

Image by Arts & Media student, Dylan Maddison
shortlisted as part of MK College's Wildlife
Photography Competition.

The logo for MK College Group, featuring a stylized 'MK' above the words 'College Group' in a bold, sans-serif font.

MK
College
Group

Climate Action Plan

Progress Report 2024/2025

Executive Summary

July 2024 – August 2025

Milton Keynes College Group's Climate Action Plan was launched to address key environmental challenges identified by our staff members, students, governors and communities.

This progress update shares the key actions made against the Climate Action Plan's ambitions between July 2024 and August 2025, although the Climate Action Plan was officially published in January 2025.

Since its launch, we have focused on raising awareness of the Climate Action Plan across the College Group with key successes including the appointment of a student sustainability officer, the inclusion of sustainability into new staff inductions and the provision of new Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.

It has also been a chance to gain a better understanding of the data we need to collect for each climate aim to recognise our starting point and where we want to go. We have set in motion important decarbonisation

projects with the securing of Carbon Offset Funding and have planned to explore climate risk and adaptation in the new academic year. This has been accompanied by a number of staff- and student-led projects through participation in the Planet Earth Games and College in the Community Day.

Going forward, our focus will be on delivering further emissions reductions through energy efficiency measures and awareness campaigns, embedding sustainability into teaching and learning through partnerships and new course offerings, and further improving our sustainability communications to our college community to celebrate successes and encourage even greater engagement.

Together, we remain committed to turning ambition into action—driving progress toward a greener future and inspiring our community to lead the way.

Doing more for our environment



We will all lead the way.

Climate Aim 1: Pursue a whole group approach.

Sustainability Committee

We have an active sustainability committee made up of five working groups, aligned to the FE Climate Action Roadmap. This year, each group has continued to meet bi-monthly with frequent attendance by our link and staff governors, and valued input by members of the prison quality team. They work through an annual programme of priorities developed in line with our climate action plan.

Student Sustainability Officer

In October 2024, a student sustainability officer was appointed to the student executive council. This is a new role that helps to promote student voice. They supported the launch of an internal Student Climate Newsletter and helped kick off a student climate action group.

Climate Aim 2: Improve resilience to climate change.

Understanding climate risk

Our Climate Action Plan is already embedded into the College Group's strategic risk register and is reported on monthly. As we experience hotter summers and wetter winters, we want to delve deeper into how increasing climate hazards may affect our estates and services and what adaptation might look like. That's why we have committed to explore climate risk and adaptation with support from public sector consultant, Local Partnerships, taking place in November 2025.

Setting internal targets

This year has been an important year for establishing our starting point. We have set up processes for data collection against our climate aims and agreed internal targets to 2030.

Sustainability Committee Working Groups

Leadership and
Governance

Teaching,
Learning and
Research

Estates and
Operations

Partnerships
and
Engagement

Data
Collection



We will promote green skills and climate awareness.

Climate Aim 3: Embed sustainability and green skills into curriculum and CPD.

Green Skills Centre

The launch of the Green Skills Centre in October 2024 marked a new drive towards [green skills development](#) with the offer of three Level 3 awards in EV charging and solar PV installation and battery storage. An exciting partnership was secured with Santander to provide initial sponsorship for learners in these green skills disciplines.



Green Futures Curriculum Challenge

We hosted the second annual [Green Futures Curriculum Challenge](#) as part of the Southeast Midlands Intercollege Competitions group. MK College won it for the second year in a row with focus on innovative recycling systems which informed the activities of the student climate action group.



Continued Professional Development (CPD)

We offered new CPD opportunities, including:

- The introduction of the Climate Action Plan into staff inductions for new starters.
- A series of workshops delivered by Supply Chain Sustainability School on topics of Sustainable Procurement, the Circular Economy and Sustainable Behaviour Change.
- A Sustainability and Green Skills Learning Guide and online resource hub launched in May 2025 to support teaching staff to identify opportunities to integrate sustainability themes.
- Sustainability content delivered as part of the Level 5 Teacher Training award in June 2025.

Climate Aim 4: Raise awareness through partnerships and communications.

Planet Earth Games

Between January and April 2025, we made our debut in the [Planet Earth Games](#), a national FE competition inspiring climate action, achieving 12th out of 28 colleges. Activities included College in the Community Day environmental projects, the Wildlife Photography Competition, pre-loved clothes sales, recycling quizzes and car sharing.



Student Climate Newsletter

These activities were celebrated in the new Student Climate Newsletter which is curated by students and monthly editions shared with college staff teams.

Sustainability Networks

During 2024/25, members of the Sustainability Committee engaged with various local and national networks to share learnings and support including, the MK Green Business Network, the FE Sustainability Discussion Group chaired by Steve Frampton of SS4FE, and the Green Skills Advisory Panel.

We will work towards carbon neutrality in operations.

Climate aim 5: Decarbonise our estates.

Decarbonisation work

Following funding awards from Salix and the Carbon Offset Fund in 2025, work began for the replacement of gas boilers for air source heat pumps at the Bletchley main campus in July 2025, contributing to the College Group's heat decarbonisation strategy. This will be completed in Summer 2026.

