

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

UNIVERSITY OF WALES

# **Sustainability Strategy**

"Through our flagship initiative, the Institute of Sustainable Practice and Resource Effectiveness (INSPIRE), we aim to ensure that our graduates are fit for the future and that their professional practice is sustainable for generations to come."

Professor Medwin Hughes, Vice-Chancellor



## 'Transforming Education, Transforming Lives'

## UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY ST DAVID

## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

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## Sustainability Strategy 2014

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#### Introduction

The concept of sustainable development is increasingly being used as a philosophical framework and planning tool for better decision-making, creating more benefit with less resource. Sustainable development is thinking about the impacts of today's actions on future generations. Our students are entering a world characterised by rapid change, uncertainty and risk which will affect them throughout their professional and personal lives. Giving them the skills to face the future with confidence is at the heart of our mission.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has already established a reputation both nationally and internationally as a leader in the higher education sector for sustainability, taking an award-winning whole institutional approach. Our Sustainability Strategy will help us go further in realising the concept of the 'sustainable university' making a powerful positive difference to our individual and collective futures

#### Our commitment

**To our students:** we will help you understand broad issues of sustainability on a local and global scale and engage with you as partners in realising the University's sustainability ambitions.

**To our staff:** this strategy demonstrates our commitment to embed sustainability across the University, and to grow in a systemic way our reputation for sector leadership. We invite you to help achieve this through what you do and to work with us on relevant activities and outcomes to contribute to inspiring the next generation

**To our stakeholders:** this strategy encapsulates the University's commitment to issues relating to sustainability, including its social responsibility. We look forward to your working collaboratively with us on making such partnerships an essential part of realising the Strategy regionally, nationally and internationally.

#### 1.1 Strategic Context – National

Wales is unique in the UK in having a duty in the Government of Wales Act for Welsh Government to promote Sustainable Development in the exercise of its functions. Welsh Government uses the Brundtland definition of 'Sustainable Development' from 'Our Common Futures' 1987 World Commission on the Environment and Development

"..development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

- In 2006, the Welsh Government made Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) an integral part of the Welsh curriculum in HE/FE and schools focused on
- Links between society, economy, environment and between our lives and those of people throughout the world;
- Needs and rights of both present and future generations;
- Relationship between power, resources & human rights;
- Local and global implications of everything we do; and
- The actions that individuals and organisations can take in responding to local and global issues.
- In 2011, the Welsh Government announced that it would introduce constitutional legislation to ensure that Sustainable Development is the 'central organising principle of government and the public sector' in Wales. This legislative commitment is to be monitored externally by an independent sustainable development body. The Future Generations Bill is due for introduction into the Assembly in July 2014.
- > The Future Generations Bill aims to address how to
  - think and deliver differently to meet existing and future challenges;
  - Design and build organisations, infrastructure and public services which will serve for the long term;
  - Identify and deal with the root causes of issues;
  - Deliver in ways which are thought through, joined up and offer what people need;
  - Integrate and balance the need for a strong economy, a strong Welsh culture and society, and a robust environment;
- > Draft goals for Future Generations Bill 2014
  - Wales is prosperous and innovative
  - Wales is a more equal nation
  - Wales uses a fair share of natural resources

- People in Wales are healthier
- Communities across Wales are safer, cohesive and resilient
- People in Wales participate in our shared culture, with a thriving Welsh language

#### 1.2 Strategic context: HE sector

In response to the duty laid on Welsh Government and the potential of the Future Generations Bill, HEFCW has increased its requirements for universities to report on their delivery of sustainable development:

- HEFCW Remit letter 2014: 'look to HEFCW and our universities to work together to develop a higher education system that is sustainable and fair and provides opportunities for all those with the potential to benefit from higher learning'
- HEFCW Carbon Management Policy 2014 'to enable universities in Wales to demonstrate their aspirations to reduce carbon emissions, and report on progress in a transparent and consistent manner.

i. that carbon management should be included in the institutional risk review processes from 2014-15 as part of the estates assessment;

ii. that institutions should be required to have an appropriate carbon management strategy in place, published on their website, including identified targets, prioritised potential projects, annual reporting and identified resources;

iii. that HEFCW would expect institutions to identify improvements to their metering infrastructure as part of their carbon management strategies, with an aspiration to achieve directly metered energy use for all buildings greater than 1000 square metres; and

iv. that HEFCW should continue to work in partnership with Carbon Trust Wales and other bodies to provide support and to signpost external public and private funding sources available to the sector.'

HEFCW Student experience 2015-2016: 'Equality of opportunity and sustainability cut across all of the strategic themes as well as being picked up in the other strategic themes.

#### 1.3 <u>Strategic context – University</u>

University Strategic Plan

The University's Strategic Plan for 2013-2017 is explicit concerning the University's commitment to Sustainability.

• A Sense of History, A Sense of Purpose: 'the University's aim is to inspire individuals and develop reflective graduates and practitioners who can make a difference in society. The

University will have an equally important role in advocating global citizenship and education for sustainable development'

- **Values**: 'through a system-based approach to delivering meaningful and relevant educational pathways we will promote learning and social responsibility that supports "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." '(Brundtland Commission, 1987).
- **Our Defining Characteristics**: 'we will offer a well-defined undergraduate curriculum, which delivers distinctive graduate attributes in the areas of employability, enterprise, sustainable education and global citizenship; and we are is committed to all aspects of sustainable development.'
- Strategic priorities: 'we will fully engage with the sustainable development agenda.'
- Faculty plans

The University's commitment in its Strategic Plan requires faculties to work with INSPIRE in the development of Faculty Plans and for each faculty to produce an annual Faculty Sustainability Plan.

