

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND
SUSTAINABILITY
STRATEGY 2024/27**

Environmental and Sustainability Strategy

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Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:

Curriculum Strategy 2024/27
Estates Strategy 2024/27

ELT SIGN-OFF: Iain Stott, Vice Principal Corporate Services



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Glossary of Acronyms

Best Available Environmental Option	BAEO
Carbon Dioxide Equivalent	CO _{2e}
Global Warming Potential	GWP
Greenhouse Gas	GHG
International Panel on Climate Change	IPCC
Single Use Plastic	SUP
Sustainable Development Goal	SDG
Sustainability Steering Group	SSG
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	UNESCO
World Commission on Economic Development	WCED

Executive Summary

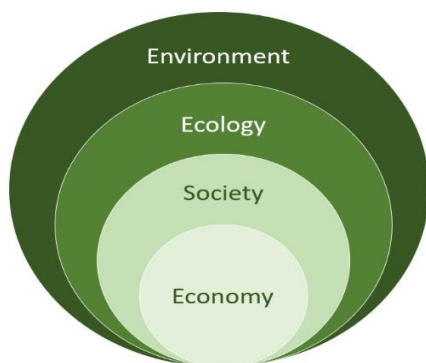
Preston College, hereafter referred to as the College, is a leading provider of further education and is fully committed to integrating the principles of sustainability across the way we work and the education we provide.

The College will take a comprehensive inventory of their CO₂e emissions and set out ambitious plans to reduce these emissions and has set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040. Furthermore, we have started to understand our environmental impacts and are actively working to develop initiatives that will reduce these impacts.

This strategy sets out an ambitious plan that will encourage all aspects of our operations to become truly sustainable, where environmental, social and economic considerations inform all decision making and the delivery of our services. We will take a collaborative approach and will engage with employees, students and stakeholders to facilitate the transformation required to become a college where excellence and sustainability lie at the heart of the education we provide.

Introduction

The world is facing a climate emergency and many of aspects of our society are proving to be unsustainable. Pollution of air, land and water, habitat loss, reductions in biodiversity, poverty, inequity, and over-consumption are just some of the issues we must try to tackle if we are to bequeath an environment which can support future generations.



'Sustainable development' has been defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED 1987) and being sustainable lies at the heart of good stewardship of the environment, where considerations of ecology, society and prosperity are carefully balanced to ensure the maintenance of a healthy and productive environment.

As an educator the College is fully committed to improving the understanding of sustainability and encouraging the behavioural change that will be required to meet the challenges we face. This strategy will provide the direction the College will take and identify some of the actions required to meet these challenges, with the aim of becoming an exemplar provider of further education where sustainability lies at the core of the education we provide and the decisions that we take.

The College understands the urgent nature of the climate emergency and has taken steps to reduce its CO₂e emissions. However, there remains a great deal more to do and this strategy will identify the further actions the College will take to help mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency. The strategy will also show how the College will become more sustainable in the way we deliver education and training, manage our estate, procure goods and services, travel, the food we eat, manage our waste and how we can encourage biodiversity.

Becoming Carbon Neutral

The latest International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report identifies that greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) continue to rise, and current plans to address climate change are not ambitious enough to limit warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial level, a threshold scientists believe is necessary to avoid even more catastrophic impacts and calls for member states to show greater ambition (IPCC 2022). We have responded to this call by setting a target of being carbon neutral by 2040, when our operations will have no net emissions of CO₂e. This significantly surpasses the UK Governments' legally-binding target of being net-zero by 2050.

The College will undertake a CO₂e inventory, in compliance with the guidelines set out in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (WRI 2004) and produced a comprehensive Greenhouse Gas Report (Preston College 2022) which has identified our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions which are defined as:

- Scope 1 - Emissions resulting from the direct use of fuel e.g., gas for boilers.
- Scope 2 - Indirect emissions, such as electricity, which is consumed at site but the emissions associated with the electrical generation take place elsewhere.
- Scope 3 - Emissions derived from third parties providing services on behalf of the College

We do not underestimate the scale of the challenge we face to meet our ambitious target however we have already started work.

We understand that the initiatives we implement to reduce emissions will become more expensive and yield less over time and recognise that we will always have to produce some emissions due to the way we operate. While, in the short term, we will be concentrating on reducing absolute emissions, we will have to identify the best available option to offset our remaining emissions. Box 1 sets out several key actions that will build on the work we have already done.

