



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

McClay Green Impact Team Pop-Up Book Swap Project

Case Study

February 2018

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1. Introduction

As part of the Green Impact initiative in the 2017-18 academic year, the McClay Green Champion Group decided to begin a Special Project that would see the permanent Book Swap Collection rolled out to public areas across campus in a Pop-Up Book Swap Campaign.

The concept was first raised by a member of the Green Impact team, Megan Corrigan, in one of the monthly team meetings. An excerpt from the notes of this meeting in October 2017 demonstrates this, as well as clearly achievable goals for the project:

Book Swap

The Book Swap Promotion could take place during Recycling Week 20-24 November.

MC suggested using the event to publicise the creation of a series of small, localised libraries around the campus which would both promote the main collection and encourage staff and student wellbeing. This could entail creating mini-book swap libraries on the shelves in University cafes. SM would ask Junction 1 if they would be interested in participating and GL speak to the Manager in Hope Café.

Action SM & GL

Another suggestion was the construction of purpose built boxes to house small collections of books for swapping around the campus. This would be looked at.

Action SB & MC

So the goals of this project were clearly set at the start:

- To raise awareness of environmental sustainability to staff and students in the University by highlighting the importance of reuse and recycling through sharing used books.
- To have a positive impact on the local community who use public spaces in the University by providing them with a space to access and contribute to the recycling of used books.
- To encourage staff and student mental health and wellbeing by offering light reading and fiction to offset the academic nature of their studies.
- To raise awareness of the permanent Book Swap collections which are in the McClay, Biomedical and Medical Libraries.
- To encourage collaboration across the campus with food outlet managers and managers of other public spaces.

Having established the idea, a small group from the Green Impact team volunteered to work on the project and make it a reality. This Project Group was made up of five members: Irene Bittles, Sally Bridge, Megan Corrigan, Gillian Laverty & Suzanne Mulholland. The group

started to meet in early November 2017 with a view to launching the book swaps by December in order to catch the students before they broke up for the Christmas vacation period.

2. Preparation

With the team established it was time to start planning the project and putting our work into action. Having considered our objectives and the name ('Pop-Up Book Swap'), we then created an Action Plan (see Appendix A) and began to work through it.

2.1 Locations

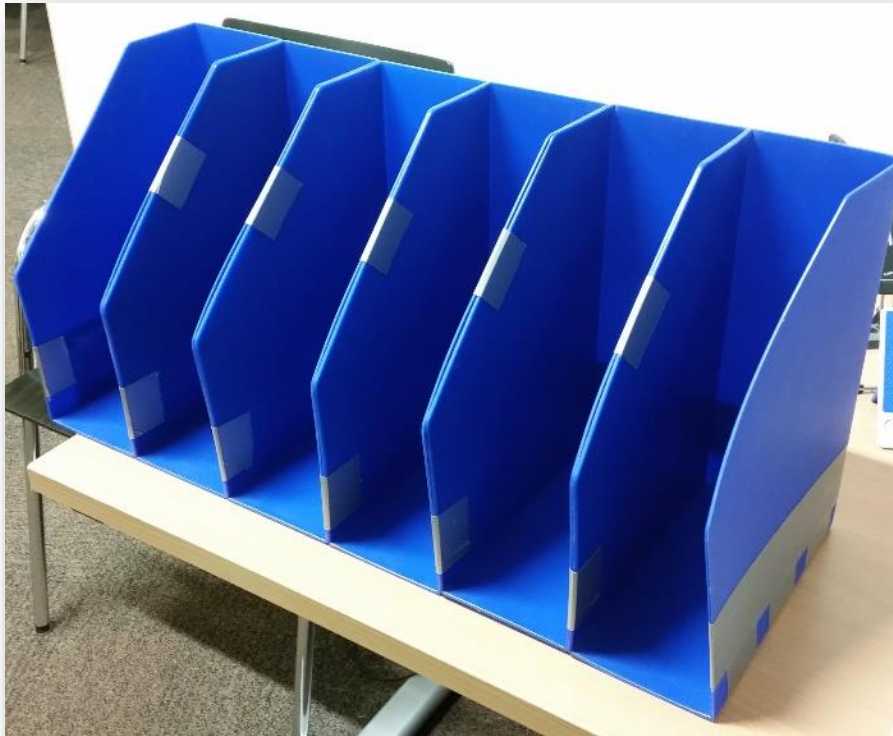
The first thing we did was to contact a number of public spaces across campus to gather feedback on if a pop-up book swap area would be acceptable and to see if there are any resource implications in terms of shelving. Of the five areas contacted, three were happy to have the Pop-Up Book Swap installed in their premises. These were Hope Café, Junction and the PEC Café.