 Four Key Performance Indicators have been established in the University's Strategic Plan to embed sustainability as a core principle across all aspects of the University from 2013 – 2017

Target	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Improve our classification in the People				
and Planet Green League.				
Embed Faculty sustainability plans		×	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	×
throughout the academic and support				
structures				
Complete curriculum audits and develop	1	×	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	1
the curriculum with due regard to the				
emerging sustainability agenda				
Maximise research, project and		×	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	×
consultancy income related to				
sustainability (to be quantified in line with				
ongoing curriculum/research review)				

## 2 Developing the sustainability agenda at UWTSD

#### 2.1 Key Milestones:

2010 – Green Academy programme commitment to establish a Wales Institute for Sustainability

2011 – Development of INSPIRE concept with support from University Council. Appointment of lead in September

2012 – INSPIRE prospectus launched. Staff Sustainability Skills Survey conducted across new UWTSD. First faculty sustainability plans

2013 – First annual report on INSPIRE commitments; Sustainability Committee established. INSPIRE becomes strategic sustainability directorate across UWTSD group. University Strategic Plan and targets confirmed. Green Dragon Environmental Management System introduced. First Support Unit Direction of Travel papers.

2014 – Participation in NUS Green Impact programme. Curriculum Audit carried out. First college sustainability plans. Faculty plans embedded in academic and support structures.

Through INSPIRE's activity, UWTSD was given the first Guardian award for the most sustainable HEI in the UK in 2013 and has featured as an exemplar of best practice in the independent HEA evaluations of the outcome of the Green Academy work in 2012 and 2014

#### 2.2 Systemic approach to embedding sustainability (see appendix 1 for more detail)

This has involved the development of the expectation that sustainability would be considered in all the usual university processes, whether they be academic, corporate or support departments:

- The University's Strategic Plan makes clear the commitment to sustainability and has set specific KPIs in relation to governance, environment, curriculum and research/innovation.
- 'An Inspired Education' features on the University's home web page as a unique selling point for UWTSD
- The INSPIRE web pages contain information from all aspects of the University's delivery
- INSPIRE opportunities and commitments have been incorporated into the prospectus and marketing arrangements
- Sustainable Development is incorporated into the main profile of specific senior officers' job descriptions and included in the general duties which follow the 14 HERA elements used as the basis of all university job descriptions;
- INSPIRE contributes to all Staff Development
- The University's Sustainability Committee was established in 2013
- Sustainability activity is reported to Central Resources Committee and thence to Senate from the Sustainability Committee
- Link Sustainability officers have been established in every School and department
- The Director of Inspire sits on key academic committees including Senate
- INSPIRE is mandatory part of validation processes
- Commitment to embed sustainability into 15% of every student's experience by 2014 has been evaluated by curriculum audit
- TSD+ award contains 20% sustainability component
- Sustainability commitment in Student Charter
- INSPIRE student internships available each academic year

- University and Students' Union commitment to Fairtrade and Green Impact
- Systemic environmental management commitments underway including improved performance in People and Planet Green League, introduction of Green Dragon level 5 environment management schemes across all campuses and the adoption of a university wide carbon management plan.

## 3 <u>Pillars of Activity - Delivering on Strategic Sustainability Target to embed</u> <u>sustainability as a core principle across all aspects of the University from</u> <u>2013 – 2017</u>

## Pillar 1: Environmental Sustainability: measured by Key Performance Indicator: 'Improve our classification in the People and Planet Green League'.

The new University of Wales Trinity Saint David has campuses in Swansea, Lampeter, Carmarthen, Cardiff and London. This configuration presents real challenges to the development of a coherent systemic approach to environmental and carbon management and student engagement which are at the heart of the People and Planet Green League. Universities are given degree classifications to reflect their performance over a wide range of categories. Universities have to demonstrate a systemic and ethical approach to goods and services, demonstrating they have policies and systems in place to deliver outcomes.

Currently, the merged Lampeter and Carmarthen campuses have achieved a third class degree and the Swansea campus a lower second class degree. This puts the merged university into the bottom third of universities across the UK (103/152). The next survey dates are between 7<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 with full rankings published on 12 November 2014. It is important for UWTSD's sustainability credentials that it improves its ranking year on year.

Environmental sustainability is usually the way in for universities embrace the sustainability agenda as good energy and environmental management systems contribute towards efficient and effective use of resources. UWTSD has assessed its performance and opportunities post-merger and is prioritising the following which will contribute to improved Green League scores and create effective systems to enable the university to manage data effectively and deliver improved outcomes.

- People and Planet Green League
- Carbon Management Plan
- Green Dragon Environmental Management System
- NUS Green Impact

An internal audit (2014) for the University carried out by Mazars considered that **partial assurance** can be given to the adequacy of the control environment and similarly, that **partial assurance** can be given to the effectiveness of those controls reviewed within the review of the mechanisms by which Carbon Management obligations are fulfilled and the effectiveness of the control environment around that strategic process. The review recognised that with regard to the technical side, TSD is at the beginning of its journey

relative to many other UK universities. However, the review also commended the work of INSPIRE in relation to outreach (or hearts and minds).

In view of the need to clarify roles and responsibilities in the new university and the impending carbon management plan, the following actions are proposed for the new academic year which will be expanded upon in the Estates Strategy and Carbon Management Plan.

КРІ	Action	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Improve our	Introduce Carbon Management Plan	1	-	1
classification in the	(CMP)			
People and Planet	<ul> <li>Appoint Energy Manager</li> </ul>			
Green League.	from savings identified - Appoint Environmental Sustainability Engagement Officer from savings identified			
	Respond to internal audit	1		
	Maintain Green Dragon Level 5		<ul> <li>Image: A set of the set of the</li></ul>	<b>/</b>
	Improve performance in NUS Green Impact including Food for Life standards	1	/	

Pillar 2: Embedding Sustainability: measured by Key Performance Indicator: Embed Faculty sustainability plans throughout the academic and support structures

The commitment to strategically introduce sustainable development across the University holistically, through teaching and learning commitments is now enshrined in Faculty Sustainability Plans which are available on the INSPIRE pages of the University's website. The plans are to a common template drawn up by the UWTSD Deans to reflect the way in which they are embedding sustainable development within subject disciplines as well as identifying cross curricular opportunities. The plans also reflect environmental commitments. The plans are updated annually. This approach was highlighted as an example of good practice by the recent internal audit.

