



# Celebrating Oxford University's Environmental Sustainability Awards 2019-2020



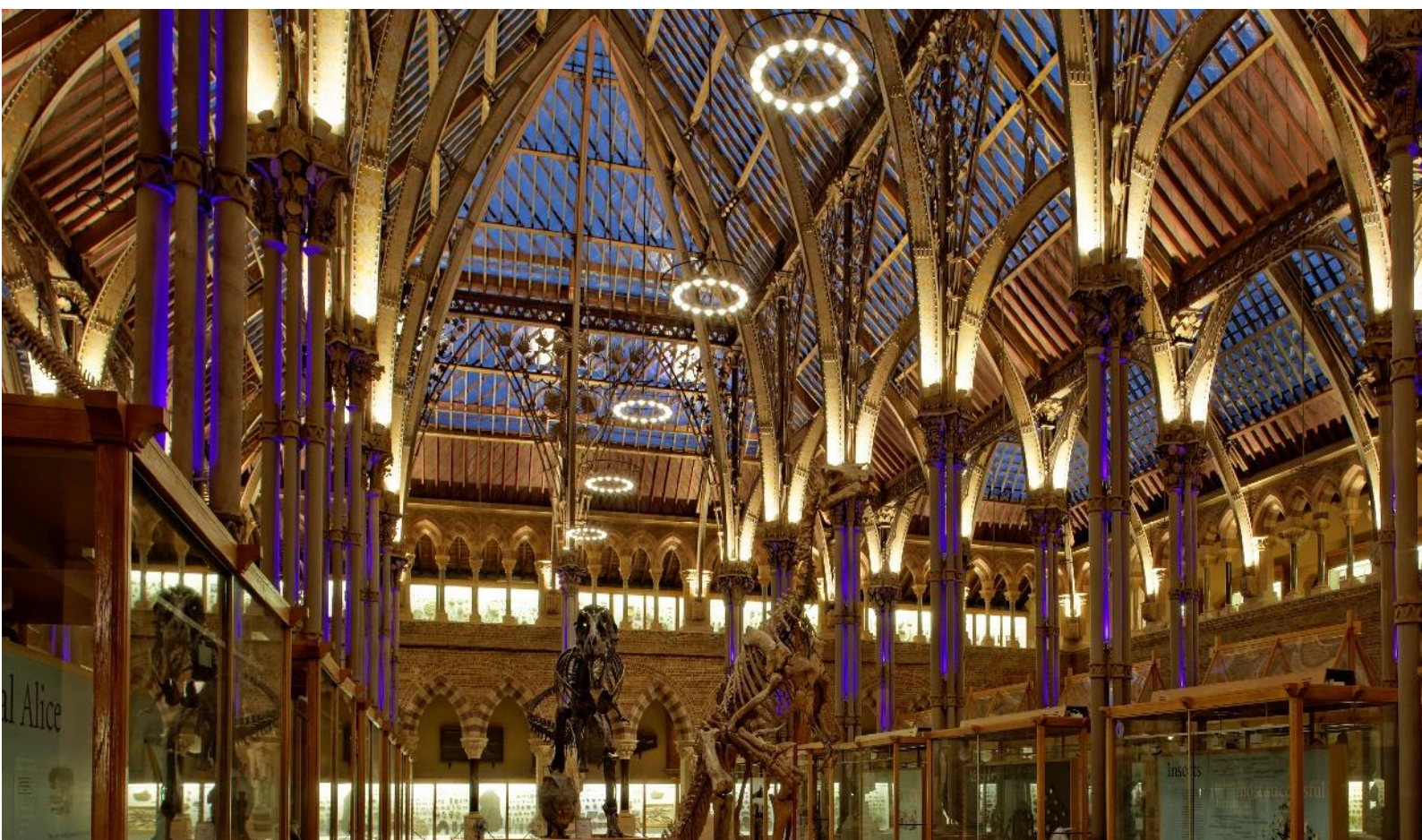
Environmental Sustainability

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## Forward by Harriet Waters, Head of Environmental Sustainability

Before we got here, 2020 was billed as a super year for sustainability with international-level negotiations planned for biodiversity and climate change. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these discussions have been put on hold, but the issues remain. Extreme weather and worrying species decline over the year showed once more the importance and urgency in taking action on a local as well as global level.

