



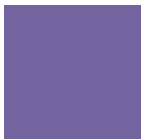
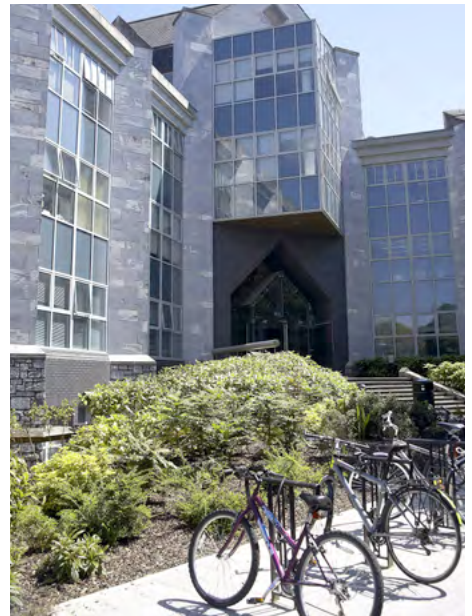
UCC SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

JUNE 2016



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



University College Cork
World's First Green Campus

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1.0 Introduction and Context

Founded in 1845, University College Cork – National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC) is one of four constituent universities of the federal National University of Ireland. UCC is a leading Irish educational and research institution: University of the year four times in recent years (2003, 2005, 2011 and 2016), with a research income that is consistently one of the highest in the country. UCC has 20,700 students, 2,800 staff (UCC 2011) and an annual income of ca. €290 million.

UCC along with local and regional government, the business community, civil society and other important institutions – is a major stakeholder in the long term sustainable development of the city, the county and the region. As a leading higher education institution, as a major research institute, as an employer, as a landowner, as a holder of significant cultural and heritage assets, and as a partner in civic and commercial life, UCC is in a unique position to take an ethical leadership role in achieving sustainability and resilience in Ireland and beyond. In fulfilling all of these roles, UCC will play its part in advocating for best practice in decision-making for the common good.

Sustainability and care for the environment are evident throughout the University curriculum with relevant subjects taught across a range of academic disciplines, including: civil engineering, energy engineering, chemical sciences, biological sciences, environmental science, geography, spatial planning, geology, sociology, medicine, law and philosophy. Complementary to and parallel with this teaching, UCC has substantial and varied research activities on environmental and sustainability related issues in all of its colleges and schools. Of particular note in this regard are a number of the University's flagship institutes e.g., the Environmental Research Institute, Institute for Social Science in the 21st Century, National Tyndall Institute, the APC Microbiome Institute, and more¹.

Accordingly, UCC has a strong commitment, in keeping with its role in environmental teaching and education, to reducing its environmental impacts. This has been addressed in recent years through the development and implementation of a documented Environmental Policy committing UCC to improving its environmental performance and forming the framework for environmental management on campus. This includes the strategies and initiatives on: energy efficiency; waste and recycling; procurement; commuter planning; infrastructure and estate management; education and communication.

Over the past number of years UCC has expended considerable efforts in addressing its environmental performance and has become a sectoral leader in sustainability. These efforts have been recognised both nationally and internationally (see Box 1). The next logical step in the process is the extension of the environmental policy to a more comprehensive sustainability strategy.

UCC is rightly regarded as Ireland's 'Green University' and in combination with the University's Strategic Plan 2013-2017 the implementation of this Sustainability Strategy will further enhance this reputation and performance.



¹www.ucc.ie/en/research/institutes/

BOX 1: NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR UCC'S GREEN ACHIEVEMENTS & SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIPS (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	
UI Green Metrics	UCC in the top five in UI GreenMetric World University Rankings since 2012. http://greenmetric.ui.ac.id/
An Taisce & FEE Global	First University to receive the Green Flag award of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) (in conjunction with An Taisce, Irish operator of FEE projects) making it Ireland's first Green Campus. www.fee.global/ www.greencampusireland.org/ www.ucc.ie/en/greencampus/
ISO	First University to be awarded ISO 50001 accreditation for its energy management system 2011.
Green Awards for Business and Sustainability	Winner Green School/College Award, Irish 'Green Awards' 2011, 2012.
	Winner Green Travel Initiative Award, Irish 'Green Awards 2012.
LAMA	Winner of Irish Local Authority Members Association Award for Best Energy Efficiency Project in 2013. http://lamaawards.org/
UNFCCC	Holds observer status at UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
ULSF	Signatory to the Talloires Declaration – University Leaders for a Sustainable Future. www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html
GUPES	Signatory to GUPES - Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability. www.unep.org/training/programmes/gupes.asp
UNEP/GEMS	UNEP/GEMS Water programme. www.unep.org/gemswater/



2.0 Background, Structure and Resources

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution which formally adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals as summarised in graphical form in Figure 1 (right). As a global University, University College Cork is fully cognisant of the contribution it can make to the realisation of these goals.

