9 NOVEMBER 2022



# ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT



# FOREWORD FROM OUR VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR SASHA ROSENEIL

### Sussex Students at the Heart of Climate Action in 2022

I am honoured to have joined the University of Sussex as its first woman Vice-Chancellor in August 2022. One of the many distinctive features of Sussex that drew me here is the University's long standing and deep commitment to making the world a better place. At the heart of this is our work on international development, global justice, human rights, and sustainability.

I was particularly inspired by the vision set out in *Sustainable Sussex*, the University's sustainability strategy. This is our third Annual Report on all aspects of environmental, economic and social sustainability at Sussex, addressing all 17 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which range from zero hunger, to gender equality to climate action (to name just three). This Report covers teaching, research, policy, outreach, and operational practice at the University of Sussex.

Sussex is ranked 10th in Europe and joint 37th in the world out of 1,410 global higher education institutions in the *Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2022* for our performance against the UN SDGs. This strong standing is further substantiated by the University ranking 55th in the world in the inaugural QS *Sustainability Rankings*, published in October 2022.<sup>coctod</sup>

There were a multitude of achievements at Sussex over the last year and I encourage you to read about them in more detail in this report. To highlight a few:

- In spring 2022 Sussex was invited to join the International Universities Climate Alliance, a group of 56 of the world's leading universities in tackling climate change. This is, in part, a recognition of the work of the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme, the University of Sussex Business School, the School of Global Studies, and the University's strong research outputs and real-world policy influence and outreach on sustainability.
- Sustainability through contributions to the UN SDGs – is now one of the four key areas of focus in our new Knowledge Exchange and Impact strategy.
- Brighton and Sussex Medical School is now ranked 1st in the UK for research in sustainable health care in the *Planetary Health Score Card 2022*.

- We are tackling both the climate and cost of living crisis in an integrated way and have increased our financial support for students to help alleviate poverty, including the creation of a new affordable housing policy and lower cost catering options on campus. We also became accredited as a 'real living wage' employer.
- This year we turned down our centrally controlled thermostats by 3°C and conducted further feasibility work into achieving our institutional commitment to being net zero for both our direct and indirect carbon emissions by 2035. We also stopped sending sanitary waste to landfill.
- Brilliant progress is being made at increasing biodiversity net gain, with over 38% of the campus already set aside for nature and our Big Biodiversity Conversation engaging our community in practical action to further rewild and support the presence of nature on campus.

But it is the role of students and education at Sussex in combatting climate change that has impressed me most as a newcomer to the University:

- September 2022 saw the arrival of our first five Climate Leader Scholars. Each scholarship recipient was selected on the basis of their contribution to combatting climate change to date and their willingness to work with both the campus and wider community to lead pledges and actions to tackle climate change.
- In February 2022, the second annual Pitch for the Planet took place – our Dragons' Den-style sustainable innovation competition. Winners received a share of £20,000 in prizes, which they are using for start-up incubation in areas such as sustainable food, reusable fashion, and environmental management.
- Alongside these flagship initiatives, students also made videos to influence the COP26 climate talks and wider societal attitude to climate change. They produced information materials to increase recycling rates that are now displayed across campus in support of our target of recycling 50% of our waste by 2025.

Finally, I was most impressed by the Sussex students who worked with the external group, Students Organising for Sustainability UK, and our dedicated sustainability team to audit our entire curriculum for its sustainability content. I have received these findings with interest and am pleased to announce that we will be doubling down on our existing commitment to ensure that sustainability is taught within all degrees as part of the Curriculum Reimagined project that is being rolled out across the whole University.

All in all, I am delighted with our work so far, but there is much, much more to do.

I am personally committed to ensuring that Sussex continues to make an innovative and transformative impact on our collective ability to tackle the threats posed by climate change, the mass extinction of species, intensifying societal inequalities, and geopolitical conflict. The planet and humanity are currently facing enormous challenges, and the energy, vision and creativity of Sussex's academic community have never been more relevant or more important.

I want our determination to be one of the most sustainable universities in the world to be evident to all students, staff, and stakeholders when they visit our campus, and for everyone to understand that environmental sustainability and human flourishing are at the heart of Sussex's mission.

I believe that we are on the cusp of achieving great things together, and I look forward to working on this exciting agenda with you for many years to come.



San a Corenel

**Professor Sasha Roseneil** 9 November 2022

The data in this report includes quantitative data from the 2020/21 year as the last full HESA reporting cycle year for consistency purposes. However, qualitative reporting of good practice in relation to policy and educational initiatives reflects the position that was correct as of November 2022. In the rare occasion when quantitative data is provided for a different period (predominantly to prevent data distortions related to the pandemic) then this is specified in the report.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report summarises progress to date at realising each of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and highlights areas for improvement that have already been identified in Sustainable Sussex – the University of Sussex Sustainability Strategy.



To make this report engaging and easy to read, the performance data is provided at a high level.

If you would like more detailed information then please contact the Sustainability Team at sustainable@sussex.ac.uk

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# **SDG1 NO POVERTY**

# 1 poverty ∕¶\*∕∰∰#¶

This SDG relates to our University's research on poverty and our support for low income students and citizens in the local community.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- The University continues to be ranked first in the world for Development Studies in the QS World Rankings – jointly with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS)<sup>i</sup> – this shows our commitment to ending poverty across the globe. IDS also offer a specific Masters degree in Poverty and Development.<sup>ii</sup>
- This year our Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education chaired a task finish group on the current cost of living crisis that produced a new affordable housing policy<sup>iii</sup> for students.<sup>iv</sup>
- Our Access and Participation Plan contains ambitious plans to help reduce poverty and promote social mobility through the provision of higher education to underrepresented groups.<sup>v</sup>
- We have targets in place to increase the percentage of students at Sussex who come from the poorest 20% of households in the UK – known as index of multiple deprivation quintile 1 (IMDQ1) – from 8.8% to 21% by 2024/25. We also want to increase the number of our graduates from IMDQ1 backgrounds.<sup>vi</sup> We have targets to reduce the gap in progression outcomes between the poorest and richest students (ie IMDQ1 and Q5) from 16% to 0% by 2024/25.<sup>vii</sup>
- Approximately a quarter of our undergraduates in 2020/21 were first generation scholars<sup>viii</sup> – this means that they are the first person in their immediate family to attend university. We recognise how important this is for promoting social mobility within our society.<sup>ix</sup>
- Our Student Life Centre helps low-income students tackle any money worries – our dedicated student funding team help with budgeting, welfare loans, hardship funds and more.<sup>x</sup>
- In 2020/2021, over 25% of our total student population received financial aid.<sup>xi</sup> This included students from low-income households earning £25,000 or less who received an entry bursary and access to a student hardship fund.<sup>xii</sup> These funds can also benefit students estranged from their families and care leavers, who also automatically receive vouchers, free bedding, and the opportunity to live in university-managed accommodation all year round during their course.<sup>xiii</sup>

- In 2020/2021, we also increased our hardship fund to a total of £615,949.<sup>xiv</sup> This was distributed between 679 students. This was a 162% increase in financial support on the previous year.
- In 2022, we increased the hardship fund by £50,000 to help all students financially impacted by war in Ukraine, as part of increased measures responding to the escalating humanitarian crisis.<sup>xv</sup>
- In October 2022, we also announced that a new £600,000 scholarship programme supporting University of Sussex students who have been in care is to be rolled out this academic year.<sup>xvi</sup>
- We encourage students from lower and middle-income countries (LMICs)<sup>xvii</sup> to attend our university. We provided 372 scholarships to students from World Bank categorised LMICs from August 2021 to July 2022 – an increase of 188% compared to the previous year.<sup>xviii</sup>
- Our legal clinics provide advice on multiple issues (including housing and employment) to the local community, which can help to prevent poverty and homelessness.<sup>xix</sup> This includes our award-winning Citizens Advice Project where our law students give the public free advice<sup>xx</sup> under Citizens Advice Bureau supervision on many issues, including debt and welfare benefits.<sup>xxi</sup>
- One of our Professors of Economics, Richard Dickens was a Low Pay Commissioner from 2014-2021<sup>xxii</sup> – directly advising the UK Government on the setting of the minimum wage and helping to alleviate national poverty.<sup>xxiii</sup> Additionally, members of our Economics Department have influenced key poverty stakeholders including: the World Bank, World Trade Organization, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the UK and US governments.<sup>xxiv</sup>
- Our Sussex Centre for Migration Research are leading two innovative projects between 2020 and 2023 on 'Protracted Displacement Economies'<sup>xxv</sup> and 'Inclusive Urban Infrastructure'<sup>xxvi</sup> to influence local, national and global poverty reduction and migration policy.<sup>xvvii</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

 Continuing to work more closely with the Students' Union to increase the availability of affordable housing and financial aid for our students.

