

The Academy for Sustainable Futures

2020-21 Annual Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The work of the Academy for Sustainable Futures has inevitably been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and short-time working. However, it has adapted and focused on areas of institutional priority, academic development, climate and ecological emergencies, and community engagement.

Emerging collaborative work with the Graduate College and Research Development is opening up new territory through mapping research output against the UN SDGs. This will help to identify areas of strength, as well as opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations for climate change.

Established work, through the *Futures Initiative* continues to support curriculum development across the University, and has been recognised internally and nationally through teaching excellence awards. Updated QAA/Advance HE ESD Guidance has been launched that will begin to impact on benchmark statements, providing a clear infrastructural driver for embedding ESD into the curriculum.

Whilst work across the environmental sustainability agenda continues to be positive, there has been very limited activity related to carbon reporting or to developing a *Climate Emergency Strategy* to underpin our commitments in this area following our formal declaration of a climate emergency in 2020. Whilst this can be easily justified, given institutional and global circumstances, action is now needed in order to set realistic, creditable and proportionate carbon reduction targets. Consequently, development work has commenced, and an institutional *Climate Emergency Strategy* will be brought to the Governing Body at the end of June.

Engagement activities have clearly suffered the most with the move to on-line working and learning. However, the Student Green Office continues to provide thoughtful and dynamic social media content, and building communities for climate action across the district is establishing momentum.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report provides a new template for annual sustainability reporting and is complemented by an on-going process of activity reporting in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals to satisfy our institutional commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) through SDG Accord (<https://www.sdgaccord.org/>).

1.1 The Academy for Sustainable Futures (ASF)

The report is organised around the four priorities of CCCU's Academy for Sustainable Futures (ASF) which reflect the activity areas within our Framework for Sustainability ([link](#)).

- Provide **evidence**, through undertaking and sharing sustainability research (see section 2, *Sustainability Research*)
- **Embed** education for sustainability within all learning and teaching (see section 3, *Sustainability Education*)
- **Exemplify** sustainable practices through university operations (see section 4, *Sustainable Environment*)
- Build relationships for change through **engagement** with our university and local communities, and with national and international policy and policy-makers (see section 5, *Sustainable Communities*)

The Academy for Sustainable Futures was formally agreed by SMT in 2020 and was developed in response to the need to build momentum, showcase activity and demonstrate leadership for sustainability. It builds upon our existing approach (the *Futures Initiative*) whilst acknowledging the need to move beyond an 'initiative', and extend the academic focus, particularly in relation to research and enterprise activity. Our institutional recognition of the Global Climate Emergency in 2020 emphasises the significance of being able to 'go further faster', particularly in relation to:

- action-oriented climate change research and skills creation;
- reaching net-zero by 2030 or 2050 at the very latest
- increasing the delivery of environmental and sustainability education across curriculum, campus and community outreach programmes.

It is important to recognise the interrelatedness of the Academy's four priorities, and that climate action is not just about reducing our carbon emissions. As a university we have clear responsibilities to develop evidence informed advocacy for sustainable systems change, as well as education and sustainable pedagogies that support the development of advocates for a sustainable future.

A strategy for the Academy will be developed for the next Academic year, in concordance with the University Strategic Framework. However, the two key priorities are:

- Launch the Academy for Sustainable Futures, building profile for Education, Research and Advocacy, that supports the University's key priorities.
- Drive the creation and implementation of the University's *Climate Emergency Strategy* to make a meaningful contribution to the UK's carbon reduction targets and strategy through developing and providing evidence and advocacy for systems change, educating our students to be the advocates of the future, and exemplifying sustainable practices through our approach to reducing our own carbon emissions

1.2 Governance of the Academy

The Sustainability Strategic Management Group [SSMG] is an executive group of the Senior Management Team, and remains responsible for monitoring progress against the University Strategic Framework for Sustainability. Annual sustainability reports are provided to SMT and the Finance and Resources Committee of the Governing Body.

The Academy comprises four strategic groups responsible for Research, Education, Environment and Community. Each group has specific operational or strategic links into the University academic or operational infrastructure, as indicated in Figure 1.

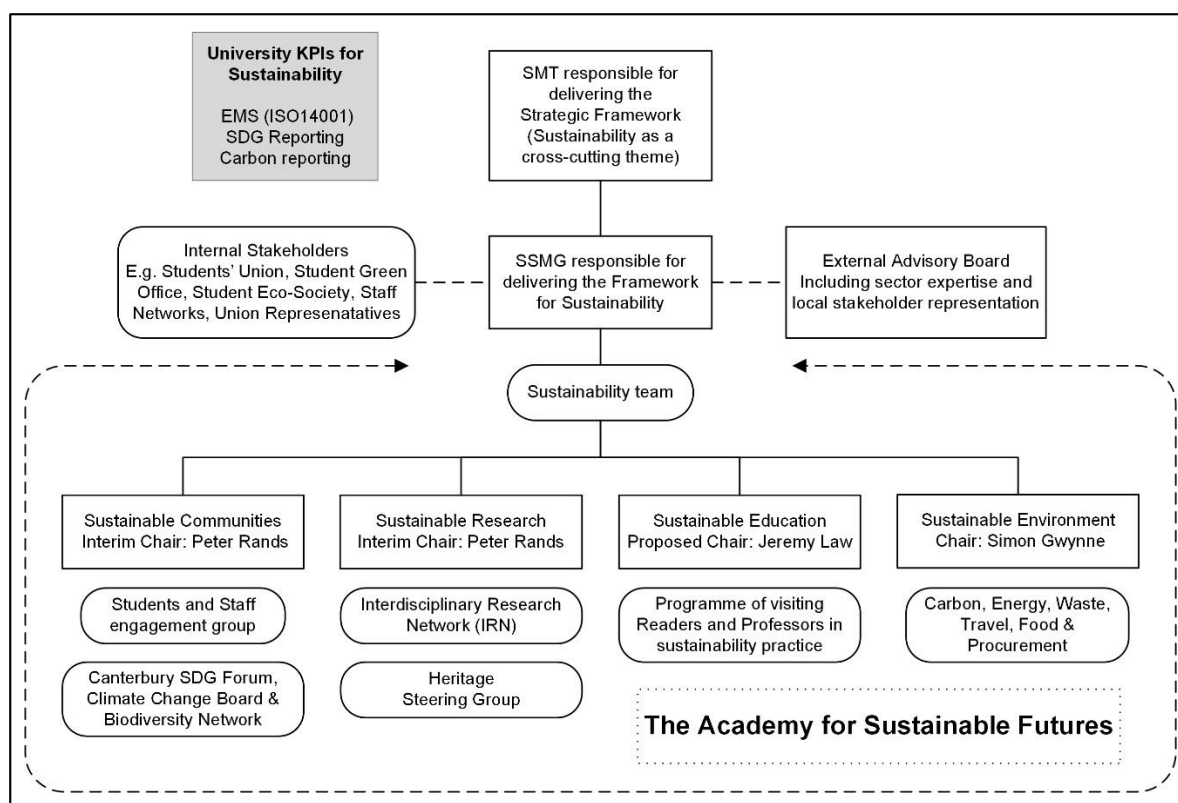


Figure 1: Organisational representation of the ASF

The Academy incorporates structures for both internal and external stakeholder engagement. The last significant stakeholder engagement activity took place in January 2020, when a Climate Action workshop was held with students, staff and the Students' Union, as part of the Responsible Futures Partnership. This focused on developing an action plan for the SDG Accord Climate Letter three-point plan. A follow-up meeting took place to 'hone' the plan with more than 30 staff in attendance. Unfortunately, national lockdown followed shortly afterwards, and no further progress has been made. However, the approach under development calls for university-wide consultation on the delivery of the plan.

1.3 Institutional KPIs and links to other reporting

The Academy has responsibility for three University KPIs relating to Sustainability. None of these are included in the University's high-level risk register that is reviewed regularly. However, they are monitored by SSMG, and reported to SMT and the Governing body annually. The current RAG status of each is included below.

