

# Sustainability Report

2022/23





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# Foreword



## Professor Kristian Helin - Chief Executive

I am pleased to present the first sustainability report of the ICR. This report provides an opportunity to introduce the origins of our sustainability journey, outline our future plans, and highlights our ongoing progress in implementing our action plan, 'Sustainable Discoveries'.

Sustainability has profound implications for cancer research. Certain types of cancer are connected to poor air quality, highlighting the connection between our historical environment impacts and our health.

We also have a great deal of work to do in creating a more sustainable ICR. We are integrating sustainable practises across our operations, providing our staff and students with the opportunity to share sustainability ideas through initiatives like our ActNow group, and reducing waste in our laboratories.

This report outlines our response to the climate emergency and emphasises how sustainability is integral to our strategy and our mission to defeat cancer.

We are pleased to share our journey with you, and we extend our gratitude to all those involved in moving us forward.

Warm Regards

**Professor Kristian Helin**  
Chief Executive and President

## Richard Woods – Head of Sustainability

As the Head of Sustainability at the Institute of Cancer Research I proudly present this report, sharing the progress and achievements that we have accomplished in sustainability thus far.

Our dedication to advancing cancer research goes hand in hand with our commitment to creating a positive impact on the environment and the communities we serve. Our commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040 is a response to addressing the current environmental challenges.

We acknowledge that our journey is ongoing, and we are continuously learning and evolving. We are grateful for your support and partnership in this effort.

**Richard Woods**  
Head of Sustainability



# Introduction

## What does sustainability mean for the ICR?

Sustainability at the ICR means acting now, in line with the UN Sustainability Development Goals, to manage economic, social and environmental issues within our organisation and globally, so that both now and in the future, we can continue to make the discoveries to defeat cancer.

In this inaugural report, we will show our progress in implementing our sustainability plans and our actions in addressing the environmental impact of our science, all while keeping our primary focus on our core mission: Defeating Cancer.

We recognise the importance of integrating sustainability principles into our work and to achieve our sustainability vision, we require a determined approach involving all members of our institution, from our research scientists to professional services personnel and all other stakeholders.

## InFocus: World Environment Day 2023

On World Environment Day, staff and students across the ICR in conjunction with the Royal Marsden got involved in a range of events, this year focused on how to reduce plastic use at home and at work.

Arranged by the ICR’s ActNow group and Royal Marsden’s Green Matters group the event included an exhibition of plastic-free products for the lab, office and home, as well as interactive games and a plastic-themed talk from a sustainability expert.

We showcased sustainable cleaning products and there was a screening of David Attenborough’s documentary Saving Our Wild Isles.

Award-winning shampoo bars and compostable sponges were distributed as raffle prizes and ICR members made a pledge to reduce plastic use.

The event engaged participants, raised their awareness of environmental concerns and educated them on ways to minimise plastic consumption.





# ICR and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

In 2020 we developed a report mapping the ICR’s strategy against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).





Some of our contributions include:



Defeating Cancer through research and teaching.

We also have a long partnership with the Royal Marsden NHS Trust bringing new cancer treatments and clinical trials from bench to bedside



The ICR is the UK’s leading academic research centre for cancer and a postgraduate college of the University of London, also considered one of the most respected institutes for cancer research globally



The ICR has undertaken extensive work addressing gender equality both currently and in the future. We currently hold the Athena SWAN Charter Silver Award.



We work extensively through industry partnerships with pharmaceutical companies, other research institutions and charities.

For example, in 2023 we were ranked as one of the UK’s best higher education institutions at engaging with industry, academic partners and the wider public, in the Government’s latest Knowledge Exchange Framework.



At our Sutton site we are the key institution to form part of the London Cancer Hub – we are working with partners including the London Borough of Sutton, Transport for London, Epsom Hospitals NHS Trust and the Royal Marsden NHS Trust as part of this regeneration project which will bring jobs and new infrastructure to the local community.



We are working with our laboratory staff, ActNow, My Green Lab and LEAF to find ways in which to address the environmental impacts of laboratory science. For example we are part of a Medical Research Council funded study together with the University of Surrey on understanding the environmental impacts of common laboratory protocols.

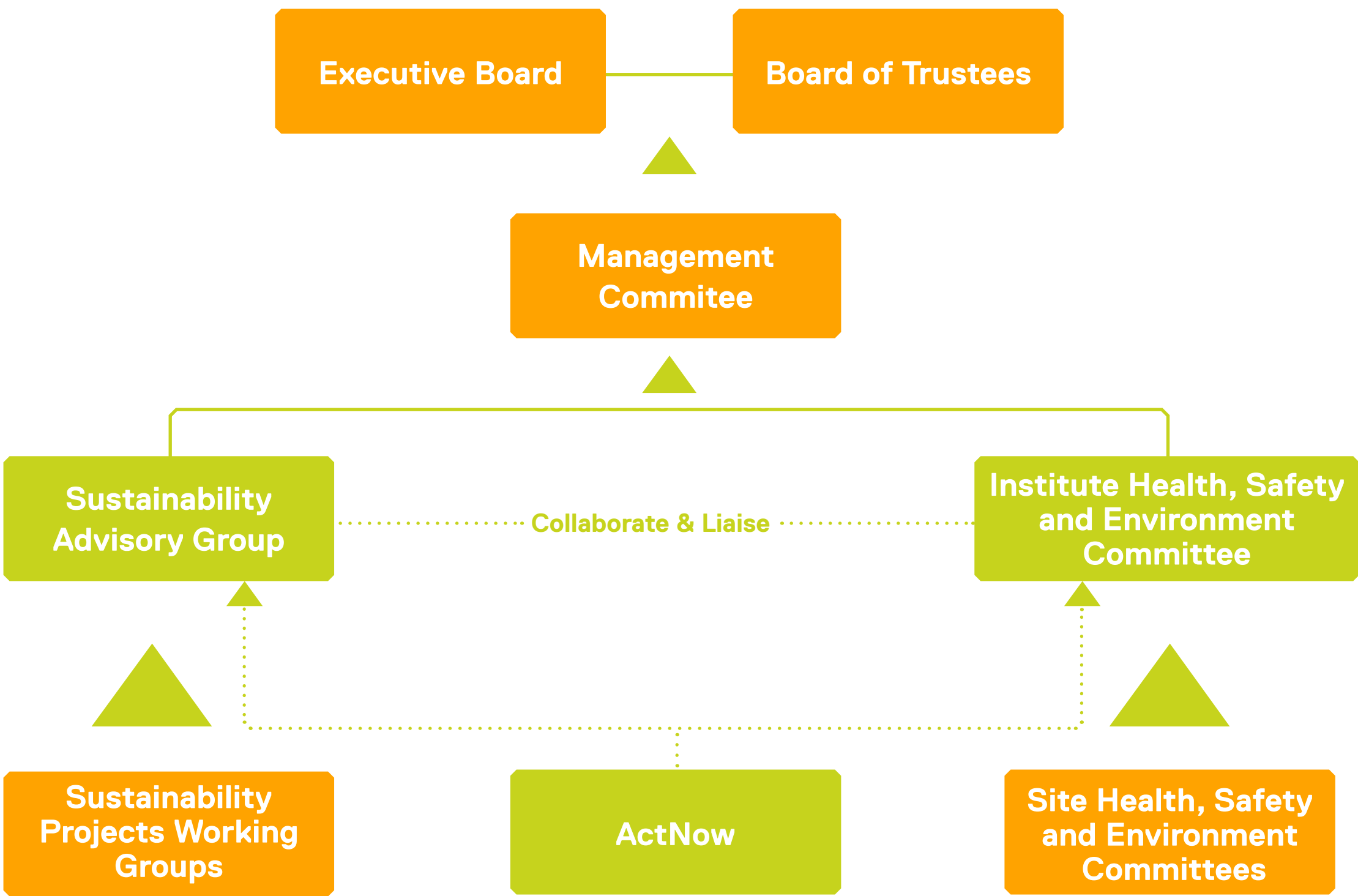


# Governance for Sustainability at the ICR

We acknowledge that the success of our sustainability plans depends on the combined efforts of both our supporting governance and the active participation of all people at the ICR.

In 2020, following the declaration of a Climate Emergency, we established the Sustainability Advisory Group (SAG), comprising senior members from various sectors within the ICR, ranging from facilities to scientific divisions. This diverse group acts as a steering group for sustainability, ensuring representation of a wide array of stakeholders outlined in Sustainable Discoveries and play a crucial role in compiling this report.

The SAG reports to the Management Committee which reports to the ICR Executive Board and to the Board of Trustees.



# Sustainability, Health & Safety team

Our Sustainability Team coordinates the delivery of our sustainability plan under the integrated management system and to continue promoting a proportional approach to risk management to enable our world class research.

Sustainability support is also provided from a number of other roles at the ICR that sit outside the Sustainability, Health and Safety Team including the ICR Energy Manager, Green Travel Co-ordinator and Supply Chain & Sustainability Manager.





# Sustainable Discoveries – the ICR’s Sustainability Action Plan



Sustainable Discoveries at the ICR represent our commitment to align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, addressing economic, social, and environmental challenges locally and globally.

This initiative, part of our strategy, aims to integrate sustainability principles into our work at the ICR.

**Sustainable Discoveries has 4 pillars:**

## **Sustainable Operations:**

- The transformation of our estates and facilities
- Supporting our people across the ICR

## **Sustainable Science:**

- How we undertake our research to defeat cancer whilst reducing environmental impacts

## **Sustainable Procurement:**

- Refers to how we improve the environmental and social impacts from our supply chain - the largest share of our carbon footprint

## **Sustainable Foundations:**

- Governance • Accountability • Training • Awareness
- Systems to Support Sustainability





# Pillar 1

## Sustainable Foundations

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# Pillar 1: Sustainable Foundations:

Under the Sustainable Foundations Pillar, we establish the groundwork for implementing our plan. We involve and educate our colleagues on sustainability topics, closely monitor our progress, while sharing our accomplishments.

In this section of the report, we will outline our sustainability strategy and our commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2040.

## ICR's Climate Impacts

- ♦ **Net zero emissions by 2040**
- ♦ **42% reduction in our carbon footprint across scopes 1, 2, and 3 by 2029/2030**

The climate crisis stands as one of today's most fundamental global challenges. The Climate Change Act 2008 mandates that greenhouse gas emissions must reach net zero by 2050.

In a determined effort to lead by example, the ICR has set an ambitious goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2040, requiring a reduction of emissions by a minimum of 90% by that deadline. We have established an interim target based on the methodology from the Science Based Targets Initiative, aiming for a 42% reduction in our carbon footprint across scopes 1, 2, and 3 by 2029/30. We have established an interim target based on the methodology from the Science Based Targets Initiative, aiming for a 42% reduction in our carbon footprint across scopes 1, 2, and 3 by 2029/30.

