



Middlesex
University
London



Sustainable Development Goals

REPORT 2023/24



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Foreword

Middlesex University is proud of our continuous commitment to environment and sustainability, which is evident in our work. This report is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and dedication of our staff, students, and partners. Together, we are shaping a sustainable, equitable future – one that we can all take pride in building.

In recent times, we have witnessed global events and emergencies of increasing magnitude and frequency, including climate disasters and public health crises, which have underlined the imperative of sustainability, both nationally and internationally.

As Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University, I am proud that throughout 2023/24 our University community has responded to these challenges with ongoing commitment to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the face of humanity's most pressing needs, including poverty, inequality and climate change, we recognise these 17 interconnected goals as a critical framework to structure our work and define how we make our contribution to tackle these challenges.

I joined Middlesex University as Vice-Chancellor in April 2024, and from the very start, I found a shared commitment to building a better and more sustainable future for all. I have seen first-hand how our students, staff, and researchers have embraced the Sustainable Development Goals, integrating them into our teaching, research, operations, and community partnerships. This commitment is articulated in our refreshed Strategy 2031 which includes sustainability as a foundation of our Middlesex approach. We are committed to serving, supporting and sustaining our local regions, in Hendon in the London Borough of Barnet and for our campuses in Dubai, Mauritius and China. As anchor institutions, we work to create a brighter and sustainable future for everyone in our communities.

At Middlesex, we prepare our students to succeed in their chosen careers, and beyond that, to shape the futures of their professions and areas of work, to make positive change for all our futures. During 2023/24, colleagues in our professional services and Faculties have ensured that the Goals are embedded in our students' core learning experience. Through SDG-focused curriculum integration, student-led projects, and initiatives like our SDG webinars, we provide students with the tools and knowledge to make informed decisions that positively impact the planet. These efforts are essential in preparing our graduates to become leaders in sustainability and advocates for change. At the same time, we are mindful of the challenges we face, from the evolving nature of global crises to the logistical complexities of embedding sustainability across all aspects of university life.

Our research, and knowledge exchange contribute to resolving problems in the world around us, based on the framework of the SDGs. A total of 753 research outputs across our Faculties were relevant to one or more SDGs this year, up from 231 in 2022/23. Our Centres and Research Clusters have been instrumental in advancing the SDGs, producing innovative and impactful work that spans diverse disciplines, from human rights to environmental health. Collaboration remains at the heart of our SDG efforts and enables us to maximise our impact and foster the exchange of ideas and resources. By strengthening our relationships with businesses, professions and charities, with local and national government, and with our neighbouring education providers we bridge theory and practice, driving change through research, advocacy, and collaboration. These partnerships enable us to address pressing issues more effectively and extend the reach of our work beyond our immediate community. Our aspirations include further enhancing our Research Repository to capture a broader range of outputs, strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration, and advancing our carbon reduction strategy.

Together with my colleagues, I believe education is the essential cornerstone for a fairer, more sustainable, more productive and prosperous society. Middlesex brings together people from across the world, doing our part to address global challenges including poverty and inequality, climate change and environmental degradation, and supporting peace and justice. This report is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and dedication of our staff, students, and partners. I am proud of our progress in all our communities and locations, and am excited by the opportunities to increase our contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals over the coming years.

Professor Shân Wareing
Vice-Chancellor



Sustainable Development Goals

KEY



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Our SDGs Research

IN NUMBERS

OVERVIEW

Over the 2023/24 period, our SDGs research and wider work have continued to evolve, grow and progress, both quantitatively and qualitatively, towards achieving even more meaningful impact across the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We have worked collaboratively with both our Academic as well as Professional Services staff to improve the way we obtain information as well as establish an authentic representation of the work we highlight.

Through collaborative work, data analysis, case studies, outreach opportunities and policy assessments, our SDG work provides critical insights into the different Goals, while also aiming to enhance and further evolve our approaches towards gathering and analysing data, as well as improve the implementation of the UN SDGs.

METHODOLOGY

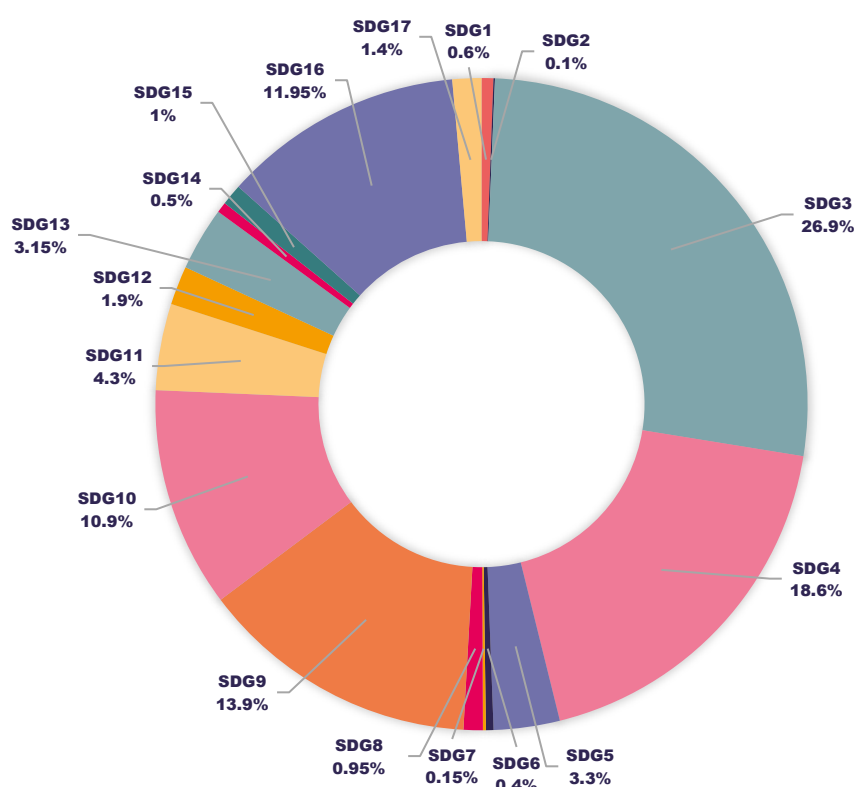
The research data presented in the report was collected through researching and analysing papers, articles, chapters and other items submitted to the University Research Repository system, as well as through various events and outreach opportunities organised by our staff within 2023/2024 period. In collaboration with our four Faculties, the Sustainability Team ensured that the information remained true to both the research and the researchers. While we acknowledge the possibility of missing some relevant papers due to human error, we continue to work with staff, students, and partners to minimize omissions.

This work has clear ties to the UN SDGs and aligns with Middlesex University's strategy to highlight and advance these global objectives. The SDG tagging mechanism was first introduced in our previous research repository EPrints Repository, in May 2022 as a mandatory field, ensuring that every deposited record had at least one SDG tag. In July 2023, we launched the new Research Repository with a similar tagging system, again requiring each deposit to include at least one SDG tag. Alongside this launch, additional automated harvesters (Web of Science, ORCiD, Publications Router) were implemented to identify outputs not previously deposited and to suggest them for inclusion. This contributed to an overall increase in deposits compared to previous years, though not all were recent outputs. Prior to migrating from the old Repository to the new system, deposit numbers also saw an increase, likely influenced by staff reminders to update their records encouraged by our Library's dedicated Research Support Team.

The introduction of the new Repository has further enhanced academic engagement with SDGs, making research outputs easier to navigate by Faculty and SDG, providing deeper insights into Faculty activity in relation to each Goal, and tracking

progress over time. However, the Research Repository is a living organism—growing and evolving alongside the research conducted, and its accuracy depends on the data provided, so we aim to further increase staff engagement with the system as our work progresses. Additionally, we strive to expand the Repository beyond research outputs to create a more comprehensive reflection of the valuable work undertaken by our staff.

ALL RESEARCH OUTPUTS BY SDG



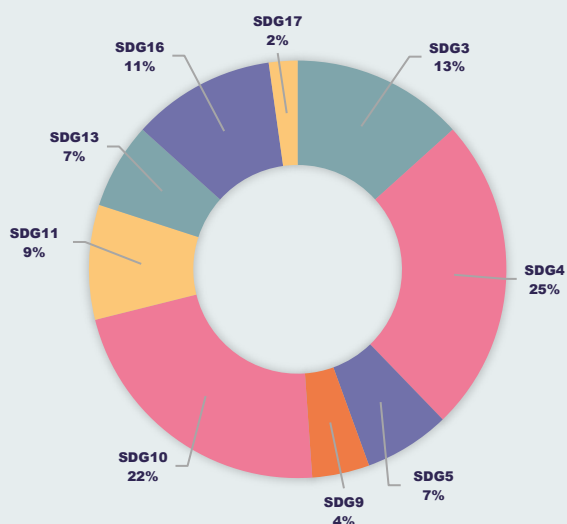
A total of 753 research outputs were recorded in our Research Repository in 2023/24, with 836 associated SDGs. This represents a substantial increase from 2022/23, when only 231 research outputs were registered. This growth can be widely attributed to the implementation of the new Research Repository system which has been in operation since July 2023 and with which academics are now more familiar. The contributions of the Library's Research Support Team to maintain the Repository and the Environment Team's efforts in promoting the SDGs have also played an important role in this significant improvement.

We remain committed to further enhancing engagement with the SDGs and maintaining the recording of research outputs in the years ahead.

