Queen Mary
UNIVERSITY of London

Sustainability Progress Report

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to **consider** the Sustainability Progress Report.
Executive Summary:	This paper serves to provide key strategic updates to Council on sustainability actions taken over the last academic year to date. Council is asked to note progress for sustainability in three key areas: Research and Innovation, Operations, and Education, as well as supporting engagement activity. In particular, Council is asked to note the Sustainability Action Statement, approved by the Senior Executive Team, and the priorities set by the Sustainability Committee.
QMUL Strategy: strategic aim reference and sub-strategies [e.g., SA1.1]	
Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:	Queen Mary Sustainability Action Statement
Strategic Risks:	Strategic objective 15. Failure to understand and respond to the risks and opportunities associated with climate change; failure to transition the university's activities, responding to changing requirements and societal expectations; failure to ensure our research and education meet future sustainability needs.
Equality Impact Assessment:	N/A
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	Progress review by Queen Mary Sustainability Committee, as well as reporting from and consultation with teams responsible for activity within the three pillars: Education, Research and Innovation and Operations.
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA	No
Timing:	Occasional paper
Author:	Zoe Sturgess, Sustainability Strategic Engagement Lead Jenna-Marie Smallwood, Sustainability and Environment Manager Oluwatobi Ajala, Sustainability and Energy Manager Sara Tome, Head of Environmental Sustainability
Date:	03/07/2025
Senior Management/External Sponsor	Dr. Philippa Lloyd

Sustainability Progress Report July 2024/25

Overview

The refresh of Strategy 2030 that was carried out last year presented an opportunity to affirm Queen Mary's commitment to combating climate risks, and set out an approach on climate action consistent with Strategy 2030 and authentically Queen Mary. This report presents a high-level summary of progress in setting this direction and summarises our performance against key environmental objectives and commitments. A summary of the key points included are below:

Pillar	Headlines
Research and Innovation	• We have become a signatory of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Concordat. • Improved uptake of the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF), with 84 labs signed up across the university.
Education	• The University has been re-approved as an Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Training Centre. • A co-created sustainability short course for students and staff will be trialled in September. • A university-wide network for sharing best practice in sustainable teaching has been established.
Operations	• A new Sustainability Action Statement, governance structure and refreshed Sustainability Committee approved by SET. • Three main priorities were agreed and set by the Sustainability Committee: ensuring sustainability is embedded in the curriculum, consideration of our sustainable travel policy and agreement to an updated carbon and energy reduction plan. • In April 2025, the Environmental Management System (EMS) was successfully recertified to ISO 14001. • Recycling rates have increased from 37.3% in 2023 to 45.7% in 2024. • Simpler Recycling legislation requires food waste streams across all commercial and residential properties by March 2025 and 2026, respectively.
Engagement	• The 2025 Climate Action Week was the biggest sustainability-focused week that the Students' Union (SU) and University has run, with 15 different events happening. • An Ethical and Sustainable Investment forum has been established by the SU, supported by senior leadership at the university.

KPMG audit

In September 2023, an audit carried out by KPMG identified key areas for improvement, which have now been addressed and exceeded through the development of the Sustainability Action Statement, detailed below, and supporting work. In summary:

- **Strategy and Action Plan -** Sustainability Action Plan is now in place and approved, with the status of an enabling plan – it has three core pillars: Operations, Research and Education (with engagement as a facilitating function.)
- **Sustainability KPIs -** Queen Mary has 13 KPIs associated with Strategy 2030 and supported by a Strategic Risk Register. Sustainability does not have a distinct KPI, however, it is included within the Strategic Risk Register. The Action Plan that has been approved includes high-level objectives across the three pillars, with workstream leads due to develop distinct KPIs to facilitate, direct and measure progress beneath each pillar.
- **Sustainability Governance, Committee** – New governance has been approved by SET in the form of a refreshed Sustainability Committee, reporting directly to SET. This is supported and reported to by Workstream lead for each pillar.
- **Communication -** A staff townhall was held in October to launch the new governance, with newly allocated resource within the Office of the Principal, responsible for communication and visibility of sustainability across the institution.

Sustainability Action Statement

The **Sustainability Action Statement,** see Appendix A, has been developed working across the institution by the Sustainability Team and Office of the Principal. Approved by SET, it sets out our vision for the next three academic years (25/26-27/28), across three core pillars: Operations, Research, and Education, with engagement and communication recognised as facilitating functions necessary to enable action. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) have been used as a guiding framework for this and provide a common language, putting our goals into wider national and international context. This document will be reviewed on an annual basis, as a minimum, allowing us to reflect on and review our progress against our targets, updating where necessary.

Governance

New governance to oversee and coordinate progress in line with the Action Statement has been approved by SET. The new Sustainability Committee consists of senior leaders representing the three core pillars Dr Philippa Lloyd, Dr Sharon Ellis, Professor Yang Hao and Professor Stephanie Marshall, acting as a sub-group of and reporting directly to SET. The committee has met twice this year, in February and June, and is due to meet again in August. Three main priorities were agreed and set by the committee: ensuring sustainability is embedded in the curriculum, consideration of our sustainable travel policy and agreement to an updated carbon and energy reduction plan. These set a clear focus for the next academic year, ensuring we make the necessary progress, contributing to our action and reputation on sustainability.

Ownership of work aligned with each of the pillars sits with newly established Workstream Leads. They will provide leadership, coordination and guidance in the development of the individual strategic pillars for sustainability, ensuring accountability and transparency. Workstream leads are expected to facilitate progress meetings with stakeholder within their area. They will also report annually, as a minimum, to the Sustainability Committee, providing progress reports against the relevant objectives and targets within the Action Statement.

