

Environmental sustainability report

2021–22



This report summarises the efforts made by the entire King’s community to make the university more sustainable: from managing our estates and providing sustainable food to engaging with our students and staff and collaborating with our local communities. We hope it inspires you to take action on climate and sustainability, whatever your role within or beyond King’s.

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UN Sustainable Development Goals

King’s College London seeks to play a central and transformational role in advancing the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(UN SDGs\)](#) by 2030 through our education, research and service to society.

Approved by the member states of the United Nations (UN) in 2015, the SDGs are a set of 17 goals designed to address our most critical global challenges.

King’s [2020–21 SDG report](#) showcases our contribution and response to the goals. Throughout this document, we have highlighted the relevant SDGs to illustrate how our work relates to each one.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



2021–22 sustainability targets and progress

- Target achieved/on track
- Progress towards target
- Target not achieved

Environmental management	Maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) to the standard of ISO 14001:2015	
	Achieve reportable environmental pollution incident rate of zero	
Water	Reduce consumption of water by 2% each year over the 2013-2022 period (cubic metres per total FTE - staff and student)	
Waste and resources	Achieve 70% recycling by weight of total non-hazardous office and residential waste in 2021-22	
	Reduce total annual operational waste produced by the university (excluding construction) by 40%, from a 2017-18 baseline	
Carbon and energy	Achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2025	
	Reduce energy emissions by at least 50% by 2025, from a 2018-19 baseline	
Food	Achieve SRA Rating of three stars for King's Food	
Supply chain	Carry out Fairtrade Action Plan 2020-22 to maintain Fairtrade University status	
	Increase number of social enterprises in our supply chain	
	Consider provisions of the Social Value Act in procurement processes	
	Reduce supply chain emissions by 25% by 2025, from a 2018-19 baseline	
Partnership and community engagement	Engage with at least one local community project which promotes and improves the environment	
	Take an active role in sector sustainability networks such as LUEG, LEAN, EAUC	
	Engage with local councils on climate and net zero strategies	
Clean air, travel and transport	Implement at least 2 clean air initiatives recommended by Business Low Emission Neighbourhoods	

	At least 75% of King's directly-controlled fleet to be zero/low emission vehicles (excluding sports ground off-road vehicles and King's Food static food/ drink vehicles)	
	Increase number of bicycle parking spaces across the estate	
	Reduce business travel emissions by 60% by 2025, from a 2018-19 baseline	
	Set baseline for student end-of-term travel	
Construction and refurbishment	BREEAM assessments carried out on all new buildings / major refurbishments as required by planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New builds to achieve minimum "Excellent" • Major Refurbishments to achieve "Very Good" 	
	All large-scale fit-out projects to apply King's Sustainability Guidance (Capital Projects Brief) and Checklist, or complete SKA assessment	
Biodiversity	Implement at least 75% of the agreed 2018-21 opportunities identified in Biodiversity Action Plan	
Sustainability engagement	Minimum 90% of eligible E&F staff to complete Fit for King's sustainability module within 12 months from induction	
	Achieve at least 600 hours student engagement opportunities	
	Achieve minimum of 60 Staff Sustainability Champion teams completing Bronze, Silver or Gold level (including LEAF)	
	Enrolling 50 students in pilot Sustainability KEATS module	

Environmental management



Targets

- Maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) to the standard of ISO 14001:2015 ■
- Achieve a reportable environmental pollution incident rate of zero ■

Policy

Sustainability at King's is governed through our [Environmental Sustainability Policy \(EMS\)](#). It applies to all areas and activities of the university and sets out our key environmental commitments, including setting and reviewing targets, and providing student and staff engagement opportunities.

Progress

Our EMS ensures that our campuses are operated in an environmentally sustainable way, with continual improvement at the core. It covers all areas of Estates & Facilities (E&F), which spans our campus operations, King's Food, King's Residences and capital projects, as well as cleaning and security teams. Training and regular internal audits ensure that policies and procedures are followed and that all staff within E&F can carry out their roles with sustainability in mind.

In 2022, the EMS was recertified to the ISO 14001:2015 standard following an external audit. With continual improvement being a key component of the EMS, we always seek to develop new initiatives to meet our sustainability objectives. The remainder of this report shares some of our key successes and developments, as well as our challenges, in 2021–22.

Water



Target

- Reduce consumption of water by 2 per cent each year from 2013–14 (cubic metres per total FTE – staff and students) ■

Policy

Through our Environmental Sustainability Policy, we are committed to increasing water efficiency across our estate through both design and maintenance. Water efficiency is also embedded into our Sustainability Guidance for Capital Projects, along with a requirement to consider greywater systems such as rainwater collection.

Progress

Our reported water consumption in 2021–22 (305,992 m³, see Annex) was higher than in previous years, which was likely the result of changing suppliers during that period. The change required transferring the meter readings of water supplies in all of King’s properties. Where the 2020–21 meters were not read prior to the change, any unbilled consumption was applied to the 2021–22 period, creating the appearance of increased consumption that year. Moreover, the university returned to full operational capacity in 2021–22, which resulted in more water being used across our campuses compared to the low figures in the previous year due to COVID-19.

We continue improving the accuracy of water consumption data, which will allow us to better track progress and undertake targeted water efficiency measures.

Waste and resources



Targets

- Achieve 70% recycling by weight of total non-hazardous office and residential waste in 2021-22 ■
- Reduce total annual operational waste produced by the university (excluding construction) by 40%, from a 2017-18 baseline ■

Policy

Our approach to waste and recycling is governed by the [King's Waste and Resources Management Policy](#), and the delivery is facilitated by the Waste and Resources Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2024. The policy sets out our commitments to managing waste sustainably and to continually improve and innovate how we do this.

