Annual Performance Report 2022 - 23 Environmental Sustainability



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the University of Hertfordshire Environment and Sustainability Annual Performance Report 2022 -23. The reporting period runs from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023, a period of significant progress in the environmental sustainability landscape, both globally and within the University of Hertfordshire.

GLOBAL CONTEXT

According to the World Meteorological Organisation, 2023 has been confirmed as the warmest calendar year in global temperature data records going back to 1850. It was also the tenth year in succession where average temperatures equalled or exceeded 1.0 °C above the pre-industrial period (1850-1900). Against this backdrop of continued global warming, the Sharm-El-Shiek **COP27** convention brought together 197 countries from around the world to take action towards achieving the world's collective climate goals as agreed under the Paris Agreement. Key take aways included the urgent need to keep 1.5C within reach, requiring global greenhouse gases to peak by 2025 at the latest, and to fall 43% by 2030. Other relevant outcomes included the need to hold businesses and institutions to account through transparency, collaboration, and target setting, particularly within sectors, and to transition towards implementation, turning pledges into action.

In December 2022, the **Biodiversity Conference of Parties (COP15)** also took place in Montreal. A key outcome of this convention was the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which set out global goals to address ongoing biodiversity loss.

UK CONTEXT

This period was also a record-breaking year for temperatures in the UK. Not only was 2022 the first year in the UK when 40°C was recorded, it was also the warmest year in records back to 1884¹. While national progress on climate action was comparatively slow, the UK did update a number of policies, including Powering Up Britain, a plan that sets out the government's intentions to enhance our country's energy security, seize the economic opportunities of the transition, and deliver on its net zero commitments.

New commitments were also published on Biodiversity. Building on the 2018 vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan, the 2023 Environmental Improvement Plan was published in January, providing a comprehensive delivery plan for the government's approach to halting and then reversing the decline in nature².

To support these initiatives, a Green Finance Plan was also published in March 2023 setting out how continued UK leadership on green finance will cement the UK's place at the forefront of this growing global market, and how it will mobilise the investment needed to meet its climate and nature objectives.

HE SECTOR CONTEXT

As the University sector enjoyed its first full year of "normality" post-Covid, the Royal Anniversary Trust published an ambitious roadmap for carbon reduction in the tertiary education sector: "<u>Accelerating towards Net Zero</u>". The report provides a detailed profile of the tertiary education sector's carbon footprint and proposes a new

¹ Met Office

² 2023 State of Nature Report, National Biodiversity Network.

Standardised Carbon Emissions Framework designed exclusively for the sector which will enable all HE and FE institutions to measure, report and manage carbon emissions.



Nature Positive Universities, a partnership between University of Oxford, UNEP Youth & Education and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, was also launched at the Montreal Biodiversity COP in December 2022. The Nature Positive Universities Alliance brings higher education institutions together to use their unique power and influence as drivers of positive change, and invites member universities to make individual pledges to address their impacts on nature. The University of Hertfordshire was one of the founding members of the Alliance.



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY AT UH

2022-23 was the first full year of post-Covid stability, and it was a period that saw plenty of change and activity on the Environment and Sustainability front.

In October 2022, Environment and Sustainability moved from Health and Safety in the Office of the Vice Chancellor to Estates. With this change, a number of new governance and reporting structures were created to help deliver on the aims and commitments of the specific target areas within the Framework, and two new engagement coordinators also joined the team to help drive a sustainable culture within our community.

In 2023 we published our Environment and Sustainability Framework, setting out our approach and commitments to reducing our impact on the environment and our intentions to embed sustainability holistically across the university. The Framework is based on 4 key risk areas:



Four pathways were established through which we will deliver our aims and commitments:



The Framework was launched at the 2023 Environment and Sustainability Conference which was attended by over 120 internal and external stakeholders.

Also relevant to this report is the increase in staff and student numbers (measured as full-time equivalent (FTE)) which in 2022-23 grew by 17% to 29,822, representing an increase of 49% on 2018/19 baseline figures. Our campus Gross Interna Area (GIA) remained largely unchanged at 192,641 m³.

