Why saving energy can add to emissions

Initiatives aimed at saving energy and reducing CO₂ emissions could actually result in an increase, a new study claims.

A major new report for the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC) explains how so-called 'rebound effects' can result in energy savings falling short of expectations.

The report's chief author, Steve Sorrell, a Senior Fellow in SPRU – Science & Technology Policy Research, says an example of a rebound effect would be the driver who replaces a car with a fuel-efficient model, only to take advantage of its cheaper running costs to drive further and more often. Another example would be a family who insulate their loft and put the money saved on their heating bill towards an overseas holiday.

Steve argues that the neglect of these rebound effects by both experts and policymakers is "a mistake". He says: "If we do not make sufficient allowance for rebound effects, we will overestimate the contribution that energy efficiency can make to reducing carbon emissions. We need to get the sums right."

The difficulty of developing policy to take rebound effects into account is exacerbated by disagreement over their significance. Some believe that they are insignificant, while others argue that energy-efficiency measures lead to increased energy consumption – an outcome that has been termed 'backfire'.

The report argues that rebound effects vary widely between different technologies, sectors and income groups, so that general statements about the size of such effects can be misleading.

Steve says: "Rebound effects are notoriously complex. Generally speaking we expect rebounds will be large in energy-intensive sectors and smaller for households or small businesses. This is important, since energy-efficiency policy usually targets these smaller users."

Rebound effects can be both direct (e.g. driving further in a fuel-efficient car) and indirect (e.g. spending the money saved on heating on an overseas holiday).

The evidence is that direct rebound effects are usually fairly small – less than 30% for households, for example. Much less is known about indirect effects. However, the study suggests that in some cases, particularly where energy efficiency significantly decreases the cost of production of energy-intensive goods, rebounds may be larger.

Sussex research packs a punch in university rankings

Latest international university league tables place Sussex fifth in the UK for the impact of its research.

The THEs-QS World University Rankings 2007, published in the Times Higher Education Supplement on 9 November, also lists Sussex among the top 150 universities in the world and in the top 50 institutions in Europe.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, said: "I am delighted that the strength of the University continues to be recognised in these international tables. I am determined that we should continue to strengthen our position further, and to establish ourselves firmly in the top 100 in future years."

The University is placed joint fifth in the UK alongside Bristol for the impact of its research, surpassed only by Cambridge, Oxford, UCL and Imperial. The ranking is based on the number of times published research papers are cited by academic colleagues around the world.

The University also scored highly for attracting international students and staff to Sussex (equal 34th and 56th in the world respectively).

The THEs-QS placing follows on from latest data confirming the strong impact of Sussex's research. The University was placed seventh in a top-ten table, published in the Guardian on 30 October, ranking UK institutions according to the impact and influence of their research over the period 2002 to 2006.

Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), says: "Research at Sussex has an impact well ahead of our size. The fact that others cite Sussex research in their own publications is testimony to the reach and impact of what we are doing. Our ambitious research development plans can build on this excellent record."

Inside

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New research aims to discover how children acquire language.

3 PSR update
Philip Harvey with the latest on the Professional Services Review.

4 Letters
Blackboards, grounds maintenance and Falmer stadium.

5 A bit cheeky
The Students' Union is selling a racy but nice sports calendar.

6 Greetings
Not one, but two greetings card designs on sale this year.
Archive helps to tell tragic story of Kipling’s soldier son

The final letter from Rudyard Kipling’s soldier son, killed in World War I, is among key items from the University of Sussex that feature in a major new exhibition at London’s Imperial War Museum.

The scribbled three-page note is dated 25 September 1915, two days before John was killed in the battle of Loos. John (or Jack, as he was known), tells his father he is about to march to the front for the first time as the war “is now general”.

The poignant letter is one of 20 items from the University’s Kipling Collection to appear in the exhibition, ‘My Boy Jack’, which opened at the museum on 6 November.

Other items from the Kipling Collection – held on behalf of both the National Trust and the Royal Literary Fund – that feature in the exhibition include letters of condolence to Rudyard Kipling from Sherlock Holmes author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and US President Theodore Roosevelt (who both lost sons in the war), King George V and Queen Mary.

