



Northern Regional Report 2008

Our 2008 schedule kicked off with a great meeting at the new offices of Burco Glen Dimplex Appliances, in Prescott, Merseyside. The theme for the day was Emergency Planning. Chris Oakley gave us Burco's first hand experiences of how they survived floods in Summer 2007 at their Yorkshire site. We then had a presentation where we were given tips and advice on how to plan for emergencies, and the complexities of "leaving no stone unturned". After a great lunch and a fascinating tour of the Burco site, the regional committee then had their sights firmly set on the June meeting.

We travelled across the border for a joint meeting with our Scottish colleagues in June. Shona and the team put on a fantastic agenda for us- we learnt about superfoods, brain foods, berries and crop research, in the fabulous surroundings of Edinburgh Zoo. We also had some wonderful Scottish fun at the Comedy Club in the evening. Then, what trip to Edinburgh would be complete without a wee dram? We were guests at the Glenkinchie distillery before heading back across the border to plan our September meeting.

No amount of planning could have prepared us for the enormity of our "mini conference" at Halton Stadium in September. We held a joined up thinking day with LACA and HCA, and had a suppliers' exhibition with over 20 stands..... and the guests kept on coming..... our final figure for attendance on the day was over eighty delegates. Many thanks to Paul Kerr at Rational for sponsoring and presenting on the day. Other speakers included Peter Roberts on Sustainability, Vim Hariani on Foster's new environmentally friendly ranges, and Julie Charlton, Steps Charity. Steps is our Charity of the Year, for which we raised £486 on the day. The event was a huge success, and the new regional committee are hoping to plan a follow up event for 2009.

We all "went down 'pit" for our Christmas meeting at The National Coalminer's museum in Wakefield. We were kindly sponsored by Windsor Foodservice and Hobart UK. We had a tour of the mine, a Christmas lunch and the committee took the opportunity to pick everyone's brains for a planning session for future meetings in the afternoon.

December's meeting was my final meeting as Northern Regional Chair. After four years of fun, I have stepped down, and Andrew Markwell has now been voted as your new Northern Regional Chair, ably assisted by David Barker, Deputy Chair, and Gill Thrush, Secretary. I have had a fun- filled four years, and have thoroughly enjoyed myself. Thank you so much to all of our committee members, sponsors, hosts, and to my employer, apetito, for supporting me throughout.

Ellen Clayton
Chair Northern Region