BCC announces immigration debate to close annual Conference 2011

The British Cleaning Council has announced that Sir Andrew Green, of Migrationwatch UK, and Gerry Sutcliffe MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration, will debate the social and economic impacts of immigration on the UK at the BCC Conference 2011.

The debate will take place on 11th October 2011 at Kings Place, where up to 400 high-level delegates and 10 official exhibitors will form the audience at the award-winning conference hall and exhibition space in London’s Kings Cross.

Andrew Green is a former British diplomat and the founding chairman of Migrationwatch UK, an organisation which is a vocal critic of the number of migrants coming into Britain. After spending 35 years working as a diplomat, where he spent much of his career in the Middle East, Green set up Migrationwatch UK in 2001, and is often featured in the media speaking out against what his organisation deems to be unacceptably high levels of migration into the UK.

Gerry Sutcliffe has been the Labour Party MP for Bradford South since 1994, occupying a number of Parliamentary roles in the administrations of both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. He was the campaign manager of Andy Burnham’s unsuccessful bid for the Labour Leadership in 2010, and, as of January this year, has been the shadow immigration minister, becoming an outspoken critic of the work of Migrationwatch UK.

Mark Woodhead, Chairman of the British Cleaning Council, said: “We are delighted to have secured such credible representation of both sides of the argument on this most contentious of issues. It is estimated that London alone has over 442,000 non-UK nationals working illegally, and while we all depend on their hard work, what are the social and economic consequences of this level of migration for people already living here? This is the conundrum our panel will undoubtedly shed some light on, with the help and input of members from our industry, who are operating on the frontline of the immigration debate.”

The immigration panel joins previously confirmed speakers scheduled for the day, which include Daniel Finkelstein, Executive-Editor of the Times, and Norman Baker MP, Secretary of State for Transport. Each speaker will be addressing issues of sustainability and social responsibly for modern businesses.

For full details of the line-up and sponsors exhibiting on the day or to purchase tickets please visit the conference website: http://britishcleaningcouncil.org/cleaningconference.html
Hello and welcome to another edition of The Voice magazine. As we reach the halfway point of the year we have seen a flurry of activity from our members, as initiatives that were conceived and devised in the winter months seeing the light of day in addition to the string of AGM’s and annual conferences taking place across the country.

The BCC’s annual conference, taking place on the 11th of October at Kings Place, is but one of these events. In collaboration with our 20 members, we have devised a programme which is relevant to every stratum of the cleaning industry, a unifying and broad welcome to another edition of The Voice magazine. As we reach the halfway point of the year we have seen a flurry of activity from our members, as initiatives that were conceived and devised in the winter months seeing the light of day in addition to the string of AGM’s and annual conferences taking place across the country.

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The Association of Building Cleaning Direct Service Providers (ABCD) held their annual Conference at the Queen Hotel in Chester, on Thursday 12th May 2011. Over 50 managers and supervisors directly involved in facilities management in the public sector were present to hear Pascoe Sawyers, Director of the personal development company My Life Is My Business, convey his philosophies on motivation and career advancement during the daylong event. Each session was designed to offer delegate’s guidance and advice which will help improve motivation amongst staff and colleagues, and perhaps most importantly, themselves, as the public sector grapples with a tough economic climate and increasingly demanding workloads.

After a welcome address by ABCD Chairman Ken Baxter, Sawyers hosted the day with sessions on the background of motivation, by highlighting the factors that underpin behaviour within the working environment.

In attendance was Steve Tarbox of Dacorum Council, who commented on the workshop: “We all know how difficult it is to maintain motivation, both as a manager and keeping the staff working at the right level. Pascoe put forward a lot of provocative ideas today, and I enjoyed discovering which personality type I align with, which I can definitely see effecting how I view my own behaviour at work.”

The ABCD plan to hold further Training Days and has subjects & workshops for Senior and Middle Managers and Supervisors in future. The Annual Conference/Exhibition takes place in May each year, and is another opportunity to network with colleagues from around the country. Please see the ABCD’s website for further information and updates.

The 2011 British Toilet Association Innovation Awards will recognise innovation in three key areas of ‘away from home’ toilet provision: new products, new services and efficiency improvements. BTA wants to hear about innovation that really improves the use or provision of publicly accessible toilets.

Anyone can nominate a provider or supplier or their own organisation or company by sending an email to enquiries@britloos.co.uk by Friday 30th September 2011. Nominations must include details of why the product, service or efficiency should be awarded a BTA Innovation Award. All nominations will be acknowledged.

