ROBINSON COLLEGE

Sustainability Report

February 2018

This report is the first edition of the Robinson College Sustainability Report and covers activity in 2017 and early 2018 and plans for the year ahead.

The marginally revised format has come about as the responsibility for sustainability has moved increasingly to departmental management and away from the Environment Forum (EF). The EF continues to function but with reduced Terms of Reference which are set out later in the report. Responsibility for the setting and implementation of strategic goals in this area rests with the College Steward and Heads of Department directly.

Therefore, this report now provides an opportunity for Governing Body to be kept informed about developments within College generally as well as in respect of environmental sustainability in particular.

Housekeeping

Waste Disposal

This Lent Term we have changed the contractor who takes away our waste. Following various issues with the previous contractor, we have secured a good deal with a new waste company – Ellgia.

Ellgia Recycling pride themselves on providing a high quality innovative solution for all their customers waste management needs. They aim to establish the most cost effective, environmentally and efficient processes to improve performance. They can provide the College with a zero landfill solution, which is great for the College’s green credentials.

With the technology that supports their service, we will have accurate figures of our waste, which can be “tweaked” to achieve cost savings. Staff from Ellgia have run introductory sessions for College staff and will be returning in February to hold an information session for students.

Ellgia provide a zero landfill solution by recycling as much quality material as possible. All the mixed recycling is hand-sorted at their depot. The general waste goes through a mechanical sorting process to extract anything that can be recycled. The residue is then processed for RDF (refuse derived fuel) of which 90% goes into the National Grid.
**Fund raising**

Last year our fund raising efforts amounted to **£982.70**.

In April we held a coffee morning to raise funds for the British Heart Foundation which raised **£246.00** and in October our beginning of term sale raised **£50** for Lennox Childrens Cancer Fund and **£686.70** for Little Miracles. Little Miracles is a charity that supports families that have children with additional needs, disabilities and life limiting conditions.

**Printer Cartridges**

Over the last year the College has recycled or re-used 35kg of printer cartridges, 67 items in total. Of these 70% were reused and 30% were recycled in their component parts. We received £7.95 for the items that were reused.

**Cleaning Chemicals**

In a bid to reduce the number of plastic bottles, and consequently reducing the carbon footprint by decreasing the amount of items on deliveries, we are currently trialling a concentrated chemical dosing system. If we go ahead and roll out the system we will be reducing the number of plastic bottles we buy by at least 50%. This year we have also started to phase out the use of aerosol containers as these are now considered as hazardous waste. That means they must be disposed of in a specific way and we must obtain relevant waste transfer certificates. We will use up any current stock but will no longer be purchasing cleaning products in aerosol containers. We will continue to review our cleaning methods and systems to find cost savings that will also be better for the environment.
Catering

In 2012 we begin to seriously look at our landfill waste. We were shocked to learn that 80 black bags full of waste were being dumped every week!! With training, re-cycling, courses, research and determination, now we are only sending 8 bags per week. As from 2018 we are changing our waste collector to Ellgia Recycling innovation, who will recycle everything they collect, which means zero tolerance to landfill waste. So that’s great news!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bags</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Checkit and Cambridge City Council partner to transform UK food safety’

In 2017 the Robinson College catering department were proud to join the leader in automated monitoring and work management solutions across food, safety and facilities management. Checkit is in partnership with Cambridge City Council in a flagship initiative to develop a next generation cloud-based food safety management system, which will revolutionise food safety compliance.

Checkit has allowed us to:

- Automate the routine checking of temperatures on food storage, creating alerts if conditions fall outside the required range, allowing managers to take action straight away
- Replace paperwork and checklists with apps, online data storage and reporting
- Automatically schedule work for team members through the day, prompting them when its due and alerting when things are missed
- Easily train team members due to its clear, easy to use smart handheld device (Memo)
- Be ready for EHO and other inspections with structured, up to date records.

As a result Robinson has:

- Saved considerable time each week on paperwork and manual checks reducing the paper trail
- Improved management visibility of compliance and confidence that the right things are being done at the right time
- Safeguarded its reputation for food safety and good practice
- Become even more environmentally friendly.
Robinson College Green Challenge for the Catering Department

Sustainable food policy

- During 2017 we have reduced the ruminant (e.g. beef and lamb) from the Garden restaurant menus, formal halls and other menus by over 25%. This is a target we hope to exceed in 2018
- Increase the vegetarian and vegan foods across all our food outlets
- Continue to source locally produced products in order to sustain the local economy
- Minimise food waste by shrewd ordering and utilisation
- Use free range or any animal produce purchased ensuring that animal welfare standards are adhered to
- Work with suppliers that only provide sustainable fish, as per ‘sustainable fish cities’ policy Robinson College signed up to in 2016
- Use as many fairtrade products, where possible, across all our food outlets
- Increase communication to staff, customers and suppliers showing our commitment to sustainable food

As a result of our ‘green impact’ commitment, Robinson College is now F gas registered.

