

**SOUND**  
environmental  
impact awards

# Sound Environmental Impact Awards

Showcase Portfolio 2008/09

# The Co-operative is a proud sponsor of the Sound Environmental Impact Awards, we fully endorse its goal of environmental best practice and applaud those Students' Unions that are participating.

At The Co-operative 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.

Our approach acknowledges that there are physical limits to the resources of the Earth, both in terms of generating materials and absorbing wastes, and that any business activity exceeding these limits is, by definition, unsustainable.

The Co-operative 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 Co-operative one of the largest purchasers of green electricity in the world and delivering CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 350,000 tonnes per annum.

We do not only 'buy-in' renewable energy; we have also heavily invested in innovative on-site renewable energy projects such as the landmark Co-operative Insurance building in Manchester, which has been covered with 7,000 photovoltaic panels. Known as the Solar Tower, it is the UK's largest-ever solar power installation and will create 180 MWh of renewable electricity each year – enough to make nine million cups of tea.

We also put our money where our mouth is, The Co-operative Bank, the UK's only high street bank with a customer-led Ethical Policy, will not provide finance to businesses involved in activities that our customers deem unethical, such as the extraction and production of fossil fuels, the unsustainable harvest of natural resources and the manufacture of harmful chemicals. As a result, since 1992, the bank has declined over £1 billion of finance to businesses that conflict with our customer's ethics.

The Co-operative applauds those Students' Unions that are taking action to reduce their environmental impacts; even small-scale initiatives can have a real impact and achieve real benefits – but that doesn't mean you have to think small and as this booklet shows you aren't. We congratulate those Students' Unions that were recognised at the Sound Environmental Impact Awards and wish them every success with their environmental initiatives.

**The co-operative**

# Welcome



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national union of students

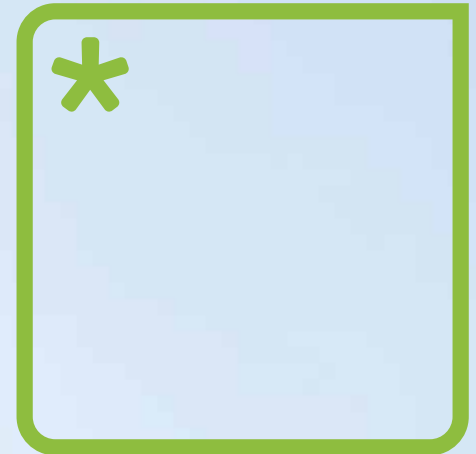


services limited

**Welcome to the official showcase for the Sound Environmental Impact Awards 2008/09. Now in its third year, this accreditation scheme continues to go from strength-to-strength and saw 79 Unions reviewing their practices and implementing positive change to green every inch of their campuses. The scheme encourages, rewards and celebrates environmental best-practice via an independent benchmarking process. Sound Environmental Impact Awards comprises easy-to-implement practical actions that motivate Unions to reduce their environmental impact.**

Celebrating and sharing best environmental practice is fundamental to this scheme's success. This showcase provides examples of what Unions achieved throughout the academic year and gives you a flavour of what the Sound Environmental Impact Awards are all about.

We hope that this showcase will inspire further members to get on board with this fantastic scheme. We also wish to share the innovative greening initiatives found in Unions within and beyond the Students' Union movement.



# SOUND

environmental  
impact awards

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# Benchmarking

## The assessment and validation process

**The Sound Environmental Impact Awards is based on a self-assessment digital workbook containing 192 criteria, each delivering a practical action that will help a Union to reduce its impact on the environment. Unions simply work through the list of 22 Bronze essential criteria and mark the bonus criteria that they meet, in doing so they collect points along the way.**

Each criterion relates to a specific practical action and is worth a score of between 1 and 10, depending on how important the action is and how difficult it is to implement. Bigger issues are broken down into manageable chunks, and the process of self-completion allows each Union to identify what they should and could be doing.

The Silver Standard is new this year. To gain the Silver Standard, Unions need to have met all of the Bronze essentials plus all 11 criteria marked as Silver essentials and gain an overall score of 400 or more.

Sound Environmental Impact Awards focuses not only on best practice in resource management, but also covers virtually every environmental issue relevant to Students' Unions. Unlike many other accreditation schemes, our criteria relate to specific practical actions – actually changing light bulbs, installing recycling bins, selling Fairtrade. The scheme delivers an action plan for becoming a greener organisation.

Once Unions had completed their workbooks, our Greener Unions Co-ordinator began the process of validating them and performing site audits – including all of the top ten scorers. An independent adjudicator also verified the bonus section scores, we then provided final marks and constructive feedback to all participating Unions.

## The essential criteria

The 22 Bronze essential criteria are actions that we think all Students' Unions could and should be doing. The 11 Silver essential criteria differentiate the greenest Unions from standard environmental good practice.

### Environmental impacts

- C.001** An environmental audit within last three years
- C.002** Identified and prioritised most significant environmental aspects and impacts
- C.003** Identified key areas for improvement of environmental performance (Silver)

### Baselines, monitoring and results

- C.014** Monitoring the number of photocopies at least monthly
- C.016** Monitoring the number of business miles travelled on Union business by different modes (Silver)

### Environmental legislation and duty of care

- C.020** Systems in place to ensure hazardous wastes and used catering oils are disposed of correctly
- C.021** Suitable practical measures to meet duty of care requirements in waste management (Silver)

### Reusing refuse

- C.038** Collecting used printer and toner cartridges internally and from students
- C.039** Collecting used mobile phones from students (Silver)

### Recycling refuse

- C.046** Majority of glass bottles from bars are recycled
- C.048** Waste paper recycling scheme and collection boxes in offices and by all photocopiers
- C.052** Scheme for recycling aluminium and/or steel drinks cans (Silver)

