

1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

In the Durham University Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy, we set out our key ambition to be one of the most environmentally sustainable universities in the UK:

“As part of the requirement to be sustainable, we are committed to making Durham University one of the most environmentally sustainable universities in the UK. To achieve this goal will require the active commitment of every member of the University community.”

The University’s [Sustainability Ambition Statement](#) opens with a commitment to

“embed sustainability at every level in the University, creating a culture where all staff and students can play their part in the University achieving our vision. Sustainability will be a central element of our research, our education, our wider student experience, and our engagement with stakeholders across the city, the region and beyond”.

The aim of this Engagement and Communications Strategy is to detail how we achieve active commitment from every member of the University community. The document introduces Greenspace, the concept created to provide an identity to our environmental initiatives, followed by analysis of the key University stakeholders and the methods and channels used to communicate with them.

We detail the key aims and objectives in our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, along with the important messages delivered under the Greenspace banner. The document then defines our campaign strategy, highlighting our ‘My Greenspace Calendar’ with an overarching annual summary and 12 focus months across the academic year. We also explain how the University is working to embed the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our operations.

The final sections of the document explain how we will measure our impact, provide details of our well-established network of staff Environment Champions and Greenspace Student Engagement Group representatives, and gives a list of actions required to successfully deliver this Engagement and Communications Strategy.

1.2 About Greenspace

In order to bring the University’s environmental initiatives and activities together, we devised ‘**Greenspace**’ as the name and concept. The University’s Energy and Sustainability Team deliver Greenspace, which promotes the University’s Environmental Policies, Plans and Procedures. We coordinate environmental initiatives across the University with the help of our Environment Champions, Student Representatives and steering groups, namely, Environmental Sustainability Strategic Planning Group and its subgroups.

Greenspace forms a collective and coherent agenda, with multiple teams and steering groups focusing on each area of the agenda, such as the:

- a. Energy and Sustainability Team
 - i. Senior Sustainability Manager
 - ii. Sustainability Managers (Energy & Infrastructure; Waste and Environmental Compliance; Biodiversity) and, Biodiversity)
 - iii. Assistant Sustainability Manager (Travel)

- iv. Sustainable Engagement Coordinator
- b. Environmental Sustainability Strategic Planning [Group](#) (ESSPG)
- c. Other Steering Groups feeding to ESSPG including
 - i. Sustainable Procurement Steering Group
 - ii. Waste Reduction Group
 - iii. Integrated Sustainable Travel Plan Steering Group
 - iv. Biodiversity Delivery Group and Biodiversity Sub Group
- d. Energy Conservation Group

2. Communication and Stakeholders

2.1 Stakeholders

The Energy and Sustainability Team lead sustainability communications and engagement activities, however, this is often enhanced by collaboration with other university initiatives and external partners.

Sustainability campaigns are relevant to and target a wide range of internal and external audiences, sometimes targeted to a group with specific interests or characteristics.

Our key internal and external partners and target audiences are listed in the table below:

	Partners	Audiences
Internal	Marketing and Communications Sustainable Development Goals Group and other Working Groups Human Resources and Organisational Development Student and Academic Services Catering University Colleges Staff Environment Champions Greenspace Student Engagement Group (GSEG)	Students living in Colleges Students with an interest in sustainability Professional Services Staff Academic staff Staff Environment Champions Greenspace Student Engagement Group (GSEG)
External	Durham Students' Union Durham County Council Biodiversity Sub Group Community Groups (e.g. Climate Action Durham) Other universities and networks Contractors (e.g. Waste) Organisation and Charities (e.g. Durham Wildlife Trust) International partners, e.g. via Matariki Network; COIMBRA	Local community Other universities and networks (e.g. EAUC [Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges]; AUDE) Environmental pressure groups Local/regional partners working on, e.g. Biodiversity International partner universities

2.2 Communication Method and Channels

The University currently has multiple social media channels for different purposes. Greenspace will work with the University's Marketing and Communications Team to ensure key news and events are shared on the main channels.

