Unite

Communications Plan

Background

Unite has recently signed up to NUS’ Green Impact programme. It will be led by their Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (SEC) and supported by NUS’ Green Impact team (NUS).

Green Impact is a staff engagement programme, encouraging, enabling and incentivizing actions which help improve Unite’s sustainability performance. It’s a tried and tested method run by NUS that’s now used by over 200 different organisations: students’ unions, universities, local authorities, colleges, fire services, constabularies, charities, businesses and dental practices – the number of organisations, and the variety of sectors they span, is constantly growing. For more information on the scheme, visit [www.nus.org.uk/greenimpact](http://www.nus.org.uk/greenimpact). A key function of Unite’s programme will also be engagement with student residences.

A Project Plan has been developed as other key parts of the programme are planned before launch in August. This Communications Plan informs that planning, and suggests what communication routes need to be scheduled across the first year of the programme.

Aims

The main goal of the communication element of Green Impact is to raise awareness of the project and help create engagement and involvement from staff in each of the key milestones of the project. In the longer term, the desire is to provide the information required to support behavioral change and engagement with sustainability across Unite’s sites. Specifically, through the process, Unite want to:

* Have a formalised system to collect information about the levels of activity around sustainability at a site level;
* Have a good picture of where they're at as a whole;
* Ensure consistency across sites so good practice is widespread;
* Have an organisation-wide approach - the whole business driving positive change together;
* Empower local level activity - building site capacity on sustainability;
* Gain positive reputation-building opportunities.

Target Audiences and Key Messages

Primary audiences are the staff at the residences across the UK as well as the student residents and office support staff.

Developing the identity and key messages for the overall campaign will be critical for positioning the project and creating the desired impact. It is important that the overarching Green Impact messages and identity provided by NUS are implemented in a way that suits Unite and fits its existing brand and values. The messaging will broadly fall under two areas:

* Communicating benefits to staff and students – professional development; team building; positive environmental impact;
* Specific sustainability and environmental calls to action amongst staff and students.

Overleaf is a list of the key audiences and the specific messages that will be communicated to them.

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| Sustainability champions and site managers | Form teams. Getting involved is good for team building, your professional development, student experience, the business and the environment. |
| All staff | Join a team. Getting involved is good for team building, your professional development, student experience, the business and the environment. |
| Area managers | Support your teams and encourage your staff to do the same. Participation is good for the student experience, saving money, improving staff communications and team building, reducing environmental impact and provides professional development opportunities for your staff and makes our sites more efficient.  |
| Senior managers  | Encourage staff to participate. Champion the programme. Enable central changes to be made that help meet the goals of the programme. Participation is good for the student experience, saving money, improving staff communications and team building, reducing environmental impact and provides professional development opportunities for your staff and makes your department more efficient. The business will gain a positive reputation for environmental action as a result of the programme.  |
| Local and national press including awards schemes | Unite’s participation in Green Impact is innovative, as is the level of sign-up to the scheme across Bristol. Showcase the programme to others in the sector and beyond. Unite should gain a positive reputation for environmental action.  |
| Students living with Unite (communicated through teams) | Get involved in making your home a greener place to live and build your CV at the same time by joining your local Green Impact team as a project assistant or auditor. Lots of opportunities to build your skills and meet new people.  |
| Prospective customers/students not living with us  | Living with Unite Students gives you a unique opportunity to make a difference to the home you live in as well as gaining valuable experience for your CV through the NUS Green Impact scheme.  |

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Branding

Consistency of Green Impact’s messages is essential to driving engagement and earning respect. Branding and identity play a big part in ensuring this consistency. NUS will provide Unite with Green Impact logos and standardized templates for their use. The programme will be called Green Impact, ran by Unite, in partnership with NUS.

Priority Activity Schedule

The table below outlines the key milestones of the first year of the project and outlines the communication needed.

