

**Sustainability and
Climate Change
Strategy 2024–2030
Summary**



“At the British Library, we are charged with safeguarding the national collection for generations to come. This naturally leads to long-term thinking about climate change. It is widely recognised that the scale of change ahead amounts to a planet-wide emergency, with devastating impacts. Our strategy reflects a sense of determination about our role; these are global challenges and, as one of the world’s great libraries, and proud signatories to the Green Libraries Manifesto, we are determined to play our part”

Sir Roly Keating, Chief Executive, the British Library

Reducing our carbon impact and collaborating with partners to create a more sustainable future

Sustainable places

We aim to continue decarbonising our buildings and embedding best practice in environmental performance in our new spaces.

Sustainable purposes

We aim to collaborate with people to open up the collection in new and interesting ways, to support work on solutions to the environmental challenges we face – from climate research to enabling sustainable business and enterprise, and engaging people through events, exhibitions and learning, to increasing climate literacy and visibility of climate science.

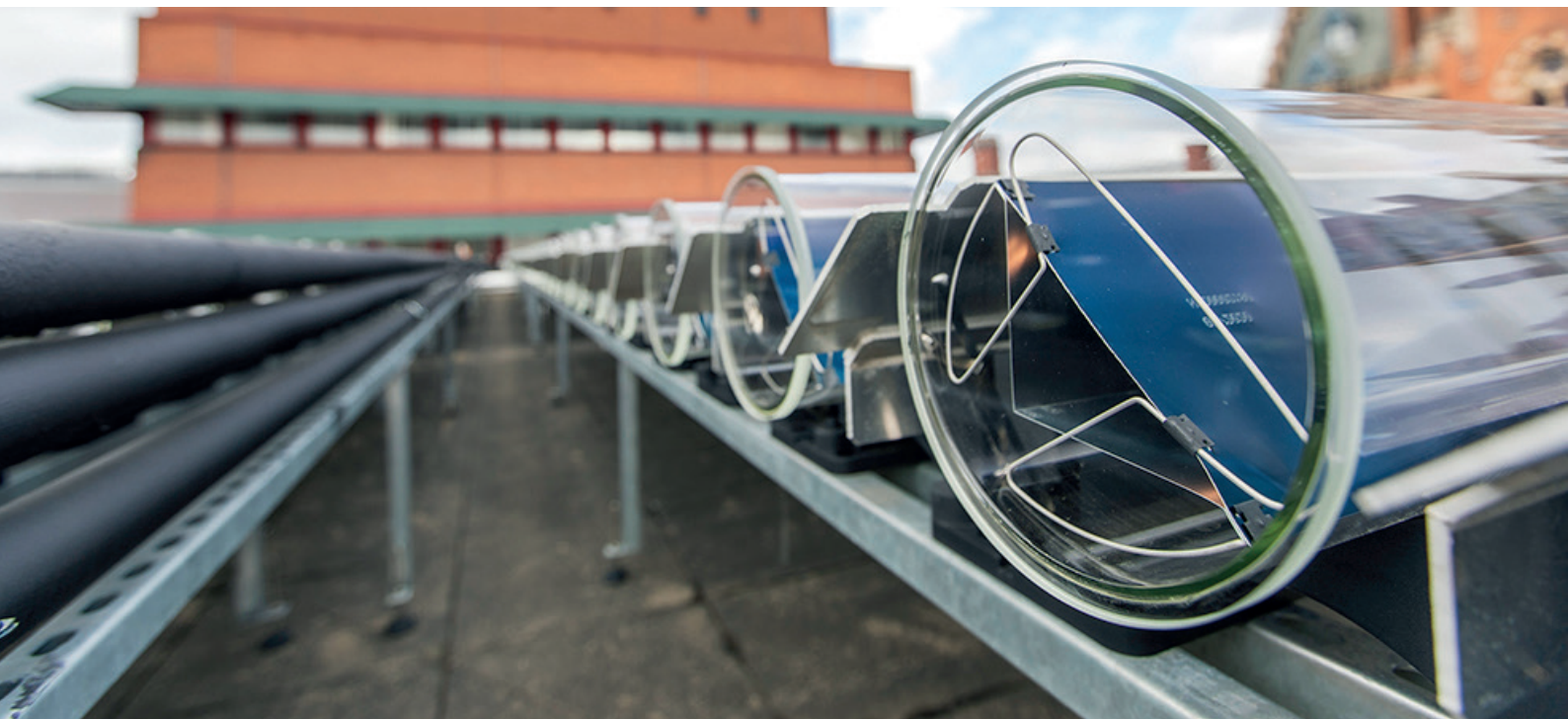
Sustainable partnerships

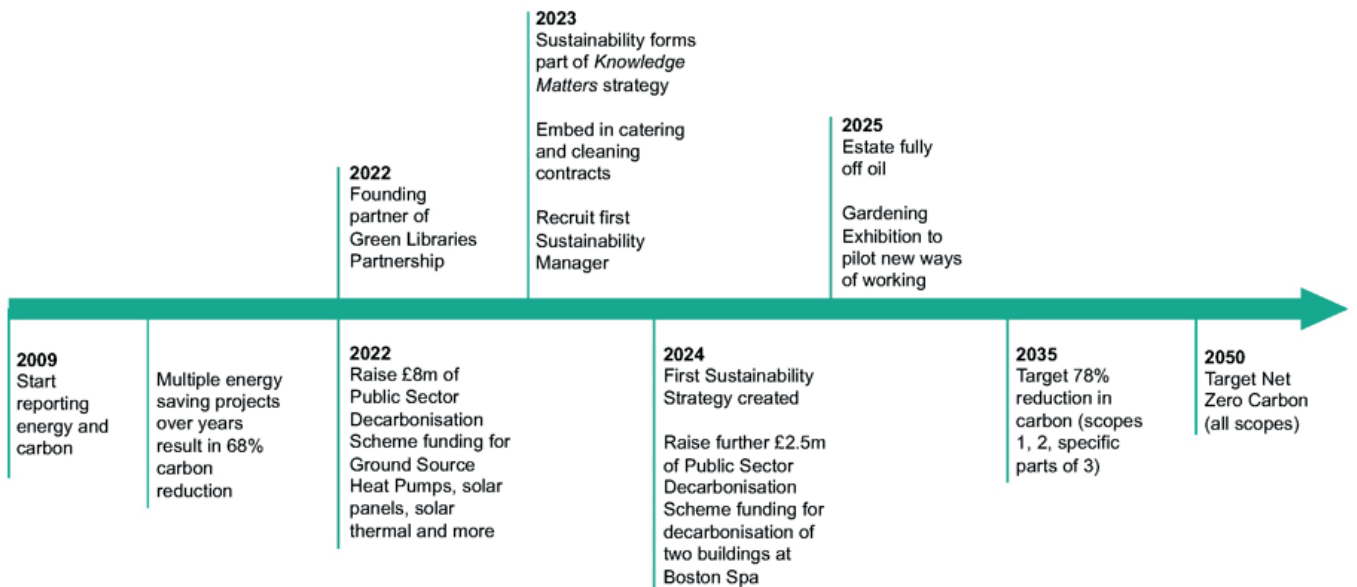
We aim to embed partnerships across the sectors we work in to support wider change, share and encourage climate action, best practice and learning.

Embedding sustainability

We aim to embed sustainability in how we work; our culture, policy, processes, governance, planning, collections and communications, ensuring it is seen not as an add-on, but as how we do everything we already do. This includes incorporating climate-related risks into our risk management, governance and conservation policies.

Solar thermal tubes on the roof at St Pancras which capture sunshine to create hot water, reducing our use of gas.





Key aims in 2024–2030 for reducing the environmental impacts of our places

Energy and carbon emissions

- **Carbon:** Meet or exceed the Greening Government Commitments and UK carbon reduction targets (a 78% reduction by 2035 against 1990 levels for our currently reported greenhouse gas emissions and net zero carbon by 2050 for all emissions, scopes 1, 2, and 3). Fully realise the benefits of the major Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme-funded projects at St Pancras and Boston Spa. Offsetting to be used for no more than 10% of the Library ultimately achieving net zero
- **Energy:** Take a more zero, less net approach, targeting an average real reduction in energy use of 4% each year, despite the annual growth in our collection, through applying the energy hierarchy and seeking opportunities for solar generation and other renewables
- **Scope 3:** Begin to measure and report the emissions generated by our wider supply chain
- **Collection management:** Continue to review environmental parameters, seeking solutions better for our collection and saving energy. Research sustainable collection management including more passive techniques, and the complex trade-offs between digital and physical.

Our new spaces

- Embed best practice in environmental performance in our three new capital projects, including reducing their whole-life carbon, being nature-positive and climate resilient.

