

SPRING 2022 | ISSUE 2

# THE GREEN GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSLETTER OF THE UK SCHOOLS SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK



## FAST FASHION FREE FEBRUARY LONDON STUDENTS LEAD SUCCESSFUL NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

THE NO BEEF CAMPAIGN • UKSSN STUDENTS DISCUSS THE DEFRA LANDSCAPE REVIEW • AVON WINTER UPDATE • REGIONAL ROUNDUP • OUR WORLD BOOK DAY PICKS • ASEN STUDENTS AT UWE EVENT • ZOE SPEAKS AT THE EXCEL



# WELCOME BACK TO THE GREEN GAZETTE

BY JACK, EDITOR, SOMERSET NETWORK

Welcome to the Spring 2022 Issue of The Green Gazette, the UK Schools Sustainability Network's student newsletter.

The spring term has been once again packed with events, meetings and work for our networks.

UKSSN is currently working with teachers to set up new networks in Devon, East of England, Greater

Manchester, Northumberland, Yorkshire and Humber.

Email [getintouch@ukssn.org.uk](mailto:getintouch@ukssn.org.uk) to find out more about joining a UKSSN regional network or staff group.

We have once again been blown away by the tireless work of our students and staff.

I hope you enjoy this wonderful collection of news stories from across the UK.



## LONDON STUDENTS LEAD SUCCESSFUL FAST FASHION FREE FEBRUARY

BY CAITLIN & MIA, LONDON



A few weeks ago we launched the 2022 Fast Fashion Free February campaign (FFFF) at London Schools Eco Network (LSEN).

Fast Fashion Free February started at Highgate School in 2019, with the aim of raising awareness about the damaging effects of fast fashion. Fast fashion refers to low quality, cheap, mass produced clothing, catering to the latest trends and made with little regard to the environment. Fast fashion has been deemed the fastest growing category of waste. It is estimated that 80 billion items of clothing are made per year and that more than 300,000 tonnes of this end up in the UK's landfills. This is problematic as most mass-produced clothing is made from polyester, which is non-biodegradable. Polyester is also energy intensive to make, meaning it has a high carbon production, and is synthesised from fossil fuels hence supporting the fossil fuel industry. The majority of fast fashion is manufactured in China, where electricity still comes mostly from coal, and this means major carbon expenditure. Other environmental impacts include the

release of micro-plastics, released when fast fashion is washed. The particles end up in oceans, poison the animals living there.

As well as the harm done to the environment, there are serious humanitarian concerns surrounding this business. Companies often outsource production for cheap labour, and research shows many of those employed in this industry are not working in suitable conditions or receiving a living wage. Additionally, it is suggested that the industry is one of the leading causes in the perpetuation of child labour. This pattern of injustice continues as reports state the developed world's clothing waste continually washes up on the shores of the global south, countries who have done nothing to contribute to this polluting problem.

There are ways of escaping contribution to these problems. Companies like Rent the Runway hire out clothes preventing the frequent need to purchase new items. Brands like Patagonia promote the purchase of quality clothing so that it last without needing frequent replacing. Ways to

get green about these issues are, as ever, reducing your purchasing of fast fashion; re-using, and mending old clothes; and recycling, upcycling, or donating items you no longer want to wear. In its first year at Highgate, FFFF was marked with a swap shop, encouraging pupils to not buy new clothes, but exchange clothing they no longer wanted with friends, so they could get a new lease of life. Since then, pledges against fast fashion have been created, with people wearing a custom badge to show their support for the campaign, as well as mending and upcycling workshops, visits to charity shops, displays around school and tutor time activities.

It is so encouraging to know that FFFF has now gone nation-wide – the more people that know about the problems of fast fashion, and its alternatives, the better!

DISCOVER  
MORE ABOUT  
THE LONDON  
SCHOOLS ECO  
NETWORK BY  
CLICKING HERE







This winter has been very busy for the Avon Schools Eco Network! If you have been keeping up to date with our social media pages, you would have seen some of our network members representing Avon at COP 26 in Glasgow. One of our mentors made this video of the trip. We spoke with leaders such as Alok Sharma, President Designate, and shared views about the need for politicians to invest in youth issues and the understanding of the need for immediate action. Back in Bristol we also participated at 'We the 33%' event with Creative Youth Network where we shared our experiences of going to COP 26 and raised awareness of opportunities for the young people of Bristol to get involved with the network.

