GREEN SHOOTS
maynooth green campus
NEWSLETTER

Issue 4 November 2021

Welcome to the fourth Maynooth Green Campus Newsletter!

Welcome to Issue 4 of Green Shoots, which covers a wide range of topics including our one million square feet of wildflower meadows, our fabulous new edible garden, the Tairseach tree trail, and our new Health and Wellbeing group, and GoGreenRoutes event.

We also report on how the Waste working group has restored hundreds of computers for re-use by non-profit or start-up organisations in conjunction with IT and Rehab, and on the very impressive MU Green Labs initiative. The climate crisis, without exaggeration, is the challenge of our time. As the eyes of all the world have looked to COP26 in Glasgow, we report on the sixth IPCC science report, edited by MU Prof Peter Thorne, and a MU webinar reflecting on COP26, with Emeritus Professor John Sweeney, who has been at COP26.

Also, we cover three awards recently won by the campus, including the Green flag for Heritage sites, and progress by the T&L committees to mainstream the SDGs in courses across faculties.

Read, enjoy, and be inspired to join with us in working on campus for a sustainable world!

Maynooth Green Campus Team


Maura Boyle

In this edition...

Remembering Eliz Dunne

Dr Jim Carolan

MGC Chair

On behalf of Maynooth Green Campus

Over the summer, we were shocked and saddened by the news that our dear colleague Eliz Dunne had passed away. Eliz was the Vice President for Estates and Capital Development and was a great friend and supporter of Maynooth Green Campus. Having come to Maynooth from UCD, she quickly recognised the unique nature of MGC and was amazed that this group had arisen organically through the voluntary contribution and passion of our members.

It was immediately clear that Eliz was driven by a similar passion to improve sustainability, promote environmental awareness and to reduce our negative impact on the environment.

We worked closely with Eliz on several projects, including tree planting, campus planning, identifying new sites for biodiversity and consulting about future builds.

Eliz wanted to see Maynooth transform itself into a national leader in environmentalism, sustainability and sustainable development. Kind, knowledgeable, respectful of everybody she interacted with, Eliz was just great fun to work with.

We will miss her dearly.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam

Maynooth wins Green Heritage Site and other awards

Stephen Seaman

Maynooth Campus Grounds Supervisor

The Maynooth Campus is delighted to announce that we have been awarded Green Heritage Site Accreditation - the first university campus in Ireland to do so.

Also the Maynooth campus received a third Green Flag for Parks and Green Spaces this month in addition to being recognised for our actions under the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan award.

Dr Jim Carolan

Green Campus Chair Biology Dept.

Green flag and Green Heritage Site awards go to...Maynooth Campus!

Maynooth Tidy towns have also successfully joined the Green Flag Award family, achieving their first Green Flag Award for the Maynooth Sensory Garden.

Having a Green Flag Award and being a Green Heritage site means the work going on the campus to preserve, enhance and protect its natural and built heritage is of the highest standards and recognised internationally. The campus is part of a global community of well managed parks and green spaces, with over 2,300 sites from 16 countries now proudly flying a Green Flag.

Screenshot of Green Flag and Heritage awards, available to watch on YouTube here.

Ireland now boasts over 100 Green Flag Sites and 7 Green Heritage sites. Our Grounds and Maintenance Supervisors, Charles Seaman and Stephen Seaman were invited by An Taisce to take part in a recording of the official flag raising and launch of the official announcements of the Green Heritage Flag awards.

Such awards are a recognition of our commitment to making real change to campus infrastructure and to showcasing best practices that hopefully other Institutions can follow.

The link for the full video can be found here.

Maura Boyle

IPCC Sixth Report on the Physical Science of Climate Change

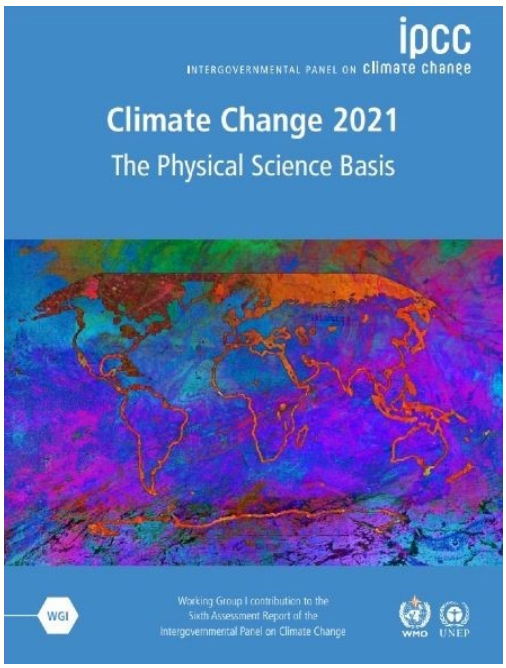
Prof Peter Thorne

Maynooth University

Co-ordinating lead author on IPCC

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in August released the first of three working group reports. This report was concerned with our latest understanding of the physical science basis. Reports to appear in February and March will detail impacts / adaptation and mitigation respectively. Finally, a synthesis report is scheduled to be published next October.

Prof. Peter Thorne was a Coordinating Lead Author on the first report and is a section facilitator in the synthesis report. The report was unique in being completed in the midst of a global pandemic. This meant that both report completion stages and approval by governments are undertaken in a virtual setting. As Peter notes, "This did mean some very late nights / early mornings and quizzical looks from security including bringing camping gear to the office for the denouement."



