

Sustainability Impact Report 2025



University of York
Students'
Union

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What does this report tell you about our work on sustainability?

This report is the University of York Students' Union's first Sustainability Impact Report. The report reflects on the progress the University of York Students' Union (York SU) has made against its Sustainability Action Plan up to April 2025. The report aims to:



- **Provide context on the 2024 to 2026 Sustainability Action Plan** outlining how it was developed and how it is shaping our current work on sustainability.
- **Communicate clearly on our ultimate ambitions by the end of 2026** for each pillar of the Sustainability Action Plan.
- **Report transparently on the progress made against each pillar of the Sustainability Action Plan.**
- **Outline the actions York SU will take over the next 12 months in order to remain on track for the successful delivery of the Sustainability Action Plan.**

The report's key findings on the progress York SU has made to date include:



- **Engagement and knowledge:** we have made progress developing our suite of student-facing resources on sustainability, introduced a new student representation framework to improve student involvement in our sustainability work and begun training key members of staff on sustainability.
- **Sustainable Development Grant:** we have improved our applicant guidance document and begun work to increase the visibility of the grant, making progress against our goal to increase the number of successful student applications.
- **Internal culture and operations:** we have established our Internal Sustainability Forum to support more joined-up work on sustainability and used Roses 2025 as an opportunity to explore the opportunities and challenges we will face when delivering sustainable events.
- **Commercial services:** we have joined the Sustainable SUs Charter, completed our first commercial services carbon emissions report, and introduced Klimato ratings onto venue menus.
- **Data, insight and impact:** we have established baseline carbon emissions data for the commercial services branch of the organisation, reported on the outcomes of the sustainability survey for three consecutive years and in 2024 raised the standard of our reporting to deliver more in depth response to the survey findings, and we have implemented steps to improve the accuracy with which we can report on student group travel emissions.
- **Communications:** we have reviewed and expanded the sustainability webpage to reflect our growing work on sustainability and delivered a 2024/25 communications plan for the Sustainable Development Grant.

The report's summary of York SU's commitments over the next 12 months includes:



- **Engagement and knowledge:** we will use the feedback gained from consultation with student leaders to increase the depth and breadth of our student-facing resources as well as ensuring that sustainability is weaved across student group ratification training. We will also begin developing staff-facing training and resources.
- **Sustainable Development Grant:** we will build an even fuller communications plan for the grant for the 2025/26 academic year to increase awareness of the grant. This will include regular storytelling and impact reporting as well as ongoing reviews of the guidance available to applicants to maximise the chance of applicant success.
- **Internal culture and operation:** we will use the Internal Sustainability Forum to continue joining up work on sustainability and to ensure we are measuring progress and impact through the Sustainability Action Tracker. We will also ensure that sustainability updates are regularly included in our staff news and we will develop a Corporate Social Responsibility policy.
- **Commercial services:** we will explore options for sustainable clothing lines, improve our vegetarian and vegan food offer as well as the way this food offer is incentivised and advertised to students, and we will begin work reducing emissions from our beverage offer.
- **Data, insight and impact:** we will complete a carbon emissions report encompassing commercial services and the charity branch of the organisation. We will also begin to report on our student group travel emissions and start co-creating an emissions reduction strategy with students. Finally, we will support the completion of the University of York's Responsible Futures audit.
- **Communications:** we will ensure sustainability features in our student-facing communications at least once a month alongside improving the accessibility of our communications on sustainability and promoting student action on sustainability through storytelling.

NB: This Sustainability Impact Report sits alongside the Commercial Services Sustainability Report 2024/25. The Commercial Services Report provides more detail on the work of the Commercial Services branch in delivering against the commitments made in the Sustainable SUs Charter.

Introduction

In 2019, York SU declared a climate and ecological emergency and committed to addressing the impact of climate change and the ecological crisis and protecting the futures of young people globally. Since then, we have taken significant steps towards establishing a democratic and operational structure and culture that will allow us to take the rapid and decisive action needed to rise to the challenges presented by the climate and nature crisis. Some key actions we have taken include:



- We developed the 2024 to 2026 Sustainability Action Plan and recruited a Sustainability Coordinator to ensure that we had the strategic vision and resources in place to deliver on our commitments.
- When we became a Single Students' Union in 2024, we put sustainability directly within the remit of the Union Development Officer, ensuring that our work is overseen by a full-time officer. We also established the Environmental and Social Responsibility Forum to provide an opportunity for students to feed directly into the work we are doing.
- We were a founding member of the Sustainable SUs Charter, with our Commercial Services team playing a leading role in pushing the commercial operations of Unions across the country to be as sustainable as possible.

These three headline developments contain a myriad of work, breakthroughs and barriers alike, delivered across the organisation. They are also only the beginning of what we need to do to ensure that we are delivering on the commitment made in our emergency declaration.

This impact report is an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made so far and a chance to talk honestly about the work we have yet to do and the progress we are committed to delivering in 2025 and beyond.

This impact report captures progress and impact up to April 2025.