We recently welcomed new members to the network from schools in Bristol and Bath such as Bristol Grammar School, St Mary Redcliffe, Temple School and Hayesfield and we hope to gather new members from other schools from year 11 as well as the Sixth Form. Our new members represented the network at UWE's Sustainability Communications Course in February where we learnt about how to target campaigns via social media or film making to specific groups in society based on age, political agenda etc. We made videos of our own, spreading awareness of a climate based issue, using the expertise of lecturers and former film researchers at UWE.

The network is especially excited about our involvement with the Force of Nature's Eco Anxiety training program. We are very grateful for the opportunity to receive training from climate activists and experts in psychology and well being from around the world. We hope that by the end of their training, our network members will have developed skills in eco counselling and will be able to mentor in their own schools and help those who are affected by eco anxiety. This is such an incredible opportunity for the network and the skills developed will be invaluable in the future as uncertainty about climate change grows and eco anxiety affects more and more of us.

In the future, the network is aiming to increase the diversity of schools and ages of our members and continue to use our social media pages to spread awareness of what we do.



## THE CAMPAIGN WORKING TO REDUCE BEEF CONSUMPTION

BY ELIAS, LONDON

We all realise that we are currently living through the most serious, and indeed the only, existential crisis to ever face humans. As species go extinct quicker than they are discovered, glaciers melt quicker than they freeze, and ecosystems collapse faster than they can regenerate, we all know that now is the time to act.

In a sea of potential solutions, it can sometimes be difficult to choose what to divert our attention to as none really seem more "worthy" of our time than others. However, there are a few key targets that come to mind when considering what would be most effective: red meat, plastics and direct fossil fuel usage (are the ones which occur to me as "big"). While all these three are undeniably interconnected and of equal importance, I believe encouraging institutions to switch away from red meat (beef and lamb) is not only the most effective act an institution (such as a school or a university) can make on a small scale – in terms of both carbon and overall ecological footprint – but is also very doable on a large, national scale.

Having paused prior to Covid-19, the #NoBeef campaign (previously endorsed by Sir Paul McCartney and supported by the University of Cambridge) is starting up again and looking to swiftly have a large impact on canteens across the UK. We are recruiting a leadership committee of people ages 15-20 who encompass a broad range of skills from public speaking to web development, to general organisation, in order to operate efficiently and effectively. The team should also be as diverse as possible, since it's only with a multitude of voices that we can build the equitable, stable future we all want.

IF THIS IS SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT, PLEASE APPLY BY SENDING A COVER LETTER AND A VERY BRIEF CV TO [ELIAS@MATTHEWSHRIBMAN.COM](mailto:ELIAS@MATTHEWSHRIBMAN.COM) AND/OR [OSCAR@MATTHEWSHRIBMAN.COM](mailto:OSCAR@MATTHEWSHRIBMAN.COM), WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

## UKSSN STUDENTS FEEDBACK ON DEFRA LANDSCAPES REVIEW

BY ASHLEIGH YORKSHIRE

On Tuesday 1st March, Jacob (Buckinghamshire) and I attended the DEFRA Landscapes Review Youth Panel which was a 90-minute meeting addressing the four key areas in the response to the Landscapes Review (an independent review, published in 2019, into the management of National Parks and Landscapes). The conversations highlighted the need for a more coherent national network, an improvement on recognising nature recovery and how the climate is inextricably linked to that, improving the accessibility for everyone to enjoy and help shape the National Parks and Landscapes and supporting local delivery of DEFRA's aims. There were young people from many institutes and backgrounds, and everyone was encouraged to share their honest opinions on the plans in place, however, it was noted that the youth lack a voice on many of the important boards who make decisions around specific National Parks and Landscapes which is hopefully being addressed. There is also an online consultation available in order to gauge the responses of as many young people as possible which will all be taken into consideration when DEFRA publishes more concrete plans in July 2022.

