

## **New 'green' facility underlines Loughborough University's commitment to sustainability**

Loughborough University today (Thursday 25 September) unveiled its new hydrogen refuelling station, underlining its commitment to the development and support of green technologies.

The facility, one of only two currently operational in the UK, will enable the University to drive forward its research in this area, as well as provide a refuelling service to hydrogen vehicles used by campus-based organisations. One of the main benefits of hydrogen-powered vehicles is that they only emit water vapour into the atmosphere and not environmentally damaging carbon dioxide. Loughborough's ultimate goal is to transfer its own service fleet over to hydrogen.

Based at Holywell Park, the facility is part of a cluster of hydrogen refuelling stations being set up across the region by the British Midlands Hydrogen Forum. Known as the Midlands Hydrogen Ring, the stations will be at the heart of hydrogen fuelling infrastructure planned throughout the UK.

The University's Chief Operating Officer Will Spinks officially opened Loughborough's refueller. On display at the event were a range of hydrogen vehicles, including Microcabs, the Morgan LifeCar and the ENV bike. The ENV bike is the world's first purpose built hydrogen fuel cell motorbike and was developed by Loughborough University spin out Intelligent Energy.

Speaking about the new facility Mr Spinks said: "At Loughborough sustainability is key. The opening of this new refueling station underlines our commitment to operating in an environmentally friendly way and to the development of new technologies that support this goal."

The refueller has been funded by Loughborough University in partnership with the East Midlands Development Agency (emda), and was manufactured by Air Products. Initially gas for the facility will be provided by an external supplier, but the University is investigating ways of creating its own hydrogen through the use of green technologies on campus.

Ian Williamson, Air Products Hydrogen Energy Systems Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa said: "We are extremely proud to provide the latest technology in hydrogen refuelling to Loughborough University. Air Products is the market leader in the development of hydrogen fuelling stations. We have already built more than 85 stations worldwide and over 66,000 safe vehicle fuellings have already taken place."

Loughborough – winner of the coveted University of the Year title in this year's Sunday Times University Guide – is world renowned for its development of green technologies. It is home to the internationally acclaimed CREST (Centre for Renewable Energy Systems Technology) and in 2006 launched a Research School in Sustainability. The School brings together a multi-talented team of experts in sustainability-related research from across the University, and promotes collaboration with other academic institutions and industry.

In recognition of its research expertise in this field Loughborough, in partnership with the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham and support from the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) and Advantage West Midlands, was chosen to host the Government's new £1 billion national Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) to develop cleaner energies. The headquarters of the ETI are now based at the Loughborough campus.

The University was also one of the first in the country to begin using 100% green power back in 2002, and this year was ranked fifth in the People and Planet Green League and awarded a First Class degree for its solid environmental performance. The Green League looks at both universities' commitment to environmental management and at their performance. It takes into consideration nine indicators, including the number of full-time environment staff employed, the percentage of waste recycled and water consumption per head. Overall Loughborough scored 47.5 points out of a total of 60, gaining 'gold stars' in four categories – environmental policy, environmental staff, Fairtrade university status and recycled waste.

**ENDS**

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Notes for editors:

**A photo call/filming opportunity will take place at the hydrogen refueller at 12.30pm on Thursday 25 September 2008. Photographers/journalists are asked to leave their vehicles at the Sports Technology Institute car park (located at the west entrance to the campus off Ashby Road) and then walk the short distance to Holywell Park where the refueller is located. Following the launch a hydrogen vehicle will be refuelled before completing a short circuit of Holywell Park. Please notify Judy Wing if you will be attending the event.**

Loughborough is one of the country's leading universities, with an international reputation for excellence in teaching and research, strong links with industry and unrivalled sporting achievement.

It is a member of the esteemed 1994 Group – a set of internationally recognised, research intensive universities – and has a reputation for the relevance of its work. Its degree programmes are highly regarded by professional institutions and businesses, and its graduates are consistently targeted by the UK's top recruiters.

Loughborough is also the UK's premier university for sport. It has perhaps the best integrated sports development environment in the world and is home to some of the country's leading coaches, sports scientists and support staff. It also has the country's largest concentration of world-class training facilities across a wide range of sports.

In the 2008 National Student Survey, the University was voted fourth in the UK, with 22 out of 30 of Loughborough's subject areas being ranked in the top ten for overall satisfaction. Loughborough is also ranked in the top fifteen of UK universities in national league tables. It was named winner of the 2006 and 2007 Times Higher award for the UK's Best Student Experience and winner of the 2007 award for Outstanding Support for Overseas Students. In recognition of its contribution to the sector, the University has been awarded six Queen's Anniversary Prizes – an achievement bettered by no other university.

East Midlands Development Agency (emda) was set up in 1999 to bring more jobs and skills to the region and to make the East Midlands a better place to live and work. The new Regional Economic Strategy - 'A Flourishing Region', co-ordinated by emda, sets out priorities for the region until 2020. Its publication follows the most comprehensive consultation ever undertaken in the East Midlands where more than 1,400 stakeholders and partners, and thousands of members of the public had their say on the future of the region. The RES highlights the themes of productivity, sustainability and equality and is underpinned by ten priorities. The new RES builds on the previous two strategies 'Prosperity Through People' and 'Destination 2010'. For more details visit: [www.emda.org.uk](http://www.emda.org.uk)

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