

Durham University Continuous Improvement Greenspace – branding the message

‘Every small step leads to big change’

About the project

Summary

In order to bring all of our environmental initiatives and activities together, the name and concept of ‘Greenspace’ was devised in 2010. Greenspace is the face for environmental sustainability at Durham University. The idea behind the brand is to make all environmental messages strong, focused and instantly recognisable. It continues to show behavioural change improvements across the University since its inception in 2010. The Greenspace motto is ‘Every small step leads to big change’.

Project partners

In order to create ‘Greenspace’ we appointed an external company and involved university members who were not affiliated with the existing environment team. This allowed us to be impartial when developing the brand. We held a brainstorming session to try and find a ‘name’ and an associated brand including style, colours etc... The result was ‘Greenspace’ – a unique brand showing instantly recognisable icons, each representing a different area of our Environmental Sustainability Policy with the motto ‘Every small step leads to big change’. The beauty of the brand is that it enables Greenspace to be more than the sum of its parts and as such every member of the University is a Greenspace stakeholder and is integral to our success.

The results

We wanted to make all messages from the ‘Environment Team’ strong, focused and instantly recognisable. Greenspace, however, is more than just a brand – it is a vehicle for change in all areas of our Environmental Sustainability Policy. It is used as a driver to enhance and embed environmental sustainability and to promote positive environmental behaviour at all levels within the University - individual, group and institutional. It continues to show behavioural change improvements across the University since its inception in 2010. The Greenspace motto is ‘Every small step leads to big change’.

There are now 10 icons in total: General Greenspace; Biodiversity, Energy; Fairtrade; Low and Zero Carbon Technologies; Procurement; Travel; Waste; Water and our newest icon relating directly to our Carbon Management Plan – ‘Reduce Carbon Emissions’. Subsequent work involved developing launch materials – pop up displays, stickers and a website with up to date information against each icon. Greenspace works across the



Profile

- HEI
- Established in 1832
- 17,505 students
- Over 3000 staff
- Urban

University to promote each area of work and to reinforce the message through the icons. During the last five years, Greenspace has undergone high-level reviews and has continuously improved its standing in the University.

Our goals

Our goal is to further embed the 'Greenspace' ethos and the commitments as outlined in our Environmental Sustainability Policy into all areas of the University. We will continue to work with other groups, teams and individuals across the University to further embed the Greenspace ethos into everyday practices and future planning.

Performance and results

As behavioural change is notoriously difficult to measure we view it on three levels: Individual (staff / student); group (Department / College) and Institutional behaviour. At an institutional level we are infiltrating different areas in the University, recently demonstrated by the inclusion of 'Environmental Sustainability' into the Education Strategy, Planning Round and information related to New Programme Development. On a 'Group' level we are working with the Carbon Leads, Environment Champions and the Building Energy Focus Groups to effect change and on an individual level we are trying to reach all staff and students with the campaigns and events we plan as part of our annual Environmental Schedule.

The future

Reflecting on the last five years Greenspace will ensure that going forward it continues to work on the three levels of behavioral change (as detailed above). All three are integral to ensure further integration of the 'brand' and associated ethos into all aspects of the institution, both planning and operation. A consistent and recognisable message is key to our success as are reviews of the methods and success of Greenspace communications and initiatives.

Sharing your project

We provide different methods of communication to our internal stakeholders including: a questions and suggestions page / form, email and telephone, face to face for everyday engagement. We then have bespoke events/campaigns as detailed in our annual environmental schedule. Every college has an Environment Team and every department has an Environment Champion with the Carbon Leads covering all areas of the University. We also have over 700 students signed up to our 'Environment Bulletin'. We have met with another internal department to advise on communications and hope that the video and case study from these awards will be used by other institutions to further develop their brand.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

For Durham University's Greenspace to be a Green Gown Award finalists is recognition of all the hard work over the last few years, it signals to the University what vital work Greenspace achieves, especially its communications and campaigns, and it rewards Greenspace staff for their commitment, expertise and enthusiasm. (Professor Tim Burt – Dean for Environmental Sustainability).

Further information

Greenspace, Durham University

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