

# Manifesto 2010

**Our work;  
Our values;  
Our objectives.**

## Chairman's Introduction

"I have been involved in the support services industry for over forty years, watched it grow, innovate and evolve into its current incarnation today where over one million people work in the sector.

The British Cleaning Council is the voice of this industry, serving all of our members and their interests as we address the challenges that lay ahead."

Steve Wright, Chairman of the British Cleaning Council, January 2010.



## Background of the British Cleaning Council

The British Cleaning Council strives to be the voice of the UK's cleaning industry. Founded in 1982, we coordinate the affairs of the industry and to promote its collective aims both in the UK and abroad.

We recognise that a collective body of professionals will always be more powerful than an individual person or company. In this vein, we provide a forum for members to meet and work together to raise the profile of the cleaning industry as it gains the credibility and recognition it deserves. We also aim to facilitate improvements in health, hygiene and general cleanliness standards in all areas of British life.

The funds we raise through our activities help us continue to pursue this agenda and further the educational, training and promotional needs of our members and the industry at large.

### Notes

This manifesto represents the shared values of the British Cleaning Council's members as they stand in January 2010. As some policies may be updated over time, please refer to the updates on [www.britishcleaningcouncil.org](http://www.britishcleaningcouncil.org) as necessary.

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## Sustainability



Although the environmental consequences of our actions are having an ever increasing influence on our behaviour, the cleaning sector's regular handling of cleaning agents, energy and waste means that we have a huge responsibility resting on our shoulders. By using our resources safely and efficiently we will be able to play a key role in protecting the environment while improving efficiency and set a positive example to the general public.

## Facts

The Cleaning and Support Services Association (CSSA) has been instrumental in the promotion of the environmental management standard ISO 14001 within the contract cleaning sector. This is now helping over 30 cleaning organisations meet their environmental obligations and improve their sustainability credentials.

The British Association for Chemical Specialities (BACS) has been active through the work of the Public Procurement Task Force with their '*Guidance for Sustainable Cleaning*' document.

Together the UK Cleaning Products Industry Association (UKCPI) and BACS have produced the '*Sustainable Cleaning - A Guide for Users of Professional Cleaning Products*' document. The report gained endorsement from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is used in their best practice specifications. Additionally, the UKCPI's '*Meeting Natural Expectations*' discussion paper facilitated the debate between industry and soety about ways to improve sustainability throughout the cleaning process.

The Chartered Institution of Waste Management's (CIWM) *Futuresource* conference created a broad platform for international businesses, enabling them to orchestrate their efforts in securing a more sustainable future, tackling climate change and improving balance sheets.

BACS produced the '*Labelling Issue Created by the Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation*' paper to draw attention to the new hazard classification legislation for chemicals. Their efforts made a key contribution to the classification debate and the EU's response to the requirements imposed by the Globally Harmonised System.

The Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners (WCEC), an Industry Livery Company, manage the biennial Building Cleanability Awards. These awards recognise the efforts of architects whose work achieves high-standards of design in sustainable cleaning.

The Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers' Association (CHSA) encourages its members to apply best practice in consumer relations through its 'Association's Code of Practice'. Every 24 months the CHSA conduct their 'Customer Expectation Survey' which allows members to benchmark their performance against the identified needs of the marketplace, and all members receive a comprehensive report on the current and future expectations of the cleaning and hygiene market.

**“We recognise that our industry has a huge environmental responsibility”**

## Values

The British Cleaning Council supports the people, planet and profit model for sustainability, which is summarised as investment in staff, environmental sustainability and sustainable profits.

The British Cleaning Council supports national and local regulators in their efforts to reduce the environmental impact of industry, with emphasis placed on achieving compliance through education and advice as opposed to enforcement and punishment.

We aim to decrease the cleaning industry's environmental impact by encouraging responsible policies and practices. This includes the adoption of techniques that minimise the environments exposure to chemical ingredients. Furthermore, our members have huge amounts of expertise, practical experience and knowledge on sustainable business practices and we expect to be consulted as much as possible during the legislative and regulatory process.

Our members support, where practicable, sustainable products from suppliers who have demonstrated a commitment to good environmental practice. To achieve this objective we need to be confident that organisations which adhere to best practices will be rewarded, while those that cause unlawful or unnecessary environmental damage will be punished.

The recession has placed great strain on our industry, through reduction of income and tightening budgets. Despite this we believe that a sustainable balance sheet can be achieved without the need to borrow excessively. While other industries have been the beneficiary of government subsidy and additional support, the cleaning industry has continued to carry out its essential work virtually unassisted. We expect to be supported during difficult times by the government, while businesses who achieve sustainable budgets and long-term growth should be rewarded.

