



London launches flood plan

The Environment Agency unveils its initiative at One Great George Street. By *Susie Harwood*

THE BRIEF After seven years of studies and engaging with stakeholders, the Environment Agency needed an event to launch the TE2100 Plan, a flood risk management plan for the Thames Estuary over the next 100 years. The launch was to take place over a two-day event in London, with a pre-launch evening drinks reception and dinner. Representatives from some 150 stakeholders, including the Port of London Authority, Transport for London and Natural England, were invited to attend.

CHALLENGES It was essential to the Environment Agency that the event had a low carbon footprint, so the venue was asked to make sure all food was locally sourced, and look at other steps to make the event more environmentally friendly.

Another potential challenge for the venue was that the event coincided with the G20 Summit in London. “We knew the G20 leaders were going to visit 10 Downing Street and Buckingham Palace, and being located in Westminster we were concerned roads might be closed when we needed to transport in equipment,” says One Great George Street event manager Perry Simmonds.

SOLUTIONS The venue worked with the police on the issue of road closures to make sure all equipment could be delivered. “For the evening dinner, we calculated the mileage of the locally sourced food and printed it on the menu cards, so delegates could see that the carbon impact was minimal,” adds Simmonds. Other steps taken included using tap water rather than bottled, projecting the programme of the event onto the venue walls to save paper, and putting the hefty TE2100 document onto a CD for delegates to take away, rather than printing it.

EXECUTION The event kicked off at 6pm on 30 March with a pre-launch drinks reception for Environment Agency executive staff, MPs and chief executive

stakeholders in the Smeaton Room. On 31 March, the morning began with keynote sessions from speakers such as Huw Irranca-Davies, Minister for Marine and Natural Environment at the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra), and Environment Agency chairman Lord Chris Smith, endorsing the plan, followed by presentations in the afternoon from key stakeholders and future implementation partners. The afternoon session finished around 4pm, so delegates could return to their hotels and get changed, returning to the venue at 6.30pm for a drinks reception and dinner in the Great Hall.

The final day, 1 April, was given over to the TE2100 Technical Conference, featuring a series of technical presentations from Environment Agency staff and consultants who had worked on the supporting studies.

VERDICT “The feedback has been very positive, with most agreeing that the conference helped broaden their understanding of the TE2100 Consultation Plan,” says Giselle Austin, communications officer for TE2100 stakeholder engagement at the Environment Agency.

She adds that the service provided by One Great George Street was excellent. “We all worked very well together. I would certainly recommend this venue for its great customer service, stunning rooms, good central location and excellent catering.” ■

FACTFILE

Client Environment Agency
Event Launch of Thames Estuary 2100 Plan
Group size 150
Agency In-house
Date 30 March to 1 April
Venue One Great George Street, London
Budget Undisclosed

The venue and client worked together to highlight their eco-friendly approach