

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Through its Sustainability Strategy, Sparsholt College Group (the college) is committed to embedding environmental sustainability across its education and training, estates, operations, partnerships and engagement with learners, staff and the wider community. This reflects the College's responsibility both to reduce the environmental impact of its own activities and to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to contribute to a more sustainable and climate-resilient economy.
- 1.2. The Strategy sets a clear direction for the College's transition towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, with targets to achieve net zero for Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 and for Scope 3 emissions by 2040. Alongside emissions reduction, the College's approach encompasses climate education and green skills, responsible use of resources, biodiversity and nature recovery, sustainable estates and infrastructure, resilient operations and constructive engagement with employers, communities and other partners.
- 1.3. The College's ambitions support the Department for Education's 'Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy for the Education and Children's Services System'¹. In particular, they align with its four strategic aims of excellence in education and skills for a changing world, net zero, resilience to climate change, and a better environment for future generations.
- 1.4. During 2025–26, the College continued to make strong progress across the Strategy's principal areas. The report summarises this progress, identifies activity still in development and sets the direction for the next phase of delivery.

2. Sustainability Strategy

- 2.1. The Sustainability Strategy (Appendix A) was developed in 2020-21 in collaboration with the cross-college Green College Group and was subsequently updated to align with the Department for Education's sustainability and climate change priorities. It provides the College's overarching framework and action plan for translating its environmental commitments into coordinated and measurable activity.
- 2.2. The Strategy is reviewed and updated annually to reflect progress, emerging evidence, changes in national policy and sector expectations, and the College's evolving priorities. It distinguishes between completed actions, activity in progress and planned future work, enabling delivery to be monitored over time.
- 2.3. Responsibility for delivery is embedded across relevant curriculum and professional service areas, supported by the College's cross-college working group. Progress is monitored and reported to the Board of Governors.

¹ [Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90222/sustainability-and-climate-change-a-strategy-for-the-education-and-childrens-services-systems.pdf)

2025-2026 Actions	Progress to date
Climate Education	
Implement the Equine Centre Carbon Calculator project at Sparsholt College	The full assessment is complete, with several actions completed to reduce the Equine Centre emissions; as a result, fencing has been replaced and changes made to external suppliers of materials.
Continue to engage learners with the countryside stewardship scheme (CSS) at Sparsholt campus	Learners have been involved in delivery of environmental management options, including AB8 (establishing and managing flower-rich margins) and AB9 (sowing winter bird food).
Appoint learner sustainability ambassadors to represent each curriculum area	Sustainability ambassadors are now in post, reporting through a standing agenda item at the Student Council.
Showcase the impact of biodiversity actions taken across the College estate, both internally and externally	A sustainability zone featured at this year's Futures Day, attended by 1,100 pupils from local schools, showcasing the range of projects and initiatives underway at Sparsholt College.
To update HE curriculum where appropriate to highlight advances in sustainability and green skills	New modules have been introduced and all degrees have been updated to reflect advances in sustainability, green technologies and the emerging knowledge and skills required to support a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.
Green Skills	
Work with industry and academic partners to explore, develop and promote methods of supporting food security through research and innovation	University Centre Sparsholt is working with industry and public-sector partners, including Innovation Agri-Tech, Barclays Eagle Labs, Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council, to expand agri-tech research, provide staff and student access to emerging green technologies, support innovative agricultural businesses and deliver sector-focused training and engagement.
Host a careers event in each priority sector which showcases green skills	Green skills were embedded across careers events at both campuses, with employers and the universities of Portsmouth and Surrey providing learners with insight into emerging opportunities and skills needs in green technology, space and satellite technology, construction and engineering.

Education Estate and Digital Infrastructure	
Development of Climate Adaptation Risk Assessment and Action Plan	The climate adaptation risk assessment has been reviewed, with the Principal and Director of Estates working with user groups to identify specific risks and develop appropriate mitigations.
Development of phased delivery plan in response to the Heat Decarbonisation Report	Development of the plan is underway. Initial decarbonisation proposals include solar panels and air-source heat pumps within the planned ICT and Saxony Buildings upgrade. A scheme to relocate the Main Administration Building boiler room is also being explored to enable the use of lower-carbon energy sources, including green electricity and potentially biogas.
Explore wind turbine energy generation in partnership with College's energy advisor	Discussions are progressing with two companies to assess opportunities and potential funding routes, with detailed proposals now being developed.
Review tree species and condition to develop a replacement programme where needed to diversify and safeguard tree stock	Tree surveys for 2025–26 are complete and continue to inform the estate strategy. A rolling replacement, enhancement and planting programme is underway to diversify and safeguard tree stock, while ensuring new-build projects contribute to biodiversity net gain.
Operations and Supply Chains	
Continue to explore energy efficiency benefits on procurement of replacement/ new equipment	Energy efficiency is considered through relevant procurement activity and capital investment. This included more fuel-efficient vehicles under the new campus bus contract, completion of the Farm solar installation, and the student accommodation window replacement programme.
Continue to ensure our investments and pension strategies align with green ambitions	The College's investment and pension arrangements continue to align with its sustainability ambitions. Hampshire LGPS is making positive progress in diversifying towards renewable investments, while the majority of the College's cash reserves are now held in a Green Deposit account.
Carbon sequestration (carbon credit)- use of estate planting strategy	Regenerative tree planting and habitat enhancement continue around the campus, with established trees in excellent health and further oak planting underway. A two-year soil-carbon monitoring programme commenced in May 2026 to

	establish baseline carbon stocks, measure changes in soil carbon and assess the potential to generate verified carbon credits.
Reduction in reprographics costs of 10% per department	A 31% overall reduction in copying and printing costs was achieved compared with 2024–25.
International	
All learners participating in a study tour will complete a project to collectively offset their travel carbon footprint.	Learners and staff completed the GAP-developed Bush Ranger module before applying their learning during study visits to South Africa in May and June. Participants reduced the impact of their travel by saving food waste, recycling clothing and walking or sharing transport to offset their flights.
Develop fundraising activities to support the Bees Abroad Charity	The College continues to strengthen its partnership with Bees Abroad and the Hampshire Beekeepers Association, with fundraising used in Rwanda to establish community-led beekeeping enterprises.
Expand the Winchester Sustainability Pyramid to Andover secondary schools	In July 2025, five secondary schools in Andover participated in the Sustainability Pyramid event, proposing projects for delivery within their schools during 2026–27.