Riverside College
Widnes & Runcorn

CRONTON SIXTHFORM COLLEGE

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

2027-2032



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The College accepts through its Environmental Sustainability Policy Statement a recognition to promote awareness and understanding of local, national, and global environmental issues and, through its own practices, strive to conserve and improve the environment.

1.2 It also commits the staff of the College to endeavour to apply the environmental aim of the policy in all aspects of its operation and its delivery of the curriculum. This strategy document is written to act as a guide to best practice.

1.3 The College recognises that to implement its policy successfully there will be a need to promote actively amongst both staff and students the importance of adopting a caring and thoughtful attitude to environmental issues and to encourage observance of the policy rather than attempt to impose any requirements on staff or students to observe it. In this respect it is regarded as of particular importance that senior staff and governors demonstrate by their actions a positive commitment to the objectives of the strategy.

1.4 Colleges have an important part to play in working towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (figure 1), introduced in 2015 and should seek to lead agendas that build social and economic sustainability through partnerships with local communities and beyond.

1.5 This strategy is reviewed on an annual basis and amendments to targets and KPIs are highlighted throughout the document.

Figure 1



Ref: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

2. CLIMATE ACTION ROADMAP

2.1 The Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education was established in November 2019. Its goal is to develop a strategic, sector-wide approach to tackle the climate emergency. The Commission developed a 'road map' for colleges to reach their net zero target, later updated in November 2024. The College will adopt this updated roadmap as a framework to this strategy.

2.2 The roadmap includes three levels of approach to sustainability, organised by level of maturity:

- **RED** – just beginning to address sustainability - Emerging
- **AMBER** – well-founded approach to sustainability and structures in place to support it - Established
- **GREEN** – models to others on sustainability - Leading

Figure 2

Key Strategic Goal	By when
RED – Emerging	2028
AMBER - Established	2030
GREEN - Leading	2032

3. SUSTAINABILITY SCORECARD

3.1 Each level in the roadmap contains a series of initiatives that can be implemented to reach net zero emissions and improve the environmental impact. Students and other stakeholders should be instrumental in developing and implementing the college's approach to sustainability. These initiatives can be broken down under the following areas:

- Leadership and Governance
- Teaching and Learning
- Estates and Operations
- Partnerships and Engagement
- Data Collection

