



# sustainability Report 2020

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OBE, Vice Chancellor & Chief Executive

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Chief Operating Officer

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# welcome

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As a future focused, innovative Higher Education institution, Falmouth University has a responsibility to drive positive behavioural change and sustainable thinking within our students and staff. We must lead the way – in our choices, actions, and teaching – towards a sustainable future.

We recognise the threat that climate change poses to the environment and communities, both locally and globally, which is why sustainability plays a key role in our 2030 Strategy. It is clear that the world needs creative minds and courageous choices like never before, and Falmouth is perfectly positioned to help the leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow find new solutions in order to protect our planet.

In response to the threats to the natural world, Falmouth University declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019. Since then, we have developed the Falmouth University Sustainability Policy – a roadmap to galvanise the University's efforts to use its resources, research and knowledge for the protection and benefit of our environment.

The policy, which was created in collaboration with staff, students and partners, follows three key themes of Learning & Teaching, Environment & Operations and People & Behaviours. We have set clear goals for each of these themes – in order to improve both our immediate environment and to support the people, places and organisations we work with.

As an anchor institution in the region, we must also help deliver Cornwall Council's Climate Change Action Plan to achieve carbon neutrality across the county by 2030. We have a part to play in supporting the creation of greener thinking businesses and individuals, because responding to the climate emergency and promoting sustainable development within Cornwall is the shared responsibility of us all.

This is why our sustainability policy goes beyond simple energy-saving initiatives and green procurement processes. Our policy has been designed to help our students to prepare for the future economy and to understand the significance of sustainability within it.

By embedding sustainability in everything we do – in our teaching, our pedagogy, our ethos and in the behaviours we nurture – we aim to arm our students and our staff with the tools to face a changing world and to play their part in making it a better one.

**PROFESSOR ANNE CARLISLE OBE**  
**VICE-CHANCELLOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

# An unprecedented year

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## WELCOME

The last academic year has been like no other. In 2019, the global spotlight turned to the environment, and caused a groundswell of support for sustainability, biodiversity and calls to stop climate change. Then coronavirus took hold.

As you will see from this report, the pandemic has had a marked impact on our ambitions for sustainability this year. The sudden shift to online and then blended learning has pushed back our plans to fully integrate sustainability in our learning and teaching models and hampered our ability to shape an on campus community culture of sustainability.

However, we have taken important steps to reduce on campus carbon emissions, to decrease plastic consumption and to encourage green behaviours – in spite of, and because of, social distancing measures.

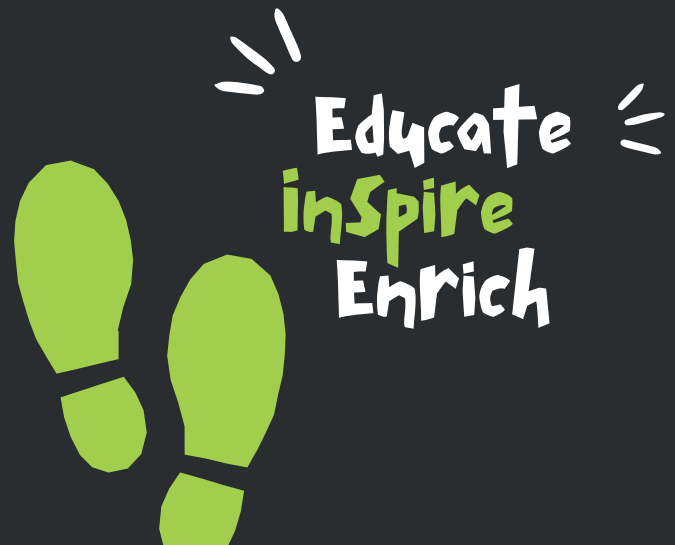
Home working has caused us to accelerate our plans for more flexible, efficient ways of working and has helped us to assess how we can make best use of our on campus assets.

The COVID 19 pandemic has also enabled us to step away from day to day campus operations and instead devote time to planning future sustainability targets and actions. As a result, we have co developed a 2030 Environment & Climate Emergency Response Plan & Policy, which will help us deliver sustainability within teams and departments across the theme of Environment & Operations.

This year, we have undertaken a great deal of work to map and understand our environmental impact and develop benchmarking that will enable us to track and drive our activity in future years. This work has given us a strong foundation on which to build our sustainability activities, particularly in regard to the themes of Learning & Teaching, and People & Behaviours.

