

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WEST of SCOTLAND

**UWS**

# **UWS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

2016 to 2020

**DREAMING,  
BELIEVING,  
ACHIEVING**

A 21ST CENTURY UNIVERSITY

[www.uws.ac.uk/sustainability](http://www.uws.ac.uk/sustainability)

# UWS Sustainability Ambitions

Sustainability is at the forefront of what we do at UWS, Sustainability is one of our three pillars of research and our new Lanarkshire development will be a leading example of an energy carbon neutral campus with sustainable features including a windfarm, generating 100% renewable power, and rainwater harvesting.

We are transforming learning environments, providing contemporary, student centred spaces, outstanding community facilities and modern staff areas and, through this, it is essential we respond to our Corporate Strategy target to reduce CO2 emissions by 20% by 2020. This will be the key to minimising our impact on the environment, alongside fulfilling all Sustainability compliance obligations. We commit to continual environmental improvement and will implement an Environmental Management System to formalise this activity.

Our courses are only part of the experience of university life and sustainability provides an ideal vehicle to enrich the student experience. The Community Gardens and Sustainability Hub, managed in partnership with the Students' Association, create opportunities for students to get together and foster relationships with their peers, UWS colleagues and the wider community. The benefits of these initiatives are multifaceted, improving health and wellbeing, reducing carbon and providing a valuable service to students in the provision of essential goods through the hub free shop.

With our students central to everything we do at UWS, together we will dream, believe and achieve a more sustainable future.



Professor Craig Mahoney  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor



# Student Success

UWS and the Students' Association of UWS (SAUWS) work together with UWS students and the wider community to deliver the aspirations of the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA). UWS provides a rounded experience for our students with opportunities for volunteering, participating in sustainability focused activity and Education for Sustainable Development that will reap benefits in employability, health, social inclusion and environmental wellbeing.

## How we will achieve this:

Action	Measurement of Success/ Timeline
Working in partnership with SAUWS, we will provide volunteering opportunities linked to sustainability. As outlined in the UWS Education Enabling Plan volunteers will be supported to achieve the Volunteer Recognition Award and Higher Education Achievement Record.	At least thirty student sustainability volunteering opportunities will be available each year. Students will be given the option of working towards the Volunteer Recognition Award and Higher Education Achievement Record.
Roll out the Green Impact Education Programme to all schools.	Green Impact Education in place in all schools by 2019/20.
As part of our Estates Masterplan we will create living learning environments throughout our campuses that enable students to link theory to practice, for example through community and biodiversity gardens.	Community gardens will be available at all sites by 2018/19.
We will work with the Students' Association to stage sustainability events and workshops, providing opportunities for students to actively participate in activity and meet students and staff from across the University.	50 Sustainability events/ workshops implemented each year from 2016/17.
We will work with the Students' Association to provide a Sustainability Hub for our students at Paisley Campus where they will be able to access a range of free essential goods as well as advice on fuel poverty, sustainable travel and food growing, improving wellbeing as targeted in the Student Partnership Agreement.	Paisley Campus Sustainability hub in place 2015/16.
Sustainability will be added as a standing item to the agenda of the Student Experience Committee to identify further opportunities to link Sustainably to student engagement and success.	Added to the SEC agenda in 2015/16.

## Case Study - Delivering Sustainable Events Education

Academic colleagues required a simple method of embedding sustainability into their subject area that could easily slot into teaching, be tailored and relevant to the course in question.

### Our goals

- To provide a straightforward, tailored toolkit to increase Education for Sustainable Development at UWS
- To increase sign up to the UWS Green Impact Programme (A National Union of Students Sustainability behaviour change toolkit)
- To reduce carbon emissions at UWS

### The approach

Events Management academic staff were engaged with the NUS Green Impact Programme and recognised its potential to be adapted as a teaching resource. The Course Leader worked with the SAUWS Green Impact Co-ordinator and NUS to adapt the workbook in 2014, in order for it to be used by events students to audit and improve the environmental sustainability of events venues across UWS. Forty eight students participated, covering nine event locations. The groups compiled environmental impact reports for an event, and worked closely with UWS staff in each venue to encourage 'greener' actions through the use of the Green Impact tool kit. The project ran for a trimester with 129 Green Actions achieved.



