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PRESS RELEASE (Please do not print this release onto paper)

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WPA¹ achieves ISO14001² in its evolution towards reducing its 'carbon footprint' and impact on the environment

ISO 14001 recognition means that WPA is one of the few West Country companies to be recognised for continuously improving its 'environmentally friendly' credentials. It is one of the highest, internationally recognised benchmarks in environmental management best practice that an organisation can attain.

WPA began the accreditation process in 2005 by recognising that it could reduce its impact on the environment as well as give the business a competitive advantage. As a result WPA is reducing its energy consumption and waste against a global background where:

- Global energy demand is set to double in next 50 years
- People are more aware and concerned about global warming.

In the last year WPA has:

1. **Cut the amount of waste that it sends to landfill by 50%** by waste minimisation and recycling initiatives.
2. **Reduced energy and raw material consumption** - Thus reducing the use of non-renewables which contribute CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere and cause global warming.

The smallest change, which has made an enormous difference, was to set the computer visual display units (VDU's) to power-down after 10 minutes of inactivity. This will save enough energy to make about 190,000 cups of tea a year.

3. **Maintained and, where possible, improved natural habitats** in the area of our Head Office in Taunton by recycling grass cuttings which, when left, provide nutrients and hydration. Sensitive environmental habitats are being encouraged in the uncultivated banks of the River Blackbrook which flows past the office.

4. **Trained and informed employees** sufficiently to ensure environmental best practice – As at the end of June, all staff have had a 1 hour briefing and all areas of the business have ISO 14001 representatives to harvest everyone's ideas.

To the future, WPA plans to:

- Recycle more and reduce waste that goes to landfill by a further 15%
- Review our carbon offsetting measures to further reduce WPA's carbon footprint
- Facilitate opportunities for staff to work from home therefore reducing cars on the road and CO₂ emissions

- Improve facilities for cyclists
- Integrate ISO 14001 into WPA's existing ISO9001 quality system.

Julian Stainton, Chief Executive of WPA, reiterated WPA's April 2006 Environmental Policy Statement:

"WPA recognise our responsibilities for the impacts of our activities, products and services upon the environment. It is our policy to strive for processes, systems and activities that reduce these impacts and prevent pollution, locally, regionally and globally. It not only makes great environmental sense but also business sense with energy prices projected to rise dramatically.

The results of the first year have been tremendous. Everyone was enthusiastic to do their bit, as a result, implementation was straightforward and we have set some tough targets. Imagine the impact on the environment if 100, 200 or 1000 companies achieve what we have done."

Nikki Samme, BSI Marketing Communications Manager comments: "One of the many benefits of ISO 14001 registration is the management and reduction of costs through control of waste. A key factor in WPA's commitment is to uphold their core value proposition: to supply services to the highest standard of quality whilst keeping costs low. I am delighted to announce that WPA has achieved ISO 14001 registration with BSI. We look forward to continue working with them in their quest to continually improve their environmental performance"

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Notes to Editors:

1. WPA is a not for profit Provident Association with a history of over 100 years of providing high quality, affordable medical insurance. Based in Somerset, WPA looks after around half a million people, providing cover for individuals and companies alike.

WPA's environmental policy - WPA recognise our responsibilities for the immediate and long term significant impacts of our activities, products and services upon the environment.

It is our policy to strive for processes, systems and activities that reduce these impacts and prevent pollution, locally, regionally and globally. We will endeavour to:

- Reduce our waste that goes to landfill
- Reduce our energy and raw material consumption
- Maintain and where possible improve natural habitats in the area of our head office
- Train and inform employees sufficiently to ensure environmental best practice on their part
- Seek continual improvement in environmental practice

We will at all times comply with applicable legal requirements that relate to our significant environmental aspects, including conformance to BS-EN-ISO 14001:2004.

Where no legislation exists we shall set our own high standards.

2. ISO 14001 - A standard that organisations across the world implement to ensure that they understand the environmental aspects of the activities and processes on site and then control them to reduce any environmental impact.

BSI Management Systems is among the most respected and reputable management systems certification bodies in the world and is accredited by a number of local and international bodies including the American National Accreditation Board (ANAB); the China National Accreditation Board (CNAB); the Japan Accreditation Board (JAB); Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA) in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

Useful websites:

- International Organization for Standardization – www.iso.org
- BSI Management Systems – www.bsi-global.com
- United Kingdom Accreditation Service – www.ukas.com