



Sound Impact Awards

Sharing best practice 2006/07

The Co-operative Group is proud to sponsor the Sound Impact Awards

At the Co-operative Group we recognise the need to develop our business in a sustainable manner. By this we mean business development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Co-operative Group is pursuing ecological sustainability vigorously. If we take the issue of climate change as an example, this ranges from ensuring that lights are switched off at night to sourcing virtually all of our electricity from good quality renewable sources, making the Group one of the largest purchasers of green electricity in the world. This delivers savings of 300,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum. However, every initiative, no matter the scale, makes an important contribution.

The Co-operative Group recently completed two major micro-generation projects on its premises – both of which are UK firsts in terms of scale and innovation. First there is our 400 ft service tower on the landmark CIS building in the centre of Manchester with 7,000 photovoltaic panels. The Solar Tower, as it has become known, is the UK's largest-ever solar power installation and will create 180 MWh of renewable electricity each year – enough energy to make nine million cups of tea.

The second is the creation of an inner city wind farm by erecting 19 micro-wind turbines on the roof of the Group's 13-storey Portland Street building on the other side of the city. This is the largest-ever commercial application of micro-wind turbines in the UK and will generate 44 MWh of renewable electricity per annum.

The Co-operative Group commends the Sound Impact Awards as a practical way students' unions can take action on their environmental impacts. We congratulate all those students' unions that took part in the first year and wish them every success with their environmental initiatives.



the Co-operative Group

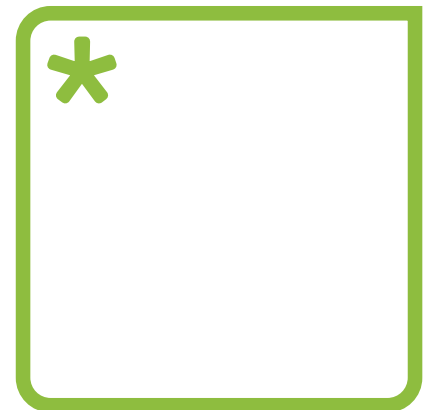


Welcome

A model for best practice

From our audits we have calculated that the average Students' Union wastes 10% of the utilities they use, and this leads to an additional 62.4 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere per union, per year.

With The Sound Impact Awards, an environmental accreditation scheme with an awards element, we can help all 233 of our member unions to collectively reduce their carbon emissions by up to 15,000 tonnes each year.



SOUND
impact awards

The time to act is now

The Students' Union movement has a proud history of ethical and environmental campaigning. At this point we are looking to the future, and have developed a new scheme which gives our members the opportunity to take immediate local action on global environmental issues.

Over the last three years NUS Services has carried out thirty detailed environmental audits at Students' Unions. At a rate of 10 audits per year, it would take us 23 years to audit everyone else, but we have decided that the time to act is now.

As is to be expected, these audits uncovered both good and common bad practice. Having proudly unearthed some highly innovative environmental initiatives, we have created a scheme which can support our members in correcting any bad practices.



Stephen Dowson

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Welcome to the official write up of the Sound Impact Awards 2006/07, the new accreditation scheme for environmental best practice in Students' Unions. This review shares some of the best ideas from Unions around the country on how they have reduced their environmental impact.

Assessing and benchmarking

The Sound Impact Awards are based around a self-assessment digital workbook. Unions work their way through the twenty essential criteria and 149 bonus criteria, simply marking those that they meet and crossing those that they do not. Each criterion relates to a specific practical action and is worth a score of between 1 and 5, depending on how important the action is.

Although there is a clear focus on best practice in resource management, the Sound Impact Awards are not exclusively about climate change. Virtually every environmental issue relevant to Students' Unions is covered; from recycling to Fairtrade, environmental legislation to lobbying the university, community schemes to biodiversity.

By using detailed criteria in this way, bigger issues are broken down into manageable chunks. Furthermore, the very process of self-completion provides the Union with a prioritised framework for greening specific to their organisation – effectively getting each union to identify what they should be doing and what they could be doing.

Topics covered in the twenty essential criteria

Environmental impacts

C.001 An environmental audit in last three years

Baselines, monitoring and results

C.013 Monitoring the number of photocopies

Environmental legislation and duty of care

C.017 Disposal of hazardous wastes and used catering oil

Reusing refuse

C.032 Sending items for re-use rather than disposal

C.035 Recycling used printer cartridges

C.037 Disposal of IT equipment

Recycling refuse

C.043 Recycling glass bottles from bars

C.046 Recycling office paper

Electricity – Awareness

C.054 Awareness-raising stickers by light switches

Electricity – Switching off

C.059 Written plan to show responsibility for switching off lighting and equipment

