



# ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

September 2015

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## Translink Travel Challenge

We are inviting all schools across Northern Ireland to take part in this year's Translink and Eco-Schools Travel Challenge to encourage pupils and parents to make 'smart moves' towards sustainable transport. The 2 week challenge can be completed at any time of the year that suits your school up to the closing date of 23rd May 2016.

A full set of project and teaching resources for KS1 - KS3 are provided. The Challenge is a great way to focus on the transport topic and work towards Eco-School awards but more than that it is fun, healthy, social and could reduce congestion around your school gates during drop-off and pick-up times.

There are great prizes to be won for the classes and pupils who make the greatest changes towards sustainable transport and the new #Smartmovers Project prize category invites your school to submit information on a clever way they have approached the transport topic. All schools who submit results or projects will be entered into a free draw to win a trip to Dublin, courtesy of Ulsterbus, and also will be invited to the final celebration event in Central Station, Belfast, in June.

Last year, more than 30 schools, including 84 classes and almost 1200 pupils, completed the challenge which enables parents and pupils to embrace the benefits of active travel. Overall, they made more than 12,500 sustainable journeys to and from school. We would like to build on that success and attract even more participants this year.

*"More and more local schools are taking part in the initiative as an innovative way of showing young people the environmental, safety, health and cost benefits of more active forms of travel. Independent research also shows that people who use sustainable transport for the journey to and from work have a significantly lower BMI and are happier than those who opt to use private transport." Ursula Kelleher, Translink.*

For more information on the Translink Travel Challenge visit [www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools](http://www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools) Or contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) to register.



*Pupils at Lagan College make 'smart moves' with the Translink Travel Challenge*

## Win a fabulous sculpture with Eco-Schools and Trócaire's 'Go Green, Go Global' Poster Competition

The theme of this Eco-Schools and Trócaire poster competition is 'Go Green, Go Global' and it is asking primary school pupils to think about how their own daily routine could be improved to reduce their carbon footprint and lessen the impact on those countries around the world which are already feeling the harmful effects of Global Warming and Climate Change.

The competition suggests links to helpful teaching resources with which to approach the topic. It addresses the Eco-Schools Global Perspective topic which naturally links to many more Eco-Schools topics and will help you work towards Eco-Schools awards.

The winning school will be presented with the unique, bespoke sculpture, "Together We Can Build a Better World," created by local artist Gloria Perry and pupils at the Eco-Schools 20th Anniversary Celebration Event.

- The competition closing date is **Friday 16th October 2015**.

More information and entry forms can be found on our [website](http://www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools) or contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for more details.



*Right: Prize sculpture 'Together We Can Build a Better World'*

# Eco-Schools World Days of Action 2-6 Nov 2015 - Live Here Love Here

World Days of Action, held annually, is an initiative of the Foundation for Environmental Education's (FEE) International Eco-Schools programme and is designed to empower students worldwide, to be the change our sustainable world needs, by engaging them in fun, action-oriented learning.

This year Eco-Schools NI are teaming up with the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, [Live Here Love Here](#) Campaign encouraging everyone to show some love, for this place we call home, by taking part in an environmental Day of Action.

We are inviting schools to register an event and do one or all of the following:

- **Clean-Up** - tidy up your school grounds or a local grot spot by holding a litter pick event.
- **Green-Up** - brighten up a run down plot by clearing out the weeds and doing some planting.
- **Spruce-Up** - come together to tackle graffiti and vandalism by splashing a little paint around and revitalising a dingy corner.

Contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) to register for more information and a toolkit to help with your day.



**LIVE  
HERE  
LOVE  
HERE**

We are teaming up with Live Here Love Here for our annual Eco-Schools World Days of Action

**Fact: NI suffers a £40m bill for street cleaning per year**

*"We would encourage everyone to [pledge](#) their commitment today and make that one positive change to encourage people across Northern Ireland to show that they love where they live by helping out in their local communities."*

*- Dr. Ian Humphreys,  
CEO Keep Northern  
Ireland Beautiful.*

## 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 36.5million hedgehogs in Britain. It seems likely that there are now fewer than a million hedgehogs left. The biggest threats to hedgehogs are:

- habitat loss, particularly the removal of hedgerows over the last 30 years
- the use of chemicals in gardens and for intensive farming which kills the creatures hedgehogs need for food and may also poison them directly
- death on the roads

Hedgehogs prefer woodland edges, hedgerows and suburban habitats where there is plenty of food for them. Hedgehogs are very much a gardener's friend as their diet includes many garden pests including slugs, snails and mice.

