Our vision is to enhance our social, economic and physical environments by embedding sustainability into the University’s core business.
About this report
As sustainability and social impact span the full range of the University’s activities, the achievements presented herewith represent the combined efforts of staff and students across many departments. It is not an exhaustive report, rather a celebration of progress and an explanation of our current and future direction as steered by University strategy, student expectations and national and international policy and need.

*Please note that whilst this Report has been prepared by the University’s Social Impact Team for the academic year 2017/18, it also uses data from the previous EMR reporting year (2016/17).

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Foreword by Professor Jon Scott, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Experience)

We are proud to present the first Social Impact annual report which highlights a University shift away from ‘Sustainability’ in its more commonly recognisable form of environmental management, towards a more encompassing definition that allows us to include embedding good sustainable practice within our teaching, research and engagement work. As such, this Report covers a broader spectrum of activity than in previous years.

The Social Impact Strategy is underpinned by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the University was proud to be one of the first signatories of the SDG Accord, demonstrating our commitment to making a positive difference to local, national and global issues. This annual report will be accompanied by our inaugural SDG Annual Report which presents a comprehensive account of how the University is contributing to each of the 17 Global Goals.

Fundamentally the University of Leicester is committed to minimising our own negative environmental impact whilst maximising the positive impact our teaching and research and engagement activities have locally and globally as we believe that universities have a moral obligation as well as the expertise to lead the way in tackling today’s complex challenges.
Social Impact Strategy

The social and sustainability agenda is now so large on the world stage that students are increasingly expecting their institutions to make bold environmental and social choices and to provide them with teaching on this important area, regardless of their chosen subject. Furthermore, large research opportunities exist for solutions to social problems. Thus, a socially-aware, sustainable University is efficient, effective, attractive and future-proof.

Under the two University Discovery-led strategies (Learning & Teaching Strategy and Research & Enterprise Strategy) are eight Discovery-enabling strategies, one of which is the Social Impact Strategy. We now report to the Strategy Support Group, which feeds directly to the University Leadership Team and Council.

The Social Impact strategy is structured under five themes – Leadership, Environmental Management, Education, Research and Community. All have priorities to achieve and indicators to measure and illustrate our progress in a thorough Implementation Plan.

Unlike other enabling strategies, the Social Impact Strategy is not largely delivered by any one department as it covers every aspect of University operation, making it an ambitious and exciting piece of work that facilitates cross-department collaborations and coordinates activities. Identifying existing work and collating it has been a major task in compiling this first report, through which we have unearthed many interesting opportunities.
Mapping our Social Impact

Social impact is a complex area that runs across every aspect of the University. At Leicester we defined it using the UN Sustainable Development Goals, developed in 2015 by world leaders as a blueprint for governments, organisations and the general public to work together to end poverty, fight inequality and stop climate change.

We have spent a large part of 2017/18 mapping the University’s contribution to the Global Goals, the findings of which are reported in a separate document and summarised below.
Leadership

Strategic Commitment:

We will provide University-wide leadership to ensure social impact is embedded throughout the institution’s operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All strategic decisions made within the University will consider the</td>
<td>Social Impact section now included in ULT report template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social and sustainability implications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will encourage all staff to take ownership of the targets set out in</td>
<td>University has joined the SDG Accord and UN Global Compact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Social Impact Implementation Plan and seek ways to incorporate</td>
<td>SDGs being publicised to highlight Social Impact and its relevance to University members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social impact in their own areas of work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will consider ethical issues when making financial decisions such</td>
<td>Ethical Finance Policy produced and Sustainable Procurement Guidance has been updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as procurement and investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will provide sustainable food options at our sites</td>
<td>Sustainable Food Policy produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing project to achieve Food for Life accreditation across University catering outlets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key stats:

Won Highly Commended Green Gown Award for Continuous Improvement

Also shortlisted for Sustainability Champion for Dr Sarah Gretton

Ethical Investment Policy

The University did not have a formal policy that considered ethical investment so when the Endowments Investment Policy was being renewed, it was agreed to include an ethical investments policy.

The new policy commits us to investing our endowment funds on a responsible basis, taking into account the concerns of the Social Impact Strategy.