The report highlights that:

- Recent changes in the climate are widespread, rapid, and intensifying, and unprecedented in thousands of years.
- Unless there are immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to 1.5°C will be beyond reach.
- It is indisputable that human activities are causing climate change, making extreme climate events, including heat waves, heavy rainfall, and droughts, more frequent and severe.
- Climate change is already affecting every region on Earth, in multiple ways. The changes we experience will increase with further warming.
- There's no going back from some changes in the climate system. However, some changes could be slowed, and others could be stopped by limiting warming.
- To limit global warming, strong, rapid, and sustained reductions in CO2, methane, and other greenhouse gases are necessary. This would not only reduce the consequences of climate change but also improve air quality.

Full report available here.

MGC Climate Justice Working Group

Dr Jamie Gorman

Climate Justice Working Group

Applied Social Studies

Demonstration in Dublin to demand climate action from COP26

How do our actions as a university community contribute to national and global efforts to address the climate and biodiversity emergency? How can our community stand with and support the communities most impacted by the crisis? As we take actions on campus - like supporting biodiversity and improving our energy management - the Climate Justice Working Group puts our efforts into global perspective and brings us into conversation with climate policy debates beyond the campus.

Climate justice applies a human rights lens to the social and environmental challenges of the climate emergency. It recognises that nationally and globally, the communities and people who face the worst effects of climate change have done the least to cause the crisis and have the least resources to respond to it. This poses major questions about social justice which must be addressed in the context of climate policy measures so that the cost burden falls on the polluter and the victims are protected and compensated.

Join us in the Climate Justice Working Group had help us to highlight these issues, raise awareness, promote policy change and practical action in solidarity with the communities facing climate change and climate related injustices in Ireland and globally.

To join the Climate Justice working group please contact Jamie Gorman, Department of Applied Social Studies at: *jamie.gorman@mu.ie*

COP26 —The final day in Glasgow

Prof John Sweeney

Emeritus Professor
Climate Change

No one expected COP26 to finish by the scheduled time of Friday afternoon (Nov 12), although the President kept signalling his intention to do so throughout the final 72 hours of intense negotiations. A draft agreement produced early on in this period contained very progressive sentiments and led to hopes that Glasgow would indeed represent a sea-change in tackling climate change.

Informed by the serious 'code red for humanity' IPCC 6th Assessment Report, it seemed the international community had finally grasped the nettle of climate change. The IPCC report was welcomed, which seemed to signal countries were here to do business. The draft included a call to parties to accelerate the phase out of coal power and the removal of subsidies for fossil fuels.

Good progress was also evident in scaling up adaptation finance for developing countries, and also on the running sore from Paris about how carbon trading would be regulated. Plenary discussion of this however extended to 3 hours in the largest hall of the cavernous Scottish Exhibition Centre and it was clear that resistance was being mobilized, especially by Saudi Arabia. This was after all the first time a reference to fossil fuels had been included in any draft agreement.

A long night of negotiation followed leading to a second draft early on Friday morning. Significant dilution was apparent. The language had changed to '*accelerating the phase-out of unabated coal power and of inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels.*' 'Unabated' coal power of course leaves the options wide open – 1% or 99% - and inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels raises the possibility of spurious justification. It seemed like a win for the many fossil fuel lobbyists which had descended on this COP, more so than in previous years. Some countries were very much in tune with the lobbyists. Australia had already the dubious privilege of being awarded the 'Colossal Fossil Award' by the Climate Action Network NGO in recognition of its laggard stance on coal.

When the delegates assembled to discuss this new draft on the Friday afternoon, it was clear that the COP would have to go into extra time to get a result. Another night's negotiation was in prospect.

As Saturday was the day that the COP fragmented into country groupings. Waiting for the final stock take to sanction the draft agreement, it became clear for those of us waiting in the Hall that the scheduled meeting simply was not convening. Instead, clusters of delegates began negotiating among themselves on the conference floor. In the middle of these were the main powerbrokers of the US, the EU, China and India. When the meeting eventually was convened, a passionate plea to accept the draft agreement was made by the EU and US, and also by several states, especially those vulnerable nations in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. In fact, probably 190 of the 196 countries would have accepted an imperfect agreement in the interests of moving forward. But India, China and Iran were not among these. And so, another redraft was done. The key phrase now read *"…including escalating efforts to phase down unabated coal power, and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies." "Escalating efforts", "phase down"* (as opposed to phase out)- such are the linguistic skills of international negotiators to achieve their objectives!

So as COP26 closes, maybe Greta's comments about 'Blah, Blah, Blah' are nearer the mark that the spin which some will put on the outcome. Yes, the big polluting countries have to come back to COP27 with stronger pledges. Yes, the requirement for rich nations to double their financial contributions to poor countries to help them adapt to climate change is good, and Ireland can be numbered among the nations which have played their part in supporting this. More so than in previous Cops Ireland was involved in several strands of the negotiations and provided a progressive and professional influence. The formal inclusion of a separate facility to further progress loss and damage reparations for these countries is also a positive step, as is the agreement on how carbon markets will be organized. But the crucial objective of 'keeping 1.5 alive' is, in reality, not significantly advanced. There is not much confidence that the proposed measures to achieve the global 45% reduction in emissions, compared to 2010, that the IPCC deem necessary by 2030 to avoid this potential tipping point being exceeded, will work.

