



2030

Sustainability & Climate Action

Framework



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Foreword



Damian Duffy
Interim Principal &
Chief Executive

Our current College Strategic Plan sets out our vision for the future and key strategic objectives for the College.



Belfast Met Strategic Plan Corporate information- About us- Belfast Met

At the heart of our new plan is our learners, those that are already at the College and the future learners who choose to study at Belfast Met, working alongside our employers and partners who create employment opportunities.

We aim to be the College of Choice for learners, the Employer of Choice for those wanting to work with us to deliver the highest quality learning, and the Partner of Choice for the public, private and voluntary sectors. To do this, we position ourselves for the future by being a truly digitally-driven, sustainable College and being clear about how we will collaborate and partner with others to contribute to Northern Ireland's economic, social, and environmental success.

Our provision is fully aligned with key Government policies which set the direction and delivery context for Belfast Met. We will contribute to the Green Growth approach and manage our resources efficiently and effectively, ensuring our learners and staff are encouraged to make environmentally responsible choices.

A key strategic theme for the College is to be 'Sustainable by Nature'. The College, as an educator, is uniquely placed to inspire, celebrate, and advance important environmental, economic, and societal issues.

Belfast Met is committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 50% and energy consumption by 30% by 2030, and to do so, our 2030 Sustainability and Climate Action Framework needs to be ambitious.

The College has made significant progress to date, and we have the opportunity to further embed sustainability across our College.

Our Sustainability and Climate Action Framework sets out how we will achieve these objective and details the key sustainability goals, KPI's, key implementation mechanisms and supporting policies and plans to achieve them.

1.0

Introduction



Aidan Sloane
Chief Operating Officer

Belfast Met is committed to using our role as educators to inspire, celebrate and advance the sustainability agenda, maximizing our positive impact on the environment, economy, and communities we serve.

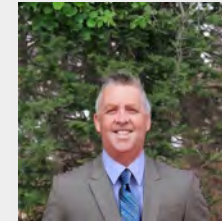
Sustainability has been central at the College for several years. To take this initiative forward we have launched our Sustainability and Climate Action Framework 2030.

The plan sets out how we will tackle the current and future challenges we face to become a more sustainable college and play our part in creating a more sustainable world.

This is a level of ambition that presents a challenge that will take time and resources to deliver. It will mean that the way we deliver certain activities will need to be different, behaviours changed, and projects redefined.

Whilst there are risks and initial additional costs involved, there will be long-term benefits and the reputational risk of mediocre performance mitigated.

We look forward for the support of the College community to play their part in achieving the aims and ambitions set out in our Sustainability and Climate Action Framework 2030.



Peter Kane
Head of Estate
& Sustainability Management

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (Act) sets a target of at least 100% reduction in net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 (i.e., net zero emissions by 2050) for Northern Ireland compared to baseline, along with interim targets including an at least 48% reduction in net emissions by 2030.

We will embed sustainability into our core functions of teaching and learning, whilst setting ambitious goals for reducing our carbon emissions, through our carbon management projects, sustainable construction and refurbishment projects.



Our Vision: Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond

Strategic Goal

Our Strategic Goal is to use our role as educators to inspire, celebrate and advance the sustainability agenda, maximising our positive impact on the environment, economy, and communities we serve.

Our overall, long-term goal is to be a sustainable and net zero carbon College before 2050. We anticipate that at the end of this current framework, a date will be determined by which we must reach this goal as we achieve efficiencies within the College and take advantage of the evolving energy landscape.

