

## **Staff and student sustainability engagement strategy (2025 – 2030)**

### **Introduction and aim:**

The University of Surrey is aiming to reduce its negative sustainability impacts and develop positive sustainability action across all areas of activity. Using the UN Sustainable Development Goals, sustainability is being embedded into each of the University's [8 core policies](#). Separate delivery plans are being developed to ensure tangible changes take place in each area.

Our staff and students all play a key role in ensuring the University meets its ambitious sustainability aims. Engagement and communication play a significant part in ensuring our community feels empowered to take action and join the University's sustainability journey.

### **Communication and engagement objectives:**

Over the next 5 years we want to develop a sustainable culture that *informs, encourages and enables* staff and students to take and support action on sustainability. We will do this by:

- Creating a 'Sustainable Surrey' identity through a major University-wide campaign, identifying key messages and making the University's key sustainability areas visible.
- Enabling our staff and students to take a range of sustainable action in order to raise awareness and normalise a sustainable culture.

### **Key areas:**

The University's Sustainability Team is working closely with a variety of key stakeholders across the University to action key areas. These include, but are not limited to:

- Net zero carbon
- Circular economy (waste and procurement)
- Catering
- Biodiversity
- Water
- IT
- Careers

The Sustainability Team will continue to work with respective teams to ensure effective communication and engagement of the sustainability actions taking place within these key areas.

### **Engagement and communication baseline:**

From 2022/2023 to 2024/2025, attendance at sustainability events and activities has been tracked. Within this timespan, a total of 3,475 staff and students have been actively involved in sustainability activity. This represents a small percentage of the University's total population (circa 18,000):

Academic year	No. of sustainable events/activities organised	Total no. of staff/students engaged
2022-2023	11	673
2023-2024	48	1157
2024-2025	76	1645

*Action: Sustainability Team to continue to track staff/student engagement with sustainability events and activities via monitoring attendance and using surveys.*

Data from Sustainable Surrey's various media channels continues to highlight the current limited reach of sustainability messages and engagement. The development of a University-wide sustainability campaign, in collaboration with the University's communications and marketing teams, will seek to change this:

Academic year	Sustainable Surrey Channel	Followers
23/24	Instagram	1441
	X (twitter)	758
	Newsletter	227
24/25	Instagram	1646
	X (twitter)	701
	Tik Tok	64
	Newsletter	470

*Action: Sustainability Team to monitor engagement rates across all Sustainable Surrey channels throughout 25/26 to establish a baseline.*

#### **Target audience:**

All staff and students should feel a part of the 'Sustainable Surrey' culture. Although we want to engage with all internal staff and students, we realise that bespoke campaigns and activities will need to be developed to reach different groups within our diverse community.

#### **Potential channels:**

The University has a range of communication channels to utilise. These include, but are not limited to:

Channel	Details	Target audience
Sustainability social media	Instagram X Tik tok	University students actively interested in sustainability
Sustainability newsletter	Monthly email to staff and students who have signed up	University staff and students actively interested in sustainability

University website	Sustainability webpages	Current and prospective University staff and students
University intranets	SurreyNet for staff MySurrey for students	All University staff and students
University newsletters	Staff briefing MySurrey for students Accommodation newsletter	All University staff and students Students living in University accommodation
University social media	Instagram (including student focused account @surreystudent) X Tik tok LinkedIn Youtube	Current and prospective staff and students Alumni

### **Action plan for 2025-2026:**

The following plan sets out key engagement and communication actions, as well as their KPIs (targets), for the 2025/2026 academic year:

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Key area</b>	<b>KPI</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Ongoing	<b>Sustainable labs:</b> All University labs taking part in LEAF (mandatory)	Lab staff + students	Net zero carbon  Circular Economy	All labs achieved LEAF bronze award by 26/27  Increase number of labs with LEAF silver + gold awards by end of 25/26	Yes	Anna Roberts
Ongoing	<b>Website:</b> Updated sustainability website to integrate SDGs	Current + prospective staff/students	All areas	Updated sustainability pages by end of 25/26  Increased traffic and engagement with website by end of 25/26	No	Charlotte Discombe / Martin Wiles / Nathalie Hinds
May 2025 to September 2026	<b>Pilot Sustainability Impact Plans (SIPs):</b> Support first two departments in creating bespoke sustainability plans	GSA + vet school staff/students	All areas	GSA and vet school create their own SIPs by end of 25/26	Yes	Martin Wiles
May 2025	<b>Green Impact:</b> Webinars and	Current staff	All areas	Increase the number of departments taking part by January 2026	Yes	Charlotte Discombe

to January 2026	support for teams from Sustainability  Awards ceremony					
May 2025 onwards	<b>Staff inductions:</b> In-person inductions  Creation of 'how to' guides  Refreshed online mini-module	New and current staff members	All areas	All new staff members to continue to receive sustainability induction  Create at least 5 'how to' guides to be shared with staff by end of 25/26  Increase number of staff taking mini-module by end of 25/26	Yes	Charlotte Discombe
September 2025 onwards	<b>Overarching sustainability campaign:</b> Develop campaign plan during Summer 2025  Launch first part of campaign across campus Oct/Nov 2025	All staff and students	All areas	Measure engagement to create initial baseline by end of 25/26  Expand campaign into 26/27	Yes	Charlotte Discombe / Martin Wiles / Kate Bailey
September 2025  to  March 2026	<b>Sustainability Mark:</b> Present at SU conferences and standings  Sustainability to support societies/clubs in completing actions for Sustainability Mark award  Awards presented at Union and Colours Ball	Student Societies/ Clubs	All areas	Increase the number of societies taking part by March 2026	Yes	Charlotte Discombe / VP Community
October 2025  to  February 2026	<b>Student induction:</b> Sustainability included in in- person course inductions (including policy, strategy +	All students	All areas	All students to receive in person sustainability induction by February 2026  Increased number of students taking part in mini-module and Global	Yes	Charlotte Discombe

	<p>engagement opportunities)</p> <p>Updated information in welcome booklets and student channels</p> <p>Presence at Freshers and Re-freshers Fair</p> <p>Refreshed online mini-module and Global Graduate Award in sustainability</p>			Graduate Award by February 2026		
<p>October 2025</p> <p>to</p> <p>March 2026</p>	<p><b>Waste + energy engagement:</b></p> <p>Implementation of more food waste and mixed recycling bins, plus signage</p> <p>Monthly pop-ups run by student volunteers</p> <p>Engagement campaign in University accommodation</p> <p>Development of student-led social media content</p> <p>Involvement in national campaigns – including Love Food Hate Waste, Recycling Week and Energy Saving Week</p>	All staff and students	<p>Net zero carbon</p> <p>Circular economy</p>	Increase in recycling rates and reduction in energy consumption across the University by end of 25/26	Yes	Charlotte Discombe / Energy Team
October 2025	<b>Sustainability Assemblies:</b>	All staff and students	TBC	Increase number of staff/students attending	Yes	Charlotte Discombe

February 2026	One assembly organised per term covering a key sustainability topic			assemblies by March 2026		
March 2026						

This strategy document, including the action plan, will be reviewed and updated annually by the Sustainability Awareness Coordinator. Communication and engagement progress will be added to this plan and the University’s annual Sustainability Report.

*Next review deadline: June 2026.*