

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION



TONBRIDGE
ONLY CONNECT

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

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Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Foreword

Tonbridge is determined to take positive action to tackle the negative effects of carbon emissions and in engaging with the wider aspects of environmental sustainability. We have prioritised 'Community and Sustainability' as one of our four pillars of education and are working hard to embed environmental sustainability into our thinking and actions. Our efforts have been recognised through an Eco-Schools Green Flag Award with Distinction.

As a school, we have a central role to play in educating our pupils, staff and parents about the importance of environmental sustainability. We want our school community to have a clear understanding of the current global issues and to embrace the proposed solutions, whilst understanding the technological, political and economic barriers to change. By mobilising our pupils with the requisite knowledge, skills and desire to affect positive change, we also hope that the younger generation will become the creative problem-solvers of the future.

In addition to our role as educators, we must lead by example and are committed to achieving outstanding environmental performance. In order to fulfil our ambition, we have gone through a process of audit, review and consultation which informs this strategy. We recognise that we need to understand and address our biggest environmental impacts and then effect a strategy to maximise the opportunities for improvement in these and other areas.

This **Environmental Sustainability Strategy** is a clear statement of our intent to respond to current environmental issues and global warming and call upon all members of our School community to support us in achieving our aims. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s report (Oct 2018) stressed the need for all of us to curb our carbon emissions by at least 49% by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

We are also passionate about supporting wildlife and encouraging biodiversity on our site and were recently awarded a Bronze Award in the Wilder Kent Awards for our efforts. Recognising the increasing pressures on the planet's finite resources, we have also established a robust waste management system. We also encourage the repair of products and items rather than disposal and replacement and seek to repurpose discarded materials or products at their end of life.

As a school, we are determined to be part of the solution towards a more sustainable world, and we feel optimistic about joining the fight to build a better future for us all and our planet.



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Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Implementation

In order to achieve our ambition, we have recognised the need to create a comprehensive Environmental Sustainability Strategy. The publication of this document is designed to reflect our level of commitment and to provide an overview of our priorities and implementation mechanisms. Following a recent period of strategic planning, review and consultation, we will continue to engage positively with pupils, staff, parents, alumni, local partners, our Governors and environmental experts with a view to implementing and reviewing our plans accordingly.

Once we are confident that we have developed a coherent Sustainability Strategy (that takes into account a wide range of issues, including financial considerations), we will put into place the relevant structures in order to drive through the agenda. We will set specific, annual and longer-term SMART targets and establish an effective monitoring system to ensure that progress towards our Sustainability Development Policy objectives are regularly reviewed and evaluated by the relevant staff and Governors (This will include termly updates and an annual report to the Governors).

Our Environmental Sustainability Strategy will encompass not only what we need to do now (in order to have a positive impact) but also what we need to do, moving forward, in order to future-proof our commitment to environmental issues.

In addition, we are aware that we must do all that we can to inspire our pupils to be positive agents of change; indeed, our pupils might be the greatest legacy we can create for Tonbridge and the global stage.



James Priory, Headmaster



Will May, COO



Will Biddle, Head
of Sustainability

The Head is ultimately responsible to the Governing Body for setting the environmental sustainability agenda and guiding the School towards successfully achieving its two principal sustainability objectives:

Positive and impactful sustainability practice

Effective sustainability and environmental education

The **Head** delegates operational responsibility to:

The Chief Operating Officer - for 'positive and impactful sustainability practice' (most notably in his management of the Estate and the Bursary)

The Head of Sustainability - for effective environmental sustainability education' and for the development and implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

The Governors, with lead responsibility for Sustainability, sit on the Governors' *Environmental Sustainability Working Group* and the *Finance & General Purposes Committee*.

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Strategic and Operational Committees

We have a number of committees and working groups whose members are responsible for developing and driving through our Environmental Sustainability Strategy:

Governors

Finance and General Purposes Committee (NB. This committee has ultimate executive oversight of the work of the Governors' Environmental Sustainability Working Group.)

Tonbridge Staff and Governors

Governors' Environmental Sustainability Working Group

Tonbridge Staff

The Environmental Sustainability Implementation Group

Pupils

Green Committee and House Reps.

