

Bradford College Sustainability Champion Ian Brown



Profile

Example:

- FE and HE
- 22,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 2000 staff
- Urban

Section 1 About the project

Summary

A bright idea from the Building Services Manager at Bradford College has resulted in the creation of a money making business, the securing of jobs and income of £35K per year. Combined with savings on waste and reuse makes the Portering teams recycling business an impressive diversification from their core work

Project partners

Biffa Recycling

Category supported by



Section 2 The results

The problem

Ian identified an opportunity to transform a former teaching building into an environmental center. He was not tasked with doing this instead he identified the amount of waste generated by the college and the cost saving potential. From this he generated a project plan and has managed it from inception to where it is today.

The approach

Ian secured the support of his line Manager and an investment of £10k bought compactors and industrial shredding machine. The money also bought bins, bags and containers for storage. The Porters collected the paper firstly from internal College areas before expanding to external clients. The team used the College vans to transport the collected material to Biffa recycling for income. Green Solutions now serves 102 external clients around the Bradford area and generates 40 tonnes of paper and card each month. All this is processed at Garden Mills building and sold to Biffa recycling. Alongside this the implementation of a furniture reuse store has resulted in a total landfill saving of 95KG and a cost saving of £291K as of April 2013. A new placement scheme for students to increase employability skills has meant 24 SSLD students have undertaken supported employment, with a female student aged 22 going on to permanent employment within the team. In addition, HE marketing students have developed a new website and marketing campaign for Green Solutions.



The campus allotment at Garden Mills has been redeveloped through Ian supporting the Students Union in a bid to the Students Eats fund. A new Polytunnel, vegetable and wildflower planting have been undertaken by volunteers.

Our goals

Having driven the College's vision to be a sustainable organization at the heart of its community our goals are to expand on this drive, identify, develop and embed new environmental schemes and practices.

Obstacles and solutions

Finding the capital investment	Ian was supported by his manager and money found from the operational budget. It helped by submitting a detailed business plan with cost benefit analysis
Finding the space to store materials and equipment	The College has a large estate so it was easy to identify a building not being used. However the square footage of the building meant it was prudent to move other initiatives into Garden Mills to make use of the space. Some is used for offices, archive storage, bike hub and the reuse store to fully utilize the space.
Getting the infrastructure right	Putting the right people in the right positions

Performance and results

The business has grown from generating £5k in 2006 to £45K anticipated by 2014 per year. The reuse store has saved £290K whilst the archive store has saved £15K per year rather than outsource this service. In 2010 Green Solutions was highly commended in the Green Gowns and again in 2013. Other individual and team awards have happened on a regular basis since 2006 including Ian being nominated in the national 2009 Star awards.

Section 3 The future

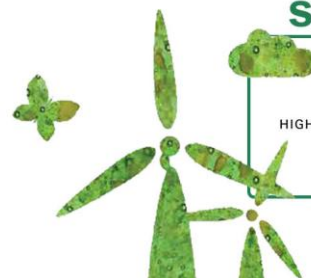
Lessons learned

Support from the top-you need management support for big changes like this to succeed. Confidence in the project manager and the belief that recycling was a growth market made this diversification possible.

Don't give up-tenacity is the name of the game when making any changes like this. Don't be disheartened if you have a setback, be creative and think that all setbacks are only temporary. Come up with new solutions to problems

Get the space in place-you can't collect and store large quantities of materials for recycling without somewhere to keep them. Before Garden Mills became available Ian bought some old containers with the income received.

Enthuse your staff-this was a big change to a traditional porter's job. You need to motivate the people who will be central to the change. Empowering them to get involved helped the team see the benefits of the change



Shout it from the rooftops-this is crucial so that staff know the service you are providing. The team at College created a website under a different identity to the College, Green Solutions, in order to get business externally.

Believe you can do it-entrepreneurship like this is not the norm in College's. Being out of your comfort zone is not a bad thing and can actually be really rewarding. But you need belief that you can do it

Sharing your project

We have shared our project with various partners and other Colleges and Universities. This has resulted in Green Solutions working as the recycling partner for Bradford University and various local Bradford schools. We also give talks and site visits and information on how to set up a recycling business.

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

It certainly puts us on the map, a great reward for a lot of hard work. It's always nice to receive awards but it's great for Green Solutions and the team. It raises the profile of what we are trying to achieve within the institution which is a great boost going forward

Further information

www.greensolutions.uk.net

i.brown@bradfordcollege.ac.uk

twitter @greensolution10

Facebook Green Solutions at Bradford College

(Include contacts details, social media links, website address)