Perhaps Glasgow will be remembered as the COP which took baby steps when giant steps were needed.

More from Prof John Sweeney on COP26 here.

Paris, Glasgow and Beyond - Universities must do their part

Dr Joe Larragy

Applied Social Studies

The latest projection from UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is that we're on course for 2.7° Celsius warming this century, compared to pre-industrial levels, even if the 2030 targets that followed from the 2015 Paris Agreement are met in full. This is a course for disaster. Such an increase would make the planet uninhabitable.

The climate system has already become more unstable, even sooner than expected, following a 1.2° C increase over pre-industrial levels as estimated by the World Meteorological Organization in 2020. In fact, while the recent widespread sense of urgency on climate change resulted from a concern about effects on our children's generation, climate change is already impacting on ours. And the effects are evident – not only in poorer regions of the global South. Even in technologically advanced countries and wealthy heartlands of the global North, storms, floods, droughts, and wildfires are increasingly frequent and more violent.

Globally, there is vast over-reliance on fossil fuels (gas, oil and coal) in transport, industry and energy production. In agriculture too, methane emissions are contributing, particularly in countries like Ireland with large beef herds. Even the ambitions of the new Climate Action Plan put forward by the Irish government this month fall short of what is needed in a wealthy country.

As leaders of 195 countries meet again, in November 2020, this time in Glasgow at the COP26 climate talks, people all over the world are looking for leadership and effective action to mitigate climate change by stemming the rise in greenhouse gas emissions causing it. The heavy lifting remains to be done, and the longer it is left, and the weaker the mitigation effort, the greater the burden of adaptation (living with climate breakdown) and the less effective it too becomes.

What can be done by individuals? A great deal less in isolation than can be done in conjunction with strategic, collective action by governments and major institutions. Citizen action is also something which individuals engage in collectively to increase the momentum of real change.

Even then, a successful engagement with climate change will likely take a century of heroic effort at every level, on mitigation and adaptation. This requires radical re-organisation of economic activities across industry, services, transport, energy and agriculture.

However, the impact of climate change has been greater in certain regions, and the drastic measures needed to arrest global heating need to address these inequalities and ensure that the polluter pays. This implies major policy departures to shield those social groups least able to afford to pay the price; a progressive contribution must come from the wealthier groups and regions, which have gained most in profits and privileges from burning fossil resources over two centuries. This is what a just transition requires.

The education system too, particularly at third level, can help bring about this radical shift in human capacity. We have made a start at Maynooth, as have other third level colleges, but environmental sustainability and climate, and other major related environmental crises, need to move up to the top of the agenda, and into the mainstream, across all subject areas, through research, teaching and cross-disciplinary collaboration. Graduate attributes across all disciplines, need to reflect this too.

Universities must do their part, not only in technical subjects but in the social sciences and humanities, to bring about a just transition. While it is very late now to be reacting to climate crisis, it is still too early to despair. There is much to be done.

Report: COP26 & Climate Justice: Reflections on the role of the University

The outcomes from COP26 were analysed at a webinar held on 18th November, organised by Dr Jamie Gorman (Applied Social Studies) and Dr Louise Fitzgerald (Geography). The webinar got a very succinct and detailed account of events in Glasgow, including outcomes and disappointments. Hot from Glasgow, Professor John Sweeney (ICARUS), Dr Aideen O'Dochartaigh (DCU Centre for Climate and Society), Jessica Dunne (Fridays for Future) and Jullian Nagi (environmental activist and formerly MSU) shared their reflections.

On of the role of the university in advancing climate justice, responses focused on four areas: (1) University policies and procedures; (2) University procurement; (3) Teaching and learning; (4) Outreach and partnership (Full details HERE). The Climate Justice Working Group will meet in December to move these ideas forward.

A recording is available HERE [Link to MS SharePoint, currently only accessible though MU accounts].

Campus Grassland Meadows Benefit Wildlife

Dr Gail Maher

Biodiversity Working Group

Biology Dept.

During June and July 2021, along with a wonderfully enthusiastic Maynooth University Biology student, Stefana Chira, I carried out a survey of some of the meadows on the South Campus. The aim of the survey was two-fold, to compare the current botanical record with the species recorded in "The Plants and Grounds of Maynooth College" (Bowering et al., 1995), and to have a baseline to compare changes in the meadow diversity over the coming years.

Since the Maynooth Green Campus Committee was set up in 2012/13, the management of the campus grounds has changed to protect and enhance biodiversity.

During the last two years, under the enlightened management of grounds supervisor Stephen Seaman, large areas of both the North and South Campus which were previously mowed on a regular basis have been allowed to develop as meadows.

One million ft2 (93,000 m2) of campus grounds are now managed for biodiversity. This means allowing the grasses and wildflowers to grow, with mowing and removal of the cut grass late in the year. By allowing the natural seed bank to grow and flower we can see what is present in the area. Removing the cuttings will reduce the fertility of the meadow and allow the flowering plants to increase.

