

SUSTAINABILITY BOARD REPORT

November 2022

The logo for The Students' Union at UWE is a white triangle pointing downwards, containing the text 'THE STUDENTS' UNION AT UWE' in red. The background of the entire page is a red geometric pattern of overlapping triangles.

**THE STUDENTS'
UNION**
AT UWE

THE STUDENTS' UNION SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER 2022-2023

Welcome to Amber Robards (they/them), our new Sustainability Officer and chair of the Sustainability Committee. Amber is a second year Environmental Management BSc student and also President of Vegan Society), Amber's manifesto: "I will represent you to the best of my ability, helping with campaigns for student ideas and pushing for change when in meetings. I'm a second year Environmental Management student who has a passion for providing students with healthier, greener food options, reducing waste and making the campus rich in biodiversity. It would be an honour to work with students and university staff to turn UWE into a more sustainable, happier place to be."

After the success of their oat milk campaign last year (campaigning for The Students' Union to offer plant-based milk at no extra cost), Amber has been campaigning around plant-based food on campus, working with campaigners from external organisations such as Plant Based Universities, Veganuary and Forward Food Programme.



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE 2022-2023

The Students' Union at UWE have recruited 12 committee members for this academic year, their profiles will be on our website shortly. Committee members are receiving a suite of training, including campaigns training to support them in deciding their specific theme they would like to run a campaign on this academic year.

Initial activity that has already taken place:

- Attending a talk at the M-Shed together for a social to visit the 'Think Global: Act Bristol' exhibition about the climate crisis, followed by a talk called, 'Are we doing enough to combat the climate crisis?' and they are already planning their next social activity.
- Two committee members are working with Abbie Basketter (UWE Energy) and Faith Terry-Doyle (The Students' Union Student Sustainability Engagement Coordinator) to campaign for mandatory climate education at UWE.

SOS-UK GREEN IMPACT ACCREDITATION

The Students' Union at UWE has been awarded Excellent ranking for Green Impact Students' Union 2021-22. This is the highest level you can achieve. We are also delighted to announce that The Students' Union at UWE are the winners of a GISU Special Award for "The Highest Scoring Students' Union", for the sixth year in a row!

38 Students' Unions participated in the programme this year and showed great ambition and commitment for sustainability. Green Impact is a sustainability and social responsibility programme run by Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK). Through participating in Green Impact Students' Unions (GISU), SUs demonstrate how they continue to lead on sustainability initiatives.

GISU gives a framework for organisations to improve their year-on-year sustainability performance, improving policy and partnerships, undertaking campaigns and improving their operations.

Our SOS-UK Auditor said:

“The level and breadth of the work completed at The Students' Union at UWE is extremely impressive. It is clear to see that sustainability is at the heart of everything they do and a key driver in their strategic plan. The work they have done around fashion, period poverty, action on sustainability week and engagement of students this year are great examples of the work you have completed. Congratulations to all involved, your passion shines through.”

Rania Regaieg, The Students' Union at UWE President, commented: ‘I’m so proud to be leading an organisation that proves it takes responsibility to drive forward change in the face of the climate and ecological crisis seriously. We relish making a positive impact on students, the local community and the environment. We would like to thank our students and staff for their passion and hard work to drive forward projects and innovation’.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL IMPACT (DAI) ACCREDITATION

UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE are the first University partnership to receive a national Drug and Alcohol Impact Accreditation. Drugs and Alcohol Impact was launched by the National Union of Students and SOS-UK in 2020 in order to embed social norms of responsible drinking on university campuses, and refocus the conversation on drugs towards reducing harm, and building healthier, safer, more productive student communities. We’re pleased to announce that after joining the pilot cohort of the programme in November 2020, the UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE partnership have achieved the SOS-UK’s Drug and Alcohol Impact Accreditation.