### Our emissions fall into 3 main areas:

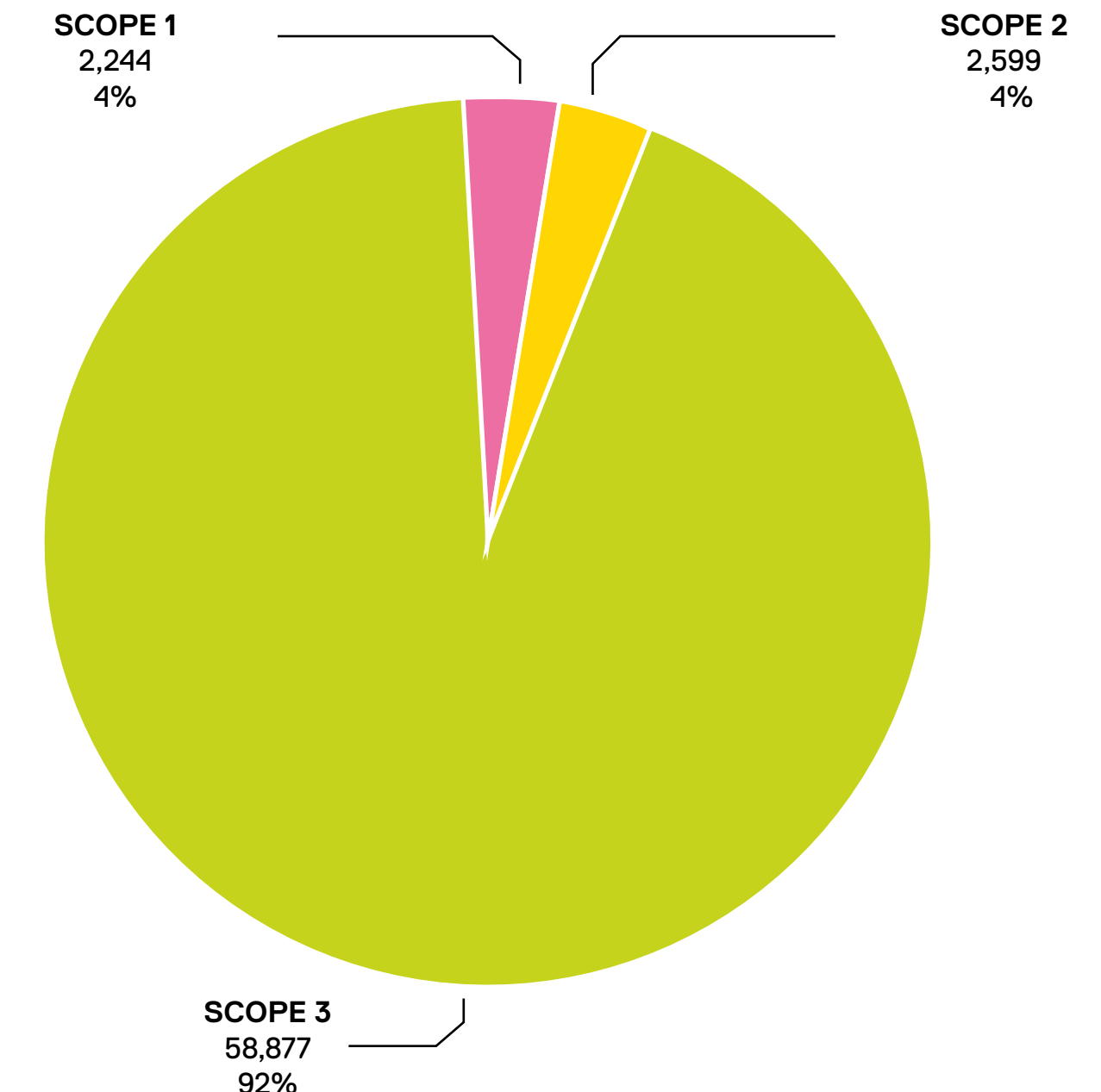
- **Scope 1** – emissions from combustion of gas in heating boilers, emissions from burning fuel for back-up generators, leakage of cooling system refrigerant gases and emissions from our own vehicles
- **Scope 2** – emissions associated with the consumption of purchased electricity from the national grid
- **Scope 3** – our wider value chain including emissions from procurement, waste management, commuting, business travel (this is by far the main source of emissions)

## ICR Carbon Footprint 2022/23

### Summary data

Our carbon footprint is calculated for each academic year. In 2022/23, the total ICR carbon footprint was 63,720 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

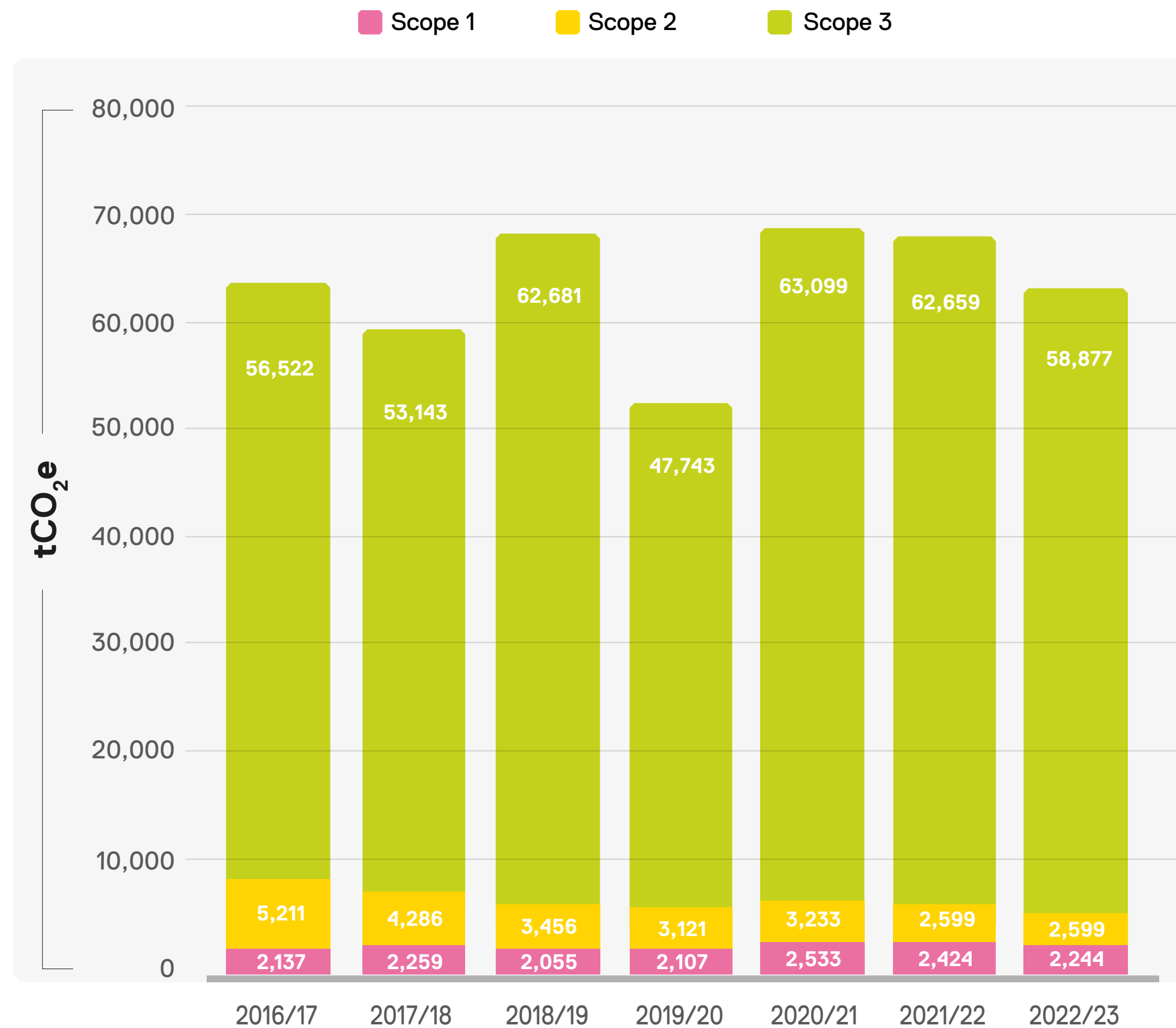
2022/2023 share of emissions tCO<sub>2</sub>e



There was a decrease of 6.3% comparing to the previous academic year. This is mainly due to the improvement of the procurement data accuracy, but also the reduction in estate energy.



Yearly emissions comparison with share of scopes (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)



## Impacts Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions:

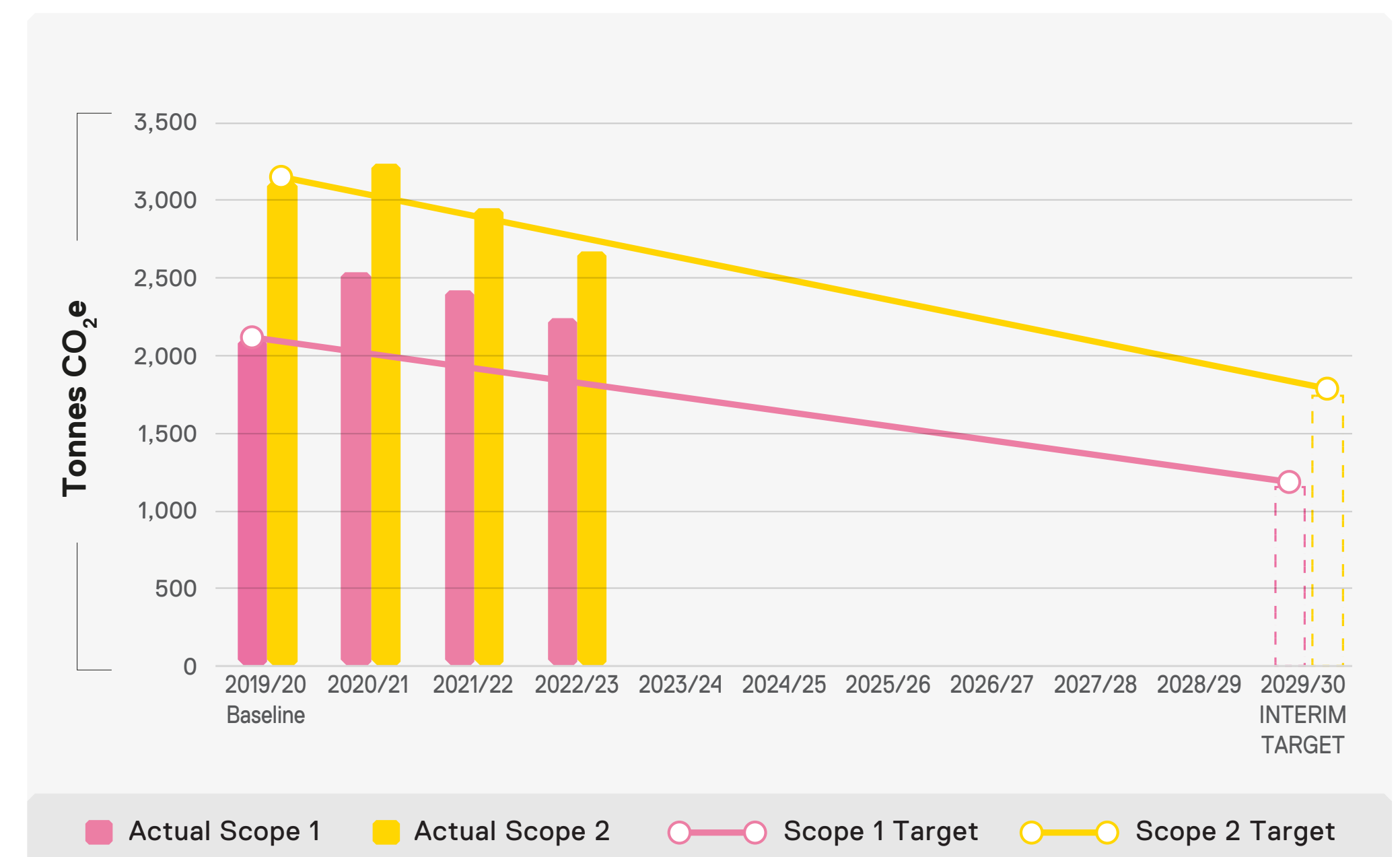
In 2022/23, Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions (carbon emissions from estates) have decreased by 7% and 12% respectively. There has been a slight decrease in electricity consumption (-11%), gas consumption (-6%) and refrigerant losses (-35%). Also, this is partly due to a reduction in the UK grid emissions factor reflecting decarbonisation of the UK's electricity supply (location based).

Emissions from combustion of fuel oil for backup generators, which is part of our Scope 1, have increased from 0.7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2021/22 to 13 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2022/23, mainly due to power outage and the completion of additional testing during the academic year.

