

EMG ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Structure of the EMG

The Environmental Management Group (EMG) was formed in May 2007 to provide the College with a focal point in working towards the implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) – one of the major aims of Birkbeck's Environmental and Sustainability policy.

The EMG are working towards certification through the Acorn BS 8555 phased implementation approach, which allows the Group to break down the standard into manageable sections.

The adoption of an EMS will enable the College to move towards an agreed level of environmental certification in a structured and phased way. An EMS will ensure a level of understanding and engagement of the College staff, students and the wider College community.

A detailed organogram of the EMS structure can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.

As part of Birkbeck's Environmental and Sustainability policy it was agreed that the EMG would provide the Buildings Committee with an Annual Report on progress which would subsequently be reported through to Governors.

Key Impact areas

The EMG, through a detailed evaluation process, identified the following significant environmental aspects and associated impacts to be significantly relevant to the College's activities, products and services that it can control and over which it can expect to have influence:

- **Procurement**

The College does not operate a centralised procurement system nor does it employ a specific purchasing officer. In light of this, it was considered that this particular aspect of the College operation could be significantly improved upon to help reduce its' environmental impact; especially in such areas as the purchasing of electronic equipment, other items (stationary) and Business travel arrangements.

- **Electricity/Energy usage**

The largest impact relating to utility usage that affects the College and its operation is the amount of electricity that the College uses. This particular utility accounts for over 70% of the overall cost of utilities and almost 85% of CO₂ emissions across the estate.

- **Waste**

Much is being done in this area, especially in terms of the increase in the proportion of waste being recycled and the reduction in waste being sent to landfill. However, there is far more that can be done to ensure that the College diverts more from landfill and that the Birkbeck community is aware of their role in helping the College achieve its targets.

Achievements during 2009

The achievements of the EMG were wide and varied during its first year:

- It achieved its target of gaining BS 8555, Phase 1 re-accreditation for the College in June 2009.
- It addressed some of the key impact areas with its' main success being the reduction of waste going to landfill as well as the increase of waste being recycled across the estate. The success of the College recycling scheme is largely due to the implementation of paper recycling bins within all office and classroom space as well as the efforts of those members of the EMG responsible for Waste.
- The College Green website won a Green Light Environmental Award for environmental practice in the public sector. The awards were judged by a panel with representatives from the Environment Agency, Barclays Bank and *Business Info* magazine.
- The EMG and its aims are integrated within all Staff Induction days with the opportunity for all participants to contribute and discuss improvements and actions to move the College's environmental agenda forward.
- The EMG continued its' strong links with various external environmental bodies to collaborate towards developing "best practice" with like-minded institutions, such as:
 - Camden Climate Change Alliance was formed by Camden Council and organisations in Camden that are committed to reducing their carbon dioxide emissions and helping to tackle climate change. The College currently occupies a position as Advisory Board member.
 - Green500, who aim to work with organisations with the greatest carbon saving potential and therefore it is targeting large businesses and public sector organisations in London.

Objectives and Targets for 2010

Despite the obvious impact of the requirements of the Strategic Review upon the time available to members of the group, steady progress has been made during 2009 in consolidating the College's position with regards to the requirements of Phases 2 and 3. It was agreed that this year additional effort would be injected by all group members to ensure that the College is in a position complete its' move towards Phases 2 and 3 during 2010 at which point the main thrust of the Strategic Review should have subsided.

Therefore, the objectives and targets for 2010 have been refined to include the following:

- Gain re-accreditation for Phases 2 and 3.
- Continue to work with both the Camden Climate Change Alliance and Green500 to develop "best practice" environmental measures that can benefit all organisations.

- Establish a point of contact within the “New Schools” to encourage support for the EMG, Green Teams and main impact areas.
- Offset the impact of electricity use upon the environment by the College through the purchase of significant quantities of this utility from “green” sources to assist in the reduction of the College’s CO₂ reported emissions.
- Increase the awareness of the Birkbeck Community to the workings of the EMG and develop a general and group specific (such as Administrators, Cleaning Contractor, Maintenance staff etc) training packages to inform critical partners.

Data Summary

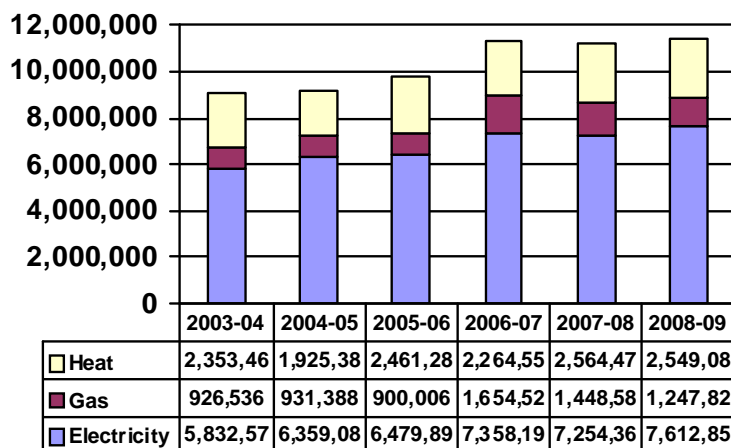
The data in this section illustrates how the College is progressing in dealing with the main aspects and impacts identified by the EMG.