Central to this approach is the hierarchy of 'Prevent, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recovery, Disposal': avoiding the creation of waste in the first instance, minimising how much is created, repairing or refurbishing items for reuse where possible, and recycling waste that cannot be avoided or reused. Recovery – which creates energy from waste – and disposal should be avoided where possible.

Ensuring this is embedded into our procurement decisions is essential to preventing waste. Therefore, the policy commits King's to integrating the principles of whole of life cycle and circular economy into our operations. Our policy also commits us to eliminating disposable items where there are viable alternatives, providing training to staff and working with academic departments to promote and support teaching and research around sustainable waste and resource management. It applies to all wastes, including hazardous waste, and refers to the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 /894.

Progress

The total operational waste generated for 2021–22 is 1,193 tonnes (see Annex), well below the target level of 1,439 tonnes given in the 2021–24 Waste and Resources Strategy and Action Plan. In addition to targeted waste reduction efforts, the achieved target was likely supported by hybrid working leading to fewer people on site and more conscientious behaviour regarding generating waste.

King's recycling rate for 2021–22 was 55 per cent, with monthly recycling rates ranging from 67 per cent in January 2022 to 53 per cent in March 2022. Although this falls short of our target to recycle 70 per cent of waste, we continued our work to improve waste management across King's. We will conduct regular campus inspections and offer more waste management training for the cleaning team to improve our recycling rates.

We continued to use and promote Warp It – an online portal that enables the redistribution and reuse of unwanted items. This allows us to divert waste from landfill and save waste-related carbon emissions as well as costs (replacement, disposal and admin).

Carbon and energy



Targets

- Achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2025 ■
- Reduce energy emissions by at least 50 per cent by 2025, from a 2018–19 baseline ■

Policy

Through the King's Environmental Sustainability Policy, the university has committed to maximising energy efficiency and reducing our carbon emissions in line with limiting warming to 1.5°C.

Our [Carbon Management Plan 2010–2020](#) outlined our journey towards reducing our scope 1 and 2 emissions by 43 per cent from 2005–06 to 2020, which was exceeded in 2019–20 with King's achieving an emissions reduction of 53 per cent.

Progress

By the end of 2021–22, we reduced our carbon emissions by 53 per cent since 2005–06 using a location-based methodology and by 64 per cent using a market-based methodology¹ (see Annex). This achievement comes despite significant growth of the university, illustrating that we have successfully decoupled our growth from growing carbon emissions.

Using Salix funds, we have carried out energy efficiency projects across campuses. We also engaged with students and staff to reduce energy consumption through schemes such as Sustainability Champions, and the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) in particular. We have also ensured that refurbishment and construction projects include energy efficiency measures by

¹ There are two key methods for calculating our carbon footprint, relating to our scope 2 emissions from electricity. The location-based method uses average carbon emission factors for each kWh of electricity we use, regardless of its origin or the tariff we have chosen. The market-based method takes into account the electricity we have purchased from renewable sources and assigns it zero carbon emissions.

applying BREEAM or SKA assessments to projects. Moreover, we are implementing a series of Building Management System upgrades to improve our control over energy use in buildings, enabling us to be more energy efficient.

We are also continuously improving our energy sourcing. As King's directly purchases UK wind power, our carbon footprint is lower when using a market-based methodology. This difference has become smaller since April 2022, as King's no longer purchases REGOs (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin) due to significant price increases. However, the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with wind farms in Scotland and Wales is still supplying us with renewable electricity, and King's College Hospital switched to renewable electricity in 2021. We continue to reduce our emissions from utilities year-on-year. In 2021–22, 109,507 GJ of energy came from low-carbon sources, including 18 GJ from on-campus photovoltaic energy.

One of our key challenges in achieving our carbon reduction targets is heating our buildings, as renewable and zero-carbon alternatives to natural gas are limited and expensive. With funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, we developed a Heat Decarbonisation Plan which sets out how King's can reduce heating emissions, and we will be rolling out various projects as part of this.

Since achieving our 43% carbon reduction by 2020 target, we have been focusing on progressing towards net zero. The King's Climate Action Network (King's CAN) was formed in 2020 to co-create a Climate & Sustainability Action Plan, giving everyone in the King's community the opportunity to actively contribute and shape our plans for the next years. The King's CAN covers thirteen key impact areas, following the structure laid out by the Swedish Climate Framework for Higher Education Institutions. These are reflected in the seven sub-groups of the King's CAN:

- Zero Carbon Estate
- Procurement & Waste
- Students & Education
- Community & Engagement
- Responsible Investment
- Travel

- Zero Carbon Research

We are committed to go beyond reducing our scope 1 and 2 emissions, taking responsibility for our scope 3 emissions, as well as maximising the positive impacts we can have through our core activities of education, research and engagement.

Spotlight on: Responsible investment



Policy

The [Ethical Investment Policy](#) commits King's to making no direct investments in tobacco, divesting from all fossil fuel investments and investing 40 per cent of its funds in investments with socially responsible benefits by 2025.

Progress

In Spring 2021, King's made the announcement that it has fully divested from all fossil fuels, almost two years ahead of its end of 2022 target. Alongside this, King's also confirmed it already held 35% of its funds in investments with a 'green tilt'. These funds do not only exclude fossil fuels, but seek to actively invest in low carbon, sustainable companies. The Finance Team continue making progress towards the 40% positive investment by 2025 target and beyond.