- 1 Maintain a recognised international standard for environmental management (ISO14001)
GREEN: EMS Recertified to ISO14001:2015
- 2 Uphold the University's commitment to the SDG Accord by embedding the SDGs, reporting annually to the UN High Level Political Forum
GREEN: SDG reporting maintained as a complementary activity to this annual report
- 3 Monitor the University's carbon reduction targets to 2030 from 2019/20 onwards (once new targets have been set)

This KPI is currently unratable as targets have not been set. However, an approach has been agreed, a group convened, and a strategy will be presented to the Governing Body in June.

The annual sustainability report is separate from the University's annual Financial report. However, from 2019/20 SECR¹ requires annual Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions reporting to be included. The University also produces a public facing annual report that is presented at a public meeting. The report provides a narrative of achievements from the year, along with summary financial and demographic data. Elements of the University's wider sustainability related activity are normally included. [Ref. <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/about-us/publications.aspx>]

1.4 External Assurance

The University has operated an externally certified Environmental Management System to ISO14001 [2004 and latterly 2015] standards since 2013. Data integrity, policy, strategy and action are audited annually internally and by our external verifier, NQA.

Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme was replaced by the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) framework, under which the University is required to report as part of the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018. The first report was produced by external consultants BIU for the 2019/20 reporting year, using a 2018/19 as the baseline year, and presented to the Governing Body in Nov. 2020. annually.

1.5 Academic context 2020-21

Plans to formally launch the Academy in 2020 were inevitably interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. Whilst its' work has continued, the combined impacts of short-time working, moving to a wholly on-line operation, along with completing and equipping the Verena Holmes Building have caused significant challenges. Due to these challenges, this report will provide a narrative that covers progress during A/Y 2019-21 and carbon-based reporting for A/Y 2019-20. However, it is important to note that delivering on the priorities for the Academy will need a refocus of priorities, in particular developing a coherent *Climate Emergency Strategy* that is delivered across and beyond the organisation.

¹ UK Government, Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting, 2019

2 SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH

2.1 The Sustainable Research Group

During 2019/20 a Sustainable Research Group was formed under the auspices of the Academy to drive the research element of the University Framework for Sustainability. This coincided with the launch of the Graduate College, which plays a key role within the group.

Work over the last year has focused around:

- developing a sustainable research community through the Sustainability in Higher Education (SHE) and the Interdisciplinary Research Networks;
- working with Research Development and the University of Leicester to map CCCU research outputs since 2015/16 to the UN SDGs.
- identifying opportunities and submitting bids for externally funded research;
- the development of postgraduate research through identifying potential supervisors with a sustainability focus; recruitment on to the Masters by Research Programme;
- ensuring alignment of the Research and Academy web pages;

2.2 Developing a Sustainable Research Community

2.2.1 The Sustainability in Higher Education (SHE) Network

CCCU developed and leads the Sustainability in Higher Education (SHE) conference series in partnership with Plymouth University. The fifth annual conference ‘The fierce urgency of now? Navigating Paradoxes in Sustainability Education’ was due to be held on site in Canterbury during May 2020. Challenged by the words of Greta Thunberg, spoken at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2019 our aim was to provide a space to explore the role and responsibility of universities in a time of global crisis and to explore what it means to act as “*if our house is on fire...*” And then the Covid-19 pandemic struck... and the focus we had planned took on a new relevance.

Under lockdown conditions, the conference moved to an online format and we all found ourselves working in uncharted territory. The conference was free to attend, and spread over 3 days with all paper presentations and workshops provided and available for viewing in advance, workshops were delivered online, and lively discussions and panel discussions created a distinctive experience for more than 170 attendees. Although challenging, the conference opened up unexpected opportunities for colleagues and students from different institutions nationally and internationally to participate, increasing diversity and repositioning the SHE network as more outward-facing.

Key outcomes from the conference were:

- All pre-recorded and live sessions (also recorded) were made available together with [Conference Proceedings](#) for on-going reference
- An extensive PRISM [case study](#) has been provided as a reference for good practice
- All presenters invited to submit manuscripts for the special issue of the International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education (IJSHE) <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/ijshe.htm> - “Navigating Paradoxes in Sustainability Education”. Publication is expected during the summer of 2021.
- The establishment of a Diversity and Inclusion in Sustainability Education working group within the University.

- The creation of a SHE Network that collaboratively runs monthly discussion forums, on challenging issues in sustainability education (see table below)

| MONTH | FACILITATOR | TITLE |
|---------------|---|--|
| June 2020 | Peter Harper, Independent Environmentalist | Scratching my head |
| July 2020 | Angela Druckman, Prof of Sustainable Consumption and Production at the University of Surrey | Embedding Sustainability Education |
| October 2020 | Fran Martin, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Exeter | Sustainability through decolonial lenses |
| November 2020 | Zulfi Ali, Senior Lecturer, Canterbury Christ Church University | Personal reflections on the many crises in ESD |
| December 2020 | Alan Bainbridge, Senior Lecturer, Canterbury Christ Church University | Learning to become: education for future survival |
| January 2021 | Diana Pound, CEO of Dialogue Matters | Seize the moment |
| February 2021 | Peter Vujakovic, Emeritus Professor of Geography, Canterbury Christ Church University | Food for thought |
| March 2021 | John Thorne, Sustainability Coordinator Sustainability in Action Group (SiAG), Glasgow School of Art | We are not here to teach students to recycle |

Table 1: SHE Network discussion group meetings

2.2.2 Interdisciplinary Research Network

The Interdisciplinary Research Network (IRN) aims to stimulate cross-disciplinary engagement and facilitate collaboration between Schools and Faculties. It incorporates the former Sustainability Research Network (SRN) and runs monthly lunchtime seminars and afternoon tea events, and has recently initiated an IRN bulletin to keep staff informed of interdisciplinary opportunities and events taking place within and beyond the University.

2.3 Mapping Sustainability Research across CCCU

One of the key challenges in developing sustainability research has been the lack of knowledge and understanding about existing sustainability research expertise and outputs across CCCU. In 2019 the Times Higher Education (THE) introduced Impact Rankings in order to rank universities according to their contribution towards the UN SDGs. In response to this, and to support their submission, the University of Leicester has developed a mathematical model for mapping research impact against the SDGs.

Using an adapted list of keywords based the SDG Goals, Targets and Indicators, keywords are used to created query codes that can be used to search publication titles, abstracts and keywords in Scopus. Research impact is assessed against the Scopus database, which is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature: scientific journals, books and conference proceedings. Whilst Christ Church is not currently making a submission to the THE Impact rankings, undertaking a mapping of research output over the five years leading up to REF 2021 offers an interesting opportunity for post-REF reflection and for developing knowledge and understanding of our institutional strengths in sustainability research. A report has been commissioned, supported by Research Development, which will also provide a comparison with universities in the Cathedrals Group.

2.4 Opportunities for Expanding Funded Research

Over the past year, the Academy has been involved in a number of applications for external funding.

2.4.1 *National Lottery Climate Action Fund*

In January 2020 Cross-Kent Natural Environment Community of Practice (CKNECP) was invited to submit a full proposal to the Climate Action Fund, after being selected from more than 600 expressions of interest. The proposal was led by the Commonwork Trust (Bore Place), with the Kent Nature Partnership, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and an interdisciplinary research team from Christ Church, represented by the ASF. The vision was to develop a lasting approach to tackling the climate emergency on a landscape scale, through a community of practice which combined the energy, reach and experience of communities and organisations to achieve meaningful change. The proposal was to provide local beacons for change at local farms/estates, as well as a beacon at a landscape scale to spread and share the learning from this initiative to gain maximum impact regionally and nationally. Unfortunately, the £200k proposal, of which £85k for CCCU's research and evaluation, did not get past the second stage submission process.

