

**The
Sustainable
City
Awards**



The UK's foremost
Sustainability awards

Environmental Management in SMEs;

Overall winner 2008

Beales Hotels



BEALES HOTELS

GENERATIONS OF EXCELLENCE SINCE 1769

Winning the Sustainable City Award

Winning the Sustainable City Award for 2008 has been a huge privilege. It hasn't changed any of the things we were already doing but it has cemented the importance of those activities in the eyes of the staff and of our guests.

For us the key message went out from the Sustainable City Awards that small and medium businesses can often lead the way in true sustainability. It was certainly satisfying to beat much larger companies, but it was also recognition that sustainability is not just the latest trendy activity (although it often plays out as this in practice) but a much deeper way of conducting business in the long term.

Staff, suppliers, guests all benefited from the recognition this award has given Beales Hotels in the past year and the trophy sits proudly on our reception desk at West Lodge Park for many thousands of guests to see each month. We shall be sad to hand it back for the 2009 awards but deeply privileged to have been part of this excellent initiative from the City of London Corporation.

Sustainability at Beales Hotels

Beales Hotels is the second oldest family business in London and the oldest in Hertfordshire. It was founded as a firm of bakers in 1769 by John Beale in Oxford Street in the centre of London and has gradually moved northwards with successive generations. It is now run by Andrew Beale, the eighth generation of Beales at the helm.

The firm runs the two highest rated four star hotels in North London and Hertfordshire – the 59 bedroom West Lodge Park in Hadley Wood, a lovely country house hotel surrounded by 35 acres of gardens and arboretum, and the 53 bedroom Beales Hotel in Hatfield, ultra contemporary, in an urban setting.

Sustainability for us is not just a recent buzz word, but for a family firm with such an illustrious history it is part and parcel of everything we do. How else could we have kept going for eight generations other than by operating in a sustainable way for all those years?

So while we have a raft of green/environmental activities, we believe sustainability to be a wider issue, involving staff, family, local community, suppliers, and financial decisions.

Starting with our green activities, these can be broadly divided into recycling, energy efficiency, local food, and the estate.

Recycling: We recycle as much as we can, including cardboard, glass, newspaper, office paper, light bulbs, organic matter etc working with various recycling suppliers to facilitate this work. This has resulted in a 60% decrease in landfill waste, as the number of bins collected each week from the hotels has registered.

Energy Efficiency: We were successful in applying to the Carbon Trust for an interest free loan of 50% of the cost of installing energy efficient boilers at our West Lodge Park Hotel. We were able to demonstrate that the boilers would save 214.2 tonnes of CO2 annually, 58.4 tonnes of Carbon each year, and £22'480 in annual bills. The boilers have been installed for a year now and the figures are almost on target.

We have also succeeded in reducing water consumption by 40% through a variety of measures, including toilet cistern "Hippo" bags, waterless urinals, the purchase of a water bowser for our estate etc.

Local Food: Located as we are in North London and Hertfordshire, we have had a harder time locating small local producers of food and drink than if we were somewhere like Devon or Mid Wales. Nevertheless we have created an industry leading network of small suppliers for our restaurants with fantastic local beef, chicken, free range eggs, fish, beer, cider, water, to name but a few. Equally importantly this message is transmitted to our guests through detailed information on the tables, and to our staff through a regular programme of staff visits.

Estate: Our West Lodge Park Hotel is surrounded by 35 acres of prime green belt land on the edge of London. We have a vested interest in keeping the grounds up, for the benefit of our guests, but our estate is more than just pretty lawns or flowerbeds – we also have the unique Beale Arboretum, founded in 1963 by my grandfather and now containing over 800 species of tree from around the world. Each year we plant over 100 trees and in 2008 this is rising to over 200 with the addition of a national collection of Taxodium, a dramatic new Sequoia avenue, and multiple ceremonial plantings by our guests in memory or celebration of a loved one.

The wider issue of Sustainability includes staff, family, local community, suppliers and finance.

Staff: Many of our 220 staff have been part of Beales Hotels for their whole working lives, with several over 25 years service and many over 10 and 15 years. In some cases the staff have reached the third generation of their family to work for the firm. The overriding thing we all need from an employer is dignity and respect – something sadly missing from most large companies these days who see staff simply as an expendable resource.

Family: Eight generations of the Beale family have worked in the firm and there are currently 19 shareholders, all but 3 are family, from 3 branches. As well as regular meetings, a programme of good governance has been initiated to draw the family owners ever closer in a real and sustainable way.

Local community: A good sustainable business is one that is firmly rooted in the local community, that knows the business and civic leaders, that is involved with local voluntary organisations and supports a large number of charities. Beales Hotels is all of these things with a programme of outreach throughout the year and thousands of pounds given away each year.

Suppliers: A sustainable business builds sustainable business relationships with suppliers over the long term that are mutually beneficial – many of our suppliers have been working alongside us for more than one generation, and all our key suppliers feature in our printed and web material.

Finance: A conservative approach to growth and development is sustainable without the boom and bust of higher growth and reckless spending typified by the short term approach of the financial sector in the UK. We have low debt, high equity, but nonetheless an active programme of reinvestment involving capital expenditure each year of many hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Andrew Beale
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