

Edge Hill University Waste and Resource Strategy

2024 - 2029



Edge Hill
University

Edge Hill University Waste and Resource Strategy

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Foreword

From our inception as one of only two women's teacher training colleges (recently rated Ofsted 2024 rated Outstanding provider for Initial Teacher Education), we've been creating life-changing environments and opportunities for our people to thrive, from exceptional teaching that inspires first-generation students to supporting academics in their world-leading research. Edge Hill University has invested more than £350m in our enviable facilities over the last 10 years. For 12 consecutive years, our grounds and green spaces have won Green Flag Awards for their beauty and environmental benefit. And we're aiming high, with targets to become Carbon Neutral by 2030 and Net Zero by 2035

With impact comes responsibility. Key to reaching our environmental targets are improving our resource management which will involve engaging with all staff, students, vendors, contractors, and suppliers in the changes we are implementing. The University has a large number of students and staff engaged in a range of academic and support activities (around 14,000 students and 1600 staff), and over 2000 students who call our Ormskirk campus home, producing a number of waste streams.

Edge Hill University is proud to seek out and implement innovative approaches to further our journey towards our sustainability strategic ambitions as outlined in our Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Since 2017 Edge Hill University has undertaken sorting of waste on site at our innovative waste compound, allowing for better control and understanding of resource management.

This Strategy focuses on the University's aims to increase resource efficiency, focusing on the prevention of waste generation; move towards a circular economy; align with the waste hierarchy; and ensure we comply with our legal obligations. This supports our sustainability related strategic ambitions, while also considering the wider global, national, and local drivers for improving Edge Hill University's sustainable performance.

Introduction

This Waste and Resource Strategy sets out how Edge Hill University will implement optimal use of the waste hierarchy and Circular Economy model across the University to support its vision of becoming a Carbon Net Zero University. Edge Hill University is focused on improving resource management, and as a result looking at measures to reduce waste production and where this isn't possible ensuring reuse and recycling are at the forefront of our model of managing resources.

At Edge Hill University waste management sits within the Facilities Management department which is responsible for the management of all waste streams generated by the University. The implementation of the strategy is undertaken by Corporate

Sustainability who work alongside Site Services to ensure that Edge Hill University's waste management practices align with the University Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

Our vision is for everyone at Edge Hill University, to take ownership for the waste they generate. We want to work together to ensure items and materials are seen as a valuable resource to be used again, recycled for further manufacturing, or sent for energy recovery.

As part of this strategy, we consider the following Vision and Mission statements to be appropriate for Edge Hill University.

Our Vision is to be recognised as a leader in waste minimisation and sustainability in the HE sector.

Our Mission is to implement the waste hierarchy to prevent, prepare for reuse, recycling, and recovery to reduce disposal.

Scope

This Strategy is applicable to all activities and services undertaken at Edge Hill University. Its scope covers:

- All sites either owned or where leased are wholly managed by Edge Hill University.
- All waste generated by the University as part of day-to-day operations, as collected by the University's appointed waste contractors.
- Items repurposed and re-used by the University or chosen partners, for example as part of the annual Big Campus Clear Out.

Baselines

Baselines are based on data from the 2022/23 academic year and will be used for the setting and monitoring of this Strategy's targets. They are:

- 706.9 tonnes of waste generated.
- 32.2% of waste recycled via our on-site waste compound.
- 39.8 kg per capita (FTE staff and student numbers) waste generated.
- 13.24 tonnes CO₂e carbon emissions generated from waste management.

Objectives and targets

Resource management is increasingly of interest to internal and external stakeholders, and this is reflected in Edge Hill University's approach to the subject. Development and promotion of initiatives that support the University in becoming carbon Net Zero are key, including adapting a circular economy approach and investing in new technologies and techniques across the University.

It is necessary for Edge Hill University to set robust and appropriate targets that suit the University. All targets must consider the existing Strategies and Policies that complement this Strategy including, but not limited to:

- Environmental Sustainability Strategy.
- Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan.
- University Strategic Plan.