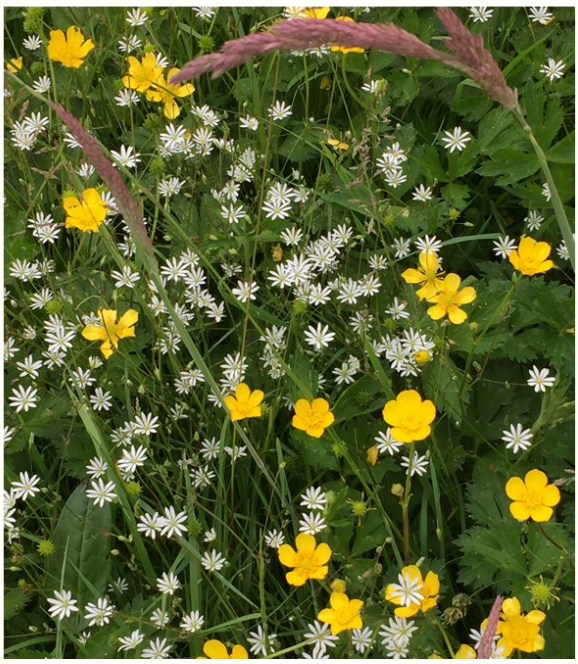
Carnivorous fly with hoverfly prey (South Campus meadow)

Buff-tailed bumblebee, an important pollinating species

Common blue butterfly, a common meadow and grassland species

Dog-rose, a common hedgerow species

Measuring the size of a Crane's-bill flower, a member of the Geranium family. A garden escapee found growing at edge of South Campus carpark.



Buttercups and Lesser Stitchwork in one of the South Campus meadows.

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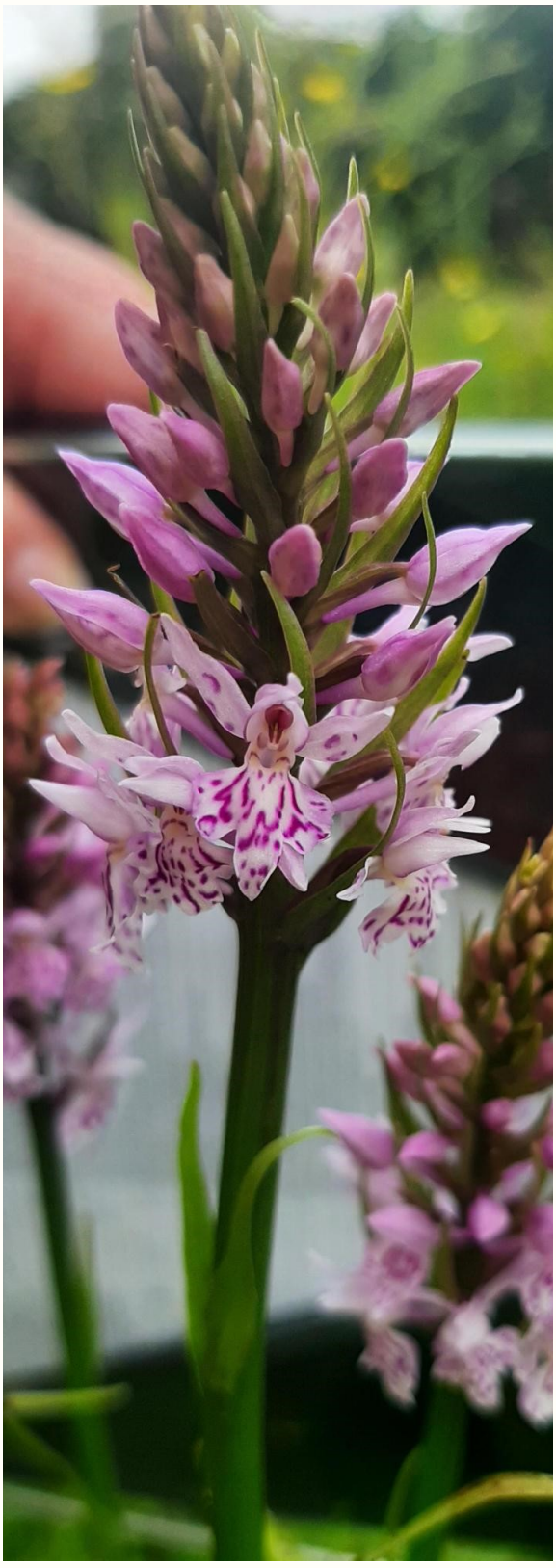


During our survey, Stefana and I recorded nearly 70 different plant species in the South Campus meadows and their margins. This is approximately 1/3 of the total number of species recorded on the South Campus in 1995. While this may seem to be a decline of species number at first glance, our survey was limited to just the meadows and their margins. Our survey has given us a snapshot of the plants present during the summer season. We also identified 4 species of bumblebee, a damselfly, 3 species of ladybird, and 2 species of butterfly, along with hoverflies, sawflies, wasps, spiders and other invertebrates.

This type of grassland, with its mixture of naturally occurring grasses and wildflowers is not as showy as a planted wildflower seed mix. However, it is a very important habitat for insects which are grassland specialists, such as the Meadow Brown Butterfly and the Green-veined White Butterfly. The flowering plants attract aphids, which in turn attract ladybirds such as the 7-spot Ladybird, the 14-spot Ladybird and the 22-spot Ladybird. Dragonflies and damselflies are more commonly associated with water, but some, such as the Common Blue Damselfly we spotted, are often seen hunting over grassland.

The diversity of invertebrates which occurs in natural meadows is dependent on the diversity of both the grasses and the wildflowers and these in turn provide food for the wide range of birds found on the Campus.

For more information about the importance of biodiverse meadows and grasslands, click here.

