

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

**Name of Team: Murray Edwards Net Zero**

**Excellence Submission Title: Student Sustainability Leaders Programme**

## **Project Achievement Summary**

Murray Edwards College is committed to developing a programme which ensures that over their time in our College, every student is informed and inspired about environmental sustainability so that they leave us as passionate and knowledgeable champions of the environment in the future life and work, thus contributing over their whole lives to the protection of the planet.

Throughout the Lent and Easter terms, we have developed a preliminary program that is designed to work towards our objectives both in its own right and as a valuable learning experience. Our goal is to create an even more ambitious program for the Michaelmas term of 2023. We are proud to report that this program has received the unwavering support of the College President. As the author of the Channel Four Television Environmental Sustainability Policy, the President is committed to the success of each event and to ensuring that the program as a whole achieves its objectives.

It comprises of four key events over two terms with additional elements.

Our programme, "How do we make Medwards greener?" kicked off on February 15 and drew 30 students, professional teams, and Fellows who engaged in a lively debate with a panel chaired by the College President. The panel comprised the Bursar, Head Gardener, two Fellows from the Net Zero Committee, and the JCR and MCR Environment Officers. The discussion covered the major challenges of improving the environmental sustainability of a 1964 building, a major task costing millions of pounds, as well as many great ideas on how behaviors in College could change.

On March 14th, our second event featured speakers from Global Choices, an external organization dealing with global issues of climate change, particularly in the Arctic. We also had a second-year law student from Kings College sharing her experiences as an "Arctic Angel," a program of young activists working with the organization. This event inspired us and helped us focus on big issues beyond ourselves, guiding us towards our third event on May 2nd.

Our third event, "Will Cambridge University Really Go Green?" on May 2nd, engaged with the wider university community. The Chapel Architect at King's College, Oliver Caroe, joined us to tell us the story of their daring solar panels. Philip Armitage at Max Fordham, who was the lead behind King's Decarbonisation Strategy Report of May 2022, also joined the panel, highlighting the benefits of PV on the

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

chapel roof and laying the foundation for reducing their reliance on fossil fuels. Tom Boden from Churchill College talked about their work on solar panels, insulation and heat pumps. A team from Darwin College told us about their engagement work on sustainability, including catering and recycling. The overwhelming vote was that we believe Cambridge will go green.

As a direct result of this meeting, Murray Edwards will host an annual event after the university and college survey is published to enable colleges to share best practice.

Our fourth and final event on May 16th is our special Antarctic night. We're inviting people from across the university and beyond. Professorial Fellow Michael Meredith from the British Antarctic Survey will speak about his recent expedition to Antarctica to study changes in Southern Ocean temperatures. He has devised a special slide show for the event. Our Music Director has composed a special Last Post for Antarctica, and a trumpeter will play this piece live to accompany a moving short film on the loss of ice in Antarctica. The event is full of important information, but it will also be a multimedia entertaining event, an innovative in-depth experience.

## KPI Delivery Update

KPIs (as in project plan)	Revised KPIs (If applicable)	Actual outcomes
Feedback from students		All 30 attendees to our initial session raised their hands to have the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Production of a major Green Newsletter and increasing the number of events in its Green Week.</li> <li>2) Creation of a programme of regular student events.</li> </ol>
Feedback from speakers		All 7 speakers agreed that more needed to be done and the need for collaboration among Colleges. Quote from Phil Armitage, Max Fordham LLP (Speaker May 2): "It was a pleasure and I really enjoyed it. There is a lot of valuable but disparate work being done and I see it as

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

		<p>a snowball gathering momentum. Joining up the dots, working together and taking a broad holistic view of sustainability will make Cambridge green.”</p> <p>Quote from Megan Groom from Darwin College: “It was a pleasure to meet you and join in the discussion. Thank you for including me. It is great to see colleges sharing knowledge and skills- collaboration and a bit of healthy competition! I look forward to seeing how your grand green plans evolve over the next year. I think an annual discussion is a great idea. I am happy to suggest some names of other brilliant people who could join your discussion.”</p> <p>As a result of speakers interaction on event on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Murray Edwards will host an annual event to enable Colleges to share best practice.</p>
Attendance		<p>Attendance has been varied, depending on the topic and students’ calendars. Total to date: 104 (registered). As a direct learning from other colleges attending the events, we will implement some of the ideas discussed during the events and they will implement some of ours.</p> <p>We have formed new relationships across several colleges.</p>

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

Alumni from the programme to complete survey at determined time intervals (real world measurement)		As our final event is May 16 <sup>th</sup> , we will be handing out survey after this date to all those who attended.
--	--	---

## Project Impact Evaluation

The events organised as part of the programme have had a huge impact on the college – spreading way beyond those who attended. Our learnings from this programme will inform a much more ambitious three year programme.