Comparing to 2019/2020, there has been higher consumption of gas in our estates in the following 3 years, mainly due to the opening of the CCDD building in 2020/2021. To meet our science-based target for 2023/24 – Scope 1 emissions will need to fall by 22% compared to 2022/23.

Scope 2 accounted for zero emissions under the market-based approach as purchased electricity was backed up with certification showing that the ICR had purchased nuclear energy via the grid. Our Scope 2 is on track to reach our near-term and net zero targets.

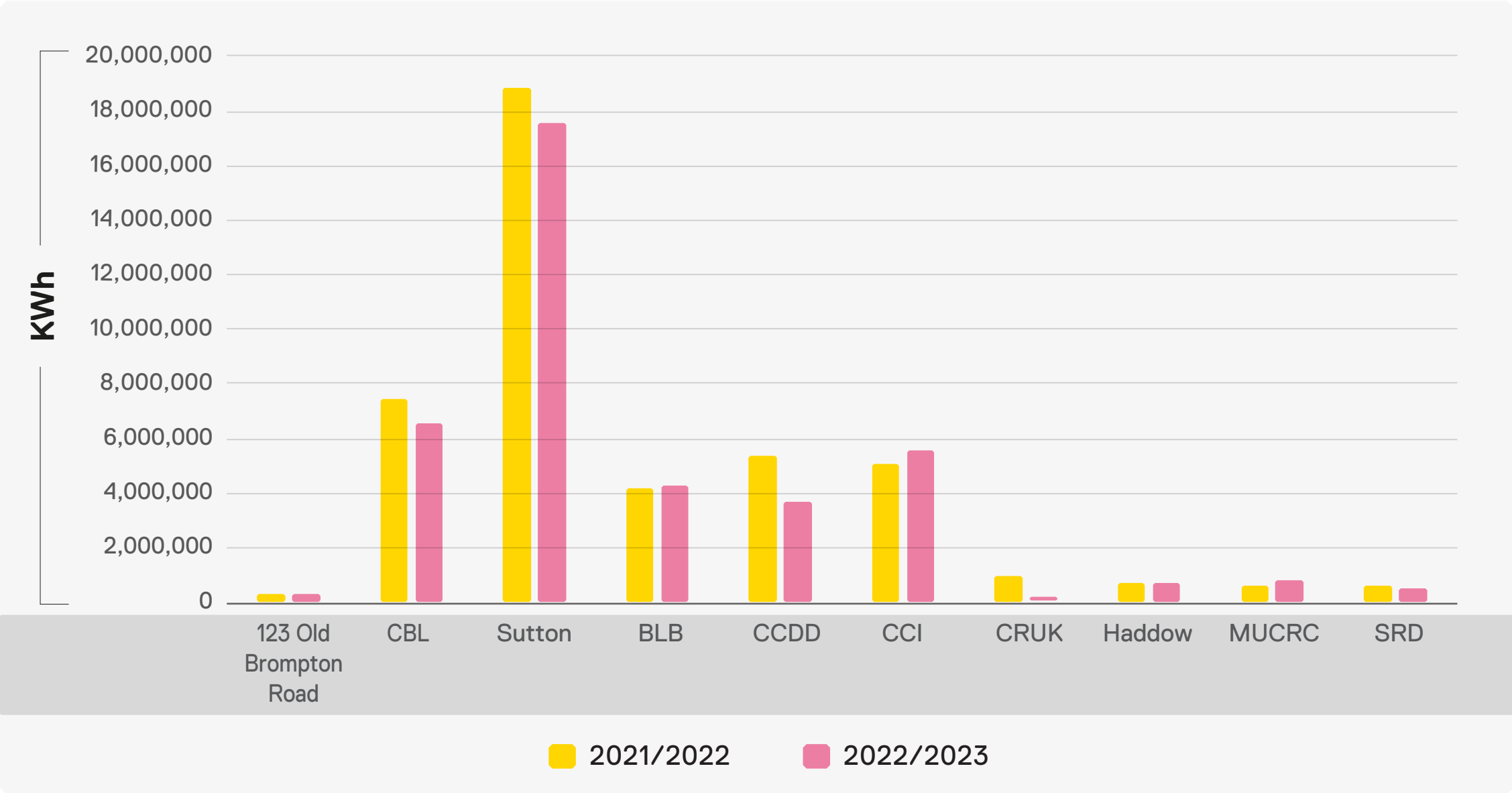
Scope 1 and 2 Science Based Target with progress





The CCDD building at Sutton is the building with the highest decrease in energy consumption (electricity + gas) between 2021/22 and 2022/23, following by 123 Old Brompton Road (-22%) and the SRD building in Sutton (-15%).

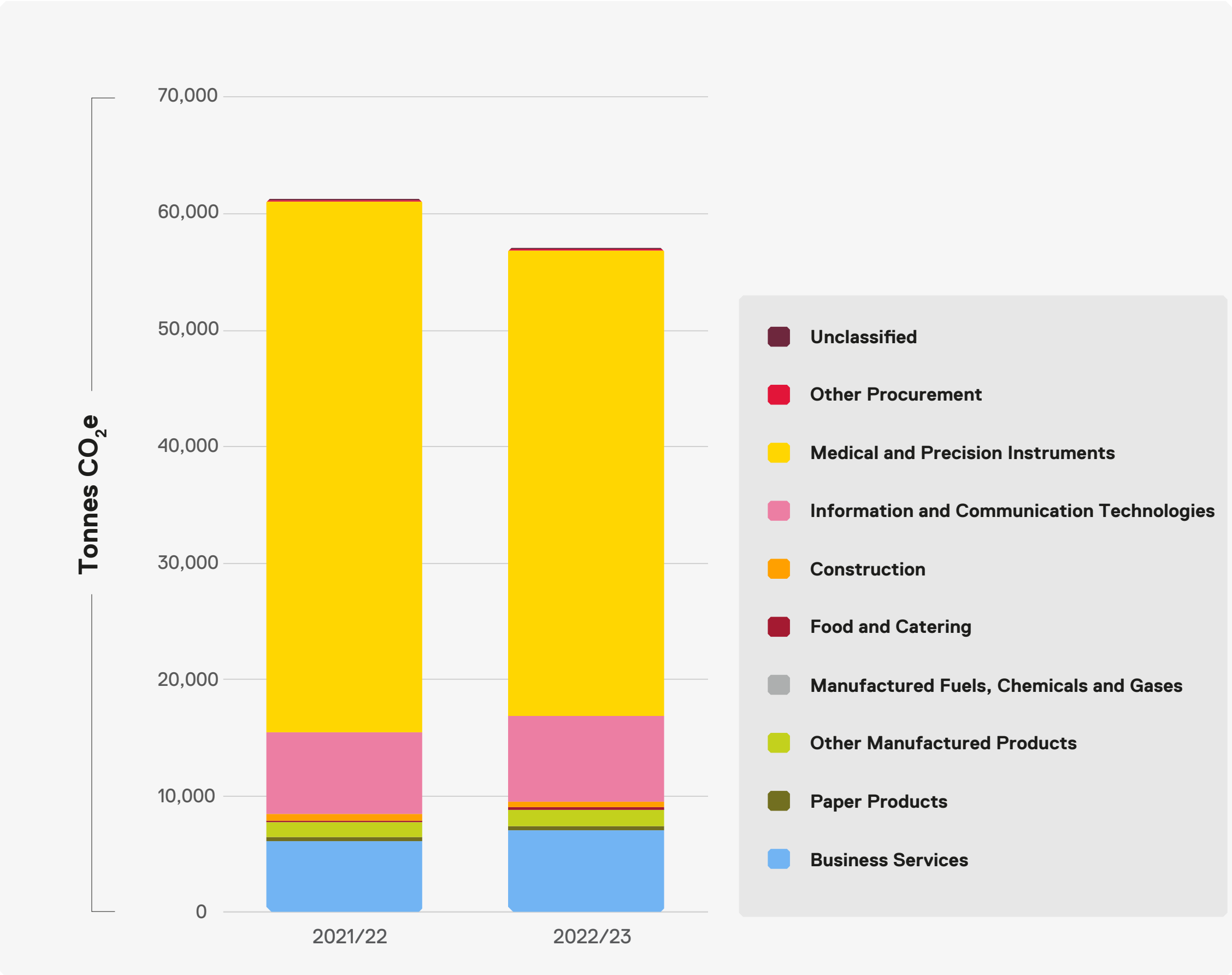
Estates Year On Year Comparison -  
Energy Consumption (Electricity+Gas) in kWh



Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions:

Emissions from purchased goods and services represented 92% of our total carbon footprint in 2022/23. For the past few years, our procurement activities have constituted the majority of our carbon emissions, which is why we are putting significant efforts into making our supply chain more environmentally friendly.

Procurement Carbon Footprint - Comparison with Previous Year





The purchase of lab consumables and equipment is by far our largest spend category in procurement, and our highest source of emissions.

This year, the procurement emissions were calculated using a hybrid approach, where we calculated supplier specific carbon data for 7 of our main suppliers, and then used the Higher Education Purchasing Consortium’s HESCET spend-based factors for the remaining list of suppliers. This is a significant improvement in data accuracy, which resulted in lower procurement emissions comparing to the previous academic years.

The procurement team is continuing to work on data collection to improve the accuracy of this data set for future years with the aim to continue to move away from a spend-based calculation approach which tends to overestimate Scope 3 emissions.

Other Scope 3 categories:

Scope 3 emissions without procurement is higher in 2022/2023, mainly due to the increase in business travel emissions following a decline during the COVID-19 pandemic. The total distance travelled by air has increased by 156%, and distance travelled by rail has increased by 110%.

Emissions attributed to waste have gone up by 14% from 67.9 tCO2e in 2021/22 to 77.5 tCO2e in 2022/23. Emission from water consumption have reduced by 24% comparing to the last academic year reflecting the efforts we are doing with our building and maintenance operations and usage monitoring.

From 2019 to 2021, the ICR witnessed a reduction in emissions, primarily attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, in 2019/2020, emissions related to procurement experienced a notable decline, while in 2020/2021, emissions associated with business travel and commuting were significantly reduced.

Homeworking emissions

We initiated the calculation of emissions related to remote work in 2021/2022. It is essential to highlight that these emissions existed in prior years but had not been quantified.

During 2021/2022, we were unable to obtain specific emission factors for homeworking emissions from the UK government. Instead, we relied on the Ecoact methodology for assessing these emissions.

In 2022/2023, the UK government did release emission factors for homeworking, which we subsequently adopted. Interestingly, while keeping the same number of hours for remote work as the previous year, the change in methodology resulted in a slight 3-point increase in emissions. This demonstrates that both methodologies align quite closely in their findings.

ICR Carbon Footprint - Comparison with previous year - Scope 3 (excluding procurement)



Sustainability Training and Capacity Building

♦ 100% of new ICR staff to take onboarding sustainability training

Our goal is for every member of the ICR to possess a strong sense of sustainability awareness, extending beyond its impact on their specific roles. We hope to install this consciousness in individuals, encouraging them to carry it beyond the workplace. We have made sustainability training accessible to all members of the ICR in various formats.

- Some of the training we currently offer consists of:
- Sustainability at the ICR – modified IEMA accredited courses to help upskill our staff and students in delivering the ICR’s Sustainability Plan.
  - Sustainability e-learning module – an inclusive sustainability course provided to all new staff during onboarding



Sustainability at the ICR Course (IEMA accredited framework)

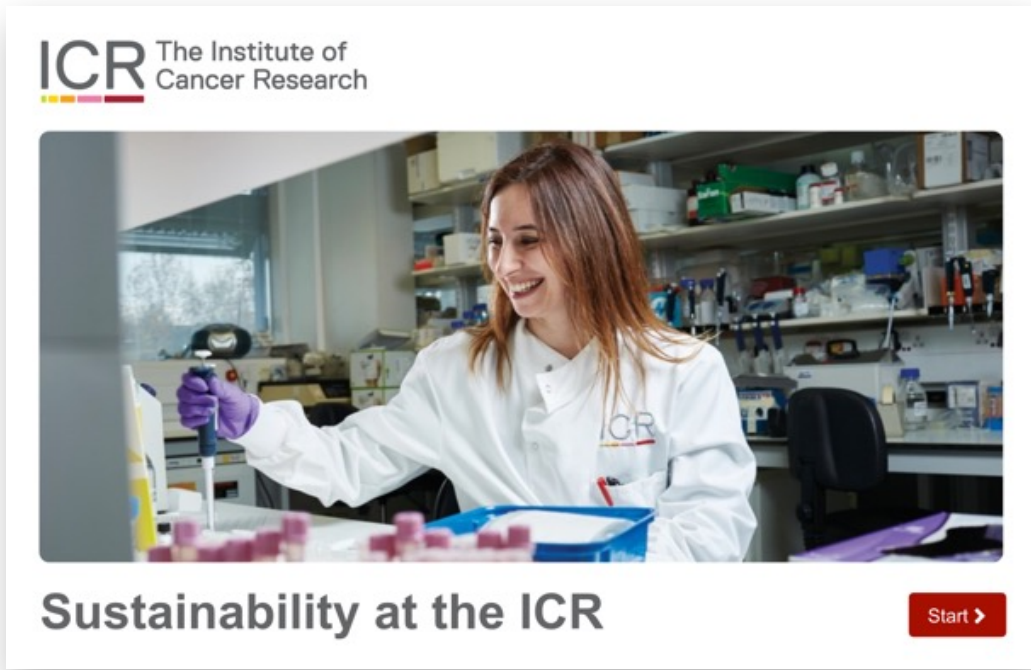
To meet our sustainability objectives in educating our staff, we utilised the IEMA (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) framework to create a bespoke three-module course (Modules A, B, and C) totalling 14 hours.

The course has three main goals: first, to provide a comprehensive overview of sustainability, in accordance with ICR’s approach; second, to tackle crucial environmental issues such as laboratory waste and energy efficiency; and third, to furnish practical guidance on how to incorporate sustainability into every ICR team.

Successful course completion leads to individuals earning an IEMA certificate. In the 2022/2023 academic year, 51 staff members enrolled in the course, resulting in 33 certificates being awarded.

Sustainability e-learning Module

Delivered in a concise 15-20 minute e-learning format, this training is an integral component of our employee induction process. It encompasses a range of sustainability topics, providing an introduction to the concept of sustainability itself and what it signifies for the ICR. Additionally, it offers a brief overview of our Sustainable Discoveries plan and outlines opportunities for engagement. This training serves as a valuable resource for individuals who may not be familiar with the subject, while also delving deeper into how to enact more sustainable practices within a laboratory setting. Simultaneously, it lays a solid foundation for newcomers to grasp the culture of the ICR.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

•Achieve the Athena SWAN award at silver

**We believe that our strength comes from combining what we have in common – our shared goals and values – with what makes each of us different.**

Creating an inclusive and supportive culture where everyone can succeed is essential to the ICR and aligns with our values. We are committed to valuing all our people, and giving everyone equal access to recruitment, career development and promotion.

Athena Swan 2025

Athena SWAN is an equality charter mark framework and accreditation scheme established and managed by the UK Equality Challenge Unit that recognises and celebrates good practices in higher education and research institutions towards the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success.



The ICR is proud to hold an Athena Swan Silver award, given in recognition of the impact of our work on gender equity. The Athena Swan Steering Group (chaired by Professor Christina Yap) is working towards our next award, to be submitted in 2025.

In 2023, the Athena Swan Steering Group have worked on:

- A pilot programme providing free period products. This is currently being expanded to cover the whole ICR.
- Review of ICR parental leave and pay. The ICR has increased our enhanced maternity, adoption and shared parental leave to 18 weeks full (enhanced) pay for all.

In the next year we will continue to embed good practices across the Institute, and focus on actions to reduce the gender pay gap and to address the under-representation of women in Faculty.



Professor Jessica Downs, Deputy Head of Cancer Biology and co-chair of the Athena SWAN network at the ICR, said: **“All research benefits from having a diverse workforce – which includes and goes beyond gender equality. There are plenty of stats to show that greater diversity leads to improved organisational performance. Working in an environment where you feel valued and where you have equal opportunities allows you to realise your own potential. I’m delighted our Athena SWAN silver award for 2019–23 recognises the ICR’s hard work in this area, and look forward to continuing work with colleagues across the ICR to shape important, practical solutions that can really make a difference to someone in the workplace.”**

Dr Vanessa McKean, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at the ICR commented: **“I’m incredibly proud that the ICR has been awarded an Athena SWAN Silver award, in recognition of the impact of our work on gender equality and developing our inclusive culture.**

**Annual equality objectives 2024**

The ICR sets equality objectives through the Equality Steering Group and these are published in our annual equality report. In 2023 we have achieved:

- To provide training for all new staff and students on a one day workshop which includes:  
Part 1- A Supportive Workplace: covers the ICR’s working culture, an overview of relevant equality legislation, bullying and harassment, and the responsibilities of staff and students to each other. Case studies are used extensively. Updated in 2022 to cover recognising sexual misconduct and revised guidance on Prevent (the UK government’s anti-radicalisation strategy).  
Part 2 - Active Bystander Training: aims to give participants the confidence and tools to challenge unacceptable behaviours.
- We work with teams, divisions and directorates to offer bespoke refresher bystander training.
- A focus group of neurodivergent staff and students contributed to the redesign of 123 Old Brompton Road site.
- Recruitment training for managers will be launched in early 2024. Currently the HR recruitment team provide 1:1 training.

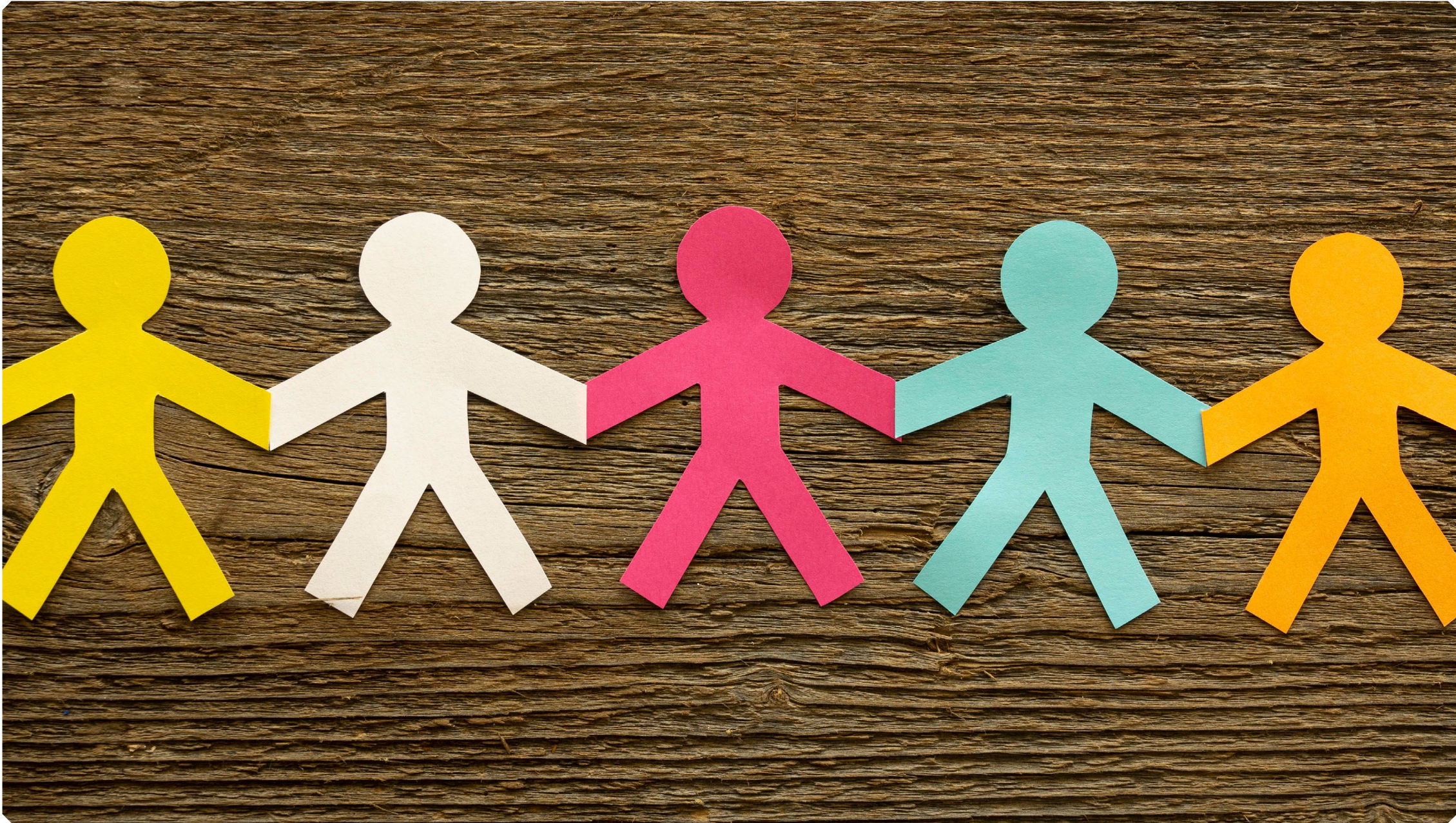
Our new online reporting platform, Report + Support, allows more effective reporting and tracking of unacceptable behaviour, and promotion of resources available to staff, students and visitors experiencing or observing such behaviours. It is an additional tool to help us improve the working environment and ensure a supportive culture for all.

We have continued our work on race equity, collaborating with Imperial College London to send ethnic minority staff on the IMPACT programme, a programme which focuses on career development for ethnic minority staff. We also sent four managers on IMPACT for Managers, equipping them with inclusive management and leadership skills.

We ringfenced summer studentships for Black undergraduates, and have received funding from Wellcome to support recruitment of technician apprentices.

**Looking ahead**

Whilst we are proud of our achievements, challenges remain: we want to close our gender and ethnicity pay gaps, address the under-representation of women in Faculty and the under-representation of Black researchers. Our People Strategy will be published in 2024 and this will establish long-term objectives in these areas, and strengthen out inclusive and collaborative culture.





**Gender Equality**

At the ICR, we want to promote change by identifying and addressing the challenges people face in establishing their careers because of their gender.

Our ambition is to create a sustainable pipeline of women in scientific and clinical leadership roles, address gender equality in all career paths across the ICR, champion gender equality in the wider research community, while sharing our expertise with other institutions.

**The Women in Science Group**

This networking and leadership development group, chaired by Professor Christina Yap, brings together senior researchers and staff from the ICR and The Royal Marsden to help address the inequality in the number of women in the most senior research leadership roles.

Topics explored include supporting high-performance teams, influencing skills, personal brand, leadership and mentoring.

**Equality networks:**

The ICR and Royal Marsden have three joint equality networks. These are the Pride Network, the Race Equality and Cultural Heritage (REACH) Forum, and the Disability at Work Network (DAWN). These networks contribute to the ICR’s equality programmes through Equality Steering Group.

During Black History Month in 2023, the REACH forum organised four successful webinars, featuring renowned speakers like June Sarpong. .

In addition, the Disability at Work Network hosted three informative discussions during Disability History Month, highlighting the invaluable contributions of individuals with disabilities to the research community.

The LGBT+ Network delivered training on supporting trans colleagues. In LGBT History month the network produced a series of posters celebrating LGBT+ scientists. For Pride, the group put on a series of events including a London Pride picnic, movie night and pizza, and craft and chat afternoons.

These initiatives sparked valuable conversations and raised awareness within the ICR and the Royal Marsden.

