

NEA2 CONFERENCE CELEBRATES INNOVATION IN THE ATLANTIC AREA MARINE LEISURE INDUSTRY



Tanguy Le Bihan, inventor of the Remora electric boat for marinas and Tim Bowerbank, Marketing Director of Cornwall Marine Network, take a group of conference delegates for a spin around the marina

INSPIRATIONAL presentations charted an upward course for innovation and growth in Cornwall's vibrant marine leisure sector at a prominent international conference last week.

Leading marine figures addressed nearly 100 delegates from Cornwall and overseas at the two-day event, aimed at boosting an industry worth some £295million to the Cornish economy.

The conference was organised by Cornwall Development Company and Cornwall Marine Network on behalf of Cornwall Council. It is part of a pan-European project called Nautisme Espace Atlantique (NEA2), which supports marine leisure businesses bordering Atlantic coastal regions. It is part financed by European Regional Development Funds from the Interreg IVb Transnational Cooperation Atlantic Area Fund, Cornwall Council and participating local organisations.

The conference speakers, who are all renowned pioneers within their field, shared the keys to their successes, demonstrated best practice examples of innovation and stressed the need for partnership and collaboration in preserving the beautiful coastlines in which we co-habit.

Cornish marine technologist Ken Wittamore, of Triskel Marine, said: "This was a first for Cornwall in terms of hosting such a high-calibre event for the marine industry. Usually you would need to travel out of county, and at some cost. Innovation is the key to our future. It allows us to expand the market even further and be more competitive and sustainable in the global market."



Jeff Sacree (Gecko Headgear) and Chris Hines (A Grain of Sand and founder of Surfers Against Sewage)

The ground-breaking event – which was free to conference delegates - was appropriately held at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall in Falmouth, against the backdrop of the world's largest deep-water harbour. Business networking took place over lunch and afternoon sessions included interactive marketing and raising finance workshops, tours of Rustler Yacht and Pendennis shipyards and a demonstration of a state-of-the-art electric marina boat from France. Alex Lake, NEA2 Project Manager (Cornwall) said: “Businesses attending the conference were treated to some of the most pioneering thinking on innovation in the leisure marine industry in Europe. This will prepare them for the next step of our NEA2 project which will be to broker business exchange visits to other regions participating in the project”. A two-day meeting of NEA2 partners from Cornwall, North Devon, France, Spain and Portugal followed the conference in Falmouth in order to develop further the transnational partnerships.



Fernando Merino (CITEVE – textile innovation cluster in Portugal) spoke about the future of textiles for the marine leisure industry. He is accompanied by Guilherme Guimaraes of Interceltica, one of the NEA2 Project partners.

For more details about the NEA2 project or to find out more about future Cornwall Marine Network events or membership benefits, please contact Tim Bowerbank or Georgia White on 01326 573 523 or Alex Lake 01209 616 083. Alternatively, visit www.nea2.eu or www.cornwallmarine.net



Part of the NEA2 delivery team in Cornwall: Georgia White (Cornwall Marine Network), Nathan Cudmore (Cornwall Council), Alex Lake (Professional Services, Cornwall Development Company)

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NOTES TO EDITOR: The NEA2 project is managed by Cornwall Development Company on behalf of Cornwall Council and is part financed by European Regional Development Funds from the Interreg IVb Transnational Cooperation Atlantic Area Fund, Cornwall Council and participating local organisations.