

2026

Environmental Management System Report

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October 2026



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Introduction and Scope

The University of East Anglia (UEA) continues to maintain certification to ISO 14001:2015, the internationally recognised standard for Environmental Management Systems (EMS). This certification demonstrates the University's ongoing commitment to effective environmental management, covering all physical estates and operations within the NR4 7TJ campus.

The EMS provides a framework for continual improvement in environmental performance, ensuring compliance with applicable legislation, realising financial and operational efficiencies, and promoting transparency in environmental reporting. It supports the delivery of the University's Sustainability Strategy and contributes to its longer-term sustainability objectives.

Responsibility for the EMS rests with the Estates and Facilities Directorate. Senior management reviews the system at least annually to ensure it remains suitable, adequate and effective.

This report provides an assessment of the UEA's environmental performance in the 2026 academic year, addressing all relevant elements of the ISO 14001 standard. It will be made publicly available via the UEA Sustainability website. This year's report includes two years of data, i.e. academic year 2025 and 2026, under each reporting heading, covering the period up to and including July 2026.



Figure 1 UEA Campus Map

EMS Management

Environmental Policy

The Environmental Sustainability Policy is reviewed annually by the Sustainability Committee alongside progress against environmental objectives. The most recent review was completed in June 2026, with the updated policy formally approved by the Committee on 30 June 2026. The revised policy reflects alignment with the UEA 2030 Sustainability Strategy and the University's 2045 Net-Zero Goals.

To access the latest version go to [Strategy and Policies page](https://www.uea.ac.uk/strategy-and-policies) on www.uea.ac.uk.

EMS Management Structure

The EMS is managed by the Estates and Facilities Directorate, ensuring its consistent application across the University's estate and operational activities. This governance structure supports UEA's continued commitment to improving its environmental performance.

The reporting structure for EMS implementation, illustrated in Figure 2 below, shows how the Estates and Facilities Directorate engages with internal and external interested parties and facilitates the flow of EMS-related information across three key functions: the Estates and Facilities Leadership Team, the Estates and Facilities Management Team, and relevant Estates staff.

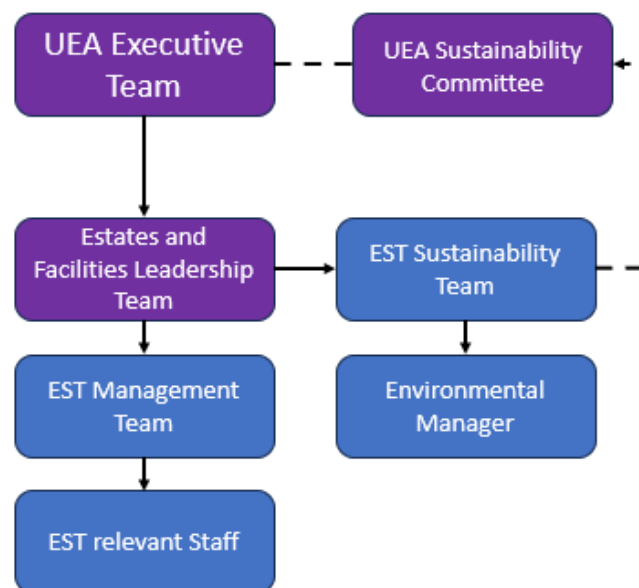


Figure 2 EMS Management Structure

Management Review

The Management Review is the responsibility of the Estates and Facilities Leadership Team (ELT) and plays an important role in ensuring the ongoing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the EMS, in accordance with ISO 14001 requirements. Two Management Review meetings were held in 2026, on 19 January and 13 July. Across these meetings, the ELT reviewed the EMS, including trends in nonconformances, results of internal and external audits, progress on environmental targets and opportunities for improvement, to ensure the system continues to support the University's environmental objectives and the ongoing improvement of its environmental performance.

Legislation Updates

In 2026 the UEA adopted a new online tool that provides updates at a clause level, to those UK environmental legislations that are relevant.

The most relevant new UK legislation and major updates that could impact UEA's environmental performance are:

Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026

This amendment introduces a forthcoming change to the exemptions from mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) for qualifying developments on sites modifying thresholds and rules – such as a new ≤0.2-hectare area-based exemption (if no priority habitat affected)

Large-scale or multi-phase campus developments exceeding the new thresholds remain subject to mandatory BNG compliance and the UEA shall continue to consider biodiversity impacts and BNG obligations when planning development projects.

