

## **GREEN TOURISM AWARD FOR LUXURY ECO HOTEL**

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Swinton Park, the luxury castle hotel in the Yorkshire Dales, has just been awarded the coveted Green Tourism Business Scheme award. The scheme is the largest green accreditation scheme in the world and the only one currently recognised by the VisitBritain tourism authority.

In order to qualify for this rating, the hotel had to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability, managing waste and energy consumption, reducing its carbon footprint and promoting an awareness of the environment and the community. It follows a committed level of environmental investment and training at the hotel over the last three years.

In 2006 the hotel installed a Wood-Chip Boiler, providing hot water and heating for the whole hotel, cookery school and staff accommodation. The oil burners are now redundant, and, with woodchip being a renewable energy source, the hotel is a carbon neutral operation.

This was the first installation of its kind for a hotel in the North of England, and is still a relatively new concept in the UK. The boilers were imported from Austria, where such technology is far more common – there are as many as 10,000 wood-fired boilers in Austria whilst there are only about 200 in the UK.

More recently, the hotel continued with its investment programme into environmentally friendly technology with the installation of an in-house O-Zone system laundry.

The new laundry reduced the laundry mileage to zero (whilst before it was being transported three times a week to Bolton and back) and has adopted the latest technology in cutting power consumption and also reducing the use of cleaning agents. The equipment was supplied by JHC and their O-Clean Ozone system allows laundry to be cleaned at room temperature and with shorter cycle times cutting down on energy costs by up to 35%, cutting down on drying time costs by 25% and using 20% less water overall. Fewer chemicals are used in the washing process and the Ozone effect sanitises all residue.

In 2006, the hotel and family owned estate was also awarded “Best Business Initiative” at the 1st Yorkshire and Humber Microgeneration Awards. These were launched by the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly and the Energy Saving Trust to reward green energy pioneers and showcase the best small renewable energy projects in the region.

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