

Vote Bhavya for Environment Officer



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Hello! I am Bhavya (she/her) , a second year student of sustainable development and this is my manifesto that outlines my experience working for sustainability initiatives and my vision and goals if elected as the Environment Officer.



My Experience

I volunteer with the Environment Subcommittee as the Member w/o Portfolio and the St Andrews Voluntary Service (SVS) as the Environment Project Officer. With the Environment Subcommittee

I work on starting initiatives that raise awareness about intersectional environmentalism, especially discussing colonialism's influence on the environment and green movements across the world. As a project officer for SVS , I have been involved in setting up a diverse range of volunteering projects ranging from remote to field volunteering, and across different aspects of sustainability from wildlife and biodiversity conservation to projects focused on building sustainable practices within the town community. Hence, I have experience working to raise awareness about various issues and encourage learning through volunteering.

My Vision

My vision is to ensure that there is a safe and compassionate space for learning about the environment and your relationship to our planet. This learning space has two aims which are outline below.

Individual Change: This focuses on learning about yourself and your relationship to the Earth. It is a space for learning through re-discovering our relationship with nature and our planet. In this space we focus on you as an individual, and developing your connection to Earth, while simultaneously coming together as a community to share our experiences about this bond that we share. This is yet another safe and kind space where, through the discovery of our unique bond to the planet we appreciate even the tiniest actions everybody takes to show our love and respect to Earth.

System Change: Everyday, across the world, environmental injustice takes place all the time, as already marginalised groups face more oppression in the name of environmentalism. These groups are also not listened to in green movements with their wellbeing and concepts of sustainability ignored. My aim is to encourage unlearning how various oppressive structures have shaped environmentalism today, increase our awareness on these issues, and come up with solutions to create change and practice environmentalism that is empowering.



My Goals

Individual Change Learning through Creativity

I aim to collaborate with organisations such as Inklight, to hold events and workshops which inspire creative reflections of how interconnected we are to nature

Create a platform where we can come together and form a community where we share creative reflections of our time spent outside that show us the diversity within our relationships to our Earth

Such creative means include expressions through photography, poetry, creative writing, handwritten notes and letters in both digital and hard-copy medium.

I will also work with the Students' Union to set up a physical space to display and share these creative reflections

I will send out regular surveys to understand how much we students feel connected to our Earth and aim to improvise with these results in hand.

Learning through contact with nature

I will liaise with Student Services and Transition to set up initiatives such as walking - buddy sign ups to encourage exploring nature

I will continue to work with different projects across town and collaborate with the St Andrews Voluntary Service to encourage volunteering for a diverse range of environmental projects.

I aim to start a volunteering- buddy sign up scheme so that people with similar interests in volunteering can find someone to volunteer with.

I aim to encourage schools and academic departments to hold optional outdoor - learning events such as outdoor tutorials that are accessible for everyone.

I aim to encourage growing plants in our accommodation through free giveaways and set up a plant-buddy scheme which encourages people to sign up to take care of others' plants temporarily

Simultaneously, I will encourage buying locally grown plants instead of tropical species



System Change

I aim to

Re-structure the Subcommittee to include a position for a Member for Environmental Justice whose role is to create events to raise awareness about environmental justice issues

Collaborate with other subcommittees, societies and officers of the Union, such as the BAME Students' Network, Disabled Students' Network, Saints LGBT+ and the Member for Widening Access and Participation to address intersectional issues related to race, class, disability, gender etc.

Expand the initiative of Intersectional Conversations started last year by the Environment Subcommittee with the help of Transition and The Third Generation Project, by hosting them regularly, publicising them more and broadening their themes

Ensure that Subcommittee events are safe, inclusive and accessible for everyone



Work with local Scottish environmental initiatives to raise awareness on the environmental problems faced by various Scottish communities

Establish a platform through social media and Subcommittee events to regularly showcase environmental initiatives and voices of Scottish people and people from Developing countries.

Encourage the inclusion of intersectional issues in University academic modules relating to sustainability and the environment.

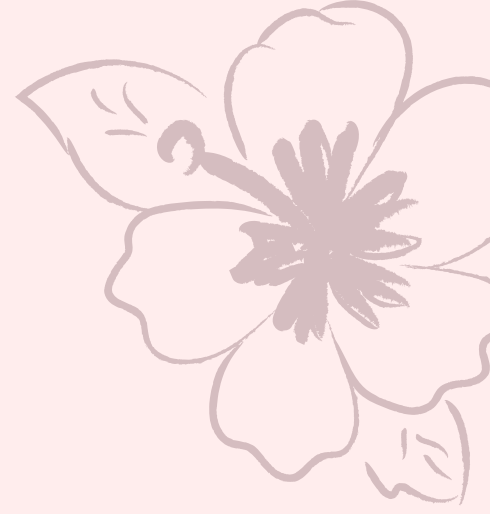
Collaborate with organisations outside the Student's Association such as the Third Generation Project and the Rector's committee to address Climate Justice.

Work with Ecosia on Campus to promote the use of Ecosia as the browsing engine across campus

Work with RBS and the Estates Environment team to make halls and catered food as sustainable and address issues such as food waste, recycling, insulation etc.



My Final Message



I want to create a space which focuses on every student and emphasises your relationship to our planet and the environment that surrounds us. A place we can come back to for finding new ways to show our love to our Earth. An environment where everyone's actions count and we are kind and understanding of everyone's attempts to contribute to healing the planet.



- Bhavya