



WESTON
COLLEGE



SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL ACTION FRAMEWORK 2022-2032



**Building a 'green,
lean and socially
responsible'
culture to create
a sustainable and
community focused
College of the Future**

Working towards a net zero college, championing green skills and careers and supporting our community through social action to sustainably grow and thrive

FORWARD



Being Green, Lean and Socially Responsible - our philosophy for a sustainable 'Net Zero' College of the Future

In England, both the Government (COP26) and the Association of Colleges (AoC) have identified 'climate change' as one of the biggest challenges of our time. Colleges, like all organisations have a responsibility to address this and to meet the UK government's target to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. At the same time, our staff and students are also passionate advocates of making a difference to their communities and therefore, we must embed a green, lean and socially responsible approach, in order to sustain the world's resources, reduce environmental impact and create the vibrant, positive and fairer communities of tomorrow.

Through this framework (and our aligned 'Super Six' sustainability principles), I am determined that students, staff and stakeholders are empowered to work together to achieve our net zero ambitions, and that we as a College, can build an ethos of green, lean, social responsibility into all our teaching and learning practice. This will be cascaded by championing green jobs and careers and strengthening our ties within our community through social action projects - working towards building a Net Zero College of the Future that can sustain our region to grow and thrive. This is in line with the Government's ambition for [Net Zero 'Building Back Greener'](#), the global vision behind the [UN's Global Sustainable Development Goals](#), the AoC's ['Green College Commitment'](#), and the [Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#).

Sir Paul Phillips Principal and CEO, Weston College

OUR AMBITION



To create a green, lean, socially responsible culture for staff and students to work together to build a **'Net Zero College of the Future'**, which champions green jobs, growth and careers - and uses social action to inclusively build a more sustainable and dynamic community, that can sustain and grow a progressive circular economy.

This will be achieved through the following key strands:

The Framework in action - using a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach

OUR SUPER SIX SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES



INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE



BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMPTION



GREEN SKILLS AND CAREERS



SUPPLY CHAIN PARTNERSHIPS



SUSTAINABILITY/ SOCIAL ACTION



ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Celebrates working with the wider community through collaboration to effect positive environmental and societal change on the ground, through building sustainable partnerships to improve the region's outlook in terms of people, place and wellbeing to build stronger, more sustainable communities.

LEAN

Encourages staff, students and stakeholders to consider and co-construct lifecycles, efficiency of process, technology etc when problem solving towards becoming a Net Zero College, and creating the entrepreneurial thinkers of tomorrow to support businesses to achieve sustainable and ambitious economic growth.

GREEN

Develops knowledge and practices to raise environmental awareness for students, staff and stakeholders with the College using a global approach to upskilling learners in green skills to develop a flourishing green economy which protects the environment it serves.

STRAND 1 COLLEGE

Reducing our carbon emissions and embedding a green, lean, socially responsible culture - for students and staff to come together, using strong green leadership, to sustainably work towards becoming a 'Net Zero' College of the Future.

STRAND 2 CAREERS

Upskilling to create the green change makers of the future. Working with employers and stakeholders to level up and champion inclusive green careers - so all learners prosper from a vibrant, progressive green economy. Cascade our 'green, lean, socially responsible' ethos, across all curriculum areas, and at all levels.

STRAND 3 COMMUNITY

Supporting our community to grow and thrive using social action projects, where students and staff work collaboratively - using green, lean and socially responsible principles, to create more sustainable, fairer neighbourhoods.

