



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

***“Improving the environmental performance of our estate and infrastructure.”***

The University of Aberdeen is committed to constant improvement in its environmental performance as part of a wider commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

We recognise that in pursuing our educational and research objectives, there is a need to protect our immediate environment. We will do so by exercising proper control over all our activities, promoting the sustainable use of resources, discouraging wasteful practices, preventing pollution and reducing our carbon footprint.

We will encourage awareness of environmental responsibility among our staff and students, while promoting environmental best practice in the management of all our activities.

Our commitments, targets and actions are detailed below:

Energy, Emissions and Discharges	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to promote energy efficiency across the University campus; to minimise greenhouse gas emissions arising from our activities; to prevent pollution and manage discharges.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> International and national targets have been set for the reduction of carbon emissions from energy use in the long and medium term. These targets are set out in our Carbon Management Plan and inform our short-term target setting.</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work towards carbon emissions targets established in Carbon Management Plan 2016-2021</li> <li>• Increase the use of energy efficiency technologies to reduce energy consumption.</li> <li>• Raise staff awareness of the need to reduce energy consumption.</li> <li>• Heat occupied areas to a maximum of 20°C in the heating season.</li> <li>• Investigate the installation of basic energy efficiency, renewable and low-carbon technologies on and off site. Implement projects where appropriate with the aim of reducing carbon emissions arising from energy use.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement second Carbon Management Plan (2016-21) building on Scope 3 and behaviour change content.</li> <li>• Report annually on performance via the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties reporting scheme.</li> <li>• Adopt best practice in the field of environmental protection, adhere to all relevant codes of practice, and pro-actively manage carbon and other emissions that have an impact on the environment.</li> </ul>
Water	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to reduce water consumption arising from campus operations, promote water conservation and encourage measures that minimise wastage; to provide plumbed-in water supplies to reduce the demand for bottled water.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Fresh water is a valuable resource. The infrastructure required to treat, deliver and</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce water consumption by 2% year-on-year.</li> <li>• Embed measures to reduce water use in all new and refurbishment projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in technologies to reduce water consumption and to recycle water e.g. grey water harvesting.</li> <li>• Improve leak identification through effective water metering.</li> <li>• Install plumbed in water supplies to reduce (or eliminate) the consumption of bottled water.</li> </ul>

ultimately dispose of the fresh water we use is complex. Reducing water consumption is part of a rounded approach to resource efficiency.	
<b>Sustainable Buildings (New Build, Refurbishment &amp; Extension)</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to ensure that new build, extension and refurbishment projects reflect the institutional commitment to minimising environmental impacts; to embed high standards of energy and water efficiency and sustainable design in all capital projects.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Our built environment is among the most important areas in which to embed commitments to sustainability; by ensuring that our built environment supports sustainable development we set the campus context within which all sustainability issues can be considered.</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New build projects will achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' and will target a minimum EPC rating of 'A'.</li> <li>• Refurbishment projects will aim to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good', and project specific targets will be set to improve the EPC ratings of the buildings, aiming for a minimum rating of 'C' where possible.</li> <li>• Set project specific targets to match (or exceed) WRAP's guidelines for the total value of materials used that derive from recycled and reused content in the products and materials selected.</li> <li>• Develop in-house computer building modelling to assess energy performance and plan future energy efficiency measures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint BREEAM assessors to all Design Teams.</li> <li>• Embed consideration of 'life-cycle' costs, including energy and emissions, throughout the project.</li> <li>• Embed sustainability criteria on all project risk registers and report consistently on sustainability performance to all project boards.</li> <li>• Identify low-carbon performance, water reduction and energy efficiency as a priority in all construction projects.</li> <li>• Investigate, and incorporate where appropriate, renewable energy technologies in capital projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste Management</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to responsibly dispose of waste in accordance with legislation and University Codes of Practice, particularly the responsible disposal of hazardous waste; to make efficient use of resources; to review opportunities and implement measures to reduce the volume of waste generated; to increase the proportion of that waste which is reused and recycled in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy; to embed waste management into corporate policies and processes.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Scotland's Zero Waste Plan sets out the Scottish Government's vision for a zero-waste society. This vision describes a Scotland where all waste is seen as a resource; waste is minimised; valuable resources are not disposed of in landfills, and most waste is sorted, leaving only limited amounts to be treated. The plan is designed to exceed the requirements set out in the European Waste Directive.</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve recycling and reuse rates annually.</li> <li>• 70% Recycling by 2025 with a maximum of 5% to landfill (Scottish Government Target) [EU target 70% by 2030]</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify an area or specific building(s) that can be used as a test bed for targeted waste reduction and recycling initiatives.</li> <li>• Improve recycling facilities on campus and introduce 'Recycling on the Go' points externally.</li> <li>• Encourage waste reduction and recycling through effective tendering of waste management contracts.</li> </ul>
<b>Travel Planning</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to reduce carbon emissions from commuting and</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce carbon emissions from commuting by 25% from</li> </ul>