#### The faculty plan comprises the following:

Summary of key ethos and pedagogical approach of the Faculty and how the Faculty as a whole intends to take the sustainability commitment forward, including arrangements for plan delivery and reporting structure; e.g area/activity, sustainability element and faculty

wide and interdisciplinary approaches and concepts. Specifically the faculty makes commitments in relation to

- a) Sustainability: working within environmental limits
- b) Sustainability: how the faculty teaches
- c) Sustainability: what the faculty teaches
- c) Sustainability and research and development activity
- d) Sustainability, the Faculty and the wider community
- e) Sustainability: competitive advantage

Faculty Plans demonstrate the link between the Faculty and the University's strategic agenda on sustainability. The documents may be used publicly to demonstrate the University's practical application of its commitment to sustainability. Faculty plans are now in their second year and provide a mechanism for annual reporting through Sustainability Committee.

The University's focus is on the embedding of a framework for education for sustainable development (ESD) in the Faculty, using a holistic and integral approach which ensures that the emphasis is not merely on the content of the different modules and programmes of study offered within the Faculty but on the entire learning and teaching experience. Faculties are encouraged to work with existing frameworks eg the HEA's Future Fit Framework and/or UNESCO's 5 pedagogic principles.

In addition to Faculty Sustainability Plans, all support units produce 'Direction of Travel' documents which are also updated annually to reflect their commitments in their operations. The first set of Direction of Travel documents have been brought to Sustainability Committee in 2013/2014. A template for the delivery of Direction of Travel documents will be agreed prior to the new academic year and faculties and support units asked for case studies which can be used on the website and in promotional and marketing material.

Target	Action	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Embed Faculty Sustainability Plans	Review plans	1	1	×
(FSPs) throughout the academic and	annually through			
support structures	Sustainability			
	Committee			
	Ensure FSPs are	1	1	×
	incorporated into			
	full Faculty Plans			
	Introduce template	1		
	for Direction of			
	Travel papers			
	Create case studies	1	1	×
	from faculties and			
	support units to be			
	highlighted on			
	website			

Review template	1	
for FSPs in light of		
new faculty		
arrangements		

Pillar 3: Curriculum development measured by Key Performance Indicator: Complete curriculum audits and develop the curriculum with due regard to the emerging sustainability agenda

#### a) <u>Complete Curriculum Audit:</u>

The university has committed to 15% of the total student experience for each undergraduate being delivered through a sustainability lens. In order to monitor and evaluate progress towards this target, a review of all degree programmes has been undertaken to ascertain where sustainable development is part of the learning and teaching experience. In this initial review, only core and compulsory modules on each programme have been reviewed on the basis this provides an 'at least' figure.

Consultations with other universities, along with a review of the literature, identified the model used by University of Bristol to represent a robust process that provides auditable data. The approach Bristol has taken is to go through all 3,215 of their module descriptors and make a judgement on whether sustainability is included, based on the UNESCO definition. From this analysis they were able to say that 30% of modules had Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within them. This data was subsequently reviewed by heads of schools, who added to the data and often increased the number of modules where ESD is present. For example, Arts increased from 12% of modules to 70%. The data can also be aggregated to calculate the percentage of modules incorporating sustainability for each programme and pathway.

The second stage of University of Bristol's process was to embed ESD into quality assurance processes, such as module descriptor templates and annual programme reviews. This has enabled the university to keep track of where ESD is included within the curriculum, with ESD staff automatically updated with regards the ESD content of new/updated module descriptors.

UWTSD has used Bristol's model and adapted it to suit the needs of the University.

#### b) ESD Curriculum Mapping Process

i. Ensure that all module descriptors are available for the mapping process. It may be that some of these are still paper based. There is also the difficulty of different Curriculum Management Systems being used at the Swansea and Carmarthen/Lampeter campuses.

- **ii.** Sift module descriptors so that out of date modules are not included in the mapping process.
- **iii.** Development of ESD Mapping Guidance, this includes the definition of ESD and the process that must be followed
- iv. Training of ESD review staff.
- v. Reviewing all module descriptors for ESD.
- vi. Prior to reviewing a discipline's modules, the reviewer goes through the relevant faculty's Sustainability Plan to ensure that they are familiar with the faculty's interpretation of ESD, where they indicate ESD to be present within the curriculum and what their plans are for embedding ESD.
- vii. Sampling of mapping results to ensure that judgements made are consistent and in line with the ESD Mapping Guidance.
- viii. Heads of Schools review the ESD mapping results and provide additional information, where possible. Once Heads of Schools have had the chance to review the results, a member of the ESD mapping team will meet with them to discuss the results. This is a crucial aspect of the exercise as sustainability may be being included in a module, but just not made explicit in the module descriptor.
- ix. Update the results following feedback from Heads of Schools.

The University has deliberately left faculties free to interpret sustainability as appropriate to their disciplines, to ensure that the integrity of the discipline is respected and that care is taken that subject bench mark statements continue to be met at all times. It is therefore critical that the reviewer is familiar with faculties' definitions before reviewing their modules.

#### Average Programme Sustainability Credits

The table below demonstrates the average percentage of programme credits taught through a sustainability lens for each faculty at UWTSD. Each figure has been calculated using only compulsory and core modules for each programme on the basis that this provides an 'at least' figure.

The outcomes are as follows, but will need verifying by each faculty prior to the release of the information publicly.

Art and Design	58%
Business	77%
FADE	67%
Humanities	29%
Performance	39%
Social Sciences	51%
Teacher Education	93%

#### c) Develop the curriculum with due regard to the emerging sustainability agenda:

As part of the validation process, all **new programme validation** documentation is reviewed by INSPIRE to ensure consistency with the University's sustainability commitments. This is a very valuable process and is proving to be a useful intervention point with which to shape the curriculum in relation to sustainability.

INSPIRE has also played an active role in developing **new programmes** to be offered in the 2014/15 academic year, especially in the areas of sustainable construction, environmental studies, food, health, environment, heritage, energy and environmental engineering.

The University's agreed **Learning, Teaching and Enhancement (LTE) Strategy** has a section on 'sustainability conscious learning' to enable students to have a clear understanding of the impacts of their future actions on the physical, social and economic environments. The LTE Strategy has key agreed actions in relation to sustainability which are incorporated in the actions below.