Electricity – Lighting equipment

C.066 Percentage of tungsten filament bulbs

Water

C.103 Water saving devices on urinals

Raising awareness

C.121 Environmental best practice in staff induction

C.122 Lobbying the university on environmental issues

Policy, commitment and plan

C.129 Active environmental policy

C.130 Formal commitment to continual improvement of environmental performance

C.138 Senior management commitment to environmental issues

C.141 Environmental issues referenced in long-term operating plan

Procurement

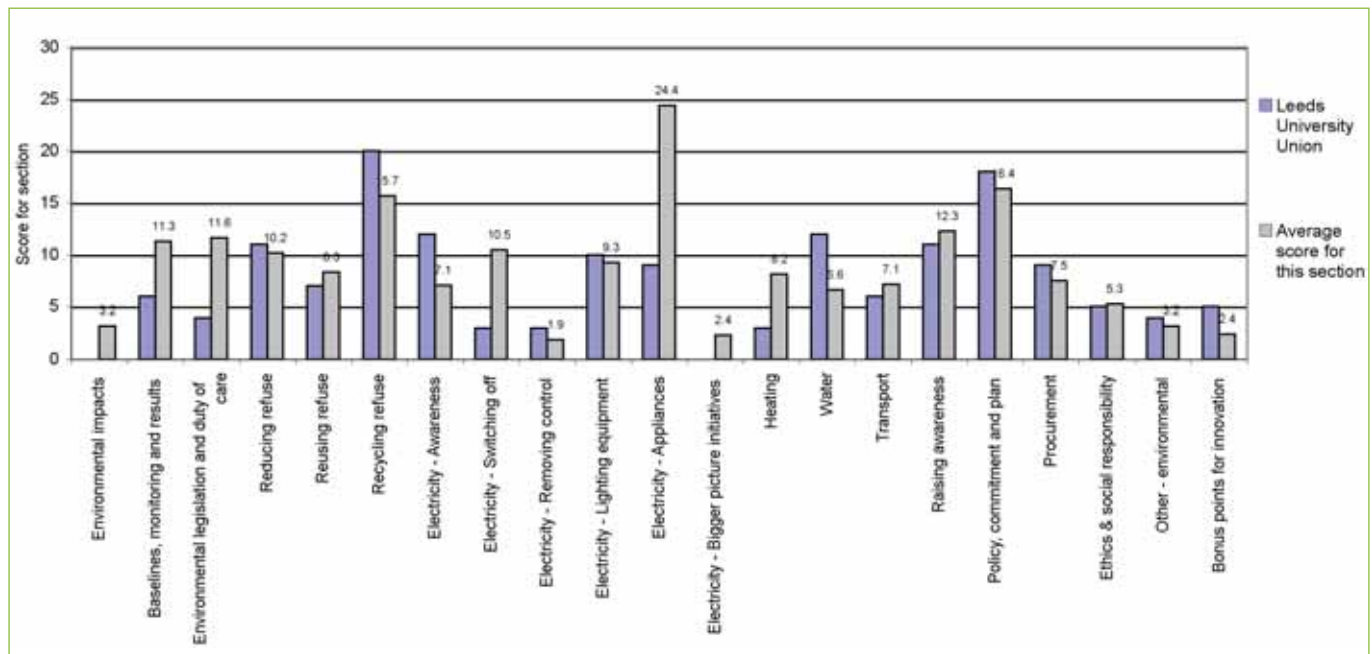
C.148 All tea and coffee served is Fairtrade

C.150 All copier paper bought is made from 100% recycled paper or from certified sustainable sources

Validation and feedback

When we launched the scheme to in September 2006 we had hoped to get thirty unions taking part in the first year. We were truly bowled over by the infectious enthusiasm for the scheme from student officers and staff alike, resulting in fifty one unions taking part, including two from further education.

When we had all the completed workbooks in we started validating the responses through site audits at a selection of unions including all the top ten scoring unions. After that we provided all participating unions with their final score and detailed constructive feedback – as shown in the specimen for Leeds University Union. Many unions have since told us that they have used their score to set strategic targets for reducing their environmental impact over the next academic year.



The awards element

The grand finale was an awards dinner during our Annual Convention in April 2007. Hosted by survival expert and TV presenter Ray Mears, and attended by over 350 key decision makers from the movement, the awards dinner was a high profile celebration event to reward all participating unions for their efforts.

The top three scoring Unions received the Gold standard, and were called on stage to collect a handmade recycled glass award. The next five highest scoring unions received the Silver standard, and also received an award. All other unions that confirmed they met all twenty essential criteria were awarded the Bronze standard and collected a certificate, whilst Unions that did not meet all twenty essential criteria were classed as 'Working Towards' accreditation and also collected a certificate.

Although the scheme plays on the competitive nature of Students' Unions, it really isn't all about the winning. Unions that are just starting to think about the environment can benefit most by taking part in the scheme.

The Gold and Silver awards were made from recycled window glass by artist Adele Billingham

Sharing best practice

Celebrating and sharing best environmental practice, within the movement and beyond, are important aspects of the Sound Impact Awards, and that is why we have created this review. It is made up of case studies from participating unions detailing how they are meeting the criteria. We hope that these ideas will give you a flavour of what the Sound Impact Awards is all about and what it is achieving.



Sound Impact Awards 2007/08

With this report we both conclude the inaugural Sound Impact Awards and launch the 2007/08 scheme.

We are setting our targets high for the 2007/08 academic year and hope to get seventy five unions taking part. To foster continual improvement we will be raising the bar slightly in the new workbook by tightening up some of the wording, increasing targets and adding one more essential criteria. So if a union achieved the Bronze Standard in 2006/07 they will have to do a little bit more greening to retain it!

All that is left to say is a big thank to our partners and sponsors for their support, and of course to all the unions that took part. Special thanks to Anna Heywood, the founder of the Sound Impact Awards. Without Anna's perseverance, enthusiasm and dedication, the scheme would not be where it is today.