Notwithstanding that all staff and students of the University should take personal responsibility for the impacts of their actions, the majority of activities of the University that impact on sustainability, are directed and influenced by and/or fall under the responsibility of a number of key actors and key functional areas in the University. These include key actors in teaching and learning, research, operations, ancillary activities, and engagement with the wider community. See Table 1 (page 5) for an overview of potential key actors and responsibilities against sustainability goals which would facilitate implementation of the sustainability strategy.

As the majority of activities of the University that impact on the environment (a significant element of sustainability management) are currently the responsibility of the Buildings and Estates Office (e.g., energy, utilities, waste management, commuting, etc.) the B&EO take responsibility and leadership in managing UCC's environmental impact. Accordingly, overall management responsibility for sustainability, by extension, within University College Cork currently rests with the Director of Buildings and Estates, who reports to the University Management Team and to the Governing Body as appropriate.

A sustainability management group, comprising key technical personnel, is convened as required to facilitate the day-to-day sustainability management. Sustainability aspects of activities under the direct control of the B&EO are controlled through the development and implementation of the appropriate policies, procedures and plans.

The Heads of each College, School and Administrative Unit are responsible for ensuring that the activities within their area of responsibility are performed in accordance with the current University Environmental Policy. This will be extended to responsibility for relevant areas of sustainability management.

A Green Campus Committee, comprised of students and staff has been in operation since prior to the awarding of the first An Taisce Green Flag in 2010,



Figure 1: UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

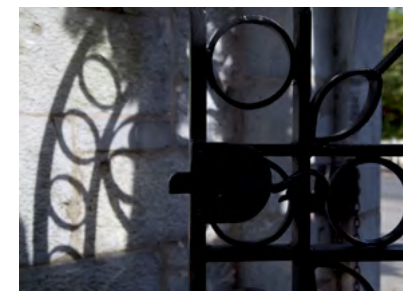
primarily to engage the student body in 'greening the campus' in association with the related activities of Buildings and Estates in relation to environmental management.

In addition UCC established a Green Campus Forum, which is co-chaired by the current Vice President for Teaching and Learning, and the Director of Buildings and Estates, to allow for and facilitate the further engagement of the university community in driving the sustainability agenda. In the Green Campus Committee and Green Campus Forum, students and staff (both academic and administrative) come together to discuss and initiate sustainability initiatives and projects, including: information, awareness raising, teaching and operational measures concerned with Energy, Waste and Recycling, Water, Travel and Commuting, Biodiversity and other areas of relevance. In this way, the wider University community can and do participate in driving the sustainability agenda.

The effective implementation of a coherent Sustainability Strategy would benefit from the clear designation of persons and areas of responsibility in relation to key sustainability goals. As part of the development of the Sustainability Strategy the operation and interaction of Committee, Forum, and key personnel will be streamlined for effective implementation.

Table 1: Suggested Key and Responsible Personnel in Relation to Sustainability Management in UCC

	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
Overall Sustainability Management	All personnel; from President to students	University Management Team via Green Campus Forum
SUSTAINABILITY GOALS		
To engage our student body, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability	Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Office of Student Experience; Office of Staff Welfare & Development; Students Union; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Representatives of e.g. Community-Academic Research Links initiative, CACSSS Community Engagement, & outreach staff from across university	VP for Teaching & Learning
To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our research, teaching and learning activities	Office of the VP for Research & Innovation; Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	VP for Research and Innovation; VP for Teaching & Learning
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development	Office of Buildings and Estates (including Estates Manager, Commuter Plan Manager, Energy Manager); Procurement & Contracts Manager; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Director of Buildings and Estates; Procurement & Contracts Manager
To enhance the health and well-being of the University and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living	Office of Student Experience; Director of Student Health & Wellbeing; Office of Staff Welfare & Development; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Office of the VP for Research & Innovation; Students Union	Head of Student Experience
To promote and engage in the sustainable use and management of the landscape and natural resources of the University, in all its campus areas, with respect to ecosystem services, natural and cultural heritage	Office of Buildings & Estates; Green Campus Forum; School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences; Environmental Research Institute; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative staff; Students Union	Estates Manager
To be an overall positive force in the journey towards creating a sustainable world for all	All personnel; from President to student	University Management Team via Green Campus Forum



3.0 Vision

To be a world-class University leading the drive towards sustainability in Higher Education Institutes and beyond, to our community, region and planet.

