

# Kingston University Sustainability Plan 2007 to 2012

Kingston University London



[www.kingston.ac.uk/sustainability](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/sustainability)

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## 1.0 Introduction

Kingston University is committed to building and designing a ‘new University’ for future generations of students and staff. As a vibrant and diverse organisation, the University impacts on the economy, environment and society both locally and globally. Sustainability can be found through all key strategic areas such as widening participation in education, through to excellence in teaching, research, partnership and enterprise.

Kingston University influences students whose future behaviours and decisions are shaped not just by the curricula they study but also by what they learn from their campus experience and through leadership of the organisation. The University has a corporate responsibility to create a healthy, safe, secure and just environment. It needs to achieve this through continual improvement in the governance of the organisation, management of its operational activities and services and through education and research.

The University has a strong record for sustainability in the HE sector and is seen as a best practice organisation for sustainability within the curriculum and in its research profile. Sustainability has been led primarily by the academic community in a ‘bottom up’ process. Since its inception in 2002, the Steering Group for Sustainability (SGS) has increasingly engaged the wider university community; importantly this has led to the recent adoption of an environmental policy by the Executive as an initial response to the KU Sustainability ‘Gap Analysis’ undertaken by external consultants in summer 2005. The next challenge is to systematically embed all aspects of sustainability within governance and operational management of the university.

## 1.2 Sustainability Vision

The University’s vision is to advance sustainability and awareness in the following areas:

- Learning and teaching
- Research and consultancy
- Estates, facilities management and procurement
- Governance
- The Kingston University community and its local, regional, national and international links

## 1.3 Current Structure

The current structure has evolved from the initiative and activities of the SGS and this has been a determining factor of present roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.

**The University Executive**, in March 2006, adopted an Environmental Policy for the University and thereby accepted overall responsibility for sustainability.

**The University Secretary** has subsequently accepted devolved responsibility for overall sustainability performance of the organisation. This will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Senior Management Group.

**The Sustainability Team** is currently made up of 3 members of staff to help the University deliver its Environmental Policy. These are the Sustainability Facilitator, the Sustainability Team Assistant (Environmental Management) and the Sustainability Team Assistant (Marketing and Communication). The first two posts are permanent positions and the latter is a temporary post.

**The Steering Group for Sustainability (SGS)** is a University wide group, made up of representatives from all 7 University Faculties, as well as key University service areas; University Senior Management and Kingston University Student Union (KUSU). The group includes those with responsibility for learning, teaching and research, estates management, faculty administration, Information Services, finance, purchasing, cleaning, security, transport, and waste management. Its remit is to drive forward the sustainability agenda within the university and to effect change. Increasingly, on a day to day basis, this is achieved through the work of the Sustainability team. The SGS meets at least once per term and has an overview of sustainability performance within the University.

The SGS currently informs the university of its activities through the Health Safety & Security Committee but it is not part of the formal reporting line. Since its inception the SGS has driven the university's sustainability agenda having responsibility for the appointment and activities of the Sustainability Team. The SGS also facilitates valuable links between grass roots ideas and concerns, in-house expertise and university executive and operational managers. *Via* its web site and promotional materials it communicates sustainability within KU and externally. Given the costs and the importance of sustainability issues, consideration should be given to making the SGS a dedicated Committee and the most appropriate reporting line.

In line with the University's Environmental Policy the Sustainability Strategy will be endorsed by the University Executive and the Board of Governors.

The **University Plan** includes a strategic objective 'to adopt the principles of sustainability in all aspects of the University's activities'.

## **2.0 Themes of the Environmental Policy**

The University's Environmental Policy aims to align itself with the organisation's strategic plan and covers the key environmental and sustainability impact areas in which the organisation needs to show continual improvement. The most important mechanisms by which the University is seeking to improve its performance are:

- learning and teaching
- research and consultancy
- pollution prevention and legal compliance
- waste minimisation and recycling
- energy and carbon management
- water efficiency
- implementation of the travel plan to encourage sustainable travel
- sustainable procurement and Fairtrade
- take account of sustainability issues as part of the New University Project
- grounds management to enhance biodiversity and for recreation
- awareness raising and training to the University's community
- communication of the environmental policy
- collaboration and work with other key partners

## **3.0 Using a Framework for Environmental Management**

The size and complexity of the University is now such that it is no longer possible to manage the environmental risks and impacts without an institution-wide systematic

approach. It is suggested that an Environmental Management System is adopted in line with a recognised standard such as ISO14001 to ensure the effective implementation of the environmental policy, to ensure continual improvement, and to manage the business sustainability risks faced by the organisation.