The latter had purpose built bookshelves already in place that they were happy for us to use. Junction identified a window ledge next to an established area for posters and fliers that would be suitable for a collection of books. Hope Café wanted to set the books on a high table where people stood waiting for their orders. The space was not being properly used and so was an ideal location for a collection of books. This led to our first obstacle – how to display the books on the table.

2.2 Shelving

Our first move was to see if there was any funding available for the Special Projects from the Carbon Management Team. We knew this would be unlikely, but thought it worth a try. Then, with recycling in mind, we decided to ask if any of the other Green Champion Teams would have any small counter top shelving which we could have. The Carbon Management Team sent out a request on our behalf and we got a few offers of shelving and bookcases (see Appendix B). Unfortunately, the shelving was too big for our purposes but we appreciated the team spirit involved from all of the Green Impact Teams who responded.

We then became more creative and decided to build our own counter top shelving using old document boxes and a lot of duct tape. This exercise in recycling and reusing was very effective and left us with the sturdy solution for a bookshelf in Hope Café. All we needed now was a good collection of books to fill it and the other pop-up locations.



2.3 Books

While we had plenty of books to use from the permanent book swap collection in the McClay Library, we were keen to gather a fresh batch in for the Pop-ups. This would give us an opportunity to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of recycling books to our colleagues across Information Services. We therefore created a new poster, which was displayed in each of the staff kitchens in the Library asking for donations of books:

This gave us a good assortment of books to fill the shelves. We next turned our attention to how to raise awareness about the project through different promotional channels.

Too many books at home?



Have a pre-Christmas clear out
and support the McClay
Library book swap.

