



# earth

The Newsletter of the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges

December 2011

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## Celebrating sustainability achievements at the Green Gown Awards 2011



University of Exeter Business School receiving their award for Courses. Go to pages 4 and 5 for the full article.

### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

#### Educational Members:

Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

ACT Training

#### Company Members:

Climate Consulting Ltd



If you want to write an article for earth please contact the EAUC office

## Still firmly on the agenda



On the one hand we have traumatic college and university funding cuts, deep instability

over student fees and a Government wavering on its green aspirations. On the other hand, the powerful LiFE Index has launched

providing us with salvation to account for and dramatically improve our sustainability performance, the most successful Green Gown Awards celebrating sector innovation and progress while at the same time the EAUC collaborated with colleagues in South Korea, Spain, Australasia and North America to put education at the heart of the Rio+20 earth summit next year. With our 312 members, the EAUC

is flying in the face of those who say that sustainability is off the agenda, a luxury we can no longer afford. Far from it - we cannot afford not to. Game on. Enjoy this edition of earth.

Iain Patton, EAUC, CEO

Please pass onto a colleague and recycle when finished

## Car sharing soars during *liftshare* week



**liftshare week**  
3-7 October

This year's *liftshare* week ran with the theme of 'rolling back the years', and the campaign proved a great success.

It was designed to remind people of when petrol prices only cost 37p per litre. Posters and other materials were created so *liftshare* week could be embedded within any 'green weeks' or environmental events such as Climate Week.

The University of Ulster had 129 people registering with their car-share scheme during the week. Sustainability Manager Adrian Davis, explains:

"*liftshare* week falls at an opportune time for us. Our car parks are under a lot of pressure,

so we took the opportunity to email staff and students highlighting the benefits of car sharing. These included easing the pressure on parking, reducing environmental impact and commuting costs. We were surprised by how easy it was to encourage people to register".

Adrian confirmed that they'll be keeping in touch with those who registered and will be developing the University's intranet pages with more information on sustainable travel.

Ali Clabburn, Founder and Managing Director at *liftshare* said, "We are delighted by the response to the campaign and hope to get even more institutions involved next year".

In just five days, nearly 6,000 new members signed up to the *liftshare* network. That's a lot more cars coming off the road, a lot less pollution, and a lot of money saved.

To find out more about car sharing, visit [www.liftshare.com](http://www.liftshare.com)

Why not find a car sharing buddy to travel to work, EAUC events or our 2012 Annual Conference?

Visit [www.eaucarshare.org.uk](http://www.eaucarshare.org.uk)



## Meet a Member – Maria Gilling



I became involved in sustainability in 2010 when I joined the LSIS Leadership Programme for Sustainability – yes, I came to it late! Prior to this I had little involvement in environmental sustainability, and a very meagre appreciation of the extent of the environmental, economic and social sustainability agenda.

As an English graduate whose ideal weekend is spent eating chocolate digestives, reading novels and watching old black and white movies; I just did not identify. I thought 'environmental stuff' was the realm of

amazingly talented scientists, committed environmentalists wearing walking boots and taking mountain walks every weekend, or people with admiration for biodiversity who watch birds and forensically measure changes in migration and nesting patterns – not me then, I always felt too unintelligent, too lazy or too busy for such pursuits!

Now I think I might be starting to get it. As an educator and a community college principal, I now understand that the sustainability agenda is everyone's agenda and a key function of my own education and business leadership. Sustainable practice has become central to my thoughts about business and my own economic sustainability responsibility, community and social responsibility; as well as my

responsibility as an educator to support the future prospects of all my college staff and learners of all ages. Although I have much to learn and understand, being an EAUC Member makes me feel like I'm part of a community and I now approach sustainability in a way that just makes good, practical business sense.

In 2011, Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC) was awarded a Princes Trust Sustainability Award and in September I was awarded a West Midlands Green Leader Award. Just shows what you can do, even if you don't have the right kit!