The benefits of implementing an Environmental Management System include:

- Demonstration of senior management commitment to sustainability
- Identification of environmental risks and competitive opportunities
- Systematic management of the University's environmental impacts
- Cost benefits through improved environmental performance and efficiency
- Improved accountability and environmental reputation with key stakeholders
- Higher performance achievement in benchmarking activities with Business and other Universities e.g. such as taking part in the HEFCE Corporate Responsibility/ Environmental Indices

A summary of what deliverables and outcomes are expected as part of ISO14001 is detailed in section 3 of the GAP analysis commissioned by the SGS, undertaken by independent consultants and presented to Senior Management Group on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2006. The key components of ISO14001 are outlined below:

- Commitment of senior management and strategic support
- Environmental Policy
- Identification of key environmental aspects and impacts
- Legal compliance
- Objectives, targets and action planning
- Communication, competence, training and awareness
- Documentation and document control
- Operational control
- Monitoring and measurement
- Evaluation of compliance
- Audit and nonconformity
- Senior Management Review

Many of the key components of an environmental management system are being put into place and integrated into University activities. It is suggested that the University follows the framework of an environmental management system to ascertain where it has been successful in delivering sustainability, but also to review areas where performance has been weaker and put into place actions to improve its performance.

**Action:**

- Action the implementation of an EMS in line with the GAP Analysis
- Within the EMS framework set up a system of performance monitoring and review in line with the plan set out below.
- The appropriateness of external verification of the environmental management system should be reviewed at a future date.

## **4.0 Plan for Implementing the Environmental Policy**

The following points set out how the University should address its Environmental Policy, with background as to why it is important to manage these issues, objectives, responsibility for action and key performance indicators.

### **4.1 Learning and Teaching**

#### **Background**

Externally the University is regarded as a best practise organisation for sustainable curriculum and research, which is reflected in HEFCE's sustainable development strategy where the University was cited as a case study. There are now a number of undergraduate and postgraduate courses from various disciplines offered by the University that explicitly address sustainability issues. With the recent launch of C-SCAIPPE, this has cemented the University's reputation as an innovative leader in this area.

The University is equipping graduates who through their professional careers will make a contribution to society. For example a number of graduates will become key sector workers such as teachers and nurses. Indeed many graduates are employed by local and regional organisations.

The environmental services industry is already a big graduate employer and this will continue to grow, as companies and organisations require more expertise to respond to sustainability pressures. Additionally, aspects of sustainability are becoming embedded throughout a wide range of graduate employment opportunities, from fashion to business. There is already a shortage of appropriately qualified staff. The University is in a unique position to respond to this demand, equipping graduates for the work place through a wide range of disciplines and research.

In addition many professional bodies now require that their members are aware of sustainability issues and particularly how as professionals they can make a contribution to society in a sustainable manner.

Student learning for sustainability is not just limited to the classroom and there are many opportunities for students to engage through interdisciplinary project work, on campus, in the local community and through other outlets such as social events and volunteering. The campus experience now needs to reflect what is being taught and get its own house in order.

Kingston University is in a unique position to help prepare the next generations of professionals for the challenges and opportunities which sustainable development presents.

#### **Objectives**

- Encourage and support innovation for sustainability in curriculum, learning and teaching.
- Encourage cross-disciplinary engagement with sustainability to enable cutting edge courses which strengthen the University's portfolio
- Foster in students an ability to view the subjects they have studied in a broad intellectual context including, for example, technical, ethical, economic, social, environmental and professional issues

### **Action**

Steering Group for Sustainability/ C-SCAIPE / Academic Quality Enhancement Committee

### **Key Performance indicators**

- Percentage of students with sustainability knowledge – entry /exit audits.
- Growth of courses that include sustainability knowledge.

