

# Sustainability Report 2021-22





# Introduction

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used to frame our strategic decisions to help us improve sustainability on campus in line with our University's values and priorities.

---

Through 2021 and 2022 we have accelerated our efforts to work collaboratively across the university on environmental sustainability.

We have demonstrated our continued strong commitment to the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our university recognises the role that we have as an institution based at the heart of London in achieving sustainable development. We are committed to using the SDGs as a mechanism to effectively report on our environmental progress and achievements while embedding these goals in estates activities to enhance strategy and to benefit students, colleagues and other stakeholders as well as our planet.

Our focus in 2022 has been on our Climate Action programme. We have an obligation to reduce our operational impacts, but also an opportunity to radiate sustainability awareness and best practice within our communities and throughout our student body.

---

Alongside developing our operational sustainability targets, we have therefore been focusing on training and opening up discussion around climate activity, through Carbon Literacy training

We have been making great strides towards reducing the environmental impact of campus operations and activities. From incorporating sustainability into procurement to supporting staff and student-led projects, sustainable practices and policies are framing the decisions made across the University.

In this report, we report on our progress made on the environmental SDGs during the 2021-22 academic year; especially focusing on the positive steps that we took towards responsible energy and waste management, land and habitat protection, and collaboration. to increase awareness of environmental issues across the University campuses to our colleagues and students.



# 2022 Results

The Times Higher Education (THE) 's SDG Impact Rankings launched in 2018 as the first global attempt to measure how universities around the world perform against the 17 SDGs.

The Rankings use carefully calibrated indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparison across four broad areas: research, stewardship, outreach and teaching through evidence submitted by universities.

Since our first submission in 2019, the Impact Rankings has been an important driver of our progress. This year, we saw an increase in our overall score from 80.8 to 85.4 out of 100. From the 11 SDGs that we supplied evidence for, we are particularly proud of our outcomes for SDGs 5, 10 and 12 as the results reflect our commitment to EDI within the University and our values of being Responsible, Progressive, and Compassionate.

## Global Ranking: 77th out of 938 universities

Our various access measures, resources, and policies to support and empower our female students and colleagues is reflected in our results for SDG 5. Our research on gender equality also contributed to our positive outcomes, including scoring 97.4 out of 100 for publications on the subject.

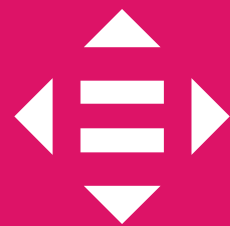
5 GENDER EQUALITY



## Global Ranking: 29th out of 796 universities

Our commitment to creating an inclusive University is also reflected in our outcomes for SDG 10. Our proportion of disabled students is 10 times the global average, and we employ over double the global average proportion of disabled staff members. We also have comprehensive measures against discriminatory behaviours which stands us out globally.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



## Global Ranking: 46th out of 606 universities

Our comprehensive policies on ethical sourcing and procurement, responsible waste disposal, and waste minimisation were highlighted in our SDG 12 results this year. Our waste management and comprehensive reporting of waste data in our annual Sustainability Report also contributed to successful outcomes.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



# Highlights

This year, we have worked even more closely with our students and academic teams to communicate the work the Sustainability Team is undertaking and share information about how to get involved.

We have been increasing the number of talks around sustainability that we give to our students and increasing programmes such as

Carbon Literacy Training to ensure a broader awareness and common language around climate impact reduction.

Below are some of the highlights from the last year which involved collaboration and partnership with students and colleagues as well as improvements to the ways we operate our campuses.



## Green Fund

The University ran a 'Green Fund' for the first time during the 2021-22 academic year. The Fund provides students with the opportunity to carry out sustainability-related projects and interventions which are co-created, designed and implemented by students and University colleagues working in partnership. This year's projects addressed food waste, sustainable agriculture practices, recycling sorting issues and environmental conservation. The University is very pleased to offer the Green Fund to student-colleague projects teams again in 2022-23.



