

# Sustainability

**Annual Report 2023/24**





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# Introduction

Welcome to the 2023/24 Sustainability Annual Report. As we find ourselves in the midst of our ambitious sustainability plan, this report highlights our ongoing commitment to fostering a sustainable future. It showcases the significant strides we have made in integrating sustainability into every facet of our University, from operational institutional initiatives, the curricula, and to student-led projects. Join us in our journey towards a more sustainable and equitable world.

“Building on the strong foundations laid in previous years, we have continued to integrate sustainability into the fabric of Kingston University. From implementing our environmental management system, to deepening student awareness and engagement through teaching, learning and knowledge exchange, we are embedding these principles into everyday practice – ensuring they are not just goals, but a shared responsibility across our community.”

Mandy Ure, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Sustainability, and Caroline Harries, Chief Operating Officer and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Finance and Infrastructure.

“Seeing the continuous developments the University is making in its commitments towards sustainability is work that our students can be proud of. Through the work highlighted in this report, it is excellent to see the opportunities where students have been included as key partners in bringing about change on campus.”

Annabel Mabin, Chief Executive Officer at Kingston Students' Union.





# Key achievements

Our unwavering commitment to sustainability, showcased through both institutional initiatives and student-led projects, was celebrated internationally and nationally. The University was honoured for its projects and whole institutional approach, recognised at the 2024 UK and Ireland Green Gown Awards, the 2024 International Green Gown Awards, the London Higher Awards 2024, and the Fairtrade University and Colleges Award 2022/24.

## 2024 UK and Ireland Green Gown Awards

Kingston University received a highly commended award in the Next Generation Learning and Skills category at the highly competitive 2024 UK and Ireland Green Gown Awards. Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the Green Gown Awards recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives by universities and colleges. The judges praised the University's approach to continuing professional development (CPD), which engages both students and staff in sustainability initiatives. Student-staff partnerships have led to the creation of engaging toolkits and resources, promoting long-term integration of sustainability in course design, which was recognised by the award.



[Watch](#) the video made by our students.

## 2024 International Green Gown Awards

Kingston University was also named a finalist at the 2024 International Green Gown Awards in the Student Engagement category, with the Sustainability Innovation Challenges, led by the Enterprise Education team. The initiative helped students to develop their capacity to innovate and their confidence to make change for sustainability.



## London Higher Awards 2024

Kingston University was a finalist in the outstanding contribution to sustainability leadership category with the institutional whole approach. The progress made in delivering its five-year institutional sustainability plan was recognised for its ambitious, inclusive, and community-based approach. It has enabled students and staff to see themselves as leaders and change-makers, proactively developing equitable and sustainable solutions for Kingston University and the wider community.

## Two-star Fairtrade University and College Award

The University is one of just six higher education institutions to have achieved two-star status in the Fairtrade University and College Awards, building upon its one-star status awarded in 2022. Students from the University audited and verified evidence from an 18-month period encompassing September 2022 to April 2024. The award recognises the University's and the Union's achievements in embedding ethical and sustainable practices within the curriculum, procurement, research and campaigning.



The University was commended by the Fairtrade Foundation for its outstanding student involvement in the scheme. We are particularly grateful to the Kingston University students who volunteered to audit the work undertaken at Kingston University and the other 21 universities involved in the programme.

Read more about our progress in our 2022/24 Fairtrade Report [here](#).

**"Sustainability and Future Skills are cornerstones of our University, with students and staff playing a pivotal role in fostering a new generation of sustainable leaders and change-makers. I am delighted that our commitment to placing students at the heart of our institutional sustainability plan and encouraging others has been recognised."**

**Professor Steven Spier, Vice-Chancellor**





(Above) Arundhati Bhatia, sustainable Design MA, Winner of the Best Overall Poster Award; (Left) Kingston University students that presented at the conference.

## London Student Sustainability Conference 2024

Two Kingston University students won the Best Overall Poster and Most Original Concept Poster awards, competing against peers from other London-based universities.

Following the success of the previous year, Kingston University was among the institutions organising this student-led conference. Twenty-five Kingston University students showcased their coursework through presentations and posters, and for the first time, 14 Kingston University students volunteered and served on the steering group. Kingston University academics were also part of the the conference steering group, review committee and delivered a climate change and inequalities workshop for conference participants.

This competition holds significant value for me. I am incredibly grateful for the guidance and support provided by my tutors – ZOE, Rentaro, and Anke. Zoe, in particular, has been a great source of inspiration and motivation for me. Rentaro has helped me expand my professional knowledge and taught me how to approach problems, discover their root cause and solve them effectively, which is an essential skill for any designer to possess. Thanks to their help and the opportunity at the conference, I have achieved minor success in this competition. I am deeply grateful to all my teachers for their invaluable support

**Fei Tian, Sustainable Design MA student, winner of Most Original Concept Poster awards**

Presenting my sustainability research poster was transformative, stemming from a desire to share Kingston University's insights. It fostered personal growth and offered a platform for engaging with diverse academic viewpoints. Travelling to another university enabled a unique idea exchange, expanding my academic perspective. This experience sharpened my presentation skills and reinforced my dedication to sustainability research.

**Chukwudozie Ugochukwu , MS Environmental Management student**

# Student and community engagement – case studies from across the University

This report celebrates the incredible sustainability efforts happening across our university. Although we know that much more has been done, here we showcase inspiring examples shared by staff throughout the year.

If you would like your sustainable practice or project to be showcased in our next report, you can do so using this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/1di6T3Hfe4>

## Learning and Teaching

### Kingston School of Art

#### Sustainable Design: Principles, Perspectives and Practices

Led by Zoe Bather, new approaches to the curriculum and assessment design within the Sustainable Design MA, DE7501 module.

**Approach:** Aiming to support students in developing critical and industry-facing responses to contemporary and emerging design practices related to sustainability, the project brief proposed: Time Travellers return with artefacts from the future, sharing urgent messages of hope or warnings, provoking questions about our desired future and how to achieve or avoid it. Through structured weekly assignments, students examined texts, designers' work, and sustainability initiatives. They engaged with decolonisation, inclusion, and design pedagogy discourses, supported by a dialogic studio culture and regular critical discourse sessions with partners. Students maintained weekly blogs, using critical design to translate theoretical knowledge into tangible outputs.

**Evaluation:** The Padlet blog has been a popular format, supporting critical reflection and timely feedback. Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ) feedback highlights engaging field trips and balanced project and learning classes.



Students working on their projects.





