



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

# SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

**JULY 2015**

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**WELCOME TO THE SUSTAINABILITY SERVICE'S NEWSLETTER,  
A CONDENSED LOOK AT SUSTAINABILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS.**

## SUSTAINABILITY COFFEE BREAKS

Have you been to one of our Sustainability Coffee Breaks yet? On the last Friday of each month, we hold interactive sessions where people from across the University have the chance to talk to members of the team about anything related to campus sustainability and take part in a fun sustainability-related activity! Previously we have recycled plastic bottles and turned them into flower pots, and in the session after that, we made bug hotels! During our next session on Friday 31st July, we will be managing the wildflower meadows to the left of School of Earth and Environment entrance by removing prolific and dominant plant species. This is open to staff and students, no need to book, just drop by!



### STAFF CHANGES



It's that time of year again – staff changeover! We have just said goodbye to 2 members of staff, Conor and Jenny. Conor was our UTravelActive intern 3 years ago and has been the Bike Hub Coordinator. He is now moving to do a PHD in Sustainable Transport and Behaviour Change. Jenny Scattergood, our Sustainability Projects Assistant, has just graduated with a First Class Honours and is now currently interrailing around Europe – lucky her!

Our 4 student interns who all started in September, Xavier, Emma, Issy and Steven are also leaving. Xavier and Issy are returning to their third and final year of studying at the University, so they won't be going far! Emma is moving back to Manchester to start her new job as an environmental scientist and Steven is taking over from Conor in managing the Bike Hub over summer.

It's not all doom and gloom, we have some new members of staff as well. Jenny Barlow is our new Sustainability Projects Officer, and has been working with us for just over 2 months now. Her job involves promoting sustainability in transport and procurement at the University. She has recently been working on the new University Travel Guide, which is available via the following link <http://urlmin.com/4qxs8>. We also have 2 new student interns, Gina and Catherine. Catherine was one of our Sustainability Architects and is now taking over Green Impact in September as our Sustainability Intern. Gina has completed 2 years of International Relations and will be the new Positive Partner in Society Intern starting in September as well. We'll make sure to get some pictures of the new team once they start!

### UPDATE ON CLIMATE HUBS

Climate Hubs has recently launched monthly Climate Cafés at the University for informal discussions on practical action to climate change (and cake!). The first café was held on 10th June, and included Carbon Neutral Sheffield as guest Speaker. Carbon Neutral Sheffield is a group at the University of Sheffield working to persuade their University to become carbon neutral by 2025.

The second climate café on 8th July focused on climate lobbying, with talks from Paul Chatterton, Kate Lock and Harriet Thew on the need for practical action and how you can engage both with your MP and the international climate talks.

The cafés are an ongoing series in the lead up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris this December. Each café will give staff and students a chance to hear discussions on current climate change issues, progress on carbon reduction projects on campus and information on how to get involved. Climate Hubs is growing, with nearly 70 members on Yammer and 5 carbon projects being set up on campus. These are; a campus solar co-operative, off-setting travel emissions, campaigning, energy behaviour and energy efficiency. If you are interested in getting involved in any of these projects, or have an idea of a project we can facilitate, please email us at [sustainability@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@leeds.ac.uk).

### NEW GREEN IMPACT WORKBOOK

The Sustainability Service would like to say a huge thank you to all teams that have completed Green Impact this past year. This has been a trial year and despite all the changes to the workbook, teams still showed great levels of determination and dedication. Thanks again!

All the feedback received has been appreciated and taken into consideration when amending the workbook. Some of the troublesome criteria such as travel have been changed to become more activity based in the lower award levels and some helpful templates have been added. There has also been the addition of criteria relating to biodiversity.

New to 2015/2016 is Platinum Plus; this new features allows successful teams that have competed all the award levels to mentor a new or struggling team. With having completed the entire workbook they can use their expertise to give advice and support and are still an integral part of Green Impact.

The workbook is due to launch VERY soon, so keep a look out on our website for further details! We look forward to you completing Green Impact in the years to come!

### A SUSTAINABLE STUDENT CHANGEOVER

We are still evaluating the success of this year's student changeover, but early indications suggest that this could have been the smoothest yet, in terms of impact on other residents! The departure of students from the three universities traditionally brings with it significant challenges to the City each year as large amounts of waste are generated and noise from end of year parties prevents residents from getting a good night's sleep. As part of our strategic commitment to ensure that the University and our students have a positive impact on society, the Sustainability Service worked in collaboration with Leeds University Union, Leeds City Council and other students unions, to put in place this year's communications and service delivery plan.

