

Edinburgh businesses vie for prestigious green accolade

Six businesses from Edinburgh have been shortlisted for this year's Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland (VIBES) Awards – Scotland's leading environment awards scheme. Wind and Cloud Travel, Grease Monkey Cycles, Edinburgh Leisure, Mercat Tours, Soilutions and Celtic Renewables have been chosen as six out of 24 Scottish businesses.

Companies from all over Scotland entered the Awards, which recognise businesses that contribute to Scotland's sustainable development through improving processes or developing new products and services.

Wind & Cloud Travel, shortlisted in the Transport category, is an Edinburgh-based tour operator, offering German speaking eco, hiking, trekking, whisky, sailing, food, rail and photography tours for individuals and small groups in Scotland. Grease Monkey Cycles, also shortlisted in the Transport category, is a cycle servicing company who also lend courtesy bikes to customers if necessary and guarantee a turn-around within 48 hours.

Edinburgh Leisure, shortlisted in the Management (large) category, is a social enterprise created to manage and develop sport and leisure services on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council. Mercat Tours, shortlisted in the Management (small) category, operates scheduled and private walking tours of the Royal Mile, Edinburgh Castle and Blair Street Underground Vaults.

Soilutions shortlisted in the Environmental Product and Service category, provide remediation of contaminated soils and waters on sites to remove the need for disposal of contaminated materials to landfill. Celtic Renewables, also

shortlisted in the Environmental Product and Service category, is one of the most innovative companies in sustainable biofuel, commercialising the copious residues of Scotland's most iconic export, the £4-billion malt whisky industry.

The awards aim to encourage efficient use of resources, improvement of environmental performance, enhancement of business competitiveness, and support for wider sustainable development.

2014 has seen a streamlining of the Award categories, comprising Management (SME and Large), Environmental Product or Service, Transport, Co-operation, Hydro-Nation, Circular Economy and Micro Business.

Winners of the 2013 VIBES Awards include Airdrie based, Albert Bartlett & Sons Ltd., Dryden Aqua Ltd., Rabbie's Small Group Tours and Vegware from Edinburgh, Whitmuir Organics from West Linton, Peeblesshire and Biomatrix Water Solutions in Morayshire. Many of the 2013 winners signed up as VIBES Ambassadors in 2014, promoting the benefits of entering the awards to their wider business networks.

Gillian Bruce, Chair of VIBES, commented: "The VIBES Awards have been recognising champions of sustainability for 15 years it is encouraging to see so many entries from such a wide range of sectors from across Scotland in 2014.

"Scotland's businesses have proved yet again to be blazing a trail in their sustainable practices and every one of those on the shortlist can be proud of their achievements."

The VIBES Awards ceremony, which is a great networking opportunity for like-minded businesses, will take place at the Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow on 27 November 2014. Details are available from <http://www.vibes.org.uk>

Sponsoring the event and award categories this year are Business Stream, Albert Bartlett and Sons Ltd, ScottishPower,

Scottish Government, Zero Waste Scotland, Lothian Buses Ltd. and NetRegs. The University of Stirling Management School is a venue sponsor.

The VIBES Awards are a strategic partnership between Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Government, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Highland and Islands Enterprise, Zero Waste Scotland, Energy Saving Trust and the 20:20 Climate Group. The Awards are further supported by CBI Scotland, the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses and Bright Green Business.

Submitted by [Lucy Nicolson](#)