

Sustainability and Carbon Management Plan 2030



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Foreword



This Sustainability and Carbon Management Plan sets out Arts University Plymouth's commitment to cutting its carbon footprint and advancing its sustainability ambitions. It builds on the university's first five-year strategy (2016), but marks a clear step forward reflecting significant progress in thinking, practice, and institutional commitment.

Our targets are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. This plan defines the actions needed to get there, alongside a framework for continuous improvement.

To support this, the university will begin refreshing its strategic approach in 2028, ensuring the next Strategic Plan fully embeds the evolving goals of this Plan.

Arts University Plymouth has been actively involved in addressing sustainability issues within its operations, teaching and community.

This commitment is reflected in the university's continued investment in its facilities, staff, and campus environment. Sustainability and carbon reduction objectives are embedded across all building projects. In recent years, the university delivered a contemporary art, craft, and design wing at Charles Cross, which achieved a BREEAM Excellent rating in 2018, demonstrating a strong commitment to high standards of environmental performance and sustainable design.

Building on this achievement, the university has established the Centre for Circular Materials, which works hand in hand with the ethos underpinning the development of the Charles Cross building. The Centre reinforces and extends these principles by embedding circular thinking into material choices, design processes, and making practices. Through its focus on responsible, bioregional, and low-carbon materiality, it ensures that the values demonstrated in the Charles Cross development continue to inform future projects, supporting a holistic and forward-looking approach to sustainability and carbon management. The university also continues to invest in the enhancement of its city centre campus grounds, supporting biodiversity and improving green infrastructure as part of its wider environmental commitment.

We have introduced and invested in solar panels and energy efficiency measures throughout our campus, and 100% of the university's electricity supply is now purchased from Low-Carbon sources. In addition, we are actively working with solar specialists to explore options for expanding our on-site solar panel installations. This expansion is projected to generate up to 159,182 kWh annually, contributing to a carbon reduction of approximately 28.8 tonnes per year. For context, electricity consumption at our Tavistock Place site between 31 July 2024 and 31 July 2025 was 902,795 kWh, highlighting the potential impact of increased solar generation.

Since 2011 the university has had a distinct sustainability plan which covered 3 key themes:

1. Minimise the effects of its activity on global warming
2. Minimise the other polluting effects of its activities
3. Promote awareness and action by its staff and students of the concepts and practices of sustainability

These principles and commitments are set out the following areas.

Buildings and Estates

Curriculum

Procurement

Community

Most recently the university declared a Climate Emergency, in a joint action by students, academic and professional services staff.

Though much has been done, our sustainability journey is at its relative infancy. Being a sustainable university requires significant long-term change.

This new Sustainability Plan expresses significant ambitions for the University: aiming for carbon neutrality, operating using circular economy principles, educating all of our students to understand sustainability challenges and taking a lead in identifying sustainability solutions through research.

We invite our staff, students, partners and stakeholders to help deliver a sustainable University, with a community of graduates enabled to continue to drive environmental sustainability throughout their lives and careers.

Sustainability Plan 2025 - 2030

Our Sustainability Plan is the engine driving Arts University Plymouth's Strategic Plan 2030: Creative Education for a Changing World. It firmly embeds sustainability at the core of our mission to prepare graduates who provide creative solutions to the complex global challenges of our times. By championing our people, place, and pedagogy, we deliver sustainable growth and impactful change in creative economies, civic engagement, and cultural ambition throughout Plymouth and the wider region. This Plan solidifies our reputation as a catalyst for individual, societal, and ecological transformation, fostering innovative and distinctive learning, teaching, and research.

Our Strategic Pillars and Corresponding Themes

Our Plan builds on past successes and aligns with the University's three overarching strategic pillars: Creative Endeavour, People & Place, and Sustainable Futures. Through these, we will deliver sustainability via four interconnected operational pillars and their 15 guiding themes:

1. Education *(Aligned with Creative Endeavour)*

We will embed sustainability across all learning, preparing graduates for a rapidly changing world. Through a creative and holistic pedagogical approach, we cultivate solution-focused thinkers ready to shape a sustainable future.

