

Green Week 2010-11

“Edinburgh Sustainability Week”

25-31 October 2010

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Illustration 1: Transition staff, EUSA staff and volunteers launch the Sustainability Week programme outside the library.



Illustration 2: Sustainability Week branding, as used on social networking site Facebook.

Transition Edinburgh University – www.teu.org.uk

OurEd – www.oured.ed.ac.uk

Edinburgh Sustainability – www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability

Introduction

Edinburgh Sustainability Week was the University's third annual green week, following *Green Week* in 2008-09, and *10:10 Week* in 2009-10. The week was billed as “events and activities for everyone at the University of Edinburgh to come together to make a difference on health, development, environment and social justice” and its main elements were:

- **Edinburgh Sustainability Awards:** Edinburgh's implementation of NUSSL's “Green Impact” scheme. They were launched in the week with a series of introductory talks and stalls at different campuses.
- **Lunchtime Road-show.** Displays and stalls were be set-up on different days in the week during lunch-hours at campuses. Transport and Parking, Waste and Recycling, Energy, Transition Edinburgh University's Engagement team along with student societies contributed. It was coordinated by Transition Edinburgh University's events team. The road-show was designed as a publicity vehicle for the programme, schemes already running, and to inform new people by inhabiting popular spaces.
- Student societies, staff groups, and external organisations were encouraged to submit events for an **open programme**. Groups were also eligible to obtain £50 towards expenses. It was coordinated by Transition Edinburgh University's events team. This element reflected Transition's desire to build links and bonds between groups already working on sustainability issues and to involve new people in the issues by involving already-strong voluntary organisations.

Planning

Planning for the week was initiated by Transition Edinburgh University who had applied for funding for the week with their 16-month project and intended on using the week to raise awareness and enrol students and staff in their projects. In the summer break EUSA sabbaticals, the Sustainability Advisor, Transport & Parking Office, Waste & Recycling Office, Energy Office, Accommodation Services, and student advocates were approached and pledged support and involvement.

This led to a series of three planning meetings over Aug and Sep which decided the aims, objectives, and outline of the week (these are reviewed in “Fulfilment of aims and targets”):

The week will **aim** to:

1. Create excitement and mass awareness about health, development, environment and social justice.
2. Bring together different groups at the University.
3. Involve new people and groups.
4. Create a legacy.

We will do this with six key **strategies**:

- i. Create tailored offerings for different audiences.
- ii. Give people small achievable things to do.

- iii. Simple key messages.
- iv. Have next steps and build the week around already planned projects, such as the Sustainability Awards.
- v. Engage people face-to-face.
- vi. Use events and activities which already run, such as Big Cheese.

Our **targets** for the week were:

- To involve 20 groups.
- To have 1,000 people attend events.

The aims and strategies build upon **recommendations** from evaluations of “Green Weeks” run in 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years as follows:

- a) Very short planning time gave little time to organise and prepare (2009-10).
- b) Publicity needed in well in advance (2008-09, 2009-10).
- c) Coordination between groups needed from planning to execution (2008-09, 2009-10).

The **timing** of the week was set for 25-31 Oct. This was thought to balance the need to be early enough that students were not too busy with exams and coursework, and late enough that there was time to plan fully. October was given as a relatively good time for academics' availability (See *Staff Engagement Strategy, Transition Edinburgh University*), and fitted in well with the publicity planned for the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards. A lead in plan was devised as follows:

- **4 Oct.** – Finalise Roadshow and Impact Awards events. Press release/story for ed.ac.uk and Staff Bulletin.
- **11 Oct.** – Content prepared for the Student. Full web programme goes live. Printed programme designed.
- **18 Oct.** – Printed programme printed. Press launch event. Final submissions for Open Programme accepted.
- **25 Oct.** – Week itself.
- **1 Nov.** – Tidy up, evaluation, data entry.