2.4.2 *DEFRA Green Social Prescribing*

In Autumn 2020, DEFRA announced funding to set up 4 regional green social prescribing pilots. The Kent and Medway Alliance for Green Social Prescribing (GSP) of which CCCU is part, put together a £500k proposal. The aim was to set up a sustainable, scalable, county-wide model for GSP which would be embedded in NHS, Local Authority and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) systems. CCCU was to provide an iterative evaluation and learning process based on the 'Realist evaluation approach', led by Prof Chris Burton. Additional partners included the NHS Kent and Medway STP, KCC Public Health, Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent Countryside Partnerships, Forestry England, and Explore Kent; with many others to be included as the project developed.

Although the proposal was unsuccessful, the partnership is strong and will be continuing to undertake initial mapping of existing provision of GSP in Kent and Medway, which is being undertaken by two new recruits under the Government's 'Kickstart' programme, led by KCC. Additionally, opportunities for Health student placements within particular settings are being explored, in order to provide initial evaluation work.

2.4.3 *Application to the Spencer Foundation for Harmony in Education research*

Dr Nicola Kemp has been leading on collaborative research and practice partnership with the Harmony Project. The project aims to facilitate wider awareness, adoption and implementation of a 'Harmony' approach to sustainability education within schools and educational organisations. In autumn 2020, an opportunity arose to apply for significant funding for an international partnership-based project, through the Spencer Foundation. The Foundation invests in education research that cultivates learning and transforms lives. The focus of the proposal was on addressing the question of whether *"the 'Harmony' approach to sustainability education provides a robust pedagogy for primary schools that could be taken to scale"*. It was to combine research established Harmony practice in schools in the UK with emerging practice in the USA and Japan.

2.4.4 Kent Wildlife Trust bid to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund

Dr Adriana Consorte-McCrea, Dr Alan Bainbridge and Dr Anke Franz have undertaken a variety of studies into public perceptions of the re-introduction of lost species to particular habitats, commonly known as 're-wilding' or 'wilding'. The Kent Wildlife Trust plan to re-introduce the Chough to Kent, for which they have made an application to the Heritage Lottery Green Recovery Fund. Adriana has proposed a small research project, valued at £3.6k, to study attitudes towards the reintroduction, as part of the bid. Whilst small in value, this bid is intended to build more formal collaboration, and opportunities for further funding in the future.

3 SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

3.1 The Sustainable Education Group

The Sustainable Education Group has a well-established record for driving forward innovation through the *Futures Initiative* since 2011. Significantly, last year this legacy of work has been recognised by the award of two teaching excellence awards that celebrate the collaborative nature of the work. This section provides some practical examples of activities that have been supported during the pandemic year, along with highlighting a step change in the QAAs Guidance on Education for Sustainable Development.

3.2 New ESD Guidance from the QAA and Advance HE

Many things have changed since the first version of the QAA/HEA ESD Guidance was published in 2014. After an extensive sector-wide review and consultation, a new version of the guidance has been published, that is intended to serve as a reference point for use in curriculum design, delivery and review.

The QAA has also reviewed the process for updating Subject Benchmark Statements and is committed to ensuring the Statements will include sections on how subject communities frame sustainable development in their teaching and assessment models. There will be a session at the Learning & Teaching conference in June, that will discuss 'The challenges and opportunities of delivering Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in blended learning contexts', which will refer to key principles within the new guidance.

Whilst the guidance provides a good starting point for integrating sustainability it needs to be complemented by a critical approach that aligns with nature of the curriculum. However, it is clear that the QAA has made a step change in its consideration of ESD that will need to be represented within the University's Learning and Teaching Quality processes.

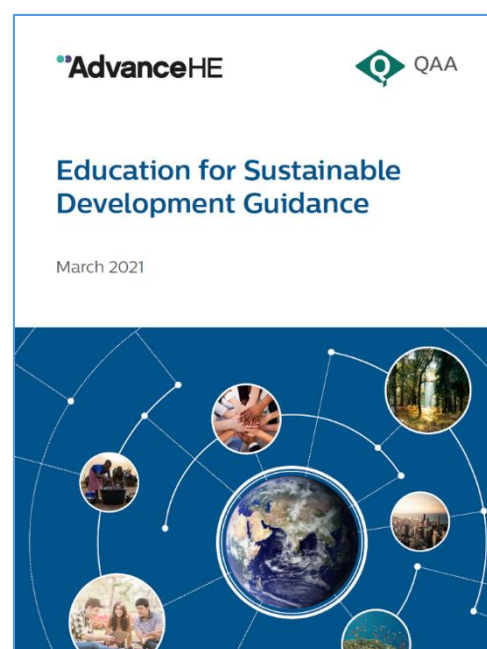


Figure 2: ESD Guidance cover page

3.3 Teaching Excellence Awards

2020 was a particularly successful year for the academic work of the Team, with internal team, and external collaborative awards for teaching excellence.

3.3.1 Advance HE CATE

The award Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE), presented by Advance HE, recognises and rewards collaborative work that has had an outstanding impact on student learning and the teaching profession. The application was based on the influence of the *Futures Initiative* since 2012, on strategy, curriculum, leaning and teaching, having supported and facilitated academic development in a wholly collaborative way. Extensive feedback identified strong and clear evidence of the teams':

- reach, value and impact, demonstrated in a range of ways;

- collaborative approach, how it worked, and how their approach benefitted team members, colleagues, students, the wider institution and beyond;
- authentic partnership with students and external stakeholders, including robust opportunities for these partners to influence the collaboration, and that the collaboration in turn demonstrably enhanced their learning or practice;
- impact on transformational change having been brought about within the institution;
- use of a robust and diverse range of evidence to underpin their claim;
- of the innovative nature of the team's approach;
- sound theoretical or pedagogical underpinning their approach to specific activities; however, it was also made clear how this theory had demonstrably informed their practice;

One of the three reviewers provided the following summary in relation to the teams' approach:

"There is outstanding evidence of excellence in your sustained approach to working collaboratively. The rationale and approach are explained thoroughly through a comprehensive spectrum of activity that fulfils collaboration in your context. You demonstrate direct engagement with students, diverse University groups and community groups. You have taken a priority area with no discipline boundaries and demonstrated how your collaboration has supported embedding practices across and beyond the institution."

There was a brief on-line celebratory event for all Advance HE CATE and NTF awards, and it is planned that there will be a joint 2020-2021 awards ceremony at the end of November this year. The team has also been asked to submit a proposal to be included in a book outlining the variety of CATE winners' work as part of the 'CATE Collection'.

3.3.2 Team University Teaching Excellence Award

The purpose of the award is to recognise, reward and celebrate collaborative work to promote teaching excellence and to create a proactive learning community within the University. The judging panel was impressed by the strength of the claim:

"which clearly demonstrates the extent of the impact that your many initiatives have had on students and colleagues within the University and beyond. The scope of the changes you have initiated is very wide and sustained over the last 9 years. The nature of the activities you have pursued is also impressive by their diversity (programme development, staff development, exhibitions, set of talks through Project 93, conferences, publications, etc.) and the public you have reached are also very varied. You are clearly driven by the key principles of the University Learning and Teaching strategy, and it is pleasing to learn that the momentum will be kept with the setting up of the Academy."

3.4 Supporting Curriculum Development for Sustainability

The Teaching Resources for Sustainability Blackboard has undergone restructuring to align with the new academic structure. It continues to offer a wide range of resources on sustainability related issues, continually updated, across academic disciplines, and provides some alignment to the UN SDGs and other overarching themes. Whilst this resource overlaps with many other cross-cutting themes, it helps with understanding the interrelations across the whole of the social and environmental arena.