	18 / 19	19 / 20	20/21	21/22	22 / 23
FTE staff	2,679	2,577	2,647	2,636	2,772
FTE students	17,403	18,456	20,179	22,928	27,050
TOTAL	20,082	21,033	22,826	25,564	29,822
Change against baseline		5%	14%	27%	49%
GIA m3	186,769	189,610*	192,422	193,227	192,641
total campus (ha)	94	94	97	97	97

*Club de Hav, Fielder Centre, Sports Village & University Bus are no longer classified as COMMERCIAL so are included in EMR from 2020.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS & SUCCESSES

- 1. New Environment and Sustainability Framework published
- 2. Net Zero Action Plan published
- 3. Continued Scope 1 & 2 emission reductions of 27% against 2018/19
- 4. 51% fall in scope 1 & 2 emissions per FTE against 2018/19
- 5. 29% fall in emissions from procurement per FTE since 2019/20
- 6. 19% decrease in total waste output against 2018-19
- 7. Waste per FTE reduction of 45% against 2018-19 baseline
- 8. Successful ISO14001 surveillance audit, with no Non-Conformances identified
- 9. First Environment and Sustainability Conference delivered with over 120 internal and external delegates
- 10. Carbon Foodprint labelling launched
- 11. Only 1.37% of waste being sent to landfill
- 12. Planted 70 Hazel whips in Hazel Grove
- 13. Committed as a founding signatory to the United Nations Nature Positive Universities Pledge
- 14. Found Hedgehog footprints on campus
- 15. Student Sustainability Advocate Programme launched, with 75 students volunteering in 2022-23
- 16. Successful Go Green week with 15 different departments organising 18 sustainability events
- 17. Re-launch of Staff Sustainability Network
- 18. Sustainability being formally integrated into all taught programmes through the graduate attributes
- 19. Sustainability integrated into Enterprise and Business Development services and internal processes
- 20. Sustainability at Herts presented at the Biz 4 Biz conference

More detail on these achievements can be found in relevant sections of this report.

OUR ESTATE AND OPERATIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE



In 2023 we signed up to the United Nations Race to Zero campaign and published our <u>Net</u> <u>Zero Action Plan</u>, detailing our commitments and road map to reaching Net Zero by 2050. By adopting an integrated approach and setting ambitious targets, the University aims to reduce its carbon impact in line with science-based targets while empowering positive action within the community. Progress against our carbon targets are summarised below, for more

details on our achievements and plans in each of the areas, please see our 2022-23 Net Zero Progress Report.

Objective: Reduce the impact of university operations and estate on climate change.

➤ **Target:** To become Net Zero by 2050 at the latest, with a 50% reduction by 2028, and a 78% reduction by 2035 against our 2018/19 baseline (Scope 1 & 2).

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2022/23 the University of Hertfordshire emitted **12,389.23 tonnes of CO²e** compared to 17,044 in 2018/19, representing an absolute reduction of 27%, and a 51% reduction per FTE.

EMR & KPI	18 / 19	19 / 20	20 / 21	21 / 22	22 / 23
Carbon Scope 1 & 2 - tCO2e	17,044.80	13,487.66	12,044.50	13,591.05	12,389.23
change against baseline		-21%	-29%	-20%	-27%
Year on year		-21%	-11%	13%	-9%
Carbon (kg CO2) / FTE	848.7	641.26	527.67	531.65	415.45
change against baseline		-24%	-38%	-37%	-51%
carbon (kg CO2) / m2	91.26	71.13	62.59	70.34	64.31
change against baseline		-22%	-31%	-23%	-30%

The scope 1 & 2 emissions reported above include:

- Energy (Gas and electricity)
- Fuel (UNO Bus and UH-owned vehicles)

The below charts show the Scope 1 & 2 distribution by source (Fig. 1), and emissions by source since 2018-19 (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1. 2022-23 Scope 1 & 2 distribution by source (excluding FGas)



Fig. 2. 2022-23 Scope 1 & 2 emissions since baseline period

As demonstrated above, at 5,124 tonnes of CO²e, electricity makes up the largest share of our scope 1 & 2 emissions (largely due to an increase in the UK conversion factor). Gas is responsible for 3,907 tonnes of CO²e, and fuel 3,356 tonnes of CO²e.

