

# Sustainability News

UC Sustainability Office (Planning, Strategy and Services)

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## Kia ora!

Welcome to another action-packed edition of our Sustainability News. Some of you may remember that a short while ago we were recruiting for a Sustainable Practices Coordinator. That process is now on hold, set to recommence during 2012. In the meantime, some of the tasks of this role are being taken on by our Waste Reduction Educator, Dr Sharon McIver.

Highlights over the last month include:

- Winning an Australasian Green Gown Award for UC's Okeover Stream restoration work
- Holding a pizza party and planting day during the UC Community Open Day
- Eco Week in September was a great success
- The inaugural Sustainability Survey
- Continued work on the UC Sustainability Strategy with the Sustainability Working Group
- Excellent applications for our Summer Sustainability Scholarships



Matt and Sharon (left) receiving the Green Gown Award

## Green Gown for Okeover Stream

At the recent ACTS (Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability) conference in Adelaide, Matt and Sharon were stoked to accept the award on behalf of the UC for the Okeover Stream Restoration and Community Engagement Project which won in the *Continuous Improvement – Specific Area* category.

The judges comments about the Okeover Stream project were: "Excellent example of long term continuous improvement. This project has been going for 15 years and shows strong environmental commitment in a local area. This project could be replicable within similar ecological areas sector/country wide. Good social engagement and high impact with the local community from an aesthetical and recreation perspective. Very little outcome on investment so purely driven by sustainability. This would be a great teaching tool as well for undergraduates and postgraduates."

The recycled glass trophy will be displayed in the lounge at Sustainability House. In recognition of all the work put into this project by the UC and Ilam communities, along with the Grounds staff, we'd like to celebrate our success with a few drinks and nibbles at Sustainability House (118 Ilam Road) on Thursday 27 October, 4.30-6.30pm. If you would like to come to this event, please email [sharon.mciver@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:sharon.mciver@canterbury.ac.nz) For more on ACTS and the Green Gown Awards go to [www.acts.asn.au](http://www.acts.asn.au).



Helping out in the Okeover Community Garden at the UC Open Day

We are very keen to hear your sustainability news, and to promote your sustainability events in our newsletter. So please contact us if you have anything to share with the rest of the UC Sustainability Community.

All the very best,

Matt, Sharon and the UC Sustainability Team.

## Summer Sustainability Internship – UC Waste Watchers

You may have seen a few of the new yellow, green, grey and red recycling posters that have recently gone up in the Undercroft, Café 101, Reboot, and 360 Café, and noticed the title, 'UC Waste Watchers', the name of the new waste reduction programme due to be launched next year.

To assist the Waste Reduction Educator in implementing the programme, we're offering a paid internship to a keen student, who doesn't mind a bit of hard work and has a keen interest in reducing our collective waste. Applications close Monday 17 October. To find out more go to:

<http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/summer/index.shtml>.

## Recycling Poster Feedback

Sharon would also like some feedback about the new poster design: What you think, how it could be improved, what's missing, and most importantly, does it assist you with putting your waste in the right bins? So if you get a chance, pop into one of the above cafés, or view it here: [http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/documents/2011\\_draft\\_recycling\\_poster.pdf](http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/documents/2011_draft_recycling_poster.pdf). Check them out and email her with your thoughts at [sharon.mciver@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:sharon.mciver@canterbury.ac.nz).



## Eco Office Meeting, 25 October, 12-1pm.

Since its launch in August, things have been quietly percolating away in the UC's Eco-Offices, but it's time that we had another get together and catch up about what's been happening out there in the departments – the successes, the challenges, and the results. The Eco-office network will be meeting at Sustainability House on Tuesday, 25 October, 12-1pm. Anyone who works in a UC Office is welcome to attend – Fair Trade tea, coffee, and chocolate supplied!



## Eco Week 2011 bigger than ever!

With the inclusion of the Reel Earth Film Festival, the Sustainability Awards and a Pot Luck Club dinner, the UC's second annual Eco Week was successful in raising the profile of Sustainability at the UC, and proved to be a great opportunity for the UC Sustainability team to show off their house. Thanks to all those who participated and supported the team in making this a successful series of events.