### **SDG2 ZERO HUNGER**



This SDG relates to our world-leading research on hunger, teaching on food sustainability and our commitment to tackle food waste and addressing hunger among students and local communities.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We have a Responsible Food and Water Production and Consumption section in our Sustainability Strategy<sup>xxviii</sup> and an updated Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy.<sup>xxix</sup>
- We are part of a consortium of seven UK universities and research institutes that are helping to create future leaders in sustainable food systems via the Partnership for Sustainable Food Future – Centre for Doctoral Training.<sup>xxx</sup> xxi
- We also offer a third-year undergraduate module in Global Food Security<sup>xxxii</sup> as well as Global Politics of Food<sup>xxxiii.</sup>
- We offer a Masters degree in Food and Development,<sup>xxxiv</sup> which teaches students about: food and nutrition security, sustainable food systems, value chains and corporate power; and agri-food technology and its contestations.
- We also teach an undergraduate module called the Forest Food Garden, enabling students to grow and harvest forest food on our campus.<sup>xxxv</sup> This is in addition to the provision of our student gardens, where students are supported to produce fruit and vegetables.<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- We are creating positive sustainable food and agriculture impacts both globally, locally and at campus level. For example, our podcast project 'Agricultural Voices of Syria' helps to promote sustainable agri-food value chains through podcasting.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The innovative project won the Interdisciplinary Research Award 2021.<sup>xxxvii</sup>
- We provide academic representation to an advisory panel that informed the development of the local City Food Strategy Action Plan (2018-2023). A key priority for the plan is to reduce inequalities (including prioritising those with the poorest diets or least access to healthy food).<sup>xxxix</sup> The City's work was recognised with the UK's first Gold Sustainable Food Places Award in 2020 because of the exceptional local results in this area.<sup>xi</sup>
- We also host events on sustainable food production on campus. For example, our Sussex Roots collective welcomes members of the community onto campus to learn about sustainable food production at our oncampus student gardens.<sup>xli</sup>

- We have multiple interventions to help prevent hunger and food insecurity amongst our staff, students and the wider community. All excess food from our catering outlets is donated to food banks via the FareShare initiative or to people in need via food redistribution apps.<sup>xiii</sup> Our student-led Food Waste Café Society that allows students to pay what they can for meals made from surplus food<sup>xiii</sup> and our Meeting House run a food bank and run regular free lunch events for students and staff.<sup>xiiv</sup>
- Sussex Food our lead catering provider on campus is a proud member of the Sustainable Restaurant Association. We provide healthy, sustainable food choices on campus. The animal rights charity PETA currently lists us as one of the most vegan-friendly universities in the UK.<sup>xlv</sup>
- All the fruit, vegetables and meat sold by Sussex Food's (provided by Compass Group UK and Ireland) main sellers come from local suppliers as standard and we source food and drinks from social enterprises wherever we can.<sup>xivi</sup>
- In 2022, Sussex Food also introduced a new range of low-cost food dishes – all under £5 – to help students with the cost-of-living crisis and to help prevent food poverty and hunger.<sup>xtvii</sup>
- In 2019/20, we collected an estimated 5.08 tonnes of food waste from the University that went to aerobic digestion as opposed to landfill.xiviii

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

Continuing to increase our food waste recycling and measurement.

### **SDG3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING**



This SDG relates to our research on key diseases and conditions and support for healthcare professions, and the health of our students and staff.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- In 2020/21, approximately 11% of our students graduated with a degree in a health profession including medicine and psychology, some of which we operate in partnership with the University of Brighton via Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS), which integrate teaching on sustainable health care and climate change into their undergraduate curriculum.<sup>xlix</sup>
- In 2022, BSMS obtained an overall, grade B<sup>I</sup>, in the *Planetary Health Report Card* (a metric assessing medical school planetary health awareness and accountability). This positioned us third overall and first in the UK for research in sustainable health care in 2022<sup>ii</sup>.
- We collaborate with global, national and local health partners to improve health outcomes.
- The BSMS Sustainable Healthcare Group is at the forefront of sustainable health.<sup>III</sup> In 2021, the group conducted the first carbon footprint of personal protective equipment (PPE)<sup>IIII</sup> with the findings influencing UK government policy and referenced in the WHO report on PPE. They are led by a dedicated Professor of Sustainable Health Care who works with the UK Government's Greener NHS team and Home Office on sustainable health supply chains. They also chair a Health Alliance on Climate Change group on sustainable surgery involving surgical colleges.<sup>IIV</sup>
- BSMS were represented at two sessions at the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow in November 2021<sup>1</sup> on sustainable health care and the mental health impacts of climate change.<sup>1</sup>
- We host the annual Sustainable Healthcare Academic Research Enterprise Conference; a global event for healthcare professionals to share best practice on sustainability.<sup>Wi</sup>
- Our esteemed Global Health and Infection Department (GHI), has members in various locations including University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust and multiple overseas institutions advising the WHO on mental health, stigma and neglected tropical diseases.<sup>Iviii</sup> In June 2022, GHI members co-organised an event at the House of Lords to encourage the UK to make a public commitment to the Kigali Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases.<sup>IIX</sup>

- We are also advising the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies on key health issues with leading academics, Jackie Cassell and John Drury, advising the UK Government on Social Care and Behaviour Change respectively between 2020-2022.<sup>kx</sup>
- We lead community outreach programmes to improve and promote health and wellbeing. For example, since 2015 our Time for Dementia initiative has seen students supporting people with dementia and their carers.<sup>kii</sup>
  We also run a Time for Autism programme.<sup>kiii</sup> While our CoSMiN project engaged Nepalese migrants, their families and related stakeholders to identify public health issues and contribute to health education practice for migrants and their families.<sup>kiii</sup>
- We have a widening participation to medicine scheme<sup>lxiv</sup> that undertakes outreach to local schools to help increase the number of medical students from underrepresented groups. It has been nominated for and won numerous awards since its inception, including being shortlisted in 2021 for the *THE* Widening Participation or Outreach Initiative of the Year Award.<sup>by ccclxiii</sup>
- We share our sport facilities with the local community – including access to complementary therapies<sup>twi</sup> and our sports team, Sussexsport work closely with Albion in the Community, local schools and disability groups to promote sport in the community.<sup>twii</sup>
- We protect the mental health of our staff via an Employee Assistance Programme and the My Health Advantage app (providing in-depth tools and support to improve mental wellbeing).<sup>twiii</sup>
- Our students can access a fully integrated counselling and wellbeing service and disability unit.<sup>bitx</sup>
- We also provide a GP<sup>Ixx</sup> and pharmacy service<sup>Ixxi</sup> and meditation drop-in sessions on campus.<sup>Ixxii</sup>
- Our Smoking Policy prohibits smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes in any University building or premises, including substantially enclosed outdoor areas.<sup>bxiii</sup>
- We provide our students with free sexual health services and advice through an on-campus health centre and through peer-to-peer student drop-ins.<sup>bxiv bxvv</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Further embedding sustainable health care in our teaching in partnerships with NHS Trusts.