In addition, the University has allocated 11% of the endowment funds to Impact Investments across the themes of resource efficiency, clean energy, financial services, healthcare and education. This allocation will be built out over a number of vintage years to ensure an appropriate diversification of managers and underlying investments.
Environmental Management

Strategic Commitment:
We will continue to embed environmental sustainability within Estates operations, to reduce carbon emissions and to encourage and facilitate staff, students and visitors to do the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will take a responsible approach to new developments and refurbishments and be sensitive to the environment in any project we undertake.</td>
<td>The Sustainable Construction Guidelines have been updated and a ‘soft landings’ approach is now in operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our carbon emissions to reduce annually</td>
<td>CRC carbon emissions saving of 13% for 2017/18 vs 2010/11 (baseline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our campus facilitates staff, students and visitors to make sustainable choices</td>
<td>We are reviewing our waste targets to make them more challenging and investing in improved signage and behavioural campaigns. Our sustainable travel infrastructure continues to grow, from improved cycle paths and shelters to video conferencing programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will continue to be ‘responsible landlords’ by enhancing and enjoying biodiversity at the University.</td>
<td>The Biodiversity Action Plan is underway and is integral to the Leicester for Life policy that is part of the campus masterplan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key stats:

**Biodiversity**
- First integral bird box installed in University building
- Official partners with 2 new groups – Urban Buzz and Leicester Swift Project
- 1 new wildlife pond and 8 new food planters

**Carbon, Energy and Water**
- Achieved Triple Carbon Saver Gold standard reducing our carbon emissions, waste and water
- Total carbon emissions decreased by 12% for 2016/17 vs 2015/16 (scopes 1 & 2)
- CRC carbon emissions saving of 13% for 2017/18 vs 2010/11 (baseline)
- David Wilson Library lighting replacement 1,280,785 KWh Annual Saving (564 KG CO2 / Annum). Project started July ‘18 and will be completed 5–6 years time

**Travel**
- 73% staff and 11% students responded to the Uni travel surveys
- 22% of staff and 60% of students commute on foot

**Waste**
- Already met the 2020 strategic targets set in the SI Strategy KPIs:
  - Achieve 50% on-site segregation of waste for recycling (by weight) by 2020
    - Achieved – current rate – 55%
  - Achieve 95% diversion from landfill (by weight) by 2020
    - Achieved – current rate – 97%
- New, more ambitious targets are currently being established
Focus on:

Leicester for Life

Leicester for Life is a promise by our University to uphold our motto ‘So that they may have life.’ It is a commitment to create and enhance space for a diversity of life – human and non-human alike. This year, it was approved as a design approach for development projects to deliver a healthier and more sustainable campus, which is self-assessed against an IIIS grading (Interesting, Immersive and Interactive Sites).

We’re safeguarding nature and wildlife by embedding specialist guidance into our University development processes. The Innovation Hub was our first building to have an in-built integral bird box and was based on the Leicester for Life model. This Biodiversity Design Guide is just the first document to be agreed on and next year’s report should look forward to an update on new guides to be selected – from waste to environmental wellbeing.

We’ve officially partnered with the Leicester Swift Project and Urban Buzz Leicester to support at-risk species and reach out to the community. Urban Buzz are providing us with equipment and courses to help us create 5 new wildflower sites in October. The Leicester Swift Group have opportunities for student research in specialist conservation techniques, which will help educate and excite community members.

Focus on:

Carbon Saver Triple Standard

The University of Leicester celebrates a decade of dedication to sustainability.

The University is audited by the Carbon Saver accreditation body every other year and for 2018 we have achieved a Triple Gold Standard for reducing our waste, water consumption and carbon emissions. This year, the University of Leicester celebrates the Decade of Achievement Award for our dedication to reducing our carbon emissions over the last ten years. This is a clear indication of the hard work and effort taken to accomplish this across the University of Leicester and we will continue to make strides in making our campus sustainable.