Statement from our Union Development Officer

In my response to the 2024 Student Sustainability Survey Report, I took the time to reflect on how the importance of sustainability has shaped my time at the University of York. Not to repeat myself, but the point still stands: the imminence of the climate crisis was a core theme to my time as a student, and still is in my role as a York SU officer. Politically, York SU, and particularly the Sabbatical Officers, has been consistently at the forefront of calls for climate activism, passing policy such as the aforementioned declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in 2019. However, acknowledging a problem is not synonymous with taking action.

Therefore, the purpose of this Sustainability Impact Report is to track the practical progress of such commitments, alongside mapped commitments for the future. The actions identified below range widely from the strategic to the individually specific, whether it be the 2024 to 2026 Sustainability Action Plan, which provides the backbone to the strategic direction of sustainability at the Union, or the implementation of carbon labelling on all SU menu items. I am incredibly excited to see York SU's dedication to ensuring that political sustainability commitments become reality.

From a student-facing perspective, it is incredibly important that reports such as these are regularly produced. The limited nature of York SU's communications regarding its sustainability work is reiterated often, and reduces our efficiency in this area. It means that when facing student scrutiny (as all SUs should), there is always an inequity of understanding as to what has already been done, and what still needs to happen. Hopefully this report will go some of the way to solving such a recurrent issue. And finally, from my perspective as a sabbatical officer, this Sustainability Impact Report is an incredibly valuable document when lobbying the university in the name of sustainability. It is a document full of best practice, helping to legitimise our demands for action.

Gen Andrews
Union Development Officer
University of York Students' Union

Statement from our Director of Commercial Operations

At University of York Students' Union, sustainability is not just an aspiration, it is a fundamental responsibility. As we navigate an era defined by climate urgency, our commitment to integrating sustainable practices within Commercial Services has never been more critical. We recognise that the choices we make today will shape the future of our institution, our students, and the planet.

The Sustainable SUs Charter provides us with a clear roadmap to embed sustainability into every facet of our operations. From measuring and publishing our carbon emissions to promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing single-use plastics, and enhancing food sustainability across campus, we are taking decisive steps to align with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and move towards a net-zero future.

One of our core priorities is ensuring that our approach to sustainability is transparent, ambitious, and actionable. By implementing carbon labelling, reducing food waste, and increasing plant-based options in our menus, we are actively enabling our student body and staff to make informed, eco-conscious choices. Furthermore, our investment in environmental awareness training and staff qualifications ensures that sustainability is embedded in our culture at every level.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on delivering real, measurable change. By the end of the 2025/26 academic year, we are committed to completing all elements of the Sustainable SUs Charter, ensuring that our Commercial Services operate in a way that is responsible, ethical, and future-focused.

Sustainability is a journey that requires collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment. We are proud to lead by example and work alongside our students, staff, and partners to create a more sustainable future for all.

Tom Mountain

Director of Commercial Operations and Development
University of York Students' Union

The sustainability action plan for 2024 to 2026

The 2024 to 2026 Sustainability Action Plan is York SU's actions and outcomes focused organisational plan to ensure that we are delivering on our responsibility as a Students' Union to current and future generations.

The plan centres around five key themes, outlining the actions and outcomes needed to ensure that we are successfully embedding sustainability into everything we do and equipping York students with the skills they need to create change.

Successful delivery of the plan would see:



- The provision of an appropriate suite of support and resources tailored to students, ensuring that all York students have what they need to engage with sustainability issues and activity in a meaningful way.
- The SU workforce feels confident in their understanding of sustainability issues and equipped and supported to embed sustainability into their work.
- Our Commercial Services arm operates in-line with the commitments made in the Sustainable SUs Charter.
- Students and stakeholders feel informed about our sustainability work and the opportunities available to them to take a lead on sustainability.
- Operational infrastructure ensures we are well placed to reduce our organisational emissions and our environmental impact.

This report is structured around each pillar of the Sustainability Action plan and asks of each:



- Why does this work matter?
- What are we aiming for?
- What have we achieved so far?
- What actions will we take in the next year to further our progress?

Engagement and knowledge

Why does this work matter?

As an organisation focused on empowering York students, we must ensure that students have access to the resources, training and support they need to engage with sustainability in a meaningful way. Simultaneously, our work fostering sustainability expertise and engagement cannot solely be outward facing. To confidently lead by example and maximise the sustainability of our operations, we must also upskill and empower our staff to integrate sustainability into their work.

What are we aiming for?

By the end of 2026, we will have a suite of resources and training opportunities tailored to the needs and priorities of students wanting to take the lead on sustainability. This will be accessible to all students and communicated well. We will also have a suite of resources and training opportunities tailored to the needs of York SU staff, so that everyone in our workplace is equipped with what they need to champion sustainability in their work.

What have we achieved so far?



- In December 2024, we developed an online sustainability training module on sustainability and the creation of the Student Sustainability Guide. To confidently lead by example in sustainable operations, we must also upskill and empower our staff to integrate sustainability into their work.
- To ensure that our provision is connecting students with a broad range of opportunities, the University's student sustainability opportunities have been signposted throughout the training module and the Student Sustainability Guide.
- In December 2024, a Sustainability Hub was added to the student group resource hub, increasing the visibility of sustainability to student leaders and acting as a central repository for our expanding suite of student-facing resources and opportunities.
- In November 2024, the residing Union Development Officer established the Environment and Social Responsibility Forum. The Forum brings together Sustainability Champions from across the Union's student leadership committees, as well as including ordinary members of the student body to represent those students not involved in student groups.
- In December 2024, the Commercial Director and Sustainability Coordinator completed the IEMA Environmental Sustainability Skills for Managers training course.
- In March 2025, we delivered a session on climate justice at the York SU Community Conference, focusing on facilitating student engagement with climate justice in order to shape York SU's approach to climate justice going forward.
- Across February and March 2025, we conducted consultation with student leaders and student representatives to understand what support and resources would be most valuable for students.

