



# Environmental Sustainability Report

Annual Report 2020/21

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Edge Hill University

Edge Hill  
University

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## Foreword



Over the last year, environmental sustainability has been in the international spotlight more than ever, with COP 26 bringing nations together to highlight the increasingly harmful impacts of climate change and work towards solutions.

At Edge Hill, environmental sustainability has been equally in the spotlight, with the launch of the new Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-25 defining ambitious aims and the success of the biggest ever sustainability festival held at the University with a weeklong series of events and activities.

This report draws a close to the previous strategy and summarises the work that has begun in a series of objectives contributing to the new strategy through the sustainability action plan. Much of this is about setting the foundations on which real improvements can be made. The University has always sought to develop the campus using sustainable technologies and the central campus development being undertaken over the next couple of years provides a great opportunity to continue with this approach. This project, along with several others in the action plan and the strong links being made through the curriculum, research activity and community engagement through groups such as SustainNET will be instrumental in enhancing the University's sustainability credentials over the next few years.

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## Introduction

Edge Hill University (EHU) is committed to enhancing environmentally sustainable practice, protecting our environment, and reducing negative impacts. To support this the Institution's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy commits:

***“To deliver and maximise performance improvements within safety and environmental management through creating conditions for sustainable development”***

To ensure that EHU continues to create a positive impact within environmental sustainability a commitment has been made to develop a regularly updated Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS). Each strand of the ESS is developed to create actions that can be taken to minimise the University's impact on the environment. These actions form the annually updated Sustainability Action Plan (SAP).

Since the 2019/2020 Environmental Sustainability Report (ESR) EHU has transitioned from the 2017-21 ESS to a new 2021-25 ESS which looks towards a carbon neutral EHU.

### Defining Sustainability

The term sustainability is becoming widely adopted when referring to the environment and use of resources without negative future impact. Prompting us to consider the links between society, economy, and the environment.

Sustainable development refers to a balance between improving quality of life for communities across the globe, whilst protecting the nature systems that support life.

The Sustainability Manager within the Operational Risk & Environment (ORE) Team in Facilities Management (FM) is responsible for overseeing progress against the ESS and reporting quarterly to the Institutional Health, Safety and Environment Committee (IHSEC).

This annual report serves to summarise progress against the current SAP. This report will close and summarise the outcomes from the previous ESS before launching the new ESS where it covers each of the themes of the ESS, detailing progress against actions and the benefits this has brought.

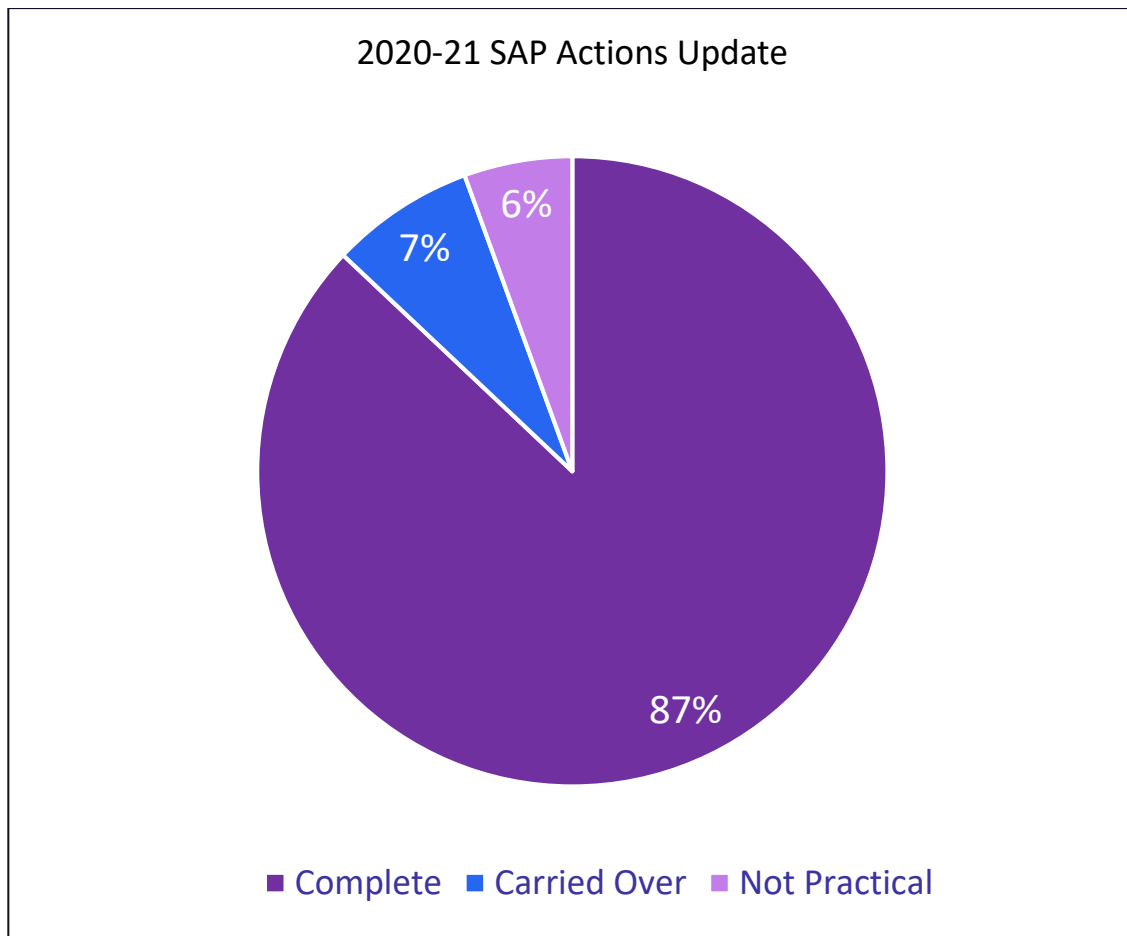
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# Environmental Sustainability Strategy

2017-2021

The 2017-2021 ESS set out strategic themes, identified with the People & Planet Green League and used to measure performance in the Higher Education sector. The 10 themes were transformed into 54 key actions within the 2020-21 SAP.

