

Decarbonisation Action Plan

2021 - 2026

Aim

The University of Suffolk recognises and is committed to, the need to act at pace within the context of a climate strategy to address the Climate Emergency as supported by IPCC findings and government targets as laid down within the Climate Change Act 2008 (amended); and to this end is committed to achieve **carbon neutrality for scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030, with a net zero target for remaining Scope 3 emissions by 2050 or sooner.**

This plan also reinforces, our commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals creating wider opportunities for leadership in research, business support, education and engagement on climate and decarbonisation within wider regional and national platforms.

This Climate Action Plan is a living document and sets out an evolving road map, summarises our work carried out to date in reducing emissions, the actions yet required to meet carbon neutrality and net zero by 2030 and 2050, signposting to our aspirational scope 3 carbon targets, and the roles and responsibilities of all members of the University community.

Using the DEFRA Greenhouse Gas Protocol, we have previously accounted for our emissions within the three scopes of emission sources measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents. Currently data capture has been restricted to waste and water metrics, a format that will need to be expanded to include institutional wide data for business travel, commuting and responsible procurement and supply chain activities. Scope 3 decarbonisation activities for these areas in addition to Waste will be managed through the Responsible Procurement and Waste Action Plan and the Travel Action Plan. This plan will focus predominantly on the Actions we will take over the next 5 years for scope 1 and 2 emissions and climate literacy training and awareness.

Methodology

Our carbon journey will be divided into key phases, to better enable targeted management and drive forward at an investment and institutional pace of change that is achievable. These phases will run simultaneously as we move forward to the goal of net zero by 2050 or sooner.

Scope 1 emissions are those emissions that are caused by the combustion of fuels, such as natural gas, or generated by university-controlled sources such as university owned vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are the indirect emissions from the purchase and consumption of grid supplied electricity. To achieve carbon neutrality, we will need to reduce as close to zero all CO₂ emissions from heating and power across campus by 2030. Carbon neutrality allows a degree of compensated off setting, so for every remaining tonne of CO₂ we are unable to mitigate an equivalent amount must be removed through a third party verified carbon sequestration scheme. Taking a carbon neutral approach for scopes 1 and 2, will initially be necessary to effectively manage those areas of campus infrastructure, or tenancy that are reliant on gas until we are able to replace with decarbonised gas solutions, or fully electrify our building and tenancy assets. We will keep our approach to this issue under review, working with partners to explore solutions and high quality, offset ecological projects by our target date.

Setting KPI targets for Scope 1 and 2

Tracking progress will proceed in a similar manner to our previous HEFCE target, with annual percentage step target decreases interlinked to management action plans that will underpin the overarching Decarbonisation Plan. This will form the foundation of our future reporting against carbon neutrality and net zero. We will continue to monitor what the science tells us and may adjust these step targets or introduce science-based targets as required. Both the Decarbonisation Action Plan and the KPI's will be fully reviewed annually, and carbon performance and energy consumption monitored on a monthly and detailed quarterly basis.

KPI targets against the objective will initially be set a year in advance. The rationale behind this is dual fold, firstly we may need to increase annual step changes to ensure we do not overshoot in line with our emissions performance, and most crucially we must obtain the data associated with the first stages of campus buildings and behavioral data monitoring and assessment within this Action Plan in order to fully understand the steps required to achieve net zero.

Scope 1 and 2: Key Pathway Interventions to Net Zero

- Build and Retrofit Specifications
- Decarbonising Energy Supply
- Onsite Renewables, Solar PV and Battery Storage
- Retrofit and ASHP/GSHP
- Electrification of heat
- Offsite renewable energy
- Commuting/business travel
- Training, Awareness and Climate Literacy
- Behavioral Change
- Offsetting

Action Plan Program

Objective Area	Initiative/Activity	Details	Target Completion Date	Status
Integration with the Sustainability and Environmental and Estates Strategy	Further anchor ambition in strategy and governance	Work with schools and directorates to ensure sustainability objectives and relevant bespoke KPI's are included.	December 27	
	Strategic Training	Training for decision-makers and strategists	Sep 2027	TNA underway
	Embed decarbonisation into Estates Strategy	All levels of growth and operation	Dec 2022	Completed
	Deepen Integration across operations	Set up strategic and operational working groups against all Action Plan Program	September 25.	Completed.
	Estates Strategy Review Group	Continue to bring forward decarbonisation program to ESG for funding application	Dec 2022	Completed and Ongoing
	Establishment of Decarbonisation Strategic Operations and Maintenance Group	To include hard SLA contractors.	Dec 2024	Completed
	Establishment of a whole Campus Climate Working Group	Explore need for a working group to tackle operational activities and research, and to come up with ideas and implement them.	September 2026	Under Discussion
	Lifecycle carbon costs	Explore integration of decarbonisation into non estates Directorates and Academic School financial planning: Net Positive Futures	Sep 2024	Completed
	Procurement	1. Integration of decarbonisation into procurement frameworks and Service Level Agreements, including KPI's	Sept 2024	Completed
	2. Explore the provision of the NetPositive Supplier Engagement Tool to support our suppliers	Sep 2024	Completed and ongoing	

