The Wee Green Guide

An all round guide to sustainable living for students in Glasgow
Foreward

Sustainability can be an ambiguous word. It is used in many different contexts by people with very different intentions. In this guide, and in our work, we take sustainability to mean a way of living that is respectful of people and the planet and can be continued indefinitely without negative environmental or social impact.

So many of our current systems do not fit this definition, but we do not think that continuing this way is inevitable or unchangeable. As students, and as people, we believe you have the power to make significant changes and help build a safer and more sustainable world for everyone. This guide briefly outlines some of the major issues and what we can do about them.

There are also ways you can make small changes to your everyday life which reduce your personal environmental impact. This guide is full of little tips and tricks on how to do just that!

For more information on anything included in this booklet, environmental issues in general, or what you can do about it, contact GUEST at estates-guest@glagow.ac.uk, or through our Facebook page.
What is GUEST?

GUEST, or the Glasgow University Environmental Sustainability Team, is a team working to catalyse improvements to the environmental practice at Glasgow University and inspire sustainable thinking in our community.

We run events and campaigns, advise and pressure other parts of the University and provide services to make sustainable living accessible to everyone at Glasgow.

We consist of eight branches:
- Sustainable Housing
- Waste Reduction
- Biodiversity
- Sustainable Food
- Energy
- Sustainable Transport
- Student Engagement
- Communications

estates-guest@glasgow.ac.uk
WHATS ON?

With swap shops and food sharing, workshops and lectures, gigs and festivals, there is no shortage of environmentally minded events in Glasgow! Here are some to keep an eye on!

THE BIKE HUB
Set up by GUEST in collaboration with Uni Cycle, the Bike Hub is a weekly DIY bicycle repair workshop. Bring broken bikes and learn how to fix them!

Join ‘The Bike Hub’ group on facebook to keep updated.

BIODIVERSITY PRACTICAL SESSIONS
Got green thumbs, always wanted to put on a beekeeping suit or interested in learning a new skill? Glasgow Uni Beekeeping Society, the GOOD Garden project and Wildlife Gardens all run regular practical sessions where you can learn how to inspect a hive, plant a tree, make a bird feeder and more!

You can find information about these sessions on each groups Facebook page.

GUEST’S POP UP ECO HUB!
Look out for GUEST Promoters out on the Cargo Bike! We will be cycling it all over campus bringing you swap shops, food sharing and more!
Glasgow Goes Green Festival is a creative space to showcase the work of young activists, environmental groups, artists and performers from across the city.

The festival has been collectively organised by students and staff from Glasgow’s higher education institutions since 2016. We hope that it will continue to grow and develop each year.

If you would like to be involved in making the festival happen then please get in touch via the Go Green Week Facebook page /gogreenweekglasgow.

Coming February 2018
A significant amount of Scotland’s energy is now produced by wind! You can reduce your environmental impact by saving washing and other energy intensive activities for a windy day!

The burning of fossil fuels for power is one of the most well known environmental issues, yet one that seems hard to act upon, because the use of electricity, gas and oil is so entrenched in our daily lives.

To have real impact we need to change the way our energy is made, through initiating a just transition* away from fossil fuels, and towards renewables.

One way we can inspire this change is by joining divestment campaigns. Divestment is a strategy of encouraging institutions to take investments out of fossil fuel companies. This makes sense both because these are dying industries (even if we did burn all the fossil fuels in the ground, there is a limited and fast decreasing amount) and because this money can then be reinvested in clean energy – which is safer for the people and the planet.

Glasgow University divested in 2014, which is great, but there are other local groups you can join or support such as Fossil Fuel Strathclyde, which is pressuring the Strathclyde Pension Fund to divest the £752 million it currently has invested in fossil fuels.

*A just transition is a move from fossil fuels to renewable energy that considers the livelihoods of those working in the fossil fuel industry. The idea is that workers would be supported and retrained for new jobs in the renewable industry. This has been initiated with success in locations across the world, including Scotland!
Tips for Reducing Energy Consumption

Excessive energy use isn’t just bad for the planet, it’s also bad for your purse! These tips will save you money as well as reducing your environmental impact.

First years, remember – your bills might be included in the price in halls, but they are not emission free!

Living & Study Areas

- Turn entertainment equipment off when not in use! Most appliances still use several watts while in stand-by.
- Don’t leave your phone charger or hair appliances in the electrical socket when not in use – the latter is also a fire hazard!
- Switch off your computer and any peripheral devices, such as printers and scanner, overnight.

