Sustainability Coordinator's Report
2019-2020

Highlights August 2019 – July 2020

See [strategy](#), [projects](#), [opportunities](#), and [best practice](#) web pages.

- ➢ Funded workshops and speakers for Freshers Week 2019 £2,637
- ➢ SiAG awarded £6,192 to support student, staff & operational projects
- ➢ 48 individual meetings with students regarding their practice
- ➢ Collected, sorted and ran a Rummage for arriving students Sept 2019
- ➢ Attended Freshers Week fair 2019
- ➢ Attended GSASA student event on climate change discussion
- ➢ Marched for climate strike with 250+ GSA students on 20 Sept 2019
- ➢ Attended Equality & Diversity workshop SimVIS Sept 2019
- ➢ Presented to PDE3 year group on businesses and waste
- ➢ Presented to Libby Anson's Enterprise students
- ➢ Attended Forres on three occasions to give talks
- ➢ Set up the first Sustainability meeting at Forres
- ➢ Worked with Stage 5 MSA students as a subject specialist in tutorials
- ➢ Joined PD students for expert input sessions Feb 2020
- ➢ Gave talk on sustainability to UoE engineering students
- ➢ Gave talk to University of Stirling psychology students on art and climate change
- ➢ Finished giving out 100 free Glasgow [Next Bike memberships](#) to staff and students, bike lights and cycle pollution masks
- ➢ Developed a [Declaration of a Climate Emergency](#) with GSASA
- ➢ Attended SSCCs
- ➢ Ran a digital [Go Green Week](#) with other Glasgow universities
- ➢ Acted as GSA liaison and attended meeting for Science Centre Canting Basin floating islands project for COP26
- ➢ Attended the Green Arts conference Oct 2019
- ➢ Volunteered at GSA Summer and Winter graduations
- ➢ Helped organise & attended [EAUC Scotland conference](#) & Glasgow forums
- ➢ Chaired and attended [EAUC Community Engagement](#) Topic Support Network meetings
- ➢ Attended the EAUC UK conference, giving two workshops
- ➢ Funded Dr Bike repair sessions for student and staff bicycles
- ➢ Supported Harriet Simms GSA Community Engagement Officer with [FROGGS](#) Garnethill community gardening and community projects
- ➢ The Sustainability Degree Show [Prizes](#) were cancelled this year
- ➢ I was on furlough for the Summer, returning 1st day of semester Sept 2020
- ➢ Attended [Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#) meetings

- ➢ Supported period poverty work at the GSA and student association
- ➢ Became Mental Health 1st aider
- ➢ Accredited as a fire marshal and first aider to better support student events
- ➢ Helped organise in-house discussion on climate change and architecture for MSA academics
- ➢ Supported and funded GSA Beekeeping society
- ➢ Student wellbeing support expanded, working with the student association
- ➢ Halls excess items collected in May and distributed for free at Freshers Week Rummage
- ➢ Ran a digital Fashion Revolution Week and screening of True Cost
- ➢ Ran straw bale and other eco workshops for students March 2020, subsidising eight student places
- ➢ School of Natural Building talk attended by 60+ students March 2020
- ➢ Organised regular SiAG meetings during the year
- ➢ Published the 2019 travel survey
- ➢ Continue to be a Cycling Scotland Cycle Friendly Campus
- ➢ Over 300 active student members of re-use charity Glasgow Scrap Store

The Sustainability in Action Group

Any GSA staff member or student may the Sustainability in Action Group. An official working group of the GSA, it provides a forum to discuss environmental and social justice issues of concern within the curriculum and around campus.

These issues are powerful tools for positively developing our work and practice. We work to make them an integral part of GSA life through our study, practice and work roles.

What we use now and later in our careers and practice matters. It matters what GSA does, and what we are seen to do and support. Having a better understanding how our use of things has social consequences supports and enhances GSA as an institution, and students' future careers and practice.

Art and design creates an emotional bond to issues such as climate change that can lead to real systematic change in our global system.

