

## University of Surrey Operational Waste Management Plan 2025-2030

### BACKGROUND

As an organisation we consume resources and produce large quantities of waste from our student accommodation, catering facilities, offices, labs, and teaching departments. Waste and recycling are highly visible issues in the sustainability agenda.

This Waste Management Plan will contribute to our Operational Policy sustainability aims and the development of an Environmental Management System (EMS). This plan also aligns with our University Strategic Plan 2025 to 2041 key targets, to remain financially stable and develop environmentally sustainable campuses.

Estates and Facilities manage waste on behalf of the University, this includes,

- General waste,
  - WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment),
  - Confidential waste,
  - Recycling of waste.
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- Our Campus Logistics Team collect both WEEE and confidential waste and manage the provision of external waste bins.
  - Our Housekeeping teams collect general and recyclable waste across both residential and non-residential buildings across campus.

From August 2025 campus logistics will also become responsible for hazardous waste in a phased hand over from Cervus Plus.

Both this change and a legislative change to the way we manage our recycled waste, has prompted a review of our waste management and the development of this plan in conjunction with the Estates Sustainability Team, further to linking with our Sustainability goals.

### INTRODUCTION

The recent change to the UK Waste regulations mean that we are now required by law to segregate our dry mixed recycling – specifically plastic, cans, cartons, paper and card from our general waste.

Previously, to maximise our recycling rates, we have chosen to use the ‘One Bin’ approach to our waste collection, where all waste except for glass and food was sorted and recycled

off site at our waste contractors processing plant. The recent changes to Waste legislation mean that as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, as the producer or originator of the waste we must recycle at source.

Amy Woods Estates Manager and Donna Harding, Estates Head of Facilities Management met with representatives from each faculty and the Estates Head of Operations Susan Keirle, Sustainability Head Martin Wiles, Head of Campus Service Catering and Head of Accommodation plus Student Union Community Voice to introduce the changes and to gain their thoughts and feedback.

Following this, plans were developed by the Estates team for Accommodation, Academic and Non-Academic space to roll out the additional waste stream across campus with objectives developed in line with this.

## THE WASTE HIERARCHY

The Waste Hierarchy (Figure 1) ranks waste management options according to their impact on the environment. As a mandatory requirement of the Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011, it should be considered when deciding the best option to manage a waste stream. This places more emphasis on waste prevention, and requires organisations to consider preparing waste for reuse, then seeking opportunities for recycling, before options such as anaerobic digestion, energy recovery, incineration or landfill.

*Figure 1 The Waste Hierarchy*



An integral part of the first stage of the waste hierarchy is reduce and reuse. It is now widely accepted that the traditional linear economy of make, use, dispose is not sustainable. The circular economy in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life, is the way forward and is considered

in this plan, along with life cycle thinking. We will consider these principles in our waste management choices and also in the procurement of goods, through our Sustainable Procurement Plan 2024.

## **LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

As with all businesses we have a legal duty to provide appropriate arrangements for the disposal of our waste and ensure it is handled appropriately.

## **OPERATIONAL WASTE OBJECTIVES**

To roll out the addition of dry mixed waste collection points across the university, initially to those areas discussed and agreed with affected parties – Faculties, Accommodation, Teaching Spaces, Catering outlets and Student Union.

- To implement additional waste bins across campus to both residential and non-residential buildings to allow users to choose to recycle their plastics, cans, cartons, paper and card.
- To encourage all users of the University to use the food, recycling and glass separation facilities, diverting as much as possible from our general waste stream, by having clear messaging and artwork on our waste bins.
- To engage with University Staff, Students and Visitors to educate them about the changes to our recycling, using SurreyNet, MySurrey, targeted emails and better clearer signage across campus.
- To retender our waste contracts, specifically general waste and recycling, hazardous, WEEE and confidential waste as one contract, with a view to making cost savings.
- Over a three-year period, to decrease the amount of general waste we generate and increase our mixed recycling, food and glass recycling volumes. Targets for this will be set after the first year, using this first year as the base volume data.

## **COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING**

### **Communication**

Plans for communication will be developed in line with the work being done by the Head of Estates and Facilities Sustainability and their team.

Information will be updated on staff and student website channels and the residents guide and updates on achievements against targets communicated to the wider university community on a six monthly and then quarterly basis, as data become more meaningful.

