

Environmental Steering Group Minutes

Tuesday 30th Jan
16:00-17:00
Room G51a

1. Welcome

2. Overview of Green Impact

3. Specific Green Impact questions to discuss:

- The union has carried out relevant primary research amongst its students to inform its sustainability work, and has published the findings.

Hot drinks survey

Bin survey - plus data about bin usage

Catering survey

ACTION POINT:

HS to contact Siobhan about bin usage

HS to deal with bin & catering

- The union has successfully engaged with its clubs, societies, and other student networks on sustainability

→ e.g. food policy

→ re-writing policy

- Maybe something about flying? Short-haul flights → trains etc.
- Cups

Short & re-publicising it

- Posters

ACTION POINT:

PB to send old one to Anna and Anna to update!

- Procurement policy for the Union shop & bar

Currently using procurement policy from the school

ACTION POINT:

PB to find old one & update it & share with group

- The union has proactively and constructively engaged senior institutional leaders and/or trustees in sustainability, resulting in positive outputs.

In-house catering & all in-sourcing → making sure that sustainability issues are on the agenda

Bins

ACTION POINT:

Jamila to speak to DC about in-house stuff

HS to speak to high level people about bins

- Sustainability is substantively included in the union's strategic plan

Operational vs. strategic

** Need to update

ACTION POINT:

PB to send strategic & operational plans to Anna

Anna to take current plan & add environmental part and take to trustees

- Union job descriptions

ACTION POINT:

PB to update job descriptions

HS to check thing with Antonia

PB to email all staff with update!

- Identifying most significant environmental impacts

Power

Waste

Travel

ACTION POINT:

Green Group to lead on this

Auditors will be looking for a well-documented assessment of at least the top five environmental impacts of the union. The list should be ranked by magnitude of the negative impact. There is no right or wrong way to do this, but plenty of guidance is available online. There will be variation between unions depending on what operations they have: commercial unions may have different impacts to non-commercial; multi-site unions may have different impacts to single site unions, etc.

Evidence will revolve around the list of impacts. The list should be dated and in the public domain, and ideally on the union's sustainability webpage. Ideally the impacts will be quantified (the amount of miles, the size of carbon emissions, the weight of waste to landfill etc.) and there will be reference to what the union is doing to reduce them.

- The union has collaborated with, or supported, one or more community organisations on sustainability.

Calthorpe project

Community skip garden

Decolonising the environment conference with lots of local campaigns

ACTION POINT:

AG to organise Go Green Week vegan cooking class

SOAS Env. Movement to email Mehdi plans for the week

Jamila to send HS some info about conference

- The union has one or more active policy commitment relating to sustainability, passed within the last three years, and has published it.

Takeaway cup policy

Environment policy

- Self defined criteria Innovative Intervention- Use this section to tell us about innovative intervention you've made on campus which you think is creative and the first of it's kind in changing behaviours, raising awareness or improving the environment

Environmental podcast

Environmentstrual

Public Bike Repair Stand
Common Ground Garden
Vegan cooking class
Food coop
Solar SOAS Green Fund

- SMART action plan on sustainability & publish it (operational & campaigning & influencing)
 - Let's make one!!
- wait till we have the negative impacts, then make this

4. Look over Union sustainability website
5. Overview of ongoing environmental campaigns in the Union

Cycling support - public bike repair stand is coming in Jan 2018, and the Union hosts second-hand bike sales every 3 months on-campus, as well as Dr.Bike bike repair sessions & bike maintenance training sessions.

Coffee cups - the Union is working on a campaign to eradicate disposable coffee cups on-campus (the shop currently goes through 5,000+ per week)

'Boycott the bottle' Water bottle reduction - the Union is working on a campaign to reduce them on-campus

Bin trial - the Union, Estates & the Sustainability have teamed up to trial bin units that include recycling, general waste & food waste. Got an opinion on them? Please fill out our [bin survey](#) to give feedback.

[Sustainability podcast](#) - SOAS Environmental Movement has taken to SOAS Radio to share environmental-related news through the medium of podcast!

Environmenstrual pilot - the Union currently gives out free pads & tampons, but these are disposable. SOAS S.U. is looking into providing reusable alternatives. There is currently a pilot project selling [Mooncups](#) (reusable menstrual cups) at a subsidized cost (ask in room G6 for more info), and is looking into other reusable menstrual products to offer to students.

Meat-free Mondays

Climate Perspectives lecture series

Decolonising environmentalism

SOAS @ 1 degree

6. Any other business & action points
 - How can we implement 50p charge on all coffee cups across SOAS (not just shop)

ACTION POINT:

Catering steering group

Speak to Paula & Siobhan

Write a short proposal

AG to draft proposal, and to send along with Mehdi & other sabbs

- We need to order larger Keepcups as it overflows if you put milk in it (at least with Americano)

- Can we put something about the environment into next year's/update this year's general goals for the S.U?
- A follow up meeting (with Khaled and possibly Myles Brenner) would be good to discuss:
- plant milk machine in shop (or bar?),
- how to implement zero waste
- a possible outright ban of plastic bottles (at least plastic throwaway cups in bar and canteen)

Go Green Week!!