The organisers were keen to use a **name for the week** that was meaningful to as many people as possible and linked with schemes already running, including the OurEd website and the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards. The name agreed was Our Impact Week – linking with both OurEd and the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards, which at the time were called “Edinburgh Impact Awards”. The decision was then made to fully align the Week with the Awards and rename it “Edinburgh Impact Week”. However, on 15 Oct University central management directed that the week could not use the term “impact” and as such the names “Edinburgh Sustainability Awards” and “Edinburgh Sustainability Week” were agreed. This final change occurred after most publicity materials had been finalised and required considerable amounts of redesign work.

Publicity

A publicity effort focused on promoting highlights from the programme. Online and printed programmes were produced, press releases published, and email briefings distributed. It was coordinated by Transition Edinburgh University with support from EUSA, OurEd and Communications and Marketing.

- **Web.** An online programme was published three weeks prior on the OurEd website, including a summary news story linked to two versions of the programme – one for staff and one for students. News stories linking to the programme were held the front page at EUSA, OurEd, and Transition Edinburgh University websites for the four weeks leading, and at the University Staff News site for two weeks preceding. The later story was also published on the front page of the University portal site (ed.ac.uk) for the duration of the week itself. It was envisaged that the online programme would be hosted on the new Sustainable Edinburgh website, but this was not possible as the site was not published in time.
- **Emails.** Targeted email bulletins were sent out through staff and student advocates in schools and faculties and through related organisations. The week appeared on several e-newsletters, and departmental academic and supports staff sent briefings to various lists including energy reps and student course-specific lists.
- **Press.** A press release and photo stunt helped the week receive prominent coverage in the two student newspapers, The Student (two full pages) and The Journal (½ page), during and after the week respectively. Between them have have a circulation of over 5,000 which is student-specific.
- **Printed programmes.** 1,000 student and 300 staff programmes were designed and printed by TEU. Most of these were distributed on at two launches: a “green carpet” ribbon cutting outside the Main Library, Friday 22 (pictured) and as part of the Student Switch Off scheme at Pollock Halls, Saturday 23 Oct. Remaining programmes were sent out through internal mail and given out at events early in the week. Over 1,000 small flyers were also distributed in the lead-up and during the week. It was intended that student and staff programmes be ready a week prior, but a problems with the name (see Planning / Name, above), design and printing caused a delay.
- **Advertising.** Cycle bill-boards circled the Central Area and Kings Buildings campuses promoting the week and it's website early in the week. Adverts appeared on screens in EUSA buildings Teviot Row House and Kings Buildings House. A banner was also hung in EUSA Potterrow.

Participation

4000 programme
events attendance

29 participating organisations

16 student societies

700 attendance at
sustainability-specific events

8 University departments and offices

270 recorded conversations

41 events at **8** campuses

- 41 separate programmed events took place at eight University campuses: Central Area, Easter Bush, Holyrood, Kings Buildings, Little France, Pleasance, Pollock Halls, New College.
- Total attendance for events in the programme total about 4000 people, of which 700 attended events specifically about sustainability, and a further 3280 attended participating events, which had a sustainability element (for example, an activity or stall).
- Conversations with counted individuals total 270 but were probably much higher as numbers were not kept at many events.

These figures do not account for multiple attendances, and there are several events for which we do not have accurate attendance records. Interactions other than event attendance, such as helping with planning and publicity, or web-site hits, are not covered. As such awareness of the week and its constituent events is probably considerably higher, and will have reached a significant proportion of the 37,000 University population.

Groups external and internal took part in both the planning and execution of the week. Contributions came from a diverse group of 29 organisations including 16 student societies and 8 University departments and offices. Each brought unique aspects to the programme and publicity effort, reaching new audiences in the University population. Many collaborated with partners with which that hasn't previously worked and for others it was the first time they had taken part in a University-wide initiative.