When we refer to sustainability we refer to those social, environmental and economic principles which allow us to create and live in a society which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*; that lead us towards a thriving, equitable and ecologically healthy world for all.**



4.0 Mission

To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our research, teaching and learning activities;

To engage our student body, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability;

To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, and ancillary operations, and infrastructural development;

To enhance the health and well-being of the University and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living;

To be an overall positive force in the journey towards creating a sustainable world for all.

5.0 Values

Our values mirror those of the University strategic plan; leadership, excellence, accountability, collaboration, integrity, innovation and diversity. We add to this the value of stewardship, in our role as educators, leaders, and agents in the journey towards sustainability.

6.0 Strategic Goal

Our key strategic goal is to increase the sustainability of the University through the embedding of sustainability goals and targets into all aspects of the University's educational, research, ancillary operations, infrastructural developments and interactions with the community. And by doing so to maintain and improve our position as one of the leading green universities in Ireland and the world.

*Brundtland G *et al* (1987) Our Common Future: Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development

**The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education www.aashe.org/

7.0 Overarching Objectives of the UCC Sustainability Strategy

University College Cork is firmly committed to the principles of sustainability. Recognising that our activities impact upon the environment, society and economy through our education, research and operations, our infrastructural development and our influence on the wider community of which we are a part; we are cognisant of our responsibilities in local, national and global terms.

We will endeavour to implement a measured and documented programme of continuous improvement towards sustainability in all our activities as detailed below in key areas and in relation to achieving our stated mission, vision and strategic goals.

- Provide for continuous improvement for sustainability in all University activities;
- Identify strategic aims, objectives and measurements of performance in each key area that they are relevant and allow for meaningful comparisons over time and across other normalised University metrics such as (a) building gross internal floor area m²; (b) number of student full time equivalents (FTE); and (c) number of staff FTE etc.;
- Cultivate a sustainability culture within the University that is student led, research informed and practice focused;
- Foster sustainability citizenship among the University Community;
- Facilitate participation of all the University community in sustainability initiatives;
- Inform and raise awareness in all stakeholders (e.g., staff, students, contractors, visitors) of sustainability issues and the relationship to their own activities;
- Make the Sustainability Strategy and other relevant information available to the public;

- Continue the University's contribution to advancing the sustainability agenda nationally and within academic discourse;
- Play a key role in the societal transition to sustainability through teaching, creating future sustainability leaders and generating new knowledge to facilitate and support a more sustainable future;
- Engage with local, national and international groups and stakeholders to contribute to more sustainable communities;
- Plan for integration of sustainability into all University strategies, plans and policies as they come up for renewal;
- Actively promote the University, internally and externally, as Ireland's 'Green University'.

The Sustainability Strategy can only be effectively implemented with the support and efforts of staff, students, contractors and other stakeholders, who will be kept informed of sustainability matters and initiatives and encouraged to engage in active involvement at all levels.



8.0 Key Areas for Implementation of the Sustainability Strategy

8.1 Sustainability Citizenship

The University is cognisant that each of us, individually, is an integral part of the wider environment and accordingly should act as good citizens of Earth. This University commits to support and promote such sustainability citizenship amongst its student and staff population.

UCC is proud to have been the first University in the world to receive the An Taisce Green Campus award, and the University sees the Green Campus programme as a significant component of its sustainability efforts. The University strives to promote sustainability citizenship through its Green Campus programme in a manner that is student-led, research informed and practice focused. Furthering the promotion of sustainability citizenship beyond the Green Campus programme and through all aspects of University life is key to the full implementation of the sustainability strategy.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To engage our student body, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability	Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Office of Student Experience; Office of Staff Welfare & Development; Students Union; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Representatives of e.g. Community-Academic Research Links initiative, CACSSS Community Engagement, & outreach staff from across university	VP for Teaching & Learning

8.1.1 Strategic Aims:

- To engage our student body, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability, and establish sustainability citizenship as a central component of the University ethos – with students and staff giving a commitment to learning more about sustainability and taking responsible action.

8.1.2 Objectives:

- To increase awareness and facilitate greater engagement of the University’s students and staff on sustainability issues;
- To encourage, support and promote initiatives for students and staff to take responsible environmental and sustainability actions through behavioural and practice change;
- To retain the University’s ‘Green Flag’ and maintain its position as a leader in the Green Campus community;
- To maintain and improve the University’s position in the world Green Metrics and/or other sustainability rankings systems for Higher Level Institutes;
- To facilitate and support voluntary student and staff environmental and sustainability relevant organisations and initiatives;
- To further engage with the Students Union, the Societies Guild and individual societies around this issue.

