



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

A Sustainable University of Liverpool

Our Strategy to Achieve this

A SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL - OUR STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE THIS



The University of Liverpool has proud civic roots. We are part of the fabric of our city, accountable to our Liverpool community, and socially invested in improving the lives of everyone who works and studies here. In signing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals we have committed to work to address the global challenges facing society and the environment today, by improving health and education, reducing inequality, ensuring economic sustainability, protecting our shared environment and its biodiversity and tackling climate change. Through this commitment to the UN SDGs we will build on our existing strengths to build a more sustainable society, economy, and environment.

We are a proudly international University. We believe our local actions can have a global impact and it is with immense pride that I introduce this plan, as the culmination of years of growing activity. We've embedded sustainability at the very heart of our organisation through signing up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals Accord, we have made great leaps in our green credentials, and with the exceptional work of the Liverpool Guild of Students, we have built a greater culture of environmental accountability on campus.

The next steps for us are ambitious but the issues we face are pressing. This strategic plan creates a long-term vision for our shared future that encapsulates our desire to act as global leaders in environmental, social and corporate sustainability. It will give us a renewed ambition, a clarity of purpose, and a guiding framework to reach our goals.

Achieving our ambitions in sustainability will only be possible if we are true to our civic roots, by committing together, as a community, to tackle the issues that challenge our society. I would like to thank my colleagues and our partners for their work so far and for that which is yet to come.

**Vice-Chancellor,
Professor Dame Janet Beer**



As Chair of the Sustainability Board I am delighted to introduce our new strategic plan for sustainability. This plan starts from the premise that our own actions—as a society, as an institution, as individuals—have huge impacts on our environment. We are a large community with hundreds of buildings, thousands of commuters, and tens of thousands of students, based on a campus that is rich in green spaces and biodiversity. Our challenge is to harness our expertise and our community spirit to be even more environmentally responsible, and to eliminate our negative impacts wherever we can.

Already, our sustainability team has designed and implemented a UKAS accredited environmental management system which provides a framework for demonstrating a continuous improvement in reducing environmental impacts. We will use this existing work to become leaders in sustainability to make a bigger difference to our society, economy, and environment.

This plan articulates the central strategy and framework with which we will reach our goal to become a more environmentally and socially sustainable organisation. This work is driven by seven working groups aligned to the UN SDGs. Their cumulative efforts form the basis of our strategy to build a more sustainable society through concerted local action.

This strategy is designed for anyone in our University community, colleagues, partners, and students, to pick up and understand at a glance how we're going to enact the UN SDGs. If you want to know more about our work you can visit: liverpool.ac.uk/sustainability.

**Nicola Davies,
Director of Finance**

OUR AMBITIONS

The diagram below sets out our sustainability ambitions. Addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals is our central mission. This is supported by eight overarching targets that cover our priorities for sustainability, driven by our seven sustainability working groups. The eighth target, under research, is driven by the Climate Futures working group; an institutional research challenge. All of this work is driven by an ethos which is based on accountability and collaborative working to make an international impact through local action. Beneath this, our day to day work will make sure we are living up to our ethos, achieving our targets, and ultimately meeting our central mission.

Aim

Working in partnerships both locally and globally, we will address the UN Sustainable Development Goals, harnessing our strengths in research and education to drive forward the solutions and cultural change needed to move to a sustainable future.

Our approach

- **We will use our strengths in teaching and research to drive forward solutions to climate change and environmental sustainability.**
- **We will recognise the tremendous amount of work that is already happening across the campus in all areas of activity and work with stakeholders to maximise our positive impact.**
- **We will be a responsible civic partner that works across Liverpool, and supports the ambitions of the City Region.**
- **We will support the eight working groups to address areas of activity that require focussed attention with a particular focus in the early stages on our operational environmental performance.**

Our action

- **Use good governance to coordinate cross organisation working groups to identify institutional sustainability projects.**
- **Publish plans, progress, and performance targets, to measure our progress and adapt to feedback where necessary.**
- **Develop a high-quality and sustainable campus using our environmental management system to manage environmental performance.**
- **Actively share knowledge, insights, and best practice.**

Eight key ambitions

Our overall strategy is driven by a key ambition from each working group. You can find more detail on how each working group is achieving these ambitions on our webpages.

Biodiversity:

To be a species and habitat rich campus, supporting biodiversity to thrive by enhancing the quality, extent and management of green spaces across our University estate.

Built environment:

To be a thought leader in practical and theoretical issues surrounding the sustainability of the built environment, using live projects on our estate to develop, test and design sustainability and assessment tools that can be adopted by industry.

Climate action:

To be a climate-resilient campus that has minimal negative and maximum positive environmental impact, achieving net zero carbon by 2035.

