We will become a university where sustainability is truly embedded through knowledge, engagement, collaboration and innovation. Each and every one of our staff and students will understand the principles of sustainability – it will be an integral part of our operations and will bring about positive, sustainable change for the future.

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POSITIVE CHANGE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The University of Leeds has once again proved its commitment to a sustainable future through a whole series of activities, innovations, research and policies. There have been some challenges – political uncertainties and a growing campus – but sustainability has remained a key priority for us throughout.

I am particularly proud of the fact that, through continuing to integrate sustainability into our curriculum, we are graduating students who are responsible global citizens. As a University, we have an important role to increase knowledge and opportunity for the benefit of society. Our graduates are testament to this; they understand global challenges, and are eager to be part of the solutions.

I am looking forward to yet another year of challenging ourselves, and others, to be more sustainable. Another year of innovation, behaviour change, outstanding research and collaboration to ensure the University of Leeds plays a leading role in building a sustainable future.

— Alan Langlands
Vice Chancellor, University of Leeds
That's why we're thinking way beyond 2020 to our vision for a sustainable university in 2050. Our vision has been created for the University of Leeds by the University community. But we don't exist in isolation; we take a wider view of everything we do, from the effects on our local communities to the impact on the world.

As a result of this global outlook, we are also ensuring that our vision and commitments contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. Throughout the report, we have linked the relevant UN SDGs to our four themes to demonstrate how our approach aligns with this wider set of global commitments.

WHAT DOES OUR VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITY ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

Here we outline the characteristics we will have, the ways we will work, and the priorities we will focus on:

- All of our students know and understand sustainability.
- We have an open, accessible campus that is interconnected with the city.
- Our campus is a test bed for new ideas and an exemplar of sustainable design.
- We are a zero carbon, zero waste institution.
- Sharing space, equipment, skills and knowledge across the institution is the norm.
- Our research addresses the grand challenges of sustainability and is accessible to all.
- Partnership and collaboration, globally and locally, are at our heart.
- All staff have the capacity and knowledge to make sustainable decisions and this is the norm.
- We're an inspiration in the city and our campus and culture are used as a blueprint for other organisations to follow.
- Challenging the status quo and making a real difference are the norm.
- We're an open, accessible campus that is interconnected with the city.
- Our supply chain is sustainable and we continuously strive for further improvement and innovation.
- Our education is excellent and is accessible to all.
- We are an equitable and open employer that creates opportunities across the spectrum of our activities.
- Partnership and collaboration, globally and locally, are at our heart.
- Challenging the status quo and making a real difference are the norm.
- We're an inspiration in the city and our campus and culture are used as a blueprint for other organisations to follow.
- All staff have the capacity and knowledge to make sustainable decisions and this is the norm.
- We're a zero carbon, zero waste institution.

Our Sustainability Strategy sets out the commitments we have made to 2020. But we know that a longer term vision is vital; a sustainable future for all requires a change in behaviour and a combined effort forever.
Q: Is sustainability at Leeds all about what happens on campus?

A: Targets have been missed in some areas, why is this?

In our Sustainability Strategy we set ourselves stretch commitments, which were always going to be challenging to meet. However, there are a number of reasons why we have missed some of these. The physical changes we’ve seen on campus were not always known or accounted for in our initial targets, but it’s encouraging that sustainability has been integrated into these. In some cases, the way we collect data has changed, which has affected results. For example, we now measure carbon associated with our generating station as inputs rather than outputs. It may seem like a small shift, but it generates higher – yet more honest – figures.

Q: What changes have you seen in that time?

A: What’s in this report?

As a university, our core purpose is to increase knowledge and opportunity for the betterment of society. To do this, we have made firm commitments to take our economic, social, environmental and cultural responsibilities seriously.

The themes set out in our Sustainability Strategy, and subsequent Annual Reports, reflect the economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts of the University of Leeds. Our targets and commitments reflect the issues that we know we can have a direct and indirect impact upon – our material topics that have, or can create, a real difference.

Although some of these will have a financial impact, our materiality goes beyond that to environmental, social and cultural impacts. That’s why you’ll find commitments ranging from carbon reduction and resource efficiency to research and volunteering.

To determine these materiality issues, we engaged with our staff and students. Working together we determined the actions and commitments we could make to bring about the most impact across the university and beyond to local, national and international communities. These are reviewed regularly to ensure we stay relevant, impactful and able to make a significant difference.
EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH COLLABORATION

In the year following our Sustainability Strategy, we focused on making sure we had the management systems, policies and reporting structures in place to make sustainability a reality, right across the University. These achievements – including ISO 14001, our procurement and construction standards – are now influencing decision making and allowing individuals to make a difference in their fields.

In the examples that follow, we show how the University of Leeds is leading the way in innovative approaches to embedding sustainability in our Schools, Faculties and Services, looking at sustainability as a whole as making sure that everyone has the opportunity to play their part.