Food



Targets

- Achieve SRA Rating of three stars for King's Food ■

Policy

Our [Sustainable Food Policy](#) commits King's to addressing sustainability impacts arising from our catering and hospitality operations whilst providing healthy and sustainable food for our students, staff and visitors. It sets out wide-reaching commitments in the areas of sourcing, society and environment, including an increased focus on local and independent suppliers, the removal of palm oil from food produced in-house, engaging with students and the local community to redistribute unsold food, removing beef from restaurant menus, and serving vegan and vegetarian options as the default options at meetings and events.

Progress

In July 2022, [King's received three stars](#) and an overall score of 80 per cent in the SRA's Food Made Good report, scoring 75% for sourcing, 86% for society and 81% for environment. Since the last report in 2019, we improved our performance across all 10 key areas with the largest increase taking place in feeding people well (33% increase), wasting no food (22% increase) and supporting global farmers (21% increase). This achievement demonstrates our progress around sustainable sourcing, society and the environment.

Regarding vegetarian and vegan efforts, our in-house menu is about 70 per cent meat-free and 60 per cent vegan, and King's Food offer a minimum of one plant-based dish on the menus every day. We removed beef from our menus several years ago. From August 2022, all our hospitality sandwich platters will be vegetarian and vegan as a default, with clients having to opt in for meat or fish. All pastries and most cakes in King's Food outlets will be vegan. There is no extra

charge for oat milk, and King's Food is committed to vegan options being cheaper than the meat or fish option.

King's Food does not use palm oil in food produced in-house and ensures products in our supply chain only contain responsibly sourced and certified palm oil. It only serves sustainably caught fish from the UK and buys British high-welfare meat, dairy products and free-range eggs to combat animal cruelty and environmental damage. Farmers are selected based on their levels of environmental stewardship. Seasonal and either local or UK-based producers are prioritised.

Food waste is measured through the amount of waste sent to anaerobic digestion. This anaerobic digestion means that it will be put into sealed containers and broken down by natural micro-organisms. In 2021-22, we produced 69 tonnes of food waste. To reduce this, King's Food partnered with Too Good To Go in 2021. Compostable takeaway containers are provided at hospitality events so that any leftover food can be taken away to avoid it being thrown away.

To reduce general waste, King's Food charges a levy on disposable coffee cups and provides a discount for bringing your own takeaway containers, such as for hot food or salads. It has also eliminated plastic straws and cutlery from outlets and worked with suppliers to reduce packaging. Free water is provided in all outlets and 43 free drinking water dispensers can be founded across our campuses.

Supply chain



Targets

- Carry out Fairtrade Action Plan 2020-22 to maintain Fairtrade University status ■■
- Increase number of social enterprises in our supply chain ■■
- Consider provisions of the Social Value Act in procurement processes ■■
- Reduce supply chain emissions by 25% by 2025, from a 2018-19 baseline ■■■

Policy

Embedding sustainability into our supply chain is fundamental to achieving our sustainability and climate aims, as the supply chain is our largest source of emissions.

Our [Socially Responsible Procurement Policy](#) is intended to ensure that King's purchases goods and services in ways that are beneficial to the university, the environment, to wider society and King's local boroughs. It commits King's to using our purchasing power to improve conditions and raise expectations of social responsibilities in the external organisations we work with, for example by requiring all suppliers to agree to our [Sustainable Supply Chain Code of Conduct](#), which covers social, ethical and environmental compliance.

It also aims to use local suppliers and small and medium enterprises where appropriate, increase the number of social enterprises in our supply chain, and incorporate social, economic and environmental criteria when awarding contracts.

Progress

In 2021–22, the Procurement Team continued making progress to make our supply chain more socially, economically and environmentally responsible.

Improving the accuracy of our supply chain emissions continues to be a priority. Currently, we calculate these via the Higher Education Supply Chain Emissions Tool (HESCET), but this spend-based approach is likely to misrepresent some emissions. We are exploring contracting an external supplier to improve this work.

To improve supply chain transparency, King's has continued our partnership with the human rights monitoring organisation Electronics Watch. This partnership allows us to provide better assurance regarding the eradication of modern slavery and ethical employment practices in our IT hardware and electronics supply chains.

We have also continued to engage our staff and students in supply chain projects through a dedicated Procurement & Waste subgroup in the King's Climate Action Network. We discussed, among other things, how we could draw people's attention to the importance of this area; we looked at how to improve our methodology for estimating supply chain emissions; and explored opportunities for supplier engagement events.

Fairtrade

King's is committed to being part of the Fairtrade Universities scheme and has set out a [Fairtrade Policy](#). This policy aligns our commitments with the UN SDGs and the four categories that make up the Fairtrade University Award: Leadership and Strategy; Procurement, Retail and Catering; Campaigning and Influencing; and Research and Curriculum. Key commitments within the policy include buying and serving Fairtrade on campus, promoting the positive impacts of Fairtrade, and engaging students and staff through our Fairtrade and Sustainable Food Steering Group.

