Barnsley College

Sustainability Strategy



Contents

Executive Summary 3

Vision 4

- Our Commitment to 2045 4
- Sustainable Education 5
- Sustainable Procurement 5

Approach 6

- Climate Action Roadmap for UK FE Colleges 6
- Sustainable Development Goals 6
- Whole College Approach 6
- Student Voice in Decision Making 6
- How We Got Here 8

Driving Themes 10

- Estates 11
- Operations 12
- Curriculum 13
- Engagement 14

Governance 16



Executive Summary



We often hear that education is the answer to the world's greatest challenges, including climate change.

Barnsley College is an outstanding general Further Education (FE) college. We have a duty to equip our learners with the tools and skills to face those challenges. In the wake of the UK government's ambitious commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions, we have an opportunity to embed sustainable learning and values throughout the College and the wider community.

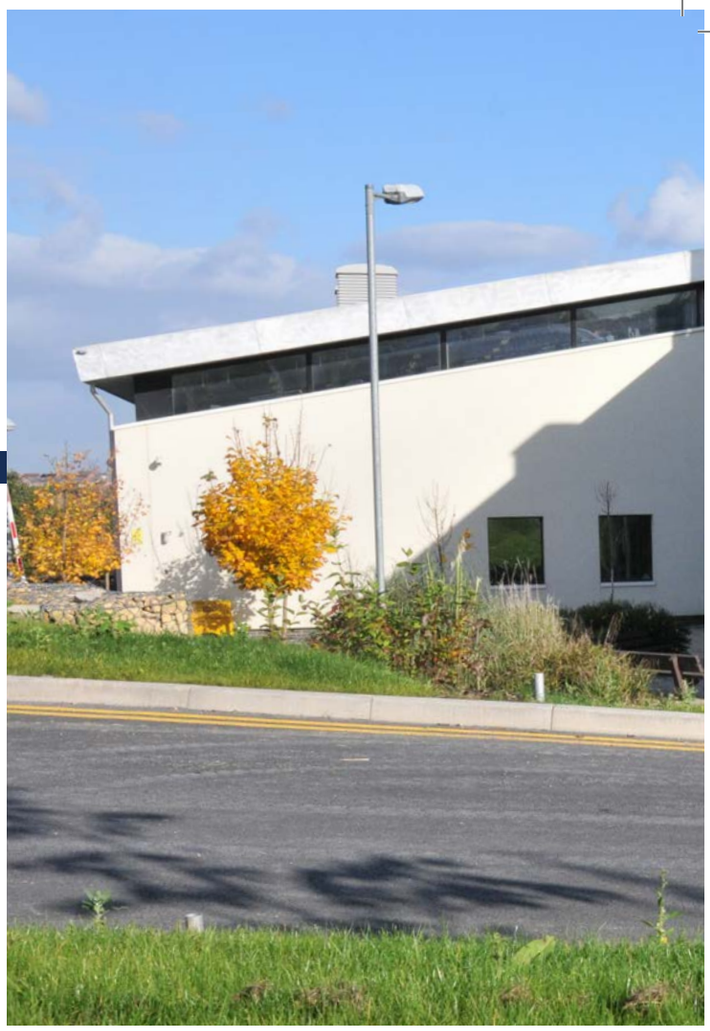
We must step-up and see opportunity in reducing our environmental impact.

Globally, we are collectively working towards limiting the earth's temperature by 1.5°C; our students, staff and the next generation will live through and experience the changes that come with this. For this reason, our sustainability strategy sets out to explore all elements of sustainability within the College's control.

We know that our actions can contribute to slowing global heating and adapting to a changing climate.

Yiannis Koursis OBE
Principal and CEO

Our Vision



Our Commitment to 2045

The College has set a target to become net zero carbon by 2045.

Following the UK Government's pledge to become net zero, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set a target for the borough to be net zero carbon by 2045.

We align with the Council's approach that this is achievable through reducing energy demand, engaging in positive behaviour change, utilising new technologies and renewable energies. We are committed to a genuine reduction in our carbon footprint with minimal offsetting complementing our efforts where appropriate.



Race to Zero and Global Climate Letter

The College has joined over 1,000 global universities and colleges in the Race to Zero campaign where we have pledged to reach net zero greenhouse gases by 2045 in line with global efforts to limit the earth's temperature by 1.5°C.

We will communicate our interim and long-term pledges to the campaign. As part of this pledge, we will collectively show that there is a vital need for education institutions to support sustainability initiatives and make every university and college net zero carbon.

