BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY'S ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2020-25

PUTTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO

BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

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FOREWORD FROM THE VC

Birmingham City University recognises the important role we play in being part of the solution to climate change and sustainable development through top class learning, teaching, research and day-to-day operation.

As such, we have declared a climate emergency, and commit to putting in place a programme that will deliver a transformed university, with sustainability embedded in our curriculum and our operations.

This Environmental Plan sets out a comprehensive series of actions, with accompanying targets, including our commitment to being a zero carbon institution. We recognise that this Plan will evolve and develop as we challenge ourselves, and we all have a part to play in achieving our objectives. As Vice-Chancellor, I will ensure that environmental sustainability remains integral in all that we do.
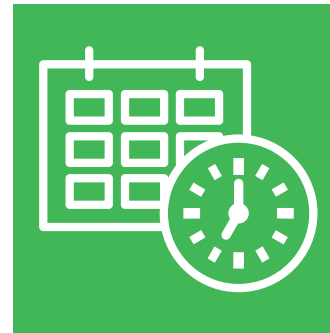
Philip Plowden
Vice Chancellor, Birmingham City University

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CREATING THIS PLAN

Students and staff have been consulted with to understand their environmental priorities and feedback, which has shaped this plan and the areas of focus. This has taken place through a range of surveys, meetings, events and a student dissertation which conducted research on students' environmental priorities.

Further research has been conducted into legislation, benchmarking against other universities, and the latest on the environmental sustainability agenda at a local, national, and global scale to inform our direction of travel over the next five years.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL VISION: HOW WILL WE LOOK IN 2025?

WE ARE A UNIVERSITY WHERE:

- Each and every one of our students and staff understands the principles of sustainability.
- Environmental sustainability is an integral part of our business functionality and operations.
- We bring about positive environmental change at the University, in Birmingham and beyond.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

- Students have a sustainability ethos throughout their experience at BCU and understand how it applies in their course and can be used in their careers.
- Our graduates are socially responsible with knowledge and understanding of sustainable futures.

LEADERSHIP:

- Sustainability is embedded in the University's mission, values and strategic plans.
- Integration of sustainability into recruitment and professional development.
- We invest ethically and responsibly.

ACADEMIC LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH:

- Sustainability is integrated strategically within our curriculum.
- Collaborative learning, teaching and research opportunities have been realised driving innovative solutions to sustainable development and climate change challenges.

OUR ESTATE:

- We have minimised resource use through our estate and operations.
- Renewable and low-carbon on-site electricity generation is in operation.
- We have protected and enhanced biodiversity across our estate.

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS:

- We will share best practice, learn from others and make research accessible.
- Positive impact on society as an employer and a neighbour in the community.
- We work with our strategic suppliers and contractors to reduce the environmental impacts of our contracts and add further social value.
- We are 'the University for Birmingham'.

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HOW DO WE GET THERE?

To achieve this vision, we have developed the following three objectives:

1. EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PROCESSES

We will continue to build on embedding sustainability in our University processes; for example, building this further into our procurement and maintaining our achievement of obtaining Level 4 of the Flexible Framework.

Our ISO 14001:2015 accredited Environmental Management System (EMS) will drive continual improvement and embedding of environmental considerations across our sites and processes.

We will conduct a mapping exercise to understand further areas where sustainability can be embedded as a requirement and consideration in our processes and governance across the University.

2. REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF OUR OPERATIONS

Our operations will become more efficient through improved monitoring and management of resources, procedures and training, therefore reducing our consumption and associated environmental impacts.

3. CREATING A GREEN CULTURE WITHIN BCU, LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

We will continue to build on the environmental events and communications we deliver, further engaging with students, staff and the local community on the positive actions they can take to reduce their environmental impacts and make a difference.

We will use our knowledge, partnerships and research to develop sustainable solutions to environmental issues on a local, regional and global scale.

Our aims, targets and actions to achieve these objectives can be found in Appendix 1.