### Electricity – Awareness

- C.056** Awareness-raising stickers encouraging staff to switch off lights in offices and communal areas
- C.058** Labelling banks of 6 or more light switches to identify functions
- C.059** Invited staff to feedback energy-saving ideas within last 12 months

### Electricity – Switching off

- C.061** Up-to-date and embedded lighting and equipment responsibility plan
- C.064** Formal lighting and equipment shutdown procedure for vacations

### Electricity – Lighting equipment

- C.069** Scheme in place/working towards reducing tungsten filament bulbs to less than 5% of all lighting

### Water

- C.111** All urinals are fitted with working water saving devices

### Transport

- C.122** Minibus training includes efficient driving techniques (Silver)

### Campaigning and campaigning societies

- C.130** Actively lobbied institution on at least two ethical or environmental issues in past 12 months

### Student officers, staff and teams

- C.140** Commitment to environmental best-practice from senior management
- C.141** Environmental considerations referenced in all new job descriptions and/or standard terms and conditions (Silver)
- C.142** Induct all new staff and sabbatical officers on relevant environmental issues within their role
- C.144** Union has developed a good relationship with the institution's environmental manager (Silver)
- C.145** An active environmental committee or internal environmental taskforce (Silver)

### Policy and commitment

- C.147** Active environmental or ethical policy and commitment to improvement of performance

### Reporting and plan

- C.151** Environmental issues mentioned in long-term operating plan

### Communications

- C.155** Union's website contains up-to-date environmental information

### Procurement

- C.161** All tea and coffee served is Fairtrade and/or Jungle Coffee
- C.165** All bottle-fed water coolers are supplied by AquAid (Silver)
- C.168** All white copier paper bought is made from 100% recycled paper or pulp from certified sustainable sources
- C.173** All fresh eggs used for catering, or for sale in retail outlets, are free-range (Silver)

# About the Awards

## Sound Environmental Impact Awards 2008/09

**Since the scheme began more and more Students' Unions are taking on board the environmental message. Students and staff are increasingly working together to reduce their individual and collective impacts.**

In 2006/07 51 Unions registered for the Sound Environmental Impact Awards and this increased to 67 in 2007/08. In 2008/09 a phenomenal 79 Unions registered, making this our most successful year so far. We are looking forward to another surge of interest from member Unions when we launch the 2009/10 scheme. Registration will open in Summer 2009.

By increasing our list of Bronze and Silver essential criteria by one element each year, we will continue to raise the standards of the scheme to ensure that Students' Unions are encouraged to keep up the momentum of striving to make improvements.

We hope that it will inspire you to take action within your own organisation.

Visit [www.nus.org.uk/sound](http://www.nus.org.uk/sound) to find out more.

## The awards element

The Sound Environmental Impact Awards 2008/09 culminated with a presentation at our Annual Dinner in April 2009, where this year's winners were announced.

Comedian, writer and broadcaster Hardeep Singh Kohli, best known for presenting *The One Show* on BBC1, did a fantastic job of hosting the Awards Dinner. Over 200 delegates, from Students' Unions near and far, enjoyed the high-profile celebration event rewarding all participating Unions for their efforts.

Our three special achievement awards are open to all Unions, irrespective of their final score: Office Depot Green Innovation Award, The Co-operative Most Improved Union Award and The Ecologist Communications Challenge Award. These Awards recognise continuous improvement and exceptional achievements.

The top five scoring Unions were then presented with the Gold Award, the first of which was named Overall Winner of the 2008/09 scheme. Those Unions who achieved all 22 Bronze and 11 Silver criteria and achieved an overall score of 400 or more, were awarded the new Silver Standard.

Other Unions that met all 22 essential criteria were awarded the Bronze Standard certificate and those who did not meet all 22 essential criteria collected a certificate for 'Working Towards Accreditation'.

Whilst Unions are aware that their final score will be tallied against those of other participants, the scheme isn't all about winning. Unions that are just starting to think about the environment can benefit most by taking part in the scheme. The workbook provides a ready-made framework for improvement.



# 2008/09 Rankings

## **The Sound Environmental Impact Awards were hand crafted from recycled window glass by artist Adele Billingham.**

Those Unions who achieved the new Silver Standard this year received an exclusive prize made out of recycled wellington boots to go with their certificate.

## **The Co-operative Most Improved Union Award**

University of Plymouth Students' Union

## **The Ecologist Communications Challenge Award**

Loughborough Students' Union

## **Office Depot Green Innovation Award**

Reading University Students' Union

Special thanks go to Anna Heywood, founder of the Sound Environmental Impact Awards. In 2008, Anna deservedly won 'Grassroots Campaigner of the Year' in *The Observer* Ethical Awards for her efforts with Sound Environmental Impact Awards after being short-listed for 'Campaigner of the Year' in 2007. This has given Sound Environmental Impact Awards national coverage and helps us share what we have collectively achieved.



*Anna Heywood with eco journalist for The Observer, Lucy Siegle, at the 2009 Observer Ethical Awards*

*Credit to Alicia Canter/Observer for providing this photograph*



# 2008/09 Rankings

## Gold Award

Loughborough Students' Union (Overall Winner)  
Leeds University Union

Newcastle University Union Society  
Edinburgh University Students' Association

University of Central Lancashire Students' Union

## Silver Standard

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union  
Canterbury Christ Church University Students' Union  
Cardiff University Students' Union  
Goldsmiths Students' Union  
Keele University Students' Union  
Kent Union  
Liverpool Guild of Students  
Liverpool Students' Union (LJMU)  
Manchester Metropolitan Students' Union  
Northumbria Students' Union  
Nottingham Trent Students' Union  
Oxford Brookes Students' Union

Queen Mary Students' Union,  
University of London  
Reading University Students' Union  
School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union (SOAS)  
Students' Union Royal Holloway,  
University of London  
Union of UEA Students  
University of Bath Students' Union  
University of Birmingham Guild of Students  
University of Bradford Union  
University of Derby Students' Union  
University of Essex Students' Union  
University of Gloucestershire Students' Union