Positive Climate Partnership

The College is a member of the Barnsley Positive Climate Partnership (PCP). The PCP champions and co-ordinates local action on climate change, bringing together individuals and organisations which will collectively impact and build momentum around the zero carbon goal. As a key stakeholder in the borough, we will work with other stakeholders to reduce emissions and create opportunities for the local community.

> ***"We have pledged to reach net zero greenhouse gases by 2045***



Sustainable Education

We aim for Barnsley College to be a local example of sustainability excellence.

As a College, we pride ourselves on outstanding services, delivering a quality education and enriching the studies of students in the local area. Embedding sustainable values throughout the organisation, we will equip students and staff with the opportunity to develop their understanding of sustainability and the knowledge to make sustainable choices.

Each student will benefit from sustainability incorporated into their programme, helping them understand its importance and how sustainability is connected to almost everything.

This strategy will create opportunities for our students, staff and wider community, reduce negative impacts on the local environment, and set an example as a FE institute which champions sustainability.

Sustainable Procurement

We strongly encourage everyone in the College to practice sustainable consumption habits, including our supply chain. Sustainability is embedded in our current procurement policy where we aim to ensure our supply network considers the environmental and human impact of their products and services.

We expect to have innovative solutions to manage waste streams, reduce the usage of plastic and we aspire to be a zero waste College.



Approach

Climate Action Roadmap for UK FE Colleges

Our strategy has been strongly influenced by the Roadmap. The Roadmap provides clear actions and guidance on how colleges can respond to the climate emergency and advance sustainability.

The Climate Action Roadmap for FE Colleges includes three 'levels' of colleges' approaches to sustainability, organised by different levels of maturity:

Emerging	Colleges just beginning to address sustainability
Established	Colleges with an established approach to sustainability and structures in place to support it
Leading	Colleges which offer a leading sustainability model to others

Each 'level' contains a series of initiatives colleges can implement to reach net zero emissions and improve their environmental impact. Within one year of launching this strategy, we aim to be an "Established" college.

Whole College Approach

Through the creation and delivery of the Sustainability Strategy, we will build on the College's existing sustainability efforts and focus our plans.

The Sustainability Strategy follows a whole College approach and with that, we will work to have every staff member and student understanding sustainability.

From our research, we know that over 85% of staff and students want the College to take further action against climate change.
We will establish governance and accountability structures including staff and students to drive sustainability.

Student Voice in Decision Making

Students are at the heart of the strategy, and we will ensure students play a central role in driving the sustainability agenda throughout the College. Students will have a say in how sustainability is delivered across the College, whilst gaining essential and desirable skills.

Sustainable Development Goals

We recognise that sustainability is about more than just the environment. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals to transform our world designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all".

They were agreed by 193 countries in September 2015.

The College approach incorporates the SDGs into its priorities and business processes at all levels. As a whole College, we will aim to positively contribute to all 17 SDGs.

FE Climate Action Roadmap
https://www.eauc.org.uk/fe_roadmap

Sustainable Development Goals
https://sdgs.un.org/goals

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



How We Got Here

July 2020
Included a sustainability goal to the strategic priorities.

