Green Gown Awards 2014
AWARDING SUSTAINABILITY EXCELLENCE FOR 10 YEARS
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finalist's case study

University of Strathclyde

Continuous Improvement

Sustainable Strathclyde: A Sustainable Success Journey

University of Strathclyde Glasgow

Profile

- Urban
- Higher Education
- 15,700 FTE students
- UK Entrepreneurial University of the Year 2013/14
- UK University of the Year 2012/13
- 2,930 FTE staff

Section 1 About the project

Summary

The University of Strathclyde are committed to ensuring our students make a useful and positive contribution to social and environmental challenges, locally and globally. This aim is embodied in our research and curriculum and demonstrated through our operational and management practices – the Sustainable Strathclyde Strategy.

The University have made steady progress since 2007 towards becoming an exemplar higher education estate. We have developed succinct sustainability policies with clearly communicated aims and objectives inked to the University Strategic Plan covering utility management, greenhouse gas emissions, waste management, resource efficiency, sustainable procurement, transport planning, sustainable construction, student and staff engagement and biodiversity enhancement.

Project partners

The University work closely with the Scottish Funding Council, SALIX Finance, Zero Waste Scotland / Resource Efficient Scotland and the Carbon Trust.

Our goals

The University of Strathclyde was established in 1796 as 'the place of useful learning'. Our vision is to be a distinctive institution, leading research and technology of international standing, generating new ideas, creating fresh opportunities and engaging in collaborative activities and strategic partnerships that benefit wider society. We aim to provide students with the opportunity to influence our 'direction of travel' as we work together towards achieving our vision of being an international technological university. ‘Zero Waste’ and ‘Zero Carbon’ (Scope 1 and 2) are targeted for 2020.

The approach

Engagement: our ‘slow but sustainable’ focus on engaging senior staff allows departments to take ownership of potentially contentious infrastructure changes. Departments work collaboratively with Estates Services and students; this strong people network enables challenges to be transparently addressed and – importantly – successes to be shared.

Resource Efficiency: £1.4M invested in 40 energy efficiency projects resulting in a 10% reduction in GHG emissions, 5% reduction in electricity intensity, 11% reduction in gas intensity, and 44% reduction in water intensity.

Zero Carbon – Our exemplar urban district energy project, in partnership with FE, social housing, and Government, will achieve a 50% reduction in GHG emissions by 2017. We aim to enable a carbon neutral campus before 2030**.**

Zero Waste: We divert 100% of our waste from landfill and are achieving a material recycling rate of 90%.

Sustainable Construction. Our Sustainable Construction Standard ensures our buildings are exemplars of sustainable design, addressing process management; resource efficiency, pollution, community support, biodiversity, and healthy environments. Our 52 Sustainable Design Quality Standards significantly exceed regulatory requirements. In partnership with the Institute for Future Cities we are developing an exemplar Sustainable Student Accommodation demonstrator.

Education for Sustainable Development. Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Architecture and the Business School have engaged with Estates to integrate over 20 student led facilities projects, driven within course curriculum.

Sustainable Transport: We have introduced a Cycle to Work scheme, a Cycle Hire scheme, and first class rail travel for business. We have driven single occupancy vehicle (SOV) rates below 12%.

Social Responsibility: Our campus will help reduce local fuel poverty by providing low cost/low carbon heat to neighboring social housing and local authority partners. Our Energy Management Training Centre supports apprentices to gain 'next generation' technology and facility management skills, in collaboration with FE partners. Our Malawi Millennium Project assists Malawian teachers, nurses and engineers to undertake health and education research.

Performance and Results (relative to 2009):

- Electricity intensity reduced 5% from 120 to 114 kwh/m^2
- Gas intensity reduced 11% from 170 to 150 kwh/m^2
- Water intensity reduced 44% from 17m^3/FTE to 9 m^3/FTE
- Scope 1&2 GHG intensity reduced 10% from 91 to 80 Tonnes/m^2
- Waste mass per FTE reduced 15% from 35kg to 29kg p.a.
- Waste to landfill reduced from virtually 100% to 0%
- Recycling rate increase from near zero to 90%
- SOV rates reduced to 12%
- Student led, curriculum linked, facility projects, increased from zero to 5-6 per annum across a variety of Faculties
- Our Sustainable Labs programme enables Phd students to lead on laboratory audit and certification, influencing safety protocols, procurement, waste management and energy efficiency behaviors and investment
- Face to face engagement with Heads of Department on bespoke energy targets has led to increased collective action on implementing efficiency investments and behavior change

Sharing our project

We have worked with our communications office to develop a short video promoting our sustainability success journey from 2009 to 2014.

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

"I am delighted to be shortlisted for a prestigious Green Gown award recognizing the hard work of the entire university community in delivering our Sustainable Strathclyde Strategy". Dean Drobot – Energy and Environment Manager.

Further information

More information on Sustainable Strathclyde please visit our website at
http://www.strath.ac.uk/sustainablestrathclyde/