



www.aub-braunschweig.de

AUB-Express October 2021

Employee Info for the Siemens locations Braunschweig, Irxleben und Ulm

It is time!

- new ♦ new ♦ new ♦ new ♦ new ♦
- English summaries of articles in our print edition
- full English articles in our English online edition on <https://aub-braunschweig.de/en1021>
- deutsche Online-Ausgabe unter <https://aub-braunschweig.de/de1021>



Dear colleagues,

everybody is talking about the "new normal", so we don't want to stress this topic too much. Only one thing is left to be said: No matter what the "new normal" will actually look like, our AUB-Express will continue to be a reliable factor in it. As always, we will not mince words and will relentlessly address problems in our working environments as well as omissions and quibbles of our management, and we will outline possible solutions.

This time, we have chosen an hourglass motif for our cover page, because many of our articles have something to do with time. It would be nice if time would just gently structure our lives, but instead it dominates and limits us all to a great extent. Processing times of all kinds are reduced in business management terms to an exceedingly annoying cost factor, which industrious business administrators are continually converting into hourly rates and headcounts. Isn't this actually an insult to the valuable human capital? Perhaps the insight that "if you don't have time, you've taken on too much" will help us here and there. In this spirit, we wish you an enjoyable read and of course a good time!

Your AUB Group Braunschweig

AUB The Independent
Employee Representatives

**WE STRENGTHEN
EMPLOYEES**



What you can read in this issue:

Two-tier society	2	Diagnosis of dementia - what now?	8
Boom for own goals... ..	3	„The internet is new territory for all of us“	9
News from India/“Lowwagistan”	4	Vacation deficits	9
SGES and the holy water	4	Salary cut.....	10
Our site must be made climate-proof!.....	5	Consumer fraud	11

second-class times

Two-tier society

The principle of equal treatment is an essential cornerstone of employee satisfaction and a good business climate within the company. Only in absolutely exceptional cases and with good justification may there be deviations from this basic principle. At our site, however, there are at least two issues where a two-tier society is practiced without sufficiently comprehensible reasons:



Partial retirement

One of these deviations is the treatment of employees' requests for partial retirement, which is handled very differently in the individual segments: In some areas, partial retirement contracts are granted only very reluctantly and only for the shortest possible total term of three years (working phase plus exemption phase). In other organizational units, long terms of up to 6 years are also made possible, depending on the wishes of the employee.

At the site, the block model is used almost exclusively; there is hardly any demand for the non-block variant (equal distribution model). The legal situation also permits individual models, provided that the principle (working time remaining until retirement is halved) is maintained. For example, a gradual reduction in working hours/working days or a more intensive orientation phase together with the successor toward the end of the working phase are possible. Such individual models are not listed in the current Siemens partial retirement guideline - presumably the management shies away from increased administrative expenses for such individual solutions.

Flexitime days

Before the introduction of so-called trust-based work, almost all employees at the site were able to save up flexitime credits on their own responsibility, even without an operational requirement, and then convert them into additional vacation days in the form of flexitime days. This was a particularly good way for parents with school-age children to spend more vacation days together with their family.

Unfortunately, when trust-based working was introduced, a company agreement was concluded that did not clearly regulate this issue. As a result, we are now experiencing different opinions on this issue: it feels as if about half of the employees continue to be offered this option more or less tacitly (the "planning discussions" mentioned in the works agreement are hardly ever held at the site), while the other half are denied it due to restrictive handling by their supervisors. We are even

aware of individual cases where this possibility is handled differently for individual employees within the same organizational unit - apparently depending on favoritism on behalf of the supervisor.

We call for an end to the two-tier society on both issues to the effect that the more favorable solution is open to all employees - which, on closer and unprejudiced examination, is often also the more favorable solution for the company!

Own goal times

Boom for own goals...

**...not only at the European Championship
or: Do we still understand each other at all?**

More and more frequently, we receive management communications or newsletters such as "EHS in Focus" only in English. Of course, the company must provide the information in English to all non-German-speaking colleagues. But does it make sense to cut out the German information altogether?



