

Sustainability News



UC Sustainability Office (Facilities Management)

Volume 1, No.4, 17 June 2010

Eco-my-flat Winners

Grey-water recycling, foraging for apples and building cider presses, building glasshouses, growing extensive vegetable gardens and organising community events aren't things you'd normally associate with student flatting.

But these are exactly the sorts of things the 2010 participants of the University of Canterbury's 'eco-my-flat' competition got up to during the first semester. In addition they raised native seedlings for environmental restoration projects, stopped up their draughts with hand-sewn 'door snakes' and preserved masses of fruit and vegetables.

The final winners were 'Tauawhi' on Hooker Ave, who won the Most Inventive and Supreme Flat awards, and 'Frew Frew' on Renfrew St, who won Most Improved.

About 100 students got involved in the competition, with a shortlist of eleven flats making it through to the final judging.

The four judges were TV sustainability personality Te Radar, Christchurch City Councillor Chrissie Williams, the CCC's Sustainability Advisor Tony Moore and the University of Canterbury's Sustainability Advocate Dr Kate Hewson.

"I think I do quite well, but these people were just amazing," said Chrissie. "The extent that they've gone to, and all the changes they've made has been very impressive. The

community building aspect was great to see. For strong sustainability this community dimension is so important," she said, referring to the emphasis shown by the eco-flatters on getting to know their neighbours and other students involved in the competition.

Te Radar said that eco-my-flat "was a fascinating competition to judge." He was impressed by the standard eco-improvements most of the flatters had made, but said he was looking for the flats that had "made sustainability sustainable" so that they could keep up their good work. He said he was also looking for flats that took the competition outside of the flat and into the wider community. "To me sustainability is about communities and community building: allowing people the resources and inclination to become involved," he said. "It was stirring work all round."

The City Council's Sustainability Advisor, Tony Moore, was equally impressed. "They were outstanding efforts. If everyone lived like this we'd probably live on Planet Earth forever. The range and depth of the commitment of the flatmates has been incredible this year. We need to get this throughout the country and at every university."

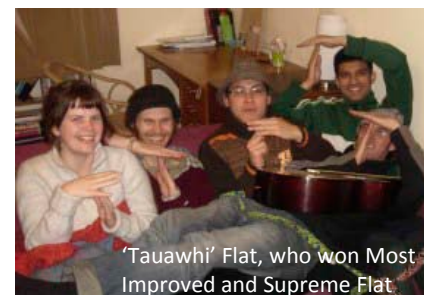
Dr Kate Hewson said "the level of creativity and good humour that was shown by the participants is what I've enjoyed the most about the competition this year."

The competition's organisers had yet to make a final decision about whether to run it again in 2011. "We are doing a full evaluation of the competition at the

"To me sustainability is about communities and community building: allowing people the resources and inclination to become involved"

- Te Radar

moment. But the feedback we've received so far has been so positive, and the results we saw were so fantastic that I'd think we'd almost certainly be running it again next year," said Dr Matt Morris.



Other Notices:

The following website can be used to easily arrange carpools to ski fields when you want to split fuel costs: <http://snowpool.org.nz/>.

The Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ (ECO) is holding its national conference this year on 2-4 July at Living Springs. Visit <http://www.eco.org.nz/> for details.



Eco-Living Workshops

Term 3 will see the return of the UC Eco-Living Workshops with topics focussed mostly around eco things to do indoors during the winter months. Topics will probably include sewing, knitting, vegetarian cooking and urban foraging. Check

<http://www.sustain.canterbury.ac.nz/ec/oliving/index.shtml> for updates. Sessions will be on Thursdays from 12.10 – 1pm at the UC Sustainability Office, unless otherwise notified.

Farewell to Kate Hewson

The start of June saw the farewell of long-term Sustainability Advocate Dr Kate Hewson from the University. Kate said she has departed to go “travelling for six months or so to various parts of the world in a mix of volunteering, learning, and holidaying. What I’ll do once I return home to NZ, well that’s a chapter yet to be opened!” We wish Kate all the best for that new chapter, and thank her for the incredible things she has achieved over the last eight and a half years here at UC.

Eco-Office Meeting

The UC Eco-Office Network (EON) met in May to start workshopping the draft UC Eco-Office Guide. The group was graced with the presence of Tony Sellin, the University’s Energy Manager, who helped answer questions on a range of topics from the relative merits of eco-bulbs to the technical details of how the office heaters work.

The next EON gathering will be on Water. This is an opportunity to feed any relevant questions about water use in offices into the Office Guide, and to have your questions answered. We will again be joined by Tony Sellin (who is also responsible for water at UC). The gathering will be held at the **Sustainability Office on Tuesday 29th June, 12-1pm**. All are welcome.

Mushrooms on Campus!



Did you know that the UC is one of the few places in Christchurch where you can find the edible mushroom *Boletus edulis* growing? This sample was brought to our office in mid June by one of our excellent Grounds staff, Matt Rudd. Matt said he finds them occasionally around campus. They were first discovered in Christchurch in 1993 – the first known discovery in the Southern Hemisphere.

Fair Trade

Following on from Fair Trade Fortnight in May, a group of people keen to progress the idea of the University as a Fair Trade campus is now forming. If you would like to be part of this group, please email Matt Morris:

matthew.morris@canterbury.ac.nz.

Also, you may like to view the panel discussion we had during Fair Trade Fortnight, featuring Stephen Hickson (Economics), Natalie Baird (Law) and Justin Purser (Trade Aid). It was a great chance to hear a range of views from experts. Click on this link, and then choose ‘Video’:

<http://cantma.canterbury.ac.nz/ResearchWeb/Sustainability/movies.htm>

Earth Night!

The UC Sustainability Office celebrated the end of term and World Environment Day with a cool party at the New Common Room, Ilam Apartments. During the celebrations we awarded the prizes to the winners of eco-my-flat. Many thanks to the sponsors of the event: Silk Road Catering, Yealands Estate, South City New World, Greenhorn Productions, M*A*S*S*I*V*E & Campus Living Villages.



Students carefully positioning wheellie bin



Spreading fermented food scraps onto a layer of rotted leaves



The team after the successful first attempt

R&R Halls Bokashi Project

Rochester & Rutherford Halls of Residence have recently begun an amazing project to ferment their food scraps with bokashi.

The project involves the Hall management, the catering company that prepares the meals, a team of enthusiastic students who are residents of the Hall, the UC Grounds department, the UC Sustainability Office, the Okeover Community Garden and Bokashi NZ.

The food scraps will be processed into plant food at the Grounds Dept, and the final product will be used in the Community Garden. This fantastic system starts putting into action the kind of systems thinking needed to achieve true sustainability on campus.

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