## **4.2 Research and Consultancy**

### **Background**

Research groups across the university are working on sustainability issues and methodology in diverse contexts. C-SCAIPE, CEESR, the Centre for Suburban Studies, Recycling by Design, Centre for Sustainable Technology, the Centre for Sustainable Construction and other smaller teams all actively contribute to the sustainability debate. This expertise has been recognised through the award of research grants and through success in reach out work with industry. For example Kingston's sustainability research and consultancy expertise has been acknowledged and developed in Westfocus with the creation of the Sustainability in Practice (SiP) network.

Collaborative and training links have been set up with local, regional and international businesses and with other HEI's. One example of successful collaboration has been the bid, to establish a Sustainable Energy Centre for which Kingston are partners with South Bank University.

Kingston University is well positioned to undertake cutting edge research and consultancy in many different aspects of sustainable development.

### **Objectives:**

- Encourage postgraduate research and innovation related to sustainable development
- Promote dissemination of research within KU and externally
- Increase income through consultancy and research developing sustainability expertise still further.

### **Action:**

SGS / C-SCAIPE / Research Centres / SIP network

### **Key performance indicators:**

- Graduates working explicitly in sustainable development and related fields
- Consultancy contracts undertaken
- Research papers published, conference papers and posters presented
- External funding secured for research

## **4.3 Pollution Prevention and Legal Compliance**

### **Background**

There is now a whole raft of environmental legislation and voluntary codes to which the University must adhere. Non-compliance can lead to court appearances, fines, imprisonment and negative publicity which will damage corporate image. There is

also a need to be prepared for new and future legislation for example the new Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment Directive and the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act (Part L of the new Building Regulations: the Conservation of Fuel and Power).

A number of Schools and Departments deal with hazardous waste materials such as chemicals, oils, paints and computers. Many are situated in environmentally sensitive areas where a pollution incident could quickly occur where effective pollution prevention measures, are not in place.

Kingston University's activities could potentially lead to pollution incidents. It is important that all Schools and Departments, particularly those using hazardous substances are aware of their responsibilities and that pollution prevention measures are implemented.

**Objective:**

- Assess legal compliance risks to the University.
- Move towards full compliance

**Action:**

Sustainability Team/ Health & Safety/ PMD /Departments & Schools undertaking polluting activities

**Key Performance Indicators:**

- Pollution emission measuring and monitoring mechanisms in place
- Competence of staff achieved through CPD undertaken for KUSCO, Estates and Faculty Technical and relevant academic employees

#### 4.4 Waste Minimisation and Recycling

**Background**

The University currently produces over 1000 tonnes of waste per year which generate disposal costs of **£120,000**. The University's recycling rate is approximately 12% which is significantly below the UK average recycling rate of 25%. Best practice in the HE sector is around 60%.

**The cost of sending University waste to landfill is around £80 / tonne and the cost of recycling is around £18 / tonne.** Also some items can be collected and donated to charity such as items left by students from halls of residence, furniture, IT equipment and toner cartridges, significantly cutting waste costs and enhancing the University's corporate reputation.

There are several legislative measures which are increasing waste prices in particular Landfill Tax which is currently £24 per tonne. The landfill tax will rise by £8 per tonne until 2010-11. This means landfill tax will double to £48 per tonne. Also the Hazardous Waste Directive which means many items such as chemicals, building materials, electric and electronic waste (e.g. computers, printers) must be disposed of *via* specialist waste companies.

There is also evidence that University skips (which are not secure and in breach of the University's duty of care for waste management) are used by staff, contractors and people coming in from outside the University to dump their waste, some of which is hazardous waste.

Many staff and students are critical that the University is not doing enough to cut waste and recycle. Students and staff clearly expect an improved service indicating that they would be willing to accept change in order to help the University reduce its waste costs and improve recycling performance.

HEFCE's Estate Management Statistics now requires information on waste production and recycling rates.