Entrants will be invited to display their innovative products or services at the BTA Annual Conference on 21st September, before judging is completed. “Our Annual Conference is a once a year opportunity for providers of ‘away from home’ toilets to network with product and service suppliers, as well as user group representatives, to discuss best practice and hear about fresh ideas which are already working”, says Mike Bone, Director of BTA. “It also provides an ideal opportunity to recognise the cutting edge of washroom product development and service provision through entries to the BTA’s Innovation Awards”.

A panel comprising members of the BTA Management Committee will judge each nomination and decide who will gain awards. There may be more than one award in each category, dependent on the number and quality of nominations. The decisions of the judges will be final.

Each award winner will receive a trophy designed specifically for the BTA Innovation Awards and a framed BTA Innovation Award certificate.

The awards will be announced and presented to the winners by a celebrity guest during the 2011 Loo of the Year Awards presentation event on Friday 2nd December at the Chesford Grange Hotel Kenilworth.
At the BCC’s Annual Conference last autumn, David Lunt, of NEST pensions, spoke about the planned changes to pension arrangements in the UK. As the date for implementation is now only just over a year away, we look at the proposed changes in greater detail and what they will mean for employers.

The Government’s review of workplace pension reform confirmed that new employer duties will start to be introduced from October 2012. For the first time, employers will have to enrol workers into a workplace pension scheme and may need to make a contribution. Some workers will have to be enrolled automatically into a pension scheme and others only if they ask to be enrolled, and the pension scheme will need to meet or exceed certain standards.

The eligibility criteria for automatic enrolment into an employer’s pension scheme are that a worker must be:
• aged at least 22 but not yet State Pension age
• working or ordinarily working in Great Britain or Northern Ireland
• earning more than £7,475 a year.

These people are known as eligible jobholders. Their employer will have to make a minimum contribution into that scheme on their behalf unless the eligible jobholder opts out.

The new duties affect the largest to medium-sized employers between October 2012 and July 2014, followed by small and micro employers from August 2014 to February 2016.

To complement these changes, NEST is a low-cost pension scheme, available to all employers to help them meet their new duties.

The scheme can also be used ahead of the new duties from later this year, when employers choosing NEST can get extra help with the set-up process and using the scheme.

An example of an organisation that might use NEST straight away is a firm we will call A Cleaning Co Ltd. Here we look at the challenges A Cleaning Co faces, and how NEST can help it meet them.

Case study: A Cleaning Co

A Cleaning Co Ltd employs between 70 and 100 staff, depending on the time of year, and has an annual turnover of £5-10 million.

As a highly competitive cost-driven organisation, with many workers earning close to minimum wage, three quarters of staff are employed part time.

The Managing Director wants to fulfil his new duties with as little disruption as possible, but is unsure what to do for his part-time workers. He also wants to know how meeting the new employer duties might affect a Group Personal Pension (GPP) which is currently aimed at his management team.

The HR Manager is recommending NEST because it is has comparatively low set-up and administration costs, and is designed to move with the member if they change jobs.

As more employers choose NEST, short-term workers will be able to move between different employers without the need for a new account. Employers can pay into the new worker’s existing NEST retirement pot, and they won’t have any ongoing paperwork to deal with once a worker leaves their organisation.

NEST offers straightforward online tools and processes, and communicates clearly with its members and employers. That means A Cleaning Co Ltd will spend less time on administration and dealing with questions as workers can get lots of helpful information online whenever they want.

How A Cleaning Co Ltd could use NEST alongside its existing scheme

At A Cleaning Co Ltd, the current GPP uses matched contributions based on 6 per cent worker contributions.

By introducing NEST alongside the existing GPP, the organisation can offer an alternative for those workers who want to join a scheme, but with a lower member contribution level than the GPP.

Choosing NEST early allows the organisation to get the scheme in place and running smoothly well ahead of automatic enrolment when most of their staff will need to be enrolled into a qualifying pension scheme. When A Cleaning Co’s staging date arrives, they can introduce NEST for the remainder of their eligible cleaning staff in line with statutory requirements.

Continued on next page.
Asset Skills has added another date to its events programme of subsidised low carbon training in response to high demand.

The sessions cover renewable technologies, funding and the government’s green agenda. Each one offers a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certificate to delegates and is aimed at people working in facilities management (FM), housing and property.

“Our low carbon training workshops have been extremely popular,” said Richard Beamish, Chief Executive of Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council for the above industries. “Our first two events were well-attended by people from various career backgrounds in the built environment. There is a clear need for training and skills development in this area. We are adding an extra date to the programme to take account of the increasing demand.”

