

University of Bradford Student Engagement Our Green Energy Challenge

Section 1 About the project

Summary

Behaviour Change, Engagement, Sustainability: A unique behavioural change project implemented in the most energy efficient student accommodation in the world. Using minimal resources and maximum engagement, we've created a pioneering programme that has driven utility reductions, cut carbon emission and improved awareness of sustainability to all 1026 students living there.

Project partners

University, Students Union, Accommodation Services, Halls Owners, Estates and Facilities.

Section 2 The results

The problem

'A building is only as green as the people are'. This motto, created during the year, epitomises OGEC. There will always be a limit to a building's effect on a sustainable agenda. People, however, can continue on to achieve greater things. That is what OGEC was all about, creating a legacy using The Green, the most sustainable student village in the world. In collaboration with 90 North, the private developer of The Green, The University of Bradford Estates department took a non-profit gamble with the future in mind to deliver a sustainable behavioural change programme tailored to The Green.

The approach

We wanted OGEC to be unique to The Green with the students taking local ownership of the project and us merely a facilitator. This meant being on site as much as possible connecting with the student community. Through constant feedback and engagement, we created an original programme designed to maximize student ownership outlined in the mind map below.



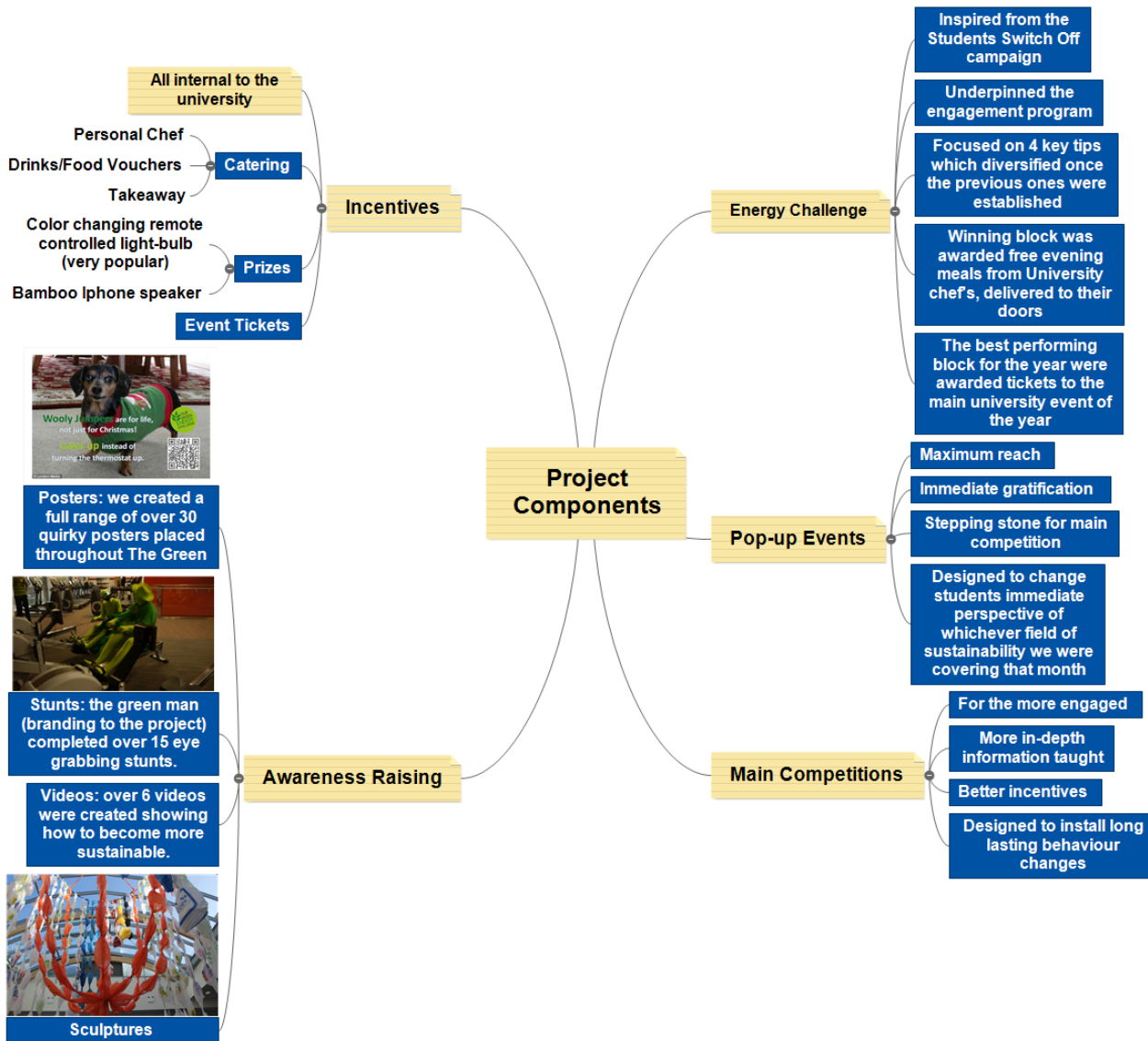
Profile

- HEI
- 12,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 1600 staff
- Urban

Category supported by



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education



Our goals

- 10% reduction in electricity & gas se against 12/13 figures
- 5% reduction in water use against 12/13 figures
- 200 surveys completed at beginning and end of project
- 3 projects funded by engagement fund

Obstacles and solutions

Project Funding	This project was funded out of the forecast savings from utility reductions
Keeping Students interested	Lots of fun activities were created to allow serious messaging to be sneaked in under the radar
Communication	A wide variety of comms modes were used including kitchen screens, social media, posters, networks etc

Performance and results

Carbon Reduction

Carbon reduction from September to May 2013/14	436,099Kg
Cumulative reduction against 2012/13 figures	15%
Relative road miles	1.5 million

Engagement

% of students that said they know more about sustainability	90%
Number of Facebook Likes	200
Number of students reached through events	500
Percentage of residents reached at The Green	100%

Project Cost

£18,000: Project Co-ordinator
£6,000: Budget
£4,000: Managerial Time

Total: £28,000

Project Savings (through utility reductions): £35,000
 Net Savings: £7,000

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

We brought departments together for the first time developing a partnership around sustainability.

- A key partner in developing a permaculture module assignment looking at how to get students to engage with the in-built veg patches at The Green; the designs were subsequently implemented at The Green (The Herb Spiral). This brought together the owners of The Green, the academic department, the university gardeners and the students.
- We formed a close relationship with the catering team, who even took time out to send a personal chef to cook a 2-course meal for the best water saving house. We played an important role in helping them achieve their food for life bronze award.
- Sustrans, BCEP, BEES, Yorkshire Water, Horton Community Farm, Grow Bradford are just some of the external organisations that were involved in our many events.

Finalist's case study

Through the constant feedback and engagement, we were a driving force to improvements to the facilities at The Green to improve the student experience including:

- A brand new social space for the students and a home for the project for 2013/14
- More appropriate recycling facilities
- Outside seating

Sharing our project

We have created a project manual that could be put onto the sustainability exchange and disseminated to anyone to help them run a similar project

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

“Being highly commended for our student engagement project and reaching the finals for the eighth year running is testament to the University’s commitment and hard work in improving our sustainability performance.”

Further information

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