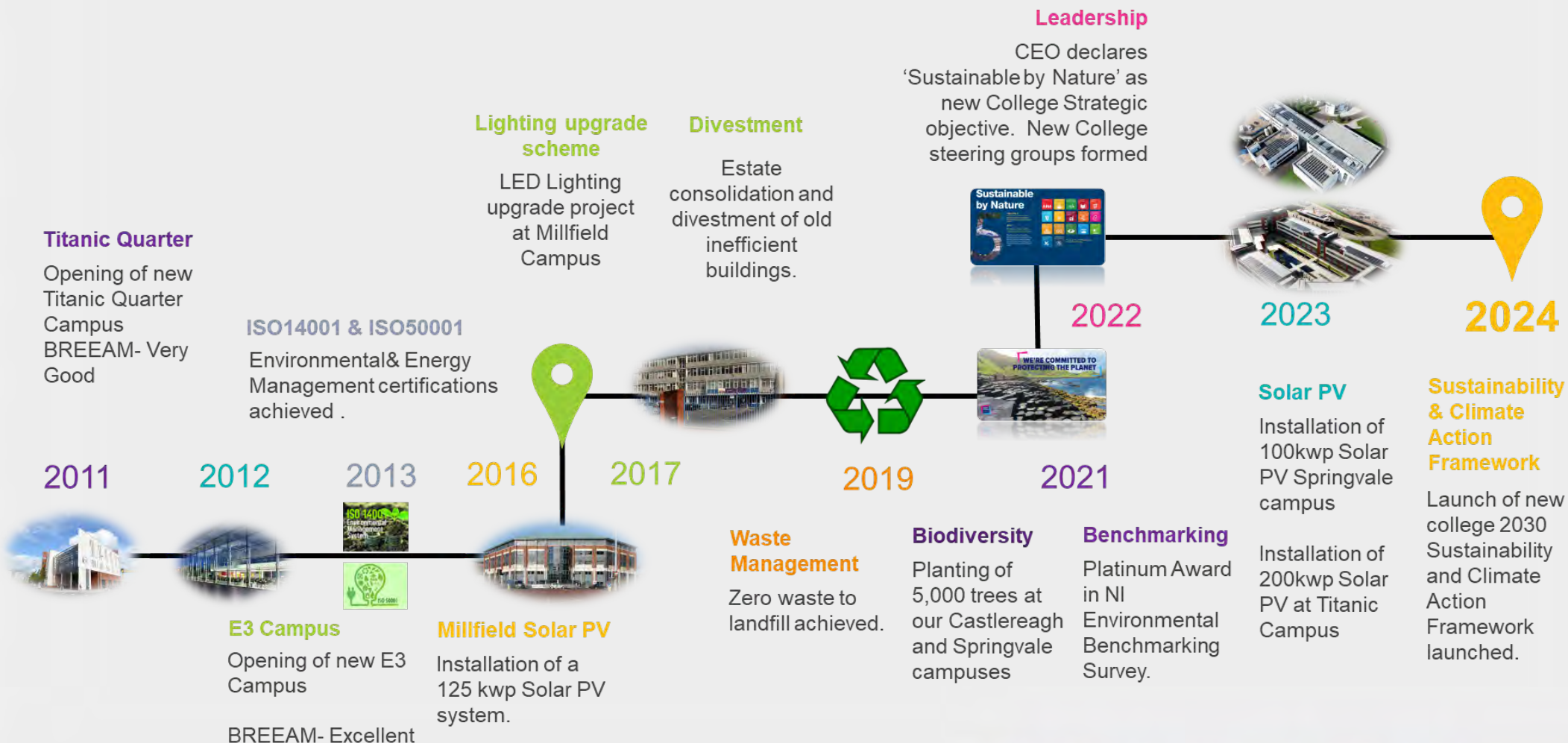
This framework will shape the College's plans and activities at all levels and across all campuses. The College's Sustainability & Climate Action Advisory Group will ensure that we turn this notion into reality and, in the context of our considerable but finite resources, set a credible roadmap for its delivery.

Eleven themes will guide our action to 2030 and beyond, and ensure that we maximise the College's contribution to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



3.0

What we have achieved so far



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution which formally adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all" and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. These issues also resonate with the College's key stakeholders, particularly in how they can commit to tackling climate change and inequality.

Belfast Met is committed to supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and publicly commits to helping achieve the SDGs.

The Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) Sustainable Development Goals Accord is the international University and College sector's collective response to the SDGs to which the College is a signatory.

Belfast Met plays a significant and positive role in addressing these goals through our curriculum, governance, teaching and learning, campus management. These actions impact on our employees, learners and the local community.

Indeed, we have capitalised on a range of opportunities to examine how the College and our staff, use resources, including energy and our buildings.

Confirming our commitment to these SDGs in the College Strategic Plan enables us to coordinate a whole college approach to sustainability and evidences the contribution we make to these issues – for our learners, the green economy, communities, and the environment.