# **SDG4 QUALITY EDUCATION**



This SDG relates to our contribution to early years and lifelong learning, our pedagogy research and our commitment to inclusive education.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We have a dedicated School of Education and Social Work (ESW).<sup>bxvi</sup> This includes our Centre for International Education that has a focus on education and international development.<sup>bxvii</sup>
- In 2020/21, we produced 260 primary school teaching graduates, including from our Masters degree in early years teaching.<sup>bxviii</sup> We also produced 435 secondary school teachers.
- We provide free pedagogic vocational training in person and online to support teachers' continued professional development. For example, in December 2021 we provided leadership and mentoring training to teachers in Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines<sup>bxix</sup> and Nigeria.<sup>bxx</sup> In October 2021, we also provided free training to teachers from Belarus.<sup>bxxi</sup>
- We are continuing our pedagogic revolution with a specific focus on the future of assessment,<sup>bxxii</sup> learning lessons from the pandemic and the redevelopment of the University Skills Hub including a focus on digital skills.<sup>bxxiii</sup>
- Our Sussex 2025 Vision is based around four themes, including "Learn to Transform – making students partners in the big decisions that shape our University's future." <a href="https://www.example.com">www.example.com</a> future." <a href="https://www.example.com">www.example.com</a> future." <a href="https://www.example.com">www.example.com</a> future." <a href="https://www.example.com">www.example.com</a> future." <a href="https://www.example.com"/www.example.com"/www.example.com</a> future.com</a> future.com</a
- We undertake educational outreach activities in the community, including schools.<sup>bxxxv</sup>
- In 2020/21, we continued to offer an elective entitled Discovering Role Models – Peer-Led Mentoring in Schools.<sup>bxxvi</sup> Within this course, undergraduates provided mentoring to school children at Brighton and Aldridge Community Academy.<sup>bxxvii</sup>
- Our English Department established Sussex Writes in 2016, where up to 30 tutors from a range of disciplines have run creative writing workshops in 25 schools across East and West Sussex. They aim to work with 3,000 Sussex students by 2025.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> They also worked with 54 young people in 22 countries in the Global South with a pan-African NGO The Youth Café.<sup>lxxxix</sup>

- Our School of Education and Social Work are involved in Green United, a youth-led initiative for students across all schools in Lewes to take environmental action, such as campaigning for 'plastic free schools' and growing sustainable, healthy food.<sup>xc</sup>
- We host a wide range of free public and community events and lectures. Our Sussex Lectures<sup>xci</sup> and Sussex Universe programmes<sup>xcii</sup> cover a wide range of topics such as championing human rights and social justice globally.
- Our Maths department also offers free outreach lectures to education groups, eg synchronisation in technology and nature.<sup>xciii</sup>
- We provide additional educational resources to the wider community – including schools and colleges – who are not studying at the university in several ways. For example, providing free access to many of our library materials,<sup>xciv</sup> Skills Hub training,<sup>xcv</sup> seminars and events<sup>xcvi</sup> (including our special collections at The Keep),<sup>xcvii</sup> We also offer modern language classes to the general public, including British Sign Language.<sup>xcviii</sup>
- The Institute of Development Studies also provides professional development courses to the wider community to help bring about social change, some of which are free.<sup>xcix</sup>
- Our former STEPS centre created a free online course called pathways to sustainability for the general public<sup>c</sup> and our Sussex Sustainability Research Programme also make resources in this area freely available online,<sup>ci</sup> both of which can aid professional development and teaching.

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Further embedding sustainability in our curriculum.

# **SDG5 GENDER EQUALITY**



This SDG relates to our research on the study of gender, policies on gender equality and commitment to recruiting and promoting women.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We have a dedicated Centre for Gender Studies.<sup>cii</sup> We also offer a Masters degree in Gender and Development based at the Institute of Development Studies.<sup>ciii</sup> A wide range of our degrees also include gender-related curriculum.<sup>civ</sup>
- Women make up around 32% of our senior academics and we have a target to increase female representation in senior management roles.\* cv
- Our Equality and Diversity Strategy, Inclusive Sussex, (as updated in July 2022) sets out our commitment to preventing discrimination on grounds of gender.<sup>cvi</sup>
- We have a policy of non-discrimination for transgender people, as set out in our Trans and Non-Binary Equality Policy Statement that was published in November 2018<sup>cvii</sup>, we published a Transitioning at Work Policy in 2020<sup>cviii</sup> and have a Trans and Non-Binary staff network to enable the provision of peer-to-peer support.<sup>cix</sup>
- Our work on delivering LGBTQI+ equality and inclusion is overseen by an academic lead and a self-assessment team.<sup>ccclxiv</sup>
- We reviewed our maternity and paternity policy in 2021 to support parents employed by the University<sup>cxiii</sup> and we provide accessible childcare and nursery facilities for students and staff, with students receiving a 20% discount.<sup>cxiv</sup> We also have a Parent and Carer Network.<sup>cxv</sup>
- In 2018, we introduced a new approach to flexible working to become 'flexible by default', to encourage a range of flexible working options from day one, including at the most senior grades.<sup>cxvi</sup> In May 2021 we also published our Remote Working Framework, which can help improve work-life balance for people with caring responsibilities (including women).<sup>cxvii</sup>
- In September 2021, we published a Menopause Policy<sup>cxviii</sup> with guidelines<sup>cxix</sup> for employees and managers on providing the right support to manage menopausal symptoms at work.

- We have been hosting menopause café meetings since June 2021.<sup>cxx</sup> Due to the huge success of this initiative, in October 2022 we hosted the first Menopause Festival.<sup>cxxi</sup> We also celebrate International Women's Day<sup>cxxii</sup> with events.<sup>cxxiii</sup>
- We actively encourage applications from students in subjects where women are underrepresented. We hold an institutional Athena SWAN bronze award – designed to encourage increased representation and progression by women in higher education.
- We also have a key performance indicator (KPI) in our Inclusive Sussex strategy for all 10 of our Schools to attain an Athena Swan Departmental Award by 2025. So far, all our STEMM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) Schools have one<sup>xxiv</sup> and in total four schools hold bronze awards, and three have silver.
- A team of Sussex staff have been organising the annual Soapbox Science outreach platform on Brighton seafront to promote women scientists and the science they do since 2017. The event returned in 2022 after a two-year Covid-related absence.<sup>cxxv cxxvi</sup>
- The student-led Everyone in Engineering society encourages underrepresented group participation in engineering with TeachFirst. They also deliver skills workshops to women with SheCanSTEM society.<sup>ccxvii</sup>
- We provide scholarships to women, for example our Asian University for Women Sussex Masters Scholarships<sup>cxxviii</sup> and our Scholarship for Women in STEM.<sup>cxxix</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Revisions to recruitment and promotion processes to remove barriers and enhance inclusivity.

\* We have a target in our Athena SWAN gender equality action plan to increase female representation in grade 10, band A from 25% to 28% by 2024. This is the area of greatest underrepresentation by women.<sup>coxx</sup>

# **SDG6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**



This SDG relates to research about water, water usage, and our commitment to ensuring good water management in the wider community.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We measure our annual water consumption, so we have a baseline from which to make improvements. In 2020/21, we used 217,734m<sup>3</sup> of mains water totalling 9.51m<sup>3</sup> per person compared to gross water use of 291,118m<sup>3</sup>, equivalent to 13.86m<sup>3</sup> per person in 2019/20.<sup>cood</sup>
- We provide free drinking water around campus from all taps, jugs and zip taps to reduce demand for single use plastic water bottles. 90% of our drinking fountains across campus are provided through a contract with AquAid, who help to bring clean, fresh drinking water to impoverished communities in Africa.<sup>cxxxii</sup>
- Our catering outlets also stock bottles of Life Water an ethics-driven, Hove-based company who are 100% carbon neutral. Part of Life Water's mission is to build wells for small communities to ensure they have safe drinking water. The sales that have been generated at Sussex have enabled Life Water to build two wells in rural communities that are attributed to the University of Sussex and Sussex Food.<sup>cxxxiii</sup>
- In July 2021, we installed a new pump house and replacement water pipes on our campus. The modern automated valves and fittings in the new pump house operate efficiently and reliably, reducing the chance of water leaks and interruptions to the water supply.<sup>cxxiv</sup>
- We apply building standards around water use to new buildings. We are already committed to achieving BREEAM Excellent in this area in relation to toilet flush and sinks,<sup>cxxxv</sup> and are committed to investigating if we should increase these standards by December 2022.<sup>cxxxvi</sup>
- Our Jubilee building has rainwater harvesting.<sup>cxxxvii</sup>
- We have also installed grey water recycling equipment in the East Slope halls of residence development, with a target of 30% of used water from showers being redirected to toilet flush systems. The grey water is currently being supplied to 1,434 student bedrooms.

