

# How We Got Chartered

CIWM's **Claire Nicoll** asked a number of the successful applicants that became Chartered Waste Managers in the autumn to pass on some advice to those thinking of taking the next step in their professional development

**B**ecoming a Chartered Waste Manager is not something to be undertaken lightly, but it is something that's achievable if you put your mind to it. Every year, about 200 candidates apply to become Chartered and, after submitting an application form, attend a professional interview. About 80-85 percent of candidates are successful following interview while those who are referred are given advice and guidance on how to achieve Chartered status. The interview is certainly not a "tick box" exercise – there's a specific format and the interviewers are looking to ensure candidates are suitable to carry the Chartered Waste Manager title. It can be daunting but if you're prepared, know what to expect and have done your homework, you've got every chance of being successful.

Here, some successful candidates from the autumn 2013 round of professional interviews offer advice on their own experience of interview:

#### Why did you want to become a Chartered Waste Manager?

"I felt that chartered status was almost an industry 'seal of approval' – becoming a CWM would be proof of knowledge and experience gained through hard work and would stand me in good stead for the future."

[Janet Wade, Dundee City Council](#)

"It's part of the natural evolution in terms of a career in waste management..." [Una Fitzgerald, RPS Group](#)

"The CIWM is a well established and respected voice within the waste industry. By becoming a Chartered Waste Manager I feel it has enhanced my career and validates my knowledge of the industry by respected waste professionals."

[Brenda McEvoy, RPS Group](#)

#### How did you prepare for your professional interview?

"I re-read the CIWM magazine issues from the previous six to eight months and prepared a presentation on a project I'd worked on that I felt showed my knowledge of best practice management of waste across a broad range of waste streams." [Brian McIntyre, RPS Group](#)

"I think the single best thing I did in preparation for the interview was to attend one of the CIWM interview preparation

sessions. The session offered very clear guidance and best practice for the interview, including helpful pointers for focussing the presentation and useful discussion regarding 'hot topics' in the industry. The obvious issue for anyone preparing for membership is the enormous breadth and diversity of the industry. It is becoming increasingly difficult for anyone to be a profound expert in all areas of the waste industry value chain. It is however possible, through media like the *CIWM Journal*, to gain a very useful insight into the current, key issues across the business." [Peter Hynes, Chinook Urban Mining](#)

"I made sure to re-familiarise myself with technical matters that I may not have worked on for a period of time."

[Mark Wilson, Silkstone Environmental](#)

"I re-read my application to take stock of everything achieved during my career. For my presentation, I picked a project that I knew inside out, was easy to present and featured both successes and challenges for discussion and ran through the 'industry knowledge list' on the CIWM website to make sure there weren't too many gaps."

[Jon Marshall, Zero Waste Scotland](#)

"I met with one of my referees to discuss his impressions of his CIWM interview, as well as going through my supporting statement with him and discussing potential interview questions. I also attended a briefing session held at the Scottish conference in October, which proved invaluable as it featured a contribution from one of the interviewers."

[Janet Wade](#)

"After initially speaking with Member colleagues, I researched the panel members and looked into their background and organisations. I felt it important to look into current 'hot topics', such as kerbside collections, recycling, landfill issues and reducing food waste. Useful sources were the *CIWM Journal* and bulletins, however, Internet research was also required." [Matt Briggs, SRCL Ltd.](#)

#### What was your interview like?

"I began with a presentation on a project I have been managing recently, focussing on my contribution. They asked questions and we discussed how the project fits into

the wider waste and resource management landscape. We then discussed my career to date, along with what I can offer CIWM and some topical issues affecting the sector. I had been nervous in advance of the interview but the interviewers made me feel comfortable immediately and I enjoyed getting to know them and discussing lots of interesting topics."

Ross Burns, Zero Waste Scotland

"My interview was not as bad as I had thought. I felt prepared and found it very enjoyable speaking with like-minded people on a topic that I am very passionate about. The interview flew by and to be honest I could have sat and talked all day with the panel. They are not there to trick you but to evaluate the depth and scope of your knowledge and if you have that knowledge it is very easy to chat on the various topics."

Will Jones, Independent Safety Services Ltd

"It was quite relaxed and friendly, one or two tricky questions but on a topic that I was familiar with. Much of the interview is centred on your presentation and your own experience and the panel do assist in enabling you to get that across well. If you are well prepared, it should go well." Una Fitzgerald

**What advice would you give someone who is thinking about becoming Chartered in the future?**

"Read the *CIWM Journal* issues regularly. They're very informative and interesting and you'll broaden your knowledge of the industry just by reading them."

Brian McIntyre

"My advice would be: if you meet the application criteria, and you are able to demonstrate your skills and experience, then go for it!! It provides a platform to show what you can do."

Mark Wilson, Silkstone Environmental

"Prepare well and make an effort to learn outside your field of expertise. Show your passion. In my mind the panel are looking for a person who is passionate about the industry."

Will Jones

"It's not nearly as daunting as you may think, and if you are interested in waste management anyway, preparing for it can even be quite enjoyable. It feels great being chartered finally, I put it off for a long time and realize that now that I probably missed out because of that." Una Fitzgerald

**How do you plan to make the most of being Chartered?**

"I am already leading by example by working with CIWM and research partners Eunomia research and consulting in commissioning and publishing some ground breaking work in the impacts and benefits of household recycling incentive schemes, directly contributing to the knowledge and learning of the industry and providing local authorities with information necessary to make better decisions."

Robin Davies, Serco

*It's all about you... at the professional interview, candidates are expected to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across the industry and articulate their own opinions. Next month, I'll be asking recent candidates what they think will make a big difference to the industry in the future... and why.*

CIWM Interview Programme Spring 2014

London & Southern Counties

Workshop	11 February
Application Deadline	14 March
Interviews	14 May

East Anglia

Workshops	26 February
Application Deadline	28 March
Interviews	22 May

North East

Workshops	27 February
Application Deadline	4 April
Interviews	11 June

North West

Workshops	13 February
Application Deadline	21 March
Interviews	21 May

Midlands

Workshop	6 March
Application Deadline	25 April
Interviews	25 June

South West

Workshop	5 March
Application Deadline	25 April
Interviews	12 June

Northern Ireland

Workshop	20 February
Application Deadline	28 February
Interviews	12 March

Scotland

Workshop	26 March
Application Deadline	7 March
Interviews	30 April

Wales

Workshops	19 February (North Wales) 19 March (South Wales)
Application Deadline	28 March / 25 April (North/South)
Interviews	21 May / 12 June (North/South)

Republic of Ireland

Workshops	27 February
Application Deadline	28 March
Interviews	15 May

*To book a place at one of the interview workshops, if you are considering applying for corporate membership or if you have any questions, please email [claire.nicoll@ciwm.co.uk](mailto:claire.nicoll@ciwm.co.uk), or visit [www.ciwm.co.uk/membership](http://www.ciwm.co.uk/membership).*

*For Northern Ireland email [raymond.martin@ciwm.co.uk](mailto:raymond.martin@ciwm.co.uk), for Wales email [celine.anouilh@ciwm.co.uk](mailto:celine.anouilh@ciwm.co.uk) & for Scotland email [gail.martin@ciwm.co.uk](mailto:gail.martin@ciwm.co.uk)*