

Sustainability



Social



Inclusion



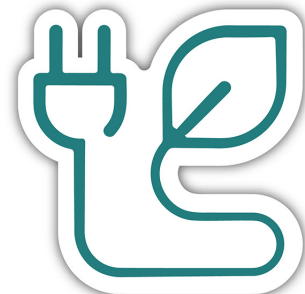
Social Justice



Environment



Net Zero Carbon



Energy



Economic



Employability



Education

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Introduction

We are proud to publish our second Sustainability Annual Report at Kingston University. Continuing the work detailed in the 2021-2022 report, we have made progress in both operational and academic strands and have increased opportunities for students and staff to engage and collaborate in achieving our sustainability targets.

It is our civic duty to share sustainability information and ensure we are disclosing our institutional objectives. As we reflect on our accomplishments and share the future challenges, we invite you to join us on this journey towards a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future.

Kingston University is a signatory of the London Higher Sustainability Pledge and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accord. We actively contribute towards several sustainability working groups within the higher education sector such as the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges, and several local community groups led by the Royal Borough of Kingston.

Over this last year we have achieved a great deal. Collaboration across strands has driven our approach and has not only led to awards and recognition, but nurtured a strong community across colleagues, students and our local community. This impressive list of achievements over the past year demonstrates the impact we can have when we work together.

Mandy Ure, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Sustainability

Caroline Harries, Pro Vice-Chancellor Finance and Infrastructure

Sustainability is of crucial importance to our diverse student body, our students expect Kingston University to lead by example while fostering an inclusive and collaborative culture of environmental, social and economic responsibility. Our students desire an experience which educates and shapes conscious and informed leaders, and inspires positive change for a sustainable future.

Hamazh Fahim, Union of Kingston Students (UKS), Vice President Activities and Development

Sustainability has captured our students' hearts and minds, and it is fantastic to see so many new projects and initiatives successfully delivered across the university community at Kingston. The University has made a strong commitment to sustainability and has embraced the challenge and fundamental changes needed to work towards a sustainable future for our students.

Annabel Mabin, Union of Kingston Students (UKS) Interim CEO



We invite you to join this movement and contribute to a more sustainable future, to be a change maker. Share your thoughts and suggestions to:

sustainability@kingston.ac.uk

Submit a case study to showcase your sustainable practice or projects please use this form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/1di6T3Hfe4>

Key Achievements

2023 Green Gown Awards

Our commitment to sustainability, both as an institution and through the development of student-led projects, was recognised at the 2023 UK and Ireland Green Gown Awards. The University was recognised for three projects in two categories at this year's awards:

- The Kingston Sustainability Innovation Challenge was a **winner in the Student Engagement category**. The judges commended the large number of local community stakeholders involved who directly benefitted from student engagement in the project, which coincided with Conference of the Parties 26. The challenge culminated in a poster exhibition showcasing students' ideas developed in class and during a Hackathon.
- Kingston's institution-wide approach to achieving net zero was awarded a **finalist in the 2030 Climate Action category**. Kingston was the only London university to be shortlisted in this category, highlighting our leadership within the capital in addressing the climate crisis.
- The London Sustainability Conference Consortium in which Kingston is part of, was a **finalist in the Student Engagement category**.



Students understand better than anyone the impact of climate change. As a university, we must do all we can to contribute to this vital agenda, empowering students to act. I am delighted our efforts to put them at the heart of our strategy has been recognised.

Professor Steven Spier, Vice-Chancellor

We are all thrilled at this award, which recognises the contributions of many people – colleagues, distinguished alumni, and most of all our students – who delivered this exciting programme. The Sustainability Innovation Challenge helped students to develop their capacity to innovate, and their confidence to make change for sustainability.

Dr Martha Mador, Head of Enterprise Education

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and Kingston University Academic Framework

The UN SDGs have been embedded in the Academic Framework. The University is committed to empowering students with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to understand and addressing these goals. As a provider of excellent higher education provision and an active partner in the wider educational community, our core activity promotes SDG 4 'Quality Education'. In addition, all our courses must develop students' knowledge and skills concerning at least two other UN SDGs.