3.2 The initiatives can be categorised into a sustainability scorecard, illustrated in Figure 3 overleaf.

LCR Net Zero Target is 2040

UK National Net Zero Target is 2050

Figure 3

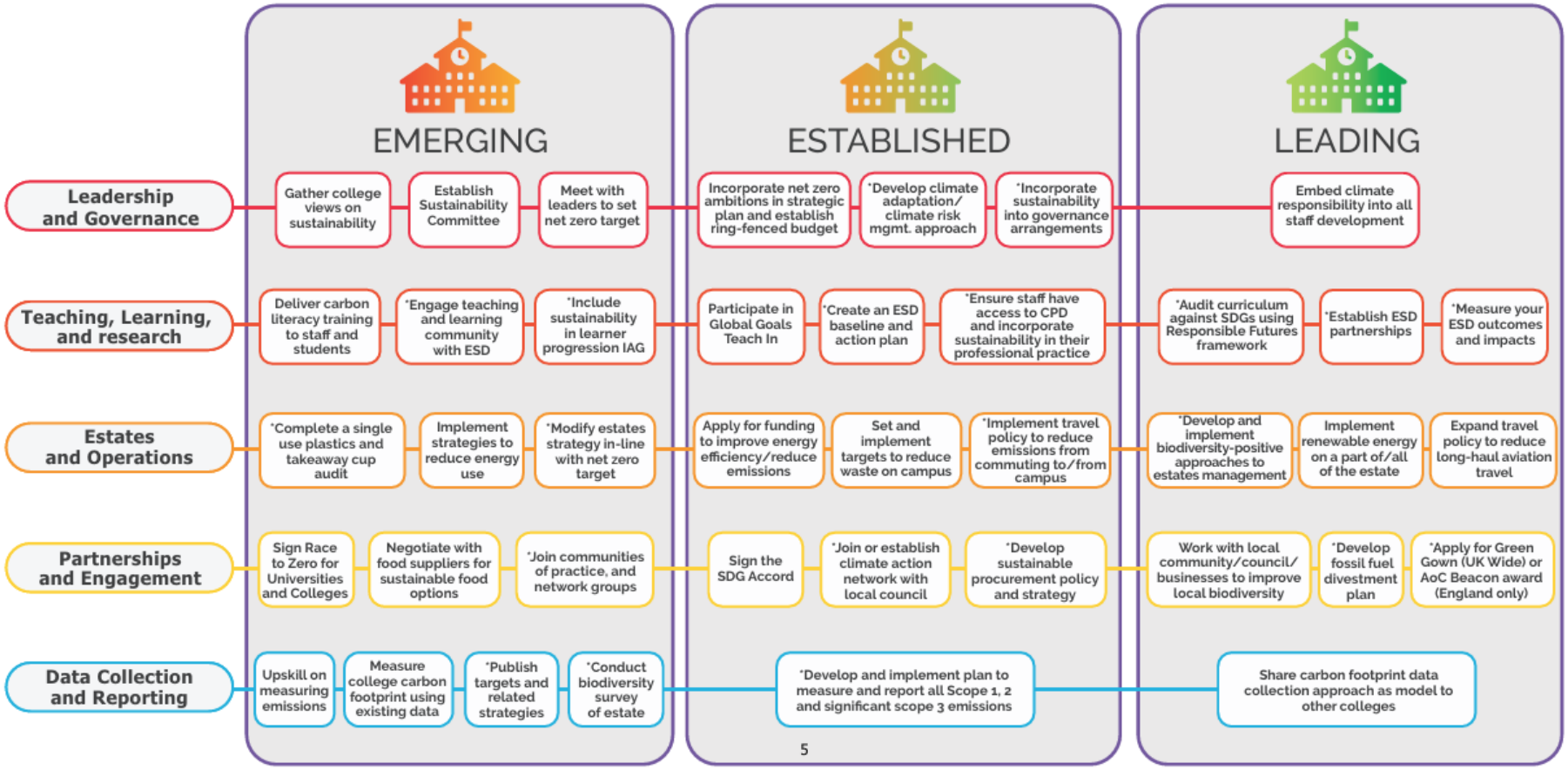


3.3 Each area of the scorecard will be owned and led by a member of the Senior Management Team:

- Leadership and Governance – Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality)
- Teaching and Learning –Vice Principal (Curriculum)
- Estates and Operations – Deputy Principal (Finance and Resources)
- Partnerships and Engagement - Principal
- Data Collection - Assistant Principal (Finance and Estates)

3.4 Each lead will be responsible for convening the sub-groups, championing the goals and ambitions, and implementing and monitoring actions towards targets.

CLIMATE ACTION ROADMAP ACTIVITIES BY AREA



4. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

4.1 The College should understand the appetite for action to combat climate change among the college community and help build the case for change. The SMT Green Strategy Group, established by SMT and informed by students, will give a face to and help drive forward the sustainability agenda. Publishing the targets will signal the College's ambitions to the whole community, partners and external stakeholders and will hold the College to account.

4.2 The College should ensure there is adequate budgetary resource to deliver the strategy and incorporate sustainability into key governance meetings to ensure that progress on targets is monitored. The effects of climate change should be incorporated into risk management plans and ensuring sustainability is incorporated in staff development programmes, where possible, will help teachers to become better teachers of sustainability.

4.3 **Leadership and governance goals**

Activity	By When
RED Activity Gather views on sustainability Establish a sustainability group Agree with leaders net-zero targets Publish targets	2028
AMBER Activity Establish ring-fenced budget Develop reporting schedule against net-zero target	2030
GREEN Activity Incorporate sustainability in all governance arrangements Develop climate change risk management process Include sustainability in the staff development programme	2032

5. DATA COLLECTION

5.1 The College will learn how to measure the carbon footprint by drawing on external resource. Educating others will help reporting to be more effective. It is important to measure the College's footprint as accurately as possible to establish a baseline and inform the net zero targets. This may reveal gaps in the current data sets that have to be estimated.

5.3 The majority of college emissions will be in scope 3 – emissions that are controlled by others and produced by things the college does (e.g. goods and services, student travel, waste disposal etc.). It is not possible to achieve net zero without measuring these emissions and finding ways to reduce them.

5.4 Once the data methodology is established to measure all emissions, this could be shared with others.

5.5 Data collection goals

Activity	By When
RED Activity Measure emissions to help identify potential reduction opportunities Measure college carbon footprint using all available data	2028
AMBER Activity Develop and implement plan to measure scope 3 emissions	2030
GREEN Activity Share best practice in data collection	2032

6. TEACHING AND LEARNING

6.1 The College community must have a good understanding of climate change, what causes it and how it is likely to affect them if they are to take action in response. They need to understand the individual actions they can take to reduce their environmental impact.