STRAND 1 COLLEGE

OUR COMMITMENT TO BECOME A NET ZERO COLLEGE

Core aims

- To embed a strong college ethos of 'green, lean social responsibility' across the College in order to work towards 'Net Zero' by 2050, - made possible through strong green leadership and governance and communicated through the College's 'Super Six' Sustainability Principles, and championed through campaigns linked to #Let's Go Net Zero.
- To become a 'Net Zero' role model for the education sector, regionally, nationally and internationally through creating collaborative partnerships aligned to key projects e.g. AoC - Beyond the FE Climate Action Roadmap - with success celebrated at every level, using a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach.
- To develop an ambitious carbon reduction plan with robust monitoring, measurement and compliance - secure capital investment to reduce the carbon footprint of its infrastructure and its population. Lead and share best practice nationally with regard to green accounting/investment to both future-proof a 'Net Zero' estate, and to encourage green re-investment in wider sustainability projects.
- To build a 'green, lean and socially responsible' supply chain, engaging with ethical partners who can promote and enhance a circular economy, and add social value to the community we serve.
- To create an environment which empowers staff, students and stakeholders to work together when designing 'Net Zero' solutions for each campus - which also improve wellbeing, biodiversity and work/life balance, and consider the role that technology plays in building a dynamic and efficient workforce.
- To support learners, staff and employers to upskill in carbon literacy, creating an inclusive 'Net Zero' talent pipeline who are passionate about tackling climate change and who can problem solve within a wider sustainability and social action context.



Key deliverables for 2024 to be reviewed annually:

1. **Launch the College's Sustainability and Social Action Framework as the overarching 'Towards Net Zero Strategy' embedding the College's 'Super Six' sustainability principles - with strong green leadership/governance in place.**
2. **Bid for FE/HE capital/revenue grants to support the reduction of carbon emissions. Embed a digital mindset for greater efficiency of process; pioneer 'green classroom management' e.g. use of the Virtual Classroom.**
3. **Reduce waste and energy and water consumption. Ensure 'BREEAM' for new builds with refurbishment using sustainable materials. Link with key government agencies e.g. DEFRA, BEIS, EA for a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach.**
4. **Develop positive interaction with our supply chain, ensuring all tendering reflects a 'Net Zero'/circular economy/social value approach. Support employers with a CPD training offer to collectively work towards 'Net Zero' as a region.**
5. **Use an evidence based approach by establishing a robust carbon reduction accounting and reporting mechanism. Facilitate integration into the annual collegiate self-assessment/audit model for SMART target carbon emission monitoring - to ensure a process of continuous improvement exists.**
6. **Ensure 'Net Zero' education/carbon literacy CPD is the norm for all learners and staff and motivation remains high using CE Hub curriculum integration; communication of the 'Super Six'; use of #Let's Go Net Zero campaigns and workforce development alignment.**

The College's Towards Net Zero strategy is a 'Whole College-Whole System' approach for students, staff, governors and stakeholders to work together to embed green and lean principles to become a Net Zero College by 2050. Now working 'Beyond the Climate Action Roadmap for FE', the strategy for 2022-2024 focuses on future actions and improvements to our business processes, technology and estates - whilst also aligning our curriculum for green careers, and supporting our community through social action to collectively level up and enhance and protect our coastal economy.

WESTON COLLEGE'S SUPER SIX SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Key messages for governors, staff, students and wider stakeholders designed to underpin the journey towards creating a 'Net Zero' College of the Future.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE

Implement a 'green, lean socially responsible' culture through strong green leadership, governance, CPD, partnerships and #Let's Go Zero campaigns. Embed long term sustainable estate investment/management e.g. renewable energy, eco-designs, waste and water management, procurement, biodiversity, with a commitment to work towards 'Net Zero' carbon emissions by 2050. Create a digital mindset for greater process efficiency and work/life balance. Ensure robust accounting, reporting and audit of 'Net Zero' to realise impact - using a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach.



BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMPTION

Create a positive carbon reduction ethos for students and staff and wider stakeholders around the 3R's Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Upskill through carbon literacy CPD, events and key messaging e.g. to use less water/waste and energy; switch off lights; computers/screens/printers when not in use; only use air con when necessary; keep doors closed; reduce the amount of food waste/single use items and unnecessary ordering of consumables by each faculty/department. Increase the amount of recycling, reduce printing with robust implementation and monitoring to work towards 'Net Zero' across all campuses.