## Kingston Urban Room Pilot: OPEN FRAME

Led by Aoife Donnelly, a town-centre urban room pop-up, implemented in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kingston, North Kingston Forum, Kingston Society, Chessington and District Residents' Association, New Malden Residents' Association, and Kingston University's Kingston School of Art. The first pop-up iteration was at the Not My Beautiful House in Kingston town centre with Studio KT1.



[Watch](#) the video to learn more about this approach.

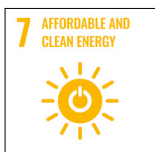


## Net Zero Carbon: Architecture and Landscape in Climate Emergency (Summer School)

Led by Professor Heba Elsharkawy and funded by the British Council.

**Approach:** The project aimed to teach students about net zero carbon architecture by designing a low-zero carbon two-bedroom house for a suburban London plot. Students explored low embodied carbon materials, passive and mechanical environmental design, and whole life carbon analysis. Lectures by experts provided theoretical and practical insights. Students recognised the urgent need for sustainable practices in the built environment and the impact of climate change, appreciating the importance of sustainability and the circular economy in their personal and professional lives.

**Evaluation:** Student feedback indicated 100% satisfaction with the learning experience, resources, and activities. Some students requested more time in the programme to work on their design projects.



## Design for Social Impact Module

Led by Dr Sass Brown, the module projects are part of the MA in Design for Social Impact: Sustainable Fashion Business and Practices.

**Approach:** Partnering with the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe, USA, students worked with artisan communities from Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Colombia, Peru, Egypt, Bhutan, India, and Mexico. The module helped students develop collaborative responses to challenges faced by craftspeople, focusing on skills and culture. These projects have helped artisan communities better communicate their stories and values through improved communications, websites, and social media channels.

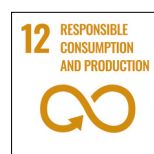
**Evaluation:** Projects result in improved e-commerce communications, styling, photography, and market strategies. Feedback from partners:

**"Phenomenal programme. It felt like an ideology project, beyond product, understanding people, limits, dreams, hopes, expectations and what it realistic. The Uganda team was blown away at this next level elevation of their work through photography, marketing."**

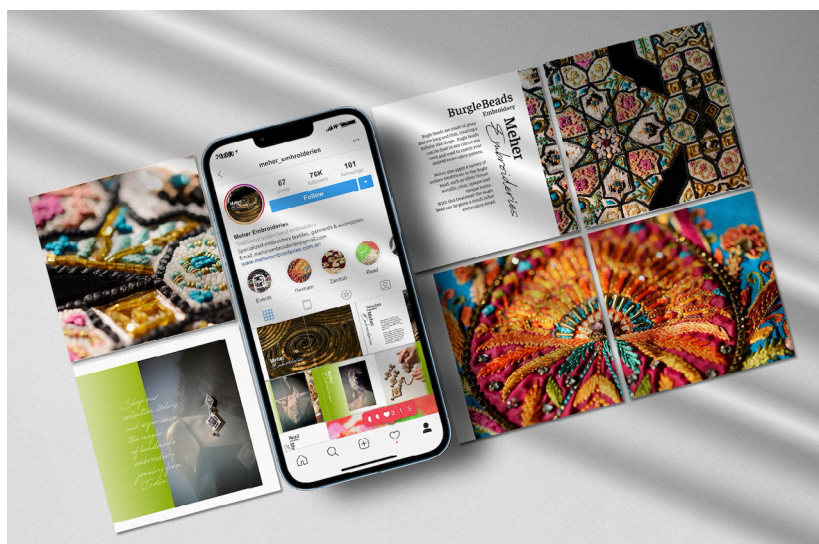
### Artisan Global

**"The care and attention that they have given this project is admirable. What a privilege and honour to work with this group! They have elevated our small collective to a very professional place."**

### TAWC – Egypt



An example of a Design for Social Impact student project that empowered communities to share their stories, develop e-commerce platforms, and create branding materials such as lookbooks.



## Faculty of Business and Social Sciences

### Elfie (ethical selfie) competition

Led by Dr Smriti Kutaula, as part of the annual Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, Kingston Business School students participated in the 'Elfie' challenge, which has been running since 2020.

**Approach:** Students take creative selfies with eco-friendly, Fairtrade, or upcycled products, or attend sustainability-focused events on campus. This raises awareness about sustainability and showcases commitment to responsible consumption and ethical practices. The competition offers prizes, fostering a deeper connection to sustainability within the Kingston University community, encouraging students and staff to reflect on their individual responsibility for society and the environment.

**Evaluation:** The PRME initiative promotes awareness and action on global sustainability challenges, making it a key part of Kingston Business School's educational framework and supporting its commitment to ethics, sustainability, and social responsibility.



## Faculty of Health, Science, Social Care and Education

### Social and Political Contexts of Birth

Led by Paul Cummins, the initiative aimed to educate midwifery students on the disproportionate effects of climate change on Black mothers and babies, following the 2023 "Black Child Clean Air" report by Global Black Maternal Health.

**Approach:** The department's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Day, and the Social and Political Contexts of Birth module facilitates sessions on climate change and pregnancy. Students explored historical and socio-political influences on midwifery practice in the UK and globally, examined strategies to promote equity in women's health services, and evaluated variations in childbirth practices, understanding the impact of different health systems and cultural practices.

**Evaluation:** Students were highly engaged and reported increased awareness of the intersection between environmental and maternal health. This initiative is crucial for midwifery students, aligning with research on pregnancy loss and neonatal morbidity and mortality.



### Understanding Food Security Through a Country Lens

Led by Dr Pedro Barra within the Public Health Nutrition module, as part of the Nutrition BSc course. Students explored factors affecting food security and its impact on health, referencing the relevant SDGs.

An Educational Approach to Sustainable Nutrition Interventions in Developing Nations and a Collaborative Learning Approach to Mapping SDG Connections

For the assessment, students had to write a report on one a least developed country challenges, such as climate change, geography, health issues, access to water, or hunger.

**Approach 1:** Students propose three sustainable interventions to improve food and water security and nutritional health for vulnerable groups, highlighting relevant SDGs. Students proposed three sustainable interventions to improve food and water security, as well as nutritional health for vulnerable groups, highlighting the relevant SDGs.

**Approach 2:** In groups, students chose an SDG and explored its relation to food security, nutrition, and health, focusing on links to SDG2. They used GenAI tools to generate ideas and create visual maps showing connections between SDGs, considering both uni-directional and bi-directional relationships. Each group presented their findings to the class.



### Explore week

Led by Sophie Craven, Amanda Baker, Carmen Ecookit, Sue Blackwood, and Tania Dias Fonseca. The School of Nursing, in collaboration with the careers and employability team, enterprise education and LTEC colleagues, the week focus on developing Future Skills and sustainability in healthcare is crucial to ensure the long-term health and well-being of both patients and the environment to all level 5 nursing students.