Academic partnerships remain a key part of our work that have been enhanced in the last year through the following collaborations:

3.4.1 Culture and Carbon Internships

By combining our strengths in sustainability and strong cultural networks across the region, the Arts and Culture and Sustainability teams are piloting a new internship model where students are placed with cultural organisations to help them define and meet some of their sustainability goals. Working with organisations to identify 'Scope 3' areas of their carbon footprint (e.g. supply chains, transportation, etc). These actions are also more likely to produce 'feel-good' changes that organisations can use for their marketing and public relations work. Prior to being paired with the organisations, students receive in-house training in carbon calculation and the sustainability priorities for the cultural sector.

In this first year, there are two students completing the internship;

- James Bickford-Smith (3rd year, Politics) and Gevish Kheddo (1st Year, Engineering). James is working with Pride Canterbury to explore a number of measures they could take including reducing single-use plastic, switching their generators to more sustainable energy supplies, and researching possible sustainability accreditation they might want to pursue.
- Gevish has been paired with Creative Folkestone and the placement has prompted a lot of internal conversations about their strategy and goals. They've recently confirmed that they would like him to focus on ideas for reducing single-use plastics for their venue and events.

These internships are supervised by Katie McGown and John Hills and supported by Tina Atchison-Thomas. Employability Managers Chiara Hewer and Famy Rashid also ran sessions with the students prior to their meetings with the organisations. The internships are funded from the Arts and Culture budget. At present, the plan is to run another cycle of the internships next year that might include a hybrid of online and face-to-face sessions, and then depending on feedback and evaluation, identify external funding sources and enterprise opportunities for this model.

3.4.2 Albert Certification

Founded in 2011 and governed by an industry consortium, Albert supports everyone working in film and TV to understand their opportunities to create positive environmental change. Albert partnerships aim to arm students with the sustainability knowledge they'll need when joining the screen industries.

Albert certification has now been embedded within the year 3 Professional Perspectives module which is core for all FRTV and Film Production students, about 60 in total. It will account for 40% of the marks in PP3 and the other 60% will be a pitch from student groups for a film, documentary, TV show, radio show.

A brief focused around biodiversity and heritage was provided, and several students produced excellent responses for short films about the campus and its role within our sustainability strategy. Module lead, Ken Fox, also secured a small Teaching & Learning Grant to disseminate information about Albert certification. This funded a number of students to create a narrated PowerPoint presentations and videos,

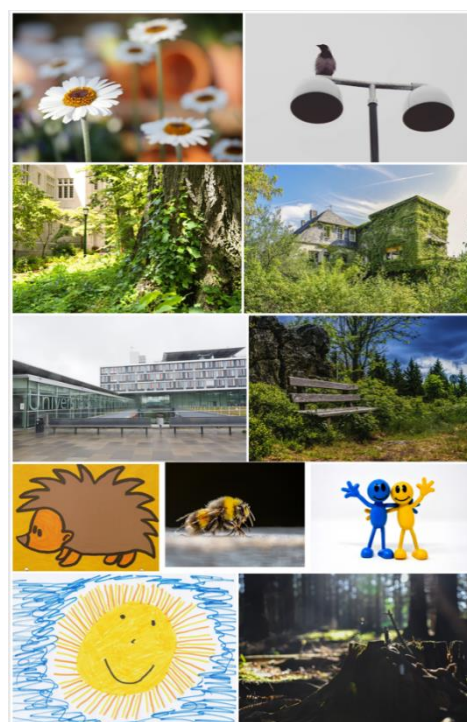


Figure 3: Images from the 'Let it Bee' proposal

describing how it has helped them to think more sustainably in their own lives but also about working more sustainably within the Creative Industries.

3.4.3 *Business and Sustainability*

In order to connect what students learned in the Business and Sustainability module and the environment they lived in, Poh Yen from the Business School approached the Sustainability Team to provide a case study on which the students could work. 'The Heritage, Hops and Honey' was provided as a brief, highlighting the need for additional resources and impetus to take the initiative to the next level. In addition to providing solutions to the challenges, students were required to evaluate their role as a student in supporting the University's sustainability commitment.

As a result of their limited awareness of sustainability initiatives, partly due to their limited in-campus experience during 2020/21, both the senior lead for sustainability and a member of the Student Green Office provided operational context. Vivid examples of how an education institution like Christ Church is contributing to sustainability challenges through working with different stakeholders were made real.

Poh Yen identifies several significant values as a result of incorporating the sustainability case into the module:

- It provided a real sustainability challenge, where students can be a direct player
- It engaged students directly with university activities when they have limited access to the campus
- It provided solution-based learning to bring students into the core of the university sustainability agenda

3.5 Supporting and Fostering Sustainable Pedagogies

One of the key messages to emerge from the SHE conference was the importance of promoting diverse voices and discourses in education for sustainability (EfS). In June 2020 the Diversity and Inclusion in EfS working group was formed to:

- Highlight areas of alignment between sustainability and racial justice; show how focussing on one, often impacts positively on the other;
- Highlight research and teaching strategies that work at the intersection of sustainability and racial justice;
- Help celebrate diversity, helping to develop a diverse and inclusive learning environments;
- Increase BAME representation in sustainability and build a sense of belonging;
- Help enrich sustainability messages with more diverse narratives and discourses; supporting decolonising of the curriculum

Presentations that have been led by the working group include:

- Sustaining Ourselves, Sustaining our World. (Closing Our Gap World Café Event 07/08/20), with Rajeeb Sah, Programme Director MSc Global Public Health, International Lead for School of Allied and Public Health Professions, Faculty of Medicine, Health and Social Care;
- SEN, Sustainability and Law (SEN & I Annual Conference: Social Inclusion 26/10/20, with Dr Gowri Nanayakkara FHEA, Subject Lead for Law and Senior Lecturer in Law, Lead for Closing the Law Awarding Gap (CLAG), Civil and Commercial Mediator, School of Law.

The Education for Sustainability Action Plan has highlighted many areas of alignment with other CCCU Strategies that are committed to education for social and environmental sustainability. Efs aims and objectives have been mapped against the framework developed by Closing Our Gap, to identify alignment with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Access and Participation Plan 2020/21-2024/25, the recommendations outlined in the Universities UK and NUS joint report BAME Students Attainment at UK Universities, and the EDI action plan. This provides a very useful overlay for all our social sustainability work.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE

- Global climate crisis
 - environmental, economic and social imbalance and inequity
 - need for healing body, mind and spirit
- Social and environmental justice fighting many of the same battles:
 - Pollution and other forms of environmental degradation disproportionately affected poorer people, working class people, people of colour and immigrants
 - Neighbourhoods lacking green space and access to nature.
 - Economic model of extreme exploitation of humans and of nature
- The effects of climate change disproportionately affect people who are unable to escape from extreme weather events



Figure 4: Sustaining Ourselves, Sustaining our World

Support has also been provided to initiatives run by the BAME Staff Network and BH365, under the umbrella of Us in the World:

- “Poetry & Motion” - An Evening of Hope & Solidarity, Through Words of Collective Resistance (21/10/20)- Harshad Keval
- “Decolonising Social Thinking series”: 28/04/21 Dr. Ali Meghji:
<https://research.sociology.cam.ac.uk/profile/dr-ali-meghji> , from Cambridge University, discussing his new book, ‘Decolonising Sociology’

Futures Initiative funding is currently supporting three projects:

- Developing a Decolonising Sociology seminar series (Harshad Keval)
- Creating a series of Craftivism workshops (Jae Fowler & Adriana Consorte- McCrea). Craftivism and Sustainability was recently presented at the Events Management Programme Spring Festival ‘Code Green’ in March 2021, introducing the concept creative activism.
- Developing an ‘Introducing Sustainability’ video series with students (Adriana Consorte-McCrea & Stephen Scoffham)



Figure 5: Craftivism and Sustainability presentation, Code Green Event, Mar 19, 2021

4 SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

After a long and successful history in carbon reduction activity, the period since 2016/17 has been blighted by financial challenges, the inevitable impacts of major building projects on the Canterbury Campus, and estate consolidation activities. Thus, energy and carbon reporting has been severely limited, and with no concrete action on setting out our approach to making a meaningful contribution to the UK's net-zero targets, as our moral and stated commitments require.