OUR RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of active Green Impact Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESULTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accreditation to ISO 14001

Flexible Framework Level 4 Achieved

Governance Review Completed

Number of IT suppliers engaged through Electronics Watch

Due to the number of years we have been running Green Impact our teams are now looking for something different to challenge them. In 17/18 we will be looking at alternatives.

To get the most value from Electronics Watch (EW), we have decided to focus on embedded EW contractual requirements at the tender stage. There was only one new tender during this period, and we continued to monitor our existing suppliers through the EW framework.

Number of people attending sustainability events

Due to the number of years we have been running Green Impact our teams are now looking for something different to challenge them. In 17/18 we will be looking at alternatives.

Linked Sustainability Development Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</th>
<th>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</th>
<th>13 CLIMATE ACTION</th>
<th>15 LIFE ON LAND</th>
<th>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,099</td>
<td>3,409</td>
<td>7,402</td>
<td>3,409</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This year, there are six Student Sustainability Architects to the student body, their opinions and priorities. Architects is just one part of our student opportunities at the University. The chance to be a Student Sustainability Architect means that PCB can now print using toner on Revive 100% Recycled Carbon Balanced Art Papers. It was a success, and means that PCB can now print all litho and digital work on recycled paper, which equates to around 800,000 sheets of All every year.

This is a great example of how everyone at the University of Leeds is involved in the sustainability agenda. How each individual is working towards the policies we've created, and how we can devise innovative, sustainable solutions with global impacts.

Our Student Sustainability Architects are part of a unique programme to increase student involvement in sustainability activities with the city of Leeds and provide the opportunities for them to lead on key initiatives that reach out to staff and students across the University. The students benefit from year-long, in-depth, paid work experience. They are embedded in the Sustainability Service, developing their knowledge and skills and enhancing knowledge and capacity at the University. The chance to be a Student Sustainability Architect is just one part of our student opportunities package, and provides us with a direct connection to the student body, their opinions and priorities. This year, there are six Student Sustainability Architects in part-time paid positions.

They are directly supporting three projects in line with the Sustainability Strategy:

1. Developing a Sustainability Volunteers programme

Gloria Kooji and Markus Mulhacre have scoped out the opportunities that volunteers can get involved with throughout the year. They developed a new online space for people to register to volunteer along with dedicated social media pages where volunteers could interact and share opportunities and experiences. They also handled the logistics of recording volunteers’ experiences to better tailor opportunities to students’ skills and interests. All of this work has laid the foundations for an official Sustainability Volunteers Programme and increased the number of volunteers who are engaged in sustainability topics.

2. Increasing student understanding of sustainability within the curriculum and research

Matthew Morton and Emilia Weaver focused on raising awareness of how students can embed sustainability into their studies. Specifically, this meant mapping dissertation proposal deadlines across schools so that the Sustainability Service could allocate resources and coordinate with as many students as possible. They were also involved in organising the University’s inaugural Student Sustainability Conference (see ‘Building Knowledge and Commitment’ for more), and creating a special recognition award for dissertations at the annual Sustainability Awards, which highlighted not only the most innovative and original ideas, but also captured the breadth of sustainability research from across our faculties.

3. Increasing ethical procurement and Fairtrade awareness across the University

As we continue to embed sustainability into all of our schools, departments and services, this year has seen the architects working across not just the Sustainability Service but the University Catering Services too. Two architects – Omprakash Ashrani and George Midddlesom – carried out a campus-wide audit of our food and drink outlets, recording the number and type of Fairtrade products available. The results were used to identify any gaps where we could offer more options and led to a trial of eight new Fairtrade products. They also ran an awareness campaign around theUniversity’s commitment to Fairtrade, organised events as part of Fairtrade Fortnight and a lively debate discussing ‘How far is Fairtrade?’ Extending the Student Sustainability Architects to other services has proved to be a real success and we’re working with other teams to create opportunities in other areas.

The Tree Project is part of the University’s Leeds Ecosystem Atmosphere & Forest (iLeAF) Centre that was looking to pilot a natural capital project, and the Facilities Directorate was looking to develop its understanding of natural capital in operational decision-making and deliver the Biodiversity Action Plan. We developed the Tree project, gained match-funding from the United Bank of Carbon and worked alongside our Estates Services, to make sure they were on board and would benefit from the project.

At the heart of the project is a survey of all the trees on our campus – recording species, height, canopy cover, condition and health. We held training sessions with Treecomastics, the leading organisation in measuring and valuing the benefit of urban trees, to make sure staff and student volunteers were fully armed with the knowledge and equipment they needed.

To date, over 800 trees have been surveyed, representing 100 different species. This is about 75% of the trees on campus, and we’re continuing to survey the remaining 25% to provide a complete set of results. All of the data collected is being fed into i-Tree Eco, a software suite specifically created to determine the value of urban trees and the key factors that can affect their performance (a report and treatment guidelines for the University, academic papers, seminars, and a living lab case study). When the data has been analysed, it will provide us with financial values for carbon storage and sequestration, pollution removal, runoff avoided and energy services that the trees on campus provide.

