



Businesses and other organisations aiming to improve their environmental performance received a welcome boost with the announcement yesterday that CO2Sense, the not-for-profit low-carbon expert company, will become an independent Community Interest Company. The company, which was formerly owned by the regional development agency Yorkshire Forward, was granted permission to become independent by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The majority of RDA land and property assets are now managed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

CO2Sense supports businesses and other organisations to cut their carbon emissions and their costs, providing advice and investment funds for renewable electricity and heat installations and projects that cut energy, waste and other resources.

Announcing the move, CEO Joanne Pollard said "We never doubted that we had a secure future following the closure of the RDAs. For the last four years, we have been passionate about enabling businesses to grow and fighting global warming – and these objectives are as important today as they've ever been. We're looking forward to helping more businesses to prosper and to cut emissions over the years to come."

CO2Sense will remain a not-for-profit company, and any income from investments or consultancy will be reinvested in low-carbon projects for the benefit of the community.

Julian Smith, Member of Parliament for Skipton and Ripon, said: "Yorkshire is at the forefront of developments in green technology and this has been helped to a large extent by Yorkshire Forward's decision to set-up CO2Sense.

"With the closure of the Regional Development Agency, I believed it was important that the work being done by CO2Sense was able to continue and I was pleased to be able to help secure the decision to allow it to be a Community Interest Company by the Secretary of State

for Business.

"CO2Sense now has an excellent opportunity to ensure Yorkshire is at the forefront of the green revolution and benefits from the jobs and investment that will bring."

Members of CO2Sense's new board will include Cllr Dobson, executive member for environmental services at Leeds City Council, Prof. Andy Gouldson from Leeds University and Adrian Lythgo, Chief Executive of Kirklees Council.

Professor Andy Gouldson, Director of the Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy at Leeds University said, "Our research shows that businesses could go a long way to cutting their energy bills and carbon footprints by making commercially attractive investments. But businesses often need an honest broker with the right expertise to help them to help them to make the right decisions and to deliver this activity in the best way for them. This is exactly what CO2Sense has been doing for several years, and it's great to hear that it will continue to provide vital help for businesses and other organisations for years to come."

Adrian Lythgo, Chief Executive of Kirklees Council, said: "For a long time, Kirklees has been at the forefront of promoting environmental initiatives, and we know how important it is for businesses, community groups and public-sector organisations to get the right level of independent support. CO2Sense has provided this type of support for many years, and I'm delighted that it will continue to do so as a community-owned company."

Cllr Dobson of Leeds City Council also welcomed the news. "It's exciting times in Yorkshire with many opportunities to create green jobs and bolster our economy while securing our low carbon future. It's great news for our region's businesses who will be able to count on the continued support of an independent, not-for-profit organisation with a proven track record of improving profitability and environmental performance," he said.

To date, CO2Sense has invested over £12.6m in low-carbon projects and has saved over 1,113,000 tonnes of CO2. According to Joanne Pollard, they have ambitious plans to invest even more money in low-carbon projects in the future. "This is just the start. Businesses who are considering developing renewable energy projects, or who want to cut their energy, waste or water costs, should get in touch with us. We would welcome the opportunity to work with them for the benefit of both the business community and the wider community."

CO2Sense

CO2Sense is the not-for-profit low-carbon expert company that helps organisations to cut their costs and to improve their environmental performance.

We help organisations to find real cost savings by developing low-carbon strategies, which give no-nonsense, clear direction to reduce energy and water use, to produce less waste and to use fewer raw materials.

We help organisations to generate both free energy and an income by developing renewable electricity and heating installations. Because we're not trying to sell a particular type of renewable energy, we make sure that organisations install the technologies that will deliver the best possible return for their investment.

We help companies that sell environmental products to develop their business. We find new markets for their products, and we help them to get the right product accreditation to make sure that their customers can buy from them with confidence.

We can also help organisations to get capital investment to help with the costs of installing new renewable energy and other low-carbon installations.

We work with some of the UK's largest companies to develop new ways of cutting greenhouse gas emissions. For example, we are working with businesses and with government to encourage the development of a carbon capture and storage (CCS) network in Yorkshire. CO2Sense is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

To find out more, visit www.co2sense.co.uk