8.1.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Number of students and/or staff involved in Green Campus initiatives;
- Campus awareness of UCC sustainability initiatives;
- Number of student organisations/societies on-campus relating to sustainability;
- Number of staff organisations/societies on-campus relating to sustainability;
- Number of students and staff involved in such sustainability relevant organisations;
- Number of students and staff involved in off-campus organisations that engage in sustainability relevant activities;
- Overall participation in sustainability initiatives, activities and societies as % of staff and student FTE figures;
- Green flag status;
- Status in the Green metrics and/or other green/sustainability rankings measures;
- Any relevant recognised awards/achievements in sustainability citizenship by students and staff.

8.2 Teaching and Learning

Sustainability issues are reflected throughout the University’s undergraduate and postgraduate education programmes, both within traditional environmentally focussed fields such as science and engineering and increasingly in other disciplines (literally from A to Z - Archaeology to Zoology). Increasing the number and quality of courses in which sustainability issues are featured is a focus area of the Office of Teaching and Learning, and is used as a performance indicator for the calculation of numerous Green rankings systems. In addition the University wide module on Sustainability taught by a range of staff from across various disciplines and colleges in the University is available to students of all programmes. As well as formal environmental education there are significant opportunities for UCC students to engage in informal sustainability education through membership of student organisations such as Environmental Society and the Green Campus initiative, fully supported by the University. Building on this performance through further engagement with Teaching and Learning activities is ongoing. Over 35 courses relating to sustainability are offered by the university. Events such as Bioblitz and engagement in culture night provide an opportunity to use event based pedagogy in teaching and learning in sustainability at UCC. Over 35 conferences and seminars are held on sustainability across the rich breadth of programmes on sustainability in almost all schools and departments.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To engage our student body, staff and wider community in becoming active citizens for sustainability	Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Office of Student Experience; Office of Staff Welfare & Development; Students Union; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Representatives of e.g. Community-Academic Research Links initiative, CACSSS Community Engagement, & outreach staff from across university	VP for Teaching & Learning
To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our teaching and learning activities	Office of the VP for Research & Innovation; Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	VP for Teaching & Learning



8.2.1 Strategic Aims:

- To foster a culture of sustainability citizenship within the University Community through both formal and informal teaching and learning opportunities and activities;
- To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our teaching and learning programmes and activities.

8.2.2 Objectives:

- To understand and document the environmental or sustainability content of current academic programmes and curriculum;
- To promote, increase and raise awareness of current programmes with environmental or sustainability content across all four colleges;
- To encourage the active participation in non-formal sustainability education in particular the Green Campus initiative;
- To encourage and support the development of sustainability literacy within teaching and learning;
- To capitalise on the diverse nature of student population to increase students' knowledge of global sustainability issues;
- Where appropriate, sustainability to be taken into account in discussions leading to course approval.

8.2.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Number of sustainability relevant education programmes;
- Proportion of students on sustainability relevant education programmes;
- Proportion of 'other' students taking sustainability relevant modules;
- Participation by members of the public and other stakeholders in courses with sustainability content;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to teaching and learning of sustainability.

8.3 Research

University College Cork is one of Ireland's leading research intensive Universities and has an active research community working on multiple aspects of sustainability. UCC's sustainability researchers can be found throughout the University's four colleges (Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Science; Business and Law; Medicine and Health; and Science, Engineering and Food Science) working in the constituent schools, associated research centres and through multidisciplinary institutes and SFI centres² such as the Environmental Research Institute (ERI), Institute for Social Sciences in the 21st century (ISS21), Tyndall National Institute, MaREI Institute, APC Microbiome Institute and more. In excess of €20M is secured annually for environmental and sustainability research, with hundreds of research papers, patents and some commercial applications/translation each year.

Transdisciplinarity on sustainability research is facilitated and encouraged through initiatives such as the Environmental Citizenship Research Priority Area supported through the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation. The University continues to win significant funding for sustainability research from EU research programmes, national agencies and through collaboration with industry.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our research activities	Office of the VP for Research & Innovation; Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	VP for Research and Innovation

8.3.1 Strategic Aims:

- To facilitate the development and empowerment of future leaders in sustainability through our research activities;
- To maintain and enhance the University's standing in research on sustainability topics.

²www.ucc.ie/en/research/institutes/

8.3.2 Objectives:

- To encourage research and innovation in the sustainability area;
- To promote and facilitate transdisciplinarity in sustainability research;
- To encourage and promote networking on sustainability across the University's colleges;
- To continue and enhance the strong links between University operational units and academic and research units;
- To encourage researchers in sustainability domains to make greater use of the University's infrastructure and community for research;
- To capture and record details of University research projects with environmental or sustainability objectives;
- To promote, increase and raise awareness of current research that delivers environmental or sustainability objectives across all four colleges.