2. Research & Innovation *(Aligned with Creative Endeavour)*

We will maximise the societal and ecological impact of our research and knowledge exchange. Our distinctive ecosystem of materials, processes, and technologies drives innovation and excellence across research, teaching, and learning.

3. Community & Engagement *(Aligned with People & Place – connected through the Place Plan)*

The **Place Plan** underpins our commitment to People and Place, guiding how we:

- Empower staff and students to lead on sustainability.
- Build partnerships, expand creative opportunities, and strengthen civic engagement.
- Position the university as an employer of choice, recognising people as our core asset.

4. Operations & Stewardship *(Aligned with People & Place & Sustainable Futures – underpinned by the Place Plan)*

We will deliver sustainability across operations by:

- Optimising physical, digital, and virtual spaces.
- Embedding sustainable construction and future-proofing estate development.
- Integrating biodiversity with our curriculum and campus management.
- Reducing energy, carbon, water use, and environmental impact.
- Promoting sustainable travel, circular economy practices, and ethical procurement.
- Strengthening governance and accountability to embed sustainability in all decisions.

Arts University Plymouth has been addressing sustainability issues for many years during which time the landscape has changed significantly.

Our sustainability Plan has been reviewed and updated in response to a number of changing factors:-

The UK experienced its two hottest years on record in 2022 and 2023, with heat waves, droughts, wildfires and floods that affected thousands of people.

On the global stage we saw countries come together at Conference of the Parties (COP) to take action towards the world's collective climate goals set by the Paris Agreement. The United Nations' Biodiversity Conference also reached a landmark biodiversity agreement, aiming to halt and reverse nature loss. We recognise the importance of supporting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals which set out a pathway towards a better future for all.

Despite these positive steps forward, we must accelerate our response to manage the impacts we are already experiencing.



Arts University Plymouth Strategic Plan

The University strategic Plan launched 2023 outlines the following five key areas:

- 1. Establish Arts University Plymouth as a leading UK Arts University.
- 2. Achieve sustained growth in student numbers and an outstanding Student experience
- 3. Evidence the impact of our research, innovation and knowledge exchange
- 4. Extend creative opportunities through partnership and research degree provision
- 5. Deliver annual surpluses to reinvest in our students, staff and campuses.

Our Sustainability Plan will support the delivery of our University Plan by:

- 1. Aligning the ecological and environmental aspirations of our campus with that of our curriculum.
- 2. Arts University Plymouth will adopt a solution-focused approach to deliver carbon, energy and sustainability targets across the university.
- 3. Retain its distinctive approach to creative learning, through careful consideration of our structures, processes and procedures

Building Our Sustainable Future - Our Current Actions and Future Plans

This section outlines the key areas where Arts University Plymouth is actively working towards a more sustainable future. It highlights both the initiatives we have implemented and the commitments we are developing to reduce our environmental impact and enhance social value. From staff and student engagement to governance and reporting, these fifteen focus areas represent our holistic approach to sustainability — guiding our actions today and shaping our ambitions for tomorrow.

1.Staff and Student Engagement	2. Education for Sustainable Development	3. Research and Knowledge Transfer
4. Space Utilisation	5.Construction	6. The living Estate (Biodiversity)
7. Energy Carbon and Water Management	8. Transport	9. Emissions and Prevention of Pollution
10. Procurement	11. Responsible Investment	12. Ethical and Sustainable Food
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Staff and Student Engagement

The university is committed to empowering staff and students to lead on sustainability, recognising that people are our core asset and central to delivering meaningful change. Through effective communication, training, and collaboration, we aim to build shared understanding, inspire sustainable behaviours, and strengthen our role as an employer and institution of choice.



Key actions:

1. **Awareness and Education** – Deliver an annual programme of initiatives to raise awareness and understanding of sustainability.
2. **Training and Skills Development** – Sustainability training and skills programmes for staff and students to enable practical action and innovation.
3. **Behaviour Change and Communication** – Run campaigns and share sustainability updates across internal and external channels to promote ongoing engagement.
4. **Measuring Impact** – Track behavioural changes through an annual sustainability survey, aiming for year-on-year increases in sustainable actions and measurable reductions in energy use and waste.
5. **Community Engagement** – Develop and deliver programmes with local community groups and stakeholders to extend sustainability awareness and strengthen civic partnerships across Plymouth.