Maria Gilling,  
College Principal at WACC

# Legal Spotlight

## Changes to the regulation of radioactive substances

Recently, the most substantial change to UK legislation affecting universities and colleges has been the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Amendment Regulations 2011, updating the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

The new regulations primarily replace Schedule 23 (Radioactive Substances Activities) of the 2010 regulations, which defines whether substances are exempt from requiring a permit for keeping and using radioactive substances or apparatus, or for disposing of radioactive waste. Universities and colleges often operate equipment

containing radioactive substances for teaching and research. Exemptions are possible for some users of small quantities of radioactive substances, either open sources or sealed sources, and for the disposal of small quantities of radioactive waste.

It is advised that any institution holding radioactive sources, or disposing of radioactive waste, require staff members with technical knowledge of the equipment to review the new Schedule 23 to the regulations.

Institutions currently holding an exemption may find that a permit is required where one has not

been previously; thus will need to apply for the permit or comply with a new exemption by 1 April 2012.

Mary Garwood  
Graduate Environmental Consultant  
[www.waterman-group.com](http://www.waterman-group.com)



More details on permits and definitions can be found in the waste section of the EAUC Resource Bank

## Breathing LiFE into universities and colleges

Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) was successfully launched to UK universities and colleges on 1 November. The EAUC has been working on developing LiFE with direct support from HEFCE, HEFCW, SFC and DELNI as well as input and feedback from key individuals across the sector.



Sign up now and you get a Member discount!

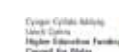
Sarah Hayward, Project Manager for LiFE, notes: "The support we have had has been critical. Not only have people participated in advisory panels and feedback sessions, we have also been invited to present at a number of regional meetings and conferences. There has been genuine positivity and enthusiasm

from a wide range of people and we're really grateful for everyone's involvement."

Evidence of success has come in a variety of ways. "First of all, we have been overwhelmed by the amount of people signing up to our online information webinars. We've had to add more dates and we're still getting a great response," Sarah continues. "We also had a number of institutions

ask to sign-up to participate in LiFE, some of which asked before we had the facilities in place for them to register!"

EAUC Members qualify for a special discount on LiFE. For more information, please visit [www.thelifelifeindex.org.uk](http://www.thelifelifeindex.org.uk) or contact Sarah Hayward on [shayward@eauc.org.uk](mailto:shayward@eauc.org.uk).





# Celebrating sustainability achievements in the education sector at the Green Gown Awards 2011

Now in their 7th year, the Green Gown Awards (GGAs) were founded in 2004 by the Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement project and have grown in reputation and stature every year.

With a record number of entries in 2011, there has been a marked increase in the numbers and types of institutions as well as staff per institution attending. The evening had an incredible atmosphere; individuals at the forefront of sustainability in their institutions were mingling with one another celebrating achievements in this field. The GGAs are firmly established as the most prestigious recognition of sustainability excellence in the further and higher education sectors.

This year's Awards, hosted by journalist and presenter Krishnan Guru-Murthy, were a resounding success and a fitting celebration for the pioneering environmental

and sustainability initiatives that have been championed in the education sector. Winners and highly commended awards were bestowed across 13 categories and guests from universities and colleges from across the UK were joined by leading figures from institutions such as Higher Education Funding Council for England, Universities UK, the Guardian Higher Education Network and the Carbon Trust to commend visionary projects that are pushing the environmental best practice boundaries.

EAUC Chief Executive Iain Patton describes the GGAs as a shop window for environmental and best practice, stating that "although

it is a challenging and anxious time for universities and colleges, this year's winning and highly commended entries demonstrate not only that innovative institutions are taking successful action to minimise their environmental footprints and enhance their social contribution, but also that this is often accompanied by other organisational benefits. The financial savings from many sustainability actions are certainly compatible with the belt tightening that seems inevitable in future years. It is therefore all the more important the whole sector learns from the successes of the Green Gown Awards' winning and highly commended entries".