RESEARCH OUTPUTS BY FACULTY

ARTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

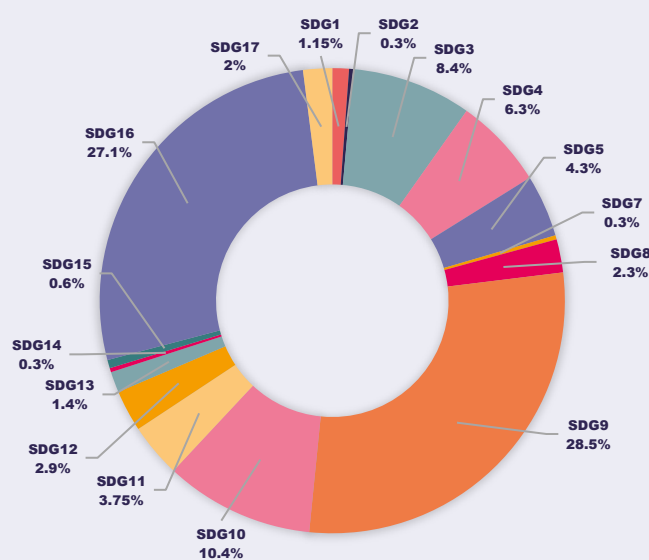
44 research outputs with 45 recorded SDGs



The Faculty's work and impact is reflected across nine SDGs, with a strong emphasis on SDG 4, SDG 10 and SDG 3. The Knowledge Exchange initiatives reinforce the University position as an anchor institution, deepening relationships with local government, communities, as well as industry and non-governmental partners. This commitment is particularly evident in the work supporting SDG 16. Key projects include the NetZero initiative with Barnet Council, the MiniBeasts project with local primary schools exploring the connections between nature and early-years pedagogy, and Creating a Sense of Place in partnership with the pop-up Kilburn Museum. The Faculty has also contributed to SDG 13, through civic engagement initiatives such as citizens' assemblies on the climate emergency, and to SDG 11 by promoting responsible architecture and encouraging public participation in shaping the built environment. Fine art projects and exhibitions have addressed SDG 5 and fostered inclusive student communities, receiving national recognition for interfaith work and efforts to combat misogyny on campus. Additionally, the work has led to the development of multimedia learning resources for secondary schools on race equity. By examining the role of the arts and creative industries in fostering resilience, facilitating dialogue, and advancing social justice, the Research and Knowledge Exchange activities in ACI continue to drive meaningful contributions across a large spectrum of the UN's SDGs.

BUSINESS AND LAW

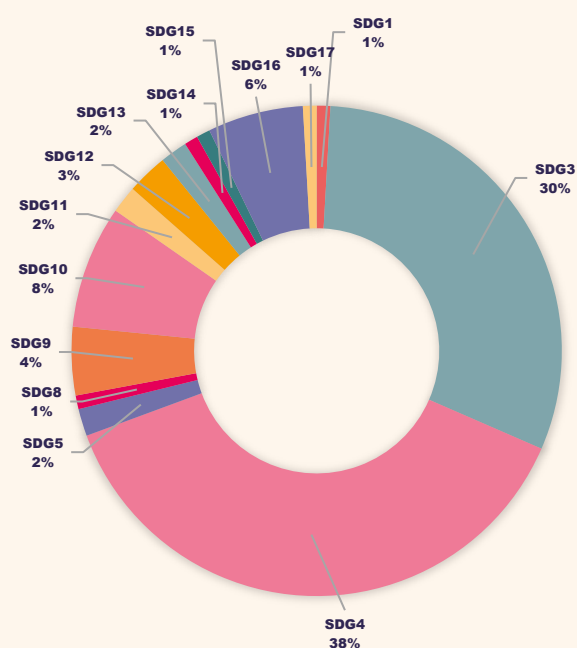
The Faculty's work across multiple SDGs demonstrates a holistic and impactful approach to sustainable development. By prioritising key areas such as governance, innovation, social equality, health, education, sustainability, and global partnerships, the Faculty is nurturing the groundwork for a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable future. The focus on these SDGs reflects a careful balance between foundational institutional reforms and actionable steps towards broader societal change. The SDGs are listed in order of the total output produced by the Faculty, starting with SDG 16, SDG 9 and SDG 10. A majority of the output from the Faculty focus on strengthening institutional frameworks, driving industrial innovation, and addressing inequalities-critical pillars for ensuring stability and long-term development. The work on SDG 3, SDG 4 and SDG 5 shows novel frameworks and policy recommendations that include initiatives improving health systems, promoting inclusive education, and empowering marginalised groups. The Faculty's contributions and impact made in the areas of SDG 11, SDG 12 and SDG 17 evidence our commitment to environmental sustainability and global cooperation that highlights our identity as an engaged and contributing Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) member. Our research impact embeds sustainable practices in global solutions by helping to create and shape resilient urban spaces, promote sustainable production, and strengthen collaborative partnerships.



288 research outputs with 347 recorded SDGs

HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION

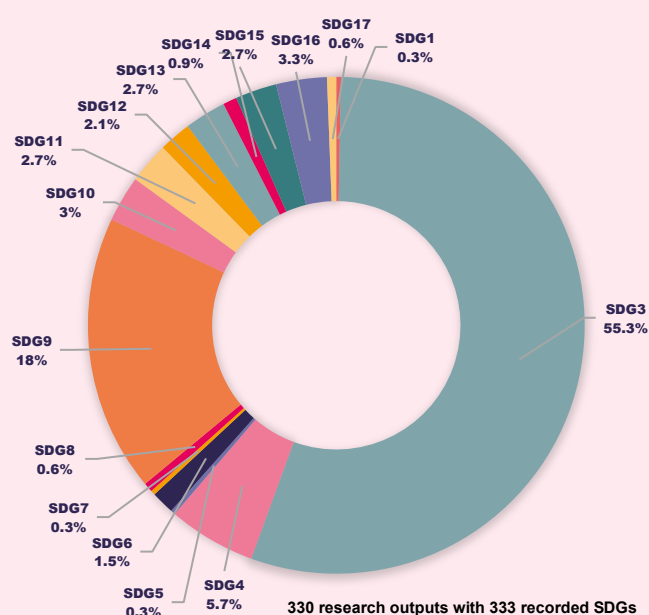
91 research outputs with 111 recorded SDGs



The Faculty's main research is focused on SDGs 3 and 4, with SDGs 9, 10 and 16 also playing a big role. Key projects in Health include reducing risks of substance use among young people, wound healing and mental wellbeing, with some work funded by the British Skin Foundation. Key work in Education includes the MiniBeasts project with local primary schools and in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries, exploring the connections between nature and early-years pedagogy. Further work includes the quality in the baby room of nurseries as well as the development of citizenship education policy which has led to change in the English curriculum. Key work in Social Care looks into the attitudes of social care staff regarding the use of SMART technology, the relationship between young offenders and their parents as well as the development of a culturally competent LGBTQ+ social care educational curriculum across Europe. Some of these projects have been funded by the Youth Endowment Foundation as well as the North Central London Integrated Care Board.

In the reporting period the Faculty of Science and Technology had over 330 outputs added to the research repository which aligned to one or more of the SDGs. Some of the Faculty research focus is linked directly to the advancement of the Goals, such as work undertaken on managing flood risk and ensuring sustainable cities, reducing the inequalities of healthcare, and the sustainable use of buildings. However, another key focus is the use of technology for decision-making on, as well as to enable, more sustainable futures and the delivery of the Goals, such as the London Digital Twin Research Centre's work to analyse and enhance growing healthcare practices. The Faculty research outputs align to all but one of the SDGs, highlighting the variety of areas where our research can make an impact, with two SDGs being more prominent. SDG 3 concerns good health and wellbeing and captures research in the areas of natural sciences (e.g. biomedical, cancer, public health), sports exercise sciences (e.g. physiology, overall population health and wellbeing) and in psychology (e.g. cognitive neuroscience, health psychology). The SDG 9 research, which relates to industry, innovation and infrastructure, represents the engineering and technology being undertaken within our engineering department (e.g. digital twins, AI and Machine Learning). Other outputs are relatively evenly spread among another seven SDGs including 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



SDG KEY:

SDG 1	No Poverty	SDG 10	Reduced Inequalities
SDG 2	Zero Hunger	SDG 11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG 3	Good Health and Well-being	SDG 12	Responsible Consumption and Production
SDG 4	Quality Education	SDG 13	Climate Action
SDG 5	Gender Equality	SDG 14	Life Below Water
SDG 6	Clean Water and Sanitation	SDG 15	Life on Land
SDG 7	Affordable and Clean Energy	SDG 16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
SDG 8	Decent Work and Economic Growth	SDG 17	Partnerships for the Goals
SDG 9	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure		

FUNDED PROJECTS



In the period between July 2023 and August 2024, a total of 87 funded projects started and 116 concluded. The project types were varied, ranging from business centric to mobility and others, with multiple departments receiving funding. Middlesex University staff from our centres such as Centre for Enterprise, Environment and Development Research (CEEDR), Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC) and the Centre for Academic Partnerships (CAP) were allocated funds through numerous institutions, while colleagues within our Faculties were also granted funding to research important topics within the areas of pedagogy, mental health, equity investment, music and agriculture, among others.

The UN SDGs are deeply embedded across the University's work including in these funded projects, with all SDGs being represented. Major emphasis within the funded projects in the 2023/24 reporting period was placed on SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. A number of dedicated Middlesex University staff are currently working on further expanding the existing system of gathering information on the funded projects to better understand their impact and connection to the UN SDGs.

