

University of Worcester Students' Union Environmental Aspects and Impacts 2021-22

Rank	Aspect	Impact
Positive impact		
1	Promotion of environmental activity through projects, for example, through events based in the Students' Union building and support of NUS projects, Student Switch Off and Green Impact.	Increase in environmental awareness throughout the student community. The Students' Union is in a unique position to promote awareness and embed sustainability activities within the student community (for example energy saving awareness).
2	Encourage and influence the institution to embed sustainability in the formal and informal curriculum (Responsible Futures Partnership)	Increase in environmental awareness and sustainability for all students. Arguably, this will have the greatest impact, as our students will become the decision makers of the future. NUS research has illustrated that student's value sustainability learning within the curriculum.
3	Buying locally- sourced, seasonal food/Fairtrade products.	Reduction in food miles leading to reduction in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions helps to reduce climate change. Sourcing local produce in season also reduces need for transportation and refrigeration (for example, veg box schemes). Sourcing and stocking Fairtrade-certified products ensures a fairer deal for primary producers and will help to improve working conditions, encourage fairer wages and better living conditions. Local produce is a healthier option as the produce does not have time to deteriorate and leads to improvement in general health and well-being.
4	Promotion of cycle use to students and Students' Union staff by supporting the institutions' sustainable travel initiative, for example bike loan scheme.	Reduction of carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions and a reduced impact on local air quality, damage to plants and biodiversity. Benefits to human health, fitness and well-being.
5	Member of Plastic Free Worcester.	Reduction in use of single use plastic with the aim of reducing to zero in 2 years. Raises awareness of the issue with students and staff.
Negative aspects		
1	Waste management and recycling	Less waste sent to landfill reduces methane and other greenhouse gas emissions which contribute to climate change. Correct disposal and storage of all waste has environmental and human benefits in terms of reduced

		<p>pollution and risk to health, reduced depletion of natural resources/deforestation, soil erosion and habitat loss. Significant benefits in terms of rodent/pest control and minimisation of waste storage facilities. Reduced potential contamination and eco-toxicity but negative contribution to climate change arises from CO₂ emissions and resource use from transport and some energy-inefficient recycling processes. Support charities and social enterprises through diverting potential waste to re-use schemes.</p>
2	Electricity provided by the National Grid and used for lighting, heating, electrical and electronic appliances in the Students' Union building	<p>Use of non-renewable fossil fuel resulting in depletion of finite gas and oil resources. Production of CO₂ accelerates climate change resulting in sea-level rises, incidence of pest/diseases, damage to human health/quality of life and reduced/impaired biodiversity. Production of sulphur dioxide leads to damage to human respiratory health and formation of acid rain resulting in forest decline and lake acidification. Also leads to risk of light pollution on SJC when inappropriate use of external lighting at night.</p>
3	Nuisance generation for example noise.	<p>Generation of any form of nuisance in the local environment including disturbance to students, staff, neighbours and habitats. This can include noise caused in the community from students after attending students union organised events.</p>
4	Disposal of food waste/ composting	<p>Composting food waste on site reduces waste to landfill and methane and other greenhouse gas emissions. Produces organic fertilisers which can be used by campus grounds management staff to enhance soil fertility and productivity. Removing food waste from landfill prevents pollution from leaching or discharge to land and water. Potential mixing of hazardous and controlled water or different types of hazardous waste increases the risk of pollution to the environment or requires additional disposal processes. It is a legal requirement to segregate waste into the correct category. This means it can be handled in a way that prevents pollution from leaching or discharge to land and water.</p>
5	Road transport to and from campus by all Students' Union staff	<p>Depletion of finite, non-renewable natural resource. Emission of CO₂, SO_x, NO_x and other contaminants and hydrocarbons which result in climate change/global warming. Reduction in local air quality due to above emissions. Impact on human health due to increasing likelihood of photochemical smog, damage to plants and impaired biodiversity.</p> <p>Removal of vegetation for construction of car-parking spaces results in loss of habitats and campus biodiversity. Contamination of groundwater with petrol, diesel, oil, salt and heavy metals such as lead and platinum. Possible entry into freshwater and soil ecosystems leading to reduction in species diversity, contamination of water supplies and risk to human health and threat to human health. Loss of</p>

		amenity and green space reducing campus open recreational and sporting facilities for staff and students, impacting on health and well-being.
6	Water used by staff, students and visitors using Students' Union facilities	Depletion of natural resource essential for all life on earth. Over-consumption can negatively affect local water supplies. Over-use of chlorine/ozone and fluoride in treatment is a potential risk of damage to human health and ecosystems. Potential for water pollution and negative impact on the environment due to uncontrolled discharges to water. Release of nitrates, phosphates and organic elements can reduce water quality, damage local plant and fish ecosystems and reduce biodiversity. Discharge of car park and other run-off can contaminate groundwater with petrol, diesel, oil, salt and heavy metals. Any pollution of drinking water supplies will affect human health, freshwater and soil ecosystems.
7	Smoking in public areas	Airborne cancer-producing chemicals and litter production. Air pollution for nearby students and staff.