Indicator	Action	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Complete curriculum audits and develop the curriculum with due regard to the emerging sustainability agenda	Annual overview for systemic input: - module descriptors - annual and major programme reviews	-	-	-
	Bring pedagogical experts to university to support curriculum development	1	1	1
Deliver agreed actions in Learning Teaching and Enhancement Strategy	Carry out full curriculum audit including optional modules	1		-
	Provide co-curricular and extra- curricular opportunities	1	1	-
Develop evidence base through Sustainability Literacy Test	Promote sustainability during induction for staff and students using Kedge Sustainability Literacy Test	/	/	

Pillar 4: Competitive Advantage measured by Key Performance Indicator<u>:</u> Maximise research, project and consultancy income related to sustainability (to be quantified in line with ongoing curriculum/research review

4.1 Competitive Advantage

At the end of September 2013 the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the National Union of Students (NUS) launched their research report on *"Student attitudes towards and skills for sustainable development*" in UK higher education. It is the third consecutive year in which the survey has been run, as part of a longitudinal study.

Over two thirds of the surveyed students feel that sustainable development (SD) is something which should be included in their university courses and over 80% believe that SD should be actively incorporated and promoted by universities – both of these beliefs have been consistently reported since the first survey taken in 2010-11.

#### Influence over university choice

27-37% of students highlighted that consideration of how seriously a university takes sustainability issues were an important factor when choosing which university to apply to, thus highlighting the importance of promoting the sustainability credentials of UWTSD to prospective students. As expected, the reputation of the university/ course, teaching methods and entry grades were the most dominant factors in choosing a university. This emphasises the importance of ensuring the standing of programmes delivered by the university, whether through accreditation with professional institutions, facilities, links with employers and expertise of teaching staff.

The research highlighted that students consider sustainability as a significant issue which should be embedded throughout their experience in higher education. There is a desire for it to be embedded at a subject level and also linked to extra-curricular activities where possible. There is a need to make explicit the links between sustainability and employability, plus also develop a more robust evidence base on the sustainability skills that employers require. The fact that over a quarter of respondents indicated that consideration of how seriously a university takes sustainability issues were an important factor when choosing which university to apply to, highlights the importance of promoting the sustainability credentials of UWTSD to prospective students.

#### 4.2 Using the Staff Sustainability Skills Survey to identify competitive opportunities

The staff sustainability skills survey (academic and support staff) was conducted across University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University to develop an evidence base of existing expertise, experience and interest in sustainability across institutions. The work has identified opportunities for new curricula and research and has engaged staff on what it means to have sustainability as a core value and strategic priority.

Preliminary research indicated that a sustainability skills audit on this scale has not been previously undertaken in any higher education institution internationally. The university is therefore leading the way, practically demonstrating its commitment to sustainability. The survey found there is a strong evidence base regarding sustainability skills and commitment

to sustainability of staff across the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University, thus informing the strategic plans of the newly transformed university. The survey has provided a wealth of information regarding the skills, experience and knowledge of staff throughout UWTSD.

The results from the survey indicate a significant potential within the institution to take the sustainability agenda forwards, with:

- 79% of respondents seeing opportunities to help the university become a more sustainable organisation.
- 49% of respondents having experience working on sustainability related projects/ initiatives.
- 78% of respondents are interested in sustainability.

This approach has seen other universities across the UK interested in taking forward similar work. Presentations on the survey opportunities and outcomes have been made to the Higher Education Academy, the Sustainable Development Research Network, the Sustainability Knowledge Alliance, the National Conference of the Environment Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) The UN Regional Centres of Expertise Conference as well as at individual universities. The survey is available as open source material on the UWTSD INSPIRE website, but the IP is owned by the University and analysing the survey outcomes is costed accordingly.

The survey has been adapted for use in the FE sector in partnership with senior managers at Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion. The survey has been carried out recently in Coleg Ceredigion where the results are currently being analysed.

It has also been adapted for the local government sector in partnership with the WLGA to assist public sector organisations in meeting the challenges of the Future Generations Bill when enacted.

Results of the survey are directly contributing to the University moving with confidence to focus on new discipline areas currently being developed including health and well-being, food, energy and the natural environment

#### 4.3 Research

Good progress has already been made in scoping and developing sustainability related research opportunities The **University's Research Strategy** states that research will be built on sustainable centres of excellence developed to deliver impact and improve social, cultural and physical capital. Cross cutting themes such as education, design, environment, enterprise, business, sustainability, heritage, health and wellbeing will facilitate collaborations within the University, within Wales and beyond. Its urban and rural mission will develop new knowledge to inform wider debates, especially on equality, inclusion and social justice. In line with its educational model, applied research will reinforce the University's local, regional and national role delivering knowledge transfer and distinctive markets for enterprise, innovation and investment. INSPIRE will develop as a Centre of Excellence for government initiatives and European calls.

The transformative role of the sustainability agenda is being developed in the following areas:

- a) **Food** Sector mapping and scoping study. This provided an overview of the University's expertise in this area along with opportunities for new curricula, research and partnerships.
- b) Project ideas in the areas of sustainable food, and sustainable construction/architecture have been submitted to WEFO and the Swansea Bay Region Knowledge Economy group.
- c) The University is setting up a partnership with BRE to develop training and research in **sustainable construction** using SA1 as an exemplar.
- d) INSPIRE has been working with the School of Business and Management to develop its ideas on sustainability related research in relation to the **Future Generations Bill**.
- e) INSPIRE is working with the Faculty of Humanities and Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust to develop **Strata Florida** as a flagship for the Heritage Academy
- f) INSPIRE is working in a tripartite relationship with Aberystwyth University and Hywel Dda University Health Board to identify innovative health and wellbeing research opportunities in a rural setting

Indicator	Action	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Maximise research,	Use NUS/HEA longitudinal research	1	1	1
project and consultancy	on students' attitudes in university			
income related to	marketing			
sustainability (to be				
quantified in line with				
ongoing				
curriculum/research				
review				
Develop specific	Identify key sustainability research	1	1	
sustainability led	partners and opportunities related			
research and	to University's strengths; eg land			
development	use and food, health and well-			
opportunities in line	being, heritage, architecture and			
with Research Strategy	the built environment.			
priorities				
	2 funded Health M Phils to be	1		
	supported through Research			
	Strategy funding			
Commercialisation	Commercialisation opportunities to	1	<ul> <li>✓</li> </ul>	
	be sought in relation to			
	<ul> <li>the staff sustainability</li> </ul>			
	audit in relation to the			
	Future Generations Bill			
	- embedding			

	sustainability throughout an institution - Curriculum audit		
Sustainability Project as part of 'Pledge' arrangements with local authorities	To develop a partnership project with each local authority where the University has campuses in relation to sustainability		

