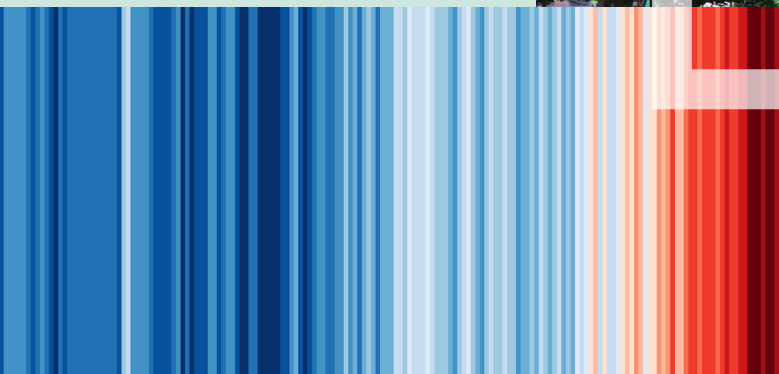


# CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023–24





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## Front page:

The graphics on the front of this document and represented on each page are ‘warming stripes’ for the globe from 1850–2021. These are visual representations of the change in temperature, as measured in each country over the past 100+ years, and each stripe represents the temperature in that region averaged over a year. For virtually every country or region, the stripes turn from mainly blue to mainly red in more recent years, illustrating the rise in average temperatures in that country. The graphics are used under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License. The Licensor and creator of the graphic is Professor Ed Hawkins (University of Reading). See [#ShowYourStripes](#) website for more information.





# 1. Introduction

We are delighted to publish this annual sustainability report, which brings together for the first time our **Climate & Sustainability Action Plan** and our **Environmental Sustainability Report**. King's has been producing an annual environmental sustainability report since 2016. The Climate & Sustainability Action Plan was first published in February 2023 to set out our ambition to address the climate emergency and wider sustainability across everything we do.

From now on, we will publish one annual sustainability report on our practical action plans and transformation initiatives, including a core set of performance metrics which cover our progress across research, education and operations. This brings clarity, streamlines data collection and strengthens accountability, enabling us to identify cross-cutting opportunities and challenges.

The report reviews our progress in four key transformation areas:

1. Acceleration Sustainable Operations
2. Embedding Education for Sustainability
3. Developing Distinctive Climate Research
4. Enabling Positive Action

We report on the 2023–24 annual review of the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan, key commitments to 2026, a summary of progress against targets by impact area, and an update on targets for 2024–25. We recognise efforts by the entire King's community to drive forward positive change on sustainability and hold one another to account as we tackle the climate and nature crisis. Our review of the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan this year led to a consolidation of objectives and targets to ensure that they are achievable and embedded in local plans, with clear ownership and accountability.

In the future, we plan to develop the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan into a new institutional Sustainability Strategy, which will allow us to further articulate our ambition and purpose for climate and sustainability at King's.





## 2. UN Sustainable Development Goals

At King's, we support the worldwide effort to build a better future for people and planet. Through our education, research and commitment to serving society, we respond to the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)**. An urgent call for action by all countries, the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out the world's most critical global challenges. They recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and drive economic growth, while simultaneously tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS







### 3. Highlights of 2023–24

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Significant progress has been made in meeting our ambitions to invest in education and research for a just transition to net zero and to build sustainability into all our actions.

The **King's Climate & Sustainability (KCS) transformation programme**, led by Professor Frans Berkhout as Assistant Principal (Climate & Sustainability), was established in 2023, with a new team created in the Vice-Chancellor's Office to support delivery of the programme. The governance for KCS includes a Steering Group, chaired by the Senior Vice President (Academic) and working groups to support our work in education, research and operations, complementing longstanding sustainability activity delivered across King's.

In our **operations**, a special project led by the **Carbon Offsetting Working Group** was set up in 2024 to develop the University's position on offsetting. We now conduct ethical screening for cash deposits, which excludes companies that generate over 10 per cent of their turnover from armament, tobacco and/or fossil fuels. A new Sustainable Business Travel Policy was agreed by the University in June 2024, introducing a series of measures to assist more sustainable choices for business travel and a restriction on flights for business travel in the UK.

In **education**, we developed an **Education for Sustainability (Efs) model**, which recognises the need to provide students with a range of different learning and engagement opportunities. Our **Efs Fund** was launched in February 2024 in partnership with King's Academy, and a new **Efs toolkit**, which helps colleagues to consider different ways to embed sustainability in the curriculum, was published in June 2024.

In **research**, we have allocated about £750,000 through a new internal KCS **seed fund** in 2023–24, which helps staff secure external research and innovation funds by providing an initial resource to develop preliminary studies and partnerships. The establishment of the **Net Zero Centre** (based in the Faculty of Natural, Mathematical & Engineering Sciences) and the **Centre for Sustainable Business** (based in King's Business School) will enable us to address challenges around decarbonising our society and shaping a more sustainable and equitable business

landscape. Work commenced on joining the **Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research & Innovation Practice** as a commitment to delivering our research and innovation in a more environmentally sustainable way.

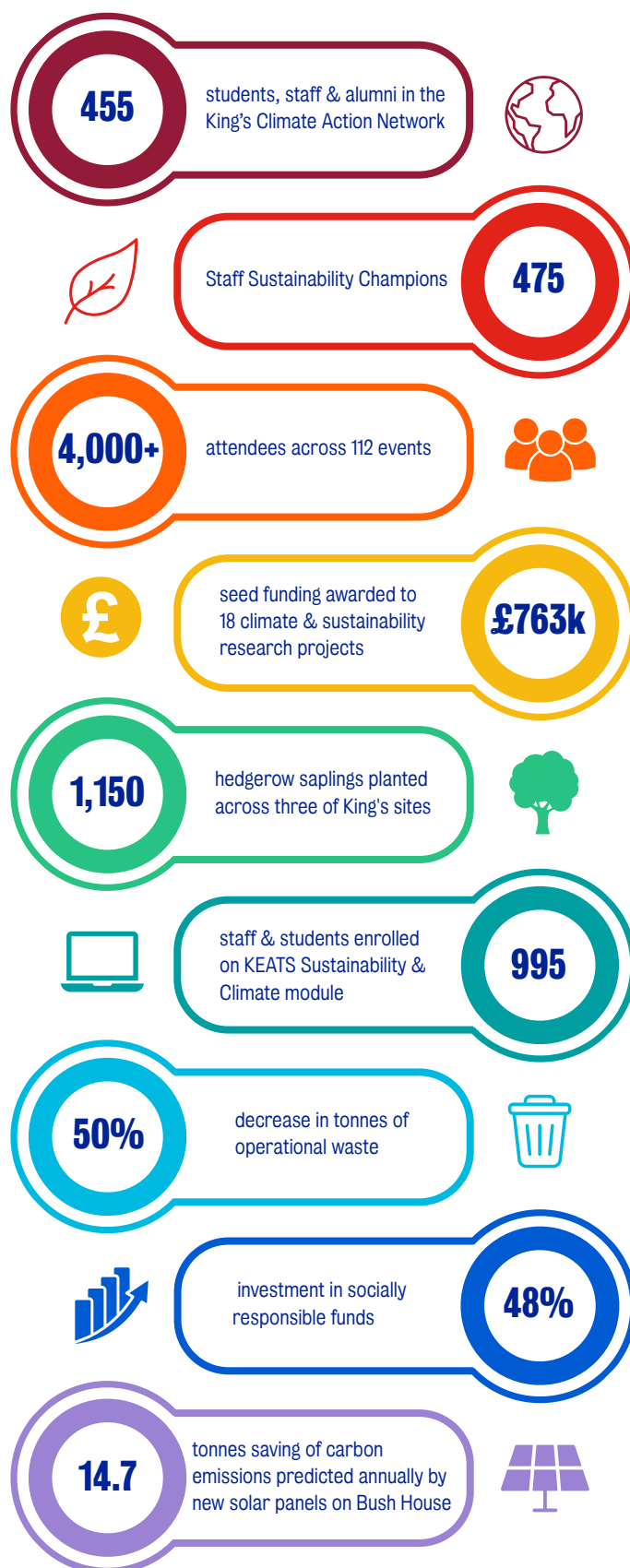
In our **communications and engagement** activities King's convened a successful COP28 Outcomes Summit in December 2023, addressed by Theresa May and Ed Miliband. Our annual **Climate & Sustainability Month** in February 2024, aimed at addressing key impact areas of the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan, included 42 events attended by 2,300 staff and students. We piloted an initial **carbon literacy training** workshop for staff and students, with certification from the Carbon Literacy Project and introduced our new **Ripple Effects blog** to showcase different views and perspectives on climate and sustainability from across the King's community. Our annual **Sustainability Awards** in July celebrated the efforts of over 450 Sustainability Champions across King's who work on audited improvement projects to make King's a more sustainable place.

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*Data included in this report is representative at the time of publishing but is subject to change in line with ongoing improvements to data availability.*



## 4. Our impact





## 5. Accelerating sustainable operations

Environmental management at King's continues to be governed through our **Environmental Sustainability Policy**. It applies to all areas and activities of the University and sets out our key environmental commitments, including setting and reviewing targets and providing student and staff engagement opportunities. A range of sub-strategies have been developed across all areas of environmental sustainability. Detailed targets across all these areas are monitored through the Environmental Management System. In March 2022, the EMS was re-certified to the ISO 14001:2015 standard following an external audit.

In this section, we review our progress and priorities for biodiversity, energy consumption & carbon, food, purchasing & procurement, property & construction, research operations, responsible investment, travel, waste & resources and water.







## 5.1 Biodiversity

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Ensure actions identified in the 2018–23 Biodiversity Action Plan are implemented	% actions implemented	78% of the actions from 2018–23 Biodiversity Action Plan have been completed, 22% are in progress.
Establish a nature baseline	Methodology created and baseline calculated	Not yet started

### Policy

We have committed, via our Environmental Sustainability Policy, to actions that will ‘prevent habitat and biodiversity loss, combat climate change and prevent the pollution of land, water and air’. The King’s Biodiversity Action Plan, first launched in 2018–19, is updated annually.