We use and/or manage several different communication channels, these are:

	Internal or External	Audience	Frequency
Greenspace Website	Internal and external	Staff, Students, Visitors, Interested parties	News items added for promotion of events and announcing updates. Annual review and update of policies and procedures. Events added to events calendar which is linked to a central University events calendar
Greenspace Newsletter	Internal	Staff and Student (Opt-in)	Email sent every Friday.
Estates and Facilities newsletter	Internal	Estates and Facilities	Quarterly email sent to all Estates and Facilities staff.
Dialogue Signposts	Internal	All Staff and /or Students	Email sent every Friday Copy available online.
Dialogue Magazine	Internal and External	Staff, Students, Visitors, Alumni, Stakeholders	4-6 issues per year Online and Print.
Daily Dialogues	Internal	All Staff and/or Students	Daily news item shared by Teams cards.
Environment Champions	Internal	Staff	Updates sent out periodically via email. Workshop and Training delivered as and when required. Receive a monthly round up of the Greenspace Bulletin.
Greenspace Facebook	Internal and External	42%- 18-24 and 41% 25-34 Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
Greenspace Instagram	Internal and External	Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
Greenspace LinkedIn	Internal and External	Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.

Greenspace Bluesky	Internal and External	Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
Greenspace Linktree	Internal and External	Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Periodic Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives.
Greenspace app	Internal	Staff/Students/Alumni	Daily and weekly tasks to promote behaviour change.
Greenspace app newsletter	Internal	Staff/Students/Alumni	Monthly newsletter to promote behaviour change through promotion of Greenspace, student-led and University initiatives.
DU Student News (Instagram)	Internal and External	Students	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
DU Things To Do (Facebook and Instagram)	Internal and External	Student/Staff/ Interested parties	Daily Posts to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
Green Move Out Facebook	Internal	Students	Promoted during the move out period, May-October.
Greenspace Student Environment Reps	Internal Colleges	Students	Meet online once per term to discuss promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives, student-led events and initiatives, project collaboration, planning, sharing ideas and best practice and general updates. Students manage their own college and society social media accounts and pages. Current groups listed on the website and Student Union website.
Student-led societies	Internal	Students	Working with societies to support and promote student-led initiatives and events.
Student Union	Internal	Students	Working with the Student Union and the Sustainability Officer at the SU to promote Greenspace and student-led initiatives and events.

DU Main News Website	Internal and External	All	Headline news articles are displayed on the University's home page.
DU Student News	Internal	Students	durham.ac.uk/experience/news/
DU (Durham University) Community News	External	Local Community	Monthly Newsletter
Digital screens	Internal	Staff/Students	Periodic uploads to promote Awareness Days/Weeks. Promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives. Promotion of volunteer and careers opportunities.
Relationship managers Faculty lead and other groups	Internal	Staff	Relationship managers are a point of two-way communication between faculty and department leads/operations. Update and distribute information on changes to procedures. i.e. waste management, energy/infrastructure projects.
Wellbeing newsletter	Internal	Staff	Regular updates including opportunities related to sustainability, such as weekly nature walks
Volunteering Newsletter	Internal	Staff / Students	Regular updates including opportunities for volunteering related to sustainability such as tree planting, hogfriedly litter picking, invasive species eradicating

3. Key Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives that are set out in the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan are as follows:

1. Promote environmental awareness within the University Community:
 - a. Staff and Students to be exposed to and engage with Environmental Campaigns and Initiatives;
 - b. Develop an effective Greenspace communication plan;
2. To work with the local community and other partners to help the region become more sustainable.
3. To ensure that environmental sustainability is considered in research and teaching:
 - a. Work with Examination Boards to ensure a paper-lean examination process;
 - b. To investigate incorporating Environmental Sustainability into course modules;
 - c. To include environmental sustainability within the Durham Award schemes.

3.1 Key Messages and Themes

The Greenspace concept and brand was originally developed in 2009 and has recently undergone a refresh. The original brand communicated through a group of icons which represent sections of our Environmental Sustainability Strategy. There are nine icons in total, including the overall Greenspace icon for engagement activities. These are: Biodiversity, Energy, Fairtrade, Low Carbon Technologies, Procurement, Travel, Waste and Water, as shown below.

In this refresh Greenspace has evolved from the name of the 'Energy and Sustainability Team' and is now a call for action and overall campaign style. Within that team, there are designated colleagues for each of:

- Waste & Recycling and Sustainable Procurement (including Fairtrade)
- Active and Sustainable Travel
- Biodiversity
- Energy, Decarbonisation and Water

They all work closely with two Greenspace Sustainable Engagement colleagues to ensure all these themes are well represented – one focused on staff engagement and one who leads on integrating sustainability to our Wider Student Experience.



