

Environment Team

Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

- Your Environment Week
12th November
- Green Impact drop in sessions
5th – 9th November

Contact Us

If you have any comments or contributions please contact:

Kate Arthur

e: kja14@le.ac.uk

t: (0116) 229 7382

BioBlitz triumphs

The 24 hour BioBlitz event held in June was a great success.

Despite the traditional British summer weather, over 100 staff, students and members of the local community turned out to help identify almost 400 species. People of all ages took part in bat and moth counting, wildlife walks, willow weaving, bird spotting and more. The BioBlitz helped raise awareness about the plants and wildlife that inhabit the University and showcased the work that we are doing to protect biodiversity.

We received loads of positive feedback from those who came along and hope to run similar events in the future. We would like to say a big thank you to all the volunteers that came along and helped make the day such a great success!



Recognition for our sustainability success

The University of Leicester has been shortlisted for two Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) Green Gown awards. The Environment Team student volunteering programme has been nominated under the Student Initiatives and Campaigns category and the Sustainable Futures module in Physics has been nominated under the Courses category. The University will find out whether or not they are the overall winners of the categories at an awards ceremony in November.

Bike Park up and running

The new University Bike Park outside the David Wilson Library has been a great success since its launch in the summer.

The 300 capacity underground bike storage facility has seen hundreds of subscriptions since the opening back in May, and has been well used over the summer period. Usage is expected to increase once the students return and want to make the most of the fantastic new facility in the centre of campus.

The Bike Park has been used as a national example of good practice within the sector and has been nominated for an East Midlands Property Development award. The store is just one part of an on-going plan to develop increased cycling facilities and cycle paths on campus, and further improvements will be rolled out in the near future.

There has never been a better time to get on your bike! The bike park is FREE, simple to use and it's easy to sign up, all you need to do is visit our website:

www.le.ac.uk/travelplan/bicycle/bikepark

Green Impact

The Green Impact scheme, run by NUS to encourage and reward sustainable behaviour in the workplace, was a huge success last academic year.

Green Impact teams from across the University celebrated their success at the award ceremony in May. Pro-vice Chancellor Christine Fyfe presented the awards to teams. For the first time, three teams achieved the top Gold accreditation for the changes that they have been making in their departments.

A big well done to all the teams who took part this year and thank you for all of their efforts.

Green Impact will be more accessible than ever this year with an improved workbook, extra assistance for teams and 'Bitesize Bronze' where the workbook will be broken down and made simpler to use for the teams.

If you want to get involved or find out more contact Kate Arthur at kja14@le.ac.uk
T: 0116 229 7382



PowerMan rescues University's IT carbon impact

The University has released an innovative way to save money and cut carbon using power-down IT software. The software, called PowerMan, automatically shuts down PCs that are left switched on but not logged on and has proved to be a fantastic way to reduce some of the energy wasted through idle PCs.

IT equipment uses 25% of the electricity at non-residential University buildings and the software is just one way in which IT Services are reducing the environmental impact of the IT equipment we all use.

The shutdown software has produced significant savings since it was first installed in 2010. Around 379,500 kilowatt hours of savings were made in the first year, which converts to approximately 5 million computer hours saved and estimated annual savings of 287 tonnes of CO₂, and £30,000 from the electricity bill.

Find out more about the shutdown software and how it is implemented at the University:

www.le.ac.uk/offices/itservices/about/green-it/automatic-pc-shutdowns



Trading fairly on campus

The University has regained its status as a Fairtrade institution.

Thanks to great partnership work between Residential and Catering Services, the Students Union and the Environment Team, Fairtrade activity across campus has increased again. Fairtrade products are available in all outlets on main campus and in the SU, with rolling discounts on certain products. The University now also sits on the wider Fairtrade Leicester steering group to promote the work of Fairtrade across the city. There will be many more events occurring around the University in the upcoming year including another Fairtrade fortnight and a Fairtrade Bakeoff so look out for the symbol around campus.



student Switchoff

The student Switch Off campaign is coming to Oadby student halls.

This year the University will be taking part in Student Switch Off; a campaign that encourages students to save energy and recycle when living in halls of residence. As with many situations there is generally no financial incentive for students in halls to use energy carefully. The Student Switch Off uses prizes, peer-to-peer communication and competition to provide incentives beyond just being more 'environmentally friendly'.

Student switch off aims to save the university money whilst benefiting the students who take part by providing them with transferable skills, experience in marketing, communications and campaigning.

Making your coffee cups more environmentally-friendly

A group of University of Leicester students are trying to find a new strand of biodegradable polystyrene as part of iGEM.

iGEM is an international science competition that gives students the opportunity to get real research experience and to spend time in the labs working on their own project. Our students are aiming to produce a modified bacterium that can effectively digest expanded polystyrene, which is currently one of the world's major waste products.

You can help find a cleaner solution to polystyrene by taking part in the experiment. Just buy a test kit for £2 (which helps pay for the project). The kits contain a small strip of polystyrene which you plant in your garden to collect bacteria, which will then be analysed in the labs to see whether it contains the right bacteria. The winning bacteria will be used to develop a new strand of biodegradable polystyrene. To find out more about the project and how you can get involved go to: www.le.ac.uk/environment/news/igem

Volunteers make a big difference

A huge overhaul of the Environment Team's volunteering scheme has resulted in a much improved volunteering scheme.

160 active volunteers took part to clock up a total of 1579 volunteer hours in 2011/12; the equivalent of one full time paid member of staff. The events and training available to these volunteers ranged from conservation days and the Big Tidy Up to environmental auditing opportunities.

This year the volunteering scheme will be run by new team member Kate Arthur who has been organising a fantastic selection of volunteer opportunities and training.