Governors' Environmental Sustainability Working Group (GESWG)

Governors with lead responsibility for Sustainability
Chief Operating Officer
Deputy Head Co-Curricular
Head of Sustainability
Finance Director

Key Functions of the Committee

The GESWG meets biannually and has responsibility for the following:
Creating and shaping the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and having a strategic and operational oversight of its implementation
Establishing clear, measurable and ambitious targets and objectives
Liaising with the Environmental Sustainability Implementation Group (including drawing on the advice of its members and helping to support their work)
Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the progress of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, targets and objectives
Communicating with the relevant stakeholders and preparing reports/information for the Head, the F&GPC and the full governing body
Allocating adequate departmental resources to ensure the success of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy
Ratification of Annual Report

The Environmental Sustainability Implementation Group (ESIG)

The ESIG meets termly and comprises the following members:
Chief Operating Office
Head of Sustainability
Estates Bursar
Director of Operations
Finance representative

Key Function of the Committee:

To bring together the relevant staff to discuss ideas and to share good practice
To help inform the strategy and policy decisions of the GESWG
To act as a critical friend to the GESWG
To keep abreast of relevant environmental issues
To drive through the plan (as set and agreed by the GESWG)
Develop Annual Report

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

We expect all Tonbridge staff to be positive environmental role models. By encouraging our staff to reflect upon their personal and professional practices, we want them to support our environmental agenda and to make positive changes wherever possible e.g. minimising the wasteful use of resources; using water bottles and reusable cups; turning off lights and electrical equipment when not in use; eliminating single-use plastics; using public transport or sharing lifts or walking or cycling to work.

Pupils

As with our staff, we expect our pupils to act in a way that demonstrates concern for the environment and shows a commitment to sustainable living. Through our integrated environmental education programmes and boy led Green Committee, we seek to inspire our pupils to be reflective and pro-active sustainability champions. In addition, we hope that some of our pupils will pursue careers in the green technologies, becoming innovators and creative problem solvers of the future.

Parents and Alumni

We are engaging with our parents and alumni in two key ways: firstly, by encouraging Tonbridge parents to adopt effective sustainable practice e.g. by improving the air quality in the vicinity of the School by not dropping off/picking up their children by car; secondly, by drawing on the expertise of environmental experts within these two important communities.

The Local Community

Through the work of our Deputy Head Co-Curricular and other Senior staff, we will work collaboratively with our local community to ensure that we develop meaningful relationships and implement actions that will have a positive impact on the local environment. Wherever possible, we aim to add capacity to existing community initiatives and to share best practice with - and learn from – other schools.



Green Committee Heads

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

History

The school has been active in the area of environmental sustainability for a number of years. Solar panels were installed on the Vere Hodge building in 2012, and energy efficiency has been top of mind for the Estates Department when planning and implementing upgrades and new builds, such as the use of auto-sensing low energy LED lighting, high standards of insulation and secondary glazing, and installation of the most energy efficient boilers.

The grounds and gardens teams, and the co-curricular Conservation group, have all made biodiversity a priority in their operations, with the establishment of multiple areas designed to support wildlife. These include a managed orchard, hedge planting and laying, wetland areas, planted woodland and large areas of grass sown with wildflowers. A programme of sustainable woodland management on and off site has also provided firewood and timber for the creation of mini beast homes. Repurposed timber has also been used to build bird boxes.

There has been a Green Committee in place since 2005 where boys and staff discuss and action a variety of sustainability-based initiatives as well as deliver whole school talks. In 2018 the school invested in the 'Join the Pipe' scheme, allowing us to begin the journey to phase out single use plastic water bottles.

Next Steps

Tonbridge School appointed a Head of Sustainability in Jan 2023 to lead on sustainability initiatives and engage/educate pupils and staff in this area. The school's insurers Marsh, working with MyCarbon, were commissioned at the same time to audit the school's Scope 1,2 and 3 carbon emissions and develop a Net Zero strategy for the school.

Some 'quick wins' were identified, including the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Tonbridge School Centre, an overhaul of our waste management systems and to look at the transition from fossil fuel powered school vehicles to EV.



