



# Sustainability at SCUC & SUAC

## Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030



Solihull College  
& University Centre

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Stratford-upon-Avon  
College





*Above: Built Environment & Sustainable Technologies students at our Blossomfield Campus.*

# We are committed to a sustainable future.

At Solihull College & University Centre and Stratford-upon-Avon College, we are dedicated to reducing our impact on the planet for the future of our students. At a time when urgent action is needed, the College is making ambitious goals towards net-zero/sustainable campuses and a curriculum with sustainability embedded into every area.

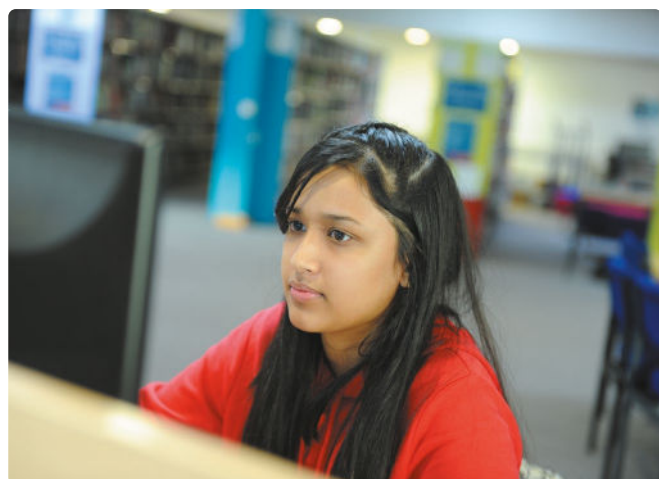
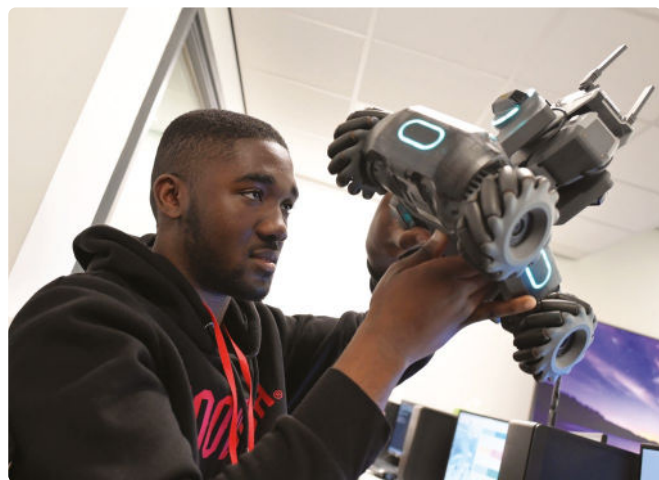


## Sustainability at SCUC & SUAC



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# Foreword from Dr. Rebecca Gater

## Principal & Chief Executive



Welcome to Solihull College & University Centre and Stratford-upon-Avon College's Sustainability Strategy. As a large institution in the education sector, we recognise the importance of taking responsibility for

our impact on the environment and society, and for educating future generations. This strategy outlines our commitment to sustainability and our plan to achieve a more sustainable future.

Sustainability is more than just a buzzword; it is a necessity. Climate change, resource depletion, and social inequality are just a few of the challenges that we face as a society. As an educational institution, we have a responsibility to lead by example and equip our students with the knowledge and skills they need to create a more sustainable future.

At Solihull College and University Centre, we recognise that sustainability is a journey, not a destination. We are committed to continuous improvement, and this strategy represents our roadmap for the years ahead. Our vision is to create sustainable campuses, where students, staff and the wider community can thrive, and the natural environment is protected for future generations. We recognise that achieving our sustainability goals will require the collective effort of all our stakeholders; therefore, we are committed to engaging with our students, staff, local community, and partners to build a sustainable future together.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that our commitment to sustainability is a reflection of our core values as an institution, and we look forward to working towards a more sustainable future.

