

Climate Action Plan

Derby College Group

1 year plan for 2025-26.



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GET STARTED

ACTION

Sign up to the [Let's Go Zero](#) campaign

By joining this campaign, your college confirms that it is taking action now to reduce its own carbon impact, and that it demands the UK Government help all colleges reach this goal by the end of the decade.

Add sustainability plans, projects and successes to your organisation's website and share through wider communications

Celebrate your college's climate action on your website, in newsletters, social media, local press, and events to showcase your successes and involve the wider community. Use the Let's Go Zero comms pack to do this.

Set up a student sustainability working group

Assemble a Student Sustainability Working Group and continue the Staff Sustainability Working Group featuring different stakeholders across the college to collaborate and effect change. Ensure one person has oversight, taking the title of 'Sustainability Lead'.

1. Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency

Calculating and taking actions to reduce carbon emissions and becoming more energy efficient.

ENERGY – BUILDINGS AND RETROFIT

ACTION

Commission an energy audit or heat decarbonisation plan

This is a top recommendation for organisations who are looking to invest in infrastructure changes to reduce energy costs and will help you to identify and prioritise the next steps with energy retrofit options and measurements for your college.

★ Optimise your BMS/BEMS settings and ensure your heating and hot water systems have efficient timings and temperatures set

Trial a reduction in temperature of 1-2 degrees in some areas, coordinated by site teams, and monitor cost and consumption reductions

Engage with the planning phase of the Derby Heat Network

Operators [Derby Energy Network | 1energy.uk](https://www.1energy.uk)

★ Double glaze all windows where possible

Replace any single glazed windows with double glazing or add secondary glazing to enhance energy efficiency, save money, reduce external noise and create a more accessible learning environment.

Install LED lighting and investigate cost/benefit of PIR and daylight linking sensors on lights (e.g. JW, Hudson)

Replace any remaining older lighting fixtures with LEDs and install motion sensors in areas that see only intermittent use. The DfE suggests LED installation can [reduce energy consumption from lighting by over 84%](#).

Sensors are most effective in areas with intermittent use, such as corridors and toilets. If LED lighting is not in place or is not possible for the setting, installing PIR (motion) sensors is a good alternative (~£10 per light plus fitting).

Review the effectiveness, operation and maintenance of your Solar PV systems

Keep panels clean to maintain performance, inspect wiring for electrical safety, make full use of any [Feed-in Tariff \(FiT\)](#) or [Smart Export Guarantee \(SEG\)](#) income, and use generation data as a hands-on learning opportunity to engage students with renewable energy.

ENERGY – BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

ACTIONS

Monitor energy use on a regular basis through dedicated platforms

Review HH metering information and energy bills for accuracy and energy use trend over previous years; develop analysis of your energy data, identify significant energy usage (SEUs), e.g. lifts, chillers; profile live data and optimise your BMS settings.

Ensure your site teams are all effectively trained to optimise the BMS/BEMS

Ensure your site teams are trained in how to monitor and effectively manage the controls on the college's BMS/BEMS systems. If you are using an energy monitoring system, then staff should be given access to CPD training courses to fully understand this so they can make use of this monitoring data to manage their systems.

Ensure catering staff understand how to use energy efficiently in the kitchens and canteens

Work with catering contractor about providing Energy Efficiency training/CPD it for their staff, e.g. only using electrical equipment when needed, avoiding preheating for longer than necessary, and ensuring drinks fridges are covered to prevent energy loss and turned off at nights and weekends.

Access support from your local Net Zero Hub

[Regional Net Zero Hubs](#) across England support colleges with improving capacity and capability on the journey to reaching net zero. College Business Managers, Operational and Estates staff can access free advice and guidance on a variety of decarbonisation projects, including acquiring Heat Decarbonisation Plans, exploring solar potential and preparing for upcoming governmental grants.

FOOD

ACTION

Investigate adding food waste bins to areas where food is consumed.

New waste regulations require all colleges to separate food waste from general waste. Contact your waste supplier to organise food waste collections separately in line with [31st March 2025 legislation](#) changes so that it can be diverted to anaerobic digestion plants. This could lower your waste disposal bills. Organise food waste caddies for all appropriate spaces.

