

Sustainability Engagement, Communication and Culture Change Strategy 2020/21

1 Introduction

The University of Kent recognises the importance of staff and student engagement in achieving its ambitions to improve its environmental sustainability. This academic year poses a unique challenge in delivering objectives due to social distancing and online delivery of teaching due to Covid-19.

This strategy has been developed as a 1-year extension to the previous Sustainability Engagement, Communication and Behaviour Change Strategy 2018-20 to detail how we intend to adapt our approach. See Appendix for previous strategy.

2 Baseline and Targets

	KPI	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Target
Engagement	Champions	80	68	60*
	Workshops	6	8	10**
	Events	2	2	2**
	Partnerships	4	4	4
Communication	Social Media (twitter)	700	704	1200***
	Publications (incl blogs)	30	35	40
Behaviour Change	Participating teams	50	46	40*

* A fall in champions and participating teams was expected in 2019/20 and expected again in 2020/21 due to organising for success as existing teams are merged and staff numbers are reduced.

** All workshops and events are expected to be delivered online in 2020/21

*** To include followers from Instagram from 01/08/20

3 Sustainability Engagement and Partnerships

Key objectives:

- Engage with sustainability champions through delivery of a series of online 'cup of tea and an SDG' events with each event focusing on an individual goal.
- Explore opportunities to work in partnership with additional internal and external stakeholders including Kent Sport (wellbeing), Mind (Kent COG), the GOLD programme and Canterbury Climate Action Partnership.

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- Pursue development of the University Sustainability Steering Group and ensure that communication and engagement is a core function of the group.

4 Sustainability Communication

Key objectives:

- Design the role and recruit students as digital sustainability ambassadors linked to the employability points scheme.
- Develop a Sustainability You Tube channel to host internal content and link to useful external resources.
- Develop central Sustainability webpages. Explore opportunities for staff and students across the University to submit content as news or blogs.

5 Culture Change

Key objectives:

- Rebrand the Futureproof programme following its move away from the Estates department
- Improve links between sustainability, environmental management and top-level strategic decision making of the University.

Appendix

Estates Department Sustainability Engagement, Communication and Behaviour Change Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/21

Statement of Support

I support the commitment of the Estates Department to drive Sustainability across the University through effective and innovative engagement, communication and behaviour change programmes.

Helen Ellis

Deputy Director of Estates

1 Introduction

The University of Kent recognises the importance of staff and student engagement in achieving its ambitions to improve its environmental sustainability. Creating a sustainable future requires fundamental changes in attitudes and behaviours across society and the University of Kent recognises that as a Higher Education Institution we are well placed to provide expertise in overcoming future challenges, and as such should lead by example, demonstrating sustainable behaviours.

2 Drivers for Sustainability Engagement, Communication and Behaviour Change

2.1 Internal Drivers

2.1.1 Environmental Management System

The University operates an Environmental Management System certified to the ISO14001:2015 standard. Effective communication and engagement is key to successfully maintaining the standard. The system is underpinned by the University's Environment policy which contains a commitment to "Communicate with staff, students and relevant interested parties and promote sustainable behaviours".

2.1.2 University Plan 2015-2010

Our institutional plan was published in 2015 and sets out the vision for the University across three main themes; Research, Education and Engagement. Sustainability engagement, communication and behaviour change helps deliver the objectives of the University plan across all three themes. This is demonstrated by the following commitments taken from the plan:

“We will engage our staff in the collective institutional vision...”

“We will create and make available a range of social and cultural experiences for our communities”

“We will identify and develop strategic partnerships...”

“We will engage and mobilise our students...”

2.2 Sector Drivers

2.2.1 Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 goals that outline the vision for a sustainable world by 2030. The 17 goals and underlying targets were created and signed by 193 countries at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in 2015.

In 2017, the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges launched the Sustainable Development Goals Accord which calls upon the world’s universities to embed the SDGs into their research, education, leadership, operations, administration and engagement activities. Karen Cox, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent signed the Accord in February 2018.

