

Harrow College

Best Newcomer

Sustainability on a Shoestring!

Section 1 About the project

Summary

In order to improve our existing old, energy inefficient facilities on an extremely limited budget we invested in low cost projects, together with behaviour change from staff and students which achieved 17.3% reduction in carbon emissions since 2010 and we now have the objective of becoming a leading sustainable college.

Project partners

Salix Loans: 2010: for two voltage optimizers, new boilers, pipework insulation, power management software, virtualized servers and BMS.
The Carbon Trust: Harrow College took part in the 5 Year Carbon Management Plan programme for FE Colleges.

Section 2 The results

The problem

We had advanced plans for a new sustainable college as part of the "Building Schools for the Future" programme which was cancelled when funding ran out – a huge blow to College morale, sustainability aspirations and finances. By 2010 we were left to improve our old, very inefficient facilities on an extremely limited budget. We needed low investment projects with a quick payback, together with behaviour change from staff and students.

The approach

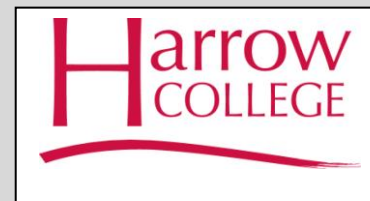
We made being a Leading Energy Efficient College our strategic objective and applied for Salix loans for energy saving projects.

We then joined the Carbon Trust Five Year Carbon Management Programme for FE Colleges in 2011 and produced a plan with over 30 projects and a 25% carbon reduction target.

What began with a need to cut expenditure on energy, grew organically to embrace other aspects of sustainability, such as enhancing biodiversity on site and various student projects. The project seems to have a momentum which is gradually encompassing the whole college and leading to increased community involvement too.

Our goals

- A Carbon Reduction target of 25% over 5 years with 2010 as our baseline.

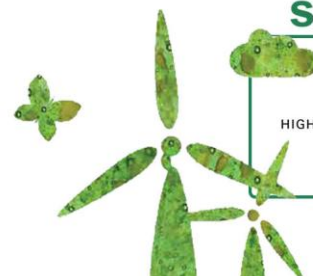


Profile

- FE College
- 2,000 full time students and 7,000 part time students: 4,245 FTE
- 336 staff
- Urban

Category supported by





- A strategic objective of being “A Leading Energy Efficient College” in 2011 and we then increased the scope of our objective to being “A Leading Sustainable College” in 2012.

Obstacles and solutions

Lack of financial resources	No cost projects – such as removing excess printers and excess light fittings, space optimization and reduced space use were undertaken.
Lack of financial resources	Low cost projects such as fitting timers to stand alone water heaters and vending machines, and fitting sensors to light appliances in WC, fitting energy saving devices in fridges and freezers were undertaken from our maintenance budget.
Lack of financial resources	Salix loans accessed which provided funding for various energy efficiency projects with pay back periods of less than five years.
Lack of staff engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff half day workshop to discuss ways in which to save energy, recommendations were then collated and acted upon. Staff asked to take the Carbon Trust Empower programme to increase awareness of ways to save energy. Staff reminded to “Turn off” at the end of the day and a staff survey showed 81% support for the switch off campaign.
Lack of student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental poster competition - winning posters displayed around the college. Successful STEM leadership programmes with sustainability themes held each year. Entered the Mayor’s low carbon challenge and had a speaker to talk to students about carbon emissions. An online optional Sustainability course was run with over 90% success rate. SLDD student projects built a wildlife pond, made a wildflower meadow and keep a bird feeding station supplied with bird food. Student sustainability ambassadors recruited A series of workshops for students arranged with People & Planet.

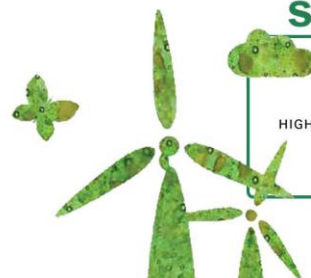
Performance and results

- Reduced energy costs by £54,910 – a 21% decrease from 2010-2011.
- Carbon Standard Re-accreditation: 17.3% carbon reduction from 2010-2012, with a very high qualitative assessment score of 83.8.
- Waste Reduction and Recycling: This year 74.75% of our total waste has been recycled and 25.25% incinerated to produce energy, which equates to 222m³ of landfill and 54.29 tonnes CO₂ avoided.
- Joint winners of the Harrow Environmental Forum’s prize for our wildlife pond project.
- ISO14001 Accreditation achieved in November 2013.
- Funding of almost £8 million from the SFA College Capital Investment Fund for a new BREEAM Excellent building, which will enable us to further improve our energy reduction and environmental management.

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

- Support from the Senior Leadership Team is essential - which includes having a Strategic Objective to be a Leading Sustainable College.



- Staff involvement needs to be continuously built over time and staff feel more engaged when their suggestions are taken into account and acted upon.

Sharing your project

We will offer advice and assistance to any educational institutions who would like to replicate aspects of this project and have already started this process. Our project has been publicized in the Harrow Schools Environmental Newsletter. Information is available on our website: www.Harrow.ac.uk/sustainability.

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

Winning a Green Gown Award as “Best Newcomer” means a great deal to us – it is a pinnacle professional accomplishment for me and confirms that Harrow College is on course to achieve our strategic objective of becoming a “leading sustainable college”.

Further information

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