FIND OUT  
MORE ABOUT  
THE DEFRA  
LANDSCAPE  
REVIEW HERE



P L A N T

B A S E D



# REGIONAL ROUNDUP

A QUICK UPDATE OF NEWS FROM SOME OF OUR REGIONAL NETWORKS



## AVON

ASEN

- Involvement in Force of Nature 'Eco Anxiety Training Programme'
- participated at 'We the 33%' event with Creative Youth Network where we shared our experiences of going to COP 26 and raised awareness of opportunities for the young people of Bristol to get involved with the network



## MIDLANDS

MSSN

- Planted 420 trees
- Will participated in the Sustainable(ish) Podcast
- Sanaa participated in the Curious Geographer YouTube channel live broadcast
- Will and Ollie interviewed Green Party MP Caroline Lucas



## SOMERSET

SCJN

- Approval granted for biodiversity area at WCSA
- Encouraging teachers to turn tech off when not in use
- Archie is to receive the Mayor's Youth Award for his local environmental work

## OXFORD

OSSN

- Selling sustainable exam kits
- Had speakers from Oxford Uni
- Making school sites greener



## LONDON

LSEN

- Ran a talk on sustainable cafeterias in schools
- Involvement in Zero Beef Campaign
- Fast Fashion Free February leaders
- Zoe spoke at the Future Build Conference



## MERSEY

MRSSN

- Pupils from St Vincent's specialist school are planting wildflower seeds grown for COP26 in the garden of John Lennon's childhood home
- Create 'Little Free Greenhouse' school project where people can take plants and replenished with new plants regularly to promote horticulture and wellbeing



Will & Ollie (MSEN) meet Caroline Lucas



Helen Burge (Deputy COO of The Priory Learning Trust - SCJN) speaking to Somerset school business leaders about sustainability in schools



Georgiana (BSEN), Nor (Oxford), Orran (Northumberland) and Sanaa (MSEN) spoke on the Curious Geographer YouTube Live



Mia & Daphne (LSEN) helping to launch Fast Fashion Free February at their school



ASEN students at the UWE's Sustainability Communications Course



SCJN students litter picking in their local area



# AVON STUDENTS TAKE PART IN WORKSHOP AT UWE

BY GRACIE, AVON



Over half term, Tillie, Ellie and I represented Avon schools eco network at the youth climate communications workshop at UWE. We started the day with getting to know each other as it was a mix of young people from local groups of climate activists across Avon and Bristol. Discussion turned to what our baseline would be for what we want to achieve from the session, and what skills we could bring, from uni degrees to team leadership skills. After settling in we decided that we all wanted climate action, so we went on to think about what our individual call to action would be to base our ideas off throughout the day. There were amazing ideas from adapting the uk school curriculum to having more climate awareness to creating a wider awareness of vegan lifestyle alternatives.

Next we learned about different parts of society and how their views on climate change differ. The Climate Outreach Society has helpfully gathered information from across society to create the seven segments of different people based on their values, interests, needs and beliefs. I personally found this really interesting and had never thought about breaking down audiences in this way. We then went onto focus on three segments that hold the most power and have the biggest impact when taking climate action. They are backbone conservatives progressive activists and civic pragmatists. To communicate and portray our message to these different audiences we have to adapt and think about the way you present our message. For example, explaining the financial benefits to backbone conservatives would mean they may be more on board with your climate action plan. Role-playing different segments allowed us to 'walk in their shoes' and get a wider understanding of how to approach different parts of society that we might not be familiar with in day to day life.

The next activity was creating an eco house. We were given a wooden house and added post notes with ideas to adapt it to become carbon neutral such as solar panels and double glazing.

After this, we focused on different ways we could interact with varied audiences, for example, using engagement activities and interactive display. We used our call to action to create a simple prototype of an interactive and engaging activity that can be shared on social media or at climate based events. There were ideas like blind tasting meat and vegan alternatives to spark an interest in people to make small everyday choices to reduce personal carbon footprint.

