

University of
South Wales
Prifysgol
De Cymru

USW Sustainability SMART Targets & Action Plan 2025/26

Estates and Facilities

Version	Date	Author of document	Description of changes
V1.0	31 July 2023	N Bradley	Document created
V1.1	22 April 2024	N Bradley	Added additional columns to tables and reviewed key actions.
V1.2	21 Jan 2025	N Bradley	Progress update of all actions undertaken.
V 1.3	07 May 2026	N Bradley	Amend smart targets to reflect progress.

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USW Sustainability Action Plan

The SMART actions below contribute towards the key target areas identified within USW's Net Zero Strategy. They reflect the key milestones in USW's carbon roadmap and will be updated to ensure they remain relevant, achievable, and demonstrate ambition with an ongoing commitment to achieving our longer term 2040 net zero target. We will report annually on the progress against our interim and long-term targets, as well as the actions being taken.

To deliver on these commitments, we will work to develop plans that reflect our priorities and target those areas that provide the greatest impact. This will require collaboration across multiple departments and faculties, including investment in our estate, operational policy decisions, and changes to our ways of working. Together, we will continue to scope out new opportunities and continue to work on making USW a more sustainable place to work and study, in which our people and local environment will thrive.

USW's policies and objectives contribute to and support the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals as indicated below.

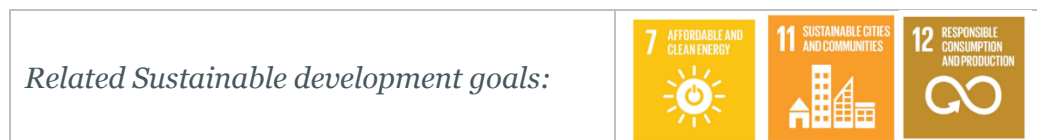


Energy & Decarbonisation

Primary Targets:

- Reduce Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 50% by 2030.
- Reduce Scope 3 carbon emissions by 50% by 2030.

Reference Document: *USW Net Zero Carbon Strategy 2030*



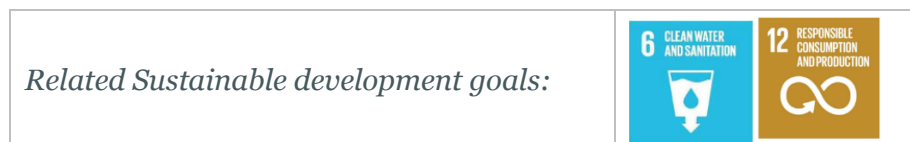
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Decarbonise Heating: Investigate long-term alternatives to remove fossil fuel consumption.	Sustainability / Estates Team	2030	HESA EMR, Audits, DEC Performance
Renewable Infrastructure: Expand on-campus solar; evaluate off-campus options (PPAs, storage, canopies).	Projects / Sustainability Team	2030	AMR Metering Data, Annual Sustainability Report
Scope 3 Management: Capture, record, and reduce indirect emissions (commuting, aviation).	Sustainability Team	July 2026	Welsh Gov Net Zero Reporting, Surveys
Departmental Alignment: Coordinate cross-departmental actions to reduce direct/indirect emissions.	Sustainability Team	July 2026	Annual Sustainability Report, Audits, Action Groups
Building Efficiency: Identify and invest in energy-efficiency improvements for existing assets.	Estates Team	Annually	AMR Metering Data, HESA EMR
Technology & Behaviour: Deploy BMS upgrades and "Turn USW Green" behavioural campaigns.	Estates / Sustainability Team	July 2027	AMR Metering Data, People and Planet
Engagement: Actively involve staff and students in sustainable resource consumption.	Sustainability / Comms Team	Annually	Surveys, People and Planet
Community Partnerships: Collaborate with wider community partners for low-carbon solutions.	Sustainability Team & Committee	2030	Annual Sustainability Report

Water Management

Primary Target:

- Reduce total water consumption by 10% by July 2027.