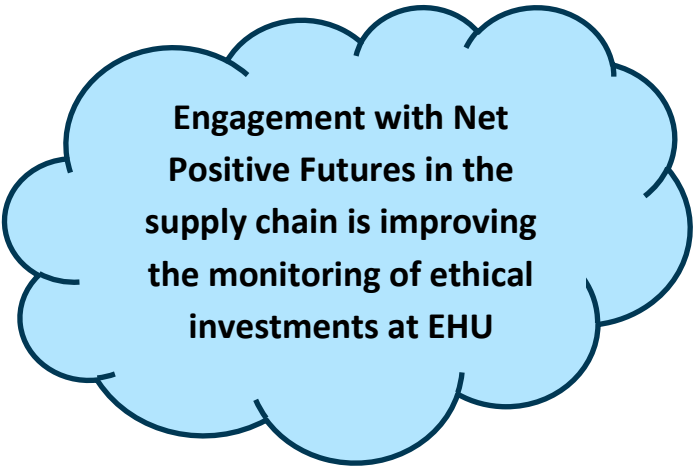
To measure performance against each action across the 10 themes, the actions were categorised into 4 levels of progress as described below. At the close of the 2020-21 SAP 87% of actions were completed, 7% were carried over to the 2021-22 SAP and 6% (3 actions) were deemed not practical due to changes in the strategic objectives of the business.





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## ESS 2017-2021 Themes and Highlights




Engagement with Net Positive Futures in the supply chain is improving the monitoring of ethical investments at EHU



10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of Green Flag Award status for EHU campus




86 Too Good to Go bags sold since launch (215kg CO<sub>2</sub>e saved)



Zero waste sent to landfill



Improved staff engagement via Sustainability Champions and SustainNET



Ranked as a top tier university in Uswitch study into being green in the sector

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# Environmental Sustainability Strategy

2021-2025

The 2021-2025 ESS builds on the momentum created around sustainability at EHU over the last 5 years and looks towards a carbon neutral future at EHU.

The 2021-25 ESS supports the EHU Strategic Plan (2021-25) which is committed to

***“Recognise and act on our responsibilities as a leading University to enhance environmentally-sustainable practice, with the aim of being carbon neutral within the life of this plan”***

ESS 2021-25 sees the launch of new themes to frame EHU's sustainability journey moving forward. These themes have been identified through consideration of the commitments of the Universities Strategic Plan and to reflect best practice within the sector as identified within the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) and Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) Sustainability Score Card and used to measure performance in the Higher Education sector.

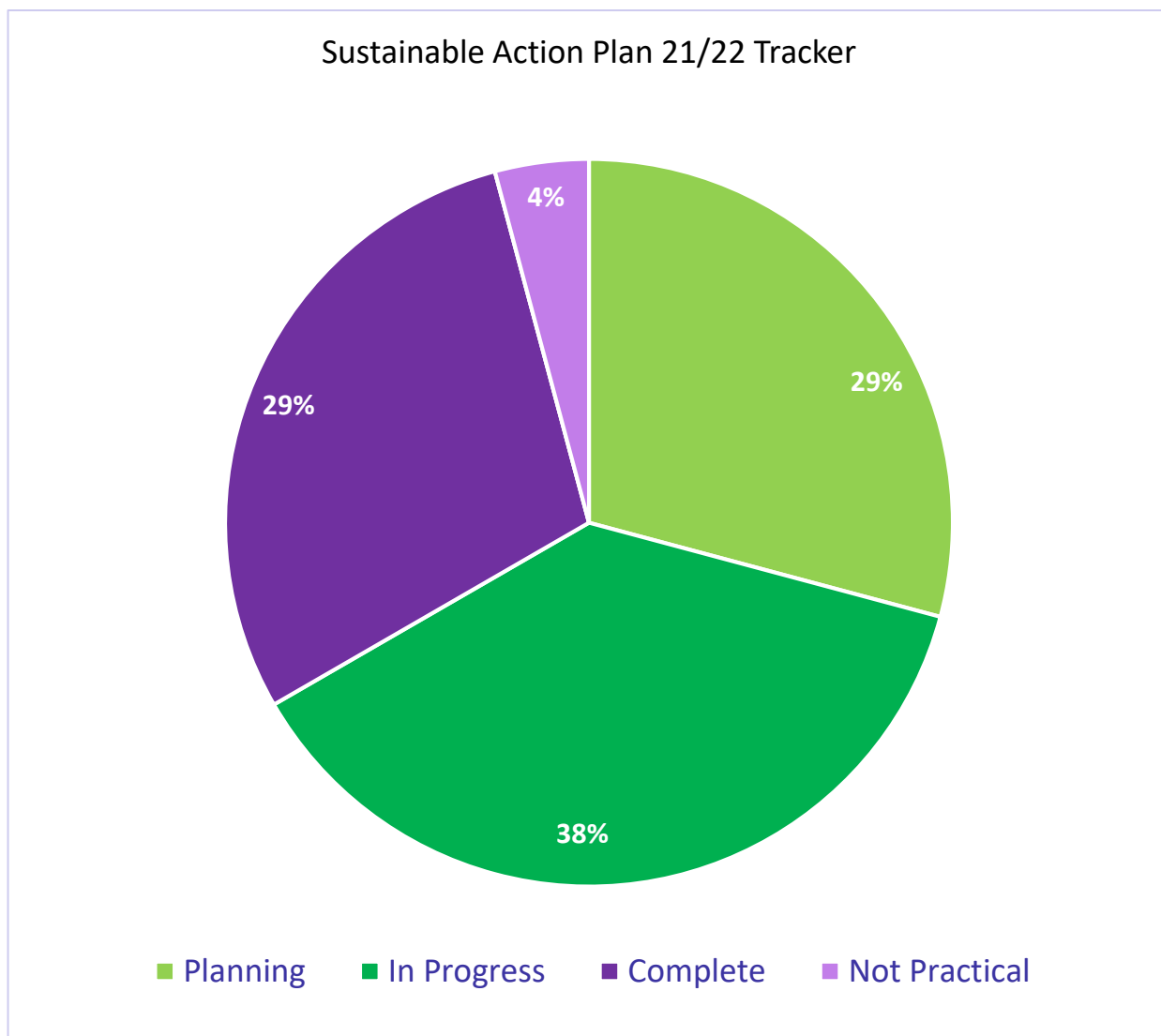
The four themes implemented in the ESS are: Leadership and Governance, Estates and Operations, Learning and Teaching and Partnership and Engagement. Each Theme is further broken down into sub-themes.