- Our remaining wastewater is removed and treated by Southern Water.<sup>cxxxviii</sup>
- In July 2021, we published our Biodiversity Strategy and Draft Biodiversity Policy that commits us to water conscious planting practices – selecting plants that do not have high water requirements, planting in shade, using mulch, and minimal watering of plants.<sup>cxxxix</sup>
- Our Geography Department conduct research into climate and water resources.<sup>cxl</sup>
- We have several operational policies and procedures in place to support clean water and sanitation management. For example, in June 2020 we produced a new Water Safety Plan, that sets out the University's strategy to work towards compliance with statutory standards and current best practice in several areas, including measures to prevent and control water borne hazards.<sup>cxdi</sup>
- We also have an up-to-date Hazardous Waste Policy that was refreshed in May 2021<sup>cxiii</sup>, and we provide guidance and posters on wastewater disposal via sinks.<sup>cxiiii</sup>

#### **AREAS WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

- Conducting a strategic review of options to improve water sustainability and set water consumption targets as committed to in our Sustainability Strategy.<sup>cxliv</sup>
- Teaching staff and students about responsible water use on and off campus.
- Developing more business cases that can generate cost effective water savings.
- Developing a policy on water reuse.
- Publishing additional guidance for end users on water discharges and standards.

# **SDG7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY**



This SDG relates to our research related to energy, energy use, policies, and commitment to promoting energy efficiency in the wider community.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- In 2020/21, we used 239,392 gigajoules of energy compared with 269,716 gigajoules in 2019/20. This reduction was largely affected by changed building use during the pandemic.<sup>cxtv</sup>
- We were on a 100% renewable electricity tariff for the whole of 2020/21,<sup>cxtvi</sup> and we also have our own renewable energy farm with 3,000 solar panels.<sup>cxtvii</sup>
- The Energy Efficient Campus section of our Sustainability Strategy sets out key targets and plans for improving our energy efficiency and reducing our consumption. This includes a commitment to auditing our entire estate and making business cases for improvements on an annual basis – targeting the 20% of poorest performing buildings for audit by 2023.<sup>cxtviii</sup>
- All new buildings constructed on the University campus must meet the energy efficiency standards set out in the BREEAM "Excellent" environmental standard.<sup>cxlix</sup>
- We have brought our privately rented accommodation up to energy performance certificate rating E everywhere, unless tenant ill health or gaining vacant possession is unfeasible.
- We are also committed to developing minimum environmental product standards for furnishings and fixture purchases to support the energy efficient retrofitting of our existing buildings.<sup>cl</sup>
- The Excellent Carbon Accounting section of our Sustainability Strategy includes plans for measuring our performance in relation to clean energy and associated carbon.<sup>cli</sup>
- Our Treasury Investment Policy,<sup>clii</sup> updated in 2021, contains a Socially Responsible Investment Policy that requires our appointed fund managers to consider the "protection of the global environment, its climate and its biodiversity including the reduction and future elimination of fossil fuel exploration and production" when making investment decisions.
- Since October 2017, our endowment funds have also been invested in the Liontrust Sustainable Future Managed Fund.<sup>cliii</sup> Our internal estimates suggest that our investments in the fund emit 76.1% less CO<sub>2</sub> than the market benchmark (scope 1 and 2 emissions only).

- Academics from University of Sussex Business School's Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) shape global, national, regional and local government energy policy development.
- Current SPRU projects include The Whole Person Whole Place project – working with local government and communities to find new ways of renovating and retrofitting homes for a low carbon future.<sup>cliv</sup> Whilst the Social Innovation in Energy Transitions project involves collaboration with local governments in six city hubs on reducing carbon emissions and produced a policy brief for EU and national policy makers.<sup>clv</sup>
- SPRU were also key collaborators in the Innovation Pathways, Strategies and Policies for the Low-Carbon Transition in Europe research project that concluded in 2021 – working with a range of stakeholders from government, academic and civil society, to generate new, state-of-the-art low-carbon pathways for the European Union.<sup>ctvi</sup>
- The University are key partners in the Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre (IDRIC) "supporting British industries to lower costs, remain competitive and protect jobs as they improve their energy efficiency and transition to a green economy."<sup>clvii</sup> SPRU academics are leading work for IDRIC on smart policy and governance for industrial decarbonisation, just transitions for industrial decarbonisation and the politics of industrial decarbonisation policy.<sup>clviii</sup>
- Our University is also a partner in the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS), which works with researchers, businesses and policy makers, to support the transition to a low-carbon energy system – including advice to businesses and local government on decarbonisation.<sup>clix</sup> We were recently selected as the new home for CREDS 2.<sup>clx</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Further energy efficiency audits and decarbonisation feasibility work.

# SDG8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



This SDG relates to our economics research, employment practices and our share of students undertaking work placements.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We are an important local employer. In 2020/21, the University employed 3,490 staff, which is equivalent to 2,555 full time employees.\* <sup>cixi</sup>
- The University of Sussex is proud to have been accredited as a Real Living Wage Employer in September 2022, <sup>cixii</sup> and has made a long-term commitment to ensure that everyone working on campus is paid the Real Living Wage (RLW)<sup>cixiii</sup> from October 2022. Also, in recognition of the current cost-of-living crisis all University staff received a one-off non-recurring non-pensionable payment totalling over £2.4m. <sup>cixiv</sup> cixv
- We recognise labour rights and three specific trade unions on campus that we meet with regularly.<sup>ctxvi</sup> Between the three unions, all staff groups in Grades 1-9 are catered for under collective bargaining arrangements.<sup>ctxvii</sup>
- We also published a Modern Slavery Act statement in 2020 that sets out the steps taken by the University to prevent forced labour and slavery in our supply chain.<sup>clxviii</sup>
- In 2020, the University became a member of Electronics Watch<sup>cixix</sup> who help public sector organisations work together and collaborate with civil society monitors in production regions to protect the rights of workers in their electronics supply chains.<sup>cixx</sup>
- In July 2021, we published a Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework – containing nine core sustainable procurement principles that we want to promote and foster within our supply chain. The framework is intended to encourage "initiatives to reduce inequality in the workplace" and "pay the real living wage" (amongst other things).<sup>clixii</sup>
- We continue to be active members of the Southern Universities Responsible Procurement Group, where non-profit organisations and education institutes share best practice.<sup>clxxii</sup> We also have a new Sustainable Supply Chain section of our website that showcases the sustainability of some of our key supply chain partners.<sup>clxxii</sup>
- We have clear policies in relation to pay and progression, such as guidelines for academic promotions<sup>cluxiv</sup> and discretionary pay increases.<sup>cluxv</sup>

- Our Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, published in 2018, contains a target to halve the gender pay gap by 2024 from a March 2017 baseline of 20.8%.<sup>cbxvi</sup> We also produce annual gender pay gap reports to help measure and track gender equality. An equal pay audit has been undertaken annually and recommendations will be implemented.<sup>cbxvii</sup>
- In July 2021, 94.3% of staff who were directly employed by us were on secure contracts of over two years.<sup>\*\*</sup> We also provide our staff with a wide range of employee benefits, including discounted gym memberships and travel opportunities.<sup>clxxviii</sup>
- We are piloting a new staff volunteering allowance to help our staff engage in meaningful activities that promote sustainable development during work time.<sup>clxxvix</sup>
- We have a dedicated Careers Service for our students.<sup>cbxx</sup> All our undergraduates have the option of applying for a paid year-long placement in their penultimate year of study. A dedicated placements team help to support students to achieve this.<sup>clxxxi</sup>
- Our Sustainability Strategy commits us to "directly linking all of our student careers initiatives to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals." <a href="https://choosil.com">choosil</a>
- In our latest annual student 'Career Readiness' survey, 78% of respondents had done some form of work-based activity in 2020/21, 16% of this was volunteering.<sup>clxxxiii</sup>
- In 2020/2021, 650 of our students undertook a work placement of a month or more. This represents ongoing growth since the beginning of the scheme, and an increase of 26% since 2019/20.<sup>clxxxiv</sup>
- Our internship scheme, Career Lab, clxxxv includes over 500 funded student internships and consultancy opportunities, over a third of which have a sustainability focus such as work experience in renewable energy cooperatives and (smart) energy companies. clxxxvi

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

 Increasing the number of students on paid work placements of over a month by 5% per year between 2021 and 2025 as set out in our operational plans.

