

Sustainability Commitments for Commercial Services

January 2025



OUR AIM

Through our accommodation, our catering operations and our values, we will deliver our students with a home and lifestyle that positively facilitates them to thrive personally, academically and socially which will enhance the university's reputation and sustainability.

The key aims of the Commercial Services Sustainability Commitments are:

- To establish accurate metering data for the consumption of gas, electricity and water in our residences and catering operations and set targets for reduction
- To educate everyone in our community on how to minimise energy, water consumption and waste in our residences and catering operations thereby reducing our carbon footprint
- To minimize the use of chemicals and other hazardous materials
- To use established frameworks to promote sustainable resource management into all procurement activities and hold our suppliers to our own standards
- To ensure that everyone in our community has access to environmental sustainability training and other engagement opportunities
- To work with partners that share our own environmental commitment and values
- To comply with all legal requirements and other compliance obligations
- To communicate regularly on our progress

OUR STRATEGY

The university is dedicated to delivering its sustainability strategy and environmental sustainability is a key enabler for the university's RH 2030 strategy.

Of the four aims of the sustainability strategy the two aims below are where Commercial Services can make the largest impact:

2. Student Leadership

To engage our students to create and achieve our shared vision for Environmental Sustainability, ensuring all our students are informed about our actions so that they in turn can influence our activities to the enhancement of the student experience.

4. Operations

To reduce our energy use and our emissions, enhance biodiversity, promote environmentally and socially responsible transport and travel, and pursue ethical procurement and investment strategies. We will do this by responsible management of our operations, and through our actions as custodians of our parkland estate. In so doing, we will achieve ambitious targets for the efficient and cost effect management of our resources and waste.

OUR COMMITMENTS

1. Provide leadership

In line with aim two of the university strategy, Commercial Services is committed to demonstrating leadership to reducing our impact on the environment.

- We are committed to encouraging individual and collective efforts from our customers
- We ensure that any communications are coordinated and part of a whole University sustainability message

2. Energy efficiency and carbon reduction

- We procure commercial catering equipment with the highest energy efficiency rating and ensure that obsolete equipment is either re-used or disposed of in an environmentally friendly way
- We ensure that equipment, heating and lighting in commercial kitchens is turned off when not in use and encourage everyone in our community to do the same
- We communicate the carbon impact of the dishes on our menus via our online portal
- We have identified efficiencies in our deliveries to campus and reduced them by 40%
- We have invested in a fleet of electric vehicles
- We buy seasonal produce from the UK whenever possible
- We are committed to reducing the hazardous nature of our cleaning materials in the cleaning of our accommodation and kitchens other than at deep clean or when no alternative is available
- We offer the most environmentally friendly guest toiletries for our commercial operation and guesthouse considering the impact of both packaging and product.

3. Waste reduction

- We educate everyone in our community on how to minimise waste and maximise recycling through video, inductions and marketing collateral
- Our 0% to landfill waste disposal contract ensures that all of the waste produced on our estate is either recycled or converted into energy
- We offer donation banks on campus for unwanted clothing, shoes, accessories and toys and publish statistics on volumes generated
- We have introduced controlled cooking of food in our dining halls and manage leftover packaged food items by offering end of day discounts

4. Disposables

- We actively encourage the use of re-usable cups by stocking KeepCups and water bottles in all catering outlets and by offering a 20p discount to customers bringing their own cup
- All disposable cups, takeaway boxes, cutlery and straws are recyclable or biodegradable
- We have joined the Refill initiative and actively promote the locations of water refilling stations across our estate
- We charge a 25p levy to customers who use take away boxes and cutlery in our dining halls

5. Sustainable procurement

- We ensure that our suppliers are regulated and that environmental issues are embedded into tendering specifications
- We have retained Marine Steward Council (MSC) accreditation and only use fish from sustainable stocks
- We have adopted the Better Chicken Commitment (BCC) for 100% of the chicken (fresh/frozen/processed) in our entire UK supply chain
- All of our meat, milk, cream and the majority of our cheese is Red Tractor Assured
- We only purchase from food suppliers who use sustainable palm oil
- We promote Fairtrade products across our campus
- Our whole eggs are free-range
- Our Boilerhouse Café is accredited by the Vegetarian Society
- We have been awarded 3* by the Sustainable Restaurant Association in their Food Made Good rating with a score of 75%

6. Monitoring and Reporting

- Our sustainability commitments are displayed across our estate and online
- We regularly monitor Royal Holloway's position on the People & Planet league table and seek to improve this incrementally year on year
- These guidelines are reviewed annually by the Head of Residential Services and the Head of Catering and Conferencing Services.

Our action plan for 2024/5

Energy efficiency and carbon reduction	We will educate everyone in our community on responsible use of energy to encourage positive behaviour by introducing “nudge points”
	We will investigate the technology available to assess the feasibility of being chemical free at deep clean
	We will measure the impact of laundry during the commercial period of operation and develop tactics to reduce the use of carbon
Waste reduction	We will record our kitchen food waste levels in order to establish a baseline
	We will improve our provision of receptacles for the different waste streams in student kitchens and pantries
	We will investigate a re-use scheme at the end of the academic year so that students can re-use items left behind eg pots, pans, crockery and cutlery to avoid them becoming waste
Sustainable procurement	We are committed to achieving a University and College’s Fairtrade Award by July 2025
	We will expand our Vegetarian Society accreditation to Café on the Square
Monitoring and reporting	We will publicise the figures for each individual waste stream and communicate them to everyone in our community

Our priorities for 2025/6

Energy efficiency and carbon reduction	We are committed to providing accurate metering data to define the consumption of our utilities when available
	We will set reduction targets for the consumption of our utilities
	We will rank our residences by consumption per bedspace and publicise this to everyone in our community
	We will complete a feasibility study for replacing all lighting with low energy LED lights
	We will conduct energy audits to identify areas for improvement
	We will investigate the use of technologies such as “smart” TRVs to reduce energy consumption
	We will look at the feasibility of water-saving technologies and practices, such as low-flow shower heads and taps
Waste reduction	We aim to introduce other waste streams such as coffee grounds composting
	We will encourage a culture of reducing waste of all kinds at source and provide facilities to do so across our estate in order to prioritise waste prevention
	We will aim for all our refuse sacks to be made from recyclable materials
	We will set reduction targets for our kitchen food waste according to the baseline previously set
	We will develop a behavioural influence campaign to support students in their journey to living more sustainably, providing information and guidance on how students can live more sustainably and reduce their expenditure whilst living in the private rented sector.
Sustainable procurement	We will source a dedicated seafood supplier to expand the range of sustainable fish on our menus
	We are committed to achieving all of the standards in the Better Chicken Commitment by December 2026
Monitoring and reporting	We will communicate our energy consumption against our targets to everyone in our community
	We will communicate the catering kitchen waste in commercial kitchens against our targets to everyone in our community