Greenspace



Biodiversity



Energy



Fairtrade



**Low Carbon
Technologies**



Procurement



Travel



Waste



Water

3.2 Annual key messages:

- About 'Greenspace' on Plasma Screens with Presentation slides
- Promotion of the online training module at the start of the academic year to new students but also new staff – in the induction handbooks and checklist
- Promotion of the "My Greenspace Calendar" (previously known as the Environment Schedule) in the first term during fresher's week and upcoming awareness months
- Promotion of the "My Greenspace app" in the first term during fresher's week with all subsequent social media posts linked to the app

3.2.1 Tone

The key messages reflect the University's Tone of Voice whilst being fun and approachable to encourage sustainable behaviour change, for example:

"We're developing new ways of thinking, shaping a better future for people and planet...but we can't do it alone. You can't do everything, think persistence not perfection, there are so many ways in which you can make a difference. Be a part of Durham University's Greenspace movement. Find out how to get involved and discover what we're already doing. We can always do more and are keen to hear your ideas. Together we can make an impact."

3.2.2 Content Aims

The aims of these messages are to:

- Highlight our Environmental Sustainability Strategic Plan; Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy; and Sustainability Ambition Statement and Environmental Management System.
- Promote targeted headline news and targets to our different audiences.
- Provide all staff and student with a baseline knowledge of environmental sustainability, our key targets, and their role in achieving these, and the Environmental Management System (EMS). Staff with key responsibility in the EMS will take part in a review of qualifications and knowledge, training will be provided if necessary, including through our corporate membership of ISEP.
- Encourage enthusiastic and passionate staff and students to become a Greenspace Champion (staff environment champions or Greenspace Student Engagement Group membership).
- Seeking to drive engagement with our MyGreenspace app, including through our annual Greenspace Varsity inter-college competition.

3.2.3 Tag Lines

- Join the Greenspace Movement
- What's your Greenspace?
- Together we can make an impact.
- Durham University - Shaping a better future for people and planet.
- Small Acts. Big Difference

3.2.4 Environmental Management System

As part of our Environmental Management System, we have aligned this engagement and communication strategy in line with procedure '3.3.1 Internal and external communications'. For more information on our EMS please visit the Greenspace website and see below our latest external audit report on engagement and communications in Section 11.3.

4. Campaign Strategy

4.1 My Greenspace Calendar

The Energy and Sustainability Team works with the ESSPG to develop the annual My Greenspace Calendar (previously known as the Environmental Schedule) which consists of an overarching annual summary of initiatives, key dates and events as well as 12 awareness months.

The Environment Schedule had been in place for several years, including the Environmental Week and/or fortnight, which has run every year since 2009.

From student feedback from the GSEG and Student Interns, it was suggested a monthly focus would be easier to manage alongside their studies and other commitments, as some weeks would come around too quickly to prepare different materials.

In 2020 the Environment Schedule was put on hold as the country went into a national lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering these new circumstances and feedback, the Environment Schedules awareness weeks were changed to awareness months, to allow staff and students more time to incorporate different campaign materials into their activities. We continued the awareness months, throughout the whole year to continue momentum and behaviour change initiatives with the staff and PhD groups and departments.

The 'My Greenspace Calendar' has since been reintroduced and plans promotion of each of the key themes (see 3.1 above) with methods for individual actions and means to make change on and beyond the University Estate. They are promoted on site and online through various communication channels.


A copy of several previous Greenspace Calendars is included here showing annual and monthly sample editions:

MICHAELMAS TERM - 7 th October to 13 th December 2019	
Induction Week in colleges An opportunity to highlight the University's Environmental Strategy and procedures including recycling and Beat the Baseload .	30 th September – 6 th October 2019
Bike Safety Week A campaign to promote bike safety and encourage cycling as a sustainable means of travel.	21 st October – 27 th October 2019
Love Food Hate Waste Competition Catered colleges compete to reduce plate waste in their dining halls.	4 th – 10 th November 2019
Waste Awareness Week A campaign to encourage waste prevention and correct recycling practices.	4 th – 10 th November 2019
Water Awareness A campaign to encourage reduced water consumption from taking shorter showers to reporting dripping taps.	25 th November – 1 st December 2019
A Festive Reminder... Important steps to take in order to support environmental sustainability over the festive period.	December 2019

