



Annual Conference, Edinburgh Castle, 22nd November 2007

IWSc CONFERENCE DELIVERS “INNOVATION INTO APPLICATION”

According to the president of the Institute of Wood Science Geoff Taylor, “the IWSc is about learning, passing on knowledge, getting it back into industry so that this magnificent substrate called ‘wood’ can continue to meet the challenges of the modern construction industry”, and this is just what this year’s conference did.

Speaking to delegates, sponsors and speakers the evening before, current president of the Timber Trade Federation and head of the Scottish Timber Trade Association, guest speaker Neil Donaldson identified wood as the solution to many of the demands increasingly being made: “There is huge change in the industry – we are innovating and continuing to add value. We are hearing more about biomass; bio-neutral and carbon neutral homes and we have the solutions”. Roger Coppock of the Forestry Commission and chair of the morning sessions also saw innovation as the key to industry development, and he praised the breadth and depth of the Institute’s programme.

The conference opened with John Moore, Senior Research Fellow and leader of the Strategic Integrated Research in Timber Project at Napier University, addressing how site, forest management and genetics affect the properties of structural timber. “Foresters are increasingly responding to the demands of architects and specifiers. Wood properties depend on stiffness, strength and stability and these properties have a huge bearing on commercial timbers. To get the right wood for the job, we have to know about it on a molecular level.” He went on to explain that there is huge variation between trees and within

logs, which also impacts on how they are cut – right for packaging, or right for structure. “We know where the wood with the properties we need is in the tree. Foresters, sawmills and log buyers – know your resource!

“Cutting edge developments in wood science are directly relevant to the manufacture and specification of wood and wood products and this kind of innovation is essential to meet the demands of the modern construction industry,” says Institute of Wood Science president, Geoff Taylor, “and the programme for this year’s conference was specifically designed with this relevance in mind.”

The conference, to be held at Edinburgh Castle on the 22nd November, consisted of a series of focused 30 minute presentations intended to provide not only relevant information but a wide range of sources to which delegates will be able to continually refer.

Drawing on advances and achievements at Napier University, John Moore, Andrew Lyons and Peter Condon from the Centre of Timber Engineering presented the case for growing trees for the future of construction, predicting the properties of timber and the value and advantages of e-learning, respectively. Dr Steve Lee from the Forestry Commission addressed the potential of genetics in tree breeding, Geoff Rhodes from Coillte looked at innovations in panel products, while Dr Martin Ohlmeyer from the Federal Research Centre for Forestry in Germany presented state-of-the-art VOC-testing and evaluation for emissions from wood building products. Dr Ed Suttie of BRE and IWSc president Geoff Taylor from Sikkens reviewed 21st Century approaches to exterior cladding and maintenance, and the conference finished with a session of questions balloted throughout the day.

Full programme and registration details are available from www.iwsc.org.uk

Notes to editor:

For more information on the IWSc, visit www.iwsc.org.uk

Institute of Wood Science
3rd Floor D
1 Throgmorton Avenue
London
EC2N 2BY

Tel: 020 7256 2700
Email: info@iwsc.org.uk

For press information, please contact:

Ruth Williams
The Good Agency PR
Tel: 020 7801 3627
Fax: 020 7738 9900
Email: ruth.w@thegoodagency.co.uk