



Environmental Education Forum E-Bulletin

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest **E-Bulletin** from the **Environmental Education Forum** which provides information on activities in the environmental education and education for sustainable development sectors in Northern Ireland. Below you will find a variety of useful information, including EEF and members news, resources, training events and seminars, publications, funding opportunities, and job vacancies in the sector.

The Environmental Education Forum is the networking body for the Environmental Education sector that promotes a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of environmental education in Northern Ireland. Forum Membership consists of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The EEF attempts to raise awareness of environmental education and education for sustainable development issues in the formal and non-formal education sectors through the provision of services such as the production of resources, initial and in service teacher training, member meetings and training and organising member and public conferences.

If you would like to send an article to include in the next E-Bulletin please contact:

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NEWS FROM THE EEF

1. SCHOOLS LEEF NEWSLETTER 6.4: AUTUMN 2009

The next issue of the LEEF Newsletter which will be sent to every school in Northern Ireland is now being developed. The deadline for submission of **ARTICLES, NEWS ITEMS, EVENTS and CASE STUDIES** is **FRIDAY 21 AUGUST**. Please feel free to promote your programmes, as well as events being run. Please send to the regular address – eef@nienvironmentlink.org. We hope that you enjoy reading these publications and would like to hear feedback to help us continue to improve and enhance the impact of the newsletters for students and teachers on your behalf.

Should you wish to receive additional copies of LEEF please contact the EEF Co-ordinator, at the usual address. Copies can also be downloaded from the EEF website: www.eefni.org.uk/publications/index.asp

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2. NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE FORUM

Since the last e-bulletin the EEF are delighted to welcome the following new members to the network:

Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group

Suffolk and Lenadoon Interface Group began meeting in 1996, supported by the Belfast Interface Group as an informal meeting of people from the neighbouring communities of Suffolk and Lenadoon in West Belfast. The objectives of the group are to benefit the local area, to promote religious harmony and to promote good citizenship. Long term, the group's aim is to develop a shared and better future to benefit everyone in the area, especially the children.

www.slig.co.uk

As new members these organisations, just like all existing EEF members will have access to meetings, conferences, ESD University days and all other Forum activities. They will also benefit from the LEEF newsletter and monthly e-bulletins containing environmental news and information; regular networking opportunities; access to the EEF website; access to facilities and services based at Northern Ireland Environment Link premises in Belfast; support and publicity for their work; sharing of skills and perspectives; improved relations with members and external organisations; increased credibility; and much more.

3. NEW EEF MEMBER RATES

At a recent meeting of the EEF Management Committee it was decided that the rates for membership of the EEF for the coming year would be as outlined below. There has been an increase in subs this year, the first such increase in three years, reflecting the need for the Forum to obtain a higher proportion of its financial support outside of the NIEA and the recent significant expansion in the work of the Forum and hence of the benefits of being involved with it. EEF Membership includes many direct benefits as well as the indirect benefits involved in being part of a major network of environmental education providers. The ability to be involved in a major advocacy body is a substantial benefit, as is access to the materials produced and events organised by the Forum. Request for payment of these subs will be heading to you / your organisation in the very near future.

MEMBERSHIP RATES 2009-2010

	Voluntary Organisation	Statutory Body
Organisation, one person	£35	-
Organisation, up to 3 people receiving membership benefits at one site	£50	£100
Organisation, more than 3 people receiving membership benefits at one site at one site	£75	£150
Organisation, additional sites receiving membership benefits	£35 per site	£35 per site



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION NEWS

1. ECO SCHOOLS UPDATE

It's been an extremely busy year for Eco Schools with 96 new schools registering on the programme, which brings the total number of schools on the programme to well over 500 Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland. With 50 Green Flag applications this year, the assessors have been busier than ever before! This year, for the first time, local councils have been organising Green Flag ceremonies to celebrate all the schools in their area who have achieved the internationally recognised Green Flag. This is a great way to recognise and reward pupils and staff for all their hard work.

Ballymoney Nursery School receive Green Flag

Ballymoney Nursery School was awarded their first Eco-Schools Green Flag, making them the first nursery school in the Ballymoney Borough Council area to have achieved a Green Flag. Councillor Evelyn Robinson handed over the flag at a ceremony in the school. Eco-Schools Manager Colin Latham congratulated the school, "This is a wonderful achievement for Ballymoney Nursery School. The enthusiasm of the pupils and the Principal and her staff has been quite infectious. I hope this encourages all schools in the borough to become involved in this great programme."

Artigarvan PS

Artigarvan PS, Strabane were successful in being granted £3000 in the Eco-Schools Currys Switched on Communities Grant Scheme. The school will use the grant to put in place energy and water conservation measures such as: Sensor or press down taps for sinks Sensor lighting for toilets Thermostats for classrooms Thermostatic radiator valves Energy efficient lighting www.artigarvanps.co.uk

2. CRAIGAVON SELECTED AS BBC BREATHING PLACES COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR

When selecting its host community in Northern Ireland for Breathing Places 2009/2010 the BBC were quick to see the potential of Craigavon as an area that could inspire the public to 'Do One Thing for Nature'. Craigavon Borough Councils Conservation Service applied to take part in the project in January and were delighted receive notification that they had been successful. Craigavon's hosting of Breathing Places was launched in May with the planting of wildlife friendly shrubs and flowers within the confines of Craigavon Civic and conference Centre. Since then Craigavon has hosted two major events, the Springwatch Dirty Weekend in Lurgan Park in June and the Green Balloon Club Day at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre in July. A further major event is planned for December as the Borough joins in the national world record tree planting attempt, 'Tree O'clock'.

Alongside these major events there are a wide range of projects happening throughout the year involving every school throughout the Borough, community groups and NGO's. In May thousands of sunflowers were planted across Craigavon in as part of a giant sunflower competition whilst volunteers have been joining the CVNI on projects such as invasive species removal and wildflower meadow planting. For further information on Craigavon's involvement with the BBC Breathing Places project contact the Conservation Service at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre 028 3832 2205 or e-mail breathing.places@craigavon.gov.uk.



3. SPERRINVIEW SCHOOL OPEN WOODLAND CLASSROOM

The recent opening of a woodland school in the grounds of Sperrinview school in Dungannon has caused quite a stir. The project was a combination of several different ventures all taking place in the 'outdoor classroom' there, including:

- **A Woodland Classroom,**
- **Tree Trail,**
- **Maths Trails,**
- **Adventure Playground**
- **Re-Opening of a Sensory Garden**

The School is very fortunate to have such spacious and exciting grounds, and has certainly made the best use of them, much to the delight and benefit of their pupils, and indeed others in the local community. Funding for the work was pulled in from a variety of local sources and the idea of a Maths trail was created by two teachers in the school, Julie Coert and Cecilia Broomfield. With help from their colleagues they set about designing three different trails, the first is for Foundation stage pupils, the second for KS1 and the third for KS2. It is also proposed to create a fourth trail in the coming year, which will be specifically for pupils with severe learning difficulties.

At the same time, Mr Chris Ayers, another Sperrinview teacher, decided to research and then develop a tree trail and a Woodland Classroom in the grounds. Chris gained advice and support from many people on this journey. The school are also well on route to achieve Green Flag status in Eco Schools.

4. RIVER CLEAN UP EARNS LOCAL LADS ECO UNESCO AWARD

Two Mossley teenagers have won an Eco Unesco Young Environmentalist award for their efforts at cleaning up a section of the Threemilewater river. Sixteen-year-old Andrew Moore, a GCSE student at Glengormley High School, and 14-year-old William Lyons, a pupil at Rosstulla School in Jordanstown, were winners of the Senior Water category.

The pair were inspired to clean up the River Laid because of the shocking amount of illegal dumping that filled the river with litter. They researched methods of river management and carried out surveys of insect and fish life to see if the water conditions could sustain wildlife. The group then took on the difficult task of removing litter from the water and improving its course. By re-planting over 100 willow saplings, the group provided cover for wildlife and prevented silt from clogging up the river.

The group also installed log weirs and rock groins to hold back gravel and provide pools for fish. They were careful to use as much recycled material as possible, even filling empty onion bags with gravel to provide a river habitat for insects. The group raised awareness of the litter problem by giving talks to local walkers. Currently, they are working with the Threemilewater Conservation and Angling Association to care for the newly cleaned river..

The ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards is an all-Ireland programme involving more than 500 schools, designed to reward the work of young people aged between 12 and 18 years who protect, conserve and enhance the environment through local projects. More can be found here: www.newtownabbeytoday.co.uk/news/

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5. BBC BREATHING PLACES UPDATE

BBC Breathing Places Schools Twilight Events report

The idea of Twilight Events originally came to the fore in May 2008 at one of our UK partnership meetings. It was decided that holding small after-school events for teachers to attend would spread the word of BPS and our partners and help to encourage teachers to share their experiences of working outside the classroom with pupils. Locally the event was hosted at St Malachys School in Whitecross, Armagh. The school welcomed 28 teachers through their doors for the event. And Breathing Places Partners in attendance on the day were Speedwell Trust, Environmental Education Forum, The National Trust, Ulster Wildlife Trust and the RSPB with contributions from Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Colin Gen Trust and the RHS who could not be there on the day. Feedback from those schools indicated that teachers were inspired to do more in their school grounds for nature after attending the event.

