

Sustainability Board – September 2016

The Students' Union Report



New Green Team Co-ordinator

Tom Ball has joined the Students' Union at Uwe as the new Green team Co-ordinator, we are thrilled to have this role filled and new energy and ideas to help us reach more students and shape exciting student-led projects. Tom joins us from BedsSU where he was the Green Hub Coordinator.

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Officer Induction

On Monday, 11th July 2016 the SU at UWE hosted a workshop run by NUS to support the new officer team in developing their understanding of sustainability and connecting their manifestos to topics relating to sustainability.

The workshop covered the following key sections:

1. Understanding sustainability
2. Why sustainability matters to students, SUs, & NUS?
3. Education for sustainable development
4. Behaviour change
5. Campaigning
6. Sustainability across the student experience
7. Action planning

Participants were asked to reflect on their own experience on their course. By moving across the room from one side meaning “strongly agree” and the other side meaning “strongly disagree” students demonstrated and discussed their personal experiences at UWE in relation to the following statements.

1. My course helps students to develop ESD skills (critical thinking, systems thinking, communications, interdisciplinary understanding, etc.)
2. My course promotes students' understanding of social justice, ethics and wellbeing in relation to their course and how these relate to ecological and economic factors
3. My institution views sustainability and social responsibility being embedded in the curriculum as a top priority
4. Students at my institution have a say in how, and what, they learn

To understand the skills students want, and expect, to develop during their degree, they were asked to draw their “ideal” graduate. The values, skills, and attributes they described were:

1. Adaptability
2. Teamwork
3. Equity
4. Articulate
5. Supportive of LGBTQ+ rights
6. Questioning
7. Critical thinker
8. Thinking outside the box
9. Fights for what they believe in

10. Caring
11. Well-informed
12. Strong research skills
13. Vocal about what needed to change
14. Activist
15. Fun
16. Good mental health
17. Bright ideas
18. Open-minded
19. Accepting of others

At the end of the workshop, we asked each officer to complete the sentence “sustainability is important to my role as XXX because...”. The following are their responses:

- “Sustainability is important to my role as VP Sport and Health because students should be able to participate in sport without being faced with issues like inequality and should be encouraged and made aware of healthier lifestyle choices – e.g. cycling.”
- “Sustainability is important to my role at VP Societies and Communications because by being involved outside of the formal curriculum, it helps students understand the social implications of sustainability as well as the environmental ones.”
- “Sustainability is important to my role as VP Education because it is important to embed into the curriculum, what we offer as a union, and how we empower students to lead positive change into the future.”
- “Sustainability is important to my role as VP Community and Welfare because I want to embed these changes into the future of the union.”
- “Sustainability is important to my role as Community and Welfare Officer because our students deserve a community at UWE that is inclusive and is accepting of all religions, nationalities, cultures, abilities (mental and physical), sexuality, and course.”
- “Sustainability is important to my role as President because I am a leader and I came here to make a positive change!” One of Ahmd’s objectives is around encouraging students to cycle to their campus.

Green Gown Awards

The Student’s Union has been shortlisted under the ‘Student Engagement Category’ and will submit the second stage of applications by 8 September and then look to create the video for the awards evening.

Green Team September Events

13TH / **BUSK FOR THE PLANET** / Grass outside Q Block / 11:00-13:00

Listen to some chilled out acoustic tunes from the UWE Live Music Society. During the event, The Green Team will be collecting donations for local environmental charity, Groundwork South. Pay what you can afford! <http://www.groundwork.org.uk/sites/south>

15th / **GLENSIDE GREEN GATHERING** / Glenside Students’ Union / 11:00-14:00

Visit us at the Glenside Students’ Union to make some upcycled tie dye t-shirts! We have limited supplies of charity shop t-shirts so drop in earlier rather than later. Feel free to bring along your own item of clothing if you would like to tie-dye it. Please wear old clothes as we will be using clothing dye.

