



Celebrating the green supreme

Rebecca Paddick took a trip to Derby College, along with education's sustainability leaders for the annual EAUC Green Gown Awards

More than 300 sustainability leaders turned up to The Roundhouse in Derby to celebrate the ninth Green Gown Awards hosted by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC).

The stunning Grade II listed building, which is the world's oldest surviving railway turning shed, played host to the annual event, which recognises exceptional environmental and sustainability initiatives undertaken by universities, colleges and the learning and skills sector across the UK. The EAUC received a 25% increase in applications for the 2013 Awards, proving that the value of sustainability is finally registering for many sector leaders.

The BBC's Professor Iain Stewart

MBE announced the winners at this year's event. Stewart is best known as the presenter of a number of BBC programmes including the BAFTA nominated *Earth: The Power of the Planet*.

"Sustainability is one of those ideas that means something different to everyone, and yet we all have a clear notion of what is 'unsustainable,'" explained Stewart.

He added: "The Green Gown Awards are about celebrating a shift in thinking within the university and college sector to embrace and support those that are really pushing ahead with meaningful ways of making a future that works for all."

The Awards continue to have a strong international presence with this being the fourth year of the Australasian Green Gown Awards, and the second year of the International Green Gown Awards. »





Iain Stewart (left)
presented the Student
and Staff Engagement
Award to Walsall
College Student Union

2013 Winners

- ❖ **Basingstoke College of Technology**
Best Newcomer
- ❖ **Lancaster University**
Carbon Reduction
- ❖ **Belfast Metropolitan College**
Construction and Refurbishment
- ❖ **University of Bristol**
Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change
- ❖ **Coventry University**
Courses (large institution)
- ❖ **The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama**
Courses (small institution)
- ❖ **University of Bradford**
Facilities and Services
- ❖ **Nottingham Trent University**
Learning and Skills
- ❖ **University of Aberdeen**
Modernisation: Effectiveness and Efficiency in the Estate
- ❖ **University of York**
Research and Development
- ❖ **The University of Manchester**
Social Responsibility
- ❖ **Walsall College Student Union**
Student and Staff Engagement
- ❖ **Maria Gilling, Principal, Walsall Adult and Community College**
Sustainability Champion Award
- ❖ **University College London**
Technical Innovation for Sustainability

2013 International Green Gown Awards Winners

- ❖ **Sunshine Coast TAFE**
Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change
- ❖ **The University of Manchester**
Social Responsibility
- ❖ **University of Wollongong**
Student and Staff Engagement/Student Initiatives

This year's guest list included university and college representatives from across the UK, joined by leading figures from institutions such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Association of University Directors of Estates, Association of Colleges, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and the Skills Funding Agency.

"Sustainability is growing and growing and people are realising that universities and colleges are brilliant places to try out new ways of living, working and learning," explained EAUC CEO Iain Patton (pictured below).

He added: "Sustainability is now making its way into the hearts of universities and colleges around the world but it is still early days, and we need education leaders to realise how valuable sustainability can be to them."

This year's event included the first ever Sustainability Champion Award. "Every year we add another category or two to reflect how the sector is evolving," said Patton, adding: "We have focused on universities and colleges in the past, but this year we have highlighted the fact that it takes leading people to push progress so that's why we added the Champion Award."

Maria Gilling, principal of Walsall Adult and Community College, won the inaugural accolade by impressing the judges with establishing Walsall as the mechanism for organisational success across the whole institution.

Speaking after the event, she said: "The College is part of Walsall Council so both the College and the council are delighted to be recognised. This is a great acknowledgement of our commitment to sustainability and



a reflection of all the hard work, creativity and innovative thinking amongst our staff and our learners over the past years. I am very proud of them."

Back to the night itself, and sharing a table with the *University Business* team was Basingstoke College of Technology (BCoT), winners of the Best Newcomer Award. In 2013 BCoT invested £160,000 in a massive 400-panel solar pv installation on its existing roof spaces. The system is generating 15% of the College's annual electricity requirement and a financial return in excess of 13% pa.

"The Award win is a real reflection of the team's hard work embedded across the college," said Anthony Bravo, principal and chief executive of the College.

He continued: "We are committed to a sustainable way of working, and next year we are going for the champions award! We've



Category supporters:





learned a lot from this event, we have met a lot of people and shared some ideas, and it has made us realise that there is still so much more we could be doing."

If there was an award for the liveliest table of the night, Nottingham Trent University (NTU) would have won it. The team were showing their support for Ivan Hopkins, NTU's executive chef, who was highly commended in the Sustainability Champion category. Judges praised Hopkins for going above and beyond the levels expected and for his passion for the sustainability agenda. He drew particular praise for achieving sustainable menus without exceeding the typical student's budget.

Commenting on the night, Hopkins

The Sustainability Champion Award nominees



said: "The fact that these awards happen is just wonderful, for us, for the HE sector and for sustainability across the country. At Nottingham Trent we've worked hard to embrace sustainable food as it is such an important part of the student experience.

"I am extremely proud of what we have achieved over the past few years and it is always easier to lead projects if you have a great team behind you and I certainly have that."

A total of 16 Awards were given away on the night, including Carbon Reduction, Research and Development, and Student and Staff Engagement. The latter was awarded to Walsall College Student Union.

"I was really impressed with not only the evening and the venue but also the administration and support throughout the application process," said Gail Houghton, student finance and support co-ordinator at Walsall College.

"The award has raised the profile of the College and has been a real boost for the students and staff involved with sustainability projects," she added.

Concluding the evening, The EAUC's Iain Patton made a few predictions for the year ahead: "2014 will be extremely student focused. Students are now customers so their expectations are rising. I think we will start to see a lot more student engagement in sustainability projects in the months ahead. Equally, to please their customers, universities and colleges will undoubtedly up their game, and this can only mean good things for sustainability." ^{UB}

Highly commended

- ❖ **Harrow College** Best Newcomer
- ❖ **South Essex College**
Best Newcomer
- ❖ **Durham University**
Carbon Reduction
- ❖ **University of Gloucestershire**
Carbon Reduction
- ❖ **The Manchester College**
Construction and Refurbishment
- ❖ **Coleg Gwent**
Continuous Improvement:
Institutional Change
- ❖ **Cranfield University**
Continuous Improvement:
Institutional Change
- ❖ **Plymouth University** Courses
- ❖ **University of Bristol** Courses
- ❖ **Durham University**
Facilities and Services
- ❖ **University of Salford**
Facilities and Services
- ❖ **University of Gloucestershire**
Learning and Skills
- ❖ **Walsall Adult and Community College**
Learning and Skills
- ❖ **Newcastle University**
Modernisation: Effectiveness and
Efficiency in the Estate
- ❖ **The University of Sheffield**
Social Responsibility
- ❖ **Durham University**
Student and Staff Engagement
- ❖ **University of Brighton**
Student and Staff Engagement
- ❖ **Ian Brown, Building Services Manager, Bradford College**
Sustainability Champion Award
- ❖ **Ivan Hopkins, Executive Chef, Nottingham Trent University**
Sustainability Champion Award
- ❖ **Nelson & Colne College**
Technical Innovation for Sustainability
- ❖ **The University of Northampton**
Technical Innovation for Sustainability

For more information about the Green Gown Awards, visit www.greengownawards.org.uk. All of the good practice from this year's Awards will be added to the bank of 2011 and 2012 resources on the Sustainability Exchange (www.sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk) in the new year and disseminated far and wide.

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