**Fairtrade survey results February – March 2023**

**Introduction**

During Fairtrade Fortnight a stall was set up outside Otters restaurants on both campuses and students and staff were asked a few questions about what they know about Fairtrade at the University, their buying habits and sustainability concerns. The questions were deliberately kept quite simple and were designed to be able to compare responses with earlier surveys. A total of 97 students took part in the survey. The face to face technique for surveying was found to be far more successful than trying to gauge a response from an on-line survey. When this was attempted previously in March 2020, only 32 responses were obtained. This technique also allowed for a greater discussion about what Fairtrade involves and sustainability issues and concerns.

**Results**

There are still a high percentage of students (73%) who do not realise that we are a Fairtrade University (Table 1). This is despite our commitment to Fairtrade being displayed on our website, included in our catering information and being part of the on-line sustainability induction, all students have to complete before starting at the university.

*Table 1 A high percentage of students do not realise we are a Fairtrade University*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Respondents BRC (%)** | | **Respondents BOC (%)** | | **Both campuses (%)** | |
| Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Are you aware that we are a Fairtrade University? | 20 | 80 | 32 | 68 | 27 | 73 |

Part of the issue would appear to be due to the fact the most students (82%) have not come across the Fairtrade campaigns and events held on campus. This is substantially lower than the number of respondents in the previous survey held in 2020, when only 29% stated that they had not seen any events in Fairtrade Fortnight 2019. The substantial difference in numbers is though to be also due to the method used to obtain the response. It is assumed that staff and students taking part in the on-line survey are more likely to be engaged in sustainability activities, than people randomly spoken to in the corridor.

Respondents at BRC stated that they had seen Fairtrade posters and the Fairtrade stall held during Green Week 2022. Respondents at BOC were aware of Fairtrade from Freshers’ Fair and Instagram.

*Table 2 Most students are not aware of Fairtrade campaigns and events held on campus*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Respondents BRC (%)** | | **Respondents BOC (%)** | | **Both campuses (%)** | |
|  | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Do not remember seeing any Fairtrade activities, campaigns or events in previous years? | 15 | 85 | 20 | 80 | 18 | 82 |

Students are aware of Fairtrade products being sold on the campuses. The most regularly sighted products are coffee, chocolate, cookies and bananas in the restaurants, chocolate and coffee in the coffee shops and chocolate in the SU Shop.

*Table 3 Students are aware of Fairtrade products being sold on campus*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Have you seen any Fairtrade products in any part of the University? If so where?** | **Canteen** | **Coffee shops** | **SU Shop** | **None** |
| Respondents BRC (%) | 50 | 13 | 2 | 35 |
| Respondents BOC (%) | 39 | 0 | 13 | 48 |
| Both campuses (%) | 45 | 7 | 8 | 42 |

These results are different from those obtained in 2020, when only 29% of respondents stated they had not seen any Fairtrade products anywhere on campus. A much higher percentage of respondents in 2019 (32%) had also seen products in the SU Shop. The SU shop has struggled to procure Fairtrade products at commercially viable prices, which may be the cause of this change. This issue has been the subject of discussions with the Universities network group and Fairtrade.

The majority of students (67%) sometimes buy products based on their ethical standards (Table 4). Bananas were mentioned as the most frequently bought product, presumably due to their ubiquitous availability. Cost was discussed as the greatest barrier to such purchases. These results are similar to those obtained in 2020, where bananas were the most frequently bought Fairtrade product, followed by chocolate.

*Table 4 Students do buy ethically produced goods*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Do you ever buy a product based on the ethical standards of the retailer or producer such as Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance etc?** | **Always** | **Often** | **Sometimes** | **Rarely** | **Never** |
| Respondents BRC (%) | 0 | 10 | 71 | 7 | 12 |
| Respondents BOC (%) | 5 | 4 | 64 | 0 | 7 |
| Both campuses (%) | 3 | 6 | 67 | 3 | 21 |

All students are either fairly or very concerned with world issues including poverty and animal welfare (Table 5). This is reflected in the greater number of students asking for vegan and vegetarian food at the University.

*Table 5 World issues such as poverty and animal welfare are a concern to students*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Are you concerned about any other world issues such as poverty, animal welfare? | Not at all | Not very | Fairly | Very | No strong views |
| Respondents BRC (%) | 0 | 0 | 17 | 83 | 0 |
| Respondents BOC (%) | 4 | 2 | 11 | 84 | 0 |
| Both campuses (%) | 2 | 1 | 13 | 84 | 0 |

Students are very concerned about climate change, with climate anxiety being mentioned by several during the discussions (Table 6). This response could be used to help the university decide whether to declare a climate emergency or not. This was one of the questions asked in the earlier sustainability survey in June 2022.

*Table 6 Students are very concerned about climate change*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Are you concerned about climate change?** | **Not at all** | **Not very** | **Fairly** | **Very** | **No strong views** |
| Respondents BRC (%) | 0 | 0 | 7 | 93 | 0 |
| Respondents BOC (%) | 2 | 0 | 16 | 82 | 0 |
| Both campuses (%) | 1 | 0 | 12 | 87 | 0 |

Relating back to the specifics of Fairtrade, the majority of students care a lot about ensuing farmers in developing countries get a fair price for the products they grow (Table 7). This response is again the same as that obtained in 2020, where most respondents cared a lot about farmers obtaining a fair price for their products, with just a few caring a little bit.

*Table 7 Most students agree with a fair deal for farmers*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you care that farmers in developing countries get a fair deal for the products they grow?** | **Don’t care** | **Indifferent** | **A bit** | **Care a lot** |
| Respondents BRC (%) | 0 | 2 | 0 | 98 |
| Respondents BOC (%) | 2 | 0 | 2 | 96 |
| Both campuses (%) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 97 |