Include themes of sustainable food choices within your tutorial programme: e.g. Explain reasons for eating less meat and reducing food waste

Promote plant-based menu options. Aim to increase uptake of plant-based meals through pupil-led assemblies.

Have students calculate carbon emissions for menu items

Use food as an educational opportunity with students and involve them in calculating the carbon emissions associated with your menu options. Some free online calculators such as [My Emissions](#) may be able to help you with this.

WASTE

ACTION

Review waste volumes and costs to understand financial implications of catering sales (plastic bottles, disposable foodware); work with Caterlink and Veolia to reduce waste and increase recycling

Carry out a bin audit to ensure mandatory recycling requirements are being met

[New mandatory waste regulations](#) require all [dry recycling](#) and [food waste](#) to be separated from general waste. To do this effectively, carry out a bin audit to review location, internal and external capacity, and labelling. Your CAA can provide a bin audit toolkit with label templates.

Provide students with education on the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling correctly and run campaigns with incentives to educate students on the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling correctly

Ensure sufficient, clean and working water fountains and taps – incentivise refillable bottle use

Actively enable students to prefer refilling bottles over buying bottled water. Provide a suitable number of cold drinking water points throughout the college; aim for minimum of 1 point per 50 students. Transition away from the sale of bottled water.

Encourage using digital resources over paper, especially in teaching, to reduce consumption

Encourage all teachers and office staff to utilise whiteboards and digital platforms for assignments, notices, administrative tasks, etc. Actively encourage the use of scrap paper trays though-out classrooms and offices.

Provide opportunities for students to learn repair and upcycling skills

Teach students how to make basic repairs to items - e.g. bikes, textiles, household items. Engage with local community and organisations such as tradespeople, Repair Cafés, bike charities, etc to run events / workshops with students. Engage students with activities such as [upcycling](#) (giving damaged/ unused items a new lease of life). Consider running an upcycling competition or fashion show with students. Organisations like [Junk Kouture](#) run college programmes.

TRANSPORT

ACTION

Run an active travel campaign to highlight the benefits of active travel and public transport. Raise awareness to staff and students and ensure information is included in staff/student inductions.

Promote employee benefits relating to active and public transport

DCG offer a number of employee benefits related to transport including a cycle-to-work scheme and discount on public transport. These should be better promoted to all staff across college.

Resolve EV charge point issue to progress

Install EV charging points in your car park for staff or parents and charge for usage.

PROCUREMENT

ACTION

★ Develop a Sustainable Procurement policy

A Sustainable Procurement Policy is a document that outlines your college's commitment to purchasing in a way that is both sustainable and ethical. You can find some further advice and links on creating a sustainable procurement policy [here](#).

Factor in energy efficiency when buying new equipment such as ovens, fridges, kettles etc.

Ensure that cost is balanced against the efficiency rating of electrical appliances to compensate upfront cost with running cost and longevity, e.g. Choosing only appliances that are the highest efficiency rating for that product.

2. Climate adaptation and resilience

Taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating and to future-proof scarce resources for potential shortages

ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

ACTION

Create a climate adaptation plan relevant to your context, using local climate risk data

Emergency planning policies can ensure appropriate preparation, response and recovery in the event of extreme weather events.

[Climate change: risk assessment and adaptation planning in your management system - GOV.UK](#)

Empower students to become climate resilient

Understand how different students may be vulnerable to climate change, both physically (e.g. access to shade/cool spaces) and psychologically. Take steps to improve pupil resilience e.g. through teaching/showcasing climate solutions, encouraging action-taking, and creating a safe space where students are able to vocalise their emotions and concerns – climate café events.

WATER

ACTION

Monitor water usage on a regular basis

Monitor your water usage on a regular basis by assessing water bills. Use the findings to inform any changes that can be made to improve efficiency (i.e. low flow taps) and compare the before/after benefits of any solutions installed.

3. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

Creating habitats and adopting practices that will enhance species diversity on the college estate and beyond

NATURE				
ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAKEHOLDERS	NOTES	TRACKER
<p>Take part in The Nature Park</p> <p>Engage with the National Education Nature Park and involve groups of students in mapping habitats across the estate. Engage with their program to monitor and increase biodiversity KS5 resources Education Nature Park</p> <p>Collect pupil voice and share with the rest of the college through the Write a Vision Statement resource</p>	<p>Start: Review:</p>			
<p>Increase biodiversity to support local wildlife e.g. add a pond, plant pollinator-friendly plants, put up birdfeeders, bat boxes and 'bug hotels'</p> <p>Develop your outdoor spaces to create a mosaic of habitats and features to provide food, shelter and water for wildlife. Grant funding is often available for this, and make use of the wider community for support and resources.</p>	<p>Start: Review:</p>			
<p>Increase planting of available areas</p> <p>Identify areas in your college grounds which could accommodate new planting. This could include hedgerows, trees and wildflower meadows or native plants in borders, planters or pots. When planning ensure the "right tree in the right place" principle is followed and consider accessibility and maintenance requirements.</p>	<p>Start: Review:</p>			
<p>Participate in local efforts to promote and protect nature</p> <p>Consider ways to link with local organisations to increase nature connectedness in students from all</p>	<p>Start: Review:</p>		<p>Pollinator Pathways Project Urban Greening & Wildlife Corridors Bristol, UK</p> <p>https://www.electricdaisy.org/</p>	

<p>areas at BH e.g. University of Derby, Down to Earth, DWT</p> <p>Engage with local nature recovery schemes, ensure your grounds are part of local "wildlife corridors", write to your MP to demand action for nature, start a tree nursery to supply saplings for the local area.</p>			<p>B-Lines - Buglife</p>	
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4. Climate Education, Green Skills and Green Careers

Ensuring the education you provide gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that your teaching staff feel supported to offer this

CULTURE
ACTION
<p>Develop a whole college Sustainability Strategy that can be shared on the college website including sub-sections that look at energy use and monitoring, emission reporting, water, biodiversity, curriculum and green skills, procurement etc; incorporate environmental sustainability actions into college business planning and KPI's and include within Strategic Objectives and monitoring KPIs</p>
<p>Appoint a sustainability focused governor</p> <p>Appoint a link governor who will work directly with the Sustainability Lead and working group to deliver the Climate Action Plan.</p>
<p>Set up a sustainability award for students or classes</p> <p>Create an Eco Award as part of the Eco Club's work, either as an end of year celebration or a weekly/half termly award e.g. for the class who do the most recycling/turn off lights and screens most consistently.</p>

CURRICULUM
ACTION
<p>Complete a curriculum audit</p>

Develop CPD for Curriculum Managers on how to incorporate sustainability across different subject areas (Climate Ambassador support?) Expand CPD for a broader range of staff which could include carbon literacy or use frameworks such as [A Rounder Sense of Purpose](#) (linked to the SDGs)

Run [Climate FRESKS](#) to students and staff together

Engage with all external partners and contractors to create opportunities for students to benefit from current and planned initiatives e.g. Decarbonisation Plan, solar generation data capture; guest speakers

GREEN SKILLS AND CAREERS

ACTION

Access the [Climate Ambassadors scheme](#)

Connect with Climate Ambassadors in your region and invite them to do college assemblies on green skills and curriculum linked topics.

Climate Ambassadors can support settings to:

- begin or progress their climate action plans through active conversations,
- navigate existing resources, organisations and sister project support, and decide where to focus efforts,
- discuss creative ideas, involving pupil voice in the development of action plans,

contribute directly to actions across decarbonisation, adaptation & resilience, biodiversity, and climate education & green careers.

Upskill careers advisors/teachers in green careers options

Staff should know about both the technical and academic routes to green skills courses available. Find further information on this here.

Invite inspirational green careers speakers in to speak to students

Find green careers speakers to inspire students and educate them about different green career options.

Connect students from all backgrounds to extracurricular green skills development opportunities

Provide extracurricular green skills opportunities that are accessible to all students, actively encouraging participation from under-represented groups by addressing barriers such as gender stereotypes, racial inequality, and financial disadvantage, so every student can gain experience in sustainability and environmental leadership.



www.letsgozero.org

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