8.3.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Research funding for sustainability related research;
- Proportion of total research income related to sustainability;
- Number of sustainability related research projects;
- Number of sustainability researchers;
- Number of publications on sustainability and environment (average per year);
- Scholarly events related to sustainability and environmental research;
- Number of internal interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to research in sustainability relevant areas.

8.4 Food, Health and Well-being

University College Cork takes the view that the health and wellbeing of its staff and students are fundamental to achieving its mission. Students who are in good health, content and self-confident will be best placed to realise their academic potential during their time at UCC. In addition, if staff are healthy and happy in their workplace they are more productive, which will create a more effective scholarly environment. The University has been awarded formal recognition by the HSE South for its efforts in Health Promotion and Improvement, under the umbrella of the UCC Health Matters initiative. In addition a considerable number of sustainable food initiatives have been developed and promoted from within UCC, which positively impact both the University population and the wider community e.g. the Cork Food Policy Council³, and the developments towards sustainable food provision on campus by the current main on-site catering contractor, KSG⁴.

The University considers that its food, health and wellbeing initiatives are integrally linked with achieving its sustainability objectives and sees many synergies e.g., promotion of walking or cycling as commuting options, encouraging local sustainable and healthy food options, growing of food on campus, etc. Further development of integration and promotional opportunities around food, health, well-being and sustainability will be a key focus of the Sustainability Strategy.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To enhance the health and well-being of the University and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living	Office of Student Experience; Director of Student Health & Wellbeing; Office of Staff Welfare & Development; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Office of the VP for Teaching & Learning; Office of the VP for Research & Innovation; Students Union	Head of Student Experience

³corkfoodpolicycouncil.com

⁴www.ksg.ie/2015/02/winner-of-the-irish-sustainable-restaurant-of-the-year/

8.4.1 Strategic Aims:

- To enhance the health and well-being of the University and wider community through the facilitation and promotion of aspects of healthy eating and living as an integral part of sustainable living.

8.4.2 Objectives:

- To ensure support services are in place for students to protect their psychological wellbeing during this time of change and to make their first years away from home healthier and more sustainable;
- To facilitate and encourage physical activity as a normal component of University everyday life;
- To create a greater awareness of the opportunities available to students in relation to physical and recreational activities;
- To encourage an informed attitude to sustainable food options and the place of food in staff and students' life;
- To promote the consumption of healthier and more sustainable food options in campus outlets and in the University community's home life;
- To contribute to advancing the food, health and well-being in relation to sustainability agenda nationally and within academic discourse.



8.4.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Proportion of staff and students engaged in regular exercise;
- Health surveys of students and staff;
- Availability of sustainable food choices in campus food outlets;
- Proportion of students and staff actively selecting local sustainable food (food surveys);
- Detail food growing initiatives on-campus;
- Detail integration and awareness raising projects, research and initiatives between key actors in food, health, well-being and sustainability;
- Student and staff involvement in relevant societies/organisations on and off campus;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to food, health and well-being in sustainability relevant areas.



8.5 Landscape, Heritage and Natural Resources

University College Cork has the good fortune to be located (largely) on the banks of River Lee on beautiful grounds with a significant area of formal gardens, informal green areas and riverside walks. The campus is home to a significant amount of biodiversity including a variety of flowering plants, grassland, many native and exotic trees, substantial riparian areas, and the various associated wildlife⁵. A recent habitat survey of the Main and North Mall Campus⁶ recorded a total of twenty-two distinct habitats, many of moderate-to-high importance to local biodiversity. Such natural resources, habitats and biodiversity not only contribute to the staff and student experience, but are critically important in the maintenance of ecosystem services including the regulation of climate and disease; the maintenance of water and nutrient cycles and crop pollination; and they provide a multitude of health and cultural benefits. The management and richness of our natural and cultural heritage and resources are integrally linked with achieving our sustainability objectives. The estate is already managed with care of the environment to the fore including: composting green waste; minimising chemical use; identification and conservation of key habitats; mapping and protection of significant trees⁷ etc. Further development of usage, integration and promotional opportunities around these resources will be a key focus of the Sustainability Strategy.



SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To promote and engage in the sustainable use and management of the landscape and natural resources of the University, in all its campus areas, with respect to ecosystem services, natural and cultural heritage	Office of Buildings & Estates; Green Campus Forum; School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences; Environmental Research Institute; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative staff; Students Union	Estates Manager
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development	Office of Buildings and Estates (including Estates Manager, Commuter Plan Manager, Energy Manager); Procurement & Contracts Manager; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Director of Buildings and Estates; Estates Manager; Procurement & Contracts Manager

8.5.1 Strategic Aim:

- To promote and engage in the sustainable use and management of the landscape and natural resources of the University, in all its campus areas, with respect to ecosystem services, natural and cultural heritage;
- To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development.