TSC roof solar array. Expected completion Spring 2025

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Energy and Carbon Management

Objectives

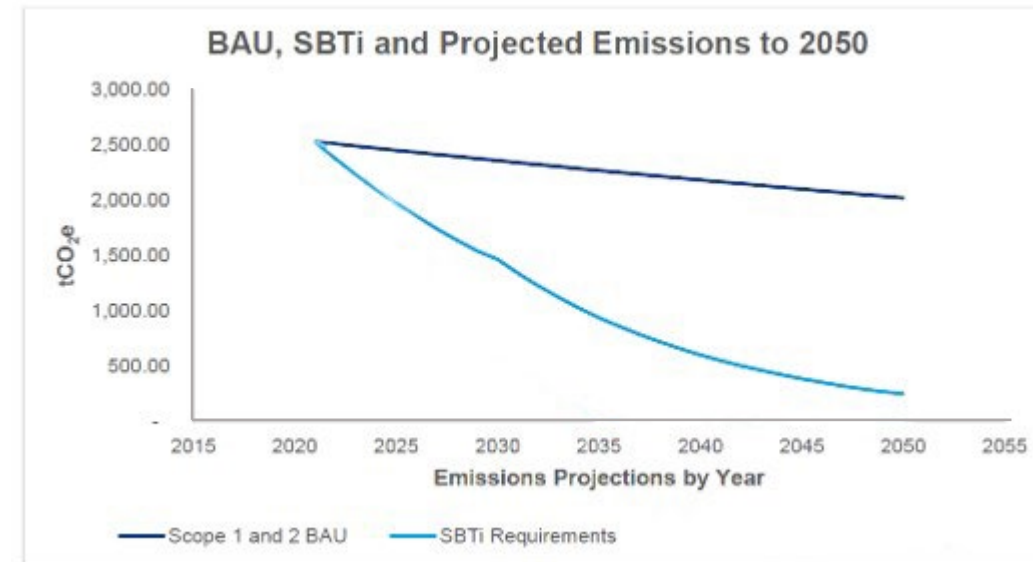
- Reduce emissions by 42% within 10 years, and at least 90% by 2050.
- Scope 1 emissions more than halved by 2035
- Scope 2 emissions from 'Business as Usual' (BAU) projections and to beat the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) targets.

Actions

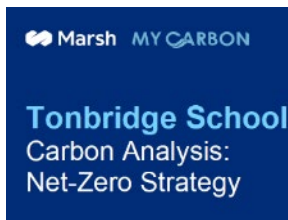
- Beginning in 2025, procure renewable electricity to achieve 100% of electricity demand by 2030, supported by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO's)
- Install heat pumps where economically viable as part of the rolling refurbishment plans for the Estate.
- Maximise the installation of solar panels across the site through a 10-year roll-out plan to 2035.
- Advance the conversion of all lighting to LED.
- Monitor electricity and energy usage to target opportunities to reduce consumption and improve insulation.
- Improved tracking systems for procurement of goods and services.
- Implement enhanced data management tools for food procurement and utilisation through a digital inventory system.
- Diversifying protein sources for school meals and transition away from beef and lamb to chicken or pork.
- Supplier engagement with food partners

Measures of Success

- Reduction in GHG Emissions
- Reduced energy costs
- Reduced energy usage
- Improved reporting and measurement



Tonbridge School is committed to reducing our emissions from 'Business as Usual' (BAU) projections and to beat the [Science-Based Targets initiative](#) (SBTi) targets.



Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Recycle/Repair/Reuse

Introduction

At Tonbridge, we believe that discarded materials aren't 'waste', but food for another system. We have worked closely with our local waste management partner Countrystyle to ensure that all of our waste streams are responsibly handled. As such, all of our dry mixed recycling (DMR) enters the cyclic economy where they are reprocessed into new products, reducing the need to harvest virgin materials. Energy is recovered from our general waste in a local facility which is used to power the plant itself and provides heat for homes in Kent. Our food waste is also processed locally, generating biogas to power the facility and liquid fertiliser for use on farms in Kent. We also encourage the repair of products and items rather than disposal and replacement and to repurpose discarded materials and products where possible.

