



Environmental Education Forum

Annual Report - 2006

The year 2006 was an extremely active and productive one for the Forum. With a full time EEF Co-ordinator in place for the entire year the output of the Forum was at an all time high. The activities and publications provided a strong basis to re launch the Forum as an active and effective group in the environmental education and education for sustainable development field and the reputation of the Forum is now firmly established throughout the education sector.

The work of the Forum is supported by the Environment and Heritage Service of the DoE through a contract for service delivery to Northern Ireland Environment Link and direct delivery of printing. The Forum is extremely grateful to them for their support.

Publications

LEEF Newsletter

Four Newsletters were developed and distributed in 2006. Each LEEF consists of 12 pages of news related to environmental education, events, activities, grants and other information plus an eight page supplement designed for use in the classroom. The issues were as follows:

- 3.1 - **Waste Free Classroom** – Distributed in January
- 3.2 - **Coasts in the Curriculum** – Distributed in April / May
- 3.3 - **Environment After-Schools (Youth Service Edition)** – Distributed in September / October
- 4.1 - **ESD in the Revised Curriculum** – Distributed in September / October

A fifth newsletter, due to be distributed in early 2007, was prepared on the topic of **Woodlands and Forestry**.

Each of the above issues has been sent to a named contact in every Primary, Post Primary, Special, Independent and Irish Language School in Northern Ireland – approximately 1,300 schools. In order to do this a database was established for these contacts and they are updated periodically. The Youth Service edition was sent to 2,000 groups via the Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade, Scouts Association and Girl Guides.

All members receive copies of each issue, plus trainee teachers receive a copy of the **ESD in the Revised Curriculum** edition to help support the delivery of the ESD in their teaching careers. Additional copies are distributed to members for their use, for example at their visitor centres.

ESD Day Resource Guide

This guide was produced in October 2006 for Student teachers, In-Service Teachers, Youth Group Leaders and Environmental Organisations as a guide to those who can contribute to or provide Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Northern Ireland. The booklet contains details of Forum members, the education programmes that they provide across Northern Ireland, the links those programmes have to all levels and subjects in the curriculum and relevant contact details, e-mail and website addresses.

5000 hard copies were printed. 1,300 were sent to every school in Northern Ireland, 100+ were sent to all Forum members, 800 were given to all student teachers that attended an ESD training day, 60 were used for the EEF October conference and 300 were taken by the Education & Library Boards for use in training in service teachers for ESD in the new curriculum.

It is envisaged that 800 will be kept over for the ESD training days in 2007/08 and the remainder will be distributed to Youth Service and used to facilitate support and training for ESD for in service teachers through CASS / CCEA / ELB's.

E-Bulletins

E-Bulletins are sent to all members once per month. On average 170 members receive information and updates.

NIEL News

A one page digest of EEF and environmental education News is included in the NIEL Newsletter, **NIEL News** each month. This is distributed to over 100 NIEL members plus governmental contacts in all Departments.

Meetings

Conferences

There were two EEF conferences held in 2006:

- St Columb's Park House, Derry on 25 January. Re-launch of Forum and ESD in Revised Curriculum was attended by 70 delegates.
- Oxford Island on 11 October - 'Are we doing any good' - evaluation of programmes - was attended by 60 delegates.

Reports of the conferences are on the Website.

Forum Meetings

There were five Forum meetings held this year:

- February: themes included re-launch of Forum, Forum dates for 2006 and ESD Resource Guide
- April: themes included LEEF, EEF Grant Programme and presentation by BBC Breathing Places
- June: themes included LEEF, ESD Days, Conference, Breathing Places and EHS Grants

- September: themes included LEEF, ESD Days, Conference, Breathing Places and EHS Grants
- December: themes will include themes and dates for 2007 meetings, ESD days and funding streams

The average attendance was 14 members per meeting (excluding December meeting)

Management Committee Meetings

Five meetings were held this year in January, April, June, September and December. The average attendance was 11 per meeting. Two Management Committee Members retired this year - Annie Mullen (UWT) and Rob Lynas (DOE Env. Policy Group)

Activities

Local and Global Days

Every year the Forum runs ESD Days at all of Northern Ireland's University establishments for trainee teachers. These are delivered by EEF member groups and are aimed at trainee teachers and PGCE students. The days consist of a series of workshops in which the leaders demonstrate best practice in delivery of EE / ESD through various aspects of the curriculum. This is the first year that Days were run at Stranmillis or for KS 3&4 at Coleraine. In all some 650 student teachers received training. The Days completed in 2006 were:

- University of Ulster Coleraine – Jan 17 2006 - KS 3&4 Geography - x 50 teachers
- University of Ulster Coleraine – March 31 2006 - KS1&2 Geography - x50 teachers
- St Mary's College – 19 Oct & 8 Dec 2006 - KS1&2 - x250 teachers
- Queens University – 3 Nov 2006 - KS 3&4 - x150 teachers
- Stranmillis College – 16&19 Oct, 4&7 Dec - KS1&2 - x160 teachers.

