

Sustainability News

UC Sustainability Office (Planning, Strategy and Services)

Volume 2, No.3, 31 March 2011

Welcome!

Now that things are starting to resemble some semblance of normal – in the sense that not everything we do is earthquake related – we thought it time for our March Newsletter.

Firstly, our hearts and prayers go out to those of our community who have lost loved ones, and to the many who are suffering from the destruction of homes, businesses and community spaces. Yet all of us have suffered loss of some kind, whether it is the community loss of a favourite café or meeting place, or the whānau loss of friends and family who have had little choice but to leave Christchurch. And it's safe to say that many of us are also suffering the occasional loss in sanity.

Yet for most of us there has never been a time when community spirit has been at such a high – although those who remember WWII will have something to compare. And the challenge now is to use that community spirit to envisage how we want our post-earthquake lives to be. We have the opportunity to embrace a new way of doing things – in our homes, workplaces, and our public spaces – and the power of the collective to make it happen.

Never before in Aotearoa has the Sustainability community had such an opportunity to contribute to what I like to think of as the 'future proofing' of a city – our city, Otautahi. And the best place to start is in our own back yards, which is why we've come up with a special series of Future Proofing workshops to help us build up our collective resilience.

Sharon McIver, Matt Morris and the UC Sustainability Team

UC Sustainability is on Facebook!



We are on Facebook so please join our community by "liking" us at [http://www.facebook.com/ucsustainabilitycommunity!](http://www.facebook.com/ucsustainabilitycommunity)

Future Proofing Workshops

The UC Sustainability Office is hosting a series of weekly lunchtime gatherings for UC students and staff in the Okeover Community Garden on Tuesdays, starting from April 12, with a focus on preparing ourselves, homes and workspaces for whatever the future may hold.

As a response to the ongoing process of recovery, the Future Proofing Workshops will be an informal space in which participants can share their stories about how they fared during the recent earthquakes and discuss ideas and plans for survival and comfort should we ever find ourselves in a similar situation.

The workshops will be as follows:

Tuesday, April 12, 12noon – 1pm: The First 24 Hours – ensuring individual and family safety, getting home, finding alternative accommodation, staying connected, setting up emergency supplies and/or shelter etc.

Tuesday, April 19, 12noon – 1pm: Emergency Kits – drinking water, food, communication, lighting, cooking, hygiene, first aid etc.

Tuesday, April 26, 12noon – 1pm: Water – drinking water, safe storage, rainwater collection, greywater alternatives, heating water etc.

Tuesday, May 3, 12noon – 1pm: Sewerage – humanure, composting toilets, long drops, alternative toilets for apartment blocks etc.

From each of these initial sessions the ideas will be collated and emailed out to participants, with a view towards developing later workshops based on the need for practical initiatives that grow out of the group discussions. Participants are encouraged to bring their lunch, along with pictures of DIY setups or items of use to share with the group. Fair Trade coffee, tea and hot chocolate will be available. To register your interest please email sharon.mciver@canterbury.ac.nz.

Community Gardens

Now that the cordoned area on campus has been reduced, we are pleased to announce that the Okeover Community Garden is once again open for staff and students. There were some issues around security in the first few weeks after the quake, which necessitated a temporary closure of both the Dovedale and Okeover gardens, and we appreciate your cooperation in this area.

However, the Okeover Garden has now been deemed safe to enjoy so we will resume the regular Friday afternoon Working Bees (2-5pm), along with the Gardening Group meetings on Wednesday lunchtimes (12noon-1pm). Due to its proximity to cordoned off buildings, the Dovedale Garden will remain closed for now, but we are working on getting it open as soon as possible.

UC Gardening Group

The UC Gardening Group resumes on Wednesday 6 April (12noon-1pm), at the Okeover Community Garden, with well-known and legendary organic gardener Lily White leading a session aimed at helping you to become self-sufficient in your own home garden. Learn what you can do to improve your personal food security.

Donation of Kings Seeds

In the days after the earthquake, the wonderful people at Kings Seeds were in touch to ask if they could donate seeds for our Community Gardens, a request that was gratefully accepted. And because of their ongoing support and commitment of both the UC Community Gardens and eco-my-flat, we have some seeds to give away to the UC Sustainability Community, so if you would like to pick up some seeds (ready for autumn planting) they will be available at the weekly UC Gardening Group sessions, held in the Okeover Community Gardens. Please bring your own packets/envelopes to transport.



Eco-My-Flat 2011

The popular eco-my-flat competition where student flats compete to eco up their homes was due to start on February 28, but has been postponed until the second and third terms. Now running from May 9 to August 12, in response to recent events, the 2011 competition will incorporate an element of survivalism with an extra workshop added on preparing emergency kits and collecting and storing water. We're hoping that our resourceful flats will not only excel in the area of emergency preparation, but will be able to teach us a thing or two as well!

One of our first tasks once we were allowed back into our office, was to notify our wonderful eco-my-flat sponsors about the postponement, and it was a real lift to our spirits to receive such an overwhelming response of support from these eco-friendly businesses. Check out our sponsors' page at www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecomyflat/sponsors.shtml

And if you or someone you know is interested in participating in eco-my-flat please go to www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ecomyflat . Sign ups will be open from 18 April.



UC Simplicity Network

With Okeover House currently being used for alternative office space, all Community Education Courses for Terms One and Two have been cancelled, including the Voluntary Simplicity Workshop planned for 31 March. However, the good news is that the regular lunchtime gathering planned for 11 April (12noon-1pm) at the Okeover Community Garden will still go ahead, so come and join the discussion on the theme Simplicity and Crisis.

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Pizza and Homebrew Party!

Seeing as the Pizza Party planned as part of UC Explore (Feb 24) was unable to go ahead, we've decided to join forces with the ABC Brew Club to celebrate the end of this particularly challenging term with a Pizza and Homebrew party in the Okeover Community Garden on Thursday, 21 April from 3-6pm. Because that week is a short one (before Easter) the party is planned as part of the regular weekly Working Bee (2-5pm). All are welcome – pizza bases will be provided, but please bring a vegetarian topping to share.



Tom Innes with the UC Brew Club on Clubs Day

Dr. Bike

The Dr. Bike workshops will be up and running again as soon as a suitable space becomes available on campus. Given the current uncertain state of accessibility as buildings are checked and worked on, we've decided to wait until things settle down a little before we host these popular workshops.

However, it was great to see the UC Bike Club had such a visible presence on Clubs' Day – well done guys!



UC Bike at Clubs Day



Eco Office

The UC Eco Office Programme is on hold at the moment as the university starts coming back together. As you may remember, the whole programme was scheduled to be launched by the Vice Chancellor this week. When we are able, we'll let you know the new date for this event.

Despite this, we are planning to hold a gathering of our Eco Office Network on Friday 29 April, 12-1pm at the Okeover Community Garden. The purpose of this meeting is to connect post-earthquake, and look at the next steps for our Network.



Anita and Juliet in their Eco Office

Sustainability Symposium Postponed

The Summer Sustainability Scholarship students were geared to report their findings back to the Sustainability Community in late February. This event was to have involved members of the Senior Management Team and to have provided an opportunity to have an open discussion on the sustainability direction of UC, as well as to learn more about the specific projects worked on by our students. Our intention is to hold this event, possibly in a different format, later in the year.

We will keep you posted about any developments. You will be able to access the final reports of our students on our website at <http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/research/catalogue.shtml>