After a delicious free lunch, courtesy of UWE, and a tour of the university eco garden where students grow their own food, we started back now with a focus specifically on filming short videos to portray our messages. We were given tips on how to get the right conditions such as lighting and sound for filming a high quality piece. In pairs we decided on one of our calls to action and planned a short video based around it. I used the idea of reducing single use plastic and replacing it with reusable containers. We were given 15 minutes to go around the UWE campus and film short videos. We even interviewed other students on why they were using reusable cups. At the end of the day we came together and shared our ideas and films we had created. It was amazing to see some of the results created in such a short amount of time and really showed the possibility of creating high quality films, quickly.

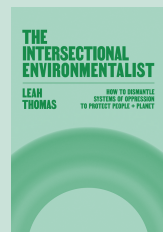
Overall we really enjoyed the workshop and learned lots of new ways to communicate our own climate messages and from the surveys the UWE team gathered, 100% of people felt confident engaging with different audiences at the end of the session and we will be able to take these skills back to our individual groups. A massive thank you to all the mentors and leaders of the session for making it so engaging and we are looking forward to working with them again soon.

## OUR WORLD BOOK DAY PICKS

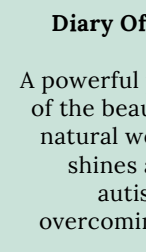


**Hot Air**  
A good read for looking at how climate science has progressed and the kind of pushback scientists have faced.

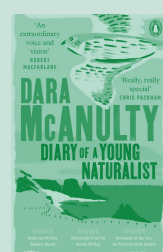
**The Intersectional Environmentalist**  
About how to engage in inclusive and diverse activism



**This Is Not A Drill**  
This is a book of truth and action. It has facts to arm you, stories to empower you, pages to fill in and pages to rip out



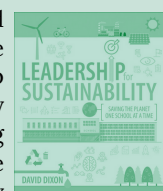
**Diary Of A Young Activist**  
A powerful portrayal of the beauty of the natural world, as it shines a light on autism and of overcoming severe anxiety.



**Birdgirl**  
There is something about birds that makes us, even for just moments at a time, lift our eyes away from our lives and up to the skies

### Leadership for Sustainability

A stirring and informative greenprint to help school leaders play their part in making their schools more environmentally friendly and better places to learn for all.



Look out for the full review from UKSSN members in next terms issue!



FURTHER READING:  
'20 ESSENTIAL WORKS OF CLIMATE FICTION FOR YOUR READING LIST'



VISIT OUR TWITTER TO FIND MORE RECOMMENDATIONS  
@UKSCHOOLSSUSTY

## OUR WORK ON THE DFE SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

BY JACK, SOMERSET



Over the past few months, myself and Sanaa (Midlands) have had the honour of participating on the youth panel to shape the Department for Education's Sustainability & Climate Change draft strategy. We were the two students from UKSSN selected to take part in this process and were joined by network staff Jess, Helen, Patterson and Phoebe who all participated in different groups.

During COP26 in November 2021, the DfE unveiled their draft strategy and some of our students were there to witness its unveiling. The day after, Sanaa, Grace and I met the Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi and expressed our interest in helping to shape the future of sustainable education.

We started our work on the strategy in December - not long after COP26. Monthly meetings allowed us to express concerns, questions or ideas about the strategy and what we believed could be an effective solution. We made sure to collect responses from across the country by appointing DfE strategy leads in each of our regional networks. This allowed our opinions to be shaped by a whole country's response rather than what would be best for certain areas.

The staff at the DfE were welcoming and honest when giving feedback on ideas - showing that our opinions truly did help to shape the strategy.

We look forward to seeing the final strategy and the impact it will have on the education sector.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE DFE CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY HERE



Department for Education



## SUCCESS FOR BUCKS AT MOCK COP

BY BSSN STUDENTS

On Wednesday 17 November, 58 students from AHS, AGS and The Royal Latin held their very own COP26 at Aylesbury High School. COP26 was a congregation of countries from around the world who gathered together in Glasgow to discuss and debate the issues surrounding climate.