EHS Natural Heritage Grant Programme (NHGP)

Discussions took place in 2005 & 2006 with the EHS as to the possibility of the EEF inputting into the Natural Heritage Grants Programme. This was agreed by the Forum Management Committee. Applicants to the programme were required to submit their applications for comment by EEF prior to assessment. A pro forma was produced by the EEF coordinator for each application detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the application and suggesting ways in which the project could be improved to increase chances of success. 16 applications were received and discussed at a special Mgt Committee meeting; reports were written up and returned to applicants. Feedback from members indicated that the process was a worthwhile and very useful exercise which enabled them to focus on the gaps and overlaps of EE provision and look at potential sharing of programmes with other agencies.

The Forum also applied to the NHGP for its own funding of activities and publications for the period 2007 – 2010

ESD in Northern Ireland – Updating of 2000 publication

Work has begun on updating the ESD publication that was originally produced in 2000 by the EEF and the One World Centre (Centre for Global Education).

Membership and Networking

Membership

Forum Membership currently stands at 92 organisations, agencies and individuals representing government, voluntary, academic and business sectors. There were 80 members in January 2006. 15 members have joined the Forum since January 2006:

- Action Renewables
- Alliance Youth Works
- Armagh City Council
- Castlereagh Borough Council
- Craigavon Borough Council
- Down District Council
- Ecos Centre
- Eco-UNESCO
- Fermanagh District Council
- Kilcranny House
- Lough's Agency
- Limavady Borough Council
- Woodland Trust
- Conan MacRuairi
- S. McAuley

Three members have left the Forum since January 2006:

- Ballymoney Borough Council
- Ulster Architectural Heritage Society – No Education Programme at present
- Historic Buildings Council – already receive information from the Forum through two other advisory bodies.

Networking

A great deal of time has been spent on liaising and networking with member organisations and EHS. By promoting the Forum's activities and the benefits which it provides to members the Forum's reputation and status as an integral facet of the environmental education sector in Northern Ireland is becoming more established. This groundwork has been crucial in providing a firm base from which the EEF can begin to move forward and develop. Networking has been ongoing with all members – especially those that have been Forum members but inactive as contributors to EEF activities.

EEF Coordinator has been active in attending conferences, member's events and training days in order to network with agencies and procure new members.

Conferences and events attended include:

- Attendance at CEE/ESD conference in London: Development of Sustainable Schools programme.
- Action Renewables interview panel: appointing of two education officers.
- Sitting on National Trust working group: Development of new Trust education programme
- Sitting on working group for development of new education tool: Vital Signs
- Sitting on working group for Enviro-Centre: development of Northern Visions
- Attending Breathing Places update meetings and distribution of information to members

- Input into Waste Forum: EEF to act as secretariat to Waste Forum
- Attendance at Outdoor Learning Manifesto meeting
- Networking has been ongoing with all five Education and Library Boards; Dept of Education - Eddie Rooney, CCEA; and CASS etc.

Promoting the Forum

A new website was developed and went live in March 2006 (www.eefni.org.uk). It is currently being promoted and enhanced to become a major communication tool for and with members.

A new EEF logo was produced in March 2006 and is now being used on all literature and publications along with the EHS and DOE logos.

A new EEF leaflet has been developed and 1,000 copies printed. These will be used to promote Forum activities at events and to target potential members.

New Penguin display stands have been developed and produced to enhance EEF profile at events, training days and to help promote work of members.

Active participation at conferences and events to promote Forum activities. These included:

- NIEL / EHS Landscape conference – May (Workshop facilitator and conference support)
- Environmental Youth Speak Awards - May (Invited to sit on judging panel for awards)
- Changing Environments / Ecological Footprints conference in September 2006 (Workshop facilitator and conference support)
- Talk given to CCEA: Inclusion of Environmental Themes into re-writing of Key Stage 4 Vocational Enhancement Programme (October)
- Input into ESD inter board group: Feedback on Leave No Trace Ireland, Forum activities (October)
- CAAN Outdoor Learning Group – Attended launch of Leave No Trace Ireland (October)
- SNI 'Choose to Reuse' conferences - three events in November (Quiz facilitator and conference support)
- NIEL / FCFCG 'Growing for Life' conference in November (conference support)
- CCEA training day: for staff (October)

Finances

Expenditure		Subtotals/ Balance
Salary and PAYE	21,194	
Office Costs	1,200	
Travel and Training	515	
Administrative Support and Management (contract - by subtraction - 25 hrs admin + 5 hrs mgmt per week)	11,991	34,900
Events	1,195	
Publications Distribution & Penguin Stands	1,142	2,337
TOTAL Expenditure		37,237
Income		
EHS Contract	34,900	
Membership Subscriptions	2,572	
TOTAL Income		37,472
Balance at 31 Dec 2006		235

The Environment and Heritage Service provides the operating expenditure for the Forum through a contract to Northern Ireland Environment Link to provide secretarial and staff services and through direct printing of publications through the Corporate Services Department.

The EEF is supported by:

