Sustainability Action Plan 2025

This action plan sits alongside the Sustainability Strategy and should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Colour codes:

Completed	Ongoing	Further work needed	Off track

1.Governance

	Objectives	Actions	Status
1	Write a Sustainability Strategy and get Executive Committee approval on the strategy	• Bring to Biodiversity and Climate Committee for approval TT23 • Take to Executive Committee for approval TT23 • Publish on the website	Completed
2	Set out an Action plan with targets and objectives to help us work towards reducing our carbon	• Bring to Biodiversity and Climate Committee for approval TT23 • Take to Executive committee for approval TT23 • Review annually by Biodiversity and Climate Committee and Executive Committee	Completed
3	Agree the governance structure and oversight of Environmental and Sustainability matters	• Detailed in the Sustainability Strategy paper	Completed
	Monitoring Progress and Sharing Progress		
4	Develop an annual Biodiversity and Sustainability report	• Bring the report to Executive Committee and then Governing Body • Publish the report on our website	Completed

Challenges

To achieve our aims, we will need to think about how to fit sustainability into our budgets and finances and the culture within College. In particular, we need to think about how we engage all members of the College to change their habits and think about their carbon output, specifically with heating, lights and energy use.

2. Finances and Investment

	Objectives	Actions	Status
1	Review College investment policies and look at divestment	Update website	Completed
2	During the annual budget discussions, make sure sustainability projects are considered	Budget holders informed	Completed
	Engage with alumni and donors		
3	Raise funds for sustainability related projects	Sustainability considerations are included within capital projects that are part of fundraising campaigns and this will continue.	
4	Include sustainability in JCR and MCR fund raising/ community work	Collaborate with JCR and MCR	Ongoing
5	Engage alumni through Floreat Domus	JCR and MCR Environmental reps to write annual article with pictures	By MT2025

Progress

Balliol started divesting in 2020

Challenges

Getting alumni funding will need to be discussed with the Development Team and feasibility looked at.

3. Estates

	Objectives	Actions	Status
1	Look at increasing renewable energy	Look at producing a logical decarbonisation plan including options for renewable energy	Completed
2	Reduce energy consumption	• Produce dashboard data to show usage • Change to LED lights • Complete trial of two Jowett Towers using remotely controlled radiator valves • Work towards changing all radiators to remotely controlled valves to enable heating control in all rooms • Work with JCR and MCR on educating all students on how to reduce energy waste • Look at roof installation and similar to contain heat and reduce energy wastage	Ongoing, some of this work has already started

	Waste		
	Objectives	**Actions**	**Status**
1	Increase recycling	Remind students and staff annually about recycling bins in rooms and offices	Ongoing
2	Reduce food waste	Make sure students are aware of the food waste bins in their rooms Continue to monitor food waste and keep looking at the data	Ongoing
3	Reduce wastage in other areas	• Install water taps for bottle refills • Bring in battery recycle points and pen recycle points • Ensure all stationery purchases across the college are either recycled or can be recycled.	Ongoing
	New Developments		
1	Have a minimum requirement of 25% Biodiversity Net Gain on new developments	Specification for future feasibility studies	TBC
2	Require all new builds to meet Passivehaus rating/criteria https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk	Specification for future feasibility studies	In-line with University policy
	Land and Biodiversity		
1	Complete a biodiversity baseline audit and perform biennial audits	Complete first baseline audit	Completed 2021
2	Increase biodiversity rich areas	Include an agenda item in Gardens Committee each meeting to ensure proper thought is continually given to increasing biodiversity – increase pollinator-friendly areas by 20%	Completed
3	Install bird feeders, swift boxes, hedgehog houses, insect hotels, log piles	Progress is shown below.	Completed

Progress

At Broad Street, there are five bird nesting boxes, bird feeders and a bird bath. The gardening team actively feed the smaller birds with fat balls in a cage that excludes larger birds and squirrels, regularly scatter bird food for the larger birds, and keep the birdbath clean and topped up.

The gardening team have begun accumulating wood and stumps for a log pile. A bat box will be purchased in the next budget year.

Challenges

Some of these changes need funds which are limited.