General Areas

- Turn off lights when leaving a room or not in use. Remember common rooms, kitchens and hallways!
- Use the radiator thermostat to avoid unnecessary heating.
- Keep blankets on the sofa or by your desk to use instead of turning on the heating.
- Use the weather! In winter, open curtains during the day to let the sun warm your flat and close curtains at night to retain heat. In late spring or summer, close curtains during the day to keep your flat cool.
- Make sure that your curtains don’t block your radiators.

Only wash clothes in full loads and in cold water when possible.
- Air dry clothes instead of using the dryer.
- Keep unused rooms closed to conserve heat. Hang out in the kitchen when your flatmates are cooking!
- Use rugs on tiled or wooden floors to keep in the heat.
- Warm up your bed with a hot water bottle.

Kitchen

- Keep your refrigerator and your freezer stocked: it takes more energy to cool an empty one.
- Cut food into smaller pieces to reduce cooking time.
- Use lids on pans to retain heat.
- Cook in batches: cook as much as possible in the oven in one go to use all the space and heat produced. Freeze the leftovers!
- Defrost food in the fridge the night before; this can halve cooking time.
- Keep the oven closed: every time the door is opened it loses heat and requires more energy to get the temperature up again.
- Don’t overfill the kettle!

Bathroom

- Take shorter showers.
- Don’t let the tap run while brushing your teeth.

Sew a door width-length piece of fabric in half and stuff with rags and old tights!

MIND THE GAP!

Place along the bottom of doors to keep out the cold!
Explore Glasgow with this list of where to find the best second hand stuff, food, services, repair shops and places to get involved! Find them on the map on the next page!
Zero Waste Map of Glasgow

Produced by Radial and some talented GSA students, this map shows you all the best locations for buying in bulk, repairing, reusing, finding second hand gems and getting involved!
We live in a disposable culture. So many everyday items are designed to be single use and ‘throwaway’. But, this does not mean that they go away. Every single plastic bottle, disposable spoon and polystyrene take away box you have ever used is still on earth somewhere, putting something in a bin does make it disappear.

We believe that, as a society, we must become more aware and more accountable for the waste we produce, reduce as much as possible and find responsible ways to dispose of it, rather than chucking it in the nearest general waste bin.

The UK uses 2.5 BILLION coffee cups a year! Most of them are not even recyclable. (BBC)

Over 15 million bottles are thrown away in the UK every year. (BBC)

In the UK, a third of all of our clothing ends up in landfill. (WRAP)
Living Plastic Free

Why should we?
Plastic is everywhere. It is on our food, our toothbrushes, it’s even in our cosmetics. It is seemingly unavoidable and yet it is imperative that we try our best to cut plastic out! Although it usually takes the form of ‘convinience’ – a disposable fork, a takeaway meal – huge amounts of oil and energy have process that gets that disposable plastic bottle to you.

Then, after it has been used for five minutes, it sits in landfill for hundreds of years (if we’re being optimistic). Much will be around a lot longer and many plastic items end up in the ocean where they are eaten by wild animals and release toxic chemicals into the water. We think that’s actually pretty inconvenient.

Yes, some plastics can be recycled! But in most places this is only certain types of hard plastic and even these can only be ‘downcycled’ as the plastic is degraded everytime it is recycled.

Not only this, studies show that consuming food that has been stored in plastic can be bad for our health, not just the planet’s.

So what can we do?
By being aware and making a few small changes, it can be easy to cut the majority of plastic out of your lifestyle!

- **Brush your teeth with bamboo!** Bamboo toothbrushes are cheap, pretty and biodegradable!
- **Carry cutlery!** Get a spork and never have to use flimsy plastic disposable cutlery again!
- **Bring a bag!** Save 5p and avoid single use plastic.
- **Keep your cup!** Bring a flask, you might even get a discount!
- **Bring a bottle!** Bottled water is more expensive than oil! Save money and the planet by reusing!
- **Cook from scratch.** Buy in bulk and use Tupperware to take meals with you!
- **Make your own.** Cosmetics, almond milk, deodrant. A quick google search will give you all you need!
Recycling

Ok, we understand. Sometimes there really is nothing else you can do and you just have to use that glass bottle or cardboard box. If you’ve reused it as much as you can, the next best thing is to recycle it and let it be remade into something new!

AT GLASGOW UNI

Bins on campus are clearly marked with **LIME GREEN** for **DRY MIXED RECYCLING**, **BOTTLE GREEN** for **FOOD WASTE** and **BLACK** for **GENERAL WASTE**.