## Summary note

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has come on a long journey since the commitment was first made in 2010 to establish a Wales Institute for Sustainability. That journey has seen the University become an award winning leader in the sustainability agenda through INSPIRE which has led to opportunities nationally and internationally for the University to promote its sustainability message. That opportunity is set to increase with the importance of delivering on sustainability being at the core of European funding initiatives and the Welsh Government's Future Generations Bill to be launched this month. The Strategy will be updated as new initiatives emerge and the national and international sustainability agenda evolves. The four key performance indicators contained in the Strategic Plan will be monitored carefully through the Sustainability Committee, Central Resources Committee, Senate and the University Council and included in institutional performance data and information where relevant.

As Sustainability is a cross cutting function, this Strategy reflects commitments made in other Strategic Plan sub-strategies; the University's Research Strategy and its Learning Teaching and Enhancement Strategy have already been costed and taken through Senate. The costs therefore are not reflected in this strategy document.

Each of the actions ascribed to the indicators is already underway as part of INSPIRE continuing to contribute to systemically developing the University's sustainability agenda. The aim is by 2015 that UWTSD will be one of the fastest rising universities in the People and Planet Green League with a clear and coherent offer delivering the most relevant education possible to its students enabling them to become the enterprising thinkers and active problem solvers of tomorrow with identifiable transferable skills that will stand them – and us – in good stead for the future.

#### Jane Davidson June 2014

#### Appendix 1

#### Key Milestones in Developing the Sustainability Agenda at UWTSD

#### 1. 2010

The merged University of Wales Trinity Saint David (Carmarthen and Lampeter) secured a place on the Higher Education Academy's first "Green Academy" programme. The Green Academy programme supported participating universities in embedding sustainable development throughout their operations. UWTSD joined Southampton, Worcester, Nottingham, Canterbury, Keele and Bristol universities to take this agenda forward.

The Green Academy '*Fit for the Future*' framework aims to embed SD through the curriculum, campus, community and culture of the university including research and innovation, governance and key performance indicators:

• The development of **curriculum-related delivery** to ensure students at the University and its partner institutions are provided with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will equip them for their future contribution to the economy, community and environment

• The development of a **campus** that reflects the highest standards of environmental performance and contributes to the social and economic capacity of the University and the wider community

• The contribution to the community in which the University operates, with special regard to the issues of **sustainable communities** and the development of low carbon regions

• The development of a **research and innovation capacity** focused on core strengths of the University, related to the organisational objectives and linked to a strong network of external partners

• The integration of sustainable development within the **culture, governance structure, operating systems and key performance indicators** of the University. An important objective is to ensure that this approach underpins the financial viability of the institution in reducing operating costs, improving the attractiveness of the University to potential students, and increasing the capacity to attract external investment.

#### 2. 2011

In February UW Trinity Saint David announced that the new university was ambitious to lead the Welsh agenda on sustainability by developing a Wales Institute for Sustainability focused on action and research to drive social, environmental and economic outcomes and to:

- influence the practice of the current and new institution (culture)

- support development of the ESDGC agenda in Wales (curriculum)

- develop specific sustainability practice (campus)

- support the development of the area as a low carbon region (community)

- develop cross-society exemplars of sustainability in practice (research and innovation capacity)

- develop partnerships with other organisations/institutions (collaboration)

A longitudinal study undertaken by the HEA and the NUS to look at attitudes of first year students towards sustainability demonstrates unequivocally that the students of today would like to see their institutions take this agenda forward. The study has run from 2011 to 2014 and consistently showed that circa 80% of respondents 'believed sustainability skills would be important to their future employers and the majority of first-year students believe that it is the role of universities and courses to prepare them for graduate employment. The softer skills incorporated within sustainable development are consistently of paramount importance to graduates, regardless of course, university type or UK nation'. (Bone and Agombar)

In October 2011, the University Council endorsed the principle that the location, values and ethos of the university represented a specific opportunity to redefine the university's mission and vision to reflect its commitment to sustainability and to making that commitment an integral part of the new university.

#### 3. 2012

#### **INSPIRE** launch

In January 2012, INSPIRE (Institute for Sustainable Practice, Innovation and Resource Effectiveness) was formally launched with a prospectus and a set of agreed commitments to embed sustainability through the strategic vision, governance, curriculum, campus and community of the new university. This systemic approach is, as far as we can tell, original in the UK and therefore innovative but also fully replicable.

#### **Staff Sustainability Skills Survey**

The staff sustainability skills survey (academic and support staff) was conducted across University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University to develop an evidence base of existing expertise, experience and interest in sustainability across institutions. The work has identified opportunities for new curricula and research and has engaged staff on what it means to have sustainability as a core value and strategic priority.

Preliminary research indicated that a sustainability skills audit on this scale has not been previously undertaken in any higher education institution internationally. The university is therefore leading the way, practically demonstrating its commitment to sustainability. The survey found there is a strong evidence base regarding sustainability skills and commitment to sustainability of staff across the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Swansea Metropolitan University, thus informing the strategic plans of the newly transformed university. The survey has provided a wealth of information regarding the skills, experience and knowledge of staff throughout UWTSD.

The results from the survey indicate a significant potential within the institution to take the sustainability agenda forwards, with:

- 79% of respondents seeing opportunities to help the university become a more sustainable organisation.
- 49% of respondents having experience working on sustainability related projects/ initiatives.
- 78% of respondents are interested in sustainability.

This approach has seen other universities across the UK interested in taking forward similar work. Presentations on the survey opportunities and outcomes have been made to the Higher Education Academy, the Sustainable Development Research Network, the Sustainability Knowledge Alliance, the National Conference of the Environment Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) The UN Regional Centres of Expertise Conference as well as at individual universities. The survey is available as open source material on the UWTSD INSPIRE website, but the IP is owned by the University and analysing the survey outcomes is costed accordingly.

