

Annual Environmental Responsibility Report 2010-11



1. Our Commitment

This is the third Environmental Sustainability Report for the University of Worcester. It describes the institution's most significant environmental aspects and how these are managed and mitigated in order to fulfil our commitment to continuous environmental improvement.

The University has a long-standing commitment to act in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner. The current Strategic Plan (2007-2012) includes a commitment to 'manage resources effectively and efficiently and raise awareness of concepts of sustainability among staff, students and the wider community'. This vision encapsulates our overarching aim to fully accept our broad responsibilities to society and develop our physical assets to provide excellent facilities and opportunities for students, staff and the wider community, but in ways which promote and champion environmental sustainability.

The University's Environmental Policy was adopted in 2007 and is reviewed and updated annually. It demonstrates a commitment to conduct all activities in an environmentally-responsible and sustainable manner. The Policy notes that while responsibility for developing procedures, raising environmental awareness and recommending best practice ultimately rests with management, good environmental practice is the responsibility of all those who attend the University. The Policy's main principles are:

- to integrate environmental management into our day-to-day operations to ensure environmental issues are addressed, whilst providing a quality service to all stakeholders;
- to control, manage and reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions;
- to comply with all relevant environmental legislation, regulations and requirements;
- to reduce our use of natural resources and prevent pollution.



2. Profile of the University

The University of Worcester is the fastest-growing university in the country and is based on two primary sites; St John's Campus and City Campus. St John's Campus is comprised of student residences, academic and administration space. City Campus new student halls of residence opened in September 2009 and for teaching in September 2010. Other smaller sites include The Garage, Riverside Building, Battenhall pavilion and playing fields, Stephenson Terrace playing fields and a number of halls of residence.

The University is organised into six academic institutes:

- Institute of Science and the Environment
- Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts
- Worcester Business School
- Institute of Education
- Institute of Health and Society
- Institute of Sport and Exercise Science

At the end of the 2010/11 academic year the University had around 1,000 employees and 10,000 students, the majority of whom are based either at St John's Campus or City Campus.

3. Our Approach

The University established an Environment Committee in 2005, chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Resources). The Sustainability Management Team, headed by the Director of Environmental Sustainability acts as a focal point for all aspects of sustainability within the University and works to develop local, regional, national and international networks to further the sustainability agenda.

4. Our Achievements

This section includes a summary on the environmental initiatives we undertook or continued in 2010/11.

Environmental Management System

In 2007, the University was one of ten pilot institutions that signed up to EcoCampus, a national Environmental Management System (EMS) designed specifically for the higher education sector. EcoCampus provides a framework for managing the institution's environmental responsibilities efficiently in a way that is integrated into all operations and activities.

The University achieved the Bronze and Silver Awards in 2008, and Gold in November 2009. It was the first university in England to attain the Platinum Award in May 2010, and is the only University in the West Midlands to be awarded platinum EcoCampus status. In May 2011 the University achieved re-accreditation, and has developed a reciprocal internal auditing arrangement with Bath Spa University.

The benefits of an EMS are that it provides the University with a structured, long-term approach to managing and reducing its impact on the environment and establishing ways of continually improving its performance. The University sets annual quantitative and qualitative targets, monitors and reports publically on scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions; and biodiversity and food.



People and Planet Green League

Since 2007, the University has established a national reputation in the field of sustainability and innovation, and has received numerous awards and external recognition of its success. Most recently the University moved to third place in the 'Green League' table out of 138 institutions. The People and Planet Green League is a league table demonstrating the environmental performance of Britain's universities. These stand above placements of any other and often more established Universities in the region.

Projects that earned the University the top regional accolade included supporting cycling and walking initiatives, many energy efficiency projects, incorporating evaporative cooling in our computer data centres and engagement and close working with students; a clear vision and management across all aspects of environmental sustainability including the curriculum.

Sustainable Food

The Sustainability department has continued its work on increasing the amount of local fresh produce within the University, and encouraging staff and students to join them in eating sustainably.

