

11 NOVEMBER 2021



# ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT

US

UNIVERSITY  
OF SUSSEX

# FOREWORD FROM OUR PROVOST, RACHEL MILLS

## 2021 has been an exceptional year at the University of Sussex

Our strong progress on developing the sustainability plans has been a bright spot during the darker moments of the pandemic. 2021 proved to be a year full of action, renewal and hope in relation to tackling the climate crisis and building a greener and better world.

In July 2021, we published our Sustainability Strategy, **Sustainable Sussex**, our ambitious plans for being one of the most sustainable universities in the world.

Sustainable Sussex not only commits us to being net-zero by 2035 for both our direct and indirect supply chain emissions. It also sets out our vision for further embedding sustainability within all aspects of our student experience and research. It shows how we will have a lasting impact in the sustainability of our local communities and how we will create one of the greenest, most biodiverse campuses in the world.

The strategy is our roadmap for success. If you have visited our campus recently it is likely that you have already begun to experience its effects. Whether that is through: using our new recycling facilities, taking part in **EcoGo** our new active and sustainable travel reward scheme; or participating in Pitch for the Planet, our sustainable innovation competition; big changes are afoot in terms of campus sustainability and that of our broader supply chain.

Our efforts to be a sectoral leader in sustainability were recently recognised when we were independently ranked 41st in the world (out of around 1,200 Universities that applied to participate in the *Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings*) for sustainability for the first time in April 2021.

We are delighted to be making good progress in relation to sustainability. Yet we will not get complacent. The climate emergency requires urgent action and we commit to making much more progress in delivering against all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals in relation to environmental, social and economic sustainability.

This, our second annual sustainability report, is intended to provide much needed transparency to enable our students, staff and strategic partners to engage with us on what we are doing to respond to the climate emergency and build a better world for future generations. The data contained in this report<sup>1</sup> provides a snap shot of how we are performing against each UN Sustainable Development Goal and identifies areas for potential improvement, many of which have already been identified and will be delivered through our Sustainability Strategy.

Building a kinder, more hopeful and sustainable planet is at the heart of everything we do at Sussex. It is with that in mind, that I am delighted to publish our second sustainability report and hope to engage as many staff, students and stakeholders on delivering further improvements throughout the coming year.



**Rachel Mills**  
Provost

<sup>1</sup> The data reported in this report includes quantitative data from the 2019/20 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 2021. In the rare occasion when quantitative data is provided for a time period other than 2019/20 (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.

The 17 SDGs are as follows:



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](mailto:sustainable@sussex.ac.uk)

# SDG1 NO 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 is ranked number one in the world for Development Studies in the *QS World Rankings by Subject 2021* – jointly with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS)<sup>1</sup> – this shows our commitment to ending poverty across the globe. IDS also offer a specific Masters degree in Poverty and Development.<sup>2</sup>
- Over a quarter of our undergraduates in 2019/20 were first generation scholars – that 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>3</sup>
- Our Access and Participation Plan contains ambitious plans to help reduce poverty and promote social mobility through the provision of higher education to under-represented groups.<sup>4</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>5</sup> We have targets to reduce the gap in progression outcomes between the poorest and richest students (i.e. IMDQ1 and Q5) from 16% to 0% by 2024/25.<sup>6</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>7</sup>
- In 2019/20 15% of our students received financial aid. For September 2020 entry, students from households with an income of under £25,000 received an entry bursary and have access to a student hardship fund.<sup>8</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 remain in university-managed accommodation all year round during their course.<sup>9</sup>
- We increased the size of the hardship fund<sup>10</sup> during the pandemic to a total of £235,234 in 2019/20, which was distributed between 321 students.
- We encourage students to attend our university from lower and middle-income countries (LMICs).<sup>ii</sup> We provided 120 scholarships to students from World Bank categorised LMICs in 2019/20 – a 35% increase from the 89 offered the previous year.
- Our legal clinics provide advice on a range of issues (including housing and employment) to the local community,<sup>11</sup> which can help to prevent poverty and homelessness.<sup>12</sup> This includes our award-winning Citizens Advice Project that sees our law students giving the public free advice under CAB supervision on a wide range of issues including debt and welfare benefits.<sup>13</sup>
- Our Professor of Economics, Richard Dickens was a Low Pay Commissioner from 2014-2021<sup>14</sup> – directly advising the UK Government on the setting of the 2020 minimum wage and helping to alleviate national poverty.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, members of our Economics Department have had wider policy influence on key poverty stakeholders including the: World Bank, World Trade Organization, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and both the UK and US national governments.<sup>16</sup>
- Our Sussex Centre for Migration Research are leading two innovative projects due to conclude by 2023 on 'Protracted Displacement Economies' and 'Towards Trajectories of Inclusion' which seek to influence local, national and global policy making in relation to poverty reduction and migration.<sup>17</sup>

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Our Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education is chairing a task finish group reviewing the costs of our accommodation on campus and the financial support we have available for students.

<sup>ii</sup> A full list of countries currently classified as LMICs can be found on the World Bank website.<sup>18</sup>