My Greenspace Calendar 2020-2021						
small acts big difference						
Michaelmas Term	October What's your Greenspace Welcome to your Greenspace Calendar Get Involved and Help us Achieve our Targets		November Travel Be prepared for the darker nights – whether your walking home, cycling to the Sports Centre or getting the bus home from work. Make sure your visible to all road users.		December Energy Power Down Challenge World Sustainable Development Goals Day	 
	January Energy Power Down Challenge, Colleges go head to head to see who can save the most energy!	 	February Fairtrade The Big Durham Fairtrade Bake Off! Fairtrade Fair		March Waste March out Waste March out Plastic Leave Durham Green	
	April Showers Water One Song Shower Challenge Fix the Leaks, report drips and leaky loo and we'll get them fixed		May Biodiversity Make some time to explore the great outdoors. Go and find what's in your nearest Greenspace, and relax.... National Walking Month—Botanic Garden Tours		June Greenspace Festival Celebrating this years Small Acts Big Differences Sustainable Procurement Stop Fast Fashion	 
Easter Term						
Summer Break	July Plastic Free July Plastic Waste Audit Simple Swaps March out Plastic		August Growing Greenspace 6th, Cycle to Work Day 9-15th, Allotment Week 15th World Honey Bee Day		September Second-Hand September, Warp it Cycle September Durham competes in a global cycling challenge!	 

Greenspace calendar April 2024 - 2025

28 March 2025

Share page:    

April

- iNaturalist City Challenge, 25 - 28
- Greenspace nature walks
- World Earth Day, 22
- April showers challenge, My Greenspace app

Follow us to find out what the Energy and Sustainability team are doing and how YOU can get involved!



greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk
greenspace.staff@durham.ac.uk



DU Greenspace



Join the Greenspace movement in April!

This month you can join Greenspace on one of our weekly nature walks or a bioblitz to support the annual City Nature Challenge.

Or sign up to the [My Greenspace app](#) and take part in our April showers challenge to earn points and win one of four monthly vouchers.

Do YOU have a biodiversity or sustainable project that we can support? Let us know!

Contact:

greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk

greenspace.staff@durham.ac.uk

Greenspace Calendar 2024 - 2025

Join our Greenspace Movement

October

- Freshers Fair & college/campus tour
- What goes where?
- E-Waste Great Cable Challenge 14th
- Recycle Ya'Bike bike servicing
- Durham Constabulary bicycle tagging

November

- COP29 in Baku
- Winter formal clothing sale
- Buy Nothing Day 29th
- Tree planting at the Botanic Gardens
- Recycle Ya'Bike bike servicing

December

- COP29 roundup
- World Energy Conservation Day, 14th, Switch off campaign, MyGreenspace
- Sustainable Holidays
- Christmas jumper swap

January

- Veganuary recipe competition, My Greenspace app
- Release of My Greenspace plant-based recipe e-book
- PEAS plant-based recipe e-book

February

- My Greenspace Varsity Cup
- Fairtrade Fortnight
- Sustainable Careers Festival, collab. with DU Careers

March

- Global Recycling Day, 18th
- March Out Waste campaign
- My Greenspace Varsity Cup winners announcement

April

- City Challenge, iNaturalist app, 25 - 28th
- World Earth Day 22nd
- April showers challenge
- Vintage clothing sale
- Fast fashion pledge

May

- National Walking Month: Explore campus walking routes campaign
- Invasive species week 15th-21st, balsam bashing
- No Mow May

June

- Greenspace Festival
- World Environment Day, 5th
- Nature/bat walks, collab. with Biodiversity team
- Grow your own challenge

July

- Green Move Out
- Plastic Free July, promo. of plastic free local retailers
- Earthshot Overshoot Day, 25th, student challenge

August

- Allotment week, staff volunteers to support student allotments/gardens
- Green Move In
- Share your mindful activities

September

- World Car Free Day
- Cycle September & Love to Ride Global Challenge
- Car share challenge
- Explore your neighbourhood

There are so many ways in which you can make a difference. Follow us to find out what the Energy & Sustainability team are doing & how YOU can get involved!

greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk
greenspace.staff@durham.ac.uk

DU Greenspace



Greenspace Calendar 2024 - 2025 Then Energy and Sustainability team are proud to present the Greenspace Calendar 2024 - 2025, with details of more events to be shared soon.

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) for details of each of these events and campaigns and for opportunities for you to get involved.

