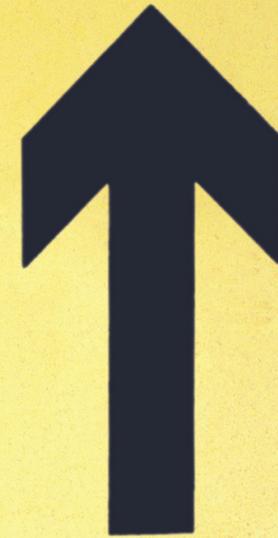


**NUS
Strategic Plan
2008–10**



national union of students

Introduction



I'm delighted to present details of our strategic plan for 2008 to 2010. This document outlines our answer to the question – “What is NUS and what should it do?”

The strategic plan takes us back to our enduring purpose, to our core mission: we promote, defend and extend the rights of students – we are the national voice of students in the United Kingdom and we develop and champion strong students' unions – we build capacity in our member organisations.

Our vision is of a pioneering, innovative NUS – a powerful force in campaigning. We will fight barriers to education, empower students to shape a quality learning experience and the world around them, and support influential, democratic and well-resourced students' unions.

Developed through conversations with students' unions, officers, NUS staff, as well as partners in the education sector, labour movement and third sector, the five key priorities in this strategic plan set our path for the medium term and lay firm foundations for the future. It will focus our efforts and our activities, forming the cornerstone of our work during the next three years and beyond. It is ambitious, it is fundamental to achieving our vision for NUS and for further and higher education.

The desire is there for the National Union of Students to be a success. We know this from the

will – not just from across the student movement, but from sector partners, government, political parties, the voluntary sector, the trade union movement and NUS alumni – for NUS to adapt and to grow stronger.

Our challenge is to create a national organisation which is fit for purpose and fit to fight the battles for students and students' unions. This strategic plan is a central element in this ongoing process of change and improvement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gemma Tumelty'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gemma Tumelty
National President

NUS Cultural Values

These cultural values are an expression of either how we currently work together, or an aspiration of how we want to be working together. The behaviours have been loosely “grouped” and a meaning and definition placed around them to help people understand what they mean.

Principled

People working in NUS behave with integrity, speak their minds honestly, but with the utmost respect for others. They are professional in their approach, accountable for their decisions and responsible in their actions.

Achieving

NUS employees and officers concentrate on making students' lives better, and supporting a strengthened students' union movement. They take decisions based on the benefits and outcomes to the membership. They are persistent in the pursuit of these goals, achieve them and celebrate their successes.

Open

NUS employees and officers challenge the orthodox and question the norm to find new ways to achieve the aims of NUS. They are generous to new ideas, creative in their thinking and look to innovate where it supports the needs of students and students' unions. Flexible to change and changing circumstances, they ensure members' needs always guide decisions.

Engaged

NUS employees and officers are committed to working with students and students' union officers and being involved in the issues they face, fighting alongside them to overcome any barriers to a fulfilling, enjoyable education. They are positive in attitude and strive to develop and advance students, students' unions and NUS.

Collaborative

NUS employees and officers work as a team within NUS and with external partners. They understand and harness the strength of democracy and collectivism in achieving the aims of NUS.

NUS' vision

Our vision is of NUS as a pioneering, innovative and powerful campaigning organisation: the definitive national voice of students. We will fight barriers to education, empower students to shape both a quality learning experience and the world around them, supporting influential, democratic and well-resourced students' unions.

To make this vision a reality, NUS has the following mission:

Promote, defend and extend the rights of students
Develop and champion strong students' unions

To achieve our mission, we believe three core values are crucial:

Equality

We believe there should be equality of opportunity for everyone to participate fully in a society that celebrates diversity.

Democracy

Our policies and priorities must be student-led and students' union-focused through building open, transparent and accessible democratic structures that increase performance and strengthen accountability.

Collectivism

Students and students' unions are more effective when they organise together locally, nationally and internationally: unity is our strength.

The mission, vision and values underpin our strategic objectives and will also help us to achieve them

NUS will secure a fairer funding system for students, ensuring further and higher education is accessible to all those who have the aspiration and capability

NUS will support, facilitate and deliver methods by which students can shape all areas of their learning experience

NUS will ensure the long term legitimacy, health and sustainability of students' unions

NUS will be a leading exemplar of equality and diversity, developing strategies to promote and enhance equality and diversity within education and students' unions

NUS will ensure it is well-governed, establishing appropriate physical, financial, intellectual and people resources to better deliver its aims

Delivering the Strategic Objectives

“Vision without action is merely dreaming. Action with no vision is just passing time. But with vision and action you can change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

We have agreed key projects that will be delivered to achieve our strategic objectives. Each of these projects are detailed in the following pages.

