



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 a number of campaigns and activities, with targets mapped against set baselines, to achieve effective engagement with students, staff and the wider community.

Effective communication leading to higher levels of engagement is the key to both behaviour change and continuing support for the sustainability agenda.

This report sets out how well some of those activities have performed in the 2021/22 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, in order to affect change.

In 2020 the university asked students and staff about sustainability knowledge and awareness, as part of a longitudinal study.

The Survey found that students were increasingly becoming aware of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, with 27% of respondents claiming to know a fair amount about them, rise of a rise of 11% on the previous year – despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

You can read more about the survey at <https://susthingsout.com/what-do-you-know-about-sustainability/>

In 2021 the University began delivering Carbon Literacy Training aimed at staff, students, and partners. The course offers participants the chance to learn in-depth knowledge about climate change and discover ways to change their behaviour. So far around 100 people have completed the course.

In addition, the University ran an SDG Teach-In, in which more than 300 students were trained, raising awareness of the SDGs.

In 2022 we were ranked 10th again overall for educators participating, increasing by 43 % the number of educators participating. We reaching 2546 students (24.6% of students based on 10,445 students in total) more than doubling our impact.

In 2021 we had 1000 students (9.6% of the student body) participating and 14 educators participating and were ranked 10th overall for number of educators participating.



Travel

The University conducts annual travel surveys with both staff and students in order to inform its Sustainable Travel Plan and as a way to communicate with each about ways to travel more sustainably. The survey provides an opportunity to remind staff and students about active travel schemes.

In the 2021/22 survey, more than 60% of those student not living on campus travelled to the University either on foot, by bicycle or using public transport. The number of students travelling by bicycle has reduced since 2018/19, as has the number of students travelling on-foot, although this has risen from a low of 35% in the 2020/21 survey to 42% in 2021/22: The number of students travelling in single occupancy vehicles has decreased since the 2018/19 survey, reducing to 35% in 2020/21 and 29% in 2021/22.

The number of students travelling by bus has reduced from 5% in the 2018/19 survey to 2% in the 2021/22 survey, while those travelling by train has increased to its highest total, with 28% travelling by train in the 2020/21 survey, and 14% in the 2021/22 survey, both higher than previous years.

The student survey also showed awareness of the various transport schemes, including the electric bike share scheme (with over 50% of students saying they had heard of it) and the bus route through campus (which almost 60% of students were aware of).

The survey revealed that more than 70% of staff still travel to the campus by car alone, indicating the need for more initiatives to reduce this further. Staff were also more aware of the bike share scheme and through-campus bus service.

Digital Engagement

The **Susthingsout.com** website 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 from students. Many of the posts are shared across the University's main social media channels as well as the Sustainability specific Twitter and Instagram feeds.

Analytics from this magazine site show most visitors are from the United Kingdom, second highest is United States and they are viewing from desktop not mobile devices. The top post is on personal sustainability and its readership come primarily from USA, Italy then UK.

The University's main website **worcester.ac.uk** is primarily aimed at prospective students. There are specific pages on sustainability, listing many of the University's achievements, to inform 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 getting most views.

Press coverage

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



In 2021/22 a number of articles were published in the media about the University's sustainability credentials and work with a combined total of over 640,000 Opportunities To See (OTS) a measure which illustrates the impact of media coverage by quantifying the level of exposure to an item – ie: how many people have potentially seen the media item.

Articles included:

- A piece about the doubling of solar panels on the University Arena
- An article about staff and students delivering flood resilience workshops to local schoolchildren
- An article about wildflower habitats on campus
- A TV piece about the University's work with the RSPB to reverse the decline in farmland birds
- Several articles about the University's annual Go Green Week activities

Awards

In March 2022 the University was named winner of the Innovation for Engagement Award in the national Green Impact Awards, organised by the independent group, Students Organising for Sustainability UK. In addition, student Megan Asbury was named winner of the Student Leadership Award “for being ‘committed to forwarding environmental education’, supporting Green Impact team members, and developing communications to increase public understanding of sustainability”.

The Innovation for Engagement Award recognises ways in which Green Impact teams have engaged more people in sustainability activity, supporting more staff and students to learn about and lead on sustainability.

It followed the news in December 2021 that the University had been ranked joint 5th in the latest People and Planet Sustainability League, an independent league table of UK universities ranked by environmental and ethical performance. It is compiled annually by the UK's largest student campaigning network, People & Planet.

The University of Worcester came joint top in the Sustainable Food and Energy Sources categories and scored 100% across five of the categories.

Events

The University's sustainability team hosts regular events both on campus and in the local community which are an excellent way to engage people of all levels.

In 2021/22 events included:

- In September 2021, the University hosted the Zero Carbon Tour bus on its travels across the UK ahead of COP26.
- During the University's Welcome Week, the Sustainability team handed out over 500 packets of herb seeds encouraging students to grow their own.
- Go Green Week – the University's annual sustainability week saw engagement from over 500 people who took part in a range of activities.
- In 2021, the Nature Society was re-established with 15 members who have been supporting several events.