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THE U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. We will map the SDGs against the action plan of this strategy to show where we are working towards these as an institution.
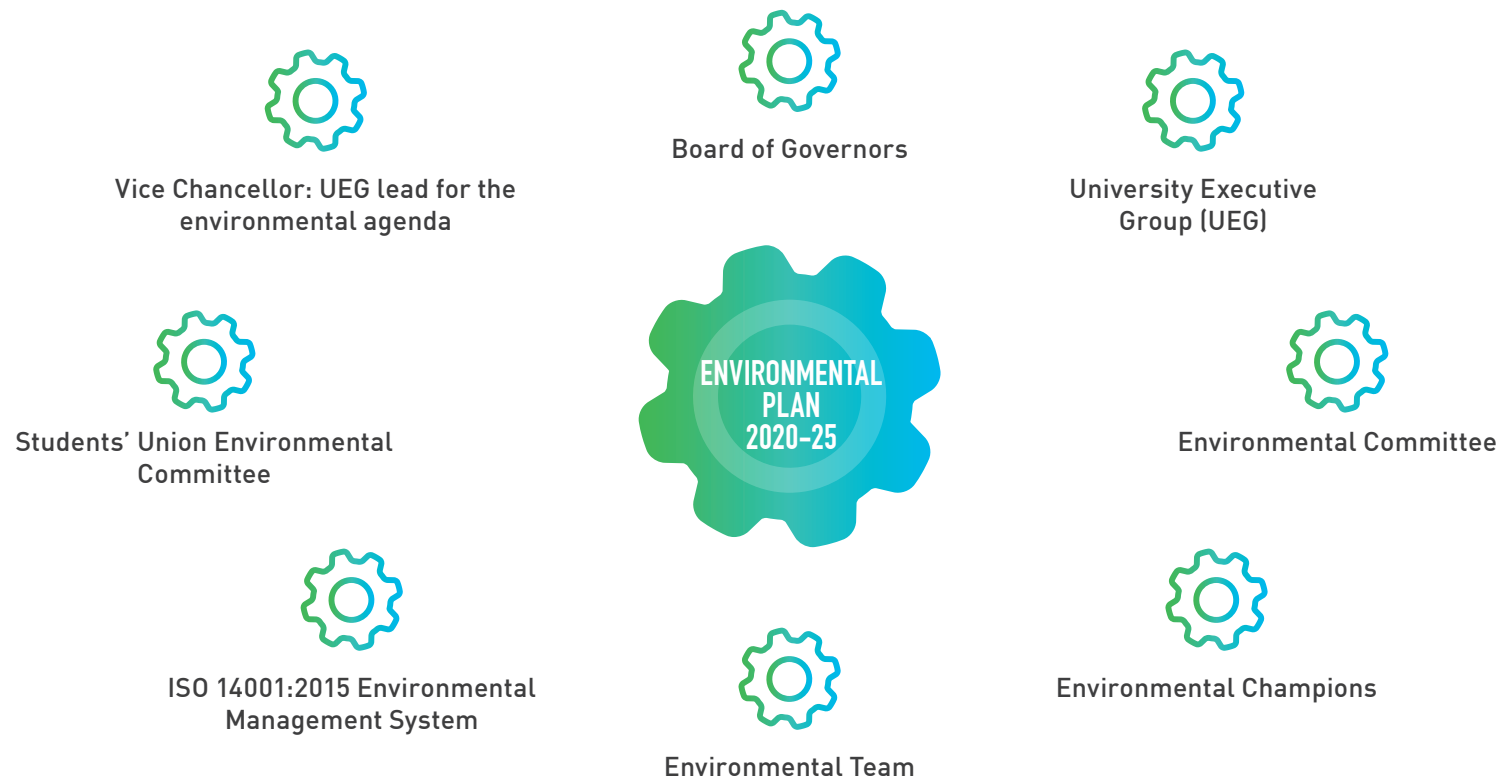
1 NO POVERTY	2 ZERO HUNGER	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	5 GENDER EQUALITY	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	13 CLIMATE ACTION	14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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HOW DO WE ENSURE IT HAPPENS?

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE:

Leadership and governance is essential to ensure the successful delivery of the Environmental Plan. A series of boards and committees is responsible for putting environmental sustainability at the heart of what we do.

Vice Chancellor: UEG lead for the environmental agenda

Board of Governors

University Executive Group (UEG)

Students' Union Environmental Committee

ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2020-25

Environmental Committee

ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System

Environmental Champions

Environmental Team

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ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES AND POLICIES:

- University Strategy
- Estates Strategy
- Environmental Policy
- Energy Strategy
- Waste and Resources Strategy
- Internationalisation Strategy

- Travel Plans
- Procurement Strategy
- Fairtrade Policy
- Sustainable Building Standard
- Sustainable Catering Policy and Targets
- Learning and Teaching Strategy

DELIVERY, MONITORING AND COMMUNICATING OUR PROGRESS AGAINST THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN:

We will monitor and communicate progress against the Environmental Plan through:

- Our EMS and associated auditing
- Delivery against the targets in Appendix 1, which will evolve over the five years
- An annual environmental report which shows progress against key themes and targets and will be presented to top management
- Associated Department/Faculty strategies
- Our Environmental Committee, which will meet and update on progress throughout the year
- Our Environmental Communications Plan, which will be used to communicate our successes and progress made.

