



Sustainability Engagement Report 2025/26

Introduction

The University of Worcester takes a ‘whole university’ approach to sustainability, from the development of its curriculum to the purchasing of goods and services, research and consultancy and has mapped its work to the SDGs through the publication of its annual review, clearly demonstrating its commitment and support for social responsibility, environmental sustainability and carbon emissions reduction to its students, staff and to the wider community.

Each year, the University’s Sustainability team runs several campaigns and activities, with targets mapped against set baselines, to achieve effective engagement with students, staff and the wider community.

Effective communication that drives higher engagement is the key to both behaviour change and ongoing support for the sustainability agenda.

This report sets out how well some of those activities have performed in the 2025/26 academic year and should be read in conjunction with the Communications and Engagement Plan.

Knowledge & Training

The Climate Emergency is arguably the most serious global issue we are currently facing; however, individuals often feel that they lack the knowledge or confidence to effect change.

We held one of the first [Peoples Emergency Briefing](#) debates as part of the annual [Go Green Week](#), which brought together a panel of local politicians, our MP, Board of Governors, staff, and students to examine local health and weather impacts. The lively discussion in a standing-room-only event showed how important this is to our communities.

In 2025/6, the university asked students and staff about sustainability knowledge and awareness, as part of a longitudinal study. Student awareness of sustainability across six key themes — energy, travel, food, carbon, biodiversity, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — reached 66% in 2025/26, according to student survey responses. This exceeds the University’s target of increasing awareness of sustainability activities from a baseline of 47% in 2016/17 to 65% by 2025, achieving it one year ahead and representing a 19-percentage-point increase from the baseline, which is pleasing.

You can read more about the student surveys, including **skills** here:

<https://susthingsout.com/sustainability-skills-in-2025-progress-but-a-clear-challenge-ahead/>

<https://susthingsout.com/worcester-students-sustainability-skills-compared-over-2-academic-years/>



Green Jobs and careers <https://susthingsout.com/green-jobs-sustainability-skills-student-careers/>

Staff were increasingly aware of efforts to embed sustainability. Staff awareness of sustainability activities across six key themes—energy, travel, food, carbon, biodiversity and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—was 82% in 2025/26, based on the annual staff sustainability survey. Awareness was particularly high for the University's work on energy conservation (89%), biodiversity management (88%) and carbon reduction (87%), while awareness of sustainable food initiatives was lower at 67%. Overall, staff awareness remains strong across all six themes.

You can read more about the staff survey here:

- <https://susthingsout.com/staff-sustainability-insights-2026/>
- <https://susthingsout.com/staff-sustainability-knowledge-and-attitudes-a-year-on-year-shift/>

In addition, the University ran the eighth Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Teach-In, raising awareness of the SDGs throughout March 2026. We launched a new ESD Community of Practice for staff to work supportively to help embed sustainability further into the curriculum.

Sustainability Literacy Test.

Building on the WPI project conducted in 2024, we have continued to make the Sulitest available for our enrolling students. In September 2024, 199 students registered, and 135 completed the test; in September 2025, participation increased, with 218 students registering and 161 completing the test. To increase our students' engagement with Sulitest in 2026, we are working with our Welcome Week planning teams to promote further participation.

Travel

A new project, funded by the train operating companies in partnership with Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership, sees students trained as well-being walk leaders.

The University conducts annual travel surveys with both staff and students to inform its Sustainable Travel Plan and to communicate with each other about ways to travel more sustainably. The survey provides an opportunity to remind staff and students about active travel schemes. The survey found that walking is the most common way for students to travel to campus, with 31% choosing to walk, closely followed by travelling alone by car (29%). Train travel was also popular, accounting for 18% of student journeys.

<https://susthingsout.com/travel-smarter-what-staff-and-students-told-us-about-sustainable-travel/>

The Travel and Transport Steering Group's work bringing all local stakeholders together has proved very valuable, and the group has contributed to local bus strategies and cycling and walking plans. It will lead to behaviour change pilots going forward. to help us make a greater impact in this area. More information is on our [transport and travel](#) page.

Digital Engagement

The www.susthingsout.com is a central repository for all the University's sustainability work and news. It is currently managed by the University's Director of Sustainability, with input and most of the content created by students. Many of the posts are shared across the University's main social media channels, as well as on Instagram and a fledgling TikTok account.

[Analytics](#) show that some of these student-created posts are well-read and well-engaged with. The site has been going for over 10 years, and some of our very oldest posts are still very popular with the local and University communities. The site is continually revamped and refocused.

The University's main website worchester.ac.uk is primarily aimed at prospective students. There are specific pages on sustainability that list many of the University's achievements, informing prospective students, current students, and stakeholders about the University's commitments.

About Sustainability consistently gets around 1500 page views, and transport and travel, waste, carbon targets, and sustainability achievements get the most views.

Press coverage

News about sustainability events and activities is regularly shared with local media via the University's Press Office. This is a useful tool for engaging with external audiences, sharing messages of best practice, and inspiring others to continue taking on the sustainability baton.

During the 2025–26 academic year, sustainability press coverage for the University of Worcester was overwhelmingly positive and focused on external recognition, including being ranked in the UK top 10 for sustainability by People & Planet and being shortlisted for major national awards such as the Green Gown Awards and Student Accommodation Awards.

The strongest themes were the University's leadership in biodiversity, nature-positive campus management, student engagement, and its reputation as a sector leader in sustainability. [See our Press pages.](#)

Awards and achievements

Details about our latest achievements can be [found on this page.](#)