Resourcing and communication

To support communication and engagement with and surrounding the new Action Statement, we have recruited a new Sustainability Strategic Engagement Lead, sitting within the Office of the Principal. This staff member is responsible for coordinating and ensuring visibility of action, moving us towards our sustainability goals.

A staff townhall was held in October, communicating the new direction and establishment of the pillars. Work is ongoing with the central comms team to develop a sustainability identity and annual plan for communication to increase visibility. This will include working closely with Workstream Leads to facilitate communication within each of the pillars, approaches to social media and a website review, ensuring visibility of progress.

Communication and visibility will be vital in maintaining momentum, trust and encouraging ownership with stakeholders both across the university and wider London network. In line with

this, the Action Statement will remain a live document, with annual reviews and reporting on progress. This will allow us to remain agile, with the foresight to see key market demands and establish ourselves as a leader in sustainability, with particular focus on our research and education.

Research and Innovation

The Concordat

In December 2024, we became a signatory of the [Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice](#) to ensure we continue to meet funding requirements at an institutional level. Our signatory letter is on the [website](#) and highlights our commitment to embed sustainability into research, taking action in the Concordat's six priority areas:

1. Leadership and system change

2. Sustainable infrastructure

3. Sustainable procurement

4. Emissions from business and academic travel

5. **Collaborations and partnerships**

6. **Environmental impact and reporting data**

New guidance has been developed and shared with faculty research managers, and managers from the Digital Environment Research Institute (DERI) and Precision Healthcare University Research Institute (PHURI) to help them estimate the carbon offsetting costs associated with travel covered by Wellcome Trust grants.

Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF)

Participation in the LEAF programme has greatly increased over the past year. This is due largely to major funding bodies, such as UKRI, the Wellcome Trust and CRUK, introducing sustainability criteria into funding requirements. At the time of writing this, there are 84 labs across all three Faculties signed up to LEAF, with 29 having already received LEAF certification, including the University's first Gold, 6 Silver, and 22 Bronze awards.

LEAF is one of only two internationally recognised lab sustainability frameworks (alongside [My Green Lab](#)). Developed with researchers, it is user-friendly, adaptable to various lab settings, and promotes peer learning. It integrates sustainability into all aspects of research, from purchasing to waste management and research quality.

A key benefit of funder-led requirements is that they bring the financial backing needed for labs to embed more progressive sustainability practices. Purchasing and travel are two areas with significant carbon impact, and funders like the Wellcome Trust and CRUK now explicitly state they will cover the more sustainable option, even if it's more expensive.

This marks a significant shift from cost-driven decisions—particularly in purchasing—toward valuing factors like carbon reduction. With Travel and Carbon Management two of the Sustainability Committee's top priorities, this alignment across funders and internal stakeholders creates a strong foundation for meaningful action.

Education

IEMA

The University has been re-approved as an IEMA Training Centre to deliver the following courses as CPD for staff: Introduction to Net Zero, Environmental Sustainability Skills for the Workforce, and Environmental Sustainability Skills for Managers. Two "Introduction to Net Zero" courses have been delivered since May 2025, with 15 attendees total, and feedback has been very positive.

Being an approved IEMA training centre affords us the unique opportunity to upskill staff across the university in-house, with the potential to expand professional development opportunities to meet the growing need for green skills across all sectors, if/when budget allows. We can also better maximise the benefits of our IEMA membership for students by getting degree programmes accredited by IEMA, providing students with IEMA membership throughout their studies and beyond, allowing them to fast-track their professional development and membership status, with access to networking opportunities, additional learning resources, and events/webinars to better understand key sustainability challenges in today's world.

Following the significant expansion of the Sustainability sector over the past decade, IEMA is rebranding in July to better represent and cater to the current sustainability landscape and will be called ISEP (the Institute for Sustainability and Environmental Professionals).

Embedding sustainability

Embedding sustainability into our education offering and training will be central to becoming a leader within sustainability, being seen as an innovator and resource for addressing the Green Skills gap. In the last year the Sustainability Curriculum Action Network (SCAN) has been set up, led by Queen Mary Academy and the Sustainability Strategic Engagement Lead. This network of over 40 academics, across faculties, is a hub for sharing best practice in sustainability teaching, actively meeting throughout the year.

A recently published paper, written by Dr Stephanie Fuller, Emeritus Professor Janet De Wilde and Sustainability Strategic Engagement Lead Zoe Sturgess, discusses the progress made to embed sustainability, such as the graduate attributes, at Queen Mary. This provides a framework of methodology for other institutions and highlights key areas for continued improvement within Queen Mary.

There is ongoing work to create a university-wide, non-credit bearing foundation sustainability short-course as part of a project funded by the Principal's Fund for Educational Excellence. This has been co-created by students and staff and will be piloted in the new academic year. Work is also underway in the school of Geography to create the infrastructure for an interdisciplinary module on the SDGs.

Operations

Environmental Performance: ISO14001 EMS Certification

QM has an internationally recognised, ISO 14001-certified Environmental Management System (EMS), which provides a structured framework to enhance environmental performance, meet compliance obligations, and achieve environmental objectives.

The EMS covers all QM activities, including those by external contractors, and is subject to regular internal audits by the Sustainability Team, annual external audits, and a more in-depth,

full recertification audit every three years.

In April 2025, the EMS was successfully recertified, with the auditor noting significant and commendable progress since the previous audits. A key finding was the need for improvement of evidence of compliance for Maintenance activities, particularly concerning the F-Gas Register[1], which has been addressed with external contractors.