The public demand for change is as strong as ever, with a desire to use lessons learned during the pandemic to move to a more sustainable 'normal'.

This year, perhaps more than any other, we have been hugely impressed by the amount of support, and enthusiasm we have had from the University community. Green Impact teams remained active during the lockdown and continued their work with a level of dedication and commitment that deserves applause. Collaboration like this is the lynchpin of our strategy. I'm very excited to see what kind of a step change the clearly-expressed sustainability goals of the University will make over the next years. I hope all of you will be a part of that change.



Bee flying away, by Vikki Rose





## Green Impact awards 2020

Green Impact is a national scheme providing simple and effective ways for staff and students to improve the sustainable practices of their buildings, departments or colleges. Actions range from changing the type of paper used to creating a biodiversity garden. These teams are accredited with either gold, silver or bronze awards and there's a special section for laboratories.

This year, the teams encountered an additional challenge due to the recent pandemic. However many of the teams continued to work on their Green Impact work throughout. Big congratulations to all the teams who maintained this important work, especially since many had to continue by working from home.



**green impact**

# Awards List

## BEYOND GOLD AWARD

Kennedy institute  
Lady Margaret Hall  
Osney One  
OUP Environment  
Oxford Chemistry  
Oxford University Innovation

## GOLD AWARD

Big Data Institute  
Careers Service  
Earth Sciences  
Foster Lab Zoology/Biochemistry  
Green Templeton College  
Kellogg College  
Oxford Biochemistry  
Primary Care Health Science  
St Anne's College  
The Old Bodleian and Weston Libraries

## SILVER AWARD

Trinity College

## BRONZE AWARD

Department of Zoology  
GLAM Divisional Unit  
Oxford Martin School  
Research Services – 5 Worcester St  
Team  
Social Sciences Divisional Office  
Wood Lab (Department of Paediatrics)

## GETTING STARTED

Botnar Research Centre  
Wolfson Building

## SPECIAL CITATION

Saïd Business School – for outstanding  
continuous improvement award





## Teams' experiences and insights

Following are some of the teams' experiences and insights on how it felt to participate in the scheme and what they learned.

### Osney One

The Osney One team got involved with Green Impact was to understand what difference they could make to their workplace's environmental footprint, finding that the scheme provides useful guidance on how to achieve this. Although at first, it was challenging to balance GI with work, with time the actions that the team put in place, such as reduced printing and varied recycling points, have become common practice. They also



managed to help kickstart progress in other libraries across the University. They were particularly proud of their fundraising efforts to establish a departmental planter for growing vegetables. The team stress the importance of addressing challenges as they arise while also treating them as opportunities to engage, prompt discussion and improve outcomes.

### Careers Service

The pandemic was an extra challenge for the team's submission this year, but it also provided more time to focus on these issues in greater depth. During the pandemic, keeping the Department's core services came first, meaning it was difficult to keep up the momentum on GI issues. However, the extraordinary last few months provided the perfect opportunity for the team to explore their workbook in detail. They were are proud of managing to complete the workbook, even with new ideas continually arising. This enabled them to make more concrete plans for the future and consider how to make sustainable changes, not only in the GI team but across the wider department.

## Green Templeton College

Green Templeton College has long been committed to sustainability, and members of the College felt this year was the right time to join the Green Impact awards. They realised the College was already meeting a lot of the criteria, so the main challenge was providing the evidence for this. Their most significant achievements this year include producing a comprehensive climate action plan and raising funds for a step-down transformer to reduce their electricity consumption which was installed in summer 2020.



## GLAM Divisional Unit

For Green Impact, the GLAM team were excited to work with like-minded colleagues to help make their working and home environments greener and more sustainable places, and to start to create real change. As well as not having access to buildings during the lockdown, the biggest challenges were motivating colleagues who are less engaged with sustainability or willing to listen, fitting in Green Impact work with other duties, and also the cost of more sustainable and green alternatives. In addition to submitting the Bronze Green Impact workbook in a relatively short time, they are proud to have worked together in a positive way to develop and implement initiatives to encourage colleagues to take part. These include the 'energy meter challenge' to monitor energy consumption at home throughout the working week, and 'imperfect vegan day', based on the idea that we don't need a handful of people to do veganism perfectly – need millions of people to do it imperfectly.

