

SUSTAINABILITY EXECUTIVE REPORT

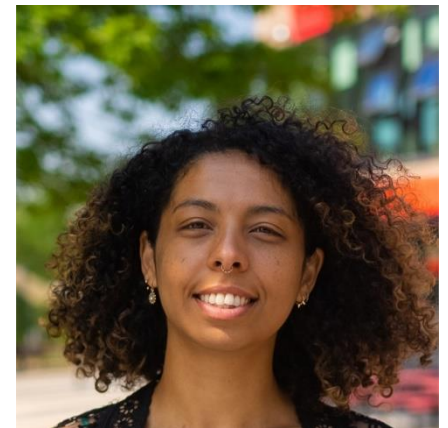
March 2024

**THE STUDENTS'
UNION**
AT UWE

SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

Chela Rossi (she/her) is our Sustainability Officer for 2023/2024. Chela is campaigning to save the below area (outlined in red) for rewilding. The 9.5-hectare site is on Frenchay campus and is currently set aside for development. The “rewilding” site would be accessible to students for wellbeing, research, and, of course, wildlife. Think of it as a sort of mini-nature reserve! Her student idea received 101 votes, 94 of which were strongly agree.

She is currently in the process of writing a proposal to UWE and is in conversation with members of the sustainability executive board regarding developing this. She is surveying students and staff for their opinions on the rewilding idea. This will feed into her proposal.



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Chela, our Sustainability Officer, chairs The Students' Union's Sustainability Committee. This student-led team meet to discuss key projects and campaign topics. The Committee members were selected in October and received campaign training in early December. The Committee has chosen to focus this year's campaign on UWE's greenspaces, and they are planning their campaign for delivery from the 18 - 24 March 2024.

Aim: to increase UWE Bristol student engagement in greenspaces on and around campus

Objectives:

- Provide an incentive for students to spend time outdoors via activities they would usually partake in outside/before university.
- Make greenspaces more encouraging and feel safer for students.
- Bring greenspaces to students in areas they already spend time in/improve students' mental health through greenspaces while they study and go about their normal day.
- Increase awareness of UWE's greenspaces

So far, they plan on running a 2k run through UWE's Greenspaces, Bio Blitz Challenges, a dog walking session and a Greenspace naming competition. Additionally, they wish to increase the amount of greenery in the Library and on walkways around campus, and add fairy lights to green spaces in the hope of making them more welcoming to students in the winter months (providing this doesn't create a light pollution issue).

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

The Students' Union at UWE were delighted to partner once again with UWE Bristol to run our Fairtrade Fortnight from 19 February to 3 March. Thank you to Vicki Harris and the Sustainability Team for their unwavering support and commitment to joint working. During the two-week period, we advertised and offered a 10% discount promotion on the Fairtrade products in our shop. We also we ran three bake sales (one at each campus) to raise money for Fairtrade - and raised £301.60, we ran a bulb-planting and Fairtrade chat drop-in at the Global café and hosted 'Neutral' a Fairtrade business to run a talk about why they chose Fairtrade is critical to their business model.

All our coffee, tea, sugar, and hot chocolate continue to be Fairtrade both in all of our staff rooms and for the Bring Your Own Cup Stations at Frenchay and Bower Ashton.

GREEN TEAM ACTIVITY

The Green Team has run a variety of events to start 2024, with Veganuary and Fairtrade Fortnight being our biggest projects.

Our regular events have been running well, with Frenchay Community Garden sessions attracting a range of students and Greenspace conservation volunteering days having a fantastic impact on the local woodlands. We are proud to add that our Greenspace volunteers have been awarded the South Gloucestershire Council Chair's Community Award - which recognises and celebrates local unpaid volunteers' valuable contribution to life in South Gloucestershire.

We have continued to run bulb-planting drop-in sessions due to its success during Welcome and the first term. It is a great event for facilitating conversations about the Green Team and reaching those without a pre-existing interest in sustainability.

GREENER FUTURES

Greener Futures is The Students' Union's sustainability competition for sports clubs and societies - 18 sports clubs and societies signed up this year. They have been working their way through the workbook of sustainability challenges and are doing some great work. The teams have been attending our community garden sessions, taking more sustainable transport to university, holding Tofu BBQ's, helping out at Green Team charity bake sales, filling out sustainability surveys, switching their search engines to Ecosia, ensuring to wash their kit at 30 degrees on a full load and many more activities.

3C's: CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND CAKE

Our Sustainability Officer and Student Sustainability Engagement Coordinator have been working with Dr Sara Williams and Vicki Harris (and numerous UWE Bristol colleagues) to run Climate Conversation and Cake. So far this term we have run one session and are planning to run two more. The session on the 15 February focused on student-led sustainability initiatives on campus to

inspire students and share some positive actions. OMS Tech, came to speak about their sustainable recycling tech company, and another student came to speak about their sustainable vintage clothing shop. We are hoping to focus our next session on decolonisation.

THE PLACEMENT UNIFORM SWAP SHOP

The Placement Uniform Swap Shop continues to be open every Wednesday between 12:00 – 14:00 at Glenside and is still extremely successful. We are fortunate to have casual staff support in the Community Assistants to organise and stock take to ensure the process is seamless and smooth for when students use it. Since January 2024, 163 students have used the Placement Uniform Swap Shop, saving students over £1,500 in this timeframe. We received positive feedback via a recent Instagram survey, with students calling this initiative 'amazing' and a 'really effective way to swap uniform'.

Find out more about our success here: [PLACEMENT UNIFORM SWAP SHOP SUCCESS!
\(thestudentsunion.co.uk\)](https://thestudentsunion.co.uk/placement-uniform-swap-shop-success/)

Find out general information here: [Placement uniform swap shop \(thestudentsunion.co.uk\)](https://thestudentsunion.co.uk/placement-uniform-swap-shop/)