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| **Activity** |  |  |  |  |  |

 | **Timing** | **Aim** | **Audience** | **Messages and calls to action** | **Communication channels used** | **Key performance indicators** |
| Launch | Aug 2014 | Raise awareness, create publicity, recruit teams | Staff  | Green Impact has started, there are lots of benefits, form a team, start planning | Staff bulletin; team briefings; intranet site pages; Sustainability Champion emails; all staff email; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | 15 teams recruited in first fortnight following launch |
| Managers | Green Impact has started, there are lots of benefits, form a team and/or encourage your staff to do so | Management team briefings; email from SLT to managers | 15 teams recruited in first fortnight; 10 managers invite the GI team to speak to their teams  |
| External press and PR | Unite Students and NUS partner up to roll out Green Impact nationwide | External comms team  | Number of press releases published/coverage received  |
| Team recruitment | Aug - Sept 2014 | Recruit teams, raise awareness | Staff  | Form a team and register on the workbook  | Staff bulletin; team briefings; intranet site pages; Environmental Champion emails; all staff email; stands in high-footfall areas; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites; staff benefits day | 30 teams recruited |
| Students | Join a team and do your bit, you’ll gain good skills | Local level communications to be coordinated by teams | 60 GIPAs recruited |
| Managers | Form a team or encourage your staff to do so | Launch follow-up email; Management team briefings | All management teams briefed |
| Support events | Ongoing | Raise awareness; provide support, information and resources to enable change; gain feedback on programme; teams recruited | Teams and GIPAs | Support is available; others are involved; give us feedback | Team emails/Green Impact newsletter; staff intranet; workbook messages; team phone-rounds; drop-in sessions; workshops; webinars; online resources; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | 50 people attend workshop; 50 people attend webinars; at least one member of each team contacted twice; 200 hits on staff intranet |
| Workbook submission | April 2015 | Ensure majority of teams submit a workbook | Teams | Submit your workbook and upload evidence | Team emails/Green Impact newsletter; staff intranet; workbook messages; team phone-rounds; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | 90% of teams submit workbook |
| Audits | May 2015 | Ensure suitable number of auditors recruited and high quality audits conducted | Teams | You will be audited  | Team emails/Green Impact newsletter; staff intranet; workbook messages; team phone-rounds; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | All teams who submitted workbook have audit |
| Students | Volunteer to be an auditor- you’ll gain good skills for your CV | Local level communications to be coordinated by teams | 30 auditors recruited |
| Area managers | Volunteer to be an auditor AND support your staff in their audits | Area manager’s meeting; staff bulletin; team briefings; intranet site pages; all staff email; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | Adequate auditors recruited, trained and with each conducting at least one audit |
| Awards event | June 2015 | To celebrate the successes of Unite, recognise staff contribution, inspire further engagement and raise student awareness | Staff  | Recognise the achievements of the programme and celebrate its success | Awards event invite; staff bulletin; team briefings; intranet site pages; all staff email; twitter feeds; TV screens across sites | Event attended by 50 people |
| Managers  | Recognise the achievements of the programme and celebrate its success | Awards event invite; management team briefings | Event attended by 50 people Unite runs Green Impact for a second year  |
| Students | Unite is an innovative organisation taking positive steps towards sustainability  | Local level communications to be coordinated by teams/something on social media channels?  | TBCStudent Project Assistants invited to the ceremony as well.  |
| Feedback gathering | June 2015 | To gain completed staff M&E surveys | Teams | Send this survey to your colleagues; complete the survey | Management team briefings/Green Impact newsletter; team emails; workbook messages; twitter feeds; | 75% follow-up rate |
| Student GIPAs and auditors | Complete the survey | TBC | 75% follow-up rate |
| Sharing outcomes | April 2015 onwards | To raise profile of Unite and Green Impact; to encourage others to participate in 2015/14 | Other potential partners | Unite has achieved a lot through the programme; get involved with Green Impact and/or take learnings to inform your staff engagement programmes | NUS’ annual Green Impact portfolio; Unite’s website; staff intranet; NUS’ website; Green Impact newsletter; relevant conference session; two national award schemes entered.  | Shortlisted for 1 national awards; Unite showcased at 1 conference |