

The RWCMD Sustainability Initiative: a sustainable future for performing arts

The Welsh College of Music and Drama was established in 1949 and was originally based in Cardiff Castle. It moved to the current site in 1973 and since this time it developed its facilities culminating in the M£22.5 development of new performance spaces which were opened in June 2011 and have helped the College achieve its number one ranking in the UK for Drama Training and as a top five UK Music Conservatoire.

Sustainability was an integral part of the design process of the new facilities and the building has achieved an excellent rating by BREEAM – the world's leading design and assessment method for sustainable building.

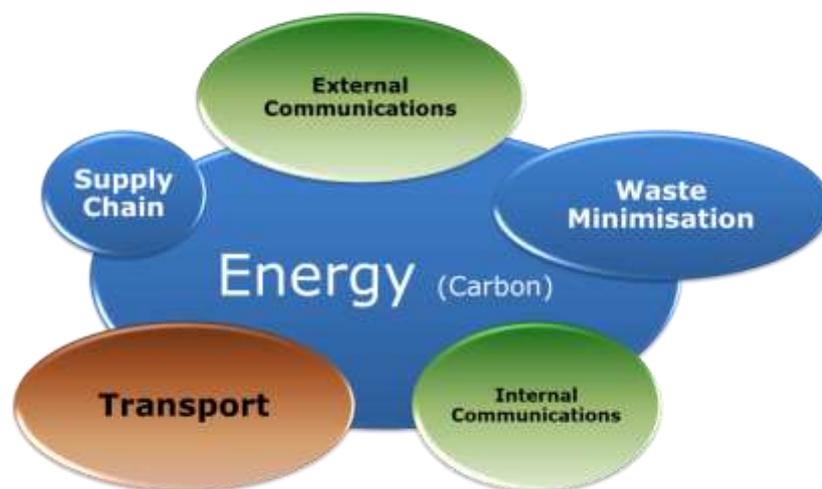
The building straddles the gap between North Road and the east side canal in the Grade 1 listed Bute Park and its stunning location means the building is an iconic landmark for the city. Members of the public enter into the foyer which sits between the Dora Stoutzker Hall, the first purpose built chamber recital hall in Wales, and the 160-seat Richard Burton Theatre. The foyer offers a unique view of the Grade 1 listed park and even those driving down the main thoroughfare of North Road by the city's civic centre can see straight through the glass walls and into the Castle grounds. Possibly the most distinctive feature of the building (pictured below) is the wooden drum which sits on the north side of the site. The materials used show the designers' 'outside in' approach – using the main drivers as the musical and artistic functionality of the building – with timber and stone finishes and the cedar wood slats circling the music hall at angles – creating a rippling affect when the sun shines on them as you drive past.



Hilary Boulding, Principal of the College, notes that *‘we are all understandably proud to work in such beautiful surroundings. We all have a role to play in demonstrating the College’s commitment to sustainability and addressing key sustainability issues by encouraging students and staff to debate and reflect on these issues, so that we can practice sustainability in our current operations and throughout our future careers.*

In November 2013, the College began an initiative following meetings with the Carbon Trust and Students’ Union. The College defines sustainability in terms of responsible decision making that does not compromise the future survival and well-being of individuals, the College and the environment. The College’s approach to sustainability is summed up by the Brundtland Declaration (United Nations, 1987) which defines sustainable development as ‘Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

The Carbon Trust project reviewed the College’s systems and processes to promote the concept of sustainability by identifying cost effective actions that could be taken. The main recommendations came from an energy survey but the report also covered a number of areas related to sustainable events which are outlined in the model below.



Sustainable Action Model

The report was a first step in raising awareness amongst all staff and students of energy use and the wider sustainability implications for the College.

