

# Cut the Carbon Fund

## New Directions (Reading Borough Council) case study



<b>Title of project</b>	<b>Carbon check</b>	
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<b>1. Aims of the project</b>	<p>The aims of the Carbon Check project were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve energy building performance.</li> <li>• To develop a strategic carbon plan for sustainable asset management for the New Directions service and to start the implementation of quick carbon saving actions.</li> <li>• Identify suitable measures for improving energy performance of hard to treat listed buildings.</li> <li>• Implement small energy efficiency measures (e.g. lighting, draft exclusion)</li> <li>• To disseminate the results of the process to a broader audience.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Situation: Identify the situation or issue that faced you</b>	The project aimed at checking and improving the energy performance of two community buildings actively used by local learners in Reading where New Directions offers courses.	
<b>3. Task: Define the outcomes you needed to achieve</b>	<p>The outcomes we sought to achieve were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced energy and water consumption and cost for Adult and Community Services</li> <li>• Improved energy and environmental awareness among staff</li> <li>• A better understanding of sustainable building management and the strategic direction necessary for running a low carbon service</li> <li>• Improved, more comfortable and better-managed buildings for building occupants.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>4. Actions that you took in order to achieve your plan, and your approach</b></p>	<p>The actions and approach we took in order to achieve the plan included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Initiation (7 Feb – 14 Feb)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather information about sites (energy bills, site details, asset management practices)</li> <li>• Assess previous sustainable refurbishment activities and their impact.</li> <li>• Preparation for site visit</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. North Caversham Energy Survey (17 Feb)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Energy Foundation (NEF) was commissioned to carry out an independent Energy Efficiency Survey</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>3. Development of Suitable Measures and recommendations (17 Feb - 25 Feb)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of Suitable Measures and costed recommendations</li> <li>• Research best practice hard to treat buildings</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>4. Energy Survey Report (4th March)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report discussed with Senior Management and Centre Staff</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>5. Advice for implementation (14 Mar – 31 Mar)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings discussed with the LSIS ‘critical friend’ to look for further opportunities to embed sustainability within the New Directions service</li> <li>• Findings disseminated to staff</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>5. Results that you obtained including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>practical achievements (what’s in place)</b></li> <li>• <b>quantitative change (statistics etc)</b></li> <li>• <b>qualitative change (behaviour, culture, thinking, attitudes etc)</b></li> <li>• <b>what the organisation(s) have learned from this</b></li> <li>• <b>what it means for learners</b></li> </ul>	<p>The most significant output of the project has been the Energy Efficiency Survey undertaken at New Directions, North Reading Centre. The survey recommended the following specific management (and very achievable) actions. These have been welcomed by New Directions senior management and will be implemented shortly to achieve significant improvements.</p> <p>Full overhaul of building energy management – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recheck, rebalance and/or overhaul the heating system if found to be ineffectual</li> <li>• Control different heating zones by a combination of additional thermostat controls and simple timer controls</li> <li>• Implement local heating controls including appropriate zoning of the building together with the installation of Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs) on all radiators;</li> <li>• Ensure accurate, regular and routine energy monitoring and reporting; (Determine whether half-hour billing is a viable option)</li> <li>• Identification of named person or persons within the centre that will be responsible for overall energy</li> </ul>

management/usage/savings;

- Appointment of nominated energy champion or champions;
- Encourage energy saving by switching down temperatures and switching off unwanted or unused appliances – including PCs and lights
- Encourage staff and others – including visitors - to 'Help Save Energy'.

There were additional recommendations which the College management will work into Reading Borough Council's (RBC) corporate approach to building maintenance and management, including:

- Install double or triple glazing throughout buildings
- If wooden frame glazing is to remain, ensure that any frames are repaired and any gaps sealed. Consider using secondary glazing if and as appropriate
- Examine 'above suspended ceiling insulation' and replace if deemed to be required;
- Examine roof space insulation to ensure that it conforms to current specifications
- Ensure all maintenance and remedial action is done in a timely and professional manner

There have been some immediate actions taken after the project and survey. By involving staff, some of the recommendations have been implemented and staff are able to contribute towards lower energy solutions at the planning stage.

With a combination of expert advice and guidance linked in with the New Directions service's desires to reduce energy costs and contribute to the sustainability agenda, great immediate gains can be made. However, it is also essential to keep these issues high on the agenda and at all levels in the organisations in order to maintain the initial momentum.

There are other initiatives within Reading Borough Council aimed at improving sustainability and cutting our carbon footprint. These link well with what New Directions is achieving and the project has been the catalyst for more rapid adoption of the RBC initiatives.

In the very short timescale available for the project, we have not been able to complete the dissemination phase. However as a teaching and learning organisation we will ensure this is in place for the 2011/2012 academic year.

Further expected benefits include:

- Better understanding of hard to treat building energy performance and retrofitting energy measures in community

	<p>and educational buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of energy and water costs and usage and their environmental impact</li> <li>• Transference and dissemination of learning through a video of the energy survey to a broader audience.</li> <li>• To incorporate the dissemination within the 'Quality Improvement Plan' and the rigorous annual Self-Assessment Review process in which we are required to make sustainability judgements.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>6. What made the project a success? What were the key ingredients?</b></p>	<p>It was key to have had support for the project from Reading Borough Council's 'Green Team' who have set challenging aims and have assisted in establishing the framework of the project. This has already meant that the recommendations will be integrated into the wider objectives of Reading Borough Council and will also allow for full implementation.</p> <p>By externally commissioning the education charity The National Energy Foundation to undertake the energy survey, the recommendations carried a much greater expert authority than if we had conducted the survey ourselves.</p> <p>We decided at the outset to work alongside senior management and also to link up with an external 'critical friend' in order to sense-check recommendations, progress made and also to ensure New Directions continues to seek opportunities at all levels including strategic ones in its planning of Adult Learning in Reading.</p>						
<p><b>7. Any resources or tools produced by the project</b></p>	<p>To date, the most helpful resource from the project is the Energy Efficiency Survey produced by the National Energy Foundation. However, we are also producing a video of how to make energy savings and this will be disseminated on the College Moodle (Virtual Learning Environment) web page.</p>						
<p><b>8. Total costs of the project</b></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>LSIS funding</th> <th>Match funding</th> <th>Total funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£6,000</td> <td>£2,000 management and administration costs</td> <td>£8,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	LSIS funding	Match funding	Total funding	£6,000	£2,000 management and administration costs	£8,000
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