Not all addressees have such a good command of English that they can understand the content effortlessly and correctly, even in detail. We can have the texts machine-translated in various ways of course, but that means additional time expenditure in permanent time crunch conditions. Moreover, there is always the uncertainty whether the machine-translated text contains distortions of meaning after all. It is therefore not surprising that this purely English-language information is often deleted without being

read or is only incompletely absorbed and poorly understood.

From a business point of view (multiplied translation costs), from the point of view of corporate culture (appreciation) and in the interest of a recipient-oriented and comprehensible transmission of information (which should be the top priority in the entire environment of a business with security-relevant products and services), monolingual English information for predominantly German-speaking corporate units is an outright own goal! And it is a misconception that the problem will vanish into thin air in the near future due to demographic change, because linguistic imprecision in an acquired foreign language remains linguistic imprecision for the younger generations as well. By the way: in response to a question from the Works Council, the Braunschweig management recently had to admit that there is no clear definition of a business language in our regulations. Instead, the management relies on pragmatism in order to provide employees with understandable work instructions and similar documents. Presumably, by "pragmatism" the management means something like "muddling along". In our view, there is no need for "pragmatism" to solve the problem, but rather a very simple central instruction that in future all corporate communications must always be in the respective national language and in English as a common language to bridge the gap. In this way, considerable hidden costs and many misunderstandings can be avoided with little diligence at a central location! This applies to many other more or less obvious decentralizations in the same way: Nice "powerpoint slide dollars" - if we think about this with honest, complete consideration, it is truly an own goal on the back of the employees!

From now on, we as the AUB take up this claim of bilingual communication ourselves and provide a summary in English for all articles in the print versions of our AUB-Expresses. We also provide a complete English edition online.

AUB The Independent
Employee Representatives

**WE STRENGTHEN
EMPLOYEES**

satire time

News from India/"Lowwagistan"

SAP developers in India have now perfectly mapped German tax law in the P22 system. After lengthy conferences, our colleagues in accounting and the Indian programmers were now able to release the 47th update and hope that this will now also permit the corrections of the past quarterly financial statements.

Rami S. asked in the last technology conference why our Train Gaming software had so many security loops - at MarioCart, he said, programming was more efficient.

Communication is rarely easy, and if it takes place in a foreign language, the ice gets pretty thin for most of us. As if it was not already next to impossible to communicate German tax law to one's fellow Germans...

And it is never advisable to use fast growth as an excuse for losing sight of the training of the big picture. A certain identification with our products is essential in order to be able to properly classify one's own actions.

We would do well to carefully factor in all these communication obstacles, otherwise one day there will be a rude awakening... and it will be very effective in terms of earnings!

Survey times

SGES and the holy water

Once again, a Siemens employee survey "SGES" is behind us. Do you sometimes struggle with the SGES questionnaire? Does

the question "I can be myself at work" always seem rather slippery and open to interpretation - is the employer really concerned with my self-fulfillment?

Quelle: istockphoto/Goodboy Picture Company



It should be an open secret that the SGES results are not supposed to be too bad. This is why some very meaningful and revealing questions are not asked at all or only in a very blurred way. There are some discussions the company doesn't even want to have, and therefore any questions about them are shunned like the devil shuns holy water. If you ask us, the following questions are missing, for example:

- Do you see gender equality (in terms of pay, development opportunities, parental leave, etc.) in your organizational unit?
- Are you able to switch off from work at the end of the day and on weekends?
- Can you take a two- or three-week vacation without worrying that something will go wrong?
- Does an open, cooperative and fear-free management style prevail in your organizational unit?
- Can you effortlessly understand the corporate information that is sometimes only offered in English as a bridge language?

- Please assign a school grade to how well and stress-free you feel the company provides and supports you with IT (end devices and their administration, hotline, software, network speed...).