University of Huddersfield Students' Union  
University of Leicester Students' Union  
University of Plymouth Students' Union  
University of Portsmouth Students' Union  
University of Sheffield Union of Students  
University of Surrey Students' Union  
University of Sussex Students' Union  
University of Wales,  
Aberystwyth Guild of Students  
University of Warwick Students' Union  
University of Westminster Students' Union  
Winchester Students' Union  
York St John Students' Union

## Bronze Standard

Bournemouth University Students' Union  
Bucks Students' Union  
Durham Students' Union  
Heriot-Watt University Students' Association  
Hull University Union  
King's College London Students' Union  
Lancaster University Students' Union

National Union of Students  
Staffordshire University Students' Union  
The University of Manchester Students' Union  
Universities at Medway Students' Association (UMSA)  
University of Brighton Students' Union  
University of Exeter Students' Guild

University of Hertfordshire Students' Union  
University of Nottingham Students' Union  
University of Salford Students' Union  
University of Strathclyde Students' Association  
University of Teesside Students' Union  
University of West of England Students' Union  
Worcester Students' Union

## Working Towards Accreditation

Birmingham City Students' Union  
City University Students' Union  
De Montfort University Students' Union Limited  
Institute of Education Students' Union  
London School of Economics & Political Science Students' Union  
Queen Margaret University,  
Edinburgh Students' Union

Sheffield Hallam University Union of Students  
Solent Students' Union (Southampton Solent)  
Students' Union University of the Arts London  
Trinity College Students' Union (Carmarthen)  
University College London Students' Union  
University of Abertay Dundee  
Students Association

University of Bedfordshire Students' Union  
University of Bristol Union  
University of East London Students' Union  
University of London Union  
University of Northampton Students' Union  
University of Wales, Lampeter Students' Union  
University of Wales, Swansea Students' Union

# An Overview of the Movement

## Of the 79 Unions taking part...

**90%** have less than 5% tungsten filament bulbs throughout the Union or a strategy to achieve the target within 24 months or have lobbied their institution to replace bulbs within the last 6 months

**87%** of those Unions with bars recycle the majority of their waste glass

**86%** buy only white copier paper made from 100% recycled paper or pulp from certified sustainable sources

**84%** have lobbied their institution on at least two separate ethical or environmental issues within the last 12 months

**82%** have an active environmental policy or at least one active policy on a specific ethical or environmental issue

**81%** have a Raising and Giving (RAG) Society which has raised over £750 for charitable causes in the last academic year

**76%** have a recycling scheme in place for aluminium and/or steel drinks cans

**66%** have an active student environmental campaigning society

**63%** have been awarded Fairtrade University status

**62%** have a non-sabbatical officer whose role is dedicated to environmental and/or ethical issues

**56%** do not have any air conditioned offices

**35%** have set minimum efficiency specifications for the procurement of at least two of the following: lighting, white goods, commercial refrigeration equipment, ventilation systems

**34%** have produced a publicly accessible environmental report within the last 12 months

**33%** use wooden disposable cutlery instead of plastic

**32%** can demonstrate a decrease in consumption of one or more utilities for the last reporting period

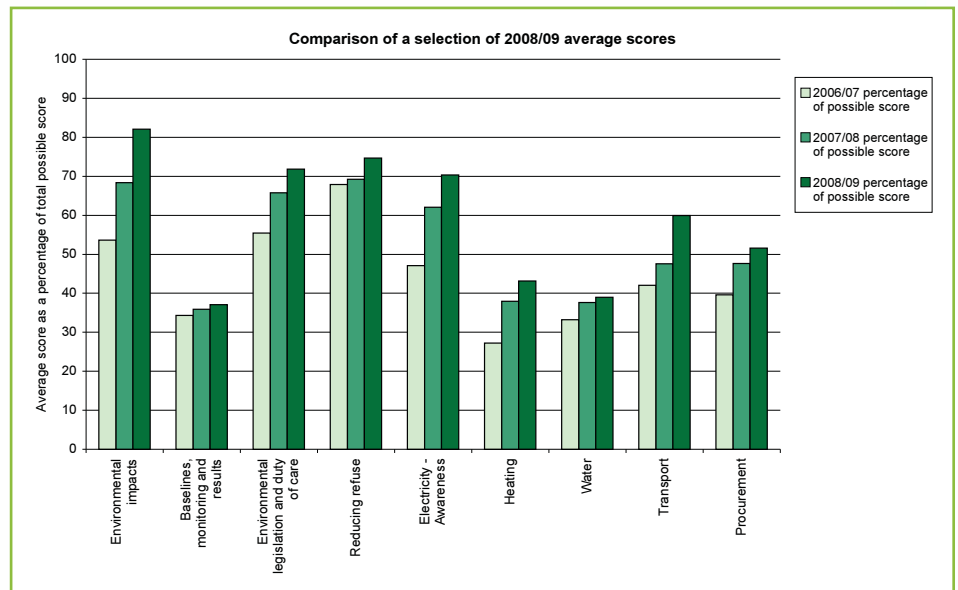
**27%** have SMART targets in place to reduce environmental impacts

**25%** are supplied with at least 50% renewable energy

**10%** have waterless urinals

**9%** have at least one water butt to collect rain water and regularly use it in preference to tap water

**5%** have installed a solar water heater/solar panels/urban wind turbine





AquaAid water cooler at UMVA



George Alagiah, patron of the Fairtrade Foundation, celebrating Fairtrade Fortnight with students from Exeter Guild



LED rig lighting at Goldsmiths SU



Cardiff SU highlighting Cardiff University's poor performance in the Green League



Canterbury Christ Church SU's president using their mixed recycling facilities



Waste bar glass recycling at Salford SU



Bradford Union's sabbatical E&E Officer holding handmade soap for sale in Uboutique

# The Co-operative Most Improved Union Award

## University of Plymouth Students' Union

### Auditor comments:

*“ Plymouth Students' Union have improved their score by a massive 350 points from last year. This has enabled them to increase from 'Working towards accreditation' last year to achieve Silver Standard this year! ”*

### GREEN DRAGONS

UPSU's Green Agenda aims to educate students at the University about environmental issues, and enable them to become involved in working towards a more sustainable lifestyle. For every mile driven on Union business a 1p per mile surcharge is collected that is invested in green initiatives.