## Primary Health Care Services

This is the team's fourth year participating in the Green Impact scheme, motivated by their desire to continue embedding sustainability and social justice in the Department and to show that everyone can make a difference in tackling environmental challenges. The team ran lots of GI-themed coffee mornings with organic and vegan food to reduce their carbon footprint. They also raised awareness of fair-trade issues and even held a fair-trade chocolate tasting. They had aimed to get planters to create wildlife planters, but unfortunately, the pandemic put a stop to that and to a planned vegan tasting session. Despite this, the team achieved a lot during the lockdown, including a wildlife photo competition and asking members to make eco pledges for 2020 virtually. They believe persistence is key, as well as communication within the Department, allowing everyone to get involved if they wish to. The scheme gives the Department a sense of pride, knowing staff are doing their best to make a difference.

## Department of Zoology

The Zoology Department was excited about the chance to make a significant change in a fresh, new way by taking part in Green Impact, motivated by members' ambition and concern about sustainability. As with many other teams, the lockdown was their biggest challenge this year. It was difficult to have made plans that could no longer go ahead because their building was closed. However, one silver lining has been the way it made them step back and look at things from a different point of view. The team are proud of the work they have done with their internal bins, placing them in communal areas with clear labels. They were one of the first teams to do this. The main lesson they want to share is the importance of communicating with colleagues in many ways about the work you are doing and encouraging them to get involved. They communicate through means including email, the staff intranet, posters, noticeboards, TV screens, websites, word of mouth, Zoom. The goal is to make sustainability in the Department as accessible and inclusive as possible.

## Department of Biochemistry

The activities to make Biochemistry more sustainable range from creating a centralised Media and Wash Lab and having dedicated staff to initiate sustainable ways of working and recycling since moving into the Department's building in 2008, to having recycling facilities and information about these readily visible, available and circulated widely. The Department also has staff who work with the building manager, safety officer, head of Department, head of administration, sustainability office and supplier reps to make all activities as sustainable as possible. The team want to send a big thank-you to everyone whose contributions over the years have made it possible to attain this award.

The Department will continue to work sustainably; the next goal is to get as many labs as possible signed up for the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) accreditation.

One of the first steps the Biochemistry Sustainability Team wants to implement this academic year is to include sustainability in the General Induction Seminar that all new staff and students attend before starting work at the Department, as well as in the welcome pack all new staff receive. The team are looking into what should be included and in what form to make an impact. Many laboratories at the Department already have sustainability in their lab inductions for new staff and students. Still, the team feel incorporating this in general induction material will help emphasise the importance of sustainability issues.



## Leaf Initiative

This year laboratory-based teams had the option to pilot the new [Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework](#) (LEAF) as part of their Green Impact efforts. LEAF is designed to drive improvements in laboratory efficiency. Teams complete a set of lab-specific criteria and can estimate the carbon and financial savings their actions have achieved.

Several departments started using LEAF this year, including ones from the **Chemistry, Engineering, Geography and Pharmacology departments**, the **Nuffield Department of Medicine**, and the **Dunn School of Pathology**.

Big congratulations go to the Nutrient Transport lab (Biochemistry) and the Wood lab (Paediatrics) who achieved LEAF Silver and LEAF Gold accreditation, respectively.

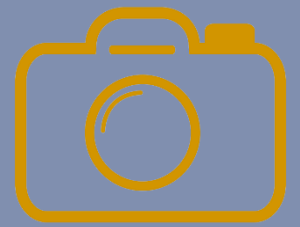
### LEAF GOLD AWARD

Wood Lab (Department of Paediatrics)

### LEAF SILVER AWARD

Newstead Lab (Department of Biochemistry)

We offer special congratulations to the newcomer teams, who joined the scheme during a very challenging year and yet remained committed.