More details about increasing costs, legal obligations, stakeholder demand and reputation risk, the potential for recycling and cost savings can be found in the Recycling Business Case which has been submitted as part of the financial planning round for 2007 – 2008.

Waste costs for the University are likely to escalate unless new initiatives and cultural change are brought about to encourage resource efficiency and recycling. There are also concerns that the University is not meeting its legal duty of care for waste management which could lead to prosecution and negative publicity.

**Objective:**

- To minimise and actively manage waste through elimination, reduction, reuse and recycling
- To promote management systems which reduce the production of potentially waste materials

**Action:**

KUSCO/ Sustainability Team/ All staff

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Waste to landfill weight and costs
- Recycling rate and costs saved
- Charities benefiting from donations

#### 4.5 Energy Efficiency

The University owns, operates and manages over 100 buildings, which include teaching facilities, offices, laboratories, halls of residence and leisure facilities with an energy spend of over **£1 million per year**.

The recent energy audit funded by the Carbon Trust found that energy consumption of most of the buildings is higher than published targets for higher education facilities which suggests that the operation of the building services systems are not properly understood and controls and systems are operating poorly.

Many improvements should be implemented in terms of energy management, though most issues should be rectified through the appointment of an energy manager (HEFCE recommend the appointment of an Energy Manager where utility costs are over £1 million).

Monitoring and targeting is limited to administration personnel simply entering energy bills on a spreadsheet: no analysis is made and many bills are paid on estimates. Further improvements such as extending metering, production of log books and awareness training will help to secure further savings through an improved understanding on how the buildings and services operate.

**The Energy Audit outlined that an energy strategy should lead to a reduction of 31% in overall energy consumption and a 30% reduction in cost. This represents a £307,693 per year on an on going basis. The cost of implementing the package of measures is estimated to be £341,000 giving a simple payback period of 1.1 years.**

The University also needs to consider the CO<sub>2</sub> associated with its energy use as tax incentives such as the Climate Change Levy, funding and new legislation are likely to be based around this.

Staff and student perception of energy management at the University is also poor, with many people complaining about room temperatures; both too hot and too cold.

There is also increased pressure to operate extended operating hours, which has a significant impact on energy use.

HEFCE's Estate Management Statistics now require information on carbon emissions, the purchase of renewable energy, as well as costs and consumption data for energy, and water.

In order to take positive steps towards managing energy and related carbon emissions **the University has joined the Carbon Management Programme for Universities.** More information regarding the programme can be found in the Carbon Management Project Plan which outlines the objectives and targets for the programme, the project team and board, governance structure, key stakeholders, the scope of the project and identifies key areas to cut carbon emissions.

Energy costs will reach £1.3 million this year. A coordinated Energy Strategy is required in order to identify energy saving improvements, reduce energy costs, raise awareness and associated carbon emissions.

Financially and in terms of reputation the University cannot afford to be regarded as a poor performer in energy and carbon management.

#### **Objectives:**

- Develop and implement an Energy Strategy to reduce energy use and associated carbon emissions
- Reduce dependence on carbon with a shift towards carbon neutral or low carbon energy sources

#### **Action:**

Property Management & Development / KUSCO/ Sustainability Team

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Electricity and gas consumption and costs
- Total emissions for energy – carbon reduction achieved
- Percentage of renewable electricity purchased
- Total savings achieved through energy reduction

### **4.6 Water Efficiency**

#### **Background**

University **water consumption costs for the financial year 04/05 were £114,000**, representing a significant spend for the organisation. The South East of England is

one of the driest regions of the UK and it is also one of the most densely populated. As a consequence the available water resource per head of population is about half of the figure used by the World Bank to indicate that a country is suffering water stress. Drier summers are likely to mean more water shortages in future, leading to restrictions on use.

As with energy no sub-metering or checking systems are in place, and bills are often paid on estimates.

The University is taking steps to reduce water use, for example during refurbishments, water efficient devices such as waterless urinals and low flush toilets are fitted as standard. The Quad Building will also use a rain water harvesting system for toilet flushing.