**Equality champions:**

Committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment, our Equality champions, Dr. Barbara Pittam (race equality), Carol Ford (LGBT+ inclusion), Professor Anguraj (Faculty race equality), and Professor Chris Bakal (Academic Dean’s Team Equality lead), collaborate with different equality networks, staff, and students to ensure the voices and perspectives of under-represented groups are heard and considered in decision-making processes.



# Pillar 2

## Sustainable Operations

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### Energy Savings hit £250k

Due to the dedicated efforts of our staff in conserving energy, the ICR has achieved substantial savings of nearly a quarter of a million pounds on its 2022/23 bills.

These initiatives were spearheaded by the Carbon and Energy Management Group, resulting in a significant -11% reduction in electricity consumption and a 6% decrease in gas usage.

Measures included reducing computer brightness and enabling sleep mode for screens, participating in initiatives like the Big Christmas Switch Off, using timers for equipment such as water baths and heat blocks, optimising incubator and fridge use, and transitioning to -70 degrees Celsius for ultra-low temperature freezers.

David Collier, the ICR's Energy Manager said: *"The figures show that even though we really only started focusing on driving down consumption halfway through the year, we've made significant progress. If we can keep these changes going, and get even more staff involved, we should be able to see even bigger savings next year."*

Laboratories typically consume five times more energy per unit area compared to office buildings, that is due to special ventilation, lighting, cooling systems, and laboratory equipment like fume cupboards and ultra-low temperature freezers. Considering that 80% of our floor space at the ICR is dedicated to laboratories, a substantial portion of our energy usage and carbon emissions originates from these operations. This underscores why our emphasis in Sustainable Operations is vital for achieving our objectives.

We are committed to reducing carbon emissions from our buildings by 42% by 2030 and 90% by 2040 (using a 2019/2020 baseline). This involves retrofitting all our buildings, improving energy management and transitioning to on-site renewable energy sources.

### Space Temperature Policy across the ICR

After a successful trial in the Centre for Cancer Imaging and Sir Richard Doll Building, the ICR rolled out in July 2023 a new Space Temperature Policy across all sites as part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.

Under the new policy, building heating and cooling will be regulated based on room temperatures, with heating triggered below 20°C and cooling activated above 25°C. These temperatures will apply

in all areas except for server rooms, hub rooms, cold stores and laboratories that require specialist environmental control.

Similar to many higher education institutions (HEIs), the ICR consumes a substantial amount of energy, the implementation of the new Space Temperature Policy is projected to result in an annual reduction of approximately 161 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, leading to an annual cost savings of approximately £94,000.

This change supports the ICR's environmental sustainability goals while conforming to guidelines set by the Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Richard Woods, the ICR's Head of Sustainability, said: *"In the 2021/22 academic year, we reduced our carbon emissions from natural gas by around 3 per cent, but to achieve net zero by 2040, we must do more. This simple change is a small but important step that underlines the ICR's commitment to becoming more sustainable in everything we do."*

## Waste at the ICR

- ♦ **Achieve a 50% recycling rate by 2025/26**
- ♦ **Maintain an annual carbon reduction target of 4.2%**

Waste management is a complex issue that holds particular relevance at the ICR, due to the predominance of laboratory space, resulting in diverse waste types such as hazardous, chemical, electronic, medical, and plastic waste. Beyond meeting regulations, our focus is on waste reduction, with an emphasis on reducing single-use plastic, commonly used in our daily operations.

Researchers at the University of Exeter weighed up their bioscience department's annual plastic waste and concluded that biomedical and agricultural laboratories worldwide could be responsible for 5.5m tonnes of plastic waste a year - equal to 1.41% of the total global plastic production.(Statista, 2021)

Our waste reduction strategy involves implementing behavioural changes and procurement strategies while shifting toward adopting circular economy practices. The circular economy model prioritises sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling materials and products to extend their lifespan.

In line with these principles and our commitment to waste minimisation, we have developed the ICR Sustainable Waste Action Plan 2023-2026.



ICR Sustainable Waste Action Plan 2023-2026

Our three-year Waste Action Plan is in line with our sustainability commitment, focusing on waste reduction, reuse, and recycling to support our 4.2% annual carbon reduction target, emissions associated with waste will be achieved through a reduction in over purchasing and reducing total waste produced.

We have also set a target of achieving a recycling rate of 50% by 2025/26, calculated against the site waste baseline year of 2018/19. Our primary focus will be on reducing waste at the source, recognising that a reduction in waste generation directly impacts the volume of materials recycled across the estate.

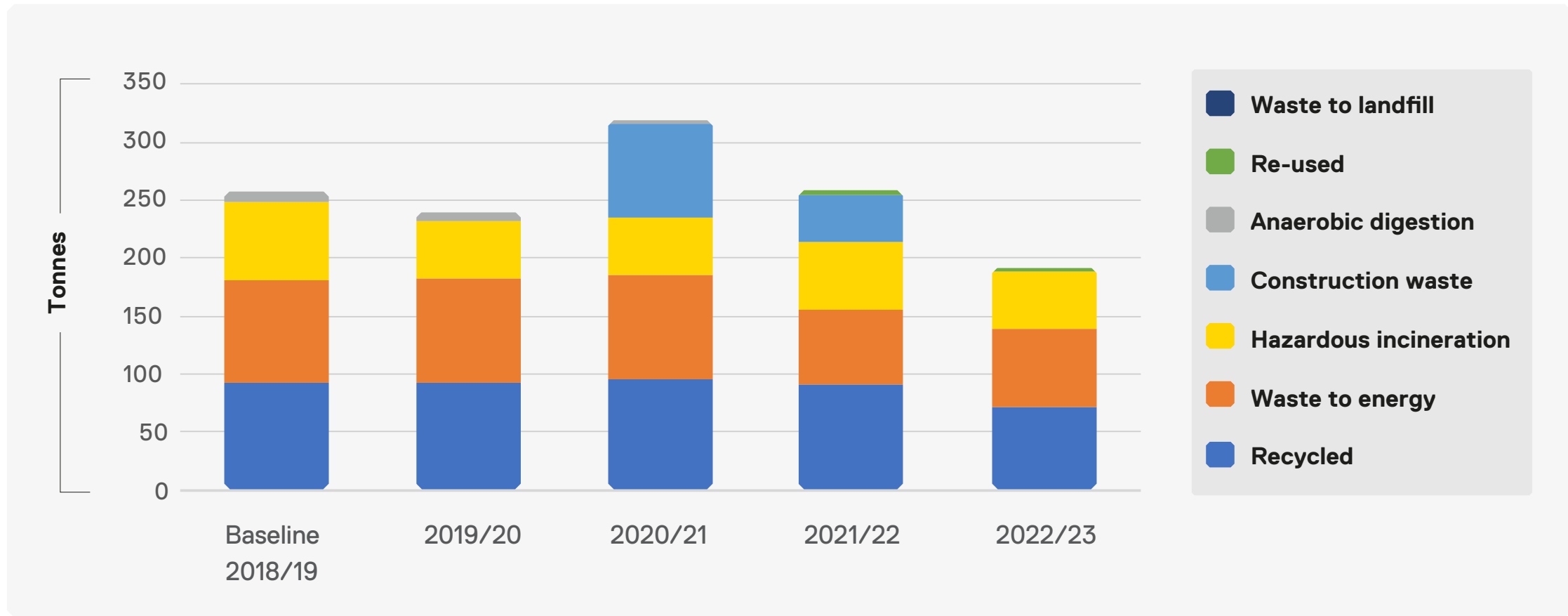
We have identified seven key areas to help reduce our waste. Each of these activities influences the waste output of the ICR, a collaborative approach will ensure that the ICR can reduce its waste and contribute to the circular economy:

- Compliance
- Procurement
- Provision of Facilities and Visual Identity
- Organisational Culture Change and Stakeholder Engagement
- Monitoring and Measurement
- Waste Stream Specific Actions
- Continuous Improvement

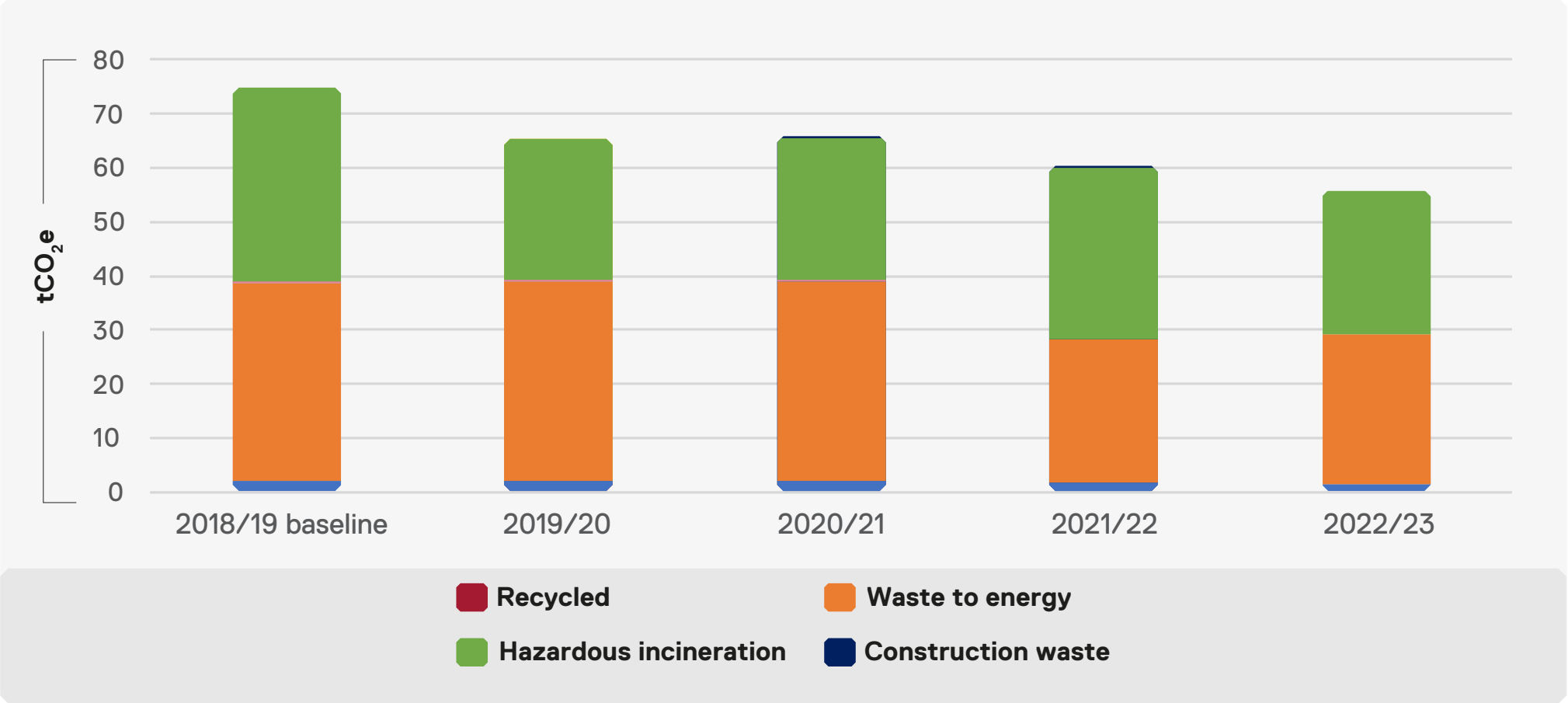
Waste Performance

In 2022/23 we have decreased our total waste in tonnes in 12.7% in comparison to our baseline year. Our total total waste in tCO2e has decreased by 4.5% against our baseline year, showing we are on track with our annual carbon reduction target of 4.2%.

