



JCR SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE

What we can do to keep our planet in mind at Hertford.



Introduction

This guide aims to inform you about how to live in an environmentally-conscious way at Hertford, as well as the work Hertford college is currently doing and its plans to improve sustainability in the future.

Much of this guide focuses on the varying environmental impacts of our individual actions. Though each of these decisions may seem insignificant, when made over a lifetime or as a whole student body, their impact is much greater.

However, it is important to note that the organisations we interact with in Oxford have a much greater impact than any individual action. If this is of concern to you, there are a number of ways to be involved with others working to reduce the environmental impact of the University and Colleges. More information on getting involved can be found on page 11.

Contents

3. Top 5 Ways to Live Sustainably
4. What is Hertford doing?
5. Ethical Banking
6. Energy Usage & Maintenance Tickets
7. Transport
8. Food Choices
9. Consumption & Waste
10. Oxford's Green Spaces
11. Getting Involved at Oxford
12. Further Information

Top 5 Ways to Live Sustainably

The theme of Oxford Green Action Week 2026 is “**The top 5 things to do for the environment**” in your role at the University. As a Hertford student, here are the top 5 things you can do:

1

Energy and water use may not be a financial concern as a student, but your choices still matter. Consider taking shorter showers and turning lights off (p.6).

2

Travel: consider using public transport, cycling, or walking where possible. There are a variety of storage options available in College over the holidays (p.7).

3

Food choices are an easy way to limit your personal impact, for example: by reducing food waste and limiting consumption of animal products (p.8).

4

Paying attention to the things you buy: consider sustainable, second-hand, or local suppliers. Ensure any waste is correctly recycled (p.9).

5

Spending more time in nature can be a great way of connecting and educating yourself on the importance of environmental choices (p.10/11).

The remainder of this guide will provide more information on how to reduce your impact in these key areas.



What is Hertford Doing?

Hertford has already made many positive steps towards reducing their emissions. More information about this, as well as future plans, can be found on these webpages:

[Hertford Sustainability Goals for 2030](#)

[Hertford Intranet Sustainability Page](#)

Hertford 2030 Priorities

1. Replacement of fossil fuel heating

2. Switch to 100% renewable power

3. Making a shift in food and drink

4. Informed approach to procuring goods and services

5. Reducing business travel and commuting

6. Reducing downstream supply impacts

13 Western Road



Hertford's "All Out House", planned to have many low carbon features including solar panels, an air source heat pump, double glazing and a green garden.

This house will allow Hertford to understand how these technologies can help cut carbon emissions, which can then be implemented across Hertford's many other buildings.

What more could be done?

Although Hertford has begun to take positive steps, you may want to compare their actions to that of other colleges to see what hasn't yet been committed to. The Climate League of Oxford and Cambridge (CLOC) is a student-made resource that compares the climate actions taken by colleges across Oxford and Cambridge:

<https://oxcamcloc.wixsite.com/cloc>

Ethical Banking

Banks invest in what makes their money grow. Sometimes this means investments in practices which are destroying the planet for the sake of profit, and upholding systemic racism and colonialism. As an example of this, here is some information about Barclays.

Barclays

Total Financing: \$235,188.75 million USD



COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF BARCLAYS FINANCING

Carmichael Coal mine

Australia - For tens of thousands of years, the Wangan and Jagalingou (W&J) people, have been living on their homelands that are now being threatened by the Carmichael coal project, in what is now known as central Queensland in Australia.



**Barclays Is The
#4 Financier Of
Arctic Fossil Fuel
Extraction
Companies In
2023.**

Reputational Risk Project: [Wisting Oil Field and Barents Sea](#)

Source: <https://www.bankingonclimatechaos.org/>

Hertford College continues to bank with Barclays.

The Good News

You can take a stand against this by moving banks. There are many greener banks out there, you just need to know where to look!

