

Aston University Sustainability Working Group
Action Sheet

Meeting: 5th March 2008

Meeting Date	Action	Who By	By When	Priority	Date Completed
03:10:07	Confirm Student Membership of Group	PH	March 08	High	Feb 08
03:10:07	Produce Catalogue of Taught Sustainable Modules	PH	March 08	Medium	
19:12:07	Organise Sustainability Research Seminar	PH	March 08	Low	
17:01:08	Temporary replacement for Reiner Grundman	PQ	Mar meeting	Medium	March 08
17:01:08	Organise Environmental Policy launch via Web, Aston Aspects, Aston Sun	LJ/PH	Mar meeting	High	10 Mar 08
17:01:08	Organise Aston Sustainability Web pages	LJ/PH	Mar meeting	High	
17:01:08	Viability of Aston event to coincide with World Environment Day - June 5	LJ/RM/GE	Mar meeting	Medium	
17:01:08	'Baseline' status report.	LJ	Mar Meeting	Medium	March 08
05:03:08	Update contacts sheet and circulate	PH/ES	April 08	Medium	
05:03:08	Report on KPIs and per capita consumption data	GE/LJ	Apr meeting	Medium	
05:03:08	Ascertain Student Guild engagement with sustainability	LD/VJ	Apr meeting	Medium	

Sustainable Aston Working Group

Minutes of Meeting
5th March 2008

Present:	Peter Hedges	PH	SEAS (Chair)
	Garry East	GE	Estates
	Robin Clark	RC	SEAS
	Breno Nunes	BN	ABS
	Dr Stuart Cooper	SC	ABS
	Dr Caroline Witton	CW	SLHS
	Dr Peter Quaife	PQ	SLSS
	Graeme Hayes	GH	SLSS
	Victoria Johnsen	VJ	Student rep
	Luke Davies	LD	Student rep
In attendance:	Emma Sutton	ES	Secretarial support
Apologies:	Professor Michael West	MW	ABS
	Richard Middleton	RM	Chief Operating Officer
	Lynnette Jones	LJ	Estates
	Dr Julia Brown	JB	SLHS

Apologies and Welcome

Apologies received from Michael West, Richard Middleton, Lynnette Jones and Julia Brown. Welcome to Luke Davies and Victoria Johnsen, two new student representatives and to Graeme Hayes, replacement representative for SLSS.

1. Membership

Contact sheet to be updated to include new members. Note that Victoria Johnsen is a campus resident as requested by RM in meeting 19th December. ES

2. Minutes of 17th January 2008 meeting

Minutes were agreed and accepted

3. Matters Arising/Action Points

3.1 Action Points

All action points are in hand. The catalogue of Taught Sustainable Modules is in progress.

3.2 Combined Honours

PH was concerned that Combined Honours has been neglected by the group and has met with the Director and Assistant Director. Although they PH

are keen to be involved, it is difficult for Combined Honours to do much as the Subjects administered by them are owned by Schools. One way forward is to make sustainability an item at the Subject Tutors meeting. PH has been involved with talks over the possibility of recommencing the Combined Honours environmental science subject.

3.3 Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges

GE confirms that the University is now a member of EAUC.

PH suggests that the group should look to send a representative to the EAUC conference which is taking place on 31st March - 2nd April 2008. LJ is already attending on behalf of Estates. More information can be found on www.eauc.org.uk. Information is handed out to the group. The Sustainability Group's budget is to be discussed with V-C in order to cover the cost of registration.

4. Chairs Report

4.1 Website and Aston Aspects

PH is hoping to launch the Aston Sustainability Group webpages on 10th March to coincide with the sustainability pull-out section which is going to be included in the March edition of Aston Aspects. PH asks the group if membership information can be displayed on the Webpage's. All agree this is fine so long as personal contact details are not mentioned. PH is also considering exhibiting the minutes on the internet. Group agrees this is a good idea. CW asks if Fair Trade can be mentioned on the group webpage's. PH is going to look in to this.

PH

4.2 Green Education Declaration

The People and Planet Green Educational Declaration has been signed by the VC. PH is going to arrange for a copy of the signed version to be put on the Working Group webpage's.

PH

4.3 Big Green Challenge

The group agrees to postpone the Big Green Challenge until next year.

4.4 Sustainability/live

The Sustainability live event which is taking place at the NEC Birmingham on 20th-22nd May 2008 is the largest UK event for excellence and innovation in environment, water, energy and land. More information can be found on <http://www.sustainabilitylive.com/sliver08/common/>.

5. Environment and Sustainability Manager's Report

(PH to report on LJ behalf)

5.1 World Environment Day

PH informs the group that there is a meeting scheduled for the 18th March between Aston University and BCC to discuss plans for World Environmental Day. Stewart Comfort, Director of Marketing, is chairing the meeting and has asked for a representative from the Sustainability group to attend. PH is unavailable. CW and LD are looking to attend on his behalf.

5.2 IER – Environmental Baseline

The Environmental Baseline was circulated to the group on 3rd March. LJ

produced the document to provide the group with information on the University's current environmental status. It is still a work in progress but gives a starting point. It will help the group to monitor the progress of the University.