Carbon emissions and management

- Data available for our carbon emissions currently covers up to the 2023/24 academic year and is summarised below. Data for the 2024/25 academic year can be expected to be reported on in the autumn.

- We achieved a 25 per cent carbon reduction against the 2018/19 baseline for scope 1 (direct emissions e.g. gas consumption and QM fleet) and 2 (indirect emissions from purchased electricity) carbon emissions, despite continued growth of the estate.

- There has been a 32 per cent reduction in scope 2 by 2023/24 against the 2018/19 baseline as shown in Appendix C, Table 1. This has been made possible because of ongoing investment into energy reduction projects focusing on our top ten energy consuming buildings and the decarbonisation of the grid.
- Scope 1 emissions have decreased by 12.72 per cent against the 2018/19 baseline.
- In the last financial year there has been a reduction of 3.92 per cent in scope 1 emissions, mainly from a decrease in natural gas consumption.
- In the last financial year there has been an increase in scope 2 emissions by 7.86 per cent due to an increase in the conversion factor for UK purchased electricity.

Energy

We have continued our collaboration with Carbon Numbers to deliver new Building Management System (BMS) installations, optimise existing systems, and implement improved time scheduling across the campus. This allows for improved energy efficiency and better building performance.

The majority of the energy savings achieved during the 2023/2024 academic year resulted from projects completed in 2022/2023. While initiatives undertaken within 2023/2024 contributed to further savings, their overall impact was a lot less. A milder winter and summer compared to the previous year also reduced heating and cooling demands, supporting an overall decrease in energy consumption.

In 2023/2024, we used:
- Electricity: **34,673,041 kWh**
- Natural Gas**: 26,694,109 kWh**

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[1] The F-Gas Register is the primary document used to verify compliance with the monitoring and overall management of F-Gases. F-Gases refers to fluorinated greenhouse gases – a group of man-made greenhouse gases that contain fluorine and are incredibly potent greenhouse gases with a high global warming potential, meaning that they trap substantially more heat than carbon dioxide and contribute significantly to climate change. Some of the most common F-Gases are those used in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.

Compared to 2022/2023, this represents:

- **An increase of 248,838 kWh** in electricity consumption
- **A reduction of 1,187,679 kWh** in gas consumption

Despite the slight rise in electricity usage, total energy consumption remains significantly below our 2018/2019 baseline.

Please see Appendix C, Table 2, for campus-wide electricity and gas consumption data from the 2018/2019 baseline year to 2023/2024. Further explanation for the increase in electricity use and the decrease in gas use during 2023/2024 is also provided in Supporting Information 1 and Supporting Information 2 within Appendix C.

A key win highlighting the small changes that can be made was the encouraging results from a campaign led by Atanas Tomov, from the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences. Over six weeks in April and May this year, fume hood sash opening, between 6am and 8pm decreased by 41.cm. This resulted in energy saving of over £11,000 and a reduction of more than 10 tonnes in the G.O. Jones building's carbon emissions. Extrapolating this across a year, this could equate to approximately £100k in savings. This presents a real opportunity for more focused Rapid Improvement Events, translating to significant savings.

Another highlight from the year is the commissioning of the SRIFF Room Data Centre Heat Recovery Project in the Joseph Priestley Building, which began operation in November 2024. With a capacity of 390 kW and an estimated annual recoverable heat of 3,416,400 kWh, this system now supports the Mile End Campus district heating network. It reduces our reliance on natural gas and marks a significant step toward a low-carbon campus.

Waste and resource management

A lot of effort has gone into the improvement of waste management at Queen Mary over the past year and a half. Including the introduction of a new non-hazardous waste management policy, and increased standardisation of bin types, signage, streams, and liners. There has also been a significant increase and improvement in training and overall engagement around waste, including inductions, the creation of waste Toolbox Talks for operations teams, and collaboration with Queen Mary's waste contractors, Bywaters, to provide targeted training and learning opportunities for both staff and students.

The success of these efforts is evident in the improvement of recycling rates, which have increased from 37.3% in 2023 to 45.7% in 2024, as seen in Appendix C, Table 3. More work needs to be done to reduce overall waste produced, with only a 12.431 tonne reduction from 2023 to 2024. The Simpler Recycling legislation came into force in 2025, requiring the introduction of food waste streams across all business/commercial properties by March 2025, and all residential properties by March 2026. Food waste will be introduced into residences from September 2025 to align with the start of the new academic year.

Construction and refurbishment

The University continue to utilise BREEAM for all new builds, major refurbishment and reconfiguration projects. All major projects aim for BREEAM 'Excellent', while minor and small new builds aim for 'Very Good' (or higher, should local building policies require so). There are currently 5 BREEAM awards - 2

'Excellent' for the School of Mathematics and the Graduate Centre, and 3 'Very Good' for the Mile End Library Extension, G.O. Jones, and Empire House.

In addition to BREEAM, the University continues to use the SKA rating assessment for all applicable major fit-out projects, and minor and small refurbishment and reconfiguration projects. Major projects aim for SKA Gold, and minor and small refurbishment and reconfiguration projects aim for SKA Silver. There are currently 5 SKA awards - 1 Gold for Dept W and 4 Silver for Peter Landing 4th Floor, Mile End Library Ground Floor, Francis Bancroft 4th Floor, and 11-13 Charterhouse.

Procurement

The [Sustainable Procurement Policy](#) was approved in September 2024. Several objectives have been committed to as part of the new Sustainability Action Statement to be achieved over the course of the next three academic years, to note:

- Embed and implement the Social Value TOMS framework into tender processes and establish a target for the 2025/26 financial year once we have baseline data for 2024/25.
- Review and identify top suppliers by spend and environmental impact, engaging with the top 10 assess and improve environmental impacts and commitments.