Where are we going next?



- Starting during the May 2025 re-ratification period, we will include sustainability across the in-person training sessions delivered during the re-ratification of student groups in May and September. We will include sustainability across all relevant training sessions - rather than being limited to a single sustainability session - in order to ensure that sustainability is incorporated as an important consideration across the management of student activities.
- Based on student consultation feedback, we are developing resources to support student leadership on sustainability. These include jargon busters, policy guides, and webinars, which will be available on the Sustainability Hub of the Student Group Resource Hub.
- We will develop a sustainability training module for student staff working in Union venues. This module will be tailored to the sustainability issues, challenges and opportunities presented in the food and drink industry, ensuring that all our venue staff are equipped with the knowledge to become sustainability champions.
- We will develop a sustainability module for career staff induction training. This training module will ensure that all staff members are equipped with an understanding of sustainability issues, the existing policies the Union has in place on sustainability and how they can embed sustainability into their work.
- From 2025, we will offer sustainability training and upskilling opportunities to all staff, including encouraging participation in the University of York's Climate Fresk and Carbon Literacy Training.



Funding sustainable development in york

What is the Sustainable Development Grant?

In 2019 the University of York and York SU introduced the Latte Levy in all of their outlets across campus. The Levy implemented an additional fee for the use of single-use cups on top of the cost of a hot drink. In 2022, the funds from the Latte Levy established York SU's Sustainable Development Grant. This grant provides £50 to £1000 for staff and student-led projects addressing sustainable development goals, supporting the York community in leading sustainability initiatives.

Impact of the grant

From 2022 to April 2025, the Sustainable Development Grant has funded 15 projects and internally awarded them £8078.56

The grant has funded a broad range of projects led by both students and staff, for example...

Trialling more sustainable weigh boats in biology labs

This project used the grant to trial sustainable alternatives to polystyrene weigh boats in biology department lab testing.

Health Sciences Herb garden

Health Science Department staff used the grant to establish their departmental herb garden, purchasing containers, compost, and starter plants from York Disabled Workers Co-Operative, a local social enterprise producing garden planters and containers.



Climate action game for University students

This project used the grant to develop role-playing games focused on helping university students navigate the trade-offs and decisions of individual climate action.

“I got funding to help with the production of role-playing games called ‘Climate Club’ and ‘Climate Club 2.0’. These games are part of my PhD research looking at how we can design games that help people make sense of their climate actions... Developing the games was an iterative process. So I would make a prototype, play it and update it. Every time, I would do some printing and organise an event and call out to people to come and play the game. For all of this and most of the logistics, I was making use of the Sustainable Development Grant. What I’m trying to create through my games is some positivity. They don’t make people feel too negative, the aim is for people to think *oh, we can still do something about this.*”

- Prasad Sandbhoor, PhD student at University of York

Tech Soc's rechargeable battery project

Technical Theatre Society used the grant to purchase a range of rechargeable batteries to help them reduce their reliance on single use batteries and work towards their goal to bring their battery waste to zero.

“As a society we are working to be as sustainable as possible with a specific focus into how we can reduce our waste. In the last 6 months we have had to buy around 250 single use batteries to keep up with the number of events we have been working on, however, with the Sustainable Development Grant we have been able to buy a range of rechargeable batteries that will greatly help our goal to bring our battery waste to zero. It is estimated that 600 million batteries end up in landfill every year and only 27% are recycled in the UK. We always ensure that any single use batteries we do use are always recycled, however, as it takes fifty times more energy to make a battery than the finished product produces, multi use batteries mean that we can significantly reduce our overall environmental impact by minimising the need for new battery production and reducing waste.”

- Spokesperson for Tech Soc

From waste to growth in the Chemistry Department

Headed up by a PhD student, the Green Chemistry Centre for Excellence are using department coffee and tea waste to make compost for a departmental growing bed. The project has repurposed felled trees from campus to create the compost bed and is currently growing its first batch of seedlings!

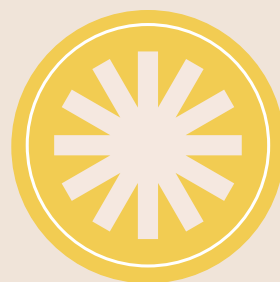
Improving access to the grant

In September 2024, grant spending data showed that students applied less frequently than staff and had higher application rejection rates.