<p>fleet vehicles; to promote a wide range of environmentally and socially responsible transport methods and to encourage users to select the best transport choice for their circumstances; to ensure the best utilisation of University parking resources to continually improve and promote the range of low carbon transport options available to the University community.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Local and national government policy requires travel plans to be implemented by organisations that generate large volumes of commuting and business-related travel. Industry best practice is that these travel plans are in line with the PAS 500 benchmark.</p>	<p>2016 levels before 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have most commuter journeys of less than 5 miles made via active travel by 2022.</li> <li>• Monitor business travel and establish reduction targets if emissions continue to increase.</li> <li>• Reduce University vehicle emissions by 20% from 2016 levels before 2022.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct biennial travel surveys to monitor travel and report on progress.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor and report on e.g. via PBCCD on business travel and fleet vehicle emissions.</li> <li>• Include business travel in scope as part of the institutional carbon footprint for 2016/2021.</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to protect and promote biodiversity on the University campus.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> We seek to manage our estate in a way that allows a wide variety of plant and animal species to thrive, as well as supporting public engagement with and academic research into biodiversity.</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, by the end of 2020, an action plan to support and promote campus biodiversity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify those with formal responsibility for overseeing biodiversity issues.</li> <li>• Establish appropriate targets for Biodiversity.</li> <li>• Investigate the establishment of a Biodiversity Working Group to help steer biodiversity issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Staff and Student Engagement</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to raise awareness of sustainability and environmental issues with University staff, students and other stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Although technical solutions and the careful management of operational practice represent important strands of activity, the need to engage our various communities in these issues is also vital. We will encourage all staff and students to recognise the responsibility they have for using resources as efficiently as possible.</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote initiatives and awareness raising measures that support all strands of policy.</li> <li>• Through staff surveys establish a baseline for awareness of institutional sustainability initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a scheme to encourage staff engagement with sustainability issues e.g. NUS Green Impacts.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate advice and guidance on all aspects of environmental sustainability.</li> <li>• Maintain a strong campus presence promoting environmental sustainability.</li> <li>• Work with the AUSA to support its efforts to engage the student body in sustainability issues.</li> <li>• Encourage colleagues to undertake an online training module to raise awareness of these issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Reporting</b>	
<p><b>Commitments:</b> to provide university management and other stakeholders with regular and appropriate reporting on environmental performance.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Alongside the formal reporting mechanism put in place as part of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties, we intend to improve internal reporting of environmental sustainability issues and raise</p>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report quarterly to University Management Group on sustainability performance.</li> <li>• Report annually as part of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties reporting scheme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and monitor high-level Key Performance Indicators for environmental sustainability.</li> <li>• Regular review, through the Advisory Group on Sustainability and Social Responsibility, of targets and policy</li> </ul>

awareness of performance.

and of reports detailing progress towards those targets.

<b>Metadata</b>			
<b>Title</b>	Environmental Sustainability Policy Statement		
<b>Author / Creator</b>	Original draft: Fraser Lovie, Policy Adviser (PPG)		
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<b>Audience</b>	All		
<b>Related documents</b>	SSR Strategy and SSR Policy. This policy replaced earlier stand-alone Environmental, Waste, Utilities and Sustainable Buildings policies in a consolidated policy that also covers Emissions and Discharges, Biodiversity, Staff & Student Engagement, and Reporting.		
<b>Subject / Description</b>	A statement detailing the University's commitment and associated targets to minimise its impact on the environment and to promote environmental awareness.		
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	An EIA was undertaken for the associated SSR Strategy.		
<b>Section</b>	Estates & Facilities		
<b>Theme</b>	Sustainability & Social Responsibility		