\* This figure only relates to fully contracted University of Sussex employees.

\*\* Our HR system only allows us to pull reports from a single point in time, therefore this figure only accounts for staff on secure contracts who are directly employed by the University of Sussex as of 31 July 2021. Due to technical issues this report is unable to exclude contracts covering maternity or other staff leave, however we recognise that it is unlikely that such contracts would carry on for longer than two years.

# SDG9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



This SDG relates to our research on innovation, research income from industry and our number of patents and spinoff companies.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We offer a specific Masters degree in Strategic Innovation Management.<sup>clxxxvii</sup> Our Sustainability Highlights in our Undergraduate Curriculum<sup>clxxxvii</sup> also showcases relevant undergraduate courses, eg Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence BSc.<sup>clxxxix cxc</sup>
- The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. The REF 2021 found that 89% of research activity at Sussex submitted is categorised as either 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'.<sup>cxci</sup> This led *Times Higher Education* to rank our University 27th of all UK institutions for both 'Research Power' and 'Market Share' in their most recent REF rankings.<sup>cxcii</sup>
- In 2020/21, we generated approximately £23m in knowledge exchange income<sup>cxciii</sup> including almost £2.7m research income from industry.<sup>cxciv</sup>
- In 2021/21, Sussex's thriving community of 115 graduate and staff businesses supported 470 jobs (an increase of 150 employees from two years ago) and enjoyed a combined turnover of £32m – this represented an increase of 175% since 2018/19.<sup>cxcv</sup>
- Sussex Innovation provides business support to local companies and start-ups. Some of this support is provided on a fully funded basis and European Research Development Fund grants are also available for companies to engage with academic expertise or intellectual property.<sup>excvi</sup>
- We created 11 Spin Outs defined as registered companies who exploit intellectual property developed at the University – since 2020, which are still trading. Nine of which have been in operation for over three years, and five of which have been registered in the last five years. <sup>coctool</sup> The most recent five are Universal Quantum Ltd – incorporated on 4 December 2018;<sup>cxcvii</sup> Metasonixx Ltd – incorporated on 21 August 2019 (this replaces Metasonics Ltd);<sup>cxcvii</sup> OWidgets Ltd – incorporated on 26 September 2019;<sup>cxcix</sup> AlternOx Scientific Ltd – incorporated on 28 February 2020;<sup>cc</sup> and Stingray Bio Limited – incorporated 6 December 2020.<sup>cci</sup>
- In 2021, we also became strategic partners in RISE (Research and Innovation in Sussex Excellence) with University of Brighton and West Sussex County Council to offer advice and support to local small and medium sized enterprises.<sup>ccii</sup>

- We are South-East Regional Hosts of the national Ingenuity social impact business challenge that supports students in the programme to pitch for funding.<sup>colii</sup> Our own Social Impact Prize (worth £37,000 in 2022)<sup>cciv</sup> is also helping to create the next generation of social entrepreneurs.
- In March 2022, we held our second annual Pitch for the Planet, a sustainable innovation competition funded by our Higher Education Innovation Fund. Four teams of students won a share of £20,000 of financial support available to realise their proposed projects on sustainable food, biodiversity, water quality and fashion.<sup>ccv</sup>
- We have additional Elevate Grants of up to £3,000 for current students or recent graduates to pay for prototypes, intellectual property protection, specialist equipment and tools to accelerate the success of their start-ups.<sup>ccvi</sup> Current students can also book Entrepreneurship Exploration sessions to learn how to develop a business and access relevant mentoring.<sup>ccvi</sup>
- Our Science Policy Research Unit were major contributors to the UN Conference on Trade and Development Framework for Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews – Harnessing innovation for sustainable development.<sup>ccviii</sup> In 2020/21, Sussex academics undertook work to apply the framework in the Dominican Republic,<sup>ccix</sup> Zambia<sup>ccx</sup> and Ethiopia.<sup>ccxi ccxii</sup>
- We are leading a re-orientation of the local skills base towards cleaner, greener technologies and enabling the roll-out of quantum technologies based on the University's core research strengths in place of the former reliance on aviation and related industries.<sup>ccxiii</sup>
- The University has multiple partnerships with industry. For example, we are working with Sprint Electric, who design and manufacture electric motor solutions used in lifts and cranes around the world. Our academics are developing remote sensor technologies to enable Sprint Electric<sup>ccxiv</sup> to monitor motors from their headquarters in the UK. While in October 2022, our Sussex Drug Discovery Centre announced a new strategic partnership with Sophion Bioscience.<sup>ccxv</sup>

#### AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

 Grow our collaborations with the industries of the future, intensify the adoption of our innovation across the economy and disrupt markets with our progressive spin-offs.

### **SDG10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**



This SDG relates to our research on social inequalities, policies on discrimination, addressing disadvantage and commitment to recruiting staff and students from under-represented groups.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We have a dedicated Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Culture, Equality and Inclusion, David Ruebain,<sup>ccxvi</sup> and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit who are actively promoting, co-ordinating and embedding EDI across the entire university community.<sup>ccxvii</sup>
- Our EDI Strategy, coxix published in 2018 and refreshed in 2022, objectives include:
  - To achieve a year-on-year improvement in the percentage of staff who believe that the University is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
  - To achieve a higher representation of staff with protected characteristics, including in senior leadership positions.
  - To hold a Race Equality Charter award by 2025.
  - To become a Top 100 Employer in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (which measures progress on lesbian, gay, bi and trans inclusion) by 2025.
  - To become a Disability Confident Leader by 2025.
- We operate a non-discriminatory student admissions policy,<sup>ccxx</sup> monitor applications from under-represented groups<sup>ccxxi</sup> and have targets in place to achieve a continued reduction in student attainment gaps for people with protected characteristics.\* <sup>ccxxii</sup> We also deliver programmes in schools<sup>ccxxiii</sup> and online<sup>ccxxiv</sup> to recruit from under-represented groups. Our latest access agreement covers students receiving disability benefit.
- In 2020/21, over a fifth (22.3%) of our students and 8% of our staff declared a disability (based on full time equivalent figures).<sup>ccxv</sup> We suspect the latter number is under reporting and that the number will rise as staff make use of our new self-service personal record system. We also introduced a workplace adjustments toolkit in December 2021, supporting the process to make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and their line managers, supported by HR.<sup>ccxvi</sup>
- We have dedicated advisors to help disabled students to access support and funding. This includes allocating disabled students a mentor or a support worker and liaising with their GP, Counsellor, or Health Care Team, if necessary.<sup>ccxvii</sup>
- We offer accessible housing to disabled students, including rooms that are wheelchair accessible and/

\* Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. or adaptable for students needing specialist personal care and support. We are pleased to be working with AccessAble on making campus information accessible to all.<sup>ccxviii</sup> Our new Student Centre is also an accessible building and has a Changing Places facility.<sup>ccxxix</sup>

- We prioritise our paid internships and student consultancy roles for disabled students, and we work in partnership with Ambitious About Autism (AAA) to train our host employers on providing an accessible and welcoming environment for autistic interns. We also heavily promote the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 scheme<sup>ccxxx</sup> – that we are a member of – and 19 of our disabled students secured internships through this scheme in 2022.<sup>ccxxxi</sup>
- In June 2020, we became one of only 15 universities to be awarded University of Sanctuary status in recognition of the work that the university carries out in providing an environment of welcome and opportunity to people from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds.<sup>cexxuii</sup> Our Article 26 Sanctuary scholarships support forced migrants and asylum-seekers.<sup>cexxuii</sup>
- We support under-represented groups through our staff networks (for BAME, Disabled, LGBTQ+, Trans, Non-Binary employees and carers) who we consult on policy changes.<sup>ccxxxiv</sup>
- We've joined the Race Equality Charter (REC), which aims to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. We aim to hold a REC award by 2025.
- We have a Dignity and Respect policy that has a zerotolerance approach to bullying and harassment that applies to staff and students.<sup>ccclw</sup> Our online Report and Support tool allows staff and students to report unacceptable behaviours anonymously or by giving their contact details.<sup>ccclw</sup> Furthermore, our Restore Respect programme offers support to anyone who has been involved in campus incidents perceived to be motivated by identity-based prejudice.<sup>ccclwi</sup> In 2020/21 Dignity and Respect Champions were recruited and trained to meet any member of staff to hear their experience of witnessing or receiving disrespectful behaviour.<sup>cccwvi</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

 Improving the recording of equality data; and reducing inequality, under representation and equality related pay gaps as set out in our EDI plans and strategy.