Box 1 – Actions to reduce CO₂e emissions and become carbon neutral

- Publish a GHG report compliant with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (WRI 2004).
- Develop a set of milestones that will be used to track our progress towards becoming 'carbon neutral' by 2040.
- Make significant cuts to absolute carbon emissions by reducing Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 25% by 2030 and by 50% by 2035 based on a **2022/23*** baseline. **(To be calculated)**
- Identify and implement carbon offsetting schemes that have been carefully evaluated to ensure that they will deliver real CO₂e emissions savings.
- Ensure that CO₂e emissions reporting is fully integrated with our corporate reporting structure and include an environmental report, as defined by the 'Environmental reporting guidelines: including Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting requirements' (DEFRA 2013), in our Annual Report.
- Identify ways of changing behaviours of staff and students regarding reducing emissions.
- Sign up to the [Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges](https://educationracetozero.org) (educationracetozero.org).

Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals

The strategy has been developed to align with and be informed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The seventeen goals are interlinked components that have been designed as a “blueprint to achieve a sustainable future” (SDGS.UN.ORG 2015) and lie at the heart of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which was adopted by all member states of the United Nations in 2015 (SDGS.UN.ORG 2015). Although most, if not all the 17 goals are relevant to the College, there are several goals that have a particular resonance with the Colleges’ values and mission and include:

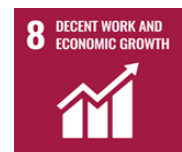


SDG 3: Good Health and Well Being - The College will promote healthy lives and well-being for all students and employees and will aim to develop initiatives aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of students and employees while supporting a healthy work/life balance for their employees.

SDG 4: Quality Education - As a provider of high-quality further education, the College will include the concepts of sustainability into all taught courses and be guided by the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (UNESCO 2022) ensuring an inclusive and equitable education with lifelong learning opportunities for all.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth – The College will provide quality education that will provide future generations the skills and knowledge to achieve full and productive employment and provide them with the tools to develop and support a more sustainable economy.



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities – The College will continue to work collaboratively with local stakeholders and develop relationships with businesses, local government, public sector authorities and the local community to help Preston become a more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable place to live.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production – The College will promote responsible resource consumption and will review their procurement strategy to identify and eliminate areas of waste. Initiatives aimed at reducing consumption and waste will be developed and implemented.



SDG 13: Climate Action - The Colleges will undertake a comprehensive audit of their CO₂e emissions and have set an ambitious target to achieve net zero emissions by 2040. The College has developed a CO₂e emissions report which will track progress towards this target and will be included in the Annual Report.

Sustainable Education and Training

We believe that as an education provider we are ideally positioned to help society meet the environmental, social and economic challenges facing us. The education we provide will be rooted in the principles of sustainability and focused on helping future generations,

who will bear the impacts of the climate crisis, to learn and develop the skills required to meet these challenges. We will ensure that our employees and students understand how their knowledge and expertise will be of relevance and essential to addressing these challenges. Ideally, we would like to see that all our students leave the College well versed in sustainability and equipped with the skills and knowledge required to bring about the changes required to meet the challenges faced by society.

The College understands that delivering a quality sustainable education is at the core of being able to achieve the behavioural changes required in helping to bring about a sustainable future. Furthermore, we acknowledge that it is essential to provide training to staff to enable them to deliver sustainable education. Box 2 provides a summary of the initial actions we will take to help facilitate this change.

Box 2 – Initial actions for sustainable education

- Human Resources Department to source sustainability awareness courses for key staff.
- Identify a key speaker to inspire staff to make a change with the relevance to T&L in technical subjects.
- Identify an FE provider that demonstrates sustainability and climate change best practice and benchmark our performance against theirs.

These actions will be followed up by a range of measures aimed at helping to embed sustainability into the education we provide and are identified in Box 3.

