Dear

Freedom of Information request reference K/20/082

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 14 February 2020, reference K/20/082.

Your request read:

“Can you publish all documents you have in relation to your decision to make Ecosia a default search engine?

I am interested in documents mainly from IT services.

Also what impact will this have on CO2 emissions by the University?”

The University of Leeds holds this information.

Following a petition from the Leeds University Union, the decision to install Ecosia as the default web browser on cluster PCs was taken in 2019, and took effect on 27 January 2020.

Please find below extracts of the relevant IT Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meetings at which the decision was discussed:

5 February 2019
“Met with LUU reps to discuss petition to use Ecosia (the search engine which plants trees) as default search engine. Discussed with Client IT, and have agreed we will change IE/Edge default browser to Ecosia on cluster PCs over summer.”

21 February 2019
“Go live with Ecosia as default search tool on Cluster desktops 27th January”

No further documents regarding the decision to use Ecosia are held.

We do not hold any recorded information in relation to the impact this decision will have on the University’s CO2 emissions. However, we can advise that while the decision will not have any direct impact on our CO2 emissions (i.e. it will not increase or reduce the amount of CO2 which the University produces), it does contribute to our overall commitment to sustainability on campus. Information on our approach to sustainability can be found here https://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/ and our specific climate response is outlined in our principles for action on climate change and can be found on our website.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions about this email, however, please do not hesitate to contact us on foi@leeds.ac.uk

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you can request an
Internal Review. Requests for Internal Review should be made in writing using the following contact information:

Post: Mr D Wardle  
Deputy Secretary  
The University of Leeds  
Leeds  
LS2 9JT  

Email: foi@leeds.ac.uk

Requests for Internal Review should be submitted within 40 working days of receiving the University’s response to your request. Further information about how the University manages Freedom of Information requests and about our complaints procedure is also available on our website (www.leeds.ac.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review/complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Kind regards

Chloe Wilkins  
Freedom of Information Officer

Secretariat  
University of Leeds