2006/07 Rankings

Gold standard

Loughborough Students' Union (Overall Winner)
Queen Mary Students' Union, University of London
Goldsmiths Students' Union

Silver standard

University of Central Lancashire Students' Union
University of York Students' Union
Northumbria Students' Union
Edinburgh University Students' Association
Union of UEA Students

Bronze standard

Keele University Students' Union
Reading University Students' Union
Aston Students' Guild
Brighton University Students' Union
City College Norwich
Durham Students' Union
Kent Union
Liverpool Guild of Students
London School of Economics & Political Science Students' Union
Manchester Metropolitan Students' Union
Oxford Brookes Students' Union
School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union
University of Bath Students' Union
University of Bolton Students' Union
University of Bristol Union
University of Essex Students' Union
University of Huddersfield Students' Union
University of London Union
University of Sheffield Union of Students
University of the Arts London
University of Westminster Students' Union
York St John Students' Union

Working towards accreditation

Birmingham University Guild of Students
Bournemouth University Students' Union
Cardiff University Students' Union
Derby College Students' Union
Heriot-Watt University Students' Association
Leeds University Union
National Union of Students
Nottingham Trent Students' Union (Brackenhurst Campus)
Sheffield Hallam University Union of Students
The University of Manchester Students' Union
University College for the Creative Arts Students' Union
University of Bradford Students' Union
University of Exeter Students' Guild
University of Leicester Students' Union
University of Portsmouth Students' Union
University of Salford Students' Union
University of Surrey Students' Union
University of Teesside Students' Union
University of Wales, Lampeter Students' Union
University of Wolverhampton Students' Union
Worcester Students' Union

Benchmarking the Movement

Of the 51 unions taking part . . .

- 92%** have a RAG society or have raised over £150 for a charitable cause last academic year
- 88%** have lobbied their institution on one or more environmental issue within the last 12 months
- 86%** of those unions serving hot drinks only serve Fairtrade tea and coffee
- 82%** have a recycling scheme in place for mixed paper
- 78%** of those unions with bars recycle the majority of their waste glass
- 75%** have an active student environmental society
- 73%** have an active environmental policy
- 72%** mention environmental issues in the union's long-term operating plan
- 71%** have less than 5% tungsten filament bulbs throughout the union
- 69%** buy only copier paper made from 100% recycled paper or from certified sustainable sources
- 63%** do not have any air conditioned offices
- 55%** have a non-sabbatical environmental officer
- 49%** have a formal shutdown procedure for vacations
- 37%** have a recycling scheme in place for aluminium and/or steel drinks cans
- 35%** have been awarded the status of a Fairtrade University
- 33%** have a register of applicable environmental legislation
- 31%** have a recycling scheme in place for plastic bottles
- 24%** are supplied with at least 50% renewable energy
- 24%** have set minimum efficiency specifications for lighting, heating and refrigeration equipment
- 12%** have produced a publicly accessible environmental report within the last 12 months
- 10%** can demonstrate a decrease in consumption of one or more utilities for the last reporting period
- 0%** have installed a solar water heater/solar panels/urban wind turbine.

Green claims code

There were two criteria that unions often thought they had met but the audits revealed otherwise:

Essential criteria C.150 requires that 'All copier paper bought by the Union is made from 100% recycled paper, or is made from NAPM accredited recycled paper, or is made from pulp from certified sustainable sources'.

Several unions were buying the Premier Elements Earth brand of paper, thinking it was made from recycled paper because of

its green packaging and name, when in reality it is made from virgin fibre from North American Forests. Likewise several unions were buying the Ability brand of paper thinking it was from certified sustainable sources because of the claim on the packet to be from well from managed forestry.

Five unions that mistakenly thought they were buying recycled paper have switched to a 100% recycled paper.

Bonus criteria C.151 requires that 'The Union ensures that, where possible, the cleaners that clean its buildings use

environmentally-friendly (plant-based) cleaning products in preference to chemical-based synthetic products'.

Several unions were buying what they thought were environmentally friendly cleaning products but in actual fact turned out to be regular chemical-based synthetic cleaners with names that alluded to the environment.

Three unions that mistakenly thought they were buying environmentally-friendly cleaning products have switched to plant-based cleaning products.

Gold overall winner

Loughborough Students' Union **318**

Auditor comments:

“A thoroughly inspiring visit. The Union is in control of energy use and can demonstrate annual decreases, its reward for investing in energy efficient technology. It has the art of recycling perfected. Both students and staff are dedicated to greening their Union.”



Money from waste

Many unions simply accept that they can't recycle cardboard because they are part of a wider university waste contract. Loughborough Students' Union, however, would not take 'no' for an answer. They rented a baler, bought a second hand forklift and now recycle all of their cardboard and a lot of the university's too! The scheme has been so successful that the union will soon be making more money through selling bales of cardboard than it pays out for waste disposal. Under the careful management of Chris Spencer, Building Services Manager, with support from VP Finance Steve Black



and E&E Officer Sara Carter, the union has gone from sending three 1,100 litre bins of waste to landfill per day, to just one per day, saving £2,160 a month in landfill charges. On top of this they sell the cardboard for £35 per tonne generating £500 per month in new income. A core part of the success has been allowing the university to use the union's baler free of charge – meaning the university hit their waste targets and the union recycles more cardboard. The scheme has been so successful that recycling now features in the union's business plan as a commercial revenue stream. The union has recently started baling waste plastic as a new venture, earning them the points for bonus criteria C.050.

Recycling trainers

As well as gaining the essential criteria for recycling bar glass, Loughborough gained bonus criteria for collecting used postage stamps for charity. Brilliantly, the union also collects used trainers for recycling in partnership with a leading trainer brand.



Saving energy

Loughborough has invested wisely in energy saving technology. It gained bonus criteria C.067 for replacing tungsten filament bulbs over pool tables with compact fluorescent lamps and bonus criteria C.076 for installing fridge saver plugs to non-retail fridges.

