

# Issue number 58 November 2015

# Greenlines

The University's  
*sustainability* newsletter

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## Spotlight on Waste!



During November, the Environment & Energy section have been focusing on waste and recycling for the first ever 'Spotlight on Waste' month. Here we round up some of the action:

### Amey Questions?

We took a trip to Amey Cespa with a number of our departmental Environment and Energy Coordinators (photo above). It was a great chance to see where all our waste and recycling ends up after it leaves our bins. The state-of-the-art facility in Waterbeach handles much of the University's waste, so it was interesting to find out how it is sorted, treated, and recycled - as well as to ask the experts some of our burning waste questions! We are sure all of the EECs who attended will be returning to their offices to spread the word about getting everything in the right bin!

### Warp Speed!

Throughout the month, we have also put a number of promotional items onto WarplT (see page 4 for more details) - there is still a chance you could grab some wine, chocolate, vouchers and more!

### Bin Busting!

The Living Lab Coordinator is planning a research project with academics and students at the University to understand what goes into our waste and what is recycled by a number of departments. The study aims to follow up on a longitudinal study running since the 1990s, and involves a sample survey of the types and quantities of waste being disposed of via the University's trade waste bins. The project will be conducted by a small group of undergraduate and masters students, Dr Edmund Tanner from Plant Sciences, and

the Environment and Energy Section. The data from this project should provide detailed information on the proportions of different materials making up the trade waste stream. This will then be used for determining ways to increase recycling and minimise waste.

### World Wide (Waste) Web

During the month, lots of information and guidance has been added to the Environment & Energy website about how to improve recycling rates and reduce waste outputs in your department. This includes:

- Frequently asked questions from staff about what goes in what bin! [www.bit.ly/1P8sMdo](http://www.bit.ly/1P8sMdo)
- Simple ways that departments can cut their waste and increase their recycling: [www.bit.ly/1QHxE9H](http://www.bit.ly/1QHxE9H)
- Guidance on running a waste audit in your department: [www.bit.ly/1NOG0Gc](http://www.bit.ly/1NOG0Gc)



Bales of plastic at Amey Cespa ready for recycling



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## Spotlight on Waste Month - a roundup of action!

It's not just Environment & Energy who have been busy spreading the recycling message. A number of Green Impact teams and departments across the University have been getting to work acting on waste and recycling actions in their own buildings, including:



Plant Sciences ran a 'Spotlight on Recycling Day' in their tea room, with information for staff (and recycled hats!)



Geography ran a joint 'Spotlight on Waste' stall in their building entrance with E&E to kick-start their involvement in this year's Green Impact scheme...



The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology held a 'spotlight on waste day' with displays, competitions & sweets to get people's interest!



The Clifford Allbutt Building hosted a recycling stall in their entrance lobby including a 'recycling challenge' for staff to remember what goes in what bin!

## University students show bags of support!

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) shops' partnership with The University of Cambridge, which encouraged students to donate their unwanted items at the end of term, has proved to be a huge success and could have raised up to £93,016 for the BHF.

For the third year, BHF shops partnered with a number of Colleges at the University of Cambridge to encourage students to have a clear out and donate the clothes, shoes, books, DVDs, bags and small



Some of the bags donated to BHF by Cambridge students

electricals they no longer needed at the end of the academic year, enabling the charity to recycle goods that might otherwise be wasted. Throughout the scheme Cambridge's students were incredibly supportive and made full use of the donation drop-off points.

The successful partnership has seen 6,644 bags donated to the BHF collection bins located around the city, including the University campuses. The profits raised will go into the fight against heart disease and help fund the BHF's life-saving research.

Amanda Purkiss, BHF Regional Stock Generator, said: "We've been delighted with the response from Cambridge students and their overwhelming support. Each BHF shop needs to receive 400 bags of items a week and thanks to generous donations from the students and staff of the University of Cambridge we have been able to help our shop in Cambridge.

Leila McElvenney from The University of Cambridge said: "Working with BHF shops, we've been able to provide a really



convenient service for students to donate the items they no longer need to this great cause rather than throw them out. We are delighted that this collaboration has proved to be such a success and hope the service continues to be used, helping us to raise vital funds to continue the BHF's life-saving work."

Contact Amanda Purkiss on [purkissa@bhf.org.uk](mailto:purkissa@bhf.org.uk) for more details on the BHF scheme.



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## North West Cambridge wins Green Apple award

The North West Cambridge Development has won a Green Apple Award (Silver) for Best Environmental Practice. The awards seek to find the greenest companies, councils and communities internationally, and commends the University of Cambridge and its site-wide infrastructure contractor, Skanska, for its ambitions and implementation so far.

The award commends the innovative measures used to create an environment that is sustainable, including a district heating network and underground waste management system. The site also includes the largest rainwater recycling system in the country that aims to minimise the risk of localised flooding whilst also reusing water to reduce potable

water consumption across the development.

