Workshop 19: A Sustainability Strategy for the University of Leeds – Becoming the Architects of Possibility

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A Sustainability Strategy for the University of Leeds: Becoming the Architects of Possibility

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Outline

• The story so far: developing a strategy for the University of Leeds
• What will we look like in 2050?
• Adopting and embedding the themes of the strategy
• Action planning and commitments
• Organisational change: ‘Being bold’
• Working with stakeholders and partners
• Challenging connections
THE STORY SO FAR...

Creating this strategy has involved a wide-ranging development process with staff, students and wider stakeholders. It’s people who will make the strategy a success, so it’s critical to involve them at every step...

- Stakeholder mapping and benchmarking. We took time to find out who our stakeholders are and benchmarked the University of Leeds against the Russell Group and other universities working in this area to assess our activities and performance.

- Seven workshops with staff and students. Through these we assessed our impact and created a vision for sustainability at the University of Leeds in 2020 and 2050.

- The local community share their views during the Leeds Sky Ride. We took sustainability to the streets of Leeds and asked the local community for their opinions about what a sustainable university would look like.

- Four focus groups held for staff and students. These allowed for a more detailed discussion about what a sustainable university should be. All the comments were captured by graphic designers – which form the illustrations that you see in this strategy.

- Displays pop up all over the University asking “What is a sustainable university?” Staff and students shared their thoughts on postcards about our impacts and the issues that are important to them.

- What does a sustainable university look like?

- Online discussions. Staff, students, alumni and sustainability professionals shared their thoughts and ideas in response to the question “What does a sustainable university look like?”

- Main strategy themes developed and shared with stakeholders. We presented the themes and commitments and asked for feedback and comments to help shape the final strategy.

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VISION FOR 2050

2020 THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN
The story so far:

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sustainability/
This strategy considers the work we have to do until 2020, but we’re already thinking far beyond that date to what a sustainable University of Leeds will look like in 2050...

**2020**
- We’re a zero carbon, zero waste institution
- All our students know and understand sustainability
- We have an open, accessible campus that is interconnected with the city
- Our campus is a test bed for new ideas and an exemplar of sustainable design
- Sharing space, equipment, skills and knowledge across the institution is the norm
- Our supply chain is sustainable and we continuously strive for further improvement and innovation
- Our research addresses the grand challenges of sustainability and is accessible to all
- All staff have the capacity and knowledge to make sustainable decisions, and this is the norm
- We’re an equitable and open employer that creates opportunities across the spectrum of our activities
- We’re an inspiration in the city and our campus and culture is used as a blueprint for other organisations to follow
- Challenging the status quo and making a real difference is the norm
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

OUR VISION
We will become a university where sustainability is truly embedded through knowledge, engagement, collaboration and innovation. Each and every one of our staff and students will understand the principles of sustainability – it will be an integral part of our operations and will bring about positive, sustainable change for the future.

OUR PRINCIPLES
WORKING COLLABORATIVELY
EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY
SHARING OUR SKILLS, SPACES, KNOWLEDGE AND VALUES
CHALLENGING OURSELVES AND OTHERS

1. Embedding sustainability through collaboration
   Commitments:
   - We will embed sustainability across the whole University.
   - We will create and support proactive collaborative networks.
   - We will develop robust management systems.
   - We will establish governance and accountability structures that drive sustainability and place it at the heart of our institution.

2. Building knowledge and capacity
   Commitments:
   - We will work across University departments to build capacity and share best practice around sustainable change.
   - We will equip all our staff with sustainability skills.
   - We will develop external links to enhance knowledge and capacity.
   - We will support and promote research that examines the issues relating to sustainability.
   - We will integrate sustainability into learning programmes and ensure all our students understand the importance of sustainability.

3. Being a positive partner in society
   Commitments:
   - We will build external engagement to further develop internal and external capacity and knowledge, and influence wider policies.
   - We will lead by example, share best practice, learn from others and ensure our research is accessible.
   - We will take our responsibility to society seriously, as an employer, good neighbour and in creating opportunities.
   - We will support our students to be responsible citizens and an active part of society, both locally and globally.
   - We will create a welcoming, culturally and environmentally vibrant campus.

4. Making the most of resources
   Commitments:
   - We will reduce our consumption of goods and services.
   - We will embed sustainability into the procurement process.
   - We will reduce the amount of waste we produce.
   - We will enhance biodiversify campus.
   - We will use water efficiently and reduce, reuse and recycle where possible.
   - We will become a low carbon university, through energy efficiency and reduced carbon emissions.
   - We will foster a staff and student body where sustainable and student body where sustainable travel is the norm.
Embedding the themes of the strategy:

In our action plans and commitments
Through organisational change
With our stakeholders and partners
## Being a Positive Partner in Society

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<tr>
<th>Commitments</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Completed By</th>
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| We will build external engagement to further develop internal and external capacity and knowledge, and influence wider policies. | Partnerships to enhance social, environmental and economic wellbeing are being developed. Third sector organisations are being supported to develop knowledge and capacity. We have open and two-way discussions with key stakeholders in the City Region. | 1) Use participatory approach to identify local research needs.  
2) Link the skills of our staff and students with the needs of the local community.  
3) Develop professional mentoring scheme.  
4) Link research activity with community interest and need.  
5) Communicate research activity with local community through public engagement and partnership activities.  
6) Develop strategic partnerships with key leaders in the field of sustainability. | 2015 onwards |
| We will lead by example, share best practice, learn from others and ensure our research is accessible both locally and globally. | We are a leader in sustainability. We work with staff and students to support impact and engagement work relating to sustainability outside the University. We share experiences with a wide range of stakeholders. | 1) Share our experiences through publications and conferences. Work with internal and external partners to communicate research with wider stakeholders.  
2) Develop an external workshop and lecture series.  
3) Develop and widely publicise Living Lab projects to include community benefit.  
4) Facilitate students working and sharing their work with the local community.  
5) Increase community and schools visits and access to the University campus, for example the Sustainable Garden, the Bike Hub, bee hives and University events. | 2014 onwards |
| We will take our responsibility to society seriously, as an employer, good neighbour and in creating opportunities. | We work with others in the city to create positive, socially sound opportunities. Sustainability will be a core part of our contracts. Staff will be remunerated in a fair manner. | 1) Investigate ways to build social value into contracts and establish a mechanism as part of the procurement process to assess social value of contracts.  
2) Investigate new initiatives to enhance local employment for example apprenticeships.  
3) Ensure all university staff are paid a living wage.  
4) Investigate ways of working proactively with the city to create opportunities locally. | 2015 onwards |
Action plans and commitments
Through organisational change

- Working with University Executive Group (UEG) to embed sustainability in our management roles and responsibilities
- Sustainability reporting feeds in to Integrated Planning Exercise
- Sustainability Steering Group feeds in to UEG
- Collaborating with staff across the University and with community, public and private sector partners and stakeholders
- Developing staff and student Sustainability Architects roles across campus to help deliver the strategy
Through organisational change
With our stakeholders and partners

We got everybody in our building involved. Sustainability is for Everyone!
Challenging Connections

Leadership and Governance
Challenging Connections

Leadership and Governance

Becoming the Architects of Possibility

Social and Ethical Responsibility 
Key to Decision Making

Collaborative Organisation

Operations 
Learning 
Innovation 
Research

Be Bold

Architects of Possibility
Thank you! Any questions?

• Potential challenges – and how we can overcome them

• Our connections you could make? How can people in the room help?

• Who do you need to challenge internally?