GREEN SKILLS AND CAREERS

Play an anchor role through working with employers to deliver the green curriculum of the future to meet green skills priorities. Upskill staff, students, governors and employers in carbon literacy, higher technical skills and wider sustainability and social action. Raise awareness of inclusive green careers through hands on immersion events looking at future technologies, e.g., auto electrification, smart systems/materials, artificial intelligence, robotics etc - to see how they are shaping sustainable construction, manufacture, logistics, transport, retail, business administration, patient care and public services.



SUPPLY CHAIN PARTNERSHIPS

Choose and upskill suppliers to meet our high standards regarding their own 'Net Zero' and wider sustainability/social action practices. Ensure compliance and foster a collaborative green, lean socially responsible culture, to create a circular economy. Engage in smart purchasing/order scheduling to reduce carbon footprint, using less deliveries/packaging etc - and bulk ordering where possible.



SUSTAINABILITY/SOCIAL ACTION

Support staff, students, governors, employers and wider stakeholders to engage in social action to undertake community activities to build stronger fairer communities - working with those most at need. Encourage educational projects which improve biodiversity (both urban as well as rural), and protect our environment e.g., using beach cleans. Ensure robust monitoring, reporting and measurement of social value to realise impact.



ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL

Reduce the numbers of single journeys undertaken by governors, staff and students. Promote use of alternative transportation including walking, bikes, public transport, carpool (COVID permitting). Use of Teams meetings etc for meetings/collaboration. Raise awareness of government incentives to adopt alternatively fuelled vehicles/passenger transport - educating students, staff, governors and the wider community on the eco cost/benefits of green travel.



STRAND 2 CAREERS

OUR COMMITMENT TO UPSKILL FOR GREEN CAREERS

Core aims

- To become an exemplar College for FE and HE for the implementation of the national green skills industrial revolution to 'Build Back Greener' - working in partnership with employers, learners, and key stakeholders e.g. [WECA](#), the [West of England IoT](#) and our [National Centre for Excellence in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\)](#), to create an inclusive talent pipeline to grow the green jobs of tomorrow.
- To align to the AoC's Green College Commitment to make climate and environmental skills/education an integrated part of all vocational and academic programmes across the College Group- championing inclusive 'green' apprenticeships/ traineeships/T Levels, adult retraining opportunities e.g., Skills Bootcamps, and higher technical pathways - as per [DfE](#) policy.
- To support the aims of the [National Climate Education Plan](#), as well as exploring alternative learning environments linked to nature, as an inclusive vehicle for re-engagement. Embed volunteering to build confidence, enhance problem solving/ entrepreneurialism, and to develop learning about wider sustainability for greater climate change reliance.
- To invest in CPD and the innovative technologies required to upskill the College's workforce to teach outstanding green skills, linking with [University Centre Weston](#) and the West of England IoT, to develop higher progression routes. Champion a global approach - being part of the [WorldSkills UK](#) Centre of Excellence/Innovation Network and through linkage to the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics.
- To embed a digital mindset, when curriculum planning to widen participation and extend geographical reach - utilising the expertise of the College's learning technologists. Create innovation as a Microsoft Showcase College for wider immersive green skills delivery, and the streamlining of processes/systems with CPD to further support learners and staff.
- To measure and monitor green skills/career progression, using a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach to increase carbon literacy, capturing the employer and learner voice throughout with impact clearly understood by the College's leadership board and governors.



Key deliverables for 2024 to be reviewed annually:

1. **Learner/staff green upskilling KPIs understood and embedded in the collegiate self-assessment process to progress 'Green Skills and Careers' as a key 'Super Six' sustainability principle. Robust monitoring through existing CLB/governor reporting mechanisms.**
2. **Seek investment through bids to ensure CPD and industry standard technologies are sustained for outstanding teaching and learning.**
3. **Employers/learners/staff engaged in green skills/ carbon literacy CPD - with CE Hubs, Adult, HE, PEF all greening their curriculum linking in awarding bodies to meet demand, in line with the AoC's Green College Commitment.**
4. **Cascade best practice from our Centre for Excellence in SEND/Inclusive Practice team. To ensure inclusive green entry level pathways are created. Build confidence with carbon footprint calculations via the Maths Centre for Excellence.**
5. **Work with DfE, UCW and the West of England IoT to develop the HTQ's needed to accelerate economic growth within high growth green sectors.**
6. **Upskill CEIAG advisors/CE Hubs to enhance the understanding of green skills/green jobs. Ensure green careers are a prominent focus in all careers activities - with wellbeing support integrated to equip learners with resilience for change.**

