

Officer:	Adam Dorey
Date of panel:	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2022

Hi all, hope you're doing well! Best of luck with any Easter deadlines :)

Fossil Free Pledge	
Working with the Climate Justice Movement to campaign for UoB to divest from fossil fuels.	
Context:	UoB currently has around £1m invested in fossil fuel companies, mainly BP and Shell. While most Russell Group unis have divested or pledged to divest their fossil fuel investments, UoB remains behind the curve.
Progress:	<p>The Climate Justice Movement is a group of students that evolved out of Tom setting up a meeting between various climate action groups – we meet twice weekly and so far have run two events. There are four working groups: digital, events, staff lobbying and report-writing. I dabble between all of these, providing access to Guild resources, creating social media content and event planning.</p> <p>The first was a Climate Cabaret, which was basically an open mic at the Indie Lounge where performances were interspersed with speeches from climate groups. I hosted the evening, and people seemed to have a good time – this increased our social media following and allowed us to make some good connections with other interested climate activists.</p> <p>The second was DivestFest, which was last Friday – we collaborated with seven societies to create a climate focused fair in Mermaid Square from 1-5pm, with performances from FolkSoc and other individuals. Our main aim here was to get students to sign our petition and we managed to double our signatures, which was great! (<a href="https://peopleandplanet.org/petitions/university-of-birmingham-divest-from-fossil-fuels-student-petition">https://peopleandplanet.org/petitions/university-of-birmingham-divest-from-fossil-fuels-student-petition</a>).</p> <p>The overall aim is to demonstrate student support for divestment in a report Mikey will submit to the Strategy, Planning and</p>

	<p>Resources Committee within the University’s governance structure at its May meeting. This report is in progress, with fortnightly meetings to ensure everything is on track.</p> <p>Our next steps will be maintaining momentum over the Easter through social media and staging some direct action in the first week back from Easter – which should be very exciting!</p>
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<b>Written Statement Aim #1</b>
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	Change In Mind - Campaign for a university-wide mental health policy
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<b>Context:</b>	Working with the FTOs to UoB campaign for a university-wide mental health strategy.
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<b>Progress:</b>	<p>The volunteers and I have talked to hundreds of students and gathered 176 conversations – student staff have since crunched the data and key themes, which group into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication – signposting the various mental health services UoB offers must improve, response times must be faster and changes must be more effectively communicated to students.</li> <li>• Education – academic pressures on students often cause mental distress, yet Wellbeing Services does not currently work with colleges or academic to explain how curricula can be designed with welfare in mind. Students also struggle to form beneficial relationships with lecturers, tutors and coursemates; and may require more support and advice on setting up routines.</li> <li>• Social integration – student loneliness is a key driver of mental distress on campus, so work must be done to ensure every student feels part of a safe, inclusive community. This includes improving women’s safety, tackling discrimination on campus but also working with students to boost their confidence, encouraging students to seek opportunities to socialise with our whole campus community.</li> </ul> <p>So, easy stuff!</p> <p>These three groups link onto specific parts of the Student Minds’ University Mental Health Charter. While Aaliyah’s informed me that the uni is keen to implement the Charter, it doesn’t seem to be on its way to actually doing it – so I’m thinking these groups indicate the best places to start integrating the Charter within our campus.</p>
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	<p>The main task now is to ensure Reeve and Aaminah inherit a functioning campaign with support from a dedicated team of students and good relationships with professional and academic UoB staff. I'm meeting with Change In Mind volunteers on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March to go through our findings with them and talk to them about how they'd like to proceed with the campaign. I've started meeting with key figures in groups such as Breathe Uni, Nightline, Headucate and MHWABS – hopefully aiming to bring these groups together around this campaign, ready for next year.</p> <p>Even if the uni pledges to adopt the charter tomorrow, I believe long-term, the best way to ensure it is continuously implemented is through a group of committed (possibly paid) students that operates between the Guild and Wellbeing Services, keeping tabs on students' mental health needs, holding Wellbeing accountable to these needs (and also the Charter) and communicating available services and events to students.</p> <p>It remains shocking that there is no uni-wide mental health policy, and it would be great if the uni pledges to implement the Charter – but a key challenge is defining and explaining what concrete initiatives are needed to improve mental health on campus. I'm not smart enough to figure this out on my own, so finding dedicated talent to work together will be key moving forward.</p>
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Written Statement Aim #2	
Activist Network – Improving Guild transparency through events and social media	
Context:	Creating networking events to help campaigners
Progress:	<p>We relaunched the Activist Network on the 15<sup>th</sup> February with guest banner-making workshops from Reclaim Campus and the Climate Justice Movement, as well as a Trans allyship workshop delivered by a PhD student! We had a better turnout, mostly by virtue of Reclaim Campus bringing their people and us bringing ours at CJM – but this forced mingling approach where groups bring 20 minute workshops seems to be successful!</p> <p>We're planning the next Activist Network for early May. Danielle's hoping to get Solidarity UoB involved to do a session on supporting the strikes, Rozena is helping to ensure various Guild student staff and committee members are invited and hopefully Black Voices can contribute a workshop!</p> <p>People were less into the drinking side of things at the Network (might have lost a bit of money by hiring Guild student staff to</p>

	<p>bartend) – so maybe in future could try more of a buffet-style type thing, with hot and soft drinks?</p> <p>While the social media side of things has been lacking, I've been planning the Campaigning 101 series and have been chatting with Jane about assembling a team to help make it alongside a larger bank of resources for campaigners accessible on the Guild website. Should also be a useful handover tool! Jane's also helping me with the web copy for the new Guild webpages.</p>
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### Role and responsibilities

*This section is for you to write about any projects you have been working on or meetings you have been to that you think are of particular importance to your remit.*

Meeting / project	Outcome for students
<p><b>Guild Statement on Adam Tickell supporting Kathleen Stock</b>            You might be aware Robin and I staged a bit of an intervention at the All Student Meeting, expressing our frustration that legal advice hadn't been sought for four months.</p>	<p>The next day, Mikey emailed us to let us know he'd spoken to Jo Thomas and an appointment with legal has been set up for this week – we're hoping we can have an officer statement issued by Trans Visibility Day on 31<sup>st</sup> March, but only time will tell if this happens. We've also drafted a Guild Belief and Commitment saying the Guild recognises the harm gender-critical views causes to Trans students, so we'll see where this lands.</p>

### Ideas and policy

*This section is for you to report on progress made to ideas and Guild policy that you have been mandated to work on. You only need to update your actions taken. You can also add ideas or policy as they are passed through the year.*

Idea / policy	Action taken since last Panel
<p><b>Uyghur Solidarity</b>            Promote Uyghur Solidarity campaign on campus</p>	<p>Uighur Solidarity, Students for Justice in Palestine and the Climate Justice Movement have a shared group chat where they're working together as they all are hoping for divestment from various investments the University holds.</p>

Other student issues, meetings or projects to note:

That's all from me – hope you're enjoying the sunny weather :)