



## Environmental and Sustainability Policy

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Responsible officer	Estates and Facilities Manager
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Further information (where relevant)	

Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact	BoM
Jane Ollerenshaw	24/05/2020	Reference to collaboration with UHI Environmental Sustainability Working Group Lease of self-charging hybrid pool vehicles	

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## 1.0 Purpose

This policy sets out West Highland College UHI's approach to sustainability and identifies the key principles which the College will apply to ensure both compliance with regulatory frameworks and the promotion of an ethos of sustainability.

## 2.0 Policy

West Highland College UHI recognises the impact that its activities have upon the environment at local, regional and national level and acknowledges a responsibility for the protection of the environment and the health of its members and the community.

To manage and reduce this impact, the College commits to developing a comprehensive Carbon Management Plan in collaboration with partner UHI Colleges with targets and timetables for substantially reducing carbon emissions and improving the environmental consequences on the environment of its activities, products and services.

## 3.0 Scope

The College will comply with all applicable legislative requirements with regard to sustainability and the environment. Further, the College will seek to apply best practice over and above any statutory minima.

This commitment applies to all aspects of the organisation and should be seen as an integral part of the College's undertakings, including procurement, construction and estates management, teaching and learning, and delivery of support services.

## 4.0 Key Principles

The key principles that the College will use in embedding sustainability in its activities are as follows: -

### 4.1 Sustainability in Procurement

While the overarching principle employed in the College's Finance and Procurement Strategy and Procurement Policy is value for money, there are also considerations with regard to sustainability which must be considered: -

#### a) Environmental Impact

The College recognises that procurement of goods and services has an environmental impact in addition to the direct contribution of the actual goods and services themselves. This may include the impact of transportation or manufacturing of those goods and services. It will therefore consider such impacts when appraising procurement options.

Particularly in large projects or procurement exercises, the College will consider the sustainability of solutions, taking into account the source of materials, use of natural resources, and stability of economic growth.

### **b) Corporate Social Responsibility**

The College recognises its position in the community as a partner to businesses and voluntary organisations throughout the West Highlands and further afield. Its relationships are not simply as an education and training provider, but also as a supplier and consumer of goods and services.

To develop and maintain such relationships, the College will also consider the local economy when appraising procurement options.

## **4.2 Sustainability in Construction and Estates Management**

Taking cognisance of the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC), "Sustainable Development Guide for Estate Management", the College will manage its current estates in such a manner so as to minimise environmental impact. Similarly, it will seek to assess and minimise the environmental impacts of any future construction projects. It will support these principles in a range of ways: -

### **a) Energy Management**

The College will set annual targets for energy use and actively monitor these throughout the year. It will seek to reduce energy usage and educate staff and students in best practice in reducing energy consumption.

The College will ensure it has Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) in place for all necessary buildings. It will consider all recommendations from those certificates and implement them wherever practicable.

The College will undertake a five yearly energy audit of its premises to ensure most efficient operational systems are in place and best practice is being followed.

The College procures its energy through national framework agreements and, in so doing, takes advantage of energy from sustainable sources in those contracts.

### **b) Waste Management**

The College will set annual targets for waste and actively monitor these throughout the year. It will seek to reduce waste materials and educate staff and students in best practice in reducing wastage.

The College will segregate waste materials to maximise recycling opportunities and, wherever possible, a cost benefit to the College.

Controlled or hazardous waste will be monitored and minimised. All such waste will be disposed of in accordance with applicable legislation.

Waste disposal will be managed in such a way so as to minimise the number of collections through compacting and utilising appropriate sized containers.

### **c) Water Management**

West Highland College UHI is committed to reducing the use natural resources and the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) relating to College activities including the use of water. The main used of water within the Colleges have been identified as kitchen and domestic use and rest rooms. The College will review opportunities and implement measures to reduce the use of water.

### **d) Construction**

In accordance with SFC requirements, the College will ensure that all major capital works will achieve a “BREEAM Very Good” rating for refurbishments and “BREEAM Excellent” rating for new buildings in respect of design and procurement and post construction.

