

News from Cambridgeshire County Council

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Author: Glenn Thwaites
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THE HIVE

Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of a new multi-million pound education and enterprise park known as The Hive.

The first building to be started on site will be the SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre which is a joint venture between Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge Regional College, designed to support businesses looking to adapt to a low carbon economy. Construction is expected to start in early December 2010.

The new centre will open in September 2011 and teach the workforce skills needed for building low carbon homes and installing renewable energy systems. It will provide new jobs and reduce the impact of CO₂ locally. The eco-excellent building is expected to cost £2.6 million. It has also been part-funded by Housing Growth Fund money allocated by Cambridgeshire Horizons and its partners, the East of England Development Agency, and the Skills Funding Agency.

Cambridgeshire County Council Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Tony Orgee, said: "What will make The Hive business park really different to other business parks is that its major focus will be on business that's good for both society and the environment."

Rick Dearing, Principal of Cambridge Regional College said he was delighted that work could now start on the innovative SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre. "We already have the SmartLIFE Centre at CRC where we teach modern methods of construction, and the Low Carbon Centre will allow us to go even further in teaching the essential skills needed for building low carbon homes and installing renewable energy systems," he said.

The Hive will eventually be home to three projects: SmartLIFE Low Carbon, SmartLIFE Eco-homes Innovation Park and the Future Business Centre.

The Hive will benefit the whole community, by working with:

- Professionals, technicians and businesses working in construction – designers, engineers, builders, plumbers, electricians – who want to update their skills to adapt to a low-carbon economy.
- Young people looking for vocational training in modern, sustainable construction techniques
- Businesses set up to tackle a social or environmental need, and the people who create and run them
- Employers who need training or staff development for their staff.

You can follow The Hive's progress on Twitter at @talktothehive www.twitter.com/talktothehive

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Notes for editors:

For further information, contact: Glenn Thwaites in the Communications Office on (01223) 699282.

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SmartLIFE Eco-homes Innovation Park will demonstrate both low carbon homes and lifestyles.

The Future Business Centre will be an enterprise hub that demonstrates the possibilities for combining good business practice with the business of doing good. It will support charities learning to trade, social enterprises wanting to grow and companies developing products that result in social or environmental benefits - through business support and affordable space for start-up companies to develop their ideas and business. More information about The Future Business Centre (formerly known as Citylife's Good Business Centre) can be found at <http://www.futurebusiness.co.uk>

The Hive is an innovative partnership between Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge Regional College, Future Business and BRE. Up to £2.3 million has been funded by Cambridgeshire Horizons and EEDA has contributed £750,000 to the Future Business Centre. About £1 million has come from Cambridge Regional College. The balance of the investment is from the private sector.