Stepping Up in Sustainability 2011-12

Sussex Downs College case study

Title of project	SustainIT	
Lead partner organisation name and address	Sussex Downs College Cross Levels Way Eastbourne BN21 2UF	
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• **Aims of the project**	• To improve understanding of climate change; to move further forward the areas of improvement as identified in our Eco pledge project and subsequent surveys. • To explore and investigate, using research from modern psychology practices, what will work best at systematically helping to cause a shift in the behaviour of individuals within organisations and thus enabling them to be "fit for purpose" (i.e. sustainable) • To offer interactive learning sessions and practical resources on I-Learn, our Virtual Learning Portal • To demonstrate ways we can positively respond to SD challenges to motivate future generations. • Provide a catalyst for our curriculum staff and students to develop new or enhance existing strategies and approaches. • To promote to students and staff an increased awareness and understanding of links between food, food miles and healthy eco- friendly lifestyles. • To identify changes to curriculum offer and embed global warming and climate change effects. • To influence students and staff to buy goods and services in a sustainable way.	
• **Task: Define the outcomes you needed to achieve**	• To help build common understanding of what sustainable development is about within the college community with the development of a tool. • Integrate our 5 year carbon management plan within the tool in order to bring together the whole college community and raise awareness of the business benefits of a sustainable action plan for our organisation. • To disseminate this activity during climate week in order to highlight issues that need to be addressed college wide, within the community and amongst our stakeholders. • Through the use of SustainIT we will get measurable improvement targets in:	

	a. Reducing waste; b. Using less energy and water; c. Recycling more and measure carbon footprint. • Consider implementation of renewable energy
• **Actions that you took in order to achieve your plan, and your approach**	• To ensure implementation of Sustainable Development via new learning we commissioned curriculum staff, IT staff and students to research and present the following as an online tool: a. Module 1: Climate Change background; visuals and statistics b. Module 2: ecological ethics as the foundation of the curriculum model; e.g. help our students develop the values, attitudes and perspectives necessary for creating environmental, social and economic sustainability c. Module 3: global warming and renewable energy as the overarching focus with emphasis on environmental and ecosystem health; to link environmental quality of both the natural and built environments with public health and individual well-being. Educating people to prevent them from affecting the environment in such a way that it, in turn, will adversely affect their well- being and development and the health of future generations d. Module 4: Information and Implementation of the college's carbon trust management system leading ultimately to an established EMS. • The online tool was identified by the IT department and a mock demonstration took place for the project team. • The content matter was then researched and produced within a period of 3 months for the IT department to embed into the tool. • All stages of the development of this tool was overseen by the College's Carbon Reduction Management Group. • A suggestion received from the Group that the subject matter and visuals could be vastly improved by a critique session from sector experts was implemented. This included peer dissemination.

• **Results that you obtained**	• We developed 4 modules with the help of curriculum staff.
	• There was much debate around the subject matter and how to get the best results in engaging with the student body.
	• We therefore formed a sub group with facilities; project staff and our Teaching and Learning Manager.
	• It was agreed that as we all had differing views on the appropriateness of the language, content matter and links it was necessary to get objective feedback from our sector specialists and stakeholders.
	• Their feedback has proved invaluable and it was agreed that there was an extraordinary amount of information, good features and links. As a result the group felt that we should consider the following before introducing the final version on our VLE:
	  a. We should have 2 separate modules for staff and students.
	  b. We should question further what changes behaviour; what are people's agenda; what triggers conversation; how do we cascade information?
	  c. We should be flexible in promoting any change
	  d. There should be more emphasis on what we are currently doing as with our Digital Media students have produced 30 second virals this year that Eastbourne Borough Council have displayed on their climate change website These messages can be influential for peer pressure.
	  e. Give more tips; influence by guiding rather than proselytizing.
	  f. Do more 'fun' activities to engage; e.g. talking bin and musical staircase.
	  g. Add incentives and rewards e.g. if they get a question on the mini quiz on the presentation correct. Local firms might be interested in being involved and giving rewards
	  h. Use Social Media: Facebook and Twitter.
	  i. A clear message that this situation has been created by people and can be changed by people. Should not be a closed system; not linear but circular.
	  j. Possibly have a voting system for students as to what can be done and have competitions.
	  k. It was unanimously agreed at the end of the project that this exercise proved invaluable in the final stages and provided the objectivity that we were attempting to find.

• **What made the project a success? What were the key ingredients?**	• The critique of the tool by local stakeholders and sector experts; this significantly widened participation. • The involvement of different areas of staff; support and teaching staff. • The involvement by our senior management team. • There was a cumulative energy which created a ripple effect. • The timely production of the college's 5 Year Carbon Management Plan which helped us to focus even more on this project to assist in disseminating information and promoting behaviour change more widely. • Our continued involvement with the EAUC and contributions made by our Environmental Coordinator at the national events.
• **Any resources or tools produced by the project**	Online learning tool : SustainIT http://sustainit.adamjohn.co.uk/ Above 30 second virals put together by our Digital Media students for the local council's Climate Change webpage. These will form part of our Carbon Reduction Communications Plan; be displayed on our Plasma screens throughout the college as examples of engagement by our student body. On recommendation by the dissemination they will be included in the tool to show student involvement. http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/climatefilms/

• **Total costs of the project**	LSIS funding	Match funding	Total funding
	£5000	£850	£5850