Box 3 – Actions for sustainable education

- Raise staff awareness through CPD days
- Provide our staff with the skills and knowledge to make decisions to help them promote sustainability and to contribute to the College's goals.
- Curriculum Area leads in Faculties complete a sustainability gap analysis for their area.
- Introduce planning for sustainability in the curriculum.
- Ensure all teams make a sustainability pledge.
- Begin to implement the pledges in September 2024 through a variety of means.
- Consider how best to introduce a self-assessment process to assess the quality and impact of the sustainability pledges.
- Provide training and support to already qualified teachers to help them understand the principles of sustainability in relation to their subject specialism.
- Support the Post-Covid-19 recovery plan for a 'green industrial revolution' by identifying and delivering courses that will help to provide training and re-skilling
- Develop and initiate a process in which all members of the institution and other stakeholders can have a voice on sustainability challenges facing the College.
- Embed the principles of sustainability into all the courses we provide by understanding how all subjects are linked to the environmental, social and economic challenges we face.
- Empower students to change behaviour and contribute to the reduction of their carbon footprint.
- Create student led activities and opportunities to raise the profile of sustainability and the Colleges' vision through creative and communication projects.

The Environmental and Sustainability Strategy is aligned and compliments the sustainability objective within the College's Curriculum Strategy:

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To promote sustainability in every programme, ensuring that all learners understand and contribute to the ten point plan for a green industrial revolution.

Enablers

- To undertake a full review of the college curriculum, identifying strengths and areas for development in relation to promoting sustainability.
- To work proactively with other providers in developing and sharing good practice.
- To develop college-wide sustainability objectives linked to the 4 C's (Curriculum, Campus, Culture, Community)
- To develop a college working group in developing and delivering to the sustainability agenda.

Impact by 2026

- All learners to have sustainability built into their programme of study and for all learners to have access to innovative resources contained on the college VLE.
- For the college to implement sustainability objectives, and to deliver proactively against agreed KPIs.
- The college will have invested in resource to support technical areas of specialism, including Building Services Engineering and Automotive Technologies

Managing our Buildings

A significant amount of our CO₂e emissions results from heating and providing power to our buildings. We have a reasonable understanding of the energy demands of our buildings and have identified several costed projects that, if implemented, would help to significantly reduce emissions from energy use and provide local power generation. Box 4 identifies our commitments to improving our building management.

Box 4 – Actions for building management

- Identify potential funding mechanisms to support the delivery of the projects we have identified. For example, the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) operated by Salix.
- Improve the roofs and related insulation.
- Replace old, inefficient HVAC.
- Upgrade the building management systems to endure optimum efficiency.
- Review the current use of buildings and identify if space is being utilised efficiently.
- Ensure that any new buildings and developments are built to the highest environmental standards, in terms of thermal efficiency, where practicable.
- Extend the capacity of solar photovoltaic arrays.
- Continue our programme of replacing all lighting in buildings with high-efficiency LED lighting

Monitoring and Controlling our Energy and Emissions

The climate emergency and the recent energy crisis have brought into clear focus that the efficient use of energy and subsequent reduction of CO₂e emissions is crucial to our aspiration to become carbon neutral and our ability to operate within budgetary constraints.

Understanding the level of our consumption and where and when we use energy is essential in effective energy management. To this end we aim to monitor and target consumption across the estate. Box 5 shows the actions we will take to improve energy management.

Box 5 – Actions to control energy and associated CO₂e emissions

- Investigate the costs and benefits of moving to a Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) backed renewable energy supply.
- Implement on-site electricity generation capacity where practicable.
- Introduce automated gas and electricity meters to support monitoring and targeting of energy usage on campus.

Healthy and Sustainable Food

Feeding an ever-growing population is becoming one of the greatest challenges we face as a society and ensuring the sufficient production and equitable distribution of healthy and sustainable food will require the combined efforts of governments, institutions, educators, multi-disciplinary academics and researchers.

The global food system must meet the nutritional demands of a burgeoning population while adapting to the impacts that climate change is having on agricultural systems of production.

The College appreciates the benefits of a balanced, nutritional diet in supporting the general health and wellbeing of students and employees and understands the environmental impacts associated with unsustainable modes of production and distribution.

The College will look to promote healthy foods which have the lowest environmental impact where possible. Box 6 identifies our commitments for healthier and more sustainable food.

Box 6 - Commitments for healthier and sustainable food

- Liaise with suppliers that are aligned vision and mission to provide healthier and more sustainable food choices.
- Source and promote locally produced foods where possible.
- Reduce and/or remove the availability of 'high impact' foods from our food outlets, including that are particularly carbon-intensive, either through their mode of production or resulting from high transport miles.
- Actively encourage the sales of low-impact and healthy foods including locally sourced plant-based and vegetarian foods.
- Promote low-carbon menu choices.