One student auditor said, ***“I believe the work is crucial to the welfare of students and young people in Bristol, and will have impacts on physical, psychological, and institutional wellbeing.”***

Another student auditor said, ***“I enjoyed seeing how passionate members of staff were about the Drug and Alcohol impact scheme.”***

SOS-UK’S RESPONSIBLE FUTURES ACCREDITATION

[Responsible Futures](#) is SOS-UK's supported change programme for a whole-institution approach to embedding sustainability in learning. Network learning amongst partnerships (institution and students' union or equivalent) is a key element of Responsible Futures – and Host Partnerships play a leadership role in this. To be considered, an accredited partnership needs to be willing to share their best practice and learnings and support other partnerships’ development and achievement of the RF accreditation.

The Students' Union are delighted to announce SOS-UK’s 2022-23 Host Partnerships are University of Derby and Union of Students and University of the West of England and The Students' Union. This year, the Host Partnerships will contribute to upcoming support afternoons covering Partnership Working for Responsible Futures (6 December 2022) and Employability and Education for Sustainable Development (16 March 2023) as well as deliver webinars sharing their good practice on an area of their choice.

“UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE are proud to be a Responsible Futures Host Partnership for 22-23. We are strong supporters of the Responsible Futures scheme and are keen to help it to further promote education for sustainable development within FE and HE. We will be

seeking accreditation for the fourth time this academic year and hope very much to share our experience of working closely and effectively together to develop opportunities for students to learn about and practice sustainable development. We look forward to working with other Host Partnerships to deliver a range of events and workshops for the wider FE and HE sector.” *University of the West of England and The Students' Union at UWE Responsible Futures Partnership*

COST OF LIVING

The Students' Union at UWE have [created a range of support options](#) that go beyond signposting to support projects, across all campuses for both staff and students. These cover food, clothing, transport, and period products.

Bike Loan Scheme

We've also received a hugely positive response to making the cost of hiring a bike free! Currently all the bikes are reserved and being distributed to students. We will undertake a survey at the end of the year to understand the impact of this scheme.

Period Stalls

To support our students during this cost of living crisis, The Students' Union at UWE are providing free period products to all UWE Bristol students.

We have been running a weekly stall at every campus site for students to collect Natracare (plastic free) single use products.

We are also providing students the opportunity to sign up to a free sustainable period product trial! The options available are reusable period underwear, reusable tampon applicators, reusable pads, and menstrual cups. They can handle example products on the stall and ask us any questions about how to use them, and sign up for their free product to try.

We held an environmental workshop as part of Green Fortnight to support students who would like more information about switching!

[More information on sustainable period products available here.](#)

If students get caught short when on campus, we currently have free single-use products available in The Students' Union toilets and are working with UWE Bristol to supply more in the toilets across all campus sites.

Swap Shops

The Students' Union at UWE are running clothing swap shops across all campus sites. We were delighted to partner with the History Society to run a very success Clothes and Book Swap event. We have also launched a [Placement Uniform Swap Shop at Glenside](#), running weekly.



WELCOME

The Sustainability Induction Video

The Students' Union at UWE and UWE Bristol have created a new video that outlines our collective commitments and goals and how all UWE Bristol students and staff can play a crucial role. This video has been viewed 560 times on YouTube from the start of term. In addition, through academics and the work of UWE's Sustainability Team in inductions, we have also showed the video to 540 – 850 students. This video therefore has reached well over 1,000 students with positive responses and feedback to help us evolve the video series in the future.

Green Team Events

The Green Team delivered a whole range of sustainability events and activities in Welcome at all three campus sites and across the city:

- Community Garden Social and Herb Planting at Glenside and Frenchay
- Clothes and Book Swap at Bower and Frenchay (we continue to run these regularly)
- Charity Shop Crawl on Gloucester Road – collaboration with LGBT+ Society
- Nature Walk at Bower around Ashton Court – collaboration with Hiking Society
- Sustainable Food Tour on Gloucester Road
- Green Team stalls at all three campuses – spoke to lots of students and got many signed up to the newsletter and gave out free Sustainable Living Guides. You can pick up a free guide at The Students' Union reception at Frenchay.

Socials and herb planting sessions in the Community Garden.



GREEN FORTNIGHT 2022

Vicki Harris and Faith Terry-Doyle have coordinated over 40 events to happen during Green Fortnight, from Monday 31 October – Sunday 13 November. We have been very pleased with quality and quantity of engagement we've had this year from students and staff getting involved in Green Fortnight, every session has had a fantastic turn out.