Drainage of water is also important and there is legislation which covers pollution of water courses and foul water systems. However there is limited information on drainage systems for potable water and for storm and foul drains. This is of particular concern if a pollution incident were to happen due to the catchment areas our campuses are in. Ultimately this could lead to court action and clean up costs.

Water shortages and price rises are likely in the future, especially in the south east of England. The University needs to be as water efficient as possible to reduce costs and minimise the impact of water shortages on its operations. The University also needs to ensure that pollution does not enter local water courses.

### **Objectives**

- Reduce water costs and consumption
- Minimise pollution caused from surface run off
- Ensure all discharges from university drains are legally compliant

### **Action:**

Property Development & Management / KUSCO/ Sustainability Team

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Water costs and consumption
- Water consumption savings achieved

## **4.7 Implementation of the Travel Plan To Encourage Sustainable Travel**

### **Background**

Car parking and transport related issues are a significant environmental and corporate issue for the University. A considerable proportion of the University Estate is given over to car parking and according to recent research by the EAUC **the University is one of only three Universities in the country still not to be charging for car parking.**

**The University also has a legal obligation to produce a Travel Plan as part of a Planning S.106 agreement and it is unlikely future planning permission will be granted unless the University can show how it will manage its transport impact.**

However, the University has made significant steps to manage its transport related issues such as providing the inter-site bus and through promotion of alternative

transport such as the car share data base, cycling and walking and the student oyster card scheme.

The University has also established a good working relationship with the Travel Department at the Royal Borough of Kingston and through the Kingston Travel Plan Network.

The University has a legal obligation to implement a Travel Plan that will reduce car use and promote alternative travel.

### **Objective**

- To reduce single occupancy car use, promote alternative travel (such as public transport, walking and cycling, car sharing and video conferencing) and reduce associated emissions.
- To ensure the travel plan promotes sustainable travel but is not anti-car to those who have no other option but to travel by car to reach university sites.
- Ensure the travel plan takes into account equitable issues such as compliance with DDA regulations and the University's family friendly policy.
- Promote management systems which reduce the need to attend University at all times (e.g. home working).

### **Action:**

University Secretary/ General Administrative Manager/ Sustainability Team

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Staff and student modal split – single occupancy car use/ alternative travel
- Support for home working implementation of flexible working agreements
- Work with external agencies to instigate new public transport options

## **4.8 Sustainable Procurement and Fairtrade**

### **Background**

The University's Procurement Policy requires sustainability is considered as part of its value for money process and that environmental issues are considered in the procurement of goods and services.

As part of this **the University agreed an Environmental Purchasing Policy in 2006**. The policy states that environmental responsibility should be a factor in all purchasing decisions. The University is committed to:

- Preventing pollution and promoting the protection of the environment and minimising the impact of all activities on the environment;
- Contributing to a sustainable and healthy future by conserving natural resources and minimising avoidable waste and pollution;
- Implementing effective waste management through reuse and recycling procedures and the purchase of recycled and recyclable material where possible to close the recycling loop;
- Consider goods and services which may be manufactured, used and disposed of in an environmentally responsible way;
- Give preference, where items are of a similar cost, to those that are manufactured with a high recycled content or are environmentally preferable;

- Consider 'whole life' costs and impacts when assessing equipment for purchase, such as: Manufacture, transport and installation; Operating costs including energy, water use and maintenance; End of life costs including decommissioning and disposal.
- Work proactively with the local authority, the London University Purchasing Consortium, other universities and the community at large to progress sustainable procurement initiatives and exchange best practice;
- To minimise any adverse environmental impact of any new University development and major renovation and ensure sustainability is included in the design of new buildings;
- Work with suppliers to make them aware of the University's Environmental Purchasing Policy and ensure the environmental credentials of suppliers;
- Training and awareness raising of staff to ensure they factor environmental decisions into purchasing decisions;
- Ensuring that where possible sustainability issues are integrated into the award of contracts;
- Consideration of other corporate responsibility issues such as the procurement of ethical and Fairtrade goods and services.

In addition to the Environmental Purchasing Policy the University achieved Fairtrade Status in March 2006 and it is important that the University continue to support the certification process through the Fairtrade Steering Group and sales of Fairtrade goods through the Students' Union and all catering outlets.