6.2 Understanding where the sustainability goals are already reflected in the curriculum – and what the gaps and opportunities are – is the first step towards offering students an educational offer informed by the SDGs.

6.3 Incorporating sustainability into core curriculums, where appropriate, will help students understand how sustainability is connected to almost everything we do. Teaching staff are best placed to do this, for example, in methods of sustainable construction or materials and should think creatively how to do this.

6.4 Teaching and learning goals

Activity	By When
RED Activity Deliver carbon literacy training to staff and students	2028
AMBER Activity Audit college curriculum against the SDGs	2030
GREEN Activity Train and support teaching staff in designing curriculum which incorporates SDGs	2032

7. ESTATES AND OPERATIONS

7.1 There are several low, or no cost options that the college is currently implementing to reduce its energy use, i.e. replacing light fittings with more energy efficient ones as part of the on-going maintenance plan, paper management and adopting a green procurement policy.

7.2 All staff and students will be encouraged to reduce and minimise waste of energy. It is recognised that simple actions, such as closing doors and windows, turning out lights and turning off heaters and lights when not in use make a difference.

7.3 In its approach to recycling, the College will ensure that only materials which are in fact recyclable will be considered for collection, that there is a demand for the recycled product and that the recycling process does not involve the use of more resources than it saves. To facilitate this, the Estates Department will undertake a regular survey of all College waste to assess its recyclability and hazard creation. Arrangements will then be made for the recycling of all waste materials that are identified as recyclable in an economical and safe manner.

7.4 The College will optimise sustainability in its property strategy by ensuring any new build strives for BREEAM excellence and improving the efficiency of existing buildings. Renewable energy sources will be used as affordable.

7.5 The College is fully aware of the impact of motorised vehicles on the environment. In order to minimise this impact, the College will wherever possible:

- Ensure adequate facilities are made available for cyclists, including secure cycle storage facilities and that any hired minibuses are from a reputable firm and are serviced to a high standard
- Actively promote the use of sustainable transport (e.g. bicycles, walking), public transport, electric cars etc
- Building electric car charging ports at the college
- Promotion of the use of electric buses

7.6 Estates and operations goals

Activity	By When
RED Activity Implement strategies to reduce energy use Ensure recycling/signage is available in every building	2028
AMBER Activity Set and implement target to reduce waste in the college by 50% Modify property strategy in line with net-zero targets	2030
GREEN Activity Implement renewable energy on a part of/all of the estate Implement new travel policy to reduce emissions from travel	2032

8. PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT

8.1 The Government, local authorities, national companies, local business, educationalists and environmentalists are all searching for environmental solutions and in order to generate and share innovative ideas and new thinking there is benefitted to be gained by working in partnership. There is also a need for the same problem to be addressed by diverse groups of people in order to generate a range of solutions.

To facilitate this, the College will:

- Develop a number of environmental contacts involving, where appropriate, the student body, staff responsible for marketing activities and other College and outside organisations
- Document good environmental practice so that it may be shared easily
- Seek funding and grants for partnership projects
- Foster natural ecosystems by partnering with the local community and partners to improve biodiversity
- Consider a fossil fuel divestment plan to divert funds away from fossil fuel companies and encourage them to transform their business models.

8.2 A significant proportion of carbon emissions come from the food we produce, eat and waste. Other factors, like where food travels from and whether it is in season also affect its environmental impact. The college will seek to offer sustainable food options to staff and students.

8.3 In order to recognise the important role of education in responding to climate change the college should sign the Global Climate Letter which is a letter from universities declaring a climate emergency, in recognition of the drastic societal changes that must occur to respond to climate change. The College should also sign the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accord, which is the sector's collective response to the SDGs.

8.4 Partnerships and engagement goals

Activity	By When
RED Activity Negotiate with food suppliers to supply sustainable food options Sign the Global Climate Letter	2028
AMBER Activity Sign the SDG Accord Establish climate action network with local council Develop fossil fuel divestment plan	2030
GREEN Activity Partner with local community/council/businesses to improve local biodiversity Apply for a Green Crown or AoC Beacon Award	2032

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

9.1 The SMT Green Strategy Group meet at least termly where progress towards goals is discussed and reviewed.

9.2 At each meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee (3 per year) governors receive a report on environmental and sustainability actions since the previous meeting. The Committee also consider, advise, and approve the Environmental Sustainability policy and strategy for recommendation by the Board.

9.3 At each Board meeting, governors are advised of environmental sustainability progress and consider any changes to strategic direction.