

# Energy awareness campaigns for staff and students key to carbon management success

## Carbon Management

**£119k**

annual cost savings

**709t**

quarterly CO<sub>2</sub> saving

## Business focus

Loughborough University occupies a single-site campus and is renowned for its teaching, research and sporting achievements. In 2008/2009, its centenary year, it won The Sunday Times “University of the Year” award. It was also awarded a First Class degree for its solid environmental performance in the People and Planet Green League 2008.

The University, keen to drive forward sustainable issues, engaged with the Carbon Trust in 2006/2007. This formulated a challenging Carbon Management Plan to reduce emissions by 15% by 2011. One of the resulting actions was to address the issue of staff engagement to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## Approach

Previously, an increase in energy consumption in student residences had led to the development of a student based energy awareness campaign. The campaign was run by Loughborough Students’ Union (through the Ethical and Environmental Officer), supported by the University Facilities Management team. During 2006/07 the campaign resulted in a saving of 145,000kWh of electricity worth £10,000. This success encouraged the University to develop a broader programme.

The resulting “It’s Better Off” staff energy awareness campaign was launched in February 2009 to raise awareness of the need to act on energy and carbon emission reduction. The campaign was rolled out with the full support of the Chief Operating Officer, and an Environmental Campaign Team was also formed – consisting of the Energy Manager, Energy Technician and Sustainability Manager.

## Gauging opinion

The campaign began with an online energy awareness survey, which received over 700 responses. These identified what staff thought of the University’s perspective on energy efficiency and climate change, and therefore what the awareness campaign needed to achieve.

The survey was also successful in directly recruiting approximately 150 staff as voluntary environmental champions. Their role is to encourage and advise colleagues on measures to save energy, water and other resources. They also report on opportunities for savings and initiatives to the Environmental Campaign Team.

These champions were provided with energy awareness support and training and tasked with cascading the energy and water efficiency message through to staff in all departments. This led to a range of communication initiatives and the establishment of a campaign website. The champions worked to gather information and suggestions from staff and these were fed back to the Environmental Campaign Team.

## Measuring awareness and motivation

Each survey respondent was given two scores based on their answers: one on awareness and one on motivation.

These were plotted on a grid, which provides a useful understanding of what's needed in terms of further work. The goal is to move people into the top right quadrant (high awareness/high motivation).

There are a number already in this quadrant, while a large number are in top left (low awareness/high motivation) as well.

It's relatively easy to move people from top left to top right, as the willingness is there but knowledge and awareness is missing.

The key findings were that:

- staff felt the University took climate change relatively seriously
- there was scope to improve the motivation and awareness of all groups of staff
- staff associate energy saving, recycling, travel and other environmental issues as one topic
- the most effective incentives will be those that:
  - make it easier to do the right thing
  - give feedback and recognise savings achieved
  - offer a walkabout with experts to identify issues
- the programme needs to convince people that their colleagues are motivated to save energy.

## Key measures

Having established a baseline in terms of consumption, and also general awareness of the issues, the University has since put in place a range of measures to help achieve its target of a 15% reduction.

- Energy awareness training and provision of a support and advice network has been developed for Environmental Champions.
- Electricity consumption profiles have been created for all campus buildings
- The "It's Better off @ Easter" campaign was run to encourage staff to turn off all non-essential electrical equipment on campuses over the Easter holidays.
- This included office equipment, vending machines, sports training and testing equipment, laboratory testing equipment and associated air conditioning/refrigeration
- A campaign website is fully developed.
- There was a front page article in "News at Loughborough" magazine and an ongoing slot in future editions to communicate sustainability.
- All staff emails and Loughborough notices are being used to communicate the campaign.

## Results

In the first three months of the campaign (February-April 2009) energy consumption at the University was 375,220 kWh less than the equivalent period in 2008 – saving £36,000 and 200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (tCO<sub>2</sub>). After 12 months, these savings had increased to 1.4 million kWh of electricity, just over 5% of the site's consumption, producing savings of 708 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> and £119k. This success has been recognised by top level senior management at the University.

The "It's Better Off @ Easter" campaign was also very successful with the electricity consumption for the Easter break in 2009 almost 18% lower than the consumption for the Easter break in 2008. This represents an additional financial saving of £4,200.



Loughborough University campaign team

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Participation in the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management service has raised the profile of carbon reduction. The resulting plan has set clear targets for our University and we are pleased with the cultural change, carbon and financial savings. ”

**Greg Watts**

Energy Manager, Loughborough University