

Glasgow University Students' Representative Council
SRC Sustainability Group
sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk

First meeting (2006-07), 2 October 2006 at 5.30pm
Boyd Orr building, Room 506

MINUTES (to be approved)

Present:	Kat Borrowdale	SRC Vice-President (Student Support)
	Rhiannon Breed	Secretary, Dirty Weekenders Society
	Kate Edwards-Kearney	Co-President, People & Planet Society
	Rachel Farr	Social Secretary, Christian Union
	Colin Greenshields	
	Samreen Khan	
	Gavin Lee	Conservative Association
	Duncan MacKenzie	Convenor (<i>author of minutes</i>)
	Michael Marshall	Co-President, People & Planet Society
	Rachel Walker	
	Robbie Watt	Young Greens
	Annie Wild	Amnesty International
	Claire Wilson	

1. Welcome and introduction

Kat, and then Duncan, welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Kat gave an introduction to the Group.

2. Approval of previous minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting on 26 May 2006 were approved.

3. Matters arising

It was decided that these would be dealt with under the appropriate agenda items.

4. Report on *Change Tomorrow Today* conference (2 October)

Duncan had attended this conference in Edinburgh organised by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency to launch their report *State of the Environment 2006: Change Tomorrow Today*. The proceedings and report are available at www.sepa.org.uk/changetomorrowtoday and Duncan **will ensure** that the library has at least one copy of the report.

5. [Stop Climate Chaos](#) and [i count](#)

a) Introduction to the issue and the campaign

Kat and Duncan introduced the campaign, which (among other things) calls on people to demand that the Government introduces a law to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 3% per year by signing pledge cards to change their own behaviour, and sending them to the Government. There will be a carnival and demonstration organised by many of the member organisations of Stop Climate Chaos on 4 November.

b) Report on meeting with Ruth Cameron (2 August)

Kat and Duncan had met on 2 August with Ruth Cameron, the Scottish Co-ordinator for the Stop Climate Chaos (SCC) coalition, and Adam Ramsay, a representative of Edinburgh University People & Planet and Students' Association. Ruth told meeting participants that SCC was keen that students' associations, unions and councils to affiliate to the coalition, and that this should not have a cost implication; she would keep us informed about developments.

c) Motion for SRC Council

Duncan proposed that the Group might consider drafting a motion to be proposed at a forthcoming meeting of SRC Council, to make the SRC an official affiliate or supporter of the Stop Climate Chaos coalition, and for related purposes. The Group **agreed** to this in principle and **asked** Duncan to draft a motion for discussion at the next Group meeting, to include a statement about the importance of the issue of climate change.

Kat expressed concern that if the SRC were to pass such a motion, it should have a tangible effect (it should commit to do something specific) and not simply be a declaration. Kat therefore **agreed** to investigate the financial and other implications of, and practical steps required to –

- audit and reduce the SRC's carbon emissions by at least 3% year on year (the SCC commitment);

- become 'carbon neutral' by 'offsetting' carbon emissions;
- switch to a 'green' energy supplier to reduce carbon emissions.

d) Contacting MPs about the [Climate Change Bill](#)

Duncan proposed that, in support of both [i count](#) and the [Big Ask](#), the Group could agree to send an email to all Scottish MPs to ask them to sign [Early Day Motion 178](#) and write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment to ask them to make parliamentary time for the [Climate Change Bill](#) by putting it into the [Queen's Speech](#) in November, which the Queen makes to announce the Government's plans when she opens a new session of Parliament. The Group **agreed** that Duncan should send this email.

Duncan also suggested that SRC Executive officers could meet with the local MP, Ann McKechin, in person to make these demands and to make clear the SRC's concern. Kat **agreed** to discuss this with the other sabbatical officers.

The Group also discussed the possibility of collecting Big Ask or 'i count' pledges from individual students and delivering them all at once to the local MP or the Prime Minister. It was **agreed** that individual societies who wished to take part in this campaign would take the lead on collecting the pledges, although (subject to later discussion) the SRC might deliver them.

e) [An Inconvenient Truth](#)

Kate and Michael mentioned that Al Gore's film about climate change, *An Inconvenient Truth*, which the Stop Climate Chaos coalition is promoting, was showing at Cineworld and the Glasgow Film Theatre. People & Planet were planning a group trip there to see it and also a stall outside the GFT on its first day. They invited members of the Group to take part.

6. Recycling and composting

Rachel Walker, before she had to leave, had earlier let the Group know that, as a first-year student, she was very concerned about the state of recycling in halls and at the university.

