

MEMO

CHELTENHAM
&
GLOUCESTER
COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

FROM Liz Rolls

TO Janet Trotter

17th January 1991

Please find enclosed a copy of the report of the Working Party of the Faculty of Education & Health on College-related environmental issues. In the light of National Initiatives (Greening Polytechnics Committee of Director of Polytechnics 1990) we would be grateful if you would put this as an Agenda item on your next Senior Management Team meeting for discussion and consideration. We look forward to your response.

We hope to meet again on February 25th at 4.30 p.m. in Ireton, not January 28th as originally planned, when we will consider the responses.

With thanks for your support and with best wishes.

Liz Rolls
on behalf of the Working Party

THE REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY
OF THE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION & HEALTH
ON
COLLEGE-RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

JANUARY 1991

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1. BACKGROUND

The Working Party was formed in June 1990 following a Faculty Board Meeting at which concern was raised about environmental issues. It seemed appropriate that the Faculty concerned with education and health should take a lead in encouraging environmental initiatives within the Institution and a working party was formed to identify the key issues and make recommendations.

The following report is the result of these deliberations and is being presented to Faculty members for:

1. Consideration, comment and agreement.
2. Support of the recommendations outlined at the end of this paper.
3. Passage to the appropriate body for adoption/translation into College policy.

2. THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

It is important to keep the environmental context in the forefront of any debate.

In particular, the consequences of global warming, ozone depletion and deforestation, together with the effects of water, air and food pollution are having implications for the quality of life and for, indeed, the future of life on the planet. The over-use of raw materials including non-renewable resources, together with their disposal has led to the questioning of the sustainability of life within this context.

The challenge to individuals is to pre-empt legislative processes by immediate action which will reduce the impact of mass consumption and raise public awareness.

3. THE COLLEGE AS THE CONTEXT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

The overarching aim of the Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education is "the provision and promotion of higher education involving the intellectual, social, physical, technical, moral and spiritual development of individuals within an academic and vocationally orientated community". In particular, the Mission Statement of the College states that it will:

'be proactive in meeting the needs of students, employers and the community (and) discharge its commitment to the Christian ethos of its foundation by the care and concern shown to staff and students, by specific activities for the benefit of the community and by promoting and continuing examination of values throughout the curriculum and not least in Religious Studies'. (Mission Statements IV and V C&GCHE October 1990).

Thus, the College has a high regard for the social, moral and spiritual climate within which it provides higher education, as well as a sense of responsibility for the needs of the community. This is demonstrated in the commitment to adopt 'the pursuance of environmentally sound policies' (Enabling Objective VIII Staff Handbook).

4. ADVANTAGES FOR THE INSTITUTION

The advantages to the institution of adopting an environmental policy are two-fold:

1. Cost saving associated with avoiding waste of materials and resources;
2. An increased marketable 'environmental' image with a high profile within the local community.

The College can be seen as being in the forefront of current thinking with a high profile environmental image. Furthermore, it can take the lead locally, developing itself as a centre of good practice, helping to form local opinion and assisting in the process of change.

The marketing strategy could include:

1. An environmental policy;
2. A marketing strategy through College literature.

This latter will attract students, interested in environmental responsibility and social issues.

5. STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

As well as marketing the Institution as an environmentally sound College, environmental improvement can be achieved through:

1. Curriculum development;
2. Specific environmental strategies.

5.1 Curriculum Development

The curriculum throughout the College should incorporate environmental issues. These issues seem obvious and relevant to programmes in health, education, environment and leisure, but are equally important and relevant in other programmes of study.

Ideas for staff development could include:

1. Staff development programmes to address these issues associated with environmental curriculum developments;
2. Encouraging the development of student projects on environmental issues;
3. Developing ideas for teaching environmental issues to a range of groups;
4. Developing modules on environmental issues.

5.2. Specific Environmental Strategies

College-based working parties need to be initiated to investigate relevant areas and to make specific and detailed recommendations.

The adoption of a wide range of strategies will serve, not only to improve the environment and make, in some cases, considerable savings, but will also provide an example of good practice to support the

image of an environmentally sound college. These strategies may be divided into relevant areas for consideration:

- 5.2.1. Resource use; materials, energy, transport.
- 5.2.2. Land use;
- 5.2.3. Food.

Possible areas of development and initiatives are outlined in the attached appendix.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party recommends that the Senior Management Team:

- 6.1. Defines the areas for consideration (possibly those already outlined in Section 5.)
- 6.2. Initiates College-specific studies in these areas to identify the strategies for environmental improvement.
- 6.3. Identifies and uses College resources, in particular key personnel with expertise in the environmental field, including academic/non-academic staff and students.
- 6.4. Identifies the technical, strategic, managerial and policy issues.
- 6.5. Develops an 'Environmental Charter' for the college.
- 6.6. Implements an environmental policy.
- 6.7. Develops a range of performance indicators to monitor the effect of the environmental strategies.
- 6.8. Develops curriculum strategies and research in to foster environmental expertise and debate.
- 6.9. Takes account of the Working Document 'Greening the Polytechnics' published by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics (Oct. 1990).