In order to address this discrepancy between student and staff, we took the following actions:

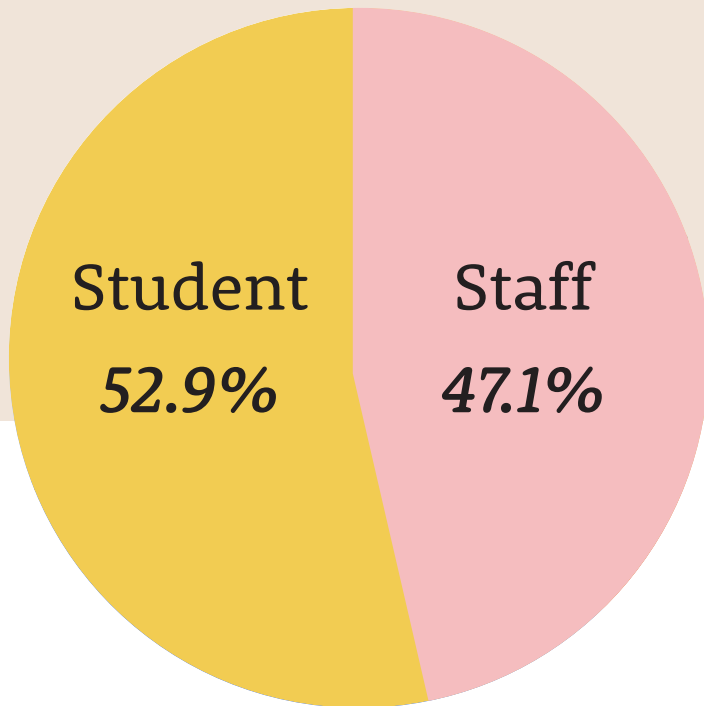


- Developed a communications plan which focused on advertising the grant to students across a broad range of communication channels at regular key dates across the year.
- Embedded the Sustainable Development Grant across all relevant student leader training.
- Improved the applicant guidance document to address common shortcomings in student applications.
- Collaborated with Environmental Sustainability at York (ESAY) on storytelling and promotion to raise awareness of existing projects and promote the grant to students and staff.

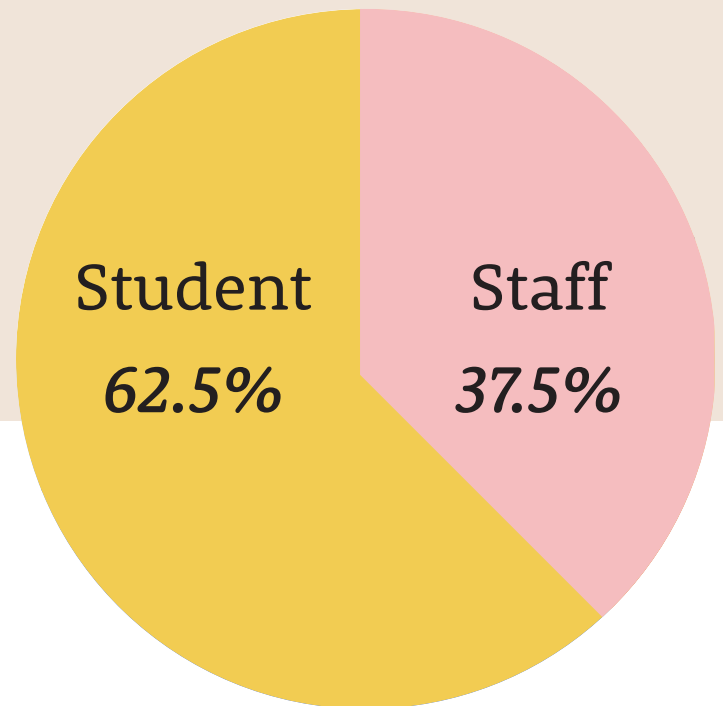


Progress against our targets

2022 to September 2024:
Staff versus student applications



October 2024 to April 2025:
Staff versus student applications



Where are we going next?



- We will continue to increase student applications by leveraging the communications channels that have proved successful and continuing to look for new opportunities to promote the grant.
- We will continue to improve student application acceptance rates by providing application support and guidance. Our next step is to develop a grant application webinar for those who find the written guidance document inaccessible.
- We will evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to increase student applications and acceptance, consulting with applicants and unengaged students to refine our approach as needed.
- We will implement a more rigorous and consistent system for recording the impact of funded projects, ensuring effective fund allocation and transparent grant administration.

Internal culture and operations

Why does this work matter?

Sustainability done well is woven across every facet of an organisation. It cannot be implemented successfully unless it is driven by an entire organisation with staff who are motivated and supported to make sustainable changes in their work. We aim to ensure that all staff have the training, guidance and support they need to operate as sustainably as possible in their own work and contribute to the broader sustainability goals of the organisation.

What are we aiming for?

By the end of 2026, all staff will complete sustainability training during their York SU induction, ensuring that everyone enters their role understanding why we care about sustainability and what action we are taking. Staff will report increased confidence in their ability to integrate sustainability into their work. As an organisation we will be better equipped to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by working with more sustainable and ethical suppliers.

What have we achieved so far?



- In December 2024, we established our Internal Sustainability Forum. The Forum brings together members from across every team of the Union to discuss ongoing sustainability work, successes and challenges. The forum facilitates collaboration and effective action by breaking down silos and leveraging the team's enthusiasm for sustainability.
- We have used the Roses 2025 planning process to explore the opportunities and challenges present when purchasing from and contracting with third parties.