Green Campus, IT and Rehab give new life to computers

Dorena Bishop

Waste management working group

History Dept.

The Windows 10 upgrade that took place over the last eighteen months left hundreds of potentially valuable University-owned PCs and laptops redundant. As they could not be upgraded to use the new operating software, they were destined for the WEEE recycling cage.

July Tony Waldron, Department of Maths & Stats with first collection by Rehab.

On the initiative of Dorena Bishop (Department of History), who leads the MGC Waste Working Group, IT Services were asked to help divert these devices from waste into a reuse project. Dorena also got in touch with Rehab Recycling who refurbish old devices for re-use by community, voluntary and start-up projects and disadvantaged schools, while also providing employment to adults with learning and physical disabilities.

Since July, IT Services have taken delivery of several hundred old devices, securely wiped them of all MU data and licences and any identifying marks and tags. As of 1st October, Rehab have collected twelve cages of desktops, laptops, monitors and other peripherals such as power supplies, keyboards, etc.

This will now be an ongoing process for old devices being returned to IT Services in future. Computers will be collected by Campus Services and machines with data go to Eolas for data wipe. Peripherals, instead of being discarded in a cage as WEEE waste for recycling, will go to a separate cage in the service yard for re-use. Indeed, as these cages were sometimes exposed to the elements even recycling can be compromised. All machines and peripherals will instead be kept in secure and sheltered locations and collected by Rehab to be refurbished and reused.

Dorena Bishop and Victor Nava Millan from IT Services with 93 desktops from CBCL1

This is a super initiative of great social, environmental & economic value. Special thanks to Karen Jago, Niamh Boldt, Victor Nava Millan, Mairead Kelly and Earl Afolabi from IT Services and Ivan Griffin and Stephen Seaman from Campus Services.

MU Green Labs

Carmel O'Flaherty

MU Green Labs

Chemistry Dept.

Inspired by MyGreenLab.org, the sciences in Maynooth are hoping to introduce sustainability into the way we work in our labs. Labs are resource intensive spaces but there is much that can be done to lessen our impact on the environment and create a culture of positive change.

Researchers and staff from the chemistry and biology departments have met to create a network of people interested in implementing changes towards a greener lab environment. The main areas of change that we are looking at are Waste, Energy, Water and Green Chemistry. While this initiative is still in the early stages of implementation, we have started to make some changes such as the examples below.

Ollie Fenelon

MU Green Labs

Chemistry Dept.

Waste

1. The group are currently looking at many different aspects of waste generation, but one focus was in packaging. A lot of packaging is delivered to the departments every week. Some of this is very durable cardboard. These cardboard boxes arrive with between one and four bottles of solvent, and moulded cardboard inserts to protect the bottles (*the inserts are a great replacement for the previous non-recyclable polystyrene beads*). After unpacking, the boxes were flattened, and both inserts and boxes placed out for recycling. However, it seemed such a pity to place perfectly good boxes into the green or yellow bin, to be broken down again, using more energy, to make a weaker product.

We talked to our supplier Lennox and asked, could they use the packaging again? Would they accept the packaging back through their drivers? And they said yes. So, our agreement now is that we store the flattened boxes and inserts, and Lennox drivers pick them up with the next delivery. Lennox are happy to reuse them within their own system, either for us or for other customers.

2. Polystyrene EPS waste is now being collected in a skip by Thorntons for recycling which is great as there are a lot of deliveries in EPS boxes.

3. The laboratory supplier Fisher Scientific have agreed to recycle glass and plastic bottles.

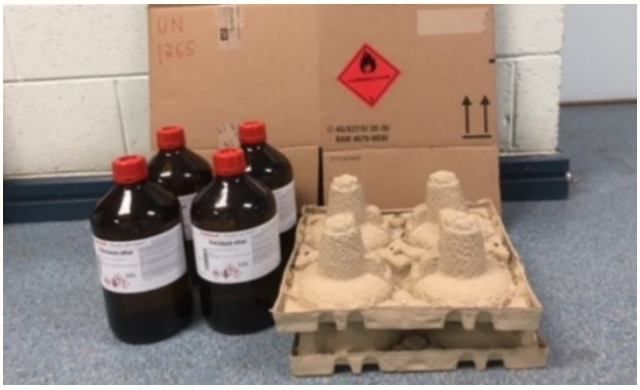
MU green labs

MU Green Labs logo, designed by Sarah Larragy

Energy

1. The fume hoods in lab are major sources of energy loss when left up. We are encouraging users to 'Shut the Sash' and have posted up "Shut the sash stickers" on every sash as a reminder to those to working to keep the sash down.

2. Signs have been posted in common rooms for light switches and equipment to remind users to switch off when not in use.



MU Green Labs had arranged for durable, cardboard inserts to be sent back to suppliers for reuse.

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Encouraging sustainability in the undergraduate labs

Focusing on the activity of undergraduate students in the laboratory, we thought about the amount of waste (chemical, gas, and water) that is generated in each laboratory session.
We have moved to having our laboratory manuals online for the 2nd-4th years undergraduates, saving a lot of paper.

Students in general are very aware the concept of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, but how could this be incorporated into their daily laboratory session? Perhaps drawing their attention to points in their experiments where they could contribute to sustainability might be of value? Working together, both Chemistry and Biology Departments developed an easily identifiable icon.