## Sustainability Awards

The inaugural UC Sustainability Awards were celebrated in the Lounge at 118 Ilam Road with afternoon tea (made on site at Sustainability House using Fair Trade ingredients), beer brewed by UC Chaplain Tom Innes, and wine donated by Yealand's Estate. Candidates were nominated by peers for their contributions to sustainability both at the UC and beyond, and were judged by staff of the Sustainability Office. Congratulations to all our winners:

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

Leigh Davidson, for Eco Office Initiatives

Cleaning Services, for Waste and Cleaning Initiatives

Cathy Jordan, Dr Bike



### SILVER

Michael Abrahamson, Okeover and Dovedale Community Gardens

Tom Innes, Creative Sustainable Student Engagement

The Potluck Club, Food Security Initiatives

Laura Scrimgeour, The Fair Trade Petition

### GOLD

Huhana Carter, Recycling Promotion and Education in Maori and Cultural Studies

Hannah Muir, the Fair Trade Fair

Russell Taylor, the Tonga Initiative Project

Susan Krumdieck, the Signs of Change Conference



The Okeover Community Garden hosted approximately 50 people during the UC Community Open Day on the first of October. People made pizzas in our wood fired cob pizza oven, and helped out by sowing seeds for use in both community gardens later in the season.

## Eco change agents

Last month we mentioned the Eco Change Agents retreat where a group of keen students learned about how they can change the world for the better. Here, two of the Change Agents, Ellen and Kristin, give a glimpse of what happened, illustrated with photos by fellow Agent Zo.



The Sustainability Office brought together a passionate bunch of students to shape them into change agents. Left to right: Ning, Kristin, Ella, (I am) Vinny, Special Agent Helen, Ellen, sharp shooter Megan, Andrew 'Snow Leopard', Tom and Photographer Extraordinaire Zo.



Andrew and Ning discuss teleportation to a sustainable future.



Pondering presentations.



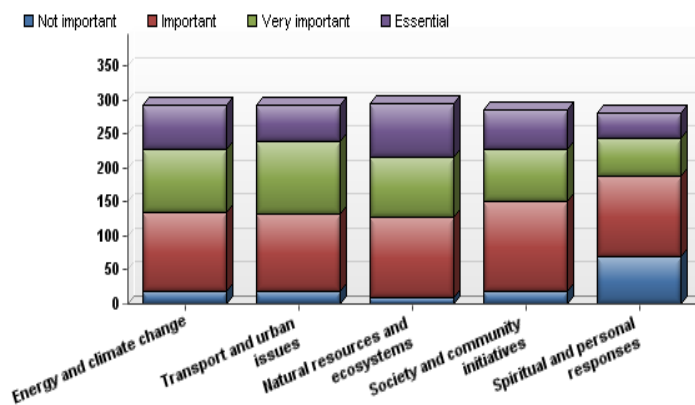
The weekend empowered us to share and act on our sustainability dreams with our new support group of fellow change agents and the UC Sustainability Office.

## Sustainability Survey

Last month the Sustainability Office ran the first annual UC Sustainability Survey. We did this to gain a snapshot of our community's attitudes and awareness about sustainability issues, and it was an eye-opener! The survey was conducted by impartial surveyors in seven locations around Ilam and Dovedale campuses on Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, between 11am and 2pm. 300 people were surveyed, of whom 94% were students. All colleges were well represented.

The full results of the 17-question survey will be published in our first annual UC Sustainability Report at the end of this year, but we thought it would be useful to give you a sneak peak now. All of this information will inform future planning for the Sustainability Office, and will also have an effect on the creation of our Sustainability Strategy.

We asked people to rate how important they viewed five different sustainability issues: energy and climate, transport and urban issues, ecosystems, society, and spiritual or personal responses. We found that in all areas people viewed these matters as being important to them.



We wanted to know how much people knew about the various sustainability initiatives happening on campus, so we asked them specifically about the Okeover Community Garden, the eco-my-flat competition, the Eco Office programme, the stream restoration work, cycling initiatives, Eco Week, and the recycling system.

With the exceptions of eco-my-flat and the recycling system (which were very well known), there was a relatively low level of awareness – and a very low level of involvement – in these projects.

