

# Sustainability Communication & Engagement Plan 2024-25

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## Background

The University of Reading is a leading sustainable University, we were ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the People and Planet league 2023/24. Environmental sustainability is one of our four [key strategic pillars](#) and in our University strategy we aspire *“to be recognised for our world-class research in climate change and its impact on the environment and society, and be a leader in global environmental sustainability.”*

Sustainability communication and engagement is a critical piece of the puzzle that will enable us to meet our environmental objective to *“Engage with staff and students as well as the wider community to raise the profile of sustainability, promote best practice and encourage actions to reduce our collective environmental impact.”* The importance of behaviour change is recognised by the [Committee on Climate Change \(CCC\) who were quoted in 2022](#) as saying “People power is critical to meet those targets...without changes to people’s behaviours now, the target of net zero by 2050 is not achievable.”

## Sustainability Services

It is a key thread throughout our work across the following areas: [EEMS](#), [pollution prevention](#), [energy](#) and [water](#) consumption, [waste](#), [travel](#), [procurement](#), [conservation and biodiversity](#), [community involvement and noise](#).

## Communication and Engagement objectives

We will communicate with our staff, students and local community and achieve the following objectives:

- 1) **Inform.** We will increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of sustainability issues among departments, schools, students and staff. We will support our communication with clear information about our University sustainability ambitions, activities and achievements.
- 2) **Empower.** We will inspire our audiences to make changes ranging from personal lifestyle to supporting bigger projects. We will provide support to encourage them to have the confidence to lead future positive change.
- 3) **Together.** We will embed a culture of sustainability, ensuring that everyone feels they can bring about positive change at all levels through collaboration.

These underpin and feed into all of our planned communication and engagement activities for 2024/25. The purpose of this document is to support the implementation of our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, highlight the methods we will use to communicate and what engagement activity we will deliver by July 2025.

## Supporters and Partners

We recognise that our department in isolation cannot achieve these objectives. We will harness the support of colleagues, students and our local community and stakeholders including:

- Reading Students Union: Officer team, Advice, SLT, Marketing, Societies, Volunteering and Community Officer, Student Voice Manager.
- External Relations Directorate: Digital team, Head of Strategic Engagement, Internal Communications Team, Events team, Community Relations Manager.
- Student Experience and Education: Student Communications and Careers
- UPP
- Venue Reading
- Community partners and stakeholders
- University Library
- Chaplaincy
- MERL
- Key delivery partners, including Reading Buses, Avanti Cycling, Reading Bike Kitchen, Reading Cycle Campaign, and Select Environmental.

## Communication and Engagement Channels

This table details the ways that we communicate to ensure we reach our intended audience which are:

- Internal staff audience
- Internal student audience
- External community

Channel	Where located	Audience – internal / external
<b>Sustainability social media</b>	Facebook Instagram X (Twitter)	Internal staff and students and external community– publicly available
<b>Sustainability Website</b>	Internet	Internal staff and students and external community– publicly available
<b>Sustainability blogs</b>	Hosted on Sustainability website	Internal staff and students and external community– publicly available
<b>Sustainability Matters</b>	University of Reading staff and students	Internal staff and students and external community - anyone signed up
<b>Sustainability Essentials newsletter</b>	Hosted on Sustainability website	Internal staff and students and external community – publicly available
<b>Staff portal</b>	University of Reading intranet	Internal - University of Reading staff
<b>In Brief</b>	University of Reading emailed to all Staff and physical posters	Internal - University of Reading staff
<b>Digital screens</b>	Library, Carrington, Palmer, Reading Students Union, Catering	Internal staff and students and external community - publicly available
<b>Department mailing lists</b>	University of Reading staff	Internal - University of Reading staff
<b>Student Newsletters</b>	Emailed to all students	Internal - University of Reading students

## Sustainability Services

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Where located</b>	<b>Audience – internal / external</b>
<b>Student Portal and app</b>	University of Reading intranet	Internal - University of Reading students
<b>Essentials pages (The Student handbook)</b>	University of Reading website	Internal students and external community – publicly available

## Communication and Engagement Action Plan

The entirety of the Action Plan will be completed by July 2025.