Against each of the strategic objectives are key performance indicators (KPIs) which will help us to monitor our progress and demonstrate how well we are working towards achieving the strategic objectives. Three year targets for each KPI will be agreed by May 2008, as will the method for evaluating each KPI. These will be monitored quarterly by the Senior Management Team and the National Executive Committee.

Each NUS directorate has their own plans which contain more operational details outlining the rest of the work that is to happen in NUS over the next year. The targets in each staff members' appraisal will show how they are contributing to the delivery of the mission, vision and strategic objectives. These will be monitored monthly by line managers.

The strategic plan will be updated annually.

1. Strategic Objective: NUS will secure a fairer funding system for students, ensuring further and higher education is accessible to all those who have the aspiration and capability

Project	Outcomes	Milestones	Timescale	Project Sponsor	KPIS
1.1 Develop a credible alternative student funding model for England that gains the support of the membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear policy agenda that enables NUS to argue for a fairer funding system for students • A policy agenda which takes into consideration the current political landscape of English HEIs • A policy that is accepted by the membership as being credible to positively influence the 2009 review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of formative debates • Key principles agreed through Annual Conference • A model for education funding in England developed around key principles 	<p>Mar 08 Apr 08</p> <p>Oct 08</p>	Head of Political Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students' unions participating in the Activists Academy • Members know what our Education Funding policy position is • No. of MPs / MSPs / Assembly members who support our policy position • No. of activists signed up to the campaign • Positive media coverage
1.2 Develop credible policy statements aimed to deliver a fairer funding system across the UK for 14+ education which consider the relevant political structures of the nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy document which clearly states NUS position on education funding in England, N. Ireland, Scotland, and Wales – covering both further and higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review and report of the current funding systems for HE and FE across the 4 areas of the UK • Clear policy statements developed across 4 areas of the UK 	<p>Sept 08</p> <p>Mar 09</p>	Director of Campaigns and Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public support for our policy position • Partners signed up to our principles around HE
1.3 Build alliances and influence wider stakeholders to ensure public and sectoral support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic partnerships developed across the Education sector • Support from the public around our campaigns messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coalition of partner organisations to be established who sign up to key principles • VC/Parliamentary events run in partnership with key organisations • Public Town Hall Meetings happen in 6 major English cities • Music events happen in 10 major university towns 	<p>May 08*</p> <p>May 08, Oct 08, Jan 09*</p> <p>Feb 09*</p> <p>Dec 09*</p>	Head of Political Strategy	

<p>1.4 Build membership capacity to effectively campaign locally and nationally on the issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National campaign delivered locally with buy in from the membership • Development of a wide range of activists in students' unions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A campaign toolkit looks at how to run a national campaign locally • 60 HE unions have students trained on Activist Academies • 20 FE unions attend campaigns training • National Demonstration 	<p>May 08</p> <p>April 09</p> <p>Oct 09</p> <p>Nov 09*</p>	<p>Head of Political Strategy</p> <p>Director of Membership Development</p>	
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* These dates are subject to change because of Parliamentary events

2. Strategic Objective: NUS will support, facilitate and deliver methods by which students can shape all areas of their learning experience

Project	Outcomes	Milestones	Timescale	Project Sponsor	KPIS
2.1 Researching the Student Learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' unions identify areas that they believe would add value from national research NUS produces annual research on the student learning experience, linked to and informing NUS campaign work Other sector agencies (e.g. HE Academy, CEL etc.) commission, undertake and disseminate research on the student learning experience jointly with NUS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of the National Student Survey and assistance provided to students' unions to enable them to use the data generated for campaigns, changes to teaching and learning and service delivery Briefing notes on research methods produced to aid students' unions to undertake their own research activities Workshops held for students' union staff and officers on research methods to support students' union's production of Student Written Submissions (SWS) for the QAA Audit Dissemination of research undertaken by individual or groups of students' unions via NUS Website NUS research programme developed, conducted and results published and disseminated annually Agreement of joint research priorities and funding between NUS and HE Academy, NUS and CEL Agreement of joint funding priorities and funding between NUS and QIA, NUS and JISC 	<p>Mar 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>Oct 08–June 10</p> <p>June 09</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Apr 08</p> <p>Apr 09</p>	Director of Campaigns and Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of students' unions undertaking on-going, meaningful research in to the student learning experience within their own institution, which they use to inform outcomes at an institutional level NUS Annual Research on the learning experience used by student movement as a vehicle for achieving change and, as a result, is well-respected by the sector NUS viewed by stakeholders as the key central resource of how to develop effective student representative systems Students' unions recognise that NUS has strengthened their representative system