⁵In May 2014, during an ‘intervarsity BioBlitz’ some 451 species were recorded on the UCC campus

⁶The first stages in a University-wide habitat and biodiversity survey

⁷www.ucc.ie/trees/

8.5.2 Objectives:

- To provide for maintenance of grounds in a manner that is in keeping with the needs of a University of the stature of UCC, but also mindful of the role as custodians of the campus for future generations;
- To continue to manage our grounds with due regard to the environment, e.g., minimising use of herbicides and pesticides; using onsite compost in preference to artificial fertiliser or purchase compost; planning and conducting all works in a manner which consider habitats requiring protection;
- To assess, maintain and increase the biodiversity of our campus; including identifying and characterising wildlife habitats, significant species and significant trees;
- To protect and enhance our key natural resources, particularly in relation to priority habitats and species;
- To promote and facilitate social and physical access to these resources, and raise awareness of the associated ecosystem, biodiversity, heritage, social and health related values;
- To sympathetically integrate our natural resources into the everyday use and enjoyment of the Campus and wider Community;
- To promote and enhance the use of our natural resources in teaching and learning and research on sustainability as well as in everyday use and recreation;
- To engage and foster partnership with local authorities and community groups to integrate, link and create a network of natural heritage and resource areas for the benefit and use of the campus and wider community and the maintenance and improvement of ecosystem services.

8.5.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Proportion and amount of open spaces on campus (% and m² per staff/student FTE);
- Proportion of campus covered in vegetation;
- Proportion of 'wild' and/or semi natural areas on campus;
- Proportion of non-retentive surfaces;
- Proportion of campus mapped for biodiversity, with numbers of key habitats and species;
- Number and effectiveness of natural resource awareness campaigns and initiatives;
- Number of projects/partnerships with local authorities and community groups;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to sustainability and natural resources management.



8.6 Recycling and Waste Management

The University is committed to reducing the volume of waste generated and to increasing the proportion of that waste which is recycled. Resource management practices are based on reduce, reuse and recycle principles. The University strives to reduce the acquisition of new materials, re-using existing materials and increase recycling to the best possible standards. In recent years, substantial progress has been made on recycling activity through the introduction of a dry mixed recycling programme resulting in significant year-on-year improvements – in the period from 2007 to 2013, recycling rates increased from ca. 21% to ca. 75%. This has resulted in a saving of €1,000,000 over the last 6 years. Further efforts to improve waste management performance through operations, innovation and behavioural changes will be explored in the coming years as part of the Sustainability Strategy.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development, specifically in relation to waste management and recycling	Office of Buildings and Estates (notably Estates Manager & General Services Office); Procurement & Contracts Manager; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Director of Buildings and Estates; Estates Manager General Services; Procurement & Contracts Manager



8.6.1 Strategic Aims:

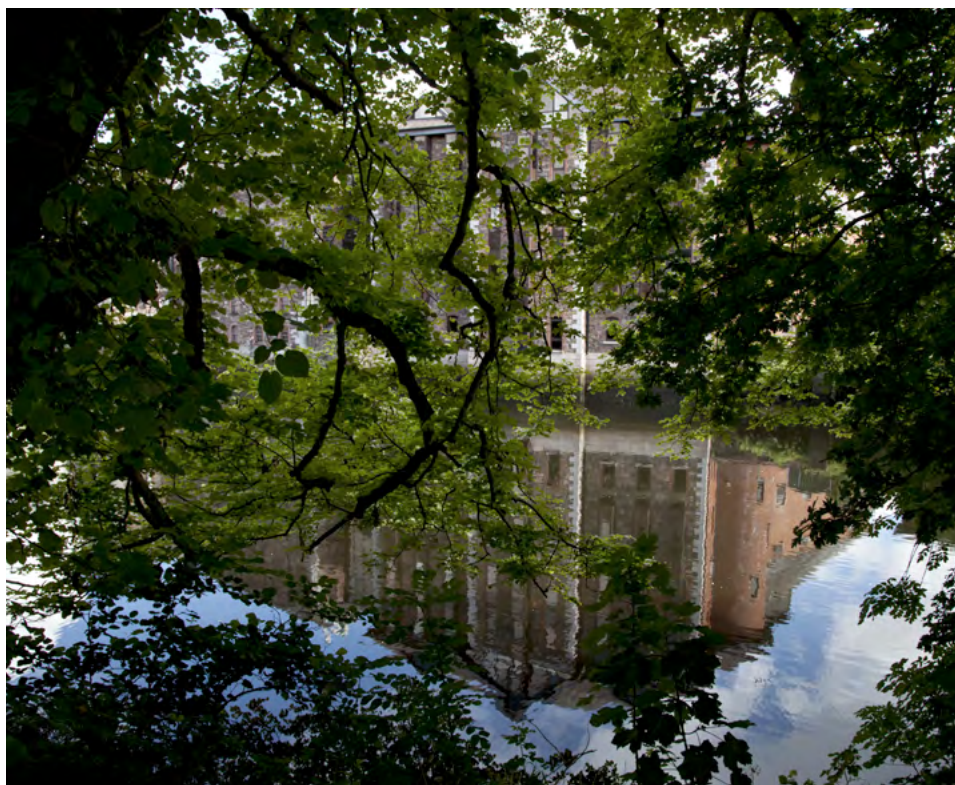
- To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations, and infrastructural development;
- To manage and reduce waste generation by the University community through behavioural and practice change, in accordance with the EU ‘waste management hierarchy’.

