

# POLICY - SUSTAINABILITY

**Owned by:** President of the Student Union

**Date passed:** 12/12/22

**Body passing:** Student Senate

**Review required:** 12/12/25

This policy commits Winchester Student Union to be sustainable; responsible for its management of energy and waste across the Union building and in all its activities; responsible for its impacts on the environment; & responsible for encouraging campus-wide biodiversity. All equipment will be employed in the most energy efficient manner possible, and all stakeholders will be encouraged to be aware of their energy use, to avoid wastage of energy and water and to seek reductions wherever practicable.

For the purposes of this policy Winchester Student Union defines Sustainability as:

*“Our ability to provide activities that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”\**

## Aims

The overriding aim of the policy is to work with the University to embed and normalise sustainability in the student experience, across both the formal & subliminal and informal curriculum, with a clear focus on the latter.

We also seek to reduce the Union's waste through the efficient use of resource & energy. The environmental benefits of this aim will lead to financial benefits for the Union.

Key factors to consider in order to achieve this aim are:

- Working within the framework of the SoS change programme, Responsible Futures; through our democratic and representative channels ensure that sustainability is embedded in the curriculum
- Raising awareness of sustainability to all stakeholders
- Monitoring energy and waste use across the Union
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities regarding resource management
- Striving to improve performance and compliance

\* United Nations definition

## **Embedding Sustainability into the formal, subliminal & informal curriculum**

The President will hold the portfolio responsibilities for Sustainability. The President will attend meetings as practicable to champion Sustainability within the University, Union and the Community. This will include ensuring the Union discharges its responsibilities under the Responsible Futures scheme and/or any further joint initiatives. The President will oversee the work of elected student officers to ensure appropriate educational and change campaigns are delivered on campus.

Winchester Student Union will make resources available to all societies that champion environmental, sustainable and ethical causes on campus. In addition, the Union Executive Committee will appoint from its number a Student Officer to take lead on representing the membership's wants & needs in regards to sustainability.

## **Embedding environment and sustainability within staffing structures**

Winchester Student Union will engage with all staff by incorporating sustainability into training sessions and staff development days. Staff will be encouraged to put forward their own initiatives for furthering sustainability within the operations of the Union.

## **Embedding environment and sustainability within our procurement**

Winchester Student Union is a registered charity with a turnover of over £1 million and a staffing body of around 80 student and non-student staff. Winchester Student Union includes a fund-raising commercial operation and must carefully consider its product procurement. Staff will take active consideration when procuring products and services including:

- Energy Efficiency: Resolve to purchase energy efficient goods wherever practicable. A sufficient fund will be held by the union to pursue actions against this policy.
- White goods: Alternatives, downscaling and necessity to be reviewed prior to any agreement to purchase white goods. White goods purchased will be to E+ standard (or higher) and will bear in mind the total lifecycle of the item.
- Lighting: Lighting to LED/Compact fluorescent/T5 standard. No new incandescent/halogen lighting to be purchased where practical energy efficient alternatives exist. Less than 5% of SU area lighting to comprise of non-energy efficient lighting as specified. Occupancy sensors to be installed in all practicable areas.
- Commercial refrigeration: Commercial refrigeration to be purchased to high Estimated Annual Consumption standard where practicable.
- Commercial ventilation: Commercial ventilation to be purchased to high EAC standard where practicable.

- Vehicle purchasing & upkeep: All vehicles to be purchased from new where practicable. All drivers to be trained in efficient driving techniques which include checking tyre pressures. Due to likely developing inefficiencies, all vehicles to be replaced at or before 10 years from first registration. Disposals to be conducted via a reputable vehicle recycler.
- Ethical/sustainable procurement: to protect ethical and/or environmental procurement through adherence to schemes such as Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance.
- Fuel: To Purchase and utilise fuel in most cost effective and efficient way. To actively seek alternative and sustainable fuel sources where such is available.
- Ethical/Environmental screening: Through its affiliation to NUS, the Union will ensure that any suppliers of goods for retail are subject to an ethical & environmental screening process, with alternative suppliers sourced over those who score badly.
- Furniture and timber: Actively sourcing new furniture or raw timber from certified sustainable sources. Where the responsibility of external contractors, engaging to ensure this is done on our behalf.
- Decisions weighting: Where a choice of products are available least negative/most positive impact on the environment will be given as much consideration as to cost.
- Life cycle: Due consideration will be given to the whole life cost of any purchase.

## **Transport**

Winchester Student Union facilitates transport to be available to our Activity Groups as well as business miles for our staff and elected officers. As such Winchester Student Union resolves to:

- Include sustainable driving information in training and drivers packs
- Only hire the most environmentally friendly vehicles that are available to us, on an appropriate cost-benefit analysis
- Discourage air travel as a means of transport - air will only be agreed for Student Union staff and officers if no other mode of transport exists that is practicable for the journey in question
- Work with the University of Winchester to promote 'greener' methods of transportation; provide incentives for staff to consider cycling or walking in lieu of other transport solutions where practicable.

## **Utilities, Buildings and Waste Management**

All of our utilities are procured and managed by the University of Winchester. The University undertakes to comply with all appropriate environmental legislation that affects our utilities and waste management procedures. To ensure our procedures are as sustainable as possible, the Union will:

- Continue to implement formal shut down procedures at the end of working hours to reduce any wastage of electricity, heat and water
- Work with the University's estate department to ensure that heating or air handling is only used when essential.

- Commit to purchasing recycled paper and will continue to improve the percentage of printed paper which comes from a recycled source; only print where required for practicality.
- Use water saving technology throughout its buildings
- Ensure any non-traditional waste including tables, chairs or old electrical equipment is either donated or responsibly recycled
- To minimise and remove, where practicable, the use of 'single use' plastic goods.

As our utilities are managed by the University, Winchester Student Union will lobby the University should any of its processes not meet our requirements

## GUIDANCE ON SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

The Union aims to work with suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of the goods and services it procures whilst still ensuring best value. The Union must ensure that the procurement of goods and services includes environmental performance as a factor in purchasing decisions. Procurement decisions should seek compliance and to track/record that goods and services purchased:

1. do not cause significant damage to the environment
2. do not consume a disproportionate amount of energy
3. minimise waste, including no unnecessary packaging
4. avoid the use of materials derived from threatened species or environments
5. support the principles of Fairtrade or sustainable sourcing
6. do not involve the unnecessary use of or cruelty to animals
7. are definitely needed
8. are selected in accordance with whole life costs and benefits
9. are where possible durable, recyclable, repairable, refillable or reusable as appropriate
10. do not emit unacceptable levels of toxic or polluting substances during their production, use or disposal
11. are bought from suppliers who can demonstrate sound environmental practices
12. are locally sourced
13. do not endanger health