Join in: Can you think of any other previously unasked questions that the company should ask in future SGES surveys in the interest of an honest desire for improvement? Please send us these questions. We will collect them and send them on to the company anonymously with an appropriate request. Nothing is so good that it cannot be improved - this is also and especially true for SGES!

time is pressing....

Our site must be made climate-proof!

In the past summers of drought and heat, many of us have suffered from unbearably high temperatures in the workshops and offices - but concrete countermeasures have not yet been taken. August 5 has now shown us that our site is also not equipped for heavy rain events: there were several water ingresses in the shed halls during a thunderstorm; the water was knee-deep at the shipping gate next to studio active, and the laboratory of the Belgium project in the basement of building 63 was completely flooded.



There is hardly anyone who is still denying that the severity, frequency and duration of extreme weather events are increasing significantly. Our site must be prepared against this so that we can ensure bearable temperatures at our workplaces in the next heat-wave summers, and to make sure we will not "drown" again during the next heavy down-pour. But air conditioning, flood pumps and thicker drainage pipes would be the wrong measures - they would only shift the problems and create additional ones. No, there are gentle countermeasures that miraculously work against both effects at the same time and even make a small contribution against the actual cause, the constantly rising CO₂ content in our atmosphere. Such gentle countermeasures will probably also be required in the design guidelines for the upcoming "Bahnhofstadt" neighborhood redevelopment (our company premises are right in the centre of it). So there are many reasons to tackle such measures for our site now and not wait until they are imposed on us!

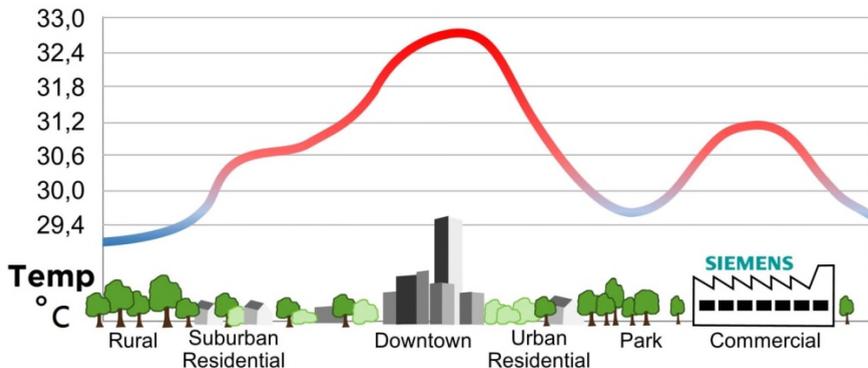
In view of future heavy rainfall events, we can no longer rely on a storm water drainage system without backwater. Instead, we will have to look at the entire catalog of measures that for a few years now has been understood in urban planning as "sponge city". For example, we will have to replace the sealing of the southern plant road with paving systems featuring drainage and truck

bearing capabilities (every private builder has this requirement today). We will need to take a close look at the relief of our entire plant site and optimize it so that stormwater is directed away from buildings everywhere by a gentle slope and toward aboveground or belowground infiltration swales and other infiltration-capable surfaces.



On hot sunny days, the traffic areas and building surfaces in cities, as well as on our premises, heat up to temperatures of up to about 60°C. During the nights, the overheated surfaces continue to radiate their heat for a long time, thus reducing the alleviating nighttime cooling. As a result, the air masses in our cities are several degrees warmer than in the surrounding areas, which is often accompanied by a significantly increased fine dust pollution. In specialist circles, the term "urban heat islands" has become established for this phenomenon.

