NATIONS, REGIONS, GROUPS & FORUMS

Nations, Regions & Groups
01536 740116
regions@ciltuk.org.uk
www.ciltuk.org.uk/regions

Forums
01536 740140
forums@ciltuk.org.uk
www.ciltuk.org.uk/forums

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

Delivering 'future fit' supply chains

The pace of change in the supply chain industry is considerable. Digitalisation, automation, sustainability, electrification, and social developments around inclusion, safety and wellbeing, training and education, are all trends that supply chain companies are needing to respond to.

The CILT Environment and Sustainability Forum partnered with Wincanton to stage an innovation event that looked at some of these themes with an emphasis on sustainability, using the resources of the Wincanton Innovation Centre to illustrate some real case studies and some imagined scenarios that were thought provoking. The event was aimed at supply chain professionals interested in innovation and sustainability and the future of our industry.

This was a two-centre 'in-person' event starting at Wincanton's Innovation Centre, part of its state-f-the-art eFulfilment facility known as The Web, in Corby and moving on to the CILT UK, Knowledge Centre, Earlstrees Court, Corby.

Geoff Clarke, Regional Director, AECOM and Chair of the CILT Environment and Sustainability Forum, started the 'future fit' event off by drawing a parallel between athletics and supply chains. Being agile, collecting performance data, striving for efficiency in a sustainable way and being mission driven are all common themes achieved by Usain Bolt and Jessica Ennis Hill in their quest to win gold medals. Modern logistics companies similarly strive for ultimate efficiency in order to win new customers.

Steve Tainton, Head of Sustainability at Wincanton, discussed why ESG and innovation are important to the supply chain solutions specialist. He focused in on its Environment Strategy, specifically NZC and talked about its direction of travel in both warehousing and transport. He described what they are doing to get there using innovation and new technologies and explained how they are doing against their targets. He spoke about alternative fuels, electrification, renewables, vehicles and infrastructure. At the time of the presentation they had 50 electric commercial vehicles on the fleet with more planned. Overall it was a really interesting insight to the company plans.

Claire Charlton, Head of Innovation at Wincanton, provided an insight into why the group established its Innovation Centre. There had been almost 2,000 visitors to the centre in 2023 ranging from academics, community groups to businesses. There is an opportunity for new companies to pitch ideas on one of W^2 Lab Pitch Days and some of the best ideas are taken forward in a collaborative way. Part of the reasoning is to provide social value but there are business interests too. Around the Innovation Centre there were a number of electronic displays which gave a chance to learn more about automation of warehouses, vehicle planning systems, staff training and much more. One of the automated robot trolleys was demonstrated to us. This is used in some warehouses to bring efficiencies in picking multiple products as these trolleys move between rows in the warehouses to save staff having to do this. The Innovation Centre is a good facility to show why Wincanton is one of the leading logistics companies in the UK.

Jean Miller, CILT(UK) Knowledge Centre Coordinator, described the information resource for CILT members providing a comprehensive source of transport, logistics and supply-chain information, delivering knowledge to members. The Knowledge Centre has over 55,000 journal articles, 12,000 books, pamphlets and reference materials. Jean described the Business Intelligence Service and later in the day there was a chance to visit the Knowledge Hub and meet Peter Huggins who has been the CILT's Librarian for over 20 years.

Find out more at:
www.ciltuk.org.uk/Knowledge-Centre/Information-Service

Geoff Clarke
Regional Director, AECOM.
Chair, Environment and Sustainability Forum, CILT(UK).