For all major works, the College will also engage in Post Occupancy Evaluations (POE) to assess the effectiveness of project delivery, as well as a review of the operational, functional and strategic performance of the building during operation.

### **e) Maintenance and Lifecycle Costs**

For all new build and refurbishment projects, the College will assess the full lifecycle costs of the project and ensure that it is affordable and that future budgets are created and maintained to ensure funding is in place to meet these costs.

In addition, full planned and preventative maintenance programmes will be implemented and funded.

To support the development, management and funding of maintenance programmes, condition surveys will be commissioned.

## **4.3 Sustainability in Teaching and Learning**

The College will ensure that teaching staff members and students are aware of the issues involved in sustainability and that they understand how the College approaches these and also how they, as individuals, can have a positive impact. It will do this in a number of ways: -

### **a) Sustainability Group**

Through the Sustainability Group, staff and student members will be able to represent views and give feedback to their peers. They will have the opportunity to broaden their own understanding and to share their knowledge with others.

### **b) Curriculum Development**

The College will develop curriculum streams specifically aimed at sustainable development, such as renewables and environmental conservation.

### **c) Citizenship**

Through its curriculum programme, the College will raise awareness of sustainability issues with students and encourage participation in activities which support this.

## **4.4 Sustainability in the delivery of Support Services**

In addition to key services such as Facilities/Estates, the College acknowledges that all support services must all contribute to the sustainability agenda. It will support this in the following ways: -

### **a) Sustainability Group**

Through the Sustainability Group, staff members will be able to represent views and give feedback to their peers. They will have the opportunity to broaden their own understanding and to share their knowledge with others.

### **b) Communications**

Through a programme of regular communications, all staff and students will be made aware of how they can personally take responsibility for their own environmental impact and how they can contribute to the College's plans.

### **c) Training**

Through organisations such as the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (eauc), the College will source, promote and support training opportunities for staff from across the College.

### **d) Departmental Initiatives**

The College will, wherever possible, support departmental initiatives which promote positive outcomes in sustainability and the environment. This may include initiatives specific to one department or those which have cross-College benefits such as the installation of "power-down" software by the Estates and Facilities department.

### **e) External Commitments**

The College will, wherever possible, support external initiatives which promote positive outcomes in sustainability and the environment. This will include commitments to national initiatives to reduce negative environmental impact and also local initiatives such as the hosting and promotion of events.

## **4.5 Biodiversity Management**

**a)** The College will actively implement appropriate practical initiatives aiming to enhance biodiversity across the estate.

**b)** Identify the potential direct and indirect impacts of our activities on biodiversity, assess the risks and take measures to minimise negative impacts and promote positive actions.

## **4.6 Sustainable Travel Management**

### **a) Health and Wellbeing**

The College will encourage the use of, and promote the health and wellbeing benefits of utilising more sustainable means of transport such as walking and cycling.

### **b) Car Sharing**

Through active implementation of journey planning and car sharing the College will ensure staff mileage is minimised.

### **c) Increased use of Technology**

The College will reduce the impact of travel and make more efficient use of staff time by actively promoting the increased use of video conference technology instead of travelling to events and meetings.

### **d) Pool Vehicles**

The College commit to lease self charging hybrid vehicles as the current lease periods for our existing pool vehicles expire.

### **5.0 Responsibilities**

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for agreeing the Policy and overseeing compliance with its principles.

The Director of Finance is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and for ensuring appropriate procedures are in place to facilitate this.

The Sustainability Group is responsible for agreeing an annual action plan and the monitoring of progress toward meeting the targets within that Plan.

All College staff members are responsible for understanding and adhering to this policy.

### **6.0 Related Documents**

6.1 [Strategic Plan 2016-2021](#)

6.2 [Finance and Procurement Strategy](#)

6.3 [Procurement Policy](#)

6.4 [Estates Strategy](#)

6.5 [SFC "Sustainable Development Guidance for Estate Management"](#)

### **7.0 Review**

This policy will be reviewed three yearly or earlier if required.

## 8.0 Appendices

### 8.1 Organisation Sustainability Structure

#### Appendix 1

#### West Highland College UHI Sustainability Structure

