

Winchester City Council Green Impact proposal

This proposal outlines a Green Impact programme to be developed by NUS and Winchester City Council (WCC), with support from local organisations including the University of Winchester. It will be delivered through WCC to organisations in Winchester.

Background

Green Impact is a change and engagement programme – it helps people understand sustainability and social responsibility, shows them what they can do to make a difference, and supports them in achieving these actions.

It has been developed over the last ten years, using social change theory and NUS' expertise to produce a cyclical model that works in all environments and workplaces, based on the themes of continual improvement, collaboration and meaningful change to establish new social norms and inspire people with the skills and passion needed to make a difference.

Each organisation that uses the Green Impact model develops their own bespoke programme creating a simple but sophisticated online tool to guide and monitor people's progress. Alongside is a dynamic, engaging support and communication package which is delivered in collaboration with students and NUS creating a community of people working together towards common, agreed goals.

Each year awards are given to teams within each programme adding light competition and a useful way of inspiring and recognising achievements. Students receive training to enable them to support and verify each programme aiding their own understanding of sustainability and social justice as well as their professional development.

Over 400 organisations have used the model to date to reach more than 100k people, 20k of whom have actively taken part in the programme. Over 2.5k students have been trained and participated too. For more information visit www.nus.org.uk/greenimpact.

Following meetings between NUS, Winchester City Council (WCC), the University of Winchester, and Winchester-based organisations, it has been suggested Green Impact would be ideal for WCC to deliver in Winchester, bringing a number of benefits to the council, the city and the organisations getting involved:

- Continue and build upon the good work in Winchester businesses that has been started through the Carbon Smart programme;
- Embed the sustainable practices and standards promoted by WCC into local organisations' procedures and estate;
- Forge closer links between Winchester-based organisations to promote networking, collaboration and community cohesion, including the Sustainable Business Network;
- Engage students in their local community and with potential future employers;

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- Raise the profile of Winchester and its community as a proactive, responsible city;
- Improve environmental impacts;
- Save money and reduce carbon emissions.

This document provides a suggested outline of how Green Impact could be developed and used by WCC to realise these benefits.

The key success factor behind Green Impact is that the model has been tried and tested, but for each new programme that is developed, it is moulded and adapted to the various stakeholders' needs. Therefore this document should be seen as a starting point that can be amended following further discussions to ensure it is fully fit-for-purpose in its design before launching.

How does Green Impact work?

Each cycle of Green Impact runs within a twelve month period (often, but not necessarily in line with the academic year). Each annual cycle consists of six main steps. These are repeated each year to promote continual improvement.

Due to the large number of stakeholders and potential participants, we suggest a 2 year programme with WCC. This will give us the time and flexibility to try out our plans, evaluate and edit them accordingly and come up with robust, tested future plans for the programme.

**Figure 1:
The Green Impact cycle**



Step One: Planning and toolkit development



An initial planning meeting will be held between WCC and NUS to agree objectives and plan the year ahead. A development workshop will be held between key local organisations who took part in Carbon Smart, as well as other key stakeholders and potential participants. Through this we will identify current areas of good practice, as well as common areas of bad practice. This information, alongside desktop research and our experience of working with other organisations will inform the creation of a draft toolkit of specific actions which NUS will draft for sign-off. Each action will be a simple, practical measure that an

organisation can take to improve its sustainability. The toolkit will cover all aspects of sustainability

(environmental, social and economic) under headings such as energy and water, waste and recycling, health and wellbeing, etc. They will be worded so they complement wider WCC policies and objectives and are relevant to as many types and sizes of organisation as possible. Some actions will be prescriptive, whereas others will allow each organisation freedom in how they approach them. We will also ensure that organisations' previous achievements through the Carbon Smart programme are taken into account. Once agreed, the criteria will be turned into an accessible, easy to use, online tool hosted on NUS' server. At this stage key communications, recruitment of further organisations and monitoring and evaluation will also be planned.

Step Two: Recruitment and launch



The programme will then launch with an event, possibly through the Sustainable Business Network. Organisations will be invited and encouraged to start using the toolkit to achieve as many of the criteria as possible. Key messages for recruitment will include opportunities to build on the work started by taking part in Carbon Smart, enhancing the organisations' reputations, financial and carbon savings the relationships that involvement will build, staff development and improving engagement with the local community and students. In the first year, a baseline survey will also be undertaken in all organisations taking part to enable their behaviours

and attitudes towards sustainability to be analysed for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

If the Project Assistant bolt-on is used, at this stage local students will be recruited from the University of Winchester and trained as Project Assistants. They will help implement the programme; visiting their allocated organisation(s) to add extra capacity and enthusiasm to their sustainability work whilst providing excellent opportunities for the students themselves. This will be offered as a six-month volunteering opportunity for the students who will benefit from training opportunities and professional work-based experience throughout their placement. In some cases, this opportunity may be directly related to their course. The actual nature of their placement will vary depending on their own interests as well as what would be of most use to the organisation(s) they are working with. Historically, Project Assistants have led on communications, monitoring impact, auditing and engaging staff.