Digital Waste Tracking (England) Regulations 2026

These regulations introduce a digital system for tracking controlled waste, with specified reporting requirements applying to operators of permitted waste facilities receiving waste, enabling the UK to transition away from paper Waste Transfer Notes.

The UEA is working with its waste contractor and reviewing procedures to prepared for full digital integration and to ensure responsibilities are clearly understood.

Water Regulations

Following the 2025 consultation, Defra confirmed strengthen Environment Agency enforcement powers, which include variable monetary penalties (up to £500,000) for environmental breaches and automatic fixed penalties (£10,000) for certain offences.

The university continues to engage and work proactively with relevant stakeholders to reinforce awareness of environmental compliance obligations and the importance of timely incident reporting. This work supports a better understanding of potential risks across the University's operations, helping to identify areas for improvement, strengthen preventative measures and reduce the likelihood of pollution incidents.

Audit Results and Non-conformances

External Audit

As part of maintaining the ISO accredited EMS, the UEA is on a 3-year recertification cycle with an annual surveillance audit. At the end of 2025, the external auditor was changed to BSI ([BSI Group](#)), who are a UKAS Accredited Certification body, providing ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001, FSC® and ISO 50001 Certification.

An EMS surveillance visit was conducted in April 2026 and no non-conformances were identified.

Internal Audits

The UEA Sustainability Team, with support from Estates and Facilities staff, undertakes a programme of internal audits covering a range of topics aligned with UEA's identified environmental aspects and impacts. Responsibility for overseeing the audit programme sits with the Environmental Manager.

In late 2025, several members of staff undertook an accredited Internal Auditor training course to enhance auditing capability across the university. During the 2025–2026 reporting period, audits were conducted covering Energy & Carbon, Nuisance & Waste, Biodiversity & Water and General Environment / EMS.

Across the internal audits, the UEA identified no major non-conformities (Major NCs), 2 minor non-conformities (Minor NCs), 11 Observations and 7 Scope for Improvement (SFI). Of these 20 findings 18 items have been closed – including both the Minor NCs - leaving only 2 Observations outstanding.

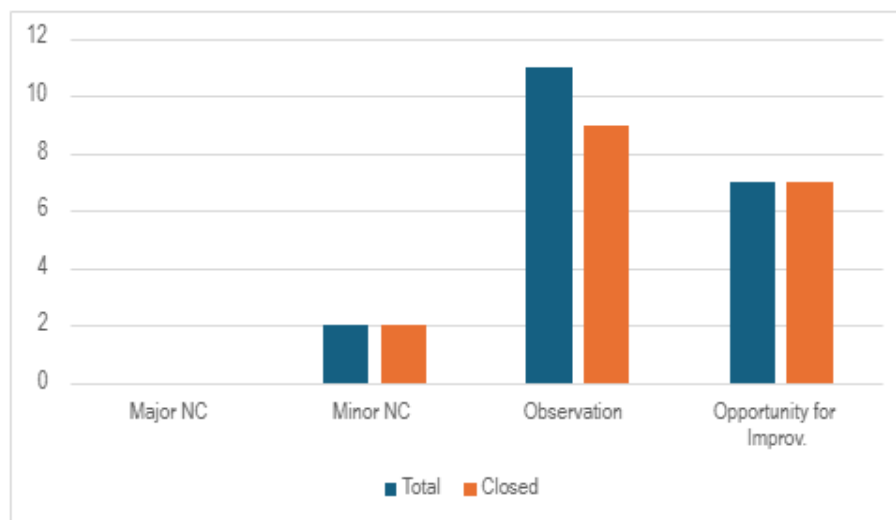


Figure 3 Graph showing closure of internal audit findings for period 2025-2026

Relevant parties have received the 2026-2027 internal audit calendar, which commenced in August 2026. The scheduled dates are as follows:

- **Air Pollution** – 6th to 7th August 2026
- **ISO 50001** – 28th to 30th September 2026
- **Waste** – 8th to 9th October 2026
- **Water and Biodiversity** – 2nd to 3rd December 2026
- **General Environment / EMS** – 11th to 12th February 2027

In 2025 decision was made to separate the previous 'Energy and Carbon Audit' into Air Pollution and cover Energy in a 3-day ISO 50001 audit, as work is ongoing for the university to achieve accreditation of its Energy Management System (EnMS).