# 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<sup>19</sup> section in our Sustainability Strategy<sup>20</sup> and an updated Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy.<sup>21</sup>
- We are part of a consortium of seven UK universities and research institutes helping to create future leaders in sustainable food systems via the Partnership for Sustainable Food Future – Centre for Doctoral Training (PSFF).<sup>22</sup>
- We offer a Masters degree in Food and Development,<sup>23</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 that enables students to grow and harvest forest food on our campus.<sup>24</sup> This is in addition to the provision of our allotments where our students are supported to produce fruit and vegetables.<sup>25</sup>
- We provide academic representation to an advisory panel that has been informing the development of the City Food Strategy Action Plan (2018-2023)<sup>26</sup> – a key priority for the plan is to reduce inequalities (including prioritising those with the poorest diets or least access to healthy food).<sup>27</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>28</sup>
- In 2019/20 we collected an estimated 57.77 tonnes<sup>iii</sup> of food waste from the University that went to aerobic or anaerobic digestion as opposed to landfill.<sup>29</sup>
- We have a number of interventions in place to help prevent hunger and food insecurity amongst our staff, students and the wider community. All excess catering outlet food is donated to food banks via the FareShare initiative or to people in need via the Olio and/or TooGoodToGo food redistribution apps and/or Brighton and Hove Food Partnership.<sup>30</sup>
- Our Students' Union supports a zero-waste café initiative organised by the student-led Food Waste Café Society that allows students to pay what they can for meals made from surplus food.<sup>31</sup> In 2019/2020 the Café fed over 400 people and saved 550kg of surplus food.<sup>32</sup>
- We provide healthy, sustainable food choices on campus. Our Dhaba café<sup>33</sup> is fully vegetarian, and the animal rights charity PETA currently lists us as one of the most vegan-friendly universities in the UK.<sup>34</sup>
- All of the fruit, vegetables and meat sold by Sussex Food (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>35</sup>
- We also hold educational outreach events and share research with land owners, farmers, conservation managers and policy makers from the private, public and third sectors. For example, hosting a workshop on 'Working with Nature in Farming and Conversation' in March 2019 to debate the future of agri-environment policy.<sup>36</sup> While our Syrian Farmers Podcast project helps to promote sustainable agri-food value chains through podcasting.<sup>37</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 on-campus allotments.<sup>38</sup>

## AREAS WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Reviewing our sustainable food offer at undergraduate level.
- Continuing to increase our food waste recycling and measurement.

<sup>iii</sup> This figure is calculated by Veolia with assumed weights of 52kg per bin. It includes all catering outlets on campus which have food waste bins, including our Chartwells outlets, IDS, Students' Union and Sussex Innovation Centre. It also includes data from Chartwells about food waste going to aerobic digester.

# 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

- We received two national Higher Education Business Continuity Network awards in 2021 for our response to Covid-19 and our handling of the pandemic.<sup>39</sup>
- We are shaping the next generation of doctors – over 9% of our graduates attain degrees from Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS)<sup>40</sup> that we operate in partnership with the University of Brighton. Teaching on sustainable health care and climate change is integrated into courses and students reported a 95% satisfaction score in a recent national NSS survey.<sup>325</sup>
- Our BSMS Sustainable Healthcare Group is a leading group in research and education on environmental, social and financial elements of sustainability in health and healthcare.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2021 BSMS PhD researchers won an award for developing innovative new processes to measure the carbon footprint of hospital surgery, particularly the use of disposable equipment, and they are now working on strategies to mitigate environmental harm.<sup>42</sup>
- We host the annual Sustainable Healthcare Academic Research Enterprise<sup>43</sup> (SHARE) conference; a national event for healthcare professionals to share best practice on sustainability.<sup>44</sup>
- We are currently collaborating with global, national and local health institutions and partners to improve health outcomes.
- We have an esteemed Global Health and Infection Department (GHI), with team members based in locations including University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust and a variety of overseas institutions advising the WHO on mental health, stigma and neglected tropical diseases.<sup>45</sup>
- We are also advising the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) on key health issues with leading academics, Jackie Cassell and John Drury, advising on Social Care and Behaviour Change respectively.<sup>46</sup>
- We are leading community outreach programmes to improve and promote health and wellbeing. For example, Time for Dementia is an initiative whereby since 2015 our students have been supporting people with dementia and their carers.<sup>47</sup> We have now also started running a parallel programme called Time for Autism.<sup>48</sup>
- We have a dedicated Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing constellated around seven thematic clusters on: Ageing and Wellbeing; Children and Wellbeing; Migration and Wellbeing; Cultural and Collective Sources of Wellbeing; Spirituality, Place and Wellbeing; Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and; Death and Dying.<sup>49</sup> The Centre's recent 'Queerantime Study' on the impact of the pandemic on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer people has been shortlisted for a *Times Higher Education (THE) Research Project of the Year*.<sup>50</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>51</sup> and our students by providing a fully-integrated counselling and wellbeing service and disability unit.<sup>52</sup> We also provide a GP<sup>53</sup> and Pharmacy Service on campus.<sup>54</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>55</sup>
- We share our sport facilities with the local community – including access to complementary therapies<sup>56</sup> and our sports division, SussexSport, work closely with Albion in the Community, local schools and disability groups to promote sport in the local area.<sup>57</sup>
- We provide meditation drop-in sessions and vigils for staff and students that are also open to the wider community, which help with mental and spiritual wellbeing.<sup>58</sup>
- More than 30 alumni, staff and students took part in the 2021 Brighton 10k and Marathon events, raising over £19,000 in support of world-leading mental health research at Sussex.<sup>59</sup>
- Reviewing current policies and initiatives to reduce and stop smoking on campus.

