

Aston University Sustainability Working Group
Action Sheet

Meeting: 3rd February 2009

Meeting Date	Action	Who By	By When	Priority	Date Completed
05:03:08	Report on KPIs and per capita consumption data	GE/LJ	Jan 09	Medium	Feb 09
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	Medium	Jan 09
25:09:08	Draft Sustainability Policy	PH/LJ/PQ/SP	Jan 09	Medium	
19:11:08	Load Transport Plan onto web pages	LJ	Jan 09	Medium	Jan 09
19:11:08	Explore inclusion of Sustainability Research and Teaching & Learning in Sustainability Event	PH	Jan 09	Medium	Jan 09
18:12:08	Present Ethical Investment Policy to Executive	RM	Feb 09	Medium	
18:12:08	Draw up draft Sustainability Awards Criteria	PH	Feb 09	High	
03:02:09	Draw up draft SAWG Terms of Reference	PH/SC	March 09	Low	
03:02:09	Explore concept of annual sustainability report	LJ	March 09	Low	
03:02:09	Plan for Eco-Campus compile Environmental Baseline	LJ/PH	March 09	Medium	

Sustainable Aston Working Group

Minutes of Meeting
3 February 2009

Present:	Stuart Cooper	SC	ABS (Vice-Chair)
	Christopher Brewster	CB	ABS
	Dr Caroline Witton	CW	SLHS
	Lucy Bastin	LB	SEAS
	Dr Reiner Grundmann	RG	SLSS
	Garry East	GE	Estates
	Lynnette Jones	LJ	Estates
	Victoria Johnsen	VJ	Estates
	Sofia Kokolaki-Hall		Estates
In attendance:	Emma Sutton	ES	Secretarial Support
Apologies:	Peter Hedges	PH	SEAS (Chair)
	Dr Julia Brown	JB	
	Professor Michael West	MW	ABS
	Dr Peter Quaife	PQ	SLSS
	Dr Robin Clark	RC	CLIPP
	Luke Davies	LD	Student rep
	Lucy Guildford	LG	Student rep
	Richard Middleton	RM	COO's Office

Apologies and Welcome

Apologies received from Peter Hedges, Julia Brown, Mike West, Peter Quaife, Robin Clark, Luke Davies, Lucy Guildford and Richard Middleton. SC as Vice-Chair welcomes members to the meeting in the absence of PH as Chair. SC also welcomes Sofia Kokolaki-Hall. Sofia will be covering LJ maternity leave. SC also takes this opportunity to announce that Carol Parkes, Senior Lecturer in ABS, will be joining the group at 15:00 to give a talk on 'The UN principles of Responsible Management Education'.

SC

1. Membership

Nothing to report

2. Minutes 18 December 08 Meeting

Approved and accepted

3. Matters Arising/Action Points

3.1 Action Points

Transport plan is now displayed on the University webpage's, <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/about/environment/transport>. Other action points are still in progress.

3.2 Sustainability Award Criteria

As discussed at the 18th December meeting, no prize for the *Outstanding Contribution to the Sustainable Campus Award* was presented at last year's Staff Excellence Awards. As a result, RM asked the group to put forward some ideas of how to make the criteria more accessible. However, no concrete suggestions have yet been made by the group. SC asks ES to email the criteria for the award to the group following the meeting and asks the group to email any suggestions to PH or ES as soon as possible.

3.3 Ethical Investment Policy

The draft version of the Ethical Investment Policy has been approved by the group. However, the group is still waiting to hear whether it has been accepted by the Executive Team. RM is absent from the meeting, ES has agreed to find out whether the policy was discussed at the last Executive meeting and whether it was approved. VJ mentions that before the policy is signed off, perhaps the group should gain feedback from the students as they may be affected by the policy. LJ agrees and states that the group should engage more thoroughly with the students when making policies and asks whether this particular policy should be taken to the Guild Executive/Council meeting. The group, however is concerned that they may not be able to act on student suggestions which may cause problems. LJ agrees to bear this in mind. ES to find out when the next Guild Council is and organise for a representative from the SAWG to attend. LJ

3.4 Draft Sustainability Policy

Work in progress. To be discussed at the next meeting. PH

4. Chair's Report

Chair absent. Item to be discussed at the next meeting. PH

4.1 Terms of Reference for Group and Operating Procedures

SC asks the group whether they think any terms of reference are needed. SC states that this issue was discussed at an earlier meeting of the SAWG, but it was decided that having links to the Executive was more than adequate. However, now as the group has grown in size and responsibility, PH has suggested that the group should perhaps become more formal in structure. CB states that it may be good to have something written down so that the group and other members of staff are able to see clearly the purpose of the group. SC states that he will talk to PH following the meeting to see whether he might be able to develop some basic terms of reference for the group and will let the group know the progress at the next meeting. LJ also tells the group that she thinks that the group should aspire to write an annual report which can be published every year. The group agrees, LJ to start working on ideas of what can be put into it. PH

4.2 Review of Environmental Policy

SC tells the group that PH has suggested that the Environmental Policy is reviewed every 12 months. LJ states that she thinks that Aston's Environmental Policy is suitable for the University and ticks all the right boxes for the Green Gown Awards - The group agrees and therefore the Environmental policy is approved for the next 12 months. It is to be reviewed again next year.

5. Environment and Sustainability Manager's Report

5.1 Sustainability Event, 26 February

VJ reports that all the planning for the event is going well. There will be a large number of external organisations attending, as well as internal departments, who will be advertising green initiatives and products. RC will be offering advice on sustainability in teaching and there will be a poster exhibition by some members of academic staff advertising research opportunities. CB asks VJ who the event has been aimed at, VJ states that the event is open to all of the university community and also staff and students from other local universities have been invited to attend. CB asks VJ to email the list of stallholders to the group so that they can offer any suggestions if necessary. VJ agrees to do this.