The Air Pollution, ISO 50001 and Waste Audit have been completed at the time of writing this report. However, please note that dates of the remaining internal audits may change slightly if auditees or auditor availability become limited by an emergency.

Environmental Performance

In July 2025 the UEA approved its Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030, which sets out the long-term strategic visions under four key aims:

Aim 1: Sustainability and Sustainable Education

Aim 2: Sustainability and Sustainable Research

Aim 3: Sustainable Operations

Aim 4: Sustainable Society

The strategy outlines the objectives and actions to deliver these aims through workplans developed by implementation teams consisting of topic SMEs, other UEA staff and a student representative.

All data shown in this section are aligned with the latest HESA reporting categories ([HESA](#)) and cover both 2024-25 and 2025-26. Although the latter period is not yet available on the HESA website, the figures provided are verified internally.

Carbon Emissions

UEA has published an update to its Carbon Management Plan (CMP) for 2026, which states the calculated carbon emissions for the latest HESA reporting year of 2024-25. In addition, energy consumption data for the 2025-26 period is presented below. The range of Scope 3 categories reported has increased in the latest version of the CMP. UEA now calculates emissions related to supply chain, staff commuting, business travel, waste, water and wastewater.

A summary of Scope 1 & 2 emissions:

Emission sources	2025-26	2024-25	Historical Data (kg CO ₂ e)			Baseline
	(kg CO ₂ e)	(kg CO ₂ e)	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2014-15
Grid electricity	924,633.77	1,550,443.01	2,011,436	1,184,641	1,483,460	13,220,000
Gas oil	6,093.41	1,445.12	26,577	1,028	-	35,000
Natural gas	17,214,879.72	16,255,725.77	12,827,586	16,276,234	17,487,816	12,047,000
Vehicle diesel	45,032.92	13,893.87	16,288	38,553	39,017	55,400
Vehicle petrol	10,225.35	11,074.27	9,986	9,814	16,225	4,800
Total	18,200,865.17	17,832,582	14,891,873	17,510,270	19,026,518	25,362,200

Table 1 Scope 2 and 2 Emissions - UEA

The largest driver of emissions is natural gas combustion in the CHP engines, which operate continuously to minimise energy costs. Improved engine reliability during 2025-26, resulted in increased running hours and, consequently, higher gas consumption and emissions compared with the previous reporting period. Despite this increase, the university's Scope 1 and 2 emissions are 28% less than the baseline, against a target of 80% reduction by 2030.

Energy Consumption

Total electricity consumption has remained largely consistent over recent reporting periods, although the balance between grid electricity imports and on-site CHP generation has fluctuated year-on-year according to CHP availability. As a result of the increased CHP operating hours in 2025-26, 82% of electricity demand was met through on-site generation. Correspondingly, electricity imported from the grid fell to its lowest level in five years.

Total heat demand was approximately 2.7 GWh lower in 2025-26 compared to the previous reporting period, primarily due to warmer temperatures reducing heating demand. However, as the CHP does not modulate in response to heat demand, this did not translate into lower gas consumption. Instead, total gas consumption increased significantly compared to the previous year as a result of higher CHP operating hours.

Energy Consumption Source	2025-26 (kWh)	2024-25 (kWh)	Historical Data - Emissions		
			2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Natural gas (excl that used as input for a CHP unit)	16,050,699	38,758,199	26,139,386	27,417,987	7,877,422
Natural gas (as input for a CHP unit)	78,040,248	50,090,324	43,995,035	61,557,216	87,925,230
Total natural gas consumption	94,090,947	88,848,523	70,134,421	88,975,203	95,802,652
Electricity consumed from onsite CHP	24,451,273	20,888,536	19,454,000	23,600,000	23,752,657
Grid electricity	5,223,920	8,759,565	9,714,734	5,720,969	7,671,217
Onsite photovoltaic	239,540	241,834	138,074	324,927	228,537
Total electricity consumption	29,914,733	29,889,935	29,306,808	29,645,896	31,652,411

Table 2 Energy Consumption

UEA has carried out a campus-wide Energy Review in 2026 in preparation for certifying the EnMS to the ISO50001 standard. This review identified significant energy users as accommodation buildings, buildings containing science labs, other 'academic' buildings and the Sainsbury's Centre Gallery. Going forward, energy performance will be reported by category, and will be tracked and improved through the EnMS.

Building Type	Total annual consumption (kWh)	% of total consumption
Residence	14,587,251	27.38%
Labs	13,830,639	25.96%
Offices/Teaching	10,136,834	19.03%
Museum/Gallery	4,533,420	8.51%
Sports Facility	3,863,151	7.25%
Library	2,646,199	4.97%
Social Space	1,201,074	2.25%
Catering	866,231	1.63%
Greenhouse	464,424	0.87%
Shops	461,973	0.87%
Lecture Theatre	291,286	0.55%
Health Facility	145,492	0.27%
Excluded	137,261	0.26%
Studio	81,457	0.15%
Laundrette	23,050	0.04%
Grand Total	53,269,742	100.00%

Table 3 – Building energy consumption by category

Water Consumption

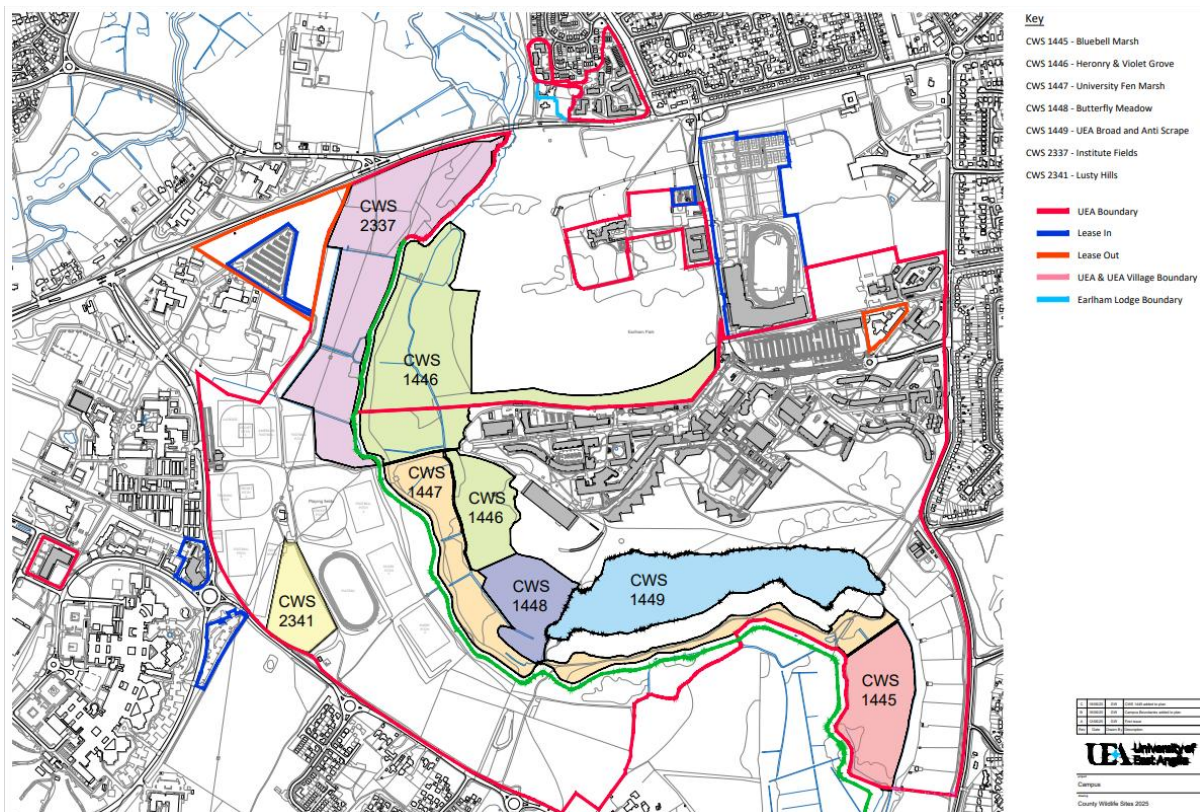
UEA has established a water reduction target of 14% by 2032 against a 2019 baseline, aligned with national and regional objectives. Water consumption in 2024/25 and 2025/26 increased compared to the baseline year. This was largely due to an issue discovered with faulty cisterns installed across the Village accommodation block, which has been worsening over time. The increase means water consumption over 2025-26 was 10% greater than the baseline. A programme of cistern replacements was conducted in the summer of 2026 to address the problem.

	2025-26	2024-25	Baseline
Water	(m ³)	(m ³)	2018-19
Total Consumption (m ³)	349,964	325,060	316,698

Table 4 Water Consumption - UEA

Biodiversity

The Estates and Facilities Grounds and Maintenance Team manages 145 hectares of campus, including 50 hectares under higher-level stewardship and the campus woodlands support more than 5,700 recorded wildlife species. In 2026, the UEA was awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award ([Award Winners - Green Flag Award](#)) for the tenth consecutive year, recognising the quality of its green spaces and their management.



The University continues to implement its Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS), providing an integrated and sustainable approach to estate management. Key biodiversity projects and achievements during the reporting period include:

- **Bluebell Marsh Restoration:** Wetland improvements included restoring the historic ditch system and pond and installing a new water-control structure to improve habitat diversity and water-level management.
- **Yare Valley Walk and Bluebell Marsh Boardwalk:** Estates worked with the Development, Alumni and Campaigns Office and Norwich Fringe Project to secure external funding to replace the boardwalk linking the River Yare and UEA Broad, improving access to campus green infrastructure and restoring a popular walking route.
- **Herbicide Reduction:** In 2026, herbicide use in plant and shrub beds was replaced by mechanical and physical weed control, including hand weeding and the use of mulch produced from campus tree and hedge cuttings. The Nomix Enviro application system was also used to reduce spray drift and run-off. Total active ingredients applied decreased from 4,498 g in 2025 to 2,918 g in 2026, a reduction of approximately 35%.
- **Organic Fertiliser:** The Grounds Team introduced a process to produce liquid fertiliser from campus vegetation, using nettles and comfrey to create a nutrient-rich natural alternative that reduces reliance on inorganic and externally sourced fertilisers.
- **Pollinator Push / Enhancement Areas:** Three campus areas were enhanced through scarification and wildflower seeding, supported by student volunteers and UEA Biodiversity Heroes. Despite drought-related challenges to seedling establishment, new plant species were recorded at all three sites.
- **UEA Biodiversity Heroes:** The Biodiversity Heroes programme continued to grow, with staff, students and local residents contributing 953 volunteer hours to conservation activities including tree planting, fen cutting and meadow management.
- **Pollinator Monitoring:** UEA joined the national UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme in 2026, introducing Flower-Insect Timed (FIT) Counts across campus. Staff and volunteers received training to support standardised monitoring and contribute data to national citizen-science research, helping to build a better understanding of pollinator activity across the estate.

Waste

The UEA Waste Implementation team works to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste before disposal. Updates and extensions to the waste procedure now better reflect current regulatory requirements and working practices. Other achievements during the 2025-26 period include:

- **Waste awareness:** Renewed information posters were displayed in all public areas to continue to highlight the UEA's recent waste intensity performance and the impact of donations to UEA's charity partners, including the British Heart Foundation. The Waste team participated in Sustainability Week, which successfully reached a large number of students, and enabled suggestions to be heard.
 - **Waste contamination:** The Cleaning Services team continued their efforts to keep waste contamination as low as possible, both through active engagement and collaboration with the waste contractors.
- Waste segregation:** A wood skip was introduced at the waste yard, enabling further segregation of waste.

The UEA saw an increase in total waste, mainly driven by a major building project that generated a large amount of construction waste of which 47% and 91% was recycled or reused in 2025 and 2026 respectively. The remaining waste was hazardous and had to be disposed of to landfill.

Waste Treatment method	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
☐ Landfill	0.50	0.00	6.26	11.40	3.60	0.10	1,444.59	418.72
Construction and Demolition Waste	0.00	0.00	6.26	1.78	0.00	0.10	109.43	418.72
Construction and Demolition Waste - Asbestos	0.50	0.00	0.00	9.62	3.60	0.00	1,335.16	0.00
☐ Recycled	0.00	5.70	2.86	3.80	3.64	3.10	1,279.89	4,674.73
Construction and Demolition Waste	0.00	4.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.89	1,241.31	4,665.91
Construction and Demolition Waste - Gypsum products	0.00	1.10	2.86	3.80	3.64	2.00	9.48	8.82
Construction and Demolition Waste - Metal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	29.10	0.00
Total	0.50	5.70	9.12	15.20	7.24	3.20	2,724.48	5,093.45

Table 5 UEA Waste Disposal Volumes – construction and demolition waste only

If construction waste is excluded, there was a 2% increase in total waste generated from 2025 volumes. A positive trend was the volume of donated items, which saw a 22% increase from 2025. The combined recycling rate also increased from 49% in 2025 to 53% in 2026.

