

Green Impact Project Case Study

Recycling Project: Saving waste from landfill

Background

Institution: University of Sheffield

Team Name: 317 36

No. of years participating in Green Impact: First year as a team

Highlights

- Established collection of “unrecyclable” waste by signing up to several Terracycle programmes
- Saved over 8kg of waste from landfill and 211 ‘units’ at 2p each raised £4.00 for a local charity
- Worked with colleagues from 3 other buildings to boost collections
- Invested in bins to improve long-term sustainability of collections

Description

Collections

When we did an initial survey of colleagues in July 2018, recycling came out top and unanimously as the project for the year. We set out to collect “unrecyclable” waste through the Terracycle programme. [Terracycle](#) takes materials and recycles and reuses these to make new products. We initially set out collecting for around 7 different programmes. Towards the end of the year we realized this was too many and now have reduced our focus to 3 key collections in each building. We hope that through being focused we can improve our staff understanding and boost collections even further.

In total we have saved over 8kg of waste from going to landfill through these collections. Terracycle has a points programme where above a level, 2 pence is earned per unit. Some of our shipment qualified for this (approximately 211 Terracycle ‘units’) and amounted to £4.00 which will be donated to a local Sheffield charity.

Wider reach

Early on, we contacted other Green Impact teams within the local vicinity on campus. There were several within the New Spring House building and so they jointly collect waste to add to our Terracycle shipments. This was collected on foot and brought to our buildings, adding no extra emissions to the collection! We also had an idea to approach the Students’ Union Nursery as we suspected they would use a lot of wet wipes with 2 baby rooms in their building... we were correct! There were over 200 flexible plastic packets saved from landfill, contributed mostly from the colleagues at the Nursery.

We are no longer collecting writing instruments for our own programme collection – the Students’ Union Volunteering team appealed widely for these and now we contribute towards this programme via their larger collection.

Establishing collections

We have invested in sturdy bins to aid collection and promote the programme more visibly within our buildings. The Terracycle collections will be ongoing and we’re looking to find more colleagues to collect with us in 2019/20.

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Self Assessment

Team Engagement: 5/5

Reach: 8/10

Creativity: 5/5

Impact Measurability: 10/10

Proportionality: 5/5

Replication: 5/5

Legacy: 4/5

Outcome: 5/5

TOTAL: 47/50

The team was very involved with this project and it sparked enthusiasm for the unusual plastic items that could be collected. Getting wider buy in from other teams was excellent and we would like to increase reach in the future. At the time of starting, it was a unique project idea, now there are other Terracycle collections starting across the University. In the future, it would be good to link these up more for reciprocal collections.

We aimed to set up collections and promote these and we are very pleased with the outcome of sending off a significant amount of waste to Terracycle, proportional to our department size. It was a successful project that could be easily replicated to a smaller or larger extent in other departments or teams. It has great impact measurability as you can count items or measure waste by weight, as well as the Terracycle points collected. This measurability has also been good for motivating our staff to keep collecting!