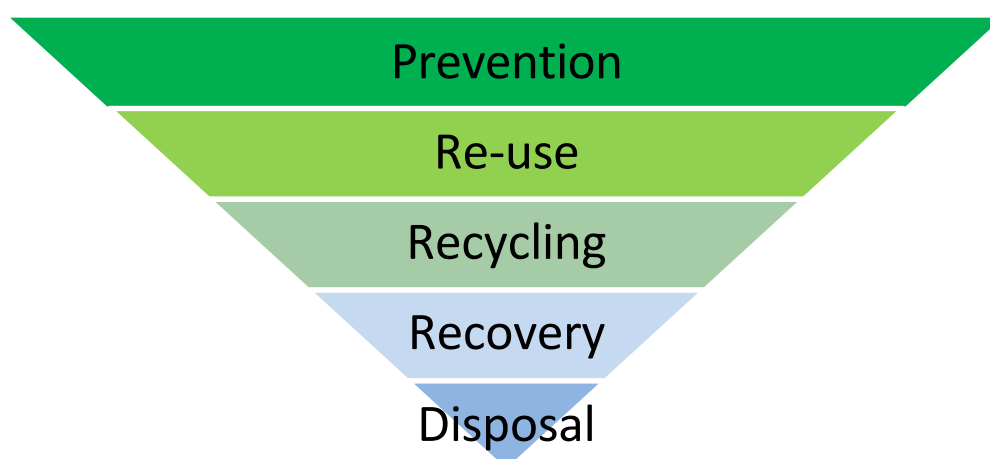
Over the lifespan of this Strategy (2024-2029), Edge Hill University has the following objectives:

- 1) Minimise the creation of waste, thus preventing pollution.
- 2) Adhere to the waste hierarchy (Figure 1), supporting the implementation of a circular economy model.
- 3) To reduce the environmental impact of resources used by the University.
- 4) Ensure the embedding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) in the waste management practices at Edge Hill University.
- 5) Embed a clear review and monitoring process to ensure that the University's performance continuously improves and targets and KPIs are met.
- 6) Ensure greater consideration is given to targeted waste management measures to address fluctuating production or needs of specific areas.
- 7) Promote and support behavioural change around waste management.
- 8) To guarantee that there is year-on-year continual improvement around resource management.
- 9) To improve the quality of waste data
- 10) Ensure legal compliance and best practice with waste management: this includes regularly reviewing relevant legislation and where appropriate reflect these in our targets.

Specific targets which sit under the above objectives are as follows:

- 1) To continue to reduce the total waste generated per capita (FTE staff and students) to 30% of the 2022/23 levels by 2030.
- 2) Reduce the CO₂e emissions from waste by 30% by 2030.
- 3) Commit to continuing sending 0% of waste generated on campus to landfill.
- 4) Embedding circular economy approaches within procurement and related practices by 2030.

Figure 1: Waste hierarchy



It should be noted that within the 2023-2025 iteration of the Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan (ESDP) a target of increasing recycling rates to 70% by 2025 was set, this is being replaced by the above targets. This is because as total waste generated is reduced, recycling rates are expected to fall, therefore eclipsing this target, our 2025 ESDP will reflect these updated targets.

Introduction to targets

Key to all targets being achieved is the accurate collection and monitoring of waste management data, including weight and type of waste collected, and vehicle trips to site for removal of waste.

These targets will be embedded within the 2025 iteration of the ESDP, both to form a framework through which they can be monitored and tracked, but also to provide a mechanism for establishing costings/ROIs.

1. Target One: Reduce the total waste generated per capita (FTE staff and students) to 30% of the 2022/23 levels by 2030

Waste production and number of people go hand in hand; therefore, it is expected that as staff and student numbers at Edge Hill University vary that waste generated will also fluctuate. To account for changing numbers of students and staff each year, Edge Hill University have made the decision to move to measuring waste generation per capita to better track and measure waste reduction strategies.

Edge Hill University are looking to take a number of steps to meet this target, including but not limited to:

- Investigate the feasibility of switching from a discount-based incentive for bringing your cup to a charge for all single-use containers and cups on site. Encourages reusable cups and plates to be used. Consider funds from single-use materials that have a charge to go towards projects to reduce waste / improve biodiversity on site.
- Look to reduce sales of single-use water bottles by offering alternatives such as refillable water bottles and making water fountains more freely available.

2. Target Two: Reduce the CO₂e emission from waste by 30% by 2030

To ensure Edge Hill University meets its carbon reduction targets as outlined in our Carbon Management Plan it is important there is a focus on reducing carbon emissions associated with waste generation. Scope 3 emissions are estimated to form between 70% and 80% of Edge Hill University's emissions; this includes emissions relating to waste generation. Measures have already been implemented at Edge Hill University to reduce our CO₂e emissions from waste generation including the use of an EV buggy on site to collect bins, and reducing the need for vehicles to come onto site as frequently to remove waste through the use of the onsite waste compound which includes bailers to compact waste.