THE GREEN COLLEGE COMMITMENT



"Everyone must be given the chance to train, upskill and retrain for the green economy"

David Hughes
Chief Executive,
Association Colleges



STRAND 3 COMMUNITY

OUR COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY SOCIAL ACTION

Core aims

- To create a culture where social action education becomes the norm, where students, staff and the community work cohesively to enhance the lives of others to build a more fairer, sustainable society in line with the global vision - as laid down by the UN's sustainable development goals.
- To use collaboration to build a network of social action partners, in a model where the sum is greater than the parts to help those most disadvantaged, using green spaces and environmental projects as a mechanism to connect and improve wider wellbeing.
- To become a champion of change to drive the sustainability and social action agenda forward in our local and regional communities, with visible engagement through volunteering - and on a national scale as a national leader of inclusive practice.
- To upskill our own staff, governors, learners and businesses to understand social action and create workforce development best practice as an 'Investor in People Platinum' where social action, sustainability, inclusion and wellbeing (as core organisational values) - can be harnessed to both benefit the community and create a better work/life balance.
- To develop social value measurement, monitoring and reporting processes to allow social value impact to be realised - ensuring that capital projects, the curriculum and supply chains are continually improving their social value designs.
- To align with cross cuttings themes (and the work of wider national/international agencies) as per the 'Department of Education's Sustainability and Climate Change strategy, e.g. National Education Nature Park and Climate Leaders' Award - with linkage to wider international work to share best practice and to protect the coastal environment we serve - in line with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy.



**COACHES
MENTORS
VOLUNTEERS
CONSERVATIONISTS
LEADERS**

Key deliverables for 2024 to be reviewed annually:

1. Engage with key FE/HE social action projects e.g. 'Good for ME Good for FE' and the National Education Nature Park/Queen's Green Canopy to increase biodiversity/natural learning environments - linking in key expertise as a national SEND Centre for Excellence.
2. Build a network of collaborative social action partners who are committed to working towards the wider ambitions of the UN's Global Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Develop Weston College Ambassador roles for students and staff to promote social action (as a key 'Super Six' sustainability principle) with volunteering embedded within curriculum design linked to key national programmes e.g. Climate Leaders' Award.
4. Launch #Let's Go Net Zero campaigns and increase student and stakeholder engagement in the College's Sustainability and Social Action Committee - to cascade ideas and grow coastal/rural/urban 'Social Action' projects linked to increase biodiversity and protecting the environment e.g. beach cleans.
5. Design and implement social value metrics and measurement e.g. TOMS framework as part of the sustainability and social action self-assessment improvement process.
6. Launch the Principal's 'Sustainability and Social Action' awards to celebrate success at every level, and create collective green re-investment opportunities to ensure momentum stays high, and that impact is realised.

**WE BELIEVE
IN MAKING A
DIFFERENCE**

A DECADE OF INNOVATION OUR ETHOS IN ACTION

Building an exemplar Net Zero College of the Future model using a 'Whole College - Whole System' approach.

THE CATALYST FOR CHANGE

The College becomes an early adopter of low carbon skills delivery within its South West Skills Construction Centre of Excellence - being appointed a South West regional lead for the National Skills Academy for Environmental Technologies.

Accredited through Summit Skills, the centres provided early training in the design, installation and maintenance of technologies such as solar thermal, photovoltaics, heat pumps and water harvesting and recycling to rapidly upskill learners in the new sustainable construction methods needed to create a greener built environment for the future.

