



PEACE GARDEN

These briefing papers describe sustainability actions at the University of Bradford as part of the development of our Ecoversity programme.

These papers are developed through The Sustainable Education Directorate together with the University staff and students featured inside, and are part of our commitment to improving communication around Ecoversity.

Comments and feedback are welcome and should be sent to: ecoversity@bradford.ac.uk

Ecoversity and the Peace Garden Project

The Peace Garden Project represents one of the most visible developments of the main Campus regeneration that underpins Ecoversity. It has transformed the area on Campus alongside Great Horton Road and is the first impression that many visitors and passers by see of the University Campus.

In 2006 the site looked rather different (see picture on the front cover) with broken paving slabs, exposure to traffic on Great Horton Road and a lack of places to sit – all rather grim. The Campus master plan proposed to create more and improved soft (plants) and hard landscaping (structures, paving, seating etc) to support a greener, safer, more sociable Campus.

The garden was designed to be inspiring, uplifting, innovative, sensitive to its many users and stakeholders and ecologically sound. It also symbolises the significant contribution to peace education by the University and offers a more inviting area to walk through and sit in. In addition, the Project was the first changing the way that major Estates initiatives are developed. The Project had a design team comprising Estates and Facilities Officers, Marketing and Communications as well as academic staff and local community representatives. This reflected the core participatory principle underpinning Ecoversity. End users and those affected by the Project were therefore involved in the design process in a meaningful way.

What was the thinking behind the design?

The linear space adjacent to the road required careful consideration of a number of key design issues. The goal was therefore to design a space that is resistant to damage, feels safe and symbolises peace education and tranquillity and is capable of adapting to mixed and changing requirements e.g. for sitting, events, walking and outdoor education as well as encouraging community use.

What specific ecological ideas were used in the final project?

The original paving from the site was recovered and used to form aggregate as a foundation layer. The grey blocks of granite ('setts'), which would have been laid in the original Campus build in 1966 were reclaimed and used to line the pathways. The lighting in the garden is solar powered. New bird and insect boxes have been introduced.

Ecological enhancement of the Peace Garden has included linking and improving the mature trees with native tree and shrub species. These include:

Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Oak (*Quercus robur*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

Why is the wall wavy?

The wavy wall (serpentine design) along Great Horton Road was designed by Professor Kirill Horoshenkov from the School of Engineering, Design and Technology. The shape of the wall is to facilitate the noise reduction from the road without creating a major visual barrier or to isolate the neighbourhood community from the garden or University. The shape of the wall also reflects the curves of the paths and planted areas to create a sense of integration.

Noise measurements were undertaken before and after the wall was erected and the garden was laid. The results show that the wall reduces the A-weighted level of traffic noise (LAeq, 15min) by 6dB that is equivalent to a four-fold reduction in the volume of traffic or quadrupling of the distance to the centre of the Great Horton Road.

A water feature with a fountain was installed to further mask traffic noise. The water feature is a low shallow pool with river washed cobbles and informal marginal planting. Currently, the water feature in the garden is being improved to provide a better degree of positive noise masking and improve the visual quality and tranquillity of the Garden. This work is sponsored by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), project EP/F055986/1.

PeaceJam

The Peace Garden forms one space on Campus to support the annual PeaceJam event run by students and staff within the Peace Studies Department.

PeaceJam was launched in the USA in 1996. Ivan Suvanjiëff, an artist and musician, had been talking with some gang members in North Denver, when he discovered that these young men with guns greatly admired Archbishop Desmond Tutu for his non-violent efforts toward social change. He then realized that Nobel Peace Laureates could act as alternative role models for disaffected young people. His colleague, Dawn Engle, helped him contact the Dalai Lama, whom she had met during her years of work for the U.S. Congress. His Holiness loved their idea and helped them set up PeaceJam as a vehicle to enable his fellow Laureates to teach young people the art of peace (www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/peacejam)

Every year PeaceJam brings together teenagers, students and Nobel Peace Prize winners at the University of Bradford – the only event of its kind in the whole of the UK or Europe!

PeaceJam aims to inspire young people to be active citizens and peacemakers, help them choose non-violent solutions to their issues and problems, build self-esteem and leadership capacity and empower them to transform themselves, their local communities, and the world (and is a lot of fun!).

Further Information

For further information or communication on Ecoversity or this briefing paper email ecoversity@bradford.ac.uk

For more detail on Ecoversity: www.bradford.ac.uk/ecoversity