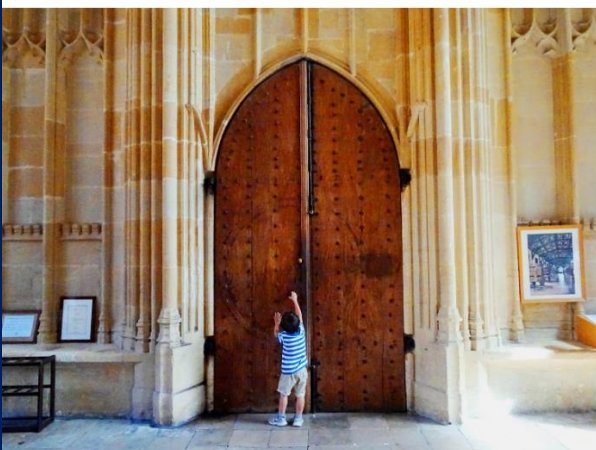
# Sustainability Photographer Of The Year 2020



*Education lights the way, Hermione Grassi, Winner,  
Sustainability Photographer of the Year competition 2019*



Following the success of previous years, the sustainability team was delighted to run this competition again. This year's task was to demonstrate what sustainability means to you as an individual during these challenging times, focusing on hope after COVID-19 and the goal of building back better. We think this is a brilliant way to see Oxford through the eyes of students and staff. We had over 80 entries this year, and the competition was tough. Below are our winners and runners-up.



**The greenhouse** by Gudrun and Maria Jakobsdottir; **Snakehead Dew Drops** by Jing Fang  
**A sign of life and hope** by Stefania Monterisi ; **New Life out of Disaster** by Sue Henderson  
**A Little Boy in the Library** by Jing Fang; **“Making peace” with coronavirus** by Lhuri Rahmartani  
Sustainability Photographer of the Year nominations, 2020