ENERGY

Objective: Reduce the demand for energy and improve energy efficiency on campus.

► **Target:** To achieve reductions in carbon from energy against our 2018/19 baseline of 85% by 2035 and 95% by 2050.



Emissions from energy have fallen 23% against the baseline period 2018/19, largely due to a decrease in electricity and gas consumption. While higher grid conversion factors during this period have led to a small increase in carbon from electricity despite a drop in consumption, these have been absorbed by the significant reductions in gas consumption, and our energy emissions overall continue to decline. The reduction in both

electricity and gas consumption has been enabled by the technical, operational, and behaviour change interventions and initiatives undertaken during this period, such as:

- Installing more efficient gas boilers and LED lighting
- Improved BMS system at McLaurin building
- Increased monitoring and planned maintenance for cooling systems
- Energy awareness campaigns.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue to reduce emissions from energy in line with our Estate Decarbonisation Plan. Having identified the main sources of emission, and carried out feasibility studies on campus, we have identified a number of projects that will continue to reduce emissions from energy:

- Design and build all-electric new buildings
- Installing air source heat pumps or alternative low-carbon technology in campus buildings
- Solar PV technology for the Sports Village (HSV)
- Upgrade boilers in the main boiler house
- 500m2 of solar PV on the new SPECTRA building
- New heating and cooling policy to reduce demand for heating and cooling
- Continue with the roll-out of LED lighting across campus
- Upgrade campus-wide building management systems including remote management

FUEL - UNOBUS & UH FLEET

Objective: Reduce the impact of our transport and logistics operations on the environment

Emissions from university-owned ICE (internal combustion engines) vehicles contribute to our scope 1 carbon footprint. At the University of Hertfordshire, there are 2 main sources of scope 1 fuel emissions: Uno Bus and university-owned vehicles.

UNO BUS

In 2022-23, UNO Bus carried 2.8 million passengers across 2.3 million km of road. While helping to significantly reduce regional emissions from private travel (it is estimated that 1 bus can replace up to 30 cars on the road³), the fuel from UNO Bus operations is considered as scope 1 emissions and is therefore included in our reporting.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
tCO ² e	5,260	-	-	4,185	3,354
change against baseline	-	-	-	-20%	-36%

CO2e emissions from UNO Bus operations have fallen steadily, and in 22/23 emissions were down by 36% against the 2018/19 baseline, largely due to more electric buses, logistical efficiencies, and fewer ICE routes.

³ ACEA - European Automobile Manufacturers' Association "Buses: what they are and why they are so important"

LOOKING AHEAD

UNO Bus is committed to reducing emissions from its operations over the coming years, and have set a target to reach Net Zero by 2050 at the latest. A UNO Bus Decarbonisation Roadmap is being developed and will be published soon.

As part of this commitment, UNO Bus has secured funding from the University of Hertfordshire and the Department for Transport to purchase 27 electric buses over the next 3 years under the ZEBRA programme (Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas). The long-term plan is to convert all vehicles to zero emissions; however, this process will be less incremental than the energy decarbonisation plan due to the capital requirements as well as depot size and energy supply constraints.

OTHER VEHICLES

The university owns 5 vans that support the portering and logistics operations. These are currently ICE vehicles with diesel engines. Emissions from these operations can be seen in the table below, and in 2022-23, the CO2e emissions were 52% lower than during the baseline period, largely due to:

- Reducing the fleet from 7 to 5 vehicles
- A change in delivery model (less office moves and movement of equipment around site)
- Grouping of tasks
- Introduction of contractors to support with these services
- Decline in postal services from 2 deliveries / collections a day to 1

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
tCO2e	9.4	-	-	5.92	4.48
change against baseline	-			-37%	-52%

Looking ahead, we will continue to explore ways to reduce the emissions from our estate vehicles, including operational efficiencies and trialling cargo bikes.

F-GAS

Objective: Reduce the impact of university operations and estate on climate change.