Kipling (who lived in Sussex) helped his only son to gain a commission in the Irish Guards. He had previously been declared medically unfit for active service because of severe short-sightedness. Posted to France on his 18th birthday, John went missing six weeks later in his first action.

The grief-stricken Kiplings went to great efforts to find their son before finally accepting in 1919 that he had died.

In 1992, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission announced that the grave of an ‘unknown Irish Guards Lieutenant’ was in fact that of John. The exhibition concludes with an examination of new evidence that strongly disputes this.

Karen Watson from Special Collections helped to supervise the University’s contribution to the exhibition, which runs until 24 February. She says: “I think the exhibition was very poignant. It shows how much of a family man Rudyard Kipling was and what great lengths he went to to find out what happened to his son.”

Putting words into their mouths?

Is it a plane? Is it a car? Is it a thingywhatsit? A new research project at Sussex aims to find out more about how children acquire language.

Psychologist Dr Jessica Horst has set up a laboratory to test a theory that toddlers and young children do not learn new words as quickly as previous studies have suggested.

Jessica, who is inviting children and their parents to take part in the study, says: “The theory is that children learn language through something termed ‘fast-mapping’ – a short exposure to an object is enough for a child to learn an object’s name. Some research suggests that six-year-olds are learning up to nine words a day. I expect to show that word-learning is through repetition over a longer period.”

In her Word and Object Reasoning Development Laboratory (Word Lab), Jessica will specifically be investigating how children learn the names of objects (nouns) and the words that describe their actions (verbs).

She will present familiar objects, such as a ball, and unfamiliar objects, such as a strange shape, to two-year-olds and ask the child to select the objects by name. She gives the unfamiliar object a new name.

“In my previous research I have found that children might remember the name of the new object briefly, but have forgotten it five minutes later,” she says.

“There is a lot that we still don’t understand about language development. Some people think it’s a magical process – it just happens through fast-mapping. But my studies suggest that this is not how children learn.”

“This research will hopefully feed into what we know about language delay and the practice of speech therapy.”

Jessica is looking for 84 children to take part in two studies. The first study involves studying the attention that 12-month-old babies pay to familiar and unfamiliar objects. The second looks at word acquisition in two-year-olds. Each interview lasts no longer than 12 minutes and parents are required to stay with their children. Each participant will receive a small gift. To find out more, email jessica@sussex.ac.uk or call ext 3084.
Find the perfect match

What will be in your stocking this Christmas? For researchers at Sussex, it could be the perfect research partner—or perhaps the prospect of funding for a new project.

That’s because academics have the chance to meet each other and chat over a glass of wine and festive buffet, at an innovative event next month that aims to promote cross-disciplinary research.

Sociologist Dr Adam Hedgecoe is helping to organise the Research Christmas Stocking event, in conjunction with the Research and Regional Development team.

He says: "It’s interesting to see how researchers from such different backgrounds manage to communicate with each other—what we hope they’ll be able to find areas of common interest."

The event aims to raise researchers’ awareness of their colleagues’ interests and expertise, and to encourage cross-campus collaboration, building on Sussex’s long tradition of interdisciplinary research.

"This is the way research is going," points out Dr Fergus Massey, a postdoctoral researcher in Life Sciences, who is also involved with planning the event. "None of us can afford not to collaborate."

Prizes of £4,000 will be awarded to the best four collaborative research proposals submitted after the event. Ultimately, it could increase the number of joint research proposals put forward by Sussex researchers.

The event, which is open to all researchers from all disciplines, takes place on Tuesday 11 December, from 5.30-8pm at the Conference Centre in Bramber House.

Personal invitations are being sent out now from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Bob Allison. For more information and to RSVP, see www.sussex.ac.uk/christmasstocking. Registrations close on Monday 26 November; sign up early, as numbers are limited.

Next steps for University’s ambition

Development of the strategic plan moves forward next week with a meeting of Council, the University’s governing body.

The discussion document, ‘Setting the scope of our ambition’, has been discussed at a wide range of meetings since it was issued on 19 October. It has garnered more than 100 detailed online responses from staff and students, and has even created positive coverage on the pages of the THES (9 November).