<p>2.2 Mapping student involvement in HE and FE institutions and developing effective representative systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practice on what makes an effective student representative system embedded and shared with sector agencies, institutions and students' unions • Improvement in the effectiveness of representative systems • Support to the learner voice embedded in to SUEI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session developed and delivered by NUS on the learner voice at NUS/AMSU/NUSSL seminar • Agreement about content regarding the learner voice in SUEI • Initial mapping report on how students are involved in both HE and FE institutions published • 7 regionally-based workshops (in HE for students' union staff and in FE for SSLOs) to share best practice on effective representative systems • Development of website to share good practice across the UK with course reps able to share experiences • Database of course reps across the UK 	<p>Feb 08</p> <p>Mar 08</p> <p>Dec 08</p> <p>Oct 08–June 10</p> <p>June 09</p> <p>June 09</p>	<p>Education and Quality Team Leader</p>	
<p>2.3 Supporting student engagement across the sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination of support for the learner voice across sector agencies (including NUS) • Representative systems are effective due to expertise shared with individual institutions • Establishment of student subject-based communities aligned to HE Academy subject networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define what an effective student representative system is • Support provided to CETL (centres for excellence in teaching and learning) student network (alongside the HE Academy) • Pilot student subject centres in 6 areas 	<p>Apr 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>June 09</p>	<p>Education and Quality Team Leader</p>	

<p>2.4 Training and support to student officers on the student learning experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education officers able to clearly articulate the centrality of the learner voice • Whole executive committees able to engage in discussions on the student learning experience • All student representatives make an effective contribution that has an impact on teaching and learning at a local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and support materials developed and reviewed with groups of stakeholders, including key informants from sector agencies, institutions, and students' unions • Summer training for all officers, but particularly Education officers, redesigned appropriately and developed in light of continuing work to support the learner voice • Appropriate handbooks, briefing notes and other support materials developed and available in hard-copy and electronically • Central database of course reps compiled • Website designed to enable the sharing of best practice and course reps able to interact with each other and share experiences • Central unit established enabling training to be delivered for faculty, departmental and course representatives and other groups as requested and appropriate 	<p>Apr 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>Sep 08</p> <p>July 09</p> <p>July 09</p> <p>July 10</p>	<p>Director of Membership Development</p>	
<p>2.5 Liberating the curriculum: students shaping their curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local liberation officers link campaigning issues with sectoral and institutional attempts to enhance the learning experience • Education and liberation officers are able to articulate the impact of equalities and diversity issues on the learning experience of the student body • Changes to the curriculum as a result of NUS work on the learner voice and liberating the curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research sponsored (possibly in conjunction with a sector agency) and published quantifying the impact of equalities and diversity issues on the student learning experience • Series of training and development workshops for LGBT, women's, international, black and disabled students' campaigns 	<p>Dec 08</p> <p>June 09</p>	<p>Social Policy Team Leader</p>	

3. Strategic Objective: NUS will ensure the long term legitimacy, health and sustainability of students' unions

Project	Outcomes	Milestones	Timescale	Project Sponsor	KPIS
3.1 Diversify revenue streams to reduce reliance on commercial and block grant funding in students' unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' unions identify and apply for external funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential new sources of external funding Taster sessions on fundraising for students' union staff and officers Commission bespoke training for students' union staff on fundraising Create and disseminate internal hub for best practice and information 	<p>Jan 08</p> <p>Feb 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>Sept 08</p>	Director of Membership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' union election turnout All students' unions that need to successfully register with Charity Commission do so No. of Vice Chancellors and University Governing Bodies sign up to the NUS code on supporting students' unions No. of FEIs implement NUS' model learner involvement and FE union strategy Students' Union Financial Health Indicators: block grant, external funding secured, profitability and balance sheet
3.2 Improve students' union governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical improvements, and greater confidence across the sector, in the governance and reporting arrangements of students' unions Ensure unions are able to register with the CC and all do so smoothly with appropriate constitutional clauses Accepted minimum standards for the governance arrangements of students' unions in terms of outcomes for HEIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding for students' union leadership and governance project from HEFCE A report is published outlining new approaches and best practice in these areas A Students' Union Governance Code applicable across the sector is produced Sign up 60 unions to SU Governance Code 	<p>Mar 08</p> <p>Dec 08</p> <p>Feb 09</p> <p>June 09</p>	Director of Membership Development	
3.3 Students' unions welcomed as key partners with HEIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of effective partnership working between HEIs and students' unions across the sector around key strategic issues such as recruitment, retention and widening participation Established ways for HEIs to improve the support they give to students' unions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and apply for funding of project An improvement toolkit assisting institutions and students' unions to improve governance and strategic partnerships Committee of University Chairman back guidance for HE on good practice in the supervision of unions 	<p>Mar 08</p> <p>Nov 08</p> <p>Feb 09</p>	Director of Membership Development	