# SDG11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



This SDG relates to our role as custodians of arts and heritage and our internal approaches to sustainability.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We are one of the few UK universities to be in an UNESCO World Biosphere Region.<sup>ccxxxvii</sup> Our boundary walk<sup>ccxxxviii</sup> allows students, staff and members of the public to walk around the edges of the university campus – mostly in the green spaces of the South Downs National Park.<sup>ccxxxix</sup>
- Our campus contains listed buildings that have been described by English Heritage as "an outstanding example of 20th century architecture." The public can freely view our heritage architecture, including buildings designed by the renowned architect Basil Spence.<sup>ccxl</sup>
- We spent £9,135,207 on arts and heritage in 2020/21, including at our library, The Keep and listed and heritage buildings, Brighton Festival and Pride. This was 3% of our total expenditure.<sup>ccxli</sup>
- In 2020/21, we provided free public events (designed for the external community) to over 77,000 people\* – this included performance arts, exhibitions and museum education. Please note this figure was lower than usual because of partial closure due to the pandemic.
- Our Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts is an interdisciplinary arts hub, which connects the University with wider regional, national and international arts communities.<sup>ccxlii</sup> The Centre presents a programme of performance, dance, live art, film, music, discussion and debate and digital practices.<sup>ccxlii</sup>
- We are also a major sponsor of the annual, curated multiarts Brighton Festival.<sup>ccxliv</sup>
- In March 2022, our School of Media, Arts and Humanities organised our second Sussex Festival of Ideas to celebrate contemporary ideas around documentary and film, music and creative practice, poetry and language and the vital role of our local cultural institutions.<sup>ccdv</sup>
- We freely share our 'special collections' of university items with the community at The Keep – a historic archive centre, including an archive of resistance testimonies.<sup>ccxlvi</sup>

- Our library provides a wide range of open access materials and resources to the general public, including journals, statistics and data sets.<sup>ccxtvii</sup>
- We have both an Active and Sustainable Commuting Policy<sup>ccxlviii</sup> and a dedicated section within our Sustainability Strategy, that includes a commitment to setting new annual active and sustainable commuting targets.<sup>ccxlvix</sup> This builds on our previous travel plan from 2019 that includes current targets for reducing car use.
- We prioritise pedestrian access on campus with a network of footpaths<sup>ccl</sup> and cycle lanes running through the campus, in addition to bus routes, as shown in our 2020 travel plan.<sup>ccli</sup>
- In September 2021, we launched EcoGo our active and sustainable travel reward scheme that financially rewards people for making sustainable journeys to and from our campus.<sup>cclii</sup>
- We also have dedicated active and sustainable travel web pages that promote our Cycle to Work Scheme and discounts for staff and students using public transport.<sup>ccliii</sup>
- Our sustainable business travel working group<sup>ccctxdil</sup> is a collaboration between staff, students and the trade unions, which is looking to reduce our business travel associated emissions in a way that promotes and supports equality, diversity and inclusion.<sup>ccctxviii</sup>
- We are also working to reduce travel demand through our updated hybrid working framework that allows many staff to work from home up to 50% – and some even 80-100% – of the time. This builds on our pre-existing flexible working policy. Since March 2020 staff who can work from home have been supported to do so.<sup>ccliv</sup>
- In 2022, we published a new affordable housing policy<sup>cclv</sup> for students and our on-campus accommodation helps to reduce student related commuting emissions.<sup>cclvi</sup>

#### AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

• Ensuring the delivery of our active and sustainable travel commitments set out in our Sustainable Sussex Strategy, including those on better business travel.

<sup>\*</sup> Actual figure of 77,643 attendees at free and chargeable public-focused events verified in table 5 of the 2020/21 HE-BCI return.

# SDG12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



This SDG relates to our research on responsible consumption and our practical approach to the sustainable use of resources.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We offer a circular economy module which is about finding ways of designing without creating waste – in our Product Design degree.<sup>cclvii</sup>
- Our Sustainability Strategy contains a dedicated Sustainable Supply Chain section.<sup>cclviii</sup>
- In July 2021, we also published a new Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework<sup>cclix</sup> to promote responsible social, environmental and economic sustainability consumption. This work builds on our 2020 Procurement and Purchasing Policy<sup>cclx</sup> and Supplier Code of Conduct<sup>cclxi</sup> that also help suppliers understand the minimum ethical and sustainability standards and behaviours that are expected when working on a University contract.
- We are a member of both the national and regional Responsible Procurement Group<sup>cclxii</sup> – a collaboration between not-for-profit organisations and education institutes on sharing and establishing best practice in the area of sustainable procurement.
- Our Sustainability Strategy also contains a Responsible Food and Water Production and Consumption section that includes low carbon ethical food commitments.<sup>cclxii</sup> We've since complemented this with an updated Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy in 2021.<sup>cclxiv</sup>
- Our catering partner Sussex Food shares our sustainable procurement values. Their parent company, Compass Group UK and Ireland,<sup>cclw</sup> issued a supply chain integrity policy statement in 2020, covering animal welfare and human rights in the sourcing of food.<sup>cclwi</sup>
- In 2022, Sussex Food retained the highest rating possible by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (three stars). All our fish is sustainably caught, our eggs are free range, and our milk comes from UK cows and is Red Tractor accredited.<sup>cclxvii</sup>
- In 2020/21, the University produced 584 tonnes of waste, with 95% of this volume going to energy recovery, but only recycled 3% due to emergency health and safety protocols during the pandemic. Please note this increased back up to ~20% in 2021/22 once restrictions eased.<sup>cctwill</sup>

- In July 2021, we set a target of a) recycling 50% of our waste and b) reducing the volume of waste produced per student by 10% by 2025.<sup>cclxix</sup>
- Our Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Policy, <sup>cclxx</sup> published in November 2021, also sets out some of the ways that we will achieve this goal, including our Policy and Pledge for Minimising Single Use Plastic. In January 2022, we also made contractual changes to prevent our sanitary waste from going to landfill.
- The Compass Group UK and Ireland the provider of our Sussex Food service – has an action plan to reduce single use plastic and regularly reports on their own sustainability as a company,<sup>cclxxi</sup> as does our primary waste management and recycling partner Veolia.<sup>cclxxi</sup> We have policies and procedures in place for disposing of hazardous waste.
- We were the first University in the UK to install an aerobic digestor to convert food waste to fertiliser in November 2019<sup>ccbxiii</sup> and in September 2021 we introduced £87,000 of new recycling bins to promote greater separation of recycling and reduce contamination.<sup>ccbxiv</sup>
- Food waste recycling was introduced to kitchens in East Slope residences in 2019 and an opt-in food waste scheme is being made available to all other residences.<sup>cctxvv</sup>
- In March 2022, we ran a Recycling Info Genius competition that rewarded students for designing recycling information and posters, with the winning entry displayed on all campus bins.<sup>cclxxvi</sup>
- We also promote sustainable fashion, eg the Sustainable Fashion Collective ran a thrift fair during the Sustainable Sussex Week in February 2022.<sup>cclxxvii</sup>

#### **AREAS WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

- Embedding our Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework more deeply in our culture
- Realising our commitments set out within our Sustainability Strategy around responsible food and water consumption and reduction and recycling of waste.