Multifaceted Research

THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGE



Dr Meri Juntti, Associate Professor of Environmental Governance at Middlesex University with Professor Joshua Castellino and Oscar Forero, published an article in the *Planning Theory & Practice* journal which focuses on the potential threat posed to indigenous peoples' rights and access to land by the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which aims to protect 30% of Earth's lands and waters by 2030. The piece emphasises the need for participatory decision-making and recognition of indigenous rights and knowledge. Protecting 30% of the globe's land area by 2030 requires broader systemic changes, including restoration and curbing land-use change elsewhere, beyond areas designated as priority for biodiversity protection. Financing from those who have benefitted from biodiversity loss is essential for effective conservation efforts. The article directly addresses SDG 15 through emphasising the need to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, to manage forests sustainably, combat desertification, and halt biodiversity loss. The paper aligns with efforts to combat climate change and its impacts, and advances SDG 13, by highlighting the role of biodiversity in climate regulation and the importance of protecting natural carbon sinks. By promoting social equity through highlighting the importance of participatory decision-making and the inclusion of vulnerable groups, particularly indigenous peoples, in biodiversity conservation efforts, the article directly supports SDG 10. Crucially, it exemplifies SDG 17 by placing emphasis on the importance of a truly inclusive and collaborative approach where governments involve indigenous peoples, other stakeholders and society in general in their efforts to achieve their aims.

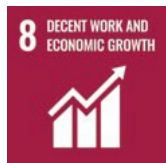


PAVING THE PATH

Authored by Dr Homeira Shayesteh, Dr Ramona Trestian, Dr Can Başkent, Dr Alison Megeney and Syderita Vaka, the paper 'Paving the Path: Empowering Women in STEM From University to Industry', addresses the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields, drawing on survey data from female students at the University. It examines key factors influencing women's decisions to pursue STEM degrees, the challenges they face during their education, and strategies to support their progression into professional careers. Family support, a passion for STEM, and early exposure through initiatives like career fairs and mentorship programmes motivate women to enter STEM. However, they often face self-doubt, academic pressure, societal stereotypes, limited mentorship opportunities, and instances of sexism in academic and professional environments, for which the paper highlights the need for systemic reforms. The paper proposes a three-stage framework: outreach campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote early STEM engagement; university-level mentorship and skill-development initiatives to foster inclusivity; and professional partnerships with industries to ensure a seamless transition into the workforce. Aligned with SDG 4, SDG 5, and SDG 8, the study advocates for structural changes to address barriers and promote equity. It emphasises creating an inclusive environment that empowers women to thrive in STEM careers, fostering long-term success and sustainability.



TEXTILES – PROTEST, RESILIENCE AND INNOVATIVE DESIGN



Luke Anthony Rooney, a multidisciplinary artist, designer, educator and researcher teaching BA Fashion at Middlesex produced a research project called ‘How can textiles create protest, embody resilience and innovative design?’. The work prioritises sustainability by sourcing materials through upcycling rather than relying on new fabrics. Garments and textiles including shirts, dresses, napkins, handkerchiefs and doilies were acquired from the Bayard Rustin Community Center in Montgomery, Alabama, and were then transformed into original artworks exhibited in London. The project examines the role of textiles in fostering discourse, particularly within marginalised communities. During a stay in Gee’s Bend, Luke engaged with local quilt makers who collaborate with organisations and fashion brands and were preparing for the ‘Airing of the Quilts,’ an event supporting economic empowerment. Additionally, Luke met with Gee’s Bend artisans, including Mary Lee Bendolph, whose quilting and activism have contributed to civil rights discourse. Ms Bendolph showed Luke her inclusion in the book *Consequences: The Clapback to Opponents of Critical Race Theory*. Gee’s Bend practices serve as both a cultural expression and historical documentation, reinforcing the project’s alignment with sustainability and social justice. The work embeds multiple SDGs, demonstrating just how versatile and multifaceted it is.



Photo credit: Luke Rooney



Photo credit: Luke Rooney



LAND USE CHANGE AND CARBON DYNAMICS

China's landscapes are rapidly changing due to urbanisation, agricultural shifts, and ecological restoration, significantly affecting carbon dynamics. Dr Helen Cai co-authored 'Land Use Change on Surface Area and Its Influence on Carbon', a study which introduces an advanced method to assess land surface area and its role in carbon storage. This research provides insights into sustainable urban development, responsible land use, and ecosystem protection, supporting carbon neutrality and environmental resilience. By integrating high-resolution geospatial data, the research improves carbon accounting accuracy, particularly in China's mountainous and hilly regions. The study finds that urban expansion and land conversion have resulted in a net carbon loss of $-5,907.44 \times 10^4$ tons, primarily due to vegetation and soil depletion. However, conservation efforts, especially in woodlands, have contributed to localised carbon gains. These findings highlight the need for refined land management to mitigate carbon losses, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas. The study aligns with SDG 9 by leveraging advanced geospatial modelling techniques for the enhancing of land use monitoring and carbon accounting methodologies, contributing to more sustainable infrastructure planning. SDG 11 is connected to the study through the highlighting of the carbon costs of urban expansion and promoting evidence-based land use policies to mitigate environmental degradation in rapidly developing regions. Findings emphasise the need for responsible land use management to maintain ecological balance and minimise carbon emissions linked to land conversion, which advances SDG 12. By assessing the impact of land use changes on carbon sequestration, the study underscores the importance of conserving forests and ecologically significant areas to sustain biodiversity and long-term carbon storage which is crucial for SDG 15.

BRIDGING NEUROSCIENCE AND ROBOTICS

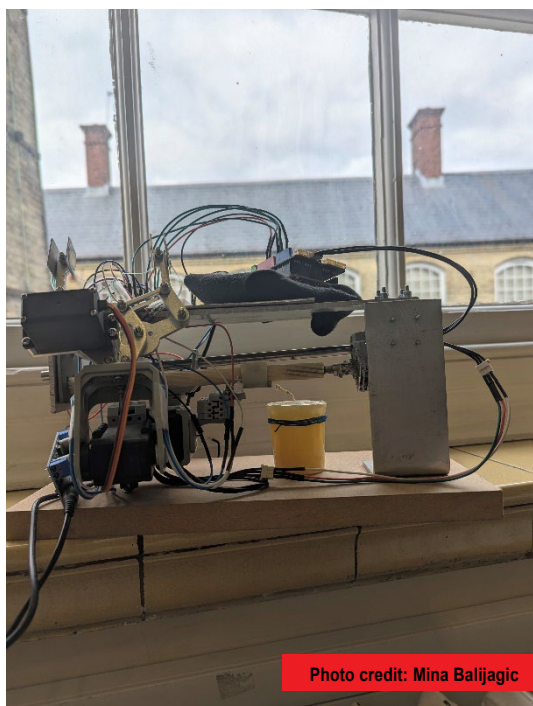


Photo credit: Mina Balijagic

Written by Professor Chris Huyck, Dr Vaibhav Gandhi and Dr Alexander Jones from our Faculty of Science and Technology, and Adam Y. Mahiddine, the paper 'Bridging Neuroscience and Robotics: Spiking Neural Networks in Action' helps the integration of SDG 9 by building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation. It uses spiking neurons, a reasonable model of neurons in the human brain, to derive the decision to stop or go on a particular robot action. This decision is made in a way that models how humans make the same decision and how those can rapidly change in response to the environment. The paper supports SDG 9 because the spiking net architecture can be very inexpensive, particularly when it is implemented in neuromorphic hardware, making robotics more readily available for sustainable industrialisation. Modelling the brain and how humans make decisions provides systems that are more adaptive. The paper shows the benefit of cross discipline collaboration, bringing together expertise from AI, robotics and psychology. This innovative approach also enables development with simple computing infrastructure including mobile phones.

BLUE CARBON



The chapter 'Blue Carbon: Challenges for Definition, Valuation and Governance' authored by Dr Meri Juntti, an Associate Professor of Environmental Governance at Middlesex University, and her peers Dr Glen Smith, Dr Tiziana Luisetti, Dr Ellen McHarg, Dr Ruth Parker, Dr Christa Brunnschweiler and Dr Lisa Benson, argues that Blue Carbon ecosystems (such as mangroves, saltmarshes, and seagrasses) play a crucial role in climate mitigation and adaptation, but their effective management and valuation face significant challenges. The chapter emphasises the role of Blue Carbon ecosystems in climate mitigation and adaptation, highlighting their importance in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing carbon sequestration, which is closely connected to SDG 13. Furthermore, by focusing on the conservation and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems the chapter supports SDG 14 and its core principle of sustainably managing and protecting these ecosystems. SDG 15 is explored through the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, particularly in the context of carbon fluxes and storage, which contributes to the broader goal of protecting, restoring, and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. It also underscores the need for collaborative governance frameworks and the involvement of local communities, NGOs, and international organisations in the management and conservation of Blue Carbon ecosystems, showing how it implements SDG 17 for fostering partnerships to achieve the SDGs.