The College believes that all staff, students, members of the College community including Board members have a responsibility to participate fully in contributing to the College sustainability initiative. A recent example of how the College takes seriously its responsibility for raising awareness of sustainability issues was the temporary and sustainable theatre that was built during World Stage Design in the courtyard of the Antony Hopkins Centre using reclaimed, reusable and recyclable

materials and a team of local and international volunteers. Further details can be found on:- www.wsd2013.com/competition

The College recognises that there are tangible benefits associated with raising awareness of sustainability including:

- Reduced operating costs and increased investment in the student experience.
- Competitive advantage and enhanced reputation.
- Reduced risk through lower impact activities and compliance with legislation

The College is committed to ensuring that through its learning and teaching and its own behaviours, it contributes to the wider objective of 'a sustainable future for the performing arts industry.' Staff and student engagement is considered the fundamental driver of the College sustainability initiative as it is essential for staff and students to understand how the College defines sustainability at a strategic level and how it requires everyone to play a part to achieve its objectives. As a stakeholder of the College, each and every one of us within the organisation has a responsibility to manage our own environmental impact. As a direct result of the report the College has identified the following actions:-

- a) Students' Union (SU) – a series of actions are being take forward with the SU.
- b) Survey of staff and students - to establish the current level of awareness, a student/staff sustainability survey has been completed and will be repeated as necessary.
- c) Communication – posters and announcements.
- d) FAQs – these are attached as Annex A and have been developed with the advice of the Carbon Trust, Venues, Estates and the Students' Union in particular.
- e) 'Champions' – staff and students who will take a lead in disseminating sustainable information around the College and look to take ownership of areas of the College where colleagues can be reminded of actions, such as 'switching off' appliances and lights.
- f) Staff Meeting - emphasise the steps that we can all take at work or at home to reduce our carbon emissions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Topic	Question	Answer
Management	Has your organisation been convicted or had a notice served upon it for infringement of environmental legislation in the last three years? If yes, please give details.	No We have never been convicted or had a noticed served.
Management	Are you certified to ISO14001? Do you have any other relevant certifications/accreditations or awards?	Yes Our New Building is BREEAM Excellent
Management	Are you certified to ISO20121?	No. We are not currently certified, we are aware of the standard and do not consider it appropriate to be certified at this time. However, we are keen to work with organisations that are certified to 20121 and will provide information as required.
Management	Do you have a sustainability/environmental/CSR policy?	We have a sustainability policy. We also have an environmental policy statement as part of our ISO14001 system.
Management	Who is the most senior person with direct responsible for sustainability?	Hilary Boulding , Principal
Management	Do you have any sustainability/environmental targets?	Not specific targets but we have a commitment to continual improvement through our ISO14001 management system.
Management	Do you produce an annual sustainability/CSR/environmental report?	No, but we do undertake a full management review of our environmental management system; additionally our buildings have an annual Display Energy Certificate. We also have an Annual Environmental Audit as part of our ISO14001 Certification.

Topic	Question	Answer
Energy	What types of energy are used on site?	Grid electricity; Natural gas
Energy	Do you buy renewable electricity, if so what percentage? If you do not buy renewable energy why is that?	No Not able to source a supply at a competitive rate at last procurement round – will review each time contracts are renewed.
Energy	Does the building have a Display Energy Certificate (DEC)?	Yes, both Anthony Hopkins & the New Building have current certificates which are on display. The AHC is rated A and the New Building is rated D.
Energy	Can you meter the energy used for individual events?	No, we do not have sub-metering to that level.
Energy	Do you have any renewable energy generation on site – for example, solar PV?	Yes we have solar thermal.
Food & Drink	Do you serve Fair Trade products?	Yes – Tea and Coffee
Food & Drink	Do you serve local food and drink?	Yes - where possible e.g. local meat
Food & Drink	Do you use seasonal produce?	Yes – where possible e.g. vegetables and fruit.
Food & Drink	If we hire a venue can you provide catering from on-site services?	Yes
Food & Drink	Is tap water available at food outlets and with venue hire?	Yes – drinking fountains and supplied in jugs
Food & Drink	Do you use reusable crockery, glassware, cutlery, tablecloths, etc.? Where disposable items are used are they recyclable?	Yes – we use reusable china, cutlery and glassware. All disposable items can be recycled. We give discount if disposable cups are re-used.
Food & Drink	Do you minimise the use of individually packaged food/drink items where possible?	Yes, but we do use some where we think food hygiene is best served.