Where are we going next?



- We will host our Internal Sustainability Forum every two months to ensure regular cross-team discussions on sustainability. The forum will maintain a Sustainability Action Log to track progress toward our aims and identify opportunities for further work and collaboration.
- We will regularly include sustainability updates in our staff newsletter. These updates will keep staff informed about our sustainable operations and promote training and engagement opportunities.
- We have begun developing a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy for the Union. This policy will provide guidance for making informed decisions about external company partnerships, based on environmental and social responsibility considerations. A draft of the policy is targeted for presentation to the Trustee Board by the end of the 2024/25 academic year.



Commercial services

Why does this work matter?

The food and drink sector plays an important role in the sustainable transition, with food production accounting for 26% of global emissions. Beyond that, food production impacts soil health, biodiversity and land use. As a founding member of the Sustainable Students' Unions (Sustainable SUs) Charter, we are committed to driving the green transition in food and beverage services across students' unions, contributing to the broader sustainable transformation needed in the sector. Sustainable SUs, an NUS Services Charity project, unites students' unions to foster sustainable practices within a net zero plan. It also promotes low-carbon, sustainably produced food and drink choices that protect nature and biodiversity through collective action and collaboration.

What are we aiming for?

The Sustainable SUs Charter maps out an ambitious route to net zero by 2050, however, such big leaps require a series of smaller steps. To take us closer to that goal, by the end of 2026, we will have developed a reporting and monitoring framework to establish baseline metrics for carbon emissions and the use of plastic and other unsustainable materials in venues and during flagship activities. We will have implemented Klimato rated B-grade menus across our venue, aligning with the targets set by the WRI Coolfood initiative. We will have reduced food waste by 10% and reduce the use of plastic and other unsustainable materials across commercial operations.

Our commercial services sustainability efforts are detailed in the Commercial Services Sustainability Report 2024/25, in accordance with our Sustainable SUs Charter reporting commitments. This report provides further detail on our progress, emissions reporting, and future actions.



What have we achieved so far?



- We are taking a lead within the sector, working to push forward sustainability within Students Unions in a way that is collaborative rather than competitive. York SU currently chairs the Sustainable SUs Charter and Green Group meetings as well as a sub group on the development of sustainable clothing options.

- We produced our first carbon emissions report for all our commercial operations. Assisted by NUS Services and Sustainable SUs, we worked with sustainability consultants Energise to help us measure and report on our greenhouse gas (GHG)

emissions for the last year in which financial data was available (2022-23).

- Our first emissions report found that 72.2% of all our emissions result from scope 3 emissions (this means our emissions from purchased goods and services).

- We have prioritised vegetarian options on our menus wherever possible to help nudge consumers towards meat-free choices.

50% of our menu items are non-meat and beef has been removed from all catering venues.

WeirDough
SOURDOUGH PIZZA

70% vegetarian,
36% vegan



39% vegetarian,
39% vegan

**BOUGIE
BAGELS**

40% vegetarian,
20% vegan

- We have implemented carbon labelling on all our menu items to help consumers understand the carbon impact of their food choice before they make a purchase.
- We have begun a trial in our busiest venue (Courtyard) to collect glass, general waste, recycling, and food waste separately from University and student waste. This will provide an accurate understanding of our venue waste, enabling us to set targets and measure waste reduction.

Where are we going next?



- In 2025/6, we plan to introduce a sustainable option into the Union's merchandise offer.
- In collaboration with unions within the Sustainable SUs Charter we will work to reduce the carbon footprint of the beers that we sell.
- In 2025/26, we plan to improve the number of vegetarian options in the YUZU and Bougie bagels range and further improve the positioning of non-meat options on our menus to strengthen our nudging approach.
- In 2025/26, we will update the carbon labelling on our menus to make it easier to understand.
- To reduce our Scope 3 emissions from packaged drinks, we will remove all glass bottles during the 2025/26 academic year.
- We will begin in-depth analysis of the relative impact of different drink products, including both keg products and non-keg packaging, to identify further opportunities for drink emission reductions.

**A 33cl beer from an aluminium can has a climate footprint of 1.13 kg CO₂e/kg, whereas beer from a 33cl glass bottle currently has a climate footprint of 1.5 kg CO₂e/kg.*



Data, insight and impact

Why does this work matter?

Having accurate and consistent data collection and monitoring processes is an essential step towards reducing our environmental impact; understanding our current position enables us to work towards better outcomes. Accurately articulating our impact allows us to celebrate successes, credit students and stakeholders for their work, and identify areas for greater effort.

What are we aiming for?

By the end of 2026, we will have established consistent KPIs and benchmark targets in key areas. We will have embedded sustainability in our student impact reporting in order to recognise the contributions students make to sustainability. We will have played a key role supporting the University's delivery of the first two years of the Responsible Futures change programme, embedding sustainability across all aspects of student learning.



What have we achieved so far?