If you are still unsure, most of these bins come with detailed instructions. Please try to adhere to these guidelines as much as possible.

Within classrooms and lecture halls, there are mixed recycling posts available (look for the white cardboard bins).

Bins to dispose of excess liquid in bottles or coffee cups are now provided in many locations on campus. Please use these so that your left over coffee does not contaminate the rest of the load!

AT HOME

Every home in Glasgow should be equipped with a **BLUE RECYCLING BAG** and a **GREY FOOD WASTE CADDY**. If you do not have one, contact Glasgow City Council.

Glass bottles and fabric waste must go to external recycling bins, these are located across the city. Find your closest **PURPLE** glass recycling bin here: [glasgowgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=345f389a91ff4f1fa193b24df8321e05](glasgowgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=345f389a91ff4f1fa193b24df8321e05)

The council will collect large items of furniture for you.

The Circular Economy

This is a term for a system that produces no waste or pollution. All materials and outputs are re-inputted in to the production chain after they have been used. You can contribute by BUYING RECYCLED GOODS, therefore not using any new resources!
Public Transport

Driving is often inconvenient in Glasgow. There are limited parking spaces in the West End and on campus and there is usually a lot of traffic in the city. Luckily there are lots of other options for getting around that are better for the environment and better for you!

The university has its own dedicated journey sharing website that you can use to find car shares or offer lifts (and split the fuel costs). gla.ac.uk/services/estates/sustainability/travel/cartravel/universityjourneyshare/

The Subway is the fastest way to get around the City Centre and West End of Glasgow. Running every four minutes at peak time, it takes just 12 mins. The stations closest to you are Hillhead on Byres Road or Kelvin-hall on Dumbarton Road. Unlimited all day travel costs £2.70 with a Subway Smart-card- apply for free at spt.co.uk/student.

Download the ‘Travelline Scotland’ app from your app store to find out more information about public transport in the area.

Buses run every 10 minutes all over the city and are relatively cheap compared to driving.

Remember: most buses in Glasgow only take coins and do not give change!

Getting out of Glasgow?

The train is efficient and can be affordable with a student rail card (apply for at travel centres around Glasgow).

Buses are the most environmentally efficient form of transport (when they’re full) and usually the cheapest. Try National Express, Megabus and Citylink!
Cycling

Cycling is an efficient, effective and environmentally friendly way to get around Glasgow. Many roads have designated cycle lanes and there are many other cyclists out and about at all times.

Find a Bike!

It is much cheaper and environmentally friendly to buy a bike second hand. There are plenty of websites to look on, such as Student Voice, Gumtree and Glasgow Free and For Sale facebook page. Alternatively, go down to the Bike Station (65 Haugh Road) where they have a selection of second hand bikes and knowledgable staff to help you find the right one! Students can rent a bike for a month for free!

Cycling Community

If you’re afraid of cycling alone on the roads, Glasgow has its own Critical Mass group. They meet at 5.30 PM at George Square on the last Friday of every month, enabling cyclists to cycle on roads in a safe group setting.

Cycle Safety

Increase your visibility by avoiding dark clothing, wearing high visibility ankle and armbands or reflective vests and ensuring that your lights are working. Cycling safety gear can also be handed out by GUEST for free, while the University can provide you with free bike-marking in case your bike gets stolen.

Route Planning

Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde’s Go Bike! campaign and the Sustrans provide good maps for cyclists (www.gobike.org), together with useful cycle tips for safety on the road and bike etiquette. Cyclists should ensure that they are obeying all road rules and for their own safety, reflective vests, helmets and functioning bicycle lights are advised to enhance visibility in the dark or in poor weather.
Cycling Resources
Staff and students at the University of Glasgow can subscribe to Nextbike and get the first 30 minutes of each ride FREE. You can find out more about the tariff and the locations of these bike stands on www.nextbike.co.uk/en/glasgow.

Join the Glasgow University Bicycle Users Group.
They host events, workshops, safety advice sessions and regular cycling trips. You can get in touch using the following links: www.facebook.com/GlasgowUniBUG or www.scotbug.com/GlasgowUniversity.

Alternative Transport

Any form of transport that is energetic, low cost and ‘manual’ is going to be far better for yourself and the planet than driving a car.

Skateboards, longboards and rollerblades are all excellent ways of getting around while excercising, and having loads of fun too. Just remember to respect traffic rules and wear protective equipment if you need to!
Food & Nutrition

The food we eat affects our health and our planet. It can feel difficult to eat in a way that is good both for our body and the environment, especially on a student budget!

