

Sustainability Strategy Annual Report 2023-24

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Through its Sustainability Strategy, Sparsholt College Group (the college) is committed to operating all its activities in a sustainable manner, through minimising the adverse impact of its activities on the environment and in promoting sound environmentally sustainable principles and practices through the delivery of its curriculum offer.
- 1.2. The college recognises the key role it plays in responding to the climate emergency, given the stakeholders with which it engages. The Sustainability Strategy sets out our approach to reach the target of net-zero emissions for scope 1 and 2 by 2030, and net-zero for scope 3 by 2040.
- 1.3. In April 2022 the Department for Education published its strategy for the education and children’s services systems on ‘Sustainability and Climate Change’¹. As previously reported, this strategy sets out ambitious activities to respond to recommendations for education from the Committee for Climate Change, the Dasgupta Review and the Green Jobs Taskforce report, and will support the delivery of the Government’s 25-year Environment Plan and Net Zero Strategy.
- 1.4. This report provides an update on progress to date with Sparsholt College Group’s journey to net-zero carbon emissions and its wider sustainability targets.

2. Sustainability Strategy

- 2.1. The Sustainability Strategy (Appendix A) was developed in 2020-21 in collaboration with the Green College Group and updated in 2023-24 to map to the DfE’s published strategy. It identifies those activities which the college has already achieved, activities which are currently in progress this academic year, and those which are planned in the forthcoming years.
- 2.2. The Strategy is updated annually and provides an action plan by which progress towards planned sustainability actions and environmental improvements is monitored.

2023-2024 Actions	Progress to date
Climate Education	
17 sustainable Development Goal (SDG) themes are mapped to College Tutorial Programme and embedded into curriculum delivery	SDGs are now embedded across the FE and HE Curriculum. The College Tutorial Programme cross references to each relevant theme and the wider climate change issues.
Sustainable objectives are identified across all curriculum areas and reviewed as part of the internal quality process	Sustainability is evidenced in all curriculum planning resources and is reviewed as part of the Course Self-Assessment Report with actions set to drive improvements or remedy any omissions identified.

Integration of sustainability into learners' social action projects across the local community	The theme for all social action projects in 2023-24 was sustainability. Stewardship of the college estate continued alongside mandatory community-based projects initiated by learners. Examples included tree planting, river-clean-ups, creation of a wellbeing garden for a local primary school and woodland management.
Development of comprehensive college duties lessons that support the management of the college estate	All learners have undertaken college duties alongside their study programme. Projects completed include hedgerow restoration, recycling of waste materials to create animal enrichment areas, and creation of new ponds and wildflower areas.
Development of the Equine Carbon Calculator tool	The tool was developed and launched in collaboration with White Griffin Limited, Hartpury University and Derby Collège. It is the first nationwide carbon foot printing tool for the equine industry.
Green Skills	
New online learning curriculum offer that promotes sustainability and the low carbon sector	<p>Eight modules are now available on the College's online learning platform, the Innovation South Virtual Campus (ISVC).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Retrofit • Carbon Literacy • Carbon Literacy & Climate Change • Introduction to Sustainable Resource Management • Next Steps in Sustainable Resource Management • Sustainable Resource Management in Practice • Tree Planting & Climate Change • Water Conservation Technologies
New curriculum offer delivered in Electric Vehicle (EV) technology, Solar PV Systems, Heat Pump systems	EV Technology and Repair and Maintenance of Hybrid Vehicles are now offered at the Andover campus with Solar PV Systems and Heat Pump System courses launching in September 2024
Development and delivery of short course offer	The Higher Education department have developed and delivered short courses in bat surveying and dormouse surveying.
Purchase of equipment and resources to support curriculum delivery of green skills	In agriculture tractor and welding simulators for the arable laboratory and herd management technology for the livestock laboratory have been purchased. A vertical farming unit will be installed in horticulture in August 2024 and Green Tech Rigs have been purchased for the new Green Skills workshop at the Sparsholt campus.

Education Estate and Digital Infrastructure	
Increase rainwater harvesting on campus (planned new builds)	A 40,000-litre water harvesting solution has been installed in the new dairy facility and a 4,000-litre grey water tank to reduce water usage is planned in the new HE Science Centre (completion date November 2024).
Installation of robotic dairy to improve health in cattle and research feed additives to reduce methane emissions	The robotic dairy is now operational providing an excellent teaching resource for both FE and HE learners.
Enhance use of solar energy by incorporating battery storage into systems	A new 64 panel system (including storage) has been incorporated into the design of the new HE Science Centre.
Replacement of floodlighting to LED	All floodlighting is now LED.
Participation in Countryside Stewardship focussing on improving the biodiversity of the farm estate	Countryside Stewardship Scheme accepted, and estate plan now enabled with farm staff and conservation staff working in collaboration to manage the college estate.
Operations and Supply Chains	
Investigate environmental/ ethical investments	Green deposit account opened- green investments.
Estate planting strategy to consider carbon sequestration	Combination of oak and ash trees planted around the sports pitch area are developing well. Wildflower turf planted across a number of locations on campus.
Introduce further electric/hybrid vehicles into college fleet	EV utility vehicle and electric ATV now added to the college fleet.
International	
All international study trips to include a sustainability learning objective	All nine study trips completed in partnership with Gap Africa have included a community engagement activity with a sustainability theme.