### Progress

Our key areas of focus have been to support urban pollinators and to expand, enrich and incorporate vegetation across the ever-changing estate. We have installed 30 urban bee devices across the King’s estate in central London (24 bee hotels and six observation panels) to provide food and refuge for bees. Their design and location at each site made it easy to monitor the bees’ use of the devices.

Working with conservation groups, we organised four tree planting events where 1,150 hedgerow saplings were planted, bringing the total number of saplings planted up to 1,780 since November 2021. King’s also signed up to ‘No Mow May’ and extended it into June and July, allowing nature to go undisturbed throughout the summer of 2024. Additional planting of wildflowers took place at Guy’s Campus in front of Shepherd’s House, further supporting urban pollinators across King’s. A community garden was installed at Denmark Hill Campus in the summer of 2024, with staff and students turning a disused area into an outdoor haven where flowers and vegetables are grown, workshops are held and produce is shared.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We will focus on updating the Biodiversity Action Plan and establish a nature baseline to measure our progress.





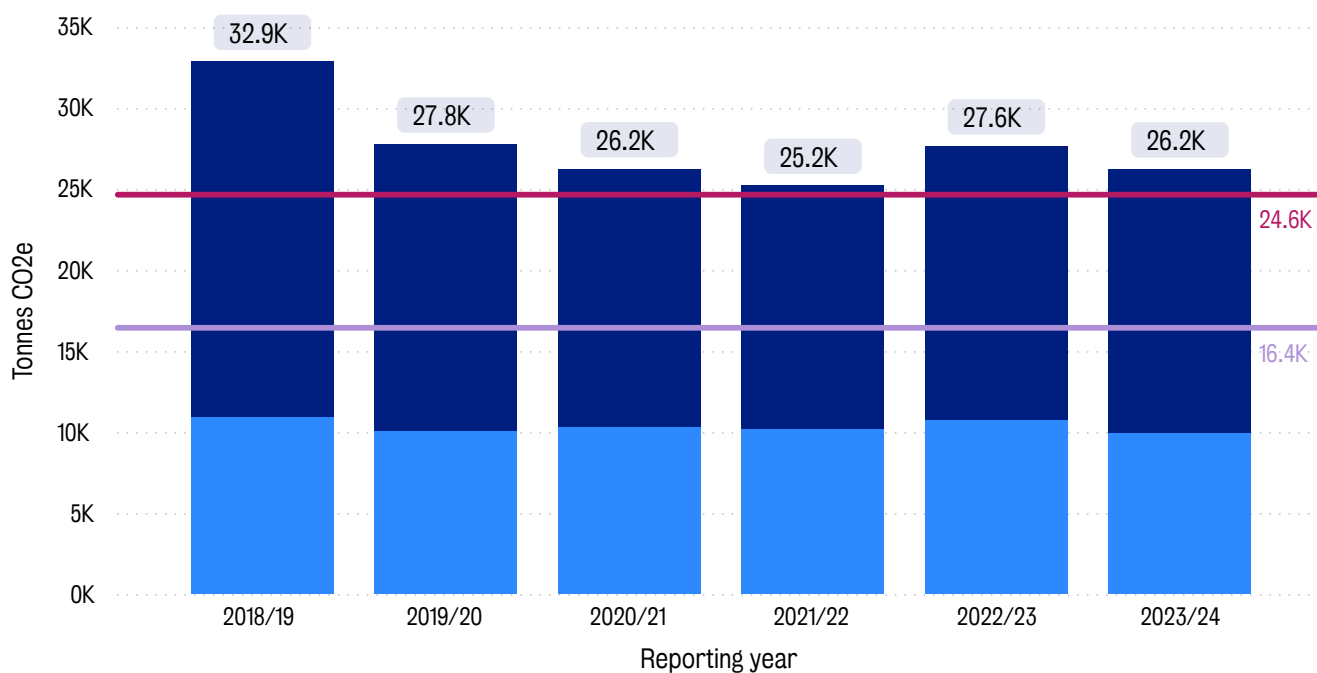
## 5.2 Energy consumption & carbon

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions (location-based) by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 from 2018–19 baseline, reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2030	Year-on-year scope 1 and 2 emissions, progress to target	26,216 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e (20% reduction compared to baseline)

### Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions by reporting year

Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, progress to targets

Scope ● 1 ● 2 — 2025 Target — 2030 Target



**Figure 1** depicts the total location-based Scope 1 and 2 emissions at King's for the 2018–19 baseline year to 2023–24 and demonstrates our progress to-date towards the targets, indicated by the reference lines. As the graph shows, we achieved annual reductions to 2021–22, but following this, Scope 1 and 2 emissions have slightly increased. Despite growth in staff and student numbers over this period, total energy consumption has remained stable. The small increase in emissions can be explained by the combined factors of small reductions to our natural gas and heat demand, but an increase in electricity consumption. Annual energy consumption figures can be found in Appendix 2.



## Policy

Through the King's Environmental Sustainability Policy, the University has committed to maximising energy efficiency and reducing our carbon emissions in line with limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Our work is continuously guided by the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan and Interim **Carbon Management Plan**.

## Progress

**Carbon reduction:** by the end of 2023–24, King's (including embedded space) achieved a 20 per cent reduction in Scope 1 and 2 location-based carbon emissions compared to the 2018–19 baseline.

**Energy procurement:** King's procures energy through the TEC framework. Electricity is supplied by EDF, which accounts for 58 per cent of King's usage under the Zero Carbon for Business (ZC4B) product, providing nuclear generated, zero-carbon electricity. Since October 2019, King's has also held a Power Purchase Agreement through TEC for 0.96 MW of wind-generated electricity, equivalent to 20 per cent of its 2019 baseload, secured for 10 years. 42 per cent of our electricity is procured and recharged by NHS partners who operate under a national NHS supply framework.

**Decarbonisation:** A comprehensive decarbonisation feasibility study is underway for the Denmark Hill Campus. We intend to conduct similar feasibility studies for our other campuses, which will contribute to King's decarbonisation pathway. A building-by-building smart Building Management System (BMS) optimisation project is underway, helping identify ongoing energy-saving opportunities. Six LED upgrade projects were delivered in 2023–24, saving an estimated 203 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.

**Data & reporting:** Improvements to energy data quality and reporting continued in 2023–24. In collaboration with King's Health Partners, access to energy data for embedded spaces has been significantly enhanced. A review of historical energy data and carbon accounting methods is underway and due for completion in 2024–25. High-quality data relies heavily on accurate metering and as part of ongoing upgrades, 30 end-of-life electricity meters are being replaced, with completion expected in 2024–25. These enhancements will support more effective performance monitoring and enable data-driven decision-making.

**Compliance:** King's participated in Phase 3 of the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) by UK government in 2023–24, with an action plan to follow in 2024–25 and implementation by 2027.

**Staff & student engagement:** The Energy Team continued to drive engagement activities in 2023–24, supporting four student-led projects. By the end of 2023–24, the associated online energy data platform had 75 active users, reflecting growing interest and participation in energy and sustainability initiatives across the University community.

## Priorities for 2024–25

We will review and update our Space Temperature Policy, Carbon Management Plan, Metering Strategy, and Decarbonisation Plan. Heat decarbonisation opportunities will be assessed as part of a university-wide roadmap to meet 2030 targets. New approaches to engaging building users through data insights will also be piloted.





## SPOTLIGHT ON | Solar panels on Bush House

In December 2023, the Estates & Facilities team achieved a significant goal by installing an array of photovoltaic solar panels on the roof of Bush House. Consisting of 64 individual panels, this installation produces around 43,329.58 kWh each year – enough electricity to power Roots, King's vegan café.

This new-generation technology means the panels are lighter and more efficient than previous cells, increasing the amount of carbon emissions saved across the campus. Every year, the array will enable a saving of approximately 14.7 metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. With a typical lifespan of 25 years, the panels are projected to save carbon emissions of an estimated 350 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

With the location of the campus within central London, the project represents a strong achievement in taking steps to reduce emissions at King's; from an extended planning permission process and delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the installation was an important step in generating clean energy and decreasing carbon emissions.

Estates & Facilities continue to innovate and develop projects aimed at tackling carbon emissions and reducing energy use across the University.

PHOTO BY KAUTUK CHADDHA





## 5.3 Food



Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Set up King's Food Living Laboratory Research Network for interdisciplinary collaborations and knowledge exchange, a student projects hub and practice-based learning opportunities	Establish a network of contributors and collaborators to deliver a sustainable community dining experience on campus	70% completed; 30% in progress

### Policy

This commitment aligns with the Climate & Sustainability Action Plan and King's Food aims to support the overall carbon emissions, water and waste reductions through our processes in procurement, production and consumption of food.

### Progress

In the 2023–24 academic year, King's Food increased plant-based hot lunch menu choices to 70 per cent and started using more sustainable MSC certified fish. We also transitioned all breakfast pastries, cakes and 90 per cent of breakfast and snacking pots to plant-based options, with no negative feedback from customers.

Carbon footprint analysis and tracking for all menu options for community dining and hospitality dishes was introduced and shared with our community.

The 'Love Our Leftovers' initiative was introduced to promote the upcycling of food within our community dining food system and takeaway boxes are now given to attendees at our events to encourage them to take food home rather than waste it. A process has been implemented to ensure leftover food that is soon to be out of date is either sold at a discount or given to staff members at Grade 2 and below. Kitchen waste is being monitored, and work is underway during 2024–25 to reduce waste at the food preparation stage of the process.

During 2024 we gained a seat at the Love British Food Education Catering group and we are working towards improving British and seasonal procurement across King's and the wider Higher Education sector.

