

University of Brighton Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change Institutional 'c-change' for Sustainability

About the project

Summary

The University of Brighton has been addressing sustainability across the whole institution for over 5 years. Sustainability is included as a core principal in the university's Strategic Plan.

Since 2008, the university has adopted a number of new sustainability related policies, including:

- Sustainable Development Strategy & Sustainable Development Action Plan
- Environmental Policy & Environmental Policy Action Plan
- Carbon Management Plan
- Ethical Investment Policy
- Sustainable Food Policy
- Sustainable Procurement Strategy
- Travel Plan Strategy
- Biodiversity Action Plan and Watts Bank Management Plan

An extensive Environment Team has been operational for the past 3+ years, and the team has developed the 'c-change' campaign, a bespoke behaviour change campaign to encourage staff and students to cut carbon.

Project partners

The university has and continues to work across all its departments and schools to embed sustainability. Funding partners have included the Green Growth Platform and the Values and Sustainability Research Group, both funded by HEFCE. Project partners who are involved in events and projects throughout the year include the Students' Union and local organisations and communities such as Brighton and Hove City Council, Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, YMCA, Sustrans and WARP-it.

The results

The problem

The university has campuses stretching across Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings. Changing the infrastructure and engaging with staff and students across all campuses can be challenging and different approaches can be needed for different sites.



Profile

- Multi-site urban HEI
- 25,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 3,500 staff
- 5 campuses over 3 cities/towns

Finalist's case study

The approach

The Carbon Management Programme Board was formed in 2010 and provides high level strategic oversight and support for all operational sustainability issues and communication and behavior change campaigns. Further to this the c-change campaign is very successful in engaging with staff and students across all 5 of our campuses, through interactive, face to face engagement, encouraging staff and students to reduce their carbon emissions and consider sustainability in their working lives.

Our goals

Ambitious sustainability goals include cutting carbon emissions by 50% in 5 years, achieving 75% recycling rate c-change, and achieving BREEAM excellent for all new constructions.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle	Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining support for campaigns and projects from all levels at the university. • Changing 'business as usual' behavior across the university. • Engaging staff and students with the behavior change campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Senior Management support has enabled sustainability to be embedded into our core principles, highlighting support from the top down. • Setting and pursuing ambitious targets has driven institutional change across the university. • Having c-change, an engaging, recognisable campaign, has fostered engagement from staff and students across our campuses.

Performance and results

The university is also becoming increasingly well known locally and nationally for its extremely positive approach to sustainability. Our ranking in the Green League has increased dramatically from being awarded a 2:2 in 50th place in 2007, to maintaining First Class status over the last 4 years, including achieving 3rd place in 2012 and 5th place in 2013. The university has also achieved the Silver Eco Campus award for Environmental Management Systems.

c-change has become the overarching brand for sustainability projects at the university and its distinctive branding has been used across numerous projects, fostering recognition and momentum of the campaign. The campaign has been recognised nationally with a 'Highly Commended' Green Gown award in 2013 and was named as a runner up in May 2013 in the Behaviour Change category of the National Energy and Environment Awards.

The future

Lessons learned

- We have learnt, through implementing projects and developing our strategies and plans:
- working towards clear goals and targets bring an organisation together,
 - reducing carbon emissions is challenging when you have a growing estate and it is important to consider re-evaluating strategies and goals if necessary,
 - creating our strong c-change brand raises awareness and participation in the behavior change campaign,
 - using social marketing techniques helps ensure campaigns are run in the most effective and engaging way.

Sharing your project

The Environment Team work closely with Marketing and Communications to disseminate and encourage involvement with these projects. Publicly our achievements have been disseminated through articles in local and national media, including an extensive feature in The Environmentalist journal (September 2014) and we showcase our work with local contacts including Sussex University, City College Brighton and Hove, local councils and community groups. We have hosted visits from a number of institutions, including Anglia Ruskin University, the University of Versailles, The Big Lottery Fund, and have presented at national conferences such as the Carbon Trust Conference.

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

Sustainability is a core value of the university and is critical to our way of working. We are proud of our work and our continuous efforts to improve. Being a finalist reinforces our efforts and gives recognition to our staff and students; without whom none of it would be possible.

Further Information

Website: www.brighton.ac.uk/sustainability

Facebook: [unibrightonchange](https://www.facebook.com/unibrightonchange)

Twitter: [@_cchange_](https://twitter.com/_cchange_)