London Student Sustainability Conference 2023

Three Kingston Students won the **Best Overall Poster** and **Most Effective Visuals** poster awards, competing with students from other London universities.

For the first time, Kingston University was one of the institutions organising this student-led conference. Ten Kingston students presented their coursework in presentations and through posters. Academics were part of the conference steering group and the review committee, while Kingston staff also delivered a Climate Justice workshop for the conference participants.



It can be so easy to lose your understanding of progress within the field of sustainability, as all we hear on the subject is largely bad news, but being at the conference, surrounded by so many inspiring projects, it's been a really reinvigorating experience. For me, winning best poster overall in a conference that represented not just design but the scientific fields as well a real reinforcement of the change that design can facilitate, and immediately afterwards, people were speaking to me about the next steps of a project I had done just as part of my degree.

**Louis Heatlie, MA, Sustainable Design student
Winner of the Best Poster Overall Award**



**Lily Tham, Winner of the Most Effective Visual;
Product & Furniture Design student.**

It was a great honour to have presented my PhD research at the London Student Sustainability Conference 2023. I became conscious that sustainability can be achieved in so many different ways and requires the expertise of individuals with various academic backgrounds. I left the conference with so much knowledge and hope that together, we can make a big impact through all these small contributions.

**Carla Nassour, PhD student, Analytical Chemistry
Oral presentation**

Students at the conference held at Kings College London



2022/23 Overview

Strand 1

Sustainability in Learning, Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange

Educational resources for academics and professional services

In collaboration with students, educational toolkits for academics and professional services colleagues were developed:

Education for Sustainability

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

Climate Change Pedagogy toolkits

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

Course Leaders Programme and Academic Induction sessions

Workshops were delivered and resources were developed to support embedding sustainability in the curriculum and supporting colleagues in their different teaching career stages.

Intercultural Learning and Global Engagement Conference 2023, International Network of Universities

Sessions were delivered by colleagues from the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre and Student Development and Graduate Success teams. One focused on climate change, anti-racism and the International Black Scholars mobility programme. Another addressed climate change and intercultural learning, in collaboration with Parahyangan Catholic University, Indonesia, and Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

Student Engagement

In celebration of Cultural Diversity and UK Mental Health Awareness Week, student-led workshops were delivered on visible mending to support reusing and upcycling clothes in the context of inflation, eco-anxiety, and the climate change impacts of fast fashion.

A student posters exhibition in the Town House Foyer was held to raise awareness of the social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability. The content of the workshops and posters were developed within the “News from Nowhere” pathway project with level 5 and level 6 BA Graphic Design students.

Students also had the opportunity to participate in several Collaborations for Sustainable Future events.

Education for Sustainable Futures module

Three Kingston University academics and a student participated in the international UNESCO – Association for Learning Design and Education for Sustainable Development Learning Design and Education for Sustainable Development Bootcamp and, in a student-partnership, developed a module to assist and influence teams in embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in their academic practices.

Collaborations for Sustainable Futures events

Students and staff discussed interdisciplinarity, the campus as a living lab, and climate justice. These events included speed dating (short conversations with potential partners with mutual interest), students’ work to inspire ways to embed sustainability in the curricula, and providing students with the opportunity to learn beyond their discipline through cross-university collaborations.

Understanding Students and staff’s perceptions of ESD across the University

In collaboration with the Head of Architecture and Landscape, we conducted a research study to explore the potential mechanisms for Higher Education Institutions to build staff and students’ capacity in sustainability and climate literacy and what may be considered essential knowledge, skills, and attributes in the different disciplinary areas concerning ESD.

Graduate Research School seminars

Webinars for graduate students and early career researchers were delivered by the Academic Lead for Sustainability and the Head of the Department of Geography, Geology and the Environment on using interdisciplinarity to tackle complex real-world sustainability problems – wicked problems – and on the importance of conducting research that addresses the Sustainable Development Goals.



Strand 2

Sustainability through our estate and operations

Policy Updates

In May 2023, the Finance Team made improvements to our expenses policy and finance system to ensure that the data collected relating to business travel mileage and associated carbon emissions is accurate and complete.