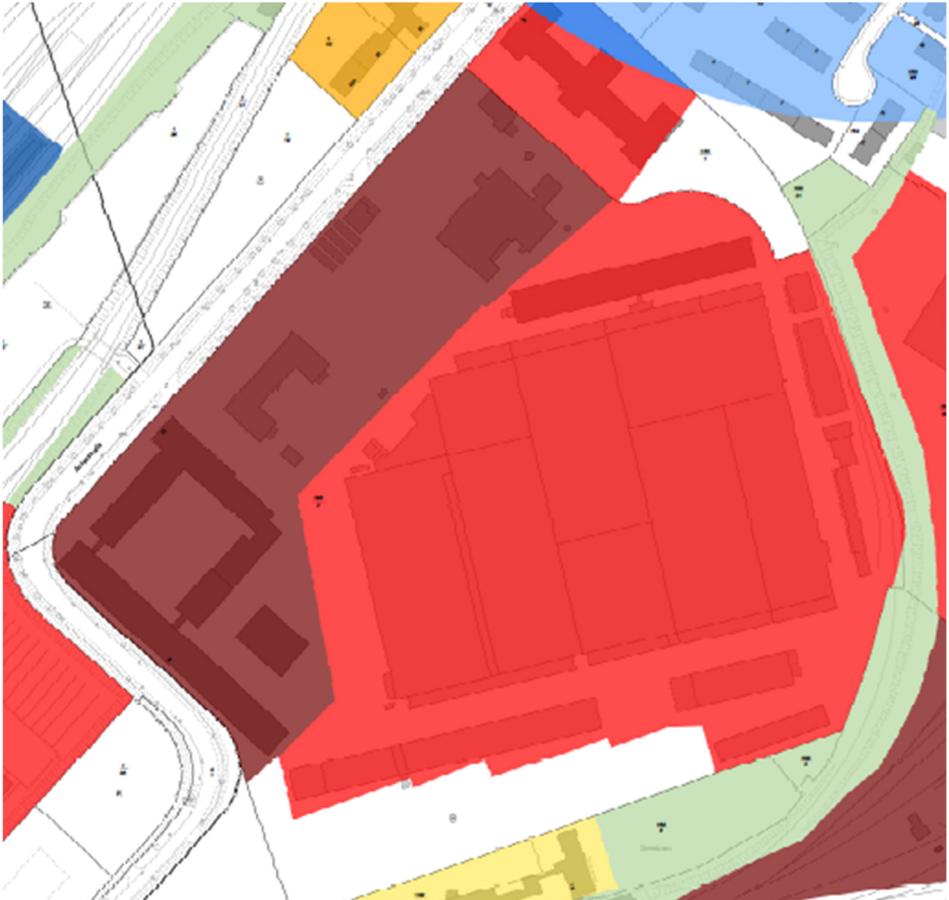
Urban Heat Islands



Source: own modification of a derivative (user TheNewPhobia) taken from Wikimedia Commons of a graphic originally from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA (Washington)

These effects not only impair people's well-being, but are also increasingly becoming a serious health problem for many. Our Siemens site represents a small heat island of its own on the Braunschweig temperature map. This is also confirmed by the official

city climate analysis 2017 of the city of Braunschweig, in which our company premises are classified in the two worst categories. In our eyes, the legend text represents a clear call to action!



Legend:

■ High bioclimatic load (status quo)
 Measures to improve the thermal situation are necessary. High demand for adaptation measures such as additional greening and shading and, if necessary, unsealing. This also applies to areas for moving and stationary traffic (esp. pedestrian and bicycle paths and squares). Sufficient compensatory spaces should be easily accessible on foot.

■ Very high bioclimatic load (status quo)
 Measures to improve the thermal situation are necessary and a priority. Very high need for adaptation measures such as additional greening (e.g. pocket parks), shading and unsealing. This also applies to areas for moving and stationary traffic (esp. Pedestrian and bicycle paths and squares). Sufficient compensatory spaces should be easily accessible on foot.