The 2010/11 academic year saw the development of the 'Veg Box' scheme for the University, with bespoke boxes offered as standard and gourmet. Students were invited to order Christmas boxes full of the ingredients and recipes to make a perfect Christmas meal for their flatmates. All food was supplied by the local company, Worcester Produce, and all fruit and vegetables were picked on the day of sale and grown within 10 miles of the campus. Contents of the boxes changes with the season and other initiatives include pumpkin carving and veg stalls to help promote local and healthy foods.

Herb gardens have been planted around the halls of residences on St John's Campus for staff and students to help themselves. Additional fruit trees have been planted close to halls, and a map is available on the website to show these and barbecue areas available for student use.

The Sustainable Food Action Plan was first adopted in October 2010, and is annually reviewed. Within this 14 quantitative and qualitative targets were set, all but one has been met or exceeded. A user group, including student representation helps to set and monitor targets.

FairTrade

We are delighted that our Fairtrade status was renewed in May 2011, and especially pleased with the acknowledgement that we had upheld and surpassed all 5 goals set. We have a wide range of products on sale throughout the University including products from Nepal and Palestine.



Green Academy

Worcester was chosen to be part of the Higher Education Academy's Green Academy pilot project along with 7 other HEI's. The project team includes students and is supported by a range of professionals to assist us in the development of a change agenda for sustainability within the curriculum.

Community Involvement

The Sustainability department works hard to realise the strategic vision of the University, specifically, 'to promote sustainable development and active engagement with the community and fully accept our broad responsibilities to society'.

Community involvement includes engaging both internally and externally, and the department has a focus on both of these aspects.

Local charities and small organisations are supported through various schemes run by the department, a few examples of work this year are:

- Regular 'Dr Bike' surgeries held on the St John's Campus offering the opportunity to buy reasonably-priced, reconditioned bicycles from a local social enterprise organisation, Motiv8.
- The local city council is supported in its waste awareness raising with an annual litter pick by student volunteers.
- Students' fundraising won a national award and a very popular series of student and staff lunchtime talks took place throughout the year on topics including renewables, biodiversity and swan rescue.

Behaviour Change

Three University-wide campaigns: Student Switch Off, an inter-halls energy saving competition, Green Impact, an inter-departmental staff competition, and Going Greener, run by the People and Planet society. Sixteen per cent of students living in Halls signed up to be Eco Power Rangers. Many activities took place throughout the year including climate and energy quizzes where 204 students took part, photo competitions and CV enhancing communications training.



Green Impact involved 15 departments, 548 staff, of which 284 were directly involved in a Green Impact committee. Thirty student auditors were trained, helping with their employability. A total of 215 greening actions were a direct result of this initiative.

Go Green Week

A fun packed week of activities organised by students covering themes of pledges, travel, energy, waste and food. Among the crazy stunts, Sting tributes and university wide environmental action, were ideas such as a Can Film Festival where students received free entry to a film by turning up with cans for recycling. And a Keen Green Karaoke where students were given a free drink for singing Sting songs. This provided a wealth of opportunities for students to learn and engage, students signed pledges and were given button badges to show how small changes can make a big difference.

Future Connect

A sustainability World Cafe imagining the University until 2020 was held in Go Green Week, February 2011. With the aim to vision the University and generate ideas to achieve a 40% reduction in carbon emissions, it enabled students to input in the discussion around embedding sustainability in the curriculum.

This novel way to engage, envision and develop action towards a sustainable university was hugely successful. Students, board members, senior management, academic and support staff at the University were invited to envision a sustainable University of Worcester in 2020 using an informal 'World Cafe' format. Around the cafe, different tables and hosts held and recorded conversations on general themes of campus, curriculum and community. Creativity was encouraged, as was graffiti and doodles on table cloths. It was buzzing, thought provoking, inspirational. Connections were made. There were surprising commonalities.

The work from the table cloths were synthesised by a local artist with the café host, the Director of Environmental Sustainability and an 11ft by 3ft banner was produced. Later in the week volunteer students and sustainability staff toured the campus with the 'banner' posing 3 additional questions. Overall over 350 people inputted. Key findings included students and staff all wanted to see the curriculum become more sustainable through 'individualisation of learning', most importantly making learning relevant. People thought old favourites of recycling reducing waste could be achieved more easily. On the subject of community sustainability, staff and students supported the continuation and expansion of internships and work placements.

10. Our Significant Environmental Aspects

Carbon Management

When it comes to Carbon Management, the Sustainability Department monitor their annual progress on qualitative and quantitative targets set. Figure 1.1 below gives a graphical representation of the qualitative target areas and percentage of targets met with Green*, Green, Amber and Red progress levels.¹

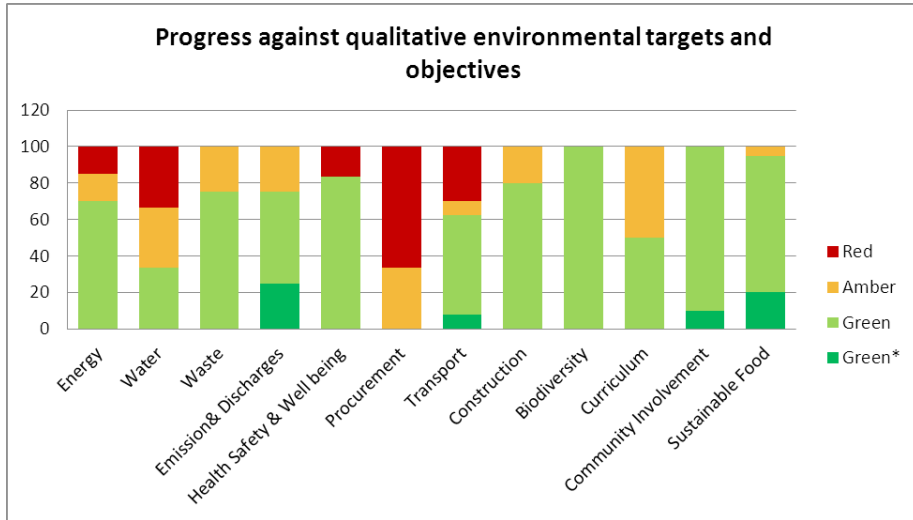


Figure 1.1

The quantitative data the department collects shows the scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions of the financial year. The overarching target set was to reduce all carbon emissions by 5% per annum from baseline year. Figure 1.2 graphically represents this progress.

Performance in reducing carbon emissions in 2010/11 has clearly been disappointing. The University measures carbon emissions in three ways:

- In absolute terms
- In relation to the number of students and staff at the University
- In relation to the size of the University’s estate (Gross Internal Area of buildings)

2010/11 saw a significant increase in overall emissions; a smaller increase in relation to student and staff numbers and a small decrease in relation to the size of the University’s estate.

Although this is a disappointing pattern, there is cause for satisfaction in the reduction in emissions in relation to the size of the University’s estate, especially since the year saw two large refurbished buildings brought into operation at the City campus. Those buildings are listed Grade 2 and as such will inherently be less energy efficient than later stock. It will take time for the University to establish the optimum management routines to secure the best results from these buildings.

The University continued to grow in 2010/11: student numbers rose substantially by 15.91% (from 6,435 to 7,459) and this undoubtedly contributed to the increase in emissions per FTE. A further factor was the more intensive use of the energy intensive facilities in the Charles Darwin Building associated with the work of the National Pollen and Aerobiology Unit.

Additionally, 2010/11 was an exceptional cold year: no adjustments have been made to the figure to reflect this factor.

¹ Exceeded target; met target; very close to target; and should be monitored closely; not met target, respectively.

The University will monitor the situation carefully going forward and is continuing to introduce improvements both to reduce carbon emissions and to monitor them with increasing accuracy, and report on more factors. This is the first year we report on air journeys. A number of significant improvements were implemented in the summer of 2011 (too late to affect the figures below) particularly in the provision of heating and hot water to older buildings on St John's. More improvements are planned in 2012, including a substantial investment in PV cell technology. For these reasons, it is anticipated that 2010/11 will prove to be an exceptional year.

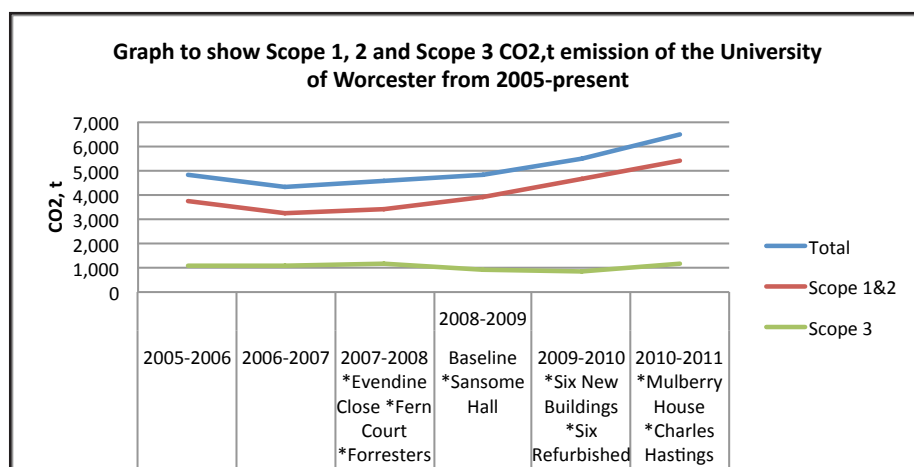


Figure 1.2

In order to facilitate year on year comparisons the University also calculates its carbon emissions per square meter of campus buildings (gross internal area, GIA) and staff and student full time equivalents (FTE's). These two metrics give slightly different statistics.

Figure 1.3 below shows the University's carbon emissions per FTE, while Figure 1.4 shows the carbon emissions per GIA.

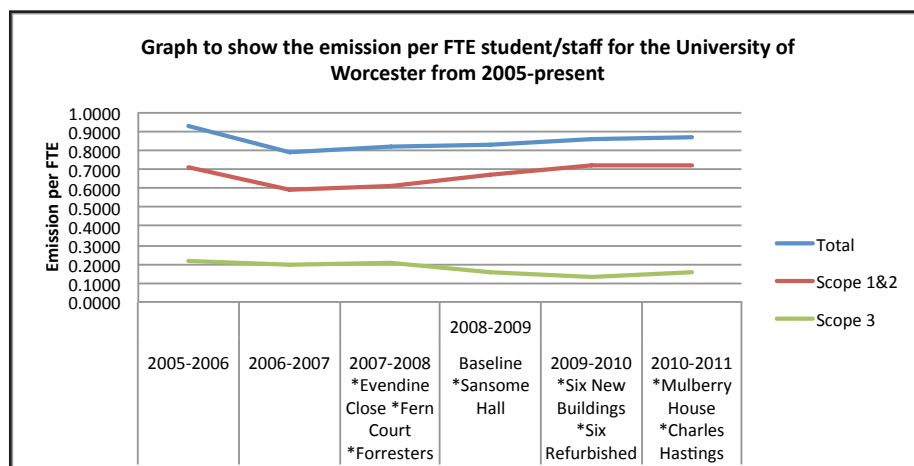


Figure 1.3

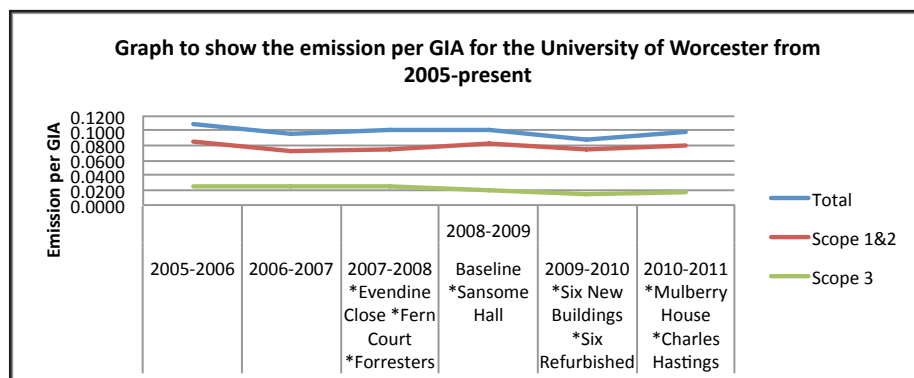


Figure 1.4

Waste Management

We are continually working at ways of minimising the amount of waste we produce and reducing the volume of waste sent to landfill. The University is aware of the importance of the waste hierarchy and the need to reduce, re-use and re-distribute materials.

In 2006/07, almost 97% of the University's waste was sent to landfill and only 3% was recycled or re-used. We have increased by 198% the amount we recycle on campus since 2008, and have managed to reduce the amount sent to landfill, just, by 0.35% despite the significant growth.

Waste management procedures are improving year-on-year and we aim to reduce waste to landfill by at least 5% annually by maximising re-use, re-distribution and recycling.

Waste reduction projects continued in 2010/11 included:

- New recycling awareness materials; including posters, bin stickers, and leaflets aimed at staff, students and nursery pupils.
- Zero Waste in halls of residence scheme.

Recycling schemes are also in place across the campus for toner and printer cartridges, mobile phones, glass, computer equipment, books, batteries, cardboard, textiles and shoes.

Zero Waste in Halls of Residence Scheme

At the end of each academic year, the University offers students the opportunity to donate any items they do not want to take home to Acorns Children's Hospice, a charity that offers a network of care services for over 600 life-limited children through its three hospices in Birmingham, Walsall and Worcester.

Every student is provided with a yellow Acorns collection sack. Full sacks are stored on campus and collected by charity staff who sort the donations and pass on sellable items to their local retail outlets.

Biodiversity

The University of Worcester is proud of its attractive grounds and committed to ensuring that the green spaces on campus are retained and enhanced. Biodiversity is actively promoted on the sites we manage and own and the web page raises awareness of the importance of this issue amongst staff, students and all stakeholders.

A Grounds Management Plan for the St John's Campus was compiled in 2008, and has been thoroughly updated to incorporate all the new acquisitions, and includes a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifying a continuing programme of grounds' improvement projects. The BAP is overseen by the Strategic Management Biodiversity Group whose membership is drawn from both internal and external stakeholders including representatives from Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

As part of our commitment to improve and protect campus biodiversity, the University regularly commissions external consultants to produce ecological surveys and reports prior to any major construction developments taking place.

13. The Future

The publication of this third annual Environmental Sustainability Report demonstrates a commitment to openness in reporting progress against challenging environmental targets and is part of the annual management review of the University's environmental management system, and the accuracy of the data collected by the department is increasing significantly.

We will continue to drive improvements in performance across the institution, and aim to retain our EcoCampus Platinum status with a robust, long-term measurement and monitoring regime. Eco Campus is incorporated in all the new sites as we acquire, build and occupy them.



As it can be seen in the first three annual sustainability reports, the University of Worcester has excelled in areas of campus improvement and its work in engaging with the community. It is important to continue developing this further, as areas for improvement are consistently clear. The University recognises the need to educate students in the importance of environmental, social and economic sustainability and through the work of the Green Academy we aim to further develop the curriculum.

Over the next academic year the Environmental Sustainability web pages and communications will continue to be revised and updated to reflect our strong environmental credentials and ensure that our students understand that climate change, environmental considerations and issues of sustainability are a defining feature for their future careers.