We appreciate that we cannot rest on our laurels and need to continue to ensure we reduce our CO₂e emissions related to waste. To do so we are looking to take a number of steps, including but not limited to:

- Consider new technologies and reassess ones that are currently not viable that could eliminate waste/ improve recycling.
- Investigate the potential for moving to an entire electric fleet of vehicles to support the contract, including the vehicles that transport waste from site to the contractor's waste management facilities.

3. Target Three: Commit to continuing to send 0% of waste generated on campus to landfill

Since 2017 Edge Hill University has sent 0% waste to landfill due to using a range of approaches to waste management including improved methods in waste segregation on campus, use of anaerobic digestion (AD) for food waste and Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) generation as the final destination for all general waste generated. It is vital that Edge Hill University continues to commit to sending 0% of waste generated on campus that cannot be reused or recycled, to landfill.

To support this target the primary step is to ensure this is embedded in our contractual arrangements with waste contractors working for Edge Hill University. Also supporting this will be investigating the potential to increase the number of waste streams collected and managed by looking at data around materials not

currently collected such as coffee cups and soft plastics, and where feasible implementing their collection and re-use/recycling.

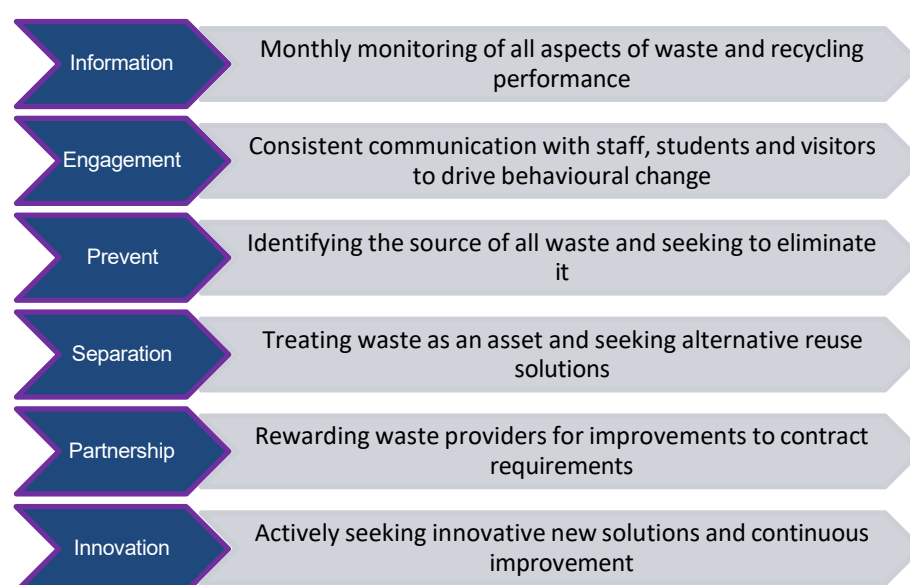
4. Target Four: Embedding circular economy approaches within procurement and related practices by 2030

The University supports the implementation of the waste hierarchy, the first and second levels of which are reduce and re-use. Full implementation of a circular economy model at the University must involve bringing in changes around procurement practices and building on the successes of our existing re-use schemes. The most successful of these is the Big Campus Clear Out which in 2022/23 diverted 1.9 tonnes of goods from waste streams and donated them to local partners including Tawd Vale Lions and the local Food Bank.

Edge Hill University are looking to take a number of steps to meet this target, including but not limited to:

- Investigating options that reduce waste generation while supporting the community; for example, composting all green and food waste on-site could produce more compost than can be used on the estate, therefore Edge Hill University could look at opportunities to supply excess to the community.
- Continuing current schemes such as Big Campus Clear Out, SU clothing swaps.
- Investigating setting up WARP-it or similar for furniture and equipment reuse and rehoming. Look at other schemes which look to reuse goods.

Supporting the implementation of our objectives and targets are the implementation of six strategic pillars as illustrated in the figure below.



Monitoring and review

1. Reporting

The annual Sustainability Report and interim Board Report will be used to report on progress of this Strategy, as well as outline plans for the following year. Our annual report is publicly available as well as going to our Board of Governors for review.

Reporting will also be undertaken termly at the ISC meetings and quarterly at the Faculty and Facilities Management Health, Safety and Environment meetings.

Edge Hill University currently have several initiatives such as the Big Clear Out, and Too Good To Go food app. Edge Hill University will ensure arrangements are in place to measure what these, and other initiatives, achieve and report on them. Edge Hill University will also look to promote these schemes to staff and students as people will only use schemes that they are aware of.