In recognition of these initiatives, in 2024, King's Food was awarded 3 stars – the highest level possible – by the Food Made Good Standard, with a score of 94 per cent. An initiative by the Sustainable Restaurant Association, the report recognises achievements across three key categories

of environment (98 per cent), society (98 per cent) and sourcing (88 per cent). Recurring every two years, this score is an improvement of 14 per cent from the previous award of 80 per cent in 2022. There were significant increases across all categories, particularly in the areas of offering more plant-based options and better-quality meat, serving the community, reducing food waste and sourcing seasonal, sustainable produce.

The report noted that, 'King's College London scored very highly throughout the assessment, which reflects the extensive work you have undertaken to use your sourcing to drive change, as well as your efforts to improve your social and environmental impact. While there were several highlights, we were particularly impressed by your approach to menu design and numerous sustainable sourcing commitments.'

As well as the score, the report details a suggested action plan to improve food sustainability even further. As a result of this, King's Food has developed some innovative programmes aimed at embedding this advice and seeking to increase the score for the 2026 award.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We plan to establish the King's Food Living Laboratory in collaboration with academic colleagues and obtain full membership of the Menus of Change University Research Collaborative (MCURC), an international initiative promoting sustainable food practices.



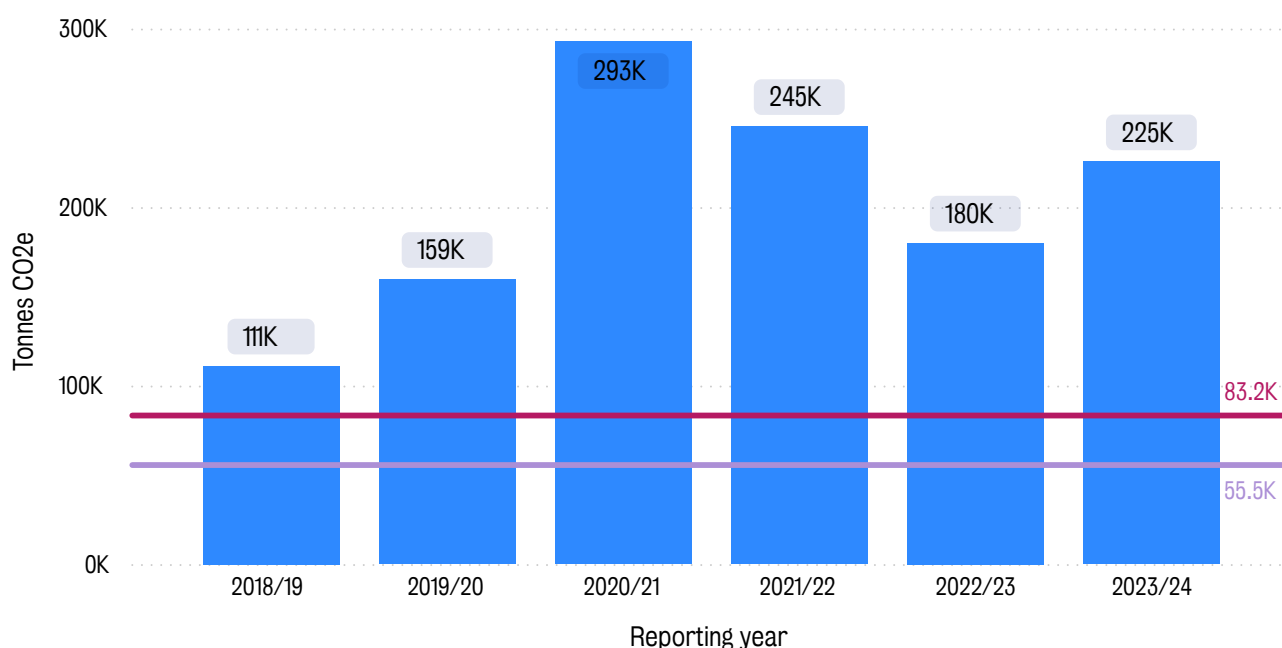
## 5.4 Purchasing & procurement

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Reduce supply chain emissions by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2030, from a 2018-19 baseline	Supply chain carbon emissions reductions from a 2018-19 baseline	The target set for 2025 (in 2018-19) was not realistic and our efforts have been directed to the 2030 target. Progress has been made with developing a strategy to achieve the targets
As above	Work with top 100 suppliers (by value) to have carbon reduction plans in place	A new role has been created to support engagement with suppliers and develop new targets

### Purchased goods & services – carbon emissions by reporting year

Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, progress to targets

● Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e — 2025 Target — 2030 Target



**Figure 2** depicts the annual carbon emissions that have occurred as a result of our purchased goods and services since the baseline year. Reduction in this area is particularly difficult paired with the growth of the University, but a number of actions are being taken to decarbonise our supply chain as detailed below. It should also be noted that current analyses use spend-based data, and through the procurement of new services and tools we endeavour to be able to report more supplier and product level data.





## Policy

King's **Socially Responsible Procurement Policy** ensures that we purchase goods and services in ways which are beneficial to the University, the environment, society and King's local boroughs, as well as using our purchasing power to improve conditions and raise expectations of social responsibilities in the external organisations we work with.

Our **Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Policy** was updated in January 2024. Of particular note is the progress made to reduce the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain on account of our partnership with Electronics Watch (a non-governmental body which works with buyers and civil society to monitor the practices in electronics factories across the world using worker-led surveys).

In 2024, the Chief Procurement Officer initiated a review and update of the University's **General Terms & Conditions of Trading**, to ensure that suppliers are obligated to minimise their environmental impact in the delivery of the contract, including waste, materials, manufacturing and carbon reduction planning.

## Progress

We engaged an external organisation in 2023 to analyse our supply chain emissions, which provided us with valuable information about the top 50 suppliers who generate the highest carbon emissions (using spend-based data). In the future, we plan to adopt a tool that will help our suppliers to calculate and understand their own carbon footprint and develop carbon reduction action plans for free, whilst providing us with actual carbon data.

Since the Socially Responsible Procurement Policy was implemented in 2019, several outcomes are now reflected in the commercial contracts across King's. For example, over 75 per cent of our contracts are with UK-based suppliers, with most being London-based suppliers. Only 3 per cent of our supply chain is made up of large enterprises, and the vast majority of our suppliers are micro enterprises. We seek social value outcomes from our contractors, for example, our furniture and asbestos removal contractors have agreed to pay our annual rebate into a fund that can be used for community projects of our choice.

We continue to use Crown Workspace as our preferred supplier for refurbished furniture. The refurbished products that Crown offers have very low carbon emissions and aim to extend the life of existing furniture for as long as possible. The Campus Futures team has been using Crown for a complex programme of Strand Campus moves, marking a real shift in how major new spaces are furnished and demonstrating the commitment to reducing carbon consumption whenever possible.

Procurement's partnership with the human rights monitoring organisation Electronics Watch continues to complement our supply chain assurance processes. This partnership allows us to provide better assurance regarding the eradication of modern slavery and ethical employment practices in our IT hardware and electronics supply chains. This includes regular reassurance that our supplier/hardware components/factory information is up to date. Procurement have also put in place an improved supplier onboarding tool which extends the coverage of assurance to a much greater range of suppliers than previously.

The Procurement team continues to work with key suppliers on an individual basis to deliver more environmental and socially beneficial outputs. For example, in 2024 Procurement secured a new arrangement with one of our major suppliers, Dell, that has changed transportation of computer hardware via land and sea, rather than air freight. Every unit moved from air to ocean or rail shipment reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 98 per cent. King's is the first organisation to drive this initiative with Dell.

## Priorities for 2024–25

We plan to adopt a tool to help our suppliers to calculate and understand their own carbon footprint, develop carbon reduction action plans for free and provide us with actual carbon data. We will identify carbon-intensive and unsustainable product categories and develop low-carbon, sustainable buying guides for these, and increase the number of contracts delivering social value. We will also begin to identify the King's departments and directorates with the largest supply chain carbon footprint and work with them to make changes.



## 5.5 Property & construction

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Embed a whole-life carbon approach into the University's Estates Strategy and campus masterplans decision-making	Methodology developed and embedded into master planning	Sustainability requirements designed into PM handbook and processes for gateway evaluation of projects
Develop a climate adaptation and resilience plan	Plan developed	Climate adaptation incorporated within PM handbook requirements for project initiation, design, delivery and completion

### Policy

All capital schemes are developed with sustainability built into their strategic definition, design briefing, and procurement stages – not simply reviewed at construction.

### Progress

In 2023–24, we made significant strides in embedding sustainability into capital planning and delivery by redefining how the Estates Planning & Development team operates. A new Capital Projects Strategy has been adopted that repositions sustainability as a core design and decision-making driver, starting from Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 0.

To support this, we have introduced a new Gateway Framework that mandates sustainability briefings, net zero alignment, and project-specific design targets (such as the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge) to be captured in early business case development. These measures have helped drive earlier scrutiny of temporary accommodation impacts, higher expectations on reuse and low-carbon materials, and greater accountability on design teams to model operational and embodied carbon performance.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We are looking to introduce new roles and capabilities – including the Planning Manager and Project Controls Coordinator – to ensure that sustainability-related milestones, risks, and targets are tracked throughout project development. This is reinforced by a revised Health, Safety & Construction (Design and Management) Policy, which now references Soft Landings, commissioning readiness, and sustainability assurance across the construction phase.

While delivery is still at an early stage, the strategic shift in how capital projects are scoped and reviewed is already leading to improved outcomes. This includes earlier challenge to carbon-intensive solutions, more robust consultant briefs, and better alignment between capital schemes and the University's wider Climate & Sustainability Action Plan.

Our focus will now be on strengthening supply chain engagement, expanding lifecycle carbon modelling at Gateway 2, and embedding whole-life carbon appraisals into our portfolio reporting framework in collaboration with the King's Portfolio Office.