Contact: greenspace.students@durham.ac.uk greenspace.staff@durham.ac.uk

Aims for the 'My Greenspace Calendar':

1. Make it easier for staff and students to get involved with our campaigns;
2. Flexibility to allow for changes in the schedule;
3. Allow staff and students to organise their own activities or events within the focus themes outlined;
4. Monthly focus and 30-day challenges enable individual to adopt sustainable behaviours or habits; and,
5. Launch the Greenspace Movement at the start of each academic year and have the Greenspace Festival in June as a celebration of all our hard work and "my/our Greenspace's".

4.2 Ongoing Initiatives

As well as our annual and monthly calendars, the Energy and Sustainability team offer a wide range of engagement opportunities in sustainability for staff, students and wider members of the public. In 2024/25, these include:

- launching a dedicated Greenspace LinkedIn account to engage with students, staff and alumni;
- the My Greenspace app aims to encourage behaviour change through education, courses, and daily/ weekly tasks and offers rewards to individual users and teams;
- the My Greenspace Varsity Trophy is a competition which runs for four weeks in which all colleges compete to earn the most points on the My Greenspace app

- during the year, all staff and students are invited to take part in student-led events which support sustainability, such as pre-loved clothing sales, Christmas jumper swaps, Halloween costume and decoration swaps and plant exchanges;
- the University hosts an annual COP debrief session, managed and facilitated by students – this is open to all university members and the wider public and provides audience members the chance to raise questions to University COP attendees.
- all university members are invited to a range of active travel initiatives including bicycle workshops, Dr Bike sessions, bike tagging by Durham police, LovetoRide breakfasts and weekly walks on and near our estate;
- all university members are encouraged to participate in waste minimisation initiatives, including our WEE Waste campaigns, our work this year on the introduction of Simpler Recycling legislation and expanded food waste collections, our What Goes Where campaigns, and our annual Green Move Out, which aims to engage all students by requesting they donate any unwanted items of clothing, footwear, non-perishable food and kitchenware; donations are sorted by staff and student volunteers and redistributed in the local community by our charity partners;
- staff and students are invited to volunteer at events such as balsam bashes, wildflower planting, hedgehog-friendly litter picking, Greenspace Festival stewarding, and Green Move Out distribution and segregation on campus;
- the Sustainability Team works with the Careers Team to run sustainable careers event – this year the Energy and Sustainability team hosted a panel event as part of Green Careers Week;
- the University provides sustainability citizen science opportunities. In April 2025, the University took part in the CNC iNaturalist global challenge and the Sustainability Team hosted several nature walks and bioblitz events across campus and in the local community – participants were offered instruction and their data contributes to university bioscience research projects;
- the Sustainability Team host weekly nature walks which are open to all staff, students and members of the local community and which run from all different areas of our campus on a rotating basis;
- the Energy and Sustainability team attend a range of events and support initiatives aimed at prospective students (including Induction information via all colleges and attendance at Open Days as well as offer holders being granted to access to University email and internal hub, including Greenspace Training); students (including Freshers' and Refreshers' Fairs, Greenspace Festival, college/department events); staff (including Staff Conference, Greenspace Festival and new starter induction); and the wider public (including the Greenspace Festival, COP Debrief Event, and local community EcoFests);
- our Greenspace training module is available to all university members online and includes three environmental sustainability modules for students and staff;
- our Greenspace Student Environment Group (GSEG) is formed of at least one student representative from each college. Representatives are elected either through the JCR student body or through the environment group. In 2023-2024, each college was represented by at least one student rep. This forms an important part of our communication network and helps us achieve behaviour change within the colleges and academic departments. The Sustainability Coordinator meets once per term with GSEG to discuss promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives, student led events and initiatives, project collaboration, planning, sharing ideas and best practice, offering support and guidance, and general updates;
- our Staff Environment Champion includes representatives from colleges and departments across the university and includes professional services and academic staff members. It is convened by our Assistant Sustainability Officer and is convened at least termly. The group offers challenge, identifies opportunities for improvement, contributes to wider sustainability initiatives, and acts as a channel for disseminating messaging.

4.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In addition to the University's Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy commitments, we have signed the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Accord. As a result, we are working to embed the UN's seventeen SDGs across Research, Education, and Wider Student Experience, as well as our work with wider communities.

Addressing these global challenges, requires a holistic and interdisciplinary approach integrating Societal, Economic and Environmental hopes and concerns and the Energy and Sustainability Team are members of the Sustainable Development Goals Group.