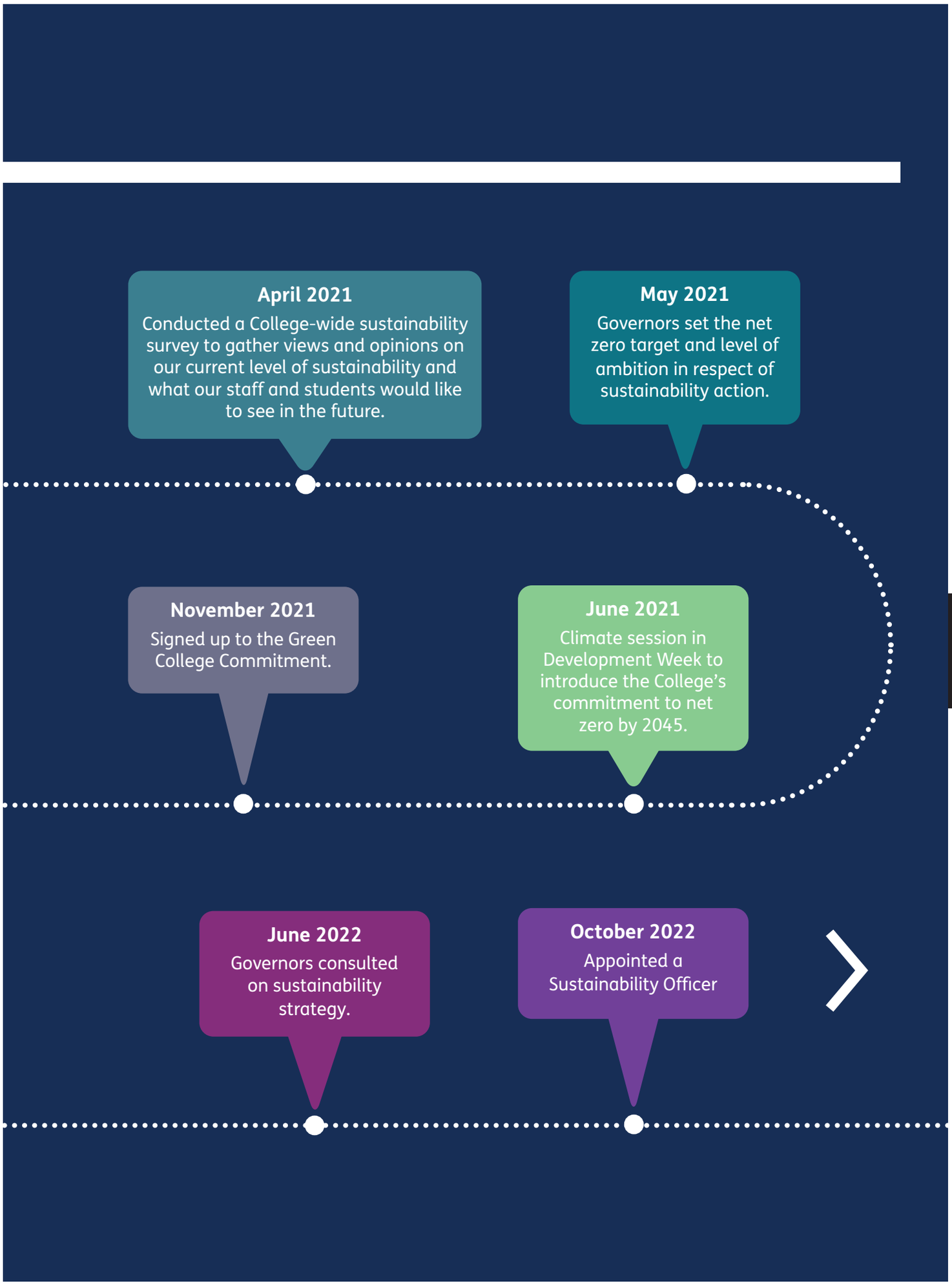
March 2021
Published a new Property Strategy aspiring to be an efficient and sustainable estate which supports teaching and learning and facilitates future growth.

December 2021
Introduced departmental sustainability action plans.

November 2021
Signed the Race to Zero and Global Climate Letter to publicly affirm the College's commitment to achieving net zero.

March 2022
Adopted the new Code of Good Governance including environmental sustainability.

March 2022
Created the College estate Decarbonisation Plan.


April 2021
Conducted a College-wide sustainability survey to gather views and opinions on our current level of sustainability and what our staff and students would like to see in the future.
May 2021
Governors set the net zero target and level of ambition in respect of sustainability action.
November 2021
Signed up to the Green College Commitment.
June 2021
Climate session in Development Week to introduce the College's commitment to net zero by 2045.
June 2022
Governors consulted on sustainability strategy.
October 2022
Appointed a Sustainability Officer

Driving Themes

The strategy will cover four main areas: estates, operations, curriculum and engagement.

By focusing our actions in these four areas, we will:

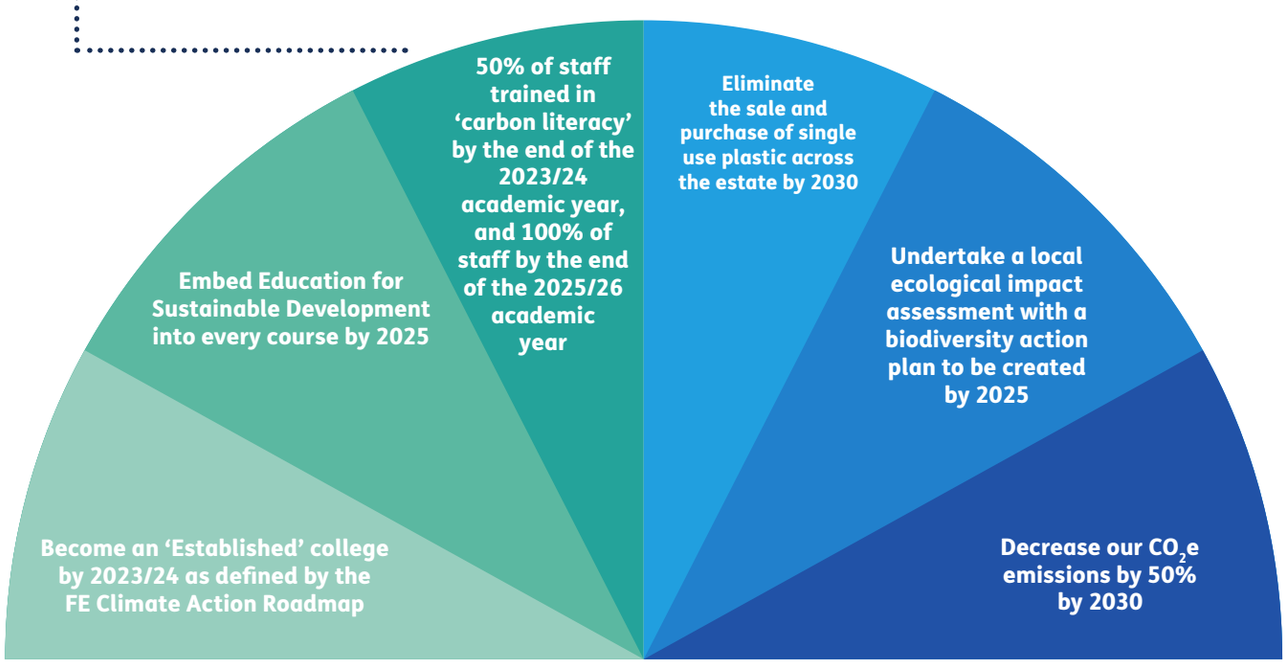
- Take measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the College's estate and commercial activities.
- Improve the College's delivery of sustainability-related skills to aid the reduction of CO_2e emissions and improve environmental sustainability.
- Take steps to raise community awareness of environmental sustainability and the opportunities for better environmental policy and practice.



Key Milestones

This strategy outlines our long-term vision for carbon reduction and improving environmental sustainability.

We recognise that it will change over time and therefore, it is crucial we set interim targets to give focus and measure our success against our long-term goals. The illustration on the right shows the milestones this strategy aims to achieve:



Estates

Goal

To decarbonise our estate in line with our net zero 2045 goal, using energy efficient and cost-effective solutions.

To reach our goal we plan to:

> Reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
> Implement new renewable energy sources.
> Design buildings to be more sustainable and energy efficient.
> Enhance biodiversity.
> Build upon and introduce water saving initiatives.

Progress indicators:

> A reduction in energy usage across the estate.
> Increase in usage of renewable energy.
> Usage of BREEAM standards in new building design.
> Increase in biodiversity of the College estate.
> Decrease in water usage, or new water saving technologies used.

Air Source Heat Pump at Wigfield Farm

In 2020, the College was successful in its application to replace the heating system at Wigfield Farm with an air source heat pump and solar photovoltaics.

The installation is complete and is expected to reduce the carbon footprint by 30 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per year.





Operations

Goal

To operate as a sustainability-focused organisation, where sustainability is at the forefront of decision making, especially when considering any changes to processes or updates to the College.

To reach our goal we plan to:

> Reduce our consumption of non-sustainable goods and services.
> Reduce the amount of waste we produce.
> Increase the availability and uptake of sustainable food on campus.
> Remove single use plastics from campus.
> Support and engage staff and students with active travel and low carbon methods of travelling to and from the College.
> Encourage a circular economy.
> Further embed sustainability into the procurement process.
> Reduce our water usage.

Progress indicators:

> Reduction of the amount of waste going to landfill.
> Introduction of recycling information around recycling bins.
> Introduction of an official car sharing scheme for staff.
> Introduction of an active travel policy and promotion of schemes.
> Reduction in the amount of water consumed per staff/student.
> Increase in sales of sustainable food options on campus.
> Percentage of contracts awarded scored on sustainability.

Crisp Packet Recycling

The Students' Union (SU) set up a crisp packet recycling station as part of a wider aim to raise awareness around sustainability and waste. In the last year, the SU has collected over 4,965 crisp packets.

