



The Recycling of Coffee Cups

Context:

In a BBC article in 2016 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-36882799>) it is estimated that in UK alone 2.5 billion coffee cups are not recycled on an annual basis and from analysing Beds SU and Aramark annual sales the University of Bedfordshire alone is contributing over 110,000 coffee cups to this figure on an annual basis.

This taken into context with the university currently sitting within the second quartile for percentage of items recycled (59%) in 55th place compared to being in the upper quartile in 11th place for overall sustainability in the people and planet green league. This, therefore represents an opportunity for the University to improve its overall performance moving forward through implementing a solution for the recycling of coffee cups.

Proposed Actions:

To address this issue two actions are proposed. Firstly, attempt to reduce the number of cups being used and secondly implement a solution to recycle cups being used rather than sending them to landfill diversion. In relation to the first action Beds SU will be implementing reusable cups for purchase that will allow the user to receive a reduction on the cost of a drink when the cup is being used and urge the University to implement a similar scheme with their catering partner Aramark.

To enable the recycling of coffee cups used it is proposed following investigations with several solutions with Adam Higgin it is proposed the University enter a contract with 'Simply Cups' (<http://www.simplycups.co.uk/shop/>) who can collect all coffee cups used and convert them in useful products for reuse such as pens, clocks and notebooks. It is proposed this action is trailed in key areas before deciding on a complete roll out.

Financial Implications:

To trail this with ten collection bins for a year the financial costs to the University are outlined in the table below:

Item:	Initial Cost Outlay:
Special bags for cups to be contained in	£500.00
Annual service charge	£500.00
Purchase of Becca bins for key locations	£2,000.00
Total cost	£3,000.00

Item:	Annual Charges:
Euro bin rental costs	£200.00
Special bags for cups to be stored in	£1,000.00
Annual service charge	£250.00
Total cost	£1,450.00

The current costs of disposing of used coffee cups are estimated at circa £1,360 per annum so therefore, there will be a reduction in these waste disposal costs.

Proposed Impacts:

It is proposed that the following impacts are used to measure the success of the initiative:

- A 50% reduction in cups going to energy from waste plants as refuse derived fuel.
- A movement of at least ten places in the recycling league table
- The maintaining of gold green impact status for the SU
- The maintaining of a top quartile position in the University green league

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