The SDG Group set out three core objectives, which are:

Showcasing the DU SDG work, by developing:

- A visible SDG landing page on DU's webpage, comms and data repository for SDG facing research, education, wider student experience (including volunteering and outreach and global environmental strategy);
- An extensive review mapping all 17 SDGs for the Annual Report;
- A marketing campaign/filming around SDGs for screens, social media etc.

Educating all DU Staff & Students on SDGs by:

- Developing SDG-related workshops and courses (with focus on themes Energy/Environment/Climate Change);
- Mapping & developing SDG outreach & volunteering;
- Developing resources on sustainable energy, travel, waste, purchasing, labs;
- Feeding in & linking existing SDG opportunities.

Operationalising the SDGs at DU - Living the Values by:

- Enhancing existing policies to support SDGs;
- Implementing new policies to incorporate SDG relevance;
- Incorporating SDGs in daily life.

5. Measuring Impact

As well as measuring the impact of specific sustainability initiatives, such as attendance at the annual Greenspace Festival and participation in the inter-collegiate Varsity Cup, the Energy and Sustainability Team will track the impact of ongoing activities, events in-person and online, and communications(as outlined in 2.2Communication Method and Channels)through the following means:

- MyGreenspace app active users, actions undertaken, and associated CO2 savings;
- Greenspace Webpage views
- Greenspace Internal Sharepoint Views
- Social media insights – post engagements, page likes/followers
- Number of Pledges or surveys submitted online
- Attendees at stalls, Freshers' Fair, Refreshers' Fair and Greenspace Festival
- Event Attendance, including COP debrief panels, careers' sessions, Greenspace Festival
- Staff and student volunteer participation
- Sustainable Travel Survey participants
- Analysis of Energy, Waste and Water Data

Impact is measured and assessed at the end of each term, a short report will summarise the findings and is presented to the ESSPG. View an excerpt of the Environmental Awareness Action Plan in [Appendix 11.1](#) and see section 11.2 for the baseline, target and progress data summary.

6. Student and Staff Representatives

Staff and Students have representatives on committees and working groups. The Environmental Sustainability Strategic Planning Group has a staff member from each Faculty, a member from the Durham Students' Union and a current Student Environment Representative.

Greenspace Student Environment Group (GSEG) is formed of a College Environment Representatives, elected either through the JCR student body or through the environment group. In 2024-2025, each college was represented by at least one student representative and each college has an established environment committee/society/group. This forms an important part of our communication network and helps us achieve behaviour change within the colleges. The Sustainability Coordinator meets with GSEG to discuss promotion of Greenspace and University events and initiatives, student led events and initiatives, project collaboration, planning, sharing ideas and best practice, offering support and guidance, and general updates.

Colleges and Departments also have a nominated [Environment Champion](#), these members of staff help promote events and collect information. Our Environment Champion network was developed in 2010 with a programme of training and workshops for champions. We communicate with Champions through our internal mailing list and several workshops and toolbox talks, as well as our termly meetings

7. Budgets and resources allocated

In 2024/25 the Energy and Sustainability Team had £132,124 allocated to Greenspace projects, including £30,000 for our Team Jump Green Rewards My Greenspace behaviour change app. Funding is dedicated annually to engagement activities, including our annual Greenspace Festival; cycling initiatives such as Love to Ride, Dr Bike and Be Safe Be Seen; and attendance at a range of events including Freshers, Refreshers, Open Days, Staff Conference and student-led activities. This is in addition to financial resources allocated to waste and recycling and utilities and energy. We also made £100,000 available to wider university Carbon-saving initiatives via our Ringfenced Carbon Budget.

The Ring-Fenced Carbon Budget, which is detailed in the Carbon Management Plan (CMP), enables staff to request funding for carbon saving projects. The CMP ring-fenced budget is available each year with a total of £100,000, and up to £10,000 available per project. This has been in place since 2011 and, during this period 128 projects have been funded.

8. Staff and Teams responsible

The Energy and Sustainability Team oversees the Engagement and Communications Strategy, the team sits within the Estates and Facilities Directorate. The team is led by the Senior Sustainability Manager and most activities within this strategy are taken forward by the Sustainability Coordinator (Wider Student Experience) and the Assistant Sustainability Officer (focused on staff engagement). They deliver work in partnership with partners and stakeholders, including those identified in Section 2.1.