Estates Projects

Sustainability is a fundamental requirement and goal in the delivery of capital projects by the Estates and Sustainability Team. Kingston University has adopted environmental validation and certification systems for major developments. The new Kingston School of Art (KSA) design studios in Penrhyn Road Main Building achieved SKA Gold, the highest level possible. The heart of the Kingston Hill campus has seen four small buildings demolished and replaced with landscape gardens and social seating areas.

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 19 years at the University.

For more information, please visit:

kingston.ac.uk/sustainability/managing-impacts/biodiversity

Student Awareness

The Estates and Sustainability Team attended the Student Enrichment Fair to raise awareness on the variety of wildlife on our estate and showcase opportunities for students to support the operational targets in the Sustainability Plan.

Student Auditors

Students were recruited to audit sustainability action undertaken by staff as part of the Green Impact Sustainability Champion Initiative. Eight students were provided with training and development opportunities in their roles as auditors and project assistants.

Green Impact

Building on the success of our sustainability champion programme, which saw six teams comprising 41 members of staff, Kingston University's Green Impact Champions put 320 individual sustainability actions into place, 228 of these actions were a direct result of Green Impact.

Sustainable Procurement

The University's catering contract was retendered with sustainability considered as part of the scoring criteria. Contractors Aramark were selected due to their notable sustainability credentials and climate labelling which help students and staff make informed, environmentally friendly decisions about their food choices and purchases.

Responsible Waste Management

The Estates and Sustainability Team audited the University's appointed waste contractors hazardous waste facility. The purpose of the audit was to ensure that waste paints, oils, aerosols and batteries generated by university activities are being transported and disposed of safely and in accordance with environmental legislation.

RE:LOVE

Students in Clayhill Halls of Residence donated more than a tonne of unwanted belongings (clothes, books, food, kitchen items) via the RE:LOVE project to local charities for reuse.

Sustainable Travel

The University appointed consultants to support the development of an Institutional Travel Plan. The Travel Plan will establish a coordinated approach to travel and include measures to support students and staff to travel as easily, and cost-effectively, as possible. It will also set out our commitment to improve campus accessibility and minimise the environmental and social impacts of University-related travel.

The University increased its electric vehicle charging provision at Kingston Hill. Bike Dr's spent a total of 24 hours on campus offering a free servicing and minor repairs of student and staff bikes and 6 hours was spent running a bike maintenance course which taught students and staff how to service their bike themselves.

Kingston University Bee Keeping Project

KU staff members alongside a member of the local community established two colonies of bees during the summer of 2023. The long term aim is to sustain the hives and set up a Bee society for students when the project is more established.



Kingston Hill Campus Landscaping



Key Targets and Measures

Strand 1

Sustainability in Learning, Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange

Targets

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

Measurements

In the curriculum:

- Increase from 38 to 112 courses reporting addressing UN SDGs (from a January 2023 baseline)



- Over 500 students
Disciplines such as Nursing, Dance, and Psychology actively explored and addressed wicked social and environmental problems.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



- Over 100 students
Midwifery EDI day, Celebration of Us—Breaking, engaged with the impacts of climate change on pregnancy. Similarly, MA Sustainable Design and MA Product & Furniture Design students addressed equality, diversity, and inclusion in the context of climate change's impacts.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



11 Case studies on embedding ESD in the curriculum from across the university have been made available in Toolkit Sheets and Case Studies Repository.

18 Students and members of staff learned how to mend their clothes while reflecting on anxiety and cultural diversity.

40 Staff members discussed their ESD practices and learned from others during the Festival of Learning and Teaching 2023, which was part of the 'Addressing equity and sustainability in higher education' theme.

152 Staff members participated in the Collaborations for Sustainable Futures events, the Course Leaders Programme's session on Sustainability, and in advocacy sessions across the university.