Forestry training featuring BPS

The Northern Ireland Forest Service Annual Guides Day took Breathing Places as its central theme in the picturesque and historic setting of Glenariff Forest Park, Co Antrim. Janet Wilson joined Education Guides and Foresters from all over Northern Ireland to lead a session summarising Breathing Places Schools to date and exploring the content of the forthcoming Term 6, Trees, and the ways in which Forest Service can maximise the opportunities within this module. A lively discussion developed, with lots of ideas ranging from creation of demonstration breathing places for visiting schools and the public to enable visitors to understand the work that BPS asks schools to carry out, to linking autumn season Forest Park events to BBC Breathing Places. This was followed by a Media Training session provided by BBC Northern Ireland when Deirdre Donnelly and David Reid outlined key points in securing successful media coverage for events and activities. Using examples of Press Releases and thinking about their own forthcoming events, all participants enjoyed a creative and entertaining discussion. As with all partners, Forest Service was encouraged to register events on the Breathing Places Event Finder and, where stories exist featuring interesting characters or wildlife, to let the BBC know what's going on so they in turn can tell a wider audience.

6. GREEN AWARDS HELP CHILDREN GROW

Ballinderry Primary in County Antrim has been awarded a gold award by the Woodland Trust for their involvement in green activities including tree planting, reducing carbon emissions and recycling.

The new initiative launched this year by the Woodland Trust offers schools the opportunity to bring the great outdoors, the wonderful world of wildlife and green issues into the classroom with a range of resources and a new award scheme. The Green Tree Schools Award scheme rewards schools every time they participate in inspirational learning events, projects or initiatives provided by the Woodland Trust. Ballinderry Primary has planted new trees in their school grounds and the children have grown trees from seeds, as well as recycling Christmas cards, visiting a wood, reducing their carbon emissions and joining in various other Woodland Trust activities.

Lorraine Magowan, vice principal of Ballinderry Primary, said: "The school is absolutely delighted to receive the award. It's wonderful that our pupils' hard work has been recognised."

To take part schools simply register at www.naturedetectives.org.uk/award and can start earning points immediately. Here are a few of the many different ways to get involved:



- Participate in a **tree planting** event
- Receive **free trees** for your school grounds
- Recycle Christmas cards, mobile phones or inkjet cartridges with the Woodland Trust
- Reduce CO₂ emissions
- Register with Nature Detectives
- Join the Ancient Tree Hunt

The Woodland Trust's learning team provides a range of resources for both primary and secondary schools. Most activities are available free of charge and further details can be found at www.naturedetectives.org.uk

RESOURCES

1. UPDATE OF THE 'ARCTIC CHILD' RESOURCE

Arctic Stories is a major KS2/3 cross curriculum project to promote children's communication, thinking and ICT skills with strong emphasis on literacy, geography, science and the environment, history and global citizenship.

It consists of three stories, each of which unfold to give children a deep understanding of life in the Arctic, past and present. When children are invited to learn about the world through narrative they become emotionally engaged. It is through narrative that human beings render actions and events in the world meaningful. As the children find out about the lives of people who are distant from them historically, socially and culturally, they develop their capacity to understand that other people are unique, distinct and autonomous, with lives and fears quite as real and important as their own.

Through the narratives the children learn about the lives of indigenous peoples in Canada who depended on the reindeer for everything, the second story focuses on the 19thC Inuit who depended on whales for their existence. The third story is that of the Polar Bear and the impact global warming is having on its life.

The cost of the pack is £60 and includes:

- Teachers' notes with guidance
- DVD of specially recorded stories
- Set of activity sheets
- 2 Full colour culturegrams
- 5 Story books 'the Gifts of kaila'
- Set of animal cards

'Arctic Stories' is available from Imaginative Minds. www.teachingtimes.com or 0121 224 7599.



2. THINK FOOD AND FARMING JUMPS ON THE FACEBOOK BANDWAGON!

Social networking has become one of the new wonders of the world and Think Food and Farming has chosen to 'get with the programme' and set up a page on Facebook. The Think Food and Farming page on Facebook aims to attract more traffic to the existing website; the Think Food and Farming website will remain the focal point so supporters not using Facebook will not be missing out!

