

Edinburgh College in the running for a Green Gown award



Edinburgh College is a finalist in three categories in the prestigious Green Gown Awards, which celebrate sustainability initiatives in the education sector.

Now in their 11th year, the Green Gown Awards recognise the exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by universities, colleges and the learning and skills sectors across the UK.

The college is shortlisted for the following awards:

- **Facilities and Services Award** –for the college’s eCar project. Edinburgh College has been operating a fleet of electric cars since its inception in late 2012 to provide staff with a sustainable, low-carbon, low-cost transport option for travel between its four campuses and other corporate travel. Significant impacts have been made in reducing the number of trips normally carried out in staff members’ own cars, saving 86,227 miles and £38,825 on equivalent travel expenses. They are also fully integrated with the curriculum, offering students on our Engineering, Automotive and Electrical courses hands-on experience, and three electric vehicle scholarships have been created – in partnership with local car dealer Alex F. Noble – as the project continues to expand.
- **Student Engagement Award** – in recognition of the work done to develop the college’s two community gardens as an important college and community resource. The community gardens at Milton Road and Sighthill campuses

have more than 200 participants from a diverse range of groups including students – including many with additional support needs – staff and local community members and groups. For many of these users the gardens represent much more than a space to grow food. They are a space to learn about healthy living, gain new skills, build self-confidence and self-esteem, increase employability, adopt sustainable behaviours and make friends.

- **Carbon Reduction Award** – in recognition of the college's Sustainability team's work to develop a Carbon Management Plan, with a footprint and a projects register; a waste strategy; a community growing strategy; a green travel plan; and more. The comprehensive Carbon Management Plan has at its heart a target of 18% minimum reduction by 2020. The college's energy-saving measures include a solar meadow at Midlothian Campus, photovoltaic solar panels on the roof of the Granton Campus and an eco-friendly hair and beauty academy.

The college is pitched against other colleges and universities from across the UK, and is the only college to be recognised in the Student Engagement and Facilities and Services categories.

Martin Webb, Edinburgh College sustainability officer, said: "We are thrilled to be acknowledged for the progress made to embed sustainability within the college infrastructure and curriculum. We are early on our journey towards achieving the aims of our wider sustainability strategy, but our small enthusiastic team are committed to improving co-ordination, facilitation and promotion of Edinburgh College's sustainability efforts."

With sustainable development moving up the global agenda, the awards are now established as the most prestigious recognition

of sustainability excellence within the tertiary education sector, as well as the environmental sector.

Image caption: Sustainability officer Martin Webb and Community Garden coordinator Severine Monvoisin in the Sighthill Community Garden.