

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development

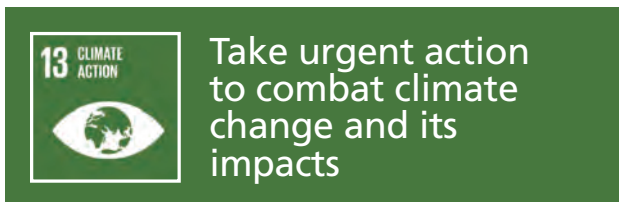
INTRODUCTION

The University of Leicester recognises that we are facing a Climate Emergency.

Climate change is currently one of the most pressing issues facing humanity. The United Kingdom, along with more than 170 other countries, officially signed the Paris Agreement in 2016 that sets out a global target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and a decisive call to action to mitigate dangerous climate change caused by human activity.

We are committed to tackling climate change and to making a major contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the city. Universities have a clear role in understanding the complex environmental challenges we face and in identifying solutions.

THE LEICESTER APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE



As we will shortly be celebrating our centenary and our thoughts are turning to meeting the challenges of our next century in a positive way that won't damage our health and will protect our environment.

Our ambition is for the University of Leicester to be a world leader in environmental sustainability both academically and operationally. We have already begun this work through our work developing methodology to map our academic contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and we have a strong pedigree of climate change research and teaching. We have also already been delivering against ambitious operational targets to reduce our negative environmental impact.



OUR APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE WILL BE TO

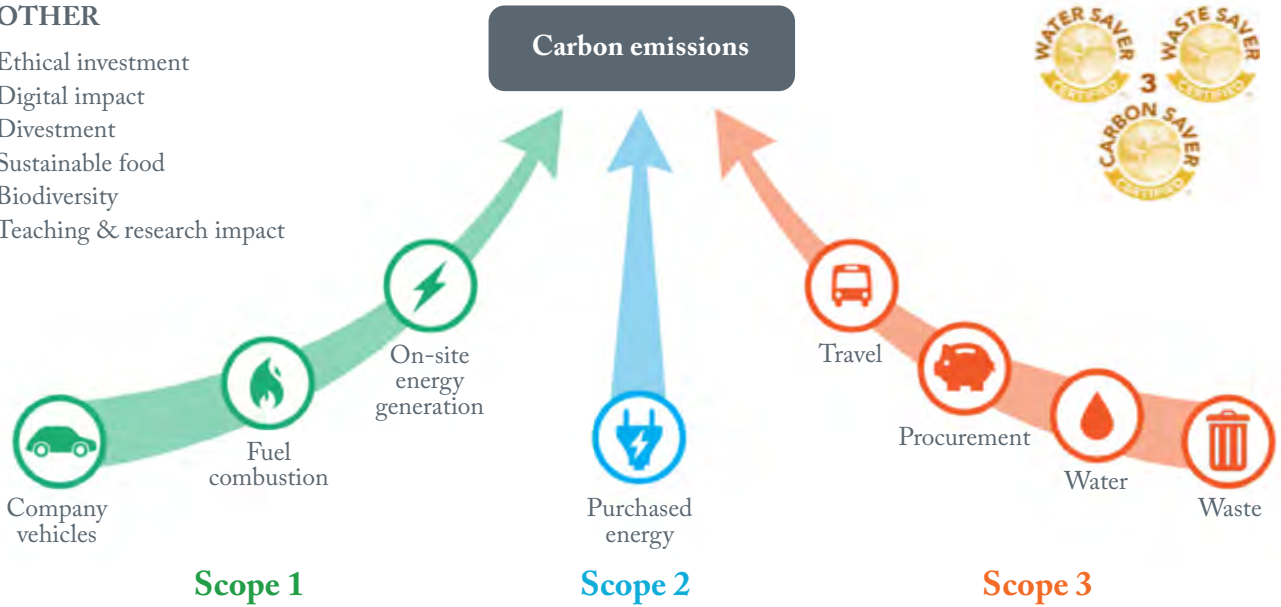
1. **Avoid** – reducing our environmentally negative impact
2. **Mitigate** – increasing our positive impact and offsetting
3. **Adapt** – ready our campus for a changing world
4. **Positive impact** – teaching and innovating for a better world

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Carbon emissions are divided between scopes 1, 2 and 3 for reporting purposes. Other sustainability considerations are listed.