This icon has now been incorporated into the Practical Manual for First Year Chemistry students in September 2021 and indicates points in an experiment where the student can take individual control of resources

MU Green Labs logo adapted for use in First Year Chemistry Practical Manuals

Chemicals

Updates to the chemical inventories have taken place and open sharing is being encouraged. At the moment, this remains within individual departments due to the safety of the transporting of chemicals.

Water

Lab experiments often involve using large amounts of water, especially needed to help keep reactions cold. Some of our researchers have switched to using waterless condensers which greatly help to conserve water when doing experiments. A recirculating chiller was purchased for use in the undergraduate labs to chill equipment.

The future is ours

The Green Labs Team

Sarah Larragy, Orla Joyce, Eithne Dempsey, Ria Walsh, Walter Walsh, Anne Maria Cleary, Martina Schroeder, Merissa Cullen, Maria Cassells, Karen Herdman, Michelle Doran, Carmel O'Flaherty, Rachel Katheryn Ward, Aine Butler, Patricia McDonnell, Karen Jennings, Orla Fenelon, Barbara Woods, Michelle Sands.

MU green labs

We hope to expand MUGreenLabs in the coming years and produce a code of practice for labs to use across campus while maintaining productivity in the workplace. We will look at the option of achieving a green lab certification and lessen our impact on the environment through our work practices. We want to create a community of people on the campus to help us achieve greener labs.

Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals at Maynooth

Michael Kenny

Adult & Community Education Dept.

A Cross-Faculty Survey was conducted on MU's Engagement with Sustainability and the SDGs. The survey was carried out by the three Faculty teaching and learning committees under the leadership of Michael Kenny, Adult and Community Education. The first report from the survey, which is rich in data, was presented to the faculty meetings in October. The T&L Committees and Faculties sincerely thank the Heads of Departments, Centres, Schools, and Institutes, its own departmental representatives, and individual staff who completed the survey.

The global context for the survey is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, which were adopted by all 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015. Despite the best efforts of the UN and of UN Member States, most people around the world remain unaware that the SDGs exist. Without adequate awareness and support, we will collectively fail to achieve these goals.

Closer to home, there is an increasing demand for teaching at university level to consider issues regarding sustainable development. This was shown by a Maynooth Student Union (MSU) Social media survey in semester one of the 2019/2020 academic year.

Maynooth Green campus previously undertook an audit and a survey of awareness about sustainability among university departments in 2018. SDGs are now featuring in the ranking of universities worldwide and MU is engaging with these processes to enhance its performance.

The report contents will be used for engagement with faculties on mainstreaming the SDGs.

Report Authors:

Michael Kenny, Patricia Kennon (Faculty of Social Sciences Teaching and Learning Committee), Rebecca Maguire, James Carolan and Joost Slingerland (Faculty of Science and Engineering Teaching and Learning Committee), Susan Gottlober (Faculty of Arts Celtic Studies and Philosophy Teaching and Learning Committee), and colleagues in the faculty Teaching and Learning Committees.

More information from:
Michael.Kenny@mu.ie

MU's Edible Garden is Flourishing

Dr Patricia Healy Kettle

Critical Skills Dept.

Images courtesy of Dr. Patricia Healy-Kettle, Dr. Aneta Stepien & AnnMarie Cudden.

Maynooth University's Green Campus 'Sustainable Food and Agriculture Working Group' are delighted to announce that phase one of Maynooth University's first 'Edible Garden' Project has been completed. Located between Rowan and Education House, the Edible Garden boasts an array of fruit, vegetables, herbs and heritage apple trees, adding to the diverse range of habitats rich in flora and fauna on campus, which are not only important for plants and animals that inhabit them, but provide an invaluable amenity both aesthetically and socially for the community that access the campus.

With phase one completed in June, 2021, this once grey vacant 'corridor' has undoubtedly been reinvigorated into a vibrant and productive landscape, enhancing and strengthening the University's public realm.

A pedestrian spine links the garden with Laraghbryan House and adjacent green areas that traverse the campus at the Moyglare Road entrance, North Campus. Compost bins and a rainwater harvesting system have been integrated to promote sustainable principles of food production in practice.

Seating areas and raised vegetable beds filled with a genus of seasonal vegetables ranging from: leafy greens (lettuce, spinach), to brassica varieties (cabbage, kale and broccoli), root, and edible plant stems (carrots, potatoes, garlic, onions and shallots), alongside an edible hedge filled with a wide variety of fruit-bearing trees & shrubs (rhubarb, plum, pear and fig, raspberries, currents, hazel, blackberry and blackthorn) create an aesthetic that draws passers-by to engage with nature, stop and pause for a while.

Before: empty vacant 'corridor'

After: Sustainable Food and Agriculture Working Group Planting Phase 1. June 2021

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Grounded in a pedagogy of 'Community-Engaged Learning', 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDG's), and sustainable methods of food production, the garden provides significant scope for developing links to learning and research, by providing an interdisciplinary space where staff, students and the local community can join in concert and cultivate food, interact with nature, and share and exchange knowledge.

Working on the principle that 'well-functioning public spaces rely on involving people in the creation of that space' (Kettle, 2015), the group aims to promote sustainable relationships with food and land through collaborative practices.

A variety of workshops and holistic garden-based projects and integrated learning-activities are scheduled for 2021/22 to cultivate interest in authentic real-world issues, aligning scientific practices, curriculum and local social relations.

Details will be provided in forthcoming 'Green Shoots' Issues, and https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/green-campus/events.

