Welcome back to both Green Impact and UEL. January is an interesting time of the year, the excitement of the holidays over, the hubbub of exams and marking and dark short days. But there is much going for January, a time of change and looking forward. For a refreshing perspective, turn to page 2 for Children’s Garden’s Thais Bishop uplifting reflection on the oft-ignored special qualities of January.

We’ve had quite a few changes ourselves in the Green Impact team since you last heard from us. We have welcomed two new members to the team, Emily Hamilton and Freyja Gillard. Emily has done some amazing work on our ISO14001 Accreditation - find out all about it on page 3.

This year is an exciting year for Green Impact, with many new teams joining the scheme, including external organisations such as the Helena Kennedy Foundation. We also have more Project Assistants than ever before, with much thanks going to Mayuri Raja in ACE for her spectacular recruiting effort. See page 3 for more Project Assistant info and meet one of our new recruits, Tom, below.

To see what happens what you get when you take Newcastle University and add The Terminator, check out the back page for NUS Green Impact HQ news. You’ll find workbook changes, top Green Impact tips and creative inspiration from other universities.

And January has brought one more change to Green Impact at UEL. You may have noticed our new look. We do hope you like it. If you would like to be involved in a future newsletter, get in touch, we’d love to have you.

The Green Impact Team

greenthing@uel.ac.uk / @UEL_greenthing

Contact us

Would you like to feature in the Green Impact newsletter? Or just want to get in touch?

e: greenthing@uel.ac.uk

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Tom Lagden

Project Assistant

I’m studying International Development and Politics at UEL. I want to learn about the global system of politics and development, in order to find out how sustainable practices can best infiltrate these broad and fundamental areas of human activity.

I joined Green Impact as a result of my work with Greenpeace. I’ve been interested in climate change since school and find that, despite it being a serious subject, it often gets pushed to one side. It’s great that Green Impact gives universities the chance to take action.
New Year Blues?
Thais Bishop, Children’s Garden

What’s to love about January?

This question always confronts us at this time of the year in the UK, after the end of our Christmas and New Year celebrations. The house gets cleared of its brightness, the city streets feel grey and grim, and a dull heaviness falls on our spirits as we try to rouse ourselves for returning to our work responsibilities….and the dawn of Spring seems so far away!

Here at Children’s Garden, UEL’s workplace nursery, we work closely with young children to celebrate the earth and all its seasons. Preparing for Christmas, there is a line of one song we sing that always touches me:

“In the earth the seeds lie dreaming, waiting for the Christmas light”

The light, of course, turns at the winter solstice, and we celebrate this knowledge in all the midwinter celebrations in our hemisphere. We experience a feeling of positivity, of expectation, of knowing that, slowly, slowly, things are beginning to get brighter.

The seeds and bulbs, which seemed to be dreaming in the earth up to this time, as shoots begin to appear, seeming to awaken and sense the re-emergence of the light.

Once this dawning light gets strong enough in our own hearts we begin to look at seed catalogues, to envision the new growing year in our gardens, allotments and window boxes. What has thrived and needs to be tended and encouraged, what new things will we try to grow, what will we change, what has not worked and needs to be left behind this year? So much to actively look forward to.

At the same time the birds gradually begin to sing again. I noticed them this morning at a busy London station. Suddenly, in most unlikely circumstances, there is something new, just beginning, half-forgotten almost, that leads us joyfully forward towards the season to come. This brings to me a sense of wonder, an appreciation of the wisdom of Nature, which knows what to do at the right time. It has so much to teach us.

This thought is echoed in a line of Coleridge’s poem which has always inspired me. The poem Frost at Midnight is written by a father who makes wishes for his small child’s future, as he watches him sleep in his cradle on a cold winter night:

“Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee...”

Why not let 2013 be the year when we try to appreciate the special qualities of the January season?
ISO 14001: something to be proud of

Happy Birthday to UEL’s Environmental Management System! After a nail biting few days of external audits, the Sustainability Team were told that UEL has successfully passed its first round of surveillance audits for our ISO 14001 Environmental Management System, since the system was put in place in January 2012.

The external audits identified that UEL’s Environmental Management System is working well to raise awareness and helping to embed change throughout the institution. Well done to all the Schools and Services which were audited and thank you for your continued support. To find out more about the Environmental Management system, check out our website.

Project Assistant boom

This year we have been inundated with Project Assistant applications. Students are really keen to get involved and help UEL become more sustainable. In return for donating their time, they also get project management training, the opportunity for some amazing sustainability experience and the chance to help save the world (or at least lower some electricity usage). Previous Project Assistants said they loved being part of their team and getting to see how UEL works from another point of view.

Special thanks, awe and congratulations got the ACE (and in particular Mayuri Raja) who recruited an unprecedented number of Project Assistants. Their hard work and enthusiastic students means that many schools and non-academic teams have a Project Assistant of their very own this year. If you see Mayuri, do give her a pat on the back!

5517
Number of Green Actions UEL undertook as part of Green Impact last year

23
Number of teams already signed up for Green Impact this year

30
Number of Project Assistants already signed up for Green Impact this year
News from the HQ

Workbook changes

Here the NUS Green Impact HQ we are continually trying to make your workbook easier to use and act on the feedback you share with us. Following your feedback, you can now:

- Upload evidence, such as photos, emails and pamphlets, to your workbook
- Change your Team Name (by going into your Profile)
- Change which team you are in (by going into your Profile)

We hope this makes things easier for you and don’t forget to feedback your ideas to improve Green Impact!

Get creative!

The best way to make an impact is to be memorable! And when it comes to getting people involved or raising Green awareness, we can’t recommend being fun and creative enough.

Why not take inspiration from Newcastle University, who ‘recycled’ well-known film and television references for their recycling campaign, or University of Bristol’s Your University Needs You recruitment campaign? You can see more ideas at www.green-impact.org.uk/lead-resource-bank.

HQ Top Tip

Want to recruit more members to your Green Impact Team?

Keep it fun and positive!

Why not organise a Fair Trade Taste Test for your next Team Meeting to promote the scheme?

Did you know?

You can secure 3 Silver Level Points by sharing your new resources, good practice or creative ideas with Green Impact HQ.