These initiatives will ensure that sustainability becomes embedded in our culture, empowering our university community to take collective and individual action towards a more sustainable future.

Centre for Circular Materials

The University's Strategy, "*Creative Education for a Changing World*," sets out a vision for sustainable growth, solution-focused education, and social and ecological progress by 2030. Central to this is a commitment to embedding sustainability across teaching and learning, equipping graduates to respond creatively and responsibly to global challenges.

The Centre for Circular Materials exemplifies this ambition. Building on the established platforms of Making Futures and Fab Lab South West, it connects critical research with hands-on experimentation in material practice, digital fabrication, and circular design. By integrating interdisciplinary learning with applied prototyping, the Centre enables students and partners to develop practical, place-based solutions grounded in local knowledge and global relevance.

Through this approach, the university fosters a learning environment where creative practice, material innovation, and sustainability are closely aligned empowering students to become active contributors to more planet-conscious ways of living and designing.



Key Actions:

1. **Curriculum Integration** – Embed Education for Sustainable Development and climate literacy across all programmes, connecting discipline-specific learning with circular design, material practice, and real-world challenges.
2. **Staff Development** – Build an interdisciplinary community of practice through targeted support, training, and recognition, strengthening expertise in sustainability, circularity, and practice-led research through initiatives such as Plymouth's Sustainable community strategy.
3. **Curriculum Enhancement** – Align programme development with sustainable and circular principles, integrating research-informed teaching and applied, place-based learning through platforms such as Making Futures and Fab Lab South West.
4. **Student and Staff Community** – Foster a collaborative culture by supporting student-staff partnerships, including work with the Students' Union, and encouraging experimentation, innovation, and locally grounded solutions.

By embedding sustainability through practice, research, and collaboration, we will equip graduates with the skills and values to drive meaningful environmental and social change.

Research and Knowledge transfer

The university will flourish as a dynamic centre of creative production and innovation, contributing to Britain's Ocean City through research, practice, and knowledge exchange. Our growing research culture will act as a catalyst for individual, societal, and ecological transformation, combining the traditions of an art school with new technologies and creative pedagogy.



Key Actions:

1. **interdisciplinary Research for Sustainability** – Promote and support practice-based and interdisciplinary research that addresses environmental and social challenges through creative methodologies, design thinking, and artistic innovation.
2. **Innovation and Knowledge Exchange** – Strengthen the university's role as a catalyst for sustainable innovation by connecting creative practice with emerging technologies, materials research, and community-led approaches to ecological and social resilience.
3. **Research-Led Education** – Cultivate future sustainability leaders by embedding research-led learning within studio, workshop, and field-based contexts, using Living Labs and creative experimentation to translate theory into real-world sustainable practice.
4. **Partnerships and Engagement** – Build meaningful collaborations with cultural organisations, local communities, and industry partners to co-create projects that apply artistic and design research to sustainability challenges and amplify social impact.
5. **Strategic Growth** – Prioritise research and knowledge exchange that integrate creativity, sustainability, and carbon reduction, reinforcing the University's distinctive identity as a centre for environmentally and socially engaged art, design, and media practice.

Through this approach, the university will position itself as a leading creative institution driving innovation, cultural transformation, and sustainable futures through research and practice.

Space Utilisation

Space within our estate - studios, workshops, digital and social environments - is a vital resource that underpins creativity, collaboration, and innovation. To support growth and sustainability, the university will adopt a long-term, future-focused approach to estate planning that aligns environmental performance with academic and cultural ambitions.

We aim to adopt a best-in-class approach to space utilisation through performance management, ensuring our estate supports sustainability objectives, enhances user experience, and reduces carbon impact.



