

19 October 2011

Press Release

NEW SMARTLIFE CENTRE OFFICIALLY OPENED BY GOVERNMENT MINISTER

Climate Change minister Greg Barker officially opened CRC's new SmartLife Low Carbon Centre today – describing it as “setting a new standard” for training and skills.

The minister praised the “impressive” centre, a joint project between CRC and the County Council, in a speech in front of 100 guests from businesses and organisations in the region.



Minister Greg Barker with CRC Principal Anne Constantine and county council leader Nick Clarke

He formally opened the £3 million building by unveiling a plaque in the foyer – designed and made by CRC carpentry staff – before writing a pledge for an energy-saving ‘pledge tree’, promising “to make this the greenest Government ever”.

Mr Barker toured the building and spoke to science students who were having their first lesson in the centre’s laboratory. He also chatted to guests, met exhibitors and held a meeting with consumer groups to talk about the Government’s Green Deal.

The minister, who was welcomed to the College by CRC Principal Anne Constantine, said it was vital that young people and businesses had access to training for the industries of the future.

The day’s events included a party for everyone involved in the SmartLife construction project – with a cake in the shape of the SmartLife centre taking pride of place.

In the afternoon, the centre opened its doors to local businesses and the public, who were also offered the opportunity to sign up for free environmental awareness seminars.

The building, which will be a centre for teaching ‘green’ building technologies, is where students will learn the expertise needed for constructing low carbon homes and installing renewable energy systems.

It will also support businesses looking to adapt to the low carbon economy, with specialist classrooms for teaching the installation of photovoltaic, advanced gas and solar energy systems.

The SmartLife Low Carbon Skills Centre is a joint project between CRC and Cambridgeshire County Council. It is part of the Hive Education and Enterprise Park, a joint venture between CRC, the county council and Future Business, which will also be home to the Future Business Centre and SmartLife Homes.

- ends -

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For more information, please contact Lynn O'Shea, Communications & PR Manager, on 01223 418773 or email loshea@camre.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Cambridge Regional College is one of the largest providers of full-time further education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region. The College has more than 4,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students, coming 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, and has one of the largest work-based learning contracts in the Eastern Region.