VJ/LJ

5.2 HEFCE Carbon Reduction Target for the HE Sector

LJ informs the group that HEFCE are going to set a carbon reduction target for the HE Sector so that any organisation who receives government funding will need to meet the carbon reduction target. HEFCE are looking at setting the target by using a 1990 baseline. LJ states that this is likely to mean the target will be difficult to meet because the sector has changed so much since this date. The interim report will be published mid-February and the final report which will state the baseline will be published the end of February. The targets will then be disseminated to Universities in April. LJ states that the Estates department have already started the process of looking at ways of reducing energy consumption which may help the University to be more prepared when the final report is published. Graham Faulks, Engineering Officer, has prepared a list of projects which would reduce the level of energy consumption in parts of the University almost immediately and the plan is to get RM to show the list to the Executive team to gain funding.

LJ

5.3 EcoCampus Update

LJ tells the group that she is very pleased with the progress of the EcoCampus Award and feels the group is on target for achieving the first stage of the award. She asks if the SAWG could act as a Review Committee for the EcoCampus award. The group agrees. LJ states that the next step is to start looking at where Aston is now, so that it is possible to judge improvements. LJ will keep the group informed of the EcoCampus award at every meeting as part of the Environment and Sustainability Manager's Report agenda item.

LJ

5.4 Green Gown Awards Update

LJ informs the group that the application forms for the awards have now been released, so the group will need to decide on which categories the University should enter and put together an entry over the next few weeks. LJ suggests that the group enters the continuous improvement/change category and perhaps the social responsibility category. However, LJ is going to send the criteria for each category to the group and asks if the group can send her some feedback.

LJ

5.5 KPIs and per Capita Consumption

GE hands out a document showing a number of key statistics for the Estates department. The handout briefly highlights where the Estates department currently stands in terms of energy consumption, waste and space allocation. GE states that more detail will be available in April. The group asks if there is any way the data from Aston can be compared to other Universities so that it is possible to see how well Aston is performing in its sector. GE confirms this information should be available sometime in April and he will try and put it into a suitable format for the group. It is therefore agreed that this item is to be discussed in greater detail after April.

GE

6. Sustainability Groups Reports

6.1 ABS

SC announces that the group's big plan is to incorporate sustainability into ABS research. SC will report on the progress. SC

6.2 SLHS

CW informs the group that the energy saving projects are still on-going and that the SLHS sustainability group is also now looking at the levels of waste which the school produces and developing recycling opportunities. CW

6.3 SLSS

RG states that there has been interest within the school to create a SLSS sustainability group, however there has been difficulty setting a date. This will hopefully be resolved by next SAWG meeting. RG has also been informed that SLSS now only orders recycled paper in their department which shows progress. RG

6.4 SEAS

The SEAS sustainability group has still not been formed, however LB reports that the group is looking to widen interest to admin areas within the school. LB states that when the group does finally meet, she would like to look into ways of collecting and recycling tetra packs. LJ states this would be a good idea, however suggests that the 'Switch off' campaign, similar to that used in SLHS could be a good starting point for the school and act as a catalyst to get people involved. LJ and LB going to work on getting a group together to implement the first project. LB/PH

6.5 Sustainability Teaching

SC reports on behalf of RC. RC is going to organise another sustainability teaching seminar. SC also reports that RC has set up a small working group who focus on ways to incorporate sustainability into teaching. RC

6.6 Sustainability Research

CB circulates the document 'Aston Sustainable Colloquia'. CB explains that he worked on the document with SC and RG and that it is a work in progress. CB explains that the document puts forward the idea of Aston holding workshops and lectures on the subject of sustainability. It would need someone to take charge of it and funding would need to be found. CB asks the group whether they have any suggestions on how to achieve funding for this project. The group agrees the best way is to get in touch with RM before the next meeting to ask whether the Executive might be able to support the proposal. Overall, the group is pleased with the idea. ES to circulate the document to the group. CB/SC

6.7 Sustainable Procurement Group

LJ reports that the Procurement group has made significant progress with the campaign for plumbed water systems. It is now possible to request plumbed water systems to be installed in accessible areas as an alternative to bottled water coolers. LJ encourages the group to promote this concept within their schools. ISA have also now got a 'buying greener' webpage which gives advice on which IT equipment to purchase. Procurement are looking at ways to ensure that schools only buy IT equipment after consulting with ISA. LJ will report back on its progress. LJ

7. Student Perceptions of Sustainability at Aston

To be discussed at the next meeting.

8. How Do We Improve Communications?

To be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Sustainability Suggestions Scheme?

SC asks the group whether they think it is a good idea to set up a sustainability suggestions scheme. CB states that it might be a good idea to create a blog so that staff and students are able to see what has already been suggested so they don't keep asking the Environmental Officers the same questions. The majority of the group like the idea of a blog as it would help improve communication. However, others in the group raise concerns about how it would be monitored. CB suggests having a separate email especially for the Sustainability group. However, LJ still raises concerns about how often the emails would be checked. SC suggests that the logistics of a sustainability suggestions scheme need to be looked in to. LJ agrees and states that she will talk with the Communications department following the meeting to find out in more detail what a blog would entail. CB agrees to get involved.

LJ/CB

10. AOB

Nothing to report

11. Date of Next Meeting

Week beginning 23rd March