

Emphasis on collaboration at Carpet Recycling UK Annual Conference

3 years ago



A 'clear shift' in industry support for collaboration to recover textile flooring waste materials and help develop technology and infrastructure for the circular economy was evident at [Carpet Recycling UK's](#) (CRUK) Annual Conference, Dinner and Awards Event held in June 2022.

Speaking after their first in-person event for three years, Adnan Zeb-Khan, CRUK Scheme Manager commented: "We received a tremendously positive response from the 90+ delegates who felt motivated to take greater action on sustainability within their organisations and collectively as a sector. We look forward to continuing the conversations and turning ideas into actions."

Sponsored by the Condor Group and IVC Commercial, the comprehensive two-day programme focussed on circularity advancements and market-based solutions, research topics and case studies to demonstrate members' achievements. Also covered, were policy and legislative changes, and technology advances within the sector in relation to treating the waste more sustainably, design for recycling and waste reduction for textile flooring.

The event provided exhibitors with an option to showcase their related services and products. Exhibitors included Anglo Recycling Technology, Ball & Young, Greenstream Flooring, Interfloor, Mach Tech Services and Sagitto.

Adnan continued: "Case studies from our member network demonstrated the importance of working closely with CRUK in achieving desired outcomes, with one member quoting up to £200k worth of savings on annual waste collection expenditure."

Through its 119-strong membership and 15 core funders (both record highs), plus extensive UK-wide and

international network, the not-for-profit association is assisting the sector in creating new initiatives aimed at pushing a greater proportion of the tonnage of waste arising up the waste hierarchy into reuse. CRUK announced at the conference that the volume of textile flooring waste diverted from landfill has increased again – an increase from 65% in 2019 to 70% in 2020. Due to several market influences and factors, a greater proportion is going to energy from waste outlets and a key focus will be to help to reduce this by potentially creating new markets.

CRUK thanks its core funders for their continued support and acting voluntarily ahead of any legislation. They are Balsan, Betap, Brintons Carpets, Condor Group, Cormar Carpets, ege Carpets, Furlong Flooring, Gradus, Headlam Group, IVC Commercial, Milliken, Modulyss, Rawson Carpet Solutions, Shaw and Tarkett.

On 29th June, the Carpet Recycling UK annual awards ceremony celebrated members' proactivity in relation to environmental sustainability, innovation and success in recovering carpet and textile flooring for new uses. Best Practice Awards in six categories were presented by guest speaker Bob Peoples, Executive Director of Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE).

Members were invited to enter five awards categories, including a new award for 2022: Circular Economy Initiative. Six members – Designer Contracts, MJ's Event Services Ltd, Spruce Carpets Ltd, Interfloor Ltd, Tarkett Ltd and Bonar Yarns – were recognised with a Special Collaboration Award to reward their efforts to reuse and recycle flooring following last year's COP26 event in Glasgow.

Core funder Tarkett Ltd took the Circular Economy Initiative award for their 100% closed loop DESSO carpet tiles, which are designed and produced using recycled flooring.

A founding member of Carpet Recycling UK, Spruce Carpets Ltd won the Reuse Member of the Year award for their reuse of carpet tiles and broadloom carpets since they were established in 2005. The company supplies flooring to low and no-income households in their local community.

Andy Murphy of Melrose Interiors Ltd was named Recycling Champion of the Year for his tireless work within product development and innovation in the circular economy turning pre-consumer surplus flooring into stylish, hand-finished rugs and runners.

Melrose Interiors Ltd also won Recycler of the Year for their RELAY recycling programme that diverts 0.5million sqm of carpet surplus from landfill per year. They recover pre-consumer carpet from production over-makes, roll ends and fitters' off-cuts for repurposing in new products.

MJ's Event Services Ltd clinched the Take Back Partner of the Year award for their coordination and drive to repurpose the COP26 flooring. The company is committed to helping their customers to find reuse and recycling outlets for the often-single use flooring it places onto the market.

Key speakers included Bob Peoples of CARE and Edmund Vankann of European Carpet and Rug Association (ECRA) with US and EU updates on how the sector should approach Extended Producer Responsibility with a key suggestion that a proactive and collaborative approach from the sector is required through CRUK to focus on market-based solutions. CRUK will move forward with this and arrange its next face to face steering meeting for October where core funders will discuss and agree next steps.

Other speakers were Ranae Anderson of Universal Fibers, Andy Murphy of Melrose Interiors, and Luca Bertamini at Aquafil who said: "I received a clear feeling of urgency regarding the need to raise awareness

about the difficulties and the challenges to overcome.”

Praising the event and CRUK’s increase in core funders, Andrew Jackson of Shaw said: “CRUK’s activity is so important to our industry if we truly want to become a circular economy. We all have a part to play. The mix of speakers and subject matters were varied and very interesting.”

Adnan concluded: “It was recognised and agreed that CRUK is the best organisation to lead the sector forward towards the Circular Economy and to consult with policy makers and legislators. I have now been asked to present at the LARAC (local authority recycling advisory committee) conference in October to help raise awareness amongst local government and will be sitting on the sustainability committee for The Furniture Makers Company to represent flooring. Liaison with other key related industries is essential in driving forward innovation and developments for the sector.”

“Finally, anyone who is not currently a member of CRUK in this sector, be it raw material supplier, manufacturer, wholesaler, contractor, retailer, technology company, recycler etc is encouraged to make contact and join us at this important (perhaps crucial) time, to collaborate in the sector’s next steps on sustainability and legislation, to be a part of CRUK moving forward and to benefit from the successes that membership can bring”.

Photo: Congratulations to Carpet Recycling UK’s 2022 Award Winners: Andy Murphy of Melrose Interiors Ltd, Winner: Recycler of the Year, Ross Dight, Lilli Coates and James Bagdadi of Tarkett Ltd, Winner: Circular Economy Initiative of the Year, Jennifer Bishopp of MJ’s Event Services Ltd, Winner: Take Partner of the Year, and John O’Hagen of Spruce Carpets Ltd, Winner: Reuse Member of the Year.