

Daniel Gardiner – Environmental Officer Manifesto 2011

I am studying Conservation Biology, am a member of the Green Party and due to having participated in environmental projects as a former Tree Surgeon, I therefore have a firm understanding of what it takes to be the Environmental Officer of Roehampton University. In recent years the university has made large strides to be environmentally friendly, however I feel strongly that much more can be done and there is always room for improvement. I want Roehampton University to be a leading example of what can be achieved when it comes to the environment and to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change. With new thinking we will be able to achieve much more.

I intend to introduce battery recycling bins onto every campus. This is important because batteries that go to landfill can leak dangerous chemicals that harm all kinds of plants, animals and even humans. Recycling the batteries also saves thousands of tonnes of metals which will save resources that our planet is running out of.

This year is the International Year of Forests and consequently the government has set out an initiative to plant more trees in England, known as the Big Tree Plant. I would like to start a tree planting group at the University. The idea will be to get as many students involved as possible planting trees in the University grounds and possibly around local communities.

Something I have been sceptical about for a long time is the use of the disposable, flimsy plastic cups in the Student Union bars. I believe there is a much better option and that is to use hard plastic cups which are available from the Incredible Cup Company. These can be washed up to 100 times. In Germany it has been proven that they are 4 to 20 times more environmentally friendly than disposable cups, plus they are much more sturdy!

The University has many positive schemes which can be built upon and improved. Things such as the Switch Off, Sound Impact Awards and the Bike Pool are examples of this. I will also petition Boris Johnson to try and get the London bike scheme closer to the University so students can take advantage of it.

In Halls I believe there is a need for the introduction of “dummies” guides and posters with recycling instructions into all of the kitchens and have the bins clearly marked with disposal instructions, as many students are unaware of what should be done with the different types of waste.

Finally, I would like to build on the great success of the allotments on campus with some of the produce being grown perhaps going on sale (or have a taster session) at special events to promote the positive aspects of growing your own food.

Of course everything costs money, therefore, as well as the Go Green Week, I would organise additional money raising events which will be great fun and educational.

To show my commitment to the environment all of my campaign posters and leaflets will be printed on recycled paper, so if you care about the environment and want Roehampton University to make a difference please vote for me, Daniel Gardiner.