	Reporting and Corporate Communication	In addition to existing sustainability elements of financial reporting and HESA/Office for students returns. Use People and Planet as well as Eco Campus to improve communication and availability of Sustainability Annual Reports and wider ESG activities	Sept 2026	Underway
Build and Retrofit Specifications	Design Specifications	Completion of building refurbishment standards to define retrofit packages and ensure demand reduction is achieved as part of all refurbishment works	Sept 2023	Completed and ongoing
		Ensure projected/estimated energy consumption and running costs of new buildings and retrofit spaces are routinely scrutinised as part of the planning round process.	Dec 2025	Completed and ongoing.
		New buildings to be developed to net zero standards, or any acquisition of existing buildings in the future is to be accompanied by a budgeted plan for ensuring compliance with net zero standards.	Sep 2024	Completed and ongoing.
	Lighting	LED campus lighting design guide to ensure compatibility and future application of Smart lighting program	Dec 2022	Completed
		LED program across remaining estate – all buildings to have efficient lighting by 2030, reducing pressure on electrical distribution infrastructure to accommodate energy efficiencies and electrification of heating	Interim Sept 2027	Underway
	Decarbonising Energy	Renewable energy contracts	Ensure all remaining electricity contracts for leased areas outside of the main contract are transferred across	April 2023
Natural gas		Reduce our use of gas significantly by 2028 and completely by 2040, offsetting maybe needed between 2030 to 2040	July 2028	Underway
		Assess existing gas utilisation areas and further develop degasification works program. Explore solar heating in James Hehir	Sept 2023	Underway
		Conduct feasibility study for ASHP to replace waterfront chillers	April 2025	Completed
		WF Hot water system repair works – upgrade insulation, addition of solar PV and link to BMS	Dec 2022	Completed
		Establish electrification of heat program, with electricity to be balanced via increased renewable energy generation.	Sept 2025	Exploring

	Air source heat pump	Removal of heat load from the heat network, identify buildings for potential ASHP retrofit.	Dec 2024	Completed
		Liase with Digital to understand reinforcement of electrical infrastructure and electrification of heat load across our portfolio	Sep 2025	Ongoing
	Standby Generator	Ensure WF generator specification provides a low to no carbon solution, bio diesel etc.	Dec 2023	Completed
	Additional Solar Install	Evaluate existing building stock to identify areas for additional Solar	July 2023	Completed
Secure solar install funding		Sep 2023	Completed	
Building Performance	Building Energy Management System	Better Building Management through introduction of smart Building principles, and good energy management hygiene delivered as a core activity across the entire estate, supported by an updated system and change of approach to BEMS delivery.	Jan 2024	Completed
	Metering Audit	Commission metering assessment with a view to granulate metering across campus to understand building usage	July 2023	Completed
	Metering upgrade	Funding approved and areas specified	Dec 2024	Completed
	Building Fabric Condition Reports	Commission campus wide building condition report to include air tightness and heat loss	Dec 2024	Underway
		Procure heat loss camera for interim spot checking	Jan 2023	Completed
	Data Management and Reporting	Improve our data and the way we communicate this to our staff and students through quarterly BMS reporting	December 25	Underway
	Retrofit/upgrade Program	Liase with Digital to identify opportunities for all minor works upgrade and retrofit include decarbonisation opportunities	April 2023	Complete Ongoing
	Space Utilisation	Using upgrade BMS roll out sensors to identify space utilisation	December 25	
Using data link strategic focus on optimisation of the University's sunk investment in space; maximising occupancy and improving user experience.		April 2026	Completed and ongoing	
With timetabling/digital Identify opportunities and budget requirements to provide new services aiming to reduce friction in use, and access to resources such as wayfinding apps, meeting room management software, desk finding tools etc.		Dec 2027	Underway	
Behavioural Change		Continue to provide the opportunity for hybrid and agile working.	Dec 2022	Complete

	Energy Efficiency Audits	Design and develop estates led energy efficiency audit schedule to understand user behaviors toward electrical equipment	September 2026	Underway
		Implement annual energy efficiency audits	August 26	Underway
	Energy Efficiency Campaigns	Campus wide Switch it Off campaign to proceed freshers	Nov 2023	Ongoing. Bi- Annual with smaller annual blitz
Commuting and Business Travel		Refer to Travel Action Plan		
Collaboration		Engagement with key stakeholders, tenants, BT, IBC and SCC and collaboration on our net zero plans to identify benefits to coordinating	Ongoing	Underway
	Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan	Continue to contribute and provide knowledge exchange and action on SCEP working groups in Community, Industry and Built Environment	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Suffolk Climate Change Partnership	Continue to support and participate in the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership identifying further opportunities to support and collaborate on funded projects and wider community engagement with SCEP initiative	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Greener Ipswich	Continue to support and participate in the Greener Ipswich working group in identifying opportunities for biodiversity enhancement of Ipswich and promotion of the benefits of biodiversity to climate change	Ongoing	Ongoing
Offsetting	We will priorities reduction in emissions over offsetting.	Annual identification of unavoidable emissions (e.g. unavoidable air travel) which may require offset before 2030.	April 2024	Ongoing
		Evaluate F-Gas and additional GHG	April 2026.	Completed and ongoing
Staff and Student Engagement		Develop and run an annual program of awareness raising workshops to increase staff and student understanding of Climate and our Climate Action Plan	Dec 2023	Ongoing

		Provide rolling bespoke sustainability training & skills programs, to enable Staff and students to deliver sustainability improvements. To include national climate literacy program.	April 2024	Ongoing
		Develop and deliver an engagement program through the Estates and SSI team aimed at community groups and stakeholders to encourage sustainable behaviors and awareness in the wider community	April 2024	Ongoing
		Investigate how to record impacts of behaviors change campaigns and training	December 2025.	Initiated.