Graphic: https://www.braunschweig.de/leben/umwelt_naturschutz/klima/stadtklima/stadtklimaanalyse/Stadtklimaanalyse_Braunschweig_Teil2_2018.pdf#page=44, with kind permission of the city of Braunschweig

With around 2.3 hectares of open space, our site offers excellent conditions for effectively counteracting this. Trees, green facades and green roofs allow part of the seeped and stored rainwater to evaporate and thus contribute to cooling the area. Trees play a key role here by providing shade as well as large evaporation surfaces that mitigate the heat island and improve the local micro-climate. This would also be clearly felt in our shed halls and office buildings, as shading along with the lower temperature of the surrounding air would also make our buildings noticeably cooler. We could then call such a redesigned location an attractive "pocket park" and would thus be fully in line with the urban planning trend - also with regard to the upcoming "Bahnstadt" district redesign - to the advantage of all people living and working here and in the surrounding area! On top of that, we would also be making a significant contribution to promoting biodiversity - another topic that is currently receiving a lot of attention.

Effective measures to make our location climate-proof are therefore inevitable and urgent. However, it will not be possible to finance them from the petty cash of our real estate maintenance. Many other Siemens locations are likely to face the same or very similar problems. Internal and external real estate investors will certainly not make our locations climate-proof! Therefore, we now need a paradigm shift in the minds of the decision-makers and must take the urban-climatic safeguarding of our locations into our own hands with courageous action, and we must do it quickly! By waiting and waiting, we are only losing precious time!

We therefore urgently appeal

- ❑ to the Executive Board:
 - Provide special budgets to ensure that the necessary measures can be tackled quickly, irrespective of the current economic situation of the individual business units and sites.
 - Provide the decision-makers in the business units and locations with a ukase to give them certainty of action

for the urban-climatic site safety measures.

- Organize central technical support for the sites.
- ❑ to the SMO Board:
 - Please support our proposals and demands towards the corporate management.
 - Give the Braunschweig site a small special budget for initial pilot steps (e.g. student competition).
- ❑ to the Braunschweig site management:
 - The earnings-obsessed savings policy of the last 15 years with regard to the maintenance of buildings and outdoor areas of our site must come to an end!
 - Take your foot off the brake and clear the way for initial pilot steps. Actively offer our site as a pilot location. In terms of the dimensions of its open spaces, but also in terms of the sustainability commitment of individual works council members and employees, it has ideal starting conditions for this!

Care times

Diagnosis of dementia - what now?

When somebody is diagnosed with dementia, it usually comes as a shock to both the relatives and the person affected. But with the appropriate support and good knowledge of the clinical picture, this new situation can be dealt with. A dementia-related illness usually announces itself insidiously and is often only recognized at a late stage, because those affected are initially able to compensate well for the decline in memory performance. If the disease progresses and becomes apparent, for example, with declining memory, physical and motor impairments or personality changes, it is important to actively accept the new situation. As a family member of a person affected by dementia, it has been very helpful for me to talk openly about the problems that arise, to take part in training courses on dementia and also to experience the support from Siemens. Care

was initially provided at home, and this was only possible by taking flexitime and working from home. There is also the possibility of maintaining or supporting abilities through special home-based occupational therapy, so that everyday life can still be managed largely independently for as long as possible. Particularly helpful for me was the technique of validation, which enables appreciative communication with the ill person.

In Braunschweig the association "ambet" (<https://ambet.de/beratung/angehoerige/>) offers information, talks and training on the subject of dementia.

But with all the caring for the relative suffering from dementia, it is also important not to get carried away. Take time for yourself and be mindful of your needs. Only if the caregiver is well, the patient will be well, too. That's why it's important to build a help network to get support, because single-handedly caring for a person with dementia is impossible.

New Territory Times?

as said already Mrs. Chancellor Merkel on 19.06.2013:

'The internet is new territory for all of us'

The new Works Council Constitution Act allows works council meetings to be held online. However, our works council in Braunschweig with the IG Metall majority would prefer face-to-face meetings and is not happy with holding digital meetings in the long run.

The Works Council Constitution Act is aimed at modernizing works council work by adding a touch of digitalisation. Meetings may be held online after the pandemic, hybrid meetings (online/presence) are also possible. Especially for the works council members who are not exempt from work, this allows for a better integration into the new normal way of council work. But our works council in Braunschweig, with its majority of IG Metall members, unfortunately disagrees - opinions such as "Voting online is not possible, it can only be done in-person" or "Young employees prefer to sit together

face-to-face" prevent the new orientation of works council meetings into the new world of work desired by the AUB.