Topic	Question	Answer
Food & Drink	What do you do to minimise food waste?	Portion control; menu planning, stock rotation; confirming numbers for events.
Production	What do you do to limit the environmental impact of visiting productions?	Outside of our venue little of this is within our control.
Production	If your productions go on tour, what do you do to limit the environmental impact?	The College reviews transport options; identifies environmental issues at venues and work with venues where practicable.
Production	Are sets re-used or recycled?	Where possible sets are re-used or used as the base for future sets
Production	Are FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) or equivalent timber products used for set construction?	Yes
Production	What happens to sets at 'end of life'?	Broken down; reusable elements are reused; other elements sent for recycling; waste to landfill minimised.
Supply Chain	If you refer people to local hotels, are they registered with the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS), or do they offer equivalent or better sustainability policies?	Many large chain hotels do not register with GTBS but have very robust environmental/sustainability programs. The College partners with the Park Plaza hotel which is within walking distance of the College.

Topic	Question	Answer
Supply Chain	Do you use suppliers with environmental credentials for printing?	<p data-bbox="962 282 1378 349">Yes, we use local printers that are committed to 'green printing'.</p> <p data-bbox="962 371 1378 573"><u>What's On Guide</u> The What's On Guide carries a World Land Trust logo which tells audiences that it is printed on Carbon Balanced Paper using ECO Friendly Vegetable Based Inks.</p> <p data-bbox="962 618 1378 1077"><u>Programmes</u> We've trialled a more sustainable approach to programmes by removing the usual expensive professionally produced booklet to a combination of foyer displays of biographies and a limited amount of basic paper programmes. We've also made the programmes available to download in advance from our website and made people aware of this through social media.</p> <p data-bbox="962 1122 1378 1469"><u>Digital Marketing</u> More of our audience opt to receive email communications from us than post. This combined with social media does help to keep postage and the printing of direct mail letters to a minimum – though for some audience direct mail by post is still the most effect medium.</p> <p data-bbox="962 1514 1378 1581"><u>Tickets</u> are sometime printed off at home.</p>
Supply Chain	Do you use recycled paper products? If yes, what percentage of total paper products are made from recycled material?	<p data-bbox="962 1720 1010 1753">Yes</p> <p data-bbox="962 1776 1378 1977">Recycled products are our first choice subject to suitability and price – we do not currently monitor the level of recycled use, but would estimate it to be around 60%</p>

Topic	Question	Answer
Supply Chain	What have you done to reduce the amount of hazardous materials you buy? For example, oil based paints, solvents, etc.	We have identified all the hazardous materials that we purchase and are working to replace them with less hazardous materials where possible.
Supply Chain	Do you enquire into the sustainability credentials of your suppliers?	Significant suppliers are required to complete a pre-qualification questionnaire to ensure appropriate sustainability policies managing both their own operations and those of the suppliers within their supply chain.
Transport	Can you provide information on getting to the venue by public transport?	Accessible by rail and bus; see web site for details
Transport	What facilities do you provide for cyclists?	Secure Cycle parking under cover for staff and students. Open-Rack cycle parking for visitors also available immediately adjacent to Concert Hall. Four Pool Bikes available for staff to use for business travel and keep-fit purposes. Cycle tool kit kept on-site for staff and students, including emergency inner-tubes. Regular Dr Bike Clinics for staff and students, along with free Cycle Maintenance classes.
Transport	Do you have facilities for electric vehicle (EV) charging?	Parking on-site is restricted to College vehicles only, plus six blue-badge spaces. EV charging is not therefore currently required.
Waste	Do you have a recycling programme?	The College will attempt to recycle as much as possible depending on the cost.
Waste	What do you do with food waste?	Composting, landfill and maceration

Topic	Question	Answer
Waste	How much waste do you send to landfill? Have you reduced this over the past three years?	The College is reviewing f methods of measuring landfill.
Waste	Is it clear to visitors/building users where they can recycle when they are on site?	Yes a range of bins are provided
Water	What measures have you taken to reduce the use of water?	Low flush toilets; waterless urinals, low flow taps.
Water	Do you use rain water harvesting or 'grey water'?	No
Broader Sustainability Issues		
Inclusivity	What provisions have you made for accessibility?	Full wheelchair access; induction loop; baby changing; assistance dogs welcome. See website
Community	How do you keep the local community informed of your sustainability activity, or issues that might impact on them?	Local consultation when appropriate. The College Board includes members from the local community who can influence the College's policy.
Community	How do you engage with/support the local community?	The College promotes an extensive public performance programme which attracts annual audiences in excess of 50,000. There are also a range of free events aimed at the wider Cardiff community including <i>Jazztime</i> foyer performances, tours of the building, exhibitions, workshops, and professional theatre and literary events.