APPENDIX 1: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE 1: Embedding sustainability in our processes

Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Environmental Management System	Our accredited environmental management system provides a robust structure to embed environmental procedures across the University	Continue to manage, maintain and continually improve our ISO 14001:2015 certified Environmental Management System throughout 2020-25.	ISO 14001:2015 certification
Procurement	We are procuring sustainably sourced goods and services that benefit the University, the local area, and globally	Maintain Level 4 of the Flexible Framework throughout 2020-25, exploring the option of achieving Level 5 or moving to ISO 20400:2017 should it become a formalised accreditation.	External and peer audit
		From 2020 onwards, all procurements over £60k require a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA), which considers environmental, economic and social impacts, and a light-touch process in place for contracts below £60k.	Completed SIAs
		All strategic and operational suppliers will have a sustainability action plan by 2025 and are being monitored to ensure delivery.	Number of suppliers with an action plan

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Projects and other processes	We have embedded sustainability as a consideration in our processes	By 2025 all University decisions taken at its main governance committees explicitly address sustainability as part of the assessment process.	Document templates
		By 2020-21 sustainability has been integrated in project management template documents.	Project template documents
		By 2020-21 complete a mapping exercise to identify further University processes to embed sustainability.	Mapping exercise outlining other areas of opportunity
		Develop and implement an ethical investment policy for BCU by end of 2020-21.	Ethical Investment Policy in place
		Review how sustainability links to and can be incorporated in the new IT strategy by end of 2019-20	IT Strategy
		Achieve the AIM Accreditation for our Events Management by 2021, which includes a section on sustainability, and work towards making our events more sustainable.	AIM Accreditation

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OBJECTIVE 2: Reducing the environmental impacts of our operations

Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Biodiversity 14 LIFE BELOW WATER 15 LIFE ON LAND	Protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity across our estate, promoting its benefits to students and staff	Measure the baseline of our biodiversity on campus by summer 2020.	Ecological survey report
		Using the ecological survey report, develop a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for BCU by spring 2021 to maintain the number of species and habitats, and where feasible increase these.	BAP Increase in species on BCU sites Increased awareness and engagement on biodiversity
		Maintain, and where feasible, increase food growing sites around campuses by 2025 from 2020 provision.	Area of food growing
Catering 2 ZERO HUNGER 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 14 LIFE BELOW WATER 15 LIFE ON LAND	Ethically and sustainably sourced food is provided for our catering and events with minimal waste produced as part of the contract delivery	Deliver our Sustainable Catering Policy and Targets to 2020-21.	External and peer audit
		Embed sustainability as a core requirement in the tender of the catering contract in 2020-21, developing a new Sustainable Catering Policy and Targets for the duration of the contract (2021-26)	Tender documentation Policy document and associated performance

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Energy and carbon	Run a net zero carbon energy efficient University	Continue to purchase 100% renewable energy (both electricity and gas).	Certification
		Reduce our scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 43% by 2020-21 (absolute and by FTE students and staff targets) against a 2005-06 baseline year.	Emissions reporting
		Deliver the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy 50% carbon reduction by 2030 against a 2009-10 baseline year.	Emissions reporting
		Review what is required to achieve a net zero carbon University by 2050 and start the delivery of actions to achieve this by 2025.	Zero carbon paper Emissions reporting
		Increase onsite energy generation from 2020 levels by 2025.	Metered onsite generation
		Throughout 2020-25, improve the capture of scope 3 carbon emission data for reporting, and setting associated goals for reporting and net zero carbon work.	Environmental reports and targets
Environmental management and compliance	Continual environmental improvement and pollution prevention	Zero major non-conformances due to a compliance obligation breach.	EMS reporting
		From 2020-25, complete the marking of manhole covers with correct identification across the estate, to include drainage CCTV inspections to all PPM maintenance contracts.	To be measured and evidenced through the Contractor Performance Meetings.

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Sustainable buildings	Our future buildings and refurbishments are designed to reduce their environmental impacts and support our Environmental Plan	Achieve an EPC rating of 'A' on all new builds.	EPC certificate
		Achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' as a minimum for all new builds.	BREEAM certificates
		Deliver BCU's Sustainable Building Standard for all new builds and refurbishments from 2020-25.	Sustainable Building Standard
			Project trackers
Transport	Reduce our emissions related to travel, with more students and staff using active travel and public transport	Encourage and increase staff, student and visitor sustainable travel through the implementation and two yearly refresh of the University Travel Plans. Specific targets outlined in the Travel Plans.	University Travel Plans
			Travel survey results
		Improve the capture of business travel information through any travel procurements from 2020-25.	Tender documentation
			Contract data
		By July 2021 review and agree an approach to post-combustion engine vehicles for BCU.	Report
Waste & Recycling	Reduce overall waste production, increase reuse, and improve recycling rates	Reduce the amount of waste generated year on-year by 1% by 2025 from a 2019-20 baseline.	Waste statistics
		Increase recycling rates annually by 2% per year by 2025 from a 2019-20 baseline.	Waste statistics
		Maintain zero waste to landfill (excluding waste from building projects).	Waste statistics annual reporting
		Establish and maintain a Waste Task Group at BCU throughout 2020-25 to continue to identify areas of waste prevention and reduction, and increase recycling.	Meeting minutes and reports