With every step, we're driving transformative change. By utilising our resources to maximum effect, providing forward-thinking leadership, world-class facilities and inspirational surroundings, we are delivering value for the institution, for our students and for our community.

**PETER COX**  
**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**





# Theme 1: Learning & Teaching

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We believe we can make a difference through education, which is why we're firmly placing sustainability at the heart of our learning and teaching. We're creating assignments, challenges and modules focused on sustainable innovation, along with whole courses developed to meet the needs of a more sustainable world.

We believe that the scale and importance of the climate challenge is best addressed by genuinely and authentically embedding sustainability in our core pedagogy and in every course in the most relevant manner possible. This principle was formally endorsed by Academic Board during the 2019/20 academic year.

We have commenced a transformational project to deliver a common integrated academic framework for the start of the 2022/23 academic year in which sustainability is integrated in a "real life" and industry relevant manner from the very outset.

*"Through bold leadership and in alignment with Government and industry, we will put environmental issues at the forefront of our teaching and learning. We recognise the role we can play in driving policy, changing behaviours and providing new ideas and solutions to difficult global problems."*

*"We can have the greatest impact when we equip our students with the skills and knowledge to make a difference in the businesses and industries that they will shape in the future. Therefore, this theme focuses on how we embed sustainable practice and climate literacy into our teaching and learning."*

## Goal 1

Design our curriculum to include sustainability learning outcomes



**courses accredited by  
A Greener Festival**

We've partnered with the Eden Project – a recognised world leader in sustainability – to create courses centred on sustainability. The Sustainable Tourism Management BA (Hons) and the Sustainable Festival Management BA (Hons) courses are the first in the world to

be accredited by A Greener Festival. They both include a year spent at the pioneering visitor attraction, allowing students to get hands on experience in the industry – promoting sustainability within the tourism and festival sectors.

## Goal 2

**Embed sustainability related projects and challenges within the curriculum**

Academic teams have created projects, challenges and briefs that stretch our students and encourage them to tackle the subject of sustainability from fresh new angles.

For example, our Graphics BA students took part in a new module this spring, allowing them to focus on the opportunities graphic designers have to amplify messages around the climate and ecological emergency. The module inspired a variety of outstanding work, from apps encouraging vegan diets, to installations highlighting ocean pollution.

In addition, 2020's annual Falmouth Illustration Forum focused on the Climate Emergency. Many attendees left the event inspired to act, both as artists and global citizens.



## Goal 3

**Ensure graduates leave Falmouth with an increased awareness of sustainability**

## A dedicated Sustainability website



We're increasing the number and variety of sustainability resources available to our students and graduates, including a centralised sustainability website, a student induction video and a new podcast. The Our Effect Podcast has been created in collaboration with our campus partner institutions Exeter University, FX Plus and the Students' Union and addresses a range of topics, from sustainable shopping to waste and recycling, green travel and sustainability in our courses.

## Goal 4

Ensure that students have an understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Ranked  
**12<sup>th</sup>**

**out of 24 institutions for student participation**

In February 2020, we took part in the SDG Teach In – putting the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of education across a week of teaching. Six academics took part, reaching 219 students overall. As a result, Falmouth University was ranked 12th out of 24 institutions for student participation.

## Looking ahead

During the 2020/21 academic year we will develop the detail of, consult upon and commence the implementation of a new common integrated academic framework. This new framework will embed education for sustainability into the learning

design of course and module narratives thereby integrating sustainability challenges into our teaching and learning practices without this looking and feeling like a bolt on to students. The new framework will also support the “doing it for real” and transdisciplinary ambitions of the 2030 Portfolio Strategy by building in two university-wide immovable cross disciplinary modules into the curriculum.

We have committed to participate in the Sustainable Development Goals Teach In event again in 2021 and will seek to build on the success in 2020 and expand the engagement in this across more courses and students.





### GENERAL WASTE

- Crisp packets
- Sandwich packaging
- Food waste
- Plastic bags
- Wooden stirrers
- Compost-able cups
- Contaminated packaging
- Tea bags

### CLEAN RECYCLING

- Drink cans and food tins
  - Mixed paper
  - Mixed cardboard
  - Plastic bottles and containers
- NO**
- Wooden stirrers
  - Compost-able cups
  - Tea bags
  - Contaminated packaging

# Theme 2: Environment & Operations

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The University will strive to integrate and balance economic, social and environmental responsibilities within all its activities. We are committed to operating as a responsible institution, addressing the challenges of sustainable development.

## Goal 1

Achieve reductions in scope 1 and 2 emissions in order to reach net zero by 2040

# 45%

reduction in scope 1 and 2 emissions to date

Despite continual growth in Falmouth's campuses and student numbers, we've reduced our total scope 1 & 2 emissions per m<sup>2</sup> GIA (direct emissions from our on campus activities, as well as indirect emissions created from energy purchased and used by the University) for the past five years. In the academic year 19/20 our

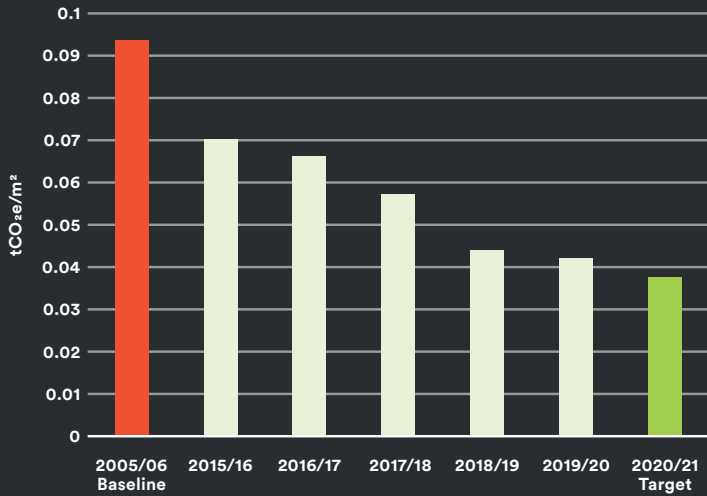
scope 1 & 2 emissions were 2,812 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, a reduction of 118 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e compared to the previous academic year.

Since 2005/06\*, Falmouth University has made commitments to comply with the latest sustainability design standards and installed the most energy efficient equipment when undertaking new builds, refurbishment and maintenance projects. In addition, we have invested significantly – and increasingly – in renewables on campus, enabling us to generate our own electricity. These key actions, as well as the decarbonisation of the National Grid's electricity over time, have enabled us to reduce our scope 1 & 2 emissions by approximately 45% to date since 2005/06.

\*Falmouth University is required by the Office for Students (Formerly HEFCE) to have a carbon management plan (CMP) in place that includes a carbon management policy or strategy. This CMP monitors our carbon reduction progress against a 2005/2006 baseline. The 2005/06 baseline date for reporting against was applied to all HEIs in 2010.



Penryn Campus Annual Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by GIA



Even taking into account the campus closures caused by COVID 19, and the huge savings in energy consumption made during this time (in April alone, we saw an estimated 41% decrease in electricity consumption and a 27% decrease in gas across both campuses, compared to the year before), we are on course to reach our target of a 50% reduction of scope 1 and 2 emissions well ahead of 2025.

We've cut out emissions through a variety of methods, including heating and energy optimisation across buildings, ventilation control in the Academy of Music and Theatre Arts building and use of electric vehicles by our Estates team. We have also switched to a 100% renewable energy tariff provider for both Penryn and Falmouth campuses.

## Goal 2

Achieve reductions in scope 3 emissions, including those from the supply chain, to reach net zero by 2050

We did not have a benchmark for scope 3 emissions, as it is challenging to measure these, so we have partnered with NETpositive Futures, and have begun using their supplier engagement tool. This will enable us to not only understand our suppliers' sustainability achievements, ambitions and challenges, but also advise them on methods of improvement, therefore increasing our indirect positive impacts through cultural change and reducing our indirect scope 3 emissions associated with our suppliers.

**100%**

electric vehicles used by our Estates team

**36%**

recycling rate across campuses



# 70%

## locally-procured food and drink

In the 2019/2020 academic year, we reached an average recycling rate of 36% across both campuses this past academic year, up 1% from the previous year.

Together with FX Plus, we have built a new 'Carbon Tracker' recording indirect emissions from our procurement, business travel, and other activities. We've also supported the investment in Greenstone environmental reporting software for FX Plus to help with the ongoing reduction of our indirect emission profile.

## Goal 3

**Improve, meet and exceed environmental legislative and regulatory requirements**

We've launched dedicated working groups to create clearly defined goals for energy and utilities, waste and recycling, sustainable travel, biodiversity, commercial operations, building and space, and the operations of the Students' Union. These working groups will identify the existing standards at Falmouth, and measure our progress against legislative and regulatory requirements, along with that of other institutions.

## Goal 4

**Maximise the biodiversity of campuses to boost regeneration and carbon sequestration**

# 4.5 acre

**increase in wildflower areas across Penryn Campus**

home to  
**163,050**  
bees

Our grounds are some of our most spectacular assets and they're a fantastic opportunity to support sustainability locally.

We have worked exceptionally hard on maximising the biodiversity of our campuses this year, with initiatives such as adding another 4.5 acres of wildflower land in the last academic year. As a result, research suggests



that the habitat of Penryn Campus supports a staggering 163,050 bees every day during the summer months according to Plantlife's 'Every Flower Counts' survey.\*

## Penryn Campus achieves a Green Flag award for the fourth year running



In November 2019, we planted 400 trees on Penryn Campus in support of the Woodland Trust's Big Climate Fightback campaign. We have also joined the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, working towards bronze level certification.

We are pleased that Penryn Campus has been recognised with the Green Flag award for the fourth year running. The award recognises best practice in parks and green spaces around the world, with a particular focus on environmental management



## Looking ahead

The big priority for this coming year is improving our data on scope 3 emissions in order to be able to better target reduction activity.

The FX Plus Estates Team has recently secured £431,000 of funding for key decarbonisation projects over next academic year, including LED lighting installations, heating, ventilation and air conditioning optimisation, and the installation of more electric vehicle points.

The closure of campuses during the COVID 19 pandemic has produced several positive outcomes in terms of limiting our environmental impact. We will be exploring a number of options to see how we can continue to capitalize on these outcomes post pandemic.

Learnings include the success of online meetings through Microsoft Teams, which means that regular home working and a reduction in business travel is now a possibility. This could mean a decrease in the amount of emissions from travel, but also an increase in staff productivity and wellbeing.

As staff and students continue a phased return to campus, we also plan to carry out a review of our campus usage. This will help us to best utilise our spaces and to identify if any facilities can be consolidated or repurposed in a more energy efficient way.



# Theme 3: People & Behaviours

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**We will seek to create a culture within the university that supports and encourages staff and students to recognise that we all have an element of personal responsibility for the environment and to act on that whilst they are at Falmouth. We will actively engage with the wider community in order to inspire and catalyse efforts to reduce our adverse environmental impact.**

As with Theme 1, the COVID 19 pandemic has also impacted on our progress with Theme 3. Physical, on campus behaviour change initiatives had to be cancelled, and communications had to prioritise student and staff wellbeing over sustainability information. However, the campuses closure period has allowed us time to develop an engaging plan to encourage sustainable behavioural changes this academic year, which will focus on three key areas of behaviour change initiatives.

We finalised the specific 'Goals' under each of our Sustainability Policy Themes in May of this year, which outlined our specific areas of work to drive decarbonisation and cultural change. From here, we had hoped to refine our approach across Theme 3's Goals, in particular, to create a more educated and active Campus Community in terms of sustainability, through working with the Communications Team. However, the COVID 19 national lockdown and suspension of on campus activity meant these discussions, as well as planned on campus behaviour change initiatives had to be put on hold.

Despite the COVID 19 pandemic negatively impacting our outreach efforts, over the past few months we have begun distributing regular internal communications including news pieces, sustainability information and resources, podcasts, and a sustainability themed student induction video.

Three priority areas have been identified for particular focus and work has begun on developing a behaviour change and communications strategy to drive measurable change in behaviours within our campus community over the coming Academic Year.

## Goal 1

**Ensure that all staff and students have a greater awareness of sustainability, and the impact we have both as an organisation and as individuals.**



**award-winning  
sustainability  
campaign**



At the beginning of the 2020 academic year, the theme of sustainability was embedded in our student induction process for the first time. Using an easily accessible film format, we were able to show new students the importance of sustainability and what they can do to play their part.

We also hosted a range of different sustainability events for staff and students, ranging from on campus bin rummages and planting events to sustainable travel sessions and a full week dedicated to promoting sustainability.

We assisted with the delivery of 'Sustainability Week', a campaign was developed in collaboration with the Students' Union, the University of Exeter and FX Plus. It not only shone a spotlight on climate and environmental issues, but it also won the Collaboration Award at the National Societies & Volunteering Awards.

During campus closures as a result of COVID 19, we continued to spread the message of sustainability with regular news, updates and activities. This included a wildlife photography competition and tips on how to protect vulnerable wildlife.

## Goal 2

Drive measurable change in staff and student behaviours

**30%**  
meat free meals

We have introduced a number of initiatives to drive measurable change in staff and student behaviours, such as taking part in the Meat Free Monday campaign. This has been a huge hit and has led to a permanent vegan food counter, allowing students to make a conscious choice. Out of the 29,000+ hot meals served across our campuses between December and March (before the Covid closure of campus) this past academic year, 30% of them were meat free.

**4,075**

fewer single-use cups used

In the last academic year, we have promoted the use of reusable cups and water bottles. We are pleased that the use of disposable cups has decreased by 9% compared to the previous academic year and plastic water bottle usage has dropped by 25%.

One of our catering outlets has stopped offering disposable cups altogether, while all other outlets have moved to Vegware compostable cups; the use of Vegware is a key step in our journey towards developing a more circular, regenerative waste system because these products will degrade quicker in our waste stream and break down into natural materials, unlike the plastic based alternatives we previously used, which would lead to both physical and air pollution through this process.

We also introduced the first sustainability category in the Staff Excellence Awards, enabling us to record and reward some of the great grass roots initiatives happening around the University.

## Looking ahead

We have recently expanded our sustainability communications by launching an external sustainability website for students and a Sustainability Sharepoint site for staff, both containing information, resources, and opportunities to get involved further with sustainability at Falmouth. We'll also expand on our induction resources for students, and create a sustainability induction process for staff as well.

Using a data driven approach, including results from a recent staff and student travel survey, we'll continue to create sustainability campaigns that target behavioural change. We'll draw attention to the different ways that people can make a difference and support this activity, from creating resources that aid home working to promoting sustainable procurement.

These campaigns, along with a greater number of engagement events, will be designed to be measurable, so that we can better evaluate the actions and attitudes of our staff and students.





# Reforestation

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We are also aware of how important it is to contribute to removing excess carbon dioxide that has already been emitted into the atmosphere.

We are therefore committing to supporting reforestation through local tree planting here in Cornwall. We plan to do this by investing a financial sum each year that equates to our total scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions in carbon cost terms. An appropriate carbon cost/price per tonne of £15 for UK reforestation projects applied to our total scope 1 & 2 emissions of 2,812 tonnes means an investment for the coming year of some £42,000.

We aim to involve staff and students in tree planting schemes to provide opportunities to participate in sustainable activities, as well as helping to drive awareness and behavioural change.

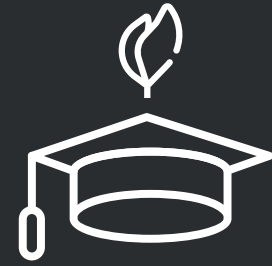
We are confident that this approach will help to drive the engagement of our campus community and provide wider ecological, social and psychological benefits. The new trees will support and help to increase biodiversity, and they will contribute to the beautiful green surroundings of our campuses.

We believe that this course of action is meaningful to both the University and our campus community, but we will keep this approach under review and alter our course if, and when, necessary.



# Student activity

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## BRINGING OUR POLICY TO LIFE

Our students are deeply invested in creating a more sustainable future – leading grassroots projects and events, as well as lobbying for policy changes across campus.

## CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

As the topic of sustainability started to gain momentum around the world, our students helped to raise awareness by holding the first Penryn Campus Climate Strike and highlighting the need for rapid action. They also made sustainability one of the main five topics in last year's Speak Week – an event that informs policies and decision making within the Students' Union.

In addition, two delegates were sent to the NUS Student Sustainability Summit and the Student Eats Conference to represent the University and to bring back ideas on how students can increase their impact.

Our students also created a variety of events around the issue of sustainability, such as the New Year, New Me campaign that focused on behavioural change and raising awareness of how products are produced.

In addition, our award winning Sustainability Week was spearheaded by the Students' Union.

## PROJECTS

Students have created a variety of innovative projects to encourage sustainability, from working with our Grounds team to improve biodiversity and

create edible pathways, to summer swap shops that limit waste when students move houses.

The Students' Union has also started to embed sustainability across all of its activities, from the SU awards to event funding applications. The SU has also been reviewing travel options for all societies and sports clubs to ensure that they are being as environmentally friendly as possible, as well as banning single use items from all SU elections.

## LOBBYING

We are proud of the way in which our students lobby for change – helping to shape the ways in which the University becomes more sustainable.

In the 2019/2020 academic year, students have lobbied for more visible information on the University's energy use and ensuring that all our energy comes from sustainable sources. They have also lobbied for the removal of single use materials and containers, and the inclusion of water fountains and microwaves around campus to support this. In addition, they have worked alongside our Catering teams to improve and expand vegan and vegetarian offerings.

Our students have also contributed to discussions around carbon offsetting and have actively supported our plans to embed sustainability in the curriculum.

## COURSE WORK

Here are just a few examples of the work being created by our students and graduates to highlight environmental issues, create sustainable products and find creative solutions to modern day problems.

### Brilliant buttons

For his final project, graduate Niall Jones worked with Fishy Filaments – a company that recycles old fishing nets into 3D printing filaments – to create recycled buttons for sustainable clothing company Finisterre. While this might seem like a small change, an estimated 25 billion buttons (weighing between 25,000 and 50,000 tonnes) are produced each year!

### Illustrating the point

This year's Falmouth Illustration Forum, organised by MA Authorial Practice students, focused on the Climate and Ecological emergency. The event explored the role of illustration in highlighting important environmental issues and instigated and deepened discussions within the University and the wider community

### Environmental ethos

Studio Mutiny, an independent games development studio set up by Falmouth graduates, has created a new game based on a magical forest devastated by machinery. The game is not only raising awareness of environmental issues, but 80% of its profits are being split between the Rainforest Trust UK and the Woodland Trust UK.

### Circular economy

This year, Fashion Marketing student Ellie Graham was accepted to join the Ellen MacArthur Circular Economy Programme, which is designed to empower the leaders and the entrepreneurs of tomorrow to create a new type of economy. The programme covers topics including circular design, business models, plastics, fashion, cities, and food.







# The Data: Year-on-year comparisons

## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

Policy Theme	Goal Within Theme	Data	AY18/19	AY19/20	Trend / Status
Theme 1: Learning & Teaching	Goals 3 & 4	Ranking in the NUS SDG Teach In.	Did not take part this year.	12th of 24	New data
Theme 2: Environment & Operations	Goal 1	Percentage reduction in total scope 1 & 2 emissions per m <sup>2</sup> compared to the 2005/06 baseline	est. 42%	est. 45%	^
	Goal 1	Penryn Campus total Scope 1 & 2 emissions per m <sup>2</sup>	0.0541 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>	0.0513 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>	▼ 0.0028 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>
	Goal 1	Falmouth Campus total Scope 1 & 2 emissions per m <sup>2</sup>	0.0307 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>	0.0298 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>	▼ 0.0009 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e / m <sup>2</sup>
	Goal 1	Total Scope 1 & 2 emissions	2,930 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	2,812 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	▼ 118 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
	Goal 2	Total estimated Scope 3 emissions	-	10,894 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	New data
	Goal 2	Proportion of total supply chain that is local (Cornwall & Devon based companies)	42% (South West based companies')	36%	New Data Refinement

Policy Theme	Goal Within Theme	Data	AY18/19	AY19/20	Trend / Status
Theme 2: Environment & Operations	Goal 2	Proportion of food and drink suppliers that are local (Cornwall & Devon based companies)	74% (South West based companies')	70%	New Data Refinement
	Goal 2	Percentage of meals sold in The Stannary and Fox Café that were meat free between December and March.	Meat free meals were not recorded.	30%	New data
	Goal 2	Total number of single use coffee cups used across all catering outlets.	71,671	50,373	▼ 21,298
	Goal 2	Total waste generated across campuses (waste plus recycling)	562 tonnes	483 tonnes	▼ 79 tonnes
	Goal 2	Total recycling generated across campuses	231 tonnes	196 tonnes	▼ 35 tonnes
	Goal 2	Average recycling rate across the two campuses	35%	36%	▲ 1%
	Goal 2	Total food waste generated across campuses	9 tonnes	16 tonnes	▲ 7 tonnes
	Goal 4	Estimated number of bees supported by the wildflower areas across Penryn Campus, per day	No Biodiversity metrics in place.	163,050	New data
Theme 3: People & Behaviours	Goal 1	Total number of behaviour change initiatives delivered by The Students' Union	Not previously recorded.	24	New data

**FALMOUTH**  
UNIVERSITY