Both employees and learners need to play their part in contributing to these goals through their behaviours and actions.

Delivering against this accord broader ambition also requires us to be financially sustainable – a critical requirement to support delivery of our purpose and enable us to fulfil our obligations as a non-departmental public body (NDPB).



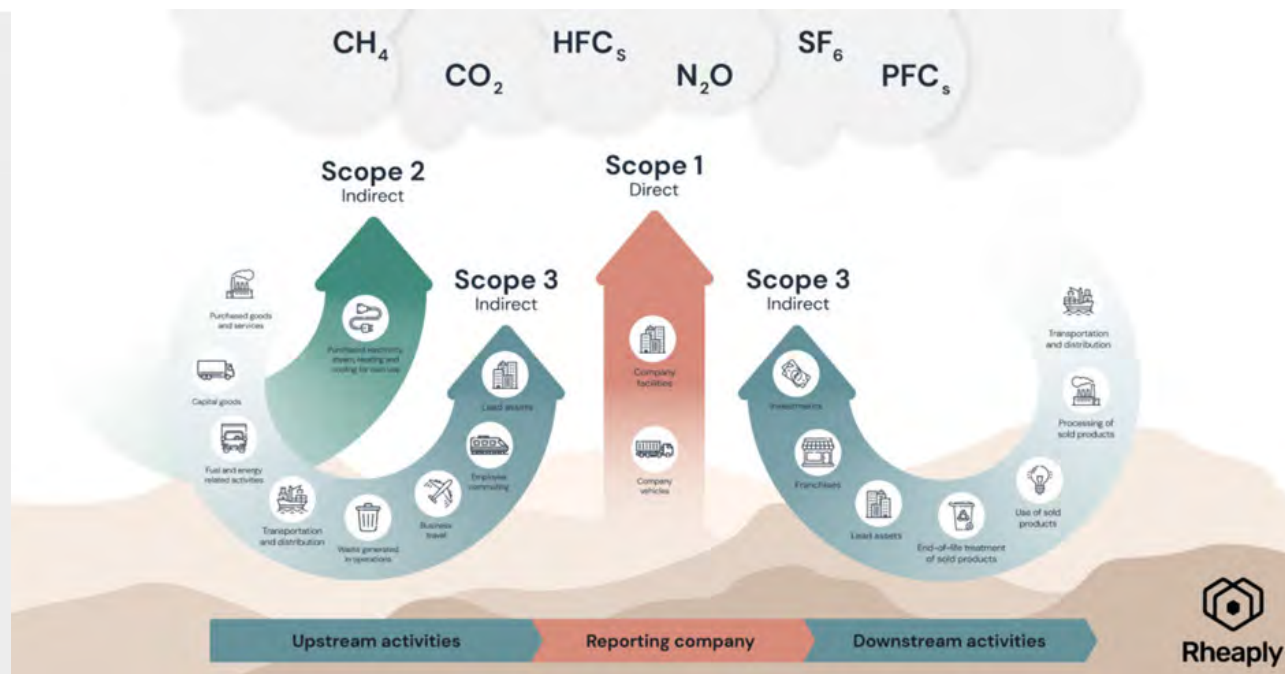
Carbon emissions

Cutting carbon is a global priority, Carbon Dioxide and other greenhouse gases released when we burn fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas are causing the planet to overheat and leading to changes in the climate such as increasing droughts, flooding, and more extreme storms. To stop this, individuals and organisations have a part to play to stop contributing to global warming and find a way to reverse the damage.

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 sets a target of a reduction of 100% in net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 (i.e., net zero emissions by 2050) compared with baseline, along with interim targets including a reduction of 48% in net emissions by 2030.

The Regulations place climate change reporting duties relating to both:

- Mitigation (actions which prevent the causes of climate change)
- Adaptation (actions which deal with the effects (impacts and risks) of climate change, helping us to better cope with the risks, changes and impacts that a changing climate can bring.



The carbon footprint of any organisation includes three scopes of emissions.