### Winning entries included:



South Lanarkshire College – Low-energy, low-carbon future-proofing of the curriculum

South Lanarkshire College's project set out to design and build an affordable, low-energy, low carbon house on campus in partnership with 50 private-sector companies, whilst also changing their curriculum to embed low-energy and low-carbon approaches in construction as well as incorporating sustainability into all lesson plans.



London College of Fashion – Fashion Education in Prisons photo shoot

London School of Fashion's 'Fashion Education in Prisons' project was an excellent example of education reaching out and creating a meaningful and effective partnership. It was achieved in often difficult and trying circumstances and was a win-win activity for all involved. Whilst small scale, the judges felt that the programme was effective in broadening the horizons of staff, students and the often-neglected female prisoners themselves.



Salford University – Energy House

Salford University's 'Energy House'; Europe's only full-size fully functioning house, which has been reconstructed to replicate the UK's hard-to-treat properties in a fully controllable climatic chamber.

Although the Awards ceremony is now over, acknowledgement of the hard work by winners and entrants doesn't stop here. We'll be incorporating case studies and lessons learnt into our CPD events programme – so watch this space!

### Thank you to all our sponsors:



# Opinion

## IEMA Competency Framework for Environmental Professionals

We are in challenging and changing times for the sector. Mounting pressure from a range of sources – including student numbers, increasing scrutiny regarding performance and carbon reduction strategies – are being faced by environmental practitioners (EPs) working in the sector.



I read about EAUC's LIFE (Learning in Future Environments) tool with great interest in earth's October issue, and it reaffirmed the importance of sustainability in the sector. I also think it highlights the crucial role that EPs have in these organisations; influencing the site, curriculum and ultimately the organisation's future sustainability.

So, how do practitioners – from Site Facilities Managers through to Sustainability Directors and those responsible for greening the curriculum – ensure that they have the right knowledge and skills to be effective in their roles?

This was the question we asked ourselves at IEMA and we made a strategic decision to address it and find answers. It resulted in the publication of the **Environmental Skills Map** ([www.iema.net/skills](http://www.iema.net/skills)) in June 2011. For the first time, the Skills Map provides EPs and organisations with clarity about the knowledge and skills required to be an effective EP – regardless of the sector they work in.

The Skills Map covers five broad levels (including Graduate or Non-Graduate entry, Operational, Managerial and Leadership) with specific consideration given to those in specialist technical environmental roles. It addresses Knowledge and Understanding; Analytical Thinking; Communication; Sustainable Practice; and Leadership for Change. Now EPs have been provided with a tool to plot where they are on the Skills Map to enable them to plan their own personal professional development.

IEMA's work on environmental skills clearly demonstrates that EPs with a strong foundation of environmental knowledge, complemented with good management and leadership skills are the ones making the greatest difference.

The Skills Map is not only beneficial for those working to improve the sustainability of a site or campus, it is also an essential tool for those teaching or studying environmental topics, guiding and influencing the career development of future environmental practitioners.

There is also an opportunity to use the framework, developed in consultation with employers, to ensure that those entering environmental roles after completing a degree or training programme are equipped with the knowledge and skills that employers have told IEMA they need.

**Claire Lea, Director of Membership Services, Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA)**



Claire is an EAUC Member Advisory Council representative so she'll be adding her vast insight on our 2012 CPD and events programme

# Exeter College: a learning journey

When Exeter College started their sustainability journey over a year ago with a sustainability audit, they flew out of the starting blocks and have barely stopped since then. This is the final piece of their journey in earth.

So much has been achieved...

The Head of Sustainability secured funding to develop the College Urban Garden, for which a project leader was appointed, and soon after it signed up to the Association of Colleges (AoC) Green Declaration.

Meanwhile, the IT department were busy virtualising servers and gaining impressive control over the shut-down ability of individual PCs around the College to reduce energy wastage.

The Sustainability Forum, made up of staff, students and College partners have been working on various projects including improving the visual identity of waste collections, and communicating that mixed-recycling which is sorted off-site, is indeed being recycled!

Working towards Fair Trade status is well underway, and it seems the College really is unstoppable now.

