

# SUSTAINABILITY BOARD REPORT

NOVEMBER 2018

**THE STUDENTS'  
UNION**  
AT UWE

## THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The elections for the remaining Students' Union Sustainability Committee positions took place in October, following reluctance from the current members to turn away one particularly passionate student a third portfolio position was created. The new members are as follows:

- Biodiversity – Mia Croft
- Campus Development – Richard Emerson
- Education – Anna Heywood
- Energy – Sarah Parker
- Engagement – Maya Loaiza
- IT – Jacob French
- Transport – Hannah Ingram
- Waste – Bennita Ciu
- Water – Karen Simpson
- Food and Health – Caroline Kiely
- Procurement – Phil Sansom
- Portfolio 1 – Curzio Potenza (Vice-Chair)
- Portfolio 2 – Julianna Munoz
- Portfolio 3 – Alfie Dickens
- Sustainability Officer – Ciaran Gutteridge

The committee have decided to focus on plant-based eating (vegan/vegetarian foods) for their headline student engagement campaign. The committee are now in the process of discussing the outcomes they would like, including the possibility of a meat-free Monday on campus.

## EAUC GREEN GOWN AWARDS

The Students' Union at UWE and UWE Bristol were awarded national accolades for our work to embed and drive forward sustainable development on and off campus.

The Students' Union at UWE won two awards at the EAUC Green Gown Awards last Thursday night. The awards, which took place in York at the historic National Railway Museum, recognised sustainability best practice within the further and higher education sectors.

The finalists, who came from over 12 institutions and represented over 1 million students, were shortlisted for their commitment to enabling and empowering young people to tackle pressing global issues to ensure they have a better tomorrow.

The Students' Union at UWE came away with both awards they were shortlisted for on the night:

1. Student Engagement Category for large institutions with a Bring Your Own Bowl food waste event series; and
2. Student Sustainability Champion went to former Sustainability Officer, Amy Staff for her true display of commitment and innovative approach to sustainability.

The Bring Your Own Bowl series saw three events, held between September 2017 and February 2018, at which meals made from surplus supermarket food. Collectively, it saved over 200 kg of

food waste, fed over 600 students and raised environmental awareness. It was also a key event of the 2018/19 Welcome for new students.

### **Feedback from the judges:**

*“Bring Your Own Bowl is simple yet highly effective initiative that could be easily replicated. It will undoubtedly inspire other institutions to explore a similar approach to reducing food waste. The application was very well-crafted and presented quality data, which clearly demonstrated how you identified an issue and addressed it.*

*We liked that this initiative was Student Union-led and included Senior Management buy-in. The evidence of changes to the SU's own business practices was particularly impressive, along with links developed with community partners and the growth achieved between year 1 and 2. It is clear that the scheme's popularity has grown since the start and we are pleased that further discussions are taking place around community fridges. We think this could be easily scaled up and run in local communities. Well done and best of luck for the future.”*

Winning this prestigious Green Gown Award is a great honour and a testament to the passion of UWE Bristol students for driving forward positive change on and off campus. We thank our colleagues at the university for their support and expertise. We have developed a truly meaningful and impactful partnership. A huge thank you to Chelsea Hopson and Hollie Lewis from HallsLife, Tom Ball, Amy Staff, the Sustainability Committee, Paul Dingley and the bar team.

With 12 entries shortlisted for the Student Engagement Category, it is a great achievement to have won and we look forward to taking our Bring Your Own Bowl event on to the International Green Gown Awards in 2019.

UWE Bristol were also shortlisted for five awards on the night; Benefitting Society, Research with Impact (both student and institution categories) and Tomorrow's Employees.

The Students' Union would like to thank our members for constantly driving forward positive change and to our UWE Bristol colleagues for their partnership, skills and expertise, which has allowed us to mutually achieve our goals. We look forward to striving for further change in line with UWE Bristol's emerging 2030 strategy.

## **NUS GREEN IMPACT AND RESPONSIBLE FUTURES ACCREDITATIONS**

The Students' Union at UWE will be audited for two NUS Accreditations in academic year 2018/2019; Green Impact in April and Responsible Futures in May 2019, in partnership with UWE Bristol.

UWE Bristol and The Students' Union launched our annual Sustainability Survey in Big Green Week, with the aim of 700 responses from students. We are currently on just over 600 responses. Many thanks to all Board Members for supporting the survey thus far.

On Monday 19 November, UWE Bristol ran a joint workshop with The Students' Union to understand the organisations' environmental impacts and rank them in order of significance; this is a new mapping exercise as part of UWE Bristol's ISO14001 standard and NUS Green Impact Accreditation. A huge thank you to Paul Roberts, Louise Finch and Vicki Harris for supporting the session and considering new methodologies to ensure this work is meaningful.

## THE GREEN TEAM: EVENTS

### GreenSpace

For 2018/2019, the GreenSpace conversation project have 7 Project Leaders and have seen 23 students attend our first two sessions for the year. Work will continue at Splatts Abbey Wood, and connections with Stoke Park is currently being investigated.

### Community Garden

We hosted our largest ever Gardening 101 session for World Mental Health Day (Wednesday 10 October), where attendees learnt about the medicinal uses of herbs (and how to grow them at home), made herbal teas and lavender/neroli scented stress putty to take home.

Our final session for the year (Wednesday 5 December) will combine Gardening 101 and the Community Garden Session for a Christmas special. We'll be making wreaths and spiced apple juice, as well as our usual gardening activities.

### Communication

On Tuesday 23 October, The Students' Union Green Team Coordinator attended the Communicate 2018 conference in Bristol. This was a gathering to discuss, debate and build a vital communications toolkit for those working in the sustainability space. Attending this conference provided numerous benefits for The Students' Union's projects.

Feedback from Tom Ball directly: *"Firstly, I was able to hear from guest speakers from all over the environmental movement sharing their key lessons from their failures and successes. There were so many transferrable teachings that we could use in our work at UWE Bristol. The event focussed on not only listening to others, but creating discussion and participation. Through this process I compiled a good selection of new strategies to possibly use in Green Team communications. I was encouraged to think of communications outside of their usual structure and make new connections. However, there were also opportunities for me to get more direct knowledge about established work streams in communications, such as social media techniques. Success in my role rests heavily on the ability to be able to communicate effectively with the UWE student audience, but also with fellow staff, project partners and the local community. Communicate 2018 encouraged me to rethink many of the ways in which we communicate our messages, as well as giving me a chance to create new connections to those working in sustainability communications."*

### Recruitment

The Green Team Coordinator is being renamed to Student Sustainability Engagement Coordinator. The interviews are taking place end of November, with the hope that the new post holder will start in early January. Thank you to Georgie Gough for joining us in this process, showcasing to potential candidates the close working relationship between UWE Bristol and The Students' Union.