Our 2020–22 Fairtrade Action Plan helped King's get [recertified as a Fairtrade University](#) by the Fairtrade Foundation and Students Organising for Sustainability UK (SOS-UK) in July 2022, achieving two stars in the student-led audit. King's Food continuously look for new Fairtrade products and ingredients to add to their menus and outlets. Rather than only offering Fairtrade for branded products such

as chocolate bars, King's Food source Fairtrade cocoa and sugar for use in their kitchens, meaning many of the in-house baked goods on sale in outlets include Fairtrade ingredients. During International Coffee Week in 2021, King's Food invited their coffee supplier, Bewley's, to speak to students and staff about the sourcing of their coffee, and during Fairtrade Fortnight 2022 Fairtrade pancakes were offered on Pancake Day. The King's Sustainability team offers support and data for students who would like to research ethical supply chains or consumption as part of their dissertations, and collaborates with other Fairtrade universities on ideas and events, ensuring fair and ethical trade are considered in university-wide initiatives such as the King's Climate Action Network.

To ensure our support of Fairtrade beyond catering outlets, Fairtrade is embedded into our Sustainability Champions programme, requiring teams taking part for an award to make the coffee and tea bought through departmental budgets either Fairtrade, organic or Rainforest Alliance certified.

Our Fairtrade and Sustainable Food Steering Group continued to meet online in 2021–22, reviewing progress and discussing with students and staff how to further embed sustainability and Fairtrade into our operations.

Partnership and community engagement



Targets

- Engage with at least one local community project that promotes and improves the environment ■
- Take an active role in sector sustainability networks such as LUEG, LEAN and EAUC ■
- Engage with local councils on climate and net zero strategies ■

Policy

We recognise that as a university, we can have significant positive impacts by engaging with our local communities and supporting local sustainability projects. Our Environmental Sustainability Policy commits us to collaborate with internal and external parties to promote knowledge sharing and community engagement, and to accelerate the achievement of local, regional, national and global goals. This supports wider work at King's to deploy our knowledge in service to society and to engage the communities we serve in London, the UK and globally through equitable partnerships.

Progress

Throughout 2021–22, we continued to build and grow links with communities around King's.

In 2021-22, we engaged with local organisations and Westminster City Council on the pedestrianisation of Strand Aldwych. The project began in the summer of 2021, and students and staff have been invited to share their vision for this space. This ambitious plan will be completed in 2022, creating a pedestrianised area outside our Strand Campus.

The King's Sustainability team also engages with wider sustainability networks, such as the EAUC (The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education) and LUEG (London Universities Environmental Group), sharing our experiences and working with the sector to become more sustainable. We collaborated with London-based universities on the [London Student Sustainability Conference 2022](#), highlighting research and projects that aim to make the world a more sustainable place.

Clean air, travel and transport



Targets

- Implement at least two clean air initiatives recommended by Business Low Emission Neighbourhoods ■
- At least 75 per cent of King’s directly controlled fleet to be zero/low emission vehicles (excluding sports ground off-road vehicles and King’s Food static food/drink vehicles) ■
- Increase number of bicycle parking spaces across the estate ■
- Reduce business travel emissions by 60 per cent by 2025, from a 2018–9 baseline ■
- Set baseline for student end-of-term travel ■

Policy

King’s is committed to addressing its environmental impacts from all operations, and sustainable travel covers three important areas within this: business travel, commuting and student end-of-term travel.

The [King’s Travel Policy and procedures](#) encourage staff travelling on behalf of King’s to consider environmental sustainability when booking travel arrangements. The policy allows for more expensive land-based travel over flights, therefore not prioritising cost over sustainability.

Our Environmental Sustainability Policy also commits us to contribute to reducing air pollution around our campuses. To do this, King’s has set a target to replace existing university-owned vehicles with electric vehicles and aims to encourage active travel such as cycling and walking to and between our campuses.

Whilst internationalisation and our global outlook are at the core of King’s Vision and are a source of significant positive impacts, we recognise the need to acknowledge the carbon impacts associated with this.

Progress

Following a period of reduced international travel due to COVID-19, business travel picked up again in 2021–22. However, reliance on virtual meetings and conferences due to COVID-19 restrictions accelerated the uptake of digital solutions and alternatives to travel. As a result, more meetings and conferences are being offered virtually, and more participants carefully consider the value of attending in person, balancing it with considerations such as time and sustainability.

We actively engage with our travel providers to make it easier to book low-carbon travel options, for example, by sorting journeys by the ‘greenest’ option and integrating carbon offsetting at the point of sale. The travel providers also support our carbon footprint reporting.

To reduce emissions from our fleet, we are working to replace our existing university-owned vehicles, which are used to transport goods between campuses, with electric vehicles. We are also exploring the use of cargo, electric or push bikes for inter-campus shorter journeys.

Regarding student end-of-term travel, we are yet to establish a methodology to estimate emissions from students travelling to and from London at the start and end of the term. We have already been engaging with students to help them understand their footprint and enable them to take action on climate, and we will work with them to identify how community-building activities and other initiatives could help reduce the need for travel.

Construction and refurbishment



Targets

- BREEAM assessments carried out on all new buildings/major refurbishments as required by planning ■
 - New builds to achieve minimum “Excellent”
 - Major refurbishments to achieve “Very good”
- All large-scale fit-out projects to apply King’s Sustainability Guidance (Capital Projects Brief) and Checklist, or complete SKA assessment ■

Policy

The King’s Environmental Sustainability Policy commits King’s to managing construction, refurbishment and post-completion occupancy of our buildings to reduce environmental impact and enhance the wellbeing of building users.

Embedding sustainability considerations into our construction and refurbishment projects is fundamental in achieving our sustainability targets, reducing our carbon emissions and achieving the Estates & Facilities (E&F) aim to provide a safe and sustainable estate.

Our Sustainability Guidance for Capital Projects sets out core principles, requirements and guidelines for how sustainability should be considered as part of construction and refurbishment projects.