BREAKING THE CHAINS



In many Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries (LMICs), people with mental illness face serious human rights violations, including chaining, beating, and confinement. These harmful practices worsen mental and physical health, increase stigma, and hinder recovery, as highlighted in Professor Erminia Colucci's ethnographic documentary 'Breaking the Chains'. To address this, it has been proposed that partnerships between traditional and faith healers and health workers could improve care and reduce abuses. However, such collaborations are complex to establish. The Together for Mental Health project, funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund, explored the experiences of people with mental illness and their families in Indonesia and Ghana. It examined why restraints are used and how health workers attempt to build partnerships with healers. The project's award-winning visual outputs are now used in training mental health professionals and have supported WHO Quality Rights training in Ghana. In Ghana, the project has helped shape policy and legislation with the Mental Health Authority. In Indonesia, it influenced the Ministry of Health to integrate spiritual healers into the mental health system, recognising their role in addressing care gaps within the 2024-2029 National Mental Health Plan. These activities contributed to several SDGs such as SDG 1 by tackling mental health-related poverty and economic exclusion; SDG 3 by informing policy through healer-health worker collaboration and addressing human rights abuses and SDG 5 through a largely female research team promoting gender equality. They also advanced SDG 9 by building local capacity and training researchers and filmmakers; SDG 10 by addressing stigma, discrimination, and access to care for marginalized individuals with mental illness and SDG 17 through international partnerships and knowledge exchange.

Learning, Education and Teaching

OUTSTANDING AWARD BY OFSTED



This is a programme where course leaders have made sure that the ITE curriculum is ambitious in scope and content on all routes offered.

- 2024 Ofsted report

Middlesex University's Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme was recently awarded 'Outstanding' for its secondary provision in its most recent Ofsted inspection. The programme emphasises SDG 4 by ensuring trainees develop a deep understanding of their core subjects and effective teaching methods. It promotes inclusive education by focusing on adapting teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and English as an additional language (EAL). The Ofsted report highlighted that "the ITE curriculum is ambitious in scope and content on all routes offered." Additionally, the programme supports SDG 5 and SDG 10 by fostering an inclusive environment and providing equal opportunities for all trainees. The report also identified that strong partnerships with schools and comprehensive mentoring further enhanced the trainees' learning experience, preparing them to contribute positively to the education sector and broader society.



SILVER IN TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

Middlesex University was rated 'Silver' in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), a national scheme run by the Office for Students that rates what students care about most: teaching, learning and achieving positive outcomes from their studies. In a breakdown of the overall Silver rating, the TEF report gave us a Silver rating for student outcomes, which means student outcomes are typically very high-quality. This reflects our students' success during and after their studies and the improvements they make in knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development as a result of studying at Middlesex, highlighting our dedication to SDG 4. The ratings were achieved in 2023 and are in place for four years.

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY FOR T-LEVEL STUDENTS



Through expert sessions led by nursing and midwifery academics from Middlesex University, T-Level students gained insight into CPR, birthing process and hygiene. Year 12 pupils from Saracens High School in Edgware, North London, were invited to participate in a four-day training experience with custom tailored curriculum in our modern facilities at West Stand in StoneX Stadium. The students are working towards achieving a certification which will provide them with the start they need towards a career in the NHS and health. This highlights our dedication to SDG 4 as well as our role as an anchor institution that focuses on giving back and investing into our community while widening access and participation for the younger generation.

CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN MAURITIUS



During this academic year, students from our BSc Biological Sciences course in London learned and engaged with conservation efforts in Mauritius. This is an annual opportunity for students led by Dr Christophe Viavattene. For two weeks the students gained knowledge and skills under the supervision of the Ebony Forest team. The program featured both lectures and hands-on activities focused on ecological surveys, predator control, ecotourism, and forest restoration. For the forest restoration component, students actively participated in various tasks such as managing invasive species, working in the plant nursery, and planting native trees at the site. This year, their efforts supported the development and restoration of indigenous forests in a new area located in the Pamplemousses district, in northern Mauritius, collaborating closely with the local team. These conservation initiatives aligned with SDGs 13 and 15.



LAW TRIP TO STRASBOURG

The Council of Europe, with the European Court of Human Rights at its heart, promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law, aligning closely with SDG16. It is a vital forum to achieve accountability for states, as well as justice for numerous victims of human rights violations across the continent, relating to SDG 10. Since 2016, Middlesex University has organised a study trip to Strasbourg to meet Judges of the Court, attend hearings and discuss contemporary issues with representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the UK diplomatic representation at the Council of Europe. The trip has provided an immersive learning experience for more than 150 students from our London and Dubai campuses, from undergraduate to PhD level while also providing a platform for over 200 students to attend virtual meetings with Judges during the pandemic. The trip is an important part of the education experience of our students, further illustrating our dedication to SDG 4. Participants in the trip have gained real life understanding of the day-to-day work of the world's foremost human rights court, equipping them to become champions for peace, justice and

strong institutions in Europe and beyond. In 2024, Professor Alice Donald accompanied students on the trip along with Dr Alessandra De Tommaso and Los Watkins from our Hendon campus and Dr Daphne Demetriou and Samantha Roberts from Middlesex University Dubai.



Photo credit: Alice Donald



A life changing experience.

- an Emirati PhD student, based in Hendon

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS



Photo credit: Tremaine Baker

In 2024, Middlesex University held a free conference for teachers and educational leaders promoting sustainability and environmental education in schools. Academics and experts participated in discussions and individual workshops at our Hendon campus, highlighting the importance of environmental education. The themes included the creation of a 'whole-school approach' to promoting sustainability, finding ways to encourage student involvement in projects, building partnerships and resources to support schools, as well as exploring way of integrating climate action into the curriculum through various subjects. Some key partners were Climate Adapted Pathways for Education; SUEZ Recycling & Recovery UK; Students Organising for Sustainability; Natural History Museum; Common Seas Education;

UCL Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability Education; Association for Citizenship Teaching; Barnet Council; Climate Ambassador scheme, and many others. The conference sparked opportunities to work with Barnet Council to support their development of a School Sustainability Strategy, with the possibility of establishing a potential network of school climate leaders to maintain momentum, share resources, and continue discussions which will support embedding sustainability education in a range of local education settings. SDGs 4, 5, 11, 13 and 17 were at the centre of the conference with emphasis placed on the symbiosis amongst the goals and the work needed for success.



SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT

Dr Homeira Shayesteh, Senior Lecturer in Construction, Architecture and BIM at Middlesex, has pioneered integration of the SDGs in curricula on programme level at the University. She has developed a competency matrix, workflow and framework for education of SDGs which is part of the Sustainability Toolkit for Engineering Professors Council in collaboration with The Royal Academy of Engineering. The toolkit is an open-access resource to embed sustainability into education, it is relevant and applicable to all courses and students, and has a national and international impact. The toolkit has had nearly 10,000 views to date and has been featured in the European Society for Engineering Education annual conference in Switzerland, and an International Society for Engineering Pedagogy (IGIP) conference in Estonia. Additionally, Dr Shayesteh has established the Teaching UNSDGs Special Interest Group (SIG), a Community of Practice that facilitates networking and the dissemination of good practice around education of sustainability and SDGs across all disciplines. This is the outcome of a research project on curriculum co-creation for embedding SDGs which is led by Dr Shayesteh and won an Enhancing Education Award in 2022. This SIG meets three to four times a year with participants across our Dubai, London and Mauritius campuses. Disciplines such as Early Childhood Years, Business, Sustainable Governance and Construction have shared their practice so far. All SDGs are incorporated in the work, with a special emphasis placed on SDGs 4 and 13.

Student Work

Middlesex University prides itself on our ability to foster an academic environment which prepares our students to thrive, to succeed in their chosen careers and to shape the futures of their professions. We are proud of the work they produce, creating solutions to tackle complex problems, the accolades they receive and the heights they reach. From winning prestigious awards such as Best Character Design and Best Sound in the Secret Story Draw Awards competition to fighting for asylum seeker rights, our students and alumni proudly continue our institutional legacy of equity in health and wellbeing, inclusive enterprise and creativity, and sustainable development through knowledge into action. We are delighted to showcase some of their work here.

MORE THAN ENOUGH!



This project by Christian D. Vattathara from the Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries aims to inspire a sense of grounded hope regarding the fight for climate change and the end of fossil fuels among a range of audiences. Research shows that the average person does not want information to be sugar-coated but also feels uncomfortable with bleak perspectives often delivered by alternative media.



Photo credit: Christian D. Vattathara

This project walks this fine line by using a semantic and visual dichotomy that acknowledges the negative state of fossil fuels while emphasising the real possibility of a positive outcome provided that we all come together for the cause. The environmentally conscious nature of the project directly relates to two of the UN SDGs. While SDG 13 corresponds to the project's overarching goal of engaging audiences towards taking relevant action, SDG 7 is the basis of the project's commissioner goal, the fair and fast implementation of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, and therefore the key question addressed by 'More than enough!'.



CENTRING ADIVASI WOMEN'S VOICES

Manasa Saravanan, a PhD Sociology student from the Faculty of Business and Law, authored a PhD paper called 'Centring Adivasi women's voices: A study of Irular women's traditional environment-based livelihoods informed by their indigenous knowledges'. Her research focuses on the Irular women, an adivasi (indigenous) community in Tamil Nadu, India, aiming to protect their indigenous knowledge and sustain their traditional ways of living. Indigenous peoples' cultures are eroding due to various factors including land eviction, the harvesting of traditional knowledge for commercial purposes, the stigmatisation of their cultural practices that are rooted in colonial legacies and caste hierarchies, denied access to their traditional livelihoods, and growing impacts of climate change.

Her study highlights the need to preserve adivasi women's indigenous knowledge, which is intricately tied to their identity, livelihoods, and environmental stewardship, while also linked to SDG 5. By employing decolonial, indigenous and feminist methodologies, Manasa's research captures the essence of SDG 10 as well as the lived experiences of Irular women and their evolving relationship with the natural environment. Furthermore, the project advances SDG 13 by promoting sustainable indigenous practices as response to environmental challenges, while also supporting SDG 15 by advocating for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of ecosystems through indigenous knowledge systems. Through its findings, the study provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders to integrate indigenous women's voices into governance frameworks, support Irular women's environmental stewardship, and ultimately protect their cultural heritage.