Plans are already coming together for the second phase of this Tree project, working with students from the Centre for Doctoral Training in Bioenergy to focus on understanding the benefits and losses of removing and replacing trees, researching staff and student perspectives of campus green spaces, and providing recommendations to our operational teams.

Ultimately, the Tree project helps us to meet our Biodiversity Standard and deliver our Biodiversity Action Plan to improve the way we manage green space. It’s also a scalable project, making it a perfect project to trial across the city with Leeds City Council, starting with the Leeds Forest Observatory in Middleton Park.

You can discover more about this year’s report and sustainability at the University of Leeds online:

Sustainability-Leeds.ac.uk

This year’s report and Sustainability-Leeds.ac.uk

The Sheffield School of Architecture and Built Environment

The West One building, where the University sits, is a BREEAM Very Good building. The University has set targets to be carbon neutral by 2030 and is making significant progress towards this goal. However, there is still much work to be done.

Therefore, the West One building has been recognised for its commitment to sustainability and has been awarded the BREEAM Very Good certification. This certification recognises buildings that are sustainable, energy efficient, and have a positive impact on the environment. The West One building is a great example of how the University is working towards its sustainability goals and how we can all play a part in making our environment a better place.

The University of Leeds is a member of the UN Sustainability framework, and is committed to embedding sustainability into all aspects of its operations. The University has set a target to become carbon neutral by 2030 and is making significant progress towards this goal. The University has also set targets to reduce its water and waste footprint, and is working to improve the sustainability of its supply chain.

The University has also been recognised for its sustainability efforts, with the West One building being awarded the BREEAM Very Good certification. This certification recognises buildings that are sustainable, energy efficient, and have a positive impact on the environment. The University has also been recognised as a leading institution in the field of sustainability, with the West One building being awarded the BREEAM Very Good certification.
As a university, building the knowledge and capacity of our students and staff, as well as with the city and wider society, is key to how we help build a sustainable society. Through teaching, research, facilities, partnerships and volunteering we have both local and global impact, and we develop, share and promote sustainability across our campus, city and beyond.

**OUR COMMITMENTS**

- We will work across University departments to build capacity and share best practice on sustainable change.
- We will equip all our staff with sustainability skills.
- We will develop external links to enhance knowledge and capacity.
- We will support and promote research that examines the issues relating to sustainability.
- We will integrate sustainability into learning programmes and ensure all our students understand the importance of sustainability.

**BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY**

As a university, building the knowledge and capacity of our students and staff, as well as with the city and wider society, is key to how we help build a sustainable society. Through teaching, research, facilities, partnerships and volunteering we have both local and global impact, and we develop, share and promote sustainability across our campus, city and beyond.

**OUR RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15/16 RESULTS</th>
<th>16/17 TARGET</th>
<th>RESULTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>5,768</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,700</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>3,985</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>873</td>
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<td></td>
<td>531.5</td>
<td>600</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49.8 M</td>
<td>243 M*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77,684</td>
<td>90,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the overall target was missed, an increase was seen. We are looking into the way we communicate sustainability module options to students.

- Number of students completing sustainability modules
- Number of modules relating to sustainability
- Number of student hours spent on sustainability initiatives
- Staff training hours completed
- Research Income (£)
- Webpage views

**LINKED SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- [UN 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure](#)
- [UN 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities](#)
- [UN 13 Climate Action](#)
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CURRICULUM

Our aim is that all students will graduate from the University of Leeds knowing what sustainability is. A key part of this is integrating sustainability into the curriculum, giving all students the opportunity to study and to gain experience of developing sustainable solutions. The Sustainability Service works in collaboration with academic colleagues to develop focused teaching experiences that provide sustainability knowledge and make it relevant to real world settings. There are lots of examples of this integration, some of which are:

The Creating Sustainable Futures Discovery Theme – available to all students, whatever their discipline – ran twice during this academic year. The modules in this theme allow students to really get stuck into the challenges facing local and global society – the environmental, social and economic issues that shape our world, and what we can do to manage these.

This year, the projects looked at everything from assessing our lifestyle storage capacities and accessibility, to gaining a better understanding of people’s perceptions of the University’s impacts on society. Some of the key findings included the fact that 47% of the 269 teaching and communal spaces assessed had lights on when not in use, 50% of people asked understood the importance of Fairtrade, and 89% of people surveyed believed the communal spaces assessed had lights on when not in use. The data collected is a great source of information for the Sustainability Service too, and is fed into University-wide reports and audits.

This year, sustainability was the focus of the assignment project for Masters students taking the Commercial and Professional Skills module at Leeds University Business School. Students took on the role of internal consultants, tasked with reviewing student and staff awareness of sustainability initiatives here at the University, and coming up with recommendations to increase awareness and get more people involved in sustainability activities.

Over in the School of Medicine, we ran a two-week Sustainability in Healthcare module, which gives students the opportunity to develop specialist knowledge and understanding of the research process. The Sustainability in Healthcare module outlined what sustainability is, why it’s important, and how they can utilise what they have learnt in their future careers.

