St Catharine's College
Cambridge

St Catharine's College
Sustainability
Policy

Our commitment

As a College, we take a progressive approach to sustainability. We aim to highlight and educate staff, Fellows and students in the importance of being sustainable and environmentally friendly.

We are fully committed to improving environmental performances across the College by adopting new solutions and creating a sustainable environment which is maintainable for future generations to come.

The College Environment Committee, comprised of staff, Fellows and students, is responsible for monitoring the sustainability policy. This committee will provide an annual assessment with recommendations and subsequent action plans.

Our aims

- Improve awareness and understanding of environmental and sustainability issues and develop solutions across the College community;

- Improve the way in which the College manages its own environment, improve energy performance and reduce the carbon footprint of the College estate;

- Educate members of the College in the areas of environment and sustainability by offering ongoing training. Encourage involvement in College-wide environmental and sustainability initiatives;

- Integrate these principles into the day-to-day operations of the College and continue to adopt best practice where possible;

Teaching and learning

- Ensure students leave St Catharine's with the commitment and knowledge to actively engage in society and with an awareness of sustainability issues;

- Provide opportunities for students to develop skills and knowledge in sustainability, enabling them to actively influence College policy;

- Discourage energy and water waste and encourage effective recycling;

- Encourage the JCR and MCR to run initiatives that will promote sustainability;

- Actively encourage a culture where students and staff respect their College environment and actively assist in meeting its environmental responsibilities

Waste management

- Minimise waste generation in all College activities and encourage repair, reuse and recycling ahead of the responsible disposal of surplus materials. Encourage all members of staff to question the need for new items and to consider alternative solutions;

- Reduce the waste of natural resources and promote sustainable development through tendering and purchasing procedures;

- Reduce and where applicable prevent pollution by avoiding the unnecessary use of hazardous materials and processes and take steps to prevent damage to either public or ecological health where such materials are in essential use;

- Ensure only waste and Licensed/Hazardous Waste carriers are used by the College to ensure that all disposal is carried out in a responsible manner in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements;

- Aim to recycle obsolete materials; ensure that timber and particular hardwoods are accessed for potential re-use whenever possible, and that old fabric materials are collected for charitable distribution

Transport

- Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport by encouraging members and visitors to walk, cycle, use public transport and car share;

- Provide staff with access to the Cycle to Work scheme;

- Provide suitable secure cycle storage for College members

Community

- Encourage all members of the College community to take positive action to promote continual environmental improvements and incorporate informed sustainability perspectives into their work;

- Create an ethos of environmental responsibility with staff and students as well as in the management of the estate, and encourage staff and student initiatives to improve environmental performance;

- Ensure that this policy and all reports and reviews by the environmental committee are communicated to all staff and students and are available to other key members of the College

Procurement

- Develop procurement procedures to ensure social, ethical and environmental criteria are integrated into programmes and to communicate this to appropriate stakeholders;

- Manage, conserve and maximise the efficient use of energy, water and materials;

- Continually increase the use of renewable resources and recycling;

- Examine ways of reducing the environmental impact of the College's use of consumables, energy and water;

- Aim to prioritise contracts with companies that have clear and comprehensive environmental/sustainability policies;

- Where possible, encourage competitive sourcing in the local economy, reducing lead-in times and the environmental impact of transportation. Suppliers are encouraged to remove their own packaging from site;

- Where possible, provide recycling bins and use a recycling company to collect all recyclable materials (e.g. plastic and cans);

- Consider opportunities within commodity acquisition strategies for products that are made from recycled materials and/or recyclable;

- Ensure building materials such as timber are sourced responsibly. Hard woods are only taken from replenish-able sources;

- The College expects its appointed investment managers to incorporate an assessment of climate chance risks in their investment processes;

- The College Investments Policy seeks to make responsible investments of an ethical nature its primary responsibility;

- All investment income is applied in pursuit of charitable objectives;

- Increasingly include a qualitative element within procurement, prioritising goods and services which follow a long term cost benefit analysis rather than short term cost cutting. This includes seeking to find the most cost effective way of obtaining similar equipment across the site, and reducing the requirement for storage of spare materials and components;

- Best practice in procurement includes assessing the ease of replacing components on failure, access to spares and the maintenance regime required for items once installed.

