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## LSE Sustainability Communications Strategy

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### Introduction

The LSE Sustainability Team conducts an extensive programme of communications around environmental and energy issues, and has had a great deal of success in engaging students and staff over a number of years. This document builds on that existing work by taking a more strategic approach, creating a joined-up vision and ensuring that future sustainability and energy communications contribute to delivering specific objectives.

### Aims

This Sustainability Communications Strategy will:

1. Articulate an overarching vision of sustainability at LSE.
2. Ensure that LSE's sustainability and energy engagement is strategically focused to deliver specific objectives, enabling individual communications projects to contribute towards clearly defined aims in a joined up way.
3. Identify key target audiences.
4. Identify methods to communicate objectives to target audiences.
5. Outline approaches to measuring the impact of sustainability / energy communications.

### 1. LSE's sustainability vision

LSE is a global university specialising in the social sciences. Our motto, *rerum cognoscere causas* - 'understanding the causes of things' – is about ensuring that we provide critical insight to address the key issues of the age. Climate change and environmental sustainability are key examples of such global challenges, and we address them through our research, teaching, campus activities, and the way we engage with the wider community.

LSE research shapes international debate within academic, policy-making and public spheres, including on climate change economics, green cities and more. Our teaching equips our graduates with an understanding of how sustainability is a key element in a complex web of global challenges including the economy, politics, development, security and beyond. LSE's campus operations ensure we 'walk the talk' by cutting our carbon footprint, sending zero waste to landfill, creating environmentally friendly buildings and buying sustainably-sourced goods and services.

Sustainability is therefore a thread that runs throughout the School, linking our activities, people and campus. We will continue to enhance these areas of work on these areas, and to communicate with the LSE community and the wider public in order to inform stakeholders of our activities, whilst encouraging dialogue and positive action around sustainability issues.

### 2. Engagement objectives

- 1) **Publicise** - Inform relevant parties of LSE's sustainability and energy commitments and progress in order to enhance LSE's reputation. In particular:
  - a) The LSE Sustainability Vision (above), the Environmental Sustainability and Energy Policies, and our ambitious targets.
  - b) The global context, and institutional / sector drivers behind this commitment.

- c) LSE has a range of projects and processes to improve its environmental footprint, in our campus operations (estate management, procurement, etc), teaching and research, and public impact.
  - i) These have had yielded significant environmental / operational / community benefits.
  - ii) Benefits are quantified where possible.
  - iii) LSE has achieved external recognition, and is a sector leader in sustainability.
- 2) **Take ownership** - Encourage environmentally / energy responsible behaviours on campus in order to reduce energy consumption, waste, etc, whilst highlighting availability of 'green' campus facilities.
  - a) Highlight to campus users that LSE's environmental performance is everyone's responsibility.
  - b) Each member of the LSE community plays their part through a number of key actions: switching off lights and appliances when not in use, disposing of waste correctly, etc.
  - c) Highlight the availability of 'green' campus facilities – bike storage, water fountains, etc – enhance campus experience with useful services, as well as improving environmental performance.
- 3) **Get involved** - Promote active student and staff participation in sustainability / energy projects – Green Impact, Student Switch-Off, Sustainable Projects Fund, etc – in order to improve environmental impacts, and enhance student / staff experience by providing high quality services.
- 4) **Dialogue** - Listen to stakeholders:
  - a) Build rapport and buy-in through active two-way dialogue with stakeholders.
  - b) Identify student and staff priorities.
  - c) Identify opportunities for improvement by taking on board feedback.
  - d) Learn about developments in sustainability, the HE sector etc, by networking with external colleagues, participating in sector debate (e.g. Green League development, LUEG).

### 3. Target audiences

1. Engagement objectives 1 - 'Publicise' and 4 - 'Dialogue' relate to all stakeholders with an interest in LSE's activities and development:
  - Students
  - Staff
  - Alumni
  - Sector bodies, institutions and colleagues
  - Local organisations, businesses, community groups and residents
2. Engagement objectives 2 - 'Take ownership', and 3 - 'Get involved', relate to LSE campus and halls users, in their capacity as contributors to LSE's environmental footprint. This includes:
  - Students (undergrad, postgrad, summer school, those living in halls)
  - Staff (academics, professional services staff, contractors)
  - Visitors

Campus users can also be seen in terms of their relationship with sustainability:

- Environmentally conscious people who actively try to reduce their environmental impact.
- People who are aware that sustainability is an issue, but are not sure what steps they should take to address it in their daily activities, or are not concerned enough to do so.
- Those who are uninterested or sceptical.

We should primarily target people in the second category, who may be persuaded to adopt habits that improve their environmental impact, given the right information or incentives – whereas those in the first category may already be doing so, whilst the third category are unlikely to change their opinions or habits.

#### 4. Engagement methods

The following is a list of the communication channels used to deliver the above objectives.

Communication channel	Description	Objectives			
		Publicise	Take ownership	Get involved	Dialogue
Annual Sustainability Report	Annual update on achievements.	X			
Awards	Sustainability Awards are applied for most years to gain external recognition for sustainability projects.	X			
Engagement programme	Opportunity for students to feed into LSE approach to sustainability.	X	X	X	X
Emails	Includes targeted messages (e.g. notices sent to residences), general one-to-one communication, etc.	X	X	X	X
Events and stalls	Various – includes Green Week, one-off waste events, etc.	X	X	X	X
External liaison	Includes sitting on sector groups and committees, conferences, networking, etc.	X			X
Facilities Guide	Guide to campus facilities published annually by Estates, directed primarily at new students.	X	X		
Green Impact	Competition for staff to implement small actions and projects to green up their own offices, run by NUS.		X	X	X
Leaflets	Distributed at events, workshops, and other relevant situations.	X	X		
Meetings	EMWGs; meetings with colleagues on specific issues; senior mgmt. via committees; etc.	X	X		X
Newsletters	Occasional articles in Staff and Student News (weekly, whole-School); Green News (termly, whole-School); Green Flash (fortnightly, to selected audiences); Green Impact newsletters (departmental and whole-cohort).	X	X	X	
Opportunities for input	Formal channels for students and staff to feed into decision-making, e.g. the Socially Responsible Investment review.				X
Posters	Produced every 1-2 years for plasma display screens around LSE.	X	X		
Public lectures	The Sustainability Team host ~3 LSE Public Lectures per year, with a range of environmental topics and speakers.				
Reporting channels	EMWGs and senior management via committees and papers.	X			X
Signage	Ensuring environmentally-related campus facilities are appropriately labelled / signposted – bins, water fountains, etc.		X		
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, blog)	Twitter and Facebook contains a mix of Sustainability Team events, achievements, etc, and wider sustainability news (for general interest), Blog publishes updates on LSE green projects, and comment on wider sustainability issues. Contributors: Sustainability Team, LSE students and staff, occasional external parties.	X		X	X
Student Switch-Off	Student energy-saving competition in halls of residence, run by NUS.		X	X	
Training	Includes sustainability section in all Flying Start staff induction training; bespoke sustainability training for Estates Division.		X		
Videos	Occasionally produced to highlight particular initiatives (e.g. the new bins), and for awards applications.	X			
Website	Contains info on LSE sustainability initiatives, opportunities to get involved, new & events, and governance & reporting.	X	X	X	
Sustainability Team responses	Responding to enquiries, discussion, FOIs, etc.				X

## **5. Key performance indicators**

- Awareness: proportion of students / staff who believe LSE embraces environmental sustainability, are aware of the School's green initiatives, and understand their role in enhancing LSE's environmental impact. (Survey required.)
- Project participation:
  - Green Impact – metrics on impact of actions taken, and participation statistics (number of teams, team sizes, rate of drop-out and new entry, GIPAs and auditors).
  - Student Switch-Off – number of student participants, energy savings vs previous and baseline years.
  - SPF – number of entries, successful projects, completed projects, and funds allocated.
- Events:
  - Number of events held.
  - Attendance (including 'directly engaged' and 'bystander' audience members).
- Electronic media:
  - Social media interactions (nature and number).
  - Website and blog browsing statistics.
  - Newsletter 'open' and 'click-through' rate.
- Training attendance numbers, and impact of training where possible.
- Engagement with departments and divisions: EMWG reporting consistency, narrative feedback on service provision, 'Meet the Customer' feedback from Director of Estates.
- Narrative feedback on sustainability projects, environmental services.