8.6.2 Objectives:

- To implement best practice approaches to resource and waste management across the University, through direct implementation in University central administration and services;
- To propagate best practice within academic/research units through empowerment, encouragement and provision of appropriate support;
- To conduct periodic waste audits on a rolling basis in different units i.e., systematic review of waste streams to identify opportunities to minimise generation, maximise reuse and recycling and select the most environmental preferable means of handling residual wastes;
- To maximise onsite composting of, and recovery of nutrients from green waste generated on the campus grounds;
- To work with the onsite food service providers to investigate the reduction and efficient management of post-consumer food waste;
- To engage with architects, construction contractors and others to minimise the amount of waste associated with the design, construction and demolition of buildings on campus;
- To take a life cycle approach to consideration of waste for large purchases including capital projects.

8.6.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Quantities of total waste and individual categories of waste generated (kg per staff FTE and kg per student FTE);
- Waste recycling rates (%);
- Number and type of audits and actions arising;
- Initiatives/workshops/training in relation to behavioural change (proportions of staff/students reached);
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to waste management initiatives.



8.7 Energy, Water and Climate Change

UCC is cognisant of the environmental and societal impacts of energy and water use and is committed to reducing its impacts through continuous performance improvement. The University has a dedicated energy manager and in 2011 became the first third level institution worldwide to achieve the ISO 50001 standard for Energy Management Systems. It has a long track record in energy management and has been particularly successful in winning grant support from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to support energy saving initiatives. UCC has current projects involving lighting, metering, heat recovery, ventilation, photovoltaics and wind energy for example. Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with its activities is also important for UCC. The University is committed to monitoring and reducing its 'carbon footprint' not only for its direct activities but also in so far as possible for indirect activities such as commuting, business travel, etc. Since 2007, there has been a 9% decrease in total energy consumption, and 750,000 cubic metres of water has been saved.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development, specifically in relation to energy, carbon and water management	Office of Buildings and Estates (notably Energy Manager); Procurement & Contracts Manager; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Director of Buildings and Estates; Energy Manager

8.7.1 Strategic Aims:

- To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, and ancillary operations, and infrastructural development;
- To reduce energy intensity and greenhouse gas emissions (carbon footprint) of the University's operations;
- To reduce the water use on campus.

8.7.2 Objectives:

- To comply with legal requirements as regards energy use;
- To optimise energy use: continuously improve energy performance and systems; reduce consumption 3% year on year and by 33% by 2020 with a baseline of 2006-08;
- To prioritise the use of low carbon energy sources and effectively utilise efficient products and services;
- To periodically measure and track the University's greenhouse gas inventory or 'carbon footprint' including both direct and indirect emissions;
- To develop and implement a comprehensive University carbon management plan including a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and investigate the possible opportunities of carbon sinking;
- To lead in development and on-site demonstration of cutting-edge technologies and systems for renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, water reduction and reuse;
- To develop a water management plan to minimise impact on water resources including reducing both water consumption and water pollution;
- To explore the reuse of grey water for appropriate applications.

8.7.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Energy consumption (kWh per student FTE);
- Greenhouse gas emitted (kg CO₂ equivalent staff/student FTE);
- Water consumption (m³ per staff/student FTE);
- Quantity of water reused (m³ per staff/student FTE);
- Proportion of energy from certified renewable sources and onsite renewables (%);
- Number and effectiveness of awareness raising campaigns in relation to energy, carbon footprint and water;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to energy, carbon and water management initiatives.



