

Maynooth Green Campus: Report to Faculties

September 2016

Contents

Maynooth Green Campus: Report to Faculties	1
September 2016.....	1
Forthcoming events	2
<i>Bio-blitz</i> 2016:- 29/30 Sep. 2016 – Save the Date	2
2016 <i>Step Challenge</i> : 12 September to 9 October	2
Student Switch Off	2
Application for Green Flag	2
Please let us know about taught modules with environmental content	2
Green Campus Charter – what do you think of it?	2
Reports.....	3
“The Burning Question” – Trócaire.....	3
Mercury rising! Thanks to Experimental Physics	3
Kildare Biodiversity Week 25th May – thanks to Biology.....	4
Bicycles repair day – another success.....	4
Successful Grant applications	4

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

BIO-BLITZ 2016:- 29/30 SEP. 2016 – SAVE THE DATE

Last September Maynooth made its first sortie into the intervarsity Bioblitz. Over precisely 24 hours we found and identified some 257 different species of naturally occurring species of flora and fauna on campus. This year we hope to build on this very successful start. To get involved please contact Gail Maher (Gail Maher abigail.maher@gmail.com) or Jim Carolan (James.Carolan@nuim.ie) in the Biology Department. ([Bioblitz 2015 tally](#))

The event will kick off at 12.00pm and base camp will be located in the JPII Library foyer and will include searches for species of the air, water, earth, creatures of the day and night, small and large, in fact anything with at least one cell. Please come along to the library and participate in one of the many activities, meet some experts and follow the progress.

The Biology Department has kindly agreed to purchase a moth trap and Maynooth Green Campus has helped with the cost of other equipment including nets, collecting trays and vials and identification material and charts. If you think you can find some interesting specimens bring them along or let us know – we need to identify them during the vital 24-hour window! We will circulate a timetable of activities later: **save the date: 12noon 29th September to 12 noon 30th September**

2016 STEP CHALLENGE: 12 SEPTEMBER TO 9 OCTOBER

We are participating in the [2016 Step Challenge](#) as part of Smarter Travel Workplaces with the National Transport Authority. Running from 12 September to 9 October, it is to promote walking and well-being in the workplace. Information will follow on how to register.

STUDENT SWITCH OFF

We have been invited to engage with the successful [Student Switch Off](#) campaign which focuses on changing behaviour in student halls of residence to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, and educate students as to how to manage energy consumption/avoid fuel poverty after they graduate. It is managed by the National Union of Students (UK) and is branching into Ireland and internationally. Maynooth has been invited to engage with the initiative and is in contact with the NUS with a view to engaging. Savings made in financial and carbon footprint terms are non-trivial. Also, in promoting more sustainable practice among students and on campus, it fits into the mission of Maynooth Green Campus.

APPLICATION FOR GREEN FLAG

This autumn we are preparing our application for the Green Campus Flag. Work has been ongoing over the summer months to pull this together. We will be asking for the assistance of departments in relation to some information to go into the application.

Please let us know about taught modules with environmental content

We have already contacted departments to ask for an up-to-date list of modules with at least some content related to environmental sustainability. We did a similar exercise in 2012-2013 and wish to bring this up to date for the application.

Green Campus Charter – what do you think of it?

We are looking for comments on a draft green charter which we wish to have adopted by stakeholders on campus. We hope to put the charter up in a number of locations. The following

text has been drafted with a view to adoption by the three partners to Maynooth Green Campus. Comments and observations are welcome.

Draft Maynooth Green Campus Charter

Maynooth Green Campus is a strategic coalition between Maynooth University (MU), St Patrick's College Maynooth (SPCM) and Trócaire that seeks to promote environmental sustainability and climate justice

Our vision centres on the global significance of local action to promote environmental sustainability in the context of teaching, research, public engagement and other activities on the campus

We engage in and promote a wide range of activities locally on campus, and more widely, under the themes of Biodiversity, Energy, Water, Waste, Transport & Travel

We have a special emphasis on climate justice because the richest economies and the wealthiest social groups are most responsible for carbon pollution, while the poorest nations and social groups experience its worst impacts

We promote the *Global Goals for Sustainable Development* adopted by the United Nations, which link social and environmental objectives

We seek to empower local actors, by linking local action to global goals, by building upon smaller actions and short term “wins”, by consolidating changes in practice and anchoring new approaches in the culture of Maynooth campus, and by monitoring and communicating progress.

We initiate, encourage and support action by students and staff on campus, and we will work in alliance with the wider community, other universities and environmental organisations in association with An Taisce's Green Campus Programme.

Supported by

Maynooth University

St Patricks College Maynooth

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REPORTS

“The Burning Question” – Trócaire

Trócaire launched the new campaign on divestment on 21st April. See [link](#) for more information

Mercury rising! Thanks to Experimental Physics

Our collaboration with the astrophysics and experimental Physics staff for the transit of Mercury between the Earth and the Sun on 9 May was a great success. Although it was a bit overcast much of the time, we linked to a telescope in Denmark which was able to show the whole event. We were struck by the huge ratio of the sun to tiny Mercury and reminded of the vast potential of solar power in replacing fossil fuels. If we don't make a transition to carbon free energy urgently it is the mercury in our thermometers that we will be watching. Watch out for further

collaborations with Physics in the coming year. If you have imaginative ways of raising awareness of environmental issues please let us know!

Kildare Biodiversity Week 25th May – thanks to Biology

Maynooth University made a significant contribution to [National Biodiversity Week](#) as part of Co. Kildare's input. A very successful morning with contributions on many aspects of biodiversity was followed by lunch and a lively biodiversity and bee identification walking tour on campus. Maynooth campus has joined the national pollinator plan. Kildare County Council also has a [biodiversity plan](#), and there will be a number of other events during the week in county Kildare and Maynooth.

BICYCLES REPAIR DAY – ANOTHER SUCCESS

A bike clinic for all staff took place in May. Those lucky enough to be seen got a free 'health-check' and discounts on repairs needed. Thanks to Lar Byrne, campus services, and Joe Timoney and the MGC travel and transport working group. It was a very successful if a bit oversubscribed and we hope to develop this initiative in the future.

SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS

Under the umbrella of Maynooth Green Campus two successful applications for funding were made to Kildare County Council totalling about €3,000. One grant is for replacement of a petrol-engine driven leaf blower, trimmer and shears by battery-powered alternatives. Well done to the Grounds Department for this. A further grant was made towards water butts on the south campus. The ones on the north campus are in regular use by grounds staff for watering plants.