Their eco garden contains indigenous plants from sustainable forests and all planters have been made from reclaimed oak. The garden is watered by a gravity drip feed irrigation system fed from a rain catchment tank.

During their first Green Week in January 2009 they held a *Dragons' Den* style Green Business Challenge. Over 30 students formed fictional businesses, developed business solutions and pitched their ideas to a team of local business leaders – the Dragons!

### CAMPAIGNS AND VOLUNTEERING

They have a new Climate Change Society which organises numerous presentations by researchers, representatives from environmental groups and businesses as well as campaigns within the University, the surrounding community and at a national level. The Society recently attended the Stop Climate Chaos rally in London in December 2008.

Volunteering in Plymouth (VIP) is one of the largest departments within the Union, and co-ordinates many different volunteering programmes benefiting the environment and the local community. These include: beach cleans; Moor Trees – tree planting on Dartmoor; working with The Barn Owl Trust and the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership.

The **co-operative**



President with UPSU's version of lug-a-mug



# The Ecologist Communications Challenge Award

## Loughborough Students' Union

### Auditor comments:

“ Loughborough Students' Union demonstrated a real desire to provide information to its users in a friendly and easily navigable manner, this site showed a real interest in spreading a message of change.”

### ABOUT THIS YEAR'S AWARD

This year's *Ecologist* Challenge Award was designed to increase the environmental and ethical presence on Student Union websites. The judging panel was composed of three students and three industry professionals, from website developers to journalists. Entrants could also request a one-to-one tutorial with Kristen Harding, Assistant Publisher at *The Ecologist* magazine to review the ideas they had for updating or creating their website for the Award. The 18 Unions that entered were marked on criteria such as aesthetics, accessibility, content and avoiding greenwash. Judges commented that there was a wide variety of commitment shown throughout the Unions' websites. The top five websites were well ahead of the other Unions.

### LUFBRA

Loughborough Students' Union's website really exemplifies their commitment to ethical and environmental issues and is the most extensive, by far. The Ethics and Environment pages are available from a button on the home page and they have a dedicated section within the website. The judges explained that this differs from many of the other Unions' sites, where it was often difficult to navigate to the environmental pages.

There is a comprehensive recent news and upcoming events page, which includes both Union and national events. Lots of useful information on how Loughborough University students can become greener is provided, with many up-to-date links to external environmental and ethical organisations. There is also detailed information on Fairtrade; what it's about and why it matters.

## ECOLOGIST

THE WORLD'S LEADING ENVIRONMENTAL MAGAZINE



Loughborough SU's Ethics and Environment pages on their website



# Office Depot Green Innovation Award

## Reading University Students' Union

### Auditor comments:

*“ Great name and simple idea which incorporates social responsibility, community cohesion, biodiversity, local environment and can be easily replicated by other Unions. Unions often do these initiatives on campus – forgetting about the students in the community.”*



*Reading students showing off their prize winning display*

## BLOOMING STUDENTS

Reading Students' Union's Blooming Students initiative was inspired by the national Britain in Bloom scheme and a practical response to complaints about the gardens and yards of student houses. The Union and University worked with local letting agents, local residents and student volunteers. A stall was set up outside the Union during the autumn term to advertise the scheme and volunteers visited student houses to get them involved. Around 2000 tulip and narcissi flower bulbs, as well as peat-free compost and plant pots, supplied by the University grounds staff were given out and spades were lent to students to get them started.

**Office DEPOT.**  
*Taking Care of Business*

## IMPROVING COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Just over 60 student households took part in the project, each competing to win a prize. Towards the end of the spring term, local residents and representatives from the University and Union visited the houses who had taken part in the project to judge them. Following this two winning student houses were awarded monetary prizes from the letting agent and two runners up were awarded monetary prizes from the Union. The project fostered better relations between the local residents and the University and Union. Students who took part said that they enjoyed making their garden look better and that it helped improve relationships with their landlord.



# Gold Overall Winner

## Loughborough Students' Union

Score: 646

### Auditor comments:

*“ Their commitment to environmental improvement shows no sign of wavering as they are continually striving to improve upon their already impressive performance. One of their objectives is to get their environmental management system accredited to the international standard ISO14001. ”*



*Awareness-raising poster about occupancy sensor lighting*

For the third year running, Loughborough Students' Union are the overall winners of the Sound Environmental Impact Awards 2009.

### AWARENESS-RAISING

Awareness-raising posters have been displayed throughout the Union. These highlight to students and staff environmental initiatives which have been put in place such as motion sensors for lighting in corridors and flush controls in urinals. The Union publishes information about their environmental performance in their staff newsletter. Realising that behavioural change is the key to saving energy the newsletter contains graphs of gas and electricity consumption with handy tips to encourage staff to do their bit. Staff have said that getting into good habits at work has made them think about their actions at home, encouraging them to save energy outside of the workplace.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

Loughborough Students' Union have impressive waste and recycling procedures and are very close to becoming zero waste! A huge variety of materials are recycled including spectacles for the RNIB and batteries. The Union has a number of compost bins so that food waste from staff and students can be composted on-site. They also segregate their waste on-site to ensure that there is no contamination before sending it to recycling companies. A new waste compactor was installed in February to compact any remaining waste, which is then sent to a materials reclamation facility (MRF) and sorted. Any waste that cannot be recycled after this process is used for energy recovery as fuel in cement kilns.