<b>Theme 1: Leadership and Governance</b>	<b>Theme 2: Estates and Operations</b>	<b>Theme 3: Learning and Teaching</b>	<b>Theme 4: Partnership and Engagement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Staff engagement and HR</li><li>- Health and wellbeing</li><li>- Risk</li><li>- Leadership</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Biodiversity/water</li><li>- Resource efficiency/waste</li><li>- Construction and renovation</li><li>- Travel and transport</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Student engagement</li><li>- Learning and teaching</li><li>- Research</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Procurement and supplier</li><li>- Food and drink</li><li>- Community and public</li></ul>

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## 2021/22 Sustainability Action Plan

The four themes of the ESS have been broken down into 24 actions as part of the 2021-22 SAP. As of February 2022, 29% of actions have been completed, 29% are in the planning stage and 38% are in progress and 4% (1 action) deemed not practical.







## Strategic Theme 1: Leadership and Governance

Theme 1 focuses on empowering each member of the EHU community to help promote the sustainability agenda through providing staff the tools to support, create and develop environmental campaigns.



There are four SAP actions for theme 1. Currently 50% are complete and 50% are in progress.

### Successes

- University Sustainability Group (USG) created as a cross-university leadership group to engage the wider university in the sustainability framework.
- Three opportunities for engagement with outdoor spaces successfully run.

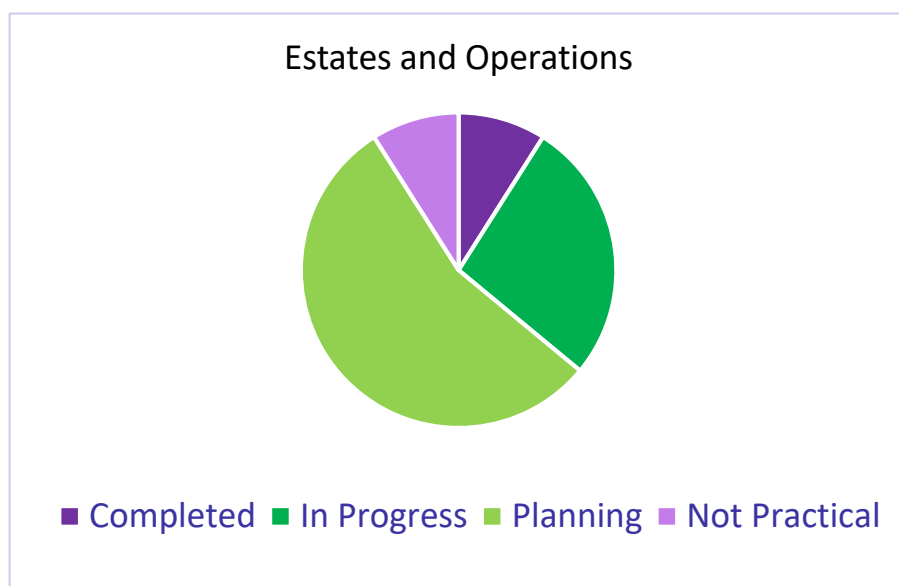
### Ongoing Developments

- Increasing the sustainability offering to staff and students as part of the induction process – empowering individuals to understand and promote sustainability at EHU and beyond. To fully understand the wants and needs of our students 22/23 will see the introduction of an annual sustainability survey.
- Improving the strength and reach of the Sustainability Champions.



## Strategic Theme 2: Estates and Operations

Theme 2 accounts for the need to be mindful in the way EHU undertakes maintenance, future construction and renovation works, as well as ensuring the EHU community is aware of sustainable travel options and implements them where possible.



There are eleven SAP actions for theme 2. Currently 9% are completed, 27% are in progress, 55% are in planning stage and 9% have been deemed not practical.

### Successes

- University pool fleet reviewed, and changes implemented to allow for improved understanding of car use moving forward.

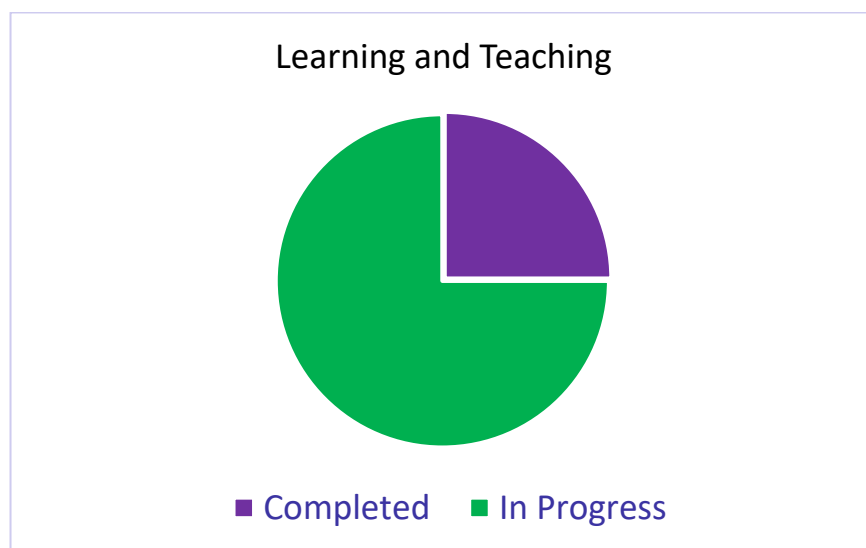
### Ongoing Developments

- Carbon Management Plan (CMP) development: The University Strategic Plan aims for a carbon neutral campus which requires the identification of baseline datasets to create a CMP that incorporates an analysis of primary carbon contributors.
- Consultations for new travel, biodiversity and waste infrastructure strategies are being undertaken to create policies that complement the CMP.