A recent league table (November 2020) for carbon reduction commitment puts the University in the bottom 1/3 of the Further and Higher Education sector, which includes all but 3 FE Colleges. With potential for significant reputational implications, it is critical that the University presents an authentic and defensible position that is understood by and acceptable to all its stakeholders. Target setting needs to be undertaken rigorously and within the context of the University's financial trajectory, in complete unison with the Estate Masterplan, and within the context of its local, regional and international operational setting.

4.1 Developing a *Climate Emergency Strategy*

In response to this backdrop previously outlined, and the realisation that as we emerge from the Pandemic, the Climate Emergency will take on greater national and international significance, a Climate Emergency Development Group (CEDG) has been convened that will develop proposals for an institutional *Climate Emergency Strategy*. This will detail the University's approach to making a meaningful contribution to the UK's carbon reduction targets and strategy, including setting and delivering a carbon reduction strategy and targets for our Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions, and setting out our approach to developing and providing evidence and advocacy for systems change. A draft *Climate Emergency Strategy* will be brought to the Governing Body at the end of June, which will outline the four core principles of what:

- Scope 1 & 2 emissions it can and cannot reduce to zero?
- Scope 3 emissions it will take direct responsibility for via an internal policy response (e.g., sustainable travel policy, procurement policy)
- Scope 3 emissions it will take indirect responsibility for via an external evidence-informed advocacy response (e.g. providing evidence-informed advocacy for changes to government policies and regulations that will improve scope 3 emissions in our supply chain)?
- It's underpinning approach to offsetting emissions will be?

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| Scope 1&2 Can reduce | Scope 1&2 Can't reduce | Scope 3 Direct responsibility (internal policy response) | Scope 3 Indirect responsibility (external evidence-informed advocacy response) |
| Approach to Offsetting | | | |

This approach will provide clarity over the:

- Direct action required to set and deliver on net zero targets for Scope 1 & 2 emissions.

- Policy and practice that needs to be implemented in order to set targets for Scope 3 emissions over which we chose to take direct responsibility.
- Approach to developing evidence and advocacy for reductions in scope 3 emissions over which we have an indirect responsibility, supported by appropriate policy.

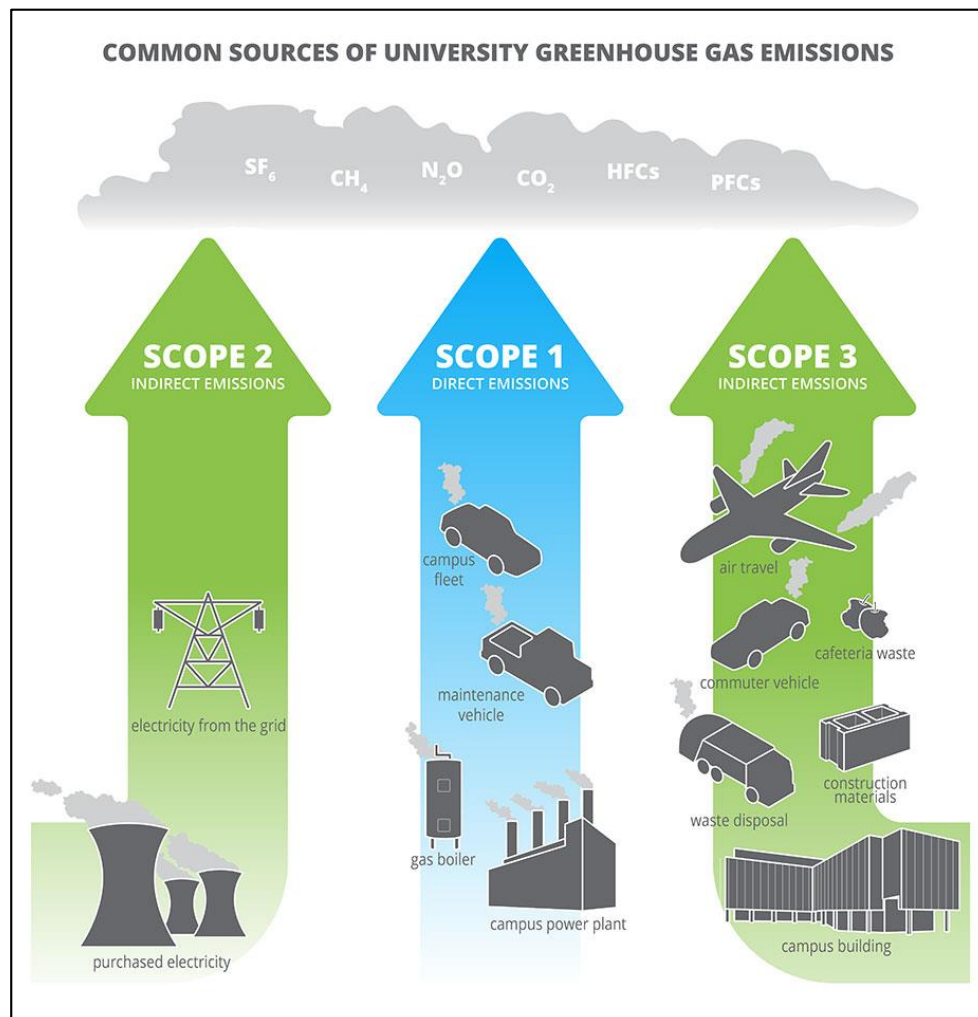


Figure 6: Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. © 2021 KieranTimberlake

4.2 Carbon emissions reporting

In 2018 the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme was replaced by the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) framework, under which the University is required to report as part of the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018. Payments made under the CRC for Scope 1 & 2 energy sources were transferred to the Climate Change Levy (CCL), with large increases for both gas and electricity in 2019. The CCL is applied to the energy bill by the supplier, with charges continuing to rise steeply on gas until 2023.

SECR mandates reporting of Scope 1 & 2 emissions, with the option to report some specific Scope 3 emissions. The sector norm in this regard is to include waste disposal, water consumption and disposal, and business travel. There is currently only very limited data collection for our Scope 3 emissions profile. So, the first report, undertaken by BiU Ltd, in which emissions for Academic Year 2019/20 are compared against the new baseline year, 2018-19, are for Scope 1 & 2 emissions only.

Fig. 7 shows the scope 1 & 2 reductions from the original baseline year, 2009/10, compared against the original 25% reduction trajectory (2009/10 to 2015/16) extended to 50%. There has been a total of a 54% reduction over the last 10 years, and a 40% reduction over the 9 years prior to the impact of COVID-19.

