

Welcome to ecoversity@bradford

Quarterly e-newsletter

Issue 1 (September 2008)

We hope you enjoy reading the first ecoversity@bradford newsletter, if you wish to contact us about the articles within this document or would like to be added to our mailing list, our contact details are at the end of the newsletter.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

ECOVERSITY DEFINITION

- Ecoversity – What is it?
- Ecoversity StuDent – What is it?

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

- UNESCO Framework for ESD - University adopts the UNESCO framework
- Academic Pioneers – pioneering, discipline-focussed ESD
- New ESD Requirement in Course Review Procedure – providing checks and balances on ESD implementation
- ESD@Bradford – seminars to build internal community and provide external insights

INFORMAL CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

- Student Ambassadors – developing agents of change
- Ecoversity Interns - making a difference
- Ecoversity Actioneers - every little helps
- Ecoversity - Schools Network – from the cradle to the grave

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

- Longitudinal Research – Ecoversity and the student experience?
- Action Research - planting seeds...?

ESTATES ACTIVITY

- Sustainability Learner Centre – a hub for ESD
- Community Engagement – a University at the heart of its communities
- Campus
- Campus Investment Plan approved
- Student Village

ECOVERSITY TASK GROUPS

- Energy and Carbon – driving down carbon, energy and bills
- Recycling
- Integrated travel
- Purchasing

- Local Actions Groups
- Food and Drink

STUDENT ACTIVITY

- Students
- Peacejam 2008
- Student Union Sabbatical Officers

OTHER INITIATIVES

- Green League – 2.1 but no right of appeal
- Eco-Campus – Gold by 2012?
- HEFCE film

EVENTS

- What's on

NEXT EDITION

- Deadline for Contributions
 - Date of next release
-

EDITORIAL

As the lead for the Ecoversity programme I am delighted to launch this ecoversity@bradford newsletter. We are on a long and sometimes difficult journey to becoming an Ecoversity and this newsletter is one of our ways of keeping our own staff and students and external audience up to date with recent developments. We welcome your feedback on our activities and look forward to the next phase of our programme.

Geoff Layer (PVC Learning & Teaching / Ecoversity Sponsor)

Ecoversity is the name given to the University of Bradford's vision for implementing sustainable development across the whole institution, covering everything we do. We began our Ecoversity journey in November 2005 and we have been through a number of twists and turns in this time period.

We will be producing a newsletter 6 times a year to give a snapshot of our activities, progress and lessons learnt. The newsletter complements the website, which will provide fuller information on specific activities, and our newspaper 'The Seed', which is produced quarterly.

The aim of the newsletter is to inform and update. We do not provide coverage of developments outside our Institution – many of these are well covered by other groupings such as Higher Education Academy Education for Sustainable Development Programme www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/sustainability, Environmental Association of Universities and colleges (EAUC) www.eauc.org.uk, and the Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement project (HEEPI) www.heepi.org.uk.

ECOVERSITY DEFINITION

Ecoversity- what is it?

Ecoversity was the name given to a vision for sustainable development at the University of Bradford launched in November 2005. The initial vision set out four areas to address – education, environment, well being and community. Over time we have refined our thinking about these different areas and what our University can do to support and implement sustainability thinking and action.

Our website provides some recent PowerPoint presentations on Ecoversity and we have produced a short briefing paper: 'What is Ecoversity?' which describes the journey we are taking; what we have learnt to date, and how we have changed our approach over time. 'The Seed', our Ecoversity newspaper, was launched in July and the first edition has started a conversation within the University about what staff and students feel Ecoversity is or could be?

Ecoversity StuDent- what is it?

