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## Northumbria students are tackling period poverty in the North East

Led by Enactus Northumbria, social enterprise team, [The Hygienies](#), are supporting women in the region with issues surrounding menstrual health, hygiene and education - an issue which is prevalent across the UK.

Students from Northumbria University saw an opportunity to help women in the local area and improve the environmental impact of menstrual waste at the same time.

[In 2017](#), one in ten girls had reported being unable to afford sanitary

products; one in seven had to ask to borrow sanitary wear from a friend due to affordability issues; and one in ten had to improvise sanitary wear. These staggering statistics inspired the team of Northumbria students to design a product with this in mind.

The Hygienies project aims to tackle period poverty, through the distribution of sanitary products to those who cannot easily access them and by removing the associated stigma surrounding menstruation.

Aligned to UN Sustainable Development Goals [3, 6, 12 and 13](#), they spread awareness about menstrual waste and environment friendly alternatives to products which are commonly reached for.

At the end of May, The Hygienies will launch a range of monthly 'make-your-own' sustainable subscription boxes, allowing customers to select the items they want, including sanitary, personal hygiene and self-care products. Customers can choose from 'The Basic Box' and 'The Teen Box', which can both be upgraded to feature luxury editions such as cotton wash bags and bamboo face pads.

For each box purchased, The Hygienies will donate a selection of sustainable menstrual products to Newcastle based charities, [West End Women and Girls](#) who fight for women and girl's rights to live in a fair society, and [Smart Works](#) who supports women back into work.



The Hygienie's donation bags of sustainable menstrual products

Eilish from Smart Works commented on donations they have already received, saying: “We always provide women with a goodie bag of beauty and sanitary products to make them feel confident ahead of their interviews. The Hygienie’s hand delivered a brilliant array of sanitary products – including a menstrual cup – that we are sure will help our clients feel great in themselves as they re-enter the job market.”

The Hygienies have also collaborated with Yoga Therapies to provide an online class, which encourages attendees to pay what they can afford whilst enjoying the benefits of Yoga during your period. All money raised has been donated to The Hygienies beneficiaries across the North East.

Courtney Brown, Head of Business Development at The Hygienies said: “We want to use our entrepreneurial spirit to combat period poverty, which unfortunately has risen significantly since the start of the pandemic. Operating sustainably is something which is really important to us, which is why we are really excited to launch the new subscription boxes to mark Menstrual Hygiene Day - containing products which help minimise menstrual waste.”

“We have been fortunate enough to create an entrepreneurial start-up in a safe 'risk-free' space, thanks to support from Enactus Northumbria, University business advisors and the Students’ Union. The Hygienies work with

incredible charities in the local area, to distribute products to people who need them and working on this project has been a personal highlight of my time at Northumbria.”

Enactus Northumbria is a society of students, academics and business leaders committed to using the power of entrepreneurial action to transform the lives and shape a more sustainable world.

Find out more about how you can [get involved with Enactus](#) and [support The Hygienies](#).

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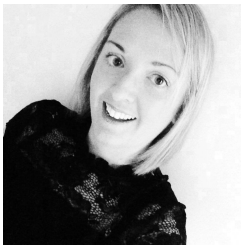
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