*On the 3rd floor you can bring any books to
Suzy or Irene*

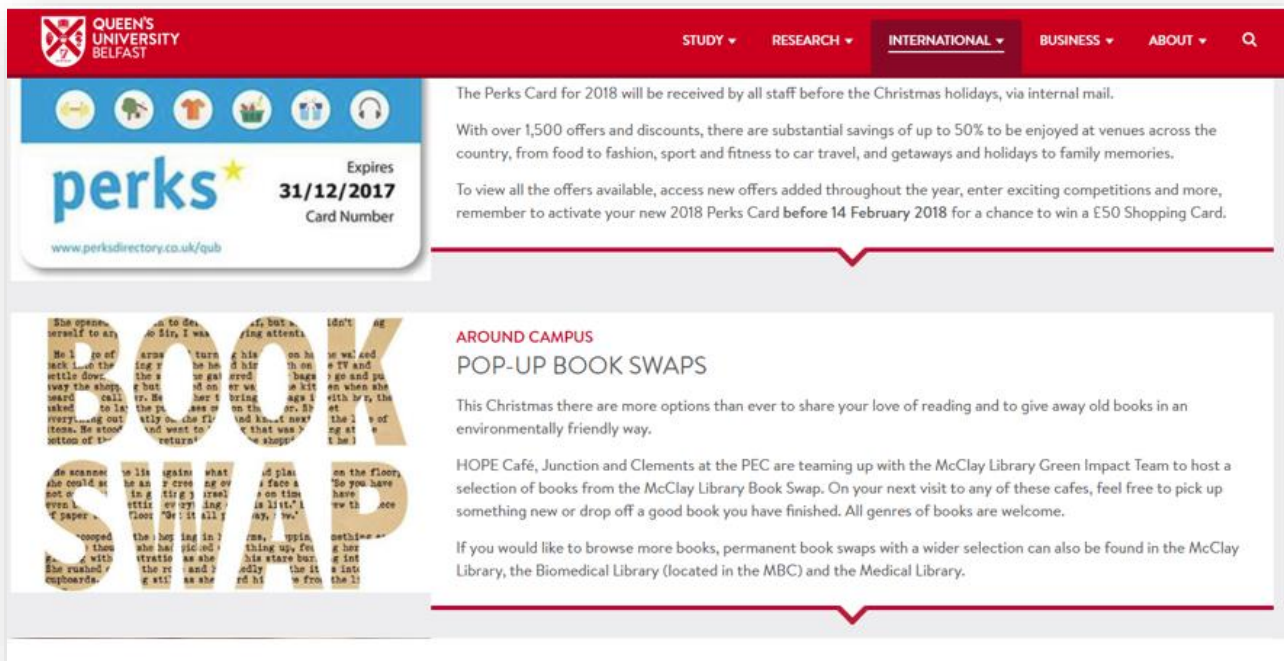
2.4 Promotion

We wanted to create an interest in the project before the launch, so that we could again encourage people to bring in books, but also so that they would start looking out for the pop-up collections. We also wanted to reach as many staff and students as possible so we used a number of different methods of promotion:

- Social Media, using both Twitter and Facebook and IS and Library accounts to maximise our publicity:



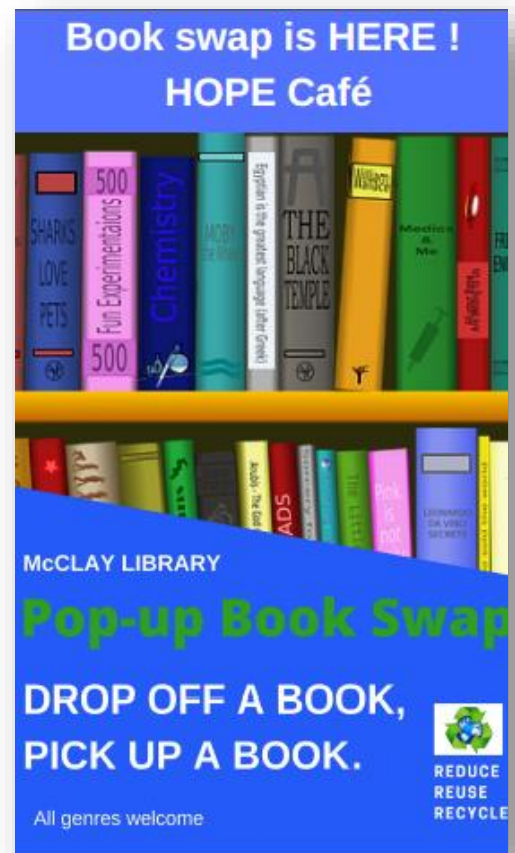
- We advertised on Staff Round-Up to attract as many of Queen's staff as possible to engage with the project and to raise awareness about the permanent book swap collections in Libraries across Campus.



- We used promotional leaflets at events leading up to the launch – such as the Book Swap promotion during Recycling Week



- We also distributed leaflets at proposed venues in advance of the launch and created flyers which were distributed at each location:



- Finally, bookmarks were produced to go into books to be swapped which highlighted the more substantial collection in McClay and other Library branches.



3. Launching the project

On a snowy Friday morning in December, we launched our pop-up book swap project in Hope Café, Junction and the PEC Café. We met on 8th December in the morning with bags, bookmarks and flyers ready to go. We loaded up our bags with books that were donated following the book swap drive the previous week. We supplemented these with some books from the permanent collection in the McClay Library. We then braced the snow and the wind and set off to spread out our message!

First stop was Hope Café. The café owners were delighted with the recycled books shelves that we had made and they gained pride of place on the high table across from the café counter. Once loaded up, the shelves very much looked the part, particularly after we had hidden the unsightly gaffer tape with our leaflets:



We put our bookmarks into the books and spread out our leaflets before moving on to the Junction café area.

Here we struggled to find a central location which would catch the eye of passers-by. We finally decided to locate the pop-up on a window ledge next to a location already used for flyers and promotional material. Using a couple of book ends to hold them up, the end effect was engaging and we hoped that people would start to use the shelves:



Our final location was in the PEC Café, so with hoods up, we braced ourselves for the walk across Botanic Park and arrived with our collection of books. This location was very suitable for the Book Swap as there were ready-made shelves in place, which we were previously used for children's books and magazines. The café owners had agreed to us using one of these sets of shelving for our pop-up book swap. We quickly set up our books and put up posters next to the shelves. We also distributed a number of flyers around the café. As this location was heavily used by both QUB and local community members, we were hopeful that this would be a successful pop-up location. We thought it looked very good anyway:



4. Maintenance

Although, the book swap shelves should be self-managing, with people taking and replacing books to keep the collection alive, we felt that we would have to do a bit of work at the start to ensure that there were enough books available at all times.