Culture and community:

To be a sustainably conscious University community, with an engrained culture of sustainability activism to support delivery of our Sustainability Strategy.

Education for Sustainable Development:

To develop and implement a programme that educates, activates and enables students, graduates, and staff to make their contribution to a sustainable future.

Travel and transport:

To be the most active travel friendly campus in the UK by improving cycle and walking infrastructure, reducing single occupancy car journeys, and making a cultural shift to wider use of digital technologies.

Responsible consumption and production:

To be a supporter of the local circular economy through managing our waste as valuable resource, adopting a whole life cycle approach to ensure the efficient use of natural resources, and influencing for environmental excellence across our supply chain.

Research:

To be originators of multidisciplinary expertise, generating responsible research and innovative solutions to safeguard the future of global citizens and the sustainability of our planet

How we will know we're achieving our ambitions

We'll know we're achieving our ambitions where they coalesce into three major targets around our estate, education, and combined research and sustainability work:

- **We will achieve net zero carbon by 2035**
- **We will reduce our waste by 50% by 2025**
- **Every student will have the opportunity to undertake a sustainability-related module, extra-curricular activity, or learning by 2022.**

Until then

This work takes time, and we are continually making improvements which take us to our goals.

These include:

- **We will continue removing single use plastics unless needed for medical or research purposes as part of our ambition to reduce waste by 50% by 2025.**
- **We will expand the availability of bike storage and length of our bike network to make active travel the travel mode of choice.**
- **We will cultivate and develop species rich habitats across the whole of our estate and work with our partners to help to enhance biodiversity throughout the LCR.**
- **We will embed the ambitions of the UN SDGs in work plans through debate, discussion, and awareness raising of this activity.**
- **We will continue to push the boundaries of environmental sustainability in all our building work using our expertise, assets, and relationships, to lead the way in the sector.**



WHAT DRIVES US

Our sustainability strategy is motivated by and complements the wider ambitions of the University as set out in our Strategy 2026, which commits us to being a leader in research, scholarship, knowledge leadership, and a top 100 global university. Its goals and ethical rationale are founded on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals which give a blueprint for 17 commitments for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

Strategy 2026

The University of Liverpool has an overarching mission for 'the advancement of learning and ennoblement of life'. In Strategy 2026 the University states that by 2026 it aims to be 'a truly global institution – in its outlook, influence, impact, student body, networks and activity'.

We will do this by:

- 1. Harnessing our strengths in research and education to enable the solutions and cultural change necessary for a sustainable future.**
- 2. Being guided by strong ethical principles and deploying our resources sustainably in both short and long-term decision making.**
- 3. Creating a vibrant and sustainable environment in which our staff and students can work, study and live and where their wellbeing is well supported.**

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As part of its broader strategy, the University has made a commitment to 'tackling the challenges of the UN Sustainable Development Goals both at home and abroad'.

In January 2020 the University formalised its commitment to the UN SDGs by signing the global higher education sector's SDG Accord in partnership with the Liverpool Guild of Students. By signing the SDG Accord the University has pledged to put the SDGs at the heart of all of its activities. To achieve this we will embed the UN SDGs as a unifying framework across the whole of the University.

The diagram opposite sets out the UN SDGs and how they relate to the University's activity. The 17 segments of the diagram set out each of the UN SDGs while the diagram in the middle illustrates how the University's four sustainable themes extend into each of the goals. The box on the right hand side then illustrates how these are translated into Strategy 2026. This means we have a single framework in the UN SDGs that we prosecute from a range of perspectives to maximise involvement, engagement, and the likelihood of meeting these stretching ambitions.

OUR STRATEGY



Our approach to a holistic framework for Sustainable Development



Sustainability is committed within our Strategy 2026 through the following:

Partnership

Tackling the challenges of the UN Sustainable Development Goals through a strong global, civic and university partnership

Social

Supporting health, education and employment outcomes for our students and for Liverpool and beyond

Economic

Supporting social mobility and economic development

Environmental

Maximising our positive impact and driving toward a net zero carbon and sustainable future

A GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO ACHIEVE OUR SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Sustainability Strategy Group

Delivering our ambitions will require a whole community effort and a governance structure that embeds sustainability, the University's Strategy 2026 and the UN SDGs at its heart. To achieve our sustainability goals, we have established seven University working groups, that report into the sustainability board. Each group has a chair from across the institution, includes a member of the University Senior Leadership Team, and is supported by a member of our sustainability team.