Despite this, when we asked people to rate how they thought UC was tracking with regards to sustainability, by far the majority said they were satisfied with our performance. We also asked how important people thought knowledge of sustainable practice would be for students' future employment. 80% said they thought this would be important or very important. 13% said they felt it would be essential.

We'll let you know when the full report is completed.

## UC Sustainability is on Facebook!

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



We also have facebook pages for our community garden and for our carpooling initiative, UC Rideshare. Find them on our main UC Sustainability Community page.

## ACTS Conference in Adelaide, September 2011

The ACTS (Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability) Conference is one of the highlights of the Sustainability Office, and this year Matt and Sharon represented the UC with a keynote presentation entitled, “Crisis as a Driver for Change: University Sustainability in an Earthquake Zone”.

Feedback about the paper was positive, with several noting that it was great to hear a talk about something real (especially the stories about Chch’s toilet challenges). The quakes may have dropped off the media radar, but in Australia there was genuine interest and concern, and a quite humbling degree of support.

For both Matt and Sharon, the real benefit of the conference was meeting and sharing ideas with all the other Sustainability Practitioners operating at tertiary campuses in Australia and New Zealand, and discovering that whilst we may not have a 16-strong team like Monash University in Melbourne (imagine that!), the UC is right up there in sustainability initiatives.

## Gasland film screening, Monday 17 October, 7.30pm, A4

You may have heard a bit about fracking lately – the intensive gas exploration ‘hydraulic fracturing’ process that is the latest threat to the already fractured Canterbury Plains.

When US filmmaker Josh Fox was asked to lease his land for drilling he set out to find out what the fracking process is about. *Gasland* is the result of his exploration: “A recently drilled nearby Pennsylvania town reports that residents are able to light their drinking water on fire. This is just one of the many absurd and astonishing revelations of a new country called GASLAND. Part vérité travelogue, part expose, part mystery, part bluegrass banjo meltdown, part showdown.” Join us on Monday night for a screening of this important and highly relevant film.

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## Defining Sustainability

We asked people in our Sustainability Survey how they define sustainability, and a preliminary analysis of the responses suggests that we tend to view sustainability as a resource use issue. This is by no means an inevitable result; some definitions focus on the strength of social bonds in a given community. The second observation, given this resource-use focus, is that, broadly speaking, we consider sustainability in one of three ways:

- 1) sustainability is about having the least negative impact on the environment possible
- 2) sustainability is about having a neutral impact on the environment
- 3) sustainability is about leaving the environment in a better state than when we found it.

The definition we develop for UC may well change over time. However, it’s an important issue to grapple with as we continue developing our draft Sustainability Strategy.

## Community Supported Agriculture project to be piloted this summer

Most of us are familiar with the benefits of farmers’ markets but Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is about taking it one step further by purchasing food that is as local and as fresh as you can get without growing it yourself. Getting your food through a CSA means that you and a grower are making a mutual commitment to support each other; you by purchasing a weekly box of produce, and the farmer by growing high quality food and getting it to you fresh!

As such, the UC Sustainability Office is assisting with a pilot of ‘The Field’, a CSA farmed by Georgina Stanley, a former UC student. The Field is a one hectare certified organic market garden close to Halswell. Making the University a hub for The Field brings the UC closer to its sustainable food aims and utilises the existing community and a single collection point.

By delivering boxes to a central pick up point at the UC, transport time and emissions are reduced and supermarkets are bypassed meaning the farmers get a better deal and can pass on the cost benefits to the customer. Because of direct links to the one farm and farmer there are also opportunities to spend time on ‘The Field’ with likeminded people and the grower! For the pilot, membership periods will be on a term by term basis, with a once off membership fee and a weekly amount of \$20 per box. Each week members receive a box of freshly harvested organically certified seasonal vegetables, enough for a household of 3-4, delivered to the UC.

We would like to commence this pilot project in November but need enough interested people to do so. Please register your interest with George: email [TheField@orcon.net.nz](mailto:TheField@orcon.net.nz). (Even if you are away until Term 1 next year, please register so we can gauge potential numbers.) And, if you are keen to explore all the possibilities for food on campus, including the community gardens, the Sustainability Office wants to hear from you. Please contact [jane.aistroke@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:jane.aistroke@canterbury.ac.nz).