Key Actions:

1. **Optimisation and Efficiency** – Maximise use of existing spaces through improved occupancy, data-led analysis, and agile space management, ensuring the right spaces are available at the right time.
2. **Smart and Sustainable Campuses** – Use the estate as a test bed for innovation by introducing digital tools such as real-time space monitoring to enhance accessibility and reduce waste.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement** – Strengthen collaboration across staff, students, and partners throughout the design, build, operation, and maintenance lifecycle to embed sustainability and efficiency in every stage.
4. **Performance and Data** – Develop defined KPIs and use live data to guide decisions, focusing on energy efficiency, occupancy optimisation, and user satisfaction.
5. **Space Standards and Mobility** – Establish clear space standards for teaching, research, and administration, and improve processes for moves, onboarding, and disposals to minimise disruption and waste.
6. **Future-Ready Estate** – Align physical, digital, and virtual environments with the ecological and creative aspirations of the curriculum, ensuring our campus evolves as a sustainable hub for artistic and interdisciplinary practice.

Arts University Plymouth will ensure that every space - physical or digital - actively contributes to our sustainability, carbon reduction, and educational goals.

Construction

The university is committed to embedding sustainability and carbon reduction principles into every stage of construction and refurbishment. Our built environment plays a central role in delivering creative teaching, research, and community engagement—therefore, all developments must reflect environmental responsibility, social value, and long-term efficiency.

We will create sustainable, future-ready buildings and spaces through environmentally responsible construction that supports the university's creative and educational ambitions.



Key Actions:

1. **Sustainable Design Standards** – Apply BREEAM Standard to all applicable projects, ensuring excellence in energy efficiency, carbon reduction, circular economy principles, biodiversity, and user well-being.
2. **Monitoring and Compliance** – Monitor each project against this standard and report on compliance and performance outcomes.
3. **Smaller Projects Framework** – Develop and implement a proportionate sustainability standard for smaller refurbishments and construction projects.
4. **Sustainability Integration** – Ensure all construction projects integrate sustainability from concept design through to operation, with a focus on lifecycle carbon reduction and circular design principles.

These actions will benefit the university by reducing carbon emissions and lower long-term running costs, and enhancing resilience and adaptability to climate change, while ensuring greater alignment between the university's physical environment and its sustainability and educational goals which will Improve health, well-being, and user experience.

Arts University Plymouth will continue to demonstrate leadership in sustainable construction - creating inspiring, efficient, and low-impact spaces that reflect our creative identity and environmental commitment.

The Living Estate (Biodiversity)

Our Living Estate is a vital green sanctuary within the built environment, providing a space for nature, wellbeing, and creativity to thrive. Through continual expansion of green spaces—such as the Contemplative Garden (2021), the subtropical garden (2022), and the bee- and butterfly-friendly planting scheme at Palace Court (2024) We actively enhance biodiversity and support healthy ecosystems across our campuses.

Sustainability is embedded in our curriculum, empowering students to carry ecological responsibility into their future creative practices and careers. The Living Estate also serves as a civic space, inviting staff, students, and visitors to connect with nature, recharge, and engage with sustainability in action.



Key Actions:

1. **Community Biodiversity Collaboration** – Collaborate with students, staff, and volunteers to enrich habitats and promote biodiversity projects.
2. **Living Estate Group** – Establish a 'Living Estate Group' to coordinate efforts with the Student Union and sustainability groups, fostering community engagement and awareness.
3. **Digital Engagement** – Use technology and social media to monitor, share, and celebrate the biodiversity and stories of our Living Estate.
4. **Open Space Enhancement** – Maintain and enhance diverse open spaces, aligned with regional biodiversity action plans.
5. **Ecological Partnerships** – Work with local conservation bodies and communities to strengthen ecological networks and promote species-rich environments.

These actions will lead to increased biodiversity that supports resilient and sustainable ecosystems, while also improving mental wellbeing by providing access to green, restorative spaces. They will strengthen community connection and encourage environmental stewardship through shared engagement with nature, and they will contribute to regional conservation priorities as well as broader global plant conservation efforts.

The Living Estate embodies our commitment to a sustainable future - nurturing nature, inspiring creativity, and fostering well being across our university community.