In the planning stage, we had initially thought that we could each have responsibility for one area which would be monitored and re-stocked regularly. However, with the pressure of our daily workload, we found that it was better to schedule book swap visits, where we all took new books to the collections together. This meant that we could properly dedicate time to the project and all participated in it as a group. This ensured that no one felt the responsibility of maintaining one site alone. It was also much more fun this way, leading to a great sense of team spirit and achievement.

We continued to promote the pop-up book swaps through the usual social media channels and even got the Carbon Management team to engage with and promote the service:



5. Evaluation

We decided to evaluate the effectiveness of the book swap by photographing the shelves each time we visited to restock them. That way we could compare the books which were on the shelves before and see which had been removed and which had been added to the collection. As can be seen from the PEC collection, three shelves of books were reduced to just two shelves over a matter of weeks:



This pattern was replicated in each location. The majority of books were taken from the shelves, leaving around a third on the shelves before we refilled them. Only a handful of books had been added to the collections from people using the book swaps.

From evaluating the use of the pop-up book swap collections it can be concluded that, in a public area, people are more likely to help themselves to books on display than return/swap them. However, it is worth revisiting the goals to see if the project has been a success

- *To raise awareness of environmental sustainability to staff and students in the University by highlighting the importance of reuse and recycling through sharing used books.*

It is clear that the book collections have all been used throughout the duration of the project. The shelves were also clearly on display, so even those who did not engage with the books, would have been aware of the initiative. The promotional material would have been seen by many, thus promoting awareness of environmental sustainability.

- *To have a positive impact on the local community who use public spaces in the University by providing them with a space to access and contribute to the recycling of used books.*

As each location is open to the public then it can be assumed that they also engaged with the project and took the opportunity to access and use recycled books.

- *To encourage staff and student mental health and wellbeing by offering light reading and fiction to offset the academic nature of their studies.*

While it can be assumed also that staff and students gained some benefit from using the facility, it can certainly be said that participation in the project was good for the mental health and wellbeing of the Green Impact Team members who set it up!

- *To raise awareness of the permanent Book Swap collections which are in the McClay, Biomedical and Medical Libraries.*

These collections continue to be actively engaged in and any promotion through leaflets and social media alerts, are beneficial to maintaining this

- *To encourage collaboration across the campus with food outlet managers and managers of other public spaces.*

The project allowed us to build up a good working relationship with each of the catering establishments who were all very keen to be part of the project and to continue with it in the future.

6. Lessons Learnt

The project team were a little disappointed with the one-way nature of the engagement with the book swaps. We had hoped that people would engage more fully and leave more books at the swap locations as well as taking them. In hindsight, it was not realistic to think that they would be as successful as the permanent book swap collections. To use these, people have to go out of their way to find them, and so are more likely to engage with them by bringing in their own used books. These permanent spaces are well established and are therefore fully self-maintained.

The principle of recycling in this project was successfully implemented and the books have been reused. However, unless the locations are allowed to become better established then the project is probably not sustainable in the long term. This would mean continued involvement of the Green Impact Team and a continuous supply of books to maintain the shelves. The project team will continue to monitor the pop-up shelves over the coming months and make a decision over the summer vacation period about whether to continue with the project in the long term.

7. Top Tips

- Consult the weather forecast before implementing your project – trudging across campus, carrying heavy books, without a hood is not comfortable!
- If you need equipment for your project, ask for help first from your Green Impact colleagues. This is a great way of getting into conversation with these teams across

campus and, even if they weren't able to help, we heard about their books swap initiatives and were able to promote our own projects to them.

- Get creative and think outside of the box. Simply using old document folders and a bit of gaffer tape created a strong and workable solution to our problem of no shelving in Hope Café. The shelves are still going strong:



- Use your Carbon Management team for help and support. They can put you in touch with other people across campus and also boost your publicity drive. From working on this project, the McClay Green Impact Team have been consulted by a couple of other teams and have given advice on the best way of setting up a book swap in their areas.
- Have fun! Enjoy the challenge of a new project and the chance to work with colleagues and team members in a way which takes you out of your normal, everyday routine. Your project should benefit others, but participating in it should be beneficial to you too!