At present, cleaning products can be sold into the 'away from home' market legally, without any labelling to confirm their specification. Without this the Weights and Measures legislation and the Trades Description Act are bypassed, allowing unscrupulous suppliers to pass off products with inaccurate labelling. We expect government to enforce a robust and compulsory labelling scheme so that consumers receive accurate information on the volume of products they are consuming.

## Education and Training



Asset Skills, the UK Sector Skills Council that covers the cleaning industry, has undertaken research which identified basic skills shortages within the elementary occupations in a third of all companies. This needs to change, through the promotion of cleaning as an attractive and worthwhile career and Government support for training and education.

Additionally, the skills and training required to become a cleaning professional are often underestimated by those on the outside, which undermines our sectors reputation greatly. Increased accessibility to education

and training opportunities should be made available to all cleaning professionals.

### Facts

Asset Skills has agreed £68 million worth of funding for their Train to Gain level 2 qualifications, which rewards investment in staff skills for employers. They have also developed easy pathways into Facilities Management via lower level qualifications, the new 'Apprenticeship in Cleaning and Support Services' and the Skills for Supporting Public Service Qualification.

**“Education and training opportunities should be accessible to all cleaners”**

The British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc) have been highly active in the training arena and its guidance on basic cleaning competence qualifications are used universally within the cleaning sector.

Accepting our responsibility to society is taken very seriously by the cleaning industry. Asset Skills and Working Ventures UK have shown through their work with skills competitions in prisons that ex-offenders make excellent employees, and they provide them with the range of skills they need to help secure employment upon release. The Federation of Window Cleaners also supports training seminars with specialist window cleaning courses, as a career and within the prison service. These prison

cleaning competitions run across the UK and demonstrate the high skills level achieved by offenders and their employability in the UK workforce.

Asset Skills has assisted thousands of individuals through their Women in Work programme, which is now in its third year of supplying treasury funded support to enable women to secure better training to fulfil their potential.

Asset Skills has also organised and run skills competitions for cleaners, supervisors and managers across the UK since 2007, with 408 competitors and 19 awards made as of November 2009. The best young competitors in the UK cleaning industry then progressed to *Euroskills* where they were awarded the highest accolade possible, Gold in every category, as the UK was awarded second place behind Germany in the European Skills league.

The Association of Building Cleaning DSP's (ABCD) has run an annual national training day for middle-managers and supervisors over the past 8 years which helps promote health and safety in the workplace as well as sustainable policies for equipment and cleaning products. They have also initiated an annual managers training day which has sought to improve communication skills and business acumen at the top level of the sector.

## Values

The British Cleaning Council is extremely concerned that the promises made on financial support for Train to Gain may not be followed up by sound delivery. At present it seems that there is insufficient Government funding to provide the number of apprenticeships that have been guaranteed, and unless this shortfall is addressed an opportunity to train and develop tens of thousands of cleaning employees will have been lost and the cleaning industry will struggle to fulfil its social responsibility obligations.

To promote cleaning as a viable, well-regarded career with clear progression and excellent prospects, we need to change the perception that it is underpaid and low-skilled. This can only be achieved through encouraging salary increases within our industry and recognition of the value of our members training programs through an increase in funding and sponsorship to enable them to expand their work.

Through our network of members we aim to provide an open communication channel where the best knowledge, practice and understanding are made available to everyone, with the overall aim of raising standards. We expect that the progress we make in improving standards and quality of service provision through measures such as these are recognised and supported by government.

## Healthcare



The quality of our work in healthcare is of huge importance to our industry and we accept that it is in this area that our performance will always be scrutinised and analysed to the greatest degree.

High-infection rates caused by inadequate hygiene procedures at hospitals are completely unacceptable. While the reasons behind such infections are complex, they can always be reduced through simple measures such as increasing the number of cleaning staff working on hospital wards and specialised training.

The cleaning industry is still expected to exceed performance standards despite the dual challenges of underinvestment and a reduction in resource. We expect Government to provide more support to our industry if we are able to address these challenges.

### Facts

Autumn 2007 saw a £50m “deep clean” drive to substantially reduce healthcare associated infections. The outcome of this investment was a demonstrable reduction in MRSA and Clostridium difficile infection rates (falling by a third in 2008-09 in England and Wales).