4.Catering, Conferencing and Events

	Objectives	Actions	Status
1	Identify, record and report the annual carbon and biodiversity impact of food	Produce first report for Governing Body	TT24
2	Reduce carbon emissions from food, including looking at food miles	Carbon emissions from food are considered as part of purchasing. This includes partnering with OxFarmtoFork and within the purchasing consortium. OxFarmToFork is a community-based local food initiative that links local food producers to University Colleges. Alongside supporting Balliol's sustainability goals of reducing carbon emissions, the initiative reinvests in the local economy, is supporting agroecological farmers who want to grow and produce food that is local, fair and ethical.	Completed

3	Improve uptake of low-carbon food options	Introduce 'low carbon' meals Develop a system to measure and display the impacts of meal choices Position the vegetarian options first and change the booking system so that everyone has to put a dietary requirement rather than meat being seen as the standard option. Work with suppliers to find the provenance of the food	Under consideration Under consideration Ongoing
4	Look at our accommodation during conferencing and how often we wash bedding and towels.	Bedding and towels are changed once a week for conferencing. There is a two night minimum for B&B.	Completed

Progress

We already offer vegan and vegetarian options at all meals and they are placed first in the servery.

The Executive Head Chef has been working with researchers in Zoology who are looking at the carbon impact of food and working with FoodQuad who supply our food.

Challenges

External conferences regularly choose beef as the top menu choice and changing that could impact our revenue.

5. Procurement and Resources

	Objective	Actions	Status
1	Ensure all procurement decisions advance overarching goals	Develop a Green Procurement Policy within the Shared Purchase Consortium Develop a Green code of conduct for our suppliers to adhere to.	Ongoing Ongoing

Challenges

We may be contractually bound to some obligations which limit our options.

6. Transport and Travel

Understand the impact of travel within the College Community			
	Objectives	**Actions**	**Status**
1	Identify how much air travel the College is responsible for.	The flight costs for 2025 included Pathfinders grants, fundraising trips for the College, academic support allowance claims and the football tour to Madrid.	On-going
2	Develop capability for virtual participation at conferences	Upgrade College conference facilities Make sure the College has AV support available	On-going
3	Review conditions for travel grants	The chalet sustainable travel grants come under the same heading as the general travel grants. It is difficult to remove the sustainable aspect.	On-going

4	Provide access to accommodation to international students over the vacation period to prevent the need for long haul flights	International students tend to opt for the longer leases, which allow them to stay in College during the vacation periods.	Completed
5	Encourage and enable flexible working from home	Introduce a flexible working policy	Completed
6	Reduce car use - particular in Oxford city centre	Encourage use of the cycle scheme whereby staff can purchase bikes. Make a sustainable transport option pack for new staff Reduce the number of staff car parking spaces on site and encourage use of Park & Rides	Ongoing
7	Switch College van to electric	Install EV charging point	Completed

Progress

Car parking space is limited and passes are required if parking in College. A cycle, train and bus pass scheme are in place and an EV car scheme is available to eligible staff. The College has purchased an electric van.

Challenges

Conferences are a key part of academia and provide networking experience.

Some of our student grants that include travel may be to places that are difficult to get to without flying.

7. Community

	Objectives	Actions	Status
1	Recruit staff with positive attitudes to our environment goals. Ensure students are aware of their environmental responsibility	Following consultation with HR, it was concluded that a website Sustainability link would be added to job descriptions.	Completed
2	Environmental nudges	With full involvement from the JCR and MCR, produce regular communication updates promoting positive changes and encouraging further change	Ongoing
3	Host College seminars and events with speakers but make them engaging to a wide community including staff	Continue to take part in Green Action week but develop a more regular event plan	Ongoing
4	Include an environmental workshop in Freshers' week	JCR/MCR to develop workshop with College assistance	TBC
5	Engage with our alumni who are working in environmental-related roles or show an interest in sustainability	Work with the Development Office	Ongoing

Progress

We have taken part in Green Action week over the past three years. The basis of our events include a beef-free week, vegan formal dinner, Pint of Sustainability and an energy competition between the Ecosync Jowett Towers. Other JCR/MCR ideas have been welcomed.

Challenges

The amount of work necessary to identify our alumni.

Attendance at environmental events can be low so strategic promotion should be thought about when organising any such event.