**Dr. Rebecca Gater**  
(Principal & Chief Executive)

# Foreword from Barbara Hughes

## Chair of Governors



Governors approve, support and challenge the work of the College, the Principal and her team. Our published Strategic Plan 2022-25 includes the College's approach and targets for sustainability.

The Corporation is pleased

to endorse this specific Sustainability Strategy. We are fully committed to its aims and ambitions. We are pleased with the progress made to date but recognise the amount of work needed to meet our Net Zero target.

Our approach includes embedding sustainability into the curriculum in line with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for the region for Green Skills and Green Jobs priorities. We adhere to the Association of Colleges (AoC) Code of Good Governance and guidance on sustainability. We aim to lead by example and be a front runner in the journey to become a sustainable College.

**Barbara Hughes**  
(Chair of Governors)



# 1. Introduction

Solihull College & University Centre and Stratford-upon-Avon College's Sustainability Strategy (2022 - 2030) was developed in response to global environmental issues and the need for urgent action to tackle climate change and become a sustainable College. This is the second iteration of the Strategy.

The Strategy re-affirms our signing of the Association of Colleges (AoC) Green Commitment, our ambition of embedding sustainability across our curriculum in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.

It underpins the College's strategic ambition to become Net Zero and the commitment to use our role (and the opportunity this gives) to promote and support social responsibility and environmental sustainability to students, staff and to the wider community. It also sets out how we will embed sustainability into the heart of the College's culture, curriculum and student experience.

The Strategy is an overarching document which sets our vision, commitment, key themes, monitoring and reporting process. A delivery plan has been developed which sets out how the aims of the Strategy will be achieved.

## Sustainability Policy

This Strategy is aligned with the College's **Sustainability Policy** which sets out the overarching principles, objectives, decision-making process and roles and responsibilities for ensuring the strategy is supported appropriately at all levels and is delivered successfully.

## 2. Our Vision

In support of the government's national ambitions for achieving Net Zero carbon in the UK by 2050, the College had previously signed up to the West Midlands Net Zero pledge setting out a target to achieve scope 1 and 2 net zero by 2030 and scope 3 by 2050, in line with the AOC green commitment.

In recognition of the urgency to act, we have revised our target and timeframe and are committed:

**To become a Net Zero, sustainable College by 2030 for all emissions (Scope 1, 2 & 3).**

Definitions for reference:

### Net Zero

Cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions 'off-set' through carbon off-setting methods.

### Scope 1

Direct greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from sources owned or controlled by the College (e.g. heating, hot water and transport).

### Scope 2

Indirect GHG emissions associated with electricity, heat or steam purchased by the College (e.g. lighting, IT and other electrical equipment).

### Scope 3

All other indirect GHG emissions associated with the extraction and production of purchased materials, fuels and services (e.g. waste and recycling, contracted services and supply of goods and services).





### 3. College Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The College Strategic Plan (2022 - 2025) includes the core ambition to: **“Work towards being Net Zero by 2030”**. This clearly and publicly demonstrates the commitment that the Corporation and Senior Leadership Team hold in becoming a sustainable college and achieving the aims of this Strategy.



### 4. Climate Emergency Declaration

In November 2022, the College declared a Climate Change Emergency ([Appendix 1, click here to view](#)).

The Declaration acknowledges that climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges facing us today and recognised the crucial role the College has is not only reducing our own environmental impact but also the responsibility and opportunity the College has through teaching, research, innovation and influence on increased sustainability.

The College’s commitment includes actions to reduce carbon emissions from energy and water use across the three campuses, reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling, promote sustainable travel as well as embedding sustainability into the culture, curriculum and College life.

It also reaffirms that the College is guided by principles of social responsibility and recognises that the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the heart of this mission.



## 5. UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 interlinked global **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** were designed to be a “shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future”. These are at the heart of our vision. The College has a direct or indirect influence on achieving these goals through the delivery of this strategy and through the curriculum offer.