The University Of Leicester has achieved the following certificates for 2018:

- Carbon Saver Certificate (11 years)
- Waste Saver Certificate (5 years)
- Water Saver Certificate (5 years)
- Decade of Achievement Award
- Triple Crown Sustainability
Education for Sustainable Development

Strategic Commitment:
We are committed to promoting social impact and sustainability through the delivery of a curriculum which provides our students with the opportunity to learn more about social impact issues and involve themselves in projects for the benefit of communities or society as a whole.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All our students to be aware of and inspired by the University's commitment to social impact.</td>
<td>SDG Events and Campaigns – NUS Survey results show that we are improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All our students to have access to formal and informal opportunities to learn more about social impact issues</td>
<td>An audit of all modules has been carried out to identify all SDG-related teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will develop a curriculum which helps students to develop the skills required to solve today's global challenges</td>
<td>ESD is now formally within the Education Excellence Programme and a strategy is being prepared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key stats:

- 2800 learners on the Concepts in Sustainable Development MOOC from over 160 countries
- 92% of the courses have at least some level of ESD within them (within the Intended Learning Outcomes and/or Transferable Skills Framework)
- 134 out of 154 programmes contain sustainability teaching - with 71% of UG students and 83% PG students receiving SDG-related teaching
- We’ve had 1812 responses to the NUS Skills Survey in the last 3 years, one of the highest responses in the UK
- Leicester scored 100% for ESD in the People and Planet University League
Focus on:

Concepts in Sustainable Development MOOC

3,343 people worldwide registered for the Concepts in Sustainable Development MOOC, a multi-disciplinary look at sustainable development and touches on topics such as complexity, entropy and inequalities. The course ran over 6 weeks with content being delivered by a series of short video lectures, articles and external resources for further learning. The course was open to the general public and was accessed through Futurelearn which allowed a global audience. This resulted in an engaging discussion in the comments section after every step.

The MOOC will be run again in 2019.

Focus on:

Curriculum Transformation

As part of the wider Curriculum Transformation (CT) project, an audit was carried out to identify existing sustainability-related teaching and opportunities to incorporate more ESD within the undergraduate curriculum.

The modules that were identified as containing SDG-related ILOs were well spread across the institution and present in more than half (79) of the programmes in the audit's scope.

This was a useful baselining exercise although it wasn't without methodological issues.
Research

Strategic Commitment:
We are committed to realising and communicating the social and economic impact arising from our work. Applied and translational work is underpinned by fundamental and conceptual research – both are essential to delivering effective and sustainable impact.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will develop external links to enhance knowledge and capacity</td>
<td>A Public Engagement Strategy is currently in preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will focus our research to address today’s global challenges and ensure that it is accessible to all</td>
<td>Completed an audit of University research and mapped it against each of the Global Goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus on:

MA/MSc Marketing

Over 100 Masters Marketing students completed group research projects in one of their modules, “Research Methods for Marketing”. The Social Impact Team provided a brief to understand how students at the University perceive and engage in efficient recycling practices and sustainable waste handling whilst studying at the University.

They carried out preliminary studies and presented their research methods to 3 members of the Social Impact Team, who picked the winning presenters. A range of different research methods were proposed, from focus groups to using ethnography. Afterwards, the students wrote reports about their studies and findings, as well as providing recommendations for future campaigns, such as putting coloured stickers on packaging to match the bin colours.

Focus on:

Research in Action

Over the past year, an intern was employed to research the implementation of the Living Lab approach at the University of Leicester, which has been named “Research in Action”. Research has been done by looking at other universities’ Living Labs approaches and meeting with Leicester’s stakeholders to investigate the most effective way to implement Living Labs at the University. Mapping of expertise, resources and potential process have been done to visualise how the Living Labs process can work. Projects have been done with Marketing and Biology students, as well as presentations to Mathematics and Museum Studies students.

Over the next year, further work will be done on establishing the process and to widen the reach by working with the Education Excellence programme to add weight, provide structure and academic expertise.
Focus on: Leicester Matters

Leicester Matters brought together the local community and academics at the University of Leicester to jointly identify pressing issues facing communities across Leicester.

We showcased the excellent collaborations already taking place across Leicester and within the University, including an insightful opening by Professor Turi King on why public engagement is so important to universities and what it does for research and for communities.

Our keynote speaker, Claire Plumb from the Leicester Masaya Link Group gave an inspiring talk on how the organisation has supported capacity building development projects in Nicaragua for thirty years. By developing a town twinning link between Leicester and Masaya, the organisation has provided local learning opportunities on how to collaborate towards a more sustainable future.