## 5.6 Research operations



Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
100% of King's laboratories areas are certified Bronze or above by the LEAF programme	% of laboratories certified Bronze or above	65% of lab areas have a representative LEAF Leads group certified Bronze or above

### Progress

This year has marked a pivotal moment in embedding sustainability at the heart of our research culture and operations. We achieved full implementation of the **Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF)** across all wet-lab areas, constituting 64 groups over 35,000 m<sup>2</sup>. We are on track for nearly all LEAF groups to be audited in 2024–25, to achieve at least Bronze accreditation. We are also preparing for our first Green DiSC accreditation and piloting My Green Lab as an international accreditation, offering tailored alternatives that complement LEAF and broaden our impact.

Our engagement and education provision for labs has grown, with a dynamic series of workshops on lab waste, procurement, computational science, and biomedical sustainability. Sustainability events across our campuses (Guy's, Denmark Hill and St Thomas') have strengthened ties between lab work, interdisciplinarity and local initiatives, such as the community gardens.

70 MyGreenLab licences across 41 departments have helped embed best practices across research teams. The number of labs adopting sustainable procurement is growing, part of our requirements for LEAF Bronze awards, encouraging campus-wide responsible sourcing.

### Priorities for 2024–25

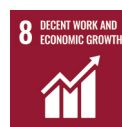
Energy efficiency continues to be a priority, with plans to recruit a cold storage technician to optimise ultra-low temperature (ULT) freezer usage and support our freezer exchange scheme.

We will work with colleagues in Estates & Facilities to support our LEAF lead community in reducing waste, addressing clinical waste misclassification, fostering better segregation and greener disposal methods.

Innovation and research initiatives continue, from a zero-waste fly facility and water recycling in the fish facility to expanded recycling in teaching labs and a shift to reusable glass and ceramic containers.







## 5.7 Responsible investment

### Policy

King's has an **Ethical Investment Policy** which commits us to making no direct investments in tobacco, divesting from all fossil fuel investments and investing 40 per cent of its funds in investments with socially responsible benefits by 2025. We also conduct ethical screening for cash deposits, which excludes companies that generate over 10 per cent of their turnover from armament, tobacco and/or fossil fuels.

We believe that the successful management of environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues is fundamental to creating value for investors. Companies that are successful in avoiding ESG risks tend to outperform in the longer term. King's expects its investment managers to engage with companies through the judicious and transparent use of voting rights and informal dialogue to encourage better management of ESG risks and opportunities. This should include consideration of key ESG issues such as: Climate Change, Ecosystem Services, Environmental Management, Labour Standards, Human Rights, Public Health, Corporate Governance, Business Ethics and Sustainability Management and Reporting, including those companies in supply chains.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We will publish an institutional statement on our position on reducing carbon emissions and the role of carbon offsetting. We will also start to explore the use of internal carbon pricing as a mechanism for considering the carbon emissions associated with investment decisions.





## 5.8 Travel

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Reducing business travel emissions by 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030, from a 2018–19 baseline	Reduction of YOY emissions from business travel, progress to target	Business travel emissions for 2023–24 were 14,841 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e, up from 11,550 tonnes in 2022–23 (28% increase)
Work towards reducing air travel within mainland UK and to destinations that can be reached within 5 hours by low-carbon alternatives, except in exceptional circumstances	Launch Sustainable Travel Policy that includes restrictions mentioned	New Sustainable Travel Policy & Procedures have been approved which are due to be published in November 2024. Air travel will not be permitted within mainland UK, except in exceptional circumstances, and rail travel for destinations that can be reached from London within five hours will be encouraged
Publicly report on our business travel emissions annually	Availability of annual reporting	Data available: review of year-on-year calculations and scoping of reporting mechanisms has begun
Explore and pilot the implementation of departmental carbon budgets for travel by 2024–25	Availability of plan and pilot	Planned for 2024–25

### Progress

Our focus in 2023–24 has been the development of our new **Sustainable Travel Policy & Procedures**. These were approved in July 2024 and will be published in November 2024. Air travel will no longer be permitted within mainland UK (excluding connecting flights and in exceptional circumstances, including caring responsibilities and mobility issues) and travellers are encouraged to use alternative methods to air travel if their destination can be reached within five hours from London by lower carbon alternatives. This latter point is not yet mandated, but it will be re-considered at the next policy review. We are meeting with key colleagues across King's (including the travel bookers community) to highlight the new policy and procedures and to encourage travellers to select more sustainable travel options.

We have also developed sustainable travel guidance, including a travel decision tree and hierarchy, and we are creating a new online business travel authorisation form to streamline the various forms and approvals required for travel, which includes a sustainability self-assessment section. The new policy will be integrated with our travel service provider to enable colleagues to make well-informed, sustainable choices when booking business travel.

We achieved a silver score for our first Key Travel Treadlighter audit, a methodology that has been developed in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund, which enables us to benchmark our sustainable travel practices against peers and best practice globally.

We are currently undertaking an audit of business travel data and carbon calculations from our baseline year of 2018–19 to date, to ensure that a consistent methodology is used and to better understand progress annually. Emissions from business travel in 2023–24 were 14,841 tonnes, a 28 per cent increase from the restated 2022–23 emissions of 11,550 tonnes. Our original 2018–19 baseline for business travel was 6,905 tonnes, but this is currently under review and will be restated in the coming months. This should be considered in any current analysis of progress against the baseline and targets.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We will launch a new online business travel authorisation form to ensure that travellers complete a sustainability self-assessment for each business trip. We will include training on King's Sustainable Travel Policy & Procedures in staff and PhD student inductions to improve compliance. We will conclude our audit of business travel data and carbon calculations from our baseline year of 2018–19 to date to enable more accurate measurement of our progress.

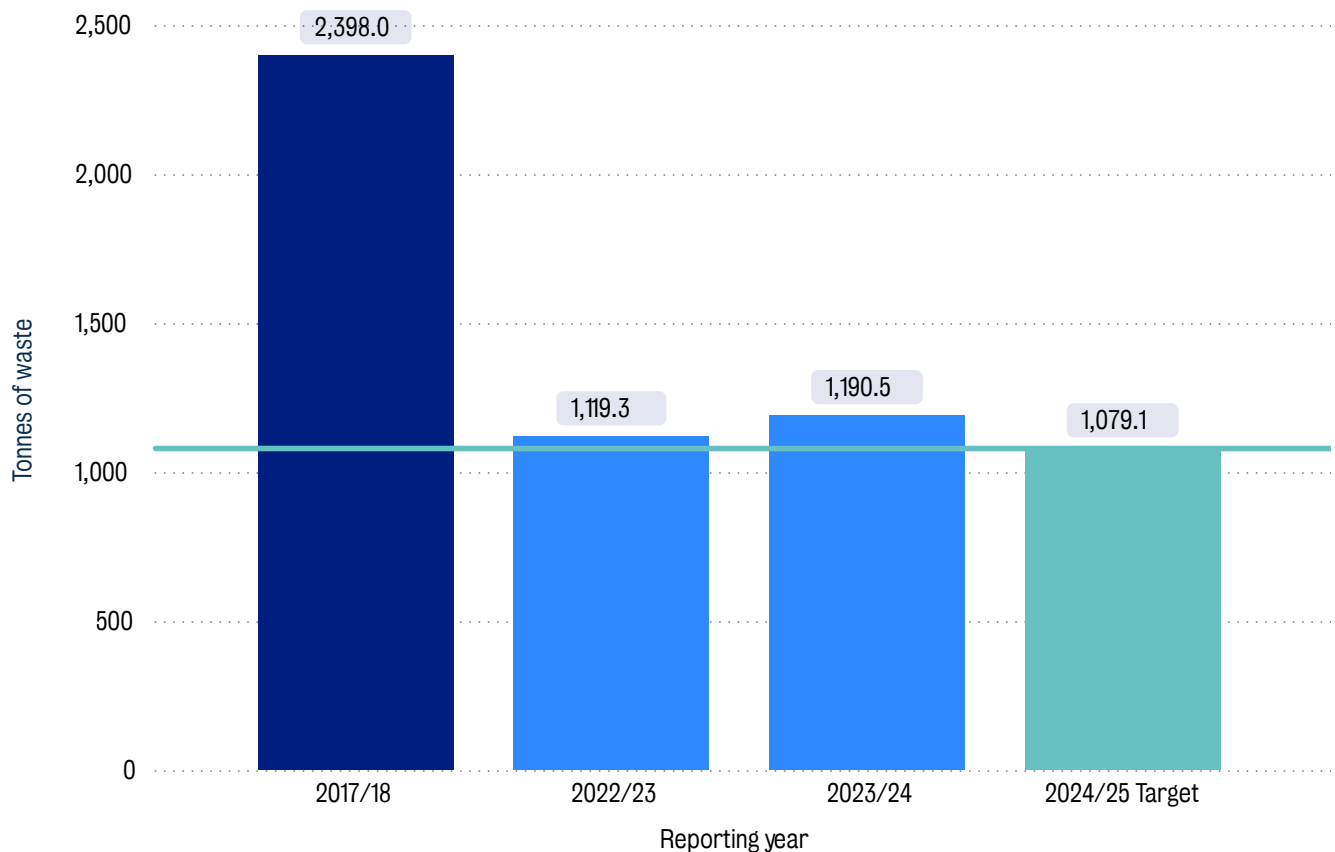


## 5.9 Waste & resources

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Reduce total annual operational waste produced by the University (excluding construction) by 55% by 2024-25 compared to 2017-18 baseline	Tonnes of operational waste year-on-year	1190t, 50% decrease from baseline
Maintain a recycling rate of 55% and above	% of waste recycled year-on-year	48% recycling rate