'The idea is to reach audiences we have so far missed such as college and university students, and to take advantage of the marketing potential of Facebook. Supporters both new and old will be able to become 'fans' of the page and interact in a variety of new ways including idea and information sharing forums, 'real-time' news and event updates on their own home pages and they can even post relevant pictures on the page.' www.thinkfoodandfarming.org.uk

TRAINING AND EVENTS

1. NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS CONFERENCE 2009

The National Sustainable Schools Conference is this year brought to you by Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd), DCSF, WWF-UK and DEA. This year, to reduce travel and allow more teachers to attend, the National Sustainable Schools Conference will be hosted in four locations around the country.

Leeds: 3rd July 2009

Preston: 6th July 2009

London: 8th July 2009

Bristol: 14th July 2009

About the conference:

Schools have a vital role to play in ensuring that the next generation have the skills and knowledge to make sustainable lifestyle choices. New resources and support are being created around the National Sustainable Schools Framework initiative from DCSF and many schools are aware of the government target of all schools being sustainable schools by 2020. The National Sustainable Schools Conference will help you plan your journey to becoming a sustainable school. There will be participatory workshops for you to identify tasks, resources and approaches. There will be a market place with many of the local and national organisations who offer support and resources to schools with demonstrations of their work. You will get to meet schools from your region who have begun their sustainable schools work.

If you would like to attend, please register online at our conference website, www.se-ed.org.uk/conference2009. Places are limited, so please do book early. Should you wish to receive a conference information pack and additional information on the conference location in your area, please do not hesitate to contact Hermione Fricker or Michael Cutts at SEEd.



2. BAGLADY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS LIVING ASAP: STRANMILLIS COLLEGE – FRIDAY 21 AUGUST

You're invited to the launch of *Baglady's ASAP World* [where S=Sustainably] on **Friday August 21: 11am-4pm;** Dance ASAP 7.30-9.30pm at **Stranmillis College**, Belfast - venue kindly provided by Belfast City Council.

The idea of this exciting event will be to connect organisations and people, through education and environment. It will be a fun day and have serious consultation. ASAP lunch will be provided.

The outcomes of the event will be: sharing of information and know-how; action, networking and getting the word out. All children are welcomed; it's their future.

Shirley Lewis aka Baglady has been living ASAP, 24/7 since her return to NI, late 2001.

Minus car, garage, oil tank, mobile, printer, TV...and every single thing in her house is ASAP. But is she doing it right.....? and what are YOU doing?

More details will follow; for more information please visit : www.bagladyproductions.org contact shirley@bagladyproductions.org or telephone 028 2563 9609

3. GET CLOSE TO WILDLIFE AND HAVE FUN IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The summer is upon us and it's the best time of year to get some fresh air and exercise in the great outdoors with your family! Why not come to Creggan Country Park and get up close to wildlife through a range of activities including pedal boating and canoeing – this provides a great opportunity for you to watch our wildlife from a different angle! Or why not contact our Environmental Officer to arrange a guided bat walk at night or a guided nature tour during the day! Or if activities aren't your thing why not enjoy a delicious meal at Creggan Country Inn and take in the impressive scenery which includes a view of Lough Foyle.

Contact us on **028 71363 133** or email info@creggancountrypark.com for more information on activities available that gets you up close to wonderful local wildlife!

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FUNDING

1 NIEA NATURAL HERITAGE GRANT PROGRAMME 2009

The revised NIEA Natural Heritage Grants Programme is now open for applications. The revised Guidance Notes and Application Form are available for downloading from the grants website <http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/funding.htm>.

The 2010/11 budget will have to support some on-going projects as well as new applications. Competition for funding is therefore expected to be high. In our consideration of applications which stretch over more than one financial year, we will be mindful of the need to reserve adequate funding levels for future years. We recommend that you consider the guidance notes, and associated documents, carefully in planning any applications.

To ensure co-ordination of education grants you are required to send an outline of your project to the Environmental Education Forum (EEF) for their comment and suggestions. This applies to any structured education programme focussed on young people (up to 25 years old) and further details will be provided in the grant package.

The closing dates for all applications are as follows:

All applications except Education	4pm Friday 21 August 2009
Education Grants	To EEF - 4pm Friday 31 July 2009 To NIEA - 4 pm Wednesday 16 September 2009

We expect the next call for applications will be Spring 2010 for projects with a proposed start date after April 2011.

