

Highlights 2023/24

This year at the University of Cambridge, we have continued efforts to improve our environmental sustainability performance.

Here are some highlights of our achievements over the past year and areas where we need to do more.



We remain on track with our carbon reduction target for the University's operational estate. Our total Market-based emissions have reduced by 67% since 2015/16. Our emissions did increase by 6% in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23. This is due to a change in our methodology as part of our ongoing work to improve the accuracy of our data.

Delivery of our [Reshaping our Estate](#) programme will further support delivery against our carbon reduction target.

The overall trend in our water consumption is an increase in use. This remains an area where we need to do more.

In terms of travel, the majority of our staff continue to commute to work using sustainable modes. However, we are currently falling slightly below our target for 75% of staff to use sustainable modes for travelling to work.



Turning to business travel, per capita emissions from business flights have decreased by almost 10% against our target baseline, but we are not on track to meet our target for a 25% reduction by 2024/25. We are currently seeing a year-on-year increase in emissions from business flights following the return to travel after the Covid pandemic.

Since 2020/21, we have seen a significant reduction in the amount of waste we produce each year. Our annual recycling waste (operational waste) has steadied around 45%, so we have some further work to do to achieve our target of 80%.

We have delivered biodiversity enhancement works on our urban and rural estate and continued to offer training in nature friendly approaches to our operational partners. For their great work across the estate, the Grounds Maintenance Team were awarded a Professional Services award for Improving our Environmental Performance.

We met some important milestones this year. We became a signatory organisation of the [Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice](#).

Our Environmental Management System (EMS) was certified to the internationally recognised ISO14001 standard.

We achieved Silver accreditation from Modeshift STARS, a national scheme recognising excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel.



We also won the 'E-Mobility Project of the Year' for our work in making Voi e-scooters and e-bikes available for staff.

The new car parking policy was approved in July 2024 by the University Council, for implementation from October 2025. New criteria will be introduced using a points-based system, which will score applications for parking permits based on several criteria including access to public transport and car sharing, to ensure permits are allocated fairly and to staff that need them most.

In July 2024, the [University announced its plans to strengthen leadership on environmental sustainability](#), across both its academic and operational activities, and work has commenced to achieve this.