Hedgehogs hibernate every year, usually from about November to around Easter, but this is much affected by the weather. Hedgehogs normally wake up several times over winter and often build a new nest made of leaves, tucked under a bush or log pile or garden shed, anywhere that offers support and protection.

Follow this [link](#) to see how to detect if you have a hedgehog in your school grounds or garden.

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)



## School news: Lismore Comprehensive girls inspired by Eco-Schools to STEM success.

Lismore Comprehensive report that Eco-Schools embedded within their curriculum has helped them to engage female pupils in STEM subjects. The school has recently been involved in numerous STEM programmes that focused on Eco-Awareness both within the curriculum and during after school programmes.

*"As a science teacher, I firmly believe there is an infinite link between Eco and STEM. The two are inseparable, a marriage between green and science, maths and technology. It is crucial that females in our communities are encouraged into these areas. Environmental education through the STEM curriculum has proven to be an effective strategy in preventing our female pupils from, dropping out of school early, and not taking up core STEM subjects prior to third level education." Olivia Smith, Lismore Comprehensive, Science Teacher.*



Pictured: Anna Kubiak from Lismore Comprehensive with her 'Global Water Project' which obtained a Silver Crest Award at the Young Innovators Sentinus Competition in June 2015.

## Delivery Partner news:

### Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Schools Environmental Poster Competition launched:

Primary 6 and 7 pupils and Years 8, 9 and 10 pupils in Secondary schools in the district can enter the competition to find thirteen "environmentally themed" posters to feature in the Council's 2016 Environmental Calendar. This will be the thirteenth edition of the calendar which has been produced since 2004. There are great prizes up for grabs. **Closing date is 16 October 2015.** For more details contact the Council directly on tel 0300 013 2233 or by email [patrick.mcshane@nmandd.org](mailto:patrick.mcshane@nmandd.org).



Ards and North Down District Council have announced a cluster group meeting date. Come along to meet your Council representatives, Eco-Schools staff and other schools for a chat and information on the Eco-Schools programme at:

**Londonderry Park Pavilion, Newtownards: Thursday 22nd October 3pm - 4.30pm.**

Contact Emma Adair for more information [emma.adair@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:emma.adair@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk).

## NI Water Poster Competition

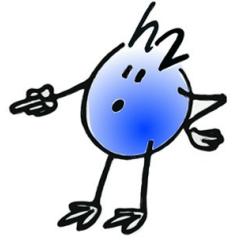
You are invited to participate in Northern Ireland Water's (NI Water) Annual Schools Competition.

NI Water provide us with clean safe drinking water delivered straight to our homes but unfortunately for some people around the world the reality is very different. 650 million people live without safe water, walking to collect dirty water from a pond or lake and carrying it back to their families. The aim of this competition is to highlight the importance of clean safe water for life.

The competition will focus on designing a poster to show the comparison of having safe water in a Northern Ireland and those living without safe water in developing countries.

The competition is open to KS2 pupils in all primary schools in Northern Ireland, with a category for Special Needs Schools. Great prizes to be won. Closing date 25th March 2016.

Contact the NI Water Education team for more information [education@niwater.com](mailto:education@niwater.com).



## Other News:

### Eco-Schools National Operators Meeting (NOM)

Northern Ireland has been selected by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) to host the prestigious international Eco-Schools National Operators Conference in November 2015 which will see representatives from FEE and the 59 countries worldwide come to Northern Ireland to share good practice and discuss the on-going development of Eco-Schools for the benefit of young people and our environment globally. As the host nation we will also provide visitors with a rich and welcoming cultural experience and will showcase some of great work being implemented in Northern Ireland's schools. We have many excellent Eco-Schools in NI to be proud of and look forward to showcasing the fantastic work of our schools to our guests from around the world.