Luckily, bank.green has done all the work for us. Follow the links below to explore more ethical and sustainable banking:



<https://bank.green/>

<https://www.bankingonclimatechaos.org/>

<https://bank.green/blog/uk-banks-league-table>

Energy Usage

Energy usage currently makes up about 37% of Hertford's core emissions¹. This includes using electricity and heating. Here are a few easy ideas to reduce your electricity and heating:

- Turn off the lights in rooms that you are not in.
- Reduce heating temperature and turn off heating when you are not in the room.
- Only boil the amount of water that you need.
- Reduce the time that you are in the shower (aim to shower for 2 songs worth of time).



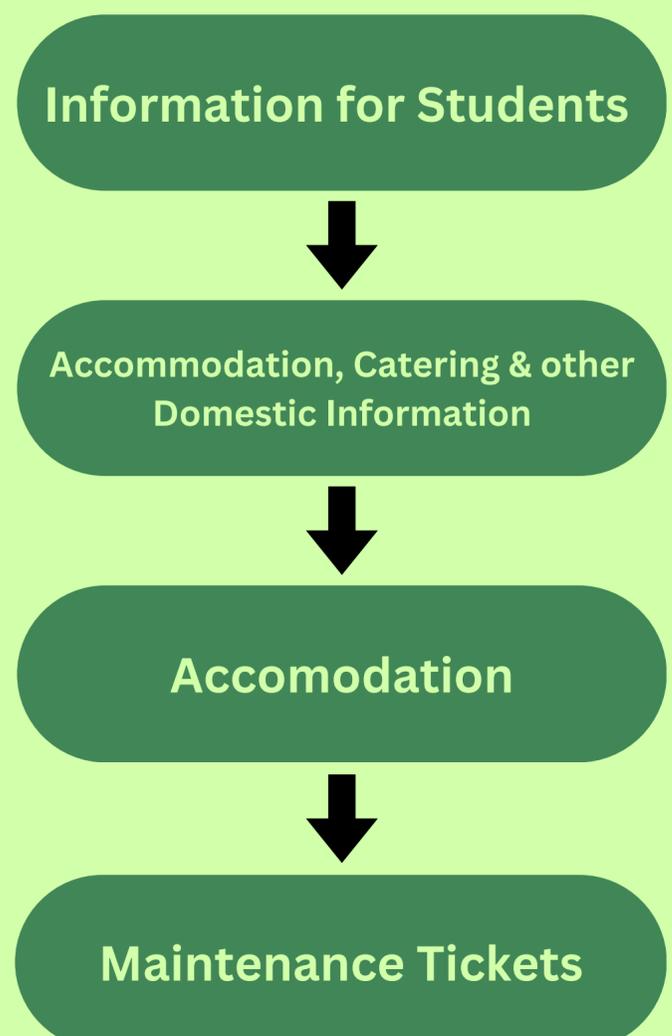
Maintenance Tickets

Many of Hertford's rooms are old and have issues with draughts, and old appliances such as radiators. These issues can make your room an uncomfortable temperature and lead to higher energy usage.

It's both easy and important to **report these concerns** about appliances via a maintenance ticket through the college intranet system:

<https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/HERT-HUB-HertfordCollegeIntranet>

Or follow this QR code:



1: <https://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/and-more/hertford-2030/sustainability>

Transport

Oxford is well designed for **cycling**, with many cycle paths and bike racks. For a cheaper and more sustainable option, you can buy a bike from one of the **second-hand bike shops** like Broken Spoke bike co-op and Walton Street cycles. More information and cycling training can be found at: <https://travel.admin.ox.ac.uk/bike/oxford>