When it comes to dissertations, we understand that there is a whole world of subjects, issues and approaches for our students to tackle. We held pop-up dissertation workshops in May to help with these decisions. We were able to advise students on how to connect their area of study with other disciplines, explain the potential of sustainability research and inspire them to use their dissertation as a way to create solutions. It was also a chance to challenge students to critically evaluate and question the current thinking on sustainability, how it fundamentally affects global challenges, and provide the space to challenge the direction of their own research.

This directly feeds into our commitment to support and promote research that examines the issues related to sustainability.

And to recognise excellence in dissertations, we also added a Sustainability Dissertation Award in the Building Knowledge and Capacity category of our annual Sustainability Awards. In 2017, the award went to James Patrick Glozier-Ochiltree from the School of Earth and Environment for his dissertation: Reworking the例行，an investigation into how social accounting mechanisms can help community-led renewable energy projects (CUREP) to be better evaluated, measured and professed their success.

SUSTAINABILITY IN FOCUS

In February 2017, we held the inaugural Student Conference on Sustainable Futures – Sustainable Perspectives on Future Challenges. Forty-five undergraduate and postgraduate students presented their final year research, the 150 staff on a wide range of topics from the potential of solar energy for communities in developing countries of Africa, investigating the impact of climate change on our rainfall patterns, and extinction risk in the marine realm to an eco-friendly app to extend the life of clothes and investigating sustainability disclosure in Ugandan print media. There was a real buzz on the day, with an exhibition, performance art session and chances to exchange ideas, ask questions and gain valuable insight into what’s going on across the University. The conference drew representation from all faculties at the University, promoting the interdisciplinary approach and collaboration we believe in. By bringing this next generation of researchers and innovators together, we hope to kickstart the creation of new solutions for a sustainable future.

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SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE

In last year’s Annual Report we said that we wanted to develop a full-year training programme to underpin our vision that all staff will understand what sustainability means and how it is related to the University. Our training module – Sustainability in Practice – does just that. Available to all University of Leeds staff, the course explores what sustainability is, why it is important and what practical actions can be taken to make sure the University has a positive environmental, social and economic impact.

The course is available both online and face-to-face and examined a wide range of scenarios. And the focus on sustainability doesn’t stop when the course is over – at the end of the module, each participant is asked to suggest a personal commitment that can contribute to positive change.

The new training module was released in August 2017, with an initial uptake of 373 staff. Although this represents only 5% of all staff, every single one made a personal commitment to make a positive change, so it’s a great start. We also felt a little under our target of 582 staff training hours, with 531 hours completed. This was an optimistic target, somewhat hampered by the delay in rolling out the online training. However, we’re confident that we’ll make up the uptake and creating more in-depth training to help staff embed sustainability into everyday working practices.

"Sustainability is important to me and here at the University of Leeds it is inspiring and encouraging to see the ongoing commitment to knowledge building initiatives." 
Amy Parsons, student

FACING THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

At the University of Leeds we’re proactive in tackling global challenges head on, challenging the status quo and promote working across disciplines to find innovative solutions to global challenges. And the newly launched Priestley International Centre for Climate is a great example of this. The Centre is dedicated to promoting a whole range of scenarios. The course is available both online and face-to-face and examined a whole range of scenarios. And the focus on sustainability doesn’t stop when the course is over – at the end of the module, each participant is asked to suggest a personal commitment that can contribute to positive change. The new training module was released in August 2017, with an initial uptake of 373 staff. Although this represents only 5% of all staff, every single one made a personal commitment to make a positive change, so it’s a great start. We also felt a little under our target of 582 staff training hours, with 531 hours completed. This was an optimistic target, somewhat hampered by the delay in rolling out the online training. However, we’re confident that we’ll make up the uptake and creating more in-depth training to help staff embed sustainability into everyday working practices.

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THE CURRICULUM
WHERE IDEAS AND COLLABORATION THRIVE

Leeds Living Lab
Accessible
Enhancing the environment
Infrastructure
Engagement
Partnership
Leadership
Influence
A more sustainable University
Started May 2017
People
Processes
Where knowledge grows
Collaboration
Leeds City Council
Interdisciplinary
Building knowledge & capacity
Outreach
Awareness
Seedcorn funding
Sustainable operations
Learning Research impact +
Health Wellbeing
Delivering mutual benefit to all stakeholders: Furthering research and driving innovation. Delivering benefits for all our stakeholders, through research, innovation and sustainable improvements.
A virtuous cycle of sustainability-related research, student education and University operational change – driving continual and sustainable improvement.
iTree Leeds: Campus Survey is an excellent example of collaborative working to enhance understanding and create real change between the Facilities Directorate, Faculty of Environment, Leeds4Trees and our staff and student volunteers.

A WHOLE WORLD OF SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

The critical outcome for all the pilot projects in the Living Lab is the fact that they produce innovative and transformational solutions to real world problems, and that these solutions are scalable and transferable beyond the University. From climate change research and inspiring behaviour change to enhancing biodiversity, the Living Lab opens the door to a whole world of sustainable solutions.