In 2021, E&F created a new strategy and action plan for embedding sustainability into capital projects. This document re-examined King’s existing approach including lessons learned, and identified where improvements could be made. The plan provides a clear roadmap with specific actions to ensure the delivery of these improvements. It gives project managers the impetus and authority to embed sustainability into refurbishments and new builds, and offers guidance on engaging with other departments at King’s whose input is essential to the longevity, sustainability and overall maximisation of the use of each building.

Progress

Throughout 2021–22, the Sustainability and Capital Projects teams continued embedding sustainability in construction and refurbishment. We continue to aim for BREEAM, SKA or EnerPHit accreditations for projects.

BREEAM assessments continue to be carried out on new buildings and refurbishments:

- London Institute for Healthcare Engineering (LIHE) is on track to achieve a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’.
- The South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation (SLaM, CYP) is progressing towards a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’.
- The Rayne Gene Therapy Vectors Facility (GTVF) is aiming to achieve a BREEAM rating of ‘Very Good’.

Several large-scale fit-out projects are also completing SKA assessment:

- The Weston Education Centre achieved a SKA Gold accreditation in March 2022.
- The South West Block remains on course for SKA Gold.
- The Quad remains on course for SKA Silver, with a small chance of achieving Gold.

Biodiversity



Targets

- Implement at least 75% of the agreed 2018-21 opportunities identified in Biodiversity Action Plan ■

Policy

King's is committed to maintaining and enhancing green spaces on our campuses to support biodiversity and health and wellbeing through our Environmental Sustainability Policy. To promote biodiversity on our estate, we developed our Biodiversity Action Plan, which assesses the current state of biodiversity on our campuses and recommends actions in four key areas: the exterior of our buildings, new capital developments, our grounds and open spaces, and our sports grounds.

Progress

Based on the Biodiversity Action Plan, 45 actions were identified for 2021-22, 10 of which (22%) have been completed, 10 (22%) are in progress and 23 (51%) have not yet started. Actions not yet started or still in progress are mostly because they were paused due to COVID-19 or are no longer relevant to the ever-changing estate.

In June 2022, part of a silver-medal winning RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2022 garden was gifted from St Mungo's to King's, and was installed at Guy's Campus. Where possible, we work with local partners such as Business Improvement Districts to improve local biodiversity and access to nature including working with Team London Bridge to create a 'pocket park' accessible to the public, located outside the Greenwood Theatre.

280 trees were planted in 2021-22, including 250 trees on King's sports grounds, donated by the Woodland Trust.

The pedestrianisation of Strand Aldwych provides a great opportunity to increase biodiversity and green spaces around campus, and relevant team members are feeding into these developments.

Campus managers are continuing to embed biodiversity where they see opportunity and the biodiversity action plan will be updated accordingly.

Sustainability engagement



Targets

- Minimum 90 per cent of eligible E&F staff to complete Fit for King's sustainability module within 12 months of induction ■
- Achieve at least 600 hours of student engagement opportunities ■
- Achieve minimum of 60 Staff Sustainability Champion teams completing Bronze, Silver or Gold level (including LEAF) ■
- Enrolling 50 students in pilot Sustainability KEATS module ■

Policy

King's Environmental Sustainability Policy commits us to providing opportunities for students and staff to actively engage in the sustainability work of the university. In addition, we are committed to providing training to students, and giving them the opportunity to embed sustainability in their formal and informal education.

Progress

Key achievements around sustainability engagement for 2021-22 include:

- 300+ people taking part in the Sustainability Champions programme and 350+ members of the Climate Action Network (CAN).
- Between September 2021 and July 2022, over 1,400 attendees came together across 87 events and training opportunities ran by the King's Sustainability Team.
- Sustainability Month took place across February, welcoming hundreds of people to more than 20 social and educational events focused on taking action around the SDGs.

- The development of the KEATS Sustainability & Climate module, which had over 600 students and staff enrol. Over 180 completed the full module and received sustainability awards.
- Over 1,000 modules mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals, carried out with the help of over 60 trained students and staff.
- Launching the [King's Spotlight on Sustainability podcast](#), co-hosted by the Climate & Sustainability team and students. The first series focuses on tackling climate change with big and small actions, the second on climate justice and the third on sustainable careers.

We have spotlighted three key initiatives below.

Staff Sustainability Champions

The [Sustainability Champions scheme](#) is our dedicated programme to engage staff in behaviour change. Staff can take part in the office programme, which is part of the national SOS-UK Green Impact scheme. Since 2020, staff working in laboratories can also join the Lab Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) initiative. The Sustainability Champions programme started in 2013 with 17 staff members participating and has grown to more than 300 staff members in the 10 years since. Our Champions work across all areas of King's, including faculty offices, teaching spaces, E&F, research labs and King's Residences.

Sustainability Champions work hard to make King's a more sustainable working environment, reducing the negative and maximising the positive social and environmental impacts of the university. The programme has proven crucial in helping King's Sustainability team embed sustainability throughout the university. It also brings together King's staff from different campuses, departments and faculties, empowering them to make positive changes within and beyond their work environments.

Throughout the year, the Sustainability Champions carried out over 2,800 actions on sustainability. At the end of the academic year, 61 Champions teams submitted their workbook online. The Green Impact Champions were audited by trained King's students and the LEAF Champions peer-audited each other's laboratories.

The breakdown of the awards were: 1 Working Towards Sustainability Dozen, 13 Sustainability Dozen, 7 Bronze, 1 Working Towards Silver, 5 Silver, 34 Gold Awards. Of these teams, 28 offices, 1 halls of residence and 32 labs submitted work into the programme. These were awarded during the annual Sustainability Awards ceremony in July 2022, which celebrates the hard work of our Sustainability Champions and sustainability volunteers across the organisation.