Buildings management

- The College looks to comply with all existing Building Regulations and to fully consider the requirements particular to buildings that have listed status or that are of historic interest;

- Design of new buildings will consider not just the functional aspirations of any new project but will also look closely at the environmental impact and consider potential opportunity costs both to the building in question and the surrounding area, including arboriculture considerations;

- Any significant work to existing buildings will look, as far as is practicable, to raise standards in older buildings to meet modern building regulations and satisfy Building Control measures;

- Utilise technologies such as BMS system to assist with day to day monitoring and managing of the estate;

- New installations of plant will be designed to minimise heat loss, to ensure that boilers operate effectively, using a modulating, and sequenced basis. New service runs are adequately insulated to minimise heat loss;

- Use of Variable Temperature heating systems which have been upgraded to be directly responsive to local climate/ temperature curves by employing weather compensation sensors;

- Always look to introduce increased thermal performance, by rationalising service delivery and minimising heat loss with effective use of insulation during refurbishments;

- Consider and adopt ways to reduce energy consumption. This will be incorporated into the design of any new or refurbishment work. On a day-to-day basis, actively engage in reducing energy by replacing traditional communal light fittings with LED lamps

Information technology

- Double sided printing and power saving options enabled on staff PCs as standard;

- Similar hardware modules procured where possible to maximise bulk purchasing of printing supplies;

- All redundant hardware is responsibly recycled;

- Wherever feasible, hardware is reused across the College site;

- Options to upgrade and re-use hardware always explored before replacement ;

- Technologies maximised to discourage use of paper and electricity;

- Teleconferencing and video-conferencing encouraged to reduce travel;

- Virtual technologies used where possible to reduce requirement for physical servers and subsequent power consumption.

Food procurement

- Source all products in an ethical, sustainable and environmentally friendly way;

- Aim to procure from local suppliers where possible and reduce the carbon footprint of food purchases;

- Encourage consumption of wines from small producers who demonstrate sustainable farming practices;

- Only procure fish from sustainable suppliers who adhere to Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) purchasing guidelines;

- Encourage use of fish suppliers who have their own trawlers to minimise carbon footprint;

- Aim to only purchase from suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to environmental and sustainability issues;

- Source local free-range eggs only;

- Source Fairtrade bananas only;

- All tea and coffee to be either Fairtrade or ethically and sustainably sourced;

- Monitor and encourage suppliers to obtain various sustainability accreditations.

Food sustainability

- Continue Membership of the Sustainable Restaurant Association and follow best practice guidelines;

- Ensure extensive vegetarian and vegan options are available;

- Promote healthier lifestyle options;

- Prioritise sustainable and local foods in our menus;

- Use regional maps to advertise the location of our local suppliers and which products they supply;

- Encourage members to purchase sustainably by displaying details of local suppliers used;

- Work with our partners to reduce the impact of our business on the environment;

- Increase the use of seasonal produce and monitor the use of non-seasonal;

- Offer a 'fish of the day' to encourage sustainable fishing practices;

- Champion British food products where local options are not available;

- Discourage unnecessary deliveries by maintaining an effective ordering and delivery system;

- Where feasible for local suppliers (i.e. coffee), the produce should be collected on foot to reduce the carbon footprint;

- Encourage student initiatives such as Vegan Dinners, Green Dinners, Eat Less Meat Monday, Eat More Fish Friday;

- Provide staff training on sustainable food practices, allergen awareness and food hygiene;

- All water provided in meeting rooms to be taken from our in-house filtration system utilising reusable glass bottles;

- Where possible, water machines are mains fed. Any that are not mains fed are refilled in-house;

- Monthly meetings with JCR and MCR food reps take place to actively communicate sustainability issues and encourage solutions. Staff newsletters are used to convey sustainability messages;

- Ensure that animal welfare standards are adhered to for any animal produce purchased;

- Communicate our commitment to serving sustainable food to customers, staff and suppliers;

- Work with suppliers to progress our sustainability agenda;

- Participate in Cambridge's efforts to become a Sustainable Food City. Showcase good examples and practices across the University that support the aims and objectives of this Policy.

Food Waste

- Maintain a sustainable waste management policy to include;

- Oils being recycled into bio-fuel;

- Only using recyclable packaging and encourage suppliers to minimise theirs;

- Only using biodegradable chemicals for cleaning;

- Recycling all delivery packaging;

- Disposing of food waste in an ethical and sustainable way;

- Communicating waste levels and reduction action plans to the Environment Committee;

- Placing food waste recycling systems in all communal dining areas.

Committee Members

Environment Fellow: Prof William Sutherland
(Miriam Rothschild Professor of Conservation Biology)
Catering Representative : Robert Jonas
Buildings Representative: Peter Young
Bar Representative: Craig Driver
Housekeeping Representative: Sharon Goodchild
Procurement Representative: Sarah Swinburn
MCR Representative: Iacopo Russo
JCR Environmental & Ethical Representative: Chloe Newbold: