

## 'Greening the Waterways' Conference Hosted by University of Birmingham

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The University of Birmingham will host a one-day workshop on the application of green technologies to waterways transportation at the School of Metallurgy and Materials on Wednesday 27 June 2012.

Entitled Greening the waterways the conference will present the results of the use of electricity from fuel cells and/or batteries to power marine transport. Clean technologies can be applied to a traditional mode of transportation to replace the conventional diesel engine, thereby eliminating atmospheric, water and noise pollution. However, the complete greening of the waterways will only be possible when the hydrogen itself is generated using on-site, non-carbon based technologies.

The workshop will be chaired by Rex Harris, Professor of Materials Science from the School of Metallurgy and Materials at the University of Birmingham, the project leader of the Protium Project. This project demonstrates that a combination of hydrogen and batteries can provide viable clean energy sources for canal boats and that the hydrogen can be stored safely and reversibly for long periods by means of a metal hydride. The 5-year operational experience of the Ross Barlow boat will be outlined by Alex Bevan, also from the School of Metallurgy and Materials at the University of Birmingham.

The history, present status and possible future for electric boats will be outlined and projects such as the Turkish hydrogen boat, the hydrogen fuelled Bristol ferry and a large scale diesel-electric car ferry under construction in Scotland, are going to be presented at the event. Sandy Taylor, Head of Climate Change and Sustainability at Birmingham City Council, will be opening the meeting and will speak about the general challenges and opportunities to make Birmingham greener.

Among other subjects, the experts will also discuss an Italian perspective on canals and freight, hydrogen generation and distribution, and design considerations for a sustainable boat. This will include a description of a hydrogen cycle for a self sufficient accommodation unit developed by EMPA in Switzerland.

*"As the waterways have always been associated with a greener life-style and still represent a very efficient means of transportation, it would be very appropriate if this is one of the first sectors of the transport infrastructure to adopt a totally clean energy strategy",* said Professor Rex Harris.

The attendance of the workshop is £50. The last day for booking is the 25th of June. To book online and for more information on the meeting go to:

[www.greeningthewaterways.com](http://www.greeningthewaterways.com) (<http://www.greeningthewaterways.com>)

The event will take place at the School of Metallurgy and Materials, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.

Ends

For further information

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