### Total operational waste by reporting year

Progress to target



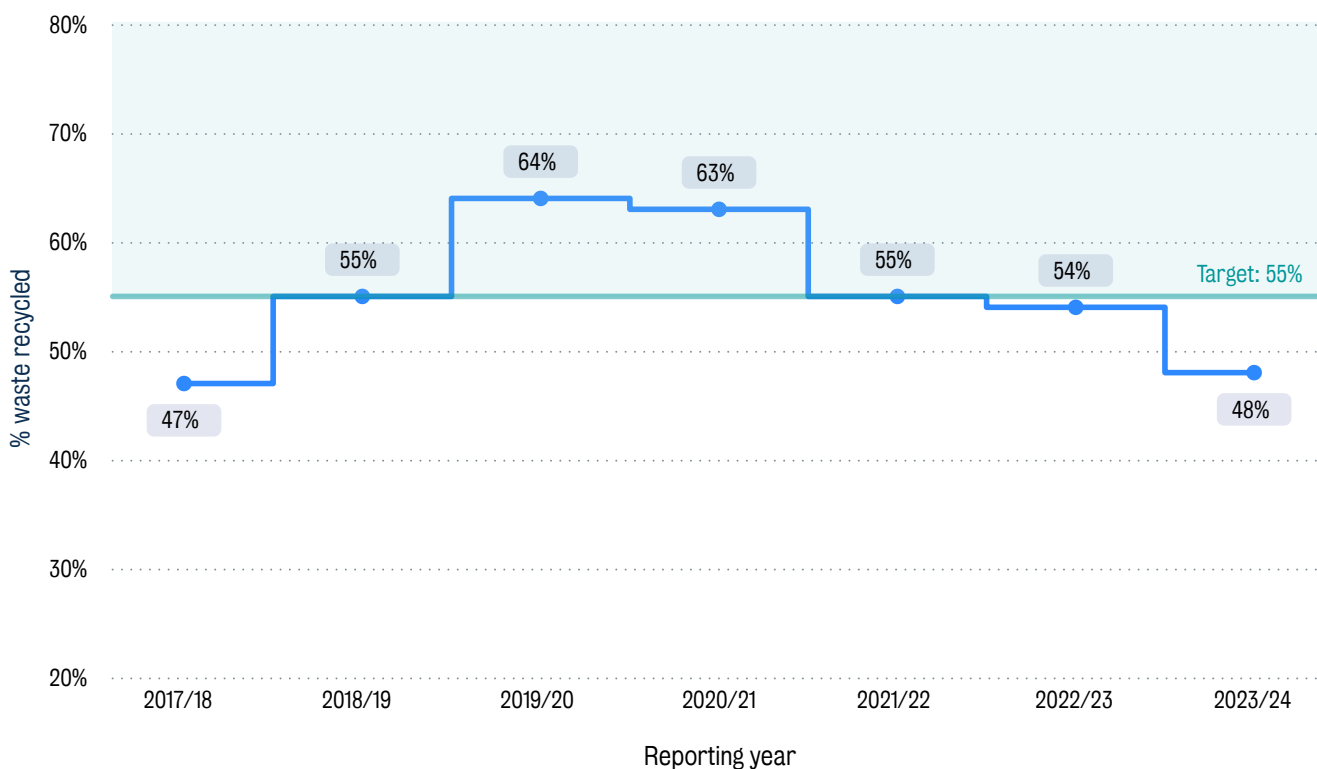
**Figure 3** shows the total operational waste produced by the University (excluding construction waste) for the 2017–18 baseline year and the last two academic years. The chart also demonstrates the progress made towards the target 55 per cent reduction from the baseline, which would limit operational waste to 1,079.1 tonnes/year. 2023–24 saw a 50 per cent reduction from the baseline level, up slightly from the previous year, and so the target remains realistic for 2024–25.





## Recycling rate by reporting year

% waste recycled vs. target rate



**Figure 4** shows the annual recycling rate achieved from the 2017–18 baseline year onwards. Between 2018–19 and 2021–22 the target was achieved or exceeded, but rates have fallen during the last two academic years. The actions outlined below will continue to support us to achieve and maintain the target recycling rate.

## Policy

The current Waste & Resource Strategy and Action Plan 2021–24 is being revised with an enhanced focus on waste avoidance and upstream solutions to enable this.

## Progress

**Operational:** During 2023–24 we entered into a new contract with Biffa Waste Services, who have taken total responsibility for waste management across the estate. We are working with the Head of Packaging at Biffa to develop the recycling waste stream to include more items we frequently dispose of, such as soft plastic sterile packaging from the labs.

**Staff and student engagement:** We are carrying out waste awareness sessions with key staff, including all of King's cleaning teams. Staff Sustainability Champions are encouraged to consider waste in their own local area as part of their toolkits and action plans and often lead with ideas and implementation. Colleagues from Estates & Facilities and King's Climate & Sustainability are working together to plan a two-year waste and circularity behaviour change campaign to be launched in 2024–25, with the aim of understanding the barriers to reduce, reuse and recycle, and helping the King's community to better understand the implications of waste. As part of our research for the campaign we had over 1,000 responses from staff and students to a university-wide waste and recycling survey in June 2024 and we held student focus groups to understand more about waste-related knowledge and behaviours.



## Priorities for 2024–25

Our main priority will be to update the waste policy and strategy using a systems-thinking approach, to focus on waste avoidance, strengthening connections to other university strategies, such as procurement.

Colleagues in Estates & Facilities and the Research, Management & Innovation Directorate will work with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and academic departments to recategorise clinical waste in our labs, following an audit of our waste streams.





## 5.10 Water

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Reduce water consumption by 2% per FTE per year	Cubic meters of water (per total FTE staff & student) consumed	9.69 m <sup>3</sup> /FTE in 2023–24 based on invoice data, an increase of 18% compared to last year. It has been difficult to assess water consumption for the entire estate due to the high level of estimated meter readings. Accurate progress can only be measured if all meters are fitted with AMRs or read monthly. The increase in consumption is attributed to improved data accuracy
Increase the number of automatic meter readers (AMRs) on King's water meters	Number of AMRs on campus	13 AMRs installed to date; the remaining 22 were unsuccessful due to the meter location being unknown, flooded meter pits, hazardous material in the meter pit and/or access issues

### Policy

Through our Environmental Sustainability Policy, we are committed to increasing water efficiency across our estate through both design and maintenance. Water efficiency is also embedded into our Sustainability Guidance for Capital Projects, along with a requirement to consider greywater systems such as rainwater collection.

### Progress

**Improvements to infrastructure:** Throughout 2023–24, additional Automatic Meter Readers (AMRs) were installed at sites across our estate, which will help to improve the response time when there is a leak. The data will be integrated with King's utility management software that automatically alerts the relevant teams when there are instances of constant, high and low water consumption.

### Priorities for 2024–25

We will continue to work with our site teams to ensure that manual readings are being taken regularly where we have been unable to install an AMR. Water will also be included in our building-by-building user engagement work to reduce utility consumption.





## 6. Education for Sustainability



### Embedding Education for Sustainability (EfS)

Our key commitment in relation to **students and education** is that all students at King's will have the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge related to sustainability as part of their core learning, rather than only as an extra-curricular opportunity. To enable this, we seek to:

1. Develop academic teachers' understanding of and confidence in Education for Sustainability via continuous professional development (CPD) and other development opportunities, such as the EfS Fund;
2. Support curriculum change by advocating for changes in academic quality processes;
3. Encourage the development of new programmes and modules related to sustainability;
4. Undertake a curriculum review to help colleagues understand where the opportunities for embedding EfS lie in our current provision.

Progress in 2023–24 has largely focused on the first of these aims and developing relationships that have laid the groundwork for future work. The EfS Toolkit has provided a starting point for colleagues unfamiliar with EfS, complemented by CPD, and the EfS Fund's first round of awards has enabled 12 projects begin to make headway in their departments. We have seen a good breadth of engagement across departments so far, but need to do more to encourage a wider range of colleagues to embed EfS in their teaching. 2024–25 will see a university-wide review of academic quality processes, with King's Climate & Sustainability listed as key stakeholders, and the move to CourseLoop (our new curriculum management tool) will enable us to undertake a regular review of sustainability embedded in existing curricula using an AI tool. Overall, good foundations were laid for embedding EfS across King's curricula during 2023–24, and we are in a strong position to make continued progress in 2024–25.

The two sections below review our targets and progress in relation to students & education and careers & employability. Given the increased focus on Education for Sustainability in 2023–24, we have provided a more in-depth review of our commitments and progress this year.





## 6.1 Students & education

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Adopt an EfS model characterising and clarifying the different learning and engagement opportunities for King's students in relation to sustainability	Availability of model	Model available on our King's Climate & Sustainability education webpages, outlining our approach to EfS
Develop toolkit to support staff to embed climate change and sustainability into their teaching by 2024–25	Availability of toolkit for educators	Toolkit published on our internal SharePoint site in summer 2024
Develop and deliver a programme of EfS CPD training for academic teachers, collectively using internal experience and expertise to co-design and facilitate learning	Number of training sessions and participants	A proposal for EfS CPD was considered at our Education Working Group and will be piloted
Integrate EfS into the curriculum design framework and toolkit at King's by 2024–25	Availability of curriculum design framework and toolkit with references to EfS	On track for 2024–25
Enable the development of communities of practice in all faculties (and eventually, all departments) to further embed sustainability into degrees and scope opportunities to develop interdisciplinary approaches to climate & sustainability	Number of active communities of practice	Round 1 of the EfS Fund led to early development of communities of practice
Steer the expansion of Living Labs/ experiential learning in EfS as part of the formal curriculum (such as the Sustainability in Practice or King's Business School Managing and Leading Sustainability modules) where students tackle local challenges by using the University and local communities as a testbed	Number of programmes that include living labs and/or experiential learning	Ongoing, with an EfS Fund application in the pipeline for a Living Labs project
Conduct a curriculum mapping exercise and report on presence of EfS in the curriculum regularly	Completion of audit and availability of report	The transfer to CourseLoop curriculum management system meant that the necessary data was not available in 2023–24
Develop an action plan in 2024 based on the findings from the EfS curriculum audit	Availability of EfS action plan	As above
Sign up to SOS-UK Responsible Futures framework and achieve accreditation	Achievement of accreditation	We will sign up in 2024–25, with view to audit in 2025–26
Continue to develop the online KEATS Sustainability & Climate module and achieve a 10% increase in completions annually	Number of students and staff completing the KEATS module	2023–24 saw the same level of enrolments in the module (just under 1000), but a lower completion rate (18%, compared to 28% in 2022–23)
Continue to make the Sustainability Seminar Series available to all students and staff and achieve a 10% increase in attendees annually	Number of seminar attendees.	329 people attended the Seminar Series in 2023–24, a 5% increase from 2022–23



Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Roll out carbon literacy training across the University to help our students and staff become carbon literate, with the potential to roll this out further to our suppliers and local community	150 students and staff trained in carbon literacy annually, with a further 15 per year becoming trainers	Pilot in June 2024 led to 42 people becoming certified. Regular training will be provided in 2024–25
Collaborate with KCLSU on student-facing sustainability engagement opportunities	Number of collaborations with KCLSU	We regularly met and communicated with KCLSU in 2023–24 and will explore collaboration opportunities for 2024–25
Encourage sustainability-related research opportunities as part of King's Undergraduate Research Fellowship (KURF)	Number of research topics offered related to sustainability	Applied for three KURF projects and awarded one. A student assistant worked with us to research internal carbon pricing
Steer the expansion of research-enhanced PGT (including online programmes) and Executive Education	Number of new programmes developed and income generated	Planning beginning in 2024–25

## Progress

A new Project Officer for Education joined the King's Climate & Sustainability team in January 2024 and has worked with colleagues from across King's, particularly King's Academy, King's Careers & Employability and faculties. Details on our progress are described in the table above, but key developments in 2023–24 include:

1. The establishment of our EfS model, which sets out the institution's commitments to embedding EfS across core curricula, enhancing additional learning opportunities in sustainability, engaging students in our climate and sustainability work, and developing opportunities for students to learn about careers in sustainability.
2. The development and publication of our EfS Toolkit, which was co-created by King's Climate & Sustainability and King's Academy, has been made available to all King's staff from summer 2024. The Toolkit was drafted over a three-month period before being workshopped with staff and students from across the institution (one workshop for those experienced in EfS, and one workshop for those not experienced). In 2024–25, we will examine how we evaluate the Toolkit and monitor its use and consider making the Toolkit available externally.
3. The EfS Fund, which supported 12 projects from six faculties in the 2023–24 pilot. These projects seek to enable lasting curriculum change and foster communities of practice. The funding was provided by King's Academy and King's Climate & Sustainability.
4. A successful carbon literacy training pilot, where 42 staff and students achieved Carbon Literacy certification.
5. An ESD Literature Review, led by King's Academy and produced by colleagues across King's, was published by Advance HE (see spotlight box below).





## Priorities for 2024–25

These developments place King's in a strong position to continue to progress embedding EfS in 2024–25. The EfS Toolkit and EfS Fund form part of an emerging journey for academic staff, along with a varied CPD offering that is in development. Carbon Literacy Training will be rolled out regularly, with at least one session offered per semester for both staff and students, and staff and PGR-focused sessions in the summer months. We will also support certified members of our community to become facilitators themselves to aid this rollout. The EfS Fund will be jointly funded by King's Climate & Sustainability and King's Academy for the next two academic years. The fund supports ongoing curriculum enhancement and enables the development of communities of practice.

### SPOTLIGHT ON |

#### Advance HE Education for Sustainable Development Literature Review

As part of Advance HE's review of the Student Success Framework, academics at King's – led by Dr Mira Vogel, Senior Lecturer in King's Academy – published 'Education for Sustainable Development: A review of the literature, 2015–2022'. This systematic review draws out good practice in Education for Sustainability, identifies gaps in research and understanding, and provides invaluable analysis of the systemic change needed to successfully embed EfS across curricula. The literature review situates King's as an institution leading the call for transformative Higher Education and has had wide influence both within and beyond King's.





## 6.2 Careers & employability

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Develop plan to further promote and support careers in climate and sustainability fields and roles by 2024–25	Availability of plan	Ongoing (built into annual employer engagement planning)
Develop Sustainable Global Experiences project between King's Careers & Employability and Global Mobility providing internationally focused experiential mobility for under-represented undergraduates	30 students virtually, 30 students in-person in 2023–24	Pilot completed in June 2024 with a total of 56 students
Embed sustainability throughout all themed careers weeks and continue hosting a sustainability-themed careers week annually	Number of careers events related to sustainability	Ongoing (built into annual employer engagement planning)
Regularly review and develop King's Careers & Employability KEATS content and sector guides covering careers in sustainability & climate. Introduce enhanced sector LMI (Labour Market Information) digital provision for climate and sustainability related fields	Availability of updated sustainability careers guidance	Ongoing (Explore Careers in Climate & Sustainability Pathway launched August 2024)
Develop a suite of virtual work-related learning projects aligned to SDGs and focused on sustainable business development	Number of students participating in King's Careers & Employability Insights Programme	Ongoing (built into Work-based Learning Unit & virtual learning platform)
Embed and maintain ESG guidance and employer sustainable practice nudges in employer joining instructions sent to all employer attendees of careers events at King's, including nudge to determine the carbon footprint of attending an event	Availability of ESG guidance % of employer attendees sent to	Delivered (updated and reviewed annually) 100% of employers who participated in employer engagement organised events received this in 2023–24 (fairs, panels, workshops, fireside chats, networking nights, presentations, spotlight promos etc)
Develop guidance and partnerships to encourage employers to procure sustainable products to giveaway at careers fairs	Partnership with Streamline (under SRA) developed	Delivered (embedded into employer joining packs)
Host annual Climate & Sustainability Networking Night showcasing live employer opportunities and graduate roles to King's students	Annual event hosted	Attendees at February 2024 event
Review and report on the impact of our careers activity through a sustainability lens annually, in line with our Sustainable Recruitment Alliance pledge	Availability of annual reports	Internal report currently provided by King's Careers & Employability to King's Climate & Sustainability



Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Embed sustainability in King's Civic Leadership Academy and King's Civic Challenge to support students in becoming sustainability leaders	Number of students involved in sustainability projects as part of King's Civic Leadership Academy and King's Civic Challenge	King's Civic Challenge no longer exists. King's Civic Leadership Academy run by Student Transition & Outcomes team in conjunction with best practice from King's Careers & Employability. Recently refreshed and reviewed
Include climate and sustainability in at least one Widening Participation project per year	Number of projects related to climate and sustainability	Sustainable Global Experience project piloted successfully in 2023–24

## Progress

Sustainability is integral to King's Careers & Employability's delivery across all areas, including Employer Relations & Development, our Work-based Learning Unit, and Events & Experiential Learning as the core teams in Employer Engagement. We strive to uphold, support and develop education, resources, partnerships and initiatives that align with our broader climate and sustainability policies, as stated in our published Commitment on Sustainability. King's Careers & Employability's core means of embedding sustainability is to create opportunities for students to connect with employers and alumni to explore new and emerging career pathways through their core programming, and to invite more sustainability-forward employers to King's events.

### Key enablers of these aims have been:

1. The annual Climate & Sustainability Careers Networking Night, which ran for the second time in February 2024 during King's Climate & Sustainability Month and attracted 191 attendees.
2. The Sustainable Global Experiences project, which was piloted in 2023–24. This project enables students from underrepresented backgrounds to gain Carbon Literacy certification via the Carbon Literacy Project, engage with sustainable businesses in Brussels (either virtually or in person), and undertake wider sustainability-focused learning on employability. 91 per cent of pilot participants said the experience allowed them to think about sustainability in practice, and King's Careers & Employability are now exploring the renewal and continued investment in the project in collaboration with various stakeholders.

Additionally, King's Careers & Employability have embedded sustainable practices in their events by providing guidance to employers attending any on campus event. This includes asking all registered employers to complete a questionnaire on their commitment to sustainability, encouraging them to use public transport to travel to our campuses, and requesting that no flyers, paper or free merchandise is offered to students (unless the latter is sustainably sourced).

### Priorities for 2024–25

For 2024–25, King's Careers & Employability will develop a self-paced digital pathway on King's CareerConnect focused on exploring climate and sustainability careers. This will involve activities focused on reviewing employer ESG credentials and provide resources to help students understand sustainability in the context of their chosen sector. King's Careers & Employability will further strengthen its climate and sustainability offer by hosting labour market insights sessions related to this growing area of employability.





## 7. Climate research

Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Higher value and more impactful sustainability research	Growth in external funding: % of target for >25% growth in value of new awards over 2022–23	Achieved 105% of target for growth in value of new awards
Increased staff engagement in climate & sustainability research growth and activity	Widening engagement for external funding: (i) Number of project leads and depts applying for external funding (ii) Number of project leads and depts awarded funding	(i) Applications by Project Lead: 85 staff members (18% increase) from 32 departments (25% increase) (ii) Awards by Project Lead: 28 staff members (12% increase) from 13 departments (18% increase)
	Internal seed funds: (i) Number of project leads and departments applying for Kings Climate & Sustainability (KCS) and Centre for Sustainable Business (CSB) seed funds (ii) Number of project leads and departments awarded funding	(i) <b>KCS seed fund rounds 2 &amp; 3:</b> Applications by PI: 48 staff members from 23 departments <b>CSB seed fund round 1:</b> Applications by PI: 10 staff members from 5 departments (ii) <b>KCS seed fund rounds 2 &amp; 3:</b> Awards by PI: 13 staff members from 10 departments <b>CSB seed fund round 1:</b> Awards by PI: 10 staff members from 5 departments

### Developing climate & sustainability research

We continue to deepen our focus on multidisciplinary **climate and sustainability research** across King's, which is critical to enable just transitions for sustainability, and to help connect and scale research across all our faculties. Throughout 2023–24, we have continued to widen the pool of researchers across disciplines engaged in climate and sustainability research to develop more impactful sustainability focused research. To enable this, we seek to build the capacity and capability of researchers across all faculties to develop new interdisciplinary partnerships and carry out innovative research, encouraging and fostering a better connected and supported research community in support of these aims.