Energy

Energy use and therefore by implication CO₂ emissions have been increasing across the estate since this type of data has been collated. However, since FY 2006-07 the usage level appears to have reached a plateau, as illustrated in the graph below.

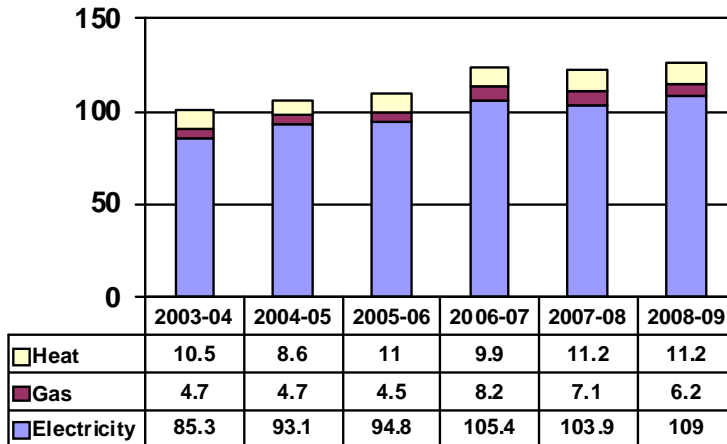
At present we are collating energy use data for FY 2009-10 to establish if this is a true plateau or whether this is simply a “blip”.

Annual Utility Usage (kWh)



Equally, it can be seen that CO₂ emissions are clearly growing, largely due to the increased consumption of electricity, although similar to usage CO₂ emissions have stabilized since 2006-07.

CO2 Emission (kg/m2)

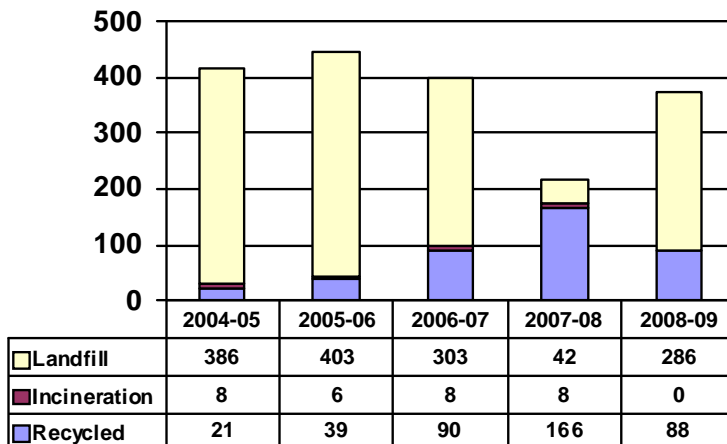


For the purpose of this report Water has been omitted from the graphical illustrations as its usage has been largely very stable at around 23,000 m³ per annum and hence its CO² emission impact is negligible, approximately 0.1 kg/m², when compared to the other types of utility the College uses.

Waste

It appears evident from the graph below that the figures being attributed to the recent success that the College has achieved in reducing waste during the period 2007-08 may well be inaccurate, as the latest figures below for 2008-09 indicate. It does still however, across the period, still indicate that the College is being successful in reducing the volume of waste going to landfill whilst the waste being recycled across the estate remains stable.

Waste Mass (Tonnes)



Conclusions

It can be seen that there is a clear improvement in some of the main aspects of the work being undertaken by the EMG, such as waste. The fact that the group continues to progress, albeit at a slower pace in 2009, is still notable as the group are wholly made up of volunteer staff members from wide and varied positions across the College who view this area of the College's business as extremely important from both an environmental and CSR perspective.

However, other areas, such as energy and procurement are not showing the same relative improvement. It is considered that the lack of improvement in these particular aspects is in the main due to the lack of dedicated individuals, able to take responsibility for these very specialised areas.

The EMG continues to be supported by a consultant on an adhoc basis to assist the implementation process; however, it is considered that more regular assistance to members of the group would provide better focus and impetus thereby increasing their effectiveness.

It is of further concern to the group that the legislative demands in the areas of procurement and energy are increasing to such a degree, such as the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) the College will have to enter into from the end of 2009, that again the specialised knowledge that will be required to trade energy certificates in the open market currently is unavailable from within the current staffing structure.

Recommendations

It is recommended that an Energy and Environmental Manager be employed to manage the increasing compliance expected under CRC and act as the EMG Co-ordinator to provide expertise, focus and encouragement to the EMG and its members.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - EMS Organogram

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP ORGANOGRAM