[CLICK HERE](#)

2011-2013



The College commits to all future new builds to BREEAM standard and launches its 'Eco House Sustainability Centre' to showcase best practice in Estate Design. Solar Panels and Solar Heat Pumps are extended across its Loxton Campus and South West Skills Campus.

This was the catalyst to cascade a workforce culture of energy and waste reduction through embedding recycling, the use of low energy light bulbs and through utilising smart energy systems such as intelligent lighting and heating designs.

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2014



The College works on innovate recycling projects as part of its OLASS 4 contract working within 13 South West regional prisons, and in 2016 launches its community interest company 'Releasing NewPotential' to provide supportive social enterprise led work experience both within prisons and 'Through the Gate'.

This included the award winning Eastwood Park organic soap production and Leyhill Grounds Coffee Shop rated 5/5 stars on Trip Advisor.

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2015



The College develops the West of England Works project - as part of the Building Better Opportunities programme jointly funded through the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund. The project works with a range of voluntary and community organisations based in Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and BANES.

The partnership delivers community outreach programmes (aimed to progressing those furthest from the workplace), through hands on employability projects linked to social action and sustainability - as core values to build stronger and more diverse communities.

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2016



The College wins the Queen's Award for its Inclusive Practice. Social action and sustainability projects are embedded by the award winning Inclusive Practice team. Weston Bay, the UK's first FE based residential training facility for young people with autism, provides specialist provision to aid social engagement, independence and employability.

The model is extended to all learners with SEND, and across wider curriculum areas working with hard to engage young people/adult learners who have had negative prior experiences of education - as a pathway to build confidence and develop key employability skills such as communication and teamwork.

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2017



The College is recognised as 1 of 14 UK Microsoft Showcase Colleges. This is in recognition of its significant investment in digital infrastructure; its comprehensive Edtech strategy to upskill its students and staff in digital capability for 21st century life, and its comprehensive CPD programmes to create the next generation of digital educators including specialist learning technologists, digital advocates and coaches.

Faculty leads use a digital mindset to create flexible/blended solutions and similarly the College's business support teams have committed to integrating cloud technologies to enhance business efficiencies and create lean practice as a mechanism to aid carbon reduction.

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2018



The College is appointed to lead the West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT), a network of 4 Colleges, 1 University and 14 Anchor Employers, to bridge the higher technical skills gap for the region. Within the WEIoT, a core focus exists for STEM, levelling up and meeting employer skills needs, as the UK transitions towards a digital and 'net zero' economy.

In 2021 the College opens its new advanced engineering teaching centre in Bristol's aerospace heartland, in partnership with GKN, (within its Global Technology Centre) to provide an inspirational learning environment, where students are taught within GKN's cutting edge research facility - working on projects such as the decarbonisation of flight.

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2019



The College is praised for its COVID 19 community leadership/volunteering programmes such as Foodbank Friday; its pop up vaccination centre in partnership with North Somerset Council; its facemask production and its fast track NHS frontline training initiatives, as well as the roll out of its outstanding remote education model #MyVirtualCollege designed to remotely support students, staff, businesses and the wider community.

The college went on to achieve national acclaim (highlighted by the Secretary of State for Education), with 'Let's Chat' - a dedicated national website with free resources/toolkits/support packages etc to improve emotional wellbeing in partnership with Gateshead College for the CCF.

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2020



The College partners with Butcombe Farm's philanthropic venture Uncle Paul's Chilli Charity, to pioneer an 'alternative classroom' model in natural surroundings to re-engage vulnerable and at risk learners who have struggled in a formal education setting. Learners with SEND are supported through its nationally recognised specialist support model, delivered by highly qualified specialist practitioners in a natural environment.

The empowerment ethos successfully builds confidence and employability skills. The entrepreneurial and immersive learning programmes are built around the real world learning opportunities of developing and sustaining, a not for profit organic chilli farm, to nurture undiscovered entrepreneurial talent.

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2021

