

AN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR
TRANSITION EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

2010



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1. INTRODUCTION

Transition Edinburgh University (TEU) is a joint staff-student initiative launched in October 2009 aiming to reduce the carbon footprint of the university community in response to the dual pressures of Peak Oil and climate change, through projects encouraging practical actions at home and at work by students and staff. Inspired by the Transition Towns movement, TEU is the first attempt to translate the scheme to the setting of a university community with its specific characteristics, requirements and potentials.

Whilst TEU has undertaken research over the past year to get the project going, including constructing a carbon emissions inventory for the University community¹, limited resources and restrictions tied to funding agreements mean there is key information that TEU working alone is not able to tap. The 2009/10 class of Participation in Policy and Planning (PPP) has been tasked to conduct research in order to generate for TEU a strategy to engage individuals from across the University community in the transition to “greener” lifestyles.

Collaboration such as this epitomises the ethos of Transition, which seeks to foster wide-scale change through cooperative and open working, tapping and connecting the numerous springs of knowledge, innovation and motivation that coexist in a university community. Action research and peer-learning fuel TEU, which aims to collate and disperse knowledge and tools so that other universities can replicate the initiative as well as engineering a green transition at the University of Edinburgh.

“Participation in Policy and Planning” as a study module aims to instil in students the importance and value of involving members of the public in the processes of decision-making that affect them, value which lies not only in the ethical merit of democratic, participatory approaches but also in the ultimate effectiveness of participatory decision-making and implementation. The module equips students with an array of skills and techniques that can be employed to better involve stakeholders in the policy and decision-making process. In this project PPP students were expected to draw on their knowledge and skills base to consult with members of the university community, stakeholders in the Transition Edinburgh University initiative, to glean information for TEU, which will help TEU better engage and engage with the University community on sustainability issues and pursue Transition objectives more effectively.

The work presented in this report was conceived by PPP in response to a loose brief given by representatives of Transition Edinburgh University, centred on their objectives and the constraints facing engagement. TEU outlined to PPP a number of engagement barriers that exist:

- i) the complex form of the university
- ii) the array of overlapping and competing extant initiatives
- iii) apathy and disconnect in the community

¹ Transition Edinburgh University (2009) *Footprints and Handprints*. <http://www.transitionedinburghuni.org.uk/projects/outreach/resources-for-other-groups/>

It became clear to PPP that the task divides into two distinct elements, the first dealing with barriers i) and ii) and issues relating to structures, organisations, entities and their interactions within the University community. The second relates to members of the community as individuals and their engagement with green initiatives and green issues generally. Whilst the community consists of more than just students, it is the student contingent on which we focus here. Conveyed in barrier iii), TEU must confront the challenge of a diverse, semi-nomadic and apparently apathetic or detached student community to achieve its goals of engagement.

PPP therefore followed a dual approach, one working group (Group A) concentrating on strategy to harmonise the existing Green Groups and Initiatives (GGIs), the second (Group B) concentrating on students with potential to be active but who currently are not engaged with TEU, GGIs or overtly “green” lifestyles. Semi-structured individual interviews were the research device employed. Whilst the following report presents the work as two distinct sections, they are intended as two complementary elements to one strategy, both equally central to the success of Transition.

This report sets out the objectives, methodologies, findings and recommendations of each stream of work, on which we hope TEU can build to direct their future work.

2. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR TRANSITION EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY: GREEN GROUPS AND INITIATIVES PERSPECTIVE

2.1. Objectives

Our objective was to address one of the “barriers to and challenges for community engagement” identified by TEU, specifically the abundance of pre-existing green groups, as well as university departments or organisations that run relevant green initiatives (referred to as ‘green groups and initiatives’ or GGIs). As described in our original briefing:

“A 'Green Transition' must combine existing sustainability work, in university boardrooms and on campus by student activists, without allowing for duplication of efforts or divisive competition.”

This research stream sought to garner the views of relevant GGIs with respect to communication, interaction and collaboration with TEU to further their shared objectives of transition to greater sustainability.

2.2. Methodology

Identifying GGIs

Group A began by brainstorming the various GGIs within and immediately surrounding the University. We specifically tried to identify groups already engaged with students, or trying to engage with students. These included on- and off-campus societies, university affiliated organisations and external (non-university affiliated) organisations. Using personal connections, lists of societies and information on the university website, we were able to produce a list of over 20 GGIs. Once we had begun the interview process, we utilised the technique of snowball sampling (asking each interviewee to suggest further relevant GGIs) to expand our list.

In addition to GGIs which already act on sustainability issues, we targeted a number of student societies from Earth Sciences, as well as groups that are interested in the environment purely for social reasons. We thought it would be worthwhile to find out whether any of these groups would be interested in engaging with TEU.

A full list of the identified GGIs is given in *Appendix 1*.

Questionnaires

We designed a semi-structured questionnaire to ascertain the level of awareness each GGI has of those who are already working on sustainability issues, and whether there was scope for further networking between groups. We then asked questions specifically about TEU, how well known they currently are, how they could aid other GGIs, and whether there were improvements that could be made to their current engagement practices. The questions are listed in *Appendix 2*.