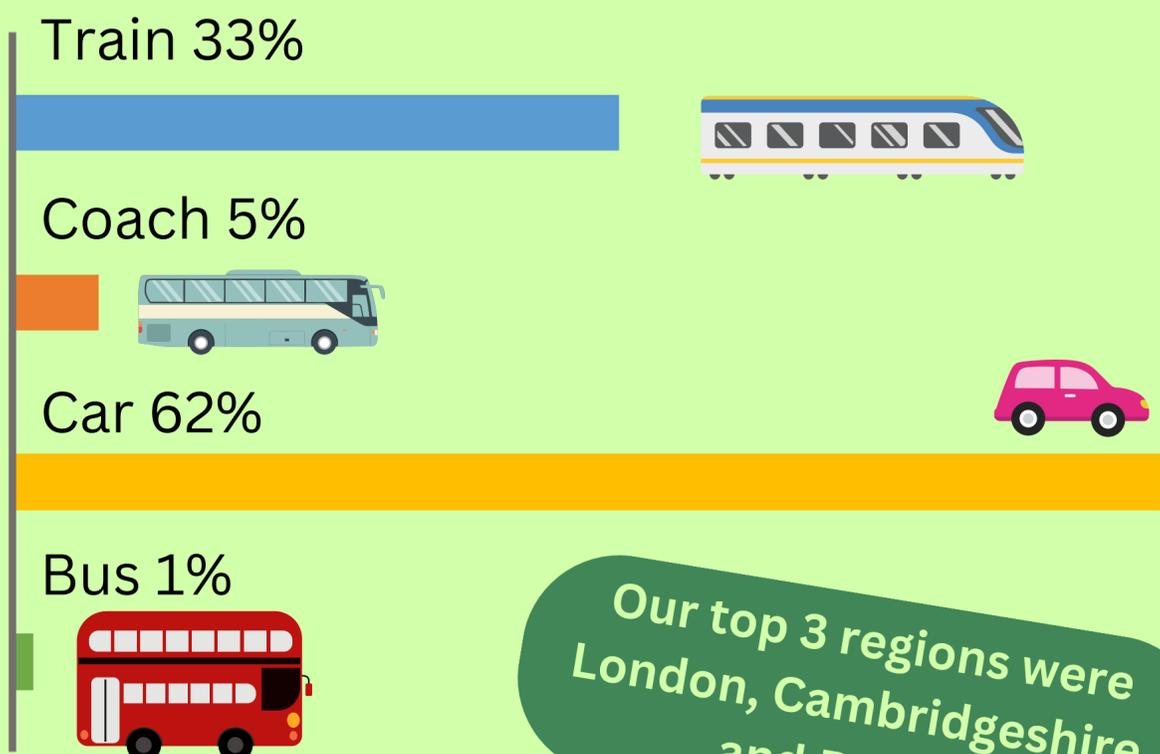
Public transport is easily accessible from Central Oxford, with **frequent buses** capped at £3 for any single journey, the 24/7 Oxford Tube coach, and direct trains to London and Birmingham.



Domestic students can help reduce this by **taking public transport home**. Over Christmas, most students can store belongings in their rooms. For other holidays the College usually provides storage to students travelling by public transport. Look out for end of term arrangement emails from the Accommodation team