## Carbon Literacy Training

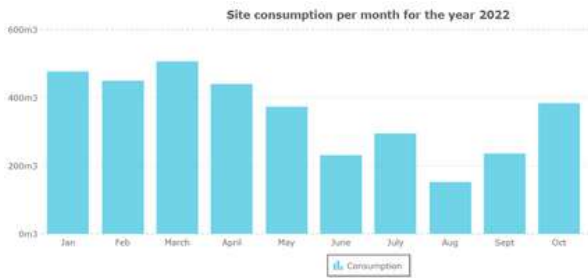
Following on from last year's successful training, we offered the Carbon Literacy Programme to a number of colleagues from across the University. The training material was designed to align with our Sustainability and Operational Strategies to help our colleagues understand the relevance of Climate Education to their day to day work. We received excellent feedback from this, and so we will be continuing to roll this out to colleagues in 2023.



## London Student Sustainability Conference

The University collaborated with five other London universities to deliver the London Student Sustainability Conference (LSSC) in February 2022. The conference highlighted student research and projects which create positive impacts in the world. Entirely student-led, the conference offered students a chance to exhibit their work through presentations, posters, and performances and connect and work with other students across London and different disciplines. The next LSSC will take place in February 2023, with nine participating universities.

# Highlights



## Automatic Water Meter Reading

To monitor and measure the use of water, the University has installed automatic water meter reading devices to the water meters at Marylebone Campus and Alex Fleming Halls. This allows the University to track water consumption in real time via a live digital portal and compare water use over various durations.

## Live Energy Monitoring

The University is committed to reducing our carbon footprint towards our wider targets to decarbonize the campus. To achieve this, solar electricity panels and solar collectors for heating were installed at the Harrow campus Halls of Residence in 2020. Since then, a live energy monitoring system has been introduced to monitor the amount of heat and electricity generated as well as carbon saved in real time. The University aims to install a digital screen displaying the monitoring system in the Harrow Campus foyer by end of this academic year.



## Heating Decarbonisation Plan

In 2021, the University received £80,000 from Salix Finance to develop University-wide Heating Decarbonisation Plans as part of their Low Carbon Skills Fund programme to provide funds for UK organisations making efforts to tackle climate change, support the economy, and work towards the UK's net zero target. The plans are now complete, enabling the Estates Department to review the University's heating performance, identify key areas for improvement, and to adopt a strategic approach towards achieving net zero scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2030.

## Ethical and Sustainable Investment Policy

The University has published an Ethical and Sustainable Investment Policy for the first time in 2021, demonstrating its commitment to responsible investing. This includes investing in organisations and countries that demonstrate a positive approach to individuals, communities and environmental performance and those that develop environmental technologies to reduce the impacts of polluting and destructive industries and climate change. The policy also ensures the University will not invest in businesses where the investment might be considered to be unethical or conflict its aims.





# Our Operational Plans and the SDGs

We are committed to embedding sustainability across our University and in all the work we do. A sustainable campus is one in which colleagues and students work together to develop initiatives that engender lasting change and have a net-positive impact on our environment and society.

We have responded to this by developing our three priority areas to help shape this sustainability agenda: Pathway to Net Zero, Sustainable Campus and Sustainable Community. Each of these areas has their own set of objectives and activities that we have developed to progress this agenda.

The University's sustainability agenda has become increasingly important over the past year, as the challenges associated with climate change become more prominent. As a responsible organisation, we have an obligation to act and to play our part in finding long term solutions to climate change.

These objectives ensure that we not only comply with emerging regulatory requirements, but also that sustainable development is fully embraced by our students and colleagues, is enshrined within all aspects of strategy and that we have resources available to ensure positive changes are made.

**13** CLIMATE ACTION



## Pathway to Net Zero

Our newly revised 2035 net-zero target shows our commitment to taking action against Climate Change. Alongside improvements to our scope 1,2 and 3 benchmarking, we have developed decarbonisation plans for all of our sites and increased renewable on-site generation by 50%.