As part of the University's Value for Money Process, sustainability issues need to be considered to promote resource efficiency, cut wastefulness and consider the whole life costs of products and services. As a Fairtrade organisation the University must also consider ethical and social issues associated with buying goods and services.

### **Objective**

- To implement the University's Environmental Purchasing Policy to deliver sustainable procurement.

### **Action:**

Purchasing Manager/ Sustainability Team

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Savings achieved through resource efficiency and waste minimisation
- Percentage amount of Fairtrade goods consumed
- Spending on sustainable and recycled products

## **4.9 Take Account of Sustainability Issues as Part of Property Management and Development and the Campus Development Plan**

### **Background**

The design, construction, use and demolition of buildings have huge environmental impacts for the University. A sustainably designed and commissioned building will achieve better efficiencies, provide a quality working environment and help the University achieve its aim of providing an improved environment for students and enhance the sustainability reputation of the organisation.

New legislation and planning regulations are mounting in terms of deliverables for sustainability and in particular the need to reduce global warming gasses associated with buildings. The University will be expected to display publicly how energy efficient it is.

Best practice in the sector has recognised that up front capital investment in sustainability technologies, building techniques and materials delivers long term benefits in terms of efficiencies within reasonable payback times. **In particular some Universities are applying a ring-fenced revolving fund to finance energy efficiency improvements in new buildings and refurbishments.** These funds are repaid out of savings achieved, so over a period the initial investment enables a succession of projects to go forward.

Other best practice shows the importance of involving key stakeholders such as building occupants and maintenance engineers to ensure smooth commissioning of buildings and to get the best occupancy performance out of the buildings.

This issue extends beyond the commissioning of new buildings; given that the average life of buildings is in excess of 60 years, the efficient management of buildings is imperative in enabling targets to be met. Where maintenance and refurbishment work is undertaken consideration should also be given to ensuring opportunities are taken to improve the environmental and social performance of buildings.

New buildings need to take into account environmental and social impacts to ensure they minimise their impact on the environment and maximise their benefit to society and the prosperity of the University.

**Objectives:**

- Sustainability targets will be included in the design, construction and occupation of new buildings and refurbishments.
- Opportunities to improve sustainability performance will be sought as part of the regular maintenance schedules and refurbishments of buildings.

**Action:**

Property Management and Development / KUSCO/ Sustainability Team / KU Centre for Sustainable Construction

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Number of new buildings achieving BREEAM excellent score.
- Building efficiency label achieved to high standard
- Sustainable capital investment and pay back time
- Post-occupancy evaluation reveals high levels of user satisfaction
- All buildings move over to higher sustainability ratings (use expertise in the School of Surveying to support this)

#### 4.10 Grounds Management to Enhance Biodiversity and For Recreation

##### Background

The University has a number of sites where biodiversity is a sensitive issue. There are now several legislative measures which mean the University must take action to protect and enhance biodiversity. In particular there is **new legislation (October 2006) which puts a duty on all public bodies (including Universities) to protect and enhance biodiversity as part of their operations and functions.** Others cover the protection of wildlife, badgers, felling licences, Tree Protection Orders and river management.

There are many benefits from addressing biodiversity management in particular the planning authority is likely to look on development applications which consider mitigation and enhancement for biodiversity favourably (particularly where the development is planned on an open space or green area). Other benefits include promotion of healthy living and well being through recreational space, volunteering opportunities, cost efficiencies in landscape management, flood reduction and carbon neutralisation, and educational opportunities.

Managing biodiversity is also a good news story and promotes the University as a good neighbour in the local community.

The University has taken some steps to improve biodiversity such as through the management of Kingston Hill Woodland and plans for a sustainable reading garden in LRC at Penrhyn Road.

KUSCO contractors, Gavin Jones Group Ltd, were also recently awarded top sustainable business (SME) in the Surrey Sustainable Business Awards 2006. They used the work they carry out at Kingston Hill to compost and recycle landscape waste as an example of good practice as part of their submission. More can be achieved as part of their contract to promote environmental management and biodiversity.