### **SDG13 CLIMATE ACTION**



This SDG relates to our research on climate change, our use of energy and our preparations for dealing with the consequences of climate change.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We offer a Masters degree in Climate Change, Development and Policy.<sup>cclxxviii</sup>
- In 2020/21 we, as a University, used 239,392 gigajoules of energy, 35.4% of this came from low carbon sources, ie solar, renewable electricity and combined heat and power. This was an 82% increase on the previous year (with 14% of energy use self-generated from renewable sources).<sup>ccclxix</sup>
- In July 2021, we published our target for reaching net zero by 2035<sup>cclxxix</sup> for both direct and indirect supply chain emissions (classified as scope one, two and three).<sup>cclxxx</sup>
- In spring 2022, the University was invited to join the prestigious International Universities Climate Alliance. A group of 56 of the world's most esteemed universities whose vision is to "provide a central hub for universities to share the latest climate research with the public and enable greater collaboration between leading research teams, supporting global leaders, policy makers and industry in planning for and responding to climate change."cclixxi
- We are committed to creating local climate education programmes and behaviour change.
- In 2022 we awarded our first five Climate Leadership Scholarships whereby students receive £3,000 per full year of study for showing leadership in the local community around climate change and working with us to deliver engagement events with the local community around tackling climate change and reaching net zero together.<sup>ccbxxii</sup>
- We have our own Climate Action Plan (the Decarbonising the Economy section<sup>cclxxxiii</sup> of our Sustainability Strategy<sup>cclxxxiv</sup>) that includes a whole section around providing civic leadership and partnerships.<sup>cclxxxv</sup> We are also members of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB)<sup>cclxxxvi</sup> and have jointly agreed ten pledges on tackling climate change.<sup>cclxxxvii</sup>
- Our Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) run weekly energy and climate seminars to educate the community both within and beyond the University. For example, in 2021/22 'Scaling up wind energy for net zero 2050 – economic, societal and material challenges.'ccbxxxviii

- We actively influence global, national and local policy on climate change. Professor Benjamin Sovacool, from SPRU, was a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>cclxxxix</sup> – the UN body for assessing the science of climate change, including mitigation and adaption – Sixth Assessment Report.<sup>ccxc</sup>
- We are working hard to support early climate disaster detection and mitigation planning and are partners in the Land Use Based Mitigation for Resilient Climate Pathways project, which engages with local and regional actors to improve our understanding of how and where land-based mitigation technologies can be most effectively deployed.<sup>ccxci</sup> This work is also having a global impact, including featuring in a COP26 EU side pavilion event in November 2021.<sup>ccxcii</sup>
- Our NERC<sup>ccxciii</sup> Discipline Hopping (DH) project is focusing on the design of a flood mitigation approach that integrates data-driven modelling, water reservoir engineering, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms with support from Barcombe Parish council, the Environment Agency and Industry.<sup>ccxciv</sup>
- Our Forecasting with Fishers project from the School of Global Studies has seen us collaborating between 2019-2022 with small scale fishers to co-produce knowledge for early warning of extreme weather events in India.<sup>ccxcv</sup>
- Our School of Media, Arts and Humanities are supporting the work of a team of Ugandan and UK academics, educators, and artists, to develop and test innovative climate action education materials for use in East Africa. The key deliverable is a card-based educational game exploring climate futures in a Ugandan context.<sup>ccxcvi</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

 Ensuring that we effectively implement our climate action plan, including creating excellent carbon accounting and conducting further feasibility work around reaching net zero.

### **SDG14 LIFE BELOW WATER**



This SDG relates to research on life below water and our education on and support for aquatic ecosystems.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We teach modules in this area including Coastal Biology and Ecology Field Course<sup>ccxcvii</sup> at undergraduate level and Coral Reef Ecology field course at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.<sup>ccxcviii</sup>
- We directly co-fund and execute the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project, cccci which is leading the regeneration of the Sussex coastal zone to promote marine diversity and carbon sequestration in the wake of banning trawling off the Greater Brighton coastline. This project has been backed by Sir David Attenborough and our academics' work on the project has been featured on BBC news.<sup>ccc</sup>
- In August 2021, University staff and students began conducting the first baseline survey of Sussex coastline to explore the recovery of kelp forests to restore some of the most biodiverse habitat in the world and recover a vital carbon sink.<sup>ccci</sup>
- As a coastal university, we are committed to supporting and organising events aimed to promote conservation and the sustainable utilisation of aquatic ecosystems. Professor Tim Cane annually supervises a small group of undergraduate students in monitoring Escherichia coli levels in various Sussex rivers and estuaries. This is expected to be integrated as fieldwork and lab work for the undergraduate module Environmental Research Skills in 2022.<sup>cocii</sup>
- We selected Surfers Against Sewage, a marine conservation charity dedicated to the protection of oceans, waves, beaches and wildlife, as our charity partner of the year in 2021/2022.<sup>ccciii</sup>
- Since September 2021 we have organised three silent disco beach cleans on Brighton Beach in partnership with Surfers Against Sewage with 75 students, our Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students participating to fight plastic pollution, to keep our local beach clean and raise awareness regarding the impacts of plastic.<sup>ccciv</sup>

- We have a Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy to ensure that food on campus that comes from aquatic ecosystems is sustainably harvested.<sup>cccv</sup>
- Our catering provider Sussex Food, part of Compass Group UK and Ireland, promote sustainable and responsibly sourced seafood and do not serve seafood on the Fish to Avoid List (as defined by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS)).<sup>cccvi</sup>
- Compass Group UK and Ireland is also partnering with the Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC)<sup>cccvii</sup> and committed to SSC's Codes of Conduct<sup>cccviii</sup> that requires annual risk assessments on all fisheries that Compass procures from.<sup>cccix</sup>
- On our grounds, newly planted trees and shrubs are watered only according to the weather and will most often only be watered during drier summer periods to reduce unnecessary water use.<sup>cccx</sup>
- We have further policies and procedures in place to encourage water conservation and sanitation – see SDG6 Clean Water and Sanitation of this document for more information.
- Sussex academics feature in the *Plastic Warriors* documentary which investigates the damaging effects plastic pollution is having on our health, lifestyle and wildlife. This included a key contribution from senior lecturer, Claire Potter from our School of Engineering and Informatics, which focused on the role of design and the issues with consumption and retail – and the responsibility of brands and corporations – in global marine pollution.<sup>cccxi</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Tasking leading life science academics to review our contribution to life below water.

## **SDG15 LIFE ON LAND**



#### This SDG relates to our research on life on land and our education on and support for land ecosystems.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Our vision is to become one of the most biodiverse campuses in the UK. Our Sustainability Strategy contains an entire section of commitments for achieving this goal.<sup>cccxii</sup>
- In July 2021, we also published a Biodiversity Strategy and Draft Biodiversity Policy.<sup>cccxiii</sup> This included a commitment to achieving biodiversity net gain and nine key biodiversity principles.
- Over 38% of campus land is already set aside for nature. We are committed to increasing this further and are currently consulting on setting aside 40%, 45% or 50% of the campus for nature.<sup>cccxiv</sup>
- In March 2022, we launched our Big Biodiversity Conversation<sup>cccxv</sup> where staff, students, and local stakeholders proposed practical biodiversity projects that they would like to see on campus on an interactive online discussion board. The best ideas were then taken forward to a workshop in April 2022,<sup>cccxvi</sup> where over 50 people codesigned the next steps to bring the ideas to life.
- In April 2022, 39 staff, students and alumni, also raised over £8,500 for biodiversity projects in and around our campus by taking part in the 2022 Brighton Marathon Weekend events.<sup>cccxvii</sup>
- In May 2022, the University allocated £20,000 to five biodiversity projects selected via the Big Biodiversity Conversation. These included projects to plant a community orchard, increase pollinator habitats, support bat and swift populations, and encourage scrub.<sup>coclux</sup>
- The Love Your Scrub project is inviting the campus and wider community to increase biodiversity via the planting of scrub, which is important for supporting 44 nationally scarce plant species, 281 rare, vulnerable or endangered insects, and 39 birds classed as priorities for conservation or of conservation concern under the Biodiversity Action Plan.<sup>cccxviii</sup>
- In addition to all our new and exciting biodiversity initiatives we sustainably manage our land on our naturalised campus that is surrounded by the South Downs National Park:
- Our campus is home to approximately 158 species of birds and 32 species of mammal, including three social groups of badgers and several bat colonies.
- We also have meadows and native wildflower areas and a Jubilee woodland.