3.4 Improve student representation and organisational performance in large FE, small and specialist HE students' unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of leadership and management of large FE, small and specialist HE students' unions improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with partners on quality model template for large FE/ small & specialist HE SUs Devise quality model Pilot with students' unions Have in place strategy to roll out model 	<p>Mar 08</p> <p>June 08 Nov 08 Mar 09</p>	Director of Membership Development	
3.5 Significantly raise the quality of students' union leadership and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of leadership and management of HE Students' Unions improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign up 30 unions to the scheme Run cohorts 4 and 5 Identify funding for SUEI post-2009 and have in place continuity strategy Identify development strands arising from Cohorts 1–5 as NUS member development priorities 	<p>Jan 08 Jan 08 and May 08 May 08</p> <p>Sep 08</p>	Director of Membership Development	
3.6 Students' unions who are about to collapse or be lost to institutions survive and thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS seen as an organisation that students' unions can turn to in times of crisis Students' unions in crisis situations thrive and develop to be sustainable and effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation and formation of approved list of support Triage and consultancy training for NUS internal staff Development of a 'crisis' students' unions strategy, including approaches for early identification and crisis management (with AMSU/NUS Services) 	<p>June 08</p> <p>Aug 08</p> <p>Apr 09</p>	Director of Membership Development	
3.7 Improve democracy within students' unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both the quality and quantity of democratic participation in students' unions is enhanced Development of new models for participation and best practice dissemination of new approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar/think tank event Externally funded research project and paper evaluating current situation and recommendations Improvement toolkit and benchmarking exercise 	<p>Jan 08 Jan 09</p> <p>June 09</p>	Director of Membership Development	

4. Strategic Objective: NUS will be an exemplar of equality and diversity, developing strategies to promote and enhance equality and diversity within education and students' unions

Project	Outcomes	Milestones	Timescale	Project Sponsor	KPIS
4.1 To conduct a piece of research which looks in to barriers to participation in students' unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrable proof that NUS research and strategies lead to greater participation of under-represented groups in students' unions (elections, clubs and societies, activities, students' union officers and staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify project funding Research looks in to barriers to participation from under-represented groups and recommends methods for increasing participation in students' unions from under-represented groups Pilot projects set up to drive participation of under-represented groups in students' unions 	<p>Mar 08 Aug 08</p> <p>Oct 08</p>	Director of Membership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile of NUS workforce reflects members/ students/ comparable organisations/ locality of offices Positive responses in staff attitude survey in respect of valuing diversity and anti-discrimination Students' union volunteers/ active members reflects student body
4.2 Conduct an equalities impact assessment (EQIA) for NUS, benchmark against comparable organisations and implement findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS runs services and campaigns that reflect the diversity of the student population NUS has a culture that values diversity Organisations come to NUS to learn about best practice in equality and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the EQIA and agree an implementation plan Benchmark NUS against comparable organisations and report on findings Set equalities standards to which NUS aspires that promote our ethos Review EQIA implementation as part of the 2009–12 strategic planning process Review all HR policies and procedures to ensure they recognise the diverse needs of staff and do not discriminate Publish NUS experience of working towards excellence in equalities and diversity NUS achieve Investors in Equality/Diversity 	<p>Feb 08</p> <p>Mar 08</p> <p>May 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>July 08</p> <p>Feb 09</p> <p>Nov 09</p>	Director of Business Services	
4.3 Conduct specific research and produce recommendations about innovative widening participation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS policies/ and work championing under-represented voices impacts on government/ institutional WP strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS/ NUSSL/ AMSU seminar looks at engaging under-represented voices Research takes place to identify new and innovative projects including recommendations to government Paper produced championing innovative work being done to widen participation 	<p>Feb 08</p> <p>Apr 08</p> <p>Nov 08</p>	Director of Campaigns and Strategy	

5. Strategic Objective: NUS will ensure it is well governed, establishing appropriate physical, financial, intellectual and people resources to better deliver its aims