Energy Carbon and Water Management

As a specialist arts university, certain disciplines are inherently water-intensive, and we are committed to addressing their environmental impact in all aspects of our work. Recognising the urgent threat of climate change, declared through our Climate Emergency, decarbonising our operations is critical to protecting ecosystems and future generations.



Key Actions:

1. **Climate Action progress** - Achieve net zero carbon for Scope 1 & 2 emissions by continually reviewing progress and timescales.
2. **Climate Change Adaptation** - Develop an integrated Climate Change Adaptation Plan to future-proof our university against environmental risks.
3. **Space and Energy Optimisation** - Optimise space usage and conserve energy across all facilities.
4. **Energy Efficiency Standards** - Improve energy efficiency in building use, design, and refurbishment to meet highest cost-effective standards.
5. **Low carbon energy generation** - Increase use of self-generated and locally sourced low- or zero-carbon energy.
6. **Sustainable Energy Procurement** - Procure gas and electricity exclusively from zero or low-carbon suppliers.
7. **Carbon Offsetting** - Offset any remaining carbon emissions responsibly.

Scope 3 Emissions:

1. **Net Zero Targets** - Set science-based targets and timelines for net zero Scope 3 emissions.
2. **Net zero Transition Plans** - Implement Circular Economy and Sustainable Transport plans to support the transition to net zero.

Through these actions, Arts University Plymouth will lead in responsible resource management, reducing carbon footprint and water use while fostering sustainable creative practices.

Transport

Transport is a key part of university operations, with frequent movement to and between campuses. The university supports Plymouth City Council's Sustainable Travel Policy, which promotes a shift from private car use to active and public transport. The Council's Connect Plymouth initiative, investments in cycle networks, EV infrastructure, and fleet decarbonisation underpin a shared ambition for a cleaner, healthier, and more accessible city.

The university contributes to this collective effort by:

- Hosting Beryl electric bikes from the Connect Plymouth scheme on campus grounds.
- Participating in the annual Plymouth City Council Travel to Work Survey.
- Operating a University Travel to Work Plan that promotes sustainable commuting and travel behaviour.
- Maintaining EV charging points on the main campus.
- Operating a fleet in which 50% of vehicles are electric, with ongoing plans for full decarbonisation.

Key Actions:

1. **Sustainable Transport** - To minimise the environmental impact from all transport activity generated by the University, including commuting, operational fleet transport and business travel, by promoting low and zero-carbon travel choices.
2. **Develop and deliver an overarching Travel Plan** - covering all university campuses, encompassing commuting, operational fleet, and business travel.
3. **Integrate sustainable transport infrastructure** - into all new builds and refurbishments, aligning with the city's transport networks.
4. **Minimise environmental impacts** - from the university's operational fleet and staff business travel, including reducing emissions from air travel.
5. **Collaborate with Plymouth City Council, local community groups, and businesses** - to co-develop transport solutions that benefit the University and the wider community.

These actions will lead to reduced carbon emissions by transitioning to an electric fleet and promoting sustainable commuting, lowering both Scope 1 and Scope 3 emissions. They will also improve air quality by reducing reliance on private and fossil-fuel vehicles, decreasing local pollution around campuses and the wider city. Together, these measures support the university's net-zero goals and align with Plymouth City Council's ambition for a low-carbon transport system, contributing to the city's broader climate targets.

Emissions and Prevention of Pollution

Understanding and managing our carbon emissions is central to achieving our sustainability goals. The University is committed to reducing emissions and preventing pollution through evidence-based decision-making, efficient operational practices, and continual improvement.

By developing a comprehensive emissions inventory and adopting systematic environmental management processes, we will ensure compliance with legislation,, and balance environmental responsibility with socio-economic needs.

Our approach includes improving data collection, promoting low-carbon energy use, and embedding carbon-positive principles into teaching, learning, and partnership projects across the region.



Key Actions:

To establish a clear understanding of the university's carbon footprint and environmental impacts, enabling effective reduction of emissions, prevention of pollution, and continuous improvement in environmental performance.