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

# 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 been named University of the Year for Student Retention in the *Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022*. Our latest figures show that our student dropout rate is less than half the expected level: 5% against a benchmark of 10.1%.<sup>60</sup>
- We have a dedicated School of Education and Social Work (ESW).<sup>61</sup> This includes our Centre for International Education that has a focus on education and international development.<sup>62</sup>
- In 2019/20 we produced 80 primary school teaching graduates. We also offer a Masters degree in early years teaching<sup>63</sup> and produce around 220 secondary school teachers a year.
- We provide free pedagogic vocational training in person and online<sup>64</sup> to teachers in Lower and Middle Income (LMIC) countries to support their continued professional development. For example, in Mumbai in November 2019<sup>65</sup> and Nigeria in 2020 and 2021<sup>66</sup>
- Our Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students, Kelly Coate, is leading a pedagogic revolution at Sussex where we are engaging students in innovative events such as a range of exciting activities including ‘hacking’ assessment methods, outdoor learning ideas, digital transformation events, and the co-creation of inclusive curricula.<sup>67</sup> In 2020/21 we hosted two pedagogic revolution events on hybrid working<sup>68</sup> and decolonising the curriculum.<sup>69</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.’<sup>70</sup>
- We undertake educational outreach activities into the community, including schools.
- In 2019/20 we offered an elective entitled Discovering Role Models – Peer-Led Mentoring in Schools.<sup>71</sup> Within this course, undergraduates provided mentoring to school children at Brighton Aldridge Community Academy.<sup>72</sup> During the pandemic students also produced an online activity workbook around wellbeing and Covid-19 for young people.<sup>73</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>74</sup> They also worked with 54 young people in 22 countries in the Global South with a pan-African NGO The Youth Café.<sup>75</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 – which to date has raised around £11,000 in funding.<sup>76</sup>
- We host a wide range of free public and community events and lectures.<sup>77</sup> Our Sussex Lectures and Sussex Universe programmes<sup>78</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 e.g. synchronisation in technology and nature.<sup>79</sup>
- We provide additional educational resources to the wider community – including schools and colleges – who are not studying at the university in a number of ways. For example, providing free access to many of our library materials<sup>80</sup>, skills hub training<sup>81</sup>, seminars and events<sup>82</sup> (including our Special Collections at The Keep).<sup>83</sup> We also offer modern language classes to the general public, including British Sign Language.<sup>84</sup>
- The prestigious 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>329</sup>
- Our STEPS centre provides a free online course called Pathways to Sustainability for the general public<sup>85</sup> and our Sussex Sustainability Research Programme also make resources in this area freely available online,<sup>86</sup> both of which can aid professional development and teaching.

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Further embedding sustainability in our curriculum as part of our curriculum review.

# 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>87</sup> We offer a Masters degree in Gender and Development based at the Institute of Development Studies<sup>88</sup> and a wide range of our undergraduate degrees include gender related teaching curriculum.<sup>89</sup>
- Women make up around 32% of our senior academics and we have a target to increase female representation in senior management roles.<sup>iv</sup>
- Our Equality and Diversity policy (as updated in July 2019) sets out our commitment to preventing discrimination on grounds of gender.<sup>90</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>91</sup>. We also published a Transitioning at Work Policy in 2020<sup>92</sup> and have a Trans and Non-Binary staff network to enable the provision of peer-to-peer support.<sup>93</sup>
- Our Dignity and Respect Policy is here to support and protect staff reporting discrimination, including gender-based discrimination in all forms.<sup>94</sup> We have trained a network of Dignity and Respect Champions to provide confidential advice and support to staff in this area.<sup>95</sup>
- Female staff at Sussex are able to access mentoring. We currently have 52 mentors, 80% of whom are women who are able to support other women seeking to further their careers.<sup>96</sup> A number of our schools also offer student mentoring (e.g. Law, Politics and Sociology).<sup>97</sup>
- We have maternity and paternity policies, which were reviewed in 2021, that support working parents at the University<sup>98</sup> and accessible childcare and nursery facilities for both staff and students – with students receiving a 20% discount.<sup>99</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>100</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>101</sup>
- We hosted our first menopause café in June 2021 – attended by over 40 staff.<sup>102</sup>
- We celebrate International Women’s Day with events.<sup>103</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 – and all of our STEMM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) Schools, plus our former School of Media, Film and Music, have Athena SWAN Departmental awards. We have a key performance indicator (KPI) in our Inclusive Sussex strategy for all Schools to attain an Athena Swan Departmental Award by 2025.<sup>104</sup>
- A team of Sussex staff organise the annual Soapbox Science outreach platform on Brighton seafront to promote women scientists and the science they do. This event has been running since 2017 and showcases female academics from PhD students to Professors.<sup>105</sup>
- Our Robogals society is a multi-national, student-run organisation promoting female participation in engineering.<sup>106</sup> In 2020, our Robogals Society hosted an event in Brighton for girls aged 7-14 to inspire more girls into STEMM careers in the future.<sup>107</sup>
- We provide scholarships to women, for example our Asian University for Women Sussex Masters Scholarships<sup>108</sup> and our Scholarship for Women in STEMM.<sup>109</sup>

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Developing a tool kit to support and develop academic staff returning from periods of carer leave (including maternity leave).

<sup>iv</sup> We have a target in our Athena SWAN gender equality action plan<sup>110</sup> to increase female representation in grade 10, band A from 25% to 28% by 2024. This is the area of greatest underrepresentation by women.