While emissions from F-Gas on campus are not included in the overall Scope 1 & 2 carbon reporting as this is not requested by HESA for the EMR (Estates Management Reporting) - the framework that we currently align our reporting with, we do measure and track our emissions from F-Gas and report on these separately.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23*
tCO2e	343.64	112.16	116.77	234.75	56.18
change against baseline	-	-67%	-66%	-32%	-

* NB. the 2022/23 figure is based on reactive works only for split units and chillers. Due to a change in contractors, PPM only started in March 2023, meaning that the 22-23 value is not representative.

While the 2022-23 data is incomplete, emissions from F-Gas has been declining steadily thanks to effective maintenance and repairs, and a transition away from the most harmful F-Gases.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the coming months, a plant condition survey will be carried out on all assets, and a replacement programme developed accordingly. Split units and chillers that are beyond their economic life will be removed where possible, or replaced with units with lower (Global Warming Potential (GWP) gases where the units are still needed. Shorter cycles in the planned preventative maintenance programme (PPM) will further help reduce emissions from leaks. When F-Gas becomes incorporated into standardised carbon reporting, we will include this in our Scope 1 & 2 calculations.

SCOPE 3

PROCUREMENT

Our Procurement emissions fall under the Scope 3 category as while they are outside our direct control, they arise as a result of our activities and operations. Procurement emissions are reported under 2 categories:

Goods and Services includes:

- Business services
- Paper products
- Manufactured chemicals
- Fuels and gases
- Food and catering (we also measure the carbon footprint of food sold based on ingredients rather than spend, but this is reported separately see section below)
- Medical and precision instruments
- Other procurement
- Unclassified

Capital Goods includes:

- Information and communication technologies
- Construction

As per the sector standard, procurement emissions are calculated by the Southern Universities' Procurement Consortium (SUPC) using a spend-based rather than product / service-based methodology in each sub-category, using GHG Protocol conversion factors.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Goods and Services	not available	38,333	25,547	34,519	41,419
Change against 19/20			-33%	-10%	8%
Capital goods	not available	15,914	13,955	23,534	21,601
Change against 19/20			-12%	48%	36%
Total	60,000*	54,247	39,502	58,053	63,020
Change against 19/20		-10%	-34%	-3%	5%
tCO2e per FTE		2.58	1.73	2.27	2.11
Change against 19/20		-14%	-42%	-24%	-29%

*Estimate based on 2019-20 taking into account the university closure in the latter part of the 19-20 academic year due to Covid.

The breakdown of the total Procurement emissions for each sub-category can be seen below.



While emissions from procurement for 22-23 are up 5% on the baseline figure of 60,000 tonnes of CO²e, when considering the growth in staff and student numbers over the last 4 years, our procurement emissions per FTE have fallen by a notable **29%**.



This has been helped by the publication of a new Sustainable Procurement Policy that sets out guidance on making sustainable purchasing decisions, as well as a new structure in Procurement enabling category managers to better manage and support procurement in specific areas.

LOOKING AHEAD

Going forward, we will undertake a comprehensive supplier audit, identifying the top 10 "emitters" in each category, and requesting environment and climate commitments from suppliers. This will then help inform the setting of SMART targets and further action relating to procurement scope 3 emissions.

SCOPE 3 UTILITIES

Our Scope 3 utility emissions⁴ are directly related to the consumption of water and electricity. As both of these have declined over the last 4 years, the Scope 3 emissions have fallen accordingly, and will continue to do so as we progress with our decarbonisation plan and water objectives.

Tonnes of CO2e from	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Electricity	603.93	485.16	455.43	446.21	443.32
Water	363.832	335.59	77.66	111.11	77.63

FOOD AND CATERING

In January 2023, our catering contractor Aramark launched its Carbon Foodprint initiative in collaboration with Nutrics which calculates and displays a score for all the meals served in our outlets⁵. This not only allows us to accurately measure the emissions from our catering service, but it also helps encourage users to consider the environmental impact of their food choices, nudging them towards more sustainable menus.

