



**For Information**

**Purpose**

A brief summary of current issues and activities affecting the EAUC's Wales Branch.

***EAUC-Wales Branch Developments***

Since the last EAUC Board meeting there has been one Regional meeting (AGM) held. This report details key items from this meeting (30<sup>th</sup> October 2012).

**'Biodiversity and Global citizenship'**

The meeting concentrated on the subject of Biodiversity and Global citizenship. We had two presentations during the day, the first from Dave Evans from XSNRG who gave an excellent presentation and overview of the River of Flowers project. The project, the 'river' in River of Flowers, is an evocative way of describing the planting of 'pollination streams' or 'green corridors' in order to help our pollinators, bees, butterflies and hoverflies, find forage. The project is founded and directed by Kathryn Lewin in 2008 as a social enterprise. The main theme running through the presentation was the plight of pollinating species through habitat loss and the need to share knowledge and to connect people in order to bring about change. There is scope for supporting the excellent scheme in any space and that this should not be a barrier to inventiveness (e.g. roof tops, balconies, or any small area). The critical aspect is the 4km rule, i.e. that pollinating species are able to locate other food sources within a maximum 4km range.

It was noted that Bridgend College and Coleg Gwent are already in the process of joining this fantastic scheme and the group felt that the EAUC could be the perfect vehicle to disseminate a Welsh case study and propose UK-wide support for the scheme. It was also noted that free trees are available from the Woodland Trust but warned that demand is high and that applications need to be forwarded very soon as the available stock disappears quickly.

The second presentation was from the Size of Wales project (Claire Raisen). The aim of this well established project is to raise awareness of tropical rainforest loss and the detrimental effects on indigenous people and culture and ecosystems and biodiversity. Organisations, groups and individuals are encouraged to raise funds which will be match-funded and used to save an area of rainforest equivalent to the size of Wales (2 million hectares). Every £1 raised will be match funded by another £1 (sponsored) – each £1 protects a whole hectare of rainforest. The aim is to raise £2 million; the total to date stands at £1.344 million.

Details were given of the Young Environmental Reporters award (an international award) could link with the size of Wales project and the FE/HE students could get involved.

The members agreed that the EAUC would be a good vehicle to disseminate information and gain support for membership to the Size of Wales.

**ESDGC**

JD gave a brief overview of the situation regarding ESDGC within Wales.

- a) JD introduced ESDGC in 2003 as a statutory requirement - at this stage this was completely new.
- b) The first action plan was introduced in 2006 with the ambition to meet the Wales commitment to sustainable development.
- c) Between 2007-2011, ESDGC remained within education without a 'champion'

- d) It was noticed that outside of the schools sector ESDGC was weak where there was no government and institution champion.
- e) It was noted that there is a strong link to the Sustainable Development Bill – a white paper is due at around 10<sup>th</sup> December this year.
- f) There is a strong lobby for ESDGC within the Bill

The group agreed that the Welsh EAUC group forward comments to WG regarding ESDGC within the Bill.

### **HEFCW**

HEFCW currently liaising with the Carbon Trust and universities regarding carbon management. A more holistic approach is being investigated and a focus on what does and does not currently work. HEFCW are to feed to results through to the governing bodies. A sum of 50K has been awarded to the sector to roll out behavioural change projects – ‘Green Impact and Student Switch-off’ via NUS. This is a good opportunity to think about the best way to frame and shape this work.

### **EAUC Wales AGM**

It was agreed that the current Chair, Vice Chair and secretary would continue in the role for another year. The Chair gave a report on the work of the group over the past year. Progress has been made against the Objectives and targets set. The biggest challenge is related to the current membership fee structure where some resistance is felt and the group has lost some institutions. Whilst the group has made progress with attracting FE, it was suggested that awareness of the EAUC could be gained through communication with Colegau Cymru. There are on-going significant changes with the HE/FE sector which may impact upon membership, particularly with regards mergers. A cross-college survey was mooted by KH – this was felt best carried out via Colegau Cymru.

It was felt that a stronger relationship should be developed with the Welsh Government.

The group felt that, with exception to specific speakers, that video-conferencing compromised the personal relationship which was felt to be so very important. The group recognised the need to think more about sustainable travel for meetings.

The group will continue to encourage members to sign the Sustainable Development Charter.

Academic staff should be encouraged to attend the meetings, particularly with regard to ESDGC. It was felt that individuals regard much of environmental management an estates issue.

Procurement was raised a significant theme to be addressed. If software is to be used in future, then we should learn from existing users (perhaps councils and NHS) to ensure a ‘right first time’ approach.

The compiling of a Welsh ‘directory of expertise’ was suggested and agreed to form one of the Objectives for the next year. The full Objectives and targets will be approved at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be: 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 – Theme and location to be confirmed

**Katrina Henderson**

*EAUC-Wales Branch Convener*  
26/11/12