- Development of sustainable procurement guidelines by the end of the 2026 calendar year.

CIVIC Community Involvement and Engagement

Climate Action Week

In 2024, Green Week was rebranded "Climate Action Week." In 2025 it was the biggest sustainability-focused week the Students' Union and University has run, with 15 different events happening. These included planting workshops, careers panels, walking tours and the BIG Green Canal Clean. There were over 150 attendees, both students and staff, across all events, with 51 at the BIG Green Canal Clean. Over eight different teams were involved including: Careers, The School of Business Management, School of Law and ResiLife as well as community partners such as Sustainably Muslim. Planning is due to begin for the 2026 Climate Action Week, with focus shifting to how we can better engage with community partners and align with our CIVIC delivery and public engagement work.

Re-Use Fair

The Re-Use Fair now has a task group behind it, led by the Sustainability Strategic Engagement Lead, with stakeholders across estates and the SU. A key social sustainability project, it sets up students for the year for a fraction of the cost, whilst delivering significant cost savings on waste processing, cleaning and disposal of items at the end of the academic year. After bringing back the winter Re-Use Fair, alongside the summer offer, in the last year, over 600 students engaged with the project, with nearly 1 tonne of items being diverted from the summer fair alone.

This is a unique project within the higher education sector that continues to grow and is a favourite among students, with high potential to become a wider social and CIVIC piece with the right resource behind it.

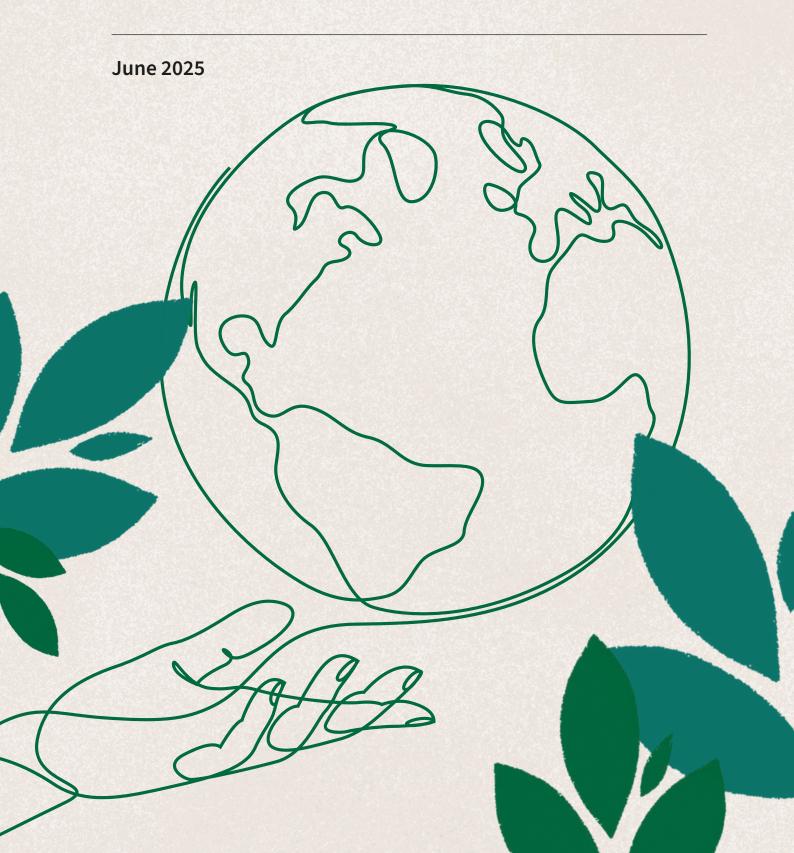***Ethical and Sustainable Investment Forum***

An Ethical and Sustainable Investment Forum has been set up by the Students' Union, with support from senior leadership within the university. It is a space for students, university and Students' Union (SU) leadership to discuss ethical and sustainability questions at QMUL. It focuses on discussion, which will result in recommendations to guide the university and SU on environmental and ethical practices, particularly ensuring both institutions align with global sustainability goals. Over the coming months, students will be providing feedback on the review of the current investment policy.

Conclusion

We will continue to work on and demonstrate how the University contributes to achieving the UN SDGs, using them as a universal language for change, and to be committed to supporting the UK Government's overall ambition of reaching net zero, as stated in our Strategy 2030 midpoint review. This includes commitment to annual reporting to Council on sustainability progress, monitoring through the Sustainability Committee and escalating to SET where necessary.

Environmental Sustainability
Action Statement

June 2025

At Queen Mary University of London, our commitment to sustainability is grounded in our values of inclusivity, integrity, and global engagement.

Through our world-leading research, education, and partnerships – both local and international – we are actively part of the movement to make the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals a reality, contributing to a more sustainable, equitable future.

This Sustainability Action Statement outlines our priorities and approach as we embed sustainability more deeply into everything we do – from the way we operate as an institution, to the way we teach, learn, and conduct research. It is a step forward in our ongoing journey to create lasting impact and deliver on our Strategy 2030 ambitions.

Professor Colin Bailey
President and Principal Queen Mary University London

Climate emergency goals

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*, stresses the need for immediate action if we are to limit warming to 1.5°C or even 2.0°C. Queen Mary is committed to supporting the Government's ambition of reaching net zero by 2050, both by mitigating the net-negative impacts of our operations and accelerating the net-positive contributions we make through education, research and engagement.