8. Appendix 1: Project Plan

Pop-Up Book Swap Project Action Plan

November 2017

Group Membership

A small team made up of members of the McClay Green Impact Team:

Sally Bridge, Irene Bittles, Suzy Mulholland, Megan Corrigan, Gillian Laverty

Objectives

- Widen awareness of book recycling by locating small books swap shelves in public spaces throughout the campus.
- Promote environmental awareness and the benefits of recycling to staff, students and visitors to the University
- Raise awareness of the main book swap collection in the McClay Library
- Improve mental health and wellbeing by encouraging people to pick up a book.
- Encourage collaboration across the campus with food outlet managers and managers of other public spaces.

Actions

- Choose and target potential public spaces to gather feedback on if a pop-up book swap area would be acceptable and to see if there are any resource implications in terms of shelving. Each target area should have a contact name and email address for future correspondence:

Space	Contact details	Agreed	Resource requirements	Initial contact person
Hope Café	Joan	Yes	Book shelf required	Suzy
Junction Café	Se and Cathy	Yes		Suzy
Students Union				Gillian
PEC		Yes	Book end – book shelf already available	Megan
Student Guidance Centre		No – already doing a project there		Irene
Ashby Cafe		Not a big enough venue		Irene

Action: Suzy, Megan, Irene, Gillian

- Discuss the project with Estates Carbon Management team and assess the possibility of receiving funding to purchase bookshelves for the project.

Action: Sally

- Following a discussion with the Carbon Management team which confirmed that there was no funding available for Special Projects, the group decided to approach other Green Impact Teams across the University to see if anyone had any small bookshelves which may be used for this project.

Action: Sally

- In order to ensure a good collection of books there could be a new call for books in the Recycling Week events email, plus a promotion of the Book Swap Collection in the McClay Library during this week.

Publicity

Anticipated publicity would be via a number of channels:

- Social Media – Library and IT
- Staff and, possibly, student round-ups (**Irene** to investigate if this is possible)
- Carbon Management Team promotion
- Leaflets at events leading up to the launch – such as the Book Swap promotion during Recycling Week
- Leaflets at proposed venues in advance of the launch
- Bookmarks in books to be swapped highlighting the more substantial collection in McClay and other Library branches.

Action: All

Maintenance

Each team member will take responsibility for one area and will go to the facility at least monthly to check on the shelves and to replace some of the books with different ones from the main book swap collection.

Action: All

Launch

In order to have a good few months of the project in advance of the Green Impact submission, the team agreed that the launch for as many sites as possible should be mid-December. This would be when the students are winding down for Christmas and before they leave the campus.

Action: All

Evaluation

Where possible photographs should be taken at each visit to the shelves which can be compared with previous visits to assess the success of the project.

Action: All

Follow up

Once up and running – Estates should be contacted with an update of the project and photographic evidence of the sites along with an assessment of the process so far.

Action: Sally

Case study

A case study of the project should be compiled in February 2018 ready for inclusion in the Green Impact Workbook Submission in early March.

Action: All

9. Appendix 2: Carbon Management call for Shelving

From: Carbon Management
Sent: 28 November 2017 09:30
From: Carbon Management
Sent: 28 November 2017 09:30
Subject: McClay Library Pop-up Book Swaps - Help needed

Dear All,

The McClay Library Green Impact Team need your help to Launch a series of pop-up books swaps across the University campus.

Full details included below.

Any support would be greatly appreciated.

Best wishes,

Jamie

Green Impact

McClay Library Pop-up Book Swaps - Help needed

Hi

The McClay Library are hoping to branch out with their book swap this year and start pop-up book swaps in a variety of locations across campus. This will include café's and shared spaces such as the Students Union and the Guidance Centre.

We have made a few contacts and the feeling is quite positive. However, one stumbling block may be where to locate the books in these areas. While some have a great nook already in place which ideal for a pile of books, others are in need of some sort of shelving.

In true Green spirit, we thought we would ask to see if any of you would have a small unused bookshelf which we could have? Even a single shelf book case would be great.

Just drop me a line if you have anything that you think might be suitable. Fingers crossed....!

As always, feel free to come along and browse our growing bookswap collection in the McClay Library.

Best wishes

Sally

This resulted in the following offers of help:

