

Glasgow Kelvin College

Finance and Resources Committee Meeting of 30 September 2025

Environmental and Sustainability Update

Report by Director of Estates and Corporate Services, Head of Facilities and Environmental Sustainability and Environmental Sustainability Manager

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members in relation to environmental and sustainability matters, and it covers the following areas:

2. Engagement with Sustainability
3. Engagement with the Sector
4. Funding Updates
5. Sustainability Awards Recognition
6. EAUC Learning for Sustainability Pilot Programme
7. Biodiversity Action Plan Draft
8. Nature Friendly Grounds Pilot Programme
9. Energy Efficiency and Building Management System Optimisation
10. Scottish Sustainable Network 2023-24 – Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report - Analysis Report
11. Educational Standards Scotland (ESS)

2. Engagement with Sustainability

Through collaboration with EAUC, the Environmental Sustainability Manager organised a one-day sustainable cooking workshop for Professional Cookery students in partnership with the Forward Food Initiative. Working alongside professional chefs, students explored how to incorporate more plant-based dishes into menus. This workshop will be featured at the EAUC Autumn Forum session on *Sustainable Catering on Campuses*. (Photos in Appendix 1.)

In support of the College's Hedgehog Friendly Campus accreditation, Support for Learning students participated in a planting event at the East End Community Garden. Over winter, they grew hedgehog-friendly plants from seed and later planted them in woodland areas where hedgehogs are commonly found. (Photos in Appendix 1.)

The Easterhouse Learning Garden held its official opening, where students from multiple disciplines came together to celebrate. Support for Learning students planted herbs and vegetables in new raised beds constructed by Joinery students, while Professional Cookery students provided refreshments and Performing Arts students gave a live performance. The event marked a milestone in the ongoing development of the garden as a collaborative green learning space. (Photos in Appendix 1.)

During the summer, the Environmental Sustainability Manager and Active Campus Coordinator completed a *train-the-trainer* workshop with Sustainable Pathways/Involv. They

are now certified to deliver interactive sustainability workshops, which will be rolled out to all Science students during guidance sessions this year, with plans to include staff during Staff Development Weeks.

The Environmental Sustainability Manager continues to engage the College community through pop-up stalls (e.g., Freshers' Week and Holistic Engagement events), class visits (including recent sessions on the UN Sustainable Development Goals with Performing Arts students), and sustainability communications. Upcoming highlights include Green Week, running 22–25 September, with a full programme of events and resources.

3. Engagement with the Sector

To remain connected with wider sector developments, the Environmental Sustainability Manager has participated in a range of conferences and events across Scotland. She presented at a Biodiversity event hosted by Forth Valley College for members of EAUC Scotland's Smaller Institutions Sustainability Meeting (SISM). Her presentation, *Student and Staff Engagement around Biodiversity*, highlighted case studies of successful staff and student collaboration on biodiversity projects.

Building on the College's previous award successes, she was invited to join the international judging panel for the International Green Gown Awards this summer, contributing to the evaluation of climate action projects from across the globe.

In addition, the Environmental Sustainability Manager and the Head of Facilities and Environmental Sustainability visited Dumfries and Galloway College to tour its campus and exchange best practice.

4. Funding Updates

LEZ Community Support Fund

Progress continues on the rainwater harvesting and storage project at the Easterhouse campus, funded by Glasgow City Council's LEZ Community Support Fund. The system was installed over the summer, and further developments, such as signage and additional planting, are underway. This system will sustainably meet the garden's water needs while strengthening the College's climate resilience.

Cycling Scotland

The College secured additional funding from Cycling Scotland to extend the Campus Cycling Officer post for a further three months. This support will enable continued promotion of active, sustainable travel and improved cycling facilities for students and staff.

Water Efficiency Fund 2025/26

The College has been successful in its bid to the 2025/26 Business Stream Water Efficiency Fund for grant funding to replace the Springburn toilet cisterns and flush handles with sensors. The Water Efficiency Fund received 32 applications in total for funding from the £100k pot. The College has received the maximum individual award of £13,430 from the fund. As well as reducing water usage from faulty handles and constantly running cisterns, this will support refurbishment plans for the toilets in response to student concerns. As part of the conditions of the award from the Fund, Business Stream will develop a case study of the project highlighting the positive impact it has had on both the College and the environment.

5. Sustainability Awards Recognition

Glasgow Kelvin College has been named a finalist in two categories of the UK and Ireland Green Gown Awards:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Sustainability – *Cycling for All: Breaking Barriers*, highlighting efforts to ensure inclusive access to cycling opportunities through fleet, infrastructure, and active travel engagement.
- Creating Impact – *Holistic Approach to Whole-Student Engagement*, a collaborative initiative embedding sustainability, inclusion, and wellbeing into all campus activities. Winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on 6 November 2025. The awards ceremony will take place in Birmingham on 6 November 2025 and will be attended by the three College staff members most involved.

The College was required to submit Stage 2 application paperwork and promotional videos. Links to the videos are below:

Cycling for all <https://share.icloud.com/photos/096MvDTVd9aldzpre-wBWV4EQ>
Holistic <https://share.icloud.com/photos/066xP3tzvaRUu8gWEF7KaCUmw>

Furthermore, the College has also been recognised by the College Development Network (CDN), with both projects shortlisted for the *Sustainability Action Award* and *Health and Wellbeing Award* categories. Results will be revealed at the CDN Awards on 4 December 2025.

6. EAUC Learning for Sustainability Pilot Programme

Glasgow Kelvin College is one of four Scottish institutions selected to participate in the EAUC/SFC pilot programme *Key Enablers for ESD/LfS*. The initiative supports institutions in embedding sustainability into learning and teaching by identifying and addressing barriers.

A core group of curriculum leaders has been established to lead this work. Together with EAUC and the College's Environmental Sustainability Manager, they have already held two planning sessions. The programme will run until May 2026, at which point outcomes will be shared across the HE/FE sector.

7. Biodiversity Action Plan

The Environmental Sustainability Manager has drafted a Biodiversity Action Plan for Glasgow Kelvin College, drawing on EAUC's guidance and the Scottish Government's *Biodiversity Strategy to 2045*. The plan is structured around four themes: governance, learning, estate, and partnerships; each with clear, measurable actions.

Once approved, the plan will guide future initiatives to halt biodiversity loss, regenerate ecosystems, and support nature recovery in local communities.

8. Nature Friendly Grounds Pilot Programme

Aligned with the Biodiversity Action Plan, the College has been selected by SOS UK (Students Organising for Sustainability) to join a two-year pilot programme focused on improving campus biodiversity across UK Colleges. This opportunity will provide resources and support to implement actions identified in the College's plan.

9. Energy Efficiency and Building Management System Optimisation

A detailed energy efficiency assessment of the East End campus was carried out by a building controls specialist during July/August 2025. The report provided recommendations which, if fully implemented, could generate potential annual savings of £18,709 and avoid 40tCO₂e of carbon emissions from more efficient energy usage. The intention is now to conduct similar assessments for the other two campuses.

10. Scottish Sustainable Network 2023-24 – Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report - Analysis Report

The 2023/24 SSN Analysis Report highlights that Scotland's Further and Higher Education sector is under increasing pressure to integrate net zero commitments into all areas of operation, with the Scottish Funding Council embedding climate action as a core requirement of its new Outcomes Framework. 81% of colleges now report having at least one emissions reduction target in place.

The Report highlights that while progress is being made, particularly in renewable heat generation, the sector still faces challenges: climate risk assessments often remain limited to single issues like flooding, though more colleges are moving towards comprehensive approaches, and only a minority demonstrate advanced climate adaptation planning. Luckily, Kelvin College has already produced a robust climate risk register and adaptation plan, which it will highlight in its upcoming 2024/25 PBCCDR. Overall, the Report underlines that colleges are making incremental progress, but stronger alignment of budgets, risk management, and reporting with Scotland's national net zero goals is needed to accelerate the pace of change.

11. Educational Standards Scotland (ESS)

The Scottish Government announced that, following the investigation by Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) into climate change delivery (which focused on the need for a monitoring body to have the remit to scrutinise the system of climate change duties, with the requisite powers to direct action where deemed necessary), ESS itself would take on this monitoring function. This would be enabled using existing powers granted by the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021. Whilst planning is at an early stage, ESS is preparing to go live in 2026-27 and intends reaching out separately to relevant stakeholders in respect of its role.

A link to the recommendations from the investigations can be found here: [Climate Change Delivery Investigation - Improvement Report - Environmental Standards Scotland](#)

12. Impact on Students

There are no negative impacts as a consequence of anything within this report. The Environmental and Sustainability Manager has participated in many events with College students to raise awareness of environmental and sustainability matters. These events assist with learning/development and citizenship skills and continue to provide an opportunity to promote our Learning Network Sustainability module.

13. Risk and Assurance

There are no additional risk and assurance implications that are not covered within this report.

14. Equality

There are no Equality implications arising as a consequence of anything within this report.

15. Data Protection

There are no direct data protection implications arising as a consequence of anything within this report.

16. Environmental and Sustainability Impact

The Environmental Sustainability Manager continues to engage with students, teaching and support staff to raise awareness of various events.

17. Resources

There are no direct resources implications arising as a consequence of anything within this report.

18. Recommendations

- i) It is recommended that members note the content of this report, links and appendix.

19. Further Information

Further information can be obtained from Lisa Clark, Director of Estates and Corporate Services - lisaclark@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk, Claire Reid, Head of Facilities and Environmental Sustainability – creid@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk, Sarah Shea, Environmental Sustainability Manager on sshea@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk or Roddy MacKenzie, Regulations and Compliance Manager on rmackenzie@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Lisa Clark
Director of Estates and Corporate Services
September 2025

Easterhouse Learning Garden Opening Celebration



Forward Food 'Plant Based Cooking' Workshop



Hedgehog Friendly Planting Event with SfL