# 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 2019/20 we used 291,118m<sup>3</sup> of mains water amounting to 13.86m<sup>3</sup> per person compared to gross water use of 327,484m<sup>3</sup> in 2018/19. However, we predict that much of this reduction in usage was related to reduced staff and student presence on campus during the pandemic.
- We provide free drinking water around campus from jugs and containers 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>330</sup> Our catering outlets also stock bottles of Life Water – an ethics-driven, Hove-based company who are 100% carbon neutral.<sup>111</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>112</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>113</sup> and are committed to investigating if we should increase these standards by December 2022.<sup>114</sup>
- Our Jubilee building has rain water harvesting.<sup>115</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 waste water is removed and treated by Southern Water.<sup>116</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>117</sup>
- We have passionately educated and advised the wider community on conscious water use. For example, in 2019 University researchers collaborated with the local Council, Southern Water and Consumer Council for Water to help social housing tenants reduce their water consumption.<sup>118</sup>
- Our Geography Department conduct research into climate and water resources.<sup>119</sup> While researchers in our School of Engineering and Informatics are working with industrial partners and water suppliers to improve both water pump efficiency and waste water treatment in a manner that can improve environmental impacts and regional water security.
- 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 a number of areas including measures to prevent and control waterborne hazards.<sup>120</sup>
- We also have an up to date Hazardous Waste Policy that was refreshed in May 2021<sup>121</sup> and we provide guidance and posters on waste water disposal via sinks.<sup>122</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>123</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 2019/20 we used 269,716 Gigajoules of energy compared with 274,761 in 2018/19.
- In April 2020 we switched to a 100% renewable electricity tariff<sup>124</sup> and we have the largest solar energy farm of any university in the UK – with 3,000 solar panels.<sup>125</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>126</sup>
- All new buildings constructed on the University campus must meet the energy efficiency standards set out in the BREEAM ‘Excellent’ environmental standard.<sup>127</sup>
- We have brought our residential accommodation up to energy performance certificate rating E everywhere, unless tenant ill health or gaining vacant possession has made this work unfeasible.
- We are also committed to developing minimum environmental product standards for the furnishings and fixtures that we buy for our estate by December 2022<sup>128</sup> to support the energy efficient retrofitting of our existing buildings.
- The Excellent Carbon Accounting section of our Sustainability Strategy includes plans for measuring our performance in relation to clean energy and associated carbon.<sup>129</sup>
- We have a Socially Responsible Investment Policy<sup>130</sup> 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.<sup>131</sup>
- Since October 2017 our endowment funds have also been invested in the Liontrust Sustainable Future Managed Fund.<sup>132</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).
- In November 2021, the University was among 24 founder signatories of new COP26 declaration for net zero asset management principles.<sup>331</sup>
- The University are key partners in the new Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre ‘supporting British industries to lower costs, remain competitive and protect jobs as they improve their energy efficiency and transition to a green economy’.<sup>133</sup>
- We shape global, national, regional and local government energy policy development. Academics from our Geography Department and University of Sussex Business School’s Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU)<sup>134</sup> designed a policy approach to improve climate technology uptake and financing in Lower and Middle Income countries used by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the World Bank and the African Union.<sup>135</sup>
- At a national level, SPRU staff gave a ministerial briefing on retrofitting and decarbonising homes to the Prime Minister’s Council for Science and Technology (CST) and the Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth in May 2020.<sup>136</sup>
- Our University is a partner in the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS),<sup>137</sup> who work with researchers, businesses and policy makers, to support the transition to a low-carbon energy system<sup>138</sup> – including advice to businesses and local government on decarbonisation. Our academics from SPRU and CREDS have informed regional energy policy by collaborating on the Greater Brighton Energy Plan, which commits the region to a resilient, net zero carbon, smart energy system.<sup>139</sup>
- Members of our SPRU’s Sussex Energy Group are also involved in the Social Innovation in Energy Transitions project<sup>140</sup> – collaborating with local governments in six city hubs to explore how social change can contribute to carbon emissions, including by engaging local communities in programmes around energy efficiency and clean energy.<sup>141</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 2019/20 the University employed 3,395 staff, which is equivalent to 2,615 full time employees.<sup>142</sup>
- We pay our staff the voluntary living wage<sup>143</sup> – based on the real living wage campaign<sup>144</sup> rather than the statutory minimum and have a commitment in our Sustainability Strategy to investigate the feasibility of applying for Living Wage Accreditation by August 2023.<sup>145</sup>
- We recognise labour rights and three specific trade unions on campus who we meet with regularly.<sup>146</sup> Between the three unions, all staff groups in Grades 1-9 are catered for under collective bargaining arrangements.<sup>147</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>148</sup>
- In 2020, the University became a member of Electronics Watch<sup>149</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>150</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>151</sup>
- We continue to be active members of the Responsible Procurement Group, where non-profit organisations and education institutes share best practice.<sup>152</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>153</sup>
- We have clear policies in relation to pay and progression, such as guidelines for academic promotions<sup>154</sup> and discretionary pay increases.<sup>155</sup>
- We have a Dignity and Respect Policy to guard against work place discrimination.<sup>156</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>157</sup> We also produce annual gender pay gap reports to help publicly measure and track gender equality.<sup>158</sup>
- In 2019, 92.3% of directly contracted fully employed staff were on secure contracts of over two years.
- We provide our staff with a wide range of employee benefits, including discounted gym memberships and travel opportunities.<sup>159</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>160</sup>
- We have a dedicated Careers Service for our students.<sup>161</sup> All our undergraduates have the option of doing a paid year-long placement in their penultimate year of study. A dedicated placements team help to support students to achieve this.<sup>162</sup>
- Our Sustainability Strategy commits us to ‘directly linking all of our student careers initiatives to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals’.<sup>163</sup>
- In our latest annual student ‘Career Readiness’ survey, 78% of respondents had done some form of work-based activity in the last 24 months. 16% of this was volunteering.
- Through our internship scheme, CareerLab,<sup>164</sup> we also supply student with work experience in renewable energy co-operatives and (smart) energy companies.<sup>165</sup>

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Increasing the number of students on paid work placements that sit outside vocational courses of over a month by 5% per year between now and 2025 as set out in our operational plans.<sup>333</sup>