However, we must be conscious consumers. Our current food system is unsustainable. Most of us are disconnected from where our food comes from, what it actually is and the impact it has on the environment. The food industry is a massive contributor to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, droughts and loss of biodiversity. The methods of production, preparation, packaging, storage and transport are complex issues to keep in mind when purchasing food.

Food production is the leading cause of global deforestation. (Friends of the Earth)

Animal agriculture is responsible for 18% of all greenhouse gas production. (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations)

The agricultural section consumes 69% of the planet’s fresh water.

In the UK, 25% of food purchased by households ends up as waste. (European Environmental Agency)

If you decide to rethink your diet to support a more sustainable agricultural system, keep in mind that food is also an emotional matter. Gradually and steadily adopting changes is best: your dietary choices should fit your routine and make you feel good about yourself in order to work.

If you feel yourself moving towards, or have a history of food related anxiety or eating disorders, there are organisations on campus that can help, such as the Starfish Group.

For more information get in touch with the GUSA Welfare Convenor: gusa-welfare@gla.ac.uk or check this link: www.nbp-eating-disorders.co.uk.
Tips for a Sustainable Diet

BUY:
- In bulk.
- Food that is in season.
- Unprocessed ingredients.
- Organic if possible: pesticides are damaging to your health and the eco-system.

AVOID:
- Fresh food that has travelled the world to reach to you!
- Fish from the Marine Stewardship Council’s ‘fish to avoid’ list available at (www.msc.org).
- Meat that is too cheap to be true.
- Eggs from caged hens.
- Palm oil and other foods that contribute to deforestation. It is not always straightforward though – soy is often mentioned, however most soy crops are fed to farmed animals, so you are still better off eating tofu than beef!

TRY:
- Eating less processed foods: avoid frozen foods, ready meals and items with way too many ingredients.
- Reducing the amount of meat and dairy in your diet. Try eating vegetarian/vegan meals a few days a week.
- Choose local products over imported ones to reduce air miles and support local producers.
- Grow some food yourself! Herbs, carrots, potatoes and more can be grown indoors, or join a community garden!
- Using the GU Food Coop and Food Sharing Glasgow – see more on page 23!
Sustainable Communities

Living ‘sustainably’ is not just about reducing the amount of waste you produce and cycling everywhere, to create a sustainable world we must also build societies that are mutually beneficial for everyone. This means establishing communities that are inclusive, supportive and safe. It means reconnecting with our local communities and reconnecting with our local environment. You could consider joining:

- Glasgow University Feminist Society
- Isabella Elder Feminist Society
- LGBTQ+
- Glasgow University Amnesty
- Oxfam at Glasgow Uni

As a student, there is a ready made University community available for you to participate in, hundreds of clubs and societies that want to include you and thousands of interesting people to connect with.

However, it is also important to remember that the world is not full of students. Even within the West End bubble there are families, young professionals, elderly people and other people of all ages and cultures. It is worth considering getting involved in community projects outside of the University. Glasgow is full of exciting initiatives and engaging communities, such as:

- Action Hillhead
- Friends of the River Kelvin
- GOW: Gibson Street, Otago Street and Woodlands
- Community gardens: Woodlands, Willowbank, Kinning Park, Toryglen and many more.
Other Groups

GUCA (Climate Action Society)
GUCA is a society of students dedicated to educating and making progress in tackling the issues of climate change, global warming and environmental conservation, through a myriad of fun events and direct action. They are the ones responsible for the incredibly successful divestment campaign which convinced the University of Glasgow Court to divest from Fossil Fuels!
Blog: gucasociety.blogspot.co.uk
Facebook: /gucasociety

Glasgow Uni Food Co-op
The Food Co-op buy food in bulk and split it between their members, allowing students to get discount bulk-buy prices on sustainable and healthy food: imagine all those nuts and dried fruit for non-extortionate prices! They also do organic vegetable bags and organic eggs. All delivered to their very own space, located on the ground floor of the QMU.
You can keep updated and register on their website: www.glasgowunifoodcoop.co.uk
Facebook: Glasgow Uni Food Co-op

Food Sharing Glasgow
Food Sharing is a global network of people aiming to reduce food waste. Food Sharing Glasgow collects surplus food from local shops and distributes this to students for free! They have also held food waste meals, workshops and film screenings.
Facebook: /foodsharingglasgow/

Wildlife Garden
The green space behind the Queen Margaret Union that makes up the Wildlife Garden provides a haven for wildlife in the West End, as well as a quiet retreat for people to escape all the hustle and bustle. Check the facebook page for events and work sessions.
Facebook: /wildlifegardeners