**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



## Sustainable Campus

We ensure sustainability is considered across all our University sites by embedding Environmental Management into our decision-making processes. Our revised environmental targets prioritise waste reduction and ensuring that standards such as BREEAM are considered in all capital projects.

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## Sustainable Community

We measure our impacts not only through our operational targets, but also by how well our University communities reflect the values of the SDGs. We are continually developing our ESD programmes and identifying ways we can measure the reach and impact of our sustainability research.

# Our Targets



## Pathway to Net Zero

Carbon net-zero for Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2035

A reduction in carbon emissions across the University by 50% by 2022/23 against a 2009/10 baseline.

Reduce Scope 3 carbon emissions by 50% by 2035 against 2019/20 average baseline data.

Carbon net-zero for direct and indirect (Scope 1, 2, and 3) carbon emissions by 2050.

## Sustainable Campus

A recycling rate across the University of 70% by 2023/24

Maintain the Ecocampus Gold award following recertification in 2021/22

Target BREEAM 'excellent' rating as minimum on all new builds.

Ensure sustainability is included as part of all tendered contracts through the University.

An increase of bicycle parking and associated facilities in line with the Active Travel programme.

Measure, maintain and increase the number of species and habitats across the University estate, in line with BAPs

## Sustainable Community

Develop a sustainability intranet Resources page to allow colleagues easy access to all sustainability documents, policies and targets

Roll out Carbon Literacy training to all colleagues and first year students at the University

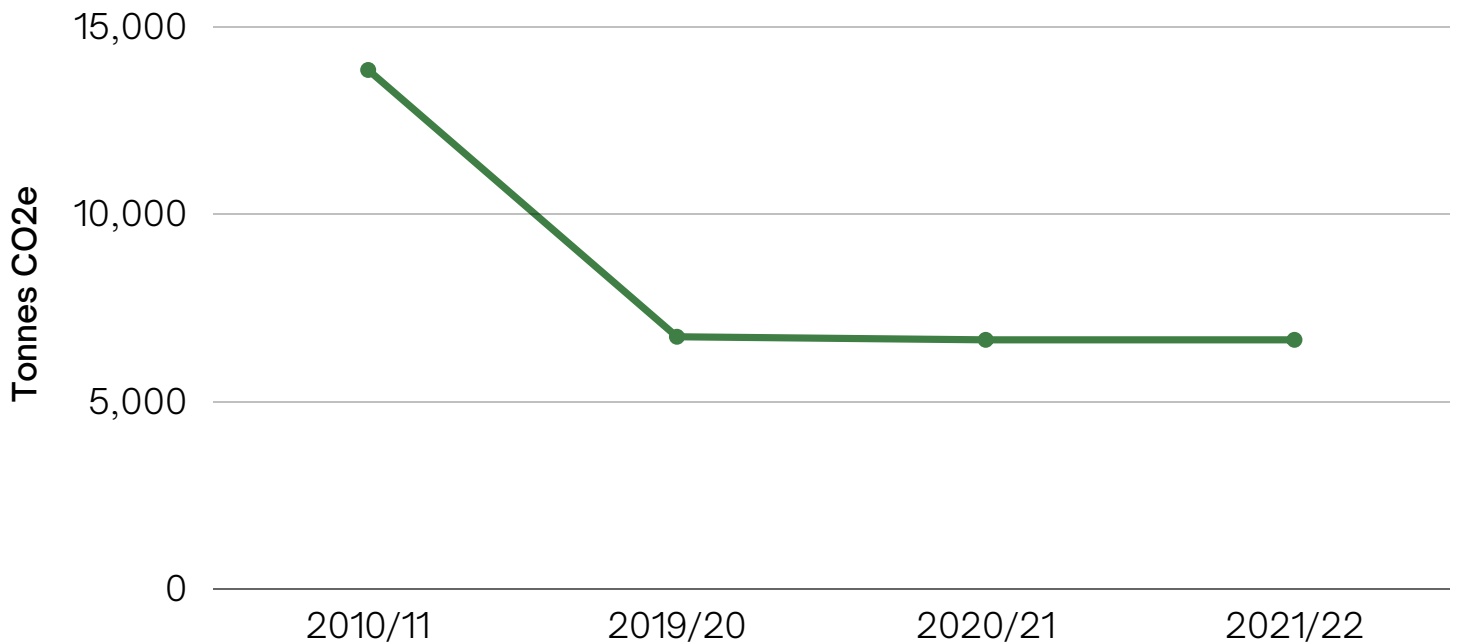
Identify opportunities to include sustainability as part of colleague inductions and training programmes