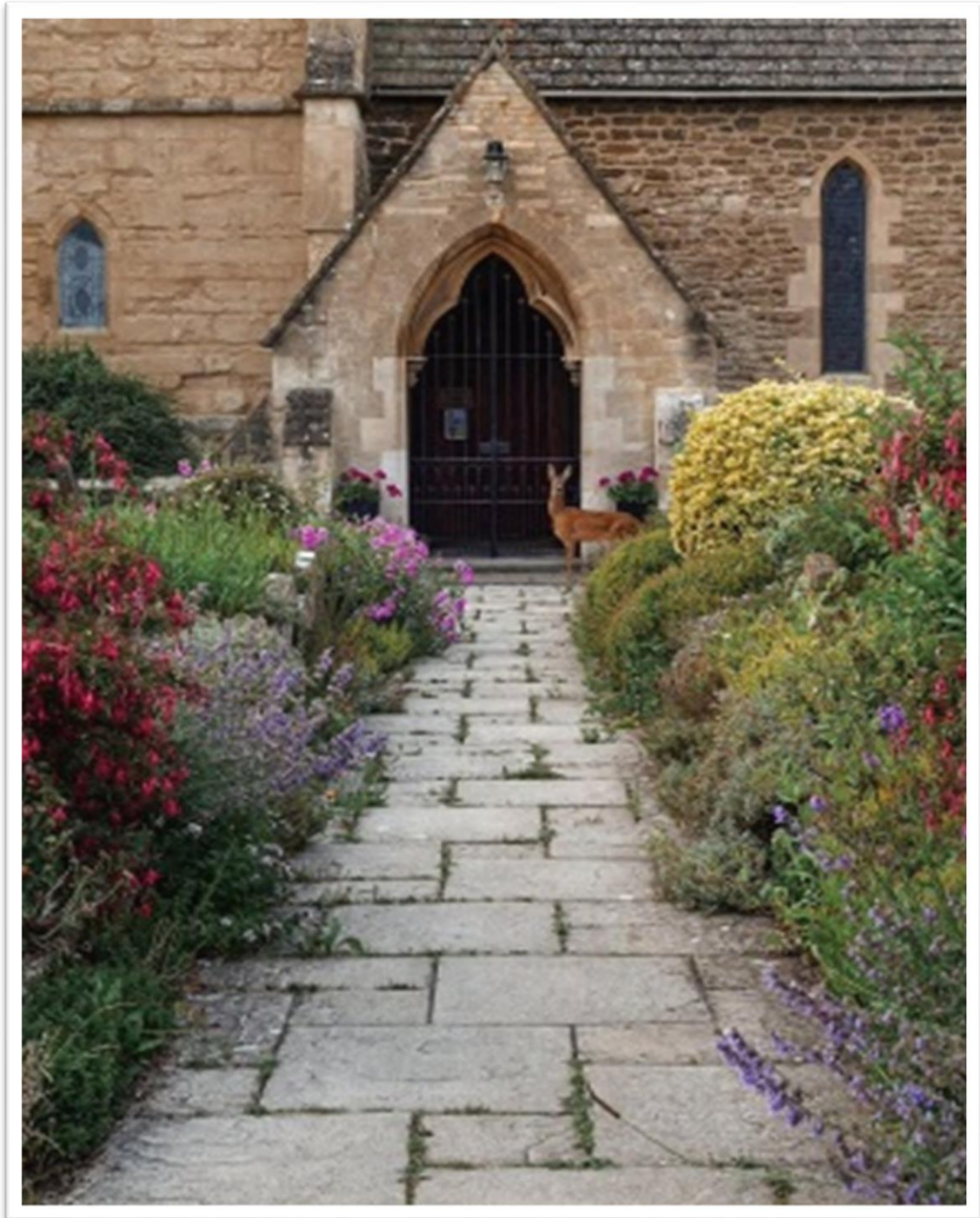


First place:

Tansy Branscombe

DPhil Archaeological Science, Brasenose College

*"Where the Wild things (Always) Were"*



"This photo was taken on an evening walk through Old Headington, en route to meet friends for a socially distanced picnic. On my way past I noticed the beautiful flowers leading to the church, so I got out my camera, and when I turned back to take a photo this deer had appeared to watch me from the top of the path. It was such a surreal moment, amplified by the quiet



and emptiness of the village. It felt especially poignant to come across this deer on one of my first post-lockdown trips, after seeing many articles about nature ‘taking back’ towns and cities during the pandemic. There is a distinct danger that sentiments like that can lead to an ‘eco-fascism’ that is far from sustainable; ecologically driven rhetoric around over-population ultimately targets the world’s poorest and most vulnerable communities, whose lifestyles are in turn amongst the least environmentally impactful. Instead, reflecting on this experience and photograph, I’d like to think it could inspire a more mundane and less radical impression of post-coronavirus sustainability. Through travel restrictions, cancelled holidays, and home-working, we have all been encouraged to interact much more consciously and carefully with our local environments. This deer probably lived near Old Headington and started visiting this church long before the pandemic struck, and long before I would ever have considered going for a long walk on a (very!) warm summer evening. Nature isn’t ‘taking back’ the streets – it was always there, we just weren’t paying enough attention!”

## Second place: Jing Fang Language Instructor, China Centre

### *“Weeding required”*

“Nature reclaims what is hers. Despite the hurt and chaos of COVID, nature reminds us to keep pushing through and build back better.”