A recent study by consultant microbiologist Dr Stephanie Dancer concluded that only using targeted cleaning methods and as single additional cleaner has a “measurable effect on the clinical environment,” cutting the number of patients who contracted MRSA while saving hospitals an estimated £30,000 - £70,000. If this policy was replicated in every hospital many lives would be saved alongside millions of pounds in the cost of additional healthcare.

The CSSA has promoted the importance of the contract cleaning sector in healthcare on a variety of platforms, including the NHS Cleaning Summit. All CSSA members involved in cleaning hospitals are required to demonstrate that they take their responsibility towards reducing HAI’s very seriously.

Work by the Healthcare Commission and the Care Quality Commission has discredited the assumption that hospitals serviced in-house achieve better standards of cleanliness. In November 2008, the Healthcare Commission found that out of 6 hospitals with perfect hygiene scores 5 were cleaned by outsourced cleaning contractors. The British Cleaning Council believes that the debate should be moved away from discussing the identity of the service provider and onto investment in the number of staff and the quality of service provided.

**“Increasing the number of cleaning staff is the single most effective way to reduce hospital acquired infections”**

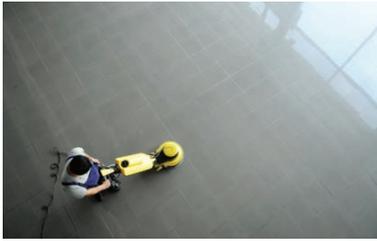
### Values

We expect the NHS and government to recognise the importance of investment in the number of cleaning staff when improving patient, staff and public safety within healthcare.

For prevention and control of infection to work effectively, there should be an ongoing effort to develop cleaning and hygiene safeguards within the sector. We expect to be recognised as standards are raised, and consulted in any legislation which affects this work. Likewise, as new technology emerges that supports the control of infection, we expect the NHS Rapid Review Panel to deliver immediate responses to enable viable technologies to appear on the wards as quickly as possible.

We promote the belief that both private and publicly funded cleaning options should be considered when devising a cleaning strategy to deal with respective situations. We expect Governments to approach the issue of hospital cleaning pragmatically and utilise the best service provider available for the task. We also expect Government focus to be on the amount of investment rather than the source of the service, where the sole basis of all administrative decisions is the delivery of safe and effective cleaning solutions.

## Technology



The design, development and manufacturing of cleaning machinery, cleaning agents and other cleaning products are full of examples of innovation, improvement and ingenuity. Our efforts to ensure that technological advancement within the cleaning industry is both efficient and sustainable should be assisted by the government if we are to maintain this progress.

## Facts

The cleaning industry has produced 12 separate technical guidelines on safe, sustainable machinery manufacture for our industry which promotes sustainable and efficient design.

The Industrial Cleaning Machine Manufacturers Association (ICMMA) has effectively lobbied for change to improve the required machinery standards through the BSI, CEN and ISO accreditations, striving to raise standards across the manufacturing sector.

ICMMA has used sponsorship funding from British Cleaning Council to develop further codes of practice for industrial machinery, applicable to pressure washers and scrubber-driers. ICMMA has established guidance for members on compliance around the non-binding WEEE legislation through the creation of a joint position statement.

The Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers' Association (CHSA) responded to governmental guidance on self-regulation within the cleaning industry by introducing the *Manufacturing Standard Accreditation Scheme*, addressing three product groups: soft tissue products, plastic refuse sacks and cotton mops.

The National Carpet Cleaners Association (NCCA) has received British Cleaning Council funding to introduce recognised standards into the carpet cleaning sector. They will be working closely with the British Standards Institution to develop recognised standards which will improve both quality and efficiency within the sector.

The CHSA Accreditation programme requires all members of the scheme to fully label their products with set dimensional information and guarantee that the product matches the specification on the label. The products of adherents to the schemes are regularly monitored by independent inspectors who make unannounced factory visits and test the products on the market place, with a disciplinary process in place to address non-compliance.

## Values

**“Design developing and manufacturing by the cleaning industry has greatly improved”**

We recognise that all customers, both business and domestic, should have complete confidence in their decision when purchasing machinery, products and any other cleaning technology. Our industry supports measures to ensure that standards and safety measures are implemented and adhered to and we expect to be assisted in our work to further this program.

We assist our members and the public by supplying them with accurate information regarding cleaning, hygiene and surface-care products. Given the experience and proven record of success our members have in this area,

we expect our recommendations to be heeded and adopted by the government when they formulate policy.

