

Environmental Policy

Name for policy: Environmental Policy

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College Committee: Environmental Sub-Committee

Policy owner: Domestic Bursar

Reviewed by: Matt McGeehan, Head of Communications

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Policy Statement – Environmental:

Gonville and Caius College recognises its role in matters of sustainability in the following ways:

1. To minimise the harmful impact of the College’s operations on a day to day basis, **and to evolve continuous** plans to reduce that impact further
2. To recognise the ability of Caians to influence other organisations, now or in future, in their responses to environmental issues, and to both demonstrate a “challenging but achievable” standard of response to those issues as a benchmark, and to demonstrate those standards clearly and succinctly in and around College.
3. To meet or exceed all applicable standards in law or regulation

The responsibilities in this document are to be shared between staff, students and Fellows. It is recognised that there are three levels at which the College can influence sustainability in decision making.

1. Through actions the College owns and controls entirely – such as building refurbishments.
2. Through actions where the College can facilitate members’ own sustainable choices – such as attractive meat free alternatives in College dining, opportunities to recycle, ways to reduce water use through showers and low-volume flush toilets etc.
3. Through education, where members and staff can share knowledge on the impact and importance of those sustainable choices – such as the impact of air vs train travel, or the carbon saving from small reductions in ambient temperatures.

For clarity, this document does not address the investment policies for the College’s Endowment, which are overseen separately by the Investment Committee.

To minimise its environmental impact Caius will seek to:

- 1. Reduce waste creation: “Reduce, reuse, recycle” – importantly, in that order.**
- 2. Reduce energy consumption, especially of energy derived from fossil fuels**
- 3. Ensure that purchases and estates developments are environmentally sound**
- 4. Review use of transport: reducing petrol and diesel fuel use**
- 5. Review use of water: Minimising consumption**
- 6. Review use of chemical pollutants: Minimising use**

More detail on each area is given below.

1. Reduce waste creation: “Reduce, reuse, recycle” – importantly, in that order. Caius commits to:
 - (a) Clearly communicate locations and responsibilities for recycling through an accessible recycling policy, publicized to students on arrival at the College in Freshers’ week and around the College on posters and through ongoing training/publicity events.
 - (b) Seek to communicate the environmental benefits of communal eating in College Hall, in terms of reduction of food waste through accurate use of the booking system, and reduction in energy cost through mass production.
 - (c) Seek to reduce the absolute amount of waste produced from College catering, offices and residential accommodation through careful planning of consumption. Record food waste and seek to reduce its volume.
 - (d) Make full use of all known recycling facilities provided by Cambridge City Council and private suppliers.
 - (e) Seek to compost, or cause to be composted, all appropriate organic and green waste produced from the College’s main kitchens and College gardens.
 - (f) Recycle or safely dispose of white goods, computing equipment and electrical appliances. Seek to support a culture of “if not broken, don’t replace” for equipment and furniture generally.
 - (g) Facilitate the use of reusable resources and containers and avoid unnecessary packaging or transported weight where possible, with a focus on catering provision and options for canteen “takeaway” services, and purchase recycled resources where suitable and available.
 - (h) Encourage students, Fellows and staff responsible for specific arrangements for events, such as the May Ball and bops, to apply the “reduce, reuse, recycle” principle and avoid reliance on disposables.

2. **Reduce energy consumption, especially of energy derived from fossil fuels.** Caius commits to:

- (a) Encourage staff, students and conference guests to save energy through visible reminders, incentives and information to increase awareness, and through implementing heating and lighting controls that respond to presence detection wherever appropriate.
- (b) Support renewable and carbon-neutral electricity options on the Collegiate energy-purchasing consortium, with the long term aim of supplying all College properties with electricity that can be attributed to renewable and carbon-neutral sources, where this is possible considering financial constraints.
- (c) Support a shift to use electricity as a power source over gas or oil over time, paired with heat recovery or other evolving technologies, recognising efficient delivery of electrical heat can to some extent offset higher pricing, subject to financial affordability being adequately tested for each individual project before progressing..
- (d) Periodically review opportunities for on-site micro-generation of renewable electricity, especially during major capital projects, and seek to maintain such systems effectively once put in place, subject to the cost efficiency of any individual scheme.
- (e) Periodically monitor college energy consumption by property at the Environmental Sub-Committee, use cross-Estate benchmarking to identify high use properties or areas and set appropriate targets to improve them. Not every property has its own meter and such measures will be by supply point or sub- meter.
- (f) Seek to ensure all appropriate insulation is in place, including but not limited to windows, roof spaces and walls. It is recognised that this may be in tension with the requirements of the College's heritage properties and cannot be an absolute target.
- (g) Give preference wherever possible to the most energy efficient and environmentally sound appliances available, such as LED lighting. Seek to ensure any user can easily access controls information paired with information on the environmental cost of use.