A bigger impact was the floodlights in the Piazza atrium which used to be left on all day regardless of how sunny it was. The union simply wired the circuit through a daylight sensor and now the lights only come on when they are needed. Loughborough has also replaced virtually all 500 of their 50 Watt halogen spotlights with 11 Watt compact fluorescent fittings and 3.5 Watt LED bulbs. The union estimates that these two initiatives alone have saved over £2,500 of electricity and around 10 tonnes of carbon per year.

The union actively tracks their energy consumption through their 30 minute meter data, gaining them bonus criteria C.008. Likewise Loughborough has managed to reduce its gas consumption by 20% by adjusting boiler clocks and regularly checking thermostatic radiator valves. Because of this, Loughborough was one of just five unions that were awarded bonus criteria C.016 for being able to demonstrate an annual decrease in the use of one or more utility. Furthermore, in 2006 Loughborough produced their first annual environmental report, in doing so gaining them bonus criteria C.143.

Best of the rest

Having more than one natural pot plant per five office-based employees gained the union bonus criteria as did using plant-based cleaning products. They gained a further bonus point through C.169 for using biodegradable nappies in its crèche. The union has held a cycle to work day, holds an annual Environment Week, runs its own green league for internal departments and its own BEST awards for environmental champions. Loughborough also has a Raising and Giving (RAG) society that is very successful, raising £626,000 for local and national charities in 2005/06.



Gold

Queen Mary Students' Union, University of London 309

Auditor comments:

“A joint staff and officer effort has produced some great strategic work and a number of novel initiatives in response. A very strong community volunteering programme.”



In the community

Queen Mary Students' Union has a flagship community volunteering programme called Provide. The programme places volunteer students in local community organisations. The scheme has helped charities that support children and young people, older people, people with disabilities, homeless people,

refugees and asylum seekers. Every year the scheme provides thousands of hours of valuable support for worthwhile schemes.

In the union

The union gained bonus criteria C.091 for calculating its carbon footprint and bonus criteria C.142 for setting targets to reduce its footprint. It has developed a suite of policies to meet these targets including a policy banning air travel. Throughout the union there is evidence of good environmental practice including buying milk in reusable glass bottles, using water butts to harvest rainwater and dual-flushing toilets.



Gold

Goldsmiths Students' Union **300**

Auditor comments:

“A nice balance between traditional, ethical campaigning and internal best practice. The union is good at promoting its achievements both internally and externally.”



Lug-a-mug

Goldsmiths Students' Union pioneered the 'Lug-a-mug' concept that has since spread to other Students' Unions. The concept is simple – students that bring their own mug to catering facilities, in the union or university, receive a worthwhile discount on hot drinks as a reward for not using disposable packaging. Goldsmiths have sourced reusable mugs that they sell to students to promote the scheme. The union also picked up bonus criteria C.o28 for offering wood disposable cutlery rather than plastic in their cafe.

Campaigning

The union gained essential criteria C.122 for lobbying their university on environmental issues, specifically in relation to investments in the arms trade. The Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) Investment Group, altered its investment policy as a result of the campaign. Goldsmiths have also supported Fairtrade by stocking Fairtrade beverages and selling Fairtrade clothing, supported the ONE Foundation by selling ONE Water and supports AquAid by using their water coolers.



Well insulated

The audit of Goldsmiths confirmed that the majority of false ceilings over office spaces had some form of insulation material laid over them, gaining them bonus criteria C.096. They also gained bonus criteria for closing the blinds on their dairy decks fridges overnight to save energy. To formalise best practice, environmental considerations are referenced in the job descriptions of all new staff gaining them bonus criteria C.120. Goldsmiths' strong all-round commitment to environmental issues was recognised at the Lewisham Community Business Awards 2006 when the Union won the award for Environmental Excellence.



Silver

University of Lancashire Students' Union 294

Auditor comments:
“Lots of high visibility environmental initiatives throughout the union give it a real green vibe.”



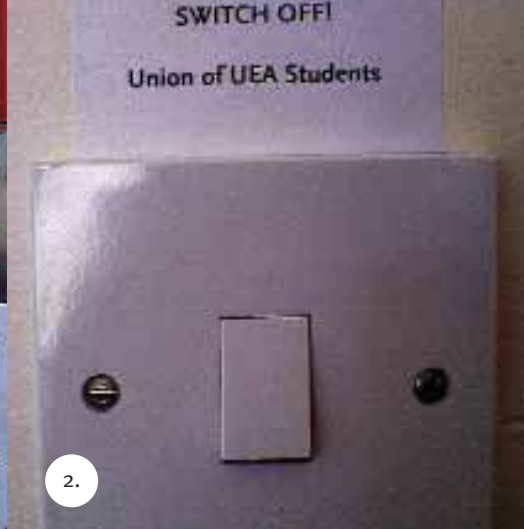
Saving energy, saving trees

UCLAN is energy efficient, gaining bonus criteria for using efficient T5 fluorescent tubes in office spaces and essential criteria C.054 for having awareness stickers by light switches, ventilation controls and even taps. Impressively, the union's nightclub ventilation system is regulated by air quality sensors ensuring that the fans run at the capacity required rather than at full speed.

It is not just energy that they are saving, but also trees. The union print shop collects paper printed on just one side and uses it to make note pads which are given out free of charge to staff and volunteers. Furthermore the union has recently landscaped their recycling yard planting a selection of trees, in doing so gaining them bonus criteria C.163 for encouraging biodiversity.