160 Members of staff engaged with the Climate Change Pedagogy toolkit.

200 Members of staff engaged with the Education for Sustainability toolkit.

474 Resources have been added to the Reading list on Sustainability.

Strand 1

Sustainability in Learning, Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange

Place-based learning:



Student-partnerships

- Five students working on the sustainability educational toolkits and articulating sustainability and inclusion.
- One student developing a survey on UN SDGs and the chemistry sector in collaboration with the Head of the Department of Chemical & Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Staff training

- 15 staff members attended the sustainability and future skills workshop and others discussed Design Thinking and ESD Pedagogies.

Research and Knowledge Exchange:

- More than 100 participants attended the Kingston University Festival of Research and Innovation, which this year had a spotlight in Sustainability.
- The UN SDGs are now included in the Kingston's Annual Report impact form supporting the Research Excellent Framework future application.
- It is agreed that Knowledge Exchange Research Institutes (KERIs) will have a sustainability action-plan and explore how sustainability-related research can be central to and cross-KERIs.
- Several cross-university networks focusing on UN SDGs were created.
- Kingston University delivered several Business Innovation & Growth South London Partnership-funded 'Big Design Lab' project workshops including a focus on a focus on the 'Future Skills and Green Skills Gaps', which drove citizens, activists, Higher Education, Further Education and Small and Medium Enterprises to rethink their approaches to transitioning to low-carbon processes.
- Kingston University hosted the Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD) Annual Conference 2023, which included a workshop on Sustainability and education, influencing sector practices.
- The Kingston University approach to Education for Sustainable Development was shared at the Society of Experimental Biology's Centenary Conference and the Royal Geographical Society Annual International Conference 2023.



Strand 2

Sustainability through our estate and operations

Targets

2038/39

Net zero carbon emissions for scope 1 and 2

2050

Net zero carbon emissions for scope 3



Year on year increase in recycling rates

Measurements (Biodiversity)

In 2022/2023, the continued work to fulfil the aims and objectives of the Kingston University Biodiversity Policy and Biodiversity Action plan included biodiversity volunteering amounted to:



153 Surveys resulted in **812** species records shared with local records centre

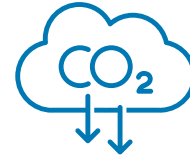
266 Biodiversity volunteers contributing **988** hours

Invasive species cleared

Rhododendron 165m ² virgin 106m ² regrowth	Bamboo 60m ² virgin 47m ² regrowth
Few flowered garlic 15m ² regrowth	Himalayan balsam 400m ² regrowth
Three-Cornered Garlic 4m ² regrowth	Floating Pennywort 8.5m ² regrowth

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 2 carbon emissions and 2050 for scope 3 carbon emissions.



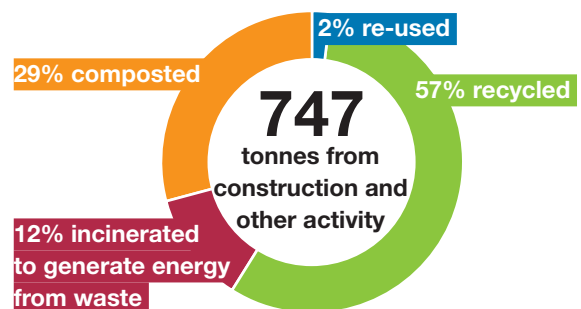
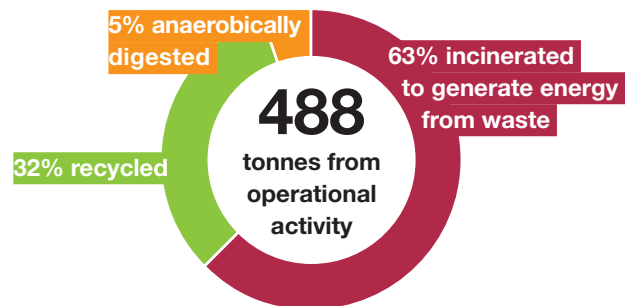
Total Carbon Emissions (tCO₂e) from scopes 1 and 2
4,042tCO₂e*

Total Carbon Emissions (tCO₂e) from scope 3 emissions
57,642.96tCO₂e**

*The 4042tCO₂e only includes electrical and gas and not any diesel used for the fleet – though this is minimal.

