

POLICY PROPOSAL

TITLE: HEALTHY CAMPUS

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The policy proposal needs to be put forward by two people who have to be registered students at Bath

INTRODUCTION

There are several aspects of campus life that are not in line with the standards set by other universities, and are not conducive towards living a healthy lifestyle. We have identified three main points for this:

- 1. Water:** Despite being a 'top 10' issue in 2014, access to fresh drinking water on campus is still surprisingly poor, with no access to drinking water downstairs in the SU, and no fountains anywhere in the SU. The majority of other buildings also have no water fountains accessible by students. In October 2014 the SU reported that only 16% of the free water points on campus were available to students, with the rest only available to staff.
- 2. Healthy eating:** It is currently much more expensive to buy healthy food on campus than to buy snacks and 'junk' food. Fruit and veg options in all campus eateries and shops are either less readily available, or simply much more expensive. Many students will opt for the cheaper and quicker option, but would prefer to eat more healthily if they could.
- 3. Smoking:** There is already a smoking ban across the parade and within 4 metres of buildings, however this is frequently ignored. Smokers should have the right to be provided with sheltered places to smoke that are not significantly out of their way.

REASON FOR CHANGE

Drinking water:

1. Students can have several hours of back-to-back lectures, and do not always have time to make a detour to another building to get water.
2. Existing fountains are slow-running due to lack of cleaning and limescale build-up.
3. Access to drinking water is essential, and should be available across the campus, not just in a handful of buildings.
4. Providing water fountains reduces the number of plastic bottles that are bought and thrown away. 15 million plastic bottles are used in the UK every day [1] – if Bath claims to be a "green university", we should aim to reduce the plastic bottles we use.

Healthy eating:

1. Students should be provided with variety in their choices of food. This should include a range of prices, but should also include healthier foods at affordable prices.

2. Students in catered accommodation are not able to store fresh vegetables or other healthy choices, or cook full meals from scratch. Their only choices are those offered in campus eateries. Eat-and-drink credit is limited, and campus food is expensive enough already, without having to pay extra for healthy options.

3. Vending machines and the 'meal deals' in Fresh Express do not promote healthy options, encouraging students to buy soft drinks instead of allowing them another choice.

Smoking:

1. Cancer Research UK writes, "Passive smoking can increase a non-smoker's risk of getting lung cancer by a quarter. Second-hand smoke can cause other health problems too. Every year, second-hand smoke kills thousands of people in the UK from lung cancer, heart disease, stroke and the lung disease Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)". [2]

2. Second-hand smoke can be dangerous to those with existing conditions such as asthma, cystic fibrosis or cancer. Students with these conditions should not be at risk of breathing in smoke.

3. Due to how busy the Parade can be, it is not always easy to move away from someone who is smoking, so many people end up breathing in passive smoke even though they would move away if they could. Keeping smoking to designated areas would help with this.

4. Smokers should have the right to smoke on campus, and it should be made clearer to them where smoking is allowed. Due to the short times between lectures, it is not fair to expect smokers to go far out of their way to find a place to smoke.

THE PROPOSAL

Drinking water:

1. Assign larger funds to attempt to plumb water fountains into the SU, either in the bathrooms or elsewhere. If this still cannot be done, provide 'water coolers'/containers on both floors of the SU which are regularly refilled with tap water and are easily available.

2. Lobby the university to search for other solutions so that water is available to students in as many buildings as possible. Continue to pressure the university to ensure water fountains are included in newly built university buildings, and to find a better design for future drinking fountains, so the water flows more quickly and the taps remain limescale-free.

4. Try to reduce bottled water in Fresh Express and vending machines, and instead offer cheap re-usable water bottles in the SU.

Healthy eating:

1. Look into offering vending machines in the SU which offer healthier options such as water, cereal bars or dried fruit snacks [3] [4], and lobby the university to offer alternative vending machines across campus.

2. Enter discussions with Fresh Express with the aim to: offer more fruit and healthy options at better prices; change the 'meal deal' to include options other than crisps, and a fruit option instead of a bottled drink (this also reduces plastic bottles!); move stock so alternative snack options are more prominent (currently, chocolate is the first shelf in the shop).

3. Work towards bringing back the fruit and vegetable market once a fortnight, in a location where it receives adequate footfall. The previous market was stopped due to not being economical, because it was placed in a location where very few students passed by. However, the recent 'farmer's market' on the Parade proved how successful fresh food stalls can be if placed in the right location.

4. Lobby the university to provide cheaper healthy options in campus eateries, and include vegetables in the price of a meal rather than making it extra.

Smoking:

1. Run focus groups to find out why students smoke in areas where the ban is in place, and what could be done to encourage people to smoke only in designated areas.

2. Lobby the university to increase designated smoking areas and make them easier to access.

3. Advertise to the student body exactly where the smoking ban is in place and why it exists, and collaborate with the university to gradually enforce the ban, once other measures have been put in place.

References:

[1] <https://www.recyclingbins.co.uk/recycling-facts/>

[2] <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/smoking-and-cancer/passive-smoking>

[3] <http://www.selecta.com/vending-products/healthy-vending/>

[4] <http://thehealthyvendingcompany.co.uk/our-products/>