- In 2024 we completed a carbon emissions audit of the organisation's commercial services branch. This audit will provide baseline data to map out the changes needed to reach net-zero emissions.
- In 2024, we conducted an audit of our current processes for recording student group travel. The subsequent report, published in January 2025, identified key avenues for improving the data collection process to ensure we can make confident estimations of carbon emissions resulting from student group travel. We committed to implementing these changes in the first quarter of 2025, and future reports will build on this more thorough understanding.
- We have conducted annual student sustainability surveys since 2022. In 2024, we conducted the survey and produced an in depth report on students' feelings towards, understanding of, and priorities for sustainability issues. The 2024 survey retained key data points for year-on-year comparison alongside changes to improve the changes to enhance detail and insight. The 2024 report also included responses from the Union and the University, ensuring student insights are incorporated into organisational sustainability work.

Where are we going next?



- In 2025, we will build on the commercial services carbon emissions audit and incorporate the charity branch of York SU into the 2024/25 financial year audit. This means that by 2026 we will have baseline data across the whole organisation, enabling us to create a realistic and data-informed plan to reduce our carbon emissions across the board.
- With our improved understanding of student group travel emissions, we will continue to report on these emissions. We will also work with students to understand the barriers to, and opportunities for, reducing student group travel emissions. By the end of 2026, we will have co-created a strategy with students focused on setting realistic travel emission reduction targets.
- By the end of 2025, we will work with Environmental Sustainability at York (ESAY) and the University of York to submit the evidence needed to complete the institution's first Responsible Futures audit. Pursuing Responsible Futures accreditation with the University will ensure continued delivery of better opportunities for students to engage with sustainability during their time at the University, further addressing commitments under the Sustainability Action Plan's Engagement and Knowledge pillar.
- Following the publication of this Impact Report we will continue to publicly report on our progress against the commitments made in this report.



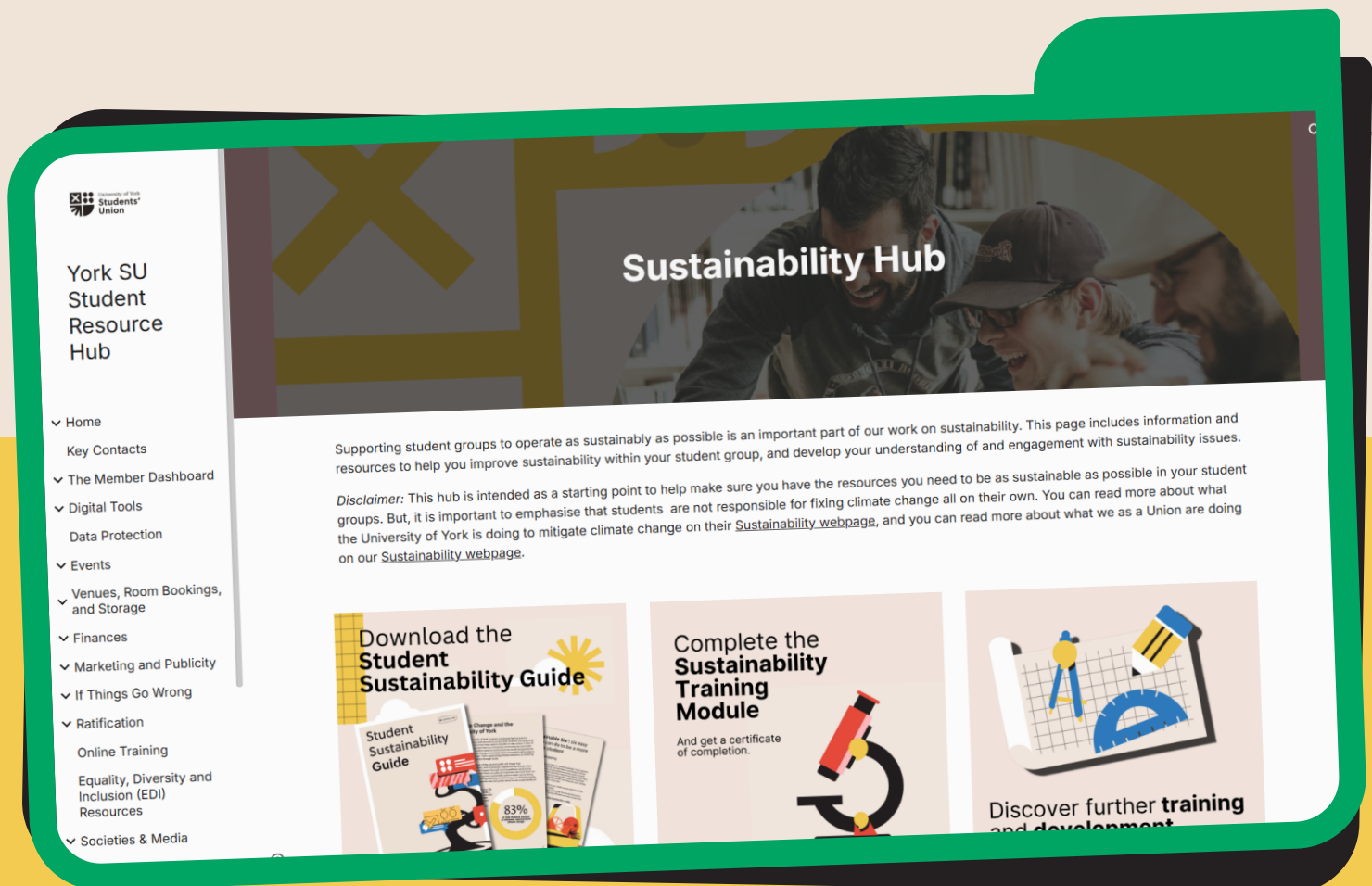
Communications

Why does this matter?