Carbon emissions from food started being recorded in January 2023. Based on current data, we have estimated that the carbon emissions for the period Aug 22 – July 23 is **144.7 tonnes of Co²e**. This will be our baseline figure to track progress against, both as absolute and per FTE. Going forward, we will continue to track emissions from food sales, and next year a healthy and sustainable food policy will be published that sets out the university's commitments and approach to reducing carbon emissions from the food sold on campus.



STAFF AND STUDENT COMMUTING

While staff and student commuting contributes significantly to our Scope 3 emissions, we don't currently have enough data to meaningfully set SMART targets or track progress.

With the publication of our new Travel Plan later this year we aim to not only establish methodologies of capturing commuting data as well as to set more specific targets: Initiatives that we already run that will help us continue to reduce emissions from commuting include:

⁴ Water supply & wastewater treatment, and electricity transmissions and distribution

⁵ Product-based carbon emissions from the food sold through tills in the canteens, excluding Premier Shops, Subway, and hospitality. The proportion of food sold through the tills is around 49% of total food sales on campus, so the data applies to around 50% of our catering service.

- Active Ride free bike hire
- Discounted bus fares
- Dozens of UNOBus routes
- Bike training and route guides
- Secure bike storage and shower facilities

BUSINESS TRAVEL

We currently report on emissions arising from business travel through HESA's EMR framework. In 2021 we started collecting product-based business travel data from our partners Diversity Travel (air and train) and Enterprise (car hire). We are not yet reporting on emissions from miles travelled for business purposes in own cars. Figures for 2018 – 2021 are estimated based on FTE numbers and travel frequency before and during Covid.

	18 / 19*	19 / 20*	20/21*	21 / 22	22 / 23
Tonnes CO ² e	1,910	887.10	500	887.10	1,240.24

* Estimated

Looking ahead, we will be taking steps to both improve the data collection and reduce the emissions derived from business travel. We are planning to develop a new sustainable business travel policy in 2024, and will also work with HR to better capture emissions data from own car business travel.

SCOPE 3 – OVERALL

The table below shows our Scope 3 progress against our 2018/19 baseline.

Tonnes CO ² e	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22
procurement	60,000.00*	54,247.00	39,502.00	58,053.00	63,020.00
waste	25.35	16.64	4.68	16.00	8.74
electricity T&D	603.93	485.16	455.43	446.21	443.32
water supply and waste	363.83	335.59	77.66	111.11	77.63
business travel	1,910.00	1,910.00	887.10	887.10	1,240.24
commuting	-	-	-	-	-
Total	62,903.11	56,994.39	40,936.87	59,513.42	64,799.92
Per FTE (tCO ² e)	3.13	2.71	1.79	2.33	2.17

* 2018/19 figures estimated based on 2019-20

While the total figure shows an absolute increase on the 2018/19 values, when considering the growth in staff and student numbers, this actually represents a 31% decrease in emissions per FTE. It is also worth noting that both the procurement and business travel figures for 2018/19 have been estimated, so while important to compare against a baseline, going forward we will also be reporting on progress against previous actual data, and focus on the predicted trajectory for each category.

CLIMATE CHANGE - CONCLUSION

As can be seen from the table below, we are making good progress against our Scope 1, 2 and 3 targets, particularly when the increase in staff and student numbers is considered. While the absolute reduction in total scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions is relatively small at 3%, we are making significant progress in reducing the emissions directly within our control, as demonstrated by the 35% reduction since 2018/19 (scope 1 and 2).

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22
Scope 1 & 2 - tCO ² e	17,044.80	13,487.66	12,044.50	13,591.05	12,389.23
Scope 3 - tCO ² e	62,903.11	56,994.39	40,936.87	59,513.42	64,799.92
Total	79,947.91	70,482.05	52,981.36	73,104.47	77,189.16
Change against baseline		-12%	-34%	-9%	-3%
FTE - tCO ² e	3.98	3.35	2.32	2.86	2.59
Change against baselines FTE		-16%	-42%	-28%	-35%

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on reducing the emissions that we have direct control over, and ensure that we meet our Scope 1 and 2 targets. We will also continue to improve our Scope 3 accounting methodologies and data collection practices so that meaningful SMART targets can be set, and action plans developed to reduce our Scope 3 emissions in line with internal, sector, and national commitments.

