

## **For Information**

### **Purpose**

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

### ***EAUC-Wales Branch Developments***

#### **Regional Objectives and Targets**

The Welsh Region continues to encourage all HE and FE in the region to link with the EAUC Group, we have had a significant increase in attendance over recent meetings largely from the FE sector which we welcome. We have also had a number of institutions interested in renewing/joining the EAUC. Since the last meeting we have also has an official welsh region 'jjscmail' set up which will enable more effective management of our e-mail communication within the region.

A Directory of Expertise has been developed which will allow members to share particular areas expertise with others for the benefit of all. Members are invited to review the list and place their names against one or more of the entries. The list will then be made available to members and placed on the EAUC website.

#### **Main Report**

Since the last EAUC Board meeting there has been one Regional meeting held. This report details key items from this meeting – (Aberystwth University - 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013 'Water')

Three presentations were given to the meeting. One of the Objectives of the Welsh Region is to invite an academic to speak on sustainability related research at the start of each meeting Presentation, the first presentation was – 'Flooding/floodplain contamination' - 'Centre for Catchment and Coastal Research'

Dr Paul Brewer from the Centre for Catchment and Coastal Research delivered a fascinating presentation on flooding and contamination issues. The key focus of the presentation was on understanding and appreciating the impacts of flood upon humans, food chains and the environment, with an underlying message on development on flood plains coupled with rain-flow from natural geology. Dr Brewer talked about flood within Wales, pointing out that recent, well-documented floods (200mm in a 3-day period) were not exceptional but the combination of high tides and rain flowing from the Cambrian Hills and building on flood plains, exacerbated problems. He pointed out that land development reduces the capacity of the land to 'manage' water and increases surface flow. The case study demonstrated that contamination from old mine workings (Pb in particular) had significant consequences as contamination levels in flood sediments were above safe thresholds; in fact allotments were closed and there were cases of cattle dying from ingesting contaminated forage. The physical legacy and implications for FE/HE were clear and particularly relevant for those institutions which may have land within flood plains and/or the potential for contamination issues from up-stream events.

The second presentation was from David Austin – Dwr Cymru –'Engaging with FE/HE to help reduce water consumption' (to include Trade effluent)

The focus of the presentation was on cost reduction measures for institutions via water audits, leak detection and telemetry. Dwr Cymru can provide free water audits and written reports for members. A case study on Trinity Saint David was provided as a demonstration of the significant savings which can be achieved – in this case £55K yr. David stressed the value of leak detection as a means of identifying

'hidden' and costly water loss and the benefit of telemetry as a cost-effective tool for water management – particularly as unanticipated water consumption can identify potential leaks.

The third Presentation was by Lorna Davies - Dwr Cymru (re-use of rainwater/surface water)

The focus of the talk was on reducing surface water run-off to sewer as a means of ensuring resilience within the existing sewage system. Water run-off from roofs and hard surfaces is a valuable resource and it's capture and diversion has several benefits – reducing flow to sewer and therefore reducing flood risk; reducing environmental impact when diluted sewage is directed to rivers during storms and heavy rainfall; reducing carbon emissions as less volume requires pumping through the system and reducing customer bills. It was suggested that tackling water run-off at source also provides an excellent educational resource in addition to improving amenity for all. Lorna described several projects to take place in both Cardiff and Swansea under the Green Space Wales initiative. There are clear opportunities for educational institutions to play a role in rainwater capture and use.

### **Update from HEFCW**

Discussions are taking place regarding inclusion of HE within the Future Generations Bill. HEFCW would be looking to enforce as much of the Bill as possible within HE even if HE are not included within the Bill.

During 2015/2016, HEFCW will be working closely on carbon management plans against a backdrop of the carbon management report by the Carbon Trust.

HE institutions are being asked to give utmost priority to the Living Greener project as a means of showcasing SD efforts.

An update was given on the Healthy Universities project which is delivered and supported by the Welsh Government, stating that there is minimal bureaucracy and an opportunity to share with our English partners.

### **Update on ESDGC**

An overview was provided of the main points of the recent ESDGC conference held in Cardiff and attended by Leighton Andrew (Welsh Government), Anne Keane (ESTYN) and Peter Davies. ESTYN propose to review ESDGC within FE during 2014/15 and the SD Bill (now the Future Generations Bill) with provide a framework for ESDGC. ESDGC will be within the Statutory Guidance which supports the Bill. Further, discussion around a 'passport' for ESDGC and the importance of continuity throughout education took place and will no doubt be discussed further.

The next meeting will be the AGM: 16th October 2013 – Thermal efficiency of Buildings – the question of retrofitting'.

**Katrina Henderson**

*EAUC-Wales Branch Convener  
19/08/13*