The award-winning submission also outlined that during construction, measures have been undertaken to mitigate the impact on wildlife as well as improve habitats once complete. Skanska has utilised temporary construction Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems to maximise the retention of surface water run-off. A series of interconnected swales and balancing ponds were used to collect and hold surface water over winter. This was subsequently used for dust suppression and watering of plants over summer. During the first 5 months of 2015 over 1.4million litres of collected surface water (non-potable) has been used rather than drawing from the mains (potable water).

Additionally, environmental measures will enhance the local ecology on the site. A unique specially constructed newt tunnel was installed underneath one of



the entry routes to enable great crested newts to access habitat and breeding ponds either side of the road. Artificial kingfisher nest boxes are to be installed in the banks of a watercourse to increase numbers, and the river bed will be constructed so as to provide suitable habitat for watervoles. In addition, features to encourage the use of new buildings by roosting bats have been incorporated into the design of the sports pavilion and utility buildings.

## Fact of the month...

According to the IEA (International Energy Agency), renewable energy accounted for almost half of all new power plants constructed in 2014. Many countries are currently making commitments to use even more renewable energy in the lead up to December's UN Climate Change Conference in Paris.

## ZipCar: an alternative to car rental

Car clubs provide a cost-effective and flexible alternative to owning a car, without the hassle or costs of fuel, insurance and maintenance. Members can book cars locally for just an hour, up to a whole weekend, or longer.



The University has a business membership for ZipCar, the world's largest car club network. Faculties and departments can join the University's corporate account for free by emailing [Travel@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Travel@admin.cam.ac.uk). This allows staff to use club cars at a discounted rate (from as little as £4.75 an hour), providing a cheap and easy alternative to pool cars or taxi use.

Cambridge has 24 club cars across the city, so members in need of a car can choose a make and model from the selection in our local area; get in and drive off. You can even unlock the car from your phone! Car club vehicles are energy efficient and cleaner than the average car. They also reduce the need to purchase a car and discourage unnecessary car travel.

Staff and students can also join ZipCar for half price for personal use. This can be a great alternative to running a second car as it's there when you need it and not when you don't! Joining a car club could save you £3,500 per year compared to owning a car (if you currently drive fewer than 6,000 miles per year).

So whether you want to...

- create a ZipCar account for your department
- join an existing departmental ZipCar account
- get discounted personal ZipCar account

...visit [www.zipcar.co.uk/cambridgeuni](http://www.zipcar.co.uk/cambridgeuni) or call **020 3668 6321** to start driving your vehicle right away!



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## Keep cups help save waste

How have the University stopped 382kg of waste from being sent to landfill, saved 28,617mj of energy, and preserved 11 mature trees worth of carbon? Simple - by reusing cups!

It's all thanks to the University Catering Service team, who were looking to find a practical, easy way to reduce waste and carbon emissions. They decided to purchase refillable travel mugs, to reduce the supply of disposable cups used by staff and students, when purchasing hot drinks from many of the University's cafes.

It was believed that significant savings could be made in consumable expenditure and waste disposal. The figures show this is certainly the case - in total



during the 2104/15 academic year, 27,280 disposable cups were saved due to the scheme, that's almost one saved for every student and staff member at the University!

The use of high quality refillable cups have encouraged the support and participation of students and staff in this sustainability initiative, and to ensure the success of the scheme it was decided that the cups needed to be sold at less than cost. This was helped with a subsidy provided from trading surpluses made by the cafes.

Next time you visit a University cafe remember to purchase or bring your existing travel mug. A 20p per cup discount is offered each time you use one!

### WARPit items of the month

*WarpIt is a free internal reuse system, allowing staff to advertise unneeded University-owned items to others, saving on waste disposal and purchasing costs.*



Log on to [www.warpit.co.uk/cambridgeuni](http://www.warpit.co.uk/cambridgeuni) to sign up and see what's on offer or to receive email alerts

## The Living Lab Lowdown

Each month we'll now be bringing you an update from the 'Living Lab' and showcasing the various projects associated with the Living Laboratory for Sustainability.

On 3 November, the Masters students on the Conservation Leadership course based in the Geography Department welcomed the Living Lab Coordinator, Emily, to a 'Leadership Clinic'. After outlining some of the opportunities and challenges she faces in her role, solutions were offered through brainstorming and open discussion, which drew on the students own experiences and careers to date. The brainstorm provided fresh perspectives on measuring impact, ways to deal with balancing short-term gains with long-term focus, and some larger scale ideas for the future (a green entrepreneurship summer camp anyone??).

### This month's featured Living Lab project:

*A student is looking at natural ventilation at two buildings on the West Cambridge site at the University, using 'tinytag' data loggers (see picture, right) to collect temperature and humidity data. The project aims to assess how natural air ventilation systems are working in the buildings.*



If you're keen to learn more about how the Living Lab could help you set up a project to apply research on sustainability to the University estate, contact [living.laboratory@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:living.laboratory@admin.cam.ac.uk)

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