Sustainable Procurement

The College understands the crucial role that procurement decisions play in ensuring the effective and efficient management and deployment of resources. We aim to improve our procurement decision making processes and ensure that environmental, social and economic considerations are included in all decisions.

The College also acknowledges that there are CO₂e emissions associated with the goods and services we commission and procure and currently these emissions are not reflected in our GHG report.

The College is fully committed to understanding and improving the role that procurement plays with regards to sustainability and Box 7 lists the actions we will take.

Box 7 - Actions for sustainable procurement

- Identify and provide training for appropriate staff in sustainable procurement. For example in the use of the Local Government Associations' [Sustainable Procurement Toolkit](#) which provides an excellent resource to support buyers, commissioners and contract managers.
- Investigate ways in which our procurement decisions can drive economic, environmental and social value through the supply chain.
- Identify and start to collate the necessary information and data that will be required for the inclusion of the CO₂e emissions, associated with commissioning and procurement, as Scope 3 emissions in future GHG reports.
- Ensure that the Supply Chain Policy is aligned with the sustainability and climate change agendas.

Travel and Transport

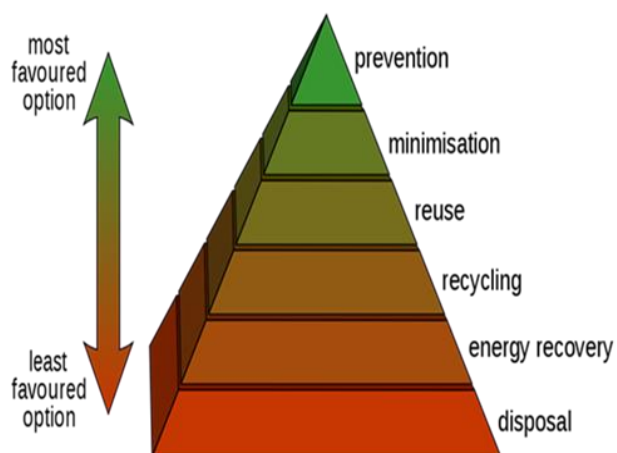
The College campus is located within the City of Preston and public transport is widely available to access the College. As part of our drive to reduce our CO₂e emissions and local air pollution the College will discourage the use of cars for personal use and instead will promote healthier forms of transport that will help to alleviate environmental impacts while encouraging healthier living. We have already introduced EV charging points and a Cycle to Work scheme and we will build on the progress by implementing the actions in box 7.

Box 7 – Actions for active and sustainable travel

- Promote active transport i.e., walking and cycling.
- Further promote the 'cycle to work' scheme.
- Consider implementing a 'green car' scheme.

Waste Management

The production and disposal of waste presents an environmental problem that is especially challenging for a country with a high population density and limited space. The College is responsible for a significant quantity of waste which may have local and regional



environmental impacts including pollution of land and water courses, especially if disposed of incorrectly, as well as producing methane emissions, a GHG 28 with a global warming potential (GWP) 28 times greater than CO₂.

Waste management at the College will be informed by the waste hierarchy where we will seek to avoid, reuse, reduce, recycle, recover and finally dispose of waste as the last resort.

We will identify innovative ways of reusing and repurposing materials and try to adapt our perspective regarding some waste streams and look at them as a potential resource.

The use of single-use plastics (SUP) is a serious environmental issue and the College will aim to stop their use wherever possible and where this may be impractical, we will identify the best available environmental option (BAEO) to reduce and/or replace the use of SUPs. Box 8 identifies the actions we will take to improve our management of waste.

Box 8 – Actions to minimise our waste

- Reduce the use of single-use packaging.
- Follow the waste hierarchy: avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and dispose.
- Identify and reduce the availability of foods which have a significantly high impact on the environment i.e., high carbon emissions from production and/or transport and water consumption.
- Collaborate with our suppliers to ensure that they can help to support our sustainability goals.
- Identify our recycling percentage and set targets to improve on this.
- Look at innovative ways of reusing or repurposing materials.
- Introduce refillable cups than can be used for coffee/tea in the refectory.

