



KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND BEAUTIFUL



ECO-SCHOOLS

# ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

March 2016

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## Eco-Schools in for the win with 'Cash for Clobber'.

Spring is in the air and school pupils all across Northern Ireland are encouraging friends and family to clear out unwanted or outgrown winter woollies and recycle them through the 'Cash for Clobber' initiative. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools are delighted to be partnering with Cookstown Textile Recyclers again for the seventh year to promote this great method of not only being environmentally friendly but also raising some welcome funds for the schools taking part.

Schools which collect the most textiles per pupil are in with the chance to win the annual 'Cash for Clobber' competition with fantastic prizes of up to £3000. Closing date for the competition this year is **31st May**. Cookstown Textile Recyclers also provide 50 pence per kilo for textiles collected. The textiles then go on to provide a valuable resource for people living in developing countries all around the world or are recycled into industrial fibres.

St Joseph's Primary School, Carryduff, were overjoyed to win £3000 in the large primary category last year and they also raised nearly £2000 from the collection itself. They have used the money to improve their eco-garden with raised vegetable beds, wildlife areas, hedgehog homes and have revamped an outdoor learning area for their P1 pupils. They are taking part again this year and hoping to hit the jackpot once more.

*Billy Conway, Marketing Manager, Cookstown Textile Recyclers said: "Cash for Clobber allows children to actually see the benefits of responsible approaches to waste and can raise valuable funds for their schools, at the same time. We work closely with education authorities and the individual schools themselves to see how recycling impacts on their environment. The clothes and shoes we recycle are taken away to be exported and used again in other countries."*

'Cash for Clobber' helps schools work towards the internationally recognised prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag award and the pupils learn about the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling through the great curriculum linked resources available.

The Competition runs **until 31 May 2016**. Visit the Eco-Schools [website](#) for more information.

To arrange a 'Cash for Clobber' clothing collection for your school contact CTR at [schools@c-tr.com](mailto:schools@c-tr.com) or phone 028 9447 8880.



St Joseph's Primary, Carryduff, won the top prize of £3000 for their school with Cash for Clobber 2015.

## BIG Spring Clean April 2016

Spring into action with our annual national clean-up!

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful is calling on schools to be part of something BIG and show that they **Live Here and Love Here** by getting involved in the [Big Spring Clean](#).



Big Spring Clean is now part of the [Live Here Love Here](#) campaign which empowers communities to take action and tackle litter to build a sense of community pride. People power is amazing! During last year's Big Spring Clean over 89,506 people participated in cleaning up their local area and removing over 107 tonnes of litter ensuring that we Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Don't forget you can [pledge](#) your support to the **Live Here Love Here** campaign and receive up-dates about actions being taken in your community.



Pupils at St Malachy's Primary School, Newry, clean-up their local area with the Big Spring Clean.

Over 50 schools have registered so far to take part in 2016. So join in and add your clean-up to this great action.

Register your clean-up and receive a **clean-up kit** including: gloves, bags, high-vis vests, posters and hints and tips. Register your results and we will send you a certificate thanking you for your participation.

For more information on how to register contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org)



## Helping Hand - a BIG 'thank you' 15% discount!

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful have been using [Helping Hand Environmental](#) litter-pick products for over 10 years. To place an order with Helping Hand using the 15% discount visit the Live Here Love Here [website](#) for more information. Offer ends 31st April 2015.

## Schools are all aboard for the Translink Travel Challenge.

The Translink Travel Challenge is now open to all schools. The Challenge is running in the summer term until **23rd May** for any **2 weeks** that you choose.

Encourage sustainable travel to school and record your results in the resources provided. Send your results to us for the chance to win super prizes!

Doing a great Transport project in your school? Why not enter the #Smartmovers Project category for a chance to win a prize too.

A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast on **Wednesday 8th June**. All schools who send results will be entered into a prize draw for an Ulsterbus school trip to Dublin. This is not only a competition but a great project with lots of learning and monitoring resources provided. Visit [www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools](http://www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools) for more information on the prizes and excellent resources or email [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).