Our Action Statement

Queen Mary recognises its responsibility to drive action in sustainability. We also recognise the unique position we are in to contribute to solutions to support climate change mitigation and adaptation. Acknowledging the significant impacts our operations have on the environment and through our ISO 14001:2015 certified Environmental Management System (EMS), we are working to implement measures and controls to mitigate any potential negative environmental impacts.

As such, we are pleased to publish our revised Action Statement, setting clear objectives for the next three academic years (2025/26–2027/28), embedding them into the wider Strategy 2030.

The Sustainability Action Statement aligns carbon and environmental management with wider strategic work, such as our CIVIC objectives, championing Queen Mary's foundational ambition of being the most inclusive research-intensive university in the world. We cannot achieve this ambition without mission-aligned action to mitigate the Climate Emergency.

Responsibility

Sustainability Committee
Queen Mary's Sustainability Committee (SC) provides leadership, coordination and guidance in the development and management of the university's sustainability risks, responsibilities, opportunities and Sustainability Action Plans to deliver continual improvement of environmental performance across all areas of Queen Mary. The SC is a senior leadership governance group with members representing our three core pillars: Research and Innovation, Education and Operations.

Among other things, the SC is responsible for coordinating the delivery of our environmental sustainability commitments and providing assurance of our environmental sustainability performance. It is the responsibility of all members of the Sustainability Committee and wider Queen Mary employees to ensure the aims and commitments outlined in this statement are upheld. This includes a clear annual review process, ensuring our targets remain ambitious, relevant and connected to key strategic work across the university.

Workstreams
Queen Mary's Workstreams provide leadership, coordination and guidance in the development of the individual strategic pillars for sustainability. Headed by a senior workstream lead, each group has representation from across the university, reporting directly to the sustainability committee and taking ownership of their areas to deliver the action statement objectives and targets, ensuring accountability and transparency.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The content of this publication has not been approved by the United Nations and does not reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials or Member States. **un.org/sustainabledevelopment**

Objectives and targets

Left table:

Headline Objectives	Targets	SDGs supported	Ownership
Research and Innovation			
Promote adoption of sustainable research practices when undertaking research.	Report annually on our progress and priority actions in line with our commitment to the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice, first report due by the end of 2025.	9 11 12 13 17	Joint Research Management Office, Procurement, Sustainability Team, Office of the Principal
	Continue to develop and improve guidance and support for researchers to help them make project-based decisions about how to reduce the environmental impact of their work and integrate sustainability considerations into external funding applications.	9 12 13 14 15	Sustainability Team, Lab Managers, Joint Research Management Office, Business Development
	Support and encourage laboratories to achieve recognised sustainability accreditations (e.g. LEAF Silver, My Green Lab) by 1 January 2026.	9 12 13	Lab Managers, Sustainability Team
	Collaborate with other universities on a Wellcome Trust funded project to pilot a tool for capturing data on carbon emissions associated with our research grants, initial project phases planned for 2025/26.	9 12 13 17	Joint Research Management Office, Sustainability Team
Promote, map and celebrate research that drives sustainability goals at Queen Mary University London.	Facilitate a scoping exercise to identify how to tag sustainability related research at Queen Mary, in line with the SDGs, by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. Assess how this could be embedded into practice, associated costs, and make a recommendation to the Sustainability Committee.	9 12 13 17	Research Services, Library
	Continue to share good practice and examples of how Queen Mary's research is contributing to sustainability goals through institutional communications (i.e. Research Highways) and impact case studies.	9 12 13 17	Research Services, Queen Mary Innovation, Research Managers, Communications Team
	Promote and encourage participation in projects that can help deliver the sustainable development goals, including opportunities for collaboration and partnership.	9 12 13 17	Research Services, Queen Mary Innovation, Research Managers
Education			
As a graduate attribute, we will embed sustainability into the formal curriculum, delivered as part of the education student experience enabling plan and principles of program design.	The Sustainability Curriculum Action Network (SCAN) is formally recognised as part of the sustainability governance structure by the end of 2024/25 academic year, meeting quarterly starting in the 2025/26 financial year.	4 13	Careers and Enterprise, Queen Mary Academy
	Develop formal guidance, supporting staff to embed sustainability into their curriculum by the end of the 2025/26 academic year, in context of key documents such as the Employability Framework.	4 10	Queen Mary Academy, Sustainability Team, Careers and Enterprise, Office of the Principal
	Re-start Queen Mary as a Living Lab within the curriculum, equipping students to deliver projects supporting local challenges by end of the 2026/27 academic year.	4 11 13 17	Careers and Enterprise
Ensure students and staff have access to training and opportunities to learn about sustainability.	Co-create a university-wide sustainability short-course available to both students and staff, as a HEAR approved activity by the beginning of the 2026/27 academic year.	4 5 10 11 13	Queen Mary Academy, Office of the Principal
	Following the delivery of IEMA's Introduction to Net Zero course in the first half of 2025, assess the possibility of expanding CPD opportunities for staff by adding IEMA's Environmental Sustainability Skills for the Workforce and Environmental Sustainability Skills for Managers courses, based on demand and finances.	4 11 13 17	Sustainability Team

Right table:

Headline Objectives	Targets	SDGs supported	Ownership
Continue to enhance the employability of our students in the environmental sustainability sector.	Work with the employability team to strengthen sector relationships by the end of the 2026/27 academic year.	8	Office of the Principal, Careers and Enterprise
	Continue to collaborate with the Students' Union and Queen Mary Enterprise team to deliver opportunities upskilling students (e.g., Skills Award Sessions, QMIncubator) with an annual update on progress.	8 13	Office of the Principal, Careers and Enterprise, Queen Mary Students' Union
Operations			
Energy and carbon emissions			
Support the government to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050.	Develop a carbon management plan, published on the website by the end of the 2026 calendar year.	7 9 11 12 13	Sustainability Team, Engineering and Estates, Campus Services, Finance
	Develop a Heat Decarbonisation Plan for Queen Mary's managed estate by the end of the 2026/27 financial year.	7 9 11 13	Engineering and Estates, Sustainability Team
	Reduce consumption of energy by 20% by the end of the 2027/28 financial year against 2023/24, looking to increase energy supply from renewable sources (if PPAs are available).	7 11 12 13	Engineering and Estates, Sustainability Team
	Reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions (tCO2e) by 18% by the end of the 2027/28 financial year against 2023/24 emissions.	7 9 11 12 13	Engineering and Estates, Sustainability Team
	Improve the capture, monitoring and reporting of scope 3 emissions, establishing baselines by the beginning of the 2027/28 financial year and consider appropriate approach to management and mitigation.	11 12 13	Sustainability Committee, Sustainability Team
Waste and resource management			
Reduce overall annual volume of waste generated, maximise recycling rates and promote a circular economy approach.	Develop a Waste and Resource Strategy and Action plan, published on the website by the end of 2025/2026 financial year.	12 13	Sustainability Team, Campus Services
	Reduce operational waste generated annually to achieve an overall reduction of 10% by the end of the 2027/28 financial year against 2023/24 figures, with associated reduction in scope 3 carbon emissions.	12 13	Campus Services, Sustainability Team, Commercial Services
	Achieve a minimum annual recycling rate above 50% by the end of the 2026/27 financial year for non-hazardous waste, with zero non-hazardous waste sent to landfill.	12 13	Campus Services, Sustainability Team
Sustainable food and catering			
Increase the sustainability of food and surrounding practices.	Increase the sustainability of our hospitality services, including the continued offer of vegan and vegetarian options, and look to introduce carbon labelling of food.	3 12 13	Commercial Services
	Roll-out ReUser cups across all UK-based campuses, including containers by the end of the 2027/28 financial year.	3 12 13	Commercial Services, Sustainability Team
	Implement the Food Made Good action plan and achieve 2* rating by the end of the 2027/28 financial year.	3 11 12 13	Commercial Services, Sustainability Team

Headline Objectives	Targets	SDGs supported	Ownership
Ethical investment			
Continue to review the university investment portfolio and banking to align with ethical investment.	Review and update the Investment Policy Statement by June 2025.	1 8 10 11 12 13 16	Chief Financial Officer
Water			
Improve infrastructure, monitoring and awareness of water supply use to deliver an overall reduction and improve efficiency.	Improve monitoring of water consumption through Automatic Meter Readers on water meters and by getting water surveys completed. Establish a water consumption baseline, with a specific reduction target to be agreed with SET by the end of the 2025/26 financial year and included in the Action Plan.	6 12 13	Estates and Facilities, Sustainability Team
Biodiversity			
Maintain, enhance and promote green spaces across campus.	Develop and start implementing a Biodiversity action plan across our UK campuses, informed by campus biodiversity assessment by the end of the 2027/28 financial year and drawing on our academic expertise in this area.	3 6 11 13 15	Campus Services, Sustainability Team, Capital Projects
Encourage more interaction with biodiversity in and around UK campuses (ongoing).	Continue to support and engage with the wider internal and external community on biodiversity each term, supporting our Civic University Agreement objectives.	11 12 15	Office of the Principal, Sustainability Team
Travel and transport			
Increase awareness and adoption of sustainable travel options amongst students and staff.	Develop a Sustainable Travel Policy, with input from the Research Innovation Board, and agreed by the Sustainability Committee and SET by the end of the 2026 calendar year.	11 13	Office of the Principal, Sustainability Team
Construction and refurbishment			
Embed sustainable practice into all construction and refurbishment projects from conception to completion.	Aim to achieve BREEAM "Excellent" rating for new buildings and BREEAM "Good" and/or SKA Silver rating for refurbishment projects year on year.	9 11	Capital Projects
	Capture and record accurate waste data related to all construction and refurbishment projects.	9 11	Capital Projects, Sustainability Team
	Develop a Sustainability Design Guide, published on the website by the end of the 2026/27 financial year.	9 11	Capital Projects, Sustainability Team
Sustainable procurement			
Develop sustainable procurement guidance for staff.	Create sustainable procurement guidelines across categories for staff, by the end of the 2026 calendar year.	1 12	Procurement, Sustainability Team
Improve the sustainability of our supply chain, contributing to carbon reduction targets.	Embed and implement the Social Value TOMS framework into tender processes and establish a target for the 2025/26 financial year once we have baseline data for 2024/25 .	1 2 5 8 10 11 12 13 17	Procurement, Sustainability Team
	Review and identify top suppliers by spend and environmental impact. Engage with the top 10 key suppliers by 2027/28 to improve carbon footprint data quality and reduce the carbon intensity of purchased products, and ensure they have carbon reduction plans.	8 12 13	Procurement, Sustainability Team
Improve the sustainability of lab and medical equipment procurement.	Encourage researchers to consider the environmental sustainability of project-related purchases.	12 14 15	Principal Investigators and Research Managers, Procurement, Sustainability Team
	Investigate feasibility of lab and medical resource sharing and evaluate financial feasibility of single-use plastic alternatives.	12	Faculty Directors of Operations, Procurement