Events

Day	Title	Organiser	Attendance
23/10/10	Student Switch Off @ Pollock	EUSA and University of Edinburgh	*
23/10/10	Big Green Cheese	EUSA with Transition Edinburgh University	1000
24/10/10	Springfield Mill Bulb Planting	Dirty Weekenders Society	*
24/10/10	The Teviot Pub Quiz featuring Eco Questions	EUSA	80
25/10/10	A Better Way to Work	UoE	*
25/10/10	A Lunch Introduction to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards @ Holyrood	EUSA and UoE	3
25/10/10	Tibet: A Critical Perspective in 2010	Tibet Society	*
25/10/10	The Pleasance Pub Quiz featuring Eco Questions	EUSA	80
25/10/10	Film: Flow	Wateraid Society and People & Planet Society	35
25/10/10	United Nations Schools Outreach	UNYSA School Outreach Society	*
26/10/10	Edinburgh Sustainability Week Roadshow @ KB	EUSA and University of Edinburgh	40
26/10/10	An Introduction to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards @ KB	EUSA and UoE	2
26/10/10	Meat-free Day at Pollock	UoE Accommodation Services	1580
26/10/10	Energy Saving Workshop	Transition Edinburgh University	*
26/10/10	Recycle-o-rama	UoE Accommodation Services	*
26/10/10	Loesje: Creative-Postering Workshop	People & Planet Society	*
26/10/10	One World One Health with Professor Sue Welburn	University of Edinburgh	200
26/10/10	The KB Pub Quiz featuring Eco Questions	EUSA	40
26/10/10	Film: Constant Gardener	MedAccess Society	30
27/10/10	Afternoon at the Allotment	Allotment and Permaculture Society	4
27/10/10	Fair Trade Café	Fair Trade Café Society	40
27/10/10	Edinburgh Sustainability Week Roadshow @ Potterrow	EUSA and UoE	*
27/10/10	An Introduction to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards @ Potterrow	EUSA and UoE	*
27/10/10	Travel and Volunteering Fair	UoE Careers Service	500
27/10/10	Radical Flyers Workshop	People & Planet Society and Old Hat Books	8
27/10/10	Winging It: Our Love/Hate Relationship with Flying	Transition Edinburgh University	38
28/10/10	Edinburgh Sustainability Week Roadshow @ Easter Bush	EUSA and UoE	*
28/10/10	A Tea-time Introduction to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards @ New College	EUSA and UoE	*
28/10/10	Climate Change at the Movies	Cineco Film Festival	47
28/10/10	Microfinance: Grameen Bank with speaker from Peru	Latin American Development and Cultural Appreciation Society (LADCAS)	*
28/10/10	An Overview of Carbon Capture and Storage in the UK	Geophysics & Meteorology Society	40
28/10/10	What Role Can Scotland Play in Working Towards A Green Future?	Young Greens Soc., SNP Soc., LibDem Soc., and Scottish Socialist Party Soc.	12
28/10/10	Film: Togetherness Supreme	Africa in Motion Film Festival	*
29/10/10	Tibetan Tea Tasting	Societea and Tibet Society	25
29/10/10	Edinburgh Sustainability Week Roadshow @ Little France	EUSA and University of Edinburgh	*
29/10/10	An Introduction to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards @ Little France	EUSA and University of Edinburgh	*
29/10/10	Apple Pressing and Cider Making	Transition Edinburgh University and Abundance Edinburgh	150
29/10/10	Film: The Importance of Being Elegant	Africa in Motion Film Festival	*
30/10/10	Film: The Age of Stupid	Cineco Film Festival	25
31/10/10	Film: Dance Got Me	Africa in Motion Film Festival	*
31/10/10	Filmmaking & Editing workshop	Cineco Film Festival	6
*attendance not recorded			3985

More detail about some specific events:

Apple Pressing and Cider Making, Transition Edinburgh University and Abundance Edinburgh, Fri 29 Oct 10, 1 – 3pm, By University Visitor Centre, Charles Street

Members of Abundance Edinburgh and the Food Working Group set up a cider pressing station on Charles Street and invited passers by to take part. 150 did so, and the event received positive responses from passers-by who were told about the week.

Big Green Cheese, EUSA with Transition Edinburgh University, Sat 23 Oct 10, 9pm

Transition staff distributed programmes, signed-up students to mailing lists, and offered rides on a bicycle powered sound system in the Potterrow Dome during the Big Cheese. Fresh Air student radio also broadcast from the bike. The event fell short of a fully *greened* Big Cheese as envisaged by EUSA, who provided little help with the event. 50 people had a go on and those present said it was a great success!

