



# Green Living

YOUR NEWSLETTER FROM THE GREEN  
TEAM AT VARCITY LIVING

SEPTEMBER 2021 •



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## WELCOME TO GREEN LIVING

Hello and welcome to Green Living, a virtual newsletter with a focus on sustainability. At Varcity Living we've always been eco-minded, but in the past year we've taken active steps to improve our green practices and mitigate our impact on the world around us.

Part of this process has been establishing our own Green Team, who take the lead on new green initiatives and work towards achieving our green objectives throughout the year.



## What we've achieved so far



Our Green Team was established last September and since then the team have been hard at work, trying to establish new practices and spread awareness of environmentally-friendly ways our staff can operate.

We have a paper light policy in both of our offices, meaning we only print what is essential. However, the two types of things that were still being printed regularly included invoices and payslips. For this reason, replacing this system with a virtual one instead was one of the first things the team looked at and achieved towards the start of 2021. We're now happy to report that our accounts team no longer have to print either of these types of items off, saving massive reams of paper from being wasted.

Once this was accomplished we looked towards our mask problem. With the coronavirus pandemic it became the norm for our staff to wear masks on a regular basis and one of the first types of masks we turned to – like many others – were disposable ones. This is something we wanted to move away from and so we sourced and purchased reusable masks for all our staff members – complete with Varcity Living logo!



Throughout the lockdown at the start of the year we introduced challenges for our staff, with litter picking included. You can see evidence of some Varcity Living families out on their own walks and proudly showing off what they've collected! We have also introduced a policy whereby our plastic cleaning bottles that are already in the offices are refilled in the future, rather than being tossed, so that we can work towards ending the chain of constantly buying plastic products.

Finally, in June we organised and oversaw a recycling collection point in an empty office space across from our College Road office. Tenants leaving properties were encouraged to leave any items they no longer wanted there, to be recycled, repurposed or sold on to a new owner by local charity Crest. You can find out more about the impact of this on page 6.

We'll be continuing to work hard towards improving as a business, to establishing newer and greener methods of working and to hopefully working alongside our tenants to improve our local environment for the better. You can keep an eye on what we're up to on our social media pages:



@varcity\_living



Varcity Living - Student  
Accommodation Bangor




@Varcity Living



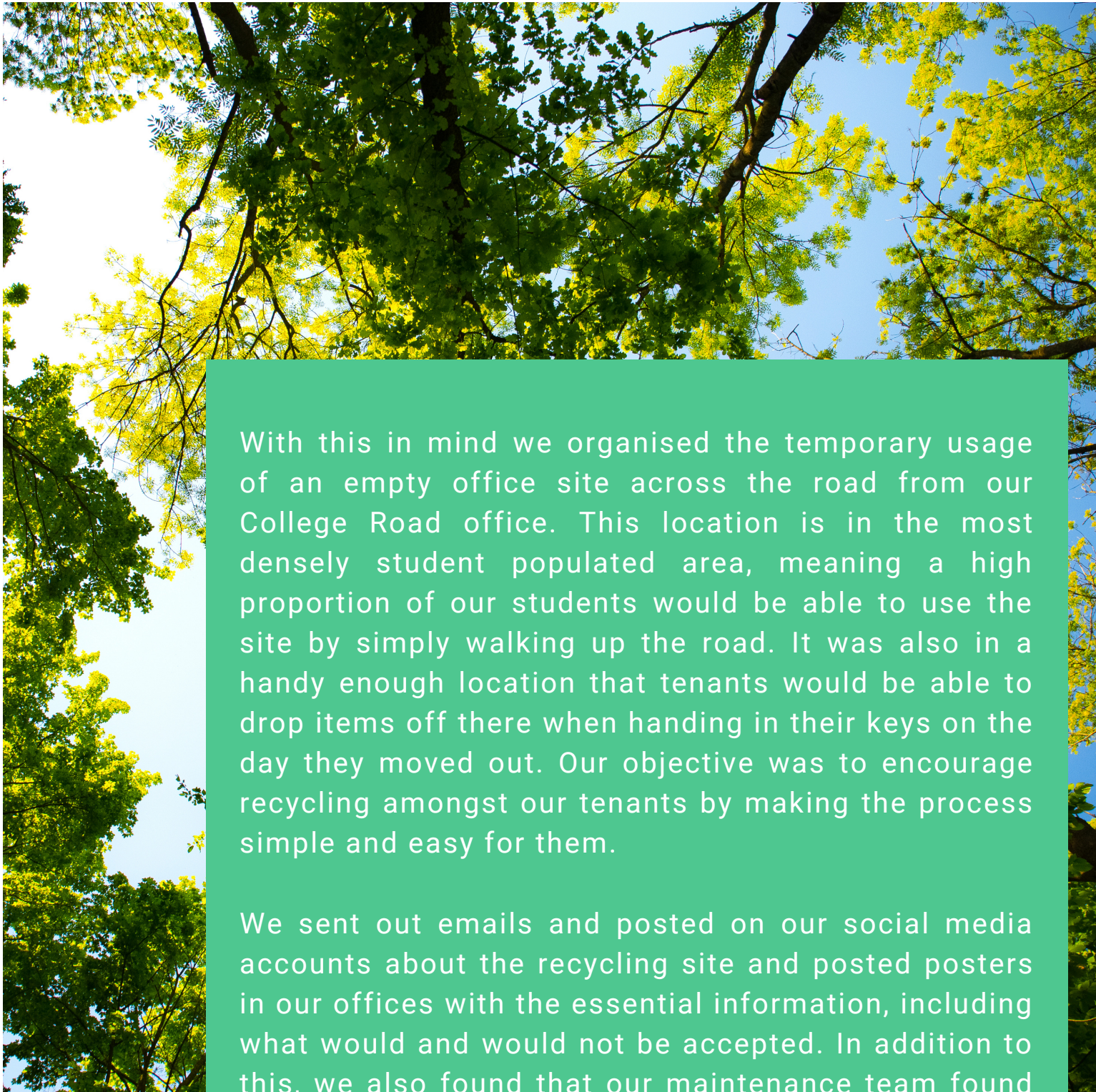
## Our recycling site

Moving home is tiring work and many students have to do it every single summer, meaning it gets old, quickly! Unfortunately, because of how taxing this process is we often have many students leaving items behind in the properties they're moving out of, or binning or tipping items that could be given a new lease of life with a different owner.



We thought that perhaps one way we could help to close the circle on this would be if students had an accessible location whereby they could easily drop off items they no longer wanted or needed.