The aim of our COP was to debate (albeit on a much smaller scale) issues and topics similar to those debated in Glasgow, with small groups of students representing the beliefs of the country they were assigned. Each group had to give a short presentation introducing their country.

Following this, students split into four areas of discussion: cities, energy, forests and food and oceans. These groups then delivered an agreed set of statements to reduce emissions and tackle climate change. The quality of the presentations and debate were excellent.

Students returned to their respective schools with a greater understanding of how complex this issue is and with a sense of purpose in addressing issues within their school and community. A big thank you to Sophie and Jess for organising this event, which was a huge success.



## LIVERPOOL STUDENTS PLANT SEEDS OF HOPE AT JOHN LENNON'S CHILDHOOD HOME

BY MRSSN STUDENTS



Pupils from a specialist school in Liverpool are planting wildflower seeds in the garden of John Lennon's childhood home, now cared for by the National Trust, to help promote ways to protect the planet from the effects of climate change.

St. Vincent's, a specialist school for sensory impairment and other needs in West Derby, have grown the seeds themselves as part of their education programme which centres on making children aware of climate change and the ways it can be tackled. Their programme has since been replicated across other schools in the region.

As part of the programme, St. Vincent's pupils planted thousands of wildflowers in the school's grounds and then harvested their seeds. The seeds were put into bags and brought along to COP26 in Glasgow last November, where a group of pupils met world leaders and gifted the bags to delegates with a message for change to protect the planet.

The school also sent bags of their seeds - dubbed 'seeds of hope' - to influential figures around the world, including Yoko Ono, who was inspired by the school's work to raise awareness of climate change. Ono suggested the seeds be planted at John Lennon's childhood home of 251 Menlove Avenue in South Liverpool, also known as 'Mendips', which she purchased and donated to the National Trust in 2003. The conservation charity happily agreed.



## UKSSN MISSION STATEMENT

We aim to make our schools, communities, regions and countries more aware of the climate and nature crises, and ultimately more sustainable, through...

### Collaboration

- Bringing together networks of students to connect and collaborate on local, national and international issues they care about, fully supported by school staff
- Deciding collectively which local, national and international campaigns and initiatives to support, bearing in mind our aim of bringing together as many voices as possible

### Representation

- Aiming to be as representative, inclusive and diverse as possible, working proactively to recruit schools, students and staff from under-represented regions, backgrounds and school types
- Holding a constructive and cooperative stance in order to involve as many as possible, in particular those not wishing or unable to join other movements

### Education

- Seeking out opportunities and platforms for students and staff to share ideas, views and resources, to influence those with power and to develop personal, social and workplace skills
- Going beyond focusing solely on purely environmental issues and highlighting the fact that the challenges affecting people and planet are interconnected

## FOLLOW US!



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WORLD.ORG/UKSSN



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UKSSN YOUTUBE PLAYLIST

UKSSN: BRINGING TOGETHER  
NETWORKS OF STUDENTS TO  
CONNECT AND COLLABORATE ON  
ISSUES THEY CARE ABOUT, FULLY  
SUPPORTED BY SCHOOL STAFF.



## ZOE'S EXPERIENCE AT THE EXCEL

BY ZOE, LONDON



**"50 years we have been talking green, 50 more, and biodiversity will be gone. 10 years full of empty promises, these next 10 cannot go wrong..."**

It is an exhilarating feeling when you have lots of people watching you, actively listening to your views as a young person. I had a speech at the ExCel Centre on the 2nd of March and it was an amazing experience. The main thing I have taken away is how important it is for adults to hear our voice, our viewpoints, our experiences with nature. I cannot preach the science behind the climate change because, let's be real, who is going to be interested in a teen talking about science that somebody else has discovered and somebody else knows more about, but as soon as I talk about something like horticulture in the education system – like I did on Wednesday, I had the audience hooked.



## WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US?

**WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING TO  
GROW OUR NETWORK AND KEEN  
FOR ANYONE TO JOIN US!**

**GO TO [UKSSN.ORG.UK](https://ukssn.org.uk) TO FIND  
OUT MORE**

