

## **Bicton College – Sustainability Policy**

Bicton College, as the College of the Environment, is committed to minimising the environmental impact of its activities through adopting sound principles and implementing good practice, and by continuous improvement in environmental performance. The College will seek to develop an ethos of environmental responsibility in all its staff and students as well as in the management of its Estate, and in doing so, aim to become a sustainable community.

The Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) vision, as set down in From Here to Sustainability (2006), is that colleges will actively commit and contribute to sustainable development through responsible management of their resources, through the learning opportunities they deliver and their engagement with communities. Bicton College will ensure progress by responding to the LSC strategy and through implementation of its own sustainability policy and action plan.

This Sustainability Policy will act as a guiding document for all future improvements and is linked to all other College policies.

Accordingly, it is the policy of the College to:

1. Manage the College in a manner that reduces the impact of its activities on the local / wider environment, with emphasis on reducing its carbon footprint.
2. Seek cultural change through raising awareness of collective and individual responsibility in working towards achieving a sustainable college community.
3. Continually increase its knowledge base of sustainability issues
4. Consider the wider environmental impact of its spending decisions through seeking an appropriate balance between cost and sustainability.
5. Conform to and where possible exceed minimum legal requirements for reducing adverse environmental impacts.
6. Work with partners and external communities, to help promote sustainability within the local area and the SW Region.
7. Monitor and regularly audit its environmental performance and develop management systems that seek continuous, measurable progress.
8. Ensure that this policy and all reports and reviews of environmental performance, are communicated to all staff and students, and are available to the public.

The policy will be monitored by the Deputy Principal who will also be responsible for its implementation via the Sustainability Coordinator and other key staff.

In order to move further towards becoming a sustainable community the College will seek to achieve the following through its Sustainability Action Plan:

1. Develop targets for a reduction in energy use including the adoption of conservation measures and renewable energy sources.
2. A reduction in water usage through wise use and adoption of conservation measures.
3. A commitment to the wise choice of products and suppliers (as a partner in the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges Sustainable Procurement Project), within legal and financial constraints, which minimise negative environmental and social impacts.
4. Avoidance of use of environmentally damaging and hazardous materials and adherence to sensible working practices where use is unavoidable.
5. Minimisation of waste through sensible purchasing, reduced consumption and the adoption of efficient waste management and recycling methods.
6. Improving the quality of life on the campus through encouraging appropriate and considerate behaviour in relation to litter and anti- social behaviour.
7. Adoption of contingencies to reduce the environmental impact of transport / travel and to improve accessibility for all.
8. Enhancing the ecological and landscape value of the College estate and the community's knowledge and appreciation of its environs.
9. Adoption of best practice in new build and refurbishment projects, as set down by BREEAM, Ecohomes and NHER assessments.
10. Adoption and implementation of recommendations of the LSC for the dissemination of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through the college curriculum, induction procedures and informally through day to day demonstration of best practice.
11. Greater student involvement in management and decision making throughout the college.
12. Improved communication between all sections of the College community (students, governors, staff and partners), in order to promote shared responsibility, to celebrate achievement and success and to further improve quality of life at Bicton for all.
13. Inclusion of staff training / CPD covering sustainability issues and ESD, and coverage of policy and practice in staff induction.

## **Implementation and responsibilities**

A commitment has been made by the Governors and Senior Management Team to develop Bicton College as the College of the Environment. The appointment of a Sustainability Coordinator with a remit to develop policy and environmental initiatives, and establish a sustainability management system within the College was made in 2007/08.

The following organisations had provided baseline information on the College buildings, suppliers and services, underlining environmental impacts and legal obligations:-

- ❖ Devon Finance Services – Internal Audit Report – Environmental Issues - 2002
- ❖ Wastewatch – Resource Management in the Education Sector - 2003
- ❖ Envision – Initial Environmental Review - 2005
- ❖ Carbon Trust – Assessment of Initial Energy Saving Opportunities - 2005
- ❖ South West Water – Water Audit Report - 2007

Further auditing will need to be carried out in order to address specific issues, to regularly measure the College's Carbon Footprint and to allow a process of annual review. Further work will be required to create an up to date baseline against which progress can be measured and documented. Success will be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively.