## Training

Training in the changes to bin types, colour coding of bags and identification of bin stickers plus identifying the correct external bins for disposal was delivered by 31<sup>st</sup> March to our cleaning and waste portering teams.

These teams collect waste across the university residential and non-residential and academic areas and are key to reducing the contamination of waste by using the correct waste bins.

Refresher training will be quarterly in the first year and then annually thereafter. Should we find that contamination rates of waste in specific areas are high, Estates staff servicing these areas will be given additional training.

Additionally, there will be liaison with Faculty Operations Teams to engage where specific areas are showing higher contamination rates of their recycling offering 'Tool box' type talks on waste segregation and recycling.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

We will continue to have separate collections for food and glass but as it is not currently technically or economically practicable to collect paper and card separately and as this not technically or economically practicable, Chambers have completed a co-collection assessment on our behalf, that allows us to include cardboard and paper in the same waste stream with our mixed recycling.

Waste stream volumes will be reported on monthly, per bin store, so volumes will be tracked to determine where more greater efforts in terms of recycling or contamination rates are required.

The baseline for our general waste and recycling figures will be those gathered in the 2025-2026 period as this is the first year that we will be sorting our recycling at source. Food and glass baseline data will be derived from our 2024-2025 existing data.

We do have overall waste figures though as noted below,

- The total annual amount of waste the University generates in tonnes for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 – **1,344.75 tonnes**
- The total amount of waste recycled in tonnes for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 – not including energy from waste – **1,088.70 tonnes – 81% of waste is recycled**
- The total amount of waste sent to landfill in tonnes for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 – **41.37 tonnes went to landfill - 3% of waste goes to landfill – or 97% diversion from landfill.**

The University aims to improve the collection of data with the delivery of the new waste segregation scheme.

In addition to this other waste streams from bulky waste to construction and refurbishment waste will be measured.

This plan will be reviewed annually and updated, with information reported via the University's annual sustainability report.

Overview of the waste management plan will be via both Operations Committee and the Napier Group (the body set up by the University to drive forward sustainability chaired by Prof Bob Nichol.

## Targets

The University of Surrey aims to divert 100% of its waste from landfill and turn waste into a resource, pushing it up the waste hierarchy by conversion, recycling, reuse and reduction. Ultimately the University aims to be a zero-waste institution, but that will take a significant amount of time and focus.

Our key goals in producing this management plan are to increase our recycling rates across all our waste streams and decreasing the volume of general waste we generate.

Targets and KPI's to be established as baseline data is determined and in line with Estates Sustainability goals.

Target	KPI	Minimum target	Target date
Decrease General Waste Volumes	Tonnes & Tonnes per FTE	Reduction in absolute & normalised 10%	July 2028
Increase Dry Mixed Recycled Waste Volumes	Tonnes & tonnes per FTE	20% increase in both absolute & normalised	July 2028
Increase Food Waste Recycling	Tonnes & tonnes per FTE	30% increase in both absolute & normalised	July 2028
Maintain Glass Recycled Volumes	Tonnes & tonnes per FTE	Maintain as baseline year	July 2028
Decrease contamination across all waste streams	Tonnes	10% decrease in waste to energy from waste	July 2028
Measure and minimise waste from new build and refurbishments	Tonnes	All projects divert 80% of waste from landfill.	July 2026
Minimise the amount of hazardous and non-hazardous but offensive waste produced.	Tonnes & Tonnes per FTE	20% reduction in both absolute and normalised	July 2029

## **Audits**

Waste audits will then take place initially monthly from September 2025, to identify areas where contamination is high, and refresher training then provided to cleaning teams and or 'Toolbox' type talks held with affected faculties and departments. These audits will then move to quarterly in the second year, depending on the reported contamination levels of our recycled waste.

A periodic audit of legal compliance with regards to waste management will be carried out. This will cover waste storage, handling and controlled documents. The audit will be carried out as a minimum annually and dovetail with wider health and safety audits of non-domestic waste.

## **WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGES**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 each external bin store across campus, will have 1100 litre bins clearly marked up with either 'General Waste' or 'Dry Mixed Recycling'. Existing glass and food recycling bins will remain in situ.