What a pity. Feedback from many colleagues shows that mobile working is seen as an important topic for individual work planning. We as the AUB continue to advocate for the promotion of mobile working.

Recreation time salami slicing

Vacation deficits

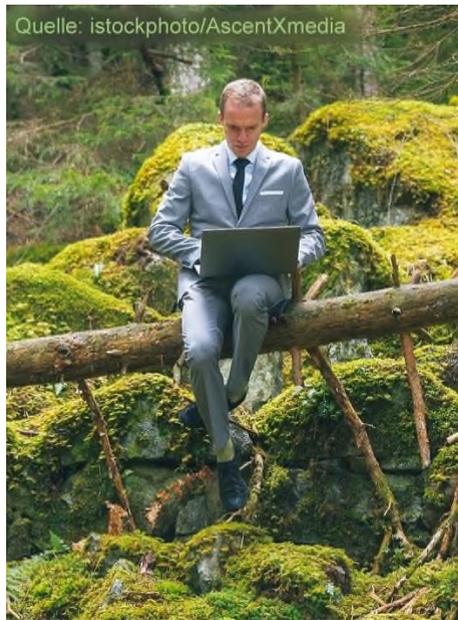
Can you really recover and relax when you are on vacation?

It is a truism of occupational medicine that vacations only have a lasting recreational value if they have a certain minimum duration. Travel to and from the vacation destination is hardly ever stress-free and reduces the recreational value just as much as the tension that arises for many toward the end of the vacation before returning to the daily work routine. For this reason, the Federal Vacation Act and many labour agreements stipulate that employers must grant their employees at least two weeks of uninterrupted vacation. Renowned occupational physicians and representatives of baua (the German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) even advocate at least three weeks' uninterrupted vacation. In reality, there is hardly any employee today who allows themselves such a "luxury"; instead, the trend is toward shorter and shorter vacations.



This trend is likely to be exacerbated by the fact that many employees are no longer able to go on vacation with a calm conscience, but instead constantly carry around with them an uncertainty as to whether something will "go wrong" during their absence. As the

duration of the vacation increases, this uncertainty grows day by day, and in quite a few cases it has even become a bad habit for vacationers to check their work e-mails more or less regularly during their vacation. The basic prerequisite for a relaxing vacation is therefore an existing and well-functioning substitute arrangement that does not overburden the substitute in an unreasonable manner. Such honest substitution arrangements are lacking in many places at our site and in the company - and the situation is very similar in many other companies.



We are therefore calling for honest, transparent and reasonable substitution arrangements for all roles at the site where issues that suddenly arise cannot simply be left unprocessed for three weeks. To this end, it would be very helpful to have a better understanding of the current situation. This topic would also be worth a separate question in the next SGES survey. However, we have the suspicion that the company does not necessarily demonstrate an honest willingness to openly question critical issues in its SGES surveys.

These grievances and their remediation go far beyond the scope of action of local works councils; this is where the Mobility General Works Council and the trade union IG Metall as social partners are called upon. Whoever is in these roles and avoids this pressing issue is partially responsible for insufficient vacation recovery of many colleagues and sometime resulting illnesses!

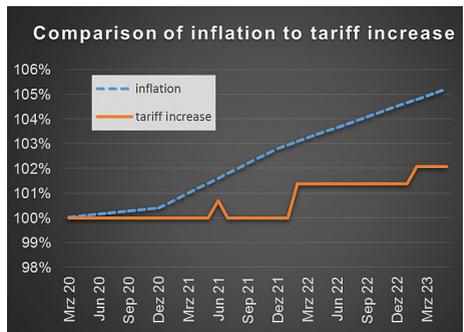
AUB The Independent Employee Representatives

WE STRENGTHEN EMPLOYEES

Employer-pleasing tariff times

Salary cut

The union agreement from the beginning of the year, which is valid until September 2022, is in fact a pay cut - despite the rather good financial situation of the companies. Apart from the wage agreement, no other useful results could be achieved.



