

Greenlight Gateway celebrate a crushing success

The young people and volunteers of Greenlight Gateway have a lot to celebrate this week with the movement of their first ton of baled aluminium to Belfast. The aluminium cans have been crushed by newly installed technology purchased through The Fair Share Programme which compresses the metal into compact bales.

The young people have been involved in this innovative initiative since April 2005 and previous to receiving funding had used a manual crushing device. Although the project will continue to use the manual crusher, the new mechanical device compresses the cans into compact bales which are easier to store.

Project manager and volunteer, Ann McIlroy commented:

”Having this machine is making such a difference to our programme. Before we were only able to move half a ton of cans at a time. By transferring them in a more compact form allows for easier handling and storage. Greenlight Gateway can now produce

their own bales and sell it directly for recycling which will be more lucrative for the community business.”

Greenlight Gateway has further developed their recycling and regeneration project by linking with Ballycastle Community Development Office and Northern Neighbourhoods Health Action Zone (NNHAZ). With this support they have been able to secure £40,000 through the Fair Share Programme. As well as the purchase of the can crusher the funding will be utilised to encourage the local community to become involved with young people with learning disabilities to look at the ability and not disability through this recycling project. The initiative will involve the Moyle District Council area with special emphasis given to the Knocklayde and Glentaisie wards. The importance of recycling will be highlighted and how this can improve the environment and have a positive effect to help maintain Moyle as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Joe and Margaret Reid, parents of Michael who is a young person involved in the project commented that:

“We never thought that we would be able to say that our son Michael was going out to work. This project has offered him 2 days

in a work environment where he is an intricate and valued part of a team.”

Parent, Mary McCracken said:

“It has been good for Ian in helping to develop his interpersonal skills, challenging him to try new experiences in a supportive and encouraging environment”

Jayne McConaghie, Support Officer NNHAZ added:

“NNHAZ recognises that there are many factors outside the formal health services which affect health and well-being within our communities. Our living environment and how we look after it is becoming a crucial factor in determining the state of our planet in the future. This recycling programme is not only making progress in reducing the amount of waste but is also very importantly giving young people with complex disabilities the opportunity to contribute to this agenda, learn new skills and reduce prejudice towards disabled people.”

If anyone would like to offer to help with the project by volunteering some of their time, or would like to contribute clothes or aluminium cans to the project, please contact; Ann McIlroy 07711727063

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Health Action Zone

1. NNHAZ is a community led partnership initiative that aims to improve the health and social well being of people and communities living within the Northern Health and Social Services Board area. NNHAZ currently operates in 14 neighbourhoods within the Northern Health and Social Services Board area.

The 14 NNHAZ areas include:

- Antiville (Larne Borough Council area)
- Armoy (Moyle District Council area)
- Ballee (Ballymena Borough Council area)
- Ballycastle (Moyle District Council area)
- Ballysally (Coleraine Borough Council area)
- Bawnmore (Newtownabbey Borough Council area)
- Craigyhill (Larne Borough Council area)
- Glebeside (Ballymoney Borough Council area)
- Glenfield (Carrickfergus Borough Council area)
- Longlands (Newtownabbey Borough Council area)
- New Mossley (Newtownabbey Borough Council area)

- Parkview & Riverside (Magherafelt District Council area)
- Ratheen, Greenvale & Sullenboy (Cookstown Borough Council area)
- Rathenraw (Antrim Borough Council area)