The survey has been adapted for use in the FE sector in partnership with senior managers at Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion. The survey has been carried out recently in Coleg Ceredigion where the results are currently being analysed.

It has also been adapted for the local government sector in partnership with the WLGA to assist public sector organisations in meeting the challenges of the Future Generations Bill when enacted.

Results of the survey are directly contributing to the University moving with confidence to focus on new discipline areas currently being developed including health and well-being, food, energy and the natural environment

#### **VocalEyes**

In 2012, INSPIRE piloted 'VocalEyes', an advanced digital crowd-sourcing platform developed by a Pembrokeshire entrepreneur. The tool was already proving to be effective in improving the students' experience by turning their ideas into actions in Pembrokeshire College. It does this by providing an open, transparent means for promoting ideas which engages the students in both the crowd-sourcing of strategy and projects. INSPIRE was keen to see whether using such a digital platform would increase participation in collective decision making and crowd-sourcing projects within the student community; produce results that display students' collective priorities; improve engagement by assisting students to debate & rate existing ideas & suggest ideas of their own and then progress the best ideas through to action by presenting the results to the UWTSD's Senior Management and appropriate representatives.

With the support of the SMT and the Students' Union, INSPIRE encouraged student comment on sustainability issues and ran competitions through VocalEyes on the Carmarthenshire and Lampeter campuses (prior to the merger with SMU) to prioritise spending on £500 investment donated by the Deans of campus based Faculties. As a result, spending was agreed on a bike shelter on the Carmarthen campus and a wildflower meadow on the Lampeter campus. VocalEyes enabled all the ideas put forward by students to be ranked and voted upon, thereby ensuring that the best supported ideas came to the fore. As a result of the pilot, VocalEyes has now been installed by the Students Union as an important tool for dialogue among students and between students and the university corporately on issues of importance to the student population. VocalEyes provides the foundation for the student community and UWTSD to have an authentic and meaningful dialogue that leads to positive actions and outcomes and enables UWTSD to carry out comprehensive ongoing consultations with the student communities and to be seen to respond to proposals.

The University is currently looking at transforming engagement with staff by adopting a similar VocalEyes process with staff across the University to enhance the quality and speed of decision making; engage in a meaningful dialogue with staff on a regular basis; action the best ideas emerging from this dialogue and publicise the results to liberate creativity and boost motivation and increase satisfaction and loyalty by enabling open, democratic processes including voting and consensusbuilding.

#### Associate Faculty

In 2012, a new sustainability module was introduced through Trinity Saint David's University's innovative, sector leading 'Going for Gold/AUR' - the Associate Faculty of the University - which provides bilingual opportunities for secondary school pupils across South and Mid Wales to study at university level. Over 30 secondary schools have participated in the scheme which has benefited 800 pupils since its launch. The scheme clearly demonstrates TSD's commitment to widening access to higher education and to Welsh medium higher education in particular. Other modules offered include study skills and curriculum based studies that contribute to the Welsh Baccalaureate as well as other courses related to the A Level curriculum. Amongst the many benefits to pupils is the opportunity to develop transferable skills that they will need at their choice of university as well as the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of their chosen subjects. The accredited Level 4 Modules support pupils as they develop their communication skills, their learning and study skills and could also be used in professional practice settings

#### 4. 2013

In 2013, following mergers with Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion, INSPIRE became the strategic sustainability directorate for the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Group providing advice, support and guidance on the development of the UWTSD Group's sustainability agenda. A University Sustainability Committee was established with representation from the wider UWTSD Group.

INSPIRE ensures the alignment of all policies and practices that contribute to or are affected by the sustainability agenda assisting in the development of key university strategies

#### NUS Green Impact programme

In 2013 the students unions and the University corporately both signed up to the NUS 'Green Impact' programme, an environmental accreditation programme which brings staff and students together with their wider communities to enable and showcase positive changes in environmental practice and to make simple, tangible and powerful changes in behaviour and policy through an online workbook of criteria. It builds on the potential of staff and students to change the way their institutions behave, from the bottom up. Each structured programme is supported by the NUS's Green Impact team. From recycling, to investing in more efficient equipment, to encouraging biodiversity, or Fairtrade, the various criteria cover a broad range of issues under the sustainability umbrella, all tailored to an individual institution to cover local policy and processes, including links to online resources, relevant policies, schemes and events. 27 staff in 6 teams achieved the Bronze Award and Lampeter Students' Union was successful in achieving the Bronze Award on its campus.

#### New INSPIRE student internship opportunities

To incentivise students to participate in the sustainability agenda, new internship opportunities were set up as a reward scheme in partnership with the Students Union for students prepared to make 'One Planet Living' commitments - a promise to be active on these issues during their university experience. 9 new internships were created for the 2013-2014 academic year (3 on each main campus) in relation to Fairtrade, Green Impact and Sustainability Exchanges. Interns were expected to work both independently and as teams, meeting regularly with INSPIRE staff , a nominated Students' Union representative and each other. All interns were encouraged to be dynamic, creative and to forge links with the student body and relevant external groups and organisations. Role descriptions are as follows:

Fairtrade Internships: There will be one Fairtrade internship opportunity on each campus and each will automatically become a member of the institution's Fairtrade steering groups. Fairtrade interns will be appointed to promote Fairtrade and develop the University's commitment to Fairtrade activity, through organising and hosting events and boosting student involvement. Interns will be encouraged to foster links with external groups such as local Fairtrade societies and other Universities. Applicants with creative ideas for entrenching and promoting a Fairtrade ethos in the University and beyond will be particularly welcome.

- Sustainability Exchange Internships: Sustainability Exchanges are opportunities for staff and students to share ideas, news and views on sustainability issues at the University and the wider community. Sustainability Exchange interns will be central to the process of organising these events and will assist in the development of programmes, appointment of speakers, creative marketing and promotion of events and encouraging student involvement.
- Green Impact Internships: The Green Impact interns will assist the Students' Union sabbatical officers and staff in achieving their goals. Green Impact internships may have more of an operational and organisational focus than the other opportunities as they will be working to the criteria of an external body. This makes them valuable opportunities for students to advance their project management skills. Green Impact interns will be able to deepen their understanding of environmental issues and play an active role in making their University greener. The University Students' Union achieved a Bronze award in the NUS Green Impact Students' Union programme as a direct result of the input from the Lampeter based Green Impact intern.

