



## Sustainable Places Projects: Place based approaches to environmental education

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The place-based approaches to environmental education project explores the impact of efforts to nurture environmental learning within experiential contexts. It is led by Sustainable Places Research Associate, Dr Ria Dunkley.

Environmental education encourages learning about environmental systems. In particular, it is concerned with encouraging more sustainable interactions between the human and natural world. Related fields include Education for Sustainable Development and the more progressive field of eco-pedagogy.

This research project explores the burgeoning field of place-based approaches to environmental education, in urban and rural contexts including within botanical gardens, eco-attractions, national parks, city parks, nature reserves and wetlands and arboretums.

The project seeks to explore novel place-based pedagogic approaches notably, the utilisation of citizen science and experiential learning. Ultimately, it seeks to uncover the meaning of environmental learning experiences within the lives of participants to provide understanding of the value of environmental education.

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## Recent Studies

- **Exploring the motivations and experiences of environmental citizen scientists:** A comparative study of two citizen science projects (Funders: PLACE 2014-Present).
- **Citizen science in informal environmental education** (Student internships: CUROP 2015; PLANET EUROPE 2015).
- **Spot-a-bee:** A citizen science project to identify plants most visited by bees in Cardiff (Funders: Santander, in collaboration with Professor Les Baillie, Cardiff School of Pharmacy).
- **BBNP: Proximity to Nature:** The role of Brecon Beacons National Park in young people's Everyday Encounters with Nature and the Environment at BBNP (in collaboration with Dr Thomas Smith, Cardiff School of Geography and Planning).
- **Using innovative technological methods to understand the role of Apps and mobile technologies in people's interactions within the outdoors,** in collaboration with Dr Thomas A Smith, Cardiff School of Geography and Planning (2015-Present)
- **Building evaluative capacity amongst outdoor learning practitioners:** enhancing user experience understanding through place-based research methodologies, January 2016 -December 2016 (ESRC Impact Acceleration Account, co-applicant).
- **Informal learning in Botanical Gardens** (Department of Education – 2010-2011; European Social Fund 2010-2011; Sustainable Places 2014-2016).
- **The Campus as a Living Laboratory** – exploring place-based learning approaches to Education for Sustainability (2016-2019 – European Commission: SUSPLACE - Marie Curie Actions Training Network; 2013-2015 – Funders CUROP, Warwick-Monash Alliance 2013-2014, HEA 2014).
- **Sustainability, Place and Memory (Environmental Humanities Network),** 2015 (GW4 2015).
- **Sensing, sense-making and sustainable place making:** an arts & social science collaborative network, 2013 (Funders: AHRC).

## Project information

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