As an educational institution, the Living Lab is encouraging us to think and operate differently; to take the theory from the classroom and apply it to real world situations. Funding, feasibility, research, testing and delivery are all undertaken by the project team, with results shared beyond the University to provide the evidence for real change.

You can apply to the Living Lab at any time by completing the application form online: sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/the-living-lab

Launched this year, the Living Lab is an exciting University-wide programme that uses our University as a test-bed for the co-creation of sustainable solutions. It relies on collaboration between students, academic and operational staff.

Providing seedcorn and match funding for interdisciplinary research projects and supporting students to deliver their innovative projects.

Scalable & transferable

Impacts are scalable and transferable to other organisations and to cities, addressing our global challenges such as climate, culture and energy, in the UK and internationally.

Open to explore

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The critical outcome for all the pilot projects in the Living Lab is the fact that they produce innovative and transformational solutions to real world problems, and that those solutions are scalable and transferable to the city and beyond. From climate change research and inspiring behaviour change to enhancing biodiversity, the Living Lab opens the door to a whole world of sustainable solutions.

As an educational institution, the Living Lab is encouraging us to think and operate differently; to take the theory from the classroom and apply it to real world situations. Funding, feasibility, research, testing and delivery can all contribute to the project teams, with final reports sent to the university to provide the evidence for real change.

You can apply to the Living Lab at any time by completing the application form online: sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/the-living-lab
At the University of Leeds our core purpose is to increase knowledge and opportunity for the betterment of society. We have made a firm commitment to take our economic, social, environmental and cultural responsibilities seriously and we’re continually exploring opportunities to work local communities, organisations and partners. These partnerships often go beyond the City Region. We exist in a global society and are committed to influencing sustainability and having a positive impact beyond our campus.

But it’s not just about sharing our own knowledge and skills. Working with local, national and international partners provides the perfect opportunity to learn from them, understanding the challenges they have and working together to respond to them. It’s something we encourage all our staff and students to do – creating truly global citizens who understand the role they can play in a sustainable future.

We will build external engagement to further develop internal and external capacity and knowledge, and influence wider policies.

We will lead by example, share best practice, learn from others and ensure our research is accessible.

We will take our responsibility to society seriously, as an employer, good neighbour and in creating opportunities.

We will support our students to be responsible citizens and an active part of society, both locally and globally.

We will create a welcoming, culturally and environmentally vibrant campus.

**OUR COMMITMENTS**

**LINKED SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**OUR RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>15/16 RESULTS</th>
<th>16/17 TARGET / RESULTS</th>
<th>17/18 TARGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring hours</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>INCREASE 500</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students Volunteering</td>
<td>3,848</td>
<td>INCREASE 3,704</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees at public events on campus</td>
<td>61,299</td>
<td>MAINTAIN 64,472</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries of Educational Engagement activity</td>
<td>119,785</td>
<td>MAINTAIN 129,364</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third sector organisations worked with</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household visits within student citizenship project</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,890</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We were close to last year’s target, in the coming year we will review our communications and support to students in this area.

We will support our students to be responsible citizens and an active part of society, both locally and globally.
Showcasing the relevance of research

We have some incredible research happening here at the University of Leeds, and it’s important to us that the activities and benefits are shared with the communities of Leeds.

Our annual Be Curious event is just one of the ways we do this – a day where we open our doors for the public to discover and join in with our research. In 2017, the theme was ‘Leeds and the Community’, highlighting all the ways that the University’s research is relevant to the local community.

The day was filled with a programme of guided tours, exhibitions, talks, stalls and children’s activities. Parkinson Court was a hive of activity where visitors could explore free interactive zones: Science and Engineering, Culture, Climate, Water, Cities, and Health.

Sustainability was a key theme, showcasing everything from how the climate of Yorkshire has changed over the last 20,000 years and how Leeds is becoming a sustainable city to ‘Wetropolis’, a live demonstration showing the effects of extreme rainfall on our region.

Our Be Curious events are a great way of creating an accessible and friendly university. They also encourage education equality – showing everyone in the local community that we’re a friendly, accessible campus where they can come to engage in learning and sustainability. For many people, they may not have considered a university career or education, and our Be Curious days are just one of the ways we encourage education equality – showing everyone in the local community that we’re a friendly, accessible campus where they can come to engage in learning and sustainability.

One letter at a time

At a time when email and social media seem like the primary way we get in touch with each other, Dr Georgina Binnie, who our Writing Back project is bucking that trend.

It’s the brainchild of Dr Georgina Binnie, who our Writing Back project is bucking that trend.

In the words of one of the older letter writers, “The Writing Back project has allowed me to write to someone whom I might not have considered a university career or education.”

She decided to set up the Writing Back project, so that other people could have the same experience, while helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation in both demographics.

Writing Back is an intergenerational pen pal project, matching students with elderly Leeds residents to exchange letters, memories, local knowledge and photographs to give the other an insight into their lives. It may seem like a small act of kindness, but it can transform someone’s day. After all, there’s something lovely about receiving a letter, seeing the effort that someone has put in to get in touch and share a little piece of their lives.