## 6. Code of Good Governance

In accordance with the AoC Code of Good Governance, the Corporation have set out their ambition and commitment to become a sustainable College through the following actions:

- A long-term strategy for carbon reduction and improving environmental sustainability has been developed, including timeframe, risks, milestones, targets and key performance indicators. The strategy takes a whole-college approach and cover areas such as:
  - (a) Measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the College's own campus and commercial activities.
  - (b) The College's delivery of the skills required to help reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental sustainability.
- A summary of the progress will be published annually in line with new non-statutory guidance for FE Colleges on how to report their energy and carbon impacts.
- Sufficient resources are in place to manage delivery of the strategy effectively and training will be made available to senior management and the board to enable the development of sufficient skills and up-to-date knowledge of environmental sustainability to support strategy delivery.
- The FE Climate Action Roadmap has been adapted to create a delivery plan and emerging national and international policy and standards will be monitored to inform its direction of travel.
- Clear ambitious carbon reduction targets deriving from commercial activities have been set.
- Collaboration with FE/HE partners and other local and national stakeholders will be enhanced to share best practice and knowledge.
- Sustainability will be delivered and monitored by Senior Leadership Team, ensuring that decisions are made and supported at the appropriate level and that all key and relevant College staff are involved in the process.
- A coherent curriculum plan for environmental sustainability, tackling climate change and carbon reduction is being developed in consultation with students.





# 7. Methodology

This strategy sets out how we will achieve our vision and builds on:

- Our established pledge to adhere to the AoC Green Commitment Climate Change mission statement of “Reducing our impact on the environment, living within our means, and thinking about future generations” and
- The adoption of the ‘FE Climate Action Road map’ as referred to in the previous iteration of this Strategy and its adaptation into a delivery plan.

A Head of Sustainability was appointed in 2022 to lead on the review, revision and delivery of this strategy.

## The delivery will be achieved by:

- Adopting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Embedding sustainability into the curriculum and student life whilst empowering students to contribute and drive the climate change agenda forward.
- Developing a Sustainability Strategy and delivery plan to reduce our carbon footprint, taking steps to become a Net Zero College: including energy, water, waste, buildings, vehicles & travel, natural environment and purchasing.
- Exploring and implementing on-site renewable energy solutions.
- Taking positive steps to mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Leading by example and encouraging further action, by others, through information, education and influence.
- Providing the necessary resources to deliver on our carbon reduction commitment.
- Establishing our carbon footprint then monitoring and reporting on our progress against reduction targets.
- Positively encouraging students, staff, visitors, our suppliers and contractors to help us explore ways that can make a difference and contribute towards a more sustainable, environmentally responsible lifestyle.

- Giving our students a voice in the strategic direction that we take, including College-based projects led by the Green Champions forum and through lobbying and campaigning.
- Encouraging students to get involved in global, national and local sustainability initiatives and projects.
- Engaging with other educational establishments to share best practice and identify opportunities for improved sustainability.
- Working in collaboration with partners, businesses and other organisations on local and regional initiatives.
- Promoting progression into the expanding green skills employment sector through the curriculum, career fairs, business engagement and other opportunities.