The internships are being evaluated in their current form. Funding has been made available to continue the programme for the next academic year.

#### TSD+ Employability Award

The University piloted its new TSD+ Employability Award in 2013 where 20% of the activity to achieve the Bronze, Silver or Gold outcomes in any one year requires active understanding of the sustainability agenda. This new award has been developed by the University in partnership with the Students' Union. The link between the sustainability and employability agenda is specifically made with the new award and new graduate attributes are being developed to reflect this

- Active Citizenship: able to appreciate the importance of environmental, social and political contexts to their studies;
- **Creative Problem Solving**: able to think creatively, holistically, and systemically and make critical judgements on issues;
- **Teamwork**: able to work collaboratively and work in interdisciplinary teams;
- Learning and Personal Development: able to develop a high level of self-reflection at a personal and professional level;
- **Communication**: able to understand, critically evaluate, adopt thoughtfully and communicate sustainability values;

In response to this new initiative, Hywel Evans, Chairman of Swansea Business Forum said, 'Broadening students' academic experience through offering them an opportunity to gain "real-life" expertise during their college days has many benefits. The acquisition of further, non-curriculum skills resulting, hopefully, in a more rounded personality makes them a more attractive proposition to any potential future employer. Students also gain by being able to more effectively evaluate the likely personal demands upon them of any specific job opportunity - based on the wider set of skills and background experience they have acquired through the TSD+ programme. The bronze, silver and gold awards should also help to impart further credibility to any work experience claimed. That TSD will be offering this programme should also hopefully be seen by any new (HE) applicant as a benefit and allow the University attract more students on to campus.'

Such a model could also be offered in the future by the university to partners and further developed alongside professional practice frameworks at post professional level. This would have significant marketing appeal at a time when there is an emphasis on the benefits of social enterprises and employability more widely. In particular, the addition of 'active citizenship' and 'creative problem solving' will enhance the employability of individual students. Sustainability and employability could also underpin the opportunities offered overseas and through distance learning alternatives.

#### 5. 2014

#### Wales Institute of Work Based Learning

The Wales Institute of Work Based Learning (WIWBL) is committed to principles of sustainability through education, and recognises a responsibility to the environment in its practice. Through the Brundtland definition of Sustainable Development, WIWBL recognises the core environmental imperative, and also that to achieve this, a balance is required with social and economic concerns. WIWBL is committed to sustainability in the following ways:

- Environmental protection, and living within environmental limits that do not compromise future generations. Work-based learning is itself a more sustainable approach to learning than residential taught education. It has an immediate effect on transport, consumption and use of resources. Furthermore, the focus on the workplace in learning, as opposed to purely academic learning, provides opportunities to directly influence that workplace and the wider community. WIWBL also offers specific modules that can help accelerate the transition to more sustainable practices, awareness of environmental protection and value creation.
- Social equity in ensuring a just and aware society, meeting the needs of existing and future generations through its unique ability to respond flexibly to learning needs and promote personal wellbeing, quality of life, and economic inclusion. WIWBL addresses these needs through the modules of study offered and through the flexible means of study. Work-based learning involves a different set of challenges to traditional academic learning, and WIWBL recognises that learners may require support in engaging with the learning processes. Personal tutor support is offered through a variety of flexible inclusive mediums, in order to offset isolation and allow them to progress in line with their abilities and aspirations.
- *Economic development* and security in helping to adopt sustainability practices by expanding the range of modules offered as a response to increasing and changing learner demand. This may include issues such as corporate responsibility, energy efficiency and waste management which may provide a competitive advantage to the business.

WIWBL recognises that sustainability is important in its functioning as a provider of distance and work based learning, but also in the WIWBL workplace itself. It is committed to ensuring that issues of sustainability are considered when making decisions about WIWBL practice and procurement, and that awareness of environmental issues is raised among its staff, learners and communities. This is achieved by its representation on the University Sustainability Committee, and in the inclusion of aspects of Sustainability in its monthly review meetings.

As part of UWTSD, WIWBL is committed to implementing the requirements of all relevant sustainability legislation and regulation, and where possible to exceed any minimum requirements. WIWBL is committed to communicating, monitoring and reviewing its Sustainability Policy Statement on an on-going basis as part of its growth and continuous improvement. The Sustainability Policy Statement will be formally reviewed on an annual basis, and WIWBL hopes to reflect its progression in its aspiration of attaining excellence in this area.

#### **External engagement principles**

The University is in the process of agreeing its principles for external engagement allied with the Strategic Plan. Following a staff consultation, the following five principles have been agreed in accordance with the values identified in the Strategic Plan in relation to collaboration, inclusivity, employability and creativity, sustainable development, Wales and its distinctiveness, global citizenship and research and its impact on policy:

- The engagement must benefit the UWTSD Group educationally or economically and enhance the university's local, regional, national or international reputation
- The engagement should be able to demonstrate how it is allied with the agreed values and commitments in the Strategic Plan
- The engagement arrangements should not be too onerous to administer
- The engagement should be built on existing good practice within the UWTSD Group
- The engagement should seek to avoid duplication of activity across sectors but provide opportunities for both sectors to participate in activities

Each faculty/college/support unit is being asked to record

- current engagement activity, with strategic justification for activity and recommendation as to whether or not it should continue
- ambitions for future engagement activity reflecting the university's strategic aims
- named lead contacts for each engagement activity

Further to this activity, a central register will be kept of the HE/FE engagement activity which will be reported to the governors annually.

A key area of development will be to focus on collaboration - through the establishment of a range of strategic relationships at regional, national and

international level – educational, strategic, political, community, commercial and business.

#### Local authorities' partnership pledges

As part of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) Group aims to establish a new educational 'system' of universities and colleges committed to educating students of all ages and backgrounds, and to stimulate economic development in the region and across Wales and beyond, the UWTSD Group seeks to build positive relationships with the local authorities where the university has campuses or substantial activity. It is developing in partnership with such authorities a **joint pledge** to strengthen partnership working in areas of joint interest.