Issues of loneliness and social isolation are found in both younger and older people. In 2016, research from Age UK found that there were 1.2 million chronically lonely older people in the UK, and a 2010 study from the Mental Health Foundation found that 36% of 18-34-year-olds worried about feeling lonely.

In the words of one of the older letter writers, “The Writing Back project has allowed me to write to someone whom I would otherwise never have come across. It is interesting to exchange letters with a much younger person, to hear her views, discover her interests and share topics of ‘written conversation’ without necessarily having met one another.”

To date, there have been over 280 people in the programme, with many of them building long-lasting friendships.

A positive impact on the local community

We have a solid civic duty to play an active part in the City, and by doing so the University of Leeds can make a lasting positive impact way beyond our campus. Building on our Community Mentoring project, our Positive Impact Partners – or PIP – programme is based on exactly that belief. Our region boasts a brilliantly active third sector, community and not-for-profit organisations.

We devised PIP to link resources with local need. Collaborating with third sector partners brings together a wealth of skills, knowledge and research expertise to create new projects that build capacity and create positive social change.

The PIP programme is unique. Critically, PIP is open to all University staff, individuals in the third sector, charitable organisations, state funded schools and any other social-benefit organisations. Working with organisations beyond our campus not only allows us to provide support for their projects, it’s also great for staff in terms of personal and professional development.

Once the partnerships have been made, the Sustainability Service supports PIP partners through workshops, training, networking and events. Through these, partners benefit from the advice, experiences and best practice of others involved in PIP.

This year, 28 third sector organisations have been involved in PIP. These provide a wide range of services including education, conservation, social services, health, faith, family, housing and recreation. It’s a hugely vibrant and innovative sector that is dedicated to improving the lives of people in Leeds – we are proud to be in a position to work with them through PIP to increase their capacity to do good and create sustainable futures.

No two PIP matches are the same; the specialists, needs and priorities of the organisation and our staff create unique support programmes that ensure everyone benefits.

Here are just three examples of PIP in action:

2. “Writing Back promotes the University’s vision of building positive partnerships by matching students as pen pals with older, Yorkshire residents. Since 2014, Writing Back has been generating friendships between different age groups and tackling loneliness.” Dr Georgina Binnie, Writing Back
3. “We’re pleased to be given the opportunity to assist one of our students. It was a fascinating insight into what can be achieved by the collaboration of our staff and students. To continue to create an impressive artwork, and witness the process from the students perspective.” — Taff, Cleaning Services

In Wakefield, PIP matched the charity Wakefield District Sight Aid with Kathryn Watkinson, Research Impact Manager from Leeds University Business School to help develop a business plan, which resulted in an extra £8,000 from a successful grant application.

Three team members from the educational charity IntoUniversity were matched with our staff to build relationships across the University and benefit from more ways for us to work together in the community.

A match between Ben Williams from the Research and Innovation Service and International Mixed Ability Sport has seen them expand their sporting and social inclusion activities across to Europe.
The University of Leeds is getting bigger. With this growth comes the challenge of meeting our carbon, water, biodiversity and resource reduction targets. But these are challenges we are ready to tackle, and having policies in place – including our Reuse, Recycling and Waste Standard, Sustainable Construction Standard, Carbon Management Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan – help through robust guidance, both internally and for our partners.

At the heart of this theme is the circular economy – closing the loop, doing more with the resources we have, getting the maximum value from them, and considering wider social impacts. From increasing the number of solar panels and electric vehicle charging points to enhancing biodiversity and reducing waste, we have had some encouraging results under this theme.

### OUR COMMITMENTS

- We will reduce our consumption of goods and services.
- We will embed sustainability into the procurement process.
- We will reduce the amount of waste we produce.
- We will enhance biodiversity on campus.
- We will use water efficiently and reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.
- We will become low carbon University, through energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions.
- We will foster a staff and student body where sustainable travel is the norm.

### MAKING THE MOST OF RESOURCES

#### OUR RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>15/16 RESULTS</th>
<th>16/17 TARGET</th>
<th>16/17 RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total waste generated (tonnes)</strong></td>
<td>1,618</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tonnage through the reuse system</strong></td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td>107.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total carbon: reduction in carbon emissions</strong></td>
<td>45,524</td>
<td></td>
<td>44,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total water: change on previous year (M³)</strong></td>
<td>697,754</td>
<td></td>
<td>680,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of sustainable travel (staff)</strong></td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of sustainable travel (student)</strong></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### LINKED SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- [1] Peace and justice for all
- [2] Zero hunger
- [3] Good health and well-being
- [6] Clean water and sanitation
- [7] Affordable and clean energy
- [8] Decent work and economic growth
- [9] Industry innovation and infrastructure
- [16] Life below water
- [17] Life on land

*DECREASE*: 
- 1,618 tonnes of waste generated.
- 102 tonnes of material through reuse.
- 45,524 tonnes of carbon emission reduction.
- 697,754 M³ of water change.
- 73% percentage of sustainable travel.
- 95% percentage of sustainable travel.

