

University of Warwick Sustainability Professional Award David Chapman

About the project

Summary

First in a new role at the University of Warwick I have supported and championed projects, ideas and initiatives to improve the impact the university has on its environment. In the process I aim to convey a sustainable message to staff, students, visitors and the local community and will continue to work with all stakeholders to better the lives of many.

In my first year I have covered areas of electricity, water, waste, procurement, transport, ecology with an aim of embedding sustainability throughout everyday life at University of Warwick. To this end I helped save over £72,000 and all the CO2 emissions associated with positive behaviour change.

The results

The problem

Warwick is a very diverse University with an ambitious target of 60% carbon reduction by 2020. To reach this target we need to not just change the physical aspects of the campus but to change behaviours so that less resources are used and positive outcomes are achieved.

The approach

I adopt a holistic approach to environmental and sustainability issues. Sustainability is a multifaceted subject and I work across a multitude of areas including energy usage, water usage, waste/recycling, biodiversity, people's behaviour, transport, education, purchasing. I tailor my approach to different groups to build relationships with staff and students from different departments and backgrounds, bringing people together to discuss opportunities and potential projects, learn from each other and share best practices.

Our goals

To achieve the 60% carbon reduction levels by 2020 and to educate staff and students to become global citizens and change agents.



Profile

- HEI
- 25,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 6,000 staff
- Rural near urban Coventry



Category supported by



Performance and results

In the past year the team has increased its presence on campus, talking to thousands of staff, students and visitors raising awareness and changing behaviours. This has led to thousands of pounds in savings through projects and campaigns, including over £70,000 from Student Switch Off and Cut the Flow.

The future

Lessons learned

I have had a steep learning curve moving from the charity sector to the Higher Education Sector. Communicate is crucial to embed sustainable behaviour and practices. Some projects require patience but it is important to be tenacious and empathetic with departments who might wish to be more proactive but may not currently have the support network or the finances to back ideas.

Sharing your project

Projects have been communicated through EAUC meetings, on our website (www.warwick.ac.uk/environment), via internal communications and newsletters to staff and students in all departments, digital signage, posters and local press.

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

Sustainability is an essential component of Warwick's strategy in which we encourage all staff to play an active role in achieving key sustainability goals. Securing a Green Gown Award would provide crucial public recognition of their efforts and our institutional commitment to excellence and best practice in supporting sustainability.

Professor Sir Nigel Thrift

Further information

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www.warwick.ac.uk/Environment