

THE OLDE BARN HOTEL
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY REPORT (DRAFT)
BY
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FOR JULY 2007

I have deliberately kept our policy quite simple and my promise is to demonstrate that we are not just playing lip service to political correctness a point that I am very happy to debate regarding our corporate competitors. I find it astonishing that most of the large corporate hotels in the UK hotels have the most impressive environmental policy, drawn up by lawyers, yet fail to demonstrate the most basic and obvious quick wins.

The report will plot our failings and successes over time in order that our policy of continual improvement can be measured and improved on.

ENERGY

Unlike most of our corporate competitors we have no intention of going down the route of "Green contracts" in order to claim that we are using 100% renewable energy. You have to question how can the national grid determine what is green energy and what is non renewable and how can they send green to one account and not another. In practical terms we all share electricity from all sources be it green or carbon unfriendly or non renewable This is indicative of ticking the boxes and a bit like planting a million trees somewhere on the globe in order that you can feel good.

The fact is we have to reduce our consumption of energy globally and in practical terms at The Olde Barn Hotel we have worked very hard already. With these simple measures our efforts have exceeded nearly all of our competitors, particularly the large corporate groups with impressive environmental policies.

- a) Fitted low energy light bulbs throughout the property.
- b) 100% of our bedrooms stock has heating which is only activated when a guest occupies a bedroom.
- c) 100% of our bedroom stock has electricity which is only activated when a guest occupies a bedroom.
- d) We have replaced all remote boilers with condensing boilers which are 96% -98% efficient.
- e) Designed and built the most energy efficient bedroom block in Lincolnshire

In this respect we exceed the measures taken by De Vere, Hilton, Jarvis/Ramada, Choice Hotels, Best Western, Accor, Marriott, Holiday Inn and many more.,

The new bedroom block was built by using structurally insulated panels

(SIPS) and building control have advised us that this is the first of its kind in Lincolnshire. The building exceeds regulations in all areas but from an energy point of view is one of the most efficient in the UK.

However, with the old part of the building we have a legacy typical of old buildings and have gone some way towards addressing that.

All 105 bedrooms have heating which is either activated by a key card or on check in which ensures that bedrooms are not unnecessarily heated. A key card is required to activate electricity in all bedrooms. We are satisfied that with low energy light bulbs through out that we are unable to make any significant energy reductions in these areas.

I have identified a potential saving of energy in the pool area. The pool is not always covered as some members of staff are unable to cover/uncover the pool at night time due to the strenuous nature of the pool cover equipment. Therefore, energy is being wasted in heat loss from the water, water evaporation will be higher and more energy will be used in condensing the evaporated air. I am exploring the cost of an automated cover and I will need to compare the capital costs against any potential energy cost savings.



WATER

We have recently installed new public toilets at a cost of £70,000. This has allowed us to install the latest water saving flushing devices on our toilets. Each cubicle has a large button and a small button within the large button. By default when the whole button is pressed the toilet always gives a short flush and you have to consciously avoid pressing both buttons to give a large flush



This device should offer a significant reduction in water consumption considering they are used by approximately 40,000 people a year. The bedrooms have modern water saving cisterns and our baths are designed to use minimal water. Only 5 rooms have Jacuzzi Bath Spa. I cannot see any major savings on water except in the garden where we will be exploring rain water recovery at some point in the future

WASTE

This is an area where we have a major cultural change to undergo with both our employees and our waste contractor. This will be through a process of continual improvement as stated in our environmental policy . We are already recycling glass, oil and separating cardboard. However we are not separating recyclable items and our waste contractor is unable to cope with it if we did. Our current contractor is Biffa and if we separated recyclable waste they would still take it to land fill at the depot we use.

The primary objective I wish to achieve before my next report is to separate all items that can be recycled and find a waste contractor able to send this to a recycling centre.