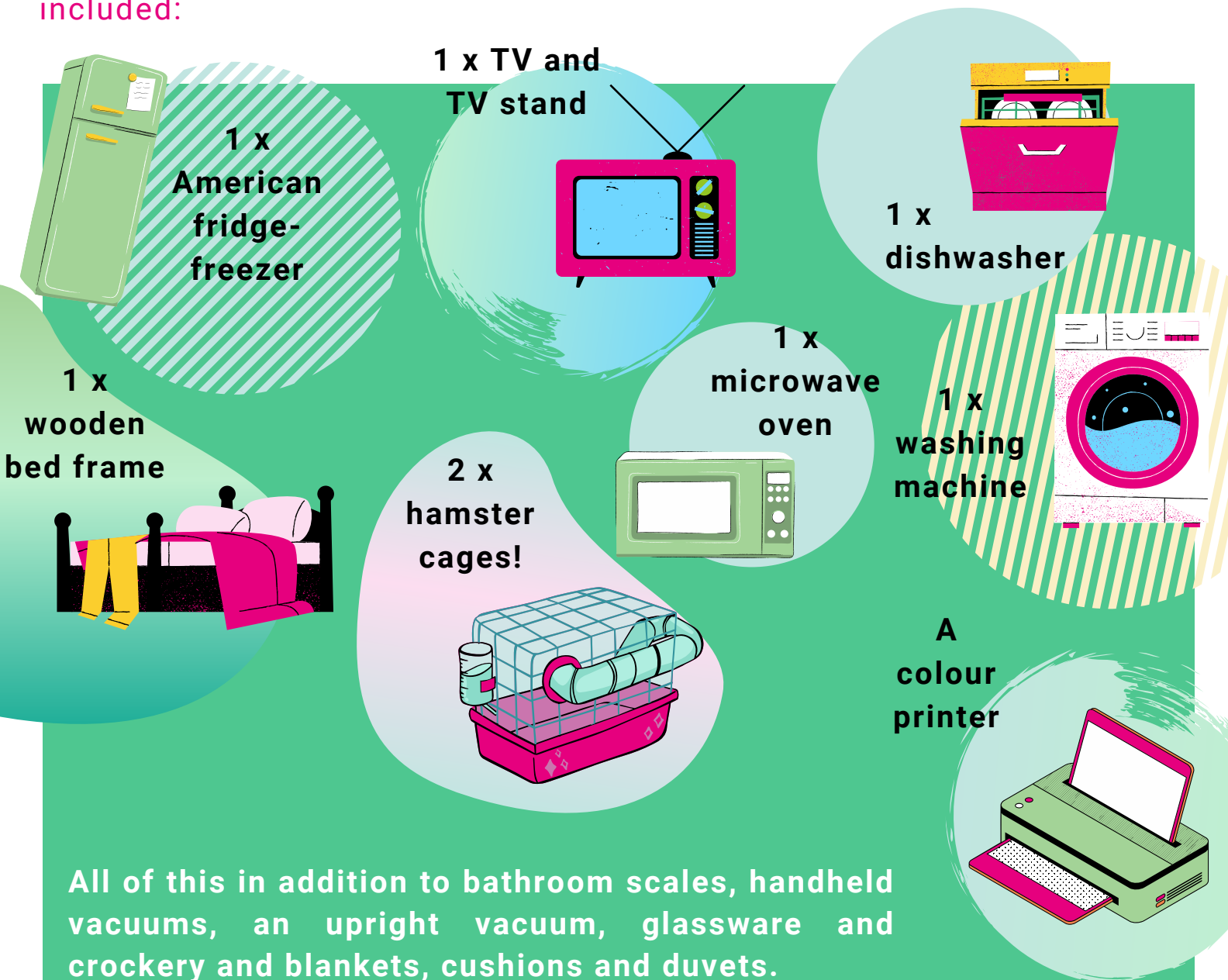


With this in mind we organised the temporary usage of an empty office site across the road from our College Road office. This location is in the most densely student populated area, meaning a high proportion of our students would be able to use the site by simply walking up the road. It was also in a handy enough location that tenants would be able to drop items off there when handing in their keys on the day they moved out. Our objective was to encourage recycling amongst our tenants by making the process simple and easy for them.

We sent out emails and posted on our social media accounts about the recycling site and posted posters in our offices with the essential information, including what would and would not be accepted. In addition to this, we also found that our maintenance team found the space useful as they were able to take old furniture and white goods there, which otherwise would have been taken to the local tip for efficacy's sake.



We were aided in all of this by local charity Crest, who made multiple trips to the site to remove all the items that had been left. In total we helped to eliminate three van loads of items from being binned and this included:



Some of the most common items recycled - so many we couldn't count! - included various kitchen items including rice cookers, pots and pans, mixing bowls, cutlery and utensils. Finally, small furniture items proved popular to recycle, and this included coffee tables, side tables, stools, bookcases, chests of drawers and tallboys. If you're in need of these it may be worth checking with Crest or your local charity shop before buying brand new!



# Local charity Crest



You may have heard of local charity Crest before, especially as they have recycling collection points in Bangor. They run a number of community retail stores, as well as a recycling hub, and work alongside the local community to repurpose preloved items.

In addition to all of this they are also committed to helping disabled and unemployed people broaden their skillset and gain employment. The charity's mission is 'unlocking people's potential through inclusion, innovation and enterprise, for the benefit of our community.'

Crest aided us in our recycling site which we ran throughout June and in to July, by collecting and repurposing the items that were left there. We will also be working with them going forward for property renovations, such as when we need to recycle old furniture or when we need to source new items for a property.

In addition we will also be turning to Crest when we need new white goods for a property as they stock a range of new and reconditioned electrical goods which means we can either help to give a new lease of life to an item, or purchase something new from a charity where the money will make a big impact.