OTHER

- Ethical investment
- Digital impact
- Divestment
- Sustainable food
- Biodiversity
- Teaching & research impact



TARGETING CHANGE

Although our previous environmental management plans have had a very positive impact, our previous work did not adequately account for the key drivers of University emissions or the potential for positive impact. In order to comprehensively tackle climate change, organisations must consider the impact of every strategic and operational decision, which this Strategy aims to achieve.

ENERGY & CARBON TARGETS	CURRENT PERFORMANCE	FUTURE TARGETS
Carbon	Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions reduced by 25% against 2004/05 base line	Achieve net zero carbon (all scopes) by 2050 at the latest
Waste	On-site segregation of waste is currently 55% (2020 target was 50%)	Reduce all waste produced annually
	Diversion from landfill current rate is 97% (2020 target was 95%)	Zero waste to landfill
Travel	Staff commuting <i>via</i> single occupancy vehicles currently is 47%	Reduce business air travel by 25%
Water	Reduce water consumption 2% annually	Reduce water consumption 2% annually
Procurement	Sustainable Procurement Guidance since 2014	Achieve Flexible Framework level 4
	Use of Net Positive supplier engagement tool	Reduce scope 3 procurement emissions
Sustainable Food	Sustainable Food Policy since 2018	Achieve Sustainable Restaurant Award accreditation
Biodiversity	Biodiversity Action Plan since 2018	50% tapestry lawns by 2022
		50% increase in grassland border or under planted hedgerows by 2021

CLIMATE PLAN

A comprehensive plan will accompany this strategy that sets out our costed and timed targets and activities necessary to achieve net zero emissions, adapt to a changing world as well as maximising our positive contribution locally and globally.

Our ambitious plan cuts across every aspect of University activities and demonstrates how seriously we are taking this emergency as we consider the environmental and social impact of everything we do.

COMMITMENTS

Climate Positive Institution – As part of a global community we will work to address climate challenges as part of our contribution to all the Sustainable Development Goals.

Example:

- We will become a Carbon Literate accredited organisation.

Emissions – We will reduce our energy consumption, enhance our use of renewable energy and achieve net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest.

Examples:

- We have already met our 2020 target to reduce absolute carbon emissions by 25%.
- The Big Chill Freezer project with College of Life Sciences will save up to 900 tonnes CO₂ in five years (that's the equivalent to running over 100 homes for five years)
- We are investing in electric charging points for the new multi-storey car park.
- This summer (2020) we will publish a detailed plan on how we will achieve net zero carbon.

Education – All our students will have the opportunity to learn about this important area regardless of subject or level studied, and develop the awareness and skills to deal with these challenges as socially responsible global citizens.

Current examples:

- 98% of our 2019/20 entrants have access to teaching aligned to the UN SDG indicators
- 40% also have the opportunity to study clean energy and/or climate action as part of their course
- We will develop a cross-disciplinary module that offers students the chance to gain significant experience in the sustainability / climate sector, including positive community engagement.

Investments – We divested from fossil fuels in 2020 as well as other ethical concerns and will positively contribute to the green economy as well as local businesses

Examples:

- We were one of the first universities to have an ethical investment policy. We have allocated half of our private asset allocation to impact investing - in businesses which have a direct, measurable social and environmental return.
- We will include environmental implications within Ethics Committee considerations.

Research – Our academics will contribute to the world's best understanding of climate change and its impacts and will provide the science to support good decision-making.

Examples:

- Our climate-related research dates back to the 1980s and we have published over 900 academic papers so far on this area.
- We will work with partner to address complex and shared large-scale environmental research challenges.



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Top 25
best UK university*

*Times Higher Education
World University Rankings 2020

94.4%
employability*

*latest DLHE

Top 10 UK university
for producing CEOs*

*Emolument.com

Top 25
UK University targeted by
leading employers*

*The Graduate Market 2019

Top 20
Students' Union*

*voted 15th best in the country by
students on StudentCrowd

3rd most affordable
city*

*NatWest's Student Living Index

2nd happiest city
in the UK*

*9NINE Super Seed

 **Leicester stands**
together*

*HeForShe - 1 of only 10 University
IMPACT Champions worldwide

Top 35
world university for sustainability*

*UI GreenMetric World University
Rankings 2018

Top 100
Europe's most innovative
universities*

*Reuters 2019

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