WASTE & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



The University's Waste and Resource Management Strategy is based on the principles of waste hierarchy which sets out the order in which waste management measures should be prioritised based on environmental impact. Our Environmental policy statement lists the following objectives related to waste:

• Reducing University waste production and promoting resource efficiency through its Waste and Resource Management Strategy to 2023.



OUR PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

	Waste Output (tonnes)	Waste per head (kg)	Waste to landfill (t)	Waste to landfill %	Waste Recycled %*	Waste to Energy %	CO2e (t) from waste
2018 – 19	895.62	44.60	13.55	1.51 %	59 %	39 %	25.35
2019 - 20	621.65	29.55	9.86	1.59 %	72 %	27 %	16.64
2020 - 21	564	24.7	7.34	1.30 %	50 %	49 %	14.68
2021 - 22	622.44	24.34	8.7	1.4 %	65 %	34 %	16.0
2022 – 23	726.44	24.36	9.9	1.37%	61 %	37.8%	18.74

* total recycling rate includes source segregated recycling, Mixed Recycling Facility (MRF) recovery, composting and anaerobic digestion.

Despite an increase in total waste output for 2022-23 compared to the previous period, 726.44 tonnes still represents a 19% decrease from pre-pandemic levels (2018-19), which is notable given that our staff and student FTE numbers have almost doubled in that period, resulting in a waste per head improvement of 45%. Levels of waste to landfill and recycling rates have also improved on the baseline level. The improvement in waste figures is a result of awareness campaigns encouraging students to bring reusable bottles and hot drink cups, more items being relocated and reused within the university, fewer paper products being used, and improved signage.

In 2023 we also collaborated with Aramark on their Wipe Out Waste campaign, which promotes the reuse of vegetable peelings and other food scraps, with the aim of reducing food waste on campus and at home. In 2022-23, 79.24 tonnes of food waste was generated on campus, which we will track progress against over coming years and as Aramark work towards their pledge of reducing food waste by 50% by 2030.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are exploring options to embed internal systems that will help make it easier to rehome and re-purpose unwanted furniture and other office items within the university. We will also be carrying out a comprehensive waste audit to help inform interventions to continue to improve our waste performance.

WATER



Objective: Reduce the impact of water usage on the environment

We have continued to reduce both our absolute and per FTE water consumption on campus. While hybrid working can be attributed to some of this improvement, much of it is down to extensive leak detection and rectification works completed at the College Lane Campus.

Water	18 / 19	19 / 20	20 / 21	21 / 22	22 / 23
m3	332,847	307,664	177,478	263,909	205,667
per FTE	16.57	14.63	7.78	10.32	6.90
change on baseline 18/19		-8%	-47%	-21%	-41%



BIODIVERSITY



With three campuses spanning 97 hectares, the university has a key role in protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Biodiversity is a core component of our Sustainability agenda and Estates Vision. Our Biodiversity objectives continue to be managed through the Biodiversity Action Plan published in 2021, sets the following commitment relating to biodiversity:

• To promote biodiversity by conserving, protecting, and enhancing existing wildlife habitats and creating new ones

While we don't yet have any SMART targets associated with this impact area, in 2022-23 we undertook a number of activities to help protect and enhance Biodiversity on campus, including:

- Carrying out our annual hedgehog surveys (yes we have hedgehogs on campus!)
- Planting 70 Hazel whips in Hazel Grove
- Committing as a founding signatory to the United Nations Nature Positive Universities Pledge
- Delivering ecology and grounds training
- Running engagement activities such as litter picks, bird watches, butterfly counts, and conservation days



LOOKING AHEAD

IN 2023-24 we are planning to undertake a Biodiversity Baseline Assessment across our three campuses. This will not only help establish the current state of biodiversity on our Estate, but will also make setting targets and measuring progress easier and more meaningful.

We will also review our tree management plan to ensure that we can protect as much of our green asset base as possible.