19th / **RECYCLE ROADSHOW** / **Frenchay Halls of Residences** / 11:00-15:00

Bemused about bins? Confused about compost? The Green Team will be on the road, visiting your halls with recycling games and Amazon.com voucher prizes. Look out for our stall! *We will be surveying students with some simple recycling questions after they complete the recycling game. This will give us a small sample of student recycling data.*

20th / THE GREEN TEAM GATHERING / SU1 / 17:00-19:00

This will be the first Green Team Gathering of the academic year. We will be introducing the Green Team Staff, running through existing green team projects and also generating ideas for future initiatives. This is where the change begins!

21ST / COMMUNITY GARDEN SESSION / SU1 Reception / 13:00-15:00

An open drop-in session to get involved with the Community Garden, where you can help grow some organic fruit and vegetables. This session is suitable for newbies and more experienced gardeners.

29th / THE GREAT GREEN DEBATE: Will the impact of Brexit help or damage the environment? / SU1 / 17:15-19:00

The UWE Debate Society are hosting a ground-breaking sustainability debate event in collaboration with the Green Team. Join us to discuss the issues surrounding sustainable development and question how we can create positive impacts for future generations. *We will soon be calling for UWE academics to fill the opponent and proponent teams (teams are a mixture of staff and students). It will be a great chance for students to enter into detailed sustainability discussions with academics.*

Green Impact Accreditation

The criteria for this accreditation has been updated, and released on 26 September for organisations to sign up. This strand of work will be led by the Students' Union Building Manager, Donna Prince. There is a new pot of NUS funding (pilot until Dec 2016) for "£750 for every new partnership a union develops in their community." We are exploring a bid to this fund.

Compostable Cups

We will soon be able to offer our customers a compostable cup as an alternative to the Starbucks-branded paper cups currently in use at Glenside and Frenchay SU bars. The compostable cups are currently being designed to include our logo and a sustainability message, and the UWE Waste team have been consulted. We will also continue to sell re-usable bamboo cups, as well as increasing the "own mug discount" to 20p. The Students' Union hopes that this will set a trend the University can follow in due course. It would be worth understanding the amount of coffee cups used at all the catering outlets across the campus sites to assess the impact this shift could make.

Community Garden

The Community Garden held a big celebration event at the end of May for all the amazing work students have done on the garden and our GreenSpace project! This involved nutritious local food from a student enterprise, bird box making for our local woodlands, music and of course gardening! Over 30 people attended and we even persuaded Steve West, Helen Lloyd-Wildman and Jane Harrington to come and see our achievements!

The Community Garden has then gone on to hold monthly Action Day sessions throughout the summer and involved lots of staff as well as students. We have bought new tools for the garden and

we are about to install a new gate for the garden to improve access for incoming students and create a more welcoming environment!

Green Capital and Change Makers

The Green Capital: Student Capital Project has finished the main delivery stage. We rounded it off with another successful Green Mingle event on 2nd June, celebrating all the amazing Change Makers from this year and showcasing their hard work to the Bristol green community! Our students have also been involved auditing the project and telling the wider HE green sector about their projects at the EAUC conference!

Bristol Big Give

Students were involved in spreading the message about giving unwanted items to charity rather than landfill at the end of term! We gave out treats and information to students across campus and helped to collect many tons worth of clothes and homeware! We then held a Big Sort Out at the end of term and have restocked our Swap Shop products for the new academic year!

14001 Stakeholder Meeting

The SU Presidents, Green Team Coordinator and Buildings Manager met with the UWE Sustainability Team to discuss the Students' Union's relationship with the University's in regards to the new push for the ISO14001 environmental management 2015 standard. It has been informally recognised that The SU at UWE will be a key stakeholder the 14001 process. This will enhance the ability of the student body to feed into decision making opportunities during 14001.

The SU Presidents delivered initial feedback from the student body, describing what they expect from the University in its sustainability commitments and environmental management strategy. The feedback discussed: bolstering active travel/exercise facilities, a green belt to protect green spaces and increased biodiversity on campus.

