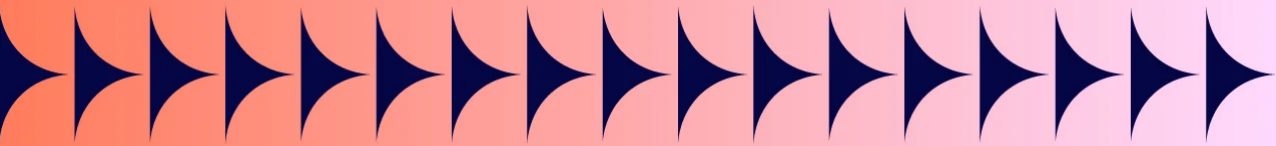


Welcome to this bite-sized edition of the Sustainability Newsletter.

May 2026



We hope it provides an easy-to-read overview of sustainability activities across the OU. If you'd like to dive deeper into any topic, just click the links within each story.

Sustainability Spotlight

A couple of simple, practical steps you can take to reduce your digital environmental impact:

- **Use email reactions instead of replying to all emails.** You will get a digest of reactions instead of every response, so the more we use it, the better the impact is!
- [Sending a PowerPoint deck as an attachment can release up to 50g of Carbon Dioxide as opposed to just 4g without a large attachment.](#) Save the document in a shared Teams or SharePoint site and **share a link instead of attaching a document.**

News, resources & engagement opportunities

- Thank you to everyone for this year's **Estates Showcase**. The day was a great opportunity to see some of the work happening across our teams and campus, and it was fantastic to see such high levels of enthusiasm, curiosity, and engagement from colleagues throughout the event. [Read more and view a few pics from the day, including our Go Green mascot Neville the Newt.](#)
- **EAUC has just launched a new [digital decision-making tool](#)** to encourage academic colleagues to weigh up the professional benefits of trips against their environmental impact.

- If you have an interest in climate, a few hours to spare, could you support an education setting in England as a volunteer **Climate Ambassador through EAUC**? [Express your interest through our sign up form](#) to receive more information.
- Since adopting the [Ecosia search engine as its default search engine](#) last year, **The Open University has helped plant over 34,000 trees** (between November 2025 and May 2026).
- **The OU recently hosted a Milton Keynes climate hustings** at its OU campus in Milton Keynes in partnership with the MK Climate Action Network. Hosted by Professor Stephen Peake, representatives from local political parties in Milton Keynes debated how they would address climate issues. A [recording](#) of the event is available.
- The OU's 10-week, 100-hour course [Climate Change: Transforming Your Organisation for Sustainability microcredential](#) offers a practical, evidence-based introduction to climate science alongside tools and insights you can apply in your role. The next course starts 4 July 2026, and [OU staff is eligible for a Staff Fee Waiver](#) with senior manager approval, making this a valuable development opportunity not to miss.

Dates for your green diary

- **EAUC events** are free for OU staff ([you can sign up here](#)). Upcoming sessions include [Sustainability communications community of practice](#) (3 June), [Living Labs community of practice](#) (8 June), [Energy & water community of practice](#) (9 June) and [Biodiversity community of practice](#) (17 June).
- **AUDE events** are free for OU staff, with events including the [Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework](#) (1 June), [Delivering future-ready estates](#) (2 June) and [Building bridges on campus: practical partnership models](#) (10 June).
- **Go Green: Sustainable Procurement** – Join us on Thursday 4 June where Clare Fitzhugh (Deputy Head of Procurement) and Stephen Hanlon (Head of Procurement) will discuss how the OU is striving to keep sustainability at the heart of the procurement process. [Sign up here](#).
- In celebration of **Net Zero Week 2026**, the UK's official national awareness week, The Open University is hosting a webinar, Getting Organisational Buy-In for Clean Energy and Low Carbon Strategy, on Wednesday 8 July 2026 to help employers turn climate ambition into organisational action. [Sign up here](#).
- **World Environment Day** takes place on 5 June, and to mark the occasion the Estates team is hosting biodiversity tours of the Milton Keynes campus

on 3 June, with spaces still available, [sign up here](#).

Help us share your positive news

- [Teresa Cox and Ismay Mummery attended](#) the **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) exchange conference on the 16th and 17th April hosted by De Montford University**, presenting snapshots of the excellent sustainability work that is taking place at the OU including the [Words of Wisdom project](#) and [sustainability resources](#) from the Learning Design team. Thanks to Victoria Hands, Paul Astles, Catriona Matthews and Avril Moore for the support with developing the slides.

Sustainability is Everyone's job

- Our preparation for the next assessment by [People and Planet](#) is well under way. Please do provide any updated materials or policies by mid-June with the [Sustainability Office](#).
- We are also preparing across the OU for our upcoming [Responsible Futures Accreditation](#) audit in July. Please submit any evidence you feel should be considered to the [Sustainability Office](#).

Get involved



Become an EAUC Member

To access resources and invites to regional meetings



How Bad Are Bananas?

Play this game at your next team away day or event



Carbon Literacy Training

Upskill, resell and make a pledge to take workplace action.



LinkedIn

Join The Open University's Sustainability LinkedIn Group.



Go Green

Join our Go Green network and workshops.



Responsible Futures

A framework to embed sustainability in the curriculum

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