### Progress

We aim to make distinctive contributions to climate and sustainability research, with a strong focus on multidisciplinary research and connecting our expertise in environmental science, technology, global health, business, law, politics and social sciences. Our aim is a four-fold growth in new awards by 2029. King's has committed investment to accelerate, scale, connect and support new climate and sustainability research.

During 2023–24 we increased the number of external funding applications and saw a 13 per cent increase in grant income for climate and sustainability-related research.

The new grants awarded or commencing in 2023–24 also saw a welcome widening of King's research into new areas, including studies on:

- Recycling multilayer plastic packaging (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, collaboration with Imperial College London);
- Understanding the mental health impacts of extreme heat in urban communities (Wellcome Trust, with London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and Stanford and user partners);
- Understanding Medical, Social and Cultural Contexts of Excess Heat in India (Wellcome Early-Career Awards).

Two staff secured prestigious **UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Future Leaders Fellowships** providing them with long-term support to tackle ambitious sustainability projects, on future battery technologies and on extreme weather, and develop their own expertise and careers (see spotlight section below).



A key mechanism to achieve our aims is through our **King's Climate & Sustainability seed fund** and to date, three completed calls have allocated £763,000 to 18 projects, including several cross-faculty awards. We are also encouraging collaboration through events, with our first interdisciplinary workshop on climate extremes and health in July 2024, which brought together 50 participants with a range of expertise from across eight faculties and directorates and representatives from two major funding agencies (Wellcome and National Institute for Health and Care Research).

The new **Centre for Sustainable Business (CSB)**, part of King's Business School, was launched in March 2024. Focusing on four themes (sustainable consumption, sustainable business systems, sustainable finance and leadership for sustainability), the Centre enables businesses to transition to socially and environmentally sustainable practices. The Centre's programme of activities so far has included the Sustainable Synergies grant development workshop series and a seed fund to support researchers and collaborators to nurture early-stage research and advance important work in sustainable business. The Centre is providing focus for a broad array of stakeholders, from academia, industry, public sector, and civil society, to drive meaningful change.

The **Net Zero Centre** in the Faculty of Natural, Mathematical & Engineering Sciences celebrated its first year by hosting a panel of government and industry sustainability experts. The Centre focuses on four key priority areas: decarbonisation for industry, business, and society; sustainable, low carbon green manufacturing; resource allocation for equity and sustainability and resilient urban infrastructures and environments. This interdisciplinary group is harnessing science and technology research to find solutions for decarbonising our economy and society and for addressing key environmental issues. One of the Centre's flagship activities is their interdisciplinary seminar series, providing a platform for engagement between academia, industry and government to develop novel research projects to achieve net zero.

An additional development was the launch of **King's Climate Research Hub** in January 2024. This interdisciplinary unit, based within the Faculty of Social Science & Public Policy, aims to share research resources and promote collaboration on climate change research with particular interest in the relationship between science, policy and culture, particularly in the developing world.

## Priorities for 2024–25

In 2024–25, we will focus on the scaling up and diversification of our climate and sustainability research, the development of external partnerships and a new capacity-building leadership programme for climate and sustainability researchers.

### SPOTLIGHT ON |

#### New £5m collaboration to help UK prepare for climate change

A UK-wide consortium led by King's was funded by UKRI and Defra (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) to deliver the coordinating hub, Maximising UK Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC). This £5m programme will address the resilience of people, ecosystems and infrastructure in the UK in the face of climate impacts, and brings together expertise from Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England, involving eight universities, five climate partnership organisations and local communities.

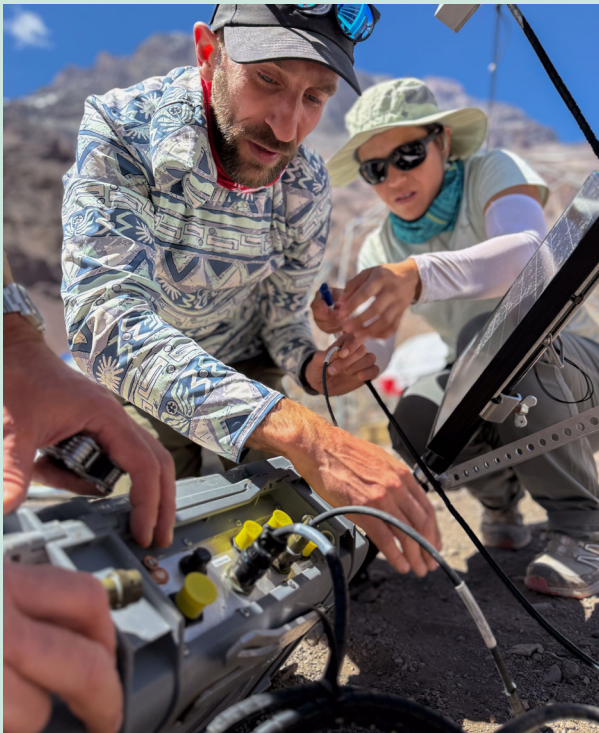
The Hub aims to inform a national climate change adaptation plan by addressing current barriers around public awareness, policy, legislation and climate data that might be hindering the UK's ability to adapt to global warming.

Key to the Hub is the idea of 'transformational adaptation' – any action taken to protect people's way of life from climate change should drive positive change, especially for the poorest and most marginalised members of society who are usually also the most vulnerable to climate change impacts.

The Hub is actively involved in: building skills and partnerships; generating data and knowledge; linking knowledge, policy and practice; and innovating through funding transformative, community-based projects.

## SPOTLIGHT ON | Prestigious UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships at King's

**Climate change is now widely regarded as an existential threat. How will humans cope with extreme heat and how can we adapt?**



Dr Tom Matthews, Department of Geography, is addressing critical research gaps in his Fellowship, to better understand unseen heatwaves through a programme of physical science, bringing new insight into how much warming is required for regions to experience heat beyond human tolerance. Focusing on one of the hottest cities in the world (Jacobabad, Pakistan), the complexity of how heat at regional scales manifests within people's homes joins up climate model projections with the conditions that people are likely to experience within their community. Through an ambitious programme of social science research, the Fellowship also tackles the question of how resilient communities may be to these future heatwaves, and the extent to which that could be strengthened through adaptation.

**How can the sustainability and resilience of the battery supply chain be improved?**



Dr Laura Lander, Department of Engineering, has a Fellowship to further her research on advancing the development of aluminium-ion batteries (AiBs) as an alternative to lithium-ion ones widely used in technologies. Lithium is a critical resource with environmental impacts in extraction and refining. AiBs have the advantage of increased the amount of energy without increasing the size of the battery, with lower supply chain risks due to abundance of raw materials, and lower environmental footprint with recycled aluminium used. This research not only pushes the limits of an emerging battery technology and sees through its advancement towards prototyping, but it will also support the alleviation of supply chain bottlenecks and geopolitical risks associated with current lithium-ion batteries.





## 8. Enabling positive action



Key commitment to 2026	High-level KPI	2023–24 progress
Staff and students at King's contribute to achieving university-wide sustainability actions and raising King's profile	Number of students and staff in climate and sustainability networks	Climate Action Network: 455 members (5% increase from 2022–23) Staff Sustainability Champions: 475 members (29% increase from 2022–23)
	Number of events and attendance	112 events, equal to 280 hours (44% increase) offered by King's Climate & Sustainability, attracting 4,000+ attendees (100% increase). 1,223,382 hours of engaging the King's community through King's Climate & Sustainability events
Offer at least 600 hours of engagement opportunities every academic year	Number of hours of engagement opportunities	740 hours logged on the volunteering platform related to sustainability. 280 hours of events offered
Organise King's Climate & Sustainability Month annually, offering all staff and students an opportunity to learn, connect and take action	Number of attendees across the month	2,253 attendees across 42 events
Establish an integrated communications and engagement strategy by 2024	Availability of strategy	An integrated communications & engagement plan has been developed for 2024–25

This section describes how our communications, engagement and events support the King's community, and our external partners, to take positive climate and sustainability action.

### Policies

King's Environmental Sustainability Policy commits us to providing opportunities for students and staff to actively engage in the sustainability work of the University.

### Policies

In 2023–24, we continued to support the King's community to learn about sustainability, take action and connect with each other and externally. Almost 6,000 students and staff engaged in climate and sustainability activities and projects, amounting to 1,228,762 hours of activity. 112 events were held, with 1,223,382 total hours of attendance, and 12 volunteering opportunities related to climate and sustainability were offered, with over 740 hours logged. 995 people enrolled on the KEATS Sustainability & Climate module and 42 participants took part in carbon literacy training. We encouraged positive behaviour change, with almost 2,000 actions being carried out by the Staff

Sustainability Champions, 74 sustainable changes being made as part of the King's Climate Action Network (CAN) and 68 pledges being made for individual and collective actions in carbon literacy training.

**Climate Action Network:** The King's **Climate Action Network** is an open, interdisciplinary forum to directly contribute to King's climate and sustainability plans. Launched in October 2020, it aims to bring together sustainability and climate expertise and passion from the King's community to create and implement our Climate & Sustainability Action Plan. The network is open to all King's students, staff and alumni. In 2023–24, the CAN grew to 455 members and focused on gathering ideas and suggestions through consultation and brainstorm sessions which fed into the KCS working and steering group meetings.

**Climate & Sustainability Month 2024:** **Climate & Sustainability Month (CSM)**, held in February each year, offers the King's community an opportunity to learn more about sustainability topics, collaborate and connect with others from across King's, and take action on the climate crisis. The month is coordinated by the King's Climate & Sustainability team in collaboration with staff and students across King's. This year, there were 34 collaborations,



welcoming more than 2,300 students, staff and alumni to 42 social and educational events. Events included a clothes swap, tree planting, the London Student Sustainability Conference, a climate wargaming event and a discussion on shaping the energy transition through a community approach.