3. **Ensure that purchases and estates developments are environmentally sound.** Caius aims to:

- (a) Seek and act upon professional advice to minimise the adverse environmental impact of new developments or refurbishments and where possible match best practice. This may include any or all of heating and water systems, space for recycling and waste management, and the use of recycled and/or sustainable construction materials.
- (b) Purchase efficient and environmentally sound appliances, and consider replacing old stock with 'greener', more efficient alternatives. Consider whether drying facilities can be provided without the use of heated tumble dryers in any new development or refurbishment.
- (c) Seek to purchase food that has been produced and delivered with minimal impact on the environment, this includes buying seasonally,

locally, and sustainably sourced food wherever possible. Fair trade and other markers of sustainable purchasing should be sought where appropriate, and the consortium purchasing through the Colleges Catering Management Committee should be supported in order to reduce delivery journeys.

- (d) Seek to reduce the consumption of meats with the most negative environmental footprint (eg beef, lamb), ensure fish is varied in type and sustainably sourced, and promote vegetarian and vegan meals through high quality menu design. Aim to purchase through schemes indicating high standards of animal welfare where available (eg Red Tractor Assured at minimum).

4. **Review use of transport: reducing petrol and diesel fuel use.** Caius commits to:

- (a) Make available information about bicycle and pedestrian routes, public transport services and car share schemes to staff, students and Fellows.
- (b) Aim to publicise information indicating the carbon cost of flying, and to provide IT and AV facilities capable of supporting remote meetings or interviews with overseas applicants or colleagues. It is, however, recognised that this is a matter for individuals, and that academic careers may be contingent on international travel that cannot be met, due to time or cost constraints, through other means.
- (c) Aim to provide facilities and, if appropriate, training to encourage bicycle use among college staff, students and Fellows.
- (d) Consider the use of electric vehicles if appropriate and cost effective for College needs, as other vehicles reach end-of-life.
- (e) Reduce the proportion of travel on College business carried out in private transport through education as to alternative means of reaching destinations and seek to eliminate unnecessary use of college vehicles.

5. **Review use of water: Minimising consumption.** Caius commits to:

- (a) Encourage a decrease in water usage among staff, students and conference guests through provision of showers rather than baths across the majority of the residential estate, and the use of low-volume flush options for toilets.
- (b) Repair sources of water leakage, such as dripping taps as quickly as possible.
- (c) Install appliances which reduce water consumption, with a focus on washing machines and dishwashers with a default economy setting.
- (d) Seek to use rainwater collection from guttering to water gardens where practicable and simple to enact, over time.

6. **Review use of chemical pollutants: Minimising use.** Caius commits to:

- (a) Seek to provide eco-friendly washing up liquid and soaps to all communal gyp and bathroom facilities.
- (b) Seek to support awareness and provision of eco-friendly sanitary products cost effectively for those that wish to use them.

- (c) Ensure that, as far as practicable, all cleaning products used by college staff have a minimal detrimental impact on the environment, ie are biodegradable and non-toxic, aiming for best practice in this area. .
- (d) Seek to minimise the use of fertilisers and pesticides in college grounds, opting for the use of compost produced on site wherever possible.

The College is committed to enforcing the principles expressed in this Policy across its many and varied activities. Environmental considerations have been previously agreed to be a standing item on committee agendas. Where possible measurable targets will be set against the objectives detailed above, and a cyclical process of review by the Environmental Sub Committee will apply.