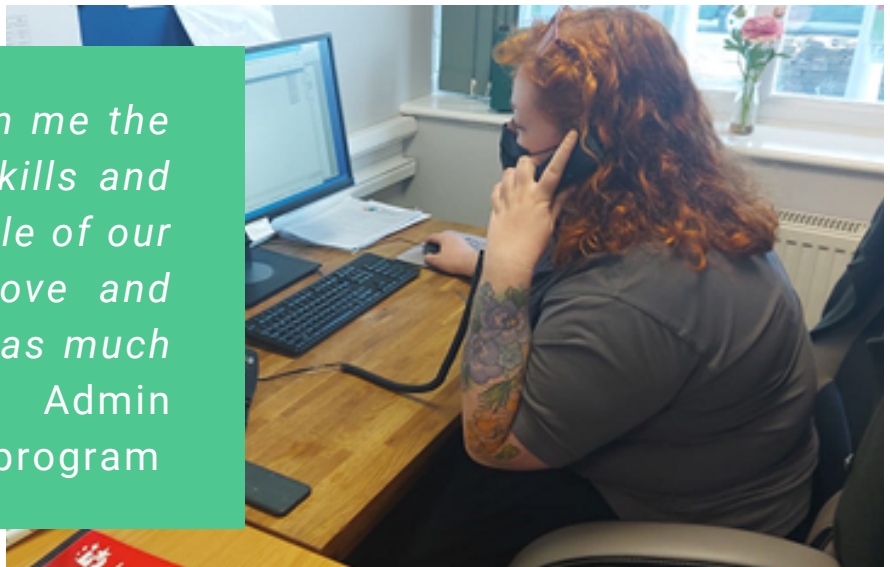


## Some notices from the charity

### Ready to Kickstart young people's careers!

At Crest we are proud to be supporting the government Kickstart scheme, which offers 16-24 year olds on Universal Credit an opportunity to learn new skills in a paid position for 6 months. To learn more please contact Steve on 01492 596783 or email [steve.pugh@crestcooperative.co.uk](mailto:steve.pugh@crestcooperative.co.uk)

*"Working at Crest has given me the opportunity to learn new skills and literally help the good people of our community[...]Crest go above and beyond to help individuals as much as they can." - Amelia, Admin Assistant on the Kickstart program*



### Learn DIY Skills!

Got good DIY skills or want to learn? We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help build flatpack furniture, repair wooden items that would otherwise go to waste and learn new skills! If you've already got the abilities, help others learn! All for the better of your local community.

Crest's facilities are perfect for enhancing your skills and the furniture you repair. They're also COVID safe and have risk assessments in place to ensure your safety. By joining Crest you'll make new friends, socialise, improve your mental wellbeing and have the opportunity to enhance your skills and your CV. Travel and lunch expenses can be reimbursed. Interested? Please call Steve Pugh on 01492 596783 or email [steve.pugh@crestcooperative.co.uk](mailto:steve.pugh@crestcooperative.co.uk).



# Recycling information for Bangor

Stuck on how to recycle in this area? Don't worry we're here to help you in your quest to become an expert eco-warrior!

In Gwynedd you will be provided with six bins in total. This includes a large green bin, which is for unrecyclable waste, a small brown indoor bin for food waste, a large brown outdoor bin for food waste, and three blue outdoor bins all clearly marked to show that they should be used for either paper and card, plastic and tins, or glass. Recycling bins are collected on a weekly basis, whilst your green waste bin will be collected on alternate weeks. To check your bin schedule you can head to:

**<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Residents/Bins-and-recycling/When-is-my-waste-collected.aspx>**

You can find further information on how to recycle and just how incredibly important this is by reading our Tenant Green Onboarding PDF, which can be found here:

**<https://www.varcityliving.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/08/Tenant-Green-Onboarding12860-1.pdf>**



## UPCOMING GREEN EVENTS

**September 17th-26th**  
Great British Beach  
Clean 2021

**September 20th-26th**  
Recycle Week

**September 25th**  
Litter picking events  
throughout Bangor

**October 4th**  
No Disposable Cup Day

**October 8th**  
International Clean Air  
Day

**September 18th**  
Bangor Green Week begins -  
various events with further info  
here:  
[https://greatbiggreenweek.com/  
events/bangor-green-week/](https://greatbiggreenweek.com/events/bangor-green-week/)

**September 22nd**  
World Car Free Day

**October 1st**  
World Vegetarian Day

**October 7th**  
World Habitat Day



# How to get in touch with us

We hope you've enjoyed your first Green Living newsletter and found information in it that's useful and relevant. We'll be writing to you again once the festive season is in full swing, but in the meantime we'll be working hard on various new green projects both for now and throughout the academic year.

From cutting down on single use-items with our Fresher's Fayre stand (outside our College Road office!) to staff litter-picks we're hoping to come up with new and exciting ways for Varcity Living to improve and build upon its green credentials.

## Got some ideas for us?

We're still pretty new to this, and for our Green Team, this is the first time that any of us members have been at the helm for an eco-friendly objective. With that in mind we're aware that there's plenty we need to learn. If you have any ideas for us, think there's something in particular we could improve on or would even like to see how you can get involved with our green efforts - or how we can get involved in yours! - then we would love to hear it.

The best way to get in touch is to email Leigh Horan-Jones, the head of the team. Her email address is [leigh@varcityltd.com](mailto:leigh@varcityltd.com).

Speak soon!

*the green team*  
*xoxo*