We recognise that standardised regulation systems can fall short of the specific needs of many organisations. The British Cleaning Council expects Government to implement flexible and responsive regulation that is tailored to accommodate the ever-changing nature of the cleaning industry. Our members expect to be consulted and involved in the strategic discussions which relate to the regulation and classification across the cleaning sector.

## Waste management



When handled incorrectly, waste disposal can do permanent damage to our environment. The licensing and regulation of this sector is of paramount importance if we are to ensure that our waste is disposed of in a responsible, efficient and sustainable way through using approved and registered waste management contractors.

### Facts

Britain produces 434 million tonnes of waste each year, throwing away over £650 million annually by dumping and incinerating waste. If this waste were to be recycled or disposed of more efficiently, the UK could save 19 million tonnes of greenhouse gases annually.

The *WEEE Directive*, which aims to improve the environmental performance of businesses that manufacture, supply and use electronic equipment, has acted to complement the *Battery Directive*, which has mandated the safe disposal of used-batteries by all industries, including the cleaning sector.

The UK is lagging behind our European neighbours in terms of recycling with its current rate of recycling running at 34% (compared with Germany's 64%). Meanwhile, the whole of the EU is wasting over €5 billion every year through incinerating waste unnecessarily, leaving huge scope for improvement across this sector.

CIWM, through its strength in partnerships, has created a new skills and competence awards for managers with the *Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board*, the sectors recognised awarding body. This award has created a benchmark for standards and training within waste management, promoting research and facilitating the interchange of knowledge within the sector.

### Values

The British Cleaning Council promotes an environmentally sensitive approach to waste disposal in order to manage environmental impact. We expect EU level support and funding to assist the British cleaning industry's efforts to ensure that the sustainability improvements within our industry continue to improve. The cleaning sector is the front-line waste disposer across industry, and therefore the benefits of any assistance we receive are multiplied across the economy as a whole. We also expect government to support businesses to adopt a waste management system that promotes minimisation, reuse and recycling wherever possible.

The CIWM supports comprehensive waste management strategies to ensure safe and responsible methods of disposal. We expect government to recognise these achievements and assist in ensuring that their measures are enforced across the sector.

We aim to promote and encourage the development of professional and technical standards within the waste management industry. We expect to be supported in our efforts so that unlicensed operators are effectively policed out of the marketplace.

We expect Government to support better resource efficiency through landfill restrictions for recyclable or recoverable materials, which will encourage new waste treatments and better resource management by businesses. We also expect increases to public subsidy for the creation of greater numbers of sustainable waste plants accessible to our industry as we strive to achieve this objective.

**“Waste management should always be conducted in a responsible, efficient and sustainable way”**

## Health and Safety



Each year an estimated 2 million workers in all industries suffer from ill health caused or exacerbated by their workplace activities in the UK. The British Cleaning Council firmly supports industry-led health and safety measures in the belief that safer working environments increases productivity, saves lives and is good for businesses.

### Facts

Over 3,000 workers in the cleaning industry suffered from workplace related ill-health in 2007-2008. The three most common causes of injuries were slips and trips, manual handling and falls from height, meaning that cleaning industry workers often have to operate in extremely high risk environments.

The British Cleaning Council has regular meetings with the Health and Safety Executive to ensure that we can convey the concerns of our members, while we relay the HSE's exchanges and initiatives back to them. We are also part of the *Cleaning Industry Liaison Forum* which coordinates Health and Safety Executive (HSE) policy on the cleaning sector.

The HSE's ladder exchange initiative, where old, damaged or broken ladders can be exchanged for a subsidy on a new model has helped over 5,000 participants since its launch in 2007.

### Values

We believe all workers should be protected, so far as is reasonable, from ill health and accidents arising from work activities. We expect government to consult our members when devising and updating any health and safety law to ensure it is as relevant as possible for our industry.

**“We believe industry-led regulation will lead to safer working**

Poor occupational safety and health performance levels result in a significant cost to the wider economy through losses in work-days, compensatory costs and reputational damage. We therefore recognise that health and safety policy is a moral issue and we expect government to provide a regulatory and enforcement framework that promotes

sensible, relevant and responsive health and safety risk management that will protect both employers and workers from unnecessary risk.

The handling of potentially hazardous and dangerous chemicals every day makes education essential for the cleaning workforce and the British Cleaning Council strongly promotes health and safety training. We expect the Government to support and sponsor employer training to improve the safety levels within the workplace.