The events took place across all three campus sites and covered a whole variety of topics. A taster of what has been offered is below:

Talks and workshops:

- The BBC and the climate crisis
- Passivhaus, UWE's new eco-accommodation
- Just Stop Oil
- Sustainable period products
- Vegan pizza making workshop

Drop-ins and activities:

- Dr bike free cycling check ups at all campuses
- Energy forums
- Sustainable and ethical careers
- Nature poetry at Bower
- A trip to the COP27 Mass Mobilisation protest in Bristol
- Litter pick and nature walk with Hiking Society
- Litter pick starting from Frenchay campus
- Sustainability tour
- Green Team themed global café with UWE Global

Sustainable fashion:

- Clothes mending at Bower and Glenside
- Charity shop crawl
- Sustainable fashion workshop
- Clothes swap at Bower and Frenchay

Community Garden

- Installing a Wildpod at Frenchay Community Garden
- Juneau community art project drop-in at Frenchay Community Garden
- Glenside gardening session

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND CAKE

The Students' Union are supporting the Environmental Management BSc course leader and students to run sessions to combat increasing levels of climate-related concern and anxiety. This is embedded as a course activity (timetabled for students across all year groups of Environmental Management), and in addition is open to all students who may also be feeling eco-anxiety.

The sessions focus on fostering community cohesion between students and offer a place where students can come together to talk about their feelings arising from the climate crisis in a relaxed and social setting. There will also be the opportunity to hear about inspiring stories and actions individuals can take. We are running them monthly, and our feedback from the first session was excellent, with 100% of those who came saying they enjoyed or really enjoyed the session. We are excited to see how this grows over the coming year! See below for an infographic about the programme created by a student:

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND CAKE

A MONTHLY MEET-UP ORGANISED BY BSC ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

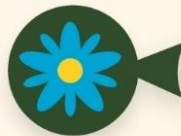
ALL STUDENTS
WELCOME



This year we are proud to be offering a series of monthly Climate Cafes and a chance to connect with other students about climate change.



The idea is to have monthly meetings where everyone can come together.



Sessions will be themed and will involve guided discussion, opportunities to share thoughts and feelings and hear from experts and guests.

Connect Students

Providing a space for students to share inspiring and positive experiences or their worries and anxieties. In turn, creating meaningful bonds between one another.



Shared Experiences and Actions



A space for discussion to share thoughts, experiences and positive actions we can take. Connecting with others across subject areas and year groups.

Climate Concerns



Climate concerns can often be overwhelming and can bring about negative emotions. These monthly opportunities will allow space to share and discuss actions, potential projects and coping methods.

Utilise the Campus

Exploring the campus and being able to engage in spaces like the community garden opens avenues to becoming more involved in ecological and sustainable activities on campus.



GREENER FUTURES

Greener Futures is The Students' Union's sustainability competition for Sports Clubs and Societies. We have 38 sports clubs and societies signed up for Greener Futures this year, 100% increase in signups from 19 last year. They have now started the competition and they are working their way

through the workbook of sustainability challenges, for example, photography Society have gained points by coming to photograph some of our events, many clubs and societies have now appointed a Sustainability Officer which is one of the first challenges and Snowsports are planning a kit swap with the support of The Green Team.

GREENSPACE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERING

The Green Team has launched the Greenspace programme for 2022-23, with three sessions for semester one, we are already offering more opportunities than previously. The sessions take place at either Splatts Abbey Wood or Sims Hill, and we usually recruit between 15-20 students to attend.

We have successfully recruited eight student Project Leaders who help local woodland committee members run the Greenspace sessions which are usually once a month on a Saturday. The project leaders keep tools in the community garden shed, and last week they cleared out and organised the whole shed. A conservation student is also doing a placement with Greenspace as well for his 60 hours of volunteering needed for his course.



