

Environmental / Sustainability Policy

Birkbeck College acknowledges that its activities have an impact on the environment, principally through energy use, waste and procurement. It will comply with all relevant environmental legislation and other requirements to which it subscribes. It will also take such additional measures as it considers necessary to reduce its impact including:

- Managing and conserving resources, including reducing energy use
- Preventing pollution where possible, promoting product reuse, waste reduction and recycling
- Working with College suppliers through the procurement process to minimise the environmental impact of the supply chain and promote sustainable development
- Supporting the Fairtrade campaign to help ensure that workers in developing countries are adequately protected and can build a more sustainable future
- Enhancing the biodiversity of the local area through the introduction of green roof and allotment schemes where feasible, and ensuring no net loss of biodiversity in development projects
- Integrating environmental management policies and practices into every level and department of the College
- Implementing an environmental management system and actively work to obtain accreditation to a national or international recognised environmental management standard
- Preparing an annual report for the College Governors on progress in implementing this policy
- Sharing best practice with other institutions to enable more sustainable working practices across the higher education sector

Getting there...

There have been a number of improvement projects within the college and more are being set up all the time. Some of the things we have achieved so far include:

- Recycling ink cartridges and toner via the post room to raise money for charity
- Setting up an allotment project outside the Henry Wellcome Building
- Holding cycle maintenance workshops
- Increasing our recycling rate to 60% over the year
- Sending 0% of our waste to landfill (waste not recycled goes to make energy)
- Sending old books from the library to charity
- Committing to Sustainable Fish Cities and to be a Fairtrade college
- Set up an Environmental Management Group (committee to initiate projects)
- Encouraged staff to act as Green Champions and Green Teams to make their areas more sustainable
- Not purchasing bottled water in hospitality (We bottle filtered water on site to use in meetings)

There is still a lot more we could do. We want the college to keep getting better.

Have a look at the college's website and the shared website for the environment across the Bloomsbury Colleges to find out more.

Email: Greenthing@bloomsbury.ac.uk
Birkbeck website: www.bbk.ac.uk/sustain
Bloomsbury Website: www.bloomsbury.ac.uk/greenthing

You can also sign up for our regular newsletter and/or to become a Green Champion and help make your area or team more sustainable.



Birkbeck, University of London



Greenthing

Improving environmental performance at the Bloomsbury Colleges

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What can you do

For more tips or information about any of these areas or to find out how you can get involved in sustainability projects, email: Greenthing@bloomsbury.ac.uk

The college has set itself ambitious targets on energy and carbon reduction (e.g. reduce carbon emissions by 43% in 2020 compared to 2005), waste reduction and sustainable procurement.

There are projects in place but the college will not be able to meet these targets unless we all work together.

There are actions that each of us can take to improve the environmental performance of the college.



Energy

The easiest way to reduce the amount of energy used in the college is by switching things off when they are not needed.

- Switch off printers, photocopiers (sleep/standby mode still uses lots of energy) and lights at the end of the day (or if not needed) – ensure everyone knows it is the responsibility of the last person who leaves the office to turn shared equipment off
- Switch off your computer (and screen) each night and if you are going to be away from your desk for an hour or more. Your screen should be turned off whenever you leave your desk.
- Dress appropriately for the weather so that you don't need heating or air conditioning on
- Open windows before opting to use the air conditioning (but ensure windows are shut when using the air conditioning)
- Unplug mobile phone chargers and other equipment when they are not in use.



Waste and recycling

There are recycling points around all the college buildings. You can recycle almost everything you need in the bins available, except food waste (this is currently disposed of as general waste although we are looking into composting options).

- Blue bins for paper and card.
- Yellow bins for plastics, drinks cups and drinks cans.
- Red bins for glass.

Have a look at the Waste and Recycling A-Z on the college website for details of what you can recycle.

Make sure you have easily accessible recycling bins in or near your office, with clear labelling as to what can be recycled in them. Kitchen areas are a good place for these shared waste hubs.

Try and reduce the amount of waste as well as making sure you are using the correct bins

- Use reusable mugs and glasses (avoid disposable cups)
- Fill a bottle with tap water, rather than buying bottled water
- Reuse items rather than throwing them away
- Recycle used toner and printer cartridges by sending them to the post room
- Print double sided and two pages per side
- Make notepads from scrap paper that has been used on just one side
- Use reusable cutlery, plates, mugs and glasses for meetings
- Contact the Estates service desk if you need new furniture for your office or want to get rid of some. They try and store items so that others can make use of it.

Travel



If you spend money on the gym each month, travelling sustainably could take its place, offering a means of exercise as well as a more relaxed journey.

- Travel to work by foot, bike, or public transport (apply for an interest-free loan from the college for a new bike or public transport season ticket)
- Cycle, walk, or use public transport between college buildings and to meetings off-site—don't use taxis
- Sign up for free cycling training with the Greenthing to help you feel more confident on London's roads or to learn bike maintenance
- Check out the college's cycle scheme or interest free bike loans to help you start cycling
- Use webinars and conference calls to avoid travelling to meetings
- If you have to drive, try to arrange car sharing



Procurement

- Only buy what you need
- Buy recycled stationery for your office, eg. A4 paper, notepads, pens, etc.
- Share resources that you don't use often, eg. hole punches, staplers, scissors
- Make sure that electrical equipment has a good energy efficiency rating (A+ or A++)