New F-gas Regulation from 2015

The original F-gas Regulation, adopted in 2006, is being replaced by a new Regulation adopted in 2014 which applies from 1 January 2015. This strengthens the existing measures and introduces a number of far-reaching changes by:

- Banning the use of F-gases in many new types of equipment where less harmful alternatives are widely available, such as fridges in homes or supermarkets, air conditioning and foams and aerosols; preventing emissions of F-gases from existing equipment by requiring checks, proper servicing and recovery of the gases at the end of the equipment's life.
In accordance of best practice, Robinson College is totally free from using any endangered Fish/shellfish on any of our menus.

Sustainable Fish Pledge

This certificate is to recognise that Robinson College

has signed the Sustainable Fish Cities pledge and promises to work with suppliers to serve only sustainably sourced fish.

Signed:

Bev Sedley, Chair of Cambridge Sustainable Food

CAMBRIDGE sustainable food
Let’s make Cambridge a Sustainable Food City
www.cambridgesustainablefood.org
A note from the Student Green Officers

2017 marked the third year in a row in which Robinson have achieved the gold award in the intercollegiate Green Impact challenge. Whilst already meeting the majority of the challenge’s criteria for the award, the college departments managed to build on previous years’ work to put themselves amongst the highest scoring teams taking part. To quote the report directly: “With collaboration between different parties, [Robinson] managed to accomplish a high number of actions that could not be achieved without such a strong foundation in the college”

Other projects pursued in 2017 included participation in the Student Switch Off campaign (also run by the National Union of Students), which primarily aimed to reduce students energy and water consumption through quizzes and photo competitions, as well as promoting other green habits such as proper recycling etc. The challenge culminated with Switch Off Week, during which the staff and students managed to reduce their energy consumption by 5.6%, helping us to be awarded a silver award overall - a stellar effort for our first year of participation!

With the beginning of the Michaelmas term, the Green Officer has focused on the reduction of students’ food waste in college. The online Robinson College Community Fridge has been set up and widely used to encourage students to share food rather than dispose of it. Additionally, students have been encouraged to become more active in the wider Cambridge community, with the promotion of local events such as the Repair Café, Food Cycle, the Divest Campaign and other sustainability events held locally and within the University. Looking forward to the next term, we hope to build on our Green Impact success of last year and push on towards achieving the Platinum level award this year.

Written by
Monty Matson & Alice Gilderdale
Gardens

As before, we continue to chip woody material to save on skips, log up larger wood & pass on to staff & fellows. Also composting where we can avoid broadleaf weeds, which also saves on skips & going back into the soil, improves structure & quality for growth of plants. We re-use pots, canes, stakes & ties unless beyond saving.

Over the last couple of years RBCB has started bringing their spent coffee grounds to us. We put these on the compost heap as, apparently, they hold nitrogen which is vital for healthy plant growth. On average this amounts to a large waste bin per week not filling up wheelie bins.

We now source the College supply of Xmas trees (5) from a grower near Ipswich, thereby reducing the carbon footprint created by transporting from Holland to distributor to us.

The department continues to use Aspen alkylate petrol in our 2 stroke machines. “This was initially developed for work health reasons, contains virtually no harmful substances such as benzene, aromatic hydrocarbons, polyaromatic hydrocarbons or olefins. Ordinary petrol contains around 100 substances including these harmful ones but Aspen petrol only has around 10 of the least harmful. This means that health risks from exposure to petrol fumes and exhaust fumes are minimised.”

Aspen 2 for 2 stroke machinery “improves machine performance & ensures a longer service life. The cleaner petrol means in turn, a cleaner engine with fewer deposits.” The machines produce no clouds of oily smoke & very little smell.

The Head Gardener is still monitoring the development of battery powered machinery & when he considers it to be practical for our purposes he will look into the purchase of suitable machines.
More generally 1.5 tonnes of computer recycling was collected and processed by Cambridge Computer Recycling, comprising of old equipment no longer serviceable and a number of old machines brought in by staff, students and Fellows.

All of the departments packaging for items were separated for recycling, and toners and ink cartridges, and batteries deposited into the College recycling bins provided by housekeeping.

All printers are set to print duplex and black only by default where at all possible, and power settings set to be power down the machines when inactive.