8.8 Procurement and Contracts

UCC by its nature procures a large amount of goods and services, and the environmental and wider sustainability implications of such expenditure can be significant. This is a great opportunity for the University to reduce the negative impacts of its purchasing decisions by implementing a systematic green or sustainable procurement policy and process. This policy would outline a series of environmentally, ethically and socially- conscious purchasing practices and reiterate the University’s commitment to sustainability through the support of green, responsible, and potentially local businesses. Furthermore, owing to the scale of the procurement, such a system (along with similar action by other public procurers) can affect real change in the marketplace resulting in great availability and more competitive pricing of environmental preferable products.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development, specifically in relation to the purchase of goods and services by and for the University	Procurement & Contracts Manager; Office of Buildings and Estates; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Procurement & Contracts Manager; Director of Buildings and Estates

8.8.1 Strategic Aims:

- To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, and ancillary operations, and infrastructural development;
- To systematically include sustainability criteria in the selection criteria for the purchase of goods and services for the University;
- To consider life cycle perspectives during the selection of goods and services wherever practical and appropriate.

8.8.2 Objectives:

- To develop a sustainable/green procurement policy and process, and related guidance to assist drafters of tenders within the University to consider sustainability criteria at the different stages of the procurement process, including:
 - Contract subject matter definition
 - Technical Specifications
 - Selection Criteria/Exclusion Criteria
 - Award Criteria
- To promote green procurement best practice when participating in procurement consortia;
- To engage with key suppliers to bring about environmental improvements throughout the supply chain, including:
 - Substituting products containing harmful substances
 - Consideration of environmental impacts on a life cycle perspective
 - Selecting products that meet the requirements of recognised labelling schemes e.g., EU Ecolabel
- To require contractors and suppliers to achieve environmental management standards equivalent to certified environmental management systems such as ISO14001, EMAS;
- To promote where appropriate and practical sustainable buying principles e.g., the principles embodied in schemes such as Fairtrade™.

8.8.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Development of sustainable/green procurement policy and process;
- Development of guidance document(s) on green procurement for suppliers/providers;
- Number of contracts awarded to suppliers of “green” products and services;
- Number of contractors/suppliers/providers who have achieved environmental or sustainability related awards/standards/certifications;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to sustainable procurement initiatives.



8.9 Commuting and Business Travel

Aware of the sustainability implications of its ca. 18,000 students and 2,500 staff commuting to the University, UCC has developed a comprehensive Commuter Plan. Led by a dedicated Commuter Plan Manager, this plan provides for active car park management and for alternative modes of travel are to be systematically addressed, facilitated and promoted. This includes initiatives such as: free University Park + Ride system, enhanced public transport links; cycling facilities; dedicated parking for car-pooling; walking routes. The plan is updated and informed by regular commuting surveys. Staff are encouraged and incentivised to use public transport for business travel wherever possible (e.g., costs for travel to Dublin, served by regular train service are only refunded at regular train fare). Alternatives to travel such as videoconferences are facilitated and promoted by the University – staff are encouraged to minimise travel and/or the negative impacts thereof.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL	KEY PERSONNEL (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY
To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, operations and infrastructural development, specifically in relation to sustainable transport	Office of Buildings and Estates (notably Commuter Plan Manager); Procurement & Contracts Manager; Green Campus Forum; Heads of Colleges & Academics Units (colleges/department/institute/research groups); Key Administrative Staff; Students Union	Director of Buildings and Estates; Commuter Plan Manager

8.9.1 Strategic Aims:

- To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our educational, research, and ancillary operations, and infrastructural development in relation to transport;
- To promote and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport for staff and student commuting, and minimise associated impacts of commuting on University neighbours and the wider city community, and the climate.

8.9.2 Objectives:

- To reduce the number of vehicle-kilometres per staff/student;
- To reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with commuting;
- To reduce 'single user' car journeys and maximise car-pooling;
- To optimise business travel and reduce associated emissions by promoting non-travel options and encouraging multi-purpose trips;
- To encourage use of public transport over car use for business travel;
- To promote park and ride services;
- To increase awareness of the sustainable transport options and the impacts of the potential different modes of transport.



8.9.3 Performance will be measured using the following indicators:

- Proportion of staff/students choosing sustainable travel modes⁸;
- Proportion of staff/students cycling to college;
- Number of bicycle racks;
- Number of park and ride patrons;
- Number of Electric Vehicles chargers installed;
- Accessibility of, and linkages between other campus areas and main campus;
- Number and effectiveness of awareness campaigns on sustainable transport options and impacts;
- Detail other opportunities/awards for achievement/leadership/engagement in relation to sustainable transport initiatives.



⁸Any non single car occupancy journey e.g. walking, cycling, public transport, park and ride, car pooling.



The university has developed an online guided tour of some of the many exciting green initiatives on campus which have led to our position as one of the most sustainable campuses in the world. The app includes a guided audio tour, with additional video, image and web content. This is available for free download from the following stores:

Click on a link to get the app:

