

# Living It Green @ GhanaCU

Reducing our Combined Environmental  
Impact on University Campuses

*You can pack a picnic breakfast, hike to a beautiful spot on our campus and drink in God's handiwork - Take in the sweeping view of the well-manicured green grass with white elegant egrets soaring around the tall trees, some ten meters apart, stooping over the dusty circular driveway. It's an amazing and electrifying scenery that can make you wish you could stop blinking for half a minute.*

**Charles Owiredu, PhD**  
*GhanaCU at a Glance*

## University Campus Environment Charter

### Sustainable Living in GhanaCU

Each year student residents living in Ghana Christian University College accommodation consumes hundreds of kWh of energy per student and potentially produces a huge amount of waste and CO<sub>2</sub> each. As a resident, a visitor or a member of staff, we would ask that you adopt some or all of the following suggestions provided in both this Guide & Charter, and by doing so, help reduce our combined environmental impact on the environment:

**i. Conserve energy:**

The university will make every effort to have each room provided with an energy saving door hanger, and your kitchen with an energy saving fridge magnet, which have several handy tips on saving energy during your stay in University accommodation.

**ii. Reduce, re-use or recycle:**

Try to avoid buying overly packaged goods, and place the correct waste in the waste & recycling bins provided in your kitchen/communal area, identified by the recycled waste tag & poster for contents.

**iii. Reduce car use:**

You may have brought a car with you to GhanaCU, but most students and visitors manage to travel between the site & Campus by other easily accessible modes of transport.

**iv. Be water wise:**

Try to minimise the use of water in university toilets, bathrooms and kitchens and help us to use water wisely: only fill kettles & pans with the water that you need; don't run showers longer than you need them; and turn off your tap when brushing your teeth.

## **Sustainability and GhanaCU**

There are many ways to get involved with sustainability whilst you are in GhanaCU:

1. Take a look at the optional modules available to almost all undergraduate students.
2. Use a bike!
3. Take part in weekly gardening sessions in the Sustainable Garden.
4. Volunteer with the Sustainability Service.
5. Become a Sustainability Rep in your Halls of Residences and make a change to how residents live sustainably. Previous reps' projects included setting up compost bins and organising events to promote sustainability.

## **RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**

Residential Services manages the residential accommodation portfolio owned by The Ghana Christian University College. Residential Services is implement in a number of environmental and energy saving measures. It will continue to conduct a series of surveys across its portfolio (2017-2022), that will highlight relative energy performance and areas where improvements can be made.

Residential Services is committed to working with fellow stakeholders, in reducing the overall impact of its operations on the environment, through the delivery of key objectives & actions to deliver continual improvement in key areas (2017). The main priorities for Residential Service operations include:

- Use & storage of chemicals (i.e. cleaning products)
- Use & storage of fuel, oils, etc
- Energy reduction & carbon emissions

- Environmental awareness & behaviour
- Buying or procurement of goods & services
- Waste management & recycling
- Building design, refurbishment & maintenance
- Travel & transport
- Saving water & reducing sewerage discharge
- Biodiversity & ecology

## **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

### **Students:**

1. Check before you buy cleaning products, and try to avoid chlorine-based cleaners where possible.
2. Keep cleaning products in their containers and ensure they don't spill or leak.
3. Use products as directed on their instructions.
4. Don't pour products directly down the sink/drain. Seek advice from residences staff, or dilute with large amounts of water.

### **Staff:**

1. Reduce the hazard category where possible, for any chemicals stored on site.
2. Ensure that chemicals are stored in secure, ventilated, well-lit & identifiable locations.
3. Ensure that hazardous chemicals are stored with appropriate control measures to contain any spillage/leaks & avoid entering the drains/ sewerage system.
4. Ensure COSHH data sheets are readily available, and that staff are aware of actions to be taken in the event of a spillage.
5. Regularly inspect chemical stores & processes, and check appropriate controls are in place.

## **Use and Storage Fuel, Oils, etc**

Kitchens in the restaurants and halls of residence use vegetable oil for cooking, and the used oil is collected regularly & re-used for either bio-diesel, or bio-electricity produced in the Kalb Technology Park by the Green Energy Engineering students. All other oils & solvents are stored in small quantities, as per the storage of chemicals mentioned previously.