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1. The baler rented by Loughborough.
2. Light switch signs at UEA.
3. Plastic diverted from landfill in Liverpool.
4. Lug-a-mug promotion at Goldsmiths.
5. Plastic recycling at Loughborough.
6. Fridge saver plugs at Loughborough.
7. Recycling bar glass at Loughborough.
8. Compact fluorescent pool table lamps.



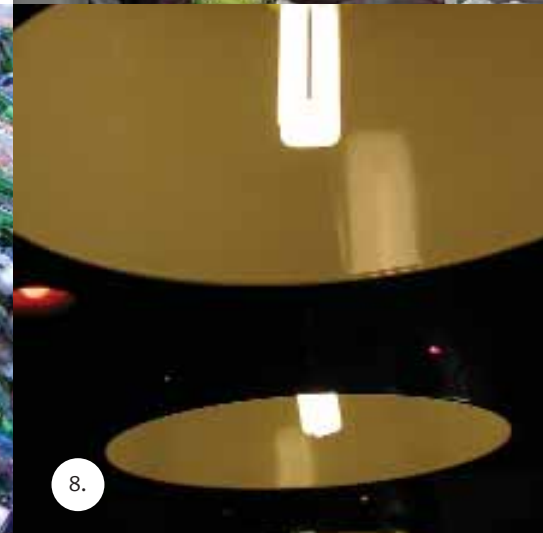
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9. Cleaning nest boxes at Nottingham Trent.

10. Natural plants in the offices at Loughborough.

11. Using plant based cleaning products.

12. Community work from Queen Mary.

13. Awareness campaign at UCLAN.

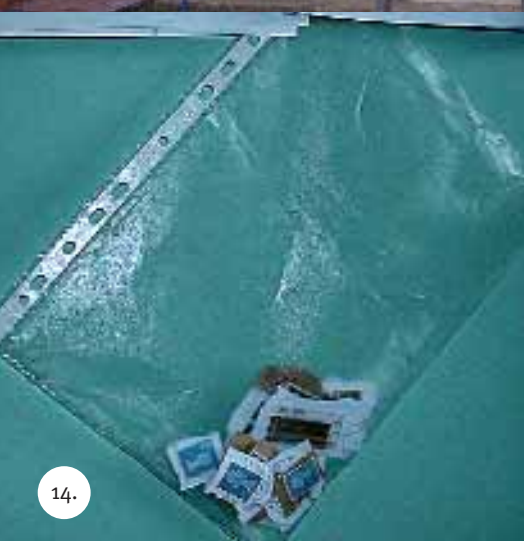
14. Collecting postage stamps for charity.

15. T5 fluorescent lights in offices at UCLAN.

16. The 'Pick it up' girls of York St John.



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14.



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17.



18.



19.



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- 17. Note pads made from used paper.
- 18. Planting trees in the recycling yard at UCLAN.
- 19. National fury over the chauffer driven Vice Chancellor.
- 20. Dual flushing toilets in Edinburgh.
- 21. Recycling ink cartridges at Northumbria.
- 22. Lug-a-mug scheme at York.
- 23. Diverted plastic from landfill.
- 24. Closing the diary deck blinds at Goldsmiths.



21.



22.



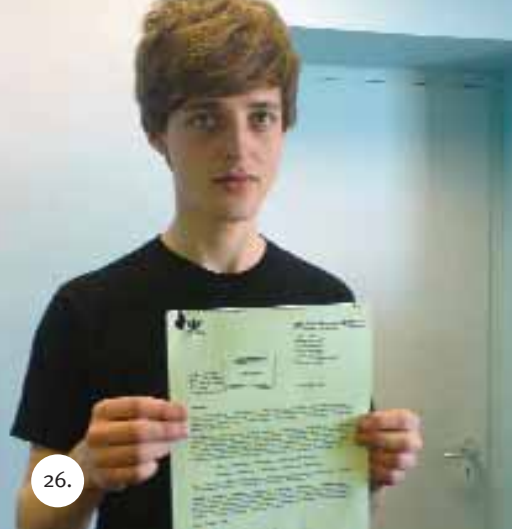
23.



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- 25. The 'green' raffle at York.
- 26. Campaigning against investments in arms at Goldsmiths.
- 27. Paper recycling at Keele.
- 28. LED light bulbs at Loughborough.
- 29. Fairtrade fortnight at Edinburgh.
- 30. 20p charge for plastic bags at Bournemouth.
- 31. Conservation work with Nottingham Trent.
- 32. Supporting AquAid at Goldsmiths.



29.



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31.



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Green transport

The union has well presented recycling facilities in public spaces. These high standards are continued behind the scenes with an exemplary recycling storage area that is well-labelled and orderly.



UCLAN has been doing their bit for sustainable transport too. In the reception area there is some useful information about public transport services, and the union has run a campaign about sensible driving for FE students. The People & Planet group based in the union even got a mention in The Sun newspaper for their campaign to get the Vice Chancellor out of his chauffer driven limo and onto a bike.

Engaging students

As well as a union shop that is brimming with ethical products, the union has a suggestion scheme with cash rewards to get students involved in greening. The union has a very active RAG group and the People & Planet group run a 'Go Green' week. This year the themed days included an energy efficiency day, a shop local day and a 'be nice' day – all raising money for the local Women's Refuge that is threatened with closure.



Auditor comments:

“York doesn't have the benefit of a big budget, so is a great example of what can be achieved with sheer grass roots enthusiasm. The Environment and Ethics Officers have built an impressive portfolio of environmental campaigns and have got buy-in from students and staff at all levels.”

