

Working Group news

The Working Group of Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum is sorry to see Principle HSE Inspector Chris Flint (5th from right on photo) leave the group due to his new post within the HSE. The Forum is thankful for all the hard work Chris did for the Forum over the past few years.

He was instrumental in the Bradford Health and Safety Blitz on Bradford in 2008. The blitz or targeted inspection was carried out jointly by the HSE and Bradford Environmental Health on a total of 164 local business visits and resulted in 66 Improvement Notices being handed out and 10 Prohibition notices.

Bradford European H&S week event

‘Safe and Healthy Workplace Maintenance’

Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum in association with Enterprise Europe Network is organising a free event for European Health and Safety Week in Bradford. The theme this year is Safe and Healthy Workplace Maintenance.

The event, which will have a key note speaker, workshops and an exhibition, will take place from 9am until 12 noon on Thursday 28th of October 2010 at the Kala Sangam



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Centre, St Peter's House, Forster Square, Bradford, BD1 4TY.

This is part of a European campaign to raise awareness among EU employers of the importance of maintenance for safe and healthy workplaces and the need to protect workers who perform it.

Event organiser Jane Howie said "10-15% of all fatal accidents in workplaces in Europe are maintenance related". "Many accidents happen during maintenance work, many happen because of lack of maintenance and many happen as a result of poor quality maintenance management." 1

Head of Manufacturing Sector, Geoff Cox will be speaking about Safe and Healthy Workplace Maintenance and Waste Industry Safety and Health. Workshop leaders include Jane Talbot, Health and Safety Manager from Christeysn UK and Ralph Baqar, safety practitioner from Focus Safety.



If your business/organisation would like a stall at the event contact us.

Happy People Do Work Harder

David Brent, played by Ricky Gervais in *The Office*, wanted to be remembered as 'the man who put a smile on the face of all who he met'. Research now suggests companies that try to make employees happy could benefit from improved levels of productivity. Photograph: Adrian Rogers/BBC

Where Slough's most famous office manager leads, eminent economists follow. David Brent's declaration that he wanted to be remembered as "the man who put a smile on the face of all who he met" may once have been dismissed as management mumbo jumbo.

But it appears the Brentmeister General may have been on to something. A team of economists has now produced research that suggests there are clear links between workers' happiness and their productivity.

The team, led by Andrew Oswald, a professor of economics at Warwick Business School and a leading authority on the relationship between economics and mental health, said its research has important implications for the worlds of politics and business.

"We find that human happiness has large and positive causal effects on productivity," the team said. "Positive emotions appear to invigorate human beings, while negative emotions have the opposite effect."

The team conducted a range of exercises in their research. In one, students were asked to add a series of five two-digit numbers in 10 minutes. The subjects were paid an attendance fee, and a performance



fee based on the number of correct answers.

Some were then shown a 10-minute film based on comedy routines performed by a well-known British comedian. The film succeeded in raising the reported happiness levels of those who saw it, compared to those who did not see it, or who watched a "placebo" film – a clip depicting patterns of coloured sticks.

Among the subjects who reported higher happiness levels after seeing the comedy film, productivity was significantly higher than for the other subjects, for both men and women. The Warwick economists noted: "Happier workers, our research found, were 12% more productive. Unhappier workers were 10% less productive." Significantly, subjects who watched the comedy film but did not report higher levels of happiness were unable to demonstrate higher levels of productivity.

Economists have long debated how productivity can be raised through improved skills and the education of workers, or the introduction of new technology. But the Warwick team suggested that their work has opened up a new line of inquiry: "Our recent research investigates an important but often overlooked ingredient – that of human emotion."

Workplace Wellbeing Tool

There is now a new regional Health, Work and Wellbeing Group and it would like to find out if the 'Workplace Well-being Tool', which it highlights as being a very useful tool is a good resource or not.

The Workplace Well-being Tool is a FREE online resource designed to help you to improve the health and well-being of people in your organisation.

The tool will help you to:

- Estimate the cost of poor health and well-being in your organisation
- Compare your health and well-being measures to those in other similar organisations
- Look at some of the things that can be done to improve the health and well-being of your employees, using examples and case studies of successes in other organisations
- Build a business case for action, ranging from the simplest changes to large scale projects

Just google Workplace Wellbeing tool to find it.