Improving Biodiversity

Although the College campus is urban there still may be a surprising amount of biodiversity at the site. Box 9 identifies the actions we will take to improve the biodiversity at our campus.

Box 9 – Actions to improve biodiversity

- Understand the existing biodiversity with a site survey and ensure that landscaping plans consider biodiversity in College grounds
- Investigate ways in which green spaces could be enhanced or added to the College estate.

Governance

Our ambition is to become a 'leading' college among our peers, where we are known and respected for our performance in embedding sustainability into the way we work and the education we provide. Central to this ambition will be sound and effective governance, where all decision making will be informed by the principles of sustainability.

We will incorporate our ambition to become carbon neutral into our College strategic plan and establish a budget to support the implementation of this strategy.

We will establish a steering group whose key role will be to oversee the implementation of this strategy.

The College has engaged in the Preston People's Climate Jury, which is a city wide project, supported from the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund. The aim of the project is to prioritise climate, environmental and sustainability initiatives and targets for Preston to adopt. The College is an anchor institution of the project and as such committed to support and work with other stakeholders to address the opportunities and challenges of climate change in a way that is fair for everyone.

Sustainability Steering Group

A Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) will oversee the strategic direction of sustainability at the College. The steering group will be chaired by a member of the College's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and will be comprised of teaching staff, support staff and students. Terms of reference for the SSG can be seen in Appendix B. Box 10 outlines the responsibilities of the SSG.

Box 10 – Responsibilities of the Sustainability Steering Group

- Ensure the successful implementation of the Sustainability Strategy.
- Develop and implement a sustainability and carbon reduction action plan.
- Monitor and manage the sustainability policy and performance.
- Identify and develop new initiatives.
- Regularly communicate our performance to Resources Committee, employees, students, stakeholders and the wider public.

Useful Links

- Climate Roadmap for FE Colleges https://www.eauc.org.uk/fe_roadmap
- UN Sustainable Development Goals <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Zero Carbon Britain <https://cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/research-reports/zero-carbon-britain-rising-to-the-climate-emergency/>
- Sustainability & Climate Change A draft strategy for the education & children's services systems (White Paper – due for publication in April 2022)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1031454/SCC_DRAFT_Strategy.pdf
- WRAP (Waste minimisation) <https://wrap.org.uk>

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Appendices

Appendix A – CO₂e emissions balance sheet or the academic year 2023/23

Reporting period 2021/2022	Units	Consumption	GHG Emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e)
Scope 1			
Natural gas	kWh	TBC	TBC
Business travel	Miles	TBC	TBC
Fleet	Litres	TBC	TBC
Fleet	Miles	TBC	TBC
Refrigerant gases	kg	TBC	TBC
Scope 2			
Electricity	kWh	TBC	TBC
Scope 3			
Electricity (T and D)	kWh	TBC	TBC
Water	m ³	TBC	TBC
Total Gross Emissions			TBC
Intensity measurements	Occupants	TBC	
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per occupant			TBC

Appendix B – Terms of reference for the Sustainability Steering Group

A Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) will oversee the strategic direction of sustainability at the College.

Vision

To oversee the transition of Preston College to become a sustainable organisation.

We understand that the world is facing a climate emergency and FE providers should play a critical part in the response to the challenges faced. The College is in a position to educate future generations and provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to find solutions to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

We recognise climate change as one of the greatest threats to the way we live and are committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2040, ahead of the UK Government's ambition.

The key deliverable of the SSG will initially be to gain approval for, and the subsequent implementation of, the College's Sustainability Strategy.

Stakeholders and membership

The steering group will be chaired by a senior member of the College's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and will comprise of teaching staff, support staff and students.

This will mean total membership of the steering group will be 12 people, of which 5 attendees will be required to make the meeting quorate.

Roles and responsibilities

The SSG will be responsible, and make recommendations, to ELT. ELT will take decisions on what items should be forwarded to the Resources Committee. The SSG will have oversight of the delivery of the College's Sustainability Strategy and notably their transition to becoming carbon neutral any action plans that stem from this document.

The Group will meet at least 3 times per year and provide both updates to the Resources Committee and an annual report at the end of the academic year.

Resources and financial support

The responsibilities of the SSG will be significant and will require sufficient resource and financial support.