

**Aston University Sustainability Working Group**  
**Action Sheet**

**Meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who By</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
05:03:08	Report on KPIs and per capita consumption data	GE/LJ	Jan 09	Medium	
05:03:08	Ascertain Student Guild engagement with sustainability	LD/VJ/PH	June 08	High	Nov 08
29:04:08	Organise follow up to Sustainability Teaching seminar	RC	June 08	Medium	
13:06:08	Aston Sustainability Day for Feb/March 2009	LJ/CW/GE	Jan 09	Low	
25:09:08	Report back on University Transport policies	LJ	Nov 08	Low	Nov 08
25:09:08	Initial planning for 2009 Sustainability Day	LJ/GE/SB/CW	Nov 08	High	Nov 08
25:09:08	Press for adoption of recycled paper & issue of print audit with Senior Management Team	RM	Nov 08	High	Nov 08
25:09:08	Draft Sustainability Policy & Draft Investment Policy	PH/LJ/PQ/SB	Nov 08	Medium	
25:09:08	Initiate 08-09 campaigns – extension of Switch Off campaign; recycling; water chillers vs. bottled water	LJ	Nov 08	Medium	Nov 08
25:09:08	Strategy for changing from bottle water coolers to water chillers	LJ	Nov 08	Medium	Nov 08
19:11:08	Load Transport Plan onto web pages	LJ	Jan 09	Medium	
19:11:08	Explore inclusion of Sustainability Research and Teaching & Learning in Sustainability Event	PH	Jan 09	Medium	

**Sustainable Aston Working Group**

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**19 November 2008**

Present:	Peter Hedges	PH	SEAS ( Chair)
	Richard Middleton	RM	Chief Operating Office
	Garry East	GE	Estates
	Lynnette Jones	LJ	Estates
	Caroline Witton	CW	SLHS
	Julia Brown	JB	SLHS
	Christopher Brewster	CB	ABS
	Stuart Cooper	SC	ABS
	Peter Quaife	PQ	SLSS
	Reiner Grundmann	RG	SLSS
	Sandra Bloodworth	SB	Purchasing
	Luke Davies	LD	Student rep
	Lucy Guildford	LG	Student rep
	In attendance:	Emma Sutton	ES
Victoria Johnsen		VJ	Estates
Apologies:	Michael West	MW	ABS
	Robin Clark	RC	SEAS

**Apologies and Welcome**

Apologies received from Robin Clark and Michael West

PH

**1. Membership**

Christopher Brewster joins the group from ABS to replace Breno Nunes. PH introduces Luke Davies and Lucy Guildford as student representatives for 08/09. PH draws attention to the fact that Victoria Johnsen is no longer a student representative, but a member of Aston staff – her new role is Environment and Sustainability Officer.

**2. Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> September 08 Meeting**

Minutes agreed and accepted

**3. Matters Arising/Action Points**

**3.1 Action Points**

Covered elsewhere on the agenda

**3.2 Sustainability Award Criteria**

PH informs the group that the judging criteria for the sustainability award needs to be decided by January 2009. PH asks for any contributions to be emailed to himself or RM as soon as possible.

PH/RM

All

### 3.3 Guild Engagement

LG and LD report back on current events/discussions which are taking place in the Guild. LG tells the group that the People and Planet society are hoping to achieve a carbon neutral Astonbury next year, although there is still a long way to go before this is achieved. LG is also pleased to announce that Aston will be hosting, along with Birmingham University, part of the People and Planet 'shared earth' event on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November in the Students' Guild. This is a national event and is good for raising Aston's profile. LG agrees to give feedback from this event at the next meeting.

LG/LD

LJ also mentions that both she and VJ have been attending meetings in the Guild to help take actions forward. LJ reports that she is working with Adrian Lowe, Catering Operations Manager, to get better recycling facilities within the Guild.

LJ

PH tells the group that he recently spoke to the Guild Senate and received positive responses from the students, so there is hope that engagement with the Guild will be stronger this year.

