

28 September 2010

Press Release

PLANNERS GIVE GO-AHEAD TO NEW SMARTLIFE LOW CARBON CENTRE AT CRC

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](https://twitter.com/talktothehive)
www.twitter.com/talktothehive

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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.

Cambridge Regional College is the second largest provider of full-time education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region. The College has around 3,500 full-time and 6,000 part-time students. Students come in from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk.

Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes. The College offers the largest and most comprehensive range of vocational courses in Cambridgeshire.