Collaboration with Residences Community Coordinator

The Green Team Coordinator and Residences Community Coordinator (Philippa Moore), have kick-started a number of initiatives to engage and educate students living in university halls about sustainability. The two community team staff members will be supporting the new university scheme 'Reduce the Juice' by promoting key messages through SU channels. They will also be integrating waste/energy data into the Hallslife points system, which draw on competition to stimulate behaviour change. In addition, the duo will be running a Recycle roadshow to engage students with recycling, and an upcycling craft afternoon to get students thinking about the production/waste cycle of their fashion items.

GreenSpace

GreenSpace were involved in our celebration event in May and have benefited from the new bird boxes which we hope to mount in the autumn term. We held a small action day in June to help litter pick in Sims Hill Community Woodland with staff from Boeing. One of our students was also showcased at the South Glos Green Volunteering Celebration with her fantastic photos of conservation volunteering which have been blown up to create new, fresh publicity! Plans are in place for more exciting woodland conservation for the 2016/17 and we already have a handful of experienced Project Leaders in place.

Food Waste Pilot

We're currently working with other SU staff and a student to pilot a food waste scheme, turning vegetable food waste from local supermarkets into soup which can then be given out to students. Key stakeholders from the student body, union staff team, and UWE catering team met recently to

discuss the development of an on-site food waste café. The UWE Catering Manager communicated that the food waste café staff would need to ensure a very high standard of food hygiene and safety to meet H.O. regulations. The café plans to source its food waste from the local Foodcycle initiative, who can deliver vegetables straight to the campus. These vegetables can then be made into soups and frozen. These soup portions can then be reheated and served to offer a more stable service to the UWE community. It has been decided that a trial of the food waste café will be delivered during the Big Green Week in October, with more regular café dates tbc once the food waste frameworks and procedures are more established.

Fresh Fish Fridays

We have started to purchase fresh fish through one of our suppliers. The fish is sustainably sourced, caught the day before we receive it, and turned into a Friday Fish Special in the Frenchay bar.

Vegetarian/Vegan Food

As well as improving the vegetarian options on our main menu in the SU Bars, and improving the information on the menus, we'll also be doing more vegetarian and vegan specials at the Frenchay and Glenside Bars, alongside the already strong offer at Bower.

The Frenchay Coffee Shop will soon be selling fruit smoothies, and the Full of Beans Coffee Cart will have a frozen yoghurt stand added to our offer this year.

Action Days

At the end of May we rounded up a fantastic year of Action Days with the Big Beach Clean, near Weston-Super-Mare! This involved 19 students making a big difference by cleaning a local coastline and learning a lot about marine litter and how they can help teach others to reduce the impact on marine wildlife. Community organisations have been contacted and have provided opportunities/dates for possible action days for the 2016/2017 academic year. The next step for the Green Team is to map out the schedule of action days for the year and decide on which organisations will receive this volunteer support, with an aim to hold the first action day in October.

Online Democracy

The Students' Union at UWE has recently reviewed its democratic structures and how it engages with its members. After thorough research and a democratic vote a new online democratic model was chosen so that any student anywhere can submit an idea online that other students can vote for. This will reduce the amount of paperwork and printing but also is a move forward for accessibility for all students to engage with The Students' Unions democracy.

New SU Shop Manager

The Student's Union at UWE are currently recruiting for our Commercial Manager (Shops and Retail), after this appointment has been made, we will continue conversations with Vicki Harris around Fairtrade & cleaning materials and more.

Student Media/Social Media

We are currently in discussion over the use of the Green UWE page/s and perhaps having trained students as admins.

Big Green Week

Tom Ball and Thomas Haines (Sustainability Officer 16/17) are working closely with Vicki Harris regarding events in October. The Students' Union will re-run the survey launched last year for our NUS Responsible Futures bid, exploring student opinions around sustainability.