# 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>166</sup> Our Sustainability Highlights in our Undergraduate Curriculum brochure<sup>167</sup> also showcases relevant undergraduate courses, e.g. Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence BSc.<sup>168</sup>
- The University of Sussex Business School is ranked 2nd in the UK for research income for 2017-20 by the Chartered Association of Business Schools.<sup>169</sup>
- The University's growing portfolio of nearly 60 graduate and staff businesses attracted external investment of nearly £28m in 2019/20, compared to only £1.2m reported for the 12 months before, and now support 375 jobs – up by more than 15% from 2018-19.<sup>170</sup>
- Our Sussex Innovation Centre also provides business support expertise to local companies and start-ups. Some of this support is also available on a fully funded basis and hothouse programmes run at the Centre. European Research Development Fund grants are also available for companies to engage with academic expertise or intellectual property.<sup>171</sup>
- We've produced several innovative spin offs – registered companies who exploit intellectual property developed at the University. We registered five of these companies since 2017: Universal Quantum Ltd – incorporated on 4 December 2018;<sup>172</sup> Metasonix Ltd – incorporated on 21 August 2019 (this replaces Metasonics Ltd);<sup>173</sup> OWidgets Ltd – incorporated on 26 September 2019;<sup>174</sup> AlternOx Scientific Ltd – incorporated on 28 February 2020;<sup>175</sup> and Stingray Bio Limited – incorporated 6 December 2020.<sup>176</sup>
- In 2021 we also became strategic partners in RISE with University of Brighton and West Sussex County Council to advise and support local small and medium sized enterprises.<sup>177</sup>
- In July 2021 we held 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 financial support available to realise their proposed projects on sustainable fashion, low carbon fertiliser, growing food from fish tanks and gamifying sustainability.<sup>178</sup>
- We are South-East Regional Hosts of the national Ingenuity social impact business challenge and support students through the programme to pitch for funding.<sup>179</sup> Our own Social Impact Prize,<sup>180</sup> is also helping to create the next generation of social entrepreneurs. The 2019 winner, Lucy Hughes, won a £10,000 prize to help take her product MarinaTex<sup>181</sup> – a sustainable plastic alternative made from fish waste – to market. She also won the highly coveted James Dyson Award, beating more than 1,000 other applicants worldwide.<sup>182</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>183</sup> Current students can also book Entrepreneurship Exploration sessions to learn how to develop a business and access relevant mentoring.<sup>184</sup>
- Our Science Policy Research Unit are major contributors to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Framework for Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews – Harnessing innovation for sustainable development.<sup>185</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>186</sup>
- A new collaboration between our School of Engineering and Informatics and Gunnebo Entrance Control is helping to improve airport security via new sensor technology and algorithms – demonstrating the value of university research for business success.<sup>187</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>188</sup> and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit who are actively promoting, co-ordinating and embedding EDI across the entire university community.<sup>189</sup>
- Our EDI Strategy,<sup>190</sup> published in 2018, contains stretching objectives including:
  - 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 in the workplace) by 2025
  - To become a Disability Confident Leader by 2025.
- We operate a non-discriminatory student admissions policy.<sup>191</sup> We monitor applications from under-represented groups<sup>192</sup> and have targets in place to achieve a continued reduction in student attainment gaps for people with protected characteristics.<sup>193</sup>
- We deliver programmes in schools to help recruit students from under-represented groups. In 2019/20, 12,756 participants from 126 schools engaged in our widening participation access activities (with some students participating in more than one activity).
- We are disability positive. Just over a fifth (21.4%) of our students had a declared disability in 2019/20;<sup>194</sup> and just over 5% of our staff declared a disability in 2019/20.<sup>195</sup> However, we suspect that the latter figure is a result of under reporting that we have started to address through a new online portal in the HR system where staff can update their own data.
- We have dedicated advisors to help disabled students to access support and funding.<sup>334</sup>
- We are part of the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 scheme and provide a 100-day summer internship for a disabled student each summer.<sup>196</sup>
- We offer accessible housing to disabled students, including rooms that are wheelchair accessible and/or adaptable for students needing specialist personal care and support.<sup>197</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>198</sup>
- Our Article 26 Sanctuary scholarships support forced migrants and asylum-seekers.<sup>199</sup>
- We provide support to under-represented groups through our staff networks (for BAME, Disabled, LGBTQ+, Trans and Non-Binary employees plus carers) who are consulted on changes to policies.<sup>200</sup> We also joined the Race Equality Charter and are working towards an application under the Charter by July 2022 which aims to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.<sup>201</sup>
- Our new online Report and Support tool allows staff and students to report unacceptable behaviours either anonymously or by giving details of the incident.<sup>202</sup> Furthermore, our Restore Respect programme offers support to anyone who has been involved in an incident on campus that is perceived to be motivated by identity-based prejudice.<sup>203</sup> Finally, our 2020 Dignity and Respect Charter and Champions help support individuals perceiving any form of bullying and/or harassment regardless of the cause.<sup>204</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.

**Protected Characteristics:** These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

# 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>205</sup> Our boundary walk<sup>206</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>207</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>208</sup>
- In 2019/20, we provided free public events (designed for the external community) to over 138,000 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.<sup>∨</sup>
- We spent £8,782,000 on arts and heritage in 2019/20, including at the library, The Keep, Brighton Pride and Brighton Festival. This was 2.8% of our total planned annual budget.<sup>210</sup>
- 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>211</sup> The centre presents a programme of performance, dance, live art, film, music, discussion and debate and digital practices, including a recent immersive installation.<sup>212</sup>
- We are also a major sponsor of the annual curated multi-arts Brighton Festival.<sup>213</sup>
- In June 2021, our School of Media Arts and Humanities put on our inaugural Sussex Festival of Ideas to celebrate contemporary ideas around documentary and film, music and creative practice, poetry and language, as well as the vital role of our local cultural institutions.<sup>214</sup>
- We freely share our Special Collections of University items with the community at The Keep – a historic archive centre in the nearby community. For example, we are currently sharing university artefacts to an exhibition on observing the eighties and pre-war Jewish life.<sup>215</sup>
- Our library provides a wide range of open access materials and resources to the general public, including journals, statistics and data sets.<sup>216</sup>
- We have both an Active and Sustainable Commuting Policy<sup>217</sup> and a dedicated section within our Sustainability Strategy, which includes a commitment to setting new annual active and sustainable commuting targets by August 2022.<sup>218</sup> This builds on our previous travel plan from 2019 that includes current targets for reducing car use.
- 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>219</sup>
- We also have dedicated active and sustainable travel web pages that promote our dedicated Cycle to Work scheme and discounts for staff and students using public transport.<sup>220</sup> We are also working to reduce travel demand through our updated remote working framework that allows many staff to work from home up to 50% – and some even 80-100% – of the time.<sup>221</sup>
- We prioritise pedestrian access to campus with a network of footpaths<sup>222</sup> and cycle lanes running through the campus, in addition to bus routes, as shown in our 2020 travel plan.<sup>223</sup>
- Our student accommodation provides good value for money in terms of market rates; and our on-campus accommodation helps to reduce student related commuting emissions.<sup>224</sup>
- All new campus buildings must also be built to the BREEAM ‘Excellent’ energy efficiency and environmental standards and built on brownfield sites where possible.<sup>225</sup>

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Ensuring the delivery of our active and sustainable travel commitments as set out in our Sustainability Strategy – including those around better business travel.