Waste, materials and water

- Continually seek out sustainable suppliers and partners for our retail outlets and work with catering, events and retail partners to continually improve our operations
- Reduce our use of non-renewable resources, minimise waste and increase the use of re-used, recycled and environmentally responsible materials across all our operations
- Embed sustainable working in our exhibitions programme, starting with our gardening exhibition in 2025.

Risk, adaptation and resilience

- Review climate risks to operations and collections. Create a climate change adaptation plan, and review business continuity, maintenance and conservation plans.

Key aims in 2024–2030 for enabling others to act through our purposes

- Create a content development plan for climate change and sustainability and create new collection resources for our users, raising awareness of what we hold in this area
- Embed the theme of sustainability within public engagement, exhibitions, and events, including a new strand of programming on climate literacy for adults and young people
- Ensure awareness and action on sustainability is a core part of our business offering
- Continue to support and amplify the voices of international libraries and their communities already at risk of climate change.

Key aims in 2024–2030 for supporting sustainability through our partnerships

- Support the work of the Green Libraries Campaign with the aim that every library in the UK becomes a green library. As part of this, amplify and engage with Green Libraries Week
- Embed sustainability in the work of the Living Knowledge Network and contribute to local neighbourhood partnerships in Camden and the wider West Yorkshire region.

Key aims in 2024–2030 for embedding sustainability at the Library

- Bring environmental sustainability to the heart of decision-making, through embedding it in our other strategies, policies and processes, as they come up for review
- Ensure that all Directors have at least one relevant performance objective against which they report and that sustainability KPIs are strengthened
- Understand learning needs, develop and deliver customised learning, including Carbon Literacy training, and becoming a Carbon Literate organisation
- Formulate and implement an external and internal communications plan
- Ensure a sustainable recovery from the October 2023 cyber-attack, embedding sustainability into the Rebuild and Renew change programme and into our new digital strategy
- Embed sustainability in Supply Chain Management policy and guidance. This includes a minimum sustainability criterion of at least 5% for larger contracts, with these suppliers asked to commit to carbon reporting and providing a carbon reduction plan.

Reporting progress

Progress against this strategy will be tracked through the actions in the associated action plan. The Sustainability and Climate Change Steering Group will review progress every six months, with an annual report to Direction Group and Board.

The strategy itself will next be updated in 2027. We will have learned much by then, both from our successes and our failures in implementing this, our first Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

This is a summary of our full Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. Find all the detail in our full strategy here bl.uk/about-us