Step Three: Support and communications



It is vital that those involved feel well supported through Green Impact. Central support will be facilitated by WCC and will depend on what is requested by the organisations. Support available could include a mix of workshops, webinars, newsletters, networking events and the provision of tools and resources to help organisations easily implement effective change. In addition, each organisation will be provided with Green Impact branding that they can use in publicity and communications. The key stakeholders and facilitators will hold regular catch-up meetings to ensure relevant resources are available and strong communications are maintained. Ongoing support and training of Project Assistants will also be undertaken.

Step Four: Toolkit submission and audits



When they feel that they are ready to be audited, the organisations will submit their toolkits, showing what they have achieved to date. Twice a year, a team of student auditors will be recruited and trained to audit each organisation. It is likely that a mixture of face-to-face and remote audits will be used, due to the geographically dispersed nature of the organisations. The audit process is vital to verify the results of the programme, provide those participating with further support, and identify good practice examples. Green Impact's auditor training is approved by IEMA¹ and is beneficial for student learning and

employability. Following the audits, the toolkits are amended as required, and organisations may be required to submit further evidence.

Step Five: Awards event



Once results have been verified, an annual Green Impact awards event will be held to celebrate the individual and collective achievements of those involved. This can be standalone or part of an existing event run locally, again perhaps aligning with the Sustainable Business Network or WCC. Key stakeholders will be invited and it will hopefully result in positive media stories. Awards will be given to bronze, silver and gold winning organisations, and certificates will be presented to student participants and organisations that are 'working towards' an accreditation. Winners' digital logos will also be provided. In addition, a number of

special awards will be awarded to people, ideas and innovations that have been nominated by organisations.

Step Six: Feedback and evaluation



Finally, after the audits a two-way feedback process will be facilitated. Each organisation will receive a confidential and bespoke feedback report showing what they achieved, how they compared to others in the programme, and which areas they can improve upon. An impact report will also be produced showing the extent to which the programme has effected change across the city of Winchester. In return, WCC will collect feedback from participants to evaluate the value of the programme and to ensure it is being delivered to its full potential. Plans for the next year will also be made. Each year a number of additional criteria are usually

added, raising the bar so organisations have to improve. Similarly, the Green Impact team often develops additional aspects of the programme between each cycle based on ideas from participants to ensure that the programme itself continually improves.

NUS will highlight any good practice case studies from the programme in wider Green Impact communications. Other stakeholders will also seek to highlight good practice for the work through their networks.

Costs

NUS is not-for-profit and as such does not benefit financially from running Green Impact. We do charge all participants of Green Impact in order to cover our costs. Prices are based on a number of factors. Depending on the programme, NUS will need to provide more, or less, tailored support in order to produce successful outcomes. This can depend on whether or not Green Impact has run in

¹ <http://www.iema.net/>

that sector before, the number of organisations taking part; how geographically dispersed these are; their current level of environmental engagement; how strong existing relationships with local students' unions and/or HE/FE institutions and other partnerships are; and, their ability to successfully deliver communications relevant to the programme. NGOs and public sector organisations will pay 10% less than private sector organisations.

Based on the proposal above, NUS' fees would be approximately £6590 for the full 2-year programme (subject to confirmation depending on agreed roles and responsibilities, project assistant involvement, scale of programme etc.). All costs exclude VAT.

Timescales

It is suggested the following be indicative of how the programme could run. These are for illustration only and bespoke timescales should be established as soon as possible.

Year 1	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Project plan finalised												
Monitoring and evaluation plan agreed												
Communications plan agreed												
Toolkit drafted												
Toolkit signed-off & uploaded												
Launch												
Baseline survey launched												
Project assistant recruitment & training												
Project assistant organisation visits												
Organisation support & regular comms												
Toolkit submission (<i>optional</i>)												
Audits and auditor training planned												
Auditors recruited												
Auditor training and audits												
Good practice examples collected												
Scores finalised												
Awards event												
Local/national media coverage												
Feedback and impact reports sent												
Follow-up survey and focus groups												
Next year planned												

Year 2	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Project plan finalised												
Toolkit edited												
Toolkit signed-off & uploaded												
Launch (<i>optional</i>)												
Project assistant recruitment & training												
Project assistant organisation visits												
Organisation support & regular comms												
Toolkit submission (<i>optional</i>)												
Audits and auditor training planned												
Auditors recruited												
Auditor training and audits												
Good practice examples collected												
Scores finalised												
Awards event												
Local/national media coverage												
Feedback and impact reports sent												
Follow-up survey and focus groups												
Future planned												

Further Information

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