9. Review process

The progress of these plans will be reviewed at least annually within the Energy and Sustainability Team as well as in our internal and external audit via our Environmental Management System (EMS – see appendix in section 11.3)

In March 2025, the Sustainability Team developed an implementation plan for delivery – our ‘roadmap’ is included within our policy for delivery of activities. Targets for sustainability engagement are included as one of six overarching themes within the Sustainability Roadmap and delivery plan and approved by Estates and Facilities Senior Leadership Team. They outline milestones and targets by quarter and were approved by our Senior Leadership Team (April 2025), who continue to receive quarterly reports against targets. Delivery of this roadmap has since been reported quarterly and will be a monthly KPI from August 2025.

Progress on engagement targets is also reported to the university-wide [Environmental Sustainability Strategic Planning Group \(ESSPG\)](#) and reviewed as part of our Environmental Management System (EMS)’s internal and external audit processes. Key updates from each academic year are also reported as part of the [University’s Annual Report](#), which is published each autumn.

10. Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by:
21/04/2020	Draft 1	Ninette Harris,	
18/05/2020	Draft 2: Comments and Feedback	Simon Park (Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager) Mark Tallentire (Deputy Head of Communications and Engagement) and SDG Group	
18/05/2020	Draft – 3	Simon Park (Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager)	Simon Park (Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager) and ESSPG
20/11/2020	Final Version 1	Ninette Harris (Sustainability Coordinator)	Simon Park (Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager)
19/11/2021	Final Version 2	Yvonne Flynn (Sustainability Manager)	Simon Park (Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager)
27/07/2025	Final Version 3	Beccy Blackwood (Assistant Sustainability Officer) and Kelly Brown (Sustainability Coordinator)	Jane Simmons (Senior Sustainability Manager)

11. Appendices

11.1 Environmental Awareness Action Plan

Objective	Strategy	Target delivery	Action	Method for Measuring Progress	Responsibility
To promote environmental awareness within the University community.	Staff and students to be exposed to environmental campaigns and initiatives.	To ensure Greenspace present at all staff and student induction events and to ensure Greenspace material on environmental sustainability is included in all college and department student inductions.	Greenspace present at 100% of Students' Union's induction/Freshers fairs annually (October and January)	Attendance at Freshers Fair. Monitor number of students visiting stall and new sign ups to the newsletter	E+S Team
			Promote My Greenspace Campaign and Actions in all College Inductions every year in the form of a presentation or a series of videos. Promote the work of the ESSPG in all induction documents, such as Handbooks, Fairs.	Review number of presentations given across colleges and departments.	E+S Team, Staff Champions
			Develop a training programme and series of workshops for staff champions in line with the EMS roles and responsibilities, to embed the Environmental Sustainability targets across all departments and PSS.	Number of events organised. Record attendance from each department and team. 47 PSS and Academic Departments	E+S Team
			Promote My Greenspace Campaign and Actions in 100% of academic department student inductions annually.	Review number of presentations given across colleges and departments.	E+S Team
		Effective use and engagement of the staff and student communication media and networks.	Maintain 100% of dialogue magazines incorporating Greenspace items during the academic year	How many articles were submitted and published in Dialogue magazine? 6 per year	E+S Team
			30% of University Members on the Environment Bulletin mailing list by 2019-20	Use Mailing List information to review number of sign up.	E+S Team

				Monitor and update through excel and email. Review mailing list format and frequency.	
			Increase the number of Greenspace Facebook page likes and followers. Regularly post on the page to keep followers informed and engaged.	Monitor online activity i.e. number of likes/followers, comments, like and engagement. Review figures and progress for each term. Report to the following ESSPG meeting.	E+S Team
			Increase the number of likes and follower on the Green Move Out Facebook page	Monitor online activity i.e. number of likes/followers, comments, like and engagement.	E+S Team
			Increase number of website views by 5% per year	Number of webpage hits Review google analytics during term time. Report to ESSPG in the a termly report. Analysis website views per page as a % of total views to track use.	E+S Team
			Review current communications channels, integrated the new branding and campaign strategy. All current communication channels reviewed, and changes implemented. Survey staff and students to establish current interests and issues the team should focus on. Distribute a survey annually, form a baseline of knowledge and interests, establish impact of current channels.	Production of an annual communication report. Review with ESSPG annually. Survey Results	E+S Team and ESSPG
		Greenspace Ambassador Programme	Review the feasibility and benefits of a Greenspace Student Ambassador Programme.	Produce a paper – SWOT analysis, feasibility.	E&S Team