Activity	Dates	Focus area	Details	Measure of Success	Owner / Budget	Target audience
<b>Welcome Week and student Inductions</b>	Sep 2024	All sustainability	Presence at Welcome fayres – including IoE and University Life. Focus on reuse of resources, new bus service and safer cycling, including bike lock sale. Promote sustainability website, social media and Sustainability Matters newsletter	Increase in number of sign ups by 50-100	Jackie Simpson, £200 Bike theft £1,500 Design and print, £500	All students
	2024/25		Sustainability information within Welcome Booklet for all new students		Rachel Alipour	
			Sustainability section within all student newsletters		Phoebe Homer	
			Sustainability sections of Essentials pages		Jackie Simpson	
			Participate in Student Engagement Group with UPP and Partners to build sustainability into student events			

## Sustainability Services

<b>Staff training and Inductions</b>	Autumn 2024	EEMS	All new staff to receive in-person sustainability input		Sustainability Staff	All staff
			All staff must complete mandatory 30 minute online training, additional courses on specific topics to be developed during 2024/25	Improved completion rates	Anna Glue / Luke Cantellow and student to deliver, Articulate licence	
<b>Our Future First</b>	2024/24	Energy and Carbon	Co-ordinate energy saving campaign throughout Christmas 2024 and Easter 2025 shutdowns, promote heating and cooling policy	Lower energy consumption and bills	Luke Cantellow / Caroline Ubrei-Joe, £4,000	All staff and students
		All sustainability	Embed Our Future First messages – encourage to take actions and report successes	6 monthly measurement	Caroline Ubrei-Joe	
			Monthly drop in clinics and Quarterly Network meeting Regular meetings and webinars	Increase number of Champions to 80	Caroline Ubrei-Joe	

## Sustainability Services

<b>Policy, reporting and targets</b>	Sept 2024	EEMS	Launch of Environmental Sustainability Action Plan	Successful publication and returns	Dylan Parkes	All staff and students, external community
	Oct 2024	All sustainability	Complete return for THE Global Impact Rankings		Sustainability and Energy staff	
	Nov 2024	EEMS	Publication of Annual Environmental Sustainability Report 2023/24	Jackie Simpson, £1,800		
	Spring 2025	All sustainability	Compilation of information for this year's People and Planet league 2024/25	Jackie Simpson, £1,000		
			Complete return for QS rankings		Jackie Simpson	
<b>Green Festival</b>	Nov 2024	All sustainability	Deliver a programme of events which will inform and empower staff, students and local community to take positive sustainable steps	Deliver range of 10-20 different events	Jackie Simpson / Sustainability team / Energy team, £2000	All staff and students
			Utilise a range of different modes of communication to maximise engagement			
			Work with partners across the University to put on a range of events across many areas of business	Aim for 500-1000 people to engage with the festival		
			Work with supporters to promote the festival widely across our community		All comms and engagement staff	

## Sustainability Services

Projects	2024/25					
		Energy and carbon	Provide updates and utilise different mediums to showcase Sports Park air source heat pump and Energy Centre water source heat pump projects	Publish two updates	Energy team	All staff and students
			Showcase continued improvements through delivery of various decarbonisation projects	Delivery of project		
		Sustainable Travel	Improve accessibility of travel related information on website, including interactive maps and regular blogs / articles.	Delivery of project	Beth Wilson / Jackie Simpson	
		Sustainable Travel	Hold On Your Bike day in Autumn 2024 – which will include safer cycling campaign and bike lock sale		Beth Wilson / Jackie Simpson, £1,500	
			Update design of all cycling posters, including how to lock your bike and printing of leaflets		Beth Wilson / Jackie Simpson, £500	
		Resource use	Improve accessibility of resource use information – new training videos for staff, promote new Keep Britain Tidy waste hierarchy, promote Warpit and regular blogs / articles.		Paul Taylor	



## Sustainability Services

<b>Smile with Sustainability</b>	2024/25		Deliver programme of regular themed sustainability events:	Aim for 100-200 people to engage these events	Jackie Simpson / Sustainability team / Energy team, £500	All staff and students
		Sustainable Travel	- Promote Sustainable travel and cleaner air through Park & Ride, Reading Buses new service and safe cycling campaign, 5 year Travel Plan, environmental impact of business travel			
		Resource use	- Resource use, including using waste contractor to promote recycling			
		Biodiversity Energy and Carbon EEMS	- Biodiversity - Reducing energy use  - Promotion of EEMS			
<b>Lectures to students</b>	2024/25	All sustainability	Delivery of lectures / talks to students as part of academic modules	Monitor through quarterly update	Jackie Simpson to co-ordinate, sustainability staff to deliver	All students
<b>External engagement</b>	2024/25	All sustainability	Participation in external engagement events, including taking part in Reading Climate Change Partnership	Monitor through quarterly update	Sustainability team / Energy team	All staff, students and external community

## Sustainability Services

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<b>Comms and Engagement tracker</b>	2024/25	All sustainability	All sustainability communication, engagement events and awareness days are managed through the team Comms Tracker.	Monitor through quarterly update	Jackie Simpson	All staff and students
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## Impact

Measured through: Sustainability website hits, Sustainability Matters newsletter opens / clicks, social media reach and followers, events attendance, lectures delivered, staff and student portal data collection of hits. These are reported quarterly to Sustainability Services team meetings.

## Version control

Version	Keeper	Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date
1.0	Sustainability Services	Annually	Dan Fernbank	27.06.24

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