Project	Outcomes	Milestones	Timescale	Project Sponsor	KPIS
5.1 Conduct a comprehensive governance review, with recommendations and new governing document to be passed by Annual Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governance structure agreed in 2008 • New governance model is more effective, more accessible, clear accountabilities • SUs are able to set policy and influence decision-making through governance model • SUs believe new governance model is fit for purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation completed • NEC considers and launches proposals • Extraordinary Conference • Motion passed at Annual Conference • Transitional arrangements • New governance model fully launched 	<p>Oct 07 Oct 07</p> <p>Dec 07 Apr 08</p> <p>Apr 08–Apr 09 June 09</p>	Director of Campaigns and Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance system seen by staff, officers, trustees and members as being effective and fit-for-purpose • Annual financial performance: surplus produced by 09/10 • Annual financial performance against budget • Survey of SUs concludes they believe the NUS affiliation fee offers good/outstanding value for money • Growth in number of NUS Extra cards sold and contribution to students' unions and NUS • Staff attitude survey positive results • Low staff turnover compared to sector average
5.2 Develop a financial strategy that improves financial planning, management information and budgetary control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NUS operates in surplus in 2009/10 • Budget allocations reflect NUS strategic priorities • No surprises • Students' unions believe their affiliation fee offers value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft 2008–10 financial strategy produced in alignment with draft corporate objectives • Review of financial management complete • Fundraising strategy approved • All budget holders trained • 2009–12 financial strategy produced • 2011–13 financial strategy produced, including surplus target for 2009/10 	<p>Jan 08</p> <p>Jan 08</p> <p>Jan 08 Mar 08 June 08</p> <p>June 09</p>	Director of Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low staff short-term absence compared to sector average • Stakeholder survey positive results • Volume of traffic using website • Reduction in carbon emissions

<p>5.3 Create a performance management programme covering induction, competences, appraisal, training and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff understand what is expected of them • Staff understand how they contribute to corporate objectives • Staff feel they have the training and development needed to succeed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Strategy drafted • liP assessment and consequent action plan approved • Cycle of performance appraisals complete • Staff attitude survey results published 	<p>Jan 08 Jan 08</p> <p>Jan 08, July 08, July 09</p> <p>Dec 07, 08, 09</p>	<p>Director of Business Services</p>	
<p>5.4 Develop an integrated website and membership database with capabilities to share info, resources and promote best practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors find it easy to access NUS/NUSSL services on-line • Website is seen across the student movement as the single most important tool of interaction • Website and single database drives successful campaigns, marketing and business development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facelift of nusonline • New single membership database in place and available to NUS and NUSSL on web • New integrated nus.org launched • Single integrated intranet available • Review of e-transactions and interactions complete 	<p>Oct 07 June 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>June 08</p> <p>July 08</p>	<p>Director of Business Services</p> <p>Head of Communications</p>	
<p>5.5 Make a step change in our IT infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic IT infrastructure is so robust as to be invisible • We have sufficient capacity and flexibility to accommodate new developments • IT drives and enables new ways of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New servers in place • Data cleaned, storage and retrieval system in place • All user IT equipment reviewed, standardised and fit for purpose • New telephone system in place, integrated with IT system • Fully integrated single infrastructure with NUSSL 	<p>Jan 08 Jan 08</p> <p>Jan 08</p> <p>July 08</p> <p>July 09</p>	<p>Director of Business Services</p>	
<p>5.6 Invest in an HR information system to help devolve HR management and allow employee self service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees are able to access their own HR records on-line • The HRIS is integrated with the intranet and knowledge management system • NUS is able to access fast, reliable management information • HR policies and procedures are applied consistently and transparently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Populate the current HR standalone system • Establish user requirements for the HRIS • Pilot the new system • New HRIS goes live 	<p>Jan 08</p> <p>Jan 08</p> <p>June 08 Sept 08</p>	<p>Director of Business Services</p>	

<p>5.7 Collaborations agenda with NUS Services and AMSU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiencies and cost savings achieved with duplication avoided • Coherence and improved service to members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with NUS Services and AMSU on further areas for collaboration • Paper outlining proposals for further collaboration in the medium to long term (beyond IT, Extra, website etc.) 	<p>June 08</p> <p>Oct 08</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	
<p>5.8 Ensuring a greener NUS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable reduction in environmental impact • Publicly available environmental policy • Comprehensive environmental audit • Reduction in carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of Sound Impact audit analysed • Action plan produced with recommendations • Environmental policy written and circulated 	<p>Mar 08</p> <p>July 08</p> <p>Sep 08</p>	<p>Director of Business Services</p>	