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## NEWS RELEASE

### ENVIRONMENT MINISTER PRAISES LOW-CARBON INNOVATION ON VISIT TO PIONEERING OFFICE

Elliot Morley MP, Minister for Climate Change and Environment, saw renewable energy in action today at the award-winning 'zero emissions' office of Renewable Energy Systems Ltd (RES) in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, and praised the role renewables and energy efficiency can play in the drive to cut climate-changing emissions. On a tour hosted by RES and the UK Business Council for Sustainable Energy, Mr Morley also met local schoolchildren who were learning about renewable energy and climate change.

The Minister said:

*"This is a unique facility. RES has developed a building into a sympathetic conversion that has very high standards of energy efficiency and renewable energy generation – something I'm very pleased to see. Projects like these not only provide a real benefit in reducing energy costs and cutting emissions, they also act as a very effective teaching tool."*

On a tour of Beaufort Court, formerly the Ovaltine Egg Farm, the Minister saw a range of renewable energy technologies, including a huge solar power array that generates both heat and electricity, five hectares of the energy crop 'Elephant Grass', which is burned in a biomass boiler to heat the office, a natural cooling system using water drawn from deep underground and the now famous wind turbine situated next to the M25. He was also shown how the much-loved 1930s buildings have been sensitively converted into a groundbreaking zero-emissions head office for RES, one of the world's leading wind power developers.

The visit was hosted by RES Group Managing Director, Dr Ian Mays, who said:

*"At Beaufort Court we have demonstrated how renewable energy technologies can be integrated successfully into buildings and the landscape and can generate clean, green heat and power. The development – particularly the wind turbine - is popular with the local community and has become a beacon of sustainable development for the area and an international case study in zero-emissions design"*

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**RES/ 10 January 2005**

David Green, Chief Executive of the UK Business Council for Sustainable Energy said:

*“As we approach a major Energy Review, Beaufort Court is an important reminder of how our buildings can become self-reliant on energy and make a serious contribution to tackling climate change. Appropriate use of renewable energy, and promoting the highest standards of energy efficiency, needs to be more systematically integrated, especially in the public sector.”*

Beaufort Court also houses a popular Visitor Centre, which runs tours and educational events for schools, community groups and professionals. Mr Morley met pupils from Bridgewater School in Berkhamsted who presented project work they had been doing on climate change and renewable energy, including working models of a wind turbine and solar power.

**ENDS**

#### **Notes to Editors**

Beaufort Court is the headquarters for Renewable Energy Systems Group (RES), one of the world's leading wind energy companies, involved in the development, construction and operation of wind farms across the UK and around the world. It is part of Sir Robert McAlpine, the British engineering and construction group. RES has been at the forefront of the wind energy industry since the early 1980s and has to date completed more than 30 wind farms.

RES moved into Beaufort Court in November 2003 and the office was officially opened by the then Minister for Energy Stephen Timms MP in May 2004. The renovation of the derelict Ovaltine Egg Farm buildings into a sustainable, zero-emissions development was supported by the EU. The architects were Studio E Architects and the building services engineers Max Fordham LLP. Beaufort Court has won numerous awards from organizations including the Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Building Magazine, the Business Commitment to the Environment, British Council of Offices and in April 2005 RES Group received the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Sustainable Development category.

For more information about Beaufort Court, visit [www.beaufortcourt.com](http://www.beaufortcourt.com)

Photos of the Minister's visit and of Beaufort Court are available.

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