The idea of the pledge is to ensure that the partnership between the university and the individual local authority contains specific actions which will benefit both partners jointly and where each partner can be held accountable to the other. The pledge will be underpinned by an agreed framework to ensure implementation of agreed actions. Each of the three local authorities has agreed on the following headlines for pledge development:

## Article 1: Sustainable Development

The partners will commit to providing strong community leadership for sustainable development in x county

## Article 2: Anti-Poverty, Economic and Community Development

The partners will support co-operation between companies and institutions to develop initiatives designed to benefit economic development within x county (and the broader city region). The regeneration of x city/town is of strategic importance to both organisations.

## Article 3 Skills & the Labour Market

The partners will co-operate to promote the development and deployment of a skilled workforce in key sectors to achieve greater levels of productivity.

## Article 4 Enterprise and Innovation

The partners will foster the development of a knowledge based economy, widening the opportunities for research & development, leading to new product and process innovations within x county's firms and organisations.

## Article 5 Sport, Culture, Tourism & Heritage

The partners will encourage collaboration on key opportunities in relation to Sport, Culture & Heritage which raise x county's profile, nationally and globally, to new and existing audiences. The aim is that the pledges will be ready for signing by September 2014. The delivery of the pledge will be the joint responsibility of the offices of the Chief Executive/Leader of each county council and the Vice-Chancellor/Chair of Governors of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

#### **INSPIRE related Research**

### Food Sector Cluster

UWTSD has a cluster of expertise in the food sector, which has the potential to become a strong research and teaching theme for the University and secure external funding. This expertise is present across a number of faculties within the University and therefore research and teaching in this area has potential to be truly multi-disciplinary in nature.

A food sector working group has been established to scope opportunities and plan how to capitalise on expertise across the university and its partners. A gap analysis was undertaken to scope opportunities and plan how to capitalise on expertise across the university and its partners. Through a process of research and engagement with university staff and stakeholders, curriculum and research opportunities for the University within the food sector have been developed. The opportunities fall into six key themes:

- Engineering
- Diet Health and Nutrition
- Food, Society and Heritage
- Education
- Agriculture
- Economy and Business

All of the themes have input from multiple disciplines across the university, thus demonstrating the systemic, holistic approach needed to tackle many of the issues facing this sector. A detailed report was published, providing an evidence base to inform strategic planning within the University in relation to the food sector.

#### Rural Health and Wellbeing

In recognition of the distinct nature of health and wellbeing in a largely rural population and a desire to focus on the wider determinants of Health, in 2012 UWTSD joined with Hywel Dda Health Board and Aberystwyth University to create a tri-partite partnership to develop a robust, research base to inform decisions and local policy. To achieve this, the partnership appointed a Reader in Rural Health &Wellbeing to focus on evaluating Health Board priorities and create research opportunities for the universities to work together in the following areas identified as health board priorities:

- Community cohesion and engagement
- Role of health and wellbeing in rural regeneration
- Improved access to services in a rural area
- Service integration and workforce development

The post-holder was also charged with working with the two universities on agreement regarding priority areas for research and innovation, initial planning for a Rural Health Institute in Lampeter and workforce solutions in relation to Health & Social Care.

Key opportunities for the UWTSD Dual Sector Group are in relation to

- Learner progression from level 3 level 8
- Bespoke programmes of study through Wales Institute of Work Based Learning in response to needs of employers/workforce development
- Potential for Rural Health Institute (Lampeter)
- Embedding National Occupational Standards
- Modules delivered in the community
- Opportunities for p/t accessible learning

The Partnership is now looking for funding to support 2 MPhil students to develop research questions in one of the key identified areas above. The absence of research work in relation to effective delivery of health and social care in rural settings gives the university a significant opportunity particularly in relation to workforce planning

#### Building Research Establishment

BRE and University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) have identified an opportunity to work collaboratively on the development of higher and further education and training courses from level 1-8, specifically including undergraduate degrees and Masters' programmes in the new School of Architecture/School of Built and Natural Environment; the development of innovation/training facilities/research centre and the development of new buildings to be located within the SA1 development at Swansea.

A joint project bid between UWTSD/BRE will be formally submitted to the Swansea Bay City Region to carry out integrated research on sustainable materials/ technologies and their performance within the built environment, with a commercial end result. The proposal outlines a controlled climate research, development and demonstration facility at SA1 (hub) which will be able to test sustainable construction technologies and materials under a wide range of environmental conditions/simulated weather events. There will be complementary facilities on UWTSD land across west Wales enabling further weather testing. The facilities, technologies and skills developed as a result of the proposal will enhance UWTSD's ability to secure competitive research funding, especially within the 'Societal Challenges' theme of Horizon 2020

BRE will act as a client design advisor for the development of the University's exciting SA1 Waterfront Innovation Quarter in Swansea to ensure the most sustainable buildings are designed and constructed as possible while meeting the cost criteria.

#### • <u>Strata Florida</u>

Strata Florida holds a central place in the construction of Welsh identity and as a birthplace of Welsh culture. It is the site of a former Cistercian Abbey in West Wales which sits at the heart of some of the best preserved historic landscapes in the country. The remains of its monastic precinct are surrounded by important prehistoric sites and the Abbey ruins became the focus of a gentry house, still present, and a large estate.

The site provides rich opportunities for archaeological excavation and for understanding the history of its standing buildings through architectural study. It also presents challenges and opportunities for the practice of Heritage in conservation and presentation of sites, landscape features, buildings, oral culture and the arts. Current activities include work funded by the EU's Rural Development Programme to harness the heritage as a resource for local tourism businesses.

The creation of a flagship project for the Wales Heritage Academy on the Strata Florida site has been identified as a high priority for UWTSD. TSD is currently working with the Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust to develop a large Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the restoration and development of this site, combining within this project its strategic commitment to sustainability and heritage, and using the site for teaching, research and regeneration purpose. Continued high-level research collaboration between CAWCS and TSD as part of this project will particularly draw on joint expertise in archaeology and medieval studies