# Carbon emissions

We are committed to reducing our energy consumption and carbon impact as reflected in our commitment to the SDGs. We have now more than achieved our Scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction target of 43% against a baseline year of 2005/06. We have therefore established new emissions targets and next year will be focusing on a reduction of 50% by 2022/23 against a 2009/10 baseline.

## GHG Emission Data

Total (Scope 1 and 2) carbon emission data



**0**

We are aiming to achieve Net Zero Scope 1 and 2 Emissions by 2035

**1.2%**

decrease in CO2 emission compared to 2019/20

**2**

Tonne reduction in Scope 3 Emissions

we are developing our plans to reach carbon net zero. We have set an ambitious target to reach net-zero for Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2035, with a reduction in Scope 3 carbon emissions by 50% by 2035.

To support this we will be updating our Sustainability Objectives into a Climate Action Plan. This will help us to focus on net-zero alongside our specific sustainability targets around energy, waste, biodiversity, construction and environmental management and will include developing our Decarbonisation Plan, continuing with Carbon Literacy Training and focusing on externally verifying our carbon calculations to include Scope 3.

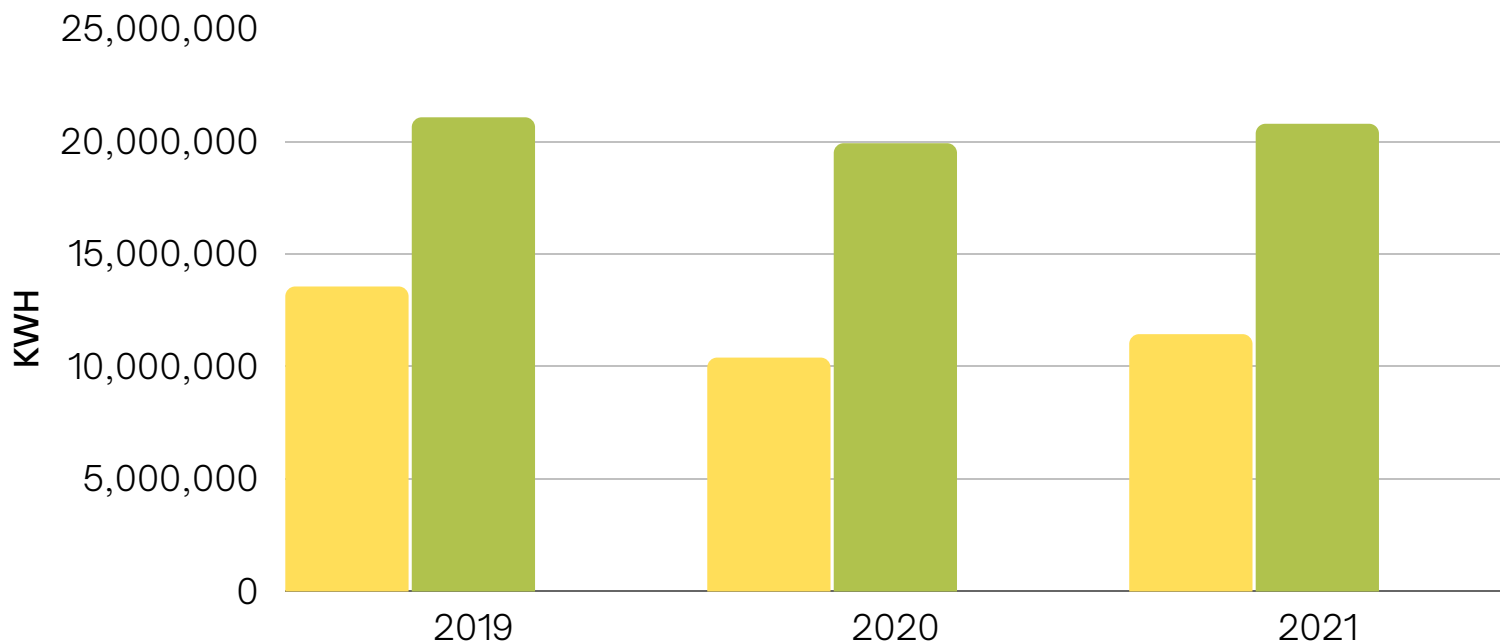


# Energy Performance

Our focus this year has been reviewing and analysing our current consumption data to developing plans for decarbonisation of our Estate. Due to rising energy costs, we have also been focusing heavily on energy reduction across all of our sites, and working with project and site teams to integrate energy reduction in Estates plans.

## Electricity & Gas Consumption

Electricity Gas



101

tonnes of carbon saved by our solar thermal panels

100%

Procurement of Renewable Electricity

25%

Procurement of Green Gas

Our energy consumption over the last few years has remained relatively static. However, this year we have seen an increase in colleagues and students on site as everyone returns to campus. Energy use has not seen a significant increase because of the energy saving initiatives undertaken over the past few years. This includes projects such as installing low energy LED lights as standard, producing energy saving IT and other equipment and focusing on insulation and energy efficiency on our sites. Other projects include:

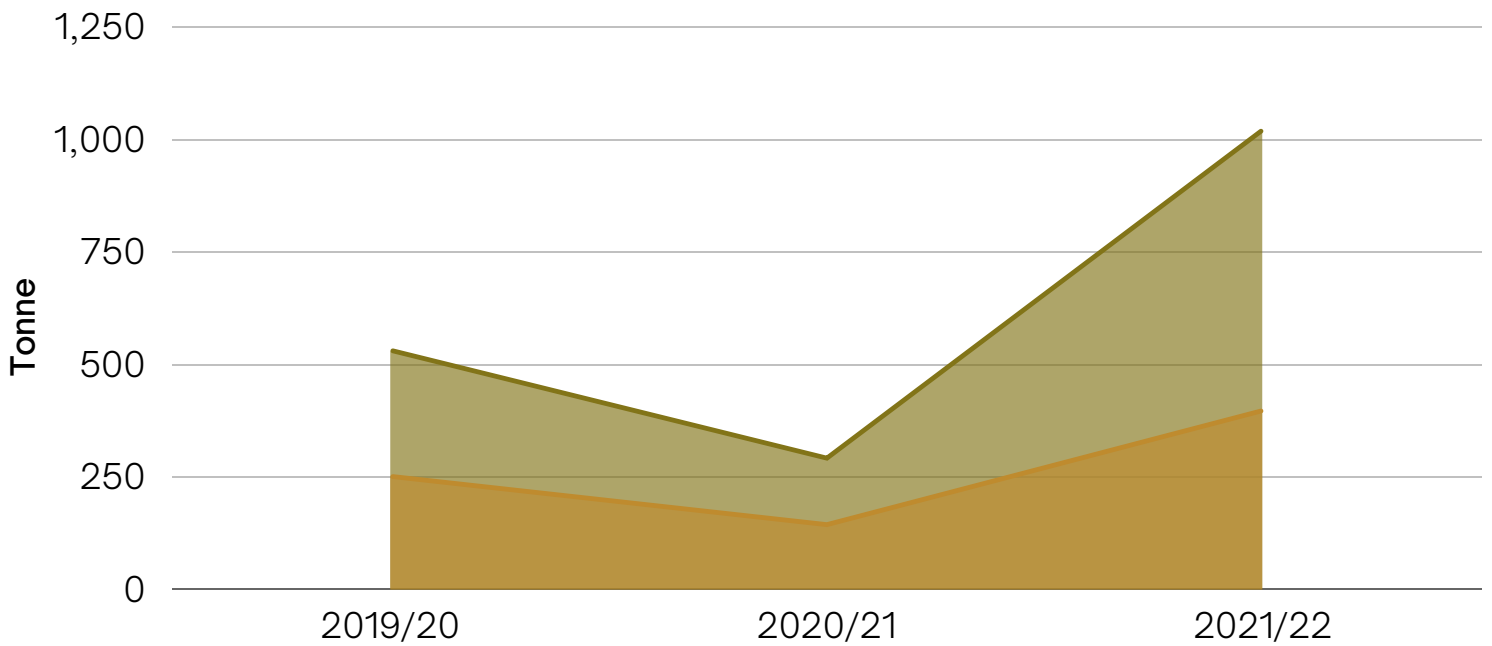
We have also installed several additional solar thermal panels on our Harrow Campus Halls of Residence to generate renewable electricity on campus. So far, this system has saved just over 101 tonnes of carbon emissions.