Ecoversity StuDent is the name of a £3.1M HEFCE funded SDF project awarded to the University in May 2007, which runs to July 2010. This project was designed to develop and implement a whole institutional approach to Education for Sustainable Development. Ecoversity StuDent comprises 6 activity areas. Activities and progress under each of these areas is summarised below. The project supports four full-time staff who form a Sustainable Education Directorate. Details of the Directorate and staff can be found on our website. The aim of StuDent is to embed ESD into the learning and living experience of all our students through the formal curriculum, wider curriculum and through contact with operations and services that reflect our commitment to SD.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

UNESCO framework for ESD - University adopts the UNESCO framework

The University has adopted the UNESCO 'framework' (www.bradford.ac.uk/ecoversity/esd) as a guiding resource for academic and educational developments for ESD. This framework provides the foundation for the ESD curriculum review work being undertaken by a network of Academic Pioneers in our 7 Academic Schools which in turn provides the basis for ESD curriculum developments. The basis for the choice of the UNESCO framework above other definitions or frameworks has been reported in several conference papers. A copy of the academic policy paper which sets out the full rationale and approach is available from (www.bradford.ac.uk/ecoversity/esd).

Academic Pioneers – pioneering discipline-focussed ESD

The development of ESD in the formal curriculum is being undertaken by a group of senior academic staff in our 7 academic schools. This group of staff has been reviewing the curricula in their respective schools over the past few months to establish what ESD is taught already and opportunities for development. This work is brought forward in the form of ESD Action Plans for the individual schools, which are reviewed and discussed by the pioneer

teams. From this we identify priorities for development and the resources and actions required to implement those priorities.

New ESD requirement in Course Review Procedure – providing checks and balances on ESD implementation

In July our Academic Policy Committee approved a paper, which will require all new courses and all existing courses as they come up for review to articulate a discipline specific approach to ESD. This process places responsibility onto the academic schools to articulate and justify ESD within their programmes. From September 2008 our Course Approval and Review Process guidelines will set out how the process will work.

ESD@Bradford – seminars to build internal community and provide external insights

ESD is a new and unfamiliar concept to many staff and students. To develop two way educational exchanges around ESD and the StuDent project, we have initiated an ESD seminar series aimed at staff and students. The seminars are designed to be informal and interactive on themes of interest and relevance to our programme goals. The first seminar held in May 2008 discussed the UNESCO framework, the second was around engaging students with experience from Durham led by Antje Danielson, and the last in the summer series was by Pat Wilkinson and Gavin Bissell from Social Sciences who described their work on mapping the student experience of the campus and the role of 'place' in supporting student learning. The events were extremely well attended. Presentations from the 3 events can be found on our website together with the programme for the Autumn 2008 series.

INFORMAL CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

Student Ambassadors – developing agents of change

Ecoversity Ambassadors are recruited to spread the word about Ecoversity, initiate actions and inspire and motivate their fellow students. In 2007/8 we recruited 15 students who worked on a variety of student initiated projects, which were then taken through to varying levels of implementation. These projects ranged from reducing paper usage, procuring re-useable mugs for hot drinks and bio-diesel. We will report on the work of the 2008/9 Ambassadors in future newsletters.

If you are a Bradford student and wish to sign up as an ambassador or learn more about the project then contact Sheri-Leigh Miles at s.miles@bradford.ac.uk

Ecoversity Interns - making a difference

Interns differ from Ambassadors in that they are working on discreet projects for a specific period of time. Projects may be student ideas that they are supported in bringing to fruition themselves. Current internships include students producing a 'Green Guide' to Bradford for new students, 'Green Maps' of the campus and reviewing Eco-IT gadgetry to post on the Web. These positions allow students to develop valuable work experience in supported project management; reflection on this process is part of their activity to enable both an appreciation of their own learning and a mechanism for continuity of their work,

Ecoversity Actioneers - every little helps

Some students, due to other time commitments and the pressures of their coursework, can only give a small amount of time. Any time can be really productive and during 2007/8 we worked with a variety of students on a number of different volunteering activities both on campus and in the community.

Working with UCAN we have produced a Green Volunteering Guide to identify volunteering opportunities for students to 'go a shade greener' by working on projects and services in the Bradford District. A copy of this guide will be put on the web at www.brad.ac.uk/ecoversity/student.

