

CREWE SETS NEW BENCHMARK IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Written by Karl

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Bentley Motors' headquarters in Crewe is the first plant in the UK automotive industry – and one of the first companies anywhere - to achieve the new energy management standard, ISO 50001. The accreditation recognises the company's continuous improvement in energy efficiency, reflecting the long-term commitment of Bentley to reduce its overall environmental impact.

The award of the new ISO 50001 benchmark – which has only been in existence for a few months – was the result of a complex audit carried out by independent certification and verification authority, Lloyds Register Quality Assurance (LRQA). To achieve the new global standard, Bentley had to demonstrate improved energy performance, including energy efficiency, use, and consumption leading to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy costs, and other related environmental impacts.

A significant proportion of the £1billion invested in the historic Pym's Lane site since the purchase by Volkswagen in 1998 has been devoted to environmental improvements. Even though car production increased ten-fold between 2002 and 2007, there has been no commensurate increase in environmental impact.

A series of initiatives have been undertaken including improved heating and lighting, better controlled boiler and compressed air systems, greater insulation and more efficient variable speed drives. The results have been significant. Between 2000 and 2010 the energy used on site for each car produced was reduced by two thirds, and by 14% for the overall site. This has delivered savings of 230GWh of energy – enough to power 11,500 houses for a year.

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In other areas, Bentley is also reducing the impact of its plant on the environment. The Company's waste recovery and recycling strategy is currently achieving a recycling rate of 77%, quickly approaching Bentley's target of 80% recycling. Water usage is also being reduced. A major part of our body coating process, water usage has been halved over the past decade with plans to improve this performance still further.

Speaking about the certification, Michael Straughan, Member of the Board for Manufacturing, said:

"Achieving ISO 50001 is a tremendous achievement. We are extremely proud to be the first UK automotive plant to achieve this distinction which is even more remarkable given the age of so many of our buildings. It is a tribute to the efforts of everyone here in looking for new and innovative ways to improve the energy performance of our facilities and I know this commitment will continue.

"Bentley's commitment to improved environmental performance goes beyond the factory itself. In 2008 we announced an environmental strategy for our products which is delivering a fleet reduction in CO2 of over 15% in four years and the introduction of a new powertrain which, by itself, improves fuel economy by 40%. Added to this is a production volume 90% of which is compatible with sustainable biofuels. We are determined that Bentley should be the leader of the high luxury automotive sector in terms of environmental performance."

The award comes at the same time as a separate re-certification of environmental management to ISO 14001. Bentley was the first UK automotive plant to achieve that benchmark in 1999 so it is again setting the standard for the UK industry with this latest award.