Waste Comparison Per Type (tonnes)

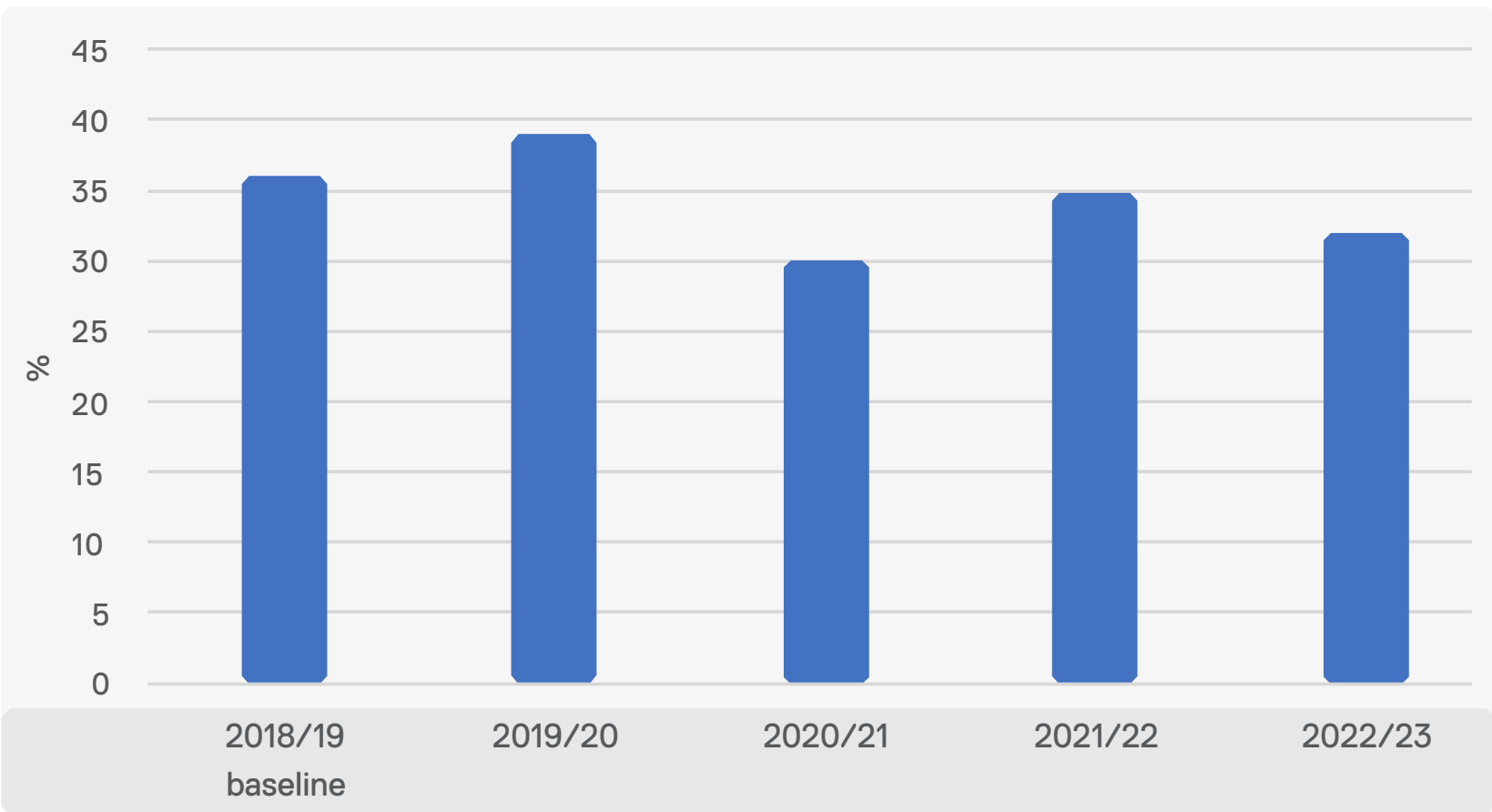


Waste Comparison Per Type (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)



We have set a target of achieving a recycling rate of 50% by 2025/26 and our progress is shown per the following graphic, we recognise that a further increase in the recycling target is achievable.

Total Recycling Rate %





Waste carbon emissions (tCO2e) versus reduction targets with progress



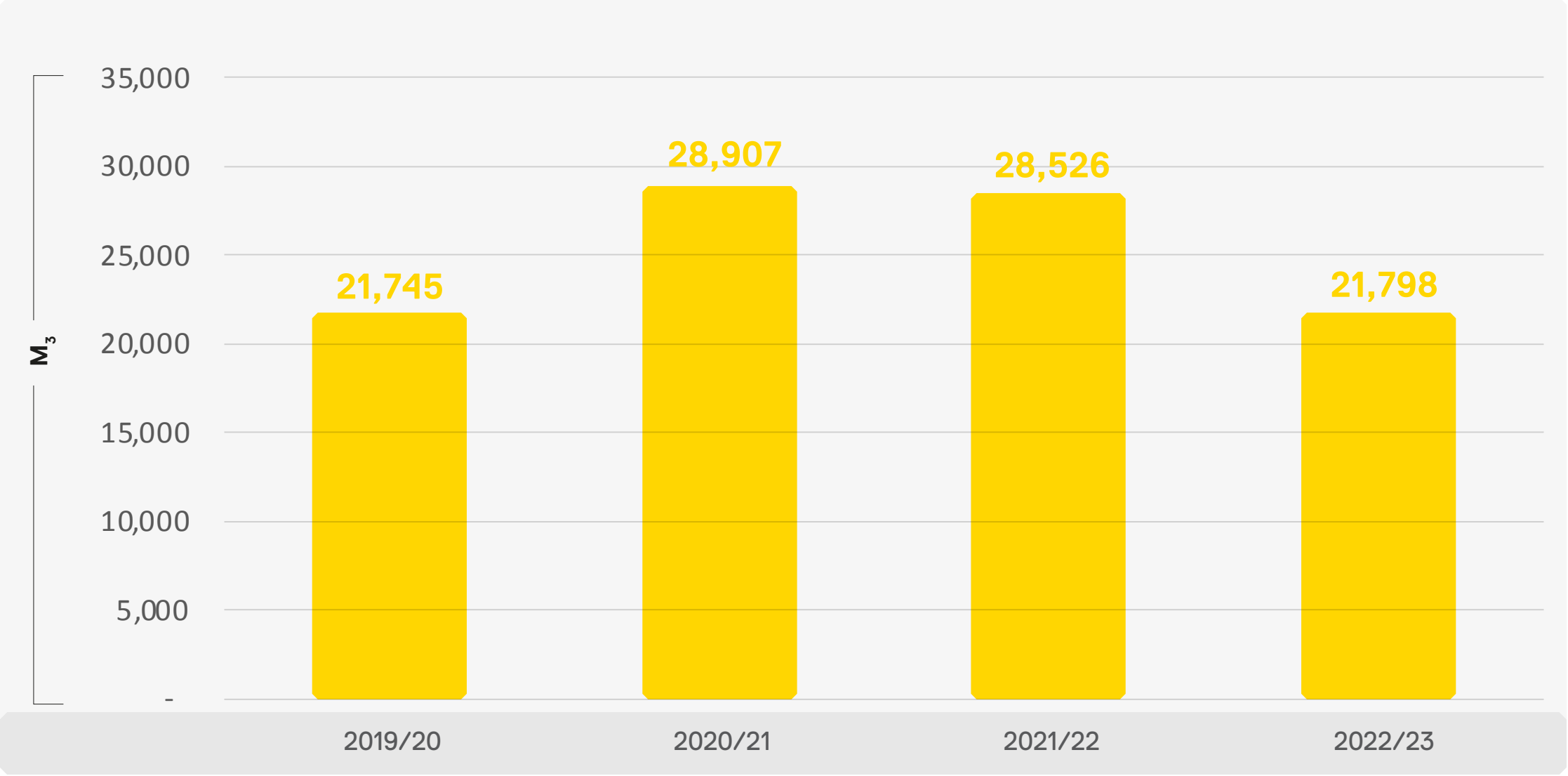
Water Use at the ICR

- ♦ Reduce water usage by 10% per ICR member by 2029/30

At the ICR, our water consumption is primarily a result of our laboratory operations and is also utilised for maintaining our grounds and various projects. In 2020/2021, our water consumption amounted to 28,907 cubic meters, equivalent to filling an Olympic-sized swimming pool 11.5 times. However, in the 2022/2023, our water usage decreased to 21,798 cubic meters, indicating a notable reduction of 24.61%.

We have set an objective to reduce our water usage by 10% per ICR member by 2029/30.

Water Consumption (M<sub>3</sub>)



Travel to ICR sites

- ♦ Reduce single-occupancy car usage on site by 15% between 2019/2024
- ♦ Increase the modal split of staff by:
- ♦ Increasing cycling and walking to and from the ICR.
- ♦ 5% increase in public transport usage (especially by train and shuttle bus) by 2020.
- ♦ Encourage car sharing to and from the ICR.

ICR Travel Plan

The ICR has a Travel Plan that is part of the ICR’s efforts to support a planning application for expanding our research and development facilities in Sutton.

The Travel Plan has successfully met its first objectives, which included reducing single-occupancy car usage on-site, encouraging more cycling and walking to the ICR, promoting the use of public transport (especially by train and shuttle bus), and promoting car-sharing among staff.



Periodic staff travel surveys are conducted every other year at ICR sites in Sutton and Chelsea to determine commuting patterns, travel preferences, and attitudes among staff members, students, and other individuals associated with the institution. The most recent survey in 2022 saw the participation of 626 respondents, representing a diverse group of personnel and contributors connected to the ICR during the survey distribution period.

To support greener commuting, we offer two electric charging stations exclusively for ICR vehicles and 20 stations dedicated to ICR staff at the Sutton site. Currently, there are no charging stations at the Chelsea site.

At our Chelsea site - Fulham Road - we have a bike shed with 22 spaces and additional 40 spaces on one of our floor patios. Our plans are to add more spaces in our 123 Old Brompton Road car park. Additionally, there are 118 external bike spaces across the Sutton campus.

We will continue with our survey to monitor progress and we are working on the development of a new Green Travel Plan.

Biodiversity

In 2017 a Biodiversity Action Plan was developed for our site in Sutton. A strategic approach to conserving and enhancing the ecological features within the ICR’s control. The aim of the project is to provide guidance to maintain and enrich the biodiversity on the site while ensuring that it aligns with local and regional biodiversity action plans.

Since then, we have created a Physic garden that houses medicinal plants beneficial for pollinating insects

Ecologists have conducted site visits to monitor biodiversity progress in compliance with planning conditions, which will continue until 2030.



Biodiversity Volunteering Afternoon – Maintaining Belmont Pastures

ActNow in conjunction with London Borough of Sutton and Sutton Nature Conservation Volunteers joined forces for a Biodiversity event with the aim to contribute to biodiversity conservation, as well as to promote team building and individual well-being.

The London nature reserve is a 10 minute walk from ICR’s Sutton site and is a chalk grass land habitat that must be maintained in a minimal nutrient state to protect the current biodiversity. These corridors are critical for maintaining healthy populations of organisms, as it promotes biological diversity and allows animals to respond in the face of environmental changes.



Masterplan for the Sutton site and London hub

The ICR is currently developing a masterplan for our Sutton site that will capture our overall vision and objectives for our estate. This plan also takes into account broader opportunities associated with the London Cancer Hub site.

This masterplan will explore the integration of sustainable practices and sustainable designs across our site to mitigate our carbon emissions and enhance wellbeing.

It will also address opportunities for renewable energy production, carbon capture, Biodiversity Net Gain, circular economy promotion, sustainable transport, electrification, adaptive building reuse, and the incorporation of relevant future technologies.