### **Accommodation Kitchen Points**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, printed green recycling 'bags' will be provided to each kitchen in accommodation, with a view that in larger kitchens, these will be replaced by larger mixed recycling bins from February 2026.

Additional signage, designed by the Estates Sustainability Team, will be put up in kitchens to supplement the existing waste signage during the 2025 semester break period and the residents guide and student facing website will be updated to reflect the additional recycling facilities available in our accommodation.

### **Academic, Central Spaces, Catering Outlets and External Areas**

From mid-August 2025, in line with the consultation conducted with key departments and teams, there will be additional 'mixed recycling points across our academic and non-academic spaces and in high traffic external areas. All combined general waste +mixed

recyclable stickers will be replaced by the following, to clarify what type of waste should be placed in each type of bin.



## SUMMARY

### Action Plan

Action Reference	Action Title / Description	Key Actions & Milestones	Responsible	Actions Completion date	Monitoring & Evaluation
EFWM001	Implement waste infrastructure	Roll out separate general and mixed waste bins with new information stickers across campus including all bin stores April to August 2025  Establish waste audit programme November 2025	Head of Facilities	September 2025	No instances of correct waste receptacles across campus
EFWM002	Update and inform university stakeholders on changes to university waste management	Hold in Person Meetings March/April 2025  Update MySurrey and SurreyNet intranet platforms and My Surrey FAQ's  Update UoS Internet Waste Management Pages July/August 2025  Present at Freshers Fair in September 2025-2028	Head of Facilities	September 2025	Increase awareness of new ways of managing waste at UoS.  Impact on contamination rates in waste collected
EFWM003	Provide ongoing training to staff	Provide initial introductory training to Estates Services teams March 2025  Ongoing refresher training on a quarterly basis in year one – 2025-2026  Targeted training for areas where general waste volumes or contamination rates are high	Head of Facilities Estates Services Manager Estates Services Managers	March 2025 – ongoing to 2028	Increase in recycling volumes.  Reduction in general waste volumes.  Reduction in overall waste costs
EFWM004	Retender UoS general waste and recycling, hazardous, WEEE and confidential waste contracts	Prepare tender October 2025  Engage with waste contractors to tender for contract November 2025  Evaluation of tenders December 2025	Head of Facilities  Head of Sustainability  Head of Procurement	January 2026	Simplify and streamline waste collections.  Reduction in overall waste costs



EFWM005	Establish baseline for general waste and dry mixed recycling	Measure, record and report monthly dry mixed and general waste volumes	Head of Facilities	September 2025 to July 2026	Set baseline for subsequent target setting for waste streams
EFWM006	Measure and Report against Baseline figures	Record and report waste volumes monthly September 2025-July 2028  Conduct waste store audits quarterly September 2025 - July 2028  Record and report trends September 2025-July 2028	Head of Facilities	September 2025 to July 2028	Use reporting figures to drive improvement in recycling volumes and reduction of contamination of waste streams
EFWM007	Run behaviour change campaigns	Waste segregation campaign  Produce 5 ways to reduce waste for staff and students  Produce 5-ways to reduce waste via buying products and services  Food waste segregation campaign	Head of Sustainability and central communications	September 2025 to July 2028	Use reporting figures to drive improvement in reduction and recycling volumes

## Supporting actions

This plan is supported by actions within,

### The sustainable and ethical catering plan

- single use plastic reduction,
- disposable coffee cup removal,
- promotion of reusable containers,
- reduction in bottled water sales.

### The sustainable procurement plan

- Reducing packaging within tenders
- Support waste tender process

## NON-COMPLIANCE

From April 2025, the public and other parties will be able to report workplaces that do not follow the new Government Workplace Recycling Rules to the Environment Agency. There

are links available on the government website with guidance information on how to report non-compliance.

This plan addresses the new government requirements for recycling and evidences our actions and plans.

## UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The University's Sustainability Strategy aligns to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Figure 2) to ensure progress is made in all areas pertinent to the University's activities. Waste management is integral to the success of many of these goals, including specifically.

SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 13 Climate Action

SDG 14 Life Below Water

SDG 15 Life On land

Relevant aspects of these goals have been considered in the generation of this plan.

*Figure 2 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*



## REFERENCES

Waste duty of care: code of practice [Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK](#)

[Business of Recycling | WRAP](#)