3 Key Principles of Sustainability Engagement

In order to achieve positive sustainable change there are some key principles that we shall ensure are met:

- We will keep people informed of useful and crucial information
- We will provide opportunities for individuals to increase their confidence in their knowledge of key sustainability issues
- We will create a community around sustainable action at Kent
- We will reward sustainable actions, not punish unsustainable ones
- We will share sustainability best practice from within and outside the sector
- We will be part of the conversation on sustainability in our sector and beyond

- We will run a flexible and consistent engagement project that is open and exciting to all members of the University community.

In the design of our engagement projects we must consider the potential barriers to change, triggers for encouraging new behaviours and find ways to ensure that new behaviours are embedded.

Futerra's 4 principles of change can be used as a best practice framework for each of our projects:

- Vision – We shall create and sell an idea that brings people together
- Maps – We shall make strong plans that are robust, SMART and bring people along
- Symbols – We will have clear branding that identifies what we are doing, giving us a clear voice.
- Stories – We will be creative storytellers, connecting people with what our sustainability community is doing.

4 Progress 2010-2017

The Estates department ran the NUS Green Impact programme for six years from 2010-2015. Over the course of the six years a total of 65 staff teams took part (some over multiple years) with an increasing number of participants year-on-year. A summary of success from the final year of Green Impact is shown below:

- 31 teams took part in Green Impact 2014/15 at University of Kent.
- These teams reached an estimated 859 staff, of which 243 were directly involved in a Green Impact committee or team.
- 12 students were trained as Green Impact Project Assistants to assist teams with their greening activities throughout 2014/15.
- 14 students were trained as Green Impact auditors in March 2015, helping to improve their employability and develop their skills in sustainability.
- Paper Reduction: an estimated 348 people were involved in a paper reduction campaign potentially saving 25,898kgCO₂ and £6,960.
- Energy: approximately 536 people were involved in energy saving awareness raising, potentially saving an estimated 104,964kgCO₂ and £16,425.

After six years of running Green Impact it was decided that the Estates department had sufficient experience in-house to develop and run our own behaviour change programme. Green15 launched in September 2015 and a total of 41 teams signed up.

Based on feedback, the decision was made to use the 2016/17 academic year as a planning year and to launch a new programme in September 2017. In January 2017, a new role of Environmental Sustainability Assistant was created to plan and deliver a behaviour change programme aimed at staff and students across the University at both the Canterbury and Medway campuses.

FutureProof is the new sustainability engagement programme at Kent, which builds upon the successes of Green Impact and Green15 and looks at how staff and students can help deliver a University of the future. By challenging each department to review their impacts against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, FutureProof aims to inspire individuals, departments and the whole University community to take action in ensuring that our estate, our curriculum and our students are ready for the future.

A FutureProof Pilot was launched in Autumn 2017/18 with teams from the Sibson building on the Canterbury campus and Gillingham building on the Medway campus. Taking into account lessons learnt, a second cohort of teams was launched in early 2018 bringing the total number of pilot teams to 9.

The programme will officially launch on the 26th June 2018 as part of the Estates Department Showcase event.

5 Baseline and Targets

	KPI	2016/2017 (or most recent) data	2017/2018 Target	2018/2019 Target	2019/2020 Target
Engagement	Champions	45	60	70	80
	Workshops	4	6	6	6
	Events	0	1	2	2
	Partnerships	1	2	3	4
Communication	Social Media (twitter followers)	539	600	650	700
	Website		Establish baseline	tbc	tbc
	Publications (incl blogs)	13	20	24	30
Behaviour Change	Participating teams	41*	20	35	50
	Staff reached	859			

* Teams who participated in the 2015/16 Green 15 programme

6 Vision for Sustainability Engagement, Communication and Behaviour Change 2017-2022

By 2019/2020 we hope to have increased awareness of sustainability issues and engaged staff and students in a variety of activities, events and workshops. In order to achieve this, this strategy has been broken down into 3 separate sections.

- Sustainability Engagement and Partnerships
- Communication
- Culture Change

7 Sustainability Engagement and Partnerships

In order to bring about positive change, it is vital that people are engaged in the process and that they are involved in relevant decision making. Effective partnerships are important to ensure joined up approaches with internal and external stakeholders to ensure the effectiveness of our approach

7.1 Sustainability Champions

Aim: Develop and maintain a network of sustainability champions, provide good quality training and opportunities to influence University policy and EMS.