Any student interested in getting involved as an Actioneer should get in touch with Sheri-Leigh at s.miles@bradford.ac.uk.

Ecoversity - Schools Network – from the cradle to the grave

The Ecoversity ethos is that Education for Sustainable Development is a lifelong process and that a University provides only one element of some people's educational experience. As part of our commitment to sustainable development in the Bradford district and the education of young people in Bradford we have started an Ecoversity – Schools ESD Network. This was initiated in June 2007 following a 6 month consultation period.

We have held several events on campus for Bradford schools around sustainable development and climate change and recently completed a survey of all 208 Bradford schools to review their activities around the Sustainable Schools agenda. We work with the University based Children's University who also run many events with Bradford schools such as a sustainable construction competition, eco-camps and in-school workshops.

We will shortly be issuing the first e-newsletter aimed at sharing good practice around aspects of sustainable development.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Longitudinal Research – Ecoversity and the student experience?

One of the common criticisms in areas of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development is that many claims are made for the benefit and impact of different types of intervention and activities, but there is often less regard given to the evidence base to demonstrate outcomes and impacts on participants. Our longitudinal research project is designed to capture data on the extent to which Ecoversity is impacting on the student learning and living experience at Bradford. Using a mixed methodology comprising qualitative and quantitative surveys and data sets Lou Comerford Boyes has provided a baseline snapshot of student levels of engagement and the impact of that engagement around Ecoversity. Lou will be discussing her work at a forthcoming esd@bradford seminar. If you would like to learn more about the project please contact Lou directly at l.comerford-boyes@bradford.ac.uk

Action Research - planting seeds...?

A second research element of our StuDent project is an action research strand. The primary focus of the action research in the first few months has been to develop an Ecoversity newspaper. Both the process by which this newspaper comes about and the end product itself is intended to develop dialogue, respectful debate and a sense of community and

engagement around issues of concern to staff and students. Some of these issues are complex and challenging but the newspaper provides a space where all members of the University Community can be made aware of, and discuss, these issues. The newspaper then becomes a mirror to the University for reflection and review.

The Autumn edition comes out in mid September with a focus on new and returning students. A copy of the newspaper, 'The Seed', can be downloaded from www.brad.ac.uk/ecoversity/resources

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Sustainability Learner Centre – a hub for ESD

The Sustainability Learner Centre is a new facility that will provide a hub for ESD activities for our own staff and students as well as Bradford schools, the wider community and visitors. An initial specification and design has been drawn up following consultations and the development of this facility is due to start in the 2008/9 academic session. Our aim is to make the building a part of the educational experience and to link different parts of the University via educational activities and events. Updates on this facility will be provided in future newsletters.

Community Engagement – a University at the heart of its communities

As a city based University, our 3 campuses are adjacent to many communities and neighbourhoods, which reflect the multi-cultural diversity and dynamism of Bradford. Ecoversity has a significant community sustainable development out-reach activity which has been headed up by Kathryn Wyatt. In the past 12 months Kathryn has organised and run a series of events and activities which seek to link University and community around themes of Sustainable Development including Transition Towns, Islam and Sustainability and Sustainable Schools.

Campus

The past 2 years has seen a tremendous amount of time and planning given to the physical and social regeneration of the University and surrounding areas. Bradford City is on the cusp of some major regeneration projects, which will support our own plans. Indeed the University plans lie at the heart of one of these projects - the City's Education Quarter.

Campus Investment Plan approved

University Council approved a Campus Investment Plan for the period 2008-2015 in November 2007. This £65M package will see a wide range of new-build and refurbishment affecting all 3 of our campuses. The development and design of the individual projects and programme as a whole has been driven by Ecoversity and the principles of sustainable construction. Some of the highlights of the plan include; a new BREEAM excellent (<http://www.breeam.org>) MBA centre at the School of Management, bringing the School of Health campus onto the main campus into a new BREEAM excellent building, refurbishment of a number of our 1960's and 1970's buildings, which have serious heating and cooling issues, a refurbished and remodelled student union complex and a major upgrade of our campus landscapes and amenity provision.