Bike auction

The Students' Union at York has developed a highly innovative model for recycling abandoned bicycles. As with many Universities, York has a large population of cyclists, and at the end of each academic year many bicycles are abandoned by students. Traditionally these bikes have been tagged by security staff and those that have not been collected within a month have been scrapped. E&E Officers Charlotte Bonner and Clare Hawley approached the university and asked if the bikes could be stored during the summer holidays.

They agreed and at the beginning of the academic year the officers held a bike auction. Using money from the university's sustainable transport fund, they arranged for a bike repairer from a local bike shop to attend the auction and carry out free minor repairs and discounted major repairs at his workshop in town. The officers sold 80 bikes raising £1,650. Half of the money raised went to a development charity to buy new bicycles for health workers in Africa, and the other half was used to run their environmental campaigns on campus throughout the year. The officers built on the success of the scheme by developing a similar service for unwanted kitchen paraphernalia.

Working with the university

The union and university also work together on halls recycling, with the union arranging teams of eco-reps in each college to collect recyclable materials from kitchens.

Computers and webpages

Other initiatives from the Union include hosting a computer recycling scheme run by IT students, their own Lug-a-mug scheme, a 'green raffle' to generate funds for carbon offsetting, and producing a green guide for freshers. The Union gained bonus criteria for having an environmental section on their webpage yusu.org/environment.



Silver

Northumbria Students' Union 269

Auditor comments:

“A will to do well in the Sound Impact Awards has seen Northumbria Students' Union achieve a high score. The union was particularly strong on formalised policies and procedures.”



Formalising best practice

Northumbria provides a great example of how to train staff on environmental best practice. They gained essential criteria C.121 for including environmental policy and procedures in their formal induction process, ensuring that all new staff do their bit for the environment right from the start of their employment. The union has also formalised its statutory requirements through a register of applicable environmental legislation gaining it bonus criteria C.020.

Renewables

Northumbria is one of just twelve unions that gained bonus criteria C.090 for being supplied with at least 50% energy from renewable sources. During the audit the union made available a certificate that showed that the union is supplied with 100% renewable energy.

Think ink

Of the fifty one unions taking part, forty one confirmed that they had a scheme in place to collect used printer and toner cartridges for donation to a reuse scheme. At Northumbria they collect cartridges for a scheme that benefits Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Silver

Edinburgh University Students' Association 261

Auditor comments:

“EUSA is characterised by high environmental profile campaigns driven by determined officers and students. Their organic cafe is simply brilliant.”



EUSA has launched its own organic cafe specialising in wholesome local food and even playing local music. The cafe has adopted the Soil Association's, Food for Life principles of 30% organic, 50% local and 70% unprocessed ingredients. It was opened by Hugh Raven, Scottish head of the Soil Association. The Association has a policy to buy only free-range eggs and has official Fairtrade University status.

Water wise

EUSA is one of just four Sound Impact Awards unions to have gained bonus criteria for installing waterless urinals and one of just five unions to have dual-flushing toilets.

Big cheese

The Association is home to a large number of student environmental and social campaign groups and periodically brings them all together through high profile events such as Fairtrade Fortnight. During Fairtrade Fortnight, their usual 'Big Cheese' Saturday party became the 'Fair Fromage' with donations to Action Aid and free Fairtrade chocolate. EUSA held a series of themed parties in the second semester to raise funds for Medecins Sans Frontieres, Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, Prospect Burma, Amnesty International and Comic Relief. The Association has also produced an energy efficiency guide for all student accommodation which is available to freshers.

Silver

University of UEA Students **241**

Auditor comments:

“An environmental and ethical ethos is evident throughout the union and this is in part due to the keen interest in the environment by a number of students and staff.”

Two heads better than one

UEA is the only union we know of that has both an environment officer and an ethical issues officer. This has allowed them to make real progress on key areas such as stocking ethical products – the Union Food Outlet has a broad range of ethical products including Fairtrade bananas.



Eye spy recycling

The union has recycling facilities for unwanted spectacles, which are sent to a charitable scheme distributing them to people in Africa. They also have a recycling scheme for unwanted CDs. In the cafe, there are recycling facilities for used teabags which are collected by volunteers for use by the permaculture society.



Energy issues

As well as ‘switch off’ signs by light switches, UEA is raising awareness of bigger issues by offering all students that buy flights in their travel shop the opportunity to buy carbon offsetting at the same time.

Aston Students' Guild

Aston has put 'CLOSE IT' stickers up by windows to save energy in the winter.



Brighton University Students' Union

Brighton ran a campaign raising awareness of ways in which students and staff could reduce their personal carbon footprint. Officers sold 700 energy saving light bulbs



at 50p each and arranged free bike checks to encourage cycling. The campaign finale was a trip to the Earthship ecohouse and a showing of Al Gore's environmental film 'An Inconvenient Truth'.

City College Norwich Students' Union

They use the Sound Ethical Choice branding to raise awareness of the ethical products available in their cafe. They also collect used printer cartridges for Childline.



Bronze

Durham Students' Union

The Union has developed its own healthy eating campaign to encourage students to get their 5-a-day.

Keele University Students' Union

Keele has an exemplary office paper recycling scheme. Every office has a green mesh recycling bin that is well labelled and is emptied twice a day. The paper goes into a metal container which is emptied fortnightly by Severnside Recycling. The Union keeps all the waste transfer notes for each collection in a well labelled file, ensuring a duty of care, contributing towards bonus criteria C.o18. Through this system the union collects and recycles around seven tonnes of good quality paper each year. Other good ideas include employing students to distribute the union newspaper thereby preventing wastage, removing nearly used toilet rolls from the main toilets and reusing them in the staff toilets, and giving left over lost property to charity shops. The union is a keen supporter of Fairtrade in its restaurant.