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, said: "I am pleased by the engagement and debate which this has engendered. I am glad that Sussex is welcoming the opportunity to think about a positive and ambitious future."

Following the meeting of Council on 22 and 23 November, there will be further discussion at Senate later this term, with draft plans then presented to a further Council meeting in January 2008.

The campus community will continue to be kept up to date and involved as the strategic plan is developed.

Professional Services Review

Ensuring that our Professional Services are properly managed and organised to support the University’s academic goals and its priorities in teaching and learning, research and enterprise is vital to our success as an institution.

Dr Philip Harvey
Registrar and Secretary

I want all staff within the Professional Services at Sussex to understand what we are seeking to achieve and why. I want us to have high standards and high expectations about what we can achieve through good teamwork and sound project management. And through such achievements, I want staff to understand clearly their role in making the University a better and more successful place in which to work.

The Professional Services Review (PSR) and the work flowing from that is an important way in which we are making this happen.

Council (the University’s governing body) established the PSR just over a year ago. It aims to get the right organisation and management structures; to improve leadership; and to focus on successful delivery of services, while meeting efficiency targets.

The first phase of the review concluded in July 2007 and has set a baseline of operation across three key dimensions, from which these services will continue to develop and evolve in future years.

The first is financial. We have organised our spending plans for the period ahead in ways which make us more efficient as well as in ways that are supportive of University academic priorities.

An efficiency saving target was set of 4%—or around £1.5m out of a total spend of just over £23m. In fact, savings of £1.3m were developed by the review teams and approved by the board overseeing the review.

This allowed scope for £300,000 of reinvestment in areas of activity identified as strategic priorities in the University’s academic plan. These, when combined with a further £250,000 of investment focused on business development and growth in earned income, constitutes a major realignment of resources within the services.

The second dimension is structural. The new organisational structure provides clear lines of organisation and leadership for our services. (See www.sussex.ac.uk/professionalservices/) I want everyone in our Professional Services to see that they are part of a well-organised, interdependent set of operations, where success is achieved by working together effectively.

The third dimension is feedback. I want us to seek and welcome feedback and comment from our clients. The new planning framework gave users the opportunity to feed back on the quality of service we provide. The results were generally encouraging, although they identified that in some service areas we have a great deal to do.

The next phase of the PSR is now moving forward. In 2007–08 we intend to work from this baseline to:

- continue a process of supporting and renewing leadership across our services
- put into operation the development plans we are creating in key areas such as student experience, marketing, international recruitment, research and enterprise; and catering and retail
- bring the full range of skills and abilities of our Professional Services to support academic planning, so that there is joint ownership of plans and the targets they contain
- embrace best practice and demonstrate value for money, e.g. making use of the growing number of 1994 Group universities engaged in the Tribal benchmarking project to assess our comparative performance
- ensure we provide a high level of service to academic units and individual staff and students—in particular through establishing service level agreements with academic units and other service users
- create a culture of continuous service improvements—developing systematic evaluation of the Professional Services that regularly reviews priorities in service and quality of delivery.

I know from talking to my colleagues that staff at Sussex take professional pride in doing things extremely well. They deserve the tools and leadership to enable them to do this. The Professional Services Review is an initial step towards this goal. By upholding Sussex values of mutual respect and support and by aiming for excellence in all that we do, I am confident that we can build the professional services that befit an ambitious and high-performing university.
Appreciation of Spence architecture

The 20th Century Society will be visiting campus on Saturday (17 November) for an appreciation of campus architect Sir Basil Spence, whose centenary is celebrated this year.

Around 40 guests are planning to attend a talk by Anthony Blee, who worked with Spence at Sussex.

This will be followed by a visit to the Spence reading room in the Library, where there will be a small display of Spence artefacts on view, then tours of two Spence buildings - Falmer House and the Meeting House.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, will be attending along with the University's current architect and members of the Estates team.

Sussex alumni share top tips

A number of Sussex graduates with highly successful careers in law and the City came back to campus this week to share their expertise with current students.

Alumni enjoying the wine and nibbles at the City event on Monday (12 November) came from JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch, among other well-known companies.