Solar power

Solar power generation across the estate totalled 11632.7 kWh between July 2024 and August 2025 – although the overall generation is likely to be higher due to issues with the online monitoring platform.



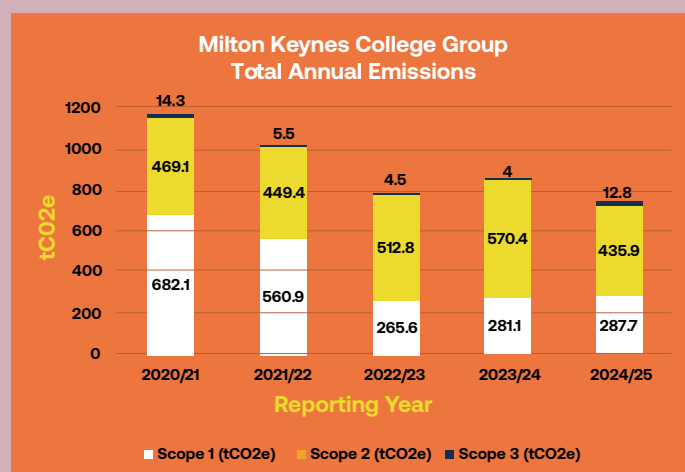
Energy efficiency measures

Energy efficiency improvements across the estates are ongoing, which in 2024/25 included further transition to LED lighting for outside lamp posts and Bletchley's courtside building, installation of motion sensors and further roll-out of smart heating controls.

Climate aim 6: Monitor indirect emissions.

Improving data collection

This year, we focused on setting up initial data collection processes. This included gaining a better understanding of our waste generation, setting up supplier questionnaires and launching a staff and student commuting survey. This gave us a starting point with regards to understanding our scope 3 emissions footprint and provided us with key learnings for improving data quality and availability.



Climate aim 7: Promote greener transport.

Commuting survey

A commuting survey was launched to staff and students in June 2025 to collect information on the method and frequency in which they travel to college. The information from this survey will be used to estimate emissions related to commuting across the College Group (including prison services) and support in identifying greener transport initiatives.

We will transition towards a circular economy.

Climate aim 8: Minimise waste through reuse and recycling.

Food waste

In line with the recent Simpler Recycling policy update, new food waste bins have been procured and installed ready for use over summer and for the new student cohort in September 2025.

Kitchen teams set up processes for measuring food waste from preparation and spoilage, consequently making changes to practices to reduce overall waste including adjustment to portions of dishes prepared and menu planning. In March, our Commis Chef apprentices also teamed up with the national Cool Food Pro project to create low-carbon meals from surplus food to provide to students at lunchtime.



Refill campaign

Following the Green Future Challenge, the winning MK College student team joined the student climate action group to develop their idea on tackling single-use plastics. Their campaign focuses on improving communications to encourage refilling of reusable water bottles and promote campus water fountains. It will be launched as part of the September 2025 Welcome Events.



ESOL take on Reuse

Our ESOL and Inclusive Learners have been busy making an impact focusing on reusing and repurposing materials.

- Students helped reduce food waste by sorting and distributing surplus food at a community fridge while tracking saved quantities as part of their work placements.
- Students organised a festive fair that promoted sustainability by selling gifts made from repurposed, recycled, and upcycled materials.
- Inclusive Learners collected unused stationery and hosted pop-up shops to cut waste and reduce departmental costs.
- Second-hand clothing sales organised during personal development curriculum encouraged sustainable shopping by providing affordable options for the college community.



Climate aim 9: Adopt responsible purchasing practices.

Onboarding new suppliers

A supplier sustainability questionnaire was launched to the top 100 suppliers by spend (2024/25) requesting information on their environmental management plans, modern slavery and anti-bribery policies. This has also been added to new supplier processes for automatic collection when onboarding new suppliers.

Partnerships with suppliers that align with MK College Group's climate ambitions continued into 2024/25, including Converge Technology Solutions who put recycling e-Waste at the forefront of their operations, and Woodhill Coffee who are a local, plastic-free business providing ethically sourced coffee.

We will improve our offer to nature.

Climate aim 10: Increase biodiversity on campus.

Wildflowers on Earth Day

To create new habitats across the estates, and to mark this year's Earth Day, over 40 students helped to sow wildflower seeds in patches close to the car parks at the Chaffron Way and Bletchley campuses. It was an opportunity for students to learn about the importance of wildflowers for local pollinators.



It also became an opportunity to discuss the impacts of global warming as the UK recorded its warmest and driest Spring in more than 50 years. As a result of an incredibly dry Spring and Summer, the seeds struggled to bloom as much as we had hoped. A stark reminder of the importance of our action to tackle climate change! Nevertheless, we will continue to evolve this project to ensure biodiversity continues to improve on campus.



Supporting nature in the community

With the College in the Community Day coinciding with the Planet Earth Games competition, more than 1,100 staff and students volunteered with over 50 community organisations across Milton Keynes and Bletchley. These included the Buckinghamshire Canal Society, MK SNAP, West Bletchley Sensory Garden and Urb Farm, with staff and students cleaning outdoor areas, planting and sowing, litter picking and painting buildings and benches.



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