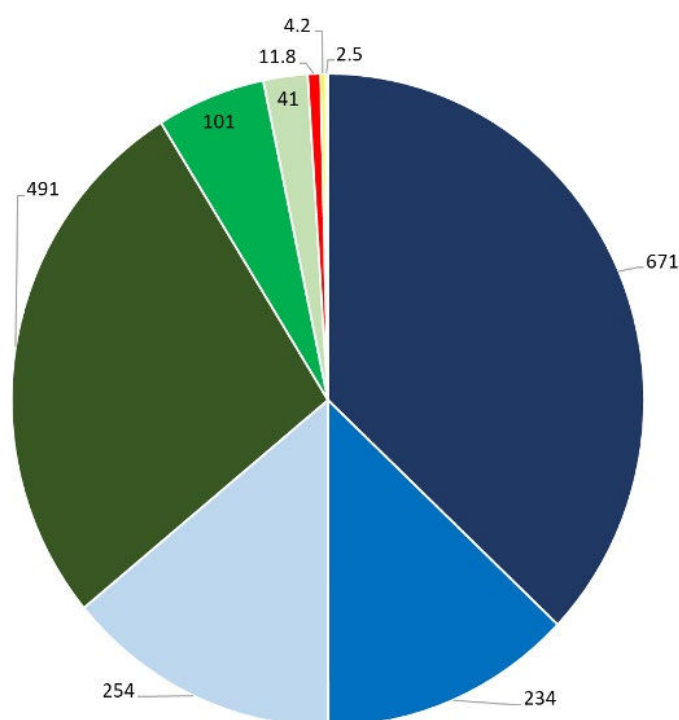
## Measuring Success

- We will have developed a Sustainability Strategy and delivery plan.
- All actions within the delivery plan will have been delivered, according to priority and opportunity, subject to any changes.
- We will have reduced our annual carbon footprint by an average of 10% p.a. from a 2020/21 baseline to net zero by 2030.
- The Green Champions forum will be relaunched, actively engaged and will have made a demonstrable positive contribution.
- Staff awareness and knowledge will have been enhanced through an appropriate training programme.
- All curriculum areas will have embedded the delivery of sustainability into their learning and lesson planning.
- Green skills training and opportunities will be established and ongoing.
- Sustainability will become normal practice as part of staff and student experience on campus.

## 8. Solihull College Carbon footprint (2020/21)

The College's carbon footprint has been established for 2020/21. These figures will be used as the baseline for measuring and monitoring reduction towards the 2030 Net Zero target. NB: As new guidance is still emerging on calculating carbon emissions, the baseline data may change, specifically for scope 3 emissions.

### Carbon footprint – TCO<sub>2</sub>e (2020/21)



Label	Category	Campus	TCO <sub>2</sub> e	(%)
	Gas	BF	671	37.1%
	Gas	WL	234	12.9%
	Gas	St	254	14.0%
	Electricity	BF	491	27.1%
	Electricity	WL	101	5.6%
	Electricity	St	41	2.3%
	Business Mileage	All	11.8	0.7%
	Water	All	4.2	0.2%
	Waste & Recycling	All	2.5	0.1%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>1,804</b>	

### Carbon emissions reporting

The College's most recent [Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting emissions data](#) has been published on our website in accordance with government requirements.

The emerging Standardised Carbon Emissions Reporting for Further and Higher Education, developed by the Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education (EAUC), is currently being adopted to monitor and report our carbon emissions more accurately and comprehensively. The Framework is based on the GHG Protocol and takes a Science-Based Target approach.

By applying this standardised framework and methodology, we will be able to calculate and report our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in a way that is consistent with and comparable to other FE & HE providers.

The framework will also allow us to develop a fuller understanding of how our operations contribute to climate change and enable us to take focused and specific actions across a broader range of areas.

## 9. Key Performance Indicators

KPIs have been established to monitor our progress towards becoming a Net Zero sustainable College:

- **SS1:** Reductions against the 2020/21 carbon footprint.
- **SS2:** Detailed reductions in gas, electricity and water use.
- **SS3:** Detailed reduction in overall waste tonnages, increase in proportion of recycled and recovered material from the waste stream.
- **SS4:** Detailed reduction in business mileage, specifically single-use internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle travel.
- **SS5:** Number of staff having received carbon literacy training (or equivalent training/qualification)
- **SS6:** Number of Green Champion student and staff members.

KPIs will be reported on an annual basis to the Strategic Leadership Team and Corporation.





# 10. Strategic Themes

This strategy is divided into five themes:

1. **Strategic leadership and commitment**
2. **Net Zero College**
3. **Green Skills and Green Jobs**
4. **Embedding sustainability in the curriculum**
5. **Embedding sustainability in student and staff experience**

Below are headlines of work streams, projects and initiatives that have been delivered in the last 12 months, as well as those that are in progress, under each theme. This incorporates steps from the FE Road Map (as set out in the previous version of the strategy) and are included in detail in the Delivery Plan with specific timeframes where relevant. We will publicise an annual report setting out progress.

