Sustainability Forum

December 14th, 2015, 12:30-1:30

**Panel:**

Dr Mark Ormerod, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Environment and Sustainability

Dr Zoe Robinson, Direct of Education for Sustainability

Huw Evans, Environmental Manager

Ethar Sirelkhatim, Environmental Officer

**People present:** 25

# Introduction

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| Mark Ormerod | * Is providing and introduction to cover what Keele is doing and explore what everyone can contribute to what Keele is doing to be more sustainable.
* Green Impact is to move from being more ‘toolkit-ty’, and move towards taking more innovative action.
* Sustainability is a big part of the new strategic plan. This is not just research into sustainability or courses about sustainability, but rather a whole institution approach to sustainability. However, there is work to be done inside and outside the curriculum with the aim for students to leave with a better understanding about sustainability. We are also making our day-to-day operations more sustainable.
* Keele is also moving to be a more externally-facing organisation. Part of this is by developing partnerships with other credible universities
* KILAS is a new initiative of Keele based around Keele Hall to increase its academic use and as well as commercial use. It will host new interdisciplinary programs and ‘grand challenges’ lecture series.
* Substantial funding has been secured and is being bid for to support the establishment of a Smart Energy Network Demonstrator (SEND).
* There is also being work done on Sustainable Procurement and we are increasingly directing investments towards more ethical investing sources
* People present were invited to ask questions about what you may not know about or what you think we need to do
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| Zoe Robinson | * We also received the NUS’s Responsible Futures accreditation by embedding sustainability throughout the organisation. It was a pilot year for the scheme and we received double the number of points for the threshold of accreditation.
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# Discussion

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| Emma Hedges, Keele SU Activities Team | **Activities has benefitted from the SPOs, but now they are moving on. What are the plans to replace them?** |
| Zoe Robinson | There were 3 part time SPOs, two working across student-facing projects, and one working across student-facing projects and estates. She would like to see a full time person, working across estates and student-facing activity. Ideally, there would also be rolling 12 month internships to provide extra support. However, this still needs to go to an executive meeting. |
| Mark Ormerod | In the past the SPOs were the right thing to do at a lower level, but now the time is right to make it into a full time role. Sustainability tends to attract high-quality people because there aren’t that many jobs.There is also potential to link our sustainability work to an apprenticeship levy, so it may be possible to support apprenticeships and contribute to sustainability work in a win-win type of situation. |
| Zoe Robinson | In the meantime contact Zoe about sustainable student activity. |
| Jen Strong, NUS | Green Impact/Student switch off scheme will take place as normal, so contact Jen or Huw with regards to those. |
| Ruth Chell Customer Service Manager for Library | **The library has received complaints about a lack of heating given the big windows, and this is a sustainability issue, given that the library is a 24 hr building. While understand the financial limits, what are the plans for improving the windows?** |
| Huw Evans | There is an action plan for window replacement across campus. The problem is that there is money spent from revolving green fund at Keele, but the criteria means there needs to be a 5 year payback, and windows are a 20 year payback. With increasing efficiency there will be more opportunities for other projects with longer payback. Water efficiency in Lennard Jones has been improved using other funding, so there is scope for other funds to be used for these projects too. |
| Mark Ormerod | There is a new addition being built on to Huxley, so the rest of Huxley will be improved in terms of energy efficiency at the same time. So this is an example of how energy efficiency is being addressed.24hr opening hours is great for student experience, but you can’t expect people to be in at 4am when it’s freezing. However low energy lighting through revolving green fund was implemented in the library. |
| Zoe Robinson | But it’s important to keep asking about these things. |
| Huw Evans | The University should publish masterplan for priority areas in terms of refurbishment. |
| Zoe Robinson | The University could also do more to communicate what is being done already. |
| Mark Ormerod | There are some ‘invisible’ improvements that are being done, and windows are just a very visible aspect of energy efficiency. There are improved boilers, and they radically improving energy efficiency and lowering our overall CO2 emission production. |
| Julius Sim, MacKay Building | **Walking through Chancellors you could turn off many lights in the buildings. What can we do about improving sensor-lighting in these areas?** |
| Huw Evans | Huw says he’ll feed this to the energy team. The payback of these improvements is subjective so we can’t know how much they improve energy efficiency with certainty. We need to have sensored lighting with an override switch as well, to turn them off when they aren’t needed. |
| John Hegarty, Psychology | **Why is energy use so high on weekends? We can’t figure out how the energy data on the TV screens in Dorothy Hodgkinsis calculated.** |
| Huw Evans | The data that goes on the screens is loaded by the AV team. We need to do an out of hours investigation of energy use, an energy audit.A new energy manager will be coming in Jan/February, to look at the assets and what creating the high levels energy out of hours. |
| Zoe Robinson | DH might be a good place to start looking at energy audits. |
| John Hegarty | John wants to figure out what can and can’t be controlled – It’s no use sending that information out unless it can be used to improve the sustainability of building by the people in it (e.g knowing how much energy a kettle consumes, and so on). |
| Zoe Robinson | **What happened to the water tap in Chancellors?** |
| Huw Evans | The tap was temporarily moved since they had to change the water supplier and now they have a meter to check on consumptions. |
| Bekki Laycock | **Can we link Blackout and Green Impact?** |
| Emma Hedges | Explains Blackout |
| Mark Ormerod | The aim is to make Green Impact less toolkit-ty, and audit-y while providing opportunities to do more innovative work. We need to be cautious about getting overzealous with switching-off. |
| Zoe Robinson | **What is the student perspective on sustainability at Keele and what is the programme of activities for this academic year?** |
| Ethar Sirelkhatim | In terms of the activities and areas to focus on during this year, they are four: promoting vegetarian and vegan food, develop the walled garden activities and the edible campus project, promote the food co-op and veg box schemes, encourage K:swap. |
| Zoe Robinson | **What are the issues that students experience around sustainability, e.g if there are any problems around accommodation and so on?** |
| Ethar Sirelkhatim | Students are very satisfied of what they are learning though the courses offered by the university. We would like to implement a compost collection scheme and glass recycling is not that easy. |
| Huw Evans | Glass recycling bins are available outside the Hall so f Residence, it would be needed a more effective campaign on raising the students’ awareness about them. It would be tricky to have food caddies since if they won’t be emptied appropriately and washed they could attract rats. |
| Philip Brown Accommodation Services Manager Hawthorns Hall | At the Hawthorn we had a big campaign on recycling glass explain to students about the issue of the contamination of the other recycled items. It has required effort to engage the students and to remind them continuously about it however it has been successful. We placed the bins on the ground floor so they are easier to access. Also other Halls should do the same.  |
| Philip Brown Accommodation Services Manager Hawthorns Hall | **What’[s happening about the card boards? There is a huge amount at the week end between the post room and the pizza boxes.** |
| ? | **Staff and students should be better informed about recycling schemes and what happens when items are recycled so people can understand better. It would be good to have a mandatory video with instructions** |
| Huw Evans | Something like that has been done by the university of Manchester. We might produce something similar as well. So far we only have videos on health and safety. |