The events are run by Asset Skills in partnership with Universities South West. The new date is 18 May at the innovative Genesis Centre in Taunton, and will cost delegates £25.

Energy Advice training across the UK

Elsewhere, Asset Skills is recruiting candidates for energy advice training in Wales and South West England, and delivering the programme in Northern Ireland. All the training is based around the level 3 Energy Advice (Home) certificate, offered by the Awarding Body of the Built Environment (ABBE).

For more information on any of the above low carbon training projects, contact Philip Stott at pstott@assetskills.org or call 01392 456 825.
To tackle ‘cowboy’ suppliers selling sub-standard and unlabelled hygiene products the CHSA (Cleaning and Hygiene Suppliers Association), the industry body for suppliers to the cleaning industry, has produced a new DVD to promote its Manufacturing Standard Accreditation Schemes.

Titled Beat the Cheats before You Buy, the DVD explains the vulnerability of buyers to unscrupulous suppliers who build products to a price point by subtly reducing the quantity and quality of their products. It contrasts this with the certainty that comes from buying solely from accredited suppliers.

Graham Fletcher, General Secretary of the CHSA explained: “Our Accreditation Schemes are a proven solution to the problem of irresponsible suppliers saying a product is one thing when in fact it is another. It makes sense, therefore, for every customer to specify CHSA Accreditation Scheme Standards in their tender requirements and we have produced this DVD as a way of spreading the message and encourage them to do so.”

Beat the Cheats Before You Buy, which is now live on YouTube, www.youtube.com/users/ForHygiene, is being distributed directly to commercial end users and will be broadcast at a range of conferences and exhibitions throughout the year; it has already been broadcast at The Cleaning Show at the NEC in March, where it was well received. Scheme members can also use the DVD in their own marketing and communication activities.

The Accreditation Schemes covers soft tissue products, plastic refuse sacks and industrial cleaning mops. They are supported by all the major manufacturers in the industry, each of whom has passed the CHSA’s stringent auditing process.

The Scheme guarantees:

- Consistency of supply: customers receive what they order
- Accurate labelling: customers get what they pay for
- Fully audited manufacturers: our standard, your guarantee

The CHSA’s membership includes more than 200 manufacturers and distributors from across the UK.

Delegates enjoy the BICSc Training Day

The British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc) launched their inaugural education conference for the cleaning industry, designed to raise standards of education and build awareness of the industry through professional standards and accredited training.

The conference- Green and keen cleaning workforces- was held in the conference centre at Old Trafford football stadium in Manchester on the 23rd June. Key topics covered during the day were sustainable workforces, training and respecting the natural environment, as the conference aimed to set new environmental and training standards in the cleaning industry.

Keynote speakers featured at the event were Stephen Ashkin, president of The Ashkin Group, an internationally recognised expert on green cleaning. During his ninety minute keynote address, Mr. Ashkin made the business case for improved efficiencies, operating on a large-scale and convincing clients that “going green makes business sense”. He also stated his belief that the cleaning industry is in a unique position in its ability to give work and meaning to the lives of the disadvantaged, and emphasised his belief in the moral imperative of the industries work.

Laurence Harvey, chief executive of Actuate, a leading UK training specialist in conflict management and equality and diversity addressed the conference for 90 minutes on how employers can overcome their prejudices and assumptions to look at the contribution people can make. “In the workplace and in life, we make judgments about people all the time. But if we all try to look beyond our prejudices and preconceptions about people, we will see that everyone has something to offer”.

Lance Harris, prison industries employment engagement manager, Mark Roberts of Action for Employment and Stephen Dunn for Remploy Employment Services also about their organisations.

To find out more about The British Institute of Cleaning Science please contact 01604 678710 or visit their website: www.bics.org.uk
The Association of Healthcare Cleaning Professionals (AHCP) launched a new British Standard for healthcare cleaning at their National Conference in June. The standards, known as PAS 5748, is intended to provide assurance to the public that risks associated with hospital cleanliness have been fully assessed and that nationally agreed procedures are in place to ensure hospitals are clean and safe for patients.

This will be the first time a British Standards Institution (BSI) backed standard has been introduced for healthcare cleaning. The standard comes as the result of a joint research and development programme by the Department of Health, the BSI and the AHCP. It will be a consensus based specification for planning, measuring and improving cleanliness services in NHS hospitals in England.

Although use of PAS 5748 will not be mandatory, hospitals will be able to use it to provide good practice evidence to the Care Quality Commission that nationally agreed procedures are in place for their premises to prove they are clean and safe for patients. PAS 5748 will exist alongside the existing national specifications for cleanliness and is expected to be adopted for use by most NHS trusts as well as other healthcare providers including GP surgeries, clinics and nursing and care homes.

