

LUSU Environmental Statement 2010

LUSU exists to enhance the 'Lancaster Experience' for all students at the University, through effective representation and the provision of high quality services and facilities. As an integral component of the University, LUSU recognises that its operations have an environmental impact, and in conjunction with the University, will proactively manage and minimise the effects of its operations upon the local and global environment.

LUSU is one of the leading Students Unions in the UK for positive environmental action and in the past year has achieved some excellent accolades to recognise this. The Union was awarded the Gold Standard in the NUS Green Impact Awards in 2010, placing it in the top five unions in the UK for positive environmental and ethical impact. This is a marked improvement upon the previous year when the Union achieved Bronze standard. The Union continues to improve its environmental and ethical actions and aims to again achieve a top five position in 2011.

An integral part of the fantastic work done by the Union is Green Lancaster, which has a dual role of providing fantastic volunteering opportunities for students and young people in Lancaster, and also aiding in the university's delivery of ever-improving energy efficiency and waste management provisions. Green Lancaster received Highly Commended status at the 2010 Green Gown Awards; building upon the award it won the previous year for its flagship Carbon Competition project, which encourages students to reduce their carbon footprint in certain on-campus residences.

Across campus there are many examples of LUSU and Green Lancaster's brilliant environmental work. The Organic Garden project has a team of dedicated volunteers who maintain and develop an area for growing fresh, organic fruit and vegetables and rearing free-range chickens. The Campus Conservation Team work weekly to improve the woodland areas of campus, and have recently completed the construction of a compost facility. In the coming year, they will be planting a mixed fruit orchard and creating an outdoor space for local children to learn and play.

The Union continues to support a range of environmental and ethical campaigns and initiatives. The LUSU shop leads the way on campus for providing Fairtrade goods and aims to always source products from suppliers with excellent environmental credentials. To minimise waste, the shop now actively encourages reusing bags, and charges a small amount for a plastic bag. Green Lancaster is working closely with the Facilities department to devise a more effective recycling policy across student residences and other waste management initiatives. The Exodus Reuse project diverted four tonnes of reusable materials, such as clothing and cutlery, to local charities, and this year aims to significantly improve on that figure.

In the coming months the Union will be strongly supporting the University's application for the construction of a 2MW wind turbine which would provide at least 10% of the University's power needs with clean, renewable energy. It will also provide the potential for a range of research projects for post-graduate students.

LUSU is committed to the long-term improvement of its environmental impact and continues to check its performance against its Environmental Policy, scrutinised by the student-led Green Committee. We aim to be a flag bearer of environmental good practice and will continue to support local and national campaigns on related issues, and encourage students to always act in the least negative and most positive way possible for the environment.

Robbie Pickles
LUSU President