2. Monitoring

Through the reporting structure, targets will be monitored and recommendations on changes required to objectives and targets will be taken to the ISC or Facilities Management Health, Safety and Environment meetings as relevant for discussion. We will also undertake monitoring to:

- Ensure any changes to the estate or operations that will impact on strategic objectives and targets are considered, and where required update objectives and targets to ensure they remain relative.
- Ensure there are adequate resources to meet objectives and targets.
- Escalate issues as necessary to the ISC and/or Facilities Management Health, Safety and Environment meetings.

Next steps

Edge Hill University recognises that waste and resource management is not a static task and therefore this Strategy is designed to be a living document which will evolve over time in line with developments in compliance, legislation and best practice. With this in mind we have a range of next steps outlined below.

1. Communication

Edge Hill University is committed to ensure clear communication regarding this Strategy and will do so by:

- Using existing communication strategies and new ones to let staff and students know what they should put in each bin and the reasons for change e.g. charges to single-use cups.

- Ensuring Edge Hill University is visible on policies and initiatives for recycling and waste, through posters/e-mails/University website.
- Listing on the University website the different schemes and ways that the university is doing to reduce waste and recycle more. i.e. use of the Too Good To Go app/charge for single-use items etc.
- Outlining what items can be recycled and where to recycle them on both the University website and posters around campus. Some items will be a single drop-off point on the campus.

2. Opportunities for staff and students to get involved

Edge Hill University recognises staff and students have a vital role to play in waste and resource management and will empower them to get involved with this Strategy by:

- Holding regular meetings on recycling and waste open to all staff and students. The meetings will offer a chance for people to have their say on what they think of how Edge Hill University manage resources and what they would like to see Edge Hill University do in the future.
- Looking into opportunities for students to get involved in green schemes and education opportunities.
- Working with students on themes for reuse workshops (clothes swap/mending clothes/cooking with leftovers).

3. HE sector collaboration

To be able to develop, evolve and reflect best practice, Edge Hill University much engage with what other universities are doing and identify transferable solutions.

4. Expect changes to recycling and waste that affect Edge Hill University

Within the next 5 years, there are already several changes proposed by the UK Government which will affect the composition of the recycling and waste at site, and we have tried to gauge what this will be.

DRS (Deposit Return Scheme). This is intended to launch in England in 2027 currently. This will put a deposit onto all drink bottles, and businesses like us who sell bottles/cans that come under the DRS will be required to collect these for return to the recycling scheme. This will mean that virtually all glass and cans and most plastic bottles will be subject to a deposit and will not then be present in our recycling & waste disposal. These materials are currently collected as separate streams at Edge Hill University and are part of our recycling figures. The removal of this will reduce our recycling rates.

Coffee cup recycling. Intended to launch in October 2025. This will require Edge Hill University to collect for recycling any single-use fibre-based coffee cups. Currently, on-site Edge Hill University has Vegware cups and Costa cups for single use. The Vegware cups we will look to collect for composting, and we will work with Costa on what options for recycling their cups.

Composting. Edge Hill University is looking into potentially composting our green waste, food and Vegware material on-site. This will remove these materials from our recycling & waste (waste elimination). As green waste and food currently contribute to our recycling rate, this will reduce our overall recycling rate. However, waste elimination is a higher priority and target for Edge Hill University than the recycling rate.

Governance

This Strategy is approved and overseen by the Institutional Sustainability Committee (ISC) and reported on at the Faculty Health, Safety and Environment meetings, and the Facilities Management Health, Safety and Environment meetings. It is managed on a day-to-day basis by Site Services and supported by Corporate Sustainability.

Glossary of terms

DRS – Deposit Return Scheme

ESDP – Environmental Sustainability Delivery Plan

HE – Higher Education

ISC – Institutional Sustainability Committee

References

¹UN environment programme website, GOAL 12L Sustainable consumption and production. GOAL 12: Sustainable consumption and production | UNEP - UN Environment Programme. Accessed on 30/05/2024.

Annexes

Document Control

Version	Date	Change Author	Summary of Changes
V.1	September 2024	Corporate Sustainability Manager	New document

Endmatter

Title	Edge Hill University Waste and Resource Strategy
Policy Owner	Corporate Sustainability Manager
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Version	V.1
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Date for Review	

Created in collaboration with Julia Hollis, Project Manager at Sitemark.