And successful alumni giving useful tips about applications and interviews during the Law event on Tuesday (12 November) included barristers and QCs from London firms.

Student Emily Cridland is president of the Student Law Body, which organised the evening with the Development and Alumni Relations Office. She said: "The opportunities to ask high-flying professionals about their secrets for success are limited and that's exactly what these events are all about."

New offices for student progress and admissions

As a result of the review of the Professional Services, and in order to improve services to students, the current Undergraduate and Postgraduate Offices are being restructured along functional lines.

The two offices will be closed on Wednesday (21 November) and Thursday (22 November) for the physical relocation of staff and equipment. Two new offices will then open next Friday (23 November) at 10am.

The Student Progress and Assessment Office - in room 330 on level 3 of Sussex House (formerly the Postgraduate Office) - will deal with registration, progress, assessment and graduation for all current students.

The Admissions Office - in room 1.10 on level 1 of Sussex House (formerly the Undergraduate Office) - will deal with both undergraduate and postgraduate admissions.

LETTERS

White versus black

Andy Jupp from Estates replies:

Rest assured that we do what we can to minimise noise.

It's always a question of balance between keeping presentable grounds and timing daily work. (Weekend work is not possible because of labour costs.)

The grounds around the main teaching areas are prioritised where possible early in the morning, with staff then moving north to the residences.

The exception to this is when car parks are cleared of leaves, which has to be done before cars arrive. Leaf clearance has to be completed quickly for safety reasons, as leaves can be treacherous if they get wet.

Weather also plays a significant part in determining the priorities for each day, as we have to cut grass when it is dry, for instance.

Football focus

The letter in the last Bulletin (2 November) from Michael Lewis about the football stadium was surely a spoof? I can't think of any other national explanation.

"Unbearable" to think about 20,000 football fans sharing a bus stop and train station with students, "intimidating and upsetting" them?!

Here are a few more questions for him:

• Has he ever been to a football match?
• How many football fans are students?
• How many football fans are graduates?
• How might the University encourage local people (including those who happen to watch football) to study at Sussex?
• How many Withdean residents have been terrorised by Brighton fans?

Professor George Mather, Psychology

A university or a park?

I joined Sussex as an overseas fee-paying student in September this year.

I am enjoying Sussex as an overseas fee-paying student in September this year.

I am enjoying my course except for one thing: I've lost count of how many classes have been spoiled by noise from outside - grass being cut, leaves being blown, etc. I'm now wondering whether I have joined a university or come to work in a park.

I appreciate that the grounds must be kept tidy, but why is most of this work not done at the weekend when few classes are being taught?

I would like to be able to recommend Sussex to friends back home but feel that I can't recommend a university where the convenience of the grounds staff is more important than the teaching of students.

Overseas student (name withheld)
Stanmer Court students welcome rent rebate

Students in a new hall of residence have welcomed a rent rebate from the University to compensate for an initial shortfall in services.

For the opening weeks of term in Stanmer Court there were significant problems with heating and power supplies, and more than the normal number of 'snagging' problems associated with new builds.

The University provided a rent rebate to all students in Stanmer Court for the first five weeks up to 26 October, the period during which services were not up to standard.

The amount being paid for the first three weeks was above the level of normal University rent rebates, to ensure the University properly recognised the exceptional nature of the circumstances, especially during the initial weeks as this new building was put into use for the first time. Students who have been resident since day one received a total rebate of £214.50.

The response from students was to welcome the amount as "substantial". They said it was "very much appreciated" and that the action being taken suggested that students' concerns were being listened to.

The University has commissioned a post-project review to look at what lessons need to be learned for the future.

Sussex to generate own electricity

The two-year project to install an energy-efficient heating system on campus is nearing completion.

A new combined heat and power (CHP) unit was delivered to the Energy Centre on 31 October. Once installation is complete – by the end of this term – it will generate around 20% of the University's electricity at only marginal cost.

Students strip off for cheeky calendar

Sporty students have shed their clothes for a calendar with a difference.

The USSU Sport Naked Calendar 2008 is due to go on sale next week and all proceeds will be split equally between the sports clubs taking part in the project.