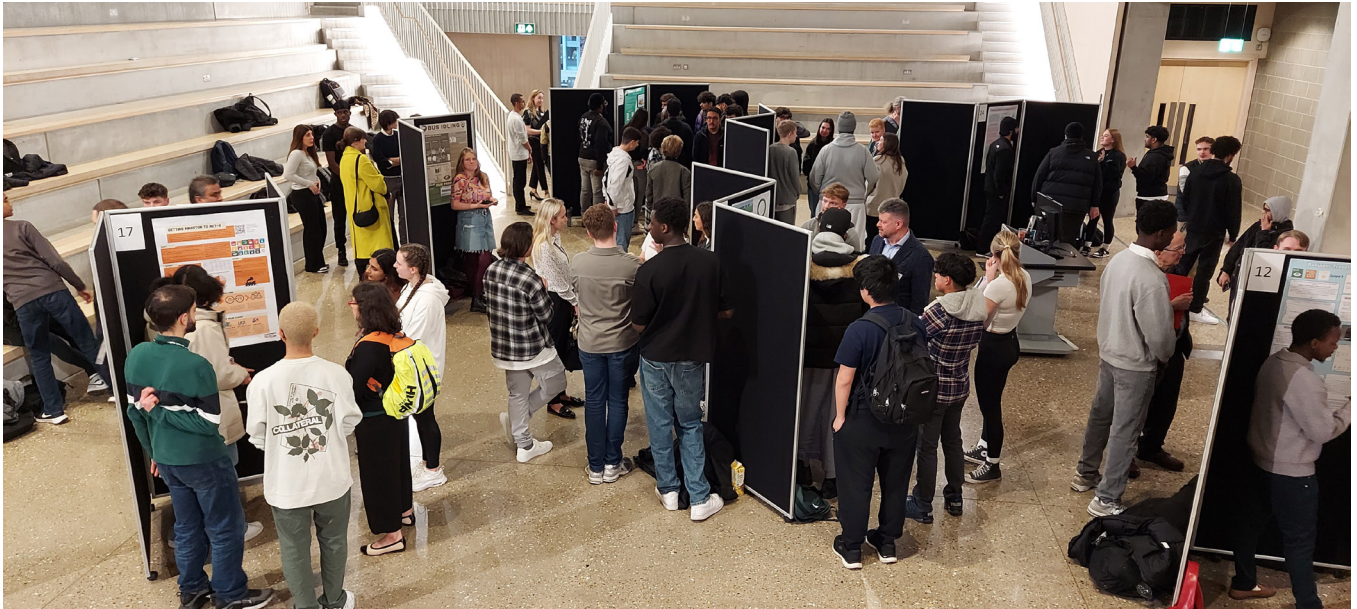
**Approach:** Moving beyond traditional discussions of medical waste to explore broader sustainability themes in healthcare delivery, the week successfully integrates SDGs while enhancing students' employability and change-making capabilities.

Students began the week with expert-led foundation sessions. Interactive elements included quizzes, a sustainability audit, and the UN sustainable tree exercise to evaluate healthcare practices. This was followed by a healthcare innovation hackathon using design thinking, where students developed proposals to improve healthcare practices.

**Evaluation:** Students presented their ideas to staff from across the university and fellow students, creating valuable networking opportunities. This showcased the evolution of an innovative approach to embedding sustainability education within a professionally regulated nursing.







Sustainability for Professional Practice: First-year students presenting their proposed solutions.

### Master of Social Work

Led by Aga Buckley.

**Approach:** Inequality hinders fulfilment and sustainable development. The cost-of-living crisis limits students to classroom education, restricting their engagement with essential social, political, cultural, and artistic events. To address this, students participated in activities like visiting the National Gallery and attending parliamentary events, enhancing their critical thinking and realising the impact of their contributions.

**Evaluation:** Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive. The idea for off-campus activities came from master of social work students, particularly international students, who highlighted the need for staff-led activities and off-campus learning opportunities. They emphasised leveraging the University's proximity to London, which offers numerous free events daily.



## Faculty of Engineering, Computing and the Environment

### Development Appraisal for a Residential Regeneration Project

Led by Gloria Ene. Project-based summative assessment within Quantity Surveying MSc.

**Approach:** Students worked in teams to create innovative proposals for residential units in the UK or internationally. This year's focus is on customer satisfaction, community strengthening, and climate action through regenerating brownfields.

Students selected a real brownfield site in Greater London, conduct economic evaluations, and propose redevelopment for 4,000 housing units. Proposals had to include specifications, space planning, transport links, cost models, timelines, and budgets, demonstrating commercial feasibility and a clear climate action strategy.

**Evaluation:** Students visited similar developments, guided tours of construction sites, and interacted with industry practitioners to ensure realistic assumptions.

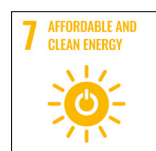


### First-year school-wide module in the School of Built Environment and Geography called Sustainability for Professional Practice

Led by Dr Purva Tavri in collaboration with academic and operational sustainability leads, and Hack Centre.

**Approach:** The module explored global problems, encouraging social, economic and environmentally sustainable solutions. Kingston University serves as a living lab for interdisciplinary groups to develop ideas. Students created posters with solutions from a hackathon, judged by external experts. The University's sustainability team used these solutions for decision-making within campus operations. The poster presentation accounts for 50% of the assignment, emphasising collaboration.

**Evaluation:** Students assessed their module experience with highlights including communication skills development, networking with industry, real-life challenges in assignments, a wide range of topics, sustainability as a career path, and knowledge expansion to SDGs.

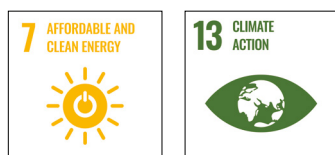


## Global Energy Summit, Biomass and Fuel Cells Renewable Technology module

Led by Dr Sahand Hosouli within the Renewable Energy Engineering MSc.

**Approach:** Students were divided into groups, each representing an imaginary nation with distinct energy challenges. They collaboratively explore and propose solutions, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and knowledge sharing. The session concludes with group presentations, feedback, and discussions.

**Evaluation:** The activity yielded positive outcomes and impacts on several fronts. Metrics on student progression and attainment indicate a notable improvement in students' understanding of global energy challenges and the transition to sustainable energy sources through group presentations, feedback, and a discussion on the outcomes. Early module evaluations indicate high levels of student engagement and enthusiasm.