<sup>∨</sup> Actual figure of 138,416 attendees at free and chargeable public-focused events verified in table 5 of the 2019/20 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

- Our Sustainability Strategy contains a dedicated Sustainable Supply Chain section.<sup>226</sup>
- In July 2021, we also published a new Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework<sup>227</sup> to promote responsible social, environmental and economic sustainability consumption.
- This work builds on our 2020 Procurement and Purchasing Policy<sup>228</sup> and Supplier Code of Conduct<sup>229</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>230</sup> – a collaboration between not for profit organisations and education institutes on sharing and establishing best practice in the area of sustainable procurement.
- Our catering partner – Sussex Food – shares our sustainable procurement values. Their parent company, Compass Group UK and Ireland,<sup>231</sup> issued a supply chain integrity policy statement in 2020, covering animal welfare and human rights in the sourcing of food.<sup>232</sup>
- In 2019, Sussex Food was awarded 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>233</sup>
- Our Sustainability Strategy also contains a section on Responsible Food and Water Production and Consumption that includes low carbon ethical food commitments.<sup>234</sup> We have since complimented this with an updated Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy in 2021.<sup>235</sup>
- We are one of only a few institutions in the UK to offer a circular economy module – which is about finding ways of designing without creating waste – in our Product Design degree.<sup>236</sup>
- We measure and record our waste. In 2019/20 the University produced 1,306.418 tonnes of waste and recycled 23% of this volume – 6% more waste than we recycled in 2018/19.<sup>237</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>238</sup>
- Our new Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Policy<sup>239</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.
- 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>240</sup> as does our primary waste management and recycling partner Veolia.<sup>241</sup> We have policies and procedures in place for disposing of hazardous waste.<sup>242</sup>
- In September 2021, we introduced £87,000 worth of new recycling bins across campus to promote greater separation waste of recycling, reduce contamination and improve education.<sup>242</sup>
- We divert 100% of our general waste to energy recovery rather than landfill and we were the first university in the UK to install an aerobic digester to convert our food waste to fertiliser in November 2019.<sup>243</sup>
- Food waste recycling was introduced to kitchens in East Slope residences in 2019, and an opt-in food waste scheme has been made available to residents in all other residences from Autumn Term 2021.<sup>244</sup>
- We also promote sustainable fashion, e.g. we recently co-organised a hackathon event and citizen challenge to help solve climate change through re-imagining fashion and textiles.<sup>245</sup>

## AREAS WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Embedding our new Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework more deeply into our organisational culture.
- Realising our commitments set out within our Sustainability Strategy around responsible food and water consumption and reduction and recycling and 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>332</sup>
- In 2019/20 we, as a university, used 269,716 gigajoules of energy. 17.3% of this energy came from low carbon sources i.e. solar, renewable electricity and combined heat and power (with 13.5% of our total energy use being self-generated from renewable sources).
- In July 2021, we published our target for reaching net zero by 2035<sup>246</sup> for both direct and indirect supply chain emissions (classified as scope one, two and three).<sup>247</sup>
- We are committed to creating local climate education programmes and behaviour change.
- In October 2021, we engaged our students in a video competition to help influence the COP. In the same month we also announced our new climate leader prizes and scholarships whereby students are awarded £3,000 for showing leadership in the local community around climate change and are asked to work with us to deliver engagement events with the local community around tackling climate change and reaching net zero together.<sup>248</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, 'Diversifying Power, why we need anti-racist feminist leadership on climate and energy', in February 2021.<sup>249</sup>
- In 2021, we also provided a pay what you decide public screening of 'Can I live?' – to 'explain what climate emergency means to us practically (right now) from the perspective of a young Black man' to help engage non-white audiences in climate education and activism.<sup>250</sup>
- We have our own Climate Action Plan (the Decarbonising the Economy section<sup>251</sup> of our Sustainability Strategy).<sup>252</sup> The strategy also includes a section on providing civic leaders and partnerships.<sup>253</sup> We are also members of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB)<sup>254</sup> and have jointly agreed ten pledges on tackling climate change.<sup>255</sup>
- 2020 also saw the launch of the University of Sussex led, Sussex Innovation Forum, as an informal space for businesses, community groups, local government and other stakeholders to come together and discuss the innovation required to make the Sussex area net zero.<sup>256</sup>
- We actively influence global, national and local policy on climate change. Professor Benjamin Sovacool, from SPRU and the Director of the Sussex Energy Group, is a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change<sup>257</sup> – the UN body for assessing the science of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation – Sixth Assessment Report.<sup>258</sup> He was also an academic panel member at the UK Parliament's Climate Change Citizens' Assembly in 2020, focused on 'How to meet the Government's target of net-zero emissions by 2050.'<sup>259</sup>
- We are working hard to support early climate disaster detection and mitigation. We are partners in the Land Use Based Mitigation for Resilient Climate Pathways project to improve our understanding of how and where land-based mitigation technologies can be most effectively deployed.<sup>260</sup>
- A University of Sussex spin off company, DataJavelin, is partnering with local Brighton based company, Ambient Risk Analytics, to deploy machine learning and artificial intelligence techniques that could transform flood forecasting and risk modelling.<sup>261</sup>
- Our Forecasting with Fishers project from the School of Global Studies sees us collaborating with small scale fishers to co-produce knowledge for early warning of extreme weather events in India.<sup>262</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>263</sup> at undergraduate level and Coral Reef Ecology field course at postgraduate level.<sup>264</sup>
- In August 2021, Prof. Rachel Mills, leading deep-sea oceanographer, joined the University as the new Provost, our most senior academic.<sup>265</sup> Her most recent work, published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,<sup>266</sup> summarises a decade of work dedicated to understanding how iron escapes from the seafloor to fertilise life in the ocean.
- Our Provost is also the architect of a free, online course, 'Exploring our Ocean',<sup>267</sup> which has reached over 57,000 learners of all ages around the world and impacted society's understanding of sustainable oceans.<sup>268</sup>
- We directly co-fund and execute the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project<sup>269</sup> that 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 the BBC news.<sup>270</sup>
- As a coastal university, we are committed to supporting and organising events aimed to promote conservation and the sustainable utilisation of aquatic ecosystems.
- We have 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. Staff and students have begun to take part in local beach and river cleans as part of the agreement while the University campus will host awareness raising events on sustainability issues.<sup>271</sup>
- During our student Welcome Week 2021, we organised a silent disco beach clean on Brighton Beach with over 30 students, our Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students to fight plastic pollution and promote conservation of our oceans and beaches. The event was co-hosted with Surfers Against Sewage who work to keep the UK's beaches clean and raise awareness of water pollution and the impacts of plastic.<sup>272</sup>
- We have a Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy to ensure that food on campus that comes from aquatic ecosystems is sustainably harvested.<sup>273</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>274</sup> Compass Group UK and Ireland is also partnering with the Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC)<sup>275</sup> and committed to SSC's Codes of Conduct which requires annual risk assessments on all fisheries that Compass Group procures from to be undertaken.<sup>276</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>277</sup>
- We have further policies and procedures in place to encourage water conservation and sanitation – see the section SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation for more information.

