

Estates and Facilities Waste Management Plan

Purpose and Context

At University of Huddersfield, waste and recycling is one of the most tangible and visible areas in the sustainability agenda and demonstrates our commitment to the University community as well as the opportunity for them to be involved in environmental improvement.

Waste management and recycling is coordinated by the university's Campus Support team who are part of the Estates and Facilities directorate. The university spends approximately £80,000 per year on waste management.

We are committed to the development of sustainable waste practices as highlighted in our Environmental and Sustainability Policy. The plan also aligns to the university's strategic plan with the aim 'financial sustainability', maintaining financial strength.

Implementation of sustainable waste management practices offers the opportunity to cut costs through effective resource management. Our aim is to manage resources more efficiently, prevent and minimise waste, increase recycling and participation giving us the following benefits:

- Legal compliance
- Reduced environmental impact
- Improved reputation
- Support for carbon reduction targets
- Cost minimisation

The actions identified in this strategy aim to identify and build on existing good practice.

Estates and Facilities have a variety of stakeholders for whom our waste management performance is relevant. Internally the cost of waste management and resource use is significant, and students have increasing expectations for our sustainability performance. We will consider these stakeholders when establishing and reporting on our waste management targets and performance and communicate in line with our Environmental and Sustainability Policy.

1. Introduction

The objectives of the Waste Management Plan for University of Huddersfield are to ensure legal compliance and best practice with waste management, these include:

- To encourage the use of the waste hierarchy principles by staff, students, and contractors.
- To reduce the total amount of waste generated each year.
- To divert waste from landfill using both onsite and offsite segregation methods.
- To reduce the cost of waste disposal.
- Recycle / reuse furniture through circular economy
- To work with contractors to encourage reuse packaging.
- To improve the quality of waste data.

The waste hierarchy is one of the guiding principles we consider in our sustainable waste management plans, encouraging waste reduction and reuse before recycling and other options such as anaerobic digestion, energy recovery, incineration, or landfill. We are also considering the circular economy and life cycle thinking in waste management and our sustainable purchasing.

Circular economy and life cycle thinking is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) in which we design to keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum

value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life. The university will consider these principles in our waste management choices but also our procurement of goods, through our sustainable purchasing.

2. Policy context

This document supports the delivery of the following policies and strategies at the University of Huddersfield

- Environmental and Sustainability Policy
- Carbon neutral strategy: A Ten-Point Plan for the Planet
- Net Zero Carbon Emissions Plan
- Waste Regulations 2011 (England and Wales)

3. Relevant aspects of circular economy and resource efficiency

Life cycle thinking - A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose), in that we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life.

Furniture - The university will develop a Furniture Policy which is relevant to all University operations which will focus on reuse and refurbishment of furniture and divert from purchasing new or disposal of furniture. This policy will apply to all new buildings, refurbishments, or one-off furniture requirements.

Suppliers – The university will work with suppliers to reduce the packaging on items and encourage take back schemes for packaging; this particularly applies to IT equipment.

4. Achievements so far

The university has been working to improve the sustainability of waste management since 2015, below is a summary of some key achievements.

- 4.1 Increase in recycling – in 2015/16 the recycling rate was zero, with waste directed to energy recovery or landfill. In response there has been a significant investment in recycling bin infrastructure and negotiation of a new commercial waste contract, with a requirement for diversion from landfill. This has enabled the University to improve recycling rates to an average of 43% in the last academic year.
- 4.2 Project Sustainable Furniture Program – Project Sustainable Furniture has offered the university community a solution to the high expenditure of furniture and has been running since 2019. The opportunity to recycle furniture within the organisation has reduced cost and waste. The venture has partnered with a university approved not-for-profit organisation who has re-furbished furniture on campus to a high standard, provided re-used furniture and reused surplus furniture.

The project over the last 3 years saved the university over £325,000 and over 163 tonnes of CO₂.

- 4.3 External contracts – The university has used the procurement process to encourage external waste contractors to support its aims for sustainable waste management and to improve service delivery. A requirement of the general waste management contract is for the contractor to provide waste collection and treatment options for residual/general waste that diverts waste from landfill disposal to more “sustainable” waste management solutions, and that the facilities used are local to the university.
- 4.4 Anaerobic digestion of food waste – Food waste from Catering is sent to off-site anaerobic digesters. These units compost around 18 tonnes of food waste per year, saving all the associated methane emissions, reducing general waste, reducing waste disposal costs and as a bonus, producing nutrient rich compost to be used on the university grounds. Composting of green waste on campus has also been introduced which again helps reduce waste sent offsite for disposal.
- 4.5 Waste data from 2021/22.

Annual Tonnage-KG 2021/22		
Total Tonnage Collected	240.8	100.0 %
Non - Recyclable Tonnage	138.0	57.3 %
Recyclable Tonnage	102.8	42.7 %
General Waste Wet - with Organics	137.2	57.0%
General Non - Hazardous Waste IC	0.7	0.3 %
Dry Mixed Recycling IC	23.1	9.6 %
Carboard / Paper	32.2	13.4 %
Mixed Packing Glass	1.9	0.8 %
Scrap Metal	20.8	8.7 %
Tin Cans / Aluminium	1.0	0.4 %
Non-Ferrous Metals	0.4	0.2 %
Fridges	14	5.8 %
Food Waste	18.4	7.6 %
Coffee	4.5	1.9 %
Confidential Waste	0	0 %
Battery Recycle	0.2	0.1 %
Skip / Bulk Waste	33.4	13.9 %

5. Objectives & Targets

Objectives and targets have been established as part of the Environmental and Sustainability Policy and will be managed within the Estates and Facilities team. These will include:

Objectives

- To ensure legal compliance and best practice with waste management, particularly onsite storage.

- Eliminate waste and improve resource efficiency through circularity, including encouraging the use of the waste hierarchy principles by staff, students, and contractors.
- To reduce the total amount of waste generated each year.
- To continue to divert waste from landfill using both onsite and offsite segregation methods.
- To reduce the cost of waste disposal.
- To improve the quality of waste data.

Targets

Metric	Desired direction	Baseline year	Baseline value	Target year	Target value
Reduction in operational waste generated on campus (tonnes) Includes general waste, food waste, Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR), building materials waste from maintenance activities, metals, and Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Excludes major construction	Decrease	2008/09	1,409 tonnes	2024/25	150 tonnes
Proportion of waste reused/recovered/recycled (%)	Increase	2008/09		2024/25	57.3%

- Reduction of operational waste by 10% from a 2019/20 baseline by 2024/25.
- Increase operational waste recycled to around 60% minimum by 2024/25.
- Eliminate avoidable single use plastics by 2025.
- Introduction of a Furniture Policy to focus reuse and refurbishment of furniture and reduce disposal.

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS	
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REVISION HISTORY		
Date	Revision description/summary of changes	Author
June 2024	Update of redraft	Ben Onyido
Sept 2019	Major redraft (approval required)	Sally Hobson
March 2018	Job titles updated (minor amendments)	Patrick Flavin
Sept 2017	Formatting updates (minor amendments not requiring committee approval)	Patrick Flavin
Sept 2016	First policy draft	Patrick Flavin