## Strategic Theme 3: Learning and Teaching

*“Learning must prepare students and learners of all ages to find solutions for the challenges of today and the future. Education should be transformative and allow us to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action to change our societies and care for the planet” UNESCO, 2021*

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and embedding the UN SDGs in teaching and research at EHU helps empower our students to become environmental change-makers during their study and beyond are at the heart of theme 3.



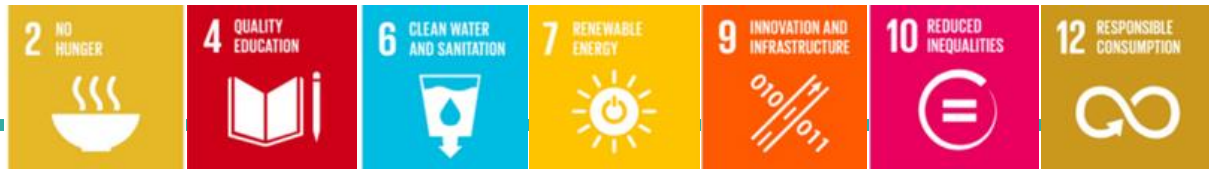
There are four SAP actions for theme 3. Currently 25% are completed and 75% are in progress.

### Successes

- 570 individuals have undertaken Environmental Awareness training since it became mandatory for staff in January 2022.

### Ongoing Developments

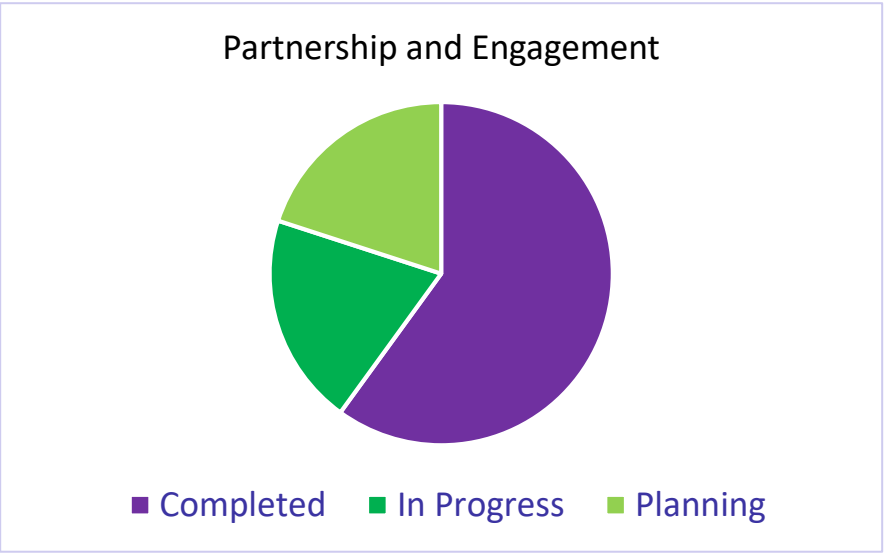
- An ESD working group of key staff has been created with the aim to support academics in embedding ESD practices in their courses.



# Strategic Theme 4: Partnership and Engagement

Creating and maintaining effective partnership and engagement opportunities across the university and beyond allows for sustainability messaging to be disseminated to a wider audience lies at the heart of theme 4.

EHU has a range of sustainability-focused groups that promote partnership and engagement both within EHU, but also in the wider community.



There are five SAP actions for theme 4. 60% are completed, 20% in progress and 20% and in planning.

## Successes

- Too Good To Go launched on campus reducing food waste and EHU's carbon footprint
- First ever Sustainability Festival run in November 2021.

## Ongoing Developments

- Further strengthening our commitment to sustainable procurement and supporting our supply chain in their sustainable betterment.
- Continued support and development of university groups and outreach activities linked to partnership and engagement

## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)

Our 2021-25 ESS aims to incorporate the UN SDGs where possible, perpetuating change at a multitude of levels within EHU. Continual improvement within each theme of the ESS is driven by a set of actions within the Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) with each action linked to a corresponding SDG.

The University's SustainNET group has created an SDG map of academic staff's expertise and interests ([Expertise & Interests - SustainNET \(edgehill.ac.uk\)](https://edgehill.ac.uk/expertise-interests-sustainnet)). This resource is further helping to develop a more collaborative SDG-framed approach on each of the four ESS Strategic Themes.

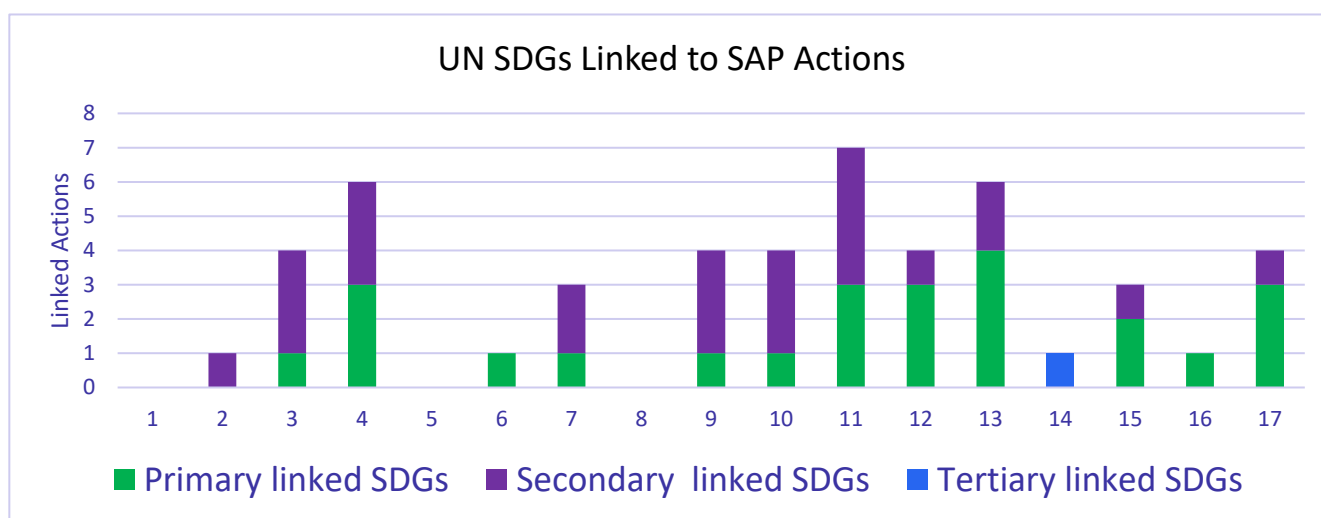
Within this report the SDGs being addressed by each theme is highlighted to provide a benchmark for our current commitment to the SDGs.