SiAG encourages this integrated approach, supplying ideas, direction, and support via [our strategy](#) which will be renewed at the next GSA strategy cycle in 2021.

Our delivery is positive and enabling, creating a safe space for a disruptive, innovative and questioning creativity.

Funding

SiAG has developed [funding criteria](#) to guide students seeking support. We publish funded projects and other best practice from across all GSA's schools [online](#). Work also regularly features on our website through [“Featured”](#) and on our [Tumblr](#) feed.

The SiAG budget in 2019/20 was £24,000. We spent around £21k, the shortfall being due to COVID closures and fewer funding applications, no degree show cash prizes being awarded, and a stop on unnecessary expenditure.

Degree Show Prizes

Degree Show 2020 prizes were cancelled.

Summer 2019 saw 41 students enter (up from 37), the most so far. [Winners](#) included students from across all Schools. In addition, we awarded prizes to PDE3, and Architecture stages 3 & 4, a new stage 1 award was also made.

For the second year we ran a graduate Degree Show Prize attracting 19 entries (up from 11 in 2018).

Working with Others

We've worked with a long list of external partners. This has included Cycling Scotland, Bike for Good (nee Glasgow Bike Station), Glasgow Bike Hive, other Scottish universities and colleges, the Garnethill community, and others as well as GSA depts.

With the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) I have helped organise the UK and Scottish conferences, sit on the Scottish forum, and convene the community engagement topic support network.

When time permits, I also give talks externally to raise the profile of our innovative student work at GSA. This is important for a small organisation like the GSA. Our resources are limited, but our national standing opens the doors to work with others and to present ideas for change on a wider stage. We build relationships both within and without the GSA, bringing in new voices and specialists to help our community, giving students access to relevant, specialised support and to host more live, real-World projects. We can show the power of Art and Design, and its ability to make positive change within our society.

Challenges & Opportunities

There's a full list and SWOT online, but below are some areas where we are working to involve more of the GSA community.

Demands on staff time means it is difficult to deliver some areas of work, for example in developing environmental policies. Draft policies were drawn up, but have yet to be properly discussed and adopted by the GSA management. Our Carbon Management Plan has expired, and we need to better integrate environmental and social justice values into GSA's strategy which is due for renewal. These issues need to cascade down into all GSA policy and departmental policy, curriculum planning, ILOs and assessment. We are working to build ethics into project assessment across the UG community.

There is a desire from staff and students to declare a climate emergency, but this will take commitment to introduce the necessary changes across all our work.

It would be useful to integrate our environmental and social justice values into all job descriptions, and to create an Exec Management Group Green Champion.

Until we are certain we can deliver it, we have withdrawn from EcoCampus ISO14001 membership. This is part of our SFC Outcome Agreement & in our GSA strategy.

Calculating targets and reporting our results transparently are vital: we need to do more to set targets and to collate and report in a timely fashion to the Scottish Government Public Sector Reporting, AUDE report, and People & Planet's University (Green) League.

Our buildings are not as efficient as they could be. We need to better monitor and communicate our energy and water usage and encourage savings. This is only part of a wider systematic organisational approach which is needed to audit our campus energy infrastructure & energy use We're continuing to work with MEARU on identifying areas where we can improve efficiency.

The GSA journey for many students starts in Halls, and halls management is leading the way with better waste management, re-use and energy & water efficiency. We support the student-led ResLife activities, the halls end-of-year clear-outs and an annual Freshers Rummage of excess student stuff. This year has seen the implementation of an innovative and highly visual recycling campaign on site.

We need a more strategic approach to providing recycling, and to support Estates so they can provide recycling stations as standard in all buildings.

A dynamic student president and student engagement team has led to increased co-working, with GSASA hosting free Dr Bike sessions to promote active travel, and SiAG supporting the student association's mental health programmes.

I am assisting HR with staff wellbeing activities, and starting a GSA staff mindfulness group network.

