

# Sustainability Action Plan 2019-2022

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Purpose of document	To document the objectives and targets for the Royal Agricultural University
Document version number	1.1
Document Status	Approved
Document owner	Director for Students
Author	Safety & Sustainability Manager
Approved by	E&S Committee
Date Approved	31/7/2019

## VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Change/reason for change/comments	Date Approved
1.0	Issue of document	25/6/18
1.1	Alignment of section 1 objectives to E&S policy Revised and updated targets and supporting actions	July 2019

## 1 Introduction

The Royal Agricultural University is committed to the highest standards of responsible practices and integrity. The RAU's vision is to incorporate environmental issues into all aspects of its operations, including teaching and research. The RAU aims to have a positive impact on the environment and seek out opportunities where environmental initiatives support the University's core purpose.

Many of the targets set out below originated in the RAU's 2014-16 Environmental Action Plan. The RAU is currently undergoing a transformation programme led by the university's new Vice-Chancellor. This includes a strengthened strategic focus on sustainability throughout our education, research, partnerships and operations. New academic appointments have built our capacity for thought-leadership on relevant issues including sustainable agriculture and land management, food waste and animal welfare. During 2019-20, we will comprehensively review and update the targets in line with this strengthened strategic commitment. Initial discussions have identified sustainability in the curriculum, sustainable procurement, biodiversity on campus, waste management and energy as areas where we have especially strong opportunities and ambitions to develop and demonstrate sector-leading best practice.

## 2 Objectives

One of the RAU's four strategic goals is to become a "sustainable and efficient organisation". We have identified six key objectives that contribute that goal. These are to:

- Comply with the highest national and sector standards for sustainability
- Put sustainability at the heart of our teaching and research activities
- Minimise environmental costs and use of resources
- Embed sustainability into the core of our management and operations
- Work to actively enhance our environment
- Engage with our community and partner organisations

We have identified a number of key targets and actions which will be measured and monitored in the pursuance of these objectives. These will be supported by multiple activities across the business to achieve the key objectives.

### 3 Targets and supporting actions

#### 3.1 Comply with the highest national and sector standards for sustainability

##### 3.1.1 Environmental management systems

**Objective:**

To establish and maintain an externally accredited Environmental Management System and comply with all relevant environmental

**Targets:**

Retain ISO14001 certification annually

Achieve 100% legal compliance (self-assessment)

Achieve top 10 ranking in P&P HE sustainability league (Out of 154)

**Supporting actions:**

We will provide staffing and financial resources to embed a culture where staff and students are actively engaged with environmental best practice.

We will embed sustainability principles into our decision making, policies and procedures.

We will measure, monitor and report against our identified targets.

We will identify any non-compliance and take preventative and corrective action where appropriate.

#### 3.2 Put sustainability at the heart of our teaching and research activities

##### 3.2.1 Education

**Objective:**

To embed sustainability throughout the curriculum across all areas of teaching and research

**Targets:**

To incorporate sustainability into 100% of the RAU curriculum and teaching programmes

To assess and embed the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) within all RAU research programmes

**Supporting actions:**

We will develop a toolkit to support academic staff in embedding the Education for Sustainable Development principles into their teaching programmes

We will assess how well sustainability is embedded into our teaching programmes through the ongoing validation process

We will assess all existing research programmes and map them against the SDGs

We will encourage all future research projects, whether staff or student, to follow the SDG principles

### 3.3 Minimise environmental costs and use of resources

#### 3.3.1 Energy and emissions

**Objective:**

To reduce scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

**Targets:**

Reduce total energy consumption by 5% per year

Reduce total scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 5% per year

**Supporting actions:**

We will investigate and seek sources of funding for renewable energy technologies

We will install renewable technologies and energy efficiency technologies as funding allows

#### 3.3.2 Water

**Objective:**

To reduce water consumption and waste water production

**Targets:**

Reduce total mains water consumption by 5% per year

Reduce waste water production by 5% per year

**Supporting actions:**

We will install targeted water metering to encourage minimal usage

We will install water saving technologies such as rainwater harvesting to increase grey water usage

We will integrate water efficiency measures into all new and refurbished buildings

#### 3.3.3 Waste

**Objective:**

To reduce scope 3 GHGs, resource use and costs associated with waste production and disposal

**Targets:**

Increase the total amount of waste mass which is recycled by 10%

Reduce the total amount of waste mass to landfill by 10%

Increase the amount of waste mass to energy by 10%

**Supporting actions:**

We will strengthen the awareness and information around recycling across all sites

We will provide more recycling points around campus

We will implement new strategies to encourage better waste segregation

We will work with all contractors to ensure they have robust waste minimisation plans in place

### 3.3.4 Travel and transport

**Objective:**

To reduce scope 3 GHGs emissions associated with staff and student travel

**Targets:**

Reduce the total amount of fuel used in RAU vehicles by 10%

Increase proportion of students using non-car transport by 5%

Increase proportion of staff using non-car transport by 5%

**Supporting actions:**

We will review the use of RAU provided diesel and petrol vehicles and look to move to electric vehicles where feasible

We will continue to provide non-car transport schemes such as the Liftshare scheme and the Cycle to Work scheme

We will look to promote public transport opportunities for business mileage rather than single person car journeys

We will look to increase the number of electric charging points available on site

## 3.4 Embed sustainability into the core of our management and operations

### 3.4.1 Purchasing and procurement

**Objective:**

To reduce scope 3 GHGs emissions, use of resources, waste production and whole life costs associate with the RAU's supply chain

**Targets:**

Achieve Bronze Level Food for Life Catering Mark

Achieve Level 2 of the DEFRA Flexible Framework

**Supporting actions:**

We will engage with our catering and food suppliers to embed sustainable purchasing practices and to move to local and seasonal produce where possible

We will review and update our procurement framework and support contract managers in securing a more sustainable supply chain

### 3.4.2 Built environment

**Objective:**

To reduce the carbon footprint of RAU buildings through improved energy efficiency measures

**Targets:**

Achieve EPC B+ rating for all new buildings

Achieve EPC D+ rating for all residential leased properties

**Supporting actions:**

All new and refurbished buildings to be designed to incorporate low-energy features and meet a minimum B rating EPC

Seek funding support and carry out the necessary energy efficiency remedial measures to RAU residential leased properties to bring them up to minimum grade D EPC rating

## 3.5 Work to actively enhance our environment

### 3.5.1 Biodiversity

**Objective:**

To put nature at the heart of RAU sites by protecting sensitive species, increasing natural habitats and biodiversity

**Targets:**

Undertake a minimum of 3 biodiversity projects on RAU sites each year

**Supporting actions:**

Support the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust manifesto through engaging with the required actions

Increase the coverage of wildflowers, hedging and other planting to increase and encourage a diverse range of species onsite

Integrate habitat and species surveys and projects into relevant teaching programmes

## 3.6 Engage with our community and partner organisations

### 3.6.1 Awareness and community

**Objective:**

Raise awareness of RAU sustainability objectives, targets and actions with all interested parties including students, staff, visitors, customers, contractors, the local community and the media

**Targets:**

Undertake a minimum of 3 events, promotions or campaigns relating to sustainability each year

**Supporting actions:**

Roll out a revised induction programme for all new staff to include awareness of RAU sustainability objectives, targets and actions

Include awareness of RAU sustainability objectives, targets and actions within the student welcome week

Increase sustainability information within visitor, customer and contractor information packs and on the RAU website

Promote and publicise successful research and other projects linked to the SDGs within internal communications and external marketing material

Work with the Student Union, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and other partners to widen participation in sustainability linked activities, events and volunteering opportunities