MANAGING OUR RISKS AND COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

Managing our environmental risks and obligations is a key priority at the University of Hertfordshire. We have a robust Environmental Management System (EMS) which continues to be governed, managed, and reported on through our working and steering groups, and according to our terms of reference. As per our Environmental Policy statement, we aim to:

- Prevent pollution
- Comply with environmental legislation
- Strive for continual improvement

While our management system provides the strong foundations upon which to deliver our environmental commitments, it is our demonstration of continual improvement that enables us to be Eco Campus Platinum certified. Our risks, obligations, and commitments, are managed through our EMS, enabling us to mitigate our impact on the environment as much as possible. In 2022-23, we set 36 new targets associated with 10 environmental objectives. Of these, 10 were completed by July 2023, with 24 remaining ongoing into 2023-24.

In July 2023, we were externally audited by Interface as part of the ISO:14001 cycle: surveillance audit.

The main findings were that the University operates "a mature and robust environmental management system with effective, embedded operational controls and planning that is delivering ongoing improvements."

There were various positives noted, including:

- Successful transfer of responsibilities for the EMS from the Health and Safety team to Estates.
- The updated Governance structure (Steering Group and sub-committees) has good potential to drive and control both strategic and operational improvements.
- Improved clarity of environmental objectives compared to the previous approach.
- Comprehensive and informative environmental reporting.
- Thorough, ambitious, and joined-up approach in relation to carbon reduction
- Enthusiastic approach to student engagement.

There were no non-conformances, but three Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs) were raised. These related to hazardous waste and internal documentation and procedures. Overall, the management system was found to meet the requirements and we were recommended continued certification to ISO14001:2015





BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY



With a community of almost 30,000 staff and students, we have a significant opportunity to drive positive change both at Herts and beyond. In 2022, 2 engagement coordinators joined the team to help drive our engagement initiatives.

Objective: Increase awareness among Staff and Students on the University approach to Environmental Sustainability.

We have set new targets to increase engagement year on year going forward, and have this year collected our baseline data against which we will measure progress. As the programme develops, we may also add additional metrics to make our engagement offering more relevant and meaningful.

КРІ	Number
Total engagement with staff through events, activities, and campaigns	208
Total engagement with students through events, activities, and campaigns	853
Number of events delivered throughout the academic year	57
Number of Green Impact teams	15
Number of staff in the Sustainability Network	64
Number of Sustainability Advocates	42
Advocate Hours Volunteered	480
Number of social media engagements (Instagram)	1325

In 2022-23 we ran a number of activities and initiatives to engage our community:

UH SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATES

In 2022 we launched the Sustainability Advocates programme, a volunteering scheme for students to learn new skills, meet link minded people, earn Go Herts points, and make a difference to our environment. Activities available through the programme include:

Enrichment:

- Environmental audit training
- Wildlife survey training
- Allotment sessions
- Sustainability workshop/talk

Empowerment:

- Green Teams audits
- Recycling audits
- Energy audits
- Wildlife surveys
- Litter picks
- Community outreach
- Assisting with awareness stalls

In 2022-23, 75 students signed up to be Sustainability Advocates. 42 of these volunteered at least 1 hour and in total the Sustainability Advocates completed over 480 hours of volunteering between them. Through the Advocate programme, a number of students were inspired to set up their own SU Environmental Society: Green Herts.



GO GREEN WEEK

In March 2023, the engagement team ran a Go Green week – a week of different activities and events to foster environmental behaviour change, particularly among students who are not already engaged with sustainability. The campaign was a great success, and across the week, 15 teams organised 18 events and engaged 315 people. The Instagram account also received 36 new followers and 3 new Sustainability Advocates were recruited.



STAFF NETWORK

In 2022 we re-launched our Sustainability Staff Network to provide an opportunity for like-minded staff to unite around a shared passion for environmental sustainability. The Network aims to:

- Provide a forum for staff to share and discuss ideas and advice on environmental issues.
- Increase awareness of environment and sustainability at UH and beyond.

By Aug 2023, the network had 68 members of staff, taking part in monthly activities ranging from workshops to informal get-togethers.