# Gold Award

## Leeds University Union

Score: 645

### Auditor comments:

*“ A Union with a strong campaigning ethos resulting in many high-profile successes, including banning plastic carrier bags from Union outlets. They also have excellent policies, including a comprehensive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy.”*



*Student volunteers in the Green Action Food Co-op*

The contest was nail-biting this year as only one point separated Leeds University Union from the top spot – watch out Loughborough Students’ Union!

### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

An internal award specifically for making an impact on the Union’s CSR activity was launched this year. The first CSR Shining Star Award went to a member of staff who identified that payslips could be e-mailed to part-time staff. Since the Union employs over 400 part-time staff, this has clear benefits in terms of savings on paper and printing.

The Union has published a Community Guide, which focuses on how to look after the environment through recycling, energy use and greener modes of transport. 5,000 copies of the Guide were distributed in halls of residences and via landlords and letting agents directly into properties.

### STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES

The Peanut Gallery is a student-run social centre where students can meet up and get involved. This space includes a free clothes swap shop, library, internet access and meeting area and it has been completely fitted out with recycled items; from computers to mugs, rugs and paint.

Green Action, a society at the Union, runs the Green Action Food Co-op, a members co-operative which is run entirely by volunteers. Members pay a nominal fee of £1 each year and can participate in all aspects of the day-to-day running of the shop. It sells cost-price vegan food that’s organic and Fairtrade where possible, as well as a range of other ethical and environmentally-friendly goods.



# Gold Award

## Newcastle University Union Society

Score: 645

### Auditor comments:

“ Newcastle has made huge progress over the past year and has increased their overall score by 319 points, taking them from Bronze last year to Gold this year! The team should be congratulated on such a massive achievement. ”



Banner at the main entrance to the Union Society advertising the Ethical Extravaganza

Joint second place highlights how hard Newcastle have worked this year. They're a real contender for Overall Winner in 2009/10.

### ENERGY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Union Society has demonstrated a massive 17% reduction in gas usage for 2007/08, compared to 2006/07. Despite the building being listed, the Union has installed secondary glazing in the form of removable panels. There are no inefficient T12 fluorescent tubes in the building or non-mirrored light fittings and they have installed a number of efficient T5 fluorescent tubes.

The Union can now recycle all types of plastic including sandwich wrappers, yoghurt pots, plastic cutlery and bubble wrap. This is thanks to a new mixed plastics scheme set up by the University to work alongside their plastic bottle recycling facilities.

### ACTIVE STUDENTS

They have two non-sabbatical Ethics and Environment Officers this year. In March 2009 they held an Ethics and Environment Week which included a Climate Change Debate organised in partnership with Friends of the Earth. The week also included an Ethical Extravaganza which included Fairtrade stalls, a clothes swap and a Fairtrade Fashion Show. The Fashion Show raised over £1000 for Fund4Darfur.

Student Community Action Newcastle (SCAN) runs a wide range of projects in the local area. They include working with the homeless, elderly, disabled and children alongside a wide range of environmental projects.



# Gold Award

## Edinburgh University Students' Association

Score: 622

### Auditor comments:

*“ This Students' Association always thinks big. Students get involved in high calibre, energetic campaigns. Every project to improve facilities and lower impacts is creative and unique - providing tailor-made solutions for each building. ”*



Fairtrade coffee is served here!

### THINKING BIG

The Association has made improvements to the ventilation system in one of their bars - warm exhaust air is now used to temper incoming fresh air via a heat exchanger. They also have a three stage plan to make their buildings more sustainable. Stage one comprises rainwater recovery for Teviot Row. Stage two involves a feasibility study on solar water heating for No.60, The Pleasance. Stage three, arguably the most ambitious, will entail an investigation next year into installing a wind turbine for King's Buildings House.

New this year is the collection of food waste for composting from all catering sites with the help of a local social enterprise. This addition to waste management has brought the Association ever closer to their strategic aim of zero waste to landfill.

### SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

The Association has an active policy on sustainable procurement to cover all purchases for internal use. Edinburgh has Fairtrade University status and the Association sells a Fairtrade version for all product categories in retail outlets. They also sell Jungle Coffee which has the benefits of both Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance coffee, plus it generates an additional premium that is given to a small forest community in Indonesia to encourage them not to hunt Anoa, an endangered species of dwarf buffalo.



# Gold Award

## University of Central Lancashire Students' Union

Score: 609

### Auditor comments:

*“ This Students' Union doesn't believe in doing things by half, especially when it comes to high-profile investment in renewable energy. Significant improvements since last year have meant that they've finally reached Gold after achieving Silver for the past two years. ”*



Installing the solar photovoltaic panels on 53 Degrees

### PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

The Union has the UK's second largest solar panel array installed on the roof of the nightclub, 53 Degrees. They have a digital notice board near the main entrance to the Union showing real-time data on the performance of the panels, which includes the total amount of carbon dioxide they have saved since being installed. The Union is gradually changing its rig lighting in 53 Degrees to efficient LED lighting, leading to significant carbon and cost savings.

### WORKING TOGETHER

Their website contains information on how students and staff can reduce, reuse and recycle whilst on campus and in the city. The Union has worked closely with the University and have excellent procedures in place, particularly for waste management. A waste audit and survey has been carried out by MSc students to look into the feasibility of composting food waste and also to minimise the contamination of recyclable waste.

New this year is the creation of the Ethics and Environment Forum which held its first meeting in January 2009. The Forum will work collaboratively with the already well established People and Planet group. The group held a What is Climate Change? fortnight in December which included workshops, debates, a coffee morning, a No Snow for Christmas Beach Party and a screening of Al Gore's documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*.