## AREAS WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- Strengthening our partnership with Surfers Against Sewage this year and engaging in more beach and river cleans with them.
- 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 campus in the UK. Our Sustainability Strategy contains an entire section of commitments for achieving this goal.<sup>278</sup>
- In July 2021, we also published a new Biodiversity Strategy and Draft Biodiversity Policy.<sup>279</sup> The document includes a commitment to achieving biodiversity net gain, nine biodiversity principles, and a target of setting aside 30%, 40% or 50% or more for nature. The exact percentage will be decided following a consultative Big Biodiversity Conversation in 2022.<sup>280</sup>
- 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
  - The campus also contains the Jubilee woodland. We engage in extensive tree planting during the Autumn and Winter months based upon local tree survey data to supplement existing trees
  - We support the ongoing restoration and development of our chalk grassland
  - We also have meadows and native wild flower areas.<sup>281</sup>
- We have plans in place to support the biodiversity of our campus. Our annual Grounds Management Plan includes key principles and actions to support native species, increase biodiversity, restore and conserve habitats and reduce the use of pesticides and water.<sup>282</sup>
- We work directly with the land to maintain and extend existing ecosystems and their biodiversity, of both plants and animals, especially ecosystems under threat. For example, our work on building 'bee hotels' and growing pollinator-friendly plants has led to us being one of only 32 organisations to win a Bees' Needs Champions award (for the third year running) in 2020 for our work to save and raise awareness about pollinators.<sup>283</sup>
- Our effective grounds management policies and practices have resulted in us winning a prestigious Green Flag award,<sup>284</sup> for well-managed green spaces, for the fifth year running.<sup>328</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>285</sup>
- We regularly organise events about sustainable land use. In January 2020, we co-hosted the Landscape Innovation conference together with the Sussex Wildlife Trust which aimed to generate positive discussions and ideas about land use, community involvement, climate change and biodiversity loss.<sup>286</sup>
- We also offer educational programmes and outreach on ecosystems and sustainable land management. One of our leading life sciences academics has also collaborated with national eco hub Planetary to develop a video series raising awareness of, and engagement with, rewilding amongst 11- to 18-year olds through a series of 13 videos.<sup>287</sup>
- We were also part of the local organising team for the City Nature Challenge, which seeks to connect people with local nature by discovering and recording as much wildlife as possible over the four-day period.<sup>288</sup>
- In July 2020, the University pledged to donate £2 to the Woodland Trust for each student who took part in our national student survey. This resulted in an overall donation of £4,506 for work on woodland and wildlife protection, reforestation projects and research.<sup>289</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 2019/20, 6% of our graduates received law degrees – to help uphold the rule of law.
- 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>290</sup> set out in our statutes.<sup>291</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>292</sup>
- We have a Sustainability Committee embedded in our governance structure. In 2020/21, it was chaired by our Vice-Chancellor<sup>293</sup> in recognition of its strategic importance. This committee is now shadowed by a Student Sustainability Committee,<sup>294</sup> with two of its members attending both committees to ensure student involvement in our 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'.<sup>295</sup>
- We have a dedicated public affairs function<sup>296</sup> within our External Relations Team and also Global Engagement Team to foster international co-operation with our international stakeholders.<sup>297</sup>
- In 2021, Vice-Chancellor Adam Tickell sat on several strategic partnership boards, including the Greater Brighton Economic Board<sup>298</sup> and City Management Board to collaborate with local and regional stakeholders.<sup>299</sup>
- We have clear policies designed to prevent bribery, fraud and corruption that we publish on our website.<sup>300</sup>
- We updated our policies on freedom of speech in September 2021 with the publication of our new Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and External Speaker Procedure.<sup>301</sup>
- We are transparent about our finances and publish an annual financial statement online for public scrutiny.<sup>302</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>303</sup> This is a partnership with the Environmental Law Foundation charity.<sup>304</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>305</sup> which is currently advising the UK Government on its International Anti-Corruption programme, and input for the UK National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-22. In 2020, the Director of CSC presented policy recommendations to the Ministerial Meeting of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group<sup>306</sup> and was part of a team that won an IMF Anti-Corruption Challenge.<sup>307 308</sup>
- We create a neutral platform to discuss political issues. For example, we are home to the influential UK Trade Policy Observatory, which is a partnership with Chatham House to promote a more just international trading environment.<sup>309</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 actively influence National Government and NGO SDG policy development. For example, in October 2021 we co-produced a report,<sup>310</sup> with BOND (the UK network for organisations working in international development)<sup>311</sup> for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development.<sup>312</sup> The report, which was launched at a UK Parliamentary Reception (called Saving Resources, Actions that achieve both the climate goals and the SDGs), was a call from UK politicians serving in Parliament to COP26 Delegates about the benefits of integrating all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goal objectives with those around reducing global warming.<sup>313</sup>
- In June 2020, we hosted a Global Partnership Conference for university leaders and academics on Internationalisation and the Global Sustainability Challenge, with a focus on the role of SDGs in partnerships.<sup>314</sup> 197 participants came from over 30 countries.<sup>315</sup>
- We have been ranked 1st in the UK and 8th in the world for student mobility and openness by the World's Universities with Real Impact (WURI) 2021 Rankings.<sup>316</sup>
- We regularly engage in international collaboration and research that enables us to develop international best practice on tackling the SDGs.
- Our Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP)<sup>317</sup> – whose mission is ‘Science for the SDGs’, has financed 40 interdisciplinary research projects that address interactions among the SDGs, and how trade-offs can be minimised or synergies maximised. This has led to an additional 40 activities and projects – most of which involved new or ongoing partners<sup>318</sup> and supports the gathering and measuring of data on the SDGs. These partners are summarised in a table (at Annex A).
- We regularly initiate and participate in cross-sectoral dialogue about the SDGs. In April 2021, SSRP held a South Coast Sustainability Forum, which brought together stakeholders, including local and national political representatives to discuss sustainability issues, such as building local partnerships for Net Zero, assessing alternatives for decarbonising heat and reducing food waste and food poverty in South East England.<sup>319</sup>
- In July 2021, SSRP held the ‘Evidence for Action Symposium’ which was an online international conference for sharing best practice on the Climate and SDG Agendas. The event was co-hosted by 12 partner organisations from 10 countries, with 50% of participants from the Global South and included scientists, policymakers, and directors of NGOs.<sup>320</sup>
- Our STEPS Centre (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability) carried out interdisciplinary global research that unites development studies with science and technology studies. The STEPS theme for 2021 was methods, for example, holding a knowledge exchange event for researchers and other participants in sustainability initiatives interested in transdisciplinary research methods.<sup>321</sup>
- Our Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) is on the steering committee of the Association of Commonwealth Universities Network on Higher Education and the SDGs – where he has lead responsibility for partnerships.<sup>322</sup>
- We report annually on our performance on each of the 17 UN SDGs.<sup>323</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>324</sup>
- The Ethical Educators section of our Sustainability Strategy commits us to embed sustainability into all aspects of student learning, experience and research.<sup>325</sup>