Photo credit: MDX News

BA Product Design graduate Harry Miller-Adams created an instant hot water appliance – Kettle., which won him the Institution of Engineering Designers Annual Prize Award for Best Final Year Project as well as the Product Design award for the Arts Thread Global Design Graduate Show 2023 in collaboration with Gucci. The product is highly efficient and user-friendly, featuring a pour-to-boil function which helps reduce energy, water and time wastage. As Kettle. is modular, it is easy to clean and

repairable, which guarantees a longer lifespan and reduces material waste and landfill usage in pace with SDG 12. Kettle. also supports SDGs 9 and 13 through its innovative design and sustainable benefits.

FOLDED FINS



BA Graphic Design student Raiyaan Omar created a social conscience project that raises awareness of the environmental impact of commercial whaling in Japan through creative activism. Aligning with UN SDGs 13 and 14, this initiative underlines the crucial role whales play in marine ecosystems and the urgent need for conservation.

While Japan contends that whaling is part of its

cultural heritage, especially in certain coastal communities, domestic demand for whale meat has declined, and whaling operations require government support. 'Folded Fins' challenges this practice through nonviolent protest and artistic expression. Whales are important to ocean health, contributing to SDG 14 by maintaining marine biodiversity and balancing ecosystems. They also support SDG 13 by aiding carbon sequestration as whales absorb carbon throughout their lives, and their nutrient cycles enhance phytoplankton growth, which captures CO₂ from the atmosphere. At the heart of the project is an origami kit designed to engage individuals in a hands-on, reflective experience. Featuring traditional Japanese patterns and educational insights, the kit encourages participants to fold, create, and explore while deepening their understanding of marine conservation.



AMBIENT AIR QUALITY IN SCHOOLS

A MSc Sustainability and Environmental Management student produced a dissertation titled 'Understanding the Characteristics of Ambient Air Quality in Schools: An Assessment of Outdoor Air Pollution Using the Breath London Network Sensors of Two Primary School Locations in Barnet', focusing on SDGs 3, 11 and 13. Air pollution around urban schools poses significant health risks, especially to children. The study analysed air pollution at two primary schools in Barnet, London, focusing on particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels in 2022. The World Health Organization's air quality thresholds were exceeded at both schools. Orion Primary had consistently high PM_{2.5} levels, while Martin Primary had elevated NO₂ levels. Both schools showed seasonal pollution fluctuations, with PM_{2.5} peaking in March and NO₂ in January, and lower levels in summer. Higher temperatures correlated with lower pollution levels. The study highlights the need for ongoing air quality monitoring and mitigation measures to protect children's health. However, it acknowledges its limitations, including its focus on a single year and two locations, and calls for more extensive research considering various factors affecting air quality.



MOLDING THE FUTURE

Dr Alejandra Gonzalez Baez authored the PhD 'Molding the Future: Sustainable recovery of metals from e-waste using fungi'. Dr Gonzalez Baez completed her PhD research in Environmental Science as part of the Biodiversity, Environment, Conservation, and Sustainability (BECoS) Research Group. Her work focused on developing a biotechnological approach to recover metals from e-waste, supported by her supervisory team, Professor Diane Purchase, Dr Leonardo Pantoja, and Professor Hemda Garelick.

The research explored bioleaching, an eco-friendly method using microorganisms to extract metals. An isolated strain of *Penicillium* fungi successfully solubilised valuable metals from the complex waste, achieving up to 70% recovery of Rare Earth Elements (REEs). REEs are critical for renewable energy technologies, but their extraction from natural resources is environmentally damaging. This research supports circular economy strategies that extend to the reclamation of critical materials from waste streams, aligning to SDG 12. Additionally, the study contributes to SDG 13 by demonstrating the efficiency of bioleaching, a lower-carbon alternative to conventional metal recovery processes. Transforming e-waste into a valuable resource presents a more sustainable solution, reducing reliance on primary mining while securing critical materials for a greener future.

HIGHLY PROTECTED MARINE AREAS



A dissertation by a MSc Sustainability and Environmental Management student titled 'Highly Protected Marine Areas: will they be an effective tool for ecological recovery?' showed that Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) were designated in June 2023 to address the failure of English Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to achieve Good Environmental Status due to human pressures like fishing. The study assessed the effectiveness of three pilot HPMAs for ecological recovery by examining fishing effort post-designation. Over 150,000 hours of fishing occurred in English MPAs from September 2022 to September 2023, with higher density than unprotected waters. Only one site, North East of Farnes Deep, was established as a suitable HPMA. Allonby Bay was shown as too small and had no fishing, so no difference was shown when fishing was removed. The research found that Dolphin Head would have been suitable in terms of size and past fishing pressure, but it was unsuccessful due to being located directly underneath the English Channel shipping lane, which results in tens of thousands of ocean-going vessels passing over the top of it every year, creating pollution, noise and risk of ship strike to cetaceans and seabirds. The paper supports SDGs 12 and 14 by highlighting that more and larger protected areas with stronger protections are needed for marine ecosystem survival under climate change.

Our Centres, Groups and Research Clusters

We are proud of our research centres and clusters, which drive innovation and scholarly excellence across various disciplines and are at the heart of our research culture and community. From our Migration, Politics and Society Research Cluster collaborating nationally through the Inter-University Migration Network and internationally via the International Migration Research Network (IMISCOE), focusing on issues like labour migrations and socio-economic inclusion, to the Centre for Social and Criminological Research (CSCR) conducting independent research on political and state violence, global social movements, and criminal justice, while incorporating principles of social justice and equality, our dedicated staff continue to strive for excellence and cutting-edge world-renowned work.



A team of researchers from our Centre of Enterprise, Environmental and Development Research (CEEDR) have been awarded funding through the ACCESS Flex Funds to further explore ways to improve and shift unsustainable practices in the fashion and textiles industry. Our academics Dr Patrick Elf, Dr Andrea Werner and Professor Fergus Lyon, in collaboration with Safia Minney are challenging the unsustainability of the UK fashion and textile sector from the perspective of key suppliers in Bangladesh and India.

Their Regenerative Post-Growth Fashion (RPGF) project advances SDGs 8, 12 and 13 by drawing on multiple social science disciplines to address a number of critical key challenges in the industry, including exploitative labour practices, overconsumption, and pollution and emissions related issues. It also explores how a rapid transformation of the global fashion and textile system from unsustainable practices to regenerative, post-growth alternatives is possible. The team uses practice-based research to highlight good practice initiatives and collaborations between UK buyers and suppliers in India and Bangladesh to reduce waste, and promote livelihoods and healthy ecosystems which supports SDGs 1, 3, 9 and 17. The project gave a voice to often over-looked communities and collected data through a radical bottom-up approach, placing emphasis on SDGs 4 and 10.

INVISIBLE RISKS



Middlesex University academics from the Centre for Abuse of Trauma and Suicide Studies (CATS), led by Professor Elena Martellozzo and Dr Jeffrey DeMarco, have been awarded £100,000 by the End Violence Partnership and the Tech Coalition to develop online training courses aimed at improving the mental wellbeing of content moderators. Advancing SDG 3, the project provides psychological support and coping strategies for moderators who regularly encounter distressing content. With over 100,000 moderators worldwide employed to check online content for harmful material, including child abuse images and videos, many work in developing countries under unsuitable conditions, often without adequate mental health support.

The initial project, called 'Invisible Risks: Combating Secondary Trauma to Safeguard Children', looked at how the demanding role of content moderators impacted their wellbeing, what made their work more challenging and what coping strategies they used. By addressing issues such as managing intrusive thoughts, developing positive relationships, and achieving a healthier work-life balance, the further development of the research promotes SDG 8 by advocating for safer and more supportive working environments. To fortify and expand the specialised skills and technical knowledge required, the CATS team, managed by senior researcher Dr Ruth Spence, collaborated with redLoop in our Department of Design and Dr Bob Fields from our Faculty of Science and Technology. This interdisciplinary approach strengthens SDG 4 by enhancing industry training and knowledge-sharing. The focus on technological innovation and accessibility aligns with SDG 9 by leveraging digital tools to create a scalable solution. Crucially, the collaboration between academia, technology specialists, and global industry stakeholders reinforces SDG 17, ensuring a sustainable, cross-sector approach to tackling mental health challenges in the digital content moderation industry.



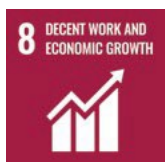
FLOOD RISK – RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

'Flood risk research for improving flood risk outcomes', an article by Professor Sally Priest from our Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC), highlights the urgent need for interdisciplinary approaches to mitigate and adapt to increasing flood hazards. The research emphasises the role of scientific advancements, policy interventions, and community engagement in managing flood risks effectively, aligning with SDG 6 by addressing how flooding affects water quality, contaminates freshwater sources, and disrupts sanitation infrastructure, leading to health risks. By examining the impact of floods on marine ecosystems, the study contributes to SDG 14, accentuating how increased runoff, pollutants, and sedimentation affect coastal and aquatic habitats. It also supports SDG 15 by exploring how flooding leads to deforestation, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss in terrestrial ecosystems. Furthermore, the research calls for improved urban planning and infrastructure, linking it to sustainable water management practices. It underscores the importance of preserving natural floodplains and wetlands, which act as buffers against extreme weather events. Through collaboration between scientists, policymakers, and local communities, the study reinforces SDG 17 by advocating for integrated and sustainable flood management strategies. Ultimately, the work underscores the need for resilience-building efforts that protect both human populations and natural ecosystems from the growing risks posed by climate change.