**COP28 Outcomes Summit:** King's hosted an important **summit event** in December 2023, reflecting on the outcomes of the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP28. Organised by the Mission Zero Coalition, King's Policy Institute, King's Climate & Sustainability and Diplomat magazine, the COP28 Outcomes Summit brought together policy officials, diplomats, industry leaders and academics to unpick what was achieved at the COP, how it can be delivered and what the ambition ought to be for future COPs.

The summit featured keynote addresses by the Shadow Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Ed Miliband, who set out his vision for the UK as a global leader in the race to tackle climate change, and the former UK Prime Minister Theresa May, who was responsible for setting the UK's legally binding net-zero emissions target by 2050 in 2019.

**Staff Sustainability Champions:** The **Staff Sustainability Champions** scheme is our dedicated network to engage and support staff in behaviour change to make their department or team more sustainable. Staff can take part in the office programme, which is part of the national SOS-UK Green Impact scheme, or in the laboratories programme, which is part of the national Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) initiative. Sustainability Champions help to create a more sustainable working environment, reducing the negative and maximising the positive social



and environmental impacts of the University. The programme has proven crucial in helping the King's Climate & Sustainability team embed sustainability throughout the University. In 2023–24, we had a nearly 30 per cent increase in members, bringing us to a total of 475 champions in 59 teams, implementing nearly 2,000 sustainability actions across the University.

**Sustainability Projects Fund: The Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF)** is a fund of £73,000 to enhance sustainability on campus and locally via staff- and student-led projects. Funded by a 20p levy placed on single-use disposable coffee cups sold at King's catering outlets, awardees can receive up to £5,000. In 2023–24, seven projects totalling £21,000 were awarded, ranging from developing a small communal garden that uses food waste to grow food and flowers, to creating a slow travel fund to support colleagues to use sustainable transport methods for conferences in Europe.

**Sustainability Seminar Series:** Each year King's Climate & Sustainability hosts an open-access, interdisciplinary **seminar series** that aims to develop participants' knowledge of some of the biggest topics in the field and empower and motivate participants to take action through interactive engagement with the topic. In 2023–24, we hosted six seminars and one guided biodiversity walk reaching over 300 attendees. The topics included: decolonising conservation and rewilding, digital environmental education, circular economics, sustainable marketing, environmental agreements and negotiations, climate justice stories from Sudan, faith communities and youth action.

**Student development and skills:** Each year we offer students development opportunities, including to undertake paid work within the King's Climate & Sustainability team and





to receive accredited training (Carbon Literacy Training and IEMA accredited sustainability auditing). In 2023–24, we upskilled 11 students through paid assistant opportunities, providing opportunities for work experience in sustainability. We hosted one engagement assistant, one education assistant and four communications assistants, one student as part of the King's Undergraduate Research Fellowship, and three students supporting data gathering and reporting. We hosted the first carbon literacy training session at King's with 42 participants which resulted in 68 pledges for individual and collective actions.

**Welcome to King's:** Information sessions, community-building events and a Sustainability Fair were held during Welcome to King's, our university-wide programme to

welcome new students to King's each September, to raise awareness of sustainability and promote opportunities to get involved, engaging with over 800 new students. In addition to joining general Welcome Hubs across all campuses, we engaged with students at a range of faculty and department specific welcome fairs and inductions.







## SPOTLIGHT ON | Libraries & Collections Sustainability Champions Team

The Libraries & Collections team has been instrumental in embedding sustainability across their operational work, which spans seven libraries across five sites and with a staff of over 180. At the 2024 Sustainability Awards, Thomas Shaw, Deputy Director of Libraries & Collections, highlighted that their team was motivated by how diverse operational activities could be mapped to support various United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For their Green Impact Gold Award, the team covered a range of SDGs. For example, the team created two new wellbeing rooms (SDG 3, Good Health & Wellbeing) and began the “Find Yourself in Our Collections” initiative, to promote student-led engagement to shape

more inclusive and representative library resources, which also benefits staff from accessing more diverse academic reading resources (SDG 4, Quality Education). For SDG 12, Responsible Consumption & Production, the team have been recycling old library books and repurposing old spaces to support students and staff. They have also installed bee hotels and planted new trees at Maughan Gardens boosting biodiversity and ecological value, in support of SDG 15, Life on Land.





## 9. Looking ahead

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Substantial progress was made in 2023–24 to boost the ambition and capacity of the King's community to act on climate and sustainability across all its activities. The start-up of the King's Climate & Sustainability transformation programme provides strategic support and resources, further enabling the commitment and enthusiasm of our staff, students, alumni and partners. We have seen engagement and collaboration across the King's community accelerate change and maintain momentum to make King's a more sustainable place to study and work.

King's continued to rank highly in national and international sustainability rankings. We were placed sixth in the UK in the 2024 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings and achieved joint first in the world for Sustainable Development Goal 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production. The People & Planet University League gave us a first-class rating, ranking fifth in the UK, and the QS World University Sustainability Rankings 2024 placed King's 44th globally.

As we look ahead, 2024–25 will bring with it a wide range of initiatives and projects, including working with our suppliers to reduce our supply chain emissions, making our research operations more environmentally sustainable, publishing our new Sustainable Travel Policy, publishing the University's position on the use of carbon offsetting, launching our behavioural change campaign on waste & circularity, using an AI tool to audit the sustainability content of our curricula and developing a new institutional sustainability strategy. Our networks and strong approach to collaboration, together with a talented King's community of students and staff, stand us in good stead to tackle these challenges. We know the need to take positive action in response to the climate and nature crisis is more urgent than ever, so while we celebrate our successes, we focus our efforts anew on refreshed priorities.



## Appendix 1. Carbon Emissions Inventory

Alongside the calculation of our Scope 1 and 2 emissions for the 2023–24 academic year, an audit was undertaken of our carbon emissions data and calculations from the baseline year of 2018–19 to present, in order to align to the Standardised Carbon Emissions Framework (SCEF). As such, the following table represents a restatement<sup>1</sup> of our annual Scope 1 and 2 emissions, including our baseline year, and percentage reduction from 2018–19 to present.

**Table 1: Total scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions**

METRICS	2018–19 (baseline)	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
<b>Scope 1 &amp; 2 carbon emissions (tonnes)</b>	32,857	27,752	26,228	25,207	27,632	26,216
<b>Scope 1 &amp; 2 reduction v. baseline (location-based)</b>		-16%	-20%	-23%	-16%	-20%

**Table 2: Detailed scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions**

Table 2 depicts the restated emissions figures, aligned to the SCEF, across Scope 1, 2 and 3 for categories in scope and where data is currently available.

SCOPE	Category	2022–23 emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	2023–24 emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Change on previous year (%)
<b>1</b>	1 Natural gas	9,577	9,056	-5%
	2 Fleet	15	8	-47%
	3A Refrigerants & research-based f-gas	–	96	n/a
	4 Other fuels	1,185	769	-35%
<b>2</b>	1A Purchased electricity	14,657	14,478	-1%
	2 Purchased heat and steam	2,198	1,810	-18%
<b>3</b>	1A Purchased goods & services	179,853	225,368	+25%
	1B Purchased water	63	62	-2%
	3 Fuel and energy-related activities	7,200	6,897	-4%
	5A Waste generated in operations	23	8	-65%
	5B Wastewater	68	72	+6%
	6 Business travel	11,550	14,841	+28%
	7B Employee homeworking	2,814	2,780	-1%
	9D Student accommodation (third party, location-based)	2,571	1,914*	–

<sup>1</sup>The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol offers a number of conditions under which baseline emissions can be recalculated, including changes in calculation methodologies or improvements to data accuracy (re-baselining). Restatement can cover any year but typically not the baseline year and can be beneficial to obtain a more accurate representation of trends.

\*Estimated figure due to data availability.





## Appendix 2. Energy consumption (kWh)

### Annual energy consumption for natural gas, electricity and heat

Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Natural Gas</b>	55,548,266	54,147,251	56,161,595	53,949,660	52,353,684	49,514,659
<b>Purchased Electricity</b>	76,228,316	64,974,961	63,424,151	68,599,620	70,779,986	69,923,794
<b>Purchased Heat</b>	13,851,007	14,611,008	14,082,024	10,311,984	12,233,514	10,073,671
<b>Total</b>	145,627,589	133,733,220	133,667,770	132,861,264	135,367,184	129,512,124



## Appendix 3. Sustainability communications & engagement

### Student and staff engagement opportunities, 2023–24 (events/meetings)

Project	Event hours	Number of attendees
Sustainability Seminar Series	10.5	329
Climate & Sustainability Month 2024	112.5	2,262
London Student Sustainability Conference 2024	8	284
Welcome to King's (September 2023 and January 2024)	41	810
Sustainability Champions	20.5	335
King's Climate Action Network	10.5	143
Volunteering opportunities	69	102
Waste & Circularity campaign meetings / training	5.5	46
Academic panels / debates	4.5	183
Climate Extremes and Population Health Research workshop	4	45
Climate Literacy Training	7	42
Other events / meetings	13	387
<b>Total</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>4,968</b>

### Student and staff engagement opportunities, 2023–24 (engagement projects outside of events/meetings)

Project	Calculation	Total hours	Total participants
Paid student assistants	Number of hours worked	1,970	11
KEATS Sustainability & Climate Module		–	995 enrolled, 178 completed

### Communication channels followers/subscribers as of July 2024

Channels (linked)	Followers/views
Instagram (@Kings_Sustainability)	2,681 followers
Newsletter	1,880 subscribers
Website	22,423 views
Blog	1,084 views
Sustainability Champions (Microsoft Teams)	475 members
Climate Action Network (Microsoft Teams)	455 members
Sustainability Seminar Series (mailing list)	794



## Stay in touch

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We welcome your thoughts on the climate & sustainability agenda at King's. If you have any comments or would like to get involved with sustainability at King's, please get in touch with us at **[sustainability@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@kcl.ac.uk)**.

For further information on our climate & sustainability initiatives, visit **[kcl.ac.uk/climate-sustainability](https://kcl.ac.uk/climate-sustainability)**

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