*MAINTAIN*: 
- 1,544 tonnes of waste generated.
- 107.1 tonnes of material through reuse.
- 44,899 tonnes of carbon emission reduction.
- 680,723 M³ of water change.
- 74% percentage of sustainable travel.
- 96% percentage of sustainable travel.

*HIT TARGET*: 
- 1,517 tonnes of waste generated.
- 60.72 tonnes of material through reuse.
- 48,479 tonnes of carbon emission reduction.
- 697,232 M³ of water change.
- 75% percentage of sustainable travel.
- 95% percentage of sustainable travel.

*EXCEEDED TARGET*: 
- 107.1 tonnes of material through reuse.

*EXCEEDED TARGET*: 
- 60.72 tonnes of material through reuse.

*MISSED TARGET*: 
- 697,232 M³ of water change.
- 75% percentage of sustainable travel.
- 95% percentage of sustainable travel.
Biodiversity in Development

The University of Leeds has made a commitment to becoming an exemplar of urban biodiversity. We’re delivering the green ideas within our biodiversity standard, which recognises the value of biodiversity for wildlife, but also wellbeing and health. It’s an ambitious aim, and made more challenging due to our development programme and the land use changes this brings.

The first challenge to this aim came in 2016/17, when an existing car park was identified as the site of our new Nexus innovation centre. The site was home to 90 mature trees. These trees were removed as part of the urban area alongside a busy dual carriageway and formed the end of a green corridor into the heart of Leeds city centre.

The loss of these trees was unavoidable, but it gave us the opportunity to develop a long-term strategy to offset this impact. Using a bespoke offsetting tool developed here at the University, we made sure that 99 trees were planted as part of the landscaping work, with another 119 trees planted on the wider campus.

In addition to planting trees, we looked at wider management of areas of groundspace. The site of the removed trees offered an opportunity to create a new green corridor into the city centre. We worked with colleagues at Leeds City Council and the University are now using this insight in the planning of management and intervention activities.

A recent example is a collaborative project between the University of Leeds and Leeds City Council to evaluate the many interventions that have been implemented to improve recycling rates. The project focuses on three areas with consistently low recycling rates compared to Leeds as a whole: Harehills, Headingley and Middleton. The aim is to identify opportunities for future interventions and to contribute to research and evidence on recycling behaviour.

The research team used data from Leeds City Council on recycling rates, contamination of bins, recycling quantity and rejection rates for these three areas. The data was linked with other census data for socio-demographics, the index of multiple deprivation and green and ethical attitudes data from Caloncredit. The data was analysed to establish any relationships among intelligence from focus groups to develop a better understanding of recycling behaviour. Leeds City Council and the University are now using this insight in the planning of management and intervention activities.

CITY LIVING LAB

The City Living Lab brings together University colleagues, civil society, business and government to co-produce transformational solutions to real-world sustainability challenges, using the city of Leeds as a test-bed.

Our vision is a city where ideas and collaboration thrive, where the integration of sustainability enhances the value of the city, and where everyone is given the knowledge and skills to be more sustainable.

As part of our Carbon Management Plan, we actively look for projects that reduce our energy consumption and, in turn, our carbon emissions. Fume cupboards have notoriously high energy consumption, and the fume extraction system in our Chemistry Building was identified as something that could be improved to deliver significant carbon savings.

The system served a number of research and teaching laboratories, and each housed its own fume cupboard extraction system. These fume cupboards discharged into one of six fume dilution systems on the roof. There was a mix of constant and variable volume extraction systems, consuming an estimated 1300MWh of energy a year. Those were replaced with high efficiency fans, ventilation ducts were consolidated and an intelligent control system was installed which links to the external conditions.

This project relied on the University working with delivery partners, staff and student lab users to model fume discharge dispersion patterns. Only by doing this could we let discharge velocity at suitable levels to ensure that fume cupboard extracts are discharged safely but not at excessive rates.

And we are already starting to see the impact — monthly energy use has decreased by almost 50,000kWh, with annual savings of around 600,000kWh. This has resulted in annual cost savings of over £43,000 and carbon reduction of 242 tonnes. The success of this project means we can build the case for future energy saving projects across the University.

Fumes, Fans and Carbon Plans

Alongside the new £5 million Brownlee Centre on the University’s Bodington playing fields is a 1.6km cycle track. As one of the longest in the country, it’s the perfect traffic-free cycling environment for staff, students and the wider community, and great for recreation, coaching and competitions.

But in order to create this public amenity, the area needed a drainage solution to cope with current and future weather events. The initial plan was for a standard drainage and storage tank. However, the team came up with another solution, one that would create an attractive feature on site and improve local biodiversity. That solution? A balancing pond as part of a wider sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS).

Balancing ponds work by controlling the flow of water – storing floodwater and releasing it only when the risk of further flooding has passed. The pond at Brownlee has the added bonus of enhancing the environment, with new wildlife habitats being created as marginal and aquatic plants are added.