1. **Emissions Data Management** - Collect and analyse data on all emission sources to create a comprehensive inventory of Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.
2. **Environmental Impact Control** - Identify significant environmental aspects of University activities and implement controls to reduce negative impacts.
3. **Pollution Prevention** - Introduce pollution prevention measures to minimise emissions and discharges to air, land, and water.
4. **Low Carbon Energy Transition** - Transition to lower-carbon fuels and energy sources, supported by the expansion of smart metering.
5. **Carbon Positive Integration** - Embed carbon-positive practices into operations, teaching, and regional collaborations.
6. **Governance and compliance Reviews** - Conduct regular management reviews and internal audits to maintain compliance and progress

This will lead to reduced carbon emissions and pollution through cleaner energy, more efficient processes, and stronger environmental controls, resulting in lower risk of non-compliance and better alignment with environmental legislation and ISO standards. It will also enhance operational efficiency by improving energy management and resource use, while providing a structured framework for continuous improvement through ongoing monitoring, auditing, and performance optimization. Additionally, it supports innovation and collaboration by enabling carbon-positive projects and integrating sustainability into learning and research.

Procurement

The university recognises that its purchasing decisions have significant environmental and social impacts. Embedding responsible procurement practices across all activities ensures that sustainability, Social Value, responsible sourcing, and supply chain transparency are central to how we buy goods and services.

Through developing a Procurement Plan, the University aims to leverage its purchasing power to reduce carbon emissions, eliminate unethical practices, and create positive outcomes for both people and the planet.

The university will embed responsible procurement into all aspects of the university's operations, ensuring that sustainability, social value, and ethical sourcing are considered at every stage of the procurement process.



Key Actions:

1. **Integrate sustainability** - ensure sustainability, social value, and supply chain transparency are integrated into every stage of procurement through a Procurement Plan.
2. **Strengthen** - understanding of sustainable procurement principles across the University to reduce negative impacts and maximise environmental and social benefits.
3. **Eliminate** - Modern Slavery and forced labour from our supply chain and uphold ethical standards in all purchasing decisions.
4. **Develop** - a whole-life costing approach within the Sustainable Impact Assessment model to evaluate environmental and social costs.
5. **Implement** - sustainability analysis for all tender exercises to inform responsible decision-making.
6. **Provide** - staff training to build capacity and awareness of sustainable and ethical procurement practices.
7. **Publish** - and monitor the university's Modern Slavery Statement, ensuring supplier compliance and taking action where risks are identified.

The benefits include environmental gains such as a reduced carbon footprint through lower-impact purchasing and improved supply chain management, alongside social value created by supporting ethical suppliers, fair labor practices, and community benefits. Economically, sustainable sourcing and whole-life costing contribute to long-term savings. Strong compliance and ethical safeguards ensure that suppliers meet legal and human rights standards, particularly regarding Modern Slavery. Overall, this approach enhances reputation and demonstrates the University's leadership in responsible procurement and its commitment to social and environmental stewardship.

Responsible Investment

The university recognises the critical role its investments play in supporting sustainability and achieving carbon reduction goals. By integrating environmental, social, and governance considerations into investment decisions, we ensure that financial activities align with the University's values and long-term sustainability commitments.

Embedding sustainability and carbon reduction criteria within the investment and tendering process enables the university to influence positive change, minimise environmental harm, and support projects that contribute to a low-carbon future.

The university will ensure that sustainability and carbon reduction are key considerations in all investment and tendering decisions, promoting ethical, transparent, and environmentally responsible financial practices.

Key Actions:

1. **Integrate sustainability and carbon reduction criteria** - into all investment and tendering processes to align financial decisions with the university's carbon management and social responsibility goals.
2. **Prioritise investments** - that demonstrate strong environmental, social, and governance performance and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.
3. **Assess financial partners and tender submissions** - for their environmental impact, climate risk management, and commitment to net-zero objectives.
4. **Embed responsible investment principles** - into procurement and financial policies to ensure consistency across all university operations.
5. **Regularly review and report** - on investment performance in relation to sustainability and carbon reduction outcomes.