### 3.4 Recycled Paper and Print Audit

PH is finding it hard to get the message of 100% recycled paper across to the Executive. The purchasing department is in the process of writing a memo to send to the Director of Finance, stating the implications – hopefully this will prompt some response.

RM has asked his department to pilot a number of ideas to cut the cost of recycling paper and has asked the Director of ICT to take ownership of the printing issue and work with procurement to reduce the number of printers in the University.

CW states that SLHS has made the decision to only order and use 100% recycled paper. CB suggests that the real issue is not the paper but the amount of staff who print unnecessarily. CB states that the group should be looking at trying to change printing behaviour as well as just reducing the amount of printers within the university. PH suggested that recycled paper should be the default position, and non-recycled paper should be specifically requested for purchase. Ways of taking this forward should be discussed at the next meeting.

### 3.5 Water Chillers

LJ tells the group that the company Eden Springs who are registered water suppliers for the University also provide water coolers which are plumbed into the mains. Eden Springs have agreed to do site surveys within the schools to identify areas where plumbed in chillers can be installed. This will reduce transport and also allow staff to feel more comfortable drinking mains water.

## **4. Chairs Report**

### 4.1 Chair's Report

PH reports that the presentation he gave to the Extended Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 about the SAWG was a success. PH states that the feedback was positive and the Executive are focused on linking sustainability into the 2012 strategy. PH also states that the Executive are considering a professor in sustainability and are keen to get the subject into the curriculum.

### 4.2 Web Pages

VJ has been working on the groups webpage's and has made a great deal of progress – all the information/presentations from the teaching and learning seminars and the sustainability research seminars are now available online.

### 4.3 Sustainability UG and PG Teaching

Interdisciplinary Studies are looking to re-launch the sustainability and environmental course and ABS has been working to launch an environmental MSc.

However, before an environmental and sustainability programme is introduced, market research needs to be conducted to ensure that there will be reasonable uptake. PH reports that this is due to begin next month so that it is completed before Christmas, the results will then be presented in the New Year. LJ also states that she has been approached by the Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, Roy Smith, to offer advice on a module which is being designed to enhance student's employability. One of the topics in this module will be sustainability in the work place. It is hoped that the pilot for this module will take place in January 2009.

#### 4.4 HEFCE Consultation

LJ states that the feedback from the HEFCE consultation is now available online, <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/events/2008/sustain/> for those who are interested.

### **5. Environment and Sustainability Manager's Report**

#### 5.1 Eco Campus

LJ has attended the first Eco-Campus meeting; she circulates the project work plan to the rest of the group. It's a three year work plan and by the end of the scheme Aston should receive its ISO 14001. The award is split into stages and from now until June 2009, Aston will work towards achieving the bronze level of the award. To begin the award, Aston must undergo an initial audit. LJ asks the group whether this should be undertaken on a university wide scale or separated into individual schools. The group decides it should be undertaken on a university wide scale – however RM states that the group should be aware that it may not be possible for the residences to be involved in the audit because of the contract. LJ also states that the group needs to decide on five areas of management which will be accessed to create an environmental baseline. The group decides the following areas will be tackled first: Policy (compulsory), Community Involvement, Emissions and Discharges, Environmental Management Systems (compulsory) and Sustainable Procurement.

#### 5.2 Whizz Go Car Club

VJ reports that the Whizz Go Car Club will hopefully be up and running by week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> November. VJ and LJ are currently working with Purchasing to finalise a few points in the contract to make sure it is easy for the cars to be charged to a department. The scheme will then be publicised around the University.

#### 5.3 Sustainable Transport

LJ circulates a transport action plan to members of the SAWG. The circulated action plan shows the progress from an original transport plan which was adopted in October 2007. LJ plans to put the transport plan on the web pages at the end of the calendar year for staff to access and see the developments.

GE also mentions that he and LJ have been looking into the possibility of a park and ride scheme from the Shustoke site to the main campus – he will keep the group updated on developments.