If you are interested (co)hosting an event, workshop, or want to get involved, please contact:
patricia.healykettle@mu.ie

> Images show development of the garden, cultivation, harvest, & enhancing biodiversity

Kildare women shine a light on food and climate

Dr Alistair Fraser

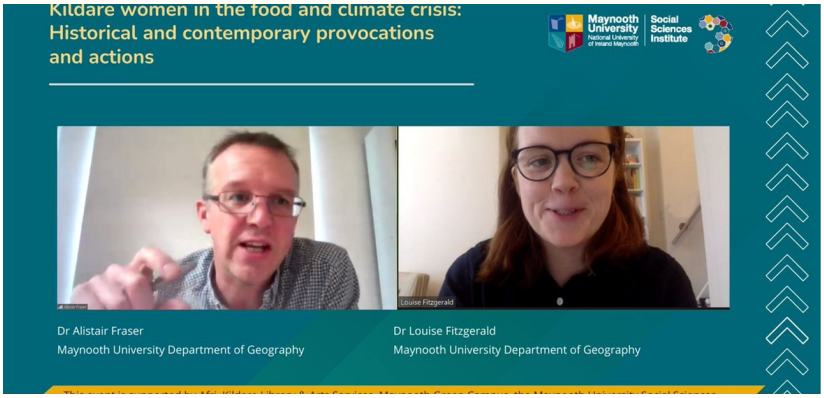
Geography Dept.

On October 14th, 2021, Maynooth Green Campus co-sponsored an event titled 'Kildare women in the food and climate crisis: Historical and contemporary provocations and actions.'
The event, which was co-hosted on Zoom by Dr. Alistair Fraser and Dr. Louise Fitzgerald from the Department of Geography, shone a light on past and present actions to deal with food and climate crises by women from or working in Kildare. The event was timely, ahead of World Food Day. Louise set the scene noting that one-third of food is produced by small producers and the majority of these are women. These producers are heavily impacted already by climate change.

The main outcome of the event was a wider appreciation of actions underway in Kildare, many of which are led by women, to combat the food and climate crises, such as workshops, community-supported agriculture schemes, food-markets, and environmental activism.

Speakers included Deirdre Lane (Shamrock Spring & the Kildare Environmental Network), Eibhlín Ní Chearbhaill (Kildare Library & Arts Services), Dr. Mary O'Connor (Ecologist & Chair of Kildare Tidy Towns), Rose Hogan (Sustainable Agriculture Adviser, Trócaire) and Dr. Patricia Healy Kettle (Maynooth University & Maynooth Green Campus). The other sponsors of the event were Afri, Kildare Library & Arts Services, the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute, and the Maynooth University Department of Geography.

A recording of the proceedings, which includes some wonderful Irish singing by Tara Nic Eachrain, is available to watch at:
https://fb.watch/8DPMBSyAHf/



Tairseach: Crossing the threshold to a classroom without walls

Laoise Ní Chléirigh

Dept. of Froebel

Do you know the English translation of the word 'Tairseach'? It means 'threshold' and lends itself nicely to the beautiful trail which has been created, connecting the two campuses of Maynooth University via nine native trees of Ireland.

Available to all, the trail begins opposite the School of Education, each tree indicated by a small post, numbered from 1-9. You first meet a seductive but craggy alder tree. Then, crossing carefully at the traffic lights, and down the sloped walkway opposite the library, you come to the majestic scots pines. These tall giants are soon followed by a mystical willow, almost hidden behind the silky birches nearby. Take a gentle right after the library cat's home and enjoy the native Irish hedgerow adorning a nearby walkway.

Yew tree featured on Maynooth University's Tairseach Tree Trail online. This tree is 'Crann 9' on the trail.

The trail continues, but we'll stop there and invite you to cross the threshold yourself to a classroom without walls, and to enjoy these native trees, including the oldest yew tree in Ireland.

The GIS platform to help you navigate the Tairseach trail was created by a team comprising Froebel and Geography staff and students, and Stephen Seaman, Grounds Supervisor. You can explore the interactive tool on this link: https://bit.ly/3law9Vi. The links for the GIS and lesson plans created for local groups and schools are available in PDF at: https://bit.ly/3hdJP0s

We hope you enjoy crossing the Tairseach and delving into the ecology and tangible magic of our award-winning campus.

Bainigí súp as!

Draíocht Dara (Magic of the Oak)

Dr Máire Nic an Bhaird

Dept. of Froebel

Laoise Ní Chléirigh

Dept. of Froebel

Dr Máire Nic an Bhaird and Laoise Ní Chléirigh from the Froebel Department received funding from An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta for the 2021/2022 academic year for the creation of the educational programme called Draíocht Dara. This is an educational resource focusing on the teaching of biodiversity through the Irish language to primary school children in 5th and 6th class (scoileanna T2) based on research conducted here in Maynooth University. Draíocht Dara will be connected with the following Sustainable Development Goals - 3,4,11,13,15,17.

The name Draíocht Dara was chosen because of the innate connection between the Irish language and the Irish landscape. The Irish Oak is a symbol of strength and wisdom. This educational programme will strengthen the teaching of the Irish language in 5th and 6th class by using nature, folklore and the school environment as stimuli. An outdoor pedagogical mindset will be utilised when creating the education programme which is vital now more than ever, especially due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Froebelian eco-feminist philosophy will be used throughout the research and development of the programme. The programme therefore will include

The objectives of the educational programme are as follows:

- to improve confidence and competence of children and teachers in regard to the Irish language
- to enhance the children's eco-literacy skills
- to highlight the importance of herbs and trees in folklore
- to create a programme that is interesting, exciting, interactive and fun, where love of nature is central to the acquisition of the Irish language
- to enhance the biodiversity in the school environment
- to engage in the Sustainable Development Goals 3,4,11,13,15,17.

