

Sustainability Engagement Plan

Brief Description & Purpose:	<p>This Sustainability Engagement Plan outlines how the university will involve students, staff, and faculty in advancing environmental and social responsibility. It focuses on raising awareness, encouraging participation and embedding sustainable practices into campus life. The plan aims to build a culture of collaboration and innovation that supports lasting change and helps create a more sustainable future.</p> <p>The Policy is overseen by the University Sustainability Management Group. Progress is reported via the Annual Sustainability Report.</p>		
Applicable to (list cohorts):	Staff: All staff	Students: All students	Third Parties: Suppliers
Date Created:	16 June 2021	Last Review Date:	01 June 2026
Approval Authority:	University Sustainability Management Group	Approved:	15 June 2026
Executive Owner:	Prof John Woodward	Business Owner:	Dr Paul Steadman
Next Review Date:	15 June 2027	Publication External Y/N	Yes

1.0 Introduction

As a challenger institution, Northumbria is committed to evolving and improving across all areas of activity, including sustainability. Our University Strategy 2025–2030 recognises sustainability as the greatest challenge of our time and sets out a clear commitment: *through innovative research, education, and collaboration, we will empower future leaders, contribute to the global transition towards a greener and fairer world, and create a sustainable campus.*

This commitment is embedded across our teaching, research and operations. Sustainability is being integrated into the curriculum so that every Northumbria student develops an understanding of global challenges and the skills to become a sustainability leader. We are investing in pioneering research that addresses urgent issues and delivers real-world impact, including initiatives such as the Renewable Energy Northeast Universities Centre for Doctoral Training. Partnerships further strengthen our efforts, enabling us to share knowledge and extend our influence.

Our progress is also demonstrated through action: we have already reduced our carbon footprint by 63% and are on the way to achieving net zero by 2040. We are working closely with our partners, including QA at our London Campus, to ensure shared progress towards this goal.

This plan builds on these foundations, aligning our activities with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and prioritising further improvements in areas such as carbon reduction, waste minimisation and sustainable campus operations. Through collective effort and engagement, Northumbria will continue to drive meaningful change and lead by example.

2.0 Plan Detail

Key to delivering our Strategy Commitments is the need to deliver effective engagement and communications amongst staff, students and the communities in which we work. Our engagement activity around sustainability has three aims:

- **Inform and Encourage:** To help our stakeholders understand more about sustainability challenges and to encourage them to adopt behaviours that support the SDGs at Northumbria and beyond.
- **Shared Voices:** To gather the views of our students and staff and to use these to shape our sustainability agenda and associated activity.
- **Promote:** To raise staff, student and public awareness of Northumbria's sustainability successes.

3.0 Key Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
University Sustainability Management Group	Policy oversight, review and approval
Staff, Students, Visitors	Support the plan by making sustainable choices, getting involved in initiative and helping build a culture of responsibility.

4.0 Related Policies, Procedures and Other Resources

- Environmental Sustainability Policy

5.0 Document Control

Version No.	Reviewer	Date	Changes
1.0		16.06.21	Created
1.1	Dr Paul Steadman	15.06.24	Strategy & target update
1.1	Dr Paul Steadman	24.06.25	Strategies, Policy format
1.2	Dr Paul Steadman	01.06.26	Strategy & target update



SUSTAINABILITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

ACTIVITY	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE	RESOURCES	TARGET(S)	RESPONSIBILITY	NOTES
Sustainability Engagement Working Group	Students, Staff & Community	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership includes representatives from Marketing & Students' Union (SU) as well as Sustainability Manager and Carbon Manager. 	Sustainability Engagement Working Group to oversee sustainability engagement and audit activity by July 2027.	Students Union & Sustainability Manager	SEWG - Student-led Voice on Sustainability event held November 2025.
Training module & inductions	Students	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online training platform. Input from Technology Enhanced Learning Team. 	Develop new sustainability module for inclusion in all student inductions.	Sustainability Manager Student, Library & Academic Services	Complete. Reviewed and updated June 2026.
	Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bespoke online training platform. Facilitation and monitoring from People & Organisational Culture. 	Develop new sustainability module for inclusion in all staff inductions.	Sustainability Manager People & Organisational Culture	Complete. Reviewed and updated June 2026.
Competency matrix & training	Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for externally provided training. Time requirements for in-house training course development and delivery. 	Review Competency Matrix to ensure it is comprehensive and effective by July 2027.	Sustainability Manager University Sustainability Management Group (USMG)	
				Aim for all mandatory courses to have a completion rates of 75% by June 2027.	Sustainability Manager USMG	
	Students	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of IEMA certification. 	Develop new Sustainability	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing



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Sustainability Ambassadors Programme			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance from Technology Enhanced Learning Team. Paid student internship – Inclusivity assessment. Blackboard VLE. 	Ambassadors Programme suitable for all students.		
	Students			Sign up 20 students in its first full year of running 2026/27.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing programme
Goalkeepers	Staff	Promote Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workbook and supporting guidance and suggested actions. Goalkeepers' training workshops. Ongoing support from Sustainability Manager i.e. regular meetings. Dedicated Teams site. Audits Annual Audit reports – 1 per team. 	At least one active Goalkeepers team in every Faculty and Service annually.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing programme
Goalkeepers Audits	Students	Promote Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half-day training session. Refreshments for volunteers. Templates for auditors. Availability of Goalkeepers for audit. Compilation and distribution of audit reports. 	Deliver Goalkeeper Audits annually (including training of student volunteers and 2 audit opportunities for each participant).	Sustainability Manager	Offers around 20 volunteer audit opportunities annually.
LEAF	Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscription to the LEAF programme. 	LEAF Sustainable labs. Achieve Bronze Standard in all labs by July 27.	Sustainability Manager LEAF Coordinators.	



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support through Sustainable Labs Group. • Staff time of participants in the scheme. • Staff time to complete audit. 			
Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)	Students & Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant staff time involved in any programme redesign. • ESD Resource intranet site for staff. • Staff training e.g. climate literacy, ESD workshops. • Dedicated Teaching Quality Excellence Fund. • Academic Registry support and dedicated Teaching excellence Team. • Living Lab projects list. 	Monthly updates to staff intranet site for training/resources for supporting education of the SDGs.	Sustainability Manager SLAS	Ongoing
Research for the SDGs	Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Services support for associated funding bids. • Business Services support for business partnership opportunities. • Research for the SDGs Guidance site on staff intranet. • SLAS support on compiling data for reporting metrics around publications. 	Develop dedicated staff intranet site for supporting research for the SDGs.	Sustainability Manager Research & Innovation Services	New intranet site under development, to be complete end of Summer 26.
				Map research for the SDGs using publishing metrics and case studies by June 27.	Sustainability Manager SLAS	
				Identify metrics which can be used for setting	USMG	



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goalkeepers input on sharing updates from Faculties regarding relevant research. 	targets around increasing research in support of the SDGs by March 27.		
Guidance and Procedures	Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple, accessible guides and resources to assist sustainable and compliant activity e.g. Environmental procedures, Waste Directory, Reuse Guidance and forms etc. Located on staff intranet pages. 	Undertake an annual schedule of audits to identify any guidance that is required or which needs revision.	Sustainability Manager	Undertaken as part of ISO14001 activity.
	Students	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and guides on relevant topics including sustainable travel, Cycle2Campus and waste guidance. Located on website and student intranet pages. 	Continually review based on student feedback i.e. GOAL findings.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
Campaigns	Students & Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of campaign design and delivery e.g. visual resources, hosting events etc. 	Run at least one major sustainability campaign annually e.g. Responsible Consumption.	Sustainability Manager Goalkeepers Students' Union	Responsible Consumption campaign (2026), Wildlife (hedgehog) campaign (2026).
Events	Students & Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event costs e.g. Dr Bike, Bike Week 	Run at least 10 sustainability events annually.	Sustainability Manager Goalkeepers	Ongoing



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					Students' Union	
Sustainability Awards	Students & Staff	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs of awards / prizes. Refreshments 	Northumbria Sustainability Awards Scheme by June 27.	Sustainability Manager	
				Launch new Sustainability Awards schemes for 2026/27.	Sustainability Manager	
				Undertake quarterly monitoring to identify most successful posts and stories.	Sustainability Engagement Working Group	Ongoing
USMG & Sub-Groups	Students & Staff	Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time for preparation, attendance and follow-up actions. 	Track attendance to ensure strong representation from all group members.	Sustainability Manager	Replace members as required. Ongoing
'Sustainability' Teams Group	Staff	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates from Sustainability manager and encouraging others to post. Responding to posts from others and acting on suggestions where possible. 	Provide regular updates to Sustainability group on Teams.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
				Publicise the group to increase membership – target 200 members by June 2027.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing



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GOAL	Students	Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of University Executive and Sabbatical Officers. Coordinated by SU to give objectivity/student voice. 	Undertake an annual GOAL Day on a sustainability focus in 2026/27.	Students' Union / University Executive	
SU Survey	Students	Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of annual student survey coordinated by SU. 	70% student rating for institutional commitment to sustainability by July 2027.	Students' Union	
Student societies	Students	Shared voices Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings between societies, Sustainability Manager and SU Activities Coordinator. 	SU Activities Officer to sit on Sustainability Engagement Working Group	Students' Union Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
Student Sustainability Mailing List	Students	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of mailing list. Gecko account for signup. 	Increase Mailing List membership by 20% from 2025/26 to 2026/27.	Sustainability Manager	
	Students			Post to the student sustainability mailing list at least quarterly.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
Staff Intranet	Staff	Promote Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy provided by Sustainability Manager. Updates completed by Marketing. 	Post at least 6 sustainability news updates on the student intranet annually.	Sustainability Engagement Working Group	Ongoing
Student Intranet	Students	Promote Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy provided by Sustainability Manager. Updates completed by Marketing. 	Post at least 6 sustainability news updates on the student intranet annually.	Sustainability Engagement Working Group	Ongoing



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All Staff Email	Staff	Promote Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Staff email from USMG Chair 	Include a sustainability update in one all-staff update, at least once a year.	Marketing	
Annual Report	Students, Staff & Community	Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple contributions required. 	Publish a Sustainability Annual report once a year.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
Website	Students, Staff & Community	Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated sustainability webpages. 	Maintain up to date webpages.	Sustainability Manager	Ongoing
Collaborative Newcastle University Agreement (CNUA)	Community	Inform & encourage Promote Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CNUA Working Group 16 project plans for key projects supporting people, place and/or planet. Dedicated website Launch event Funding applications Allocation of funds 	Develop 16 actions plans for key projects to be delivered under CNUA e.g. NetZero.	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Business & Enterprise)	Ongoing
Engagement events for Climate Change e.g. youth climate engagement, policy forums with local government etc.	Students, Community & Staff	Inform & encourage Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for events Provision of staff experts Administration of events Provision of space e.g. lecture theatres 	Deliver at least two engagement events a year with local audiences focusing on challenges relating to climate change.	Marketing Sustainability Manager Business Enterprise Services	Co-organiser: Student Climate Summit & Innovation



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Active membership of local groups, championing sustainability in the community	Community	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of groups including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Enterprise Partnership (Chair) ○ Students in Newcastle / City Life ○ NetZero Taskforce ○ North East Coalition on Climate Change ○ Newcastle Biodiversity Group (Chair) ○ Newcastle Fairtrade Partnership. 	Maintain membership and undertake actions as agreed within the relevant groups.	Various	Ongoing
Pack for Good Campaign	Students & Community	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate British Heart Foundation Banks on campus and in local area on agreement with the Council. • Publicity of the scheme e.g. door-to-door leaflets. • Litter picks. 	Deliver an annual Pack for Good scheme on conclusion of the academic year.	Sustainability Manager Sodexo Students' Union	Ongoing
Leave Newcastle Happy Campaign	Students & Community	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity of the scheme e.g. door-to-door leaflets. • Social media advertising campaign. 	Deliver an annual Leave Newcastle Happy scheme on conclusion of the academic year.	Sustainability Manager SLAS Students' Union Newcastle University Newcastle City Council	Ongoing
Best Neighbour on Campus	Students & Community	Inform & encourage Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prize money for the scheme • Resources for receiving entries, judging, promoting scheme etc. 	Deliver the Best neighbour on campus scheme on an annual basis.	Student, Library & Academic Services	



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Public lectures	Students, Community & Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised by events team i.e. identifying speakers, publicity etc. Refreshments Provision of space e.g. lecture theatres Booking portal 	Deliver an annual schedule of public lectures exploring a range of sustainability-related challenges.	Events Team	Ongoing
Sustainability community education programmes (free or include a fee)	Community	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme development by academics and Business Enterprise team. Programme delivery by academics. Training materials and assessment (where relevant) CPD portfolio 	Deliver an annual programme of education opportunities around sustainability for local businesses/ local community – at least some must be free.	Business Enterprise Teams Faculties SLAS	Ongoing
Outreach schemes in support of the SDGs incl. NUSTEM, Building Advice Centre, Student Law Office & Business Clinic	Community & Students	Inform & encourage Shared voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student volunteers and paid supporting staff. Funding for schemes. Travel to schools, businesses and organisations receiving free advice. 	Deliver an annual programme of outreach schemes which support the SDGs.	Various	Ongoing
Volunteering Programmes	Students, Community & Staff	Inform & encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for schemes. Travel costs for volunteers. Engagement with organisations/ individuals being supported. Health, Safety & Risk Assessments. 	Deliver an annual programme of volunteering opportunities supporting sustainability needs within the local community.	Students' Union Graduate Futures	Ongoing