## **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

**Students:**

1. Please do not keep vehicle fuel or oils in your accommodation, as these are a fire hazard.
2. Please ensure that any cooking oil is kept in a secure container.
3. Use cooking oil carefully, and avoid contact with hot surfaces.
4. Do not pour oil down the sink/drain. Consider taking excess used cooking oil to the Kalb Technology Park recycling facility at on the Amrahia Campus.

**Staff:**

1. Ensure that any fuel/oil is stored in secure, fire-resistant, well-lit & identifiable locations.
2. Ensure that hazardous fuel/oil is stored with appropriate control measures to contain any spillage/leaks.
3. Ensure COSHH data sheets are readily available, and that staff are aware of actions to be taken in the event of a spillage.
4. Regularly inspect fuel/oil stores & processes, and check appropriate controls are in place.

## **Energy Reduction**

Energy consumption is also monitored in University accommodation on a monthly basis, and savings identified for specific initiatives undertaken. In addition to physical energy reduction measures, we also promote energy saving behaviour campaigns to students & staff in residences, through both the Student Green Reps initiative, and the 'Living it Green' campaign.

**Simple Actions that can make a great difference:****Students & visitors:**

1. Report problems with your cooling, lighting, or water to residences and facility staff.
2. Please don't waste electricity when you go out. Switch off all electrical appliances in the residential halls, offices, lecture halls, and laboratories when and where there is nobody using the space.
3. Please don't waste energy when your air conditioner is on while the windows are open.
4. Don't leave electrical appliances on standby overnight, or whilst you are away.
5. When boiling water or cooking, only fill your kettle/pan with enough water for your needs and use a lid where possible.

**Staff:**

1. Send work orders to Estates/contractors as soon as possible, for repairs to air conditioners and lighting systems, and ensure works are completed quickly.
2. Ensure that all cooling & control systems are set to appropriate temperatures at the start of each term.
3. Ensure that all office lights & electrical appliances are switched off at the end of each day, and prior to holidays.
4. Pass energy wasting and electrical fault complaints to Senior managers and Estates Services.
5. Work with Student Green Reps to raise awareness and support energy saving initiatives on campus.

## **Food waste and Recycling**

Recycling bins are provided in residential sites in common areas/kitchens and larger bins are provided externally for subsequent collection. In large residences, we recycle glass; a mixture of paper, card, plastics & cans; white goods; waste vegetable oil; used light tubes/bulbs; furniture; beds & mattresses.

Food waste provides a significant amount of waste thrown away in University Hostels. Students must learn tips on planning food purchases, storage, explanations including 'use by dates', and those all-important recipes for leftovers, to make your money go further.

### **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

#### **Students & visitors:**

1. Plan your purchases and try to buy products that have the minimum packaging where possible.
2. Place each type of recycling in an appropriate bin, and please do not mix them up, or contaminate with food waste.
3. If you live in a small property and do not have any recycling facilities, then Residences staff will be able to confirm the nearest recycling point available to you on campus.
4. When you leave at the end of the year, please donate any unwanted clothing, bedding, crockery, pans, etc to the annual Leave GhanaCU Tidy campaign that runs on the Amrahia campus or similar operations. Further information can be found on our website [www.ghanacu.net/leaveGhanaCUtidy](http://www.ghanacu.net/leaveGhanaCUtidy) or e.mail [donate2charity@ghanacu.net](mailto:donate2charity@ghanacu.net)

#### **Staff:**

1. Only print when necessary, and use the double-sided photocopier facility to minimise paper use, or re-use old single-sided copies for rough notes.
2. Collect any used printer/copy cartridges & forward to Purchasing Office in University

## **House for recycling.**

1. Use reusable cups & glasses rather than rely on plastic or other single-use drinks vessels.
2. Return any unwanted mobile phones to The Kalb Technology Park (KTP) on Campus, for re-use/recycling.
3. Store redundant electrical goods for collection by KTP for subsequent recycling.
4. Call the KTP Office if you need to dispose of or purchase any furniture.

## **Building Design, Refurbishment & Maintenance**

Residential Services is committed to improving the quality of university building, property and facilities.

Residential Services follows a program to keep its properties redecorated and refurbished, works undertaken include energy saving initiatives, e.g. lighting upgrades, improvements to cooling & lighting controls, and the installation of double or secondary glazing where appropriate. We ask that residents report building and building service defects, so that we can make quick and effective repairs to minimise loss of energy resources (electricity or water).

