

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIP

Challenge:

How to resource setting up an Environmental Management System (EMS) and ensure it gains the support of retailers

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Solution:

WestQuay in Southampton, a Hammerson-owned shopping centre, set up a partnership with the University of Southampton in 2008 to develop an EMS. The result of this is that, in 2009, we were able to obtain ISO 14001 certification.

We identified the opportunity to develop this work through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP). KTPs provide a mechanism for universities to place recent graduates into businesses as associates for at least two years, to fulfil a specific role while undertaking a research project of long-term benefit to the host company. With professional support from both partners in the KTP, associates gain access to both the academic expertise of the university and the operational expertise of the business.

At WestQuay, an associate was recruited to manage, maintain and develop the recently achieved certification to ISO 14001. Part of the development of the standard will be to ensure the EMS is understood and implemented by retailers. Hammerson adopted a green clause as standard in all new leases in 2007: we do, however, recognise the need to work closely with retailers to help them put the clause into effect.

The KTP will therefore devise a suite of measures that WestQuay can use to better engage with retailers. A Sustainable Operations Guide will then be created to support the existing Tenant's Sustainability Guide, which focuses on shop fit-out. The aim of engaging retailers on these issues is to improve their energy and waste efficiency and to encourage them to participate in centre-based 'green' marketing events. This should result in improved profitability as retailers benefit from lower energy and waste costs and improved footfall resulting from marketing events.

Once tested and approved, the measures developed at WestQuay will be adopted at other shopping centre assets and could be adapted for use in office buildings and retail parks.