The targets for reviewing large applications are as follows but will depend on the number of applications received and staffing levels:

Complete Assessments	Late November
Group Review	Early December
Decisions DFP approval not required	January
Decisions DFP approval required	February

Please bear in mind that the grants team is small and will have a considerable workload to complete between September and November. To assist them you are asked to do the following:

- Submit applications as early as you can before the closing date to assist the team to initiate assessments sooner.
- Provide any additional information or answer any queries as quickly as possible.
- If seeking ongoing funding, ensure that all reports for any previous project have been submitted.



If you do not have computer access you may ask for the materials to be posted to you. Grant Programme staff are also available to help applicants with queries and can be contacted at:

Maia Taylor – Grants Programme Manager – 028 9056 69621 – maia.taylor@doeni.gov.uk

Terry Eakin – Access Grants – 028 9056 9580 – terry.eakin@doeni.gov.uk

John Farren – Biodiversity Grants – 028 9056 9612 – johnfarren@doeni.gov.uk

Peter Turner – Economic Appraisals and financial issues – 028 9056 9610 – peter.turner@doeni.gov.uk

Ken Wooster – Administrative queries – 028 9056 9611 – nhgrants@doeni.gov.uk

2. BIG LOTTERY FUNDING

For the period of 2006-2009 there is £90 million available through the **Big Lottery Fund** divided over several different grant programmes:

BIG TRUST FUND

Big Trust Fund is designed to support change in organisations in Northern Ireland's voluntary and community sector through a period of significant restructuring and rationalisation. It is a long-term investment, possibly up to ten years, to support all the changes that will need to happen to the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. See www.biglotteryfund.org.uk.

AWARDS FOR ALL

Awards for All is a joint Lottery grants scheme aimed at local communities to bring people together and increase community activity. Awards range from £500 to £10,000 and are on-going. See www.awardsforall.org.uk.

BIG DEAL

Fund projects that help young people to make a difference in their own life and to the lives of others. The Big Deal can only make awards directly to individual and informal groups of children and young people aged 0-25. An individual can apply for awards of £500 and a group can apply for an award between £500 and £2,500. Closing date for applications is 30th September 2009. See www.thebigdealni.com for further details.

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FREEBIES FROM THE FORUM

We have some publications and resources to give away, if anyone is interested please let me know and I shall arrange to get them sent out to you a.s.a.p.

1. ADDITIONAL ESD RESOURCES GUIDES AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION

There are additional ESD Resource Guides produced last year and sent to all schools, pre school groups and youth groups, available for distribution. The document was designed to help teachers and group leader's source organisations within Northern Ireland who can contribute to or provide Environmental Education / Education for Sustainable Development visits and talks.

2. LEEF NEWSLETTER: FRESHWATER

There are also spare copies of the last LEEF Newsletter on Freshwater. The issue was designed to help schools and teachers identify opportunities for developing wildlife friendly water features in the school grounds.

3. NIEL FACTSHEET: FOOD, FARMING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

There is also available some spare copies of a recently produced Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) Fact sheet entitled '**Food Farming and the Environment**'. This Fact Sheet explores some of the issues affecting our food and farming systems in Northern Ireland and makes recommendations for improving the sustainability of food production, distribution and consumption patterns. The Fact Sheet will encourage and inform debate amongst those who decide upon future policies and practices which impact upon the environment of Northern Ireland.

If you would like to receive any of the above publications please contact the Forum at eef@nienvironmentlink.org or telephone (028) 9045 5770.

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MEMBERSHIP OF EEF

JOIN US

The Environmental Education Forum is the networking body for the Environmental Education sector that promotes a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of environmental education in Northern Ireland. Forum Membership consists of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Most members are actively involved in environmental education and bring a wide range of expertise and enthusiasm to the forum. Membership to the EEF is open to all individuals and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors.



Benefits of membership include:

- Access to an established networking and information organisation
- LEEF Newsletter distributed five times per year
- Two conferences per year organised on a range of related environmental education topics
- ESD Days run at all of Northern Ireland's University establishments
- E-mail updates on the Forums activities plus relevant information, publications and events
- Access to free reference Library
- Access to EEF website
- Support and publicity for your work
- Sharing of ideas, expertise and experience

	Voluntary Organisation	Statutory Body
Organisation, one person	£35	-
Organisation, up to 3 people receiving membership benefits at one site	£50	£100
Organisation, more than 3 people receiving membership benefits at one site at one site	£75	£150
Organisation, additional sites receiving membership benefits	£35 per site	£35 per site

As part of your subscription, you will have the opportunity to have one page in the ESD resource guide for teachers and group leaders and one free place at an EEF conference each year.

If you would like to promote your events, publications and training through this E-Bulletin please contact:

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