Reference Document: *RIBA Climate Challenge 2030*



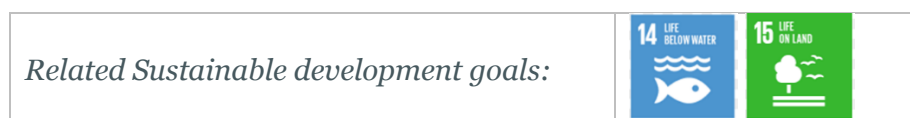
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Leak Detection & Monitoring: Focus on Treforest Campus (highest consumer) and proactive estate-wide assessments.	Sustainability / Maintenance Team	Annually	AMR Data, HESA EMR, Monthly Energy/Water Reports
Sub-metering Upgrades: Improve metering for performance tracking, including irrigation systems.	Sustainability Team	July 2026	AMR Metering Data, Annual Report
Water-Saving Tech: Retrofit existing buildings with conserving tech (e.g., low-flow showers, rainwater harvesting) and mandate for new builds.	Sustainability / Projects Team	Dec 2026	Audit Findings, Project Specs, AMR
Engagement & Profiling: Align targets across key buildings; communicate usage profiles to improve departmental engagement.	Sustainability / Comms Team	July 2026	Monthly DMT Reports, Stakeholder Feedback
Alternative Water Sources: Review and implement greywater and rainwater harvesting opportunities.	Sustainability Team	April 2026	HESA EMR, People & Planet (P&P)
Behavioural Change: Engage staff and students in academic and residential blocks on responsible usage.	Sustainability / Res Life / Comms	Annually	Participation Rates, Turn USW Green Metrics

Biodiversity & Land Use

Primary Targets:

- Achieve 10% biodiversity net gain across the estate by 2028.
- Achieve Green Flag certification for Treforest campus by end of 2028.
- Increase wildflower/pollinator habitats by 15% and install 25 nesting boxes by 2027/2028.
- Complete a 100% Biodiversity Baseline Habitat Audit by December 2026.
- Eradicate/manage invasive non-native species across all campuses by 2030

Reference Document: USW Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2023-26



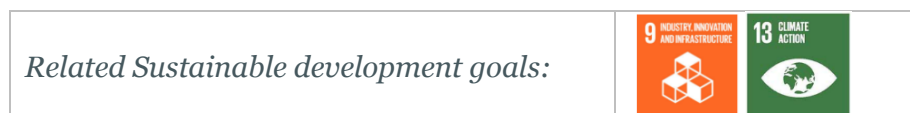
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
BAP Implementation: Progress all objectives outlined in the 2023-26 Biodiversity Action Plan.	Sustainability Team / Action Group / Grounds	July 2026	Action Group, BAP Progress Reports
Develop New BAP: Develop a new Biodiversity Action Plan covering 2027-30	Sustainability Team / Action Group / Grounds	December 2026	Action Group, BAP Progress Reports
Capital Projects: Integrate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into all new builds and masterplans.	Sustainability / Projects Team	Ongoing	PEA's / Phase 1 Habitat Reports
Tree Canopy Cover: Implement a progressive increase in tree planting across all campuses.	Sustainability Team / Grounds	Annually	Tree Surveys, Annual Sustainability Report
Scheme Certification: Evaluate requirements and benefits of certification to Green Flag for Treforest Campus.	Biodiversity Action Group	Dec 2026	Committee Minutes
Urban Greening: Improve biodiversity in traditionally urban campus areas.	Sustainability Team / Action Group	Dec 2026	Phase 1 Reports, Visual Audits
Living Labs: Use green areas for student teaching and research and proactive habitat management.	Sustainability Team / Action Group	Annually	Research Output, Student Engagement Data, Faculties
Woodland Management: Proactive forest and tree management to maintain healthy growth.	Grounds / Facilities / Action Group	Annually	Professional Tree Surveys
Engagement: Deliver at least 8 "Plant & Pot" sessions annually.	Sustainability Team / Accommodation	Annually	Attendance Logs, Annual Report

Travel & Transport

Primary Targets:

- Increase use of alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles by 15% by 2030.
- Reduce staff and student commuting emissions by 3% per annum (from 2022/23 baseline).
- Transition 100% of university-owned fleet to zero-emission by end of 2029.
- Provide at least 4 Dr Bike workshops a year to encourage active travel use.