Headline Objectives	Targets	SDGs supported	Ownership
Governance			
Have a renewed, approved and functional governance structure for sustainability at Queen Mary.	Active Sustainability Committee meeting quarterly from 2025, with supporting governance structure.	11 12 13 16	Sustainability Committee, Office of the Principal
Integrate the principles of sustainable development into all aspects of our operations.	Maintain presence of sustainability on the Queen Mary University strategic risk register, reviewed bi-annually at the beginning of the financial and calendar years.	11 13	Sustainability Committee, Office of the Principal
	Maintain a certified ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System (EMS), with continual improvement of the university's environmental performance.	11 13	Sustainability Team
CIVIC Community Involvement and Engagement			
Finalise the engagement plan.	Finalise an engagement plan identifying key objectives and engagement areas across all pillars by the end of the 2025/26 financial year, with workstream leads.	1 13	Sustainability Team, External Relations, Workstream Leads
Collaborate with key stakeholders on sustainability plans and targets across East London.	Identifying areas for action and collaboration, including through the East London Civic Action Network. Build connections and engage with leaders from local councils and community groups (e.g., Tower Hamlets Greening Growing and Biodiversity Subgroup) at least once per term.	1 11 13 17	Sustainability Team, Office of the Principal, External Relations
Represent Queen Mary on East London sustainability and Climate emergency groups/ strategies/boards.	Engage with sector-wide networks (EAUC, LH, Tower Hamlets Climate Partnership, etc.) at least once a term.	11 13 17	Sustainability Team, Workstream Leads
Establish baseline student understanding of sustainability.	Take part in the annual SOS Sustainability Skills survey and other relevant surveys (e.g. making used of those from EAUC). Identify other mechanisms through which to gather insights from the [student] Queen Mary community.	13	Queen Mary Students' Union, External Relations, Sustainability Team, Student Experience
Increased awareness and visibility of Queen Mary's Sustainability activities for both internal and external audiences, building on reputation.	Develop a sustainability communications strategy and calendar of key milestones by the end of 2025/2026 financial year.	13 11	Office of the Principal, Sustainability Team, External Relations
	Improve position in key sustainability rankings (such as QS) year on year through commitment to sustainability.	13 16	Sustainability Team, Office of the Principal, External Relations
	Deliver a COP report including both an external facing comms piece and internal learnings/actions by the end of January each year.	9 13 16	Office of the Principal, External Relations, International Office, Research and Innovation
	Align key Queen Mary Activity across the three core strategic pillars with the SDGs, to be reviewed annually.	11 13 17	Office of the Principal, Sustainability Team, Workstream Leads
	Deliver key behaviour change campaigns and initiatives annually, including, but not limited to Climate Action Week.	11 12 13	Sustainability Team, External Relations, Office of the Principal, Workstream Leads
Increased offering of sustainability engagement and learning opportunities for students and staff.	Update the Staff Induction Checklist to include key sustainability documentation and information for staff. This will be reviewed by the end of the 2025/26 financial year, and a decision will be made by the VP of Policy and Strategic Partnerships on introducing mandatory sustainability training for all staff.	11 12 13	Human Resources, Sustainability Team
	Continue to work with the Students' Union and local organisations to deliver sustainability volunteering activities annually.	1 2 3 5 10 11 13	Office of the Principal, Sustainability Team, Queen Mary Students' Union

The climate emergency requires a diversity of ideas, perspectives, and approaches if we are to overcome it.

No single institution, company, or government holds all the answers. Lasting solutions will only come through collaboration, innovation, and shared commitment, using the SDGs as a shared blueprint for action.

At Queen Mary, we remain committed to nurturing the ideas, technologies and leadership that the future demands. Our community of students, staff, and partners from all walks of life, are at the heart of this – bringing together knowledge, creativity and lived experience that will help shape a more sustainable and just future.

qmul.ac.uk/about/sustainability

Appendix C – Energy and carbon emissions

Scope	Source	Unit	% reduction against 18/19	% reduction against 22/23	Total amount 2023/24	tCO$_2$e 2023/24	Total amount 2022/23	tCO$_2$e 2022/23	Total amount 2021/22	tCO$_2$e 2021/22	Total amount 2020/21	tCO$_2$e 2020/21	Total amount 2019/20	tCO$_2$e 2019/20	Total amount 2018/19	tCO$_2$e 2018/19
Scope 1	Natural gas	kWh	12.77	4.06	26,694,109	4,883	27,793,531	5,090	30,090,308	5,511	30,090,308	5,437	28,539,358	5,247	30,431,855	5,598
	Fleet (owned/operated)	Litres	-66.47%	7.91%	4,064	10	4,358	11	4,684	12	3,540	9	1,878	5	2,319	6
	Refrigerants & researched-based f-gas, VOC	Kg					130	248								
	Other fuels (heating oil/ gas oil/ petrol)	Litres	20.49%	-44.04%	7,976	22	5,531	15	12,683	34	15,097	41	12,080	33	9,305	28
	Total Scope 1		12.73%	3.92%		4,915		5,116		5,545		5,478		5,280		5,632
Scope 2	Purchased Electricity (kWh) location-based carbon footprint	kWh	31.81%	-7.86%	34,673,041	7,180	34,424,203	6,657	32,895,178	6,985	30,560,272	7,125	31,972,683	8,172	37,198,130	10,530
	Total Scope 2 (location based)		31.81%	-7.86%		7,180		6,657		6,985		7,125		8,198		10,530
	Total scopes 1 and 2					**12,265**		**11,773**		**12,530**		**12,603**		**13,452**		**16,162**
Scope 3	Fuel- and energy- related activities	*various*	1.46%	0.81%	-	3,197	-	3,223	-	3,738	-	2,764	-	2,620	-	3,245
	Waste generated in operations	Tonnes			1,066	20	1,072	20	698	15	439	9	631	13	991	21
	Business Travel	passenger.km	-45.03%	-138.6%	28,435,377	8,887	17,473,664	3,724	5,158,122	901	497,403	606	14,208,207	3,008	25,022,347	6,128

Table 1 – Greenhouse gas emissions by source in tonnes of CO$_2$e.