Climate Change at the Movies, Cineco Film Festival, Thu 28 Oct 10, 5.30 – 7pm, Martin Hall, New College

Christian Aid and Cineco, Edinburgh University's free Environmental Film Festival, held a debate and discussion about how film has contributed to achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Environmental Sustainability. The panel was Professor Michael Northcott (Theology and Ethics), Professor Janette Webb (Sociology) and Rachel Howell (Researching "The Potential for Climate Change Mitigation through Education"). The event led through clips of different environmental films and invited the audience to consider their ability to engage and inspire their audience into action. Attendance was 47, with a particularly high proportion of academics. Olivia Furber has written a guide for volunteers on how to run such an event.

Edinburgh Sustainability Week Roadshow, EUSA and UoE, Various times

Displays and stalls were be set-up on different days in the week during lunch-hours at four campus: Kings Buildings, Potterrow, Easter Bush and Little France. Transport and Parking, Waste and Recycling, Energy, Transition Edinburgh University's Engagement team along with student societies contributed. It was coordinated by Transition Edinburgh University's events team. The road-show was designed as a publicity vehicle for the programme, schemes already running, and to inform new people by inhabiting popular spaces.

Introductions to the Edinburgh Sustainability Awards, EUSA and UoE, Various times

The Edinburgh Sustainability Awards, run by EUSA and UoEd Sustainability, are Edinburgh's implementation of NUSL's "Green Impact" scheme (http://www.eauc.org.uk/green_impact). Their launch was planned to include a series of five introductory talks across the University: at Holyrood, Kings Buildings, Potterrow, New College, and Little France in the Week. These talks, coupled with the roadshow (see above), received high prominence on publicity for the week. Turnout was low at events early in the week leading to those later on being cancelled altogether.

Meat-free Day at Pollock, UoE Accommodation Services, Tue 16 Oct, Pollock Halls

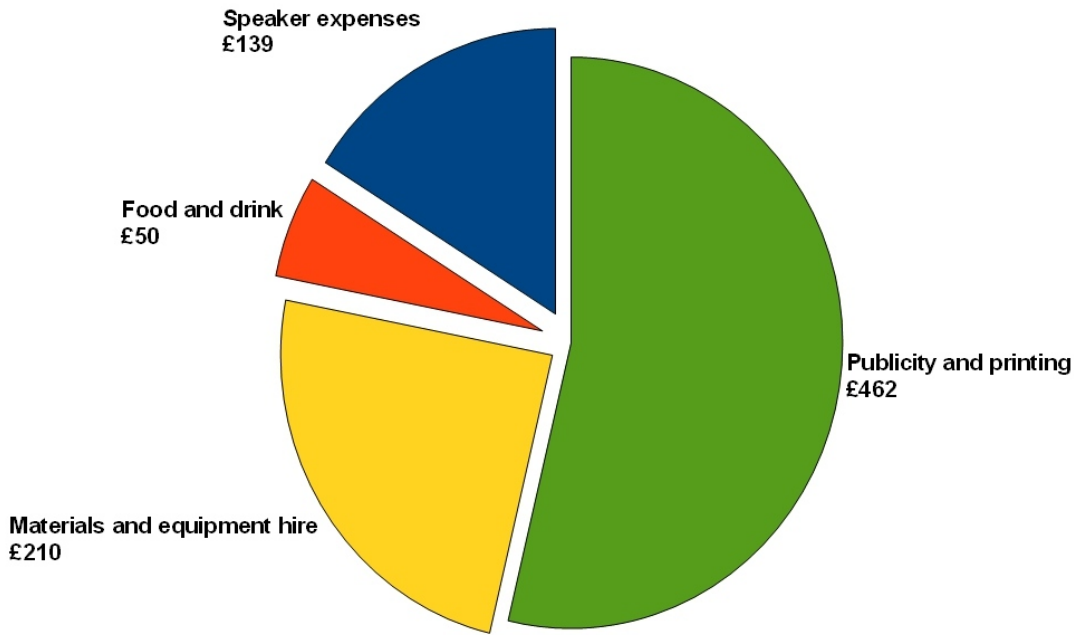
To promote low-carbon diets, Accommodation Services organised for the catering at Pollock Halls to be totally meat free for the day. There was also a stall giving away recycling freebies. In all, an estimated 1580 people would have eaten a meal. Since usually between 50-80% of residents eat vegetarian options, this represents as many as 800 additional people eating a veggie meal that day. However, no information was provided to explain the lack of meat options and unhappy students were "very rude" to catering staff about this.