Reducing the amount of cleaning chemicals and off-gassing of toxic chemicals from furniture and carpets/paints within the GSA continues to be of concern. I'm promoting better purchasing of furniture/paint/carpets, better monitoring of air quality across the GSA and attempting to get permission for a chemical-free cleaning trial. We've previously screened "Underkastelsen" a film that clearly illustrates the dangers of current chemical use (the good news is that climate change may not be the biggest threat to humanity)

In the face of COVID and major operational change, my focus has been on influencing the GSA's curricula in positive ways. We already deliver good teaching on environmental issues, but a more strategic approach is required. Student pressure is needed to push boundaries and be more innovative, free thinking and questioning of the status quo in design, architecture and art. I aim to show the relevancy of addressing environmental and social justice issues within any area of teaching and research to improve the overall experience of students.

I continue to work with the Enterprise and Careers managers to offer better post-GSA opportunities. Initiatives such as [Missing In Architecture](#) are promoting change.

We support the [GSA Beekeeping](#) Society with funding and promote [GSA Yoga](#).

Priorities for 2020-21

SiAG's strategy is online. Priorities for 2020-2021:

- Support staff and student wellbeing in what will be an unprecedented year
- The further development of the Sustainability Clinic where students can book appointments to discuss their work 1-2-1 via Zoom
- Continue to support students with advice and funding
- Support GSA Yoga and GSA Beekeeping
- Exploring queer theory in support of disrupting current thinking
- Support for LGBTQ+ groups, GSA POC collective, GSA Queer Society, GSA Climate Society, XR society and STAR refugee group.
- Support for Missing in Architecture and supporting events and talks within the architecture curriculum
- Offer schools staff training on the climate and ecological crises and how their disciplines can help address them
- Work across GSA to integrate COP26 into the GSA curriculum
- Work with organisations and all staff and students, societies and GSASA to prepare for COP26
- Introduce the Degree Show Prize earlier in the academic year to help students get the most out of their practice development
- Offer the graduate prize again, and an inaugural PhD prize in 2021
- Develop curriculum engagement with academics and students, including cross-school and departmental projects
- Continue to link social justice with environmental action within the curriculum and on campus
- Work with MEARU and departments to help the GSA community reduce their resource, energy & water use
- A greater emphasis on studios organising their own storage of excess materials, mini-rummages within depts., & student-led initiatives on waste
- Promoting safer operational alternatives such as chemical-free cleaning
- Use a psychosocial approach to explore how creative approaches can help us address climate change
- Undertake University Green League reporting, and support the Scottish Government's Required reporting and AUDE reporting
- Regularly communicate our efforts and promote opportunities to the GSA community through newsletters, social media and our website (for example supplying best practice examples)
- With HR, develop an online staff sustainability induction
- Support community garden and project spaces with FROGGS the Garnethill environmental group

- ➢ Promote plants in studios with funding available for plants
- ➢ Support and work with other external partners
- ➢ Attend all SSCCs, Reps meetings and work more with GSASA and Lead Reps
- ➢ Develop a Scrap Map for green and eco alternatives in GSA and Glasgow
- ➢ Develop MSA and Design materials libraries
- ➢ Support GSA Library with their alternative reading lists
- ➢ Support Race, Rights and Sovereignty Group
- ➢ Assist GSA in developing Black Lives Matters and Black History Month programmes
- ➢ Explore Stow Garden as a community and GSA resource
- ➢ Run more active travel programmes, including more cycle repair sessions
- ➢ Deliver the secure Stow cycle storage building
- ➢ Deliver climate and ecological crises training to GSA Board and senior management groups
- ➢ Push for a fragrance-free and low chemical toxic working environment
- ➢ Help develop ethic assessment within the GSA curriculum
- ➢ Expand my involvement with curriculum into Design Domain, Year 1 cross-school project and SoFA Sustainability Series
- ➢ Bring back more GSA alumni for talks to current students
- ➢ Make more connections to art schools leading the way with curriculum approaches
- ➢ Work with the Circular Arts Network to develop materials swapping

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