PAS 5748 will be a major milestone along the road to clean, safe hospitals and healthcare environments. It represents the culmination of a process to identify and standardise healthcare cleaning processes and procedures which started a decade ago with the publication of the first National Standards of Cleanliness in 2001 and the first edition of the Healthcare Cleaning Manual in 2003.

In times of economic austerity, clients need a guarantee that all aspects of health and safety compliance, innovation and corporate responsibility are covered. In a recent business restructure, OCS has ensured that it firmly focuses on this area of client support by appointing Paul Thrupp as its Cleaning Director, reflection of his key role Paul’s role in making a difference across the industry. He represents OCS as Executive Council Member for the Federation of Window Cleaners (FWC) and chairs the Health and Safety Forum of the Cleaning and Support Services Association (CSSA). Paul also represents OCS within the HSE Cleaning Industry Liaison forum, as well as serving on the Business Services Board of Asset Skills.

He is keen to stress the importance of his wider role. “Our industry associations allow us to gain business benefits such as maximum impact from latest technologies,” says Paul, “but this also ensures we can influence the industry at strategic level.” Paul actively seeks opportunities to act as an “ambassador” for the industry and has given cleaning a voice at many events including special interest group forums.

The CSSA Health and Safety Forum includes representatives from all the major member companies and is strategically set up to share information and drive forward best practice. The Forum consults over a wide range of matters including UK Health and Safety regulatory issues and makes representation on behalf of the industry to bodies such as the CIEH, DEFRA and the HSE. “We have been actively involved with projects such as slips and trips, footwear, COSHH, REACH, GHS and driver safety,” explains Paul. “We distribute accident statistics for industry benchmarking and share knowledge gained from accidents and near misses.”

Nowhere is Health and Safety more crucial than in the window cleaning industry and, as an Executive Council Member of the FWC, Paul works with the other FWC committee members to make continual improvements. Several IOSH approved training courses have been introduced, including The Safe Use of Ladders and Water-fed Poles and Risk Assessments for Window Cleaning. These courses are available for both members and non-members. Paul comments, “Our aim is to continually improve the profile of the industry and we have recently formed a Corporate Members’ Committee which gives more influence to larger members to support clients and the industry alike.”

Earlier this year, Paul helped judge the Innovation Awards at the Cleaning Show and will a be part of the Health and Safety Discussion Panel at the British Cleaning Conference in October.
Loo of the Year Awards 2011

Some of the leading FM and cleaning companies enter their client’s loos in the Loo of the Year Awards. In 2010 these included Carlisle Cleaning, Dougland, ISS, MITIE, Resource, TC Contractors and Wettons.

They recognise the annual Loo of the Year Awards are a proven, cost-effective and independent annual assessment of the standard of their toilet provision management and receive proper recognition through our annual grading scheme.

There are National Awards for England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and UK Trophies awarded to the providers of the very best toilets. Awards and Trophies will be presented at the prestigious Awards Event on Friday 2nd December.

Sponsorship Packages start at £1,000

Email information@loo.co.uk or phone 01403 258779 for an entry form, or enter online at www.loo.co.uk

New apprenticeship information available

Asset Skills has updated its apprenticeship information in a range of new leaflets. They cover vocational qualifications and apprenticeships in facilities management, housing, property and cleaning.

Apprenticeships are nationally recognised training programmes that offer an excellent way of mastering practical skills in the workplace, while gaining a formal qualification.

They give new or existing employees the chance to train as they work and earn money and are increasingly recognised as the gold standard for work-based training.

The new leaflets can be accessed here: http://www.assetskills.org/ApprenticeshipGuides/

ABCD select the injured jockeys fund as Charity

The Association of Building Cleaning Direct Service Providers (ABCD) raised £270 for the injured jockeys fund after a donation drive at their annual Conference at the Queen Hotel in Chester, on Thursday 12th May. The charity was selected by former ABCD director David Froggett, who passed away suddenly in February this year.

BICSc Awards Dinner, Golf Day and AGM

The British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc) is holding its annual awards dinner, golf day and AGM on 22 September at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel and Country Club, Meriden, as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations.

BICSc is launching a number of fresh initiatives this year which reflect industry developments, including new qualifications, delivered through external providers.

Awards Dinner tickets cost £75 each, or 8 people for the price of 7 at £525 for bookings made before 12 August. The cost for the golf day is £100 per person.

For more information please email awards@bicss.org.uk