*Cranmore Integrated Primary, Belfast, are all set for the Travel Challenge*

## Hedgehog Campaign -

Mark H Durkan, Minister for the Environment, as part of NIEL's new Species Champions initiative, is asking all schools to help their native hedgehogs. In the 1950's it was estimated there were 36.5 million hedgehogs in Britain. It seems likely that there are now fewer than 1 million hedgehogs left.

### Bangor Central Integrated Primary School – Hedgehog adventures.

Last spring the caretaker at Bangor Central Integrated Primary School noticed a hedgehog in the school grounds as he was opening up early one morning. The school thought that it may have been hibernating under one of their mobiles. The Eco-Committee contacted the RSPB to see if they could give them advice on how to look after their hedgehog.

The RSBP set up a stop motion camera and managed to capture the hedgehog on film as it moved around the grounds after dark. The school was delighted by this result and decided to take actions to make their grounds as hedgehog friendly as possible. They created 'wild' undisturbed areas with leaf piles and fallen branches. They tried to encourage more mini-beasts into their grounds by building bug hotels and habitat areas.

In the autumn they built [hedgehog homes](#) out of cardboard boxes to create inviting cosy places for hedgehogs to hibernate. In the winter while the hedgehog was sleeping they built a lovely willow dome sculpture of a hedgehog with help from the RSPB which they hung bird feeders from. They also took part in the RSPB Big Schools' Bird Watch.

Now as spring approaches again and hedgehogs will be waking up and looking for food the school is crossing their fingers that the hedgehog will be spotted again enjoying their school grounds.

If you have seen any hedgehogs in your school grounds or have top tips you would like to share please contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) and have a look at our Hedgehog Campaign on our [website](#).



## School News:

### Kesh Primary School digs into food waste topic with composting project.

Food waste is hitting the headlines and awareness of its environmental impact is growing. New [food waste legislation](#) starting from April 2016 will see schools being required to separate their food waste from other waste bins.

Kesh Primary School, Enniskillen, are working towards their 5th Green Flag and thought they were doing well with their waste by recycling their plastic and card. They did a waste audit and were surprised by how much food waste they had in their landfill collection. After a little help and advice from their local council they decided to set up compost bins to recycle their fruit and vegetable peelings in school. They soon managed to get the whole school, including the canteen, on board and are now harvesting some great compost for their school garden.

The process has been a great learning opportunity for the pupils, staff and parents. To find out more about their experiences read their [case study](#). Other useful waste case studies from [Down High School](#) and [McClintock Primary](#) are also available on [www.eco-schoolsni.org](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org).



## Partner News:

25 schools from across **Belfast City Council** have been looking at recycling and food waste issues with this year's [Wheelee Big Challenge](#). Schools will be completing a waste audit and putting in place actions to reduce waste. A description of actions and results will then be entered into a competition with final judging on the 10th June in the Great Hall, Belfast City Hall. There is still plenty of time to take part with the project running until the end of May. Free resources and bins or a wormery are also supplied. Contact [cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for more information.



Congratulations to Lucia from Assumption Grammar, Ballynahinch and Liam from St Columba's Primary School, Clady, on winning the Post-Primary and Primary sections respectively of the **Environmental Youth Speak** competition on 8th March at Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey. The final saw amazing entries from schools all across NI and the judges were blown away by the pupils' passion for preventing waste issues.



*Lucia from Assumption Grammar urged us not send our rubbish to landfill "far, far away".*

# International Eco-Schools News:

## Lagan College NOM video.

Pupils from Lagan College, Castlereagh, have created a great video of their visit from international guests from Eco-Schools all over the world during the Eco-Schools National Operators Meeting (NOM) in November. Watch it [here](#) for a look back on a great event.

## Green Schools Ireland, Eco-Schools Expo, a great success

25th February 2016 saw the first ever Eco-Schools Expo in held in Ireland. This was an incredible event organised by a fantastic team and attended by inspiring students and teachers from all over Ireland.