To showcase the achievement of our Sustainability Champions, we published a [2021–22 Sustainability Champions Stories booklet](#), which contains case studies from teams across the university.

In addition to our Sustainability Champions programme, we offer opportunities for staff to learn about and get involved in sustainability. When staff join King's, our Environmental Sustainability Policy forms part of their induction checklist. The Climate & Sustainability team regularly present at Welcome to King's events run by the Organisational Development team, as well as a range of departmental and directorate meetings. Many of our sustainability initiatives, such as the King's Climate Action Network and our KEATS Sustainability & Climate module and seminar series are open to staff as well as students.

Within E&F, sustainability forms a key part of the Fit for King's training programme. All staff joining E&F go through the Fit for King's programme, which includes training sessions on service delivery, inclusivity, wellbeing and professional communications. Sustainability is included in the initial induction and a dedicated sustainability workshop is part of the core programme. This ensures that E&F staff, who are key to sustainability through their roles, in areas such as maintenance, campus operations, catering, security and cleaning, have a good understanding of sustainable practices and King's commitments in this area. In 2021–22, we met our target to train 90 per cent of E&F staff on sustainability as part of the Fit for King's induction.

King's Climate Action Network (King's CAN)

The [King's CAN](#) is an open, interdisciplinary forum to directly contribute to King's climate and sustainability plans. Launched in October 2020, it aims to bring

together climate and sustainability expertise and passion from the King's community to create and implement our Climate & Sustainability Action Plan. The CAN is open to all King's students, staff and alumni. It was launched in recognition of the need to invite our community to co-create solutions with us in order to take meaningful climate action. By collaborating, we can ensure our Climate & Sustainability Action Plan reflects the ambition, fresh ideas and engagement of the King's community.

In 2021–22, the CAN grew to 350+ members and focused on the implementation of actions to progress towards the aims set in the Action Plan. The CAN brainstormed ideas across 7 sub-groups: Zero Carbon Estate, Responsible Investment, Community & Engagement, Zero Carbon Research, Travel, Students & Education and Procurement & Waste. Members signed up to smaller working groups to start implementing actions.

KEATS Sustainability & Climate module

Following on from a Hackathon in February 2021, a listening campaign in the summer of 2021 and work undertaken by the Students and Education group of the King's Climate Action Network, King's developed an online module on sustainability and climate. This module sought to fill a gap in sustainable education while empowering the King's community to take action.

'Sustainability & Climate: Learn, Discover, Take Action' is a fully co-created, open access and interdisciplinary module covering the biggest topics in sustainability from climate change and food to sustainable finance and social justice. More than 50 students, alumni, academics and professional services staff have developed the module since its inception in a dedicated Take Action Team – it is a module that has been designed by them, for them.

The key aim of the module is not just to equip participants with sustainability knowledge, but for them to develop the agency to take action on the issues that most concern them. Despite it being online, the module has been created to be as interactive as possible by embedding Padlets, pledges and discussion forums throughout the course. It has been complemented by a Sustainability Seminar

Series and other events to build a sense of community and support participants in developing transferable skills.

Content in the module was set by the Take Action Team. The 15+ sections include setting the scene of sustainability (exploring 'What is Sustainability?' and the SDGs) and a deeper analysis of social, environmental and economic areas of sustainability, including circular economies, sustainable banking, eco-anxiety, food systems and climate justice. The module has a variety of learning modes, including videos, podcasts, case studies, quizzes and forums.

The module's Learning Outcomes are:

- Critically engage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the progress that has been made around them, and discuss interconnectivities between the goals.
- Describe how sustainability is relevant to your academic field and identify gaps in your own sustainability education.
- Explore connections between the climate crisis and inequality, and reflect on your position in relation to this.
- Engage with others around the topic of sustainability.
- Feel inspired to act and identify how to take action in relation to real-world sustainability issues, recognising interconnected economic, environmental and social perspectives.
- Demonstrate your sustainability knowledge and skills in relation to your future career plans.

To gain recognition through a King's Experience Champion for Change Award, participants are required to complete the two-part assessment. A personal statement encourages them to reflect on their learnings to explain why they deserve an award. A creative submission asks them to reflect on actions for sustainability they have taken or could take and express these through, for example, a narrated presentation, poem, podcast, poster or video.

In the 2021–22 pilot year, 630 students and staff enrolled on the module and 122 of those completed it for an award.

2022–23 sustainability targets

Environmental management	Maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) to the standard of ISO 14001:2015
	Achieve a reportable environmental pollution incident rate of zero
Water	Reduce consumption of water by 2 per cent each year from 2013–14 (cubic metres per total FTE – staff and students)
Waste and resources	Achieve 73 per cent recycling by weight of total non-hazardous office and residential waste in 2022–23, and 75 per cent in 2023–24
	Reduce total annual operational waste produced by the university (excluding construction) by 35 per cent from 2017–18 to 2022–23, and 30 per cent by 2023–24
Carbon and energy	Achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2025
	Reduce energy emissions by at least 50 per cent by 2025, from a 2018–19 baseline
Food	Maintain a Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) rating of three stars for King’s Food
Supply chain	Develop a Fairtrade Action Plan 2022–24 to maintain Fairtrade University award
	Reduce supply chain emissions by 25 per cent by 2025, from a 2018–19 baseline
	Increase number of social enterprises and not-for-profits in our supply chain
	Implement supplier assurance tool to audit our supply chain
	Audit our major electronics suppliers via our partnership with Electronics Watch
	Increase awareness of the Socially Responsible Procurement Policy internally and externally
Partnership and community engagement	Engage with at least one local community project that promotes and improves the environment
	Take an active role in sector sustainability networks such as LUEG, LEAN and EAUC
	Engage with local councils on climate and net zero strategies

