



One of Birmingham's greenest venues is celebrating today after maintaining a British Standard accolade for their environmental credentials.

Conference Aston, Birmingham city centre's premier conference, hotel and event venue, has had its ISO14001 accreditation reaffirmed following the refurbishment of 53 bedrooms as part of a £5.4m redevelopment of the Aston University site.

The bedrooms, which are now all of 4* equivalent quality as a minimum, were the final phase of the 163 rooms on site to be refurbished. As part of the renovation, the remaining rooms have been fitted with a wide range of environmentally-friendly appliances, including the use of thermostatic mixing valves to control water temperature, LED and energy saving lighting, split flushing toilets and facilities for easier recycling.

All paper, plastic and battery waste is to be recycled once rooms are cleaned, whilst the donation of old furniture to a variety of organisations in the region is an initiative that will continue. So far, beneficiaries have included Hillcrest school; Age Concern, 1st Sheldon Scout Group; Inter-Action MK; Child Education Development and Empowerment (CEDE) trust fund and the EFA Foundation.

Lucy Talbot, director at Conference Aston, said: "Conference Aston was the first academic venue in the UK to be given this rating and our green credentials are something that we take very seriously, so we are very proud to have retained our British Standard rating for our environmental management systems.

"When we were looking at the refurbishment of the bedrooms, it was imperative that whilst we raised the quality of the rooms, we didn't forget that they needed to be energy efficient too. It's been a tough balancing act, but one we feel is very worthwhile.

“For example, we have reduced the amount of water that our showers use per minute by five litres, but have not compromised the quality of the shower which is a key requirement for any hotel user.

“Things such as the removal of bottled water from bedrooms to decrease plastic waste have been offset by the installation of water coolers on bedroom landings. These steps may not seem like big deals, but when factored in to the grand scheme of things, it can make a real difference.”

For more information on Conference Aston’s redevelopment, call 0121 204 4300 or visit www.conferenceaston.co.uk