



# College Environmental Sustainability Strategy

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Environmental sustainability is a global responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect the global eco systems to support health and wellbeing of current and future generations. It meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Bruntland Commission Report, 1987).

The College Environmental Sustainability Strategy concerns an action plan for making its services greener, conserving on energy usage and helping to promote environmental initiatives.

This strategy sets out St Helens College’s approach to sustainability and in particular environmental sustainability. The strategy further supports the College’s Strategic Goals.

## Our Strategic Goals



### Outstanding Student Experience

Delivering an outstanding experience, placing students and apprentices at the heart of everything we do.

### Exceptional Curriculum

Developing an innovative and agile curriculum that meets the needs of our students and communities.

### Growth

Achieving growth through strategic partnerships and relationships with key organisations and employers.

### Transformed Estate

Transforming the College’s estate to inspire outstanding teaching and learning.

### Employer of Choice

Attracting and retaining skilled staff through reputation, recognition, and a strong sense of community.

### Anchor Institution

Building upon our role as an anchor institution in Knowsley and St Helens and contributing to the leadership of education and skills ecosystems.

In particular, the College's commitment to ensure our buildings are equipped to meet and address the threat of climate change, by being energy efficient and meeting waste and carbon standards throughout their lifetimes. This is underpinned by the College's Environmental and Sustainability Strategy and ambition to become net zero by 2040.

## The Three P's of Sustainability



Also known as the 'Triple Bottom Line', this sustainability framework will be used to examine the impact this strategy has and includes the following:

- **People:** the positive and negative impact the College has on its most important stakeholders. These include students, employees, families, customers, suppliers, communities, and any other person influencing or being affected by the College.
- **Planet:** the positive and negative impact the College has on its natural environment. This includes reducing its carbon footprint, usage of natural resources, toxic materials and so on, but also the active removal of waste, reforestation and restoration of natural harm done.
- **Profit:** the positive and negative impact the College has on the local, national and international economy. This includes creating employment, generating innovation, paying taxes, wealth creation and any other economic impact the College has.

## International Context

In 2015, UN Member States adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These global goals set out by the United Nations call to undertake action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere (UN.org, 2023).



*Figure 1: UN Sustainability Goals (SDG)*

The College’s Environmental Sustainability Strategy will have regard for these goals.

## Environmental, Social Governance (ESG) framework

ESG is a set criteria for evaluating an organisations performance on environmental, social and governance. Within this, environmental is defined as ‘the impact the organisation has on the environment and on climate change, including energy consumption, waste disposal, and carbon emissions’.

Examples include:

- Renewable energy
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy usage and efficiency
- Climate risk
- Water management
- Recycling processes and waste reduction
- Emergency preparedness
- Climate Change Strategy
- Biodiversity
- Carbon footprint reduction

## Regional Context

The Metro Mayor and Combined Authority have set the ambition for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) to be the cleanest, greenest city region in the country, promoting a balanced and sustainable land use strategy. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to making the City Region net zero carbon by 2040.

## Local Context

St Helens Council has developed a Climate Response Plan ‘Pathway to net zero by 2040’.

Knowsley Council has a clear vision to support its people and communities to thrive with achieving net zero by 2040 one of its key priorities.

The College has committed to supporting the councils’ climate vision to make St Helens and Knowsley a net zero borough by 2040.

## Sector Context

The 'Further Education Climate Action Road Map' was developed in collaboration with the Climate Commission and an award-winning management consultancy to provide clear actions and guidance on how colleges can respond to the climate emergency and advance sustainability. The roadmap includes three levels of a college's approach to sustainability:

- **Emerging:** colleges just beginning to address sustainability
- **Established:** colleges with an established approach to sustainability and structures in place to support it
- **Leading:** colleges which are models to others on sustainability

Each 'level' contains a series of initiatives that will inform the actions taken to reach net zero emissions and improve their environmental impact.

A key aspect of the roadmap is to ensure that the college communities, learners in particular, are fully involved in the decision making and influence the way in which actions are implemented.

St Helens College has self-assessed as primarily taking an 'Emerging' approach. Therefore, the College's environmental sustainability strategy for the next five years is:

### **To demonstrate St Helens College's 'Established' approach to environmental sustainability**

The College will achieve this by:

- Ensuring student and staff training to encourage informed, intelligent sustainability discussions
- Embedding environmental sustainability within the curriculum
- Gathering baseline data, setting targets and monitoring impact using International Organisation Standards (ISO)
- Reviewing procurement practices to ensure environmental sustainability

## Target setting, key performance indicators and reporting

As part of the strategy, the College will develop its Climate Action Road Map, which sets out specific intentions for achieving this strategy. This Road Map will be regularly monitored by the College's Finance, Resources and Commercial Committee. The Governing Board will review the strategy annually and receive a report on achievements against the action plan. A copy of this report will be published on the website.

The College is required to report its environmental impacts under the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018. This is achieved through Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) within its financial statements.