LJ

#### 5.4 Sustainability Event on 26<sup>th</sup> February 09

VJ and LJ are co-ordinating the sustainability event. It is going to be held in the Guild Hall on the afternoon of 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009. VJ reports that it will be similar to the Environmental day which was held by Estates earlier this year, but will be on a larger scale. There will be lots of stalls which will offer advice on sustainability and also sell their green products. Fairtrade will also be involved in the event, offering advice and selling their products. The architects involved on the new residences have also been invited, offering information on sustainable building. VJ is also hoping to get M&S on board as sponsors of the event. VJ would like to get members of CLIPP to get involved to talk about sustainability in Teaching and

Learning - PH to raise with RC. PH states that he will contact the people who were involved in the research seminar and ask them to participate to hopefully persuade more academics to attend the event. CW suggests using a poster session, this is considered, and to echo this suggestion, VJ asks the rest of the group to email her with any other suggestions the group may have for the event.

PH/RC/  
VJ

All

#### 5.5 Sustainability Campaigns 2008/09

LJ states that she will soon be launching a recycling campaign across the University. LJ and the Estates department will be looking at installing recycling units around the University. These units will be phased in gradually to the different schools/departments. LJ is also looking at the possibility of recycling food waste, however this will come at a later stage as to begin with Catering Aston will take part in an audit to assess whether enough food waste is produced to be able to compost waste on site. LJ has agreed to keep the group updated.

#### 5.6 KPIs

GE reports that the statistics for the Estates department are due in January and therefore the department is currently in the middle of collecting all the necessary data, so he suggests that the KPIs are reported in the New Year instead when the data is more concise.

GE

#### 5.7 SLHS Energy Saving Projects

VJ reports that the staff in SLHS have taken part in a 'switch off' campaign in an effort to reduce the amount of electricity which is used within the school – for the first week staff were told not to change their normal behaviour, in the second week they had to switch off electronic equipment wherever possible. The results showed a 48% average saving in electricity after turning off their appliances at the sockets. The participants were given trailing sockets to make the process of switching off easier. VJ is hoping to purchase more of the sockets and meters so that more trials can take place in other schools and on a larger scale – VJ asks the group for any advice on the best way to get funding for this project.

All

### **6. Short Term Initiatives**

#### 6.1 2<sup>nd</sup> Research Seminar

PH reports that the 2<sup>nd</sup> research seminar was a relative success. PH hands out a document which reports back on the main discussions.

### **7. Sustainability Groups reports**

#### 7.1 ABS

Covered in item 4.3 – discussions being held over the possibility of creating an MSC in sustainability.

#### 7.2 SLHS

CW reports that in addition to the switch off campaign, a competition is being held within LHS to encourage staff and students to think of ideas to make the school more sustainable. JB states that a prize will be awarded to the best idea. The deadline is 5<sup>th</sup> December so CW and JB will report on the winning idea at the next meeting.

#### 7.3 SLSS

Nothing to report – PH suggests that PQ and RG look at ways of implementing the ideas discussed by LHS in their own school as a way of raising awareness.

#### 7.4 SEAS

Nothing to report

### 7.5 Sustainability Teaching

PH reports back on behalf of RC and informs the group that CLIPP will be holding a meeting on teaching sustainability early 2009 and asks for any suggestions for the format of the seminar to be passed to RC.

All

### 7.6 Sustainable Procurement Group

Most issues covered in item 3.4 and 5.2 – LJ also reports that the procurement group is also looking into ways of getting staff to use only low emission cars from the University car hire companies.

## **8. Feedback on Lunar Society Debate**

Only two members of the group were able to attend the Lunar Society debate, LG and SC agree that there is nothing significant to report.

## **9. Implementing “A Sense of Direction” in 08-09**

### 9.1 Sustainability Policy

VJ is currently looking at existing policies from other Universities and a draft policy will be created for Aston based on these examples.

PH/LJ/P  
Q/SB

### 9.2 Ethical Investment

PH circulates a draft copy of the Ethical Investment Policy and asks the group to email any comments to him before the next meeting so that the policy can be finalised as quickly as possible.

PH/LJ/P  
Q/SB  
All

### 9.3 Community Engagement

Carried over to January meeting

## **10. AOB**

Nothing to report

## **11. Date of next meeting**

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December

Focus to be action rather than reporting back