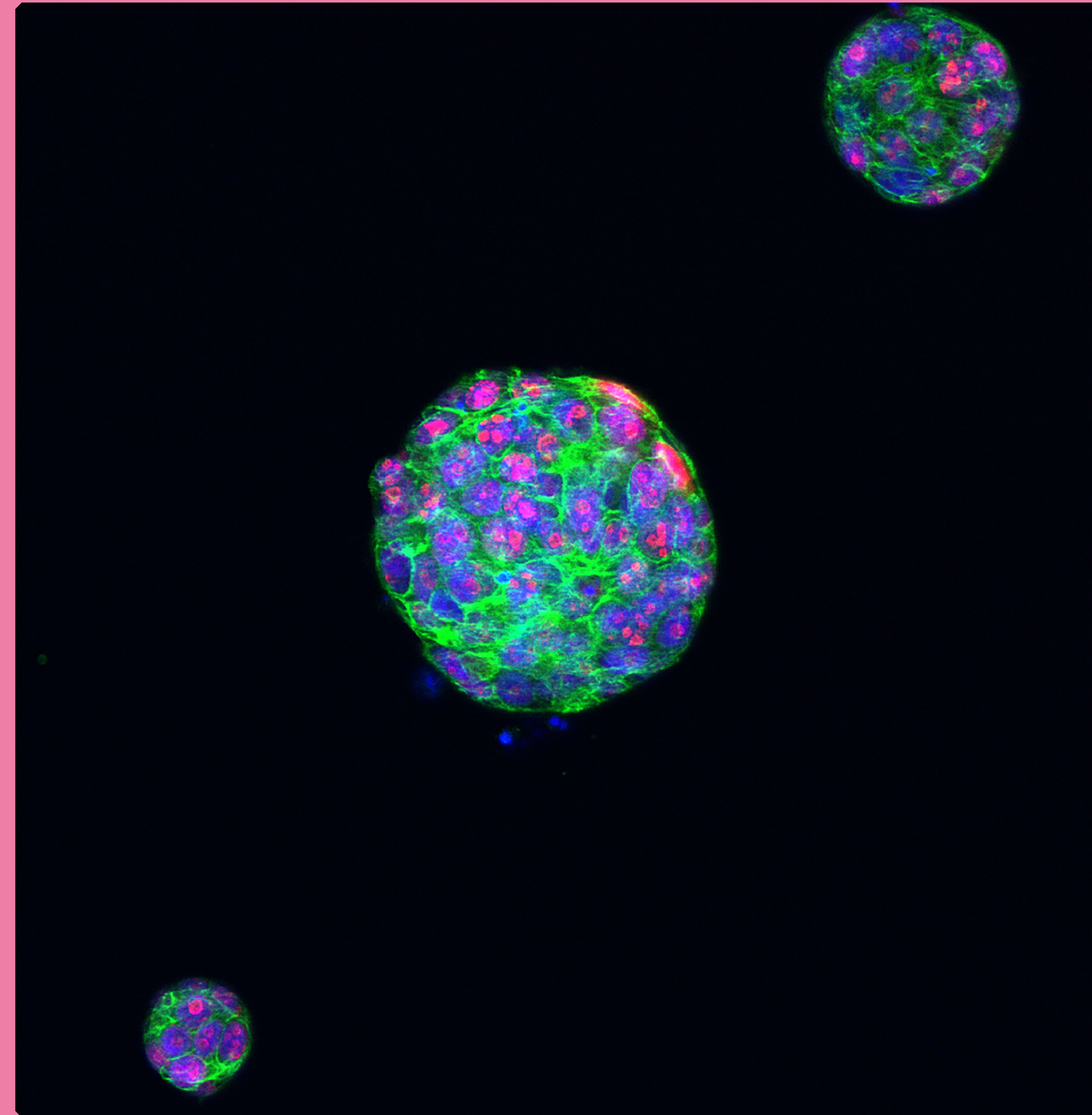




# Pillar 3

## Sustainable Science

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Science is core to the ICR, and historically, scientific research has been associated with substantial carbon emissions and waste generation, especially from plastics and hazardous materials. Laboratories, due to their nature, consume significant amounts of energy and water while also generating substantial waste.

In pursuit of our objective, we collaborated closely with our scientists to ensure our laboratories are signed up in laboratory sustainability certification schemes, such as LEAF and My Green Lab, which will be elaborated in greater detail within this report.

These initiatives will assist our laboratory teams in achieving our net zero and broader sustainability objectives by investigating our energy consumption and carbon footprint of various laboratory equipment types and identifying strategies to minimise their environmental impact.

Concerning lab waste, our aim is to both reduce the overall waste generated and enhance waste segregation practices to increase recycling and reduce incineration.

### Environmental Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of Laboratory Protocols

In collaboration with the University of Surrey and the Medical Research Council, we conducted a project to analyse the Environmental Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of laboratory protocols. The project aimed to evaluate the environmental impact of specific protocols, such as electrophoresis & western blotting, microscopy & imaging, DNA and gene expression analysis, and cell and biochemical assays.

This assessment, utilising LCA as a central sustainability analysis tool, provides detailed environmental data and evidence, enhancing our science teams’ comprehension of the ecological footprint and overall environmental impact.

The project findings will be shared with the bio medical research communities and the LCA practitioner community, aiming collaboration and ongoing partnership focusing on advancing low-impact biomedical science discovery.

## ActNow

In response to the 2021 Staff Attitude survey, which showed 83% agreement among our staff and students regarding the importance of sustainability as a key priority for the ICR, the ActNow group was started.

ActNow’s purpose is to unite colleagues who are passionate about sustainability and environmental issues, allowing the exchange of ideas and expertise to implement best practices across the ICR effectively.

The group has been actively working with The Royal Marsden Green Matters to develop and implement initiatives and helped in the creation of our action plan Sustainable Discoveries.

ActNow meets monthly to discuss possible greener initiatives to implement across the ICR such as more sustainable laboratory practices.



### Interview with ActNow member, Karen Lane, postdoc in the Downs lab at the Cancer Biology department in Chelsea

Can you briefly introduce yourself and your role at the ICR lab?

*My name is Karen Lane – I am a postdoc in the Downs lab in the Cancer Biology department in Chelsea. I joined the ICR 5.5 years ago after completing my PhD in the University of Galway, Ireland. My work is mainly lab-based, studying the SWI/SNF family of chromatin remodellers, which are mutated in >20% of cancers.*

How long have you been involved in sustainability initiatives within the ICR?

*I joined ActNow and LEAF when program was officially launched in Chelsea in September 2022.*



Could you describe some of the key sustainability projects or practices you have been a part of or have observed in the lab?

*The freezer challenge for our ultra-low temperature freezers, adding recycling options for plastic bottles, and making procurement more sustainable.*

*Most of our lab members are now part of the LEAF program and we have made extra efforts to have a sustainable lab, for example by getting rid of old unused equipment and clearing out considerable space in freezers so that we are not using unnecessary energy.*

In your opinion, what are the most significant sustainability achievements or milestones the lab has reached so far?

*Getting our Bronze Award for sustainability as part of the LEAF program. While many of the criteria for this award involved small steps, being successful in all 16 criteria means we have taken definite steps to think about and improve sustainability in our corner of the ICR. We are now starting to work towards getting the Silver Award.*

Can you share a particular success story or impactful change that resulted from your sustainability efforts or those of your colleagues?

*Our lab has developed central approaches to many things to prevent waste. This includes databases for all chemicals, centralised protocols, and yearly group retreats to discuss science. There is also a detailed lab induction document for new starters. Our lab also sets aside half-days once every few months to clear out fridges or freezers to ensure we are not storing unnecessary reagents.*

In your opinion, how does sustainability align with the overall mission and values of the ICR lab?

*In many ways! I believe the ICR is trying to make the world a better place by helping to find cures and kinder treatments for cancer. However, I believe the climate crisis needs to also be addressed to make the world a better place, so we must also try to minimise the harm we do to our planet while helping to treat cancer. It also aligns with many of the ICR's values, such as Valuing All our People and Making a Difference.*

## LEAF – Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework

- ♦ Investigation of energy consumption and carbon footprint of laboratory equipment
- ♦ Enhancing energy efficiency in laboratory settings
- ♦ Focus on sustainability in computational labs

The Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework is an initiative designed specifically to improve Sustainability in labs. Created originally at University College London, LEAF was initially piloted for two years across 23 universities and research institutes, comprising 235 lab groups. Per year, each group saved an average of £3,700 and 2.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, equivalent to planting roughly 115 trees.

LEAF is now in use in over 70 academic institutions across the UK and Europe. There are three levels of award (awarded to lab groups): Bronze, Silver and Gold.

LEAF also comes with a number of optional calculators to calculate money and CO<sub>2</sub> saved through good practice, such as waste reduction, and a lot of supporting information, tips and ideas.

Laboratories are responsible for approximately 2% of global plastic waste - equivalent to ~5.5 million tons of waste - and consume 3 to 10 times more energy per square metre than a typical office. Recognising our role in this statistic motivated us to take a further step towards sustainability, and LEAF was the ideal initiative to partnership with.



### LEAF comprises four core elements:

**1.The Framework:** online tool that guides users through sustainability actions

**2.Online calculators:** allows users to measure financial and carbon impact

**3.Toolkit and Resources:** guides to sustainable lab equipment and consumables to induction and procedures

**4.User Engagement & Training:** sustainable science tailored workshop to staff and students





LEAF is a transformative initiative that empowers laboratories to be at the forefront of sustainability while advancing scientific knowledge.

Twenty-four laboratories located in Chelsea participated in the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF). Each laboratory had one or more designated LEAF representatives responsible for coordinating actions within the lab. The administrative requirements for LEAF are minimal, involving the completion of a straightforward form at the end of the year.

The most significant aspect of the award lies not in the paperwork but in the year-round efforts made within the lab to implement more sustainable practices. LEAF also places a strong emphasis on promoting excellent and replicable scientific research, as well as upholding scientific integrity. It encourages the reporting of negative results and effective experiment planning to reduce the need for repeated experiments, aligning with established scientific best practices.

Following the submission of the forms, each laboratory underwent an audit conducted by another laboratory. The primary objective of this process was to facilitate the exchange of ideas and expertise among labs while allowing connections between different divisions and fields.

The whole process was supported by a central ICR team who was there to help with any technical queries and manage actions, they also served as central access to all the individual forms and calculators submitted, which enabled to report back on the progress and celebrate the success of the labs that took part.

### **Sustainable Digital Infrastructure**

In 2023 a program was introduced specifically for computational laboratories. This program targets spaces characterised by high IT demands, extensive utilisation of hardware, storage of substantial data volumes, or the execution of significant computational assessments.

The pilot phase of the framework had a duration of four months, from July to October. At the conclusion of this period, laboratories receive recognition at one of the three levels: Bronze, Silver, or Gold, based on the extent of their sustainability initiatives. This recognition system enables the segmentation of

sustainability efforts into manageable units of work, motivating individuals to undertake more substantial sustainability measures.

The program includes a Green Algorithms groups calculator that can be used to estimate the carbon footprint of computation runs, as well as guidance on how to make more sustainable choices.

The ICR is among the select institutions, including the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford, the University of Exeter, Queen's University of Belfast, UKRI, KCL, and the European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI) to volunteer as one of the fifteen groups participating in this initiative.

The collaboration centres on the introduction of foundational sustainability practices and educational efforts. Throughout the program's duration, follow-up meetings are organised by the leader of the program. Essentially the framework serves as an initial step towards instigating change and encouraging participation and adoption of more comprehensive sustainability practices.

### **Partnership with Sustainable Digital Infrastructure**

The Breast Cancer Research (BCR) Bioinformatics group, led by Syed Haider, was offered the opportunity to take place in Sustainable Digital Infrastructure, the initiative implementation was coordinated by Santiago Madera.

The group specialises in the development of computational methodologies and conducts bioinformatic research and development within the breast cancer division, focusing on translational research.

This criterion involves the development of an induction process for all newcomers, outlining sustainable practices, with a specific focus on coding procedures, data storage, and software and computational package optimisation.

The initiative proposes to assess four categories: Office, Hardware, Data storage and Computations. The assessed practices focus on introducing and educating. The framework also encourages further involvement and implementation of more engaging practises.