Prepared by the Working Party comprising:

Janet Higgins, Mike Littledyke, Liz Rolls, John Willoughby; with thanks to Tony Jeans.

APPENDIX: POSSIBLE AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT AND IDEAS FOR INITIATIVES

The Appendix contains ideas for

1. Resource Use
2. Land Use
3. Food

A.1. RESOURCE USE

Resource use includes the use of:

- 1.1. Materials
- 1.2. Energy
- 1.3. Transport

1.1. Materials

Examples include the use of recycled materials by:

- a) Use of recycled paper products including:
envelopes; note pads; other office stationary; computer print outs; photocopying material; unbleached toilet rolls; using straw-based papers.
- b) Re-using envelopes by using stickers including the College environmental logo (see 3a).

Recycling waste materials by:

- a) Sorting wastes into glass, cans, paper products, foil, organic wastes, stamps and textiles. The provision of appropriate 'banks, materials to be taken to recycling points.
- b) Using organic wastes as fertiliser on College grounds.
- c) Developing a resource centre for usable 'junk' materials for primary technology which could offer a valuable service to student teachers, but could also be extended to local schools and nurseries.

Reducing the use of non-biodegradable materials by:

Reducing use of disposable cups etc. Paper to be used instead of plastic.

Conserving limited natural resource materials by:

- a) Avoiding the use of tropical hardwoods for furniture, fixtures and fittings.
- b) Cutting down on use of paper by using both sides of the paper and generally using only what is deemed as essential.
- c) Careful disposal of unwanted 'out-of-date' furniture etc.

Restricting the use of polluting chemicals by:

- a) Banning aerosols with CFCs;
- b) Using mercury free batteries;
- c) Checking air conditioning units to ensure they are not shedding CFC coolants;
- d) Using cleaning materials and paints which are environmentally friendly.

1.2. ENERGY

A policy of reduced electricity, oil, gas and water use by energy efficiency strategies would both save money and reduce CO₂ emissions, hence restricting the greenhouse effect. F.O.E. consider that a 20% saving is a realistic target.

Examples might include:

- a) Switching off unnecessary lights. Small notices (with the College logo) would remind people to do this;
- b) The use of low energy consumption light bulbs. The higher initial cost is offset by the considerable savings over the lifetime of the bulbs;

- c) Efficient insulation. An energy consumption inventory could pinpoint which strategies will give the most efficient results;
- d) Closing doors to restrict heat loss. Appropriate small notices (with the College logo) may also remind people to do this;
- e) Advising students on domestic savings which could produce significant savings. A welcome to the College pack could include a range of environmentally friendly and energy efficiency ideas e.g.:
 - * use of lids on pans;
 - * only boiling the amount of water you need to use;
 - * cooking more than one dish in an oven;
 - * washing with full loads and cool washes.
- f) Using energy efficient electrical items;
- g) Fridges be maintained with efficient seals and kept well stocked;
- h) Thermostats be kept to the lowest acceptable level;
- i) An investigation of energy-efficient heating systems, e.g. solar heating.

1.3. TRANSPORT

An efficient transport policy would reduce pollution cut down on excessive fuel consumption: Examples include:

- a) encouraging cycle use by providing cycle parks and showers for cyclists' use;
- b) College vehicles should be efficiently tuned, use lead free petrol and, if possible, be fitted with catalytic converters to minimise pollution;
- c) A car pool to make more effective use of transport;
- d) Use of transport between sites to be rationalised for efficiency;

- e) A directory of people travelling regularly to College by car to encourage people to car share, hence saving petrol and money.

Similarly a directory where people making other journeys could advertise their intentions and petrol costs would encourage car sharing and reduced travel costs and the number of journeys overall. Insurance facilities may need to be examined for such schemes;

- f) Flat rate reimbursement of car allowance to encourage low consumption;
- g) Purchase of locally produced commodities from locally based companies e.g. food

A.2. LAND USE

2.1. LAND MANAGEMENT

Examples include the encouragement of good land management by:

- a) Developing environmentally supportive areas including ponds, wetlands, wild gardens, heather rows, bat and bird boxes;
- b) The use of organic materials, avoiding chemical weedkillers, artificial fertilisers, composting kitchen materials (See Resource Use 2b);
- c) Access to land with mature trails, seating, labelling of plants.

2.1.TREE PLANTING

Examples include the development of a Policy for tree planting which would include identifying appropriate areas and encourage planting of native trees and shrubs.

A.3. FOOD

Examples include the provision of healthy food by:

- a) Purchasing organic foods;
- b) Providing a 'Health Choices' menu which includes high fibre, low-fat options;
- c) Designating smoking/non-smoking areas in the cafeteria.