## UN SDGs Commitment: 2021-25

EHU currently has commitments in place to address 16 out of the 17 UN SDGs.

This includes linking 14 SDGs to actions on the Sustainability Action Plan, 1 SDG (#8) is covered by EHU policies including accident reporting/monitoring and our commitment to tackling modern slavery in the supply chain.



### Athena Swan Awards

The 16<sup>th</sup> SDG has been addressed through the commitment made to Gender Equality at EHU through the Athena Swan charter.

Edge Hill University holds the following Athena Swan Awards

Edge Hill University	Bronze University Award
Faculty of Education	Bronze Award
Faculty of Healthm Social Care and Medicine	Bronze Award
Department of Sport and Physical Activity	Bronze Award
Department of Biology	Bronze Award
Department of Computer Science	Bronze Award



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## University Groups and Outreach

EHU has a range of university-based groups that promote and support our ESS and run community-engagement events. 2021 saw the first ever Sustainability Festival at EHU which was open to the community as well as EHU staff and students.

### University Sustainability Group (USG)

A cross University group, formed in March 2021 as part of the conversations surrounding the University's 2021-25 Strategic Plan consultation process and comprises all EHUs leads on sustainability.

The USG provides a forum for discussing important strategic issues related to sustainability, as well as a body devising new ideas on formulating and developing EHU's sustainability strategies in the future. It comprises of 16 representatives from across the campus and provides a means to recognise sustainable leadership at all levels of the University.

### Sustainability Champions

The Sustainability Champions are staff dedicated to the sustainability movement at EHU. Meeting every quarter, the Sustainability Champions discuss and share best practice, disseminate sustainability initiatives to their colleagues to ensure the message is effectively communicated, and provide input on new projects.

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## SustainNET

Formed in February 2020 SustainNET continues to grow and extend its activities over the past year, in 2021 its membership grew from around 60 to 100 members (two-thirds of which are staff).

SustainNET works to advance the sustainability agenda both on and off campus, covering four main themes: research, education, student engagement and local community partnership:

- Research: SustainNET has facilitated new interdisciplinary project collaborates between Biology, Business, Geography and Psychology.
- Education: In March 2021 SustainNET held in partnership with Liverpool World Centre an online Education for Sustainability Conference with almost 100 delegates from EHU, local organisation representatives and other UK university academics working in this area. After the even SustainNET established an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Working Group to take forward the main outcomes and recommendations of the conference.
- Student Engagement: As a spin-off initiative of SustainNET its 30 student members formed their own autonomous Sustainability Society affiliated with EHUs Student Union.
- Community Partnership: SustainNET continues to work with local sustainability-focused organisations, or Partners. In 2021 the number of Partners has risen from around 25 to 40 which are a mix of private, public and civil society organisations from various sectors (<https://sites.edgehill.ac.uk/sustainnet/partners>).



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## Sustainability Festival



# **Sustainability Festival**

## **2021**

### **Edge Hill University**

During the first week of November 2021, to coincide with the start of the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow, EHU hosted its first ever Sustainability Festival. The Sustainability Festival, which was open to the public, involved around 90 separate events and was structured over six themes: Community, Tours, Performances, Talks, Food-Drink-Shopping, and Competitions.

Most SustainNET Partner Organisations were involved in all six themes. In the Community theme SustainNET Partners showcased their sustainability work across all five Festival days.

As well as directly engaging with attendees with their work, the Sustainability Festival also provided network community-building opportunities for the Partners attending, supporting a key aim of SustainNET to promote a network community of sustainability-focused organisations in our area.

On the back of the success of the Sustainability Festival, SustainNET plans to organise other sustainability organisation networking events in the future, as well as knowledge exchange activities.