Key objectives:

- Recruit sustainability champions on an ongoing basis for all areas of the University using a variety of general and targeted approaches to maximise uptake.
- Ensure all sustainability champions are given full induction and training appropriate to their role within 3 months of expressing interest.
- Hold at least 4 champions workshops per year.
- Consider a champions representative being included in the membership of the Environmental Sustainability Team.

7.2 Sustainability Events

Aim: Develop an annual programme of sustainability events

Key objectives:

- Develop and maintain a calendar of national and international sustainability events and include this in the Sustainability web pages.
- Work in partnership with Kent Union to develop a Go Green Week programme.
- Ensure ongoing representation for Sustainability at University events (induction fair, employability fairs etc...).
- Plan a minimum of 2 Sustainability events per year (at least 1 at Medway).

7.3 Partnerships

Aim: Develop effective partnerships with stakeholders to maximise resources and ensure effectiveness of approaches

Key objectives:

- Meet regularly with Sustainability colleagues from Greenwich and Christ Church Universities to identify opportunities for collaboration, especially on the Medway campus.

- Work closely with staff and student officers from Kent Union to share ideas, best practice and organise joint events. Encourage Kent Union participation in Sustainability initiatives such as the champions' network and FutureProof.
- Identify opportunities within Sustainability with links to student employability and ensure all volunteer sustainability opportunities are registered with the employability points scheme.

8 Sustainability Communication

Effective communication is essential for keeping people informed and confident in their knowledge of the issues around sustainability. Communications should be positive and focused on sharing best practice to encourage a sustainability community.

8.1 Social Media

Aim: Develop and maintain a positive social media presence

Key objectives:

- Maintain and promote the Sustainability Blog featuring internal and external sustainability stories. Encourage guest blog submissions from the staff and student body.
- Develop the Sustainability twitter handle to signpost to webpages and encourage participation through competitions and discussion.
- Use the Sustainability twitter handle to engage with stakeholders internally and externally.
- Keep up-to-date with advances in social media to ensure that Sustainability remains accessible and visible to students and staff.

8.2 Website

Aim: Produce an informative, engaging and navigable webpage for Sustainability

Key objectives:

- Re-develop the Sustainability webpages with a clear landing page and series of sub-pages.
- Identify suitable links to other internal webpages related to Sustainability.
- Monitor website visitor information and plan edits to webpages in response to this data.

8.3 Publications

Aim: Maximise opportunities to engage staff and students through regular, quality articles in publications internal and external to the University.

Key objectives:

- Produce an annual report celebrating successes and positive messages around sustainability
- Uploaded regular stories to campus online highlighting progress and performance around sustainability
- Upload regular articles to the blog and share these through existing channels
- Identify other publications both internal and external where sustainability articles could feature

9 Culture Change

In order to affect positive and long-lasting changes in environmental behaviours requires a shift in the culture at the University towards a more sustainable approach. To be successful, a culture change should be driven both from staff and students on the ground as well as being supported and driven by top management.

9.1 FutureProof

Aim: To deliver a positive culture change programme using the UN sustainable development goals as a framework for action

Key objectives:

- Create a narrative/ brand around Sustainability at Kent under the heading of FutureProof
- Equip people with the skills to embed sustainability into their area of work
- Build up a portfolio of actions taken by the University to support the Sustainable Development Goals
- Use FutureProof as a framework for encouraging embedding sustainability into the curriculum
- Use FutureProof as a framework to support collaborations with other education partners.

9.2 Environmental Management System

Aim: Maintain an Environmental Management System to the ISO14001:2015 standard and achieve continual improvement in environmental performance

Key objectives:

- Engage with relevant internal departments including Estates, Procurement and Hospitality to ensure the EMS is embedded into day-to-day operations.
- Develop systems to ensure environmental risk is included in the institution level and local risk assessment process.

- Raise the profile of the Environmental Management System through training, internal communications and web presence.
- Develop and report annually on key environmental indicators