Clean air, travel and transport	Implement at least two clean air initiatives recommended by Business Low Emission Neighbourhoods
	At least 75 per cent of King’s directly controlled fleet to be zero/low emission vehicles (excluding sports ground off-road vehicles and King’s Food static food/drink vehicles)
	Increase number of bicycle parking spaces across the estate
	Reduce business travel emissions by 60 per cent by 2025, from a 2018–19 baseline
	Set baseline for student end-of-term travel
Construction and refurbishment	BREEAM assessments carried out on all new buildings/major refurbishments as required by planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New builds to achieve minimum “Excellent” • Major refurbishments to achieve “Very good”
	All large-scale fit-out projects to apply King’s Sustainability Guidance (Capital Projects Brief) and Checklist, or complete SKA assessment
Biodiversity	Implement at least 75 per cent of the agreed 2022–23 opportunities identified in the Biodiversity Action Plan
Sustainability engagement	Minimum 90 per cent of eligible Estates & Facilities (E&F) staff to complete Fit for King’s sustainability module within 12 months of induction
	Achieve at least 600 hours of student engagement opportunities
	Achieve minimum of 60 Staff Sustainability Champion teams completing Bronze, Silver or Gold level (including LEAF)
	Enrolling 250 students in the Sustainability KEATS module, with at least 150 students completing the module

Annex

Carbon, energy and water

Table 1: Total scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions (based on the Estates Management Record)

	2005-06 (baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
CO ₂ e (tonnes)	52,389	30,617	24,506	25,909	24,559
Reduction compared to baseline (location- based)		-42%	-53%	-51%	-53%
Reduction compared to baseline (market- based)		-62%	-68%	-66%	-64%

*The data is based on the 2021-22 submission to the Estates Management Record.

Table 2: Estimated carbon emissions, energy and water consumption, 2019–22

Metrics	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22*	Change from previous year
CO ₂ Scope 1 and 2 emissions (tonnes) – utilities only	26,496	26,121	24,671	-6%
Grid electricity (kWh)	64,223,864	63,820,164	67,558,315	-6%
Total natural gas (kWh) including CHP feed	50,805,076	55,501,960	53,752,163	-3%
Steam and hot water (kWh)	10,946,640	14,082,024	10,264,517	-27%
Water*** (m ³)	61,119	335,077	702,410 (raw data) (326,596 with BEIS Conversion factor)	-3% (with BEIS Conversion factor)

*2021–22 figures were based on estimates and are subject to change.

**This is based on billing data from our supplier. During COVID, restrictions meant we could not access water meters to collect more accurate data. In 2021, we changed water supplier, which has improved the accuracy of our water consumption data. To continue improving the accuracy of our readings, Automatic Meter Readings (AMRs) will be installed in the near future.

Table 3: Overall changes in water consumption in m³ and per FTE, 2017–22

Academic year	Volume of water usage in m ³	Comparison from previous year m ³	Water consumption per FTE (m ³ /FTE)	% change from previous year water usage in m ³ /FTE	Explanation for obscure data
2013–14	288,596	n/a	10.3	n/a	
2014–15	385,252	+29%	13.3	+29%	
2015–16	329,409	- 18.7%	10.8	- 18.7%	
2016–17	338,627	+ 3.7%	10.4	+ 3.7%	
2017–18	407,367	- 13.4%	11.8	- 13.4%	
2018–19	332,336	- 21%	9.3	- 21%	
2019–20	646,705	+ 86%	17.3	-86%	COVID flushing
2020–21	335,077	- 60%	6.89	-60%	New contractor, improved meter readings
2021–22*	326,596	-2.53%	8.03	+16%	Expansion of improved meter readings and more people on campus

*Data for 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022. FTE for 2021–22 is 40,668.