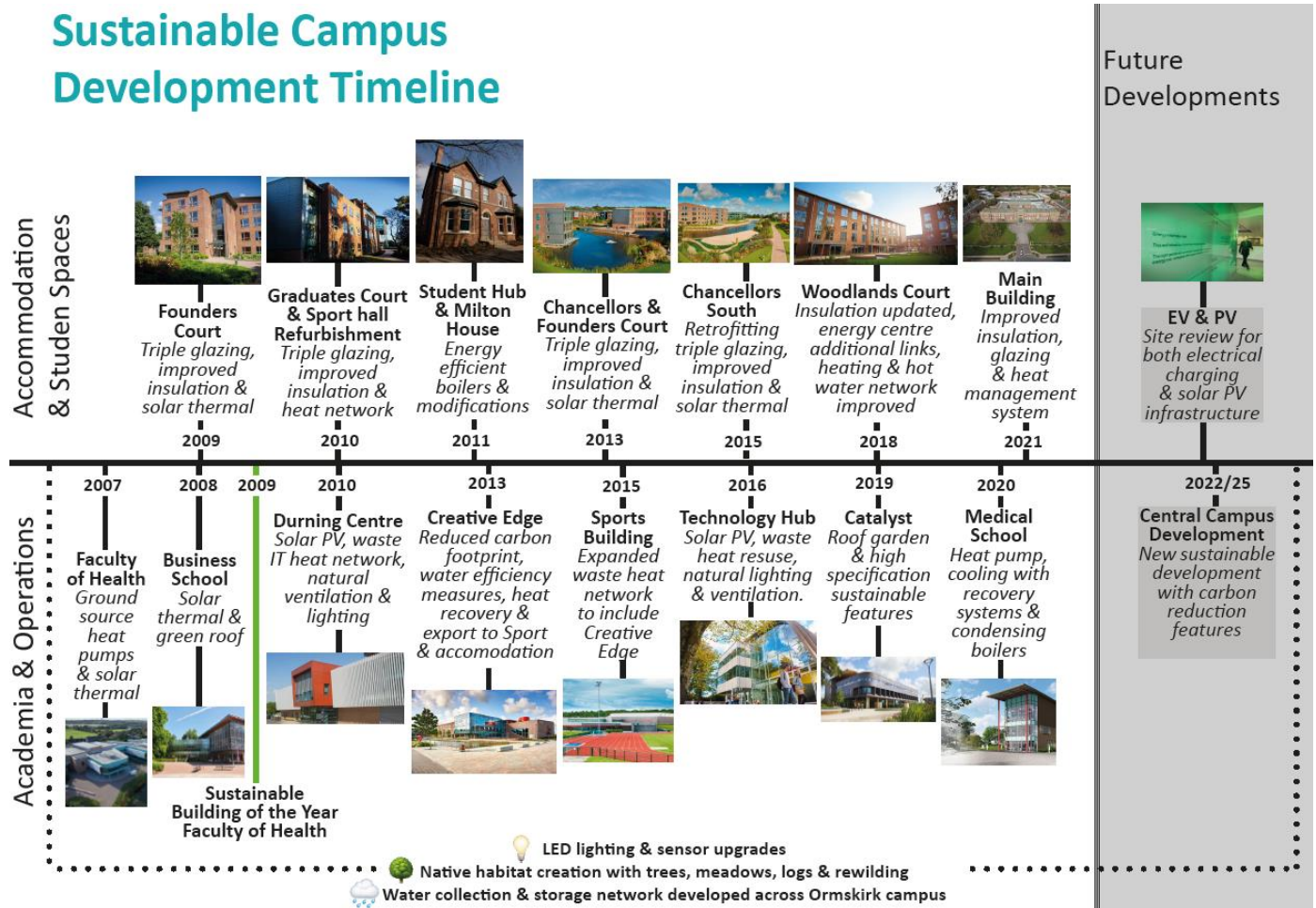




## Sustainable Campus Update

### Sustainable Campus Development

Edge Hill University campus already has a wide range of sustainability features integrated within its infrastructure.

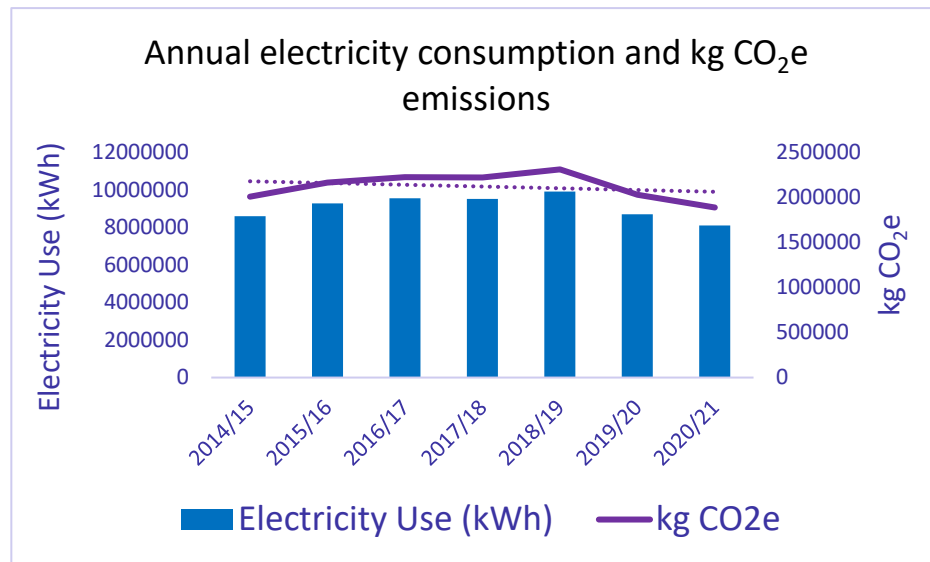


Future campus developments will consider integration of features to reduce carbon emissions and support campus biodiversity. As part of this a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is being produced to ensure the diverse biodiversity currently enjoyed at EHU is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy.

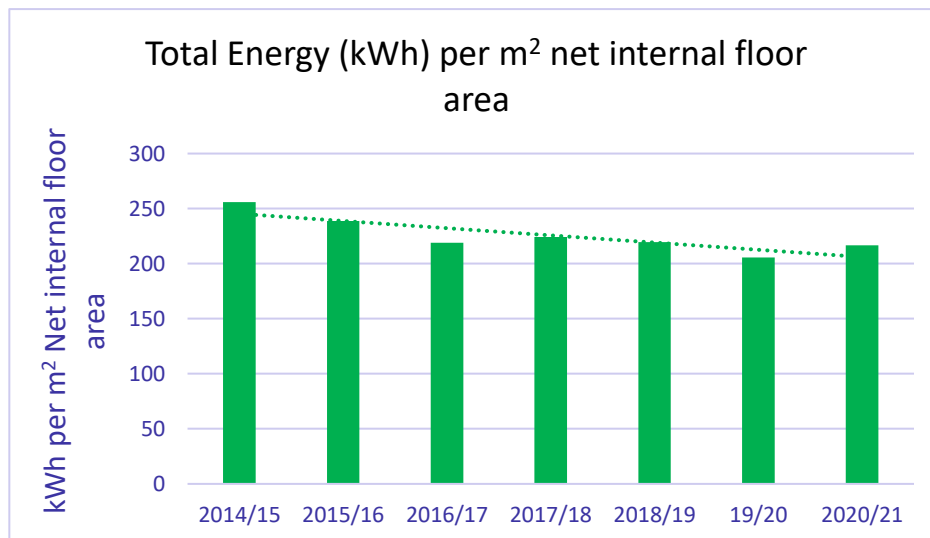
## Energy Consumption

As part of EHU's ambition to reach carbon neutrality we are committing to improve reporting on our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions to update all stakeholders on our progress.

Over the last seven years our overall CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions have decreased as has our electricity consumption. The upcoming Carbon Management Plan (CMP) will support EHU in further reducing our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions to allow us to become a carbon neutral campus.