**This has been calculated using the Higher Education Supply Chain Emissions tool where an emission factor is applied to spend (£), we are currently reviewing our scope 3 methods of calculation in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

Measurements (Waste)



102,110m³ Water consumption



Strand 2

Sustainability through our estate and operations

A Regenerative Campus: Energy and Carbon

In 2023 the University achieved 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 of new energy efficiency technologies and thermal improvements to the estate.

The University annual Carbon Management Budget of 666k was invested directly into a plethora of projects including, improvement to building control, LED lighting upgrades, additional Electrical Vehicle Charge points, installation of secondary glazing, and installation of new electrical hot water services to reduce reliance of natural gas.

The Energy Manager has continued to develop the implementation of the Decarbonisation of Heat programme that will require significant investment over next 15 years to achieve the net-zero target. The programme of works will phase out the reliance on natural gas. The strategy is aligned to the depreciation of existing assets which enables clear sign posting of future investments.

The University has achieved a 68% reduction in operational tCO₂e emissions from its initial 2005/6 baseline.

Year	Electricity tCO ₂ e	Gas tCO ₂ e
2019/20	2262	2627
2020/21	1644	3159
2021/22	1959	2457
2022/23	1444	2598

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's waste is either reused, recycled, composted, anaerobically digested, or incinerated to generate energy from waste.

The University has a waste target to achieve a year-on-year increase in the proportion (%) of operational waste (residential and non-residential) recycled (from the baseline year of 2019/2020). While the University has not met this target, the total volume of waste produced in 2022/23 is lower when compared to the baseline year (2019/20) and remains below pre-pandemic volumes. Interventions are being implemented to address this including delivering waste training for the senior leadership group and updating our waste signage. This reduction in total waste is largely attributed to changed agile working patterns following the pandemic and halls waste from Kingston Hill and Seething Wells now being managed by Kingston Student Living.

Year	Tonnes	Recycling Rate (%)
2019/2020	618	35.7
2020/2021	283	44.3
2021/2022	378	39.3
2022/2023	488	32.1

Views from the Hogsmill and Mill Street for the Refurbished Mill Street building, the project achieved the highest possible BREEAM rating of Outstanding and demonstrates Kingston University's ability and commitment to reduce carbon across the estate.



Delivering Progress

The focus of the 2022-2023 work was to raise awareness and ensure commitment/support of the University's Sustainability Plan targets and challenges to engage all in this journey.

To achieve this, members of the sustainability steering groups engaged with the University Senior Leadership Group, with the Heads of School and Heads of Department Forum, with the School Directors of Learning and Teaching and professional services staff via presentations and workshops to ensure understanding and ownership amongst influential academic and professional staff members.

The workshops' focal point was our Sustainability Plan, which emphasized critical challenges across various themes, including energy management, waste management, ethical procurement, IT, education, research and knowledge exchange. It reinforced the need to embed sustainability in the curriculum to foster the development of green skills needed for a low-carbon industry and economy.

Through workshops, presentations, and open dialogues, Kingston University staff gained a comprehensive understanding of our sustainability targets. By equipping our leadership with the knowledge and perseverance to navigate challenges in energy, waste, procurement, IT, education, research and knowledge exchange, we strive for a university that educates and leads by example in building a sustainable future.

The University established 3 Steering Groups to lead and deliver the strategic sustainability objectives of the Plan. Since their inception, the membership to these groups has evolved, and key outputs from these groups are summarised below:

Environmental Management System (EMS)

An EMS is a framework that helps organisations manage their environmental responsibilities effectively. The University EMS steering group began understanding the structure of ISO 14001, a widely recognised standard for EMS implementation. They collaboratively developed a template aspect and impact register, laying the foundation for assessing environmental aspects and impacts across various university activities. Ultimately, this initiative equips the university community with valuable knowledge to prioritize environmental efforts effectively, mitigate risks, and enhance overall environmental performance in alignment with the University's sustainability goals.

