

# University College Birmingham Sustainability Baseline and Roadmap

## Lead Organisation

Sustainability West Midlands

Project Team: Anna Bright, Dr Beck Collins and Nathaniel Weaver

## Customer



## Project Duration

May – October 2022

## The Project

SWM members University College Birmingham (UCB) commissioned SWM to review their current position with regard to sustainability across the university, and to set out a way forward to becoming more sustainable.

## Aims

This project aimed to understand where the university had been successful in taking action towards sustainability, and also where it needed to make further progress. The project also aimed to engage staff and student stakeholders in the discussion. Finally, the project aimed to provide a framework to take forward future sustainability activity.



## Challenges

Working with partners in education can be challenging because of the necessarily overriding focus on teaching, which can often preclude engagement in extra-curricular activities such as this. We overcame this by carrying out stakeholder engagement predominantly at pre-existing events and networks, such as Welcome Fest for students, and the Sustainability Steering Group for staff.

## Outputs

A report was delivered that gave high level recommendations for the university to follow. It recommended the adoption of an ambitious, measurable target for emissions reduction by 2030. It recommended the recruitment of a Sustainability Manager to drive forward sustainability action, beginning by carrying out quantified audits on energy, waste, transport, nature and reviews of procurement, investments, before setting targets for improvement. This would be followed by setting out plans for how these improvements will be made, and then monitoring progress. The report also recommended an academic-led review of the curriculum to embed sustainability into teaching, and wider activity across the university community to catalyse the creation of a sense of environmental citizenship, supported by extra-curricular activities.

This report was supported by a detailed action plan setting out priority activities to be carried out across campus to reduce carbon emissions (for example specific energy efficiency improvements), to take steps towards embedding sustainability in the curriculum, and ideas for extra-curricular activities.

SWM also supported UCB to explicitly celebrate the commencement of its sustainability journey through creating [website content](#).

## In the Future

UCB accepted SWM's recommendations and have now recruited their new Sustainability Manager. As members of SWM, we continue to support them on their journey, and help them to benefit from the best practice of the wider membership.

## Accolades

*"It has been a real pleasure to work with SWM and will share our progress with you."* José Lopes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (External Affairs)

## Contact Details

For further information on the project please contact the SWM team at [enquiries@swm.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@swm.org.uk).