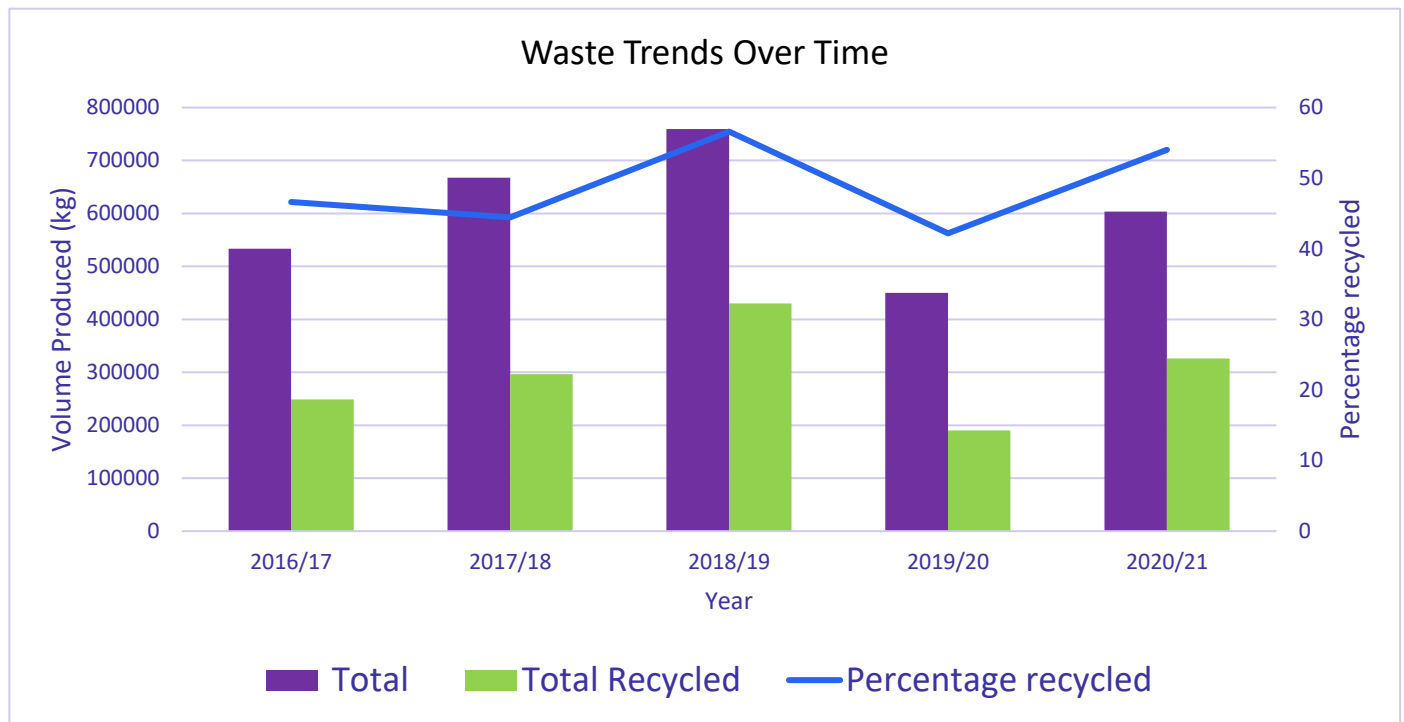


Over the last seven years our total energy (gas and electricity) consumption per m<sup>2</sup> net internal floor area has decreased overall in line with our commitment to reduce energy consumption and the related CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions.



## Waste Management

EHU are also committed to maximising recycling and minimising waste going to landfill. Over the last 5 years 0% of waste has gone to landfill, the percentage of waste recycled has increased overall and our infrastructure for managing waste has been reviewed with an aim to further increasing recycling.