This naked calendar is a bit different to the many produced over the last few years, because the images include some action shots (including a rugby line-out).

"Finally, it's a fantastic memoir and a really good team-building opportunity for everyone involved."

He added: "The calendar is aimed at the Sussex community. All photographs have been taken on campus so it's a good record of our beautiful campus which every member of this community, be they student or staff, should take pride in."

"Furthermore, our sport teams represent the University at a local, national and international level. This calendar is a good way of showing support for the teams."

The calendar is priced at £5 and available from shops around campus. The Union will also be hosting stalls over the next few weeks and students will be going around offices and residences selling the calendar.

Polly Ridgway, the social secretary for the netball club, came up with the idea and since then has collaborated with other sports teams and the Students' Union to design a calendar that will not only incorporate the Sussex sport ethos but also show that sport shouldn't only appeal to the overly competitive. Twelve different sport teams are involved – one for each month.

Michael Alexander, Activities Officer for USSU, explained why they chose to shoot a nude calendar:

"Firstly, it's something different – there have been lots of nude calendars in recent years but not many of them have been as tricky to negotiate as shooting nude athletes in action.

"Secondly, the comedy factor of seeing something like a naked rugby scrum is, quite frankly, hard to resist."

"Finally, it's a fantastic memoir and a really good team-building opportunity for everyone involved."

He added: "The calendar is aimed at the Sussex community. All photographs have been taken on campus so it's a good record of our beautiful campus which every member of this community, be they student or staff, should take pride in."

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McColl’s

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Academic events

MON 19 NOV

4.15pm Anthropology seminar: Jonathan Spencer (Edinburgh), The perils of engagement: A space for anthropology in the age of security? Arts C233.

5pm Geography seminar: Pete Langston (Southampton), A mideast over troubled waters: Reconstructing Holocene climate change from Icelandic lakes. Arundel 1B.

7.30pm Café Scientific: Adrian El (Sussex), GM nation? GM plants? Britain’s place in the international debate around agricultural biotechnology. 32 Egremont Place, Brighton.

WED 21 NOV

12noon Chemistry seminar: Alston Misquitta (Cambridge), Computational chemistry. Arundel 401.

1pm Controversies seminar: Lucy Wimberley & Juan Mateos-Garcia, Internet and online social relationships. Freeman Centre, Social Space.

1.15pm Law seminar: Grace James (Reading), Pregnancy/workplace conflicts in the UK. Russell 12.

2pm Art History seminar: Art and extremism: Visual culture within and without the mainstream. Arts E419.

2pm Politics seminar: Mick Moran (Manchester), The changing contours of business power. Arts C233.

4pm Social & Political Thought seminar: Darrow Schecter (Sussex), Mediated unity and mediated non-unity: Reflections on Hegel’s dialectics, negative dialectics and legitimacy. Bramber House 243.

5pm Migration seminar: Jef Humpeers (Open), title TBC. Arts C233.

THU 22 NOV

4pm History seminar: Sulai Dubow (Sussex), Jan Smuts, the United Nations, and the rhetoric of race and rights. Arts A155.

4pm Psychology seminar: Martin Eimer (Birkbeck), Top-down modulation of attentional capture and direct links between attention and emotion: New findings from ERP studies. Pevensey 1, 183.

FRI 23 NOV

2.15pm Freeman Centre seminar: Simon Collinson (Warwick Business School & Advanced Institute of Management Research), Breeding the competition? Reciprocal learning and the co-evolution of innovation capabilities in China. Freeman Centre G24/25.

4pm South Asia seminar: Sunita Nair, Legislative disorder of health: Contemporary health discourses in Kerala. Arts A71.

MON 26 NOV

3pm International Relations seminar: Laleh Khalili (SOAS), Travelling doctrines: A genealogy of detentions in counterinsurgencies. Arts C233.

4pm Language and Linguistics seminar: Christian Uffmann (Sussex), A new idea on ‘intrusive’ [r]. Arts A71.

TUE 27 NOV

12.30pm Life History seminar: Ben Ragley and Becky Taylor (Sussex), Memory, identity and power in a ‘deprieved’ area. Bramber House 256.