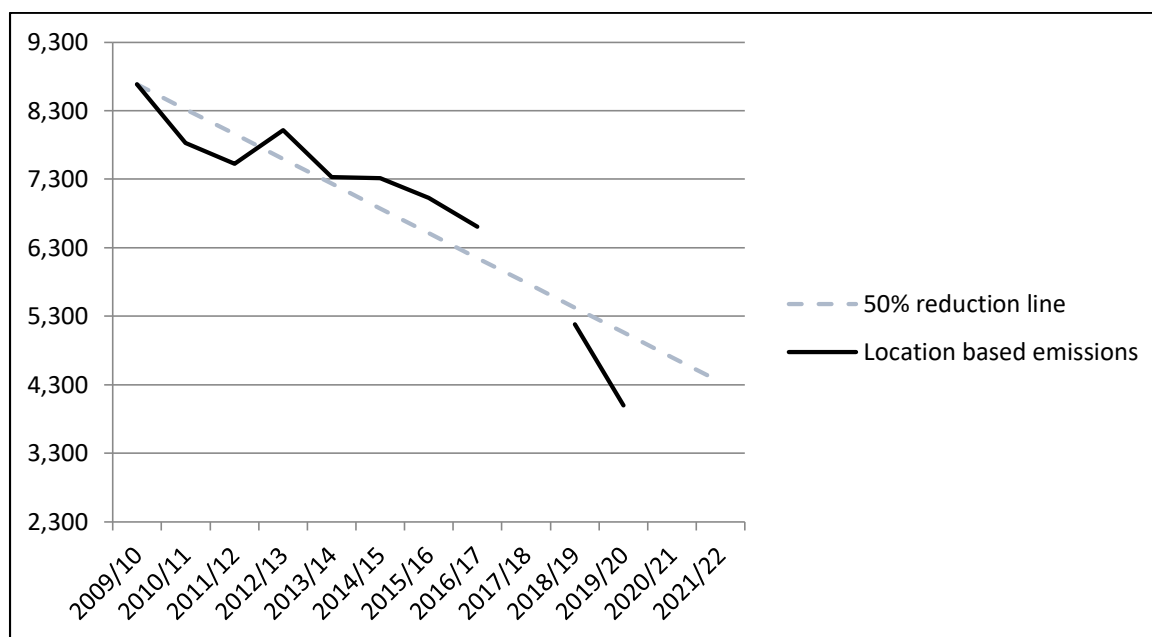


Figure 7: Scope 1 & 2 emissions traced since the first base-line year, 2009/10

NOTE: Reported emissions for 2018-20 are based on the BEIS 2020 emissions factors. 2018/19 year has been set as the new baseline year. Construction emissions are excluded as they belong to the contractor until handover, but should be included in any supply chain emissions (Scope 3).

COVID Impact

Reported emissions for 2019-20 have fallen by a total of 23% from the baseline year 2018-19. This reflects a 10% reduction from August to February, and a 40% reduction from March to July due to the implications of COVID-19.

It is important to recognise that there will be a proportionate increase in domestic emissions from energy use in the 'working at home' environment, offsetting reductions in emissions from commuting, which remain part of the overall Scope 3 emissions profile.

The emissions profile for 2020-21 will show a similarly disrupted picture due to Pandemic and the opening of Building 2. During the period 2019-21 significant consolidation of the estate will also be reflected in the overall scope 1 & 2 emissions profile. A more stable and balanced profile is not expected to be seen until AY 2021-22 is reported in October 2022, as long as campus operations return to pre-COVID levels in August 2021.

4.3 Building Carbon Literacy through Training

The first session of Carbon Literacy Training (CLT) was due to be run on campus in late March 2020. In the intervening period, the Carbon Literacy Project (CLP) gained funding from BEIS² to develop two Carbon Literacy Toolkits based on the MMU and NTU versions of the training. Launched in early 2021, these are available to all public sector organisations to support CLT in the workforce and

² Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

amongst their clients (e.g. students and pupils). Whilst the materials themselves are not distributable, the University can use them to run external courses to generate an income stream.

Subsequently, four staff that were to attend the CLT in March 2020 have attended courses run by the EAUC³ based on the MMU toolkit, which was very well received and is already galvanising carbon reduction action. The training can be delivered face to face, on-line, or in a blended fashion, and consists of 5 modules run over two 4-hour sessions or four 2-hour sessions, with additional pre-reading/viewing independent work.

The University has now been given access to the toolkits, and is working to develop in-house CLT for staff and students. Individual certification is provided on completion, which has been considered by the Student Green Office as a highly desirable addition to their employability. It is hoped that a pilot will be run during the summer with a small team from a single department, and courses will then be held throughout the year, along with consideration of advertising for external fee-paying attendees.

4.4 Waste disposal

Following the award of the University waste contract to Countrystyle in August of 2016, with subsequent extension, the contract continues to prove extremely successful. Costs continue to reduce due to robust monitoring of waste by Countrystyle, and the overall waste figures continue to trend downwards.

For AY 2019/20 292 tonnes of waste was produced with a recycling rate of 35% across the university estate. This is a reduction of 118 tonnes and 29% on AY 2018/19. These figures will have been affected the Covid-19 pandemic, and the consequential move to on-line learning and home-working. Whilst a more permanent operational shift may result in further waste reduction on site, it is likely that this will be partly balanced by increased domestic waste for food related and paper.

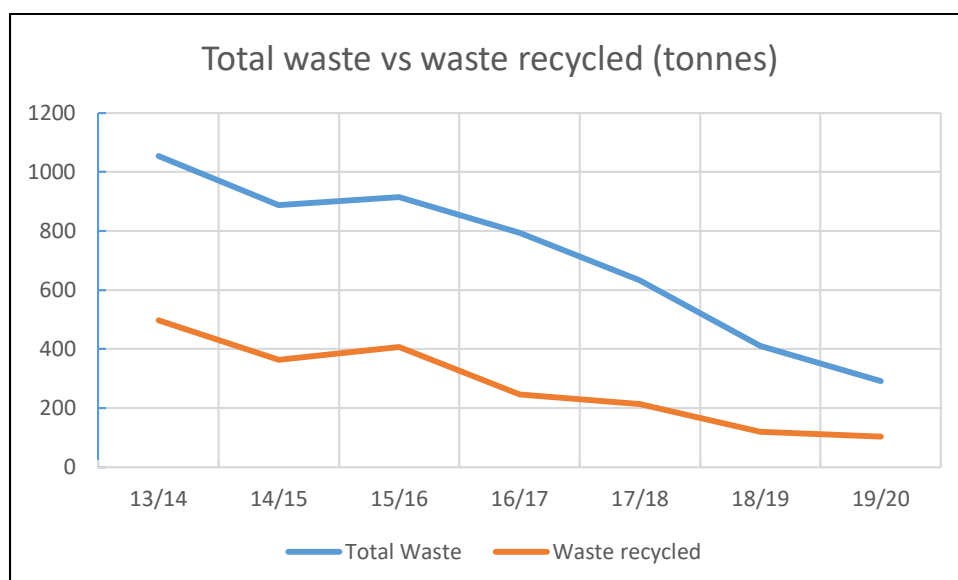


Figure 8: The on-going downward trend in waste production, matched equally by recycling

³ The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education

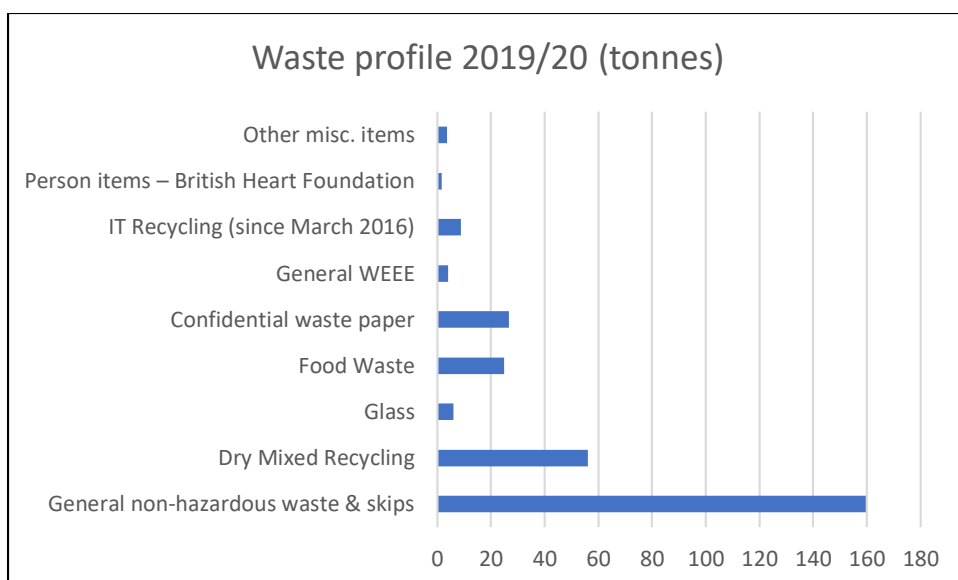


Figure 9: The University waste profile or 2019/20

Whilst the Countrystyle contract remains very robust, it has been in place for 5 years (3 years plus 2 years of extension) and still functions very well. However, University needs to approach the market place again through formal tender to ensure the contract remains the most appropriate solution. The new tender will be in place for June 2021.

