

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

February 2022





Environmental sustainability means avoiding the damage and exploitation of our environment so that future generations and natural populations are able to thrive. There is growing recognition that it is impossible to separate environmental sustainability from commitments to social sustainability and equality.

St Catharine's College is proud of our community's expertise and commitment to advancing environmental sustainability, through world-class research that advances policy and academic discourse, and tireless efforts going on behind the scenes to improve how the College operates. [Read more about some of this recent activity.](#)

We also welcome the University of Cambridge's commitment to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability performance, as set out in its ['Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy'](#).

| Our vision | Our commitment |
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| Humans and the natural world are intimately connected: our actions affect the wellbeing of non-human organisms, and these organisms contribute to a healthy, meaningful life for us all. We do not want to compromise these ecological systems or deplete the world of its natural resources. We want future generations to inherit an environment that is healthier and more biodiverse. | Recognising that climate change as one of the biggest challenges that humanity has ever faced, St Catharine's will reduce the environmental impact of the College community (decreasing our footprint), while harnessing the positive influence of our students, staff, Fellows and alumni to encourage and support other communities to take action (expanding our handprint). |

| Focus areas | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Energy consumption | Resource & waste management | Biodiversity & ecosystems |
| Water use | Generation & application of knowledge | Alumni with sustainability skills, knowledge & understanding |

| Goals | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To achieve carbon-equivalent net-zero status by 2040 | To identify other measurable and ambitious objectives encompassing our community's operations, individual behaviours and our influence on wider society across our focus areas (see above) | To produce, release in the public domain and implement roadmaps that are focused and actionable to ensure we achieve our objectives |

Guiding principles

Engagement: Community engagement and support will determine the success of this strategy, since our handprint and footprint involve change in practice and culture across all facets of college life. Each of our action plans will need to address the collaboration and behaviour change necessary.

Connectivity: St Catharine's is connected to other groups and communities working to similar goals, so we will seek out, learn from and share successes.

Accountability: All members of the St Catharine's community are accountable to one another for addressing the College's environmental sustainability. In addition, the Green Working Group is accountable for its activities to Governing Body, via the General Estates Committee, and will ensure there are identified owners for any activities. It is acknowledged that there will need to be close working between the Green Working Group and colleagues on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.

Focus: Our community has a finite amount of time and resources to achieve our goals and we will need to navigate a plethora of ways to address the threat of climate change and ensure the greatest positive impact.

Tenacity: Meaningful progress will take time and require the St Catharine's community to sustain momentum year-on-year – regardless of changing personnel, student elections and other potential disruptions – and to brave changes that might feel uncomfortable.