

Issue number 48 December 2014

# Greenlines

The University's  
*sustainability* newsletter

## Environmental Policy out for consultation

We are now on the next stage of the 18 month process of reviewing the University's Environmental Policy. The Environmental Policy Review Committee is now consulting on a proposed environmental sustainability vision, policy and strategy.

The University of Cambridge is a world-class university with an international reputation for research and teaching, attracting the finest minds from around the world.

Much of that research contributes significantly to the environmental sustainability challenges faced by society. However, the University's existing Environmental Policy dates from 2008, it has no teeth, is largely ignored and its level of ambition does not align with the University's aspirations.

The proposed vision is that the University of Cambridge is committed to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability performance.

This is a level of ambition that presents a huge challenge that will take time and resources to fulfil. It will mean that some activities will be significantly altered, many behaviours changed, and projects redefined.

Whilst there are risks and initial additional costs involved, there will be long-term benefits and the reputational risk of



poor performance will be averted. The simplicity of the proposed policy and strategy provides clarity for university members, visibility for society and inspiration for funders.

The proposed policy and strategy resonates with Cambridge's multi-century scale of vision and provides a focus for action and decision making. Our performance needs to be benchmarked against peer institutions nationally and internationally.

The Review Committee will consider any suggested amendments and subsequently submit a report to the University Council. Comments are invited from the University community, including individuals, groups, institutions, schools and committees, on the following questions:

a) Does the University agree with the general thrust of the environmental sustainability vision and overarching aims?

b) To what extent is there an opportunity, or indeed a responsibility, to raise the profile of environmental sustainability matters across the whole spectrum of our undergraduate and graduate teaching?

c) Does the University have comments on the operational proposals?

The deadline for comment is on 23 December. The document can be accessed here with details of how you can submit your response: <http://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/environmental-policy-review>.

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## WARPit: free item exchange

The University has launched WARPit, a new online tool which allows staff and departments to redistribute unwanted items across the University.

WARPit makes it easy for staff to pass on unused or underused items to other departments across the University, saving on storage and diverting waste from landfill, as well as helping staff to find free items which will save

departments money as they do not need to buy new!

Any member of staff can upload their unused items of furniture, electricals, books, stationery, lab equipment, technical equipment or fixtures and fittings to WARPit to be requested by others in the University. People can also request items to be given away or loaned by others.

To get maximum resource efficiency organisations should transfer resources within the organisation. Sometimes

deadlines are tight and new owners cannot be found within the same organisation.

This creates a whole region/city/town level resource sharing organisational network improving the sustainability of all organisations in the network.

Create your own account for WARPit here: <https://www.warp-it.co.uk/cambridgeuni>, and start sharing goods across the estate.

## University success at 2014 Green Gown Awards

The Green Gown Awards are an annual celebration of sustainability success across the UK tertiary education sector. The University of Cambridge was shortlisted in two categories, joining 60 other HEIs across the UK in vying for this prestigious recognition of best practice.

The Environment and Energy Section are thrilled to announce that we brought home a Highly Commended Award in the Technical Innovation for Sustainability category!

Congratulations to the Hutchison/MRC Research Centre and University partners for their work on retrofitting a demand ventilation control system in the building. The Award application, entitled 'Of Engineers and Occupants: Energy efficiency through innovative ventilation control', has saved over 41% of their gas use as a department.

The Hutchison/MRC Research Centre undertook a multi-faceted approach involving building occupants and engineering expertise to reduce its environmental impact, enhance its energy saving culture and crucially reduce costs



Two members of E&E at 2014 Green Gown Awards in Manchester

and wastage, to protect the 'science budget'. Driven by these corporate, social and financial needs, the improved environmental performance has resulted in highly significant saving of utilities costs with a project payback of less than 2 years.

We were sadly unsuccessful in our second Finalist category for 'The Living Laboratory for Sustainability as a platform for research and action', under the Research and Development category. Through the Living Lab, students and staff use our estate as a practical resource or test bed to research real-world sustainability issues. Examples

include running freezer audits to identify ways for departments to improve their efficiency, or post-occupancy evaluation work. It not only provides an opportunity for students and staff to research ways to reduce environmental impacts, but an opportunity for staff and students to better engage with their university. If University staff or students have ideas for projects, please contact Claire Hopkins on [Living.Laboratory@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Living.Laboratory@admin.cam.ac.uk).

Congratulations to all of the winners from across the sector!



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## Switch Off Week results

**Hundreds of staff and students pledged their support and saved energy during the University's second Switch Off Week. Held from 10 – 16 November, the week highlighted the role of the individual in reducing the University's £16 million energy bill.**

Staff and students have a role to play in how the University saves energy. Throughout the year the University's Environment and Energy Section (E&E) implements projects to reduce the University's environmental impact and promote sustainability, but although a team of ten can do a lot, they cannot do everything.