## Greener Trials

Clinical trials, crucial for identifying safe and effective treatments, contribute significantly to environmental impact. Despite the initial disclosure of a trial's carbon footprint 16 years ago, little effort has been made to consciously reduce carbon consumption.

The urgency of the climate crisis has grown exponentially. In 2022, approximately 38,000 new trials were registered on Clinicaltrials.gov, with estimated carbon footprints ranging from ~80 to over 2000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per trial. Addressing the carbon footprint of clinical trials is an important yet underexplored avenue for decarbonisation while safeguarding health.

The ICR recognises the importance of fostering innovation to face global sustainability issues and at ICR-CTSU we are committed to reducing the environmental impact of trials and reducing the carbon footprint of our research.

A collaboration between the Institute of Cancer Research – Clinical Trials and Statistics Unit (ICR-CTSU) and the University of Liverpool supported through NIHR funding has brought renewed activity and interest in this area through the development of the first iteration of a method and guidance to carbon footprint publicly funded clinical trials. The work has been conducted in collaboration with other UKCRC Clinical Trials Units and the Sustainable Healthcare Coalition's Low Carbon Clinical Trials Group. We also plan to work towards a de-centralised approach to clinical trials by, for example, employing remote and e-consent practices to reduce unnecessary patient travel and remote monitoring techniques to reduce ICR-CTSU team visits to participating sites.

## My Green Lab



- ♦ **Building sustainability understanding within research divisions**
- ♦ **Reducing overall laboratory waste**
- ♦ **Collaboration with scientists to ensure laboratory sustainability certification in schemes such as LEAF and My Green Lab**

My Green Lab is a non-profit organisation with a mission to build a global culture of sustainability in science.

Recognised by the United Nations Race to Zero campaign as a key measure of progress towards a zero-carbon future. It is dedicated to promoting environmentally responsible practices within laboratory settings. The programme covers 14 sustainability topics and aims to reduce the environmental impact of scientific research and laboratory operations by implementing sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient equipment, reduced waste generation, and the use of more sustainable materials.

Each lab that participates in the programme receives a comprehensive review of their current level of sustainability as well as recommendations for improvements. Five of the labs achieved certification at the highest level (Green) and one achieved Platinum level certification, which is the next best level.

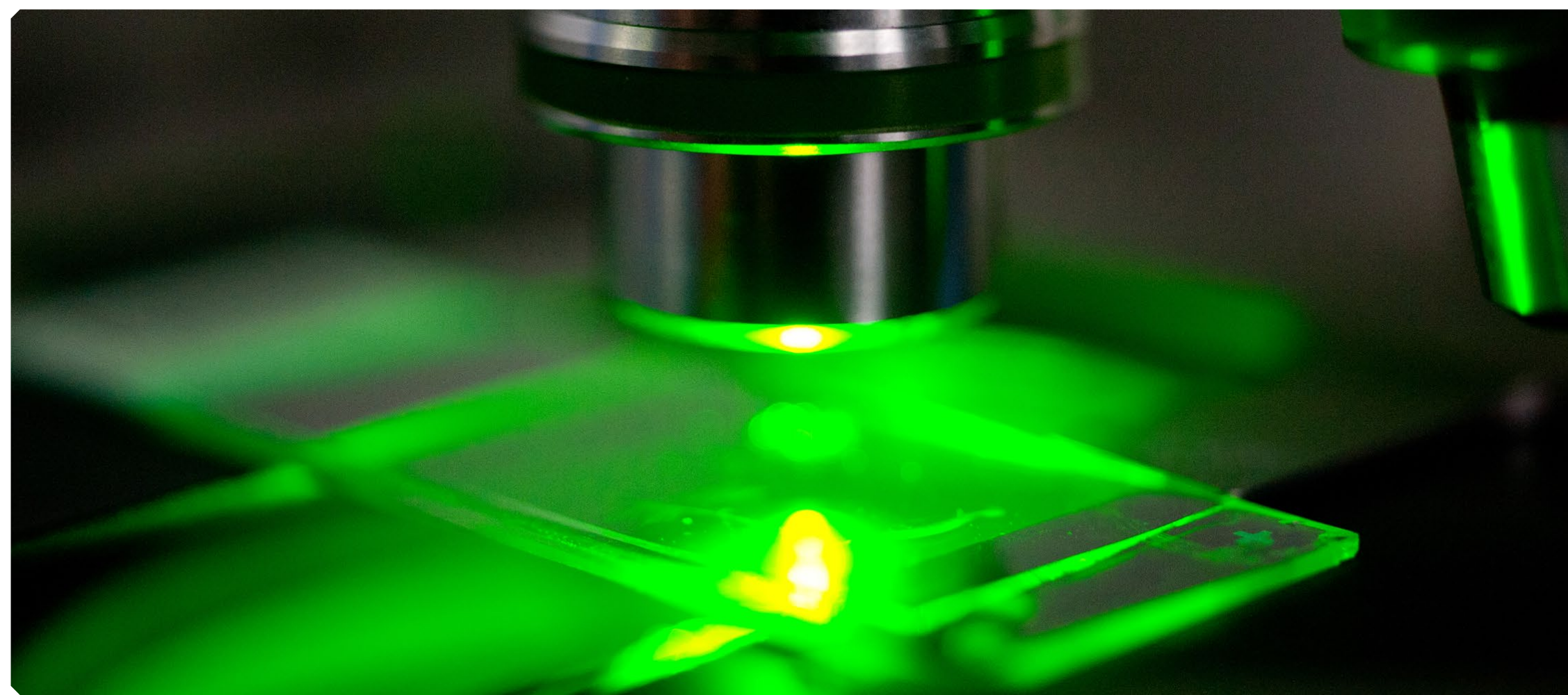
We had 110 of our research scientists across six laboratories within the Division of Cancer Therapeutics, situated at the Centre of Cancer Drug Discovery achieved My Green Lab certification in acknowledgment of their efforts to mitigate the environmental impact of their research and enhance sustainability.

*“This was a target in our Sustainable Discoveries action plan and it is a considerable achievement that the labs involved should be really proud of. It is a positive step on our journey towards achieving net zero by 2040 and shows that we are making progress in our aim of building a culture of sustainability in everything we do at the ICR.”* Lisa O'Fee, Senior Scientific Officer in the Cancer Therapeutics division and member of the ActNow group, who led the initiative.

## My Green Lab Ambassador Training

Within the laboratory environment, the ICR collaborates with My Green Lab to offer a collection of concise online modules. These modules focus on promoting sustainable laboratory practices, including subjects like green chemistry, carbon and energy reduction, and ways of being choosing more sustainable products in the lab. This initiative addresses a knowledge gap identified by My Green Lab, emphasising the importance of enhancing awareness among scientists.

Within this module, 110 scientists in Sutton and 45 scientists in Chelsea have completed Lab Sustainability





Certification. Considering that there are approximately 700 wet lab scientists in total, this means that 20% of the ICR’s scientists have obtained Sustainable Lab Certification.

Freezer Challenge 2022 and 2023

The Freezer Challenge is a six-month cold storage competition for laboratories run by My Green Lab and the International Institute for Sustainable Laboratories. It employs a competitive spirit to encourage the adoption of optimal cold storage management practices within laboratories.

The ICR took part in the Freezer Challenge 2022 alongside 1700 other laboratories around the world. We earned 148 points as an organisation and managed to conserve approximately 1,107 kilowatt-hours per day during the six-month challenge period. This amount of energy is equivalent to powering 65 typical homes in the UK for an entire year, considering that a single ultra-low temperature freezer can consume as much energy as an average household. This achievement resulted in estimated savings of £46,000 and earned the ICR an honourable mention.

The ICR once again participated in the Freezer Challenge in 2023. This time, the total kWh saved during the six-month challenge period closely mirrored the previous year, resulting in an average of 1,072.5 kilowatt-hours per day.

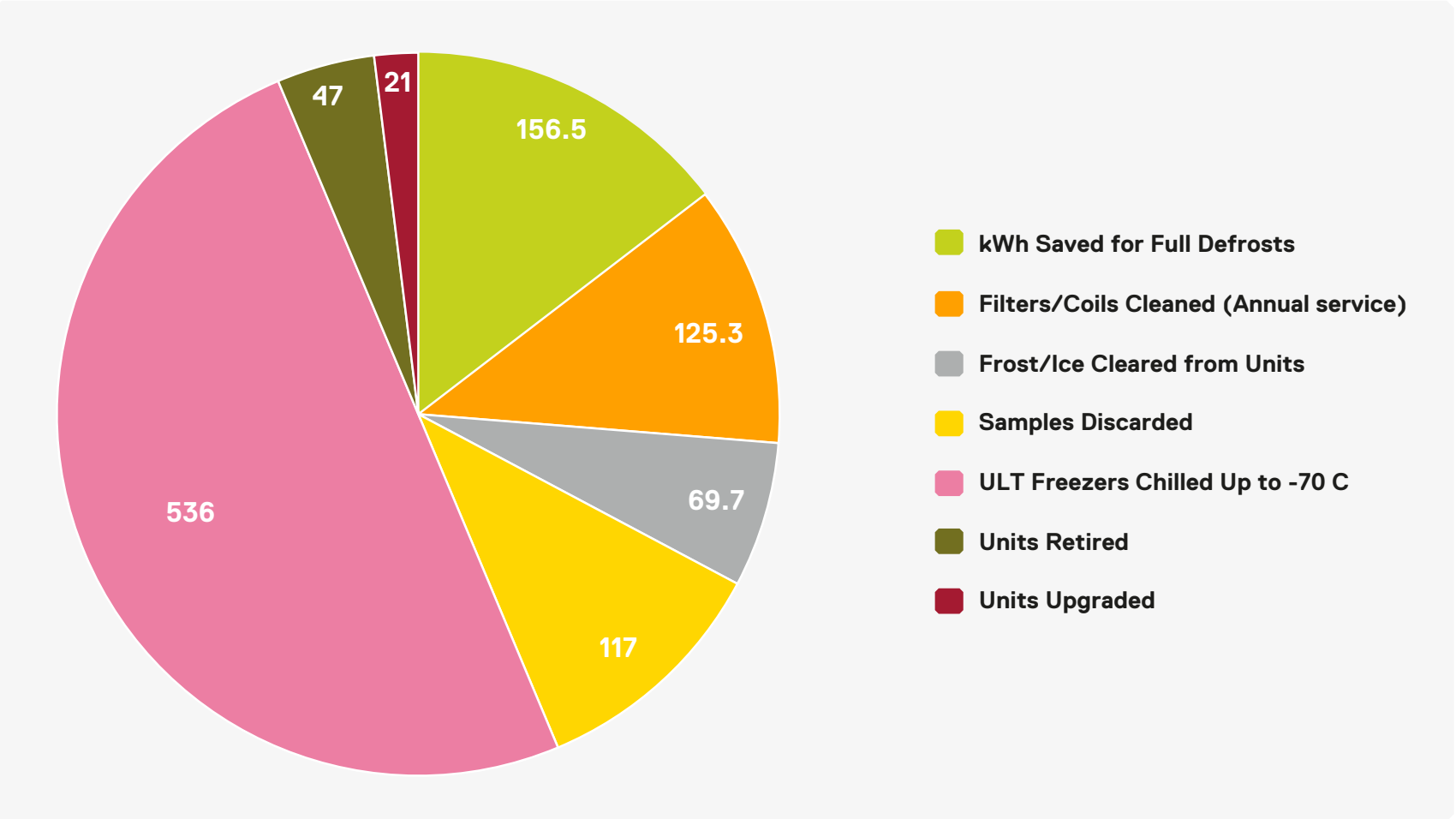
Changing the temperature settings of ultra-low temperature freezers from -80°C to -70°C, carrying out full defrosts, implementing regular cleaning and maintenance routines for freezers, and disposing of unnecessary samples were all confirmed as effective methods for decreasing energy consumption.

The ICR secured a place in the top six for points earned through sustainable actions and ranked in the top three for energy savings among all participants in the Freezer Challenge.