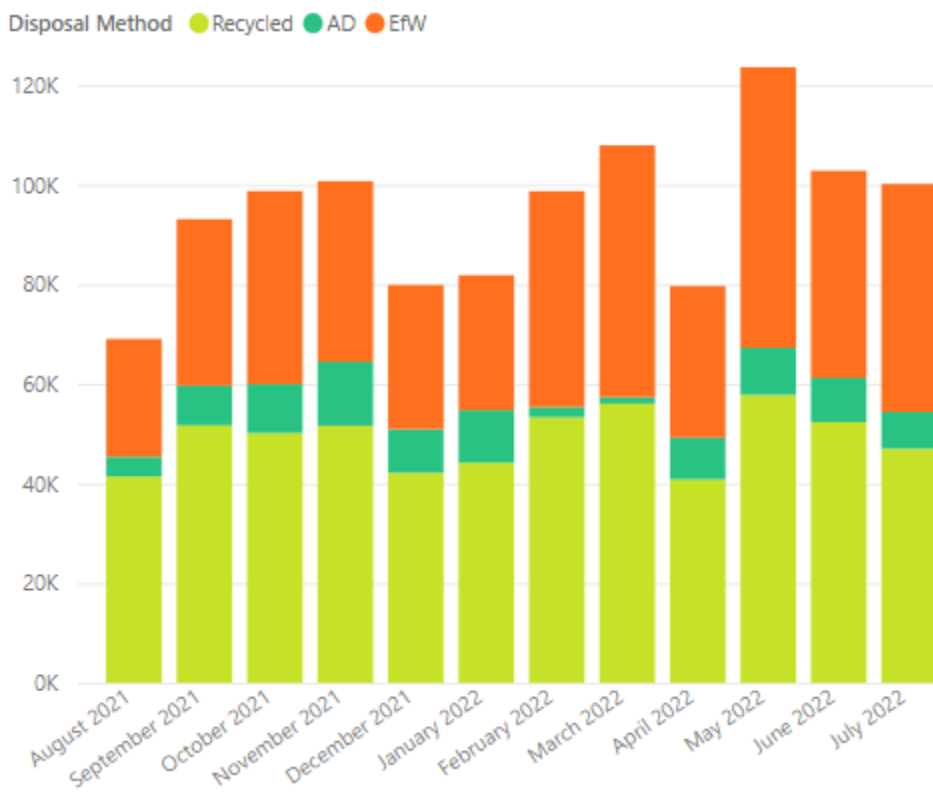
Waste and resources

Table 1: Waste generation target and progress

	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Percentage against 2017–18 baseline (2,398 tonnes) as per strategy targets	-40%	-35%	-30%
Maximum waste generation target (tonnes)*	1,439	1,559	1,678
Waste generated for the year	1,193	TBC	TBC
Percentage change against target (maximum waste generation) (tonnes)	-17%	TBC	TBC

*Maximum waste generation targets (tonnes) have been revised and the action plan updated accordingly.

Figure 1: Total operational waste by disposal method per month (kg) in 2021-22



Note: AD = anaerobic digestion, EfW = energy from waste.

Figure 2: Total operational waste (kg) per property (campus and residences) in 2021-22



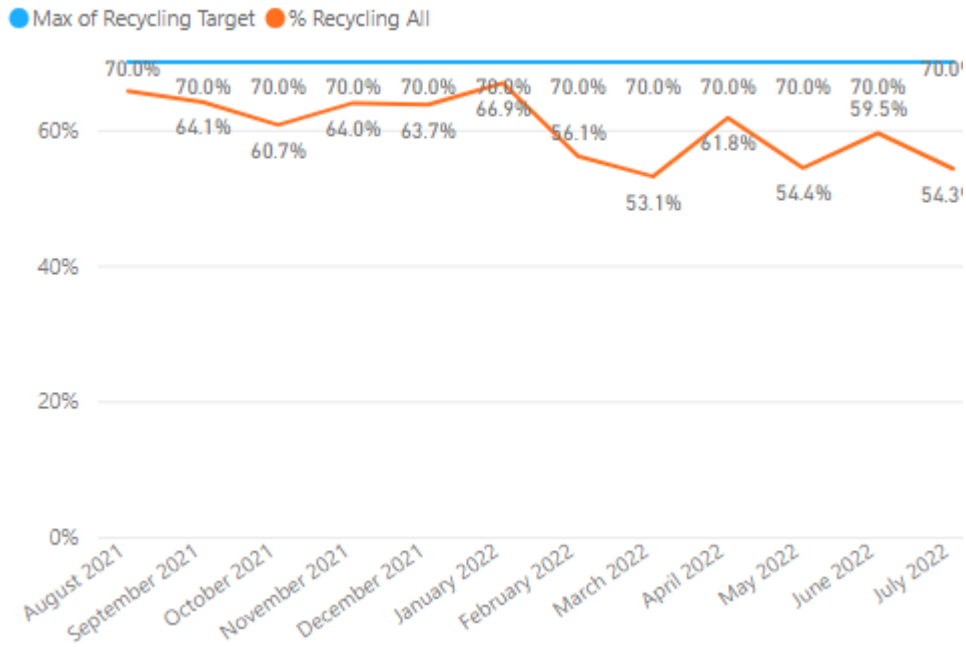
Table 2: Total operational waste per month (kg) between 2017-2022

AcademicYear	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	Total
2017/18	214065.34	182210.59	211144.43	214025.86	174554.09	189975.48	199477.08	199082.00	188924.00	186740.00	218927.00	219023.00	2398168.87
2018/19	225593.91	191415.48	219950.36	191591.85	162866.20	181185.92	170542.35	182167.07	158740.16	190148.40	182038.21	188356.88	2244596.78
2019/20	154458.50	188474.50	202944.56	174332.31	152491.83	172480.24	181200.99	156745.79	29581.72	41734.93	51084.35	57293.78	1562823.50
2020/21	77291.22	90451.64	88203.44	79463.54	57892.80	47412.41	55217.31	80841.43	91340.79	90745.52	117101.14	100288.02	976249.26
2021/22	91377.09	117126.89	116127.98	123291.35	105229.76	105451.62	123424.04	134379.11	102098.35	150450.65	126936.22	124469.72	1420362.78
Total	762806.06	769679.11	838370.77	782704.90	653034.67	696505.67	729861.78	753215.40	570685.02	659819.50	696086.91	689431.40	8602201.18

Table 3: Waste generation targets and progress

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Annual recycling rate target %	70%	73%	75%
Annual recycling rate %	55%	TBC	TBC

Figure 3: 2021-22 recycling rate against the 70 per cent target



Stay in touch

We welcome your thoughts on the sustainability agenda at King's. If you have any comments or would like to get involved with sustainability at King's, please get in touch with us at sustainability@kcl.ac.uk.

For further information on our sustainability initiatives, visit kcl.ac.uk/climate-sustainability.

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