GREEN IMPACT

Green Impact was launched for a second time in January 2023. Over 5 months, teams across the university competed against each other to complete environmental and sustainability action across a number of activity areas. Over the course of the initiative, staff members completed over 226 actions on energy, waste, food, transport, and community engagement. Our Student Advocates were also able to take part by auditing the teams' submitted workbooks. 3 teams achieved a Green Impact Award, which was presented at the 2023 Environment and Sustainability Conference.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

On top of the above-mentioned programmes and initiatives, the engagement team also ran several campaigns throughout the year to engage staff and students, particularly those not already engaged through other means. These activities included to name a few:

- Litter picks
- Sustainable Christmas stall
- Plant-based taster sessions
- Sustainability games
- Movie nights
- Biodiversity walks
- Conservation sessions
- Fungi walks
- Photo competitions

We also collaborated with several schools, departments, and societies on sustainability projects, and were nominated in the SU x UH staff collaboration category at the SU Awards for the support we provided their teams and students.



E&S CONFERENCE 2023

In June 2023 we held our first Environment and Sustainability conference to launch our Environment & Sustainability Framework and Net Zero Action Plan. The day-long event was attended by over 120 delegates including internal members of staff and external stakeholders such as councillors, business leaders, and community groups. The conference was extremely well-received and helped secure our position as a regional sustainability hub.





TEACHING, LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR LIFE

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



Following the adoption of the new graduate attributes in 2022, the Herts Learning review has started mapping all programmes against the attributes, including "sustainability driven". Course leaders have also started developing sustainability links in at least two separate modules within the programme, a process that will continue into next year. This allows for clear, at-a-glance information, for students, prospective students, and the public about where being "sustainability-driven" is located in each programme how this attribute

is brought to life in the curriculum.

In addition to this work, our Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, which is taken in-service by those new to lecturing roles, has also been through this mapping process – with spotlights on "sustainability-driven" in both the first and last modules.

Outside of the formal education framework, we also offer a number voluntary CPD training options for staff wanting to learn more about environmental sustainability.

RESEARCH, ENTERPRISE AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Our Research, Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange Pathway helps drive sustainability through engagement with external partners such as councils, businesses and regional partnerships, and in 2022-23, the Enterprise and Business Development (EBD) team set the following commitments:

- Departmental Terms of Reference for a Sustainability Group and Action Plan
- Introduction to Sustainability at Herts and training opportunities to be included in EBD's induction pack from 23-24.
- Sustainability training to be discussed during appraisals
- IHASCO sustainability training to be added to our list of mandatory training.
- Sustainability-focused and trackers to be incorporated into the various departmental activities as appropriate.

Some of the activities delivered during this period include:

Curriculum and student experience:

- Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2022 with a day dedicated to exploring sustainability in business
- Green Careers Fair March 2023

Enterprise, research and global engagement

- Herts Sustainability Accelerator Jan 2022 Sept 2022
- Sustainability incorporated into the programme for Watford Young Entrepreneurs Programme
- Sustainability included in themes explored as part of the 12-month Incubator Programme.

Success Stories:

- First sustainability-focused R&D Accelerator Herts Sustainability Accelerator
- <u>University presentation at the Biz4biz Sustainability Conference</u>, outlining the University's holistic approach to Sustainability to a large business audience

Case Studies:

- Go Design Services Alumna-led business supported through the Herts Sustainability Accelerator
- Design Exchange Partnership programme led by the University's Zero Carbon Lab

Read more about our climate research and the important work they are doing here: <u>Climate change and</u> <u>Sustainability Research</u>

CONCLUSION

While 2022-23 saw progress in many areas relating to our environmental sustainability aims, it was also a significant year for establishing our commitments and putting in place the structures and mechanisms required to achieve our objectives and targets. With these now firmly embedded in strategic and operational decision-making across the university, future annual performance reports should not only report continued progress towards our current sustainability goals, but also set new targets in areas where baseline data or reporting metrics were previously unavailable. We will also continue to work closely with staff, students and the wider community to inspire a culture around sustainability, where everyone feels empowered to contribute to the lived experience of our sustainability agenda.

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