- We support the ongoing restoration and development of our chalk grassland and engage in extensive tree planting during the autumn and winter.<sup>cccxix</sup>
- Our Grounds Management Plan includes principles and actions to support native species, increase biodiversity, restore and conserve habitats and reduce pesticide and water use.<sup>cccxx</sup>
- We maintain and extend existing ecosystems and their animal and plant biodiversity, especially ecosystems under threat. Our 'bee hotels' and pollinator-friendly plants led to us being one of only 21 organisations to win a Bees' Needs Champions award (for the fourth year running) in 2021 for our work to save and raise awareness about pollinators.<sup>cccxxi</sup>
- These policies and practices have resulted in us winning a prestigious Green Flag award,<sup>cccxxii</sup> for well-managed green spaces, for the sixth year running.<sup>cccxxiii</sup>
- We consider biodiversity in our planning applications for the construction of new buildings. For example, submitting plans for green roofs in our new student accommodation developments and undertaking bat and badger surveys to ensure that we mitigate any environmental impacts associated with improving our campus.<sup>cccxxiv</sup>
- We regularly organise events about sustainable land use. For example, in April 2022 our Provost hosted a Stop the Mass Extinction speaker event as part of our Big Biodiversity Conversation, which involved Sustain (the Sustainable Farming Campaign) that discussed the role of the third sector in tackling the biodiversity crisis.<sup>cccxvv</sup>
- In March 2022, the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP) held a session on tropical forests as part of their Research Partnerships Conference, which aimed to show tropical forests as critical zones for the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>ccccxvi</sup>
- We also run educational and outreach programmes on ecosystems for national and local communities. For example, our Senior Lecturer in Biology, Christopher Sandom runs Rewilding Sussex as a community group to engage people with rewilding locally.<sup>ccccxvii</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

 Engaging our esteemed life sciences academics in developing further policy and practice in this area that support biodiversity and help guard against mass extinction.

# SDG16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



This SDG relates to our research on law and international relations, our participation as advisers for government and our policies on academic freedom.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- In 2020/21, over 7% of our graduates received law and enforcement related degrees. This was an increase of 27% in the number of graduates compared to the previous year.
- We are proud of our strong and democratic governance arrangements. We have elected representation on our highest governing body (Council) from academic and professional service staff and students, <sup>cccxxviii</sup> set out in our statutes. <sup>cccxxix</sup>
- We publicly recognise our Students' Union (the University of Sussex Students' Union) which is affiliated with the National Union of Students. The Union has elected officers who work with the various University governance committees and campaigns.<sup>cccxxx</sup>
- We have a Sustainability Committee embedded in our governance structure. In 2021 it was chaired by our Provost<sup>cccxxxi</sup> in recognition of its strategic importance. This committee was shadowed by a Student Sustainability Committee,<sup>cccxxxii</sup> with two members attending both committees to ensure student involvement in high-level decision-making processes in this area.
- We strategically identify and engage with key stakeholders within the community to form strong local partnerships – as outlined in our Sussex 2025 Strategic Framework vision, which sees us as "both listening and acting in the local and regional interest, working with public bodies, charities and civic society to find solutions to economic and social challenges."cccxxxiii
- We have a dedicated public affairs function<sup>cccxxxiv</sup> within our External Relations Team and Global Engagement Team to foster international co-operation with our stakeholders.<sup>cccxxxv</sup>
- Our Vice-Chancellor Sasha Roseneil sits on several strategic partnership boards including the Greater Brighton Economic Board, cccxxvi City Management Board and Sussex Health and Care Assemblycccxxvii to collaborate with local and regional stakeholders. cccxxviii

- We have clear policies designed to prevent bribery, fraud and corruption on our website. cccxxix
- We review and update our policies on freedom of speech annually to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose and we enforce these through our governance structures. We published a revised Freedom of Speech Code of Practice in September 2022 and our External Speaker Procedure in September 2021.<sup>cccxl</sup>
- We publish an annual financial statement online for transparent public scrutiny.<sup>cccxli</sup>
- Our Environmental Justice Law Clinic gives law students the opportunity to develop their skills and help the local community by working on environmental justice issues.<sup>cccxlii</sup> This is a partnership with the Environmental Law Foundation charity.<sup>cccxliii</sup> Students have advised clients on issues including noise pollution and biodiversity conservation, as well as researching the incorporation of sustainability criteria in local neighbourhood plans.
- We provide expert policy advice to Government. We have a dedicated and highly esteemed Centre for the Study of Corruption (CSC),<sup>cccdiv</sup> which is currently advising the UK Government on its International Anti-Corruption programme and providing input for the UK National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-22.<sup>cccxlv</sup>
- The CSC regularly provides policy briefings for Select Committees and similar bodies, and faculty members act as expert advisers, for example to the Cabinet Office's post-Brexit Procurement Transformation Advisory Panel.<sup>cocxtvi</sup>
- We create a neutral platform to discuss political issues. For example, we are home to the influential UK Trade Policy Observatory (UKTPO), which is a partnership with Chatham House to promote a more just international trading environment.<sup>cccxt/vii</sup>

#### AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

• Further strengthening our relationship and partnership working with the Students' Union.

### **SDG17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**



This SDG relates to the broader ways in which our University supports the SDGs through collaboration with other countries, the promotion of best practices and the publication of data.

#### **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We report annually on our performance on each of the 17 UN SDGs.<sup>cccxlviii</sup>
- One of the four strategic aims of our new Knowledge Exchange and Impact Strategy is to lead on and influence local, regional, national and international discourse concerning the efficacy, sustainability and impact of proposed solutions for the UN SDGs.<sup>ccclxxiv</sup>
- We frequently initiate and participate in cross-sectoral dialogue about the SDGs.
- Our Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) has lead responsibility for partnerships at the Association of Commonwealth Universities Network steering committee on Higher Education and the SDGs.<sup>cccxlix</sup>
- In June 2022, we hosted our third annual Global Partnership Conference for university leaders and academics on Internationalisation with a sustainability sub-theme of "Are universities mapping partnership activities against the Sustainable Development Goals?" The conference was attended by 255 participants from 35 countries, including NGOs such as Cara and Jisc, who are addressing SDG challenges related to quality education and reduced inequalities.<sup>cccl</sup>
- We regularly engage in international collaboration and research on developing international best practice on tackling the SDGs. Our Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP),<sup>cccli</sup> whose mission is 'Science for the SDGs', has financed 48 and co-sponsored nine interdisciplinary research projects to address interactions among the SDGs, while minimising trade-offs and maximising synergies. This has led to 42 additional activities and projects<sup>ccclii</sup> – many involving new or ongoing partners<sup>cccliii</sup> – to support gathering and measuring of data on the SDGs.
- We influence National Government and NGO SDG policy development. For example, in October 2021 we co-produced a report,<sup>cccliv</sup> for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development<sup>ccclv</sup> to help UK politicians serving in Parliament to advocate to COP26 Delegates to integrate all 17 SDG objectives into climate change objectives.<sup>ccclvi</sup>

- While in September 2022 our Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (an international research and policy partnership at the University of Sussex Business School) brought together over 70 participants from national innovation agencies and research institutes and international intergovernmental agencies, such as the OECD, to preview new tools and learning-based materials focused on both Global South and Global North contexts, for transitions toward sustainability and achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>ccclvii</sup>
- We are committed to providing meaningful education around the SDGs across the University, to all students and offer many relevant and applicable courses in this area.<sup>ccct/viii</sup>
- The Ethical Educators section of our Sustainability Strategy commits us to embed sustainability into all aspects of student learning, experience and research.<sup>ccclix</sup> We have begun to move this work forward by working in partnership with the NGO Students Organising for Sustainability who trained our students to audit the entire undergraduate and Masters curriculum for its content related to all 17 SDGs, to identify areas of best practice and scope for improvements.<sup>ccctx</sup>
- We provide meaningful education outreach on the SDGs, including to our alumni and the wider community. For example, in October 2021, our Better World event focussed on the impact Sussex researchers and alumni are having in the challenge to create a more sustainable society. It was attended by over 100 guests including alumni, business and community leaders.<sup>cccixi</sup>
- While this year, our Sustainable Futures project engaged children aged eight to 18 and their teachers from nine local schools and colleges to work with artists, dramatists, scientists and storytellers, as part of a University of Sussex funded research project that aimed to inspire and support students from diverse backgrounds to engage deeply with sustainability issues.<sup>ccclxii</sup>

#### **AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE**

• Continuing to grow as a global and local leader in Sustainable Development.

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