Hughes Hall Environmental Sustainability Policy, June 2025

Introduction

Hughes Hall is committed to positive environmental impact and improving environmental sustainability across all aspects of its activities and operations. As a college within the University of Cambridge, we recognise our responsibility to integrate sustainable practices across our campus and operations, and to support the Cambridge higher-education ecosystem and the City of Cambridge more widely. By adopting this policy, Hughes Hall aims to foster a culture of environmental responsibility and contribute to a sustainable future for our institution and the wider community.

1. **Overarching objectives**
   - Commit to considering sustainability in all College's strategic decision-making
   - Establish specific plans with quantitative targets and a robust approach to monitoring environmental performance over time
   - Continue improving College operations towards higher efficiency, reducing waste and optimising environmental performance
   - Collaborate with local partners to leverage mutual strengths and maximise progress
   - Upskill College community members and actively promote sustainable best practice
   - Involve the College community in holding Hughes Hall accountable to its commitments and helping achieve the lasting change

2. **Energy and Resource Management**
   - Reduce overall energy consumption
   - Aim to procure all energy from renewable and sustainable sources, including building up capacity for on-site energy generation
   - Engage with community energy generation schemes, such as the Cambridge City-wide Heat Network, during their development and operation
   - Reduce energy usage through efficient lighting, heating, and equipment
   - Reduce water consumption
   - Promote responsible water use and encourage conservation strategies

3. **Waste Reduction and Recycling**
   - Minimise general waste and increase recycling efforts
   - Implement a comprehensive re-use and recycling programme for all waste
   - Encourage waste reduction through paperless initiatives
   - Responsibly dispose of all hazardous materials

4. **Catering and Food Waste**
   - Prioritise buying locally sourced produce where possible
   - Where possible procure produce from sustainable and Fairtrade sources, including but not limited to, meat, fish, beverages, dried ingredients and general provisions.
   - Reduce food waste overall and recycle as appropriate
   - Encourage and support plant-based and low carbon menu options
   - Reduce to a minimum the consumption of ruminant meat

- Encourage sustainable processes in food preparation and presentation, including adopting low-energy equipment and sustainable packaging

5. **Procurement**
   - All procurement to support the College's overall sustainability goals
   - Encourage sustainable practices within College supply chain partners
   - Prioritise renewable, recyclable and reuseable products, packaging, materials and services where possible

6. **Sustainable Transportation**
   - Promote low-carbon sustainable transportation, both for colleagues travelling to and from College as well on College business
   - Provide facilities for cyclists (secure parking, charging, and where practical changing/shower rooms)
   - Provide charging facilities to support electric vehicles, including for College vehicles
   - Encourage low-carbon transport options for College activities

7. **Campus Biodiversity and Green Spaces**
   - Improve biodiversity through habitat conservation and biodiversity net gain projects
   - Maintain and enhance green spaces with native planting
   - Avoid the use of pesticides and harmful chemicals across the estate
   - Avoid removal of established trees and shrubs, where possible
   - Designate parts of college lawns as 'wildflower meadows'

8. **Sustainable Education and Research**
   - Actively support research on sustainability and climate change
   - Encourage and support College-led environmental initiatives from students, seniors and staff

9. **Community and Stakeholder Engagement**
   - Collaborate with local organisations (residents, businesses, local Government and NGOs) on sustainability projects
   - Provide awareness campaigns and training for senior members, students and staff

10. **Estates Development and Building Strategy**
    - Ensure all new buildings and renovations follow sustainable design principles
    - Consider the potential for on-site renewable power generation in major estates projects
    - Incorporate energy-efficient and low-embodied carbon materials and technologies in construction
    - Prioritise improvements to energy efficiency operational performance in all buildings
    - Monitor and improve temperature control across all buildings to avoid excessive heating
    - Prioritise sustainable land use and green infrastructure in estate planning

- Seek sustainability net gains in retrofit and maintenance work, aiming for replacement of infrastructure and equipment with more efficient / lower environmental footprint items, accepting a reasonable cost premium if necessary.

11. Investments Strategy

- Select investment funds which meet the College's Environmental, Societal and Governance (ESG) criteria and which have minimal exposure to companies involved in harmful activities

12. Responsibility, Monitoring and Review

- This policy is the responsibility of Council; the Bursar will be the SRO
- Council will monitor and review this policy through regular reports from the Sustainability Working Group (SWG)
- The SWG will use monitoring and reporting protocols to regularly assess and report on environmental performance
- This policy will be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary

Bursar, June 2025