Leeds University Union again delivered the Leave Leeds Tidy campaign that provided information and advice to students through a communications strategy, student warden patrols and collections of unwanted items from local communities in partnership with Emmaus. In addition, this year the partnership has been able to secure 10 new community based textile bins to make it even easier for our students to donate their unwanted clothing and all funds raised went to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. The Sustainability Service ran a new communications campaign to raise awareness on the impacts of noise on other residents and to encourage reporting to the Universities and Colleges Neighbourhood Helpline Service. Whilst the majority of our student's do not cause any problems for their neighbours, end of exams is traditionally a peak for noise complaints. The campaign combined practical weekly tips through social media along with a corresponding blog on the Sustainability webpages. All in all, the combinations of the various campaigns helped minimise the disruption caused to local neighbourhoods in inner North-West Leeds.



### REUSE@LEEDS TO OFFER CITY-WIDE BENEFITS

The Sustainability Service are currently scoping the opportunities to expand on our sector-leading Reuse@Leeds scheme to a citywide reuse network. Linking together the Being a Positive Partner in Society and Making the Most of Resource themes within the Sustainability Strategy, we are exploring how we can utilise our expertise and established network to widen the participation of the reuse@leeds whilst providing wider benefits to the City through increased charitable donations and domestic reuse. Initially we would seek to create a citywide furniture reuse network to freely distribute unwanted furniture, with the view to expanding the system to one that will incorporate domestic reuse.

Our plan is ambitious, but we believe that working in collaboration with other major organisations in the city we could provide all stakeholders the same massive savings, reduce our city-wide carbon impact and create a reuse community that would put Leeds on the national map as 21st-century leaders. We have already received expressions of interest from Leeds City Council, NHS and the Leeds Furniture Reuse Network.

### SUSTAINABLE LIBRARY

As well as being a stunning place to study, the Laidlaw Library was designed with sustainability in mind. This fantastic library has the following sustainable features:

- 225 sq m of solar photovoltaic panels on the roof;
- High technology, but as low energy as possible e.g. LED screens and low energy lights that turn themselves off when no-one is around or natural light levels increase;
- Clever use of natural daylight to avoid solar overheating;
- Heavyweight structure to give more stable internal temperatures;
- Lower heating needs due to exceptional air tightness and high levels of thermal insulation;
- An Energy Performance Certificate rating of B (in the top 10% for low energy use);
- Good air quality by using building materials with low levels of volatile organic compounds;
- A green roof halfway up on the Woodhouse Lane side;
- Beehives on the green roof, helping to maintain the bee population of Leeds and pollinating the area.
- Over 95% of waste generated in the construction was recycled.

Overall, the Laidlaw Library has a BREEAM building standards sustainability rating of 'Excellent'. It is also worth mentioning that during the refurbishment of the Edward Boyle Library, the sustainability area that was originally in the basement has now been moved to the Brotherton Library. We hope you enjoy this fantastic and sustainable new study space!

### NEW ANAEROBIC DIGESTION PLANT TO OPEN THE GATES TO THE LEEDS COMMUNITY

The University of Leeds is planning on developing the first anaerobic digestion plant in Northern England which will process food waste and provide new research and teaching opportunities to students, staff and members of the community. Anaerobic digestion is the breakdown of complex organic matter by the action of simple organisms in the absence of oxygen and has been used for several decades to stabilise sewage sludge and has more recently been harnessed for waste treatment and renewable energy generation. This plant has been fully funded by the University and will be jointly managed by the Facilities Directorate and academic staff at the University.

The University is continuously working to be at the forefront of sustainability and to embed this culture into the fabric of the institution. Through the Living Lab, new and ongoing research is made more accessible to students, staff and the wider Leeds community. The University is also able to not only create ownership but support research at all levels and foster community engagement throughout the entire process.

Academics at the University have been conducting extensive research into optimising community urban micro anaerobic digestion networks that would increase localised energy production as well as process food waste. Electricity and heat can be generated from the biogas and biomethane released during the anaerobic digestion process. The liquid or solid residue from anaerobic digestion plants is called digestate and is rich in nutrients which are highly beneficial to plants. We also hope to use this digestate as a fertilizer on our grounds in the future.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS RELATING TO SUSTAINABILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY,  
OR YOU WOULD LIKE TO USE THIS NEWSLETTER TO HELP PUBLICISE AN EVENT ON CAMPUS,  
THEN PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US: [SUSTAINABILITY@LEEDS.AC.UK](mailto:SUSTAINABILITY@LEEDS.AC.UK)