Each group has a set of objectives whose ethical rationale is informed by the UN SDGs and that in turn support delivery of the objectives linked to Strategy 2026. This means that our plan for sustainability and the work that will follow is embedded institution-wide. The membership of each group, including relevant academic and teaching expertise, students and professional services staff, affords a mechanism for new ideas to bloom from the ground up, and locates the University's vibrant and diverse community at the heart of our governance structure.

Key Interfacing Committees supporting decision-making:

- Capital Investment
- Wellbeing Board
- Faculty Sustainability Groups
- Liverpool Guild of Students
- Research Impact Committee
- Education Committee

Additional groups reporting to FSLT are consulted as appropriate



The **University Council**, in partnership with Liverpool Guild of Students, has overarching responsibility for ensuring that the University meets its SDG Accord commitments, including reporting to the UN each year on how the University has contributed to the individual SDGs.

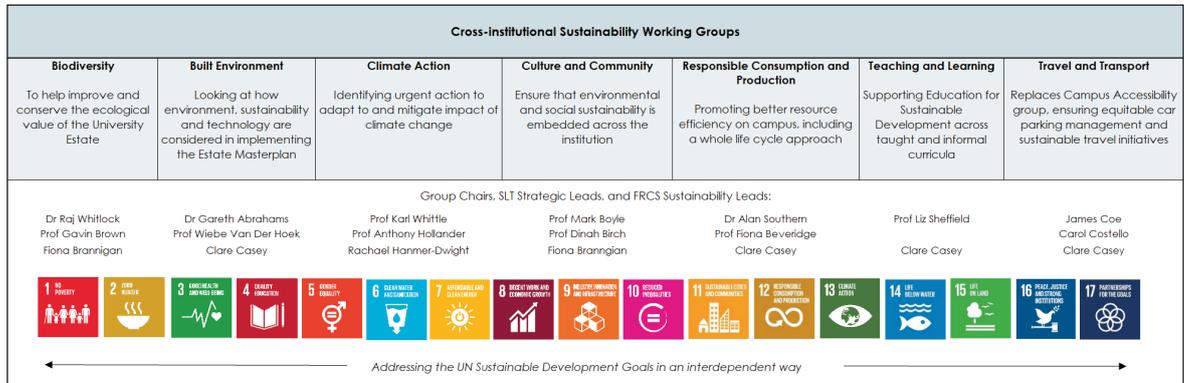
The **Senior Leadership Team** has overarching responsibility for the University's Sustainability Policy, and receives quarterly updates from the Sustainability Board.

The **Sustainability Board** meets quarterly and has strategic oversight of the Strategy, Annual Sustainability Report, and EMS. It brings together the work from the individual working groups into a holistic framework.

The **Working Groups** grow projects and initiatives that support key ambitions of the Sustainability Policy, Strategy, and the EMS. Membership of all groups comprises academics, professional services, SLT representation and the Liverpool Guild of Students.

Sustainability team and resources within FRCS

Supporting WGs and providing strategic and operational recommendation



The Sustainability Team

Sustainability requires committed leadership, clear strategic direction, and effective operational support, all working within a robust governance structure. The University Estates Department provides operational support and delivery across all areas of sustainability. This includes strategic drive from the award-winning Sustainability Team. The role of the Sustainability team is to:

- **Create the content and support the implementation of the sustainability strategy, sustainability policy and the governance structure.**
- **Provide specialist operational expertise in support of the Sustainability Board, its sub-groups, and the action plan.**
- **Manage compliance of environmental legislation and other external reporting processes.**
- **Measure and manage the continuous improvement of environmental performance and priorities of the University through the externally audited and UKAS accredited ISO 14001 Environmental Management System.**
- **Manage the University's externally audited and UKAS accredited ISO 14001 Environmental Management System.**
- **Measure and report on the University's sustainability progress, including continuous improvement of environmental performance, delivery of the Sustainability Action Plan, and embedding of the SDG framework.**
- **To develop awareness raising events for staff, students and partners.**
- **To develop the annual sustainability report, and more broadly to measure performance against KPIs and report these on an annual basis.**
- **To work with, influence and strengthen relations with external partners.**



OVER TO YOU

This strategy is a living document to match the dynamic nature of our work. We know we have longstanding sustainability challenges but we have to be ready to adapt to an ever-changing world. Here, our strategy represents a distillation of our ambition, our direction, and the ways we will make change. We are building a community of sustainability advocates and we want you to be a part of it.

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If you are reading this as a staff member and you want to help make our campus more sustainable; if you are a student with a burning desire to help us reach our goals; or, if you are one of our partners who shares our vision and wants to know more about our work email us at sbility@liv.ac.uk. If you are a student don't forget that you can also get involved with the work of the Green Guild.

This work is only made possible by our collective endeavours and together we will be leaders in building a more sustainable future.





THE **SUSTAINABLE**
RED BRICK