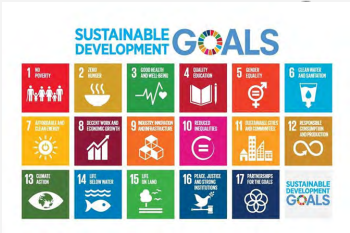
- Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned sources.
- Scope 2 emissions refer to carbon produced from our purchased electricity.
- Scope 3 emissions include all other indirect emissions within our value chain.



With a short window to 2030, the College will also focus its efforts on energy efficiency projects and initiatives that will impact on our goal to reduce our GHG emissions by 48% by 2030, and allow the College to operate within its carbon budget.

Scope 3 emissions are typically more difficult to measure and are often not included in an organisation's carbon reduction targets. We intend, in the first year of our action plan, to gather the best information possible about scope 3 emissions to begin addressing this significant part of our campus footprint.

Our Themes





Sustainable Leadership

To provide sustainable leadership and confirm our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, publicly committing to helping achieve them.

Objectives

- Sign up to 'The Sustainable Development Goal Accord' the international University and College sector's collective response to the SDGs.
- Establish Sustainability Steering group to facilitate the day-to-day sustainability management.
- Report annually to Governing Body and wider stakeholders on the sustainability performance of the college.



We will

- Sign up to and maintain support of the Sustainable Development Goals Accord for Colleges and Universities.
- Develop an action plan for SDG activity across the College, setting out targets and objectives in each area.
- Benchmark our College on SDG activity against our peers locally and globally and demonstrate the actions taken and impact made.
- Report annually through the SDGs Accord framework and College Sustainability & Climate Action report

Teaching & Learning

To facilitate the development and empowerment of future workforce and leaders in sustainability through our teaching and learning activities.

Objectives

- To foster a culture of sustainable citizenship within the College Community through both formal and informal teaching and learning opportunities and activities.
- To facilitate the development and empowerment of future workforce and leaders in sustainability through our teaching and learning programmes and activities.

Link to SDGs



We will

- Understand and document the environmental or sustainability content of current academic programmes and curriculum.
- Promote, increase and raise awareness of current curriculum programmes with environmental or sustainability content across all Departments.
- Through curriculum design, explore ways to enhance sustainable Teaching and Learning.
- Develop the leaders of tomorrow, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills they will need to drive change for a sustainable world.

Food, Health & Well-being

To improve the health and well-being of the college and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living.

Objectives

- To enhance the health and well-being of the College and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of aspects of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living.



Link to SDGs



We will

- Ensure support services are in place for learners and staff to protect their psychological well-being and to make their lives healthier and more sustainable.
- Create a greater awareness of the opportunities available to learners in relation to physical and recreational activities.
- Work to develop and implement a sustainable food policy.
- Encourage an informed attitude to sustainable food options and the place of food in staff and learners life.
- Promote the consumption of healthier and more sustainable food options in campus outlets.
- Contribute to advancing food, health and well-being in relation to sustainability
- Continue to replace plastic and single-use items throughout catering operations.

6.4

Sustainable Citizenship

To engage our learners, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability and become 'Sustainable by Nature'

Objectives

- To engage our learners, partners, staff, and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability.



Link to SDGs



We will

- Increase awareness and facilitate greater engagement of the College's learners and staff on sustainability issues.
- Encourage, support and promote initiatives for learners and staff to take responsible environmental and sustainability actions through changing behaviours and procedures / actions.
- Facilitate and support, voluntary student and staff environmental and sustainability relevant voluntary organisations and initiatives.
- Provide carbon literacy training to staff and learners.

Energy & Climate Change

To meet and exceed Government targets for reducing carbon emissions by 2030 while supporting the colleges plans for growth in activity and learner numbers.

Objectives

- To reduce carbon emissions from energy use by 50% by 2030 against a 2016-17 baseline.
- To reduce energy consumption by 30% by 2030 against a 2016-17 baseline
- To aspire to a long-term ambition to achieve net zero emissions before 2050.

8.7Mwh
Gas & electricity
consumption
in 2023-24

Link to SDGs



We will

- Determine the College's scope 1,2 and 3 carbon footprint and develop appropriate metrics to monitor these emissions.
- Develop and implement Carbon Management Plan to include the development of a roadmap to achieve carbon reductions and appropriate targets and key performance indicators across all carbon emission scopes.
- Provide regular mitigating and adaptation reports for climate change.
- Review our current and future vulnerability to climate-related risk and use our governance processes to manage climate risk and resilience effectively.
- Implement energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects within existing buildings.
- Assess the opportunities for estate-wide renewable energy at Belfast Met.
- Monitor and analyse energy and carbon data through our building management systems and provide relevant information to departments to minimise carbon emissions associated with their activities.
- Maintain the College ISO Environmental & Energy management certifications.