## 1. Strategic leadership and commitment

### Delivered

- The inclusion of a sustainability ambition in the College Strategic Plan (2022 – 2025).
- Climate Emergency Declaration and commitment to tackle climate change.
- Revision of the Sustainability Strategy.
- Developing of a delivery plan.

### To be completed by December 2024

- Update of the College's Sustainability Policy.

## 2. Net Zero College

### Delivered

- Leading on Colleges WM 'Towards Net Zero' workstream.
- Establishing the College's carbon footprint 2020/21.

- Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanism for carbon emissions reductions against target.

### To be completed by December 2024

- **Energy use:** Building Management System (BMS) replacement, Energy efficiency and building decarbonisation survey, LED lighting replacement, EV charging infrastructure solutions, district heat network project and end-of-life boiler replacement solutions explored.
- **Waste management:** Enhancement of the waste and recycling collection service and bin provision, development of a waste management plan (in line with the waste hierarchy) and anti-litter campaigns.
- **Green travel:** Review of the Travel Plan and collaboration with Solihull MBC and Stratford-upon-Avon DC sustainable transport ambitions and workstreams.
- **Biodiversity:** Delivery of the Stratford-upon-Avon College Green Heart project and exploring opportunities to enhance the pond at Blossomfield campus.
- **Procurement and contracts:** Development of a Sustainable Procurement Policy, implementation of sustainability criteria in tender evaluation and working with existing suppliers of goods and services to increase sustainability and calculate scope 3 emissions from the supply chain.

## 3. Green Skills and Green Jobs

### Delivered

- Complete ESF Business Elevator and Collaborate to Train projects (due to end summer 2023).

### To be completed by December 2024

- Careers days and engagement with local employers on green job opportunities.
- Review 'Fast Forward' on-line careers interactive tool to identify sustainable career paths.

- Analysis of LSIP priorities and development of an implementation plan in relation to green skills and green jobs.

#### 4. Embedding sustainability in the curriculum

##### Delivered

- Sustainability PPD delivered to all students.
- Level 2 Understanding Climate Change & Environmental Awareness promoted to staff to complete to build baseline knowledge of sustainability across the College.
- Member of Colleges WM 'Leadership, Curriculum and Professional Development' workstream.

##### To be completed by December 2024

- Commence process for embedding sustainability in the curriculum through lesson planning, innovation days and whole College development days.
- Carbon Literacy Training options established.
- Analyse the Government Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Green Jobs and Green Skills priorities and develop a plan to implement.

#### 5. Embedding sustainability in student and staff experience

##### Delivered

- Relaunch of Green Champions forum.
- Election of Student Green Officer Representative.
- Development of a sustainability events calendar.
- Whole College development day sustainability sessions.

##### To be completed by December 2024

- Engagement events during Big Green Week (June 2023).
- Sustainability Conference (planned for March 2024).



## 11. Delivery Plan

A delivery plan, which incorporates and builds on the Road Map in the previous version of this strategy, has been developed to set out how the strategy will be delivered.

## 12. Green Skills & Green Jobs

The College will adopt and apply the principles and objectives of the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan in relation to:

- Green Skills as defined by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) as “the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society.”
- Green Jobs as defined in the national Green Jobs Taskforce report in 2021 as “employment in an activity that directly contributes to - or indirectly supports – the achievement of the UK’s net zero emissions target and other environmental goals, such as nature restoration and mitigation against climate risks.”

This will be achieved by embedding sustainability in the curriculum, through engagement with businesses and other external organisations and through careers events and other opportunities and initiatives. The College will be evaluating its current curriculum offer to assess how we currently contribute to the green skills and jobs agenda and assessing which aspects of green skills provision we want to include going forward.

## 13. Communication

Progress made will be communicated internally through the staff and student hubs and Principal’s e-newsletter and external through the website and

press releases. A termly update will be circulated to staff and students and an annual progress report will be presented to Corporation. A Sustainability update has also been included as a standing item on the SLT agenda.

