

Chris Lambert, Director of Resources UUK

Good morning! Firstly, on behalf of our Chief Executive, Baroness Diana Warwick, I'd like to warmly welcome you all to Universities UK and hope that you enjoy your day here at Woburn House.

Secondly, on behalf of the Governance Board of the Universities UK and Guild HE Accommodation Code of Practice, I'd like to thank you for attending this, their second Annual Meeting. I'm sure that the day will provide an informative range of presentations on the operation of the Code, and will offer opportunities for you to contribute to discussions around the administration and future development of the Code.

The last year has seen the operation and administration of the Code "settle in" successfully, but there have also been significant new developments. Universities UK recognizes the hard work undertaken by both the Governance Board and the Sector Advisory Group over the last twelve months in moving the Code forward, in consultation with colleagues within the Department of Communities and Local Government.

In this regard, I would particularly like to thank Mark Swales and his team at CUBO for their achievements, including the creation of a comprehensive database to underpin the operation and monitoring of the Code in practice. The success of the Code is such that it now covers 196 higher education establishments, including more than 5,500 buildings and some 244,000 rooms, and the use and development of the database will be crucial to the effective and efficient administration of the Code into the future. Universities UK will continue to support the work of Governance Board in ensuring that participating institutions comply appropriately with the Code's requirements.

I should also mention the imminent introduction of the new branding and logos for the Code that have been approved for use across participating institutions, and which will serve to raise and embed levels of awareness of the Code amongst students. Finally, the new web-site that came on-line in the Autumn offers increased levels of information and accessibility, in a user-friendly environment, and will provide a key resource for all those involved with the Code, or interested in learning more about the Code.

I'd like to conclude by drawing attention to the Code as a very good example of a "shared service" which realises substantial cost savings and other benefits to participating institutions, and to the sector as a whole. For those institutions that would have student residences within the "Homes in Multiple Occupation" definition, the Code has delivered a significant saving to them. Others have benefited from the improved management standards, the safeguards arising out of the audit process, and from adopting a Code of Practice that is aimed fundamentally at improving students' confidence in the quality of the service and accommodation their institutions are providing to them.

I hope that you have an enjoyable and productive conference. Unfortunately I'm unable to join you for the remainder of the day due to prior commitments, but look forward to hearing about the outcomes from the conference at a later date.