Good communication underpins so many elements of effective work on sustainability. Good communication ensures that staff and students are aware of the opportunities available to them. Good communication ensures that we are holding ourselves accountable to our commitments and that stakeholders understand our actions and their purpose. Good communication allows us to celebrate our successes and acknowledge the efforts of staff and students committed to sustainability. Finally, it also allows us to be honest about where we are falling short and fosters an open dialogue on how we can improve.

What are we aiming for?

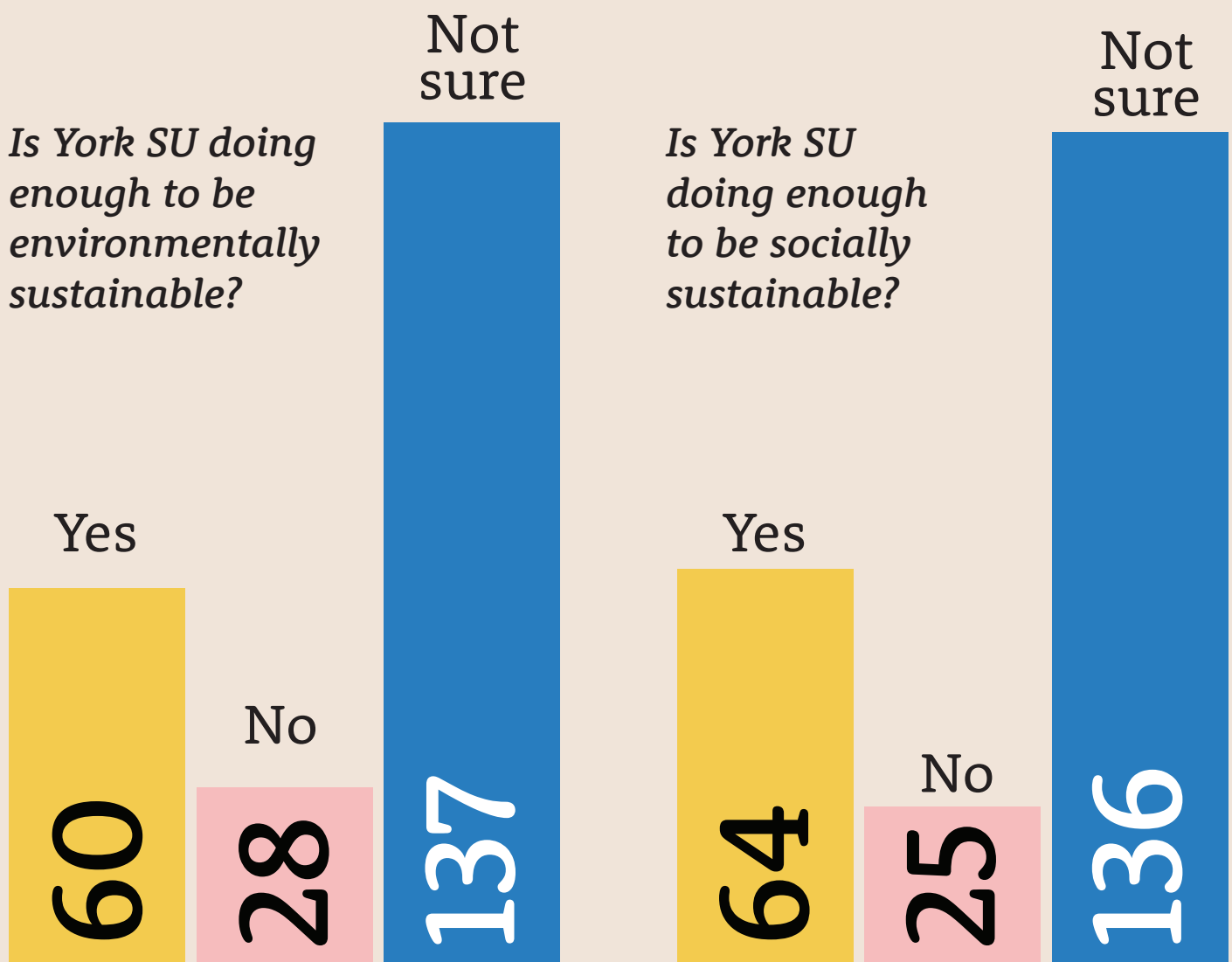
By the end of 2026, we will establish a consistent and accessible communications framework for both staff and student work, ensuring that opportunities, resources and updates are communicated transparently and are accessible to all.



What have we achieved so far?