Please let Victoria Smith, Yorkshire and Humber Health Work and Wellbeing Coordinator know if you find the tool useful or not .

victoria.smith@dh.gsi.gov.uk

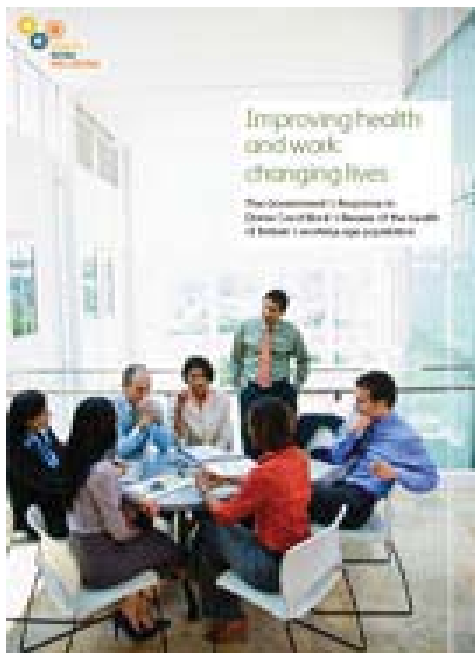


Some of the Forum's key achievements in improving Health and Wellbeing over the last three years are:

- The Forum has acted as a network for sharing information, ideas and expertise for public, private, voluntary, trade union and health organisations. Our new Management Committee includes the Department of Health, Work and Wellbeing Coordinator and Principle Officers from the HSE and Bradford Environmental Health.

- The Forum has hosted 12 major events around health and safety issues, produced quarterly Well @ Work newsletter and influenced local policy.

- We have over 700 local employers as members of the Forum and have had an impact on the occupational health and safety of tens of thousands of employees in the District.



- Last year the Forum initiated the setting up of a joint Health, Work and Wellbeing Task group made up of the Health and Well Being Partnership and the Regeneration and prosperity Partnership. As a response to Dame Carol Black's review of the health of the working age population and her visit to Bradford, at our invitation, this contributed to the Government's response 'Improving Health and Work: Changing Lives'.

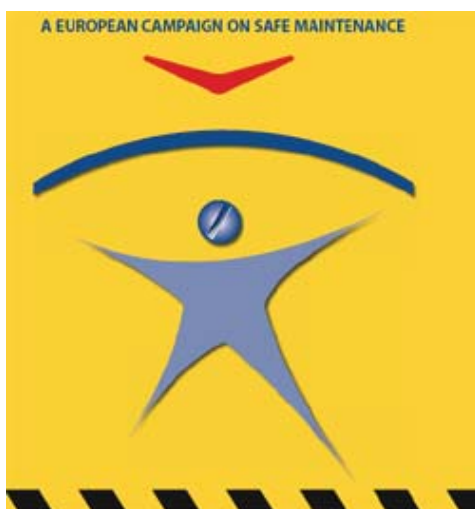
- As a result of the above the Forum was granted funding to contribute towards the recommendations of the Health Work and Wellbeing Task Group report. We have delivered on recommendations 7,8,9,12,& 13 which are about improving employee health.

- We have produced a draft consultation strategy 'Health Work and Wellbeing' 2011-2014 for the Bradford District, which will be launched during European Health and Safety Week in October 2010.

The estimated cost of occupational ill health and accidents in Bradford for 2008/09 was between £86 million and £132 million (HSE figures see page 3 of Health, Work and Wellbeing Strategy for the Bradford District 2011-2014).

Fundamental health and safety issues in Bradford still need to be addressed as well as health promotion. Common issues such as poor welfare facilities, lack of testing of extraction and lifting equipment, poor management of hand arm vibration and working at height practices are still an issue.

Low paid unskilled jobs can have a significant adverse effect on both physical and mental health. People lower down the social scale are found to have lower levels of psychological well being. This is why death rates for adult men in unskilled work are nearly twice that of adult men in professional employment. The Forum intends to continue to focus on lobbying and raising awareness for decent jobs with decent pay for Bradford.



European Work Hazards Network Conference 2010



BAOHSF Chair Andrew Mawson attended the European Work Hazards Conference at Leeds University 10 to 12 September. The conference is held every two years in different European countries and attracts delegates from throughout the European Union and farther afield.

Delegates visited workplaces close to the conference location to observe Health & Safety in operation in the UK (*see photo right of delegates touring Neville Hill Maintenance Depot*), attended workshops on Health & Safety topics, listened to speakers in plenary and debated issues.

This year there was a strong international contribution to the conference with speakers from China, India, Korea and Mexico. Asbestos has now been banned for many years in most developed nations, Canada a major

asbestos producer however continues to export asbestos to developing nations such as India and Korea. Speakers from those countries described the damage this asbestos does to the lives of workers where they live and called for a world wide ban on asbestos use.

Uncontrolled ship breaking remains a major issue in some developing countries with little attention paid to the hazards involved. Workers protection in China where everyone is a union member is poor and evidence was presented of attempts to cover up accidents in order to retain international contracts. Delegates discussed a 'safe trade' mark operating in a similar way to fair trade but concerns were raised this could be just a sticker.



BAOHSF

Tel: 01535 691049
E.mail jane@baohsf.org.uk
web: www.baohsf.org.uk
13 Scott Street
Keighley BD21 2JH
Tel: 01535 691049

WHAT

Workers' Health Advice Team
Unison Offices, 2nd Floor
Auburn House, Upper Piccadilly
Bradford, BD1 3NU
Tel: 01274 393949



To receive newsletters, seminar lists and keep in touch please complete this form

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Send to Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum, 13 Scott Street, Keighley, BD21 2JH