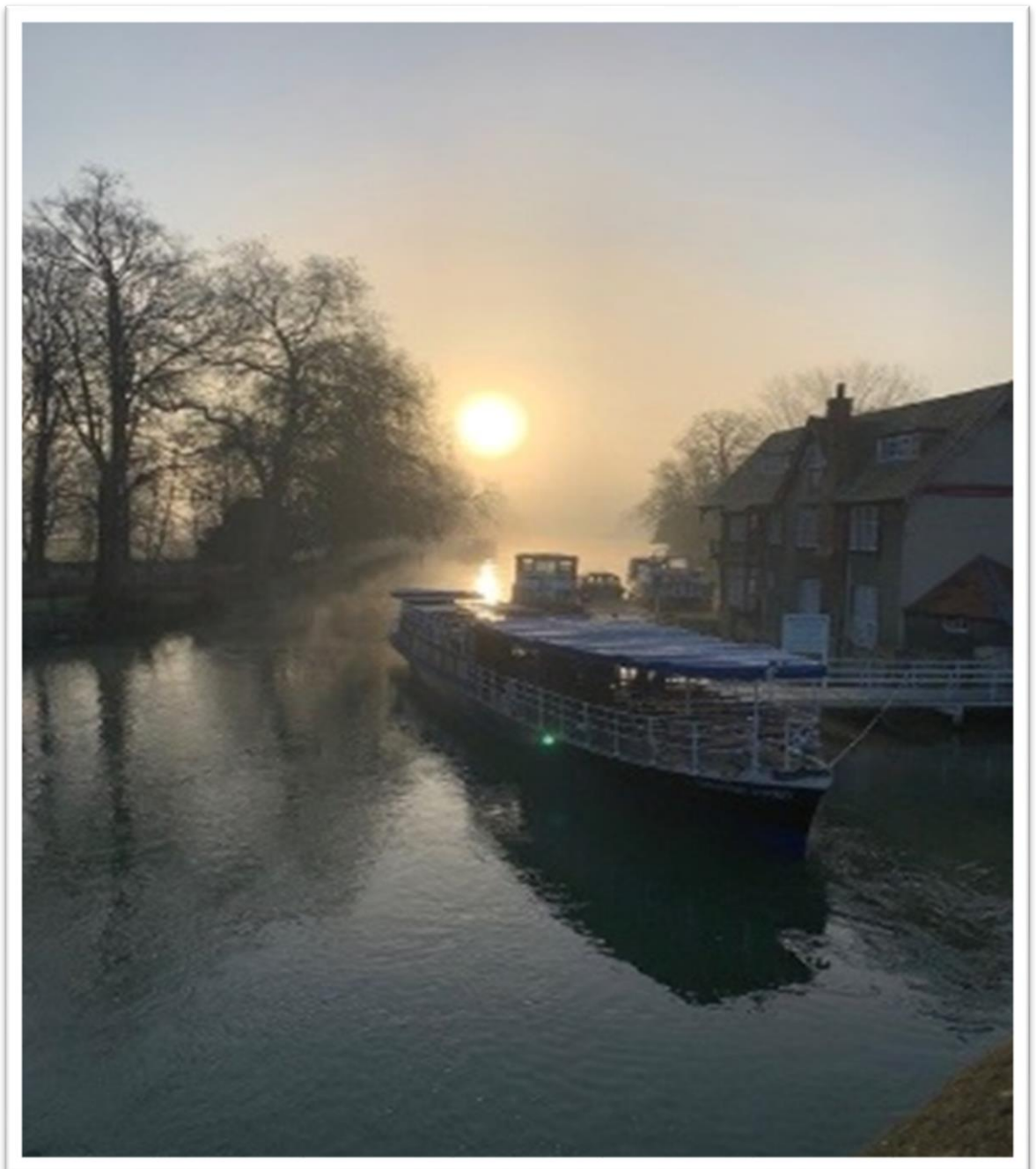


Third place:

Desiree Meyerding

Marketing manager, Said Business School

*"Sunrise Folly Bridge"*



"Appreciation of a mystic atmosphere to be witnessed from Folly Bridge. Got off my bike to indulge myself into this special moment for a little while."



**Runner up:**  
**Alicia Hayden**  
Biological Sciences, Lady  
Margaret Hall

*"Wisdom amongst the trees"*

"Around my house I have come across three different Tawny Owl families this year. This adult Tawny Owl was resting during the afternoon, near its branching youngsters."



**Runner up:**  
**Anne Pearsall**  
PROMYS Europe Administrator, Mathematical Institute

*"Oxford by bicycle"*

"During lockdown, I have been enjoying regular bike rides around Oxford with my family, enjoying the fresh air and quiet roads, discovering new corners of Oxford and



watching a glorious Spring unfold. I am reminded every day how fortunate we are to have all this on our doorstep. I hope as lockdown eases that travel by bicycle will continue to be our mode of choice and that we will continue to be alert to the wonder of nature."



# Student Switch Off Winners



student  
**switch off**

Over the course of the year, Oxford colleges compete in a series of challenges to earn Switch Off awards. The competition rewards the colleges with the highest percentage of participants pledging to save energy and water and to recycle more. Due to the pandemic, the Switch off teams were unable to complete the task and celebrate together.

Below is the leaderboard where the figure in the bracket represents the percentage of students who signed up out of the college student body.