Reference Documents: *USW Travel Policy*, *USW Travel Plan*



Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Policy Integration: Include sustainable travel policy in new staff inductions.	Sustainability Team, HR	December 2026	Staff/Student Surveys, Induction Logs
Emissions Reporting: Capture and reduce GHG emissions from fleet operations and business travel.	Sustainability Team / Procurement	Annually	Annual Carbon Footprint Report, EMR Scope 3
Fleet Transition: Convert remaining fossil-fuel vehicles to electric (EV) to improve local air quality.	Sustainability Team	July 2029	EV Conversion Rate, Fleet Inventory
Travel Plan Update: Revise the formal USW Travel Plan to promote sustainable modes.	Sustainability Team	December 2026	Updated Travel Plan Document
Homeworking Impact: Improve annual calculations of carbon emissions related to frequency of homeworking.	Sustainability Team	Annually	Staff Travel Survey Results
Active Travel Incentives: Encourage walking/cycling via incentives and infrastructure.	Sustainability Team	Annually	Participation Data, Facility Audits
Data Collection: Conduct biennial staff and student travel surveys to establish patterns.	Sustainability Team	Biennially	Survey Response Data

Waste & Circular Economy

Primary Targets:

- Achieve Zero Waste by 2040.
- Maintain Zero Waste to Landfill status.
- Achieve a 75% recycling rate by 2030 (aligned with Welsh Government targets).

Reference Documents: *Welsh Government 'Towards Zero Waste' & 'Beyond Recycling' Strategies*

Related Sustainable development goals:



Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Waste Audits & Diversion: Conduct estate-wide audits, focusing on end-of-year residential "move-outs."	Facilities Team/ Cleaning	Annually	Annual Audits, Supplier Data, Waste Tonnages
Contamination Reduction: Increase recycling rates via single-source bins, labelling, and education.	Facilities team /Cleaning	Annually	Recycling Data, Monthly Waste Reports
Food Waste Diversion: Partner with catering to divert avoidable food waste to social causes.	Facilities Team/ Catering	Nov 2026	Catering Waste Data, App Transaction Logs
Repair & Reuse: Expand focus on equipment and furniture reuse to reduce total waste volumes.	Facilities team /Cleaning	Annually	Warp-It Savings Reports (CO2 & £), BHF Data, E-Cycle, Unigreen Scheme
Sustainable Procurement: Align policies to reduce waste at the source and improve supply chain social value.	Facilities Team / Procurement	July 2026	Procurement Contract Tenders, IT Reuse Data
Accommodation Recycling: work more closely with Accommodation to improve recycling rates and reduce overall waste arising.	Facilities and Accommodation	Annually	Recycling Data, Monthly Waste Reports

Sustainable Procurement

Primary Targets:

- Convert at least 10% of supply chain spend data to carbon values using product/service-level emissions factors (Tier 3) by 2030.
- Ensure 80% of top 50 suppliers (by spend) have a carbon footprint on *Net Positives* by end of 2028.
- 100% of new contracts valued at over £25k per annum to include Sustainability Risk Assessment (SRA) and Social Value criteria.
- Reduce emissions from purchased goods and services by 5% per year by 2030.

Reference Document: *Net Positives Portal, Sustainable Procurement Policy, SRA*



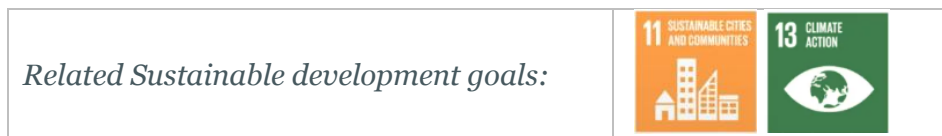
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Policy Development: Create a university-wide Sustainable Procurement Policy.	Procurement Team	July 2026	Net Positives Data, Annual Report
Purchasing Guides: Develop guides for high-impact categories (e.g., IT hardware) to prioritize sustainable options.	Procurement /Sustainability Team	July 2027	Supply Chain GHG Analysis
IT Carbon Impact: Collaborate with IT suppliers to enhance energy efficiency and capture carbon values.	Procurement Team	July 2026	Product-Level Emissions Data
Supplier Engagement: Host annual awards and workshops to discuss supply chain impacts.	Procurement Team	Annually	Supplier Engagement Event Logs
Social Value: Embed social value (work experience, workshops, visits) into all relevant contracts.	Procurement Team	Annually	Contract SRA / Social Value Reports
Reporting Accuracy: Transition from broad spend-based reporting to product and service specific carbon data.	Procurement Team	July 2026	ProcHE SIC Codes, Net Positives
Product-Level Data: Explore AI opportunities for enhancing product/service-level carbon reporting	Procurement/ Sustainability team	July 2026	Annual Report

Construction & Refurbishment

Primary Targets:

- Ensure all new buildings meet RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge targets.
- 100% of capital and refurbishment projects must include sustainability/climate considerations.
- Prioritise low-carbon, all-electric building services; heat pumps as standard for new builds.
- Generate an average of at least 25% of building load from on-site renewables for all new builds.
- Aim to achieve a DEC rating of D or above for all campus buildings by 2030.