URBAN GREENSPACES AND WATERSCAPES



As a co-lead of the Sustainable Development Research Cluster, Dr Meri Juntti and her colleague Dr Sevda Ozsezer-Kurnuc authored a review paper analysing 46 international studies published between 2019 and 2021. Their findings highlight that urban greenspaces and waterscapes play a crucial role in promoting good health and wellbeing, aligning with SDG 3. Access to nature has been shown to enhance mental and physical health, improve overall quality of life, and foster social cohesion. However, these benefits do not flow equally to all residents. The social impact of urban nature is influenced by material, social, and subjective factors, leading to varied and sometimes conflicting outcomes. The study also underscores how urban form, demographic diversity, and socio-economic status shape people's ability to engage with and benefit from green and blue spaces. These disparities highlight the importance of SDG 10, which calls for inclusive policies that address social and economic imbalances. Factors such as gender, cultural identity, and personal experiences further influence how individuals interact with urban nature, reinforcing the need for planning approaches that ensure equitable access for all communities. To achieve truly sustainable and inclusive cities, the research emphasises the need to move beyond a focus on simply providing physical access to nature. Instead, policies and urban design should prioritise actually realized access to the benefits of nature, ensuring that all city dwellers can fully experience and enjoy these spaces. This aligns with SDG 11, which advocates for urban environments that are inclusive, resilient, and accessible to everyone. This research forms part of the BlueGreen Impact project, conducted in collaboration with the London Development Trust. The project aimed to improve awareness and understanding of the unequal social impact of urban water and green spaces in the context of housing regeneration. It also provided usable indicators and guidance to integrate this knowledge into community stewardship strategies, supporting the creation of greener, healthier, and more equitable urban environments.



Y2A HUB

The Newham Youth to Adulthood (Y2A) Hub is a specialist probation service designed to support young adults transitioning from youth to adult criminal justice systems. Co-led by Dr Jenni Ward from our Prisons Research Group and other colleagues including Dr Karen Duke and Dr Matt Cracknell, in collaboration with researchers from Sheffield Hallam University, the study examines the Hub's implementation, effectiveness, and challenges. It highlights the benefits of a diverse workforce, co-located services, and tailored interventions in improving engagement and outcomes. By offering specialised support, the Y2A Hub promotes SDG 16 by fostering inclusive societies, ensuring access to justice, and strengthening institutions. It also aligns with SDG 10, addressing inequalities within the justice system and aiding young adults' reintegration. Additionally, through training and employment opportunities, the Hub contributes to SDG 8, promoting skills development and sustainable economic growth. Funded by the Ministry of Justice (2022-2024), the Hub's evaluation is informing national probation policy and practice. It serves as a model for integrating co-located services within probation, reinforcing justice, equality, and sustainable development.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

From our diverse curriculum to University-wide initiatives aimed at combating discrimination, along with our dedication to mental health and wellbeing, we remain adaptable and committed to grow in order to foster a more inclusive environment for everyone. As a core principle of our Middlesex University Strategy 2031, equality, diversity, and inclusion shape our research, teaching, and engagement. They also significantly influence our approach to health and wellbeing.

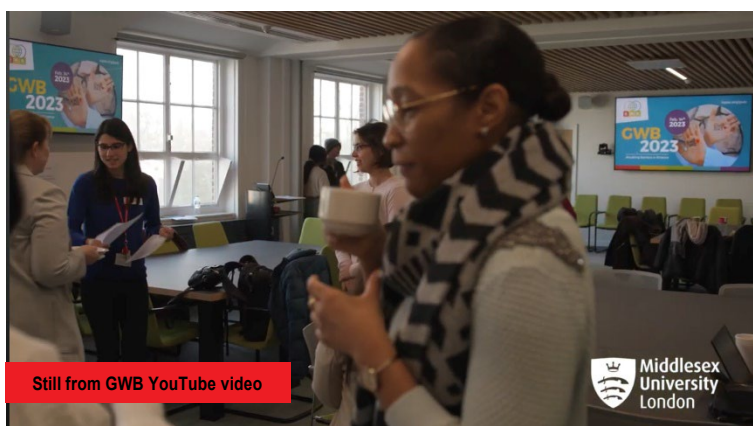
GLOBAL WOMEN'S BREAKFAST



The IUPAC Global Women's Breakfast (GWB) is a worldwide initiative that brings together scientists of all genders to support the empowerment of women in science, foster collaboration, and inspire the next generation of leaders in STEM. From 2023 to 2025, Middlesex University proudly hosted GWB events, creating vibrant spaces for dialogue, student-led presentations, and networking across disciplines. Each year, our events have brought together students, staff, alumni, and partners to examine the challenges encountered by women in science and to celebrate their achievements. The sessions have consistently promoted inclusion, mentorship, and visibility, particularly for early-career researchers and underrepresented voices. These efforts align strongly with the UN SDGs—not only SDG 5 and SDG 4, but also SDG 9, SDG 10, and SDG 17. Our commitment to GWB reflects our broader aim to drive inclusive innovation, break down systemic barriers, and build a more equitable future in science and education.

“ Not only are more girls joining STEM subjects, but I think now there are definitely really good role models in STEM who are women who lead the field and who have shown that things can be done by everybody and it's not a gender-specific subject at all.

- Supriya Mankad, Chartered Architect at Transport For London





MDX NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION FESTIVAL

The annual MDX Neurodiversity Celebration Festival is an opportunity to celebrate and showcase the talents, strengths, and unique perspectives of the neurodivergent community. These events feature performances, stalls, activities, workshops and discussions. The goal is to celebrate diversity and inclusion, while also helping the University community to become better informed. These events are open to all, and take place across our campuses in London, Mauritius and Dubai. The Festival is led by a team of professional

services staff as well as academics from the Health, Social Care and Education Faculty. Events featured in our MDX Neurodiversity Celebration Festivals include a performance by Chickenshed Theatre students which embodied the spirit of neurodiversity positivity and barrier-breaking, and a talk on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in Postgraduate Research Studies' given by Nico Pizzolato, Director of Postgraduate Research Studies at the University. The talk was a doctorate presentation introducing EDI considerations related to postgraduate research in the higher education sector, outlining preliminary insights of an ongoing review, in collaboration with Advance HE. Additionally, the Festival facilitated MDX Neurodiversity Global Panel Discussion and a Q&A where neurodivergent students from across our global campuses shared insights into their educational journey, discussed their unique experiences and the challenges they face while showcasing their strength and accomplishments.

OUR ACCOLADES



Middlesex University is a proud advocate for equality, diversity and inclusivity. Over the years our community has worked hard to develop and implement policies strengthening our commitment to EDI, a work of continuous improvement as seen in our strategies and statements. Our efforts have been recognised with multiple accolades including the prestigious Bronze Award from the Athena Swan Charter, acknowledging our strong commitment to eliminating gender bias and fostering an inclusive culture that values all staff.



We have also been awarded the Gold Award by Stonewall, in recognition of our dedication to fostering an inclusive workplace for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and queer individuals in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2023. We also ranked 58th out of 268 organizations and secured 8th place among the 30 higher education institutions that participated this year. Additionally, Ant Babajee, a CRM Manager at the university and the former co-chair of our LGBT+ Network, was named a Change Maker of the Year.



As a member of Advance HE's Race Equality Charter (REC), we have been honoured with a REC Bronze Award, highlighting our dedication to enhancing the representation, progression, and success of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff and students in HE. This achievement signifies that Middlesex University is making meaningful strides toward fostering a more inclusive culture and expanding opportunities for all members of our staff and student community, regardless of background or experience.



We are proud to have achieved the highest level of recognition, the Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) status through the Government Disability Confident scheme. This achievement shows that we lead the way in fostering positive change by shaping attitudes, behaviours, and workplace cultures within our businesses, networks, and communities. Through inclusive recruitment practices, we not only drive meaningful progress but also experience the advantages of a more diverse workforce.



Our thriving staff Inter Faith Network (IFN) won the Alliance Award at the University Alliance Awards 2024 for initiatives to promote understanding and tolerance among the diverse communities in the London Borough of Barnet.

Supporting Our Students

Middlesex University is committed to providing comprehensive support to ensure every student thrives academically, personally, and professionally. Our dedicated staff offer guidance on mental health, financial assistance, disability support, and career development. Students can access academic resources, mentoring programmes, and personal tutors to help them navigate their studies successfully. We also have a vibrant network of student societies, counselling services, and wellbeing initiatives to promote a positive university experience. Whether through one-on-one support or community-driven initiatives, Middlesex fosters an inclusive and supportive environment where every student can reach their full potential.

MDXMOVES



MDXMoves began in 2015 as a small but impactful initiative to promote physical activity and wellbeing among students and staff. It was first launched as the 'Active Summer' programme, through a collaboration between Middlesex and several universities within the European Network of Academic Sports, and laid the foundation for the next phase, the 'Go Fit' programme. The growing popularity of these programmes demonstrated the demand for a year-round solution, aligning with SDG 3 by fostering healthy lifestyles and improving mental and physical health. Building on previous successes, we partnered with Himotive to develop MDXMoves, the first full-scale, web-based version of the platform which integrated with a range of fitness trackers, offering more meaningful rewards such as food, coffee, gym memberships, exclusive merchandise, and the opportunity to network with peers. The introduction of an easy-to-use tracking system, coupled with tangible rewards, significantly boosted engagement, motivating participants to keep moving. After four years, we transitioned to an app-based version.