These have been sent to Walkers, where they've been melted down and recycled into new packets ready for the shelves.





Curriculum

Goal

Embed sustainability throughout the curriculum, creating sustainability conscious students who will leave us with the skills and knowledge required to contribute to a more sustainable society.

To reach our goal we plan to:

> Integrate sustainability into student learning and ensure our students value the importance of sustainability.
> Incorporate green pathways in our curriculum and careers support services.
> Deliver Carbon Literacy training to staff and students.
> Equip staff with sustainability skills.
> Recognise and reward learner success in sustainability initiatives.

Progress indicators:

> Increase in student awareness of sustainability.
> Advertisement of 'green' curriculum and options for post-college.
> Staff trained and certified in Carbon Literacy and have sessions run for students each year.
> Incorporate sustainability related sessions into the staff development programme.
> Student participation and achievement in sustainability schemes and projects.

Staff Development

With support from the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) we have equipped over 240 teaching staff with essential knowledge to begin embedding Education for Sustainable Development into their teaching and learning practice.



Engagement

Goal

Engaging stakeholders in the delivery of the strategy is key - especially students. We aim to have a combined staff and student approach where implementation and delivery can be influenced by stakeholders.

To reach our goal we plan to:

> Publish progress annually.
> Increase the visibility of sustainability within the College.
> Increase Carbon Literacy with staff and students.
> Support staff and students to reduce eco-anxiety.
> Widen collaboration to drive sustainability.
> Seek out and share best practice.
> Utilise the Think Low Carbon Centre for sustainability events and community engagement.
> We will use our position as an anchor institution to further the sustainability agenda across the borough and wider stakeholders.

Progress indicators:

> Integration of sustainability progress within College reporting system.
> Have sustainability messaging present in College buildings and College online presence.
> Increase in promotion of sustainability related actions, achievements and messaging via College channels.
> Achieve bronze, silver, gold or platinum Carbon Literacy status.
> Host sustainability events.

Think Low Carbon Centre

Barnsley College built the Think Low Carbon Centre in response to legislation aimed at cutting CO_2e emissions.

The centre features solar panels, a green roof covered in wildflowers, triple glazing,a wood-pellet powered biomass boiler and reflective sun pipes which allow natural daylight into darker rooms. Rainwater is recycled and used for flushing toilets.

The building is currently used by students aiming to gain theoretical knowledge and practical experience of low carbon construction and environmentally sustainable principles and practice.





Governance

The College adopts the Association of College's Code of Good Governance recognising the need to promote and support its environmental sustainability requirements.

This strategy is approved and monitored by the Board of Governors. The Board will receive an annual environmental sustainability report. Progress updates against the strategy are planned into the Board's schedule of business as part of the College's reporting on the balanced scorecard and through a climate update received twice a year.

The strategy may be updated following its annual review.

The strategy will be formally reviewed no later than 2026 following updates and progress reports in 2025. This will enable realistic milestones to be set for the following five years, covering a period between 2025 and 2030. The College will publish progress on its website.

Through this strategy we aim to establish governance and accountability structures that drive sustainability throughout the College.

To achieve this, the College will ensure that sustainability is included in decision making and guarantee sustainability is considered across all levels of operation. It will also embed sustainability reporting into existing reporting systems, such as the Performance Review system.

The College will establish a Sustainability Steering Group. The aim of the Sustainability Steering Group will be to bring together those within the College who will lead change and drive the strategy. The Group will be chaired by the Vice Principal Finance who is the Executive Lead for the Sustainability Strategy.

The group will focus on delivering the Sustainability Strategy and the accompanying action plan.

The Sustainability Steering Group will be made up of members of the College management team, the Sustainability Officer, staff and students. The work of the Steering Group may be supported by working groups focusing on specific elements of the strategy.

The work of the Sustainability Steering Group and its working groups will be reported to the Board of Governors through the climate update.

An informal 'Sustainability Voice' will support the working groups and the delivery of the strategy, whilst also providing a forum for discussion on wider sustainability within the College.

Membership will be open to staff and students with an interest in sustainability irrespective of their role within College. The group will meet once a term to discuss ideas for embedding sustainability throughout the College, progress toward actions and share success between the group. The Sustainability Voice will be chaired by the Sustainability Officer who will feed back to the Sustainability Steering Group.

AoC Code of Good Governance
https://www.aoc.co.uk/corporate-services/governance/code



Sustainability Action Plan

Each department in the College has a sustainability action plan linked to the College priorities and the SDGs.