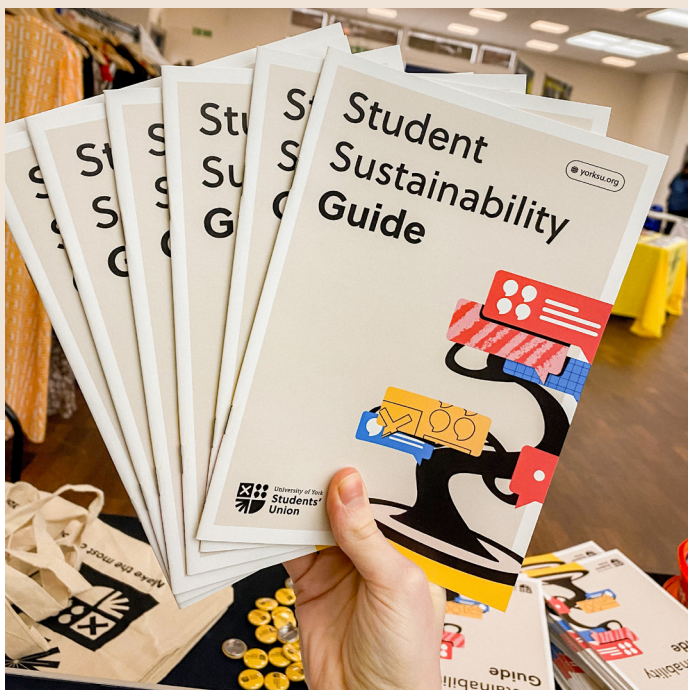
- For the 2024/25 academic year, a communications plan was created for the Sustainable Development Grant, identifying two key points of elevation to boost awareness across the year and collaborating with module leaders and staff at the University of York to increase the visibility of the grant to students.
- In February 2025, the York SU Sustainability webpage was reviewed and expanded to include training, resources, key impact and reporting data, and monthly updates on venue food emissions. It was also reformatted to improve usability and navigation, enabling stakeholders to find necessary information more quickly.
- The 2024 student sustainability survey showed that much still needed to be done to improve the way we communicate with students on sustainability.
 - 44% of respondents felt either not at all or slightly informed about York SU's work to become more sustainable, compared to 28% of respondents for the University's work.
 - 56% of respondents were unaware of the 2024 to 2026 Sustainability Action Plan, compared to 39% who had never heard of the University's Sustainability Plan.



Where are we going next?



- We will ensure that sustainability features within our student-facing communications at least once a month. This will take place across a variety of formats and channels and will ensure that we are weaving sustainability into our messaging to students.
- We will diversify our communications by developing more sustainability storytelling, promoting the work of students and student groups across our channels to help students get more recognition for the amazing things they do.
- We will improve communication of our venues' carbon emission ratings. This includes providing venues with tools to share carbon emission information with customers and improving central reporting of these emissions.
- We will use the Environment and Social Responsibility Forum to share information with student leadership committees and facilitate peer-to-peer communication.
- The Union Development Officer will deliver a monthly sustainability newsletter to all Environment and Social Responsibility Forum members. The newsletter will include policy updates, support resources, and engagement opportunities, equipping Sustainability Champions to share sustainability information and resources with their committees and groups. We will also explore options to expand access to the newsletter to all student leaders.
- We will continue improving the accessibility of our sustainability communications, seeking ways to make our work more understandable and engaging for a wider audience.



Summary of actions

<i>Engagement and Knowledge</i>		
➔	Include sustainability across the in-person training sessions delivered during ratification in May and September.	2025
	Develop a sustainability induction module for student staff in venues.	2025
	Develop a sustainability induction module for career staff.	2025/26
	Promote training and upskilling on sustainability to all staff members.	2025
	Improve promotion of the Sustainable Development Grant to increase student applications.	2025
	Improve applicant guidance to increase the number of student applications being accepted.	2025

Internal Culture and Operations

→	Continue the Internal Sustainability Forum on a bi-monthly basis.	2025
	Include regular sustainability updates and opportunities in internal communications.	2025
	Develop a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.	2025/26

Commercial Operations

→	Introduce a sustainable option into the Union's merchandise offer.	2025/26
	Reduce the carbon footprint of our venues' beer offer.	2025/26
	Improve the number of vegetarian options in the YUZU and Bougie Bagels range.	2025/26
	Improve our carbon labelling on venue menus to make it easier to understand.	2025/26
	Reduce our Scope 3 emissions from packaged drinks by removing all glass bottles from.	2025/26
	Increase our understanding of the carbon impact of different drink products to inform future footprint reduction strategies.	2025/26

Data, Insight and Impact



Complete a whole organisation carbon emissions audit, providing baseline data for the Charity branch of the organisation. 2025

Consult with students on our improved understanding of student group travel emissions to decide upon next steps. 2025/26

Work with ESAY to submit the evidence needed to complete the institution's first Responsible Futures Audit. 2025

Produce a 2026 impact report to measure progress against the commitments made in this report. 2026

Communications



Include sustainability in our student-facing communications at least once a month. 2025

Diversify our communication on sustainability through more storytelling and promotion of student activity. 2025

Improve the way we communicate about our carbon labelling on our venue menus, including empowering venue staff to take a lead in communicating and promoting this. 2025

Utilise the Environment and Social Responsibility Forum to cascade information across student leadership committees and facilitate more peer-to-peer communication. 2025

Deliver a monthly sustainability newsletter from the Union Development Officer to all Environment and Social Responsibility Forum members. 2025

Increase the accessibility of our communications on sustainability to make it easier to understand and engage with. 2025

Sustainability Impact Report 2025



University of York
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