Student Village

The University recently signed a heads of terms with developers MI7 for a 1000 bed space BREEAM excellent Sustainable Student Village, which will be opened in September 2010. The village will be designed to a sustainability specification drawn up with the architectural engineering consultancy Ove Arup, which also included widespread student consultation. Based on the Accent home design (<http://www.accentgroup.org/Housing/Accent+Home/>) the project is aiming to demonstrate not only high levels of sustainable design but also that it is possible to produce sustainable student accommodation at no additional premium. The village will be co-located with major new developments on the Eastern flank of the Campus including a new Dental and Medical Institute, a new nursery, leisure and work-living units and private developments for retail and business.

ECOVERSITY TASK GROUPS

Task Groups- driving change for Ecoversity

The Ecoversity Task Groups are an internal mechanism to develop work plans for Ecoversity around themes of interest to staff and students. The background to the task group structure and their initial work plans was described in the first edition of 'The Seed'. An update of some recent highlights is provided below.

Energy and Carbon – driving down carbon, energy and bills

Our new biomass boiler plant will be fired up in anger for the first time in the new heating season. Using locally sourced woodchip the boiler will reduce our overall carbon emissions by around 500 tonnes or 5% of our building related total. We have just been given the go-ahead for a further biomass boiler at our School of Management on the Emm Lane Campus, which will reduce our carbon emissions by another 500 tonnes. Our first major energy and carbon week is planned 20 – 24 October from which we aim to cut our electricity consumption by 10%.

Recycling

The new in-building recycling system is now almost fully in place, and in July we reached a 47% recycling rate i.e. 47% of all the waste that leaves the University of Bradford. We are now looking to hit the 60% level by 2009.

In addition to the in-building facilities, more on-the-go recycling facilities have been purchased for the Amphitheatre to help keep this area tidy and to promote recycling in outdoor areas. A new recycling 'bring' site is also being installed in the Shearbridge car park to allow all students a facility for easy recycling.

Integrated Travel

The University of Bradford is sponsoring a free city bus that will service the University on Great Horton Road, both train stations, the city centre and retail parks. This bus will make it easier for staff, students and visitors to travel up to the different campuses and the city centre. Further information including a timetable can be found at www.brad.ac.uk/travel.

In the next few weeks the main Campus will have a number of road closures as part of the Campus regeneration. Longside Lane Halls of Residences will be demolished, which will enable this side of the Campus to be completely re-designed.

In the past few weeks more secure bike cages have been installed on all Campuses for staff and students to allow them to store their bikes safely. We now have space for 40 bikes on the main Campus and 10 spread across our other Campuses. There are also 30 spaces for hire which are in the main used by staff.

Food and Drink

Access to free drinking water as an alternative to bottled water is one of the issues being addressed by this group – the first stage is to identify and highlight water points on Campus so staff and students can choose to refill their own bottles, the second is to have water points fitted that will make free water an option at the retail outlets across Campus.

The group is also working closely with Bradford's Sodexo team who are planning to re-brand 'Jazzmans' at the start of the new term as a Fairtrade, local and organic café.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Students

Whilst all our Ecoversity activities aim to involve and engage students, the students themselves are responsible for developing their own and work activities. This year the Student Union were awarded a bronze in the National Union of Students Sound Impact Award (www.soundimpact.org.uk/) and are aiming for silver in 2008.

Every year **Peacejam** (<http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/peacejam/>) led by students from the Peace Studies Department brings together teenagers, students and Nobel Peace Prize winners at the University of Bradford – the only such event in the whole of the UK or Europe! Each year Peacejam invites a Nobel Peace Laureate – this year's guest was Rigoberta Menchú Tum from Guatemala who is an indigenous Guatemalan, of the Quiché-Maya ethnic group. Menchú has dedicated her life to publicizing the plight of Guatemala's indigenous peoples during and after the Guatemalan Civil War (1960-1996), and to promoting indigenous rights in the country. She was the recipient of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize.