## Leaderboard

Christ Church (68%)
Lincoln (60%)
Oriel (36%)
Keble (14%)
Balliol (12%)
St Anne's (12%)
Wadham (12%)
Jesus (10%)
Worcester (6%)
Lady Margaret Hall (3%)





Student Switch Off overall winner:

## Lincoln College

50% of students at Lincoln took part in the first SSO quiz, and they had the largest turnout of any college for the second quiz. They also promoted recycling throughout the year through Facebook, email and posters. They are changing their waste provider, making it easier to measure how much they recycle. Lincoln conducted four SSO events.

Winner of recycling/ reusing competition:

## Oriel College

Oriel achieved an 18% turnout for the first quiz and 20% for the second. The effort that they put into recycling is impressive. They installed recycling bins in every room, added recycling facilities for the non-standard waste stream and donated food waste to charity. Hosting OxUnboxed in their College offered another opportunity to reduce waste as well using glassware in the bar and providing sauces in washable pots.

The Oriel team was involved in OU Lent Campaign and Planet Pledge, making all their afternoon teas events in the MCR vegetarian.



# Student Union Awards 2020





Our Oxford Student Sustainability awards were awarded by the Oxford SU based on students' votes. These were awarded to students who have worked incredibly hard for climate action, inspiring leadership, increasing awareness on climate action or changing how colleges or departments operate for the better. A huge congratulations to all award-winning contributions to sustainability in Oxford.

### **THE SUSTAINABLE ADVOCATE:**

**Gloria Rosetto, Merton**

With the most nominations of anyone, this beloved E&E rep has a true record of advocating for sustainable living, during lock down no less!

### **THE WASTE SAVER:**

**Florence Lapplin, St Hilda's**

Flo has served as an excellent ethics and environment rep for St Hilda's, organising a moon cup initiative to reduce period plastic & producing guides on creative ways to live and eat sustainably as students in Oxford. Holly Jackson and Kamran Sharifi, also at St Hilda's, organised successful community food initiatives in response to the lockdown – Holly set up a college fundraiser which raised over £600 for the Oxford Food Bank & Kamran led a student initiative to collect foodstuffs left in accommodation which was then donated to local food banks.

### **THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGISER:**

**Ellie Holton and Bart Ashton**

**Lady Margaret Hall.**

Something the pair said they had learned this year is how much sustainability work happens in teams and Ellie and Bart were nominated together for working as a team to bringing people together across all the colleges. Their Sustainability Guild workshops have had an incredible impact, getting colleges started on setting carbon targets. Their second workshop was on energy and we have no doubt that this explains the explosion of interest in energy efficiency.

### **THE SUSTAINABLE DINER: Viola King Forbes, Jesus**

Viola has been on Jesus' sustainability working group and has focused on the college's food, providing incredible veggie and vegan options, securing meat-free Mondays and overall improving the sustainability of the College's food.

## THE SUSTAINABLE DEPARTMENTAL LEADER: Sue Henderson, Chemistry

Sue Henderson has truly led the way to ensure that the Department of Chemistry shows leadership, despite many technical challenges, in reducing its negative environmental impact. Sue was nominated many times by her peers and honored at the Student Union Awards.

## THE SUSTAINABLE PARTNER: St John's Divestment Occupation, Solidarity Team and Environment representatives.

Students voted to nominate the St John's Divestment Occupation, Solidarity Team and environment representatives for their bravery and persistence in communicating the urgency of the climate crisis. Particularly deserving of a mention are Ankit Ranjan, Molly Clarke, Fergus Green and Anna Olerinyova.

## THE SUSTAINABLE TEACHER: Tristram Walsh, Arunima Sircar, Alice Evatt, Asisa Singh, Thea Stevens and the entire 2019 board of the Oxford Climate Society

OCS have put on an incredible number of world-leading events and hosted their own extracurricular climate school to educate people on sustainability and climate. In 2020 their School Of Climate Change may be scaled up and offered to the entire student body.

## THE SUSTAINABLE TRAVELER: Anna Gee, Somerville College

The policy Anna wrote aimed to reduce air travel by college members. It includes a number of strategies – for example, Somerville will no longer fund air travel to any destination that can be reached in less than five hours by train from Oxford. The proposal was debated in the Somerville Sustainability Working Group and passed to Governing Body. We're very optimistic that it will be passed by the Governing Body as well, but unfortunately the decision has been delayed due to the focus on Coronavirus.