



# University of Warwick/ Coventry University Community Green Week takes Coventry by Storm (or soup)



### Profile

- Higher Education
- 24,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 6000 staff
- Campus based in rural location but situated next to urban Coventry

## About the project

### Summary

In 2017 Green Week went city-wide for the first time with Coventry University, the University of Warwick (UoW) and Coventry City Council (CCC) working together for the social and environmental benefit of the city and its surrounding region. The week has provided a platform for further collaboration, extending community partnerships and creating new networks. A new, city-wide climate change group has formed following the event.

### Project partners

University of Warwick, Coventry University, Coventry City Council, Coventry CAN (Climate Action Network), Coventry SU, Warwick SU.

## The results

### The problem

Both Universities in Coventry held a Green Week during the 2<sup>nd</sup> term of the academic year. Through talks with Coventry City Council we saw there was a desire to have a sustainability event across the whole city. This event needed to engage the public and educate people around actions they can do to make a positive difference. The event would also help to aid in the reduction in food and fuel poverty in Coventry.

### The approach

Green Week 2017 created a platform to take an area of common interest beyond University walls and into the community with the goal of engaging and including a cross section of the local community on sustainability. This has been achieved by exploiting the benefits each organisation in the newly formed partnership has been able to bring, through contacts, facilities and resources. New links have been established with community organisations, schools, residents groups and members of the public.



Green Gown  
Awards 2017



Dissemination  
supported by:

**hefce**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL  
FOR ENGLAND



## Finalist's case study



Communications about the event were managed by the City Council to ensure the community and city wide theme were at the heart of the initiative.

### Our goals

To bring the Coventry population together and educate on how to make a positive difference in the city and on climate change as a whole.

### Performance and results

A positive outcome has also been the formation of a new strategic partnership with representatives from both Universities and Coventry City Council (CU, CUSU, UoW, WUSU, Warwick Volunteers, CoventryCAN, Coventry City Council) to develop the programme and 27 community partners participated in events. This is already leading to further city initiatives and collaborations.

The range of activities spanned both Universities and the city itself, engaging with as many community organisations and sections as possible. These included:

- Four community-based volunteering activities impacting 4 areas of the city; Hearsall, Gosford Park, Charterhouse and Spon End with 70 student volunteers and 15 community-based volunteers worked together to make a noticeable difference to the area. 3 skips full of waste were collected.
- Community Green fairs held at both universities and the city centre involving 35 differently themed information stalls with 27 local organisations involved, attracting over 400 people.
- 35 schools engaged in the 'Plastic Fantastic' competition, with packs given out. 8 finalists are now at the judging stage for their 'Plastic Made Fantastic' exhibitions. This has strengthened University outreach into schools, and interest in sustainability for the younger generation.
- 244 students took part in formal and informal learning events including lectures and interactive discussions based on the Whole Earth Exhibition which was located in the public domain at Coventry University.
- 33 volunteers were involved in debating and planning UN policy at the Model Summit. This had a live video stream through the City Council's website.
- The city centre 'Disco Soup' event gave out 140 litres of soup to Coventry residents with information on reducing food waste by using leftovers.
- Sustainability societies at Warwick University opened their doors for evening lectures on climate change, a sustainability-based Fashion Show, and allotment events.
- The week engaged various departments such as Conference Centres at UoW who ran a Forest Clean Up event for a local patch of woodland.
- A well-attended Sustainability Market was held in the city centre at the weekend to make sure that as many people were engaged as possible.
- The week was advertised through posters, online, social media and local radio.
- First termly Swap Shop hosted at UoW.
- All Student Meeting voted that the SU move away from disposable cups and work with pharmacy to stop selling cosmetics tested on animals.



Green Gown  
Awards 2017



Dissemination  
supported by:

**hefce**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL  
FOR ENGLAND



## Finalist's case study



On campus further outcomes have been achieved with 3,000 reusable coffee cups being distributed at the University of Warwick and on a joint theme Coventry University launched its new coffee cup recycling scheme.

The event has also created an opportunity for students from both universities to work together with the common goal of societal benefit. They have gained valuable employability skills through planning projects, marketing events, forming new relationships and a greater understanding of citizenship.

An event of this nature is pioneering for the sector and demonstrates the overall benefits we are able to bring to the community and society as a whole through working in partnership. Following our lead, the model created in Coventry is now being replicated by Worcester University and Worcester City Council, creating even more communities working together and demonstrating shared practice. The programme deliberately targeted new practices and initiatives to bring Coventry together through a joint cause, engaging cross-sections of the community and interest groups, educating all involved about the actions they can take to make a difference.

### The future

#### Lessons learned

We learnt that events like this need to be planned further in advance and include more people as well as have as much advertising as possible at an earlier time. There are many people out there that wish to make a difference and are willing to get involved in this type of event. Working together we can make an impact.

#### Top 3 learnings from implementing your project

- 1 Work together! Joining forces = greater impact.
- 2 Know your audience and goals and run events accordingly
- 3 Inclusivity: involve others from start to finish

#### Sharing your project

We have communicated about this project through University publicity channels as well as through the EAUC. We also plan to use video footage to advertise the next Green Week in March 2018.

#### What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

'It's wonderful to see our Coventry community working with us to improve sustainability in our local area. I look forward to seeing our partnerships grow stronger to the benefit of Coventry, our University and our wider region. A Green Gown Award is a great way to recognise this beneficial partnership.'  
Vice Chancellor and President of the University of Warwick, Prof. Stuart Croft



Green Gown  
Awards 2011



Dissemination  
supported by:

**hefce**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL  
FOR ENGLAND



Finalist's case study



'Winning the Green Gown award is a testament to the people and institutions who have come together in creating a city wide Green Week; working with and within the community for the benefit of Coventry as a whole.'

Professor John Latham, Vice-Chancellor & CEO, Coventry University

### Further information

[www.warwick.ac.uk/environment](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/environment)

<https://www.facebook.com/GreenatCU/>

[www.greengownawards.org.uk](http://www.greengownawards.org.uk)

Delivered by  
**eauc**