

TOMORROW 'S OFFICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY:

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Tomorrow's Offices is a programme providing a framework for offices at the University of Canterbury (UC) to progress towards a sustainable future. This paper contains suggested guidelines and maps the steps to developing environmental and social-practice in the offices at UC. It is intended for office unit leaders and other interested office community members to be a directive guide for the Tomorrow's Offices programme.

Tomorrow's Offices was to be piloted in the Facilities Management (FM) offices, Human Interface Technology Lab (HIT Lab) and potentially other small office units. Though still on the long term list of priorities, it has been temporarily put on one side. The aim of the project is to develop University of Canterbury offices to a level of environmental and social excellence and practice with a view to concurrently maintaining the traditional and necessary performance indicator of economic best practice. Pending more extensive development, feedback from the pilot period and the potential allotment of additional staffing resources in future, the programme may be extended throughout the offices at UC.

This paper can be regarded as a starting point for the development of the 'Tomorrow's Offices' programme (under any guise) when it is resumed. It is divided into five sections supplemented with appendices

- a. Ultimate goals for sustainability in UC offices

ⁱ to aid putting into place the mechanisms with which to achieve these steps. It is envisaged that comprehensive support mechanisms will constitute a significant portion of the operational programme. The range of mechanisms will include

- Practical workshops offered in conjunction with other University initiatives
- Links to a comprehensive range of guidance case studies and templates;
- Phone and/or email support providing advice and updates;
- Comprehensive feedback mechanisms;
- One-on-one specialist support;
- Advice on environmental risk and responsibility in your office

A widespread suite of communications, created by the UC Sustainability Team, relating to other sustainability initiatives at UC though often relevant to areas of the Tomorrow's Offices programme, will also be released over 2008.

The combination of ample support networks a

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ⁱⁱ See Appendix II for support documents.

Tomorrow

communicative means, statements will be easily transferable into a more prescriptive statement of vision.

With internal review and circulation, support will be built and all the necessary knowledge and views will be harnessc 0.001 esllv9()TJ -m be naytou -m bs 9(9.96 207.96 37.92nTD [(((e)4(pr)10l2(por)9s)10 (l

"In addition to the above, our office and community will engage in continual improvements that we make in pursuit of the goals of sustainability and on reaching such levels, we will strive to continue practice at those high standards, and search for ways to improve beyond performance targets."

In creating a statement of vision, your office is setting an important 'endpoint' for its sustainability journey, and will be in a position to measure its progression towards its set of ideals.

C: BENCHMARKING INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN UC OFFICES

In business as in wider society, we measure what we value. Given the values set above, it is logical that your office seeks to measure performance with respect to the values implied in its statement of vision. Measuring against these values has importance as a directional indicator: 'Are we moving towards or away from sustainability and Tomorrow's Office?' Benchmarking of performance indicators provides the means of measurement, and will allow your office to know where it is in the present, track where it has been, and anticipate where it is going with respect to its indicators. This emphasises the need to set effective indicators before benchmarking even begins. While many forms of benchmarking exist, one of the most effective ways is to measure performance parameters against the best practice of a comparable institution. At UC this will entail each office unit comparing their progress towards their differing visions with themselves and another-

Much of this data will be provided by Facilities Management or the relevant authority on campus, but some will require in-house monitoring.

Next, further interaction will be necessary to identify what practicalities are necessary to deliver your goals towards Tomorrow's Office...

D: PRACTICAL GUIDES: TOWARDS TOMORROW'S OFFICES AT UC

Actual achievement of the vision set out above is long term and will effectively be ongoing. It should be realised that while large progressions towards sustainability will require capital expenditure from the University, there is an abundance of choice and action which can be made towards office's vision on a daily basis. These represent perhaps the most effective contribution your office community can make towards sustainability, and are the major route to your ideals for Tomorrow's Offices.

In Your Office:

Your office will again need to bring together its entire community to develop guidelines for action. These guidelines will need to be at a level specific to your office, but generally must not fall below a common level of performance

Though the headings

Tomorrow's Offices at the University of Canterbury

Individuals should:

- Wait until the dishwasher is full before turning it on.
- Always use the economy cycle on your dishwasher; your dishwasher is able to heat its own water, use this function it's more economical than drawing water from the hot water cylinder.
- Don't use a full flush when a 'half' flush will suffice.
- Report dripping taps and running toilets or urinals that are not operating 'on demand.'
- If your office includes labs, think about water use when you plan your experiments and use electric vacuum pumps.

The University will support these initiatives by:

- Adjusting thermostats so that hot water temperature at the tap is no more than 55°C, saving both energy and money.
- Maintaining water fixtures at a high standard, and responding to reports of dripping, etc.
- Incorporating water efficiency in new and retrofit building specifications
- Optimising water usage for irrigation of the grounds

Food

Despite the reduction of the possibility to make poor dietary choices in Tomorrow's Offices, the choice of food one eats remains an individual one. Discussions amongst your office community, the benefits of 'healthy eating', an area of increasing public visibility, are not necessarily an effective tool in promoting healthy and sustainable diet options. Options like organic, local and fair trade should be placed in the consciousness and agenda in your offices, particularly by community members already using them. Leadership in this area will come in the form of promotional and stocking initiatives in UCSA cafes on campus.

Transport:

Alongside all commercial operators in modern society, University of Canterbury has a strong dependence on motorised transportation. This is one constituent of modern society's reliance on fossil fuels. In the University's scope, this includes daily transport within Christchurch and vicinity to and from campus; transport of goods to campus; travel to field stations around the South Island; community air travel and others. Transport is difficult to tackle without high levels of institutional support. The points below should be discussed in your office, but will be the subject of a comprehensive communications scheme underpinned by a University strategic plan. Issues to discuss include:

- Promoting walking and cycling whenever possible.
- Promoting the use of UC Rideshare in your office.
- Promoting the maximum use of Christchurch's extensive MetroBus system.
- Promoting the maximum appropriate use of communication technologies such as video-telephones and the Access Grid to avoid costly and carbon intensive air travel in conducting business. This is a current ICTS project.
- Making consideration of transportation in purchasing and disposal decision making, and checking whether your needs can be sourced locally.

Appendices

I: Facilitators

Facilitators will be a vital component in the success of 'Tomorrow's Offices'. They provide the vehicle to deliver many, if not all of the 'mechanisms' listed in the introductory section: they are the initial focal point of motivation in the programme, the initial store of knowledge, the giver of feedback and thereby an implicit arbiter of success. Facilitators are clearly important in the initial stages and require a very specific skill set. Knowledge is required from practical to theoretical levels; social skills and 'bedside manner' are vital to achieving 'buy in' from office communities.