Glasgow Student Housing Co-op
A group working towards the establishment of a student housing cooperative in Glasgow as a way to combat increasing rents and provide a democratically controlled living environment.
Email: glasgowstudenthousingcoop@gmail.com
Blog: /glasgowstudenthousingcoop.wordpress.com
Facebook: /glasgowstudenthousingcoop
GOOD Garden Project
A GUEST initiative to engage staff, students and the local community in growing their own food. https://www.facebook.com/The-GOOD-Garden-Project-1526141501035204/

Glasgow University Bee Keeping Society
Promotes learning and participation in beekeeping activities. Maintains two hives! https://www.facebook.com/GUBeekeepingSociety/

Fossil Free Strathclyde
https://www.facebook.com/fossilfreestrathclyde/

Glasgow University Vegan Society
https://www.glasgowstudent.net/clubs/listings/vegan-society/

GU Students Tenants Union
https://www.facebook.com/gustudenttenants/

Waste Not Want
Kinning Park Complex

The Real Junk Food Project
https://www.facebook.com/TRJFPGlasgow/

Climate Action Scotland
www.climateactionscotland.wordpress.com

Urban Roots
Community led environmental projects in the South Side. http://www.urbanroots.org.uk/

Stop Climate Chaos
Coalition of organisations working together against climate change. http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/

UofG Carbon Management Plan
gla.ac.uk/media/media_192265_en.pdf

UofGSave It Campaign
gla.ac.uk/about/values/environment/saveit

Uni-Cycle
Free services and support for students from the Bike Station. http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/glasgow/whats-going/pro/uni-cycle/

RSPB Glasgow
http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/glasgow/

Action Hillhead
https://www.facebook.com/actionhillhead/

GOW Community
http://gowcommunity.org.uk/

Friends of the Earth Scotland
http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk/

Young Friends of the Earth Scotland
https://www.facebook.com/groups/1049257129476024/

Young Friends of the Earth Europe
http://www.foeeurope.org/yfoee/
Plastic Free July
http://www.plasticfreejuly.org/

1 Million Women

WWF footprint calculator
footprint.wwf.org.uk

The 10:10 campaign
Advice and inspiration for a low-carbon life
www.1010global.org/uk

Recycle Now
Recyclability guide what can and can’t be recycled.
www.reculenow.com/what-to-do-with

Glasgow Freecycle
http://my.freecycle.org

Word Power Books
www.word-power.co.uk

Greener Scotland
Online Seasonal Foods Calendar:
www.greenerscotland.org/eat-greener-avoid-waste/season-food-calendar

Love Food Hate Waste
http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/

DoNation
https://www.wearedonation.com/

Keep Scotland Beautiful
www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org

Lexicon of Sustainability
The Lexicon of Sustainability™ is a crowd-sourced project, which relies on people around the world, to gather the ideas we need to build a sustainable future.
www.lexiconofsustainability.com

My Plastic Free Life
Author Beth Terry claims that we cannot just recycle our way out the mess we’re in. On her website, she offers tips, advice and useful resources towards living a plastic-free life, or at least reducing your plastic footprint.
myplasticfreelife.com/plasticfreeguide

Glasgow Local Food Network
This is an informal network of community organisations and individuals from across Glasgow that are passionate about local food and striving to produce more of what we eat and eat more of what we produce.
glasgowlocalfood.blogspot.co.uk

Slow Food Glasgow
https://www.slowfood.org.uk/groups/glasgow/

Friends of the Earth Glasgow
They are involved in recycling and planning issues, in safeguarding and preserving green spaces and biodiversity around the city.
https://sites.google.com/site/foeglasgow/

Eco-logic Books
A small, ethically run company that specialises in environmental books.
www.eco-logicbooks.com

Recycle for Scotland
www.recycleforscotland.com

Global Justice Now
http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/

Creative Carbon Scotland
http://www.creativecarbonscotland.com/

The Climate Coalition
http://www.theclimatecoalition.org/

Ethical Consumer
Website that provides the tools and resources you need to make ethical choices simple, informed and effective.
www.ethicalconsumer.org

Centre for Alternative Energy
Tips for Energy Conservation
info.cat.org.uk/energy-conservation

Take One Action
http://www.takeoneaction.org.uk/

Greenpeace Glasgow
http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/tags/glasgow

Climate Outreach
Resources for communicating climate change
http://climateoutreach.org/