**Student Union Sustainability & Engagement Report**

This report highlights recent initiatives and ongoing projects aimed at sustainability, student engagement, and wellbeing within the university. It covers work on sustainability, planning for upcoming initiatives such as the pantry, swap shop, and repair café, reflections on the success of Raise and Give (RAG) Week, and various events aimed at student participation and welfare. Additionally, it provides an update on efforts towards student safety, food pricing, and sustainability practices, as well as planning for Mental Health Day in collaboration with the Wellbeing Team.

**Sustainability** **Initiatives**

**Sustainability** **Progress** **&** **Planning**Significant work has been done to improve sustainability on campus, with efforts directed at reducing waste, promoting reuse, and increasing awareness. **1.**Pantry Planning – Work is underway to set up a student pantry, which will provide free or affordable food options to those in need. This aims to reduce food waste while supporting students facing financial difficulties. Discussions are ongoing regarding food sourcing, storage solutions, and volunteer coordination. **2.**Swap Shop – The Swap Shop initiative is being developed to encourage clothing and item exchanges, reducing fast fashion waste and promoting a circular economy within the university. Plans include a designated space, marketing efforts, and a structured swapping system.

**3.**Repair Café (March 2025) – Planning for the Repair Café is progressing well, with a focus on electronic repairs, clothing mending, and bike maintenance. This initiative will not only promote sustainability but also offer students opportunities to learn new repair skills.

**More Sustainable Practices on Campus**• Encouraging reusable mugs – Efforts are being made to reduce disposable cup waste by encouraging students to use reusable mugs. Discussions are in progress with catering services about potential discounts for students using their own cups.• Reduction in food & coffee prices – Work is ongoing to negotiate lower food and coffee prices on campus, making healthy and sustainable choices more affordable for students.• Waste reduction initiatives – Additional measures are being considered to increase recycling bins, introduce food waste collection points, and reduce packaging waste in campus cafes.

**Event** **Highlights** **&** **Engagement** **Initiatives**

**Success** **of** **Raise** **and** **Give** (**RAG**) **Week**

RAG Week was a huge success, with strong student participation and significant funds raised for charitable causes. (Women’s Aids NI) Belfast campus charity of the year 2025. Key highlights include:  
• Brew Mondays – A series of coffee mornings designed to bring students together for conversation and mental health awareness.  
• Mini Golf Tournaments – A fun, interactive event that encouraged student participation while raising funds.  
• Bake Sales – A popular initiative, with all proceeds going to charity. (Women’s Aids NI).  
• Pool Tournaments – Engaged students across different faculties, fostering community spirit.  
• Purple Party – A standout event that brought students together in a social and celebratory setting, contributing to the overall success of RAG Week.  
  
These events not only raised funds but also strengthened student engagement and community connections on campus.

**Student** **Engagement** **&** **Welfare**

**Student** **Safety** **App**

Work is progressing on the development of a Student Safety App, which aims to provide:  
• Emergency contact features  
• Live campus safety updates  
• A reporting system for incidents  
• Resources for student welfare and support  
  
The app is in development stages, with feedback being gathered from students and relevant stakeholders to ensure it meets the needs of the student body.  
  
**Increasing** **Student** **Engagement** **&** **Participation**  
  
Efforts are being made to encourage more students to take part in events, societies, and wellbeing activities. Strategies include:  
• Better communication through social media and university platforms  
• More diverse events to appeal to different student interests  
• Collaborating with societies to increase outreach

**Planning** **for** **Mental** **Health** **Day** (**March** **2025**)

Collaboration with the Wellbeing Team is underway to organize a Mental Health Day featuring:  
• Sensory Arts & Crafts Activities – Providing a creative outlet for stress relief.  
• Coffee Mornings – Encouraging informal discussions about mental health and wellbeing.  
• Collaboration with the Activities Team – Conversations with Laura and Karen are ongoing to align plans and coordinate student-focused activities.  
  
This event aims to provide a supportive and welcoming environment, ensuring students have access to mental health resources and peer support.

**Conclusion**  
  
The past few months have seen significant progress in sustainability, student engagement, and wellbeing initiatives. The success of RAG Week, the planning of sustainability-driven initiatives like the Pantry, Swap Shop, and Repair Café, and the push for student safety and affordability on campus all contribute to a more supportive and sustainable university environment.

Daniel, Emily and I met with the dean of the Ulster University Business school to discuss ways to improve a better learning experience, setting the students up to thir potentials after studying a business course and using that to cause a change in the sectors they have decided to join, and this meeting was really insightful.

Shag event was a great success, the turnout at the sex toy bingo was brilliant!.

Baby changing room has been fixed and now functional, big thanks to Estate team, Daniel, Emily who pushed for this.

An invitation was extended to me to represent at the AI4fun event, it was inspiring, seeing lot of creativity and innovation from the student of Artificial Intelligence.   
  
With upcoming events such as, Mental Health Day, repair cafe opened to staff and students and continued efforts towards better student participation and wellbeing, the university is on track to create a more inclusive and engaged student community.