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Water 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	Minimise water usage and use water efficiently	Install water meter loggers and establish a baseline of water consumption for 2019-20	Loggers installed Water meter data
		Once a baseline is established, develop a water reduction target and approach to reduce water consumption in 2020-21, and associated carbon emissions, to deliver by 2025	Water meter data

OBJECTIVE 3: Creating a green culture within BCU, locally and globally

Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Curriculum (SDG icons 1-17)	Support all students in gaining knowledge and skills to deliver sustainable development Staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to deliver a sustainable curriculum	By August 2020 sustainability has been integrated as a requirement in the course approval form	Course approval form
		By 2025 every course has been assessed for sustainability, using the SDGs as a framework, via the Periodic Review.	Periodic review process and outcomes
		Develop and deliver a new SEDA accredited course for staff on Embedding Sustainability in the Curriculum by August 2020.	SEDA accredited course Case studies and staff assignments

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Engagement, communication and training	Encourage positive behaviour change and a green culture at BCU	Deliver four environmental engagement events per year.	Sign in sheets, photos, event marketing materials
	Upskill students and staff in their environmental awareness and ability to make positive change	Deliver at least one environmental communication per month to staff through our communications channels.	Environmental Communications Log
		Make use of central student communications channels to communicate messages and news of events to the student body.	Environmental Communications Log
		Embed environmental content through non-standard communication channels to students throughout 2020-25.	Environmental Communications Log
		Increase the number of Environmental Champions joining the network year on year from 2020 to 2025	Numbers of Champions on the mailing list
		By 2025, all permanent staff have completed the environmental awareness training, with specific environmental training provided to key stakeholders from a 2020 baseline.	Training matrix, sign in sheets, training materials, ERP training records

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Community Partnerships	Support the local and global community, economy and partnerships in developing sustainable solutions, raising awareness and creating a green culture, establishing BCU as the 'University for Birmingham'	Environmental activities contribute towards the Graduate+ awards programme each year, including attending and/or involvement in environmental events and volunteering.	Sign in sheets and records
		Maintain our graduate attributes to include a sustainability and global element year on year.	Graduate Attributes document
		STEAMhouse: Deliver environmentally focused event/workshop once a year from 2020-25.	Details and outcomes of events/workshops
		Support the local business community with the development of environmentally sustainable business solutions from 2020-25.	15 businesses provided with 12 hours support
		Birmingham 2029: Deliver applied research on societal challenges facing Birmingham from 2019-2029, linking to the environmental agenda and UN Sustainable Development Goals, for example, the "Does urban greening benefit everyone? Social inclusion and exclusion of the 'greenification' of urban space in Moseley, Birmingham."	Beider, H. & Chahal, K. (2020) "Birmingham 2029" book to be published by Policy Press and ongoing publications
		Work in collaboration with stakeholders and organisations throughout 2020-25 to keep at the forefront of the environmental agenda locally, regionally and globally	EAUC meeting attendance R20 Taskforce involvement

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Area	Aim	Objectives and Targets	Measures/Data/Evidence
Community Partnerships	Support the local and global community, economy and partnerships in developing sustainable solutions, raising awareness and creating a green culture, establishing BCU as the 'University for Birmingham'	Deliver research projects to develop sustainable solutions locally, regionally and globally through Faculty Research Centres and Groups, for example the Global Environmental Challenges Research Centre, which includes: Developing community centric sustainable solutions for rural communities in Western Cape South Africa MacroBio – Sustainable utilisation of Macroalgae, focused on biomethane production in Indonesia ALG-AD – Creating Value from Waste Nutrients, from anaerobic digestion in the UK, Belgium, France and Germany Solar pump based village microgrids –tackling the energy/water/food nexus in India Water, Environment and Communities Research Group (WECRG) supporting water knowledge, technology and processes, locally and globally Constructing a Digital Environment – facilitating long term management of natural capital to deliver benefits in addressing deprivation in East Birmingham	Published papers Active funded research projects Project outputs e.g. project tools, new technologies, monitoring data

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IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION OR HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2020-25 PLEASE GET IN TOUCH:

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Version: 1
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Approval date: February 2020
Approval by: Board of Governors