2.3. Key Points

By interviewing representatives of these GGIs, a number of points were derived which gave insight into the priorities, values and goals of those groups, and their expectations and opinions of other groups including TEU. Examination of these key points allowed us to ascertain which issues are the most important in developing an engagement strategy between TEU and these groups. It also allows fuller understanding of recommendations for improvements in engagement. There was a lot of overlap among the GGIs on the subject of central points of interest, and almost all of the points are within a context of information access. The factors identified have been summarised and grouped as follows:

Communication

Both societies and University-affiliated groups believe that working together would be positive and many are keen to be engaged with other groups and with TEU. However, they mention some barriers to this engagement and to group interaction. One barrier is the lack of information (specifically contact details) available regarding the other groups. This sentiment was reiterated by the external groups as well, indicating an all-round desire for increased communication. All three group categories also regard a lack of basic information as a barrier. This can be a lack of information available to new group members regarding ongoing projects as well as lack of information available to other groups regarding where projects may overlap.

Uniqueness of GGIs

With this in mind, both societies and external organisations stress the importance of TEU identifying group capacity and aims. This is to say that it is crucial to recognise what each group is capable of taking on with regards to financial and physical capabilities, as well as what the groups interests may be. Groups may have different levels of interest in involvement and engagement - this needs to be taken into consideration. On the other hand, as the societies pointed out, some groups do not necessarily want to be "engaged" and if TEU were to desire cooperation with these groups, then their goals would need to be tailored to and they would need to be approached in an appropriate manner.

Societies acknowledge the advantage that comes about, in terms of working well with other groups and students, when personal relationships have been established. In other words, friendships make for better group interactions and cooperation. Another key point brought up was the fact that the societies have a large influence over students yet there are barriers that exist in engaging these students. One reason for this is the high turnover of students and therefore the high turnover of society members, as was also identified by TEU as a challenge. This links to the recommendation of providing basic information about each group and their projects.

Neglected Areas

Societies, University-affiliated organisations and non-University affiliated organisations all depicted expectations of TEU and barriers they believe exist for TEU engaging with them and with the other groups. The external, non-university affiliated groups regard this engagement as being extremely difficult and believe some groups or individuals may not currently be engaged, or even known about by TEU, due to being "out of the loop". In

fact, societies and university groups mention the lack of TEU publicity outside of the central university area as a problem. University organisations also indicate the neglect of first year students as a barrier to engaging students in the long-term, tying in with the recommendation of prioritising Pollock Halls as a starting point for engagement.

Modes of Interaction

The external groups were the most vocal with their opinions of areas for improvement in active engagement, although all groups had ideas. Issues brought up include the fact that most groups have a lot on their plates already, linking to the recommendation of TEU taking the primary role in bringing the groups together. There is also an opinion among these groups that TEU should focus on working better with the professionals they deal with and take into account formal organisations and procedures. Finally, it was believed that TEU can further engage currently un-engaged groups by emphasising accessibility, economic benefits and trends.

2.4. Recommendations

The GGIs interviewed made some recommendations that they think would allow better engagement with other GGIs, staff and students. Two points that were common to all three sectors were:

- an increased sharing of expertise and resources among all GGIs and
- an emphasis on the positive aspects of green living

Societies

Representatives from university societies voiced a number of suggestions to improve communications between societies and TEU. Common themes to emerge were increasing the amount and quality of publicity for TEU events; increasing the number of meetings held between GGIs; and increasing the involvement of certain groups. The societies would like to see a more diverse range of people attending these functions. This may be accomplished by approaching new or currently uninvolved GGIs and asking them to participate- this includes GGIs from other educational institutions in Edinburgh. Targeting academic staff as an influential and numerous group was also mentioned.

University-Affiliated Organisations

Recommendations from University organisations (such as EUSA and Accommodation Services) focused mainly on improving communication and networking. A shared meeting place was suggested for GGIs to meet and discuss issues. One representative recommended utilising Pollock Halls as a hub of TEU activity, suggesting its use in a range of green initiatives from growing fruit to reducing energy emissions. This came out of the key point that Freshers are seen to be a neglected group. It was suggested that TEU could take on the role of linking the other GGIs: to “be the glue that holds them together”, as one interviewee put it. It was also mentioned that TEU should be easier to access if more people are to be encouraged to get involved.

External Organisations

These organisations have plenty of experience in engaging with the public and the advice they offered on getting people involved is valuable. The recommendations were more of a general type as these organisations are looking at the situation from outside the university bubble. They concur that an increased number of common meetings between GGIs would be helpful and that TEU should be easier to access. They recommend that talking to people face to face is the best means of engagement and that appealing to their self-interest is important. External organisations encourage making use of personal connections, but recommend that they increasingly become organisational ones so as to increase professionalism and to encourage 'outsiders' to become involved. One representative suggested linking more closely to the University both academically (offering dissertation topics), and generally (making use of university facilities such as workshops and labs).

2.5. Engagement Strengths of TEU

We feel it is important to note that a lot of positivity towards TEU came out of the interview process. Representatives of all types of green group and initiatives interviewed praised the energy and enthusiasm of the TEU staff. Overall they are seen as passionate about what they do, good at engaging student audiences and effective at achieving things spontaneously and quickly.