## Sustainable Solutions for a Grade I Listed Building in London

Led by Zoe Almazan within module CE7204, integrated in the assessment – Individual Practical Report.

**Approach:** Students must visit the building and produce an individual practical report using text, pictures, floor plans, 3D drawings, and photographs, as appropriate. They must complete the following tasks: Identify the Building Regulations for Historic Buildings; Include the appropriate Approved Documents for fire safety and combustion solutions, Critically evaluate and highlight any other safety concerns that become apparent. Furthermore, they must advise of the appropriate legislation of BIM for heritage, the Net Zero Emissions Law and the Climate Change Act.

**Evaluation:** Students propose sustainable solutions for the Palace of Westminster. The building, located in Westminster, London has been a Grade I listed building since 1970 and a part of UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1987. Students develop a real-world problem with emphasis on the rehabilitation of the building whilst demonstrating sensitivities to existing building styles, fabric, and layout, while using technologies that seek to keep the building's carbon footprint at zero or near zero. Students must conduct a professional condition survey of the building taking in consideration the Net Zero Emissions Law and the Climate Change Act.



## Research and Knowledge Exchange

### Kingston School of Art

#### Healthy Energy Efficient Dwellings (HEED)

Co-led by Professor Heba Elsharkawy Funded by the Medical Research Council [Grant number: MR/Y503186/1], with a total grant of £187K.

**Aims:** To address knowledge gaps in understanding the range and causal relationships of indoor air pollutants (IAPs), their correlations to health issues, the implications of occupants' behaviours, and current retrofit strategies on indoor air quality (IAQ) and thermal comfort (TC). The project aimed to develop and test early-stage evidence-based technical-behavioural interventions to improve IAQ and the health of occupants in UK homes.

**Partners:** Kingston School of Art, University of East London, University of Suffolk, Newham Council, and Hyde Housing Association.

**Impact:** Some of the papers published:

Basaly, L. G., Hashemi, A., Elsharkawy, H., Newport, D. and Badawy, N. M. 2024. Evaluating Thermal Comfort and Overheating Risks in A Social Housing Prototype: As-Built Versus Retrofit Scenarios. *Environmental Science and Sustainable Development*. 9 (2), pp. 1-12.  
<https://doi.org/10.21625/essd.v9i2.1073>

Narayanan, V. V., Hashemi, A., Elsharkawy, H., Newport, D. and Basaly, L. G. 2024. Comparative Assessment of Insulation Materials for Improving Indoor Air Quality in Building Retrofit. *Environmental Science and Sustainable Development*. 9 (2), pp. 1-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.21625/essd.v9i2.1071>

Narayanan, V. V., Hashemi, A., Elsharkawy, H. and Newport, D. 2024. Effects of Occupant Behaviour and Air Filtration on Indoor Air Quality in Social Housing. *International Sustainable Ecological Engineering Design for Society (SEEDS) 2024*. Leeds, UK 27 - 29 Aug 2024







Climate Fresk workshop.

### The Trusted Innovation Mentor: A Generative AI ChatGPT Tool for Creative Ideation and Learning

Led by Dr Evy Sakellariou, the project incubates ideas in human-centred generative AI for female leadership. It was showcased at the Gen AI Deep Dive & Networking at the Kingston Business School in May 2024, and integrated into the Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship (IME) MSc curriculum with student contributions to research, testing, and refinement.

**Aims:** To develop the Trusted Innovation Mentor, an AI-powered innovation tool on the OpenAI ChatGPT platform designed to enhance early-stage ideation.

**Partners:** Kingston Business School, the School of Computer Science and Mathematics, and Think Tank Women4AIInnovation Futures.

**Evaluation:** MSc IME 100% employability rate, Top 5 ranking across all Kingston University modules in student evaluations), seed investments, Bright Ideas award-winning competition entries, presented at Kingston University Festival of Learning June 2024.



### Climate Fresk Workshop

Led by Dr Sahand Hosoul in the engineering research techniques, innovation and sustainability module.

**Approach:** A Climate Fresk workshop for final-year students used 42 cards to illustrate climate change causes and effects, connecting them in a way that showed how one factor influences another. Students worked in groups to connect the cards, fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving. The final visual map highlighted the complex relationships and the global climate crisis.

**Evaluation:** The workshop received great feedback, with one student commenting that the interactive nature and group discussions made it the best part of the module, highlighting how much they enjoyed learning in this way.



We invite you to join this movement, contribute to a more sustainable future, and become a change-maker. Share your thoughts and suggestions by emailing [sustainability@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@kingston.ac.uk). To submit a case study showcasing your sustainable practice or project, use this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/1di6T3Hfe4>

## Strand one: Sustainability in learning, teaching, research and knowledge exchange

### Mapping sustainable development goals in the curricula

Following the integration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the 2023 academic framework update that realigned core elements to include Future Skills, inclusive design, and education for sustainable development. In 2023/24, a mapping exercise was conducted for second-year to understand how courses addressed the SDGs. Course leaders reported to the education committee on which SDGs were addressed, as well as how, where, and which resources were used to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to tackle societal challenges related to the SDGs.

### Educational resources for academics and professional services

In partnership with students, Kingston University's educational toolkits and the Education for Sustainable Futures module on Canvas have been updated and shared externally.

Education for sustainability:

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/6f177deaa7.html>

Climate change pedagogy toolkits:

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/527842e8b8.html>

### Continuous professional development workshops

Workshops were delivered and resources were developed to support embedding sustainability across the curricula. These efforts, aimed at helping academics feel confident in embedding sustainability, included course leaders, inductions, and at-school away days, supporting colleagues at various stages of their teaching careers.

### Inclusive curriculum consultants and sustainability

Student-consultants were trained in education for sustainable development (ESD), climate justice, and the intersection between climate change and social inequalities. This enabled them to support course teams through their validation process, ensuring they embed ESD while making their curriculum more inclusive.

The aim is to reflect the diversity of the student body and equip students with the skills to contribute positively to a global and diverse world.

### Collaborations for sustainable futures: Education for climate action

Kingston University fosters climate action education through events and workshops, integrating climate education into the curricula.

Initiatives like Climate Fresk training helped students and staff to understand causes and consequences of climate change and provided the opportunity to become a recognised facilitator. These efforts promote environmental awareness, sustainable practices, and enhance employability skills.

### Student short film screening

A series of short environmental poetic films produced by first-year filmmaking students were played on digital screens to staff and students across the University. The films were also showcased during the Kingston University celebration of Kingston University Green Library Week and the Kingston University COP 28 campaign.

As a result, the students' films gained considerable attention across the University and the wider community.