## **Sustainability Action Plan**

The SAP will be a 'live' document that prioritises actions to achieve greater sustainability at Bicton College over the short and long term. It will be a document owned by the College community who will shape it, implement it and identify priorities. It will cover the three 'realms' identified by DfES – campus, curriculum and community but be divided according to areas of responsibility. Each section of the plan will:

- Identify its area of responsibility
- Provide a summary of relevant environmental legislation and areas of risk
- Provide any audits / baseline information
- Provide a headline indicator and monitoring mechanisms
- Identify the staff responsible
- Identify the actions already taken
- Identify the key targets in 2007/08
- Identify longer term targets

Some plans will be cross college (e.g. energy) some specific (e.g farm) and some may overlap. The College will regularly review its performance against targets set in the action plan and through national benchmarking. Areas of responsibility will be: energy; waste management; procurement; transport; buildings (refurbishment, maintenance, new build); estate management (including biodiversity); farm management; catering; welfare and curriculum.

In encouraging community participation, information will be disseminated through:

- The cross college newsletter and intranet
- The College website and prospectuses
- The Student Council and any sub groups / working groups
- The Sustainability Working Group reporting to CMT and SMT
- Hard copy in library

All new staff and students will be made aware of the College's Sustainability Policy and Action Plan and their responsibilities in supporting and creating a sustainable community, initially through induction procedures.

Key staff will be tasked to meet targets and to identify timescales and costs and, where appropriate, savings made. Some staff will be identified as champions and develop expertise in particular areas. Staff development will be a key area in 'building capacity' and enacting this policy.

All staff and students will need to 'sign up' to the policy and participate in the delivery of actions, if the overall aim of substantially reducing the College's environmental impact and establishing a sustainable community are going to be realised.

The Governing Body, Principal and Senior Management Team have a corporate role of providing leadership for the College's aim of becoming a sustainable community. This includes ensuring that:

- strategic decisions accord with the principles of sustainable development as set down in the College's Sustainability Policy
- management systems provide for the effective monitoring, auditing and reporting of the College's performance in becoming a sustainable community
- the College complies with this policy and appropriate legislative requirements

**The Senior Management Team** has a specific responsibility for ensuring that the Sustainability Policy is implemented within their own areas of responsibility and with all employees they manage. Directors / managers should ensure that adequate training, information and supervision are provided to ensure employees, contractors and visitors are aware of their environmental responsibilities.

Specific post by post responsibilities and line management will be documented in the Sustainability Action Plan.

## **The Sustainability Working Group**

This cross-college group will meet on a termly basis / as required to:

- supervise, monitor and review continued development and implementation of the College Sustainability Policy and Action Plan
- ensure that targets are met and that policy is applied consistently
- ensure effective communication on sustainability issues and performance throughout the College and with interested parties
- innovate and develop initiatives to help further the sustainability agenda and maintain momentum
- prepare reports to CMT and SMT including an annual progress report which provides recommendations for future action, financial estimates and any proposed revision of policy
- continue to encourage greater student involvement in the decision making process

Membership of SWG will comprise:

- a member of SMT
- the Sustainability Co-ordinator
- College sustainability champions
- Student Council representatives
- a College Governor
- co-opted members and guests e.g. local community representatives and external advisors

**The Student Council** will have an opportunity;

- to consider and contribute to the College Sustainability Policy and Action Plan
- support agreed actions and advise on implementation
- to provide feedback to the SWG on progress reports
- establish sub groups and working groups as appropriate to help further the College's sustainability agenda
- develop actions, projects and campaigns to further sustainable development
- elect representatives to serve on the SWG and other appropriate College bodies
- consider sustainability principles in its decision making