Re-usable cotton bags in use at Surrey SU



Fairtrade clothing on sale at LSE SU



Free range eggs on sale at Winchester SU



Warwick SU President wins campaign to stop university printing wasteful cover sheets



Toner cartridge and mobile phone recycling at Aberystwyth Guild



Sound Ethical Choice branding at ULU



@MSAs E&E Officer with their Carbon Academy carbonometer

# Greening the Union

**From greening the Union building itself, to getting staff and students involved – much of the Sound Environmental Impact Awards concentrates on easy-to-implement practical actions. Here are just a few examples of some of the fantastic initiatives that Unions have put in place this year.**

## ENERGY MANAGEMENT

### Northumbria Students' Union

As part of a £2 million refurbishment of their main daytime café bar and kitchen facilities in the summer of 2008 the Union successfully lobbied the University to upgrade the building management system (BMS) for those areas. New energy efficient heating, ventilation and water systems were installed. In addition, intelligent programmable lighting was fitted throughout so that the lighting is predetermined to efficient levels. The Union has also secured a further £1.5 million investment for the summer of 2009 which will involve upgrading the BMS to the first floor of the building.

## CONSERVING WATER

### The University of Manchester Students' Union

Manchester Students' Union marked all ten criteria in the water section of the workbook. They have at least one waterless urinal, at least two dual-flushing toilets and have installed cistern volume adjusters in all pre-2000 toilets. The Union has at least one water butt to collect rainwater and has fitted percussion taps, occupancy sensors and spray taps to reduce water wastage. They also have a 30,000 litre rainwater harvesting storage tank underneath the Manchester Academy nightclub and music venue to store rainwater collected from the roof. The water is then reused for cleaning and to flush both the public toilets and changing room toilets.



*The delivery of the rainwater harvesting tank for The Manchester Academy*

## RECYCLING

### Keele University Students' Union

The Union has an innovative new reverse vending machine where aluminium cans and plastic bottles placed in the machine reward recyclers with vouchers for prizes. Two trees were planted in recognition of KUSU using recycled paper for their 2008/09 handbook. Reusable woven polypropylene bags made from recycled material were used for the 2008 Freshers welcome packs. No unrecyclable waste is sent to landfill but instead is sent for energy recovery to provide heat and electricity for local housing. During 2008 KUSU recycled over 120,000 non-returnable glass bottles, 12 tonnes of cardboard, 5 sacks of printer cartridges and 4.68 tonnes of waste paper!



*Keele University SU's reverse vending machine*

# Greening the Union

## REUSE

### Durham Students' Union

The Green Move Out project organised by Durham Students' Union's Sustainable Living Action Group (S.L.A.G.) involves diverting unwanted items left by students at the end of each term from landfill to reuse. The scheme diverted around 5 tonnes of unwanted items from landfill in Easter term 2008. Items were sent to local charities including the Great North Air Ambulance, Centrepoint, and Deerness Boarding Kennels and Cattery. This initiative won the National Recycling Awards 'Best Waste Minimisation Project' in 2008. A workshop to introduce London HE and FE institutions to the project was held at The London School of Economics and Political Science in March 2009 and a north east workshop is in the pipeline.

## GREENING COMMERCIAL SERVICES

### Kent Union

This year the Union has continued their excellent work within their retail and catering facilities. Only organic or soya milk is used in catering outlets. Organic fruit and vegetables are available and all tea, coffee and sugar is Fairtrade. They have teamed up with local charity Seeds for Africa, offering a Fairtrade coffee with 10p of the price going to the Charity. Work is underway for a new fully self-sustainable outlet representing Kent Union's environmental and ethical values. The outlet will provide local, Fairtrade and organic produce prepared in a building utilising sustainable construction and energy saving devices including solar panels, photovoltaics, a wood chip burner and a green roof.

## RAISING AWARENESS

### University of Derby Students' Union

Derby Students' Union held a Sustainable Living Day at the end of January 2009 which was organised by their non-sabbatical Ethics and Environment Officer and Union staff members. The project was funded by Junction 49, an online campaigns guidance portal for young people. Throughout the day, stalls sold hand made cosmetics, recycled jewellery, local food and gave demonstrations on how to re-fashion old clothes. They also had their new University of Derby Students' Union branded lug-a-mugs for sale and encouraged people to use them straight away by offering a free coffee when presented at the café. In the afternoon there were a range of talks and videos, including Oxfam's *Sisters on the Planet*.



*Kent Union's ethical eatery*



*Derby SU's new lug-a-mugs for sale at their Sustainable Living Day*

# Greening the Union

## STAFF TRAINING

### Liverpool Guild of Students

The Guild is committed to providing environmental training for staff, realising that they play a vital role in greening all operations. This includes attending NUS Services' Ethical and Environmental Officer Toolkit Training event in October 2008. From January 2009, seven members of cleaning staff are undertaking City and Guilds NVQ Level 2 in Recycling Operations or Level 3 in the Management of Recycling Operations. The IEMA accredited training course 'Introduction to Environmental Awareness' was delivered in March 2009. In May 2009, a number of staff from facilities and retail to marketing, as well as staff from Liverpool Students' Union attended NUS Services' Carbon Academy training day held at the Guild.

## ENCOURAGING BIODIVERSITY

### University of Warwick Students' Union

Warwick Students' Union have recently started a gardening club called Swap and Grow which allows members to meet up and exchange ideas, hints and tips. They held a meeting at the Union where people could swap seeds and plants ready for planting in the spring. Union staff launched a competition to grow the biggest sunflower and set up a *Facebook* group to see if they could get 1000 members to compete. Participants were encouraged to take a photo of the bare soil pot, complete with sowing date, and regularly update their picture so that everyone within the group could monitor each other's progress.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

### Staffordshire University Students' Union

As Staffordshire University is based over four campuses, the Union has to tackle head-on the issue of making travel more sustainable. A recent campaign which aims to increase cycle parking at the Stoke campus, involved carrying out a survey with students who live on campus or study there. This has followed successful campaigning for increased cycle parking at the Stafford site. They are also lobbying the University to restrict parking available on campus to encourage car sharing. The Union believes in practising what it preaches by actively incentivising staff to lift share, commute by bicycle through the Cycle to Work Scheme and use the inter-site bus service.