Notes: Energy data is only for UK campuses; West Smithfield campus has been estimated for consumption between 18/19 and 21/22 due to lack of data. Contribution of 50% of total electricity consumption from the Institute of Technology included in the calculations. Refrigerants data is not included in the scope 1 totals, although it's listed on the table for 22/23. Data from fuel used in generators is not included in 'Other fuels'. Business travel data from Key Travel (it does not include travel claimed via expenses/ p cards).

	Mile end		Whitechapel & Chislehurst		Charterhouse Sq.		Dept W		Institute of Technology		Lincoln Inn Fields		West Smithfield		TOTAL ANNUAL	
	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity	Gas	Electricity (kWh)	Gas (kWh)
2018/19	21,841,625	16,538,035	8,099,750	7,185,721	6,787,737	6,507,339	0.00	0.00		0.00	80,838	0.00	388,180	200,760	37,198,130	30,431,855
2019/20	18,036,903	15,197,409	7,480,830	6,844,336	6,098,538	6,252,957	0.00	0.00		0.00	67,692	0.00	288,720	244,656	31,972,683	28,539,358
2020/21	17,126,114	15,357,617	6,822,157	7,525,957	6,234,495	6,540,097	153,315	0.00		0.00	61,353	0.00	162,838	147,294	30,560,272	29,570,965
2021/22	18,550,726	16,127,003	7,282,910	6,818,983	6,132,225	6,806,502	459,268	0.00	0.00	0.00	181,330	0.00	288,720	337,820	32,895,178	30,090,308
2022/23	18,575,397	14,633,338	7,958,662	6,784,584	6,423,759	6,163,661	539,706	0.00	86,625	0.00	551,335	0.00	288,720	300,205	34,424,203	27,881,788
2023/24	**19,233,647**	**14,739,240**	**7,556,109**	**6,047,511**	**6,298,036**	**5,567,601**	**542,808**	**0.00**	**160,450**	**0.00**	**493,813**	**0.00**	**388,180**	**339,758**	**34,673,042**	**26,694,109**

Table 2. Electricity and gas consumption (in kWh) by QM campus between 2018/19 baseline and 2023/24.

Notes: Electricity consumption for Robin Brook (West Smithfield) between 2018/19 and 2021/22 has been estimated due to lack of data. Electricity consumption for Institute of Technology calculated as 50% of the total, as the building is used in partnership with Newham College, split matches the agreed financial share of bills. IQ East and Ilford campus not included due to lack of data.

Waste Type	2018/19 EfW, tonnes	2018/19 Recycled, tonnes	2019/20 EfW, tonnes	2019/20 Recycled, tonnes	2020/21 EfW, tonnes	2020/21 Recycled, tonnes	2021/22 EfW, tonnes	2021/22 Recycled, tonnes	2022/23 EfW, tonnes	2022/23 Recycled, tonnes	2023/24 EfW, tonnes	2023/24 Recycled, tonnes
Bywaters												
Waste for Incineration	574.328		418.285		294.559		391.952		594.308		554.319	
Bulky Waste		78.46		101.96		88.53		117.48		63.16		59.27
Dry Mixed Recycling (include. cardboard & glass)		310.733		81.33		39.107		161.542		254.56		307.866
Food Waste		25.059		23.003		15.096		23.649		29.80		41.556
Edible Oil and Fat		1.56		2.028		2.028		2.041		1.91		1.618
WEEE		0		3.975		0		0.12		9.03		1.071
Fluorescent tubes & low energy - exclud. LED		0		0.386				0.136		0.35		0.247
Domestic seating waste containing POPs	0		0		0		0		0		6.5	
Others (Non-Haz)		0.75						1.34				
Hazardous Products			0.221									
Total	574.33	416.56	418.51	212.68	294.56	144.76	391.95	306.31	594.31	358.81	560.82	411.63
% Recycling		42.04		33.70		32.95		43.87		37.65		42.33

Table 3 – Waste figures for waste streams collected by Bywaters (in tonnes).

Note: WEEE data only for waste collected by Bywaters. Waiting for data from Stonegroup.

Supporting Information 1 – Energy reduction detail

In 2023/24, electricity use was reduced by 897,257 kWh across several key buildings, mainly due to BMS optimisation, improved scheduling, lower demand, and building works. Notable savings came from:

- Joseph Priestly: –244,005 kWh
- John Vane Science Centre: –177,604 kWh
- Whitechapel Student Union: –163,093 kWh
- Innovation Centre: –150,573 kWh
- Informatics Teaching Labs: –161,982 kWh
- Gas consumption also fell by 1,187,679 kWh, primarily due to a milder winter and BMS improvements.

Supporting information 2 – Energy Increase detail

Electricity savings in 2023/24 were partially offset by increased consumption in some buildings, mainly due to higher occupancy, changes in use, and control system issues. Key examples contributing to a total **increase** of 1,273,161 kWh include:

- Francis Bancroft: +828,393 kWh, driven by the relocation of the Biological Services Unit (BSU).

- Mile End Library Extension: +157,408 kWh (electricity) and +213,009 kWh (gas), due to the new extension opening in September 2023 and issues with air handling unit controls.