We have engaged, informed and inspired. We aim to quantify the impact and effectiveness of our approach through surveys of students, staff and Fellows, guided by Fellow Dr David Willer. David is a recognised expert in surveying behaviours relating to environmental sustainability. We will begin the process of designing our surveys and then gaining ethical approval in late May 2023, before launching to the College community, acting as a further engagement tool

Our first event of February 15<sup>th</sup> saw a number of practical ideas brought to the fore which are now being acted on including ways of highlighting vegan and vegetarian food and new ideas about recycling. Those attended said they had a transformed understanding of the bigger issues of the College buildings. The difficult issue of room usage was engaged with actively as people discussed and attendees from the Fellowship gained new understanding of the need to change the ways in which rooms are used to move from individual rooms to shared spaces. There was acceptance of College plans to place sensors in rooms to assess energy use. As a direct result of the event, the College is producing a major Green Newsletter and increasing the number of events in its Green Week. The College will disseminate a major thermal imaging project so people can understand the problems by seeing them visually. The event has sparked a lively conversation throughout the College about the extent of the issues and the need for change. As an event, it was a significant success in terms of building engagement.

Our first event also had a particularly great impact because it got the whole college talking about how we need a step change in our environmental sustainability. Students, staff and Fellows who attended came up with a lot of very good ideas from good ways to change how we eat and new ideas for recycling to developing understanding which was not there before of the need for major changes to our 1960s building which have poor insulation and which lose a great deal of heat through single-glazed windows. For the first time, we discussed the need to consider how we use buildings and whether it is still appropriate for people to have their own rooms which lie empty. We explained the people how we would be carrying out a full review of the environmental sustainability of the college estate

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

and there was a great deal of excitement. We discussed how we would place sensors in rooms to monitor how they were used and how much energy was lost. Previously some students and members of the Net Zero Committee had been engaged, this meeting engaged the wider groups of staff, Fellows and other students. This was an innovative event because it demonstrated that environmental sustainability is for everyone. It prompted big debates and discussions in the ensuing days. Fellows who had never previously discussed environmental sustainability debated it over the ensuing week in particular. We demonstrated there is a lot of knowledge and enthusiasm within the college.

Our second event, with speakers from an external organisation dealing with global issues of climate change, particularly in the Arctic, was inspiring and helped us to focus on big issues outside ourselves.

Our third event on May 2nd has also had an amazing impact as it has allowed us see the need for collaboration among colleges to make sure decarbonisation and the creation of a sustainable university can be reached. We had four Colleges represented at the event. It prompted us to plan a yearly get together with all the Colleges to talk meet and swap best practices and know-how (see legacy below as well for more details).

Darwin student engagement officer Meg Groom told us about everyday improvements students had brought in, including Darwin's unique recycling scheme. Tom Boden of Church College told us how they had taken action on buildings by training up their own internal teams in how to install solar panels and make applications to the authorities. We have invited all at the university. This is an innovative event in terms of colleges sharing good practice with each other and learning from each other.

And we still have one final event to go on May 16<sup>th</sup> which we are looking forward to host!

## Project Difficulties and Opportunities

The difficulties so far has been ensuring speakers we want to have are available on the dates we have in mind (and do not collide with other events taking place at College)

The opportunities have been on the level of collaborative work we can do with other colleges.

# Green Impact Excellence Project Report

## Value added benefits

As a direct result of our first meeting in Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, we were inspired to hold the third meeting to talk about if Cambridge University would really go green. This third event which took place on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, hosted leaders from other colleges to inspire and inform by telling us what they did. Those involved in the solar panels at Kings gave the story of a hugely high profile action but the Darwin student engagement officer Meg Groom told us about everyday improvements students had brought in, including Darwin's unique recycling scheme. Tom Boden of Church College told us how they had taken action on buildings by training up their own internal teams in how to install solar panels and make applications to the authorities. We have invited all at the university. This is an innovative event in terms of colleges sharing good practice with each other and learning from each other.

## Legacy

- Our learnings from this programme will inform a much more ambitious three year programme.
- Another legacy from our session on May 2<sup>nd</sup> was the realisation of the gap of knowledge sharing among decarbonising the colleges as a community. We have agreed to an annual fixture for Colleges to meet to swap best practices, hosted at Murray Edwards initially. This will be a major event for all colleges, hosted by Murray Edwards. We will ask colleges to circulate in advance their innovative ideas and the practical steps they have taken. We are considering innovative ways of communicating the information at the event if we have wide take-up by colleges – we may ask each college to make a short film which can be circulated by the university comms team, for example. For us, this is a very important legacy that will continue from years to come.
- We have formed new relationships across several colleges.

## Photograph

See pictures uploaded separately.