The benefits include environmental gains by supporting the reduction of global and institutional carbon emissions through sustainable investment choices, as well as ethical and social advantages by ensuring investments align with the University's values and promote transparency, equity, and positive societal outcomes.

This approach also enhances financial resilience by encouraging long-term, stable returns through investments in sustainable and future-resilient sectors. In addition, it strengthens the University's reputation by demonstrating leadership and accountability in responsible financial management, while ensuring that financial decisions align with institutional carbon reduction targets and broader sustainability goals.

Ethical and Sustainable Food

The university is committed to offering food that reflects its values of sustainability, inclusivity, and social responsibility. As part of this, catering contracts are tendered every 3 to 5 years to ensure alignment with our sustainability principles and to foster purposeful, mutually beneficial partnerships.

Food provision should be affordable, healthy, and sustainable, supporting local and Fairtrade suppliers, minimising waste, and meeting the diverse needs of our growing international community. The university works with catering partners who share its ethos — prioritising low-impact operations, ethical sourcing, and responsible food practices that promote wellbeing and environmental stewardship.

We aim to ensure that all food and catering services across the university are ethical, sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible, supporting healthy lifestyles and reducing the environmental impact of food production and consumption.

Key Actions:

1. **Embed sustainability principles** - in catering tenders, ensuring providers share the University's values and commitment to ethical and low-carbon practices.
2. **Source locally and responsibly** - prioritising Fairtrade goods, seasonal produce, and UK-grown ingredients wherever possible.
3. **Reduce food and packaging waste** - through improved planning, composting, recycling, and sustainable packaging alternatives.
4. **Support sustainable diets** - by collaborating with our suppliers to ensure eco-friendly, health-conscious options are both available and enticing across all our sites.
5. **Ensure seafood sustainability** - by sourcing fish only from well-managed and certified marine sources.
6. **Encourage supplier transparency and accountability** - requiring evidence of ethical labour practices, environmental management systems, and net-zero commitments.
7. **Promote continuous improvement** - through collaboration with catering partners and active engagement with students and staff on sustainable food initiatives.

The benefits of these actions include environmental improvements such as reduced food waste, lower carbon emissions, and more sustainable sourcing practices across the supply chain, alongside enhanced health and wellbeing through access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally inclusive food that supports healthier lifestyles. Economically and socially, the approach strengthens local economies through partnerships with local and regional suppliers and adds Social Value through Fairtrade and ethical sourcing. It also promotes ethical governance by ensuring transparent, fair, and responsible food supply chains that eliminate risks of modern slavery or unethical labour practices. Overall, it enhances reputation and leadership by positioning the university as a sector leader in sustainable catering and ethical procurement, demonstrating clear progress toward carbon reduction and social responsibility goals.

Engaging with our City and Community

Arts University Plymouth is deeply rooted in the city's cultural, social, and economic life. The University recognises its responsibility to contribute positively to Plymouth's wellbeing and sustainability through creativity, collaboration, and community engagement.

The university champions placemaking, knowledge exchange, and creative partnerships that connect academics, students, businesses, and communities to drive innovation and support environmental and social progress. Through these initiatives, Arts University Plymouth helps shape a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable city.

The university will strengthen its role as a cultural leader by fostering partnerships that promote sustainability, creativity, and community wellbeing, ensuring our activities deliver shared value for both people and the planet.



Key Actions:

1. **Foster creative collaboration** - through projects that enhance placemaking, civic pride, and environmental awareness.
2. **Engage with local organisations, businesses, and individuals** - to co-create initiatives that support sustainable and cultural development.
3. **Advance knowledge exchange** - bringing together academics, students, and communities to share expertise and ideas that inspire innovation and mutual benefit.
4. **Embed sustainability and climate awareness** - in community and student projects, encouraging creative responses to environmental and social challenges.
5. **Collaborate with Plymouth City Council and civic partners** - to align with citywide sustainability and carbon reduction goals, supporting inclusive, low-carbon growth.
6. **Enhance community access** - to the university's creative spaces and resources, ensuring openness, participation, and shared learning.