Reference Documents: *RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge; UKGBC Delivering Net Zero (Commercial Retrofit), DEC's*



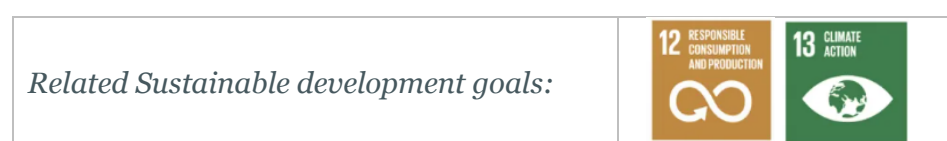
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Net Zero Alignment: Align new builds (COMET/Chiropractic) with RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge.	Projects / Sustainability	Aug 2026	Project Outcome Reports, Standard Specs
Design Standards: Develop sustainable building design guides (Lighting, Controls, BMS).	Projects / Sustainability	July 2027	Standardised Specifications
Renewable Integration: Conduct feasibility for renewables in all major developments and retrofits.	Projects / Sustainability	Ongoing	New Renewable Installations (kWp)
Embodied Carbon: Develop reporting processes for embodied carbon in small-scale projects.	Sustainability Team	July 2027	Embodied Carbon Footprint Data
Space Optimisation: Improve room scheduling and BMS integration to reduce energy demand.	Projects / Space Management	Nov 2026	Space Utilisation Reports, BMS Data
PV Maintenance: Establish a maintenance contract to ensure optimum Solar PV efficiency.	Maintenance Team	July 2027	Energy Generation Yield (kWh)

Sustainable Food & Catering

Primary Targets:

- Retain SRA 3-star *Food Made Good* rating for all catering outlets.
- Increase vegan meal sales to 10% and plant-based milk sales to 15% by 2030.
- 100% certified tea, coffee, sugar (Fairtrade/Rainforest Alliance or other) and RSPO palm oil by Dec 2027.
- Implement traffic-light carbon labelling on 50% of menus by January 2028.
- Increase non-disposable (reusable) hot drink purchases to 20% by end of 2027.

Reference Document: *Sustainable Food Policy*



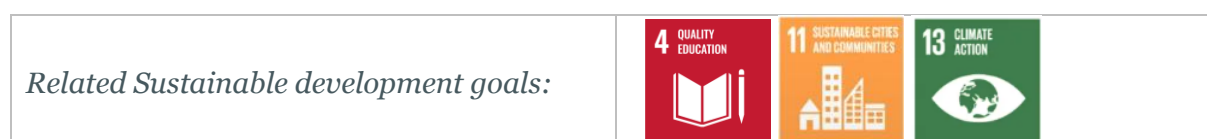
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Policy Review: Update sustainable food policy to reflect university-wide catering aims.	Catering Manager	Annually	Supplier Data, SRA Certification
Certification: Maintain 3 star rating for SRA Food Made Good certification. Explore opportunities to improve performance in key areas.	Catering Manager / Sustainability	July 2027	SRA Assessment Reports, People & Planet Score
Food Waste: Reduce food waste via Meat-Free Mondays, "Too Good To Go," and composting opportunities.	Catering Manager	July 2026	Waste Supplier Data, App Usage Stats
Carbon Labelling: Integrate software to generate carbon footprint ratings on menus.	Catering Manager / Sustainability	Jan 2028	Menu Carbon Metrics
Supply Chain: Liaise with suppliers to reduce single-use plastics and delivery frequency.	Catering Manager	Nov 2026	Supplier Packaging Audit
Sourcing: Integrate home-grown fruit, herbs, and vegetables into catering provision.	Catering Manager	July 2027	On-site Orchard/Allotment Yields

Education for Sustainable Development

Primary Targets:

- Aim to embed sustainability into teaching, learning, and research across all course curriculum by 2030.
- Require a "Sustainability Impact" assessment for all new course proposals by Jan 2027 (demonstrating alignment with at least two UN SDGs).
- Deliver carbon literacy training to at least 50 students/staff per academic year.
- Facilitate 10 student-led sustainability projects annually using the campus/community as a testbed by 2027.