In order to tackle Biodiversity issues the University has established a 'Biodiversity Implementation Group' The remit of the group is to:

- identify a biodiversity strategy for KU... all campuses and residential sites ...a strategy that also fits with local community and scientific objectives, as well as wider government policy
- to form an expert implementation group that can respond rapidly to estates requests as and when issues arise
- to set guidelines and principles for biodiversity within estates management at KU
- to identify desirable future plans within contexts specified above *e.g.* themed courtyards
- that have educational and recreational benefits as well as biodiversity and landscape benefits

The University must adopt a coordinated approach to managing its biodiversity as part of its operations and in consideration of future landscape plans and new building projects.

**Objectives:**

- Promote biodiversity and conservation on all University campuses as well as supporting the development of the Campus Development Plan and formal landscaping elements.
- Innovate in the delivery of biodiversity enhancement.

**Action:**

Biodiversity Implementation Group / SGS

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Percentage of sites covered by Biodiversity Action Plan
- Key species indicators
- Enhancements achieved

#### **4.11 Awareness Raising, Training and Communication**

**Background**

Sustainability awareness is gradually gaining momentum both within the University and externally in the local community as well as nationally in the sector. This has mostly been in relation to a marketing and communication plan delivered by the Sustainability Team, the conferences, workshops and other activities organised by the SGS, and through the launch of C-SCAIPE. Significantly the University was highly commended in the recent Green Guardian awards.

The University is also accountable to a number of stakeholders, for example students, the students' union People & Planet Group, staff, HEFCE, the local community, business, insurers, partners and local authorities.

The implementation of a training programme will also help to ensure continual improvement, so staff and students are equipped with the skills and knowledge to make their contribution to making the University more sustainable.

The delivery of continued improvement in management for sustainability should be communicated and celebrated.

**Objectives**

- To raise awareness of sustainability issues and to communicate sustainability achievements to key stakeholders.
- To train staff, students and others such as contractors to ensure awareness of sustainability issues and how they relate to their own personal circumstance.

**Action:**

SGS, Sustainability Team/ C-SCAIPE

**Key Performance Indicators:**

- Number of internal news items
- Number of articles in local and national press
- Other media coverage received
- Number of people attending events/ training
- Awareness level of staff and students of sustainability issues
- Local, national and international events hosted at KU

## 4.12 Collaboration and Work with Other Key Partners

### Background

Working with other strategic partners will help the University achieve its sustainability goals as well as contributing to the sustainable development of society. There are also a number of other advantages such as enterprise, collaboration, research and working with business that will bring immense benefits to the University as well as future prospects for students.

**Locally** the University is making a huge contribution for example through the Royal Borough of Kingston, working with others such as through the Think in Kingston events and the Students Union Volunteer Service.

**Regionally** it is also making a contribution through the West Focus Partnership and especially the Kingston-led Sustainability in Practice (SiP) network, through C-SCAIPE and by working with others such as the Bloomsbury Environment Group and the Thames Landscape Strategy.

**Nationally** the University has been working with the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges and Forum for the Future, as well as collaborative relationships with other Universities and colleges including HEA subject centres. The SGS has hosted a major national conference, 'Sustainability in Practice: Moving the Benchmarks Forward' and a recent workshop 'Sustainability in Higher Education: Overcoming Barriers'. There are also opportunities to engage with professional bodies concerning sustainability issues relevant to their membership.

**Internationally** there are many initiatives. The Steering Group for Sustainability has been working with the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and Grand Valley University in the USA. C-SCAIPE and the Centre for Sustainable Construction have emerging links with the University of Calgary, USA. The SGS and C-SCAIPE are planning an international conference to be hosted at Kingston in September 2007 'Sustainability in Practice; from Local to Global'.