## 14. Collaboration

The College will continue to:

- Seek the views of existing and potential students, staff, parents and alumni, all of whom have a stake in the sustainably responsible practices of the College.
- Work with contractors to maximise opportunities for sustainable delivery of services and products provided and, through tendering and contract extension negotiations, utilise market expertise to ensure sustainability is embedded throughout our supply chain.
- Collaborate with partners and stakeholder groups locally and regionally to realise co-benefits and share knowledge, learning and best practice.

### Partners and stakeholders include:

- Colleges West Midlands.
- Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP).
- Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce (GBCC).
- Love Solihull.
- Solihull BID.
- Solihull Climate Change Commission (SCCC).
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC).
- Sustainability West Midlands.
- Warwickshire Colleges Group (WCG).
- West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).
- Other FE and HE Institutions.

## 15. Review Process

This Strategy will be reviewed annually and presented to SLT and Corporation for approval with an annual progress report.



# Solihull College & University Centre

## Climate Emergency Declaration

### Climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges facing us today.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has reported that a 1.5°C rise in global temperature by 2050 is now unavoidable and that immediate and ambitious action is required to prevent this increase being exceeded. It is therefore inevitable that the planet will experience greater risk to flooding, extreme weather conditions, water shortages, deterioration in air quality and heat exposure. It is imperative that we take action now to mitigate against and adapt to climate change.

The 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) in November 2023 builds on the outcomes of COP26 to deliver action on an array of issues critical to tackling the climate emergency, including: urgently reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building resilience and adapting to the inevitable impacts of climate change.

Faced with a growing energy crisis, record greenhouse gas concentrations and increasing extreme weather events, COP27 seeks renewed solidarity between countries, to deliver on the landmark Paris Agreement, for people and the planet.

**In support of this, Solihull College and University Centre hereby declares a Climate Emergency and a commitment to become net zero by 2030 in line with the IPCC recommendations**

Dr. Rebecca Gater, Principal of the College states:

***"All organisations have a duty to act and Colleges such as ours have an important additional role to play through our teaching, research and innovation on sustainability. We felt that it was important to declare a climate emergency backed up with meaningful targets through to 2030 and will be pushing ahead to develop a strategy and actions to achieve this target."***

***Positively, this is an opportunity to create a better and sustainable future in terms of the environment, economy and health and well-being."***


The College's commitment includes actions to reduce carbon emissions from energy and water use across the three campuses, reduce waste, maximise re-use potential, increase recycling, promote sustainable travel as well as embedded sustainability into the heart of the College's culture, curriculum and student experience.

Our College is guided by principles of social responsibility and we recognise that the **UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are at the heart of this mission.

#### **We are delivering the following actions to achieve this:**

- Adopting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Embedding sustainability into the curriculum and student life whilst empowering students to contribute and drive the climate change agenda forward
- Developing a Sustainability Strategy and delivery plan to reduce our carbon footprint, taking steps to become a Net Zero college, including: energy, water, waste, buildings, vehicles & travel, natural environment and purchasing
- Taking positive steps to mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change
- Leading by example and encouraging further action, by others, through information, education and influence
- Providing the necessary resources to deliver on our carbon reduction commitment
- Firstly, establishing our carbon footprint and secondly, monitoring and reporting on our progress in meeting reduction targets
- Positively encouraging students, staff, visitors and our suppliers / contractors to help us explore ways that can make a difference and contribute towards a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly lifestyle
- Giving our students a voice in the strategic direction that we take, including college-based projects led by the Green Champions forum and through lobbying and campaigning
- Seeking involvement from our students in global, national and local sustainability initiatives and projects
- Engaging with other educational establishments to share best practice and identify opportunities for improved sustainability
- Working in collaboration with partners, businesses and other organisations/agencies on local and regional initiatives
- Promoting progression into the expanding green skills employment sector through the curriculum, career fairs, business engagement and other opportunities

Signed:



Date: 11/11/2022



Solihull College  
& University Centre

Stratford-upon-Avon  
College



Sustainability  
at SCUC & SUAC





# Sustainability at SCUC & SUAC

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**Solihull College  
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