The children will learn about nature, trees, herbs, the importance of folklore through the Irish language, and will create herb patches, bird feeders, bird baths in the school environment through valorising items perceived as waste. These children will become Draíocht Dara ambassadors and their title will be 'Na Gaeil Ghlasa'. The newsletter Draíocht Dara will be published monthly to share news of the biodiversity efforts and the language learning of the educational programme.

New MGC Health & Wellbeing Group

Dr Rónan Foley

Head of Health and Wellbeing Working Group

Geography Dept.

As the associations between climate change, ecology, sustainability and even the impacts of the global pandemic all show, health and wellbeing are emerging as an important aspect of any green campus experience. In these past two years, nearby nature has been rediscovered as never before.

While aspects of health and wellbeing (human and non-human) are embedded in almost all the existing MGC groups, we feel it is time to pull the topic out for more focused attention. As a result we are developing a health and wellbeing strand within the Maynooth Green Campus committee as a stand alone group linked to SDG3, Good Health & Wellbeing; While many of the measures used to measure progress against SDG3 are quite illness-related and the monitoring of the health of all campus residents is important, the focus of this group will also include the wider wellbeing dimensions of public health, around health promotion and education including the development of campus-wide assets to promote health and well-being.

Ronan Foley (Geography) is the lead for this new group, while other committee members include, Máire Nic an Bhaird, Laoise Ní Chléirigh, Tadhg McIntyre, Jennifer Lloyd-Hughes and Patricia Healy Kettle.

We feel that the Maynooth Campus, with its many natural spaces; green, blue and other shades and palettes, is underused as a space of health and wellbeing and we would hope that the group will help develop and report on a wide range of student and staff activities, research projects and initiatives; while also recognising the importance of the natural campus environment as an important asset for the residents of Maynooth, and as a crucial part of the town community, in which MU is a key component.

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Joe Larragy

Go Green Routes

Dr Tadhg MacIntyre

Scientific co-ordinator of GoGreen Routes

Psychology Dept.

Almost 50 people in-person and 80 online attended a training event about GoGreenroutes, funded by the EU Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 869764). The three-day event was organised by its scientific co-ordinator, Dr Tadhg MacIntyre, MU, and colleagues, Dr Aisling O'Loghlen (project manager), and Anastasia Campbell, ALL Institute, with support from the EPA, Enterprise Ireland, Coillte and MU Research Development Office.

GoGreenRoutes is a €10.5m EU-funded project promoting nature- connectedness across Europe, Latin America and China. It is a multidisciplinary consortium of 40 organisations combining participatory approaches, citizen science, big data and digital innovation to co-create "Urban Well-being Labs" in six cities [Burgas (Bulgaria), Lahti (Finland), Limerick (Ireland), Tallinn (Estonia), Umeå (Sweden) and Versailles (France)].

The event had a focus on inclusionary methodologies, which, as acknowledged by VP Dr Gemma Irvine, aligns with MU's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda. Other contributors included Head of Mission at the Finnish Embassy, Anne Mutanen. Lahti recently won the European Green Capital award and is a model for other cities. Another Finn, incoming MU President Professor Eeva Leinonen, spoke of how nature is important for all, including political leaders, for mental health.

Head Groundsman Stephen Seaman leading the tour of MU Green Campus with Autumn school attendees who travelled from 12 European countries.

Cont'd from previous page

Charlie Burke, representing Autumn School co-funder Coillte, presents an engraved commemorative bog oak plaque to H.E. Gergana Karadjova, Bulgarian ambassador to Ireland, with Dr Tadhg MacIntyre, Maynooth University.

The event also showcased research from MU's ALL-Institute (Assisted Living and Learning) directed by Prof Mac MacLachlan and Prof Deirdre Desmond. Highlighting the work of Dr Ronan Foley (Geography), Dr. Richard Roche and others. One illustrative example of this work was presented by Dr Catriona O'Toole (Education) who outlined the blueprint for the forthcoming Kyrie therapeutic Farm project.

Dr. Jim Carolan, Chair of Maynooth Green Campus, outlined how a citizen-led approach across the faculties has succeeded in powering the imagination through engagement with nature at many levels. One of the highlights of the three-day event was the tour of the campus, led by grounds supervisor and horticulturist Stephen Seaman, accompanied by lecturer in horticulture at TU Dublin, Rachel Freeman.

The campus is a thriving place of varied habitats benefiting students, staff and the local community. Hungarian Ambassador to Ireland, Gergana Karadjova praised these achievements too, as she accepted a plaque from Coillte recognising the role played in the project by the team at the Hungarian municipality of Burgas.

Maynooth campus was a fitting setting for the three days of discourse on research and innovations on the interactions between human and environmental health. GoGreenRoutes has recently been featured on RTÉ science program 10 Things to Know about which was broadcast on Nov. 1st.

Key Links:

1. GoGreenRoutes website
2. 10 things to know about website
3. Maynooth University ALL Institute website
4. Kyrie Farm website

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