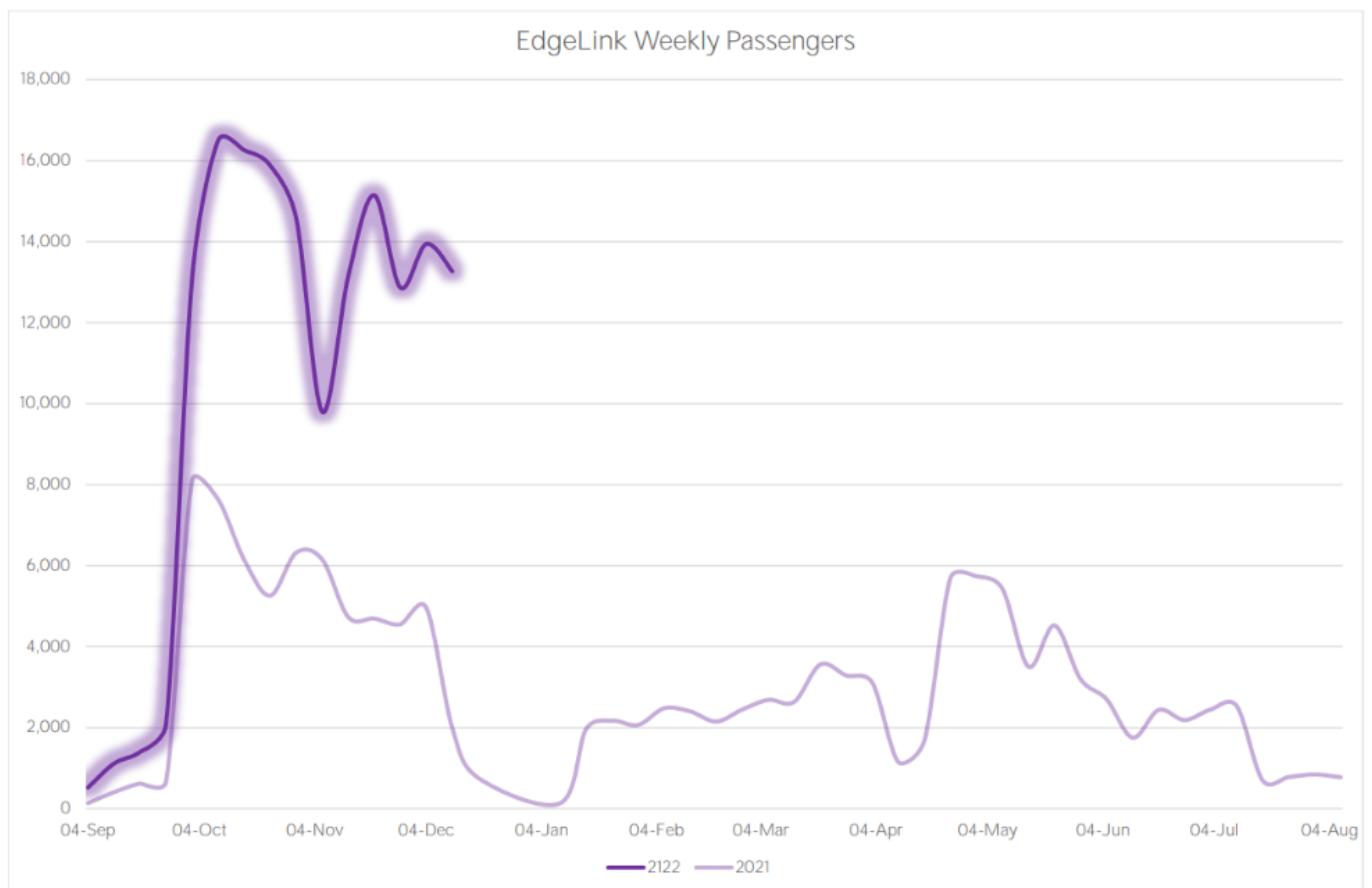


## Travel

### EdgeLink Bus Service

As part of EHU's commitment to reducing car use by those travelling to campus a regular bus service (EdgeLink) running between Ormskirk bus station and EHU campus is provided free of charge.

Weekly passenger data illustrates patronage during the restrictions present during 2020/21 remained healthy (pale purple in graph). Changes to restrictions have led to patronage from September to December 2021 increasing (dark purple in graph). Between September and early December 2021 the CO<sub>2</sub> kg/passenger emissions was 0.295.

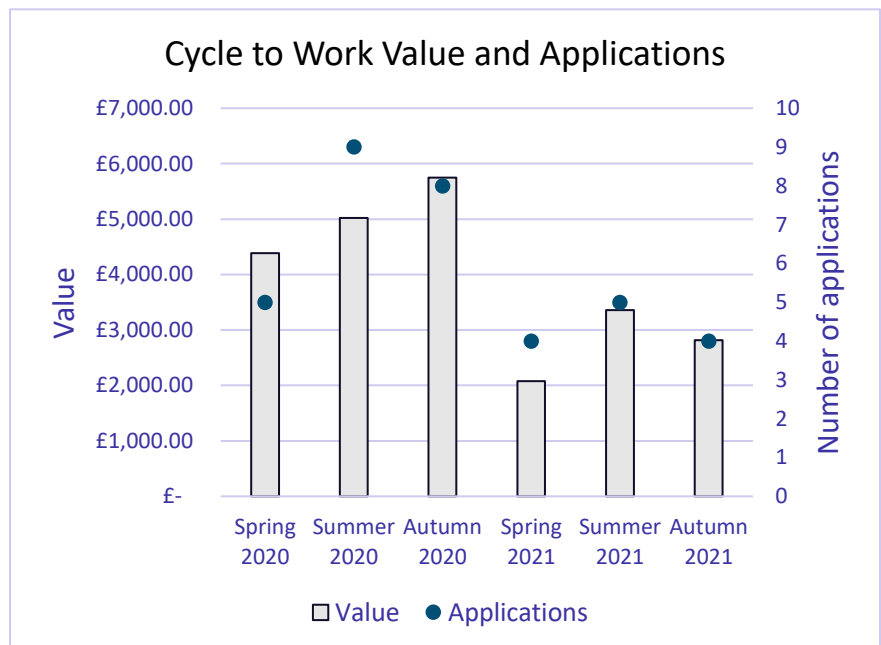


## Cycle 2 Work

Edge Hill University operates three Cycle 2 Work application windows per year (February - Spring, June - Summer and October - Autumn) where eligible staff can apply for up to £1000 towards purchasing cycling related equipment, including a bike.

The October 2021 application window ran successfully with the September 2021 Love to Ride campaign helping highlight the scheme. Overall, there has been a decrease in both applications and the value of the applications. Reasons for this will be explored as part of the next travel survey.

To complement the Cycle 2 Work scheme, EHU run regular cycling campaigns to encourage staff and students to cycle to campus. There are also a range of facilities on campus to support cyclists including showers, Sheffield stands and BLUC Bike Lockers to provide secure storage.



## Carshare

EHU runs a successful carshare scheme, operated in conjunction with the liftshare.com platform. This scheme allows staff and students to register to find others to car share with. EHU guarantees car sharers a parking space if at least two people arriving in a car together both hold a valid car parking permit and reserve their parking space in advance.

For staff the Guaranteed Ride Home Scheme is operated to ensure registered members of staff are able to get home in the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstances.

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## Future Development

Implementation of the 2021-25 ESS and its associated SAP is at the fore of sustainable action at EHU, with both at the core of key decision making. As we progress through 2022 work with stakeholders across the institution from multiple departments will allow the sustainability team to gather feedback on tangible actions that will feed into the 2022-23 SAP.

As outlined in our 2021 Environmental Sustainability Report, EHU are now implementing a cycle of annual reporting and SAP creation. This in turn will then feed into the next ESS.

The continued development of the University Campus is critical to providing an environment where students can thrive, and long-term recruitment and retention of students can be sustained. Over the last 10 to 15 years there are multiple examples of how the campus has developed great facilities whilst incorporating sustainable design to ensure that the environmental impacts of the campus are minimised.

Looking to the future, with objectives driven by the 2021-25 ESS, the University will continue to implement initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of the estate with an approach focusing on two key areas: using building management systems (BMS) to run the estate as efficiently as possible, and where new developments are built, ensuring that sustainability is an important factor in the design and end use of the buildings: the upcoming development of central campus is being planned with sustainability at the forefront.







Find us online at [www.edgehill.ac.uk/stustainability](http://www.edgehill.ac.uk/stustainability)  
For further information contact us via: [sustainability@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@edgehill.ac.uk)