### BAFTA Albert sustainable production training

Kingston University, in partnership with BAFTA Albert, offered sustainable production training to equip students with the skills to implement eco-friendly practices in the screen industries. The workshops covered climate essentials, sustainable production techniques, and hands-on practice using industry tools.

Students who 'graduate' from the course receive an exclusive Albert graduation certificate, demonstrating their expertise in sustainable production.

### Green skills and green jobs series

As part of the Careers Festival, Kingston University hosted the Green Jobs that Change the World for the Better session, highlighting the importance of green jobs in driving positive environmental change.

The festival also included a green skills jobs series, where students had the opportunity to learn and talk with professionals from different sectors and networking with industry professionals, aiming to equip students with the knowledge and skills for green careers. It fostered student participation and collaboration, promoting a community dedicated to sustainability and innovation.





### **Education for sustainable futures bursaries competition**

In October 2023, the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre (LTEC) launched the inclusive curriculum and education for sustainable futures bursaries competition, awarding up to 10 £1,000 bursaries to support innovative teaching practices. Open to all academic and professional staff, the bursaries aim to foster inclusive curricula and sustainability in education, encouraging student partnerships.

### **Green libraries: The role of knowledge spaces for a sustainable future**

Kingston University joined the UK green libraries week, recognising their pivotal role in sustainability. The University's library services hosted a round table with students and staff to discuss how these spaces serve as hubs for environmental education, resource sharing, and community engagement, promoting sustainable practices and awareness. The event concluded with a screening of eight short films by filmmaking students.

## **Local, national and international collaborations**

### **BIG Design Lab event: Green growth and innovation with a focus on green houses and retrofitting**

Led by Kingston University, this event focused on sustainable practices, particularly green houses and retrofitting. It addressed challenges and opportunities in retrofitting buildings to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. Participants, including businesses, residents, and students, collaborated to develop innovative solutions, fostering community engagement and promoting sustainable growth through practical discussions and creative problem-solving.

### **e-Waste ideathon cross-universities and sustainability-related hackathons**

The e-Waste ideathon at Kingston University was held in partnership with eight London-based universities, and in collaboration with Kingston Council, Save the Planet Club, SunrayRecycle, Hubbub, and Virgin Media.

Participants worked on innovative solutions to tackle electronic waste, addressing both local and broader socio-economic and environmental issues. The event included discussions, project proposals, mentorship, and a judging panel to evaluate the ideas presented.

The Kingston University HackCentre has been crucial in supporting ESD in the curricula, by codesigning with academics and faculty employability partners SDG related hackathons across the University to tackle pressing sustainability problems while supporting the Future Skills agenda.

### **Intercultural learning for global engagement conference**

As part of the International Network of Universities' (INU) 25th anniversary celebrations in 2023, the INU organised an online conference on intercultural learning for global engagement for both students and staff.

Kingston University and the strategic academic lead for sustainability played a pivotal role in presenting sessions intersecting the UN SDGs with intercultural competencies related topics such as climate change and global inequalities.

## Strand two: Estates and Operations

### Policy updates

The University's travel policy was updated to reflect the ambitions within its new travel plan. Notably, the travel policy precludes domestic business travel by plane if the destination can be reached within five hours by rail, unless there are exceptional operational or wellbeing reasons.

### Estates projects

Sustainability is an important consideration in every estates and sustainability project.

2023/24 saw the delivery of phase 1 of the Penrhyn Road ground floor transformation project. In addition to new social, support, and Future Skills teaching spaces, phase 1 delivered significant sustainability improvements through measures such as newly insulated walls, replacing single glazing with double glazing, low energy heating and ventilation systems. Phase 1 included upgrading three external courtyards, including new planting, and saw the former car park transformed into amenity social space, with newly planted trees and flowers.

### Biodiversity

The biodiversity and landscape manager has continued to deliver the aims and objectives set out in the biodiversity action plan and policies, building on the work that has been ongoing for the last 20 years at the University (as of 2025).

For more information, please visit  
[Biodiversity | Kingston University London](#)

### Student awareness

In September 2024, the estates and sustainability team attended Freshers Fayre, engaging new students by playing an interactive climate footprint game called How Bad are Bananas? in order to raise awareness of the environmental impacts associated with day to day choices. In 2023/24, the team totalled 24 hours of game play and engaged with 457 students and staff.

### Student auditors

Students were recruited to audit sustainability action taken by staff as part of the green impact sustainability champion initiative. Twenty-one students were provided with training and development opportunities in their roles as auditors and project assistants. Students were also recruited to audit Fairtrade action undertaken by the Fairtrade award team. A record number of fifteen students were given training, and 10 students were redeployed to audit other universities that had not secured enough student auditors.

### Green impact

Our sustainability champion network saw 11 teams comprising 60 members of staff who took on 361 individual sustainability actions both at home and on campus.

### Sustainable procurement

The University appointed a sustainable procurement manager to implement a sector-wide net zero carbon supplier tool to enable the measurement of supplier carbon emissions and the calculation of Kingston University's scope 3 greenhouse gas (GHG) baseline.

### Responsible waste management

The University has taken steps to optimise reuse and improve waste segregation across the estate. In February 2024, the estates and sustainability team opened the Re:Use box which offers unwanted stationery for staff and students to rehome and prevents the need to buy new materials.

Between February and July 2024, 838 items were donated, equating to 46.3kg worth of materials that otherwise would have been incinerated to generate energy from waste. The estates and sustainability team also developed new waste stations which aim to improve segregation and reduce contamination.

### RE:LOVE

Students living in the Clayhill Halls of Residence donated over one tonne of surplus materials including clothes, kitchen equipment, duvets, books and stationery that were sorted and donated to charitable partners across London for re-use.

### Sustainable travel

The University launched its travel plan which confirms the University's commitment to encouraging and enabling more environmentally conscious travel by students, staff and visitors.

The plan has set carbon reduction targets associated with student and staff commuting as well as business travel. Dr Bike spent a total of 24 hours on campus offering free servicing and minor repairs to student and staff bikes, with four hours spent running a bike maintenance course which taught students and staff how to service their bikes.

Bike marking was also conducted on campus, resulting in 27 bikes being marked with their own unique code which helps in identifying stolen bikes and reuniting them with their owners.

### Kingston University bee-keeping project

A Kingston University staff member alongside a member of the local community managed two small hives during summer 2024, where honey was successfully extracted and sent for analysis to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. The results are due in spring 2025 and will provide information on what plants the bees are foraging on.

In the next academic year, staff will be able to learn about bee-keeping as one of the actions in the green impact scheme.