### **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

#### **Students & visitors:**

1. Familiarise yourself with the air conditioning controls in your accommodation or office. Ask other officers to show you if you are uncertain.
2. Report any problems with your cooling, lighting, water supply or building to Facility officers or Residence staff.

#### **Staff:**

1. Inform both students & visitors how the cooling controls work in the accommodation.
2. Ensure that any air conditioning complaints are brought to the attention of senior managers & Estates Services.
3. Ensure repair/maintenance works to cooling and ventilation systems are always completed as quickly as possible.

## **Travel & Transport**

Travelling to the University on foot, by bicycle, or by public transport is easy and often faster than driving & looking for that elusive car parking space. Owing to the proximity of most residences to the campus, the majority of our student residents walk to the University,

whilst others use the bus, or cycle. We hope that by 2022 only 20%-25% of students will be using a car for travelling to campus.

## **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

### **Students & visitors:**

1. Please avoid bringing a car to GhanaCU campuses, as there are plenty of alternative modes of travel, and parking on Campus is limited.
2. We encourage the use of bicycles. Secure cycle storage spaces are provided at all large University residences, but we would also advise that you invest in a strong reliable D-lock to keep your bike secure when out & about in town outside campus.
3. We encourage car sharing without a hint of selfishness.

### **Staff:**

1. Ask about the nearest bus stop or trotro station to the campus, and details on Metrobus for regular travel on public transport in Accra or towns around the campuses.
2. Arrange to car-share with colleagues living close to you.

## **Saving Water**

Although the Amrahia campus is located on a site with a lot of underground water, preserving water supplies is important, not only due to the uncertainty of its availability, but also because there are hidden energy costs associated with its production & supply.

About 80-90% of the water that we use at residential sites ends up going in to the drains or sewerage system. If we can reduce the water that we use for drinking, cooking & washing, we can also reduce the discharge to the sewerage system.

The University is seeking to incorporate the installation of rainwater harvesting systems for use in flushing toilets. Pressure reducing valves will be fitted where possible. Finally, lo-flo showers & dual flush toilets will be installed where this is feasible.

## **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

### **Students & visitors:**

1. When cooking/making a drink, only fill your kettle/pan with enough water for your needs.
2. When washing up, please use the sink or washing up bowl, and don't wash your plates & cutlery under a running tap.

3. Turn the shower on when you get in & not before, and don't leave it running afterwards.
4. Report any problems with dripping taps or leaks to appropriate staff (Residence Staff) as quickly as possible.

**Staff:**

1. Get Estates/contractors to make repairs to ensure works are completed at the earliest possibility.
2. Install 'water hippos' or similar devices in older large WC cisterns in excess of 7 litres.
3. Regularly check taps & showers for faults during inspections.

## **Biodiversity and Ecology**

Biodiversity and ecology are all about managing the relationship that we have with plants & animals on our Amrahia campus, and in the area in which we live. As we go about our daily activities our behaviour can affect plants, trees, insects, birds and mammals that live alongside us. Whilst many sites are located in built-up areas, their trees, shrubs & plants provide both a refuge & source of food for a variety of species.

### **Simple Actions that can make a great difference:**

**Students & visitors:**

- You can help Residences staff & Student Sustainability Reps by listing birds, plants, trees, insects or mammals observed on your site, especially during annual events, e.g. Campus Bird Watch, that takes place in late January/early February each year.
- Join the Ant Watching Club organized by Dr Charles Owiredu
- Join GhanaCU Sustainable Garden Volunteers.

**Staff:**

1. List birds & details of other plants, trees, insects or mammals observed on your site, especially during the annual Bird Watch event that takes place in late January/early February.
2. Look out for further events being planned during the year.

## **Becoming a Sustainable Rep**

Student Sustainability Reps are elected/ appointed to the Hall Executive each year by their fellow residents. Their role is to act on behalf of residents in environmental matters on site, and also to help promote environmental initiatives at their



residence. Once elected, Student Sustainability Reps will receive training and support, to run environmental campaigns and improvements. Being involved will likely mean:

- Attending termly meetings.
- Arranging student meetings to promote environmental schemes on your site.
- Attracting a group of like-minded student volunteers to help implement the schemes.
- Acting as a link for communicating environmental issues, between resident students and staff on site.
- Promoting positive behaviour through personal contact, posters, newsletters, etc.
- Encouraging fellow students to take a greater personal responsibility.
- Monitoring environmental initiatives, and suggesting areas for improvement.