### Objectives

- Encourage collaboration and work with key partners to transfer knowledge, develop skills and action for sustainability.
- Increase involvement locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

### Action:

SGS, C-SCAIPE, SiP network, Sustainability Team

### Key Performance Indicator

- Activities undertaken
- Key partners involved in collaboration
- Events promoted
- Knowledge transfer activities

## 5.0 Corporate Responsibility

### Background

For an organisation to show it is truly sustainable it must demonstrate how it is continually improving on its **environmental, social and economic impacts**. The

organisation Business in the Community suggests that the following issues show how an organisation can demonstrate this:

**Community**

Community investment is often the most visible side of a company's social responsibility programmes. This investment takes the form of charitable donations, staff time and skills, plus donations in kind.

**Environment**

Corporate responsibility towards the environment involves making management decisions which minimise negative impacts and costs arising from the organisations operations and services

**Ethics**

The thinking behind an organisation is represented by its principles. Ethical principles reflect the values of the organisation, determined within the context of the values of its stakeholders and the society in which it operates.

**Human Rights**

A civilised society recognises the right of every individual to liberty, freedom of association and personal safety. These form the basis of a code of human rights found at the core of national and international law across the globe.

**Responsibility in the Market**

Businesses can have a real social impact through their marketing activities. This can strengthen their competitive edge - or damage it. Key issues include ethical advertising, relationships with suppliers, relationships with customers, distribution, packaging, and the manufacturing process itself, whilst Cause Related Marketing can have a direct effect on sales.

**Vision & Values**

Organisations are like people - each has a unique personality. Just as people recognise each of us by the way we communicate and the way we behave, so a company should reflect its own unique character to the world.

**Workforce**

Business impact in the workplace means recognising the business benefits and the wider social impact of good employment policies. This not only covers the traditional areas of recruitment, remuneration, and training, but also the growing concerns - and opportunities - of issues such as diversity and equal opportunities.

Business in the Community is a unique movement in the UK of over 750 member companies, with a further 1600 participating in programmes and campaigns. They operate through a network of 88 local business-led partnerships and 45 global partners. Their members employ over 12 million people in over 200 countries worldwide. In the UK members employ over 1 in 5 of the private sector workforce.

**Action:**

- The University should consider membership of Business in the Community to access this large and well known knowledge network for organisations involved in responsible business practice.
- The University should consider the framework outlined by Business in the Community to identify its current level of performance in terms of corporate responsibility and to communicate to its stakeholders how it contributes socially, economically and environmentally.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The following is a summary of strengths, opportunities, threats and weaknesses facing the University.

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice example for sustainable curriculum and research</li> <li>• Steering Group for Sustainability</li> <li>• Grass roots support for sustainable development</li> <li>• Growing body of knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic staff</li> <li>• C-SCAIPE - national centre of excellence for teaching and learning</li> <li>• Strong community links, working in partnership with key stakeholders</li> <li>• Senior manager responsible for sustainability performance</li> <li>• Governor level knowledge and support for sustainability</li> <li>• Emerging reputation as a sustainability leader</li> <li>• Gap analysis has provided an agenda for strategic corporate action</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a reputation leading to competitive advantage in funding opportunities</li> <li>• Competitive advantage</li> <li>• Resource efficiency (management of waste, energy, water and procurement of goods)</li> <li>• Risk reduction through legal compliance</li> <li>• Tax advantages</li> <li>• Marketing and publicity through promotion of a sustainable University</li> <li>• Become the best practice sustainability institution in the sector for curriculum, campus and community.</li> <li>• Motivated, loyal staff with high aspirations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative publicity and poor corporate image</li> <li>• Unable to gain planning permission as a result of not managing sustainability issues</li> <li>• Lack of legal compliance leading to court action and loss of reputation</li> <li>• Gap between teaching in sustainability and managing the University Estate sustainably grows</li> <li>• Escalating utilities and waste management costs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of EMS leading to lack of coordination and enforcement in resource management</li> <li>• Estates environmental issues being addressed in a piecemeal approach</li> <li>• Negative performance improvement in areas such as energy, water and waste</li> <li>• No targets set</li> <li>• No systems management and lack of data to show performance improvement</li> <li>• De-motivated staff, low aspirations, high turnover</li> <li>• Missed funding, research and consultancy opportunities</li> </ul>

The University has a great opportunity to fulfil its vision of becoming a sustainable organisation at the forefront of community, curriculum and research and campus resource efficiency.