# Key targets and measures

## Strand one: Sustainability in learning, teaching, research and knowledge exchange

### Targets

- Students to recognise they have developed sustainability skills and attributes.
- Sustainability to be built into the place-based learning agenda.
- Sustainability to become a core element of research, partnerships and knowledge exchange activity.

### Measurements

#### In the curriculum:

Existing courses addressing UN SDGs	Number of courses
None	13
At least one	164
At least two	139
More than two	36

#### Number of modules that address SDGs per course

One to two modules	73
Three to four modules	52
Five or more modules	28

Level of maturity	Number of courses
Beginner	61
Awareness	35
Change	50

**62** Courses were validated or revalidated in 2023/24, under the updated academic framework, which now includes Future Skills, inclusive design, and education for sustainable development.

**580** downloads of the education for sustainability toolkit worldwide, including the UK, Canada, Finland, Sweden, France, and Japan.

**461** downloads of the climate change pedagogy toolkit worldwide, including the UK, Spain, Greece, India, and Saudi Arabia.

**223** Members of staff participated in sustainability related Continuous Professional Development workshops (e.g., course leaders, induction, validation, climate justice, ESD).

**5** Bursaries for education for sustainable futures were awarded.

**1,495** Students participated in SDG-related hackathon in their courses.

**42** Students participated in the cross-universities London e-waste ideathon.

**Climate literacy:** 55 students and members of staff were trained on climate fresk. In addition, six students and 14 members of staff were trained as official facilitators to deliver workshops across the University.

**20** Students and staff shared their library experiences during Green Libraries Week, discussing support for a sustainable future.

**Over 200** students attended sessions on climate change and its impacts through various events and modules, including midwifery EDI day, socio-psychology, public health nursing, dance industry, and sustainability for professional practice.

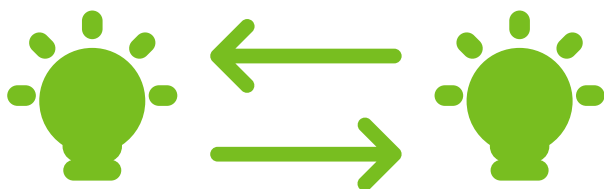


#### Place-based learning:

**45** Students attended the Green Jobs that Change the World for the Better and Green Jobs Series.

**20** Students worked on sustainability-related projects within the sustainability plan, Strand one. Activities included:

- Supporting academics in their course validation and revalidation process,
- Developing resources and guides for students,
- Creating the green skills toolkit for primary and secondary school teachers which was to be launched in the 2024/25 academic year.



#### Research and Knowledge Exchange

- The UN SDGs are now part of the research case study annual reporting. An overview of Kingston University's research related to UN SDGs highlights that SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being, SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities, and SDG 4 – Quality Education are the most common, while SDG 2 – Zero Hunger and SDG 15 – Life on Land are the least common.
- Kingston University's approach to embedding the UN SDGs through a student-partnership resulted in the development of the education for sustainable futures module. This was showcased at the AdvanceHE Sustainability Symposium 2024 and the London Metropolitan University Learning and Teaching Conference 2024.
- Fifty-eight students from universities across North and South America, Europe, and Asia participated in the International Network of Universities' Global Citizenship and Sustainable Futures: Learning for Change programme. Kingston University students actively engaged in the programme, and the Kingston University also delivered an elective session on climate change and social inequalities. This session was the most popular elective among all participants, with 29 students in attendance.

## Strand 2: Sustainability through our estates and operations

**2038/39**

**net zero carbon emissions for scope 1 and 2**

**2050**

**net zero carbon emissions for scope 3**

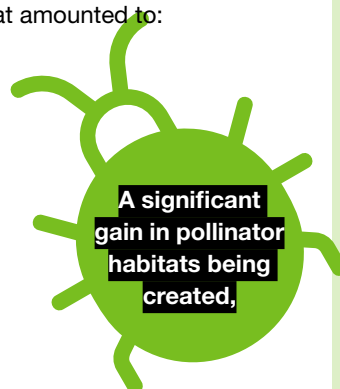
The University set a new waste target to 'divert 60% of operational waste (residential and non-residential) from landfill/energy from waste per academic year'.

#### Measures (biodiversity)

In 2023/24, work continued to fulfil the aims and objectives of the Kingston University Biodiversity Policy and Biodiversity Action plan, which included biodiversity volunteering that amounted to:

**269**

**surveys resulting in 1,568 species records being shared with local records centre**



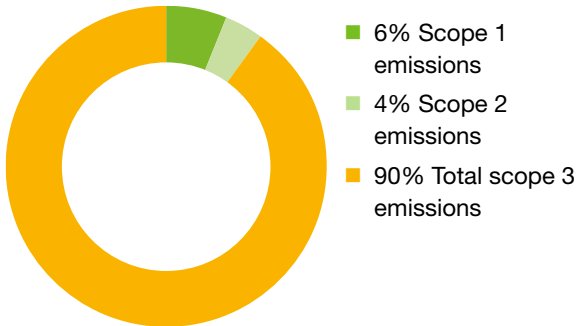
**A significant gain in pollinator habitats being created,**

**307**

**biodiversity volunteers (including repeat volunteers) contributing to a minimum of 1,277 hours of work and activities**

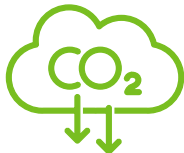


Kingston University 2023/24 baseline



Measurements (energy)

The University is committed to reducing its carbon emissions, setting an ambitious carbon target of net zero carbon emissions by the year 2038/39 for scope 1 and scope 2 emissions and 2050 for scope 3 carbon emissions

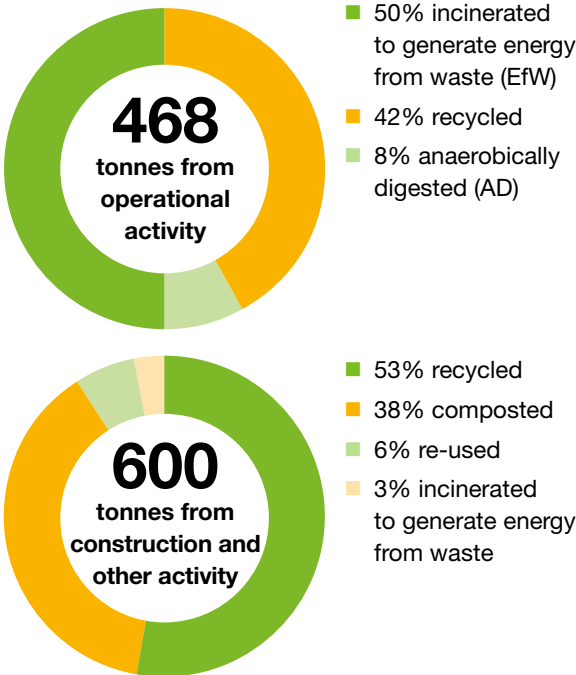


Total Carbon Emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) from scopes 1 and 2  
**3,521CO<sub>2</sub>e\***

Total Carbon Emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) from scope 3 emissions  
**30,424.83tCO<sub>2</sub>e\*\***

- \*Scope 1 and 2 comprise emissions from burning fuel in our vehicles, and electricity and gas consumption used on the estate
- \*\*This has been calculated in line with the greenhouse gas protocol and includes the following categories of emissions:
- Purchased goods and services,
  - Capital goods,
  - Fuel and energy related activities (not included in scope 1 and 2),
  - Upstream transportation and distribution,
  - Waste generated in operations,
  - Business travel,
  - Employee commuting (including students), and
  - Downstream leased assets.