The end of year Student Bash – Party on the Amp had a green tinge this year with a big recycling and clean up campaign; a freecycle stall, a cycling smoothie maker, a second hand clothes fashion show and much more. Led by the Student Union, with support from Ecoversity, the event attracted over a 1000 students. For full details and photos see the first edition of 'The Seed'.

Union Sabbatical Officers

The University's Student Union has six Sabbatical Officers for Academic Year 2008-09:

Nadia Chergui, Women's Liberation,
Sophia Coles Riley, Ethics, Environment & Welfare
Katie Moore, Student Activities
Lloyd Russell-Moyle, Union Secretary & Treasurer
Olga Savina, Academic Affairs
Alex Wilson, Media & Entertainments

Sophia is the first full time Ethics and Environmental Sabb in any English University.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Green League – 2.1 but no right of appeal

This year the University were graded a 2.1 in the People and Planet Green Leaguer table the same as last year but dropping 16 places to 31st. We think that P&P have done a great job in raising the profile of green issues in the sector. We have some quibbles with the methodology (which is rather narrowly focussed) and the lack of appeal over the data used to score each University (we lost marks this year for some areas which we thought were based on erroneous data) but are now working with People and Planet to ensure that next year the data will be corrected.

Eco-Campus – Gold by 2012?

We were awarded a bronze award in the Eco-Campus (www.ecocampus.co.uk), a scheme that is designed to help Universities on the road to developing an Environmental Management system. Ben Tongue our Environmental Manager is now working on the requirements to achieve silver in 2008/9.

HEFCE film – shooting the VC

Web2.0 visited Bradford in the early Summer to interview Mark Cleary, our VC, to feature in a short film about Sustainable Development in the HE sector to accompany the HEFCE Sustainable Development consultation. Mark provided an overview of developments in sustainability in the sector. The film has been embedded in our website.

EVENTS

Some events to look out for:



ESD@ bradford Seminar series

Programme - Academic Year 2008-09

Please note that refreshments are provided at each seminar and lunch is available only where stated.

15 September 2008

Julie Matthews Sunshine Coast University Queensland

Title: Wildlife in the Ecoversity.

Time: 12:30pm-2:00pm.

Location: D1 conference room.

30 September 2008

Robyn Allison Auckland NewZealand

Title: Earthsong- creating a sustainable community project in inner city Auckland

Time: 1:00pm-2:30pm.

Location: H33, Richmond Building.

13 October 2008

Professor Gina Wisker, University of Brighton

Title: ESD Curriculum Review - Embedding ESD in the Curriculum.

Time: 12:00pm-2:00pm.

Location: D1.

ENERGY week

24 October 2008

Graeme Swindles, University of Bradford

Title: Is Global Warming Becoming Uncool?

Time: 12:00pm-2:00pm

Location: D Floor Foyer

This Seminar is Part of Energy Week at the University of Bradford 20 – 24 October 2008

This seminar will focus on the science of climate change from a palaeoclimatologist's perspective. The nature and causes of climate change over several timescales will be discussed and a critical evaluation of recent global warming will be presented

eostudent
making sustainability work

29 October 2008

Lou Comerford Boyes and Sheri-Leigh Miles, University of Bradford

Title: Ecoversity and the student experience- what have we learnt one year on

Time: 12pm-2pm.

Location: New Boardroom.

12 November 2008

Liz Sharp and Christine Sefton, University of Bradford

Title: The Challenges of Promoting Sustainable Behaviour.

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm.

Location: C9, Richmond Building.

2 December 2008

Professor Daniella Tilbury, University of Gloucester.

Title: (*tbc*) University of Gloucester Sustainability Strategy

Time: 12:00pm – 2:00pm.

Location: C9, Richmond Building.

A full list of our events, or those we are supporting or think are interesting can be found at www.bradford.ac.uk/ecoversity/events.

If you have a relevant event you would like listing then please get in touch.

NEXT EDITION

November 2008

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