## AREA WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

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

# ANNEX A

## UK LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Brighton & Hove Allotment Federation
- Brighton & Hove Food Partnership
- Brighton & Hove Man and Biosphere
- Buglife
- Bumblebee Conservation Trust
- Buzz Club
- Falcon Coffees
- Freegle
- Girls Who Grind Coffee
- Grown in Britain
- Pro Baristas
- Small Batch Coffee Roasters
- South Downs National Park
- Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Tangent Energy

## UK GOVERNMENT

- All-Party Parliamentary Group on the SDGs
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- UK Environment Agency (EA)
- UK Met Office

## INTERNATIONAL – COUNTRY LEVEL

- American University in Cairo, Egypt
- Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI), South Africa
- African Population Health Research Centre, Kenya
- Armauer Hansen Research Institute, Ethiopia
- Banaras Hindu University, India
- Bangladesh High Commission
- Beijing Normal University, China

- Coral Conservation and Community Development, Creative Action Tank (CAT), Indonesia
- Centre for Pollination Studies Calcutta, India
- Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), India
- Central University of Finance and Economics, China
- Centre for Climate Change Studies/Institute of Resource Assessment-University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ)
- Centro de Conservación Investigación y Manejo de Areas Naturales (CIMA), Peru
- Corbana, Costa Rica
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
- Eritrean Institute of Technology (EIT), Eritrea
- Future Agriculture Consortium and Technical University of Mombasa, Kenya
- Ghana High Commission
- Icafe, Costa Rica
- ICPAC – IGAS Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, Kenya
- IGAD Regional Food Security and Nutrition Steering Group, Kenya
- Indonesia Program Lead (PM), Coral Conservation and Community Development
- India Meteorological Department (IMD)
- Indian Institute of Human Settlements (India)
- Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
- Institute of Endemic Diseases, University of Khartoum, Sudan
- Instituto Centro de Vida (ICV), Brazil
- JP Grant School of Public Health, Bangladesh
- Kenya Meteorological Department
- Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS)
- Maastricht University, Netherlands
- Marine Science and Research Centre for Pacific Marine Resources, University of Papua (UNIPA), Manokwari, Indonesia
- National Cancer Institute, Cairo University, Egypt
- National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), Kenya
- New Guinea Binatang Research Centre NOPOKI-UCSS, Peru
- Ocean State Forecast Services, India
- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Tajikistan
- Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research
- Papua New Guinea University of Technology
- Peoples Science Institute, India
- Research Centre for Pacific Marine Resources, University of Papua (UNIPA)
- Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture
- San Francisco University, Quito, Ecuador
- Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania
- State Disaster Management Authority, India
- State Emergency Operations Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, India
- Toxicslink NGO, India
- Universidad de Costa Rica
- Universidade do Estado da Bahia, Brazil
- Universidad Federal do Reconcavo de Bahia, Brazil
- Universidad Nacional Intercultural de la Amazonía - UNIA, Peru
- University of Buea, Cameroon

- University of Cape Town, South Africa
- University of California, UCSF Centre of Vulnerable Population, USA
- University of Economics and Law, Wuhan, China
- University of Ghana University of Science and Technology (CUSAT)
- Utrecht University, Netherlands

## INTERNATIONAL – GLOBAL

- Bats without Borders
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
- International Water Management Institute
- Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network
- Stop TB Partnership
- UN Environment (UNEP)

## OTHERS – UK

- BOND
- Chatham House
- Conservation Research Africa
- Environmental Funders Network
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- National Trust
- Not1More
- Overseas Development Institute
- Pesticide Action Network (PAN)
- Save the Children UK
- UK National Farmers Union
- Vision 2030
- Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)
- Wilton Park
- WWF UK

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