

# Environmental Sustainability Policy

The University of Oxford has over 22,000 students. The University's functional estate covers 600,000 m<sup>2</sup> and includes 220 departments distributed across more than 230 buildings. The Sustainability Steering Group is responsible for the development of sustainability strategy and monitoring its delivery, while day-day implementation of sustainability initiative is managed by the Environmental Sustainability team.

Through its activities and actions the University recognises it impacts on the environment, locally, nationally and globally. The University will work to enhance its positive impact and reduce its negative impacts. The University of Oxford has made a commitment within the Oxford University Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018 to continue to deliver its sustainable targets. These targets will be met through continual improvement. The University will also meet legislation and other requirements to which the University subscribes, and where practicable strive for best practice.

The University has identified ten key areas through which environmental sustainability shall be approached. These are;

- **Energy and carbon management**- by encouraging energy efficient practices and investing in its estate to reduce carbon emissions;
- **Emissions and discharge**- by putting in place appropriate controls to prevent pollution and work to reduce where practicable emissions and discharges to air, land and water;
- **Waste and material resources** – by encouraging preventing and reducing waste and reuse of resources prior to recycling or disposal;
- **Water**- by reducing water consumption through water efficient practices and technologies;
- **Education, research and knowledge transfer**- by increasing awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability by staff and students and serving society by contributing and promoting the University's research and knowledge transfer on sustainability;
- **Sustainable travel** –by reducing emissions from work-related travel and University-owned vehicles;
- **Sustainable buildings** – by making full use of available space and designing and refurbishing buildings in line with the University's Sustainable Building Philosophy;
- **Biodiversity** – by enhancing wherever possible wildlife habitat on University-owned land and supporting wider initiatives as appropriate;
- **Sustainable purchasing** – by encouraging and embedding sustainable and life-cycle considerations into purchasing decision.
- **Community**- by working with local schools and businesses and supporting an extensive volunteering programme.

The University will set clear environmental objectives and targets reviewed annually by the Sustainability Steering Group and supported by long-term strategies and plans. Performance will be monitored, measured, and communicated to stakeholders as appropriate. To assist in delivering the University's strategy an environmental management system is being established and rolled out over the functional estate.

This policy, approved by Council on 10 February 2014, covers the University of Oxford's functional estate. The policy has been endorsed by the Oxford University Student Union.

The policy is available to all students, staff working for or on behalf of the University and, to the general public. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Sustainability Steering Group which shall report to council, making such recommendations as it considers appropriate, at least once every five years.

**Professor Andrew Hamilton FRS**  
Vice Chancellor

Endorsed by the Council on 10 February 2014 [minute 16 e]  
Endorsed by Oxford University Students Union on December 2013  
Reviewed by the Sustainable Steering Group on 13 November 2014 [minute 5]  
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