



## Wiles Greenworld uses ISO 14001:2015 to drive environmental performance

“The new standard significantly raises the bar and gives a clear demonstration of both commitment and competence in managing an organization’s impacts on the environment.”

Toby Robins, Sustainable Development Director

### At a glance

- Wiles Greenworld deliver office supplies and design supplies, printing, IT systems, consumables and accessories, catering and cleaning products and furniture. Their focus is to offer a complete business solution by focussing on customers and their needs and reducing costs whilst ensuring that they do so in the most sustainable and ethical way possible
- Wiles Greenworld have been certified to ISO 14001 since 2004 and their award-winning initiatives have reduced their environmental impact providing them with experience and expertise that they share with customers and suppliers
- In 2009 they renounced their carbon neutral status, investing instead in a Charitable Trust set up to support greenhouse gas reducing schemes locally

## Organizational information

Wiles Greenworld already had a mature environmental management system (EMS) in place and have, indeed, been certified to ISO 14001 since 2004. They have also been certified to ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems since 2000 and more recently OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety. The benefits of running an externally audited environmental management system are well recognized within the company.

Toby Robins, Sustainable Development Director explains: *'Because our impact has been quantified and reduced in a structured and targeted way we were confident not only that our impact on the environment has been reduced but also that cost savings have been realized.'*

Having an environmental management system in place has meant that as well as reducing cost and carbon, the company has won and retained business, staff are happier knowing they are working for an ethical and responsible company, and everyone is confident that they are compliant and responsive to the increasing volume of environmental legislation.

Robins believes that if the environment becomes uninhabitable then there is no society. If there is no society there is no business. There is therefore an obligation

to operate in a way that supports the maintenance of a healthy environment and healthy society. *'Regulation sets the bar for the lowest acceptable performance...'* he goes on to say *'...but standards such as ISO 14001 contribute in driving better practice by creating a framework to set the bar higher. We embrace the moral obligation to adopt a leadership position and welcome the opportunity of being an early adopter to demonstrate our values.'*

**"The organization found that the implementation did not present any significant challenges"**

## Implementation

The organization found that the implementation did not present any significant challenges. Many of the new criteria brought practices that were already in place at Wiles Greenworld and were within the scope of the EMS audit.

The area of most discussion surrounded section 4.1 of the standard, understanding the organization and its context. The organization includes, both within their induction program and at their monthly departmental meetings, discussion and education regarding the environmental impacts of humanity and the social consequences of those impacts. They have also implemented measures to address

economic impacts within procurement practices which build resilience against climate change related phenomena.

To more neatly address section 4.1 in the standard Wiles Greenworld included the requirements of section 6.1 to form a merged spread sheet identifying external issues and risks and opportunities across environmental, social and economic considerations. This then acted as a pre-cursor for the aspects and impacts register, helping to inform the setting of environmental targets and objectives.

This broader sustainability approach seemed to the organization to be supported by section 0.2 of the standard which states 'the purpose of the International Standard is to provide organizations with a framework to protect the environment and respond to changing environmental conditions in balance with socio-economic needs.' Robins explains: *'We wasted some time trying to limit implementation to environmental issues. Including broader sustainability factors makes sense and simplifies implementation. This is especially true with stakeholders and external issues.'*

The organization found that one of the easiest aspects to implement was the leadership and commitment requirements. They believe that the benefit of being an SME is that the person responsible for the







standard is more likely to hold a senior position and be closer to the firm's strategic decision-makers. Toby Robins is one of the three main board directors and has built environmental considerations into his business practices since 1989.

Sustainability is embedded throughout the organization both within their operations but also as a significant differentiator in the marketplace. This means that the EMS is fully aligned with the company strategy.

In summing up, Robins went on to say *'We do not believe the additional criteria should pose a challenge to a competent environmental manager, either internal or external.'*

#### Reflections on ISO 14001:2015

Wiles Greenworld considers the inclusion of lifecycle thinking to be one of the most valuable additions to the revised standard. They already had comprehensive measures in place within their EMS, including using FSC and PEFC labelled products, because of their recognition of the importance of sustainable management, and therefore no changes to the management of these

aspects of their supply chain have been required other than ensuring alignment with the audit programme.

Toby Robins notes: *'The introduction of lifecycle thinking and external issues forces a more holistic approach emphasising that there are factors within your control, factors you can influence and those against which you can only build in resilience.'*

The organization found that the new standard is more aligned with how they already work. Recognizing and documenting their global risks and opportunities had provided merit and they recognized that, in order to create a more resilient business model with regards to climate change, they needed to diversify their supply chain and continue to pursue a policy of purchasing locally and encourage suppliers to adopt environmental management systems. As more companies apply these measures, they believe, the more they should appreciate what Wiles Greenworld have put in place and the more business Wiles Greenworld hope to win. This will confer greater resilience to the benefit of all links in the chain.

**"The new Standard should be indispensable for responsible businesses."**

Toby Robins

## About ISO 14001

BS EN ISO 14001 puts environmental management at the heart of your organization's operations to help meet environmental regulations and improve efficiency and environmental performance.

Suitable for all sizes of organization, this best-selling standard maps out a framework that a company or organization can follow to set up an effective environmental management system (EMS) including policies and objectives. It can help your organization reduce its environmental impact as well as grow your business.

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