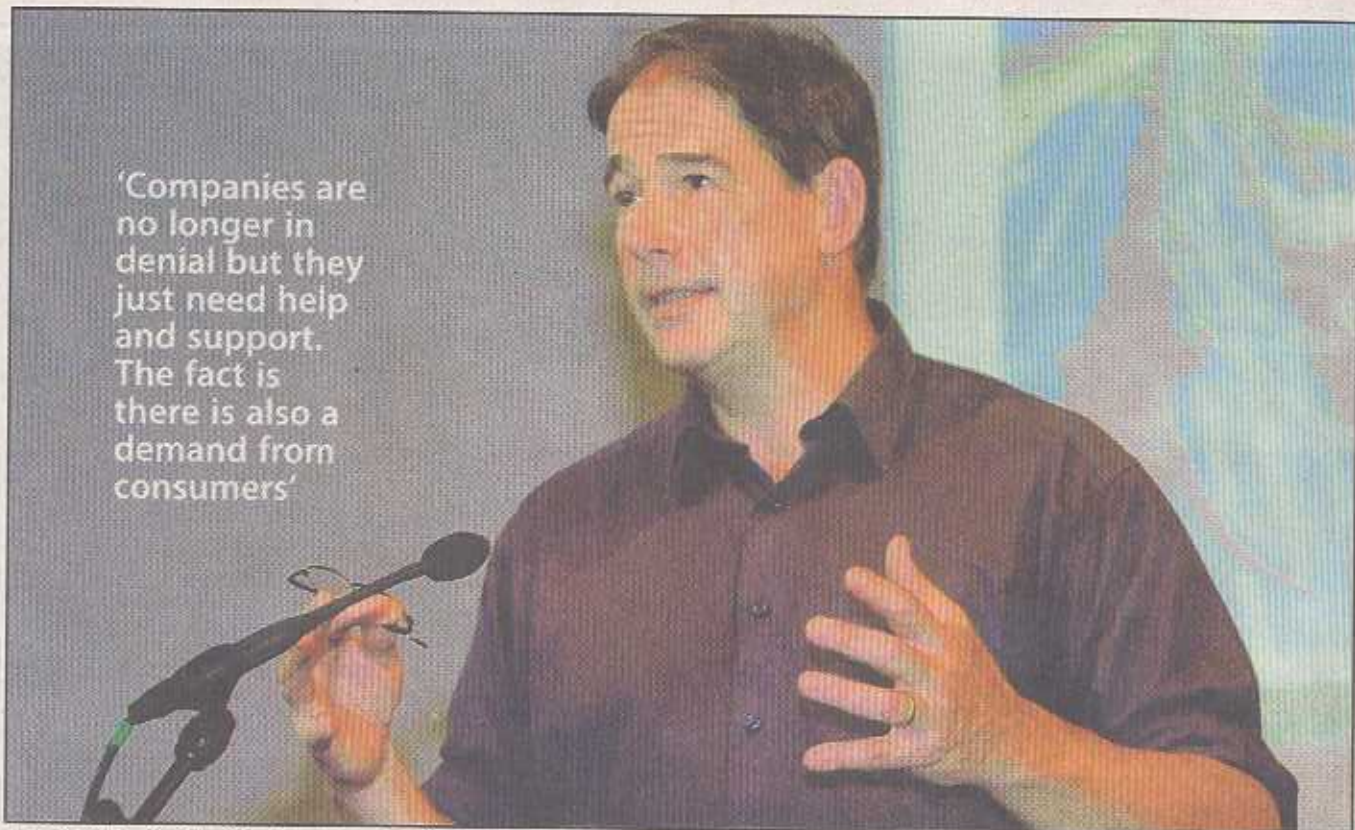


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You can't ignore the green agenda any more



Jonathon Porritt: The West environmentalist says having a sustainable policy can mean merely following good management practice

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BUSINESSES in the region must adapt to the green agenda or risk extinction, says one of the country's leading environmental campaigners.

Jonathon Porritt, who lives in the Cotswolds, will deliver the warning in Cheltenham later this month at a conference aimed at the business community.

And the seasoned campaigner believes that small and medium-sized businesses no longer have the luxury of ignoring the green agenda.

He said: "It is no longer a case of whether

Leading campaigner Jonathon Porritt tells West firms they have to adapt to a new reality

companies should adopt a sustainable approach but more a case of the best way to go about doing it.

"For better or worse the Government has said it is going to intervene and within the next two years there will be legislation in place.

"Any company which has an energy bill of over £500,000 is going to have to conform to a Government standard. Companies can no longer afford to ignore what is going on - but the majority have already woken up to that."

Mr Porritt has been campaigning on en-

vironmental issues for more than three decades but he believes that over the last two years the message has finally started to get across.

Dramatic events such as last summer's flooding have helped to hammer home the fact that climate change can no longer be ignored.

Mr Porritt said: "For most businesses having a sustainable policy means just following good management practices. There is no mystery to having a neutral carbon footprint: all it involves is sound management practices.

"On the whole companies are no longer in denial; they just need help and support. The fact is there is also a demand from consumers. It is now important for people to deal with companies who have green policies."

Having achieved a 50 per cent cut in emissions in the last year, office services company

The Commercial Group is a shining example of what can be achieved with a little effort.

Simone Mann, co-founder and director of the Cheltenham company, said: "We made the decision to become carbon neutral and our staff were happy to come along with us.

"There are lots of simple things companies can look at such as how they get rid of their waste, even straightforward things such as plastic drinking cups. Once you start looking around there are lots of savings to be made.

"But the process makes people feel more involved and more a part of the organisation. As an employer we want to be taking on people who are awake to the issues."

● The event is at Cheltenham Racecourse on Wednesday, April 23. Details at www.csrday.co.uk or email csrday@commercial.co.uk.