Progress against the departmental plans is reported at Performance Review.

Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability Steering Group

Working Group

Sustainability Voice

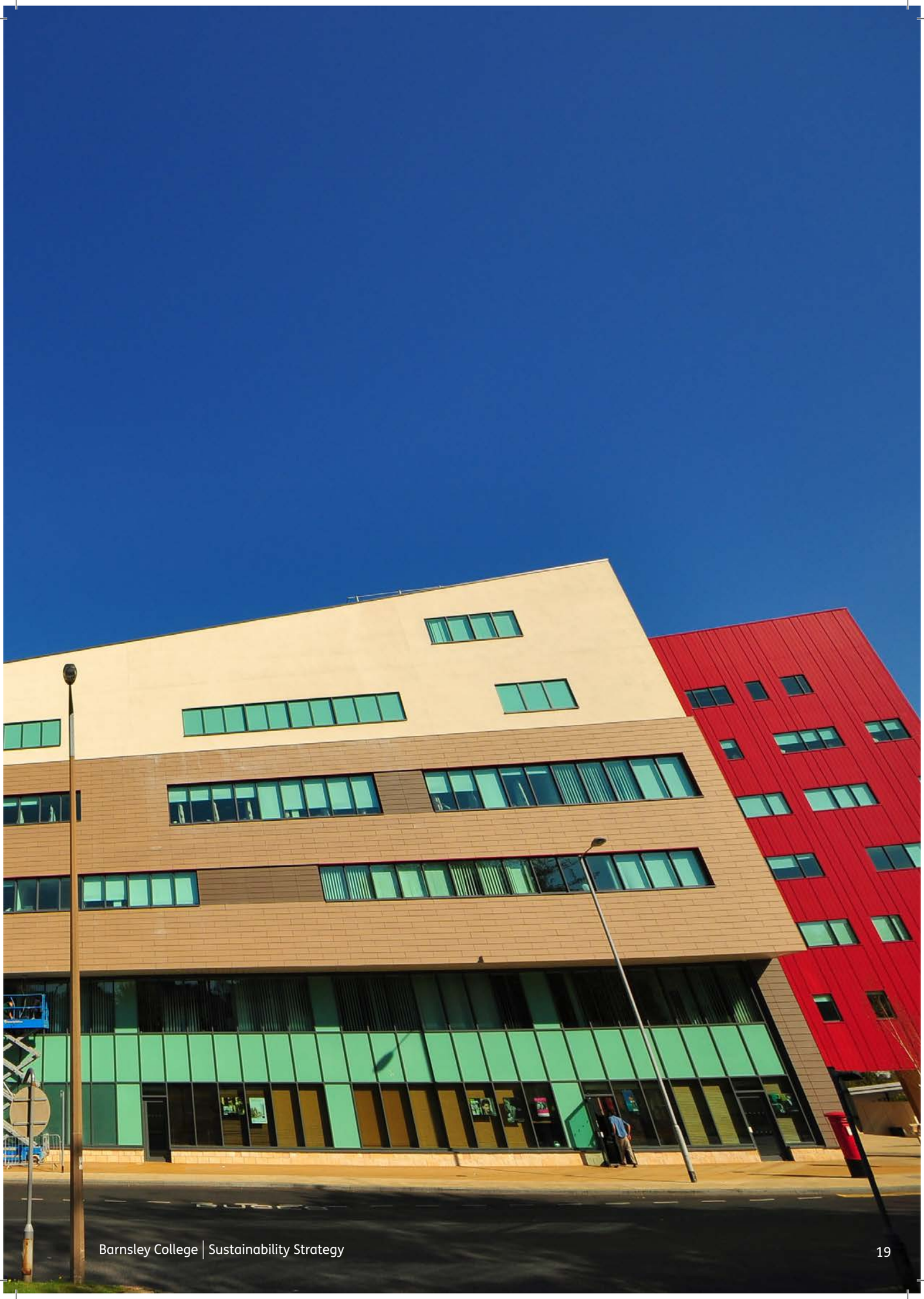
Departmental Sustainability Plans

Report to Board of Governors

Outcomes reported at PR







Barnsley College

Postal address
Church Street
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S70 2YW
(Sat nav S70 2AX)

01226 216 123
info@barnsley.ac.uk
www.barnsley.ac.uk

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram,
TikTok and Twitter

BARNSLEY SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

LSIS BEACON

Ofsted Outstanding Provider

NOV10222BCS