President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins gave a powerful speech, praising the schools for their huge efforts and talked about the importance of 'reconnecting'.

Exhibitions from schools filled the hall and informative talks were held throughout the day. Evelyn Cusack, RTÉ weather presenter, Deputy Head of Forecasting at Met Éireann and Secretary of the Irish Meteorological Society finished off the day with an interesting talk on weather and the changes throughout time. Speeches made on the day are available to view [here](#).



Irish President, Michael D Higgins chats to pupils about their Eco-Schools work.

## 'Education as a Driver for Sustainable Development Goals' Conference in India

11th -13th January 2016 saw FEE member, the Centre for Environment Education, organise an international conference on Education as a Driver for Sustainable Development Goals in partnership with UNESCO, UNEP and the Government of India. Ian Humphreys, CEO of Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, represented FEE at the conference, which took place in Ahmedabad, India.

The conference follows the launch, in September 2015, of the [17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) following a global consultation. One of the goals is Quality Education. However, this conference focused on developing education in its broadest sense (including training and capacity building, communication, raising public awareness and formal education at all levels) as a cross-cutting theme relevant to all the goals. It is now accepted that policy instruments and technological solutions are insufficient to alone achieve sustainable development. [Read more...](#)

## Swedish Eco-Schools show positive results.

Eco-Schools Sweden have just received the results from their yearly Eco-Schools survey, answered by more than 1600 teachers: it is clear that Eco-Schools makes a difference in their daily work.



91% think that Eco-Schools supports active work for sustainable development.

75% think that Eco-Schools gives children and young people more influence, and it provides an increased involvement of educators.

81% think that the Eco-Schools work makes children and students feel proud!

*Lisa Adelsköld, Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation, said, "My visions now are that we can build a stronger network of Eco-Schools coordinators who are engaged in the work of Swedish municipalities on environmental issues. We need to build more local support and the teachers must be able to meet in local networks. We all need to be inspired and learn from each other to continue to work towards sustainable development!"*

## YRE National Operators Meeting - Glasgow.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful enjoyed attending the Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) National Operators Meeting in Glasgow in February. This was a chance for countries from all over the world who run the YRE programme to gather for training, inspiration and idea exchanges. [Read more...](#)



The deadline for NI entries to the YRE competition has been extended to the **11th April**. More details on the [website](#).

Young Reporters for the environment

## Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful news:

Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland is operated by the environmental charity Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. Here is the latest news from other areas of our organisation:

## New Benchmarking Report published.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's Benchmarking Report provides the first detailed analysis of Local Environmental Quality data since the establishment of the eleven new councils.

Covering littering and dog fouling, education, campaigning, public engagement, enforcement and more it compares 2015 with the three previous years of legacy council data. It replaces the NI Litter Survey reports carried out on behalf of the DoE since 2006 with a more comprehensive look at the wider picture of litter in Northern Ireland. Visit the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful [website](#) to download the report.

Key facts and figures at a glance for the period 2015-2016

**Average litter levels improved during 2015**



Although there is no proof of causality it is interesting to note that the first significant drop in litter levels in 8 years took place in the year when Live Here Love Here began it's above the line media campaign

**95%** of streets and public spaces surveyed in Northern Ireland have at least some litter on them

**12%**

Despite the improvement in average litter levels, 12% of streets and public spaces still have unacceptable levels of litter and/or dog fouling



**x2** Just two councils issued over two out of every three fixed penalties for littering during 2014-15. These two highly effective councils gather more than twice as much in fees per fixed penalty on average than less well performing councils

In winter, people are less likely to clean up their dog fouling in secondary retail and high density housing areas. Other types of land showed almost no difference.



**1 in 3**

travellers which fail to meet the standard for litter do so because of high levels of dog fouling

**1 in 5**

Almost one in five spaces has unacceptable levels of either litter; detritus; graffiti; or flyposting

**1 in 7**

recreational areas have unacceptable levels of litter

**£40m**

Spending on street cleansing exceeded £40 million for the first time in 2014-15



**128**

schools were awarded a prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag in recognition of their work on environmental and anti-litter education.