Net Zero Carbon

The Net Zero Steering Group has been instrumental in advancing our sustainability goals and better understanding our pathway to achieving net zero carbon through several key activities. A primary focus has been on developing a comprehensive Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas inventory, particularly emphasizing emissions associated with travel. This activity has led to enhancements in our expenses policy and finance system, ensuring accurate data collection on business travel mileage and related carbon emissions. Additionally, the group recognised the necessity for an Institutional Travel Plan to understand emissions from student and staff commuting and business travel. The Net Zero Steering Group's efforts have advanced our understanding and capture of emissions and facilitated tangible improvements in operational practices, procurement, and catering services, aligning with our overarching sustainability objectives.

Communications and Engagement

The Communications and Engagement Steering Group has cultivated a diverse and dynamic space for sharing sustainability challenges and upcoming events. The group has fostered a culture of collaboration, innovation and inclusivity to amplify the reach of our initiatives, share research grant opportunities and drive progress towards our sustainability goals. Key outcomes from this group have been additional coverage and visibility on sustainability communications within existing internal and external communications channels such as the student and staff intranet, newsletters and social media channels. Specifically, the group supported the London Student Sustainability Conference and communicated the ReLondon London Recycles campaign which targets young people, promoting recycling awareness and participation.

Looking Ahead

Anticipating the challenges of meeting the University's sustainability goals while maintaining economic sustainability is crucial. One of the most significant hurdles lies in decoupling growth in student numbers from increased environmental damage.

As our institution grows, so does the demand for resources and navigating this expansion without compromising our commitment to sustainability requires innovative solutions, strategic planning, and a dedication to sustainable practices across the University.

Priorities for 2023/24

Strand 1

- **Deliver climate action and climate literacy training** for students and staff to empower the University community to enact the necessary changes to mitigate and adjust to climate change impacts.
- **Support the Future skills' Explore stage prototypes** addressing sustainability and the UN SDGs through gamification and problem-solving strategies.
- **Advocate and support the Green Jobs agenda** with the Student Development & Graduate Success team.
- **Launch the Education for Sustainable Futures Bursaries Competition** to support creating and disseminating innovative practices in developing Education for Sustainability.
- **Showcase student works across the university** to raise awareness and inspire students to be change-makers in their communities.

Strand 2

- **Firmly Establish Baseline Data** creating a full Greenhouse Gas inventory for entire value chains and establish a robust methodology for reporting the annual emissions for all scopes.
- **Focus on Waste Management**, review our waste target, policies and waste signage. We will put further initiatives in place to facilitate the sharing of resources between staff and students.
- **Develop the Institutional Travel Plan** in consultation with students and staff to reflect the needs of our diverse community whilst encouraging sustainable and active modes of travel.
- **Grow capacity within the procurement team** by creating a new Sustainable Procurement Manager role and working with our suppliers to embed sustainable practices and products within our supply chains and develop a robust methodology in quantifying scope 3 carbon emissions from the purchase of goods and services.

Both Strands

- Continue to build upon the progress of our existing steering groups.
- Focus on student facing events and our visibility amongst our student community
- Engage students with a campus living lab approach, solving real-world and university sustainability issues.
- Develop training and continuous professional development as part of the Kingston University Essentials training for all staff, ensuring completion formal sustainability training to encourage sustainable behaviours and be literate and confident to apply sustainability as part of their roles, responsibilities and decision making.

Closing Message

As we conclude this year's sustainability annual report, it is with immense gratitude that we reflect on the remarkable journey our University has embarked upon towards a more just and sustainable future. Through unwavering commitment, we have made strides in integrating sustainability into our curriculum, encouraging future leaders to act responsibly and champion sustainability.

Our collective efforts have not gone unnoticed, as evidenced by our prestigious Green Gown Award on a national stage and the London Student Sustainability Conference. These accolades serve as a testament to the impactful steps we have made in advancing sustainability.

As we celebrate our achievements, let us not forget that sustainability is not merely a goal or an award to be achieved, but a way of life to be embraced by each and every one of us. It is a call to action that intersects many aspects of work and life and unites us in a shared commitment to achieve a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous future for all people and the planet.



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

sustainability@kingston.ac.uk



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