*Cleaning staff from Liverpool Guild who are attending the Recycling Operations course*



*Staffordshire Uni SU's screen saver encouraging staff and students to walk or cycle*

# Engaging with the Institution

The traditional role of a Students' Union is to lobby their institution, including campaigning on ethical and environmental issues. However, increasingly Unions are working with the institution, maintaining good relationships and sharing their expertise. Here are some examples of how Unions across the UK are engaging with their institution.



*Giant coffin used in Essex SU's Death of Ethics funeral march*

## LOBBYING FOR AN ETHICAL INSTITUTION

### University of Essex Students' Union

The Union has been campaigning for five years for their Institution to sell Fairtrade products. On 01 July 2008 they saw their hard work pay off when the University of Essex achieved Fairtrade University status. The Union also held a high-profile demonstration on campus entitled the Death of Ethics, where a funeral procession of students carrying a giant coffin marched through Square 3. This followed the University Council's rejection of proposals to adopt an ethical investment policy. In response to campaigning by students the University has set up a steering group to draw up an ethical investment policy.



*Winners of Lancaster University SU's GreenLancaster halls of residence carbon competition*

## PARTNERING

### Lancaster University Students' Union

GreenLancaster is a partnership between LUSU, the University's Estate Management department, and the Universities Partnership Programme. Their mission has four key elements: energy reduction and awareness; waste management and recycling; greening the supply chain; and sustainable transport promotion. One example is a pilot carbon competition which will provide a financial reward to the best performing student residence. It allows students of the BREEAM Excellent\* halls of residence real-time access to the buildings' utilities consumption data. In addition, funding from the youth volunteering charity, V and the University's Estate Management department has meant that GreenLancaster have started environmental volunteering projects in the summer term of 2009.

\*The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method sets the standard for best-practice in sustainable design. BREEAM Excellent is the second highest rating available.

## CONSULTATION ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS

### Canterbury Christ Church University Students' Union

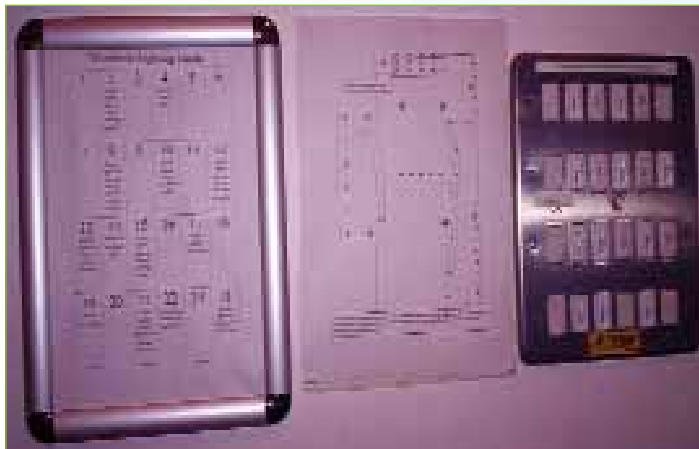
The Union has built up a good relationship with their Institution. Union staff and Executive have regular monthly meetings with the University's Director of Facilities Management and will continue this good relationship with the new Environmental Manager. They successfully lobbied to increase recycling facilities, with recycling stations now dotted all over campus. Last year's President was involved in the discussions over the environmental considerations for Augustine House, a new library and student services centre. The building will use geothermal energy, where the piles that form the foundations will provide around a quarter of all the energy needed to heat and cool it.

# Engaging with the Institution

## JOINT INITIATIVES

### University of Sheffield Union of Students

A number of officers meet with the energy and environmental managers on a monthly basis. As a result, the Union, in collaboration with the University have produced a Freshers green guide called *Taking Control of your Environment*, which contains ethical and environmental information including; issues, facts and a directory of ethical shops and recycling sites. Their Facilities Manager is now a member of the University Environmental Co-ordinators Network. The Network has over 100 members who assist in identifying opportunities for environmental improvement, reporting problems and raising awareness of environmental and sustainability issues. The Union, in conjunction with the University is also involved in the See Change Project, which deals with responsible waste management and is now in its third year.



Light switch guide in The Waterhole bar at Portsmouth SU – the bar is run by UPEL

## GREENING COMMERCIAL SERVICES OWNED BY THE INSTITUTION

### University of Portsmouth Students' Union

University of Portsmouth Enterprise Ltd (UPEL) runs the Union's commercial services. The Union has pushed for environmental improvements within these services by working closely with the University's Energy and Environmental Manager and Student Centre Bar Manager. This has resulted in many environmental achievements, including upgrades to more efficient lighting; water saving devices fitted in all urinals and waste bar glass and cardboard recycling. The Union has successfully lobbied UPEL to provide free range eggs in catering facilities. The Energy and Environmental Manager also helped the Union to write the environmental section of their strategic plan.

## GOING GREEN

### Hull University Union

The Union has been running People and Planet's Go Green campaign since 2007. Go Green calls for: active, public support of senior university management; full-time environmental management staff; written, publicly available environmental policy; and an environmental audit. Over 1000 signatures have been presented to the Vice Chancellor as well as a number of letters. A recent letter asked for an environmental audit of the Hull campus and accommodation, in order to draw up an environmental policy. As a result of their campaigning, a new waste management strategy to recycle cans, glass, plastic and paper via communal bins began in January 2009.