This approach fosters meaningful, two-way relationships between Arts University Plymouth and the community through shared knowledge and co-created projects. It harnesses the transformative power of arts, culture, and creativity to inspire positive social, cultural, and environmental change while strengthening local identity, participation, and inclusion through creative engagement and placemaking. It also supports regional growth by empowering local creative industries and small enterprises and enriches student learning through real-world collaboration and civic engagement. Overall, it reinforces Arts University Plymouth's reputation and leadership as a creative institution committed to sustainability, innovation, and community transformation.

Governance

Strong governance underpins the University's approach to sustainability and carbon management. Arts University Plymouth recognises that effective leadership, accountability, and transparent decision-making are essential to achieving meaningful environmental and social outcomes.

Sustainability is embedded within institutional governance structures, ensuring that climate action, ethical practice, and continuous improvement are integrated into strategic planning, operations, and performance monitoring.

We aim to provide robust governance that ensures sustainability, carbon reduction, and environmental responsibility are embedded in all decision-making processes, policies, and institutional frameworks across the university.

Key Actions:

1. **Integrate sustainability into governance structures** - ensuring clear leadership, accountability, and oversight at all levels.
2. **Align university policies and strategies** - with national and regional sustainability goals, including Plymouth's net-zero ambitions.
3. **Maintain transparent reporting and compliance** - ensuring environmental performance is monitored, reviewed, and publicly communicated.
4. **Support evidence-based decision-making** - through the collection, analysis, and use of reliable environmental data.
5. **Empower staff and students** - to contribute to sustainability governance through committees, working groups, and participatory initiatives.
6. **Ensure ethical leadership** - incorporating social responsibility, equality, and integrity into institutional governance and operations.
7. **Commit to continual improvement** - by reviewing governance frameworks regularly to reflect best practice and changing environmental priorities.

These key actions will help ensure clear accountability by providing strong leadership and structured oversight so that sustainability goals are actively monitored and achieved. They also promote transparency through open reporting that builds trust and demonstrates progress to stakeholders and the wider community. Embedding sustainability within governance strengthens strategic alignment with national, regional, and sector-wide climate objectives, while inclusive structures empower staff and students to participate meaningfully in climate action and decision-making. Regular review and evaluation drive continuous improvement, enhancing institutional resilience and adaptability. Taken together, these actions reinforce Arts University Plymouth's reputation for responsible leadership and governance excellence, strengthening its role as a trusted institution.

Reporting

Transparent and consistent reporting is essential to track progress, demonstrate accountability, and drive continuous improvement across the university's sustainability and carbon management activities.

Arts University Plymouth will measure, monitor, and communicate its environmental and social performance openly. Regular reporting ensures that sustainability objectives remain central to institutional planning, decision-making, and community engagement.

We will establish clear, transparent, and evidence-based reporting mechanisms that measure the university's progress towards sustainability, carbon reduction, and environmental targets, supporting continuous improvement and accountability.

Key Actions:

1. **Develop a consistent reporting framework** - to monitor performance against sustainability and carbon management objectives.
2. **Collect and analyse reliable data** - across energy, transport, waste, procurement, and emissions to inform decision-making and identify improvement areas.
3. **Publish annual sustainability and carbon reports** - communicating progress, challenges, and achievements to stakeholders and the wider community.
4. **Align reporting practices** - with recognised frameworks and standards such as ISO 14001 and national sustainability reporting requirements.
5. **Integrate sustainability reporting** - into institutional performance reviews and governance structures to ensure accountability at all levels.
6. **Use reporting to support learning and engagement** - sharing best practice and success stories across departments, staff, students, and partners.

These key actions strengthen transparency and accountability by demonstrating the university's commitment to openness and integrity in managing its environmental performance. They also support informed decision-making, using data-driven reporting to guide targeted action and ensure resources are used effectively. Regular performance review promotes continuous improvement, fostering a culture of reflection, learning, and ongoing progress. At the same time, clear and accessible reporting enhances stakeholder engagement, building trust and collaboration with students, staff, partners, and the wider community. Together, these actions reinforce Arts University Plymouth's reputation and leadership as a responsible, forward-thinking institution dedicated to sustainability and social value.