Measurements (waste)



Measurements electric vehicle charging

Kingston University facilitated 1,500 individual charging sessions, the equivalent of 62,300 miles, saving 12 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

A regenerative campus: energy and carbon

In 2024, the University continued to achieve further energy reductions and operational savings from a suite of initiatives, including further optimisation of the University-wide building management system, plant replacement, and investment in new energy efficiency technologies and thermal improvements to the estate.

The University's annual carbon management budget was invested directly into a plethora of projects all aimed at improving the efficiency of operations.

Projects included, upgrades to the hot water systems, the introduction of a new smart heating system at the Kingston Hill campus, and optimisation of various building controls across the estate.

The University continued to phase out the use of inefficient fluorescent lights with highly efficient LEDs, and additional electrical vehicle charge points were installed to serve the new 100% electrical fleet vans.

The energy manager has continued to develop the implementation of the decarbonisation of heat programme that will require significant investment over the next 15 years to achieve the net-zero target. The programme of works will phase out reliance on natural gas. The strategy is aligned to the wider estate vision and depreciation of existing assets which enables clear sign posting of future investments.

The University has achieved a 68% reduction in operational tCO<sub>2</sub>e emissions from its initial 2005/6 baseline.

\*\*\*\* Figures below include emissions related to building portfolio where Kingston University has operational control. It also includes the impact of the 100% renewable PPA accounting for 4116MWh per annum.

Year	Electricity tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Gas tCO <sub>2</sub> e
2019/20	2252	2027
2020/21	1577	2568
2021/22	1928	2032
2022/23	1476	1967
2023/24	1490	1996



### A regenerative campus: waste

The University has a zero waste to landfill policy and works continuously to prevent waste production and implement the waste hierarchy. Kingston University's waste is either reused, recycled, composted, anaerobically digested, or incinerated to generate energy from waste.

The University has set a new waste target to divert 60% of operational waste (residential and non-residential) from landfill/energy from waste per academic year. Whilst this target was not met in the academic year 2023/24 the University did improve upon this diversion rate when compared to the previous year and is the highest diversion rate achieved since 2019/20.

Year	Tonnes	Diversion rate (%)
2019/20	618	46
2020/21	283	48
2021/22	378	42
2022/23	488	37
2023/24	468	50

\*Data for 2023/24 includes fly ash generated by EfW incineration processes within final recycling rates.

The University opened the Re:Use box in February 2024 and within six months donated 46.3 kg of unwanted stationery to students and staff. The ethos of the Re:Use box is to only take what you need, to donate your surplus and reduce waste.



[youtube.com/shorts/X-nDy8yCsnk?si=2\\_gMphoNC0RSUx-z](https://youtube.com/shorts/X-nDy8yCsnk?si=2_gMphoNC0RSUx-z)



## Collaborations between strands

### **Climate Change and Us – Kingston University Conference of the Parties 28 Campaign**

- Seven students' short films were screened across the University, addressing students' concerns about climate change.
- 62 participants including students, staff, and social stakeholders actively engaged in the PechaKucha event, featuring academic staff and community guests' provocations to discuss climate action.
- Town House stairs were transformed to showcase the climate stripes. Displayed over 28 steps, each stripe represented the average temperature for a single year, relative to the average temperature over the period as a whole. In total, 172 years-worth of data was collated with blue shades at the base of the stairs, indicating cooler-than-average years, while red shades demonstrated years that were hotter than average, culminating in a stark band of deep red stripes at the top of the stairs showing the rapid heating of our planet in recent decades.

### **"How Bad Are Bananas?"**

This interactive game raises awareness about the environmental and social impacts of everyday choices. Participants answered questions about the carbon footprint of various products and activities, learning about the effects of their actions on the planet. Over the past academic year, the game has been on tour across the University's four campuses at various events totalling 24 hours of game play, engaging with 457 students and staff, and resulting in a total of 246 Fairtrade bananas being awarded as prizes for participating in the game.

### **Fairtrade forum**

- The Fairtrade forum brought together students, staff and suppliers to discuss the importance of Fairtrade. Attendees were invited to sample ethical and Fairtrade products that are available across the University outlets, as well as participate in interactive games to win Fairtrade prizes. Due to the success of the forum and high levels of staff engagement, the University was recognised by the Fairtrade Foundation as 'Campaigner of the Month' for February 2024.
- Over 50 people participated in the round table on how gender equality, migration, food security and other issues are strongly affected by climate change, organised in collaboration with Kingston University Athena Swan and the Fairtrade Foundation.



Copyright: Stephanie Todd

### **AdvanceHE Sustainability Symposium 2024**

Kingston University's comprehensive approach to strengthening collaborations between the academic and operational strands of sustainability was showcased at the sector-wide symposium. The presentation was led by the University academic and operational sustainability leads, highlighting a whole university approach.

### **ISWA 2023**

The School of Engineering and the Environment and the estates and sustainability team came together to identify challenges and opportunities in preventing and managing food waste at the University. The report, which was prepared by degree apprentices, highlighted the need to score sustainability highly when selecting catering contractors. The University has since made interventions to address the recommendations in the report such as introducing climate labelling on all food served and investigating sustainable food accreditations. Findings from this collaborative project were presented at the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) world congress in October 2023.



# Delivering Progress

**We have continued to run regular sustainability steering group meetings throughout 2023/24, ensuring cross-University collaboration and oversight as we advance our sustainability goals.**

## **Environmental management systems**

During the 2023/24 academic year, the University continued to strengthen its environmental management system (EMS).

Faculties and professional service departments completed their aspects and impacts registers, identifying the environmental effects associated with their operations. This collaborative effort supports a more consistent and accountable approach to environmental performance across all areas.