# Research, Enterprise and Engagement

UWS Centre for Environmental Research is actively involved in research, enterprise and engagement in the area of sustainability. Research is strongly linked with enterprise, forging strong partnerships with industry to increase resource efficiency, reduce environmental impacts and ensure UWS is at the lead in environmental research.

## How we will achieve this:

Action	Measurement of Success/ Timeline
UWS Academic staff and Postgraduate students will undertake research in areas as diverse as sustainable mining practices (including more sustainable 'greener' hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, practices), climate change, aquaculture and waste water treatment.	To continue to deliver climate change focused research activity.

## Case Study

One such example of a sustainability project that involves researchers from UWS and industry is a Knowledge Transfer Partnership project with a local water treatment company, looking at the recovery of potentially toxic metals from effluents from industrial processes and the purification of the captured waste for re-sale as a raw material. Academic expertise is being used to study the effectiveness of different treatment options on the efficiency of the recovery processes.



# UWS Global Reach

UWS has a key role to play in equipping our students with the knowledge and skills required to be valued global citizens. The UWS Social Responsibility Statement outlines how we will lead by example, contributing to our local and global community through the development of innovative partnership projects that will have a positive impact on the economic, social and environmental sustainability of these communities. UWS is committed to the United Nations Global Compact and delivering its 10 principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

## How we will achieve this:

Action	Measurement of Success/ Timeline
Achieve Fairtrade status.	Action plan in place 2016/17 Application in 2017/18
Create a Global Citizenship Award.	Award created in 2015/16 Award will be delivered in 2016/17
Develop a UWS Code of Ethics.	Code of Ethics approved in 2015/16
Report on the UWS Social Responsibility Statement.	A report will be produced in 2015/16
Support the implementation of the UWS Global Reach Enabling Plan through the implementation of social activity providing "opportunities to mix" and an informal learning environment.	Promote volunteering activity to International Students on an ongoing basis.

## Case Study – Community Gardens Outreach

The Students' Association Community Garden Co-ordinator worked in partnership with Alzheimer's Scotland to develop a productive fruit and vegetable growing space at their day-centre in Paisley. This project enables people whose lives are affected by Alzheimer's to benefit from therapeutic horticulture, alongside the health benefits of organically produced local food. A training event, in partnership with Trellis, entitled, "Meaningful



activities for people whose lives are affected by Alzheimer's" supported the development of a Renfrew network of therapeutic horticulture practitioners in residential and day centres.

SAUWS Environment team also worked in partnership with Migrant Help Paisley to support an anti-slavery and human trafficking project through providing window-sill planters for individuals to grow food at home.

# UWS People

Staff engagement is critical to a successful UWS, with people who are driven and supported to provide an exceptional educational experience for our students. UWS Sustainability delivers a range of initiatives and benefits that support staff in adopting sustainability actions; reducing carbon, saving money and improving health. Activities also support academic colleagues in embedding sustainability in course work design.

## How we will achieve this:

Action	Measurement of Success/ Timeline
Incorporate Sustainability into the UWS Staff Induction process.	Implemented in 2016/17
Continue to deliver the UWS Green Impact programme to increase staff engagement and Action on Sustainability.	Increase the number of Green Impact teams to 25 by 2019/20
Continue to deliver cycle to work scheme benefit	Target 30 new applicants by 2019/20
Promote the UWS car share scheme: <a href="http://www.uwsjourneyshare.com">www.uwsjourneyshare.com</a>	Increased uptake by staff, targeting an additional 50 members by 2019/20
Continue to grow our UWS Community gardens, promoting health, social and environmental benefits to staff. The gardens will be led by staff volunteers.	Ongoing management of Paisley and Ayr gardens.
Implement Sustainability workshops sessions with UWS staff.	Five sessions implemented by 2019/20
Enable employees to live a more sustainable life at home through the knowledge and initiatives that we provide.	Work with Home Energy Scotland to implement annual energy advice clinics. Work with local partners to provide bike maintenance checks.
Incorporate Sustainability Impact Assessment into the front cover of all Committee and Policy papers.	Designed and in place in 2016/17

## Case Study - Cycle to Work

Dr Glenn R Marland, Senior Lecturer and Subject Lead Mental Health, and Amanda Carson, Lecturer in adult nursing, describe how the scheme has benefited them.