BN asks whether it would be possible to measure the amount spent on utilities per student. GE states that he is currently working with Graham Hooley, Senior-Pro-Vice Chancellor to produce a number of KPIs per student head for energy consumption within the University. PH asks if he would be able to collate some of the information and present the figures to the group at the next meeting. GE agrees. GE

5.3 Sustainable Procurement Group

PH reports that LJ has met with the Purchasing Department for their initial meeting. LJ thinks it is going to be a learning curve. The next meeting is taking place in 18th March. LJ

5.4 Campus Development and Tree Planting

With the enabling works for the residences project now on site, GE reports that has been necessary to remove around 160 trees from campus. GE However, to replace these trees LJ has arranged for 200 saplings to be planted at Shustoke on 17th March. All the group have been invited to attend. GE

GE also states that the new campus developments will promote sustainability. They will contain a number of modern sustainable features such as grey water recycling and green roofing. GE comments that at present the new residences have not been BREEAM rated, however he believes that they would achieve a high rating.

PH suggests that GE holds the Campus Development Seminar in June but uses it to show the positive long term gains of the residence projects to show the good behind the immediate losses'. CW suggests contacting University Communications and arranging for a positive spin on the negative aspects of the build.

6. Short Term Initiatives

6.1 Teaching and Learning Workshop

RC has sent out an all staff email to publicise the event which is taking place on Thursday 13th March 2008. The aim of the seminar is to begin a debate on how the ideas on sustainability can be incorporated into the teaching and learning practice across the University. It will explore what is currently taking place in the 4 Schools with a speaker from each. RC will report back on what happens at the next meeting. RC

6.2 Sustainability Research Seminar

PH sent out an all staff email proposing 3rd July as a possible date for the Sustainability Research seminar. He is waiting to hear the response before confirming the programme. PH states it will be a chance to share common ideas. PH

7. Sustainability Groups Reports

7.1 ABS

Held first meeting and changed the name to Social Responsibility Group. The main priority of the group is to produce a curriculum map of ABS. BN talks to ISA about their Environmental Policies as an action point of the meeting. Understands that ISA are changing their main computer supplier to Stone Computers, who have agreed to take away and recycle old machines. However, it appears that many departments within the University fail to communicate with ISA when purchasing new electrical equipment. BN suggests this should be something LJ brings up with the Sustainable Procurement Group. BN states that ISA are looking to default all printers/copiers to print double sided. Also looking at developing swipe cards for printers to reduce the amount of waste produced.

SC/BN

7.2 SLHS

CW asks the group if they know how SLHS can go about recycling old equipment. PH states that there are certain charities who do recycle old equipment but that the school would need to be careful that Aston would not be liable for anything. Would have to check with LJ and the terms of the waste contract.

CW

7.3 SLSS

PQ reports that he is still trying to put together a membership list for a meeting and has not held one as yet. However, he is hoping to get people together after the Easter break.

PQ

7.4 SEAS

PH states that it still needs to be decided how SEAS will take this forward. The first stem may be an item on the School Board agenda

PH

7.5 Research

SC apologises and states that due to other commitments he has not had chance to work on developing a research catalogue. He is hoping to begin soon.

SC

8. Sustainability Strategy

PQ is pleased that the group is making advances within the University; however he would like the group to be involved in more flagship projects so that Aston can begin to lead the way rather than play catch up. In order to do this PQ has suggested three projects which may enhance Aston's sustainable reputation. Ideas stem from a visit to the Centre for Alternative Technology:

PQ

- 1) to look at the possibility of making the University roof green;
- 2) take a room in the old building and refurbish it to a very high standard of sustainability;
- 3) a pilot compost toilet.

LD shows preference for a green roof as it will mean low disruption but high impact.

PH states that a working with a large flat roof has high potential for research and therefore could bring money to the University. CW agrees and comments that the projects would probably also be beneficial to psychological research.

PQ/PH/RC

PH, RC and PQ are going to get together to discuss how to develop a strategy, which will be the main item for the next meeting.

9. Revolving Green Fund

Information about the Revolving Green Fund was circulated to the group prior to the meeting. PH states that it is a central fund operated by HEFCE which allows for Universities to apply for loans to help pay for green projects. The deadline to comment on the HEFCE proposal is 21st April. GE suggests that we should support this as it would be a useful to fund sustainable initiatives, particularly for the old building.

Group supports the overall idea of the Revolving Green Fund.

10. Raising Student Awareness

VJ suggests that to raise student awareness on the issue of sustainability, the group needs to come up with a big event to grab attention. VJ and LD put forward the idea of a Go Green awareness week. This could include talks and lectures, stalls selling products, fun gimmicks and Green themed nights at the Students' Guild. LD states that there was a Go Green week last year; however it was not successful due to lack of publicity. Therefore, it is agreed by the group that Go Green week is only going to work if there is widespread support throughout the University. PH Suggests that the group decides on next year's dates by the next meeting to ensure that the dates can be included in the 08/09 Guild calendar. PH agrees with VJ that in order to capture student's attention the activities must be fun. RC suggests that a student working group should be created to ensure that ideas get carried across into the next academic year. LD suggests that it might be helpful to contact the Guild Environmental Committee and get them involved. PH asks if he can look into this.

VJ/LD

11. AOB

12. Date of next meeting

Week beginning 28th April.