To enhance the University's internal audit processes, it also introduced new software designed to support the effective management and monitoring of audits. This tool enables the University to streamline its audit activities, improve data tracking, and ensure greater visibility of compliance and continuous improvement efforts.

These developments mark important progress as the University works towards greater alignment with ISO 14001 standards and embed environmental sustainability more deeply into its operations.

## **Net zero carbon**

In 2023/24, the University took significant steps toward advancing its net zero carbon ambitions. A key milestone was the development of a comprehensive travel plan, informed by a university-wide consultation and travel survey that gathered valuable insights into staff and student commuting patterns. The data collected now plays a vital role in helping to better understand and reduce commuting-related emissions.

To support the measurement and management of its carbon impact, the University has procured a net zero carbon supplier tool – a carbon accounting platform developed by Nottingham Trent University and Net Positive Futures. This tool is specifically designed for the higher education sector and is used by the Sustainable Procurement Manager and our suppliers to enable detailed tracking and reporting across all scopes. It also supports scenario modelling and benchmarking, helping to plan more effectively for carbon reduction across operations and supply chains.

As a result of these efforts, the University now has a comprehensive GHG inventory and baseline for 2023/24, including scope 3 emissions. Analysis of this data has shown that approximately 90% of the University's total emissions fall under scope 3, with the remaining 10% attributed to scope 1 and 2. This highlights the importance of addressing indirect emissions such as procurement, travel, and waste, which form the majority of the University's carbon footprint.

These developments provide a strong foundation for setting future targets and tracking progress as the University moves closer to achieving its net zero carbon target.

## **Communications and engagement group**

- During the 2023/24 academic year, the University continued to communicate its sustainability activity and progress through established channels, including student and staff bulletins, press releases, internal and external communications, and social media platforms. These routes have remained key in ensuring both the University community and wider stakeholders remain informed and engaged with its sustainability initiatives.
- Looking ahead, a key priority will be to review the current membership involved in sustainability communications and to develop a strategic communications plan. This plan will help ensure consistency, visibility, and impact of sustainability messaging across the institution.

# SDG progress/reporting

The 2023–2024 Course Leaders UN SDG Reporting reveals that a substantial majority—78.5%—indicated their courses address at least two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting Kingston University’s strong commitment to sustainable development. In contrast, only 7.3% reported not addressing any SDGs. When examining which SDGs are most commonly addressed, aside from SDG 4: Quality Education, the most frequently cited were SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities, SDG 13: Climate Action, and SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. These findings align closely with the 2023 mapping of course specifications and module descriptors (see mapping report), with the exception of SDG 10, which was not previously identified as a key focus in teaching.

Kingston University’s commitment to sustainability is further reflected in highlights impactful research aligning with several SDGs. Notably, significant contributions were made toward SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Additional research efforts supported SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

In operational sustainability, Kingston University achieved a 68% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2023/24, progressing toward its net zero target for 2038/39. This achievement, alongside the procurement of renewable energy and implementation of energy efficiency projects, demonstrates our commitment to SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy and SDG 13: Climate Action.

Furthermore, the introduction of a new University Travel Plan aims to enhance accessibility across the estate while minimising the environmental impact of university-related travel, supporting SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities.

Our 2-star Fairtrade Award reflects a wide range of initiatives promoting a more just, equitable, and sustainable world, contributing to SDG 10 and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Further commitment to SDG 12 is evident through innovative circular economy initiatives such as the RE:Love Scheme and RE:USE Box, which promote reuse and sustainability on campus.

The successful delivery of our Biodiversity Action Plan and related policies has contributed to SDG 15: Life on Land. Meanwhile, our Green Impact sustainability champion network, along with active engagement from students and staff, drives meaningful action at local, national, and international levels, supporting SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

While we are proud of the significant progress made across multiple areas of sustainability, we recognise that our work in supporting the UN SDGs is ongoing. Achieving true sustainability requires continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration. We remain committed to identifying areas for growth, deepening our impact, and embedding sustainability into every aspect of university life. As we move forward, we will continue to build on our successes, address emerging challenges, and strengthen our contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.





# Looking Ahead

## Strand 1

- **Enhance students' graduate attributes**, green skills for greener jobs, and opportunities for networking through cross-universities collaborations.
- **Develop a Hackathon toolkit** to support colleagues SDG integration in the curricula.
- **Enhance inclusion and sustainability** through advocacy sessions and collaboration with Inclusive Curriculum Consultant programme to launch the Reimagining Inclusion, Sustainability, and Equity in University Practice (RISE UP) programme.
- **Continue supporting academics** in embedding ESD through bespoke professional development workshops and through the Course leader's programme.
- **Deliver climate literacy** training across the University through student-staff partnership approach, where students and staff act as facilitators.
- **Organise an international event** on teaching and researching for a just transition, in partnership with universities such as the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, London Metropolitan University, Malmö University, and the University of Warwick.

## Strand 2

- **Launch a Travel Plan Task and Finish Group** to implement the actions detailed in the University Travel Plan.
- **Conduct our Internal Audit Regime** and complete a Gap Analysis in preparation for our application to ISO14001:2015.
- **Roll out new waste infrastructure** across the estate and identify opportunities for improvement to support circularity on campus and meet the new University waste target.
- **Continue improving the accuracy** of our scope 3 data and engage with the University community in addressing these emissions.
- **Develop a sustainable IT working group** to drive change within hardware and software procurement and staff/student behaviours to data management.
- **Maintain our Fairtrade University** status and continue to engage staff in our sustainability champion 'Green Impact' scheme, and provide auditing opportunities for students.

## Both Strands

- **Strengthen collaboration with external stakeholders** such as universities, the Royal Kingston Borough, Kingston Chambre of Commerce, businesses, and local community groups for knowledge exchange activities.
- **Launch, and chair, the University Alliance (UA) Sustainability Network** to bring together academics and operational professionals from UA member institutions to drive the sustainability agenda within their institutions.

# Closing Message

Reflecting on the 2023/24 academic year, we are immensely proud of the dedication and hard work of our students and staff in driving sustainability at Kingston University. Our efforts as a community in integrating the UN SDGs into our curriculum, research, operations, and community initiatives have earned Kingston University national and international recognition.

Your passion and commitment are the heart of our progress. Together, we are not just meeting goals but setting new standards for a sustainable future. We encourage you to keep sharing your ideas, providing feedback, and actively participating in our initiatives.

Thank you for being the driving force behind our achievements. Let's continue to make a difference together and be agents of change for a better world.

Warm regards,

Tania and Stephanie



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Fonseca**

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for Sustainability



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Strategic Operational Lead  
for Sustainability



Let us know your thoughts on this report and continue the conversation by contacting us at:

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