Switch Off Week demonstrated that small, simple actions by individuals all add up. Total electricity use was down by 0.24% during Switch Off Week, compared to the previous week (not adjusted for weather), with a kWh reduction of 4,938. However due to the variable research patterns, this figure may mask the individual successes.

Throughout Switch Off Week, the E&E Section collected pledges from people about how they were going to save energy. Many people pledged to change their habit of not turning off computers, monitors and other IT equipment, even overnight. Others resolved to dress more appropriately for cold weather, or to use only the lighting that was strictly required.

In addition to looking at their personal energy use, staff and students were invited to share their ideas, however big or small, about how the University as a whole can save energy.

### Thoughts and events from across the week

This year, Switch Off Week saw 22 events running over 5 days. There were a diverse array of departments and researchers tackling the issue of energy and sustainability from their perspective.

Professor of Computer Science, Ian Leslie, spoke about new computer technology which can improve monitoring; Dr Carolin Crawford from Astronomy drew attention to the problem of light pollution caused by lights left on unnecessarily; Dr Bhaskar Vira, Director of the University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute talked about energy from a development perspective; and Cambridge University EcoRacing, spoke about how innovation in technology can bring solutions to energy shortages.

The Switch Off Week Roadshow brought tools to help staff and students switch off and reduce their carbon footprint including stickers, posters and thermometers. The touring team were accompanied by an energy bike, on which passers-by could pedal to produce enough energy to power an energy-efficient light bulb, a tungsten light bulb, a screensaver and an iPod.

Tim Hele, a member of the Chemistry department, topped the energy bike leader board by powering 90 watts using pedal power for a 1 hour, 1 minute and 1 second; smashing Monday's top score of 20 minutes, and Tuesday's of 30 minutes. The average person can power the bike for 30 seconds before getting tired, proving the point that powering our everyday bits of kit takes more effort than we realise.

Switch Off Week was designed not only to illustrate the efforts that many individuals can make in one week, but

also to change and create positive habits throughout the year.

Departments and offices who wish to continue the effort or to begin to reduce their energy consumption can still find resources and help from the Environment and Energy Section. Funding is also potentially available for a variety of energy saving measures, including improvements to IT equipment. Please see the Environment and Energy website: <http://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/> for both posters and stickers or for information on funding.

### Department successes

Throughout Thermal Thursday, the Institute of Public Health treated their staff to a trolley of tea and hot chocolate as the building's heating had been switched off. This saved the Institute 11.68% during the week compared to the previous week.

Kenmare House and Bailey Grundy Barrett Building won the Unified Administrative



*Eva Dring from Cambridge Admissions & Undergraduate Study team, winner of Thermal Thursday photo competition.*



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Service competition. They beat Old Schools and Greenwich House by reducing their energy use the most and saved themselves 10.09% this week compared to the previous week. This success was supported by a culture of shared responsibility - if someone left something on, they were letting the side down.

Centre for Mathematical Science have taken the opportunity to improve the automatic lighting controls in their library, meaning they now time out after 15 rather than 30 minutes, as well as fitting a master switch for one of their staff areas so that lights can now be completely switched off when the last member of staff leaves.

**What next?**

- E&E will continue implementing projects to make the University more sustainable and reduce our energy use – to keep in touch, sign up for Greenlines directly by contacting [environment@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:environment@admin.cam.ac.uk).



*Pledging their support, passers-by at the Downing Site Roadshow*

- E&E have launched the brand new 'Empower' tool designed to help individuals across the University understand how they can save energy: [www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/empower](http://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/empower).
- If you're really keen on making a difference, why not become an

Environment and Energy Coordinator?

- To discuss potential funding available for a variety of energy saving measures, including improvements to IT equipment, please contact [environment@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:environment@admin.cam.ac.uk).

## Meet the new Energy Manager

**Name:** Lisa Rodmell

**Position:** Energy Manager

**How long have you been in this position?** 35 days

**What does this position entail?** Utility procurement and budget management, legal compliance, reducing energy and water consumption, analysis of consumption, policy development and implementation.

**What is your background and how did you get here?** I am a Chartered Energy

Manager with the Energy Institute. I have an MSc in Building Services Engineering and am due to finish an MSc in Energy and Sustainable Building Design in January 2015.

**What are you most looking forward to getting your teeth into in the coming academic year?** Learning all about the University, meeting lots of people from different teams and departments and completing a full 12 month cycle of energy reporting and compliance.

**What is your environment and energy pet hate?** Exaggerated energy saving claims by manufacturers and suppliers.

**What animal would best suit your personality?** A blackbird because I like

to be up early and outdoors.

**Do you have any hobbies?** Walking, running, pilates, keeping fit, gardening and the great outdoors.



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