		Annual promotion of the online sustainability training module to staff and students.	100% students & staff to access the module as part of registration / induction process each year. Update Training Module.	Blackboard/DUO online module data per academic year.	E+S Team
		Produce and deliver an annual schedule of environmental campaigns, competitions, and initiatives through the My Greenspace Calendar	Deliver 100% of the 'My Greenspace Calendar' each year.	Number of events planned and delivered. Review impact at the end of each term. Report to ESSPG.	E+S Team
		Annual Greenspace Festival: Students and Staff will be invited to hold events throughout the Festival, as well as attend events.	Increase awareness of sustainability amongst staff and students. Number of volunteers engaged, and events held.	Number of volunteers and events planned by staff and students.	E+S Team
	Review and develop sustainability in the core curriculum	Establish baseline data for 2018-2019. What will be measured?	Setup a working group, as established by the Provost Board, develop a plan of action, collaborate with academic staff and teams, feeding back to ESSPG and UEC. Establish the best method to measure and analysis sustainability in the curriculum i.e. through handbooks, module titles, internal audit.	Number of courses with sustainability embedded into the modules.	ESSPG

Promote Environmental Awareness and knowledge of the SDGs in the local community	Work with Outreach and Engagement Teams to promote Environmental Awareness in the local community.	Work with student volunteering to develop a local school's project that encourages sustainable behaviours and problem-solving activities.	Develop one school project with Student Volunteering, that will run for one academic year and deliver to 3 cohort of students. The project details to be developed - have 3 different workshops with each cohort. Monitor student numbers, survey student's awareness before and after series of workshops.	Number of school groups engaged. Number of applications for the competition.	SDG group and E+S Team
		Work with the Community Team, DCC and local environmental groups to support local environmental awareness days and events.	Attend Durham Climate Change Group meetings and report back to E+S Team, ESSPG and other relevant parties.	Number of external events supported by DU.	SDG group, E+S Team, Outreach Teams

11.2 Impact Tracker

Channels and Media	Metric	Start Impact (2018-19)	Progress as at May 2020	Progress as at Dec 2021	Target Impact by July 2022	Progress as at September 2024	Progrss as at June 2025
Greenspace Facebook Page	Likes	552	639	727	2000	838	840
	Followers	524	713	849	2000	938	943
Greenspace Website Views	Total Views	79,470	80,252 (4.2% of DU home)		5% of DU home = 94,789.5	Data awaited at time of refresh	Data awaited at time of refresh
Environment Bulletin	Total subscribers	953	1457		2,300		
Greenspace Instagram						887	1172
Greenspace app Active Users	Total Users					1667	2113
	Staff Members					651	788
	Student Members					1013	1321
Greenspace LinkedIn							162

11.3 External Audit of Durham University's Greenspace Engagement and Communications, May 2025 (EcoCampus, Platinum):

"Communication

The Sustainability Coordinator (Wider Student Experience) and Sustainability Coordinator (Staff) explained how sustainability related communications are planned and tracked through the 'Communications Delivery Tracker'. This provides a monthly schedule of communications detailing the relevant sustainability themes such as energy, waste and recycling and biodiversity.

The tracker details the target audience, communication channels, and is used to record communications that have been completed. For example, in April 2025, a strong focus was placed on promoting the iNaturalist App. This campaign included a series of guided walks and was promoted through a range of internal channels including SharePoint, with supporting materials such as a user guide provided - evidence viewed during the audit.

Internal communication platforms discussed include:

- The University website
- Weekly newsletters (e.g. Dialogues)
- Microsoft Teams messaging (Daily Dialogues)
- On-site digital display screens.

In addition, the Greenspace Environment Group (GSEG) meets termly and includes representatives from each college. The group discusses issues such as energy, waste, sustainable transport, and biodiversity, and runs initiatives including clothing drives and the promotion of campaigns like Green Move Out. Minutes and the action log from the meeting held on 05/02/2025 were provided as evidence.

Engagement is also monitored through tools such as the Greenspace App, which tracks user registrations and activity by month.

For more formal or regulatory communications, such as updates on legislative changes, communications are distributed by the Business Support Team via direct staff emails. A recent example included a university wide communication on Simpler Recycling requirements.

The evidence provided confirms that roles responsibilities related to the EMS are defined, training has been provided, and relevant communications are delivered."