Photo credit: Mina Balijagic

The app, now in its second year, has gained over 7,000 members, showing the lasting impact of the programme and its widespread adoption. MDXMoves has expanded beyond step tracking to include a variety of wellbeing activities, offering participants a broader range of incentives and rewards. One of the standout initiatives is the Adventure Series, a programme that takes students on trips around the UK, encouraging physical activity and providing them with opportunities to explore nature, supporting sustainable practices and a connection with the environment, while contributing to their overall wellbeing. This commitment to wellbeing was recently recognised when MDXMoves won a European Award for the Adventure Series programme. MDXMoves also supports SDG 12 through its thoughtful reward system. We offer eco-friendly prizes such as reusable water bottles, coffee cups and merchandise, which incentivises physical activity while promoting conscious consumerism. By encouraging the use of sustainable products and promoting outdoor, low-impact activities, MDXMoves supports more responsible consumption patterns. The app also helps reduce the need for expensive and resource-heavy interventions, making it a more sustainable and cost-effective approach to improving wellbeing. Through these efforts, MDXMoves contributes to a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle for both individuals and the wider community.

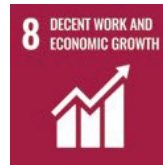


Funded by the NHS North West London Young Adult Mental Health Partnerships, we launched a new initiative to enhance student mental health and wellbeing through a collaborative approach between students, staff and health and wellbeing partner organisations. In alignment with SDG 3, the initiative prioritised early intervention, proactive care, and inclusive access to support services to improve health outcomes across the student population. The first part of the funding helped students co-produce content, events and initiatives, promoting SDG 4 by embedding mental health literacy, health promotion, and peer-led learning opportunities into the wider educational experience. The second part of the funding was allocated to digital platforms designed to host content, connect organisations and support volunteer contributors, increasing accessibility and reach. A key component of the project was a Stepped Framework approach, ensuring that access to resources and organisations started with the needs of the student so that they could get the right support, at the right time, and in the right place. The digital products took the form of an intuitive web tool that mapped a wide range of support services, from health promotion to clinical care.

To further support early intervention, a student peer health promotion group was identified, made up of students in leadership roles across the University. This empowered students to champion well-being through social prescribing, community engagement, and health education - strengthening SDG 10 by engaging hard-to-reach groups, including students from culturally diverse backgrounds who are often less likely to seek support until reaching a crisis point. Project outputs included a shared social prescribing model, a digital wellbeing toolkit, and a structured referral framework that collectively supported equal access to mental health services. For example, a video podcast series featured students in conversation with Professional Services staff such as our Counselling and Mental Health team on the topic of 'International Students and Mental Health', and with our Sustainability Team on 'Mindful Living - A pathway to sustainability'. Students also spoke with partner organisations like Brook Sexual Health Charity on 'Sexual Health at University', which led to an increase in sexual health testing on campus. By diversifying how partners could engage with Middlesex through podcasts, fairs, workshops, events, and co-created content, this initiative demonstrated the power of SDG 17. It strengthened collaboration with wellbeing and healthcare providers, contributed to reducing mental health stigma, improved health outcomes, and embedded proactive wellbeing strategies into university structures.

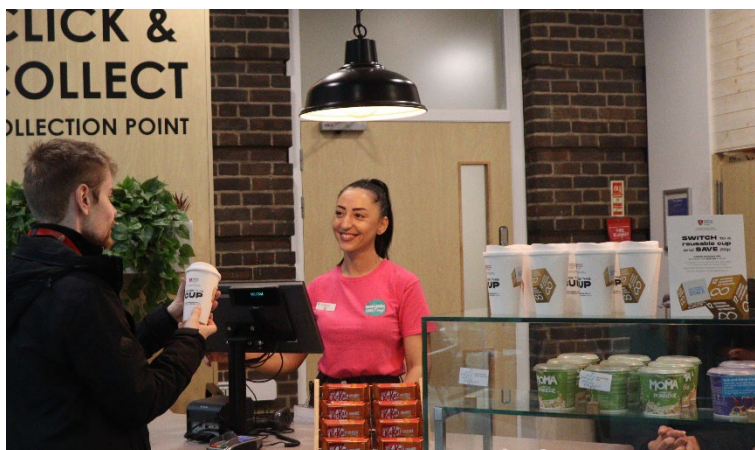


5P CUP FUND



From the campaign 'Reducing Plastic on Campus' and 'Engage in Change' event, generated a genuine interest among many students and staff in learning more about how to reduce their plastic footprint. These initiatives, together with the push by the University to reduce its plastic footprint, the 5p Cup Fund and the 20p discount on drinks sold using a reusable cup on campus were introduced in 2019. Students and staff have been invited to bid for funding of up to £1,000 to spend on sustainable initiatives, with funding bids submitted in writing to the Environment Team. The bids are considered on criteria such as promoting at least one of the Middlesex University sustainability objectives: enhance biodiversity across our London Campus, actively managing and reducing utility consumption, promoting sustainable transport and travel, reducing our carbon footprint or maximising recycling and preventing waste. The funding is non-recurring as a one-off spend and contributes to achieving a maximum student and staff engagement.

In 2023/24, the campaign generated £4,900, funding successful projects such as an additional bee hive and TRASHED, an immersive poster-trail. The 5p Cup Fund offers significant benefits for both students and the University by linking everyday behaviour to long-term sustainability. By encouraging reusable cups, it directly reduces single-use waste on campus, supporting SDG 12 and SDG 13. Funds raised are reinvested into student-led projects focused on sustainability, innovation, and wellbeing, aligning with SDG 4 by providing real-world learning opportunities and SDG 9 through support for creative environmental solutions. These paid projects also contribute to SDG 8, while improving green infrastructure and inclusive public spaces in line with SDG 11. For Middlesex, the initiative strengthens our environmental leadership and student engagement, while empowering students to drive change, co-create solutions, and champion campus-wide responsibility. It's a simple yet impactful model of sustainable development in action.





GREEN INNOVATION WANTED



POWER UP CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY

Got an exciting idea for a project, initiative or activity that would make the campus even more sustainable?

Collaborative Work

Middlesex University has placed collaboration at the heart of our efforts to align with the University Strategy. During the 2023/24 academic year, we undertook several impactful partnerships that emphasise social justice, innovation, and global engagement. From domestic initiatives such as 'Changing the Culture', to international partnerships with institutions such as the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology in China and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education, our collaborative work has strengthened the University's global academic outlook. These partnerships provide students access to innovative research and education, broadening their horizons and creating cross-cultural connections.

#HEARMYVOICE

In partnership with the London Borough of Barnet and led by Dr Helen Bendon, Interim Head of our Film School, and Ben Serlin, Senior Safeguarding Project Manager, the University is proud to continue the important work to change the culture around subtle and everyday forms of misogyny and sexism. The #HearMyVoice campaign involves an exhibition of work from film, animation and graphic design students, workshops with secondary schools and local community partners, and a panel discussion on supporting students into employment in the creative industries post #MeToo. Launched in 2023, #HearMyVoice aims to highlight and tackle misogyny, violence against women and girls, and domestic abuse. The latest campaign focuses on subtle and 'low-level' forms of misogyny and sexism which are often normalised and accepted. Events organised included a School Day, in which sixty pupils from Hendon School, The UCL Academy London in Swiss Cottage, and St Mary's and St John's CE School in Hendon were involved in workshops that helped them understand and recognise misogynistic language and behaviours in their communities, while designing their own campaigns and contributing to an anti-misogyny toolkit for schools. Other activities included 'Walk in the Park', a performance by BA Theatre Arts students which was followed by a walk from our Hendon Campus to the nearby Sunny Hill Park to champion safer streets and greater protection for women walking at night, as well as a Community Partners Forum and a Women in Screen Production panel. 'Seeing the Unseen' project by third-year BA Graphic Design students Claire Bath and Fuat Hassan contributed to the campaign with 'Where's Wally' style posters highlighting examples of misogyny and sexism. The whole campaign aligns with UN SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 16 and 17.



Middlesex University plays an important role in the community and as an education institution it is only right that we work with Barnet Council to have a positive influence in our local schools and the wider community, as well as supporting our own students.

- Dr Helen Bendon, Interim Head of Film School, Middlesex University



RITTERMAN PERFORMANCE BASED DIGITAL TWIN PROJECT

The Ritterman Building Digital Twin project at Middlesex University London, in partnership with IESVE industry experts, demonstrates the application of advanced digital twin technologies to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability.

Led by Integrated Environmental Solutions Ltd (IES) with contributions from Dr Homeira Shayesteh and Middlesex students, the project utilized IESVE software to assess the building's energy performance and explore retrofit strategies to reduce carbon emissions. The project focused on three key interventions: Heating System Improvements, Air Source Heat Pumps, and Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP). GSHP implementation emerged as the most effective, achieving a 34% reduction in energy use and significantly lowering emissions. Dr Shayesteh facilitated a 17-hour IESVE training program, equipping students with skills in digital solutions like Intelligent Communities Life-Cycle, Intelligent Community Design, and Energy Performance Certification.