Over the last 12 months the department has replaced the entire network switch infrastructure, that support new energy saving features such as being able to power ports down whilst devices are in a power save state. The old switches that these replaced were offered to the rest of the University and were all claimed, to save them having to be disposed of.
**Maintenance**

The maintenance department along with appointed contractors have undertaken a significant amount of modernisation projects over the last 12 months. The following report shows a few examples of some of the key projects tackled and attempts to explain the benefits of such projects.

**E Staircase Refurbishment**

As part of our rolling programme of improvements, the installation of private pods to the top 2 floors allows each student their own showers, toilets and washing facility within their own rooms. Removing the baths from the previously shared areas allowed us to combine the areas for back to back pods. The pods are now fitted with flexible hoses for ease of cleaning.

The frame going in for the first of the pods.  

Insulations installed between walls and above ceilings for both sound reduction and energy passage. We also looked at the most functional layouts for the rooms with Pods.

Thermostatic heating vales were installed on each radiator in all rooms allowing better control for the occupier.

E staircase windows showing on the right hand side of this picture from the gardens shows very little heat loss in comparison to the bright orange showing on the left hand windows on F staircase which is planned for refurbishment.

Looking at E and F from Herschel court with the bright orange showing the energy loss on F. The obvious improvement also shows on E with a lack of condensation whereby F has considerable condensation on both panes.
**Energy Management**

As a part of our on-going monitoring process we now receive a heat map from our energy provider which enables us to see and evaluate the use of the energy within the main college. This is a small sample showing the highest use in the darker red.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>3am-6am</th>
<th>6am-9am</th>
<th>9am-12pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03:00</td>
<td>03:30</td>
<td>04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The externals of the rear of the house were tackled in 2016, this year became the challenge of bring the front into line.

The project consisted of the removal of the old broken down PVC double glazing which was replaced with new Aluminium powder coated frames with upgraded glazing.

The front rendering was in such poor condition that the patchwork had to be painted in order to enhance the front of the building.

The windows to this façade were also replaced to upgrade the U values for the building in general.
**6 Adams Road - Internal + External Decoration**

Refurbishment to include full rewire

Changes to regulations required that the staircases were all upgraded to include handrails and stair nosings the contrast against each other to ensure visually impaired are able to use the facilities.

Replacement of the old lean-to turned out to be bigger job than first thought. The timber frames and boxings were all found to be full of wet rot. The roofing to the porch/lean-to was replaced with Aluminium struts. External decorations brought the house appearance back to a good standard.
Thorney Creek House – Bathroom Renovation (in-house team)

The ground floor bathroom was in a terrible state and had significant dampness on the external window wall. Once we took down the ceiling we found an old pipe connection that had deteriorated on the underside and was leaking badly. Once fixed the walls were allowed to dry out and the maintenance team set about the task of bringing the room up to a good usable standard.

By using sheet materials we were able to bring the walls to an easy to clean surface without the need to re-plaster the original walls.

Condensation had become a problem above the bath due to the shower and the height of the ceiling.

Lowering the ceiling also allowed us to install an easy washable surface again without the need to break out the existing plaster. It also allowed us to run our cables and wires without chopping into the existing fabric of the building.

The replacement ceiling in place but not quite finished.

The finished product.
**4a Sylvester Road**

Remove cladding and replace with new cementine board and new insulation as used in 1A Sylvester Road

The woodpecker had enjoyed boring holes through the old timber boards for some time and had caused considerable headaches for the maintenance team. The boards became unrepairable in places which created the need for replacement.

**Staff Cycle Store**

A new area was created to encourage staff to cycle to work. The area has space for 20 cycles, this equates to 20% of our workforce. The area is well used and provides the staff with a safe clean storage area for cycles.
**Male/female staff changing room re-decoration.**

The very tired changing facilities for the catering staff were upgraded by our in-house team in late summer 2017. The wall tiles etc had become generally aged and damaged. The challenge was to bring the facility to a good usable standard.

The new showers give a nice clean and very usable/washable finish.
Environment Forum

During the course of 2017, the EF introduced an annual Legal Compliance Checklist and all relevant departments completed their reports according. This checklist covers all of the mandatory processes, procedures and action required of the College in respect of Enforcement; Waste and resource management; Producer responsibility; Air pollution and energy; Water; Land; Nuisance; Wildlife and countryside; Planning; Other factors. The determination of the College’s level of compliance rests with HODs and the College Steward and completed documentation can be view upon request.

Through the course of the year, the EF hosted a number of Environmental Awareness Workshops which all staff members were invited to attend. The workshops were generally well received by those who attended. The programme included a brainstorming session and a number of interesting ideas were generated the following of which have been developed further:

- “Turn off” signs on all light switches (in progress)
- Flatten all boxes – make signage clearer; all departments to do their own (New cardboard collection system in place.)
- Recycling point at the green noticeboard/photos? (in place)

Workshop content

What does “being Green” mean to you? How green are you?