Winging It: Our Love/Hate Relationship with Flying, Transition Edinburgh University, Wed 27 Oct 10, 6.30 – 8.30pm, Faculty Room North, David Hume Tower, George Square

Speakers John Stewart (HACAN Clearskies), Tom McMillan (flightlesstravel.com), and Peter McColl (Transition Scotland, Edinburgh Greens) discussed the importance of aviation, its environmental impacts, and alternatives.

Costs

Transition Edinburgh University spent £861.08 of cash budget on the week divided up as follows:



TEU's staffing costs, and costs incurred by other offices/organisations, will be significant, but a full analysis here is not possible.

Evaluation and recommendations

How we met our aims:

1. Create excitement and mass awareness about health, development, environment and social justice. **Part met.** More mass publicity, “greening” of fixed events (e.g. green menus in Teviot), and on-campus interactive activities required. It is not clear what added attendance or interest groups and events in the week got that they wouldn't have otherwise gainted.
2. Bring together different groups at the University. **Met.** Various groups collaborated who had never met before, e.g. People & Planet and Water Aid Society.
3. Involve new people and groups. **Met.** Several societies and departments participated who had not been involved with sustainability engagement before.
4. Create a legacy. **Part met.** New connections and between groups and organisations have the chance to make a lasting impact, but any future success of the Sustainability Awards is unlikely to owe much to the week.

How we met out targets:

- Involve 20 groups. **Met:** 29 groups participated.
- Have 1,000 people attend events. **Met:** 4,000 people attended.

Key recommendations:

1. **Critical analysis of the costs and benefits of running a week is required.** The aims of the week could have been achieved by a year-long Sustainability engagement effort rather than focusing on one week. For Sustainability Week, it was resolved that only a week could create an 'buzz' on campus – however, without big publicity back-up, this won't happen regardless.
2. **Continue involving non-green groups.** Accessing “unusual suspects” can be difficult, so rather than asking students and staff to get involved with what we're doing, we should build on the experience of the Week to work with other groups to make sustainability relevant to them (for example *Geological and Meteorological Society* event).
3. **Continue simple interactive activities.** Building on the success of simple and fun interactive events such as *Apple Pressing* or the bicycle-powered sound system at the *Big Cheese* were both popular when described and to participants. They caught the attention of passers by and did not require a great deal of planning or publicity.
4. **More organisations should be encouraged to take ownership of this work.** The coordination of the week was taken on by Transition Edinburgh University, which may not have capacity for this work in future years. Such events (weeks or otherwise) could have a significantly higher impact with leadership from EUSA, with their experience, access to students, large event-running capacity, relevant commercial activities, and high-profile publicity channels.
5. **More targeted events and advertising.** The most successful events had specific appeal to specific audiences and targeted their publicity accordingly: for example “Climate Change at the Movies” brought in Theological and Religious Studies academics by including them in the event and using school-wide publicity. Less targeted events did not succeed in this, such as the Sustainability Awards introductions.
6. **More lead in time is a necessity.** Planning should begin at least six months in advance with fairly complete publicity sent out a 1-2 months in advance. Without this, busy people cannot be expected to be able to make time for events.
7. **The role of University's Central Management needs to be clarified.** Re-naming an event of this scale less than two weeks before it begins caused a number of problems: the efforts of publicising the previous name were trashed, considerable confusion was caused between organisers, publicity materials, and printed and on-line, had to be corrected. There was clearly a communication failure between organisers and Central Management, and there remains a question over what and how much power Central Management has over details of events whose organisers include EUSA and external organisations.
8. **Use of internal mail for distribution of printed materials.** Along with using student and staff emails, direct mailing is essentially free by using internal mail – and this should be taken advantage of.