Waste Treatment method	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
☐ Anaerobic Digestion	129.34	112.00	68.78	87.95	108.69	106.64	111.73	100.36
☐ Compost	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.26	41.90	66.58	42.24
☐ Energy from Waste	984.10	698.20	501.05	712.25	725.18	622.75	623.15	575.96
☐ Incinerated	12.70	7.30	6.88	6.54	7.76	0.07	0.04	0.00
☐ Recycled	572.80	421.10	369.56	592.19	626.32	462.25	485.91	581.39
☐ Reused	91.00	17.44	21.22	41.57	44.05	56.31	72.23	87.94
Total	1,789.94	1,256.04	967.49	1,440.50	1,530.26	1,289.92	1,359.64	1,387.89

Table 6 UEA Waste Disposal Volumes – excluding construction waste

Transport

Progress has continued in strengthening sustainable travel options across the University, with a focus on reducing transport-related emissions, improving travel choices and making more efficient use of existing services. A number of initiatives have been developed or enhanced over the past year to support more sustainable journeys for staff and students, in line with the University's Sustainability Strategy. The year-round Park & Ride service, initially introduced for students, has been extended to staff, providing greater opportunities for sustainable commuting across the University and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH).

Key developments over the reporting period include:

- **Connect Bus:** Fleet provision has been adjusted on selected routes to better reflect passenger demand and support more efficient vehicle utilisation.
- **Night Bus Service:** The Night Bus has been incorporated into the network's standard service provision, helping to maintain access to sustainable transport options outside regular daytime hours.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Fleet:** Security vehicles have transitioned from diesel and hybrid models to fully electric vehicles, supporting the reduction of emissions associated with operations.
- **Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Parking:** Phase two of the project was completed, extending ANPR coverage to the Edith Cavell and Bob Champion buildings. This provides more comprehensive parking data to inform travel planning and help target sustainable travel initiatives towards specific user groups.
- **Travel Survey:** A travel survey was conducted in-house, achieving a representative sample of responses from university staff. Student participation was insufficient to generate meaningful data, highlighting an area for improvement in future survey activity.
- **Dr Bike Service:** The on-campus Dr Bike service continues to support active and sustainable travel through bike health checks and participation in university sustainability events. Since reopening two years ago, the service has completed hundreds of bike health checks. The reuse and donation scheme has also been formalised, enabling abandoned or donated bicycles to be refurbished and resold. In addition, collaboration with the University of Sanctuary provides opportunities for unwanted bicycles to be donated to refugees.

The University also continues to support the Cycle to Work scheme, encouraging staff to choose cycling for their commute. For students, Sportspark offers short-term cycle hire, providing an additional option for those wishing to travel around campus and the local area using a sustainable mode of transport.

Conclusion

During 2026, the UEA continued to strengthen its EMS and demonstrate its commitment to continual improvement, maintaining ISO 14001 certification with no non-conformances identified during the external surveillance audit. Progress was made across key environmental areas, including an improved recycling rate, reduced herbicide use, enhanced biodiversity initiatives and the expansion of sustainable travel options. These achievements reflect the ongoing commitment of the Estates and Facilities Sustainability Team, supported by the Estates and Facilities Leadership Team, and the hard work and dedication of colleagues across the University.

However, challenges remain in reducing carbon emissions and water consumption, with increased gas use associated with improved CHP reliability and water consumption remaining above the 2019 baseline. The UEA will continue to address these challenges through targeted improvement actions, the development of its EnMS, enhanced environmental monitoring and reporting, and preparation for evolving regulatory requirements.

Building on its foundation of effective environmental management, collaboration, and a commitment to regulatory compliance, the UEA will further embed sustainability across its operations, support the delivery of its Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2030, and progress towards its longer-term ambition of achieving net zero by 2045.