What is The Environment?
Discussion about Climate change, Ecological footprint, Carbon management

Impacts of Environmental Change
Ecological footprint - Population change and resource consumption - Water as a resource
Global warming - The Greenhouse Effect - CO2 Emissions

Sustainable Development
What is Environmental Sustainability?
How does Robinson College contribute to the problems?

What is Robinson College doing already to reduce its impact upon the environment?
Environment Policy - Environment Forum
Initiatives and achievements
Discussion about what we are doing
Tour of the College to view some of the things in place

Group discussions
To identify ways in which each person/department can contribute to meeting the strategic goals – leading to action plan – improve existing.
As the strategic direction adopted by operating departments has become more focused and targeted, so the need for the EF to operate as before has diminished. Nevertheless, there is value in having a forum in which ideas can be shared and student and staff members can come together to achieve shared objectives. The resultant revision of the Terms of Reference are as below:

ROBINSON COLLEGE
ENVIRONMENT FORUM – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose statement
To assist with the implementation of the College Environmental Policy and to assist in achieving the overall goal to minimise the College’s carbon footprint.

Scope
The Forum will consist of a representative from all departments as required from time to time, the College Steward and the RCSA and MCR Green Officers.

The Forum will meet termly and will report from time to time to the Governing Body through the Finance Bursar.

Terms of Reference

1. To review and recommend any necessary updates of the policy to the Finance Bursar.

2. To contribute ideas and suggestions which, if implemented, would have a positive effect upon the College’s impact upon the environment.

3. To monitor and review performance in all the areas of activity outlined in the policy with a view to improving the results.

4. To manage registration of the College with relevant and appropriate “Green Schemes” and/or certification bodies.

5. To promote and advertise the College’s “green credentials”.

NSLM Dec 2017 v.4

Green News Noticeboard

Having a College environmental notice board is a great way of starting to communicate to staff, students and visitors on our green initiatives and can act as a central point of information as well as a visual sign of our commitment.

Our Green News Noticeboard is located at the top of the Garden Restaurant staircase and shows the latest Green news, events and awards that we have received. Both the College Administrator and Green Officers update the board to ensure it is both relevant and interesting whilst helping to raise awareness.

We have also set up a Green News Noticeboard on the College website. We try to upload appropriate stories and articles of relevance.
Porters’ Lodge

The Porters’ Lodge has continued to play an active part in the College Sustainability Plan through 2017 and into 2018.

Within the Lodge, we are making a conscious effort to reduce printing output, and we follow a strict procedure when dealing with any waste we have produced or arrives via courier, with clearly marked receptacles dotted throughout the Lodge for its disposal.

An area that has grown in recent years has been the daily delivery from Amazon and the various online courier’s, with on occasion in excess of 80 to 100 boxes of varying sizes arriving with anything from bicycles to books, all encased in cardboard. A conscious effort is also being made to reduce the amount of paper work produced.

As well as dealing with its own waste, the Lodge endeavours to educate the students passing through following an evening out to correctly dispose of various food wrappers (also helping to maintain the smart appearance of College).

Duty Porter will routinely note down and report any defective lights observed around the College whilst on patrol.
During the Conference period, information is displayed within the lodge informing guests of college procedure for disposing of any rubbish they have and also smoking areas within College.

We believe education is a key driver to improve the sustainability and environmental footprint of the College. As such whilst carrying out routine Security Patrols the Duty Porter will highlight areas that need action, leaving paper notifications or email. Particular attention is paid to ensuring lights are off, doors are closed in rooms and passageways not in use, to try and reduce our use of power. Further checks are carried over the night period of all kitchens to ensure cookers/hobs not in use are not left on (safety and environment).

Leaving a hostel window wide open, staircase doors open or the entrance to the Umney Foyer when the temperature is minus 5 outside is not a good use of the College heating system.
Thursday 22nd February saw the first of the new staff events organised by the Robinson College Social Committee. A group of 34 staff and their guests headed into London to see Andrew Lloyd Webber’s highly acclaimed, ‘School of Rock’.

Group discount tickets had been purchased from the Leicester Square Box Office and at £25 a ticket it proved to be excellent value for money for staff as the seats offered a premium view. The event was considered a great success and staff are keen that we look to running a trip to see another show next year. As the coach hired could seat 53, this event could be opened up to students and Fellows.

Other events planned by the Social Committee include:

- Robinson’s Got Baking Talent – Monday 26th February
- A Curry and Quiz night - TBC
- Summer tea party - Thursday 9th August
- Staff Christmas party – Thursday 20th December

The Social Committee are currently reviewing the format of the Christmas party to encourage more staff to attend. They are also keen to receive suggestions for other events that could be organised.