Recently, we have purchased a petrol powered shredder at a capital cost of £2,000 capable of shredding all kitchen green waste and gardening waste. Previously this went to landfill and is now being used to make our Olde Barn compost. We have no idea of how much green waste we produce but we can use the compost on our extensive herb gardens. If we cannot use all the compost we produce we may even bag it and sell it !!



Kitchen and garden waste being shredded



The best compost in the business and only £1 per bag !!

We believe this is a major achievement this year and we hope to see a dramatic reduction in the waste we send to landfill sites.

RAW MATERIALS

We have always been quite conscious about our sourcing of raw materials in respect that they need to be environmentally friendly. The raw materials we use are from responsible suppliers and are generally safe for the environment

we do not use bleach or caustic in our cleaning products and try to use recycled products wherever possible. We use recycled paper and paper products wherever we can and our bin liners are from recycled products and bio degradable. We use paper on both sides and use "used paper" in our fax and photocopier. All internal paper is used twice but we have tried to reduce this by making sure that all departments now have email for communication. This has been at quite a considerable cost and for the moment we do not have any further budget for this type of "saving".

We have been commended by Christie & Co a highly respected authority on businesses such as ours, as having one of the highest GP margins and one of the lowest operating costs in the hospitality Industry. We out perform every corporate brand Hotel in the UK. Our 82% overall GP margin indicates that we have minimal wastage of raw materials and we achieve a GP margin that any corporate hotel would be envious of. This proves that minimising waste and caring for the environment is PROFITABLE

Christie and Co are employed by our bankers to protect their interests and are able to bench mark our business against similar businesses. We believe that we have been able to keep wastage in all areas of our business to an absolute minimum.

PURCHASING

All of our major corporate competitors employ professional buyers who purchase from central suppliers and negotiate fixed price contracts for pre determined periods of time. This removes the purchasing decision locally and helps control costs. Most of our competitors have central purchasing including De Vere, Hilton, Jarvis/Ramada, Choice Hotels, Best Western, Accor, Marriott, Travel Inn, Travelodge, Holiday Inn, and yet claim to source locally in their environmental policies. This is where I firmly believe that some environmental policies are not worth the recycled paper they are written on. We are proud and passionate about Lincolnshire producers and will defend our position on this subject most rigorously.

It has been well documented over the years that we are passionate about local producers. It is in our culture and plays a major part of our success and is not a policy to satisfy political correctness.



Wherever possible we source from local producers and as the biggest champion in our area we are generally their largest account. This pays dividends as our growers will plant specialist produce for us such as garlic sprouts, unusual leaves and we are guaranteed asparagus as thick as your thumb. It also means that our menus are constantly changing as crops and produce come in to season. On the breeding side it means that our Lincoln red beef herd is only fed grass in the summer and hay in the winter. This means that our beef has a wonderful marbling of fat and it is high in omega 3, generally only found in fish oils.



We also use Aldershaws Brewery a micro brewery in Grantham who brew beer and lager for us. Oldershaws Brewery has gained recognition winning awards with both CAMRA and SIBA. We also have an own label beer brewed exclusively for us



An example of our commitment to local producers

My biggest single concern and an area which I will be giving considerable time for my next report is the energy required and the pollution created by our laundry requirements. The amount of laundry that is required to service a 106 bedroom hotel together with table linen for diners and leisure towels for the Health club and Spa is phenomenal. We have a duty to make sure we investigate this as phosphates are being emptied in to drains from washing powder and tremendous amounts of water and energy is used for washing and drying our linen. One thing I will say though is that I guarantee having completed my report and studied its findings The Olde barn Hotel will use the most environmentally friendly supplier in the market place.

In short we believe passionately about our environment and I will report every six months on the improvements we have made to our business to protect our environment. I can assure you that everything we claim we will be proud to demonstrate and unlike the “brands” we will not employ lawyers to produce an environmental policy to satisfy the needs of political correctness. We will be bold and share our findings, successes and our failings with anybody who is interested.

Patrick Hunt
MANAGING DIRECTOR
THE OLDE BARN HOTEL