Kat told the Group that she had been looking into the state of recycling at the university, particularly in halls of residence, and had been liaising with the Accommodation Service. It appeared that facilities at Murano Street had been successfully installed, and also that Glasgow City Council is expanding its network of recycling facilities, so that it might be possible to approach them for funding if a proposal were put together. The Group **expressed** general interest in improving this area. It was **decided** that Kat would co-ordinate an assessment or survey of existing facilities so that priorities can be identified. Robbie suggested that a petition could be drafted to put pressure on the university and/or the residence management companies concerned to install better recycling facilities. It was **decided** that Robbie would draft this petition and liaise with Kat before going ahead with it.

Claire raised the question of recycling or reuse of printer cartridges in the Library (and presumably run by the Computing Service). She **agreed** to contact the Library to find out about this situation.

In relation to composting, Rhiannon mentioned that the [Dirty Weekenders](#) maintain a compost heap in the University Wildlife Garden behind the QM Union, which could be used by anyone (although there are limitations on what can be put into it – please email gu_dirty_weekenders@yahoo.co.uk for details). Robbie also suggested that the petition mentioned above could also include a demand for better composting of biodegradable waste.

7. Green / 'Sustainability' Map

A 'sustainability' map of the university campus would point out features like recycling points, charity shops and so on; see www.greenmap.com. The map would be published on the SRC's and/or University's web sites, but could also be printed and displayed physically on campus. The Group felt that since freshers' week had passed and the University would be more inclined to produce and display the map once better facilities (recycling, etc.) existed, this project should be **deferred** until later.

However, Annie suggested and the Group agreed that a textual list of the locations of recycling points around campus could easily be compiled; and Michael **agreed** to start this and send it to Duncan.

8. Energy efficiency in Halls

Kat and Duncan had met with the SRC Advice Centre staff during the summer and had agreed that halls of residence would be a high-priority target for an energy efficiency campaign. The Group **agreed** after discussion that a survey should be carried out to ascertain the levels of student support for the energy efficiency plans. It was suggested that for the University and Sanctuary Management it was beneficial to focus on the benefits of lower heating bills, and other business benefits rather than environmental benefits. The Group noted that it would be possible to commission a feasibility study for halls; Michael and Kat **agreed** to liaise about this.

9. Bike library

A 'bike library' project, to establish a pool of bikes which can be borrowed, is being co-ordinated by Duncan, Kat, Viola Retzlaff (Travel & Transport Co-ordinator, Estates & Buildings) and David Tait (Honorary Secretary, GU Union) in liaison with Beth Hamer, an ex-School of Art student. Information about the project on which this is based can be found at www.glasgowbikelibrary.co.uk. Duncan told the Group that many issues had yet to be settled in relation to this project. It was **agreed** to set up a separate committee to co-ordinate it. If any members are interested they should **contact Duncan** at sustainability@src.gla.ac.uk.

10. Double sided printing

After discussion the Group agreed that obliging students and departments to have assignments submitted only using double-sided printing would be too complicated, probably not worth the effort, and might be undesirable for practical reasons. However, it was **agreed** that if a survey of departments revealed that they would be willing to accept assignments printed in this way, then the Library and Computing Services could be approached to change the configuration of computers to make this the default setting. It was **decided** that Kate would draft a letter to be sent to departments, and Kat would liaise with Mhairi Wilson ([SRC Vice-President, Learning & Development](#)) about the SRC Executive contacting departments.

11. Events programme

The Group was informed that Stop Climate Chaos was going to have a stall at the [Ideal Home Show](#) which would be from 10am-6pm from 13-22 October. Members and societies were invited to volunteer to help with this and to get in touch with Duncan if they were interested.

After discussion about the Group organising events to promote sustainability, it was **decided** that it would be better to organise events around a focus or campaign, rather than organising them without such a purpose, and therefore not to take any action now but wait for an appropriate time.

Also, Rachel Farr drew the Group's attention to [Stand Up Against Poverty](#), an event on 16 October, an attempt to set a world record for the number of people who will stand up against poverty, to raise awareness of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [[UN – UNDP – Millennium Project – Wikipedia](#)] and to demonstrate to policy makers the growing global support for the eradication of poverty; participants would have one minute to read a pledge, and the totals at the end will be collated by Oxfam. She asked members to support it.

12. Any other competent business

Robbie told the Group that a branch of the Young Green Party had been established at Glasgow University and invited all members to join. Gavin, never one to pass up an opportunity, reciprocated by informing those present that the Conservative Association always welcomed new members. The Group thanked them.

13. Date of next meeting

It was **decided** that the next meeting should be held on Thursday 26 October at 5pm (venue to be announced).