

# Innovation

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### University of Sussex Students' Union Environmental Society - Green calendar

The now famous Women's Institute calendar inspired a bevy of Brighton students to bare (almost) all in the name of ecological awareness. The Environmental Society 2006 calendar not only features eye-catching photographs of members for each month, but uses them to highlight a green theme (see next page).

The calendar was photographed over a 12 month period by students, with student models, and student artistic directors who donated their time and resources. It was professionally produced on recycled paper, with print costs of £2,100. By selling 1,000 copies at £5, the Society has raised almost £3,000 for three charities, including a sanctuary for former battery hens. A large proportion of the sales were achieved through a special web site set up as part of the marketing. Sales were helped by the considerable publicity for the calendar in the local media.

Miriam Rose, a student and chair of the Environmental Society, thinks that the calendar has had much more effect in raising environmental awareness than other possible alternatives, such as campaigns and protests.

She believes that "it has increased the Society's membership and raised the profile of environmental issues

amongst students and staff. It has shown that environmentalists don't have to be serious all the time but can be light hearted. And the web site has also allowed us to reach an audience beyond Brighton."



Miriam Rose

The calendar has also had unexpected side effects. The University's students have not always been popular with local residents but the calendar, says Miriam, "brought the first positive publicity in a long time, and forged better links between students and the town, as well as between students and the Estates department. Those of us who were involved have also learnt a lot of valuable skills in design, publicity, marketing, fund raising and project marketing, as well as having a lot of fun."

#### Judges' Comments on Innovation

*Community relations in Brighton have also been enhanced by the creativity and humour of University of Sussex students in producing their very professional, WI-style, (almost) naked calendar. We feel that most will agree that the content is well attuned to its primary audience of students, that the pictures are striking but tasteful, and the captions witty and informative. In part by demonstrating that environmentalism can be lively and amusing, it has extended the Environmental Society's influence well beyond the relatively few individuals on a single campus that their other actions might have reached.*