# Waste Performance

This year has seen an increase in total waste production as colleagues and students are now coming back to site and areas like catering are resuming service. We have been focusing on ensuring that recycling streams we had in place pre-covid are now re-instated. Our new waste providers started service in May 2022, each with their own plans for net-zero. We will be working with them closely on monitoring carbon emissions from waste and improving recycling rates.

## Incineration VS Recycling

■ Energy From Waste   ■ Recycled



61%

Recycling Rate for  
2021/22

0kg

Waste To Landfill

10

Tonnes of Furniture  
Donated to Good Causes

As students and colleagues have returned to campus, waste and recycling collections have been closely monitored and only increased as required to prevent any unnecessary vehicle movements.

We have new contracts in place with two key waste companies who have been helping us to improve our operational waste management and increase recycling. We have undertaken several waste audits from our sites to understand where materials can be further segregated. Materials such as pallets and plastic wrap have been separated and recycled separately, reducing emissions and improving our overall recycling rates.

# Next Steps



We will continue embedding the SDGs across all our activities within the University's sustainability objectives and measure our progress each year. Our students will be educated on sustainable development with an understanding of how they can use their potential to positively impact our society, while our operations will continue to become more sustainable each year through innovation, collaboration and creativity.

## Pathway to Net Zero

Following the delivery of the University's Heat Decarbonisation Plan, a wider decarbonisation plan will be produced next year. This will set out our pathway to net zero and plans to become a carbon-neutral University which will frame our actions relating to energy and carbon to help us reduce our carbon footprint.

## Sustainable Campus

Alongside a focus on energy reduction, we will prioritise working with our new waste contractors to increase recycling rates across the University. Our Environmental Management System will be refreshed and our Policies updated to reflect our new carbon targets.

## Sustainable Community

We will continue to roll out Carbon Literacy Training and projects such as the Green Fund, to further engage colleagues and students in sustainability activities at the University. We will work more closely with our key suppliers to better understand what we can do together to improve our impact.

## Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainability Team will continue to lead on the delivery of the SDG framework working in partnership with our colleagues and students within the University. We will also continue our submission to THE's Impact Rankings to track annual progress on the SDGs.

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER

309

UNIVERSITY OF

Formerly  
THE POLYTECHNIC  
Founded by  
QUINTIN HOGG

309

GEORGE GAYLEY