Glen stated: *"Since buying a bike on the Scheme I have become inspired to cycle more and even joined the local cycling club. The increase in physical activity resulted in losing nearly 2 stones in weight and becoming much fitter generally as well as gaining a whole new social circle. I would recommend this to any member of staff."*

Amanda detailed the following advantages of the scheme: *"The benefits financially of cycling to work are reduced fuel costs and less wear and tear on my car. I really liked the scheme because I hardly noticed I had bought the bike as it comes off before tax."*

*"The benefits to me are the extra exercise I can fit into my day. It allows me to unwind on the way home. My commute is five miles and it takes me half an hour either by car or bike. Although the car is faster in some places, the bike allows me to whiz through the traffic, which is great."*

*"Taking the bike requires more organisation as I need to plan ahead what I am doing and take clothes to change into. I can't cycle everyday as I have to travel for meetings or collect things on the way home but I try to cycle as much as possible."*

*"The scheme has made me cycle more in my leisure time so it has impacted more on my health than I thought it would. The scheme was recommended to me by a colleague and I recommend it to others."*





## UWS Money and Infrastructure

UWS Estates Strategy provides the vision for progressive, efficient and sustainable learning environments. We will embed sustainability in our estates, from the provision of sustainable travel infrastructure to the inclusion of low carbon and renewable technology in project design.

### How we will achieve this:

Action	Measurement of Success/ Timeline
Reduce our carbon footprint by 20% for energy, waste, water and business travel.	Carbon footprint will be reduced by 20% by 2019/20 based on a 2012/13 baseline.
Develop partnership projects with Local Authorities and other key partners to bring about cost efficiencies and attract funding opportunities for Sustainability projects.	At least one Sustainability partnership project implemented each year.
Recycle or reuse 40% of our waste.	To be achieved by 2019/20 Initiatives to include coffee cup and catering packaging recycling and the introduction of a furniture re-use website, <a href="http://www.warp-it.co.uk/uws">www.warp-it.co.uk/uws</a>
Embed carbon reduction in new Estates Developments.	Achieve EPC Carbon Neutral and zero carbon energy solutions on our new Lanarkshire Campus.
Increase the use of Green IT equipment and ensure new equipment is efficiently controlled.	Information Technology and Digital Services and Sustainability working group set up in 2015/16.
Reduce grey fleet business travel carbon emissions by 10%.	Target met by 2019/20 Implement Web conferencing in 2015/16 Increase the use of electric vehicles and charging points from 2015/16.
Reduce UWS building footprint by 30%	To be achieved by 2020 through the development of the new Lanarkshire campus and rationalisation of space at other campuses.
Encourage staff and students to cycle to campus	Review cycle parking across all campuses in 2016/17. Apply for Cycle Friendly Campus Status by 18/19.
We will ensure we fully satisfy and, where possible, exceed our obligations to meet environmental legislative requirements.	Annual submissions of Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme and Public Bodies Climate Change reports. Annual review of Estates Solutions legislative compliance register. Develop a UWS Climate Change Adaptation Plan by the end of 17/18.

## Paisley Heating Phase One Case Study

Replacement of inefficient boilers and distribution network at Paisley campus in 2013 achieved significant reduction in carbon emissions and costs. Gas emissions at Paisley reduced by 600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, saving £78,833 in the first year. As part of the developing Carbon Management Plan a feasibility study will be carried out to look at the potential for the use of low carbon technologies in further reducing carbon from Paisley campus heating.





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