2025/26 Travel Survey



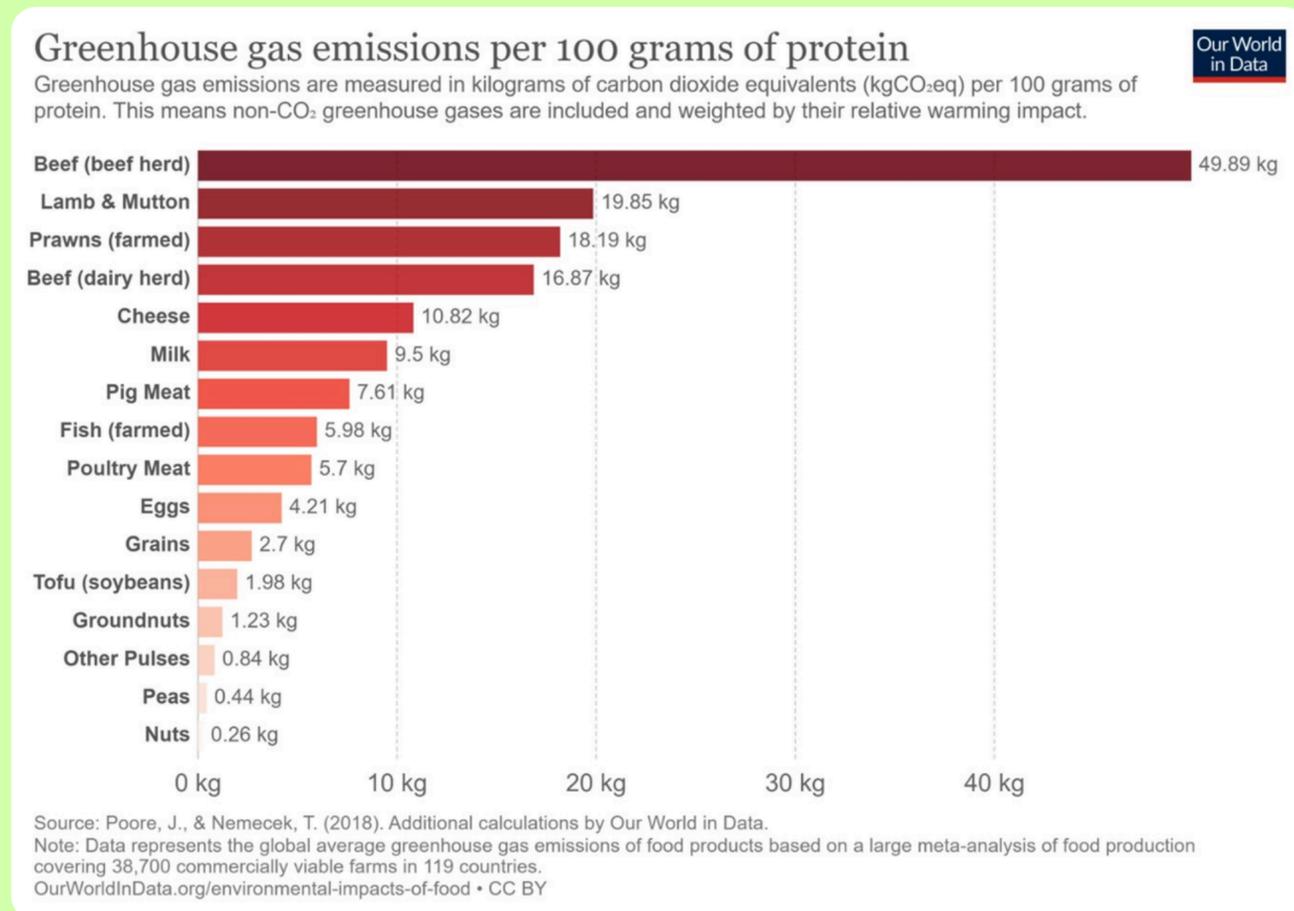
Our top 3 regions were London, Cambridgeshire, and Bristol!

The Sustainability Manager's survey found that our UK based undergrads mostly travel by car, with nearly all of them getting picked up by parents.

About 38% travelled by public transport over the Christmas holiday.

Food Choices

Our **dietary choices** make up a significant part of our environmental impact, with animal products generally have a much greater impact than plant-based products¹. Therefore, each meal represents a chance to reduce your footprint. **Vegetarian or vegan meals** are also **cheaper in half** than meat options so can be a great place to try more meat-free meals.



Oxford term time can be busy so it's always nice to have more time with friends. A tried and tested **cooking rota** might help: a group of friends take turns cooking for each other. This reduces the amount of time that appliances are used every night and the amount of time you will need to spend cooking on a busy night!

Over £250/pp of household food is wasted generated each year in the UK². Therefore taking steps to reduce food waste is beneficial to the planet, and your pockets! This can be done by:

- Making a shopping a list and only buying what you need
- Freezing left-overs (if you have a freezer!)
- Choose recipes using food you already have



1: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/ghg-per-protein-poore>

2: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7552/CBP-7552.pdf>

Consumption

Hertford receives many **Amazon** parcels every day, adding to the **~300 million kg of plastic waste** produced by Amazon in 2021¹. Each item purchased from a nearby shop instead reduces the packaging and emissions associated with delivery.

Reduce the impact of your consumption by buying **second-hand** when possible from Oxford's many **charity shops**. **Donating** unwanted items (such as clothes or books) here is also a great way to reduce waste.



Oxfam Broad Street



British Heart Foundation Westgate



Oxfam Superstore Cowley

Waste

Dry Mixed Recycling

All items must be **clean and dry**, as well as **correctly sorted**, to avoid whole loads being sent to landfill at the recycling plant.