Reference Documents: *Carbon Literacy Project*; *SOS-UK Responsible Futures Framework*



Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Carbon Literacy (CLT): Deliver online and in person training sessions for staff and students.	Carbon Literacy Group	July 2026	Number of certified staff/students
Framework Adoption: Identify the best reporting mechanism for measuring sustainability in the curriculum.	Teaching & Learning Action Group	July 2027	SOS-UK Certification Status
Student Inductions: Develop standard sustainability slides for all student first-week course inductions.	Sustainability Team/ Faculties	July 2026	Mapping Data & Induction Audits
Curriculum Mapping: Conduct a formal mapping exercise to identify courses currently aligned to UN SDGs.	Sustainability Team / CLT Group	March 2027	SDG Mapping Data & Surveys
Academic Toolkit: Develop guidance for academics on how to align existing and new courses with the SDGs.	Sustainability Team	2030	Toolkit Downloads / Usage Data

Community Engagement

Primary Targets:

- Facilitate 1,000 hours of student volunteering annually toward local communities by 2027/28.
- Conduct a minimum of 12 community litter picks per year.
- Aim for 10% of Turn USW Green members to participate in community or volunteering activities.
- Build and support active sustainability partnerships with local community groups.

Reference Document: *Sustainability Engagement Strategy, Turn USW Green, eCount Cymru*



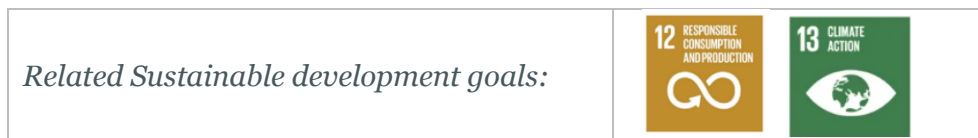
Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
Engagement Platform: Increase "Turn USW Green" sign-ups to drive collaboration in community schemes.	Sustainability Team	Annually	Registered Members, Engagement Metrics
Biodiversity Outreach: Support local community projects (e.g., Meadow Street Gardens) to enhance local biodiversity.	Sustainability Team / Wellbeing	Annually	Number of Events, Partner Feedback
Civic Collaboration: Support local council climate programs and share best practices via regional workshops.	Sustainability Team	Annually	Meeting Minutes, Joint Project Outcomes
Student Voice: Partner with the Students' Union (SU) to establish closer ties on engagement and events.	Sustainability Team / SU	July 2026	SU Engagement Stats, Society Formation, closer ties.
Community waste: Support the "Treforest Litter Pickers" and staff/student groups in community clean-ups.	Sustainability Team/ SU	Annually	Number of Litter Picks, Volunteer Hours

Emissions & Discharges

Primary Targets:

- Establish a baseline value for total fugitive emissions from HVAC and refrigeration systems by July 2027.
- Prevent pollution from F-gas leakages and ensure zero harmful discharges.
- Ensure 100% of new heat pump and cooling installations use refrigerants with a Global Warming Potential (GWP) of less than 150.
- Ensure all new construction projects include SUDS in the design and construction to reduce runoff via green/blue roofs, permeable paving, or attenuation tanks.

Reference Documents: *Supplier Data Sheets; F-Gas Regulatory Compliance Records*



Key Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Evaluation & Monitoring
F-Gas Monitoring: Capture all leakage data from AC and refrigeration systems across all sites.	Sustainability / Maintenance Team	Annually	F-Gas Leakage Reports
Sustainable Cooling: Engage with Projects teams to ensure new equipment (e.g., Heat Pumps) utilises refrigerants with low GWP.	Sustainability Team / Projects	Annually	Equipment Design Specifications
Pollution Control: Monitor and minimise harmful discharges to water and land.	Maintenance / Sustainability Team/ H&S	Annually	Maintenance Logs, Site Audits/ Health & Safety Reports