Kent Union

Brimming with great environmental initiatives, Kent have an active Ethical & Environmental Scrutiny Committee which brings together trustees, staff and elected students to help green the union. They hold an annual staff development day on environmental issues – providing a chance for each department to formulate a plan to implement the union’s environmental policies. Kent Union is a very employee friendly organisation with policies on flexi hours and annualised hours that bring both social and environmental benefits. Linked to this, the union allows staff to volunteer for charities during work time, and fundraises through a charity cuisine scheme in their catering outlet. On paper use, the union is implementing a scheme to plant a tree for every 100,000 pieces of paper used. Last year all 500 t-shirts bought for freshers helpers were Fairtrade, as were the 200 bought for the Admission: Impossible campaign.



Liverpool Guild of Students

They have a Community Action group which is very active carrying out numerous beach cleans and litter picks in deprived neighbourhoods. The group is extremely responsive to community requests whatever they may be. The Guild has also succeeded in establishing a PET plastic recycling scheme. Between October 2006 and March 2007 the union recycled 87,000 PET bottles filling 50 x 1,100 litre wheelie bins collectively amounting to 2.8 tonnes of plastic being diverted from landfill.

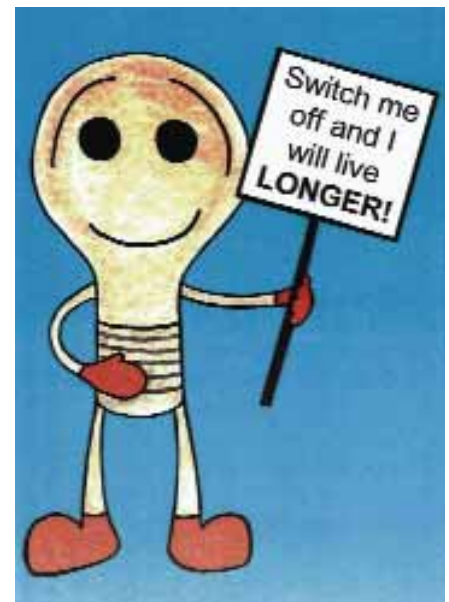


University of Bath Students’ Union

Bath had an eco-friendly refit of their shop using organic paint, biodegradable products where possible, wood certified from sustainable sources, and installing new HCFC-free fridges.

University of Bolton Students’ Union

Bolton have developed their own energy efficient mascot called Eddy, named after Thomas Edison, the inventor of the electric light bulb. Eddy’s introductory verse is “Meet energy efficient Eddy, he is always ready, he lights up to show you the way, but if you leave him on all day, he will soon be DEADY!”. The union has also been proactive in fundraising for Children in Need, approaching local companies for any unwanted merchandise and holding an auction.



University of Essex Students' Union

They took the decision to stop proactively offering carrier bags to customers in their shop and to impose a 5p charge per bag. The outcome has been an 80% reduction in the number of bags given out from 1,100 per day to just 200 per day. All the bags sold are now biodegradable as well. Additionally the union has invested in unbreakable polycarbonate drinking vessels for their nightclub in preference to one-use disposable versions, resulting in much less plastic waste being sent to landfill. Essex also has a policy that all election candidates must take down their posters and recycle them after the elections.

University of London Union

ULU has a team duty officers and part of their role is to ensure that lighting, ventilation systems and electrical appliances are always switched off before the building is closed.

University of Sheffield Union of Students

Sheffield provide an excellent case study for how Students' Unions can benefit from recycling. The union started recycling waste bar glass to reduce their compactor skip charges. From these initial savings they employed two term-time staff to collect and sort the glass to prevent contamination issues. These employees were also asked to litter pick around the union, including the public highway, providing an important community benefit. Having these members of staff in place allowed the union to start recycling cardboard as well. To help make space in their small recycling yard, Sheffield chose a small cardboard baler that produces bales weighing around 20 kilos.



Sheffield is one of only a few Students' Unions that can categorically say that they are recycling more than they are sending to landfill. Between September 2006 and February 2007 the union recycled 88 tonnes of glass, 17 tonnes of cardboard, 6 tonnes of paper and diverted aluminium cans away from landfill to a local scout group. The total weight of waste recycled over the period was 111 tonnes. This compares to 98 tonnes of general waste that was sent to landfill through the compactor skip over the same period. As well as the environmental benefits, their recycling efforts have had a significant financial benefit, reducing their waste bill by a third and saving £2,061 over the period.

Sheffield were also one of just six unions that received bonus criteria for using plant-based cleaning products, such as Seldet Lemon which is made from concentrated lemon juice.

York St John Students' Union

York developed the award winning SSHH! campaign which has since spread to many other Students' Unions. The scheme encourages students to leave their union quietly and respect local residents. The union

also has an annual community barbecue to thank the local residents for putting up with any noise from students throughout the year, which is preceded by a community clean up operation where student volunteers go and carry out a community litter pick. The union has an all year round "Pick it up" campaign aimed at reducing the amount of litter on campus and in the local community, fronted

by the 'Pick it up' girls, who are actually the rugby team in drag images. All the litter bins on campus have been labelled with the 'Pick it up' logo, and their environmental officer has created a campus map showing the location of recycling facilities which is widely used by both the union and university.



