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## £3k advice package is good news

**VOLUNTEERS** and staff at community newspaper *Leys News* are celebrating after winning a £3,000 package of advice in a competition.

*Leys News*, launched in 1996 as a one-page newsletter which came out four times a year, has grown into a 20-page full-colour tabloid with a print run of about 6,000.

Its voluntary management board hopes the prize, from the *Oxford Mail's* sister publication *In Business* magazine, will allow it to grow into a monthly publication. At the moment, it is published six times a year and distributed free to every household.

Editor Kate Griffin said: "The advice we have won will give us the structure we need to become more competitive and serve the community better."

"We have been planning to go monthly for the last three years, but we haven't been able to achieve it. We need someone from outside to give us a new impetus."

The prize — 30 hours of free expert consultancy with an estimated value of £3,000 — is provided by Lloyds TSB Corporate Markets, accountants and business advisers Critchleys Chartered Accountants and business advisers corporate support firm Croner Consulting.



**BOOST:** *Leys News* editor Kate Griffin, centre, with, from left, *Leys News* board director Roy Simmonds, Lloyds TSB relationship manager Matthew Dillon, Critchleys marketing manager Robert Pinheiro, *Leys News* board chairman, Chuma Nwokolo and Croner Consulting business manager Eric Burrow

# ENERGY CONSULTANTS FIND TRADING UP BY 26% CLIMATE CHANGE IS GOOD FOR AEA

CLIMATE change is good for business at high-tech company AEA Technology, which posted an upbeat trading update to the City after new orders increased 26 per cent.

The environment and energy consultancy, based at Harwell, said its profits, due to be revealed in June, would be in line with market expectations.

It has seen "strong double-digit sales growth" and good cash performance after a cost reduction

**By Maggie Hartford**  
Deputy Business Editor

plan has also been achieved. The company, which declared a pre-tax profit of £5.9m for the six months to September, is taking on 100 new staff this year and has already recruited 75 new energy and environment consultants.

They include top industry figures such as Dr Garry Felgate, from the Carbon Trust, who heads the energy & environment business, and Tim Curtis, from the Energy Saving

Trust. The environment business employs about 700 people at Harwell and the company said most of the new jobs would be based there.

The growth follows several years of financial difficulty, with hundreds of redundancies and the resignation of chairman Peter Watson. AEA, which has its roots in the nuclear industry, sold its nuclear businesses to concentrate on environment.

AEA said demand was growing in the UK and it had won significant orders from the Government, the

Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly, which reinforced AEA's position in the market

AEA has doubled its work for the EU during the year, with projects covering energy security, energy, environmental best practice and air quality.

AEA has opened an office in Bucharest and appointed energy experts to take advantage of European environmental grants to new EU members.

It is now setting its sights on expanding to the US.

Chief executive Andrew McCree said: "AEA's progress continues and the performance is much improved in 2006/07."

"The new management team is substantially in place and a number of changes are being effected to improve customer focus and streamline business processes, with the goal of accelerating organic growth. "We are looking forward to the next financial year with confidence."

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