The Leicester Matters engagement day concluded with a workshop where academics formed teams to address specific challenges and propose action plans. The best plan will be awarded funding to conduct their project.
Community

Strategic Commitment:
We are committed to making a difference to society through our research, our teaching, our outreach programme, our contribution to the environment, and by encouraging our students and graduates to make a positive impact.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will take our responsibility to society seriously, as an employer</td>
<td>We are now a principle partner in the Leicester Citizens movement. A full economic and social impact study is being carried out to monitor our local and national impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and a good neighbour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will support our students to be responsible citizen and an active</td>
<td>We run several UN SDG-related events each year. We provide a huge variety of extra-curricular and volunteering opportunities through the Leicester Award programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part of society, both locally and globally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will create a welcoming, culturally and environmentally vibrant</td>
<td>The Leicester for Life policy has been established to further the work we have begun with Urban Buzz and other pollinators to make our campus attractive – to all species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will open out the knowledge resource of the University to the wider</td>
<td>The Social Impact Enablers Programme is being developed with the Innovation Hub to use University expertise and resources to help SMEs to be more environmentally sustainable. We are developing more physical and digital signage to communicate our expertise and ‘open our doors’ to the local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community for two-way opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key stats:

The Social Impact Team now has over 1500 followers on Twitter and over 650 on Facebook, including:
- Over 55 interactions on Twitter for the 12 days of SDGs posts
- Over 350 interactions with Exit Week on Facebook

Over 1400 society students were engaged in SSWG-related activities

1290 students completed the Leicester Award

There are 55 current activities recognised on the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)

2034 students completed at least 1 activity recognised on the HEAR
Focus on:

Exit Week

The first ever University of Leicester Exit Week theme was the Global Goals. It provided students with an opportunity to enhance their CV, get involved with volunteering opportunities and celebrate their successes throughout the previous academic year – all under the banner of the SDGs, which gave students the impetus to recognise their individual contributions to the goals now and in the future.

Exit Week

Global Goals, Local action.

This was an opportunity for students to showcase the projects and work they had done throughout the academic year relating to the Global Goals to fellow staff and students.

The purpose of the day was to celebrate student projects, success and ideas; challenge the status quo, what can and should we be doing?

Keynote speakers, student project showcases and a delicious fully vegan, low carbon footprint buffet were followed by the highly anticipated debate on ‘Should the University of Leicester be plastic free?’

The debate was a lively discussion with both sides making some excellent points towards the plastic argument. From the ‘Against’ team, key points being raised included the need for better education regarding plastic as it is in almost everything. It is very hard to ban something that has become ingrained into our society especially with the mass consumerism attitude we have created.

This idea of mass consumerism further expanded the debate, exploring that plastic is not necessarily the issue, it is the waste disposal that needs to be examined more. Plastic has reached the headlines because of the littering in the oceans, not because of the material itself - if you solve the waste and the problem of plastic is reduced.
Our sector performance

Many of our competitors have invested in their sustainability strategies recognising it as both an efficient way to run the organisation and a draw to students, particularly the international market.

The following table shows our P&P League position in each category against the top performing universities of our competitor group. The main areas we now need to work on are Carbon Management, which has been addressed by the publication of the revised Carbon Management Plan in August 2017, sustainable food and the introduction of an Environmental Management System, which is currently in preparation.

Our AUDE Green Scorecard shows that we are performing fairly well in carbon management, waste and management. We are underperforming in procurement, biodiversity and water where we have set high but attainable targets. Areas we can improve in are travel (due to a lack of public transport availability and increases in parking spaces) and adaptation.

Four of our closest competitors submitted to the UI GreenMetric World University Ranking (Universitas Indonesia). Nottingham came second, we came 39th.

What’s next in 2018/19?

- SDG Report – the first University of Leicester annual report on our contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Social Impact in partnership with the Education Excellence programme to bring a new improved programme of Living Labs and ESD opportunities for students, based on their feedback.
- Social Impact Enablers – collaborative programme with the Innovation Hub to bring students and local business together to tackle sustainability and social challenges.
- Leicester University Loves Plastics! – University-wide collaboration tackling over-dependency on plastics.
- Digital Campus project introducing a dedicated App to develop a more immersive, interactive campus using existing technology to showcase our SI credentials.