## Public Hygiene



Social spaces that enable a better quality of life should be valued and maintained. They influence our behaviour, how we interact with our environment and are strongly linked to our quality of life. We recognise that cleanliness and provision of public services are where first and last impressions are created, and through our own campaigns and those of our members we are committed to bringing about cleaner, safer and tidier public spaces and discourage activities which have a negative impact on environmental quality. The government should recognise this and support us in achieving our objective of a better public environment for all.

## Facts

The British Toilet Association (BTA) runs the annual *Loo of the Year* awards which recognise the best 'away from home' public toilet facilities. The Awards have encouraged the highest possible standards in all types of public toilets as part of a high profile political and media campaign for the past twenty years.

The *Clean Britain Awards* encourages those in the public realm to gain recognition for the cleanliness and quality of their geographical areas and encourage civic pride and engagement in local environmental quality.

Keep Britain Tidy's Big Tidy Up campaign has resulted in 15,000 volunteers collecting over 50,000 bags of rubbish in 2008, while their Local Environmental Quality survey has helped measure and compare local environments year on year.

## Values

The British Cleaning Council encourages action and campaigning to maintain and improve the cleanliness of our environment. The campaigns we support have a positive impact on the public spaces which benefit everybody and we expect to have our activities supported.

We expect government to set targets and benchmarks to measure improvements in the cleanliness and tidiness of local environments for those responsible and punish those who do not fulfil their obligations.

We expect legislation which will ensure a minimum number of public toilets are provided by those in the public realm, alongside a guarantee that they will be secure, fully attended and subject to cleanliness standards testing.

The London 2012 Olympics will be a significant opportunity for the UK to show its public spaces, streets, parks and hotels as a hygienic and hospitable destination for visitors. We call on the London Organising Committee to ensure that sufficient funding and planning is provided for the cleanliness of the Olympics so that the UK can show itself in the best possible light.

**“Clean and safe public spaces create a better environment for all”**

## Specialist Cleaning



The British Cleaning Council represents a number of organisations engaged with specialist cleaning tasks, such as window cleaning, wheeled bin washing and building cleaning. It is clear that specialist cleaning requires a tailored approach with more stringent safeguards to ensure quality control is maintained and risks to workers safety and the environment are minimised. To achieve this we need the full support of government to effectively regulate the sector and ensure that such measures are effectively enforced.

## Facts

The National Association of Wheeled Bin Washers has commenced the monitoring of their sector as they strive to achieve an industry wide standard. They are working in partnership with the Environment Agency on new guidelines and have created a *Certificate in Wheeled Bin Washing* to improve standards in that branch of the cleaning sector.

The Federation of Window Cleaners has used British Cleaning Council funding to significantly increase the amount of training they offer to keep window cleaning as free from accidents as possible, with particular attention focused at the problem of falls from height.

## Values

We expect the government to recognise the problems that arise from unlicensed practitioners and the commercial disadvantages some operators will suffer by adhering to minimum standards if their competitors do not. We expect the government to assist the industry's efforts to improve standards across the specialist cleaning industry through effective policing, as well as offering clear and decisive action on legislation and industry wide issues.

**“Specialist cleaning requires a tailored approach with more stringent safeguards”**

We encourage the usage of cleaners who are members of a reputable trade body as the best way to ensure minimum standards of safety, pay and sustainable practices. This will help these sectors safeguard the reputation of the sector while protecting their customers in both the domestic or commercial sphere; we expect government to support our industry's efforts to achieve these objectives.

We expect government to effectively enforce punitive measures against non-legitimate operators in order to help direct demand towards fully-licensed and legitimate practitioners.

## List of Current Members

Asset Skills

The Association of Building Cleaning Direct Service Providers (ABCD)

British Association for Chemical Specialities (BACS)

British Association for Cleaning in Higher Education (BACHE)

British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc)

British Toilet Association (BTA)

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)

Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)

Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers' Association (CHSA)

Cleaning and Support Services Association (CSSA)

Federation of Window Cleaners (FWC)

Industrial Cleaning Machine Manufacturers Association (ICMMA)

Keep Britain Tidy

Keep Wales Tidy

National Carpet Cleaners Association (NCCA)

The National Association of Wheeled Bin Washers (NAWBW)

The UK Cleaning Products Industry Association (UKCPI)

The UK Housekeepers Association (UKHA)

Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners (WCEC)

The British Cleaning Council represents the collective interests of its members. Membership of the British Cleaning Council is open to any recognised trade association, research, educational body or institution concerned with industrial, commercial and institutional cleaning. Individual commercial companies are not eligible for membership.

All content by members of the British Cleaning Council.

Further background on all of the information provided in this document is available on request.

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The Voice of the Cleaning Industry