## Adopt A Spot

We are delighted to announce that [Adopt A Spot](#) is growing and we are able to support another 50 groups who will join the 150 groups already helping keep where they live looking beautiful.

Adopt A Spot is a volunteering opportunity through Live Here Love Here that allows groups across Northern Ireland to formally adopt an area of their choosing and look after it. These groups look after the area for a minimum of two years and they dedicate time four times a year to clean up the area and report information back via [Live Here Love Here](#).

## Other News:

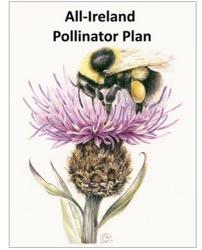
### OPAL (Open Air Laboratories) courses.

Three courses providing citizen survey training are open for anyone interested in learning more about the environment. The training covers tree, bugs, water, soil and lichen surveys across 6 sessions - all for only £5. Visit the Queen's University [website to book](#). Dates on offer are:

- Wednesday evenings from 4th May to 1st June - Hospital Hill Community Centre, Omagh.
- Saturday mornings from 7th May to 21st May - Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon.
- Tuesday evenings from 26th April to 24th May - Queen's School of Education in Belfast.

### Inspiring children to help save the bees! Junior Pollinator Plan launched.

Last year, bee experts in Ireland came together to produce the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020. It explored the challenges facing bees in the world today, the key role they play in our eco system and ways in which everyone could do their bit to help protect them.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools are delighted to support the 'The Junior Pollinator Plan', presenting these ideas especially for a younger audience in a fun, easy to understand way. It encourages children to look at how they can help safeguard against the demise of bees in Ireland and will help children understand the importance of bees to our world and empower them to take action to help safeguard our pollinators.

If you are a pollinator, finding enough food is the biggest challenge you have to face. Declines in wildflowers are subjecting our pollinators to starvation. Fertiliser application has resulted in increased crop yields, but in strong declines in wild flowers in managed field and in adjacent semi-natural habitats. Our tendency to tidy up the landscape rather than allowing wildflowers to grow along roadsides, field margins, and in parks, gardens and school grounds is also playing a big part in fewer of these resources being available.

Download a copy of the [Junior Pollinator Plan](#) a great resource for teaching on the topic and lots of ideas on how to help bees.

### Global Learning opportunity for schools.

Schools in Northern Ireland can bring education for a fair and sustainable world into their classrooms by getting involved in the Global Learning Programme (GLP). More than 160 NI schools are already taking part in the staff development initiative and making excellent progress.



All participating schools are offered training on global learning (with sub-cover provided), plus resources and guidance. Schools can find out more, plus register for the programme by visiting the GLP website, [www.globallearningni.com](http://www.globallearningni.com). Questions should be directed to [glp@centreforglobaleducation.com](mailto:glp@centreforglobaleducation.com). The GLP is managed by the Centre for Global Education and funded by the UK government.



### Green Flags this month.

Congratulations to all the schools who have achieved their Green Flag award in the last month. We are continually amazed at the knowledge and enthusiasm of all the pupils and staff at our Green Flag schools and they are to be congratulated on their fantastic achievement.

Congratulations this month go to:

- Ballymacrickett Primary School, Crumlin
- Christ the Redeemer Primary School, Belfast
- Cumran Primary School, Clough
- Enniskillen Model Primary School, Enniskillen
- Parkview School, Lisburn
- Roe Valley Integrated Primary School, Limavady
- St Teresa's Primary School, Omagh
- The Holy Family Primary School, Downpatrick



St Teresa's Primary, Omagh.



The Holy Family Primary, Downpatrick.



Parkview School, Lisburn.

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**Don't stop here! Visit our Eco-Schools Northern Ireland [website](#) for more news, project ideas, programme guidance, case studies, delivery partner information, and much more.**