1pm COGS lecture: Rob Biffl, Machines and the art-nature distinction in early modern Europe. Pevensey 1A/3.


2pm SEI seminar: Sally Marthaler, Alan Mayhew and Jim Rolfe (Sussex, France) under Sarkozy: The first six months. Arts C233.

1.45pm Anthropology seminar: Maruko Swacek (Queens, Belfast), Moving bodies, emotional dynamics and multi-sensorial engagement. Arts C233.

6.30pm Professional lecture: Jim Rolfe (Sussex), Regionalism and deep integration: The challenges for economic policy and economic analysis. Medical School Lecture Theatre.

7pm Institute of Physics Lecture: Hasok Chang (UCL), Inventing temperature. Pevensey 1A/7.

THU 29 NOV

4pm Psychology seminar: Chris Bradshaw (Nottingham), Mechanisms of choice when rewards are delayed. Pevensey 1, 183.


FRI 30 NOV

12 noon Chemistry seminar: Christopher Tato (Sussex), Metal hydrides and organometallic chemistry. Lewis Pennicott (Sussex), The total synthesis of Galtolbine B. Arundel 401.

2pm World Environmental History seminar: Paul Lane (York), Archaeology, landscapes and historical ecology: An outline of recent work in Eastern Africa. Russell 33.

2.15pm Freeman Centre seminar: Richard Haskett (NESTA), The new frontiers of innovation policy (TBC). Freeman Centre, G24/25.

4pm South Asia seminar: Caroline Wilson (Sussex), The allure of medical technologies in Kerala. Arts A71.

Small ads

To let: Newly refurbished 2-bed 1st-floor flat, Fareham Rd, B'ham. Mature people only. £780 pnm. T 01882 518846 (exx), ext 7477, E p.b.g@sussex.ac.uk.

Holiday let: Detached 3-bed hillside villa, sea 300m. Costa del Sol, between Malaga and Nerja. From £175 pw. T 0161 472831.


Arts events

PERFORMANCE

Wed 21-Fri 23 Nov

7.30pm

SUSS - Yerma
Sussex University Drama Society present Federico Garcia Lorca’s dark piece, written in 1933. Recently retranslated, it merges melodrama, classical theatre, ensemble, dance and music. Meeting House.

MUSIC

Wed 21 Nov

1.20-2pm

Lunchtime concert

Final year Music students, Gamma Farrell (voice) and Richard Morson (piano). Meeting House.

Thu 29 Nov

1.20-3pm

Lunchtime concert

Second year Music students taking their ensemble performance exams. Meeting House.

The Bulletin is written and produced by Alison Field and Lisa Brace, with contributions from Jacqui Bealing, Maggie Clune and Rob Read. We welcome any news, story ideas, letters or small ads from the staff and students of the University. The next issue will be out on 30 Nov, with a copy deadline of 1pm on 23 Nov. Please contact the Press & Communications Office in Sussex House, ext. 8888 or email bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.
Announcing a brand new event for faculty and Post Doctoral researchers at Sussex....

The research Christmas stocking event

This fun and innovative event will provide researchers with the chance to take part in a research matching exercise, enabling those with complementary skills or expertise to meet and chat over a glass of wine and festive buffet.

Registrations close on Monday 26 November. Sign up early as numbers are limited.

Dear Father Christmas,

For my research project I would like

p.s. I’ve been good all year
Yours hopefully

University of Sussex
Research and Regional Development Division
The research Christmas stocking event aims to encourage cross-campus collaborations, raise awareness of colleagues’ research interests and expertise – and, ultimately, increase the number of joint research proposals put forward by researchers at Sussex.

Prizes of £4,000 will be awarded to the best 4 research proposals submitted post-event, and everyone who attends has the chance of increasing their grant award success by accessing additional skills and expertise of colleagues that they meet on the evening.

Personal invitations are being delivered now, so look out for your Christmas stocking and to RSVP and for more information, please visit: www.sussex.ac.uk/christmasstocking

Tuesday 11 December, 5.30 – 8pm
at
The Conference Centre, Bramber House