It never is all plain sailing, surely?

No success comes without struggles, and Exeter College have had challenges throughout their journey but managed to not let them get in their way. The most significant test on the College community's commitment to sustainability happened during a change in leadership of the sustainability programme. The original ambassador of sustainability took a position at another College from Christmas 2010 but it was not until the following April that the role of Sustainability Ambassador was awarded to the Head of Estates, Steve Strang. Work continued in this time, but admittedly, progress on the projects was "slow" in the four month gap and longer-term planning on some projects hit a "hiatus". The fact that the College continued as before is testimony to the enthusiasm, engagement

and empowerment of the staff at the College. Commitment made by the senior management by signing the AoC commitment in November 2010 also helped to reassure staff that the gap would only be brief. As one member of staff reported in late January 2011, "with no sustainability leader since Christmas, things are slow here, but we are promised a replacement soon". Steve was quick to get things back on track and reflects that "yes, a handover would have been better, but we are continuing with renewed enthusiasm".

Inevitably, behind every tale of success are highs and lows. As they embarked on their journey, Exeter College were keen that others could learn from their experiences, and have been generous in doing so. Look out for more on Exeter College's Learning Journey on SORTED including a series of interviews with key staff involved in sustainability developments.

Find Exeter College on SORTED

## Save the date!

Open for delegate bookings on 9 January 2012

We are excited to be returning to the University of York for our 16th Annual Conference. Our Conference

ethos is to offset all carbon emissions from the activities related to the Annual Conference directly to the venue. In 2011, this was achieved by a donation to the University of York, who have planted an 'EAUC tree' on their Heslington East campus. Read more about how we're creating a sustainable 2012 conference on our website.

Over the next few months, we'll be busy planning the 2012 Annual Conference programme so look out for the latest news in the next issue of earth and our website.



EAUC 16th Annual Conference to be held on 27 - 29 March 2012 at the University of York

# Printing that doesn't cost the earth

Although we print the bare minimum, it's vital that we set the standard for sustainable printing. EAUC Member Park Lane Press (PLP) will have the honour of printing earth in the future. PLP has demonstrated their green credentials through their progressive vision and successes in this industry. Time, effort and capital have all been invested to achieve as many environmental

accreditations that they can (such as EMAS and ISO14001), in support of their ethos and working methods. Specialising in waterless printing, PLP also operate under numerous best practice processes; including using 100% renewable energy, pure carbon offsetting and using vegetable inks only. In short, it is very exciting to have them on board as they certainly reflect the EAUC's vision and practice.



For more information on Park Lane Press, please visit their website on [www.parklaneexpress.co.uk](http://www.parklaneexpress.co.uk)

## EAUC Boardroom developments



We'd like to welcome our new EAUC Wales Branch Convenor, Dr Katrina Henderson, who takes over from Derek Jones.

Thank you to Derek for your work and commitment to the Wales branch.

"Hello! In the early days, the branch was a gathering of Welsh universities and colleges sharing problems and ideas. I would like to return to these founding principles of working together wherever possible and expanding the excellent work of the Energy Efficiency group which evolved out of the branch. I believe that in these times of increased challenges in driving the sustainability agenda forward, we can learn from our colleagues in the further education (FE) sector and aim to increase our FE membership to this group."

**Do you want to join the board? Email [info@eauc.org.uk](mailto:info@eauc.org.uk)**

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## Generating income through recycling books



Several of you already contribute through this EAUC scheme (from individual departments, libraries or their own students). A collection box is provided by Better World Books (BWB) and picked up from you when you're ready, free of charge.

Moreover, for every book they sell you receive a payment. The amount depends on the volume of books you give and the ones they sell. This has really taken off in the US and with a new American Managing Director in the UK, we're looking forward to learning from their experience.

There are several good reasons to get involved, from recycling to income generation. BWB are managing this scheme, so please mention the EAUC when you donate your books.

**Happy 3rd Birthday to BWB**



To recycle your books, visit our Member-only offers page