COVID impact

There has been a 27% reduction in collections, which has largely as a result of students leaving accommodation early. Many either took everything away immediately on leaving or returned later and cleared their accommodations, which also resulted in a significant reduction in donations of personal items to the British Red Cross. There have also been very significantly reduced footfall at all catering outlets due.

Since lockdown began the role of all housekeeping staff has moved from 'output' to 'input' specification cleaning. Proactive cleaning on high-touch areas, along with the provision and replenishment of more than 700 hand sanitiser stations. Additionally, a different selection of products has been in use and waste handling practices have changed.

4.5 Transport provision

The University fleet vehicles lease contract has been extended several times and is now 6 years old. With several issues starting to appear with some of the fleet, options for replacements are being sought. Whilst it is the aspiration of the university to reduce the carbon footprint, and move to wholly electric vehicles, there are some specialist vehicles such as, the Grounds & Gardens Tipper truck, catering refrigerated vans and the Large Logistics Luton van that can only be replaced with Diesel vehicles. For the remaining seven vehicles, it is planned for replacement with Hybrid or pure Electric.

4.6 Sustainable catering

The drive to ensure that sustainable catering principles are embedded into the culture of the operation remains, with the continued diversity of menu choices and minimisation of unsustainable packaging. However, there are on-going issues related to the provision of disposable cups, which the

current levy is unable to eliminate, along with the consequential impact of recycled waste contamination and the volumes of general waste.

As the campus begins to open up in the new academic year, further consideration needs to be given to increasing the levy, introducing significant loyalty schemes or eliminating the availability of disposable cups.

4.7 Biodiversity

Engagement with cultural heritage, the natural environment and wildlife is seen as critical to the health and well-being of society. The University seeks to address this through our green spaces on campus, with even small urban sites having a significant impact. Unfortunately, due to the Pandemic, the campus has been off limits for most students and staff, but key sites such as the Johnson Wildlife and Wellbeing Garden have been nurtured and maintained, and progress on this and other 'green heritage' projects shared via bespoke videos made by the Sustainability Projects Officer (John Hills).



Figure 10: Johnson Wildlife and Wellbeing Garden tended through the winter

Another initiative to be affected by the Pandemic was on-site judging of 'Canterbury in Bloom' (2020) which had to be by a report only; the University normally hosts the presentation to the judges prior to the tour of sites around the city. Our contribution was recognised through a further Gold award, to which our work on environment and heritage on our main campus, within the Canterbury UNESCO World Heritage Site, contributed.

After several years of working with other individuals and organisations concerned with biodiversity in the Canterbury district, the ASF has coordinated the creation of the Canterbury Biodiversity Network (2021). In response to the 2019 IPBES⁴ Global Assessment report, and hosted by the University, the network initially seeks to share expertise and information to ensure a more joined up approach to conserving natural habitats and wildlife locally, and longer-term to build integrated Biodiversity Action Plans for the district.

⁴ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

4.8 Hop gardens and Ale production

The first national lockdown severely limited the use of the 2019 Tradescant Ale for hospitality over the summer period. However, private sales held up and the remainder was sold by September 2020. Plans for the 2020 brew hung in the balance, but with national lockdown easing over the summer, it was decided that we should continue with what became the 'Hop Pickers Tipple'; breaking from the tradition of historical reference, it became a light-hearted celebration, with our very own 'Green Man' featured on the label.

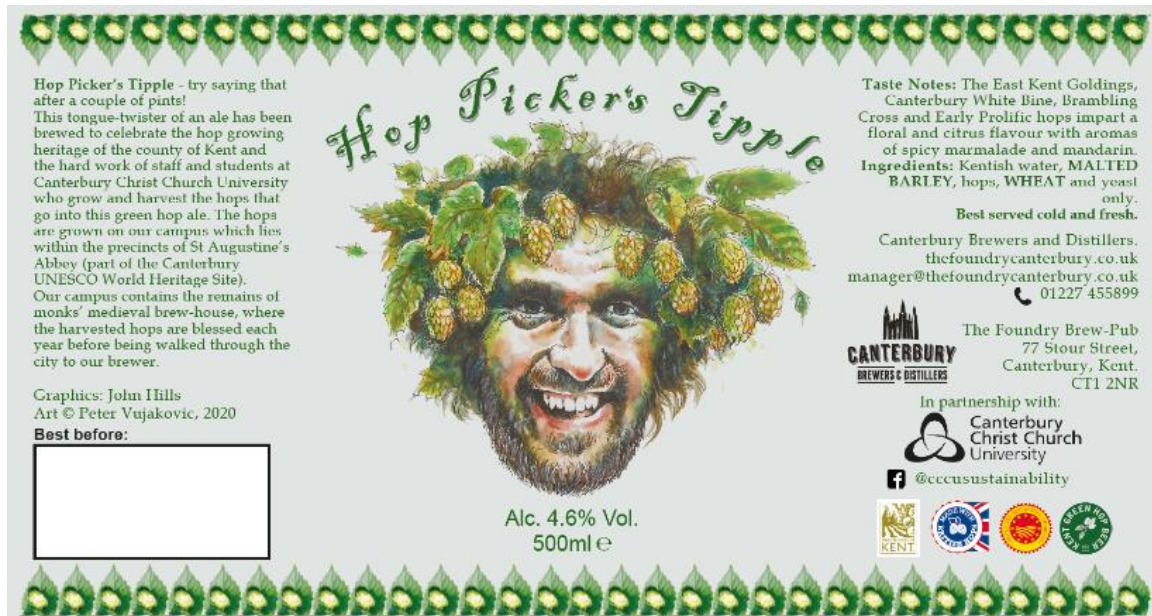


Figure 11: Beer label for the University's 2020 Green Hop Ale

Over the winter months, thoughts of the huge landscaping task around the Verena Holmes building provided the opportunity to take advantage of the unique position of the building. Lying adjacent to the lay-line between St Martin's Church and the Cathedral that passes across our site and that of St Augustine's Abbey, the South Bank that borders the former prison provided a perfect location for a new hop garden. Using coppiced poles from the University of Kent, the hops will be grown in a maypole style using a sturdy central pole. Hop runners from our existing plants have been propagated, and should be productive in about 3 years.



Figure 12: New hop poles erected outside Verena Holmes

Additionally, a small vineyard will be planted with four heritage vine varieties on the lower bank behind The Old Sessions House.



Figure 13: Supports erected for the new vineyard on the new bank behind TOSH

4.9 ISO14001:2015 certification

2020 was a year for full recertification of our Environmental Management System (EMS) to the ISO14001:2015 standard. A normal 3-day on-site visit planned for April 2020 turned into a 2-day virtual audit and a 1-day on-site visit in September 2020. As one of the very first virtual audits that NQA had carried out there were some teething problems. However, our NQA external auditor (Jesse Culleton) was very accommodating, and the Christ Church team had no problems with sharing documents, using Teams, and resorting to the telephone when necessary. Consequently, our registration was extended for 6 months to allow for the on-site visit. Thankfully, the summer break between lockdowns allowed for a very successful visit.

A recommendation for full recertification was concluded, without non-conformances, two opportunities for improvements, and a best practice commendation for Covid-preparedness:

***“Best Practice:** The University approach to ensure the safety of staff, students and visitors during the CoronaVirus Pandemic was evidenced with the social distancing measures put in place and work with local authorities in dealing with student gatherings within the university’s campuses.*

The University’s commitment to conducting, managing Emergency preparedness planning and response to reduce the spread of Covid-19 within the local community whilst keeping student teaching and future development priority.”

5 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Internal and external community engagement has been difficult during the last year, with virtual modes taking centre stage. The Student Green Office continue to lead on thoughtful and dynamic content for all our social media platforms, ensuring that there is a legacy of content available for future students. Module collaborations have continued undeterred (section 3.3), and there is clear evidence of more depth and nuance to student engagement. Externally, establishing the organisational infrastructure to tackle Climate Change and Ecological Crisis at a District level, continues to accelerate.