These modules fostered expertise in sustainable design, energy efficiency, and urban planning, enhancing student readiness for careers in sustainable architecture and energy management. The project aligns with four UN SDGs, notably with SDG 7 through the utilisation of sustainable energy sources and promotion of energy efficiency, and with SDG 9 through the adoption of advanced digital twin technology and optimisation of building performance and resilience. The project reduces environmental footprint with digital technologies and contributes to inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urban environments, which supports SDG 11, while also advancing SDG 13 through the significant reduction of carbon emissions and the implementation of effective energy conservation measures. By leveraging digital twin technology and implementing sustainable practices, the Ritterman Building serves as a model for advancing sustainability in academic institutions, promoting Middlesex University's leadership in climate action and sustainable development.



ANNUAL MALCOLM SARGEANT LEGACY LECTURE

The University is proud of our collaboration with the Professor Malcolm Sargeant Charitable Trust. Professor Malcolm Sargeant was the first of his family to go to university, and this changed his life and his future. As a legacy to him and his life, his Trustees, have set up the charity to provide funding to students from England and Wales looking to complete a degree at Middlesex University and who need financial assistance in order to study. They also host annual lectures on a variety of topics. The lectures were first organised in 2022, while the second lecture took place in 2023. So far there have been three student beneficiaries, with the hope for more to come. This collaboration aligns with SDG 1 by reducing financial barriers for students from low-income backgrounds, providing bursaries and resources that promote economic inclusion through education. At the same time, it advances SDG 4 by enhancing access to academic opportunities and supporting student success through funding and enrichment initiatives. The partnership also addresses SDG 10 by empowering students from marginalised or underrepresented communities, ensuring equitable access to higher education, while embodying SDG 17 through meaningful collaboration between the charitable and education sectors, combining resources and expertise to create lasting, positive impact for students and society.

BARNET ZERO CHALLENGE



Barnet Council and Middlesex University announced the 'BarNET ZERO Challenge' in 2023, a competition encouraging individuals and communities to come forward with innovative ideas and provide practical solutions for reducing carbon emissions. Aligned with Barnet Council's goal to become a net zero carbon council by 2030 and a net zero borough by 2042, this unique opportunity provided participants with the opportunity to attend workshops and pitch their projects to a panel of experts, for a chance to secure funding and other exciting prizes. Shortlisted entrants had the opportunity to participate in workshops throughout February 2024, where they could refine and develop their ideas with guidance from sponsors such as Microsoft, NatWest, and Brent Cross, as well as Middlesex University academics. The final ideas were submitted in March 2024, following which a panel of judges selected the top three ideas, before a public vote in Barnet. Our Head of Environmental Sustainability Rabin Doolub was one of the three judges. Benefits and incentives for participants included a £10,000 cash fund, with £5,000 for first place, £3,000 for second place, and £2,000 for the third place. The top three ideas – which were announced at a special event to mark the end of Barnet Climate Action Month held at the RAF Museum in Hendon in July 2024 - were Eco Learn & Play by Karem Salas, GRUBS – Green Roofs Upon Bus Shelters by Fiona Quinton, and Eco Mobility by Anna Tobin, with GRUBS winning the Barnet community's voice. GRUBS proposed the adding of green roofs to bus shelters in order to enhance biodiversity, clean air and the improvement of the overall wellbeing of bus passengers. The Challenge aligned with multiple SDGs such as SDG 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 17.

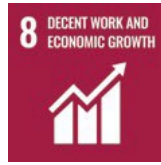


Photo credit: Mina Balijagic



Photo credit: Mina Balijagic

BRIEF CASES



Brief Cases at Middlesex University is a non-work-based practical learning opportunity offered through the Work Experience module tailored for MA Global Governance and Sustainable Development students. Developed in collaboration with The Heaven Company London Ltd., its objectives are to bridge the gap between academic study and commercial reality and to provide students with a realistic setting to apply knowledge and skills from taught modules to professional tasks pertaining to the implementation of the UN SDGs. Brief Cases at Middlesex is delivered through three contact sessions supported by The Heaven Company. Through independent work and workshops, students increase understanding of sustainability challenges in the private sector and receive realistic feedback from industry representatives. Final outputs include a business report presenting a response to a brief issued by the Heaven Company.

The module provides students with practical learning opportunities that bridge the gap between academic study and real-world applications of the SDGs, aligning with SDG 4. This enhances their skills and knowledge, preparing them for future careers. Additionally, by collaborating with The Heaven Company, the initiative helps students understand the sustainability challenges and opportunities in the private sector, promoting sustainable economic growth and decent work in line with SDG 8. In accordance with SDG 9, students are encouraged to think innovatively and develop practical solutions for businesses, fostering a culture of innovation and sustainable industrial practices, while the program also supports diverse learning styles and increases engagement and belonging among students from various backgrounds, promoting equality and diversity in education as presented by SDG 10. The briefs set by The Heaven Company also focus on developing environmentally and socially sound business practices, contributing to the creation of sustainable communities as per SDG 11, while the collaboration between Middlesex University and The Heaven Company exemplifies a successful partnership that leverages academic and industry expertise to achieve sustainable development in line with SDG 17.



MINIBEASTS OF BARNET

A Middlesex University team of academics led by Professor Jayne Osgood spent the first half of 2024 working with two local schools on an innovative 'Environmental Education' pilot project to support Barnet Council's net zero ambitions. They worked with 120 four-year-olds from two primary schools in Barnet as well as their teachers, parents and grandparents and the Council to create 'Minibeasts of Barnet'. The Minibeasts project was funded by Higher Education Innovation Funding and the team included Dr Victoria de Rijke and PhD student Matthew Maxwell.

The team used creative arts-based methods, movement, collage, and nonsense poetry to help the children to create together and to learn through making things and play. Children were supported to explore tiny species living alongside them in their community, including microbes, insects and harmless viruses, that they encountered every day without noticing. Children were encouraged to engage with the natural environment and consider how their interactions with these 'minibeasts' could inspire new ways of thinking and living in the world. The aim of the project was to develop an understanding in young children of how all species are interconnected. It challenged the idea that humans were superior to other species, and encouraged the children to consider our relationship with everything around us, no matter how small. The project advanced SDGs 4, 15 and 17.

Our Sustainable Campus – London



SUSTAINABILITY IN NUMBERS



Waste – We have 0% waste sent directly to landfill. 181 tonnes of our overall waste is recycled and we have saved 970 kilograms of food waste through our subscription to the Too Good To Go app. Green waste generated by grounds maintenance is composted.

Energy – Our solar panels generated 76,823 kWh of green energy in 2023/24, while our Switch-Off Campaign at Christmas 2024 saved £41,151.

Water – Tanks under MDX House collect rainwater to irrigate plants on the deck. Rainwater harvested on Sheppard Library is filtered and used to flush the toilets, while our water refill machines located around campus have refilled more than 500,000 water bottles since their installation.

Biodiversity – Our annual tree audit manages and enhances the health and condition of our trees, contributing to biodiversity, while relaxed mowing enables wildflowers and wildlife to thrive.

Green Travel – Our Hendon campus hosts 10 EV chargers available to everyone with access to the car park. In the 2023/24 period they delivered 15,344.8 kWh and helped us save 8,593.09 kg of CO₂.

OPEN RING OUTDOOR PODS



The first installation of our open ring outdoor pods took place at the beginning of 2019, and due to high demand from students and staff, another order was placed in 2020 and further pods were installed. A key feature of the pods is that they are self-sufficient, as they are fitted with solar panels. Our outdoor pods share the same materials as that of a yacht, built from recycled composite fibre glass. This material means they are highly durable, long lasting and weather proof. The project aligns with SDGs 7, 11, 12 and 13, and having been a part of our London campus for six years, the pods are a staple for summer study sessions as well as social gatherings.



GREEN WALLS AND ROOFS

The Ritterman Building, completed in 2017, features four green walls covering a total of 110m², installed as a core sustainable feature that contributed to the building achieving a BREEAM environmental award. These walls host over 3,500 plants, supported by a state-of-the-art irrigation system that collects and uses harvested rainwater, reducing the need for mains water and enhancing resource efficiency. In 2024, a pesticide-free pest control method was introduced using nematodes, naturally occurring waterborne predators, to treat vine weevil infestations, demonstrating the University's move toward environmentally friendly maintenance practices. Additionally, the sedum-covered green roofs on both the Ritterman and Grove Buildings enhance biodiversity by providing a thriving habitat for plants, pollinators, and other wildlife. These green roofs also help to reduce rainwater run-off, easing pressure on drainage systems and contributing to climate resilience in urban design. Altogether, Middlesex's green walls and roofs serve as living examples of sustainable architecture, ecological responsibility, and innovative environmental management – embedding sustainability into the heart of the campus infrastructure and advancing SDGs 11, 12, 13 and 15.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges faced by universities, Middlesex University continues to prioritise environmental sustainability across our operations and curriculum. From managing waste responsibly to equipping our students with the knowledge to make informed choices, we are embedding sustainability into our institutional fabric.

I am particularly proud of how the UN SDGs are being integrated into our teaching, supported by initiatives such as our UN SDG webinars within our *Middlesex in Conversation* series as well as interdisciplinary student projects. By working closely with our Faculties, we ensure that environmental considerations inform every aspect of our education and research.

Looking ahead, Middlesex University remains committed to working with sustainable practices on campus and beyond. Whether it's through fostering collaborations, reducing our carbon footprint, or empowering students and staff, we are determined to lead by example. This report highlights our progress and inspires us to continue striving for a greener, fairer future for all.

Rabin Doolub, Head of Environmental Sustainability



Sustainability | Middlesex University

**Contact our Environment and Sustainability Team at
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