Students learning woodland management skills as part of the Greenspace sessions



Students and their newly created living fence at Splatts Abbey Wood during a Greenspace session in October.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

- Addition to single use takeaway levy – along with UWE Hospitality, and in order to reduce reliance on single-use items, we have now introduced a 20p levy for customers who need us to provide a Vegware container for takeaway food items. This levy does not apply if we don't offer

an alternative i.e. down at Bower where we don't have a dishwasher. We don't charge this levy if they bring in their own container.

- Reusable coffee loyalty – in collaboration with the Community Team, we are handing out several hundred Ecoffee cups for free. These also come with a loyalty card which gives a customer their 10th drink free. The loyalty scheme is only open to customers using reusable cups, and is a further effort to reduce single-use.
- Engagement with NUS Services Ltd – to support our sustainability work, we have engaged with key people in NUS Services, and will continue to work with them to challenge our suppliers and build understanding of our 2030 commitments.
- Dairy alternatives – we have now removed the additional charge for dairy milk alternatives for hot drinks and ask the customer at point of sale for their preferred milk.

STUDENT MATTERS TO RAISE

1. Fossil-Fuel Free careers: we wanted to share some exciting news with you - Birkbeck, University of London has become the first university in the UK to make a Fossil Free Careers commitment. The [story](#) was in the Guardian not long ago and there has been great coverage on social media for this. It would be great to reopen discussions about making this happen at UWE Bristol. Additionally, the Fossil Free Careers campaign has been specifically mentioned in [Green Impact](#) this year. It has been added as a criteria to the Green Impact workbook, and it will therefore be one of our priorities. As I am sure many of you know that Green Impact is a really useful guide for a lot of our sustainability work as a Students' Union. We would also like to continue to create more positive change in the areas laid out by Green Impact, as well as getting a grade Excellent for the 7th year in a row for this accreditation.

2. Mandatory and Visible Climate Education: The Students' Union is asking UWE Bristol to set up a task and finish group, reporting to the board, to review, and create an action plan in order to satisfy the new student campaign for mandatory and visible climate education for all UWE students.

1. Review ESD action plan, understand and publish progress to date and review how we can be innovative, as per our commitments to achieve this in new ways, co-creating with students.
2. Key members will include representation from course reps and interested students, KESEs, Carbon Education Providers
3. Review the [UWE Enhancement Framework for Academic Programmes and Practice](#) as part of the [Design Note Series on Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\)](#)
4. Review climate education in curricular and extra curricular and agree student life cycle education package.

This student idea links in with our collaborative goal:

Strategy 2030

The University's Strategy 2030 sets out the ambition and priorities for the University 2020-2030. The Strategy is based on the University's mission and values: UWE Bristol transforms futures: powering the future workforce, supporting local economic prosperity, shaping the health and sustainability of our communities and creating solutions to global challenges.

Strategy 2030, Learning and Teaching Strategy

At UWE Bristol we take a practice-led, research informed, inclusive approach to our programmes and curriculum, which prepares our graduates to be confident problem solvers, responsible global citizens and effective life-long learners.

We challenge our students to be ambitious for themselves and society - understanding their role and impact for sustainability, health, wellbeing and their communities.

Transforming Futures Climate Action and Sustainability Strategy

One of the three strategic priorities is to 'Promote the Understanding of Sustainability'. Through teaching and learning we equip successive generations of students with the knowledge and commitment to address the ongoing challenges of sustainability. We also address this priority through research aimed at understanding and contributing to addressing these challenges.

2030 commitment: Work with staff and students to explicitly address climate change and environmental challenges through our teaching, learning and curriculum. Expectations set and included in all programmes under the UWE Bristol Enhancement Framework and related policies, along with audit of achievement.

“We are equally clear that we have a responsibility to society to ensure graduates are equipped with the skills, knowledge, capabilities and capacities to contribute to a sustainable future. ESD is central to the aims and ambitions of both Strategy 2030 and the Transforming Futures: Climate Action and Sustainability Strategy. UWE’s Knowledge Exchange for Sustainability Education group provides cross institutional leadership on this theme. The current Sustainability Plan aims to “ensure that a sustainability culture permeates our curriculum, research and the knowledge base and behaviour of our staff and students, evidenced by the ability of staff and students to articulate links between sustainable development and their discipline”.