5.1 Student Green Office (SGO)

This year the SGO have tackled the challenge of going entirely virtual in their operations by focusing on greater variety in their digital communications and engagement strategies. They've produced a wide variety of blog posts and social media content, including videos on unpacking the SDGs, cooking up recipes submitted by international students, creating time-lapse videos of local walks and focusing heavily on student wellbeing during the periods of extended lockdown.



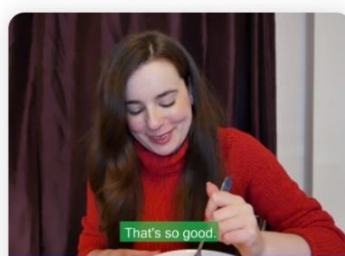
Figure 14: Dan Johnson, 3rd year BA in Media Production

They've continued their support of our module collaborations by talking to students in virtual classroom seminars, supporting virtual work experience placement opportunities, have made connections with the new Student BAME Network and Closing Our Gap initiative, and continued to support university-wide student-facing initiatives such as Stress Less, Mental Health Awareness week and more by adding to the suite of content on social media channels and providing guest posts for the Student Communications team.



Mental health and Sustainability -The importance of starting conversations

When we think of sustainability it is only natural that we think of the environment, that is mainly what we focus on and it what most resources point to as [...]



International Recipe Fest – Grilled Yassa (Gambia/Senegal)

Back in December, our SGO Project Officer for BAME Projects, Kumba, held an International Recipe fest over Teams with the aim of compiling and sharing different recipes from all over [...]



Buying second-hand clothes can help you slash your carbon footprint

As students, it can be incredibly difficult to make changes to our own lives to reduce our carbon footprints. We may lack direct control over our energy providers, our travelling [...]

Figure 15: Student Green Office Blog

5.2 Module Collaborations

One noticeable change over the last few years, with regard to student engagement with sustainability, has been in the quality of work produced for some of our module collaborations.

For example, in the PR Campaign Planning module the SGO provide sustainability briefs each year. In previous years it was clear that only a few students engaging the subject with depth and understanding and many students only superficially embedding sustainability into their projects. This year saw the most thoughtful, nuanced and well researched set of campaigns of any year thus far.

Our first-hand experience with students strongly suggests that they are growing more environmentally aware, more sustainability literate and seeing the connections between education for sustainability and their future lives and careers more readily.



Figure 16: Publicity material for 'Code Green'

5.3 Canterbury partnerships for Climate Action, Biodiversity and the SDGs

Local partnerships for sustainability continue to be established with substance and momentum:

5.3.1 The Canterbury Climate Action Partnership is ably led by Dr Carl Wright and an executive team that includes university representation, with on-going meeting facilitation handled through the Sustainability Team. This is a large, multi-stakeholder civil society group, with a clear mission to Educate, Energise and Empower local people and communities into action around climate change. There are clear reporting lines to and membership of the Canterbury District Climate Change Partnership Board (CDCCPB) that is led by the City Council.



Figure 17: CCAP

5.3.2 Formed in November 2020, the CDCCPB is led by Canterbury City Council Carbon Reduction Officer (Nicholas Thurston), with representatives from, Kent County Council, three Universities and their respective Students' Unions, CCAP, Canterbury BID, and East Kent Hospital Trust. Its single objective is to 'Agree a joint action plan to reduce carbon emissions across the District'.

The CDCCPB has agreed to adopt a localised carbon budgets for the Canterbury District, similar to the UK Government's approach, which will set targets based on 5-year budgets. So far it has been agreed that the sole focus will be CO₂, with several scenarios being drawn up for consideration.

Key thematic work streams have been agreed, with work already having begun on analysing opportunities for reductions in Food, Buildings, and Products & Waste.

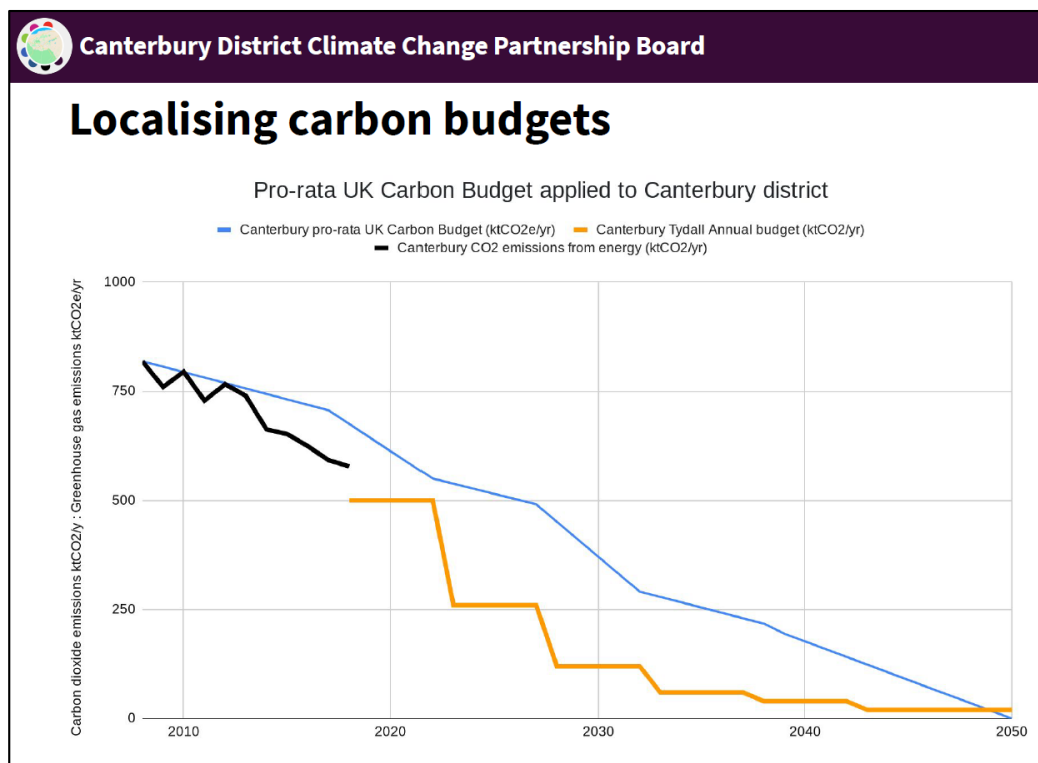


Figure 18: Options for localising carbon budgets

5.3.3 The Canterbury Biodiversity Network, set up jointly between the University and members of the SDG Forum, has recently been formed with representatives from over twenty local organisations participating, including the Environment Agency and Kent Wildlife Trust, and Canterbury City Council. Its primary purpose is to raise awareness of the global biodiversity crisis and ensure that increased priority is given to tackling it at the local level. Initially, it will:

- facilitate information exchange and joint working between groups and individuals engaged in protecting biodiversity in the district,
- support the Kent Biodiversity Strategy,
- support the creation of a district-wide Nature Recovery Network and the promotion of Nature-based Solutions to climate change, and
- encourage concerted action at the local, regional and national level to address the biodiversity crisis.

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The work of the Sustainability Team and latterly the Academy, has often been considered as acting as the University's conscience, and over the last 10 years much has been achieved. However, there has been an inevitable slow-down in recent times, which is contradictory to the general direction relating to the Climate and Ecological crises, and the University's role and responsibilities in responding to these. As we tentatively emerge into a post-covid world we need to think carefully about how we will make substantive, proportionate, authentic, measured and defensible changes to the way we operate, what we teach, and the focus of our research, so that our graduates are prepared to tackle the challenges ahead.

Report compiled by:

Dr Peter Rands

Director of Sustainability Development, with contributions from members of the Academy.

May 2021