Sheffield Union & University co-produced Freshers' green guide and volunteering guide

# Volunteering and Community Initiatives

**Unions play a vital role in acting as a bridge between the student community and local residents, helping to build relationships. Here is just a taster of the myriad of ways that students get involved through societies and volunteering schemes locally, nationally and internationally.**

## SOCIETIES

### Anglia Ruskin Students' Union

Anglia Ruskin Wildlife Society was created for students to gain hands-on field and surveying experience in the local area. The society is involved in a variety of practical conservation work with local charities and also gets involved in campaigns to protect wildlife. The Roots and Shoots Society promotes Fairtrade and recycling on campus and members volunteer at Cambridge University Botanic Garden's Schools' Garden project. They also organise the collection of non-perishable food for donation to local charity, Jimmy's Night Shelter. Both Societies have a close relationship and recently worked together to clean up a local river, proving that they're willing to get their hands dirty!

## GETTING INVOLVED

### Heriot-Watt University Students' Association

This year has seen a big drive on volunteering. The Association launched the campaign Target 50 which aims to get 50% of Heriot-Watt students taking part in some form of volunteering. Initiatives undertaken as part of this campaign include a series of employability workshops, the setting up of a website designed to help students find volunteering placements, a volunteering fair and promotion of the Millennium Volunteer Awards. As well as the Target 50 campaign, the HWUSA Raising and Giving (RAG) Committee has re-formed and held a series of fundraising events in aid of Children in Need, World Aids Day and a number of one-off events.

## WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

### Cardiff University Students' Union

Student Volunteering Cardiff (SVC) is one of the largest students volunteering organisations in the UK. SVC is a student-led organisation which began in 2001, but has roots going back to 1971. SVC exists to create opportunities for students to volunteer on projects in the local community, working with disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society and to promote positive links between the two. It has over 1000 volunteers and runs 32 projects which include working with children, young people, those with mental health problems, the elderly and homeless people. SVC was the first student volunteering organisation in the UK to achieve the Investing in Volunteers standard.



*HWUSA students tree planting in Scotland*



*Students from Anglia Ruskin SU cleaning up a local river*

# Volunteering and Community Initiatives

## INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

### University of Bath Students' Union

Bath Students' Union have recently introduced a brand new range of fairly-traded ethical goods into one of their retail outlets. They sell Esperanza Economica (meaning economic hope) products, through their SIFE (Students In Free Enterprise) group. The students sourced these products through their volunteering project in Bolivia. They sell a variety of scarves and bags made by women who have suffered as a result of domestic violence and have no other means of creating an income to support their families. SIFE also support and send volunteers to Bolivia to work with women and children affected by domestic violence and to Uganda to teach school children basic skills.

## BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

### University of Exeter Students' Guild

Recycle:Reward was a joint initiative in conjunction with Exeter City Council, the University of Exeter and the Students' Guild. This followed on from a campaign which delivered information on what can be recycled and recycling collection days to all students living in the city. Ten heavily student populated streets were checked by Council Enforcement Officers for good or bad recycling and students were then rewarded appropriately. The partnership has delivered extra waste collections, community events in student areas and Give and Take schemes to reuse unwanted household items. The scheme was publicised by the University's new Community Wardens with the intention of improving relations between students and local residents.

## GROWING GREEN

### University of Gloucestershire Students' Union

Gloucestershire Students' Union's Allotment Society was established in August 2008 and has gained national press coverage in everything from gardening magazines to national newspapers. Wherever possible, tools and equipment are sourced sustainably, traded for other items or recycled. The Society has been granted funding to help provide new equipment such as polytunnels and pond liners and to buy fruit trees and communal seeds. With advice from organisations including the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and Garden Organic, the site will provide a home for wildlife such as frogs and hedgehogs, as well as growing organic produce for students.



*Gloucestershire SU's Allotment Society hard at work on their plot*



*SIFE volunteers from Bath SU in Bolivia with local women and children*

# Comments from Some of Our Unions

*“ The Unions have really stepped up a significant level this year and have surpassed themselves. It has been so exciting to see how Unions have been doing everything they can to green all aspects of their operations and universities in a race to the top, and every point they have gained has been good news for the environment. ”*

**Anna Heywood**  
Project Founder

*“ The Sound Environmental Impact Awards have inspired not just the staff, but the sabbatical officers and senior management, to get behind it. ”*

**Alan Williams**  
Brackenhurst Campus Manager  
Nottingham Trent Students' Union

*“ We are much more conscious of our impact and have made great steps relatively quickly. It is rare for decisions not to factor in some ethical and environmental considerations now. Thanks! ”*

**Jim Robbins**  
Campaigns and Representation Manager  
University of Westminster Students' Union

*“ I think that overall Sound Environmental Impact Awards is a very good concept, and I am most proud of the work I have done this year as a sabbatical officer through Sound Environmental Impact Awards. ”*

**Emilie Seager**  
Vice President Communications and Services  
Students' Union Royal Holloway,  
University of London

*“ We all worked as a team as there are so many people at Warwick that are passionate about the environment. Winning Silver has made a huge difference as people feel they have been rewarded for their efforts and can see their projects working. The biggest difference Sound Environmental Impact Awards has made is getting everyone talking about ways to drive this forward and we now have an active green website which is a great tool for communicating ideas and people generally feel more enthusiastic towards new ideas for the new building. ”*

**Helen Kendrick**  
Facilities and Safety Administrator  
University of Warwick Students' Union

*“ We never had a policy or strategy or any meaningful ethical and environmental practices before the Sound Environmental Impact Awards ...much to our shame. Without doubt, the scheme has spurred us on! ”*

**Martyn Williams**  
Chief Executive  
Northumbria Students' Union

*“ To be at the forefront of environmental best practice is one of our strategic goals and the [Sound Environmental Impact Awards] workbook is being used as the tool to get us there. ”*

**Liz Riley**  
Facilities Manager  
University of Sheffield Union of Students

*“ I would recommend it to anyone whose Union had never done it before. ”*

**Martin Jopp**  
Finance Officer  
Union of UEA Students



**Birmingham City Students' Union  
receive their Working Towards  
Accreditation certificate**

# Partners and Sponsors

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



*We would like to say a huge thank you to our partners and sponsors for their support and of course to all the Unions that took part.*

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