Water & Waste Management

Our activities produce around 150 tonnes of waste, and we use 17 million litres of water a year. Reducing these are a key priority.

We aim to conserve water through efficient use and management in order to reduce water consumption on campus.

We aim to minimise and actively manage waste through behavioural and practical change in accordance with the waste management hierarchy of elimination, reduction, reuse and recycling.

Objectives

- To develop water and waste management plans to minimise impact on water resources including both water consumption and water pollution.
- To send zero non-hazardous waste to landfill.
- To recycle at least 50% of total waste produced at the College by 2030

150 Tonnes

Waste generated through college activities in 2023-24

17,646 m³

Water usage during 2023-24

We will

- Develop a water management plan to minimise impact on water resources.
- Monitor water consumption data to assist in identifying areas of potential savings and seek opportunities for installing water management measures, such as rainwater harvesting.
- Develop a waste management plan to identify opportunities to minimise generation and maximise reuse and recycling.
- To take a lifecycle approach to waste for larger purchases including capital projects.
- Improve provision of appropriate recycling infrastructure and rollout binless offices and classrooms.
- Engage with design teams to minimise the amount of waste associated with the design, construction, refurbishment and demolition of buildings on campuses.
- Work with the onsite food service providers and our student catering department to investigate the reduction and efficient management of post-consumer food waste.
- Work with our IT department to examine opportunities to re-use IT equipment planned for disposal.
- To support student-led waste reduction initiatives.

Link to SDGs



Sustainable Procurement & contracts

All the products and services to support our day-to-day operations come with both financial and environmental costs are a major contributor to our indirect Scope 3 carbon emissions. Understanding the environmental, social, and economic impacts of what we buy, how we buy and who we buy from will help us deliver this strategy.

We aim to positively influence the sustainability performance of suppliers and the sustainability credentials of the goods and services that we purchase.

Objectives

- Consider adding sustainability criteria to selection criteria used in all departments' procurement activity.
- Consider whole-life cycle perspectives during the selection of goods and service wherever practicable and appropriate.

Link to SDGs



We will

- Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy covering all aspects of sustainability (environmental, social and economic) and including commitments to procure goods and services that minimise energy use, waste and social impacts.
- Develop guidance on green procurement for suppliers / providers.
- Develop procedures that promote sustainable procurement and encourage departments to use these.
- Provide appropriate training and guidance to staff involved in purchasing decisions, both within Procurement Services and other departments, that will consider the whole life cycle cost of equipment and services.
- Promote practicable sustainable buying principles, where appropriate.
- Establish a mechanism for redistributing items that could be reused.

Sustainable Construction and Refurbishment

Our campus is likely to change in size, shape and usage in the coming decade. Buildings also impact on the wellbeing of staff and the student experience.

We want to ensure any development is done in accordance with the highest possible environmental standards and reduce the environmental impacts of our construction and refurbishment projects.

Objectives

- To establish and implement a standard for sustainable construction and refurbishment at the College



61,000m²
Size of college estate covered through 4 main campuses and 1 satellite campus

Link to SDGs



We will

- Embed sustainability and carbon commitment within our Estate Strategy.
- Consider refit and refurbish of buildings before considering new ones.
- Take a strategic approach to the use of the existing estate through more efficient use of space and increasing the use of shared facilities.
- Review the College's approach to sustainable construction with a revised approach covering new build, refurbishment, fit-out and master planning.
- Maximise low and zero carbon technologies such as Solar PV, district heating systems and ground source heat pumps.
- Carry out life cycle cost analysis of construction and refurbishment on all projects to ensure that sustainability considerations are taken into account.
- Apply social value principles across major projects.

Commuting and Travel

To promote and encourage sustainable travel options for staff and students for travel to work, travel at work and travel for work in order to reduce carbon emissions and the impacts of commuting on the wider city community.