- ✓ Metal, card, paper, cartons, glass, plastic pots, drink bottles, plastic film.
- ✗ Batteries, coffee pods, crisp packets, electricals, kitchen roll, polystyrene, chocolate wrappers.

Brown Food Waste Bin

- ✓ Any food waste, tea bags.
- ✗ Compostable packing, other food packaging.

Other

- A **battery bin** is located next to Hertford's post room.
- **Soft plastic recycling** is available at the front of Magdalen Street Tesco.
- More information: <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/goes-bin>

1: <https://oceana.org/reports/amazon-report-2021/>

Oxford's Green Spaces

The importance of spending time in more natural environments is clear, particularly with the stress that life in Oxford can bring. Below is a list of green spaces in or around central Oxford which are accessible for students to enjoy the calm of time in nature.



Port Meadow, North-West Oxford. River walks and wild swimming spot. Cows, horses, birds.



University Parks, Central Oxford. Walks, playing fields, ParkRun.



Botanic Gardens, Central Oxford. Beautiful garden by the river, greenhouses. Free entry with bodcard.



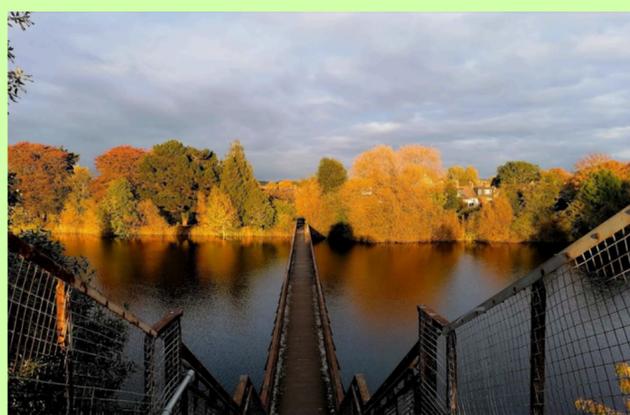
Christ Church Meadows, Central Oxford. Walks down to the river, views of the city.



Music Meadows and Marston Meadows, Central Oxford. Meadows by the river.



Magdalen College, Central Oxford. Extensive grounds and deer park. Free entry with bodcard.



Hinksey Park, South Oxford. Wild swimming spot.



Trap Grounds, North-West Oxford. Small community nature reserve.

For an online map of these locations visit: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/3V77SLCyJB8rXXubA>

Getting Involved at Oxford

There are many different movements for environmental change in Oxford. Some of these work within existing systems, whilst others challenge them.

Due to the University of Oxford's historical prestige and influence, some believe that if Oxford makes positive changes, then other universities and larger institutions may feel incentivised to follow. Consequently, **campaigning for change at the University** and its Colleges can be a good place to start.

You can get involved with environmental action with the groups below. At a college level you can be elected as the **JCR Environment & Ethics Officer**, where you can represent the views of the undergraduates in meetings at college and in the Student Union.



Oxford Climate Society: a large society hosting informative panels, events and fun socials to meet other people interested in climate.

Instagram: @oxfordclimatesoc



Oxford Uni Nature Conservation Society: promoting discussion and action on nature and the need for conservation in the time of a biodiversity crisis.

Instagram: @oxfordconservationsoc



Oxford Climate Justice Campaign: a group of students, academics & alumni campaigning for the university to break its ties with fossil fuels.

Instagram: @oxfordclimatejustice



Oxford Youth Demand: a campaign of young people demanding an immediate two-way arms embargo on Israel and a rollback of new UK oil and gas licences.

Instagram: @youth.demand_oxford



Further Information

Hertford Intranet Sustainability:
<https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/HERT-Sustainability>

Further questions?

Freddie Brown, JCR E&E Officer 2026:
jcr-envandethics@hertford.ox.ac.uk

Ellen MacDonald, Sustainability Manager:
ellen.macdonald@hertford.ox.ac.uk



Written by: Eleanor Cosford, Ruby Finn & Beatrice
McWilliams

Edited by: Freddie Brown (updated 2026)