DAX management salaries - which are more than several billions per year anyhow - have almost all risen by double-digit percentages in recent years, so there is no restraint here. The Siemens profit is also well on track (the expected profit for FY2020/21 is over €6 billion). However, the last union agreement, concluded at the beginning of the year and

valid until September 2022, is a confession of failure: in the face of rising inflation, an actual minus was agreed, i.e. a pay cut! Why the restraint, why increase the companies' profits on the backs of the employees? Isn't that exactly what the trade unions are criticising?

But money is not everything - what about other sectors? We as AUB have developed ideas at the start of the union agreement bargaining phase and proposed them to the union (see February 2020 AUB Express). These included topics concerning sustainability, but also concrete improvements to the collective agreement such as the possibility of "T-Zug A days" for all employees. However, the union achieved: Nothing. The only thing agreed upon in the collective agreement was "future viability", but unfortunately with no concrete definition. Actually, there is nothing more than the further additional payment T-Zug B. In order to prevent dismissals, it may be agreed to reduce the working time for all employees covered by the collective agreement at the expense of the T-Zug B payment. However, this is hardly feasible in the engineering or IT sector and rather unrealistic for large parts of the workforce.

All that remains to be said is that, for union agreements, the same is true as for free economy: competition is what ensures new ideas and real progress in the long term. This is what is missing at IG Metall. Support the AUB!

Swindle times

Consumer fraud

More than 90% of all commercially available insect hotels are completely ineffective and can even harm the animals looking for a home. Manufacturers and retailers are thus committing consumer fraud on a large scale.

The insect hotel officially opened at the end of May next to the fire extinguishing pond provides detailed information about this. The complete equipping with species-appropriate nesting opportunities had been delayed due

to delivery difficulties and was not yet available at the main flight time of many wild bee species. Therefore, only about 40 nesting tubes have been populated this season. In the next season we expect a considerably bigger run.



If you want to build your own insect hotel over the winter, or give one as a Christmas gift, we recommend the Wikipedia article "Insect hotel". It describes a useful structure and interior equipment as well as common errors. Reinhard Niewerth, ☎ 0531/5934-2547, will be happy to answer any questions.

AUB The Independent Employee Representatives

WE STRENGTHEN EMPLOYEES

Our AUB Works Council Members



Reinhard Niewerth

Full-time works council member

- Works committee
- Occupational safety and Social affairs
- Mobility

(0531) 5934-2547

de, fr, ,



Dirk Schaper

SRE FIN RS SMO

- Works committee
- Personnel matters
- 3i Commission

(0172) 3505 440

de, en, es,



Peter Sieverding

SMO RI MT BID

- Safeguarding employment and Location development

(0173) 2427 246

de, en,



Jasmin Köllner

SMO RI D BID 6

- Personnel matters

(0172) 6130 912

de, en, ,



Guido Zabski

SMO RI D PIC 4 10

- Outdoor installation
- Representative for Data Protection and Information Security

(0531) 5934-2587

de, en, ,



Kerstin Heinisch

SMO RI R&D DF 4

- Education and Innovation

(0172) 1608 578

de, en, ,



Henning Plinke

SMO RI R&D F TTC

- Production
- Safeguarding employment and Location development

(0152) 5922 4198

de, en,

Impressum

Editors: Reinhard Niewerth, Henning Plinke, Peter Sieverding, Dirk Schaper, Jenny Wellmann

Responsible: Dirk Schaper, Kriemhildstr. 26, 38106 Braunschweig

Print: Print shop Bührig, Königslutter/Rotenkamp

All articles have been researched to the best of our knowledge and belief. The authors express their personal opinions in the respective articles. If you would like to comment on the content of this issue, please get in touch with one of our contacts. Your letters to the editor are welcome!