

UCU Green Rep Report Back of Activity 2023/24

OBU Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

I am a UCU Rep on the OBU Sustainability Working Group (SWG) chaired by Joe Tah (Dean of TDE) which meets quarterly.

I have continued to push on themes highlighted as weak at OBU in the [People and Planet University League Table](#). *OBU has moved down from 34th place to 53th place scoring particularly poorly on Ethical Investment and Ethical Careers.*

I have been pushing for divestment from Barclays (Europe's biggest investor in the fossil fuel industry). *The VCG has responded stating its position, 'that it is better to be at the table to try to influence Barclays' and that the bank is 'showing movement toward more environmentally friendly activities'. A representative from Barclays is to be invited to talk to the group at a future meeting.*

I have been pushing the University to take action to recognise and move on the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to make this explicit in strategy, teaching and research activity. *There has been movement with the development of an Education for Sustainability Strategy and the University Impact Team recently held a meeting (9 May 2024) to discuss embedding SDG in research and agree on a set of actions.*

Sustainable Travel Plan Strategy Working Group

I have provided input into the Sustainable Travel Plan and Strategy arguing for a just transition that does not penalise those who cannot afford to live near their place of employment (and have to rely on expensive privatised transport systems) and that does not privilege some members of staff over others because of their pay grade. *I have specifically requested the provision of staff bus operating between Thornhill P&R and the Headington campus and for the Uni to push the highways authority to provide a good-quality protected cycle path from the P&R site to Brookes along London Road – the current offering is substandard – and provision of electric bike hire and training. Travel Plan Manager, Ashley Hayden, has now left the University and I will look to work with his replacement.*

Other activity

Have worked with EDI to promote a Peace Garden between Buckley, Clerici and Abercrombie and participated in planting activity on the site.

I have challenged the NUS and University over its stunt of turning Brookes into a live zoo by transporting Llamas/Alpacas from Worcestershire to campus for two hours 'to improve student and staff wellbeing'.

FUTURE ACTIVITY

If re-elected I plan to focus on working with OBU Environmental Manager, NUS and UNISON to improve OBU's performance on the People and Planet University League Table as this has leverage with university senior management. I am also pushing for the SDGs to be embedded in teaching and research as it gives us a comprehensive framework of goals and targets and creates a shared language.

I am open to sharing this role and to promote diversity and inclusion.

Tim Jones | OBU Green Rep | 10 May 2024