Volunteering with the Environment Team is a great way for students to gain extra employability skills alongside their degree. After last year's pilot, the Environment Team will also be running the Leicester Award for Sustainability, offering students additional opportunities to be rewarded for their volunteering. This award is now full for this year.

For more information visit our webpage: www.le.ac.uk/environment/getinvolved/volunteers or contact Kate at kja14@le.ac.uk T: 0116 229 7382



Welcome to Kate Arthur

The Environment Team has gained a new member!

Kate Arthur has joined the Environment Team as the new Communications and Events Intern. Kate is a recent University of Leicester Geography graduate and will be the primary contact for the Green Impact scheme as well as organising the student volunteer opportunities. Kate is a keen rower and enjoys travelling, but is looking for a more carbon friendly way to tour the globe!



Your Environment Week is coming!

The 12th of November will see the University taken over by sustainable events.

Your Environment Week will act as the launch pad for all the sustainable initiatives running this year including Green Impact and Student Switch off and will also have loads of other activities for you to get involved with.

YEW can learn about all of the opportunities available for university students and staff to help the University become a more sustainable place to live and work. **YEW** can make a difference to your university so get involved with Your Environment Week!

Environment Team Staff

Environmental Manager: Emma Fieldhouse

e: ejf13@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 223 1439

Carbon and Energy Manager: Chrispal Anand

e: cpa4@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 252 2308

Waste Manager: Phil Ball

e: pb174@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 223 1434

Sustainable Travel Officer: Sandra Lee

e: sll33@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 252 2306

Carbon and Energy Officer: Natalie Jarman

e: nej4@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 252 5682

Communications and Events Intern: Kate Arthur

e: kja14@le.ac.uk t: (0116) 229 7382

T: (0116) 252 2453

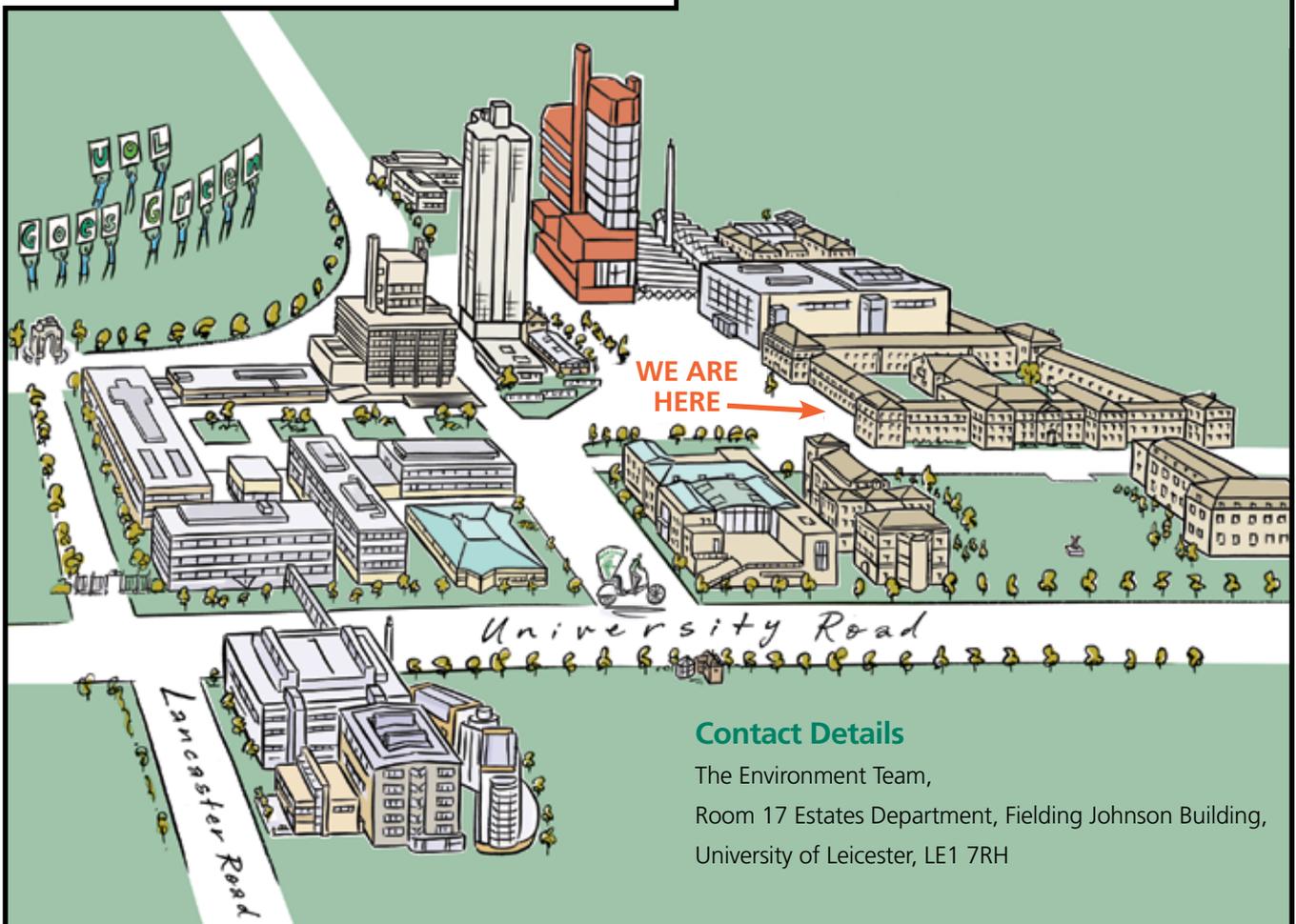
E: environment@le.ac.uk

W: www.le.ac.uk/offices/estates/environment

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Contact Details

The Environment Team,
Room 17 Estates Department, Fielding Johnson Building,
University of Leicester, LE1 7RH