Objectives

- To reduce the number of private vehicle-miles per staff/student.
- To optimise business travel and reduce associated emissions by promoting non-travel options and encouraging multi-purpose trips.
- To increase awareness of the sustainable transport options and the impacts of the potential different modes of transport.

70.2%

Percentage of learners using public transport to commute to campus*

*2024 Learner Survey

Link to SDGs



We will

- Develop a new sustainability travel plan covering travel to work, travel at work and travel for work.
- Deliver sustainable travel incentives and projects to encourage walking, cycling, use of public transport and car sharing.
- Estimate our staff and students' travel emissions as part of their college journey and commit to setting a target to reduce it.
- Provide video-conferencing facilities in each campus to support reduction of staff and student travel.
- Greater provision of bicycle racks.
- Promote public transport over car use for business travel.
- Replace existing College petrol or diesel vehicles with electric alternatives where possible for use on campus and between campuses.
- Reduce the number of vehicles on campus as far as possible and increase electric vehicle charging points for staff and visitors.

6.10

Biodiversity

We want our estate to contribute to the health and well-being of staff, students, visitors and the surrounding local community.

We aim to promote and engage in the sustainable use and management of the landscape and natural resources of the College and to minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational operations and infrastructural development.

Objectives

- To continue to manage our grounds with due regard to the environment.
- To assess, maintain and increase the biodiversity of our estate.
- To promote and enhance the use of our natural resources in teaching and learning and sustainability as well as in everyday use and recreation.

Link to SDGs



We will

- Develop a Biodiversity Plan.
- Seek win-win situations for offsetting net carbon emissions and produce beneficial biodiversity impacts through tree and hedgerow planting.
- Develop a Sustainable Food Policy that aims to minimise the indirect biodiversity impacts of the food that we purchase.
- Seek to source all timber and paper from sustainable-certified suppliers and require our preferred contractors to do likewise.

Partnership and Engagement

To facilitate opportunities where staff and students can develop and share their knowledge, skills and experience to engage with and contribute effectively to achieving the College's sustainability aspirations.

Objectives

- To develop formal and informal collaborative partnerships with local, regional, national, and international stakeholders.



Link to SDGs



The SDG Accord

Commitments from:

110

Universities and colleges

103

Endorsing partners

Across

85 countries

"Inspiring, celebrating and advancing the critical role that education has in delivering the SDGs."

Be part of the change you want to see in education.



We will

- Provide improved information to support staff and students in understanding the environmental performance of their own departments, and to help inform appropriate actions at departmental level.
- Provide appropriate training, both general and role specific, to support staff and students to effectively contribute to achieving the College's environmental sustainability aspirations.
- Deliver regular engagement events through Student Union activities.
- Provide regular communication with the College community via formal and informal channels to facilitate action at individual and departmental level.
- Actively consult with staff, students and other relevant stakeholders on the development and implementation of operational policies, plans and practices.
- Actively seek formal and informal partnerships and opportunities for collaboration with regional, national and international stakeholders.
- Recognise the symbiotic relationship between the College and other FE colleges, Universities and employers and seek opportunities to work in collaboration on environmental sustainability initiatives.

7.0

Governance and Reporting

The Principal & Chief Executive has responsibility for environmental sustainability and carbon emissions.

The Project Governance Team will be as follows:

- **Project Sponsor – Chief Operating Officer**
- **Senior Responsible Officer – Head of Estate & Sustainability Management.**

The Environmental Sustainability and Climate Steering Group is chaired by the Head of Estate and Sustainability Management and reports directly to the College Executive Leadership Team.

The steering group, comprising key technical support personnel and curriculum staff, has been convened as required to facilitate the day-to-day aspects of sustainability management.

Implementation of this 2030 Sustainability & Climate Action Framework is coordinated and undertaken by Estate & Sustainability Management with an annual action plan setting key activity for each year.

All staff and learners at the College should take personal responsibility for the impacts of their actions-the majority of activities of the College that impact on sustainability, are directed and influenced by and/or fall under their responsibility.

Our performance will be benchmarked annually against national and international peer institutions.

This framework will be reviewed regularly, taking into account our developing understanding of the scale of challenges, our own performance and emerging opportunities.