It’s also going to be a useful addition to our Living Lab and an interdisciplinary space for teaching and research. We’re installing monitoring equipment to measure its effectiveness as a sustainable drainage system, along with a range of other environmental indicators such as sediment, nutrients and temperature.

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The University of Leeds benchmarks its sustainability performance against the UK’s 24 leading research universities in the Russell Group. It’s important to gauge our performance in relation to the wider sector. We don’t exist in isolation, and we’re always looking for ways to collaborate and create wider impact.

Source: HESA Estates Management Record 16/17

Campus energy consumption per staff and student (full-time equivalent) 2016/17

Compared to our peer group we have made improvements in our campus energy consumption per FTE. We are now below the Russell Group median.

Waste mass per student and staff (full-time equivalent) 2016/17

This year has seen improvements in our comparative waste performance. This is due to waste initiatives and changes in construction activity. Last year we were sat 10th against our peers.

Modal split for sustainable commuting by staff 2016/17

This year we have maintained our position in relation to student commuting modes. We continue to perform above the median.

Modal split for sustainable commuting by students 2016/17

We have seen an increase in our staff using sustainable travel modes. As a result this year we have gone further above the Russell Group median.
The People and Planet Green League ranks UK Universities on their environmental and social justice performance. We are pleased to continue to improve our performance in the Green League, improving our overall placing to 16th but also to rank 2nd in the Russell Group.

The University should be commended on an impressive overall achievement. It has exceeded many of its own targets on increasing positive impacts, such as the number of student hours spent on sustainability initiatives (3,985 against target 1,120), and the number of modules relating to sustainability (244 against target 163), whilst also achieving significant decreases in its negative impacts, including a reduction in the total waste generated (1,544 tonnes against a target of 1,618 tonnes) and a reduction in carbon emissions (44,899 tonnes against a target of 48,479 tonnes).

It is very reassuring to see the University investing so much time and effort in student and staff engagement relating to sustainability. From their staff training programme that reached 1,500 people, delivering short talks on sustainability to thousands of new students, and including sustainability as an optional discovery module that any student can take, there is a genuine commitment to participation.

The institution is showing valuable leadership for the higher education sector through initiatives like their student sustainability research summit, their Living Lab programme, and their student sustainability architects roles, all of which are novel and impactful in terms education for sustainable development.

I encourage the University to continue to invest in engaging and empowering students and staff on sustainability, as we know from our research that allowing people to own a problem helps secure their investment in the solution. To this end, it would be a good next step for the University to develop more ways of creating and encouraging student activism and campaigns relating to sustainability. These might help to challenge the University further on topical issues like single use plastics and divestment, as well as providing transformative learning experiences for students.

Following a verification visit, I am delighted to be able to validate the information in this report. During verification I have talked to various people involved in the work outlined in this report. In addition, I have reviewed the data sets which have been collected to track progress against the targets outlined in the report.

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The future

WHAT’S IN STORE FOR 2017/18?

We’re always looking ahead; considering a more sustainable future. As set out in our vision to 2050, we understand the need for a long term view of sustainability.

And 2017/18 looks set to bring all this and more. Next year is filled with exciting opportunities as we continue to develop many of our projects and activities, and brand new ones are inevitably born. We will increasingly focus on the Living Lab programme – as an exemplar of how sustainability is embedded into the way we work and the wider impact we can have. We will also strengthen our commitment to the circular economy approach, namely by revitalising our Reuse@Leeds system.

Opportunities to get involved in sustainability will increase. We are looking to develop an approach to engaging staff in sustainability, including a full review of the Green Impact programme and taking a look at our wider student opportunities to ensure everyone can develop their knowledge, understanding, and practical skills.

Our PIP programme will continue to grow, seeing our staff work with even more local third sector organisations to create mutual benefit, new partnerships and co-learning. We’re also looking to develop a new School Governors Programme, an incredibly important volunteer role to help school leadership teams to set targets, policies and standards and to plan for future development. This hugely valuable experience will give even more staff and alumni the chance to give back to their local community and make a positive impact on the education of young people across the city region.

As we continue to contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals, our global outlook will increase as our environmental, social, economic and cultural impacts are regarded through an international lens. Of course, we will continue to work with our own City of Leeds – the council, public, private and third sector partners. As an anchor institution, this enhances the sustainability of all involved and reinforces our core purpose to increase knowledge and opportunity for the betterment of society.

Get involved

Do you want to know more about incorporating sustainability into your research? Have an idea for a reducing our impact on the environment? Know a great community group we should partner with? Or want to get involved in sustainability events?

We welcome your feedback, it helps us to improve and innovate for the future, so let us know what you think. Get in touch with the Sustainability Service, we’d love to hear from you.

sustainability.leeds.ac.uk
/UoLSustainability
@UoL_Sus
@UoL_Sus

You can discover more about this year’s report and sustainability at the University of Leeds online:
sustainability.leeds.ac.uk