Working towards accreditation

Bournemouth University Students' Union

The Union has taken lots of little steps to green their building. In their shop they have imposed a charge of 20p for carrier bags as a means of encouraging students to reuse bags. They have also developed their own energy efficiency mascot, the Green Frog, who appears on stickers by light switches and in email campaigns. Bournemouth print their magazine on 100% post-consumer waste with vegetable based inks, and they have plans to serve hot drinks in a selection of second-hand mugs in their two catering venues, as a way of promoting recycling values. The union also regularly shows 'An Inconvenient Truth' on the TV screens throughout the union.



Leeds University Union

Leeds have entered into a partnership with Oxfam to create one of the first Oxfam campus shops. The new shops are aimed at students, selling second-hand retro clothing books, music, videos, games, and magazines in a colourful and trendy environment.

Nottingham Trent Students' Union



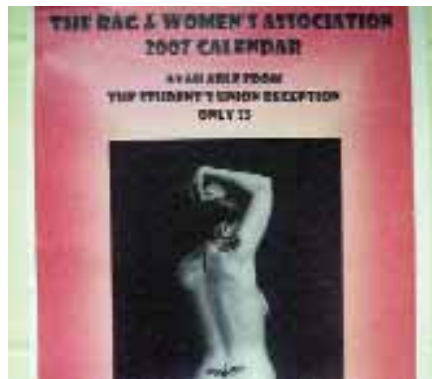
Nottingham Trent have an active Conservation Society getting out into the local community at least once a week in term-time, undertaking a range of conservation projects that benefit people and wildlife, from hedgelaying, to cleaning nest boxes, to creating homes for sand martins.

University of Surrey Students' Union

As a union they use Ecosys printers and Ecostar glass washers, have occupancy sensors and percussion taps in one of their washrooms and have developed a good working relationship with the university's energy and environment manager.

University of Wales, Lampeter Students' Union

Following the tradition of the Womens Institute, Lampeter has an active RAG society that has raised funds by selling a calendar with photos of students without their clothes! The union's Environment and Commercial Services Officer, James Camps ran a campaign to get the university to get better recycling facilities on site including writing a letter to his MP.



Comment

So all in all, a brilliant performance by all those unions taking part in the Sound Impact Awards. We were amazed by the variety and amount of environmental best practice out there, and the fifty one participating unions have done the Students' Union movement proud. But enough of what we thought about you – what did you think of us?

“The scheme has prompted our Union to take action on several areas highlighted in the workbook. I believe the workbook is an excellent tool to use in helping to create initiatives for environmental improvements. New relationships have developed with the institution and internal societies that provide a coordinated and effective response”.

Frank Birkett, Acting General Manager, Manchester Metropolitan Students' Union

“I'd just like to say how impressed I was with the thoroughness of the workbook – it has raised many issues, a number of which we have already been able to take action on, some of which we were already in the process of introducing, and the rest of which are now on our agenda for next semester”.

Nick Bryer, Ethical & Environmental Officer, Birmingham University Guild of Students

“I believe that the workbook will provide a superb road map to the union in our ongoing drive towards greening all our activities”.

Alastair Mcgregor, General Manager, University of Manchester Students' Union



“The awards ceremony was really buzzing. It was inspiring to see a group of young adults so committed to making changes towards more environmentally conscious and sustainable choices. The participation of so many unions in the first year shows great potential for the years to come”.

Kristen Harding, Distribution Manager, The Ecologist Magazine

“We now live in a time of consequences, no longer can we sit back and merely talk about climate change, we must take strong action personally, institutionally and politically if we are to stop climate chaos. People & Planet applauds the systematic approach to environmental management prescribed by the sound impact awards. We hope that this soon is seen as a standard practice and acts as a bench mark achieved by all Students' Unions”.

James Lloyd, Head of Campaigns People & Planet

Sound Impact Awards shortlisted

Anna Heywood, founder of the Sound Impact Awards, was shortlisted alongside George Monbiot and Al Gore for Environmental campaigner of the year in the Observer Ethical Awards 2007. Anna was entered for her role in getting the Sound Impact Awards up and running so successfully. Although Al Gore scooped the prize, the Sound Impact Awards were highly commended by the judges.

2007/08 Awards

If you would like to find out more about the Sound Impact Awards for 2007/08, visit www.soundimpact.org.uk or email soundimpactawards@nussl.co.uk.

Partners and sponsors

The Sound Impact Awards are run by NUS Services, in partnership with NUS, People & Planet, EAUC, HEEPI and The Ecologist magazine.



national union of students



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Office Depot is delighted to be supporting the Sound Impact Awards.

To help our customers make informed choices regarding their green options, we have launched The Green Book™, containing over 1000 environmentally preferable products in one catalogue.

The environmental attributes of the products are clearly labeled by type, such as third party ecolabels like Blue Angel, Fairtrade, and FSC, lower waste through recycled content, lower energy use or lower chemical use. Other environmental solutions and services such as waste management, recycling services and ISO14001 guidance are also provided.

The Green Book delivers over 30 pages of additional information, supporting material, advice and background content including some simple tips on how to make the your workplace a greener place.

For further information or to order a copy of The Green Book, please email the Office Depot Environment Team at ukenvironment@officedepot.com

Office Depot

In 2007, Office Depot won the OPI award for Environmental Responsibility for the third year in succession. "Not for the first time Office Depot wowed the judges with its comprehensive and passionate approach to the environment. From established programs such as its Green Book, to company-wide initiatives that reduce its landfill waste by 75%, Office Depot continues to be our industry's champion for all things Green."





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