### Green Teacher of the Year Awards.

Those of you who are familiar with the Green Teacher of the Year Awards have probably been wondering where it has gone this autumn. Fear not - the Green Teacher of the Year Awards have found a new home with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools. It will be moving to a new time in the spring/summer terms. So keep an eye out here and on our website [www.eco-schoolsni.org](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org) for more information in 2016.

### 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 on other projects from our organisation -

### Mark H Durkan pledges support for Live Here Love Here.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful staff were pleased to take part in a clean-up of Culmore Strand this month and meet Mark H Durkan, Minister for the Environment. He pledged his support to the Live Here Love Here campaign which encourages everyone to roll up their sleeves and love where they live with a clean-up, green-up or spruce-up. To find out how to get involved and pledge your support go to the website [www.liveherelivehere.org](http://www.liveherelivehere.org).

### Whitehouse Lagoon Clean-Up.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful were pleased to support a recent clean-up of Whitehouse Lagoon as part of the Live Here Love Here campaign. Rosie Watkins, a keen volunteer, organised the clean-up and has been enthusing local youth and community groups over the years to look after the lagoon where the Glas-na-Braden river flows into Belfast Lough. The site's sheltered location is a haven for seabirds and is managed by the RSPB.



On the day of the clean-up 30 people took part including Rosie's group of volunteers, the RSPB and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, who helped remove the collected

litter. The group met after high tide and were amazed to see what was left on the shore. They collected 40 bags of rubbish including 2 tyres, lots of machined wood and a bath! The weather was fine and a lot of volunteers carried on working for a further two hours proving that litter picking can be addictive when you get started. Well done to Rosie and her team for showing how much they love where they live.



## Funding Opportunities:

### Wrigley's Litter Less Campaign

The International Eco-Schools Litter Less Campaign is funded by the Wrigley Company Foundation. The campaign runs in 31 countries internationally and last year engaged over 450,000 young people.

This is the fifth year the campaign will be running in Northern Ireland through Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Eco-Schools. Due to the high interest in this campaign there will be a short application process used to shortlist schools.

There are 30 places available on this year's Litter Less Campaign with funding of £320.00 available to each school to implement a litter or waste themed campaign. The campaign will run from October to April.



If you are selected you will be agreeing to complete the following actions:

- monitor the impact you have on litter or waste in school during the project;
- organise a community event promoting your anti-litter/waste campaign;
- coordinate with another school, preferably in another country, about your project;
- report your results;
- submit 3 pictures and a short summary of your campaign;
- participate in a before and after student attitudes survey on litter (provided by Eco-Schools to selected schools).

If you would like to take part please contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for an application form; forms must be returned by **15th October 2015**.

### Cookstown Textile Recyclers - Cash for Clobber

Cookstown Textile Recycler's (CTR) 'Cash for Clobber' is a great way to raise money for your school's environmental projects. CTR will give money for the clothing they collect which is all sorted locally and either distributed to countries in need or recycled into fibers used in industry. They are the only BSI certified clothing recycling company, with strong environmental ethics at their core, which Eco-Schools Northern Ireland recommended and they have proudly sponsored our waste topic for the last six years. They also run a competition each year with great prizes for the schools who collect the most clothing per pupil.



To arrange a 'Cash for Clobber' clothing collection for your school contact CTR at [schools@c-t-r.com](mailto:schools@c-t-r.com) or phone 028 9447 8880.



### Give Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful a 'Helping Hand'

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, the charity which operates the Eco-Schools programme in Northern Ireland, has selected Helping Hand Environmental as their official environmental partner of choice for 2015 and hopes that a strengthened working partnership, with the UK's #1 Litter Clearance Hands Tools Company, will be successful as the environmental charity announces an exciting development to their partnership – a bespoke litterpicker!

Schools can buy the new litter-pickers as part of the official Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Order Form in association with Helping Hand Environmental. The scheme enables schools to purchase litter clearance equipment and generate funds for Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful every time they quote **KNIBGROUP** when placing an order with [Helping Hand Environmental](http://HelpingHandEnvironmental.com).

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