Objectives

- Maximise volume of dry mixed recycling (DMR)
- Reduction of general waste
- Reduction of single use plastic
- Non-contamination of DMR and food waste
- To repair items and products wherever possible
- Repurpose discarded materials where possible.

Actions

- Removal of all general-purpose wastepaper baskets/bins on main school site, to be replaced with dedicated split recycling bins in all landings, corridors, public spaces and outdoor sites.
- Educate the school community on the correct use of the new system.
- Encourage repair of items and products at 'end of life' and the repurposing of discarded materials and products.

Measure of Success

- On-going waste data tracking
- Repair/reuse projects

DRY MIXED RECYCLING



Paper
FOLDED card
Dry plastic bottles
Dry drinks cans
Folded pizza boxes
(no crusts or sauce pots)

GENERAL WASTE

Coffee cups
Plastic film
Sweet wrappers
Crisp packets



FOOD WASTE



Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Environment/ecology

Objectives

- Create and manage a number of areas on the school estate that encourage as wide a range of animal and plant life as possible.
- Harvest and produce a range of food and drink provided by wild and managed sources, including honey, apple juice, pork and sloes.
- Reduce our dependence on chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides.
- Reduce the demand for fossil fuel and water in the maintenance of the school grounds
- Investigate sustainable water supplies for irrigation.

Actions

- Manage orchard areas, including hedge planting and laying
- Create areas of uncut grass where sports turf isn't required for wildflowers to establish.
- Planting of dedicated woodland and ad hoc tree planting.
- Locate mini beast homes, bird boxes and beehives in appropriate areas.
- Create and manage pond/s and wetland areas.
- Use of growth retardant to reduce need for mowing and water.
- Replace use of chemical based chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides with organic NPK fertiliser.
- Grounds vehicles run on biodiesel to reduce emissions.
- Installation of sub-surface irrigation for lower beds to reduce water use.
- Recycle water for washing of grounds vehicles.

Measures of Success

- Increased populations of wildflowers, trees, insects, birds and small mammals.
- Growth in sales of produce.
- Reduced fuel bills for grounds vehicles.
- Reduced volume of water used on gardens and grounds.



Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Education and engagement

Objectives

- Educate and engage boys, staff and parents in environmental sustainability issues.
- Elicit behaviour change across the school community to result in improved waste management, reduced energy use and sustainable procurement of goods and services.
- Establish sustainability in the academic and co-curricular curriculums, including UN Sustainable Development Goals..
- Build links with the local community to share resources and good practice.
- Encourage local ownership of sustainability audits/plans and procurement

Actions

- Sustainability related topics built into Biology and Geography curriculums.
- Continue a boy led Green Committee to discuss and action sustainable initiatives, visit local businesses and projects and deliver whole school talks.
- Continue the Wednesday Afternoon Activities Conservation Group to work on and off site in a range of conservation related activities (tree planting and felling, harvesting, hec planting and laying, and creation of homes for wildlife).
- Run sustainability symposiums on Wednesday afternoons with all Novi to inform them of the schools Environmental Sustainability Strategy Plan and to encourage participat in sustainable initiatives.
- Seek to further embed sustainability topics/materials in academic curriculums.
- Careers and Universities Dept. to promote courses and careers, and invite mentors in sustainability related careers.
- Head of Sustainability to deliver in person and electronic updates to school community through beginning of term notices, newsletters and social media posts.
- Approach and engage with local schools, businesses and councillors to share resources and good practice (e.g. giving day projects and hosting a school COP)
- Seek out relationships with OTs, parents and other friends of the school in the field of sustainability for talks/mentoring/support.
- Promote the School's work on sustainability and the environment with existing and prospective parents.

Measures of Success

- Healthy/growing numbers attending Green Committee and Conservation Group.
- Reduction of contaminated waste and energy bills.
- Increased awareness of sustainability amongst school community.
- Increased number of boys entering sustainability-based courses and careers.
- Growing number of links with local schools and other individuals.
- Audit reviews and outcomes





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