Societies

Representatives of societies told us that they appreciated the professionalism TEU had brought to the university green groups and they felt the existence of Transition helped encourage groups to do more and be clearer in their work. Some groups told us that TEU are already doing a good job of engaging students and bringing groups together and one group said they were grateful for the effort put into keeping in contact.

University-Affiliated Organisations

A representative of a University organisation endorsed the views of the societies that TEU are good at engaging students. Department representatives saw TEU's staff as good campaigners and valued their passion, enthusiasm and 'ability to think outside the box'. They also view TEU's ability to mobilise people rapidly and get things done quickly and spontaneously as a major strength.

External Organisations

Representatives of external organisations who work with TEU praised their knowledge and expertise and echoed the University staff in praising their zeal and campaigning skills. TEU's unique position as a Transition group situated within a university with access to the academic expertise and facilities that that entails was seen as a great asset.

3. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR TRANSITION EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY: THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

3.1. Objectives

To identify through discussions with students approaches through which TEU could communicate with members of the student body at the University of Edinburgh, to engage them with their vision of Transition and involve them in a transition to greener lifestyles within the University community.

3.2. Methodology

Questionnaire

Semi-structured interviews with students based around a questionnaire developed by the group comprised the basis of this research stream. A combination of closed and open-ended questions was used to generate information that could be analysed more quantitatively without losing the richness and multitude of ideas that emerge from a more open format. Where open questions were employed, prompts were occasionally used to encourage responses in the case of hesitancy or reticence. The questions themselves were written and posed in neutral language and tone to try to incite honest and accurate replies. The interviewees were free to develop further on any of the closed questions with their additional comments recorded by the interviewer. The tone of responses was also noted in an effort to accurately encompass the perspectives and feelings of the participant.

The questionnaire followed TEU's working group structure, which included the following four themes:

- Food
- Domestic energy and water
- Travel and transport
- Waste

Within these working groups, questioning focused on three distinct areas of student engagement:

- Current behaviour
- Knowledge and awareness
- Willingness to engage and respondents own ideas on engagement

In addition to the four primary themes, a fifth section gauging knowledge of green groups and initiatives operating at Edinburgh University was included, relating the work of Group B to that of Group A. Please see Appendix 3 for a complete listing of questions asked in student interviews.

Sample

As a function of project time constraints and in the interest of efficiency, PPP Group B decided to concentrate purely on students, as they represent a significant segment of the University community, both functionally and numerically. Based on the population segmentation work (Figure 1) presented by DEFRA (2008) in the report *A Framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours*², students who are already strongly committed to sustainable lifestyles (“Positive Greens”) and those who have no interest in the cause or inclination to adopt any behavioural change for environmental reasons (“Honestly Disengaged”) were excluded from the sample.

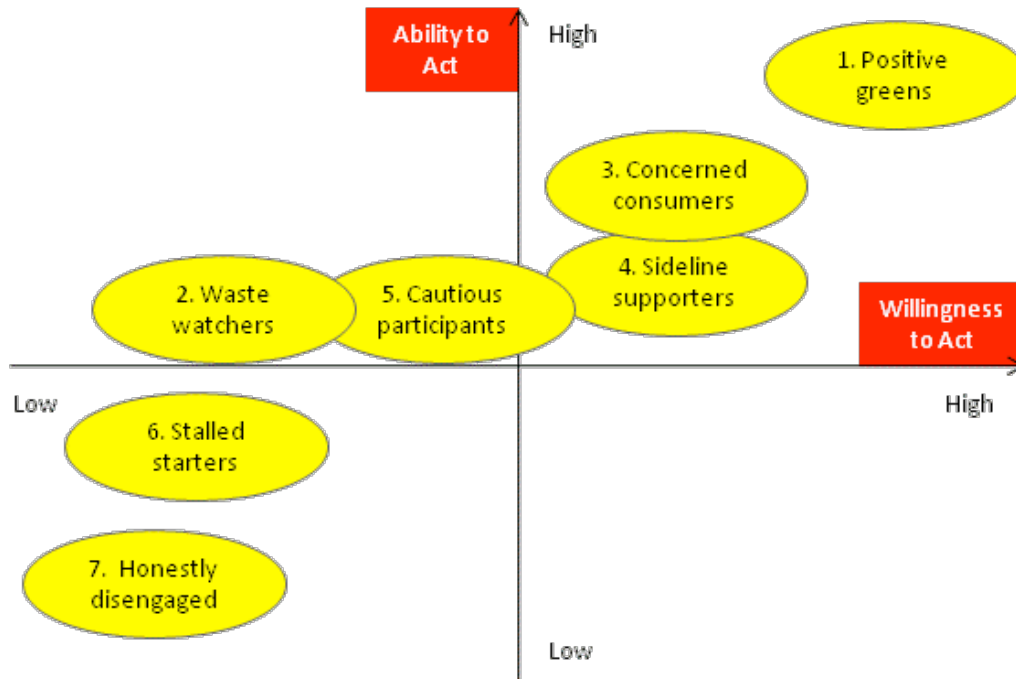


Figure 1. Segmentation of society, according to willingness and ability to act on sustainability issues
Adapted from Defra (2008).

PPP felt TEU should concentrate its efforts on those parts of the community with the greatest potential, rather than preaching to the converted or wasting resources on “hopeless cases.” A set of preliminary screening questions was put to potential participants prior to the interview to ensure they fit the profile (see Appendix 4). The group decided against concentrating on undergraduates, as postgraduates represent a very important sector too often forgotten in activities of the university community, and clearly have different motivations and requirements than undergraduate students.

Due to the small sample size (n=20), the qualitative nature of the research (that is to say no obligation to have a random sample), and limitations on time, interviewers selected participants from among their acquaintances. While this potentially raises questions of representation and bias, efforts were made to select from different age groups, study

² Defra (2008) *A Framework for Pro-environmental Behaviours*. January 2008. Defra, London. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/evidence/social/behaviour/documents/behaviours-jan08-report.pdf>

levels, nationalities, and fields of study. For the purpose of this research endeavour, it was decided this methodological approach was sufficient.

3.3. Results

Through discussion groups, the information garnered in the interviews was drawn together, using commonalities and interesting remarks and thoughts of the interviewees to identify the drivers of change in student behaviour and recommendations for TEU on general approaches to follow, paths to avoid and some specific ideas for engaging students in the initiative.

Drivers of Change

From the interviews conducted, PPP observed there are four main drivers of behavioural change among students, which are as follows:

1) **Information:**

During the interviews it was found that the majority of students agreed to incorporate environmentally-friendly activities in their daily lives if given more information on how to do so. It was also found that the manner in which information is shared with people influences their receptiveness. Most students felt that information could be disseminated in a more interactive manner rather than making it too “preachy.” They also appreciated delivery in a more positive manner; negative messages engender guilt and resentment. Therefore it can be concluded that the more interesting and innovative the method of education adopted, the more attention it will draw amongst a wider portion of the student community.

“I’ll change only if I can see the good that it would achieve”

2) **Convenience/Access:**

Although most students are willing to adopt positive environmental behaviour, their primary concerns lie with convenience and accessibility. Any difficulties in obtaining green products would discourage students from purchasing or using these items. There was a general consensus that students were ready to make changes in their behaviour provided it did not cause them major inconvenience. For example a large percentage agreed to recycle if they were informed about the location of recycling bins within the city.

3) **Culture/Habits:**

Throughout the interview process it was interesting to discover the strong influence family upbringing and cultural origins continue to exert on student lifestyle choices even after their arrival in Edinburgh. Even within this small sample we detected cultural differences, in terms of behavioural motivations and attitudes toward certain issues. Behaviours observed and habits developed in the parental home continue to influence student attitudes and some behaviours, although this is tempered by factors such as finances and facilities.

Personal benefit, both in terms of health and cost savings, emerged as another major driver of student behavioural change. Students admitted they would adopt certain environmentally friendly habits if they were told about the personal benefits that can be obtained from them.

“My parents were keen on being environmentally friendly, so it’s habit”

4) **Finance:**

Cost remains a significant factor in influencing student purchases, including green items such as energy saving devices and organic food. The majority of students indicated that they would buy energy saving devices if they contributed to a reduction in utility bills. Those in university accommodation often conceded they waste electricity because they are not charged separately for their utility use and would change this behaviour if Accommodation Services metered and charged them accordingly for their individual energy consumption. On the other hand some student tenants in private accommodation indicated a degree of powerlessness to improve their energy consumption, financially constrained to accept what is provided by the landlord.

“If it costs a lot, it ain’t gonna happen”

TEU can make use of these driving factors to understand what exactly would influence students to change their behaviour towards the environment and encourage them to incorporate eco-friendly habits in their daily lives.

3.4. Stepping Forward

Identification of the key factors that drive and stimulate the behaviour of students in general should provide TEU with the opportunity to explore and develop best practices with respect to moving forward in a positive and productive way.

To do so effectively requires a two-fold approach encompassing both information dissemination and promotional events. A recurring realisation shared by the interviewers was a genuine willingness on the students’ behalf to behave in a more environmentally friendly manner. Sadly, any such enthusiasm is generally stifled by a severe lack of information and general ignorance on how to do so.

Recommendations

We believe this to be a very surmountable problem, overcome by genuinely empowering students through the constant supply of helpful and accessible information on a variety of practices and behavioural choices that would allow them to live in a more sustainable manner. This could be accomplished in part through:

- Green welcome packs at matriculation

- Residences orientation
- Online information directory
- Information hub on campus

It remains imperative to cover all “greening” elements, from recycling to energy and food consumption, by indicating environmentally friendly habits in both convenient and cost effective ways without impelling students to expend too much time or effort to obtain the information or take up suggested actions.

In order to truly appeal to and engage the whole student body, however, it is also important to combine the factual with the fun. Based on student responses, effective, attractive communication of environmental information is a core element to building a more sustainable university community. Promotional events will be of fundamental importance in engaging students and encouraging them to really bite into the work of TEU.

Attracting the attention of students can be done in a variety of ways through well-planned and clearly advertised events such as tours, fairs, and entertainment activities. What remains essential is to appeal to the fun and active element in order to entice students to adopt a very positive attitude towards a greener lifestyle and ultimately partake in change. In executing an effective system of information, TEU would be providing and promoting the necessary knowledge that students need, empowering them to change their own behaviour for the better. What is to be gained is a more aware, informed, and engaged community collectively and willingly participating in achieving a lower carbon university.

Caveats

Establishing a climate change engagement strategy for the Edinburgh University community will inherently involve a largely heterogeneous group. Therefore, from the offset TEU must recognise that there is no one-method-fits-all scenario, and it must address a wide range of behavioural profiles. Inevitably, as stated, people have different driving motives and various behavioural traits that can be exploited in different ways to reach the same outcome.

“If you have to fly, you have to fly”

Unfortunately, PPP concluded that little can be done to influence air travel. With such a large proportion of the student body being international students, the issue of long-haul flights is almost impossible to address, and therefore attempts to do so by TEU would come at the expense of efforts in the direction of other areas. While air travel is an issue that is largely beyond the scope of TEU to tackle, a sense of optimism should be taken from the day-to-day travel routines of Edinburgh students. The large majority of students walk on a daily basis, with some cycling frequently. Many respondents demonstrated an open mindedness to suggestions to enlarge the student cycling body (e.g., bike share systems, guided cycle routes induction days, pressure to develop additional cycling lanes, etc). Most interviewees raised the point that they endeavour to utilise trains instead of flights for domestic travel.

Other points to take away were the nature and tone of communication and instructions with regards to getting people involved with climate change issues. Positivism is key: people seem much more open to action if addressed in a positive way. Tactful delivery of issues surrounding personal behaviour is important, and “preaching” should definitely be avoided. This emerged as one of the most prevalent reasons for students dismissing climate change-relevant education and information.

“I hate regulation”

The majority of interviewees reinforced the anticipated strategy that positivism, or a ‘carrot’ approach, is favoured over punishment, and so rewards and incentives for environmentally-friendly behaviours are likely to gain a higher engagement level than penalties or ‘sticks’ for negative behaviour. It is also important to give people an element of free choice and so avoid coercion towards mandated behaviours. This relates back to rewarding positive behaviour and providing sufficient information such that people can realise the consequences of their decision-making. If undertaken as a self-determined choice, it can be expected that behavioural change will be more fully embraced by the individual and long-lasting in consequence.

3.5. Key Points and Final Thoughts

The wide variety of students interviewed as part of this process revealed a strategic resource ripe for harnessing: diversity. The myriad of inventive suggestions and helpful insights gleaned from respondents reflected an eclectic mix of academic and cultural backgrounds. Engineers, linguists, earth scientists, and historians yielded equally substantive proposals for engaging both themselves and their peers in TEU efforts. Not unlike an ecosystem reliant on its biodiversity for adaptations to changing climate conditions, the University’s diverse student body harbours a wealth of knowledge, experience, and innovation that will prove invaluable towards building a more resilient, environmentally-sustainable community.

The challenge for TEU will rest in its formulation of a wide array of advertising and information campaigns that appeal to these distinctly different student groups (e.g., international students, postgraduates, undergraduates, age groups, academic fields). Acknowledging this diverse audience simultaneously requires recognition that multi-faceted approaches remain integral to successful engagement strategies and one-size-fits-all solutions should be altogether avoided.

The first step in developing these dynamic participatory methods lies in additional outreach and research endeavours. Based on initial interview results, the PPP group has identified a comprehensive set of tools available to TEU staff and volunteers that will prove effective in refining current engagement techniques, developing new ones, and engendering a more participatory relationship with the wider student body. These tools include:

- On-site orientations
- Interactive workshops
- Partnerships

- Student interviews
- Surveys

In addition to identifying critical tools for formulating future engagement strategies, this undertaking also divulged student attitudes, or rather, the misperception of attitudes. As interviewers discovered over the course of this project, lack of awareness and understanding frequently masquerades as apathy amongst the student populous. In reality, once confronted with thought-provoking questions, the majority of students consulted demonstrated a genuine interest in learning more about what they could do to address their individual carbon footprints. Ignorance, rather than apathy, featured as the common barrier to effecting behavioural change.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Whilst this Participation in Policy and Planning research group has not formulated a specific engagement strategy for Transition Edinburgh University, we are confident that the information garnered from our interviews with this small sample of the University community provides TEU with clear directions of how they can take their endeavour forward. It is hoped that TEU will be able to extend this project further, looking to other segments of the community for their own thoughts on motivations to engage with the issues and how they believe they can contribute to the process.

This research has revealed a number of positives in which TEU should cement their work. Firstly, individuals and green groups within and around the University are generally willing and eager to adopt more sustainable behaviours and to cooperate in the pursuit of sustainability objectives. The role of TEU is to provide the information and the impetus, to empower people and organisations to get involved. Secondly, the University is a diverse community, overflowing with ideas, skills and talents that could add real strength to TEU's mission. TEU needs to open up to and welcome as well as actively seek these contributions. This necessarily involves respect for the interests, motivations and specific capacities of various individuals and groups, which should be seen as benefits rather than barriers, channels through which more people can be accessed and engaged in Transition. Finally, TEU should capitalise on its own talents, its energy, freshness, enthusiasm and creativity, to fuel the expansion of Transition, to take the lead on uniting similar or competing efforts and to contrive events, publicity materials and campaigns that will speak to and motivate the student body, following the guiding rules of positivity and fun.

As a point of convergence of the two streams of research presented in this report and a potential point of germination for the TEU initiative, we believe Pollock Halls could serve as a centre for activities for TEU. Improving access and visibility, providing a go-to point for information and a convening area for green groups, a TEU Hub at Pollock offers the potential to overcome or help to overcome a number of the barriers and challenges highlighted. Furthermore, as the place of residence of a significant number of first year undergraduates, activities conducted at Pollock with the support of Accommodation Services would not only help and encourage the resident students to adopt more pro-environmental behaviours, it may also foster in them motivation to continue to engage with TEU and sustainable lifestyles through the rest of their time as part of the Edinburgh University community. As an enclosed community in itself, cooperation between the management, the residents and other entities active at Pollock Halls has the potential to make radical improvements in sustainability, with energy and water consumption, waste management and food provision open to unique degrees of control or influence.

Despite the potentials of Pollock, we stress the importance of a broad-based approach, where all contingents of the community should be considered, consulted and involved, including international students, post-graduates, faculty and so forth. Information packs at matriculation, potentially tailored to suit the broad category of student, and easily accessible online information are central to our recommendations. This research strongly suggests that if armed with the information on why and how to go about behavioural change in terms of energy, consumption and waste, the majority of individuals are prepared, even keen to do so. TEU needs to capitalise on the wider benefits of "green" choices to maximise the persuasiveness of its argument and speak to a wider range of people.

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF GREEN GROUPS AND INITIATIVES

The University institutions:

EUSA
Energy and Sustainability Office
Waste and Recycling
Transport and Parking
Accommodation Services

The Societies:

People and Planet (the most important)
Allotment and Permaculture
Young Greens
Co-operative Society
Carbon Management Society/Carbon
Masters Group
The Dirty Weekenders
Geology Society
Geography Society
People and Planet
Edinburgh Young Greens
Agricultural Society
Fair Trade café

The External Organisations:

Abundance Edinburgh
People and Planet UK
Changeworks.
Edinburgh South Energy Efficiency
(ESEE)
Scottish Education and Action on
Development

Changeworks
Energy Saving Trust
South Morningside School
Woodcraft Folk
Greener Kirkcaldy
Sistec (Carbon Monitoring and
Evaluation Consultancy based at Herriot
Watt)
Queen Margaret University (a TES
member is on QMU's sustainability
working group)
Consultant Health Psychologists
Abundance
North Edinburgh Trust
Piper
EAUC
Napier Conservation Society
Friends of the Earth
Edinburgh Community Backgreens
Association

Transition Groups

Transition Pentlands (used to be called
Deep South)
Transition Edinburgh
Transition Edinburgh Central
Transition Edinburgh South
Transition Edinburgh North

APPENDIX 2 – GGI QUESTIONNAIRE

Draft Interview Schedule – Interviews with green groups and initiatives for Transition Edinburgh University engagement strategy

1. Introduction

- Explain project, reason for interviews, aims of research, confidentiality, check if happy to be recorded
- Consent form signed
- Review list of GGIs

2. Awareness of other GGIs

Do you work with other GGIs inside or outside the university?

- Which ones?
- How do you work with them? (*Joint projects, events etc?*)
- How do you feel about them and working with them? (*generally positive, negative, indifferent*)

3. Views on how well GGIs currently work together

How well do you think green groups and initiatives in the university work together?

- Any examples of GGIs working really well together?
 - How do they do it? - any structures in place (*Joint meetings, shared website or discussion groups, socials, casual friendship networks*)
- Any examples of GGIs working really badly together (*conflict, divisiveness, indifference*)
 - Why do you think that is? What went wrong?
- Do you think there are any barriers that stop groups working together well?
 - What are they? (*communication, infrastructure*)
 - What could TEU do about this? (*communication, networking, outreach*)
 - What could other GGIs including their own group do about this?

How much overlap do you think there is between the different groups' work?

- Do you think there is duplication in the work of the different groups? (*between your GGI and other GGIs, or between other GGIs that you have witnessed*)
- What do you think each group does well? Is there anything you think they don't do well? (*strengths and weaknesses – specifically looking at engagement*)

4. Awareness and opinions of TEU

How much do you know about TEU and their work?

- Do you work directly with them?
- How do you feel about TEU (*generally positive, negative, indifferent*)

(*If unaware of TEU, outline TEU's work and goal to them*)

How well do you think TEU is working with other groups?

- Has there been any change in how GGIs work together since TEU started?
 - Anything they do well in terms of connecting with existing groups?
 - Anything they do badly?
 - What could they do differently?

5. Interest in linking up with TEU/ other GGIs

Do you think it would be useful for existing GGIs to work together more?

- How do you see TEU's work fitting with yours? (*current projects: Big Switch, Green Dragon's Den, Big Green Makeover*)
- Does your organisation/ group have any projects you'd really like to work with TEU on?
- Are there aspects of TEU's work you think your group could (or would want to) get more involved in/ involve more of your members in?
- What could TEU do to help your group? (*look again at their previous projects*)
- What would help your group get more involved in TEU's work?

6. Their group's/other GGI's engagement strategies

How do you involve people in your group and its activities?

- Have you tried different engagement strategies/ways of targeting different groups?
 - What has worked well?
- Any great strategies for involving 'less green' students? – If so, how?
 - What hasn't worked? - What barriers to engagement have you come across?
- Do you think any of the other GGIs are particularly good at engaging people? - How/why?

7. Contacts

Looking back at our list of GGIs, is there anyone you think is missing?

- Who else should we speak to?

8. Ending

Any additional points – anything I haven't asked that you'd like to add?

Background information

- How many members does your group have?
- How long have you been running?
- How do you fund your activities (*fundraising, society grants, etc*)
- What proportion of your members are students?

Double check informed consent – are you happy with what y said at the beginning about anonymity etc?

Thanks and invitation to presentation

APPENDIX 3 – INDIVIDUAL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY FOR TRANSITION EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY MSc course: Participation in Policy and Planning

Interview date & number

Nationality	
Age	
Gender	
Field of study	
Year of study	

A. FOOD

Behaviour

A.1. How would you best describe your diet?

- Vegan – Plant based foods only
 Vegetarian – Primarily plant based foods, but some dairy
 Occasional meat-eater
 Meat as a regular part of the diet

Comments: (Why is this your diet?)

A.2. How often do you eat meat or fish?

- More than once a day Few times a week
 Once a day Less than once a week

A.3. To what extent do the following factors influence your food purchasing habits?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Price	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Convenience	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Quality	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Freshness	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Provenance	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Carbon Footprint	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Behaviour/habits of peers	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Others	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

A.4. How often do you buy organic products

- Always Sometimes
 Often Never

A.5. Do you buy pre-processed food? yes no
 This includes ready meals, pre-cut vegetables etc. (not marmalade etc)

A.6. Where do you obtain your food? – indicate an approximate percentage

- % Supermarkets
- % Convenience stores,
- % Restaurants / Bar / take aways etc.
- % Specialised stores (small butchers, fish mongers, etc)
- % Farmers markets
- % Gardens / allotments
- % Cooperatives
- % Wholefoods markets
- % Other local and fresh sources

Water

A.7. How often do you consume bottled water and why?

- More than once a day
- Once a day
- Few times a week
- Less than once a week

Comment:

Knowledge

A.8. To what degree do you associate the following with carbon emissions?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Provenance of foods	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Use of fertilisers, pesticides etc	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Extent of processing	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Quantity of packaging	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Meat consumption	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Others	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

Engagement

A.9. To what degree do you think the following would encourage you to adopt a more eco-friendly diet? Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Awareness of the impact	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Advice on how to go about it	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Price levels	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
The behaviour/opinions of housemates	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
The behaviour/opinions of other peers, etc.)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

A.10. What would encourage you to change your diet, if at all?

A.11. What do you think may encourage students to think about the environmental impact of the food they eat?

B. ENERGY

Behaviour and knowledge

B.1. What is your accommodation type?

- Student housing
- Private house
- Private flat

B.2. Have you installed any of the following devices to save energy?

- Energy efficient light bulbs
- Smart thermostat
- Water saving fixtures
- Power strips to turn off stand-by lights
- Others (please indicate)

B.3. Energy savings habits. Do you:

- Turn off lights when you leave
- Set your heating to hours to match when you need
- Close your curtains
- Lower the temperature of the rooms
- Use power strips to turn off stand-by lights
- Turn off computers and monitors when not in use
- Air dry clothes whenever possible
- Unplug small appliances when not in use
- Minimise use of power equipment when landscaping
- Use as much water as needed in the kettle

B.4 Which water saving features and habits do you have in your home?

- Water saving habits
- Re-use water
- Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth or shampooing (why)
- Minimize shower time and toilet flushing
- Run clothes and dish washers only when full
- Hippo in the toilet cistern
- Dual-flush toilet

Engagement

B.5. Do you think about the amount of energy and water you use at home?
Why/why not?

yes no

B.6. What would encourage you to adopt more energy efficient behaviours?

B.7. To what degree do you think the following would encourage you to adopt more energy efficient behaviours?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Awareness of the impact	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Advice on how to go about it	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Lower utility bills/financial incentive	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Financial help to buy more efficient appliances	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Technical assistance or general guidance to buy and install more efficient appliances	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
The behaviour/opinions of housemates	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
The behaviour/opinions of other peers, etc.)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

C. TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

Behaviour and knowledge

C.1 What are your primary modes of transport for your daily activities?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Walking	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Bicycle	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Bus	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Car	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Carpool	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Train	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Motorbike	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Others	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

C.2 What are your primary modes of transport for long distance journeys?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Walking	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Bicycle	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Bus	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Car	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Carpool	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Train	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Motorbike	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Plane	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

C.3 What do you think are the advantages of

- a) Walking
- b) Cycling
- c) Public transport

Engagement

C.4. What would encourage people to walk more?

C.4.1 Do you think Edinburgh is a good city to walk in and why?
(If not what improvement could be made?)

C.5. What would encourage people to cycle more?

C.5.1 Do you think Edinburgh is a good city to cycle in and why/why not?
(If not what improvement could be made?)

C.5.2. Would you consider using a bike-sharing scheme?

C.6. What would encourage people to use public transport more?

C.7. How often do you use the University shuttle bus? Comments?

Air travel

C.8. How often do you travel by plane? (miles or hours covered last year)

C.9. Where to and for what reasons?

- Domestic
- Short haul
- Long haul

C.10. To what degree do you think air travel affects climate change?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

C.11. Have you heard of carbon off-setting? yes no

C.12. Have you ever offset the carbon from your own flights? yes no

C.12.1 Would you consider offsetting in the future? yes no

C.13. What do you think would encourage other students to reduce their flights?

D. WASTE

Behaviour and knowledge

D.1. To what extent do you think the quantity of waste produced in this country is an issue?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.2. Where on the scale would you rate yourself as a waste producer?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.3. How many average garbage bags do you fill a week?

D.4. How often do you throw away food?

Circle your answer from 1 (never/rarely) to 6 (very often)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.5. Does the quantity of packaging influence what you buy?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.6. Does the durability of a product influence your purchase?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.7. Do you make any attempts to reuse products? yes no

D.8. If yes, which products? (Plastic bags, bottles etc...)

D.9. How important do you consider recycling to be?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

D.10. What motivates people to recycle?

D.11. Which of these types of waste do you recycle or compost? (Tick multiple options where appropriate)

- Paper
- Food
- Plastic bottles
- Tin cans
- Glass
- Cardboard
- Cartons (juice)
- Textiles

D.12. How easy is it for you to recycle?

Circle your answer from 1 (weak) to 6 (strong)

Paper	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Food	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Plastic bottles	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Tin cans	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Glass	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Cardboard	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Cartons (juice)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
Textiles	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

D.13. Do you recycle more at home and why?

D.14. What do you think would encourage students to recycle more?

E. GREEN GROUPS AND INITIATIVES

E.1. Have you heard of:

- EUSA
- University of Edinburgh Energy and Sustainability
- University of Edinburgh Waste and Recycling => N/A
- Edinburgh Energy Climate Centre (ECCC)

- People and Planet (the most important)
- Allotment and Permaculture
- Young Greens => we aim to campaign for green issues inside and outside the university
- Co-operative Society => Spreading the good word
- Carbon Management Society
- The Dirty Weekenders
- Ecology Society
- Green Feet at SAC
- Vegetarian Society

- Abundance Edinburgh
- Transition Edinburgh South
- Transition Edinburgh North
- People and Planet UK
- Changeworks

E.2. Which of these logos do you recognize (please circle):



APPENDIX 4 – PRELIMINARY STUDENT SCREENING QUESTIONS

Please delete all the options that do not apply for you and leave your choice under the questions.

- 1) As an environmental concern, I consider climate change / global warming to be:
 - a) Very Important
 - b) Somewhat important
 - c) Not sure / No opinion
 - d) Not particularly important
 - e) Of no importance

- 2) How would you describe yourself:
 - a) Extremely concerned about my impact on the environment and constantly looking for more ways—in addition to the many things on an individual level I am already doing—to reduce it.
 - b) Aware of a variety of environmental issues affecting the planet and occasionally making everyday lifestyle choices to help mitigate those.
 - c) Concerned about environmental issues affecting the planet as a whole but they do not affect or influence my everyday behavior / activities / choices.
 - d) Aware of environmental concepts like climate change and carbon footprint based on media coverage, discussions with peers, or course material but otherwise not particularly concerned or worried about their potential impacts.

- 3) Which of the following do you consciously do in an effort to lessen your carbon footprint and overall environmental impact on the planet:
 - a) Recycle
 - b) Use re-usable grocery bags as opposed to plastic ones
 - c) Walk, bicycle, carpool, or take public transit whenever possible
 - d) Buy organic and/or fairtrade food products
 - e) Buy locally-produced food products
 - f) Eat less meat
 - g) Restrict personal air travel in order to reduce overall carbon emissions
 - h) Take quick showers
 - i) Turn lights and appliances on only when in need of them
 - j) Install energy-saving features such as lightbulbs, timers, smart thermostats, insulation, etc. at my flat / accommodation
 - k) Re-use grey waste water for other purposes (e.g., used dishwashing water to irrigate back garden or potted plants)
 - l) None of these

- 4) Who do you feel is likely to be most effective at tackling climate change and other environmental issues :
 - a) The Government
 - b) Industry
 - c) Scientists
 - d) Individuals

- 5) Which of the following incentives would motivate you the most to change your daily individual consumption patterns (consumption of energy, water, food, etc.):
 - a) Tax-break / government subsidy
 - b) Personal savings (as a result of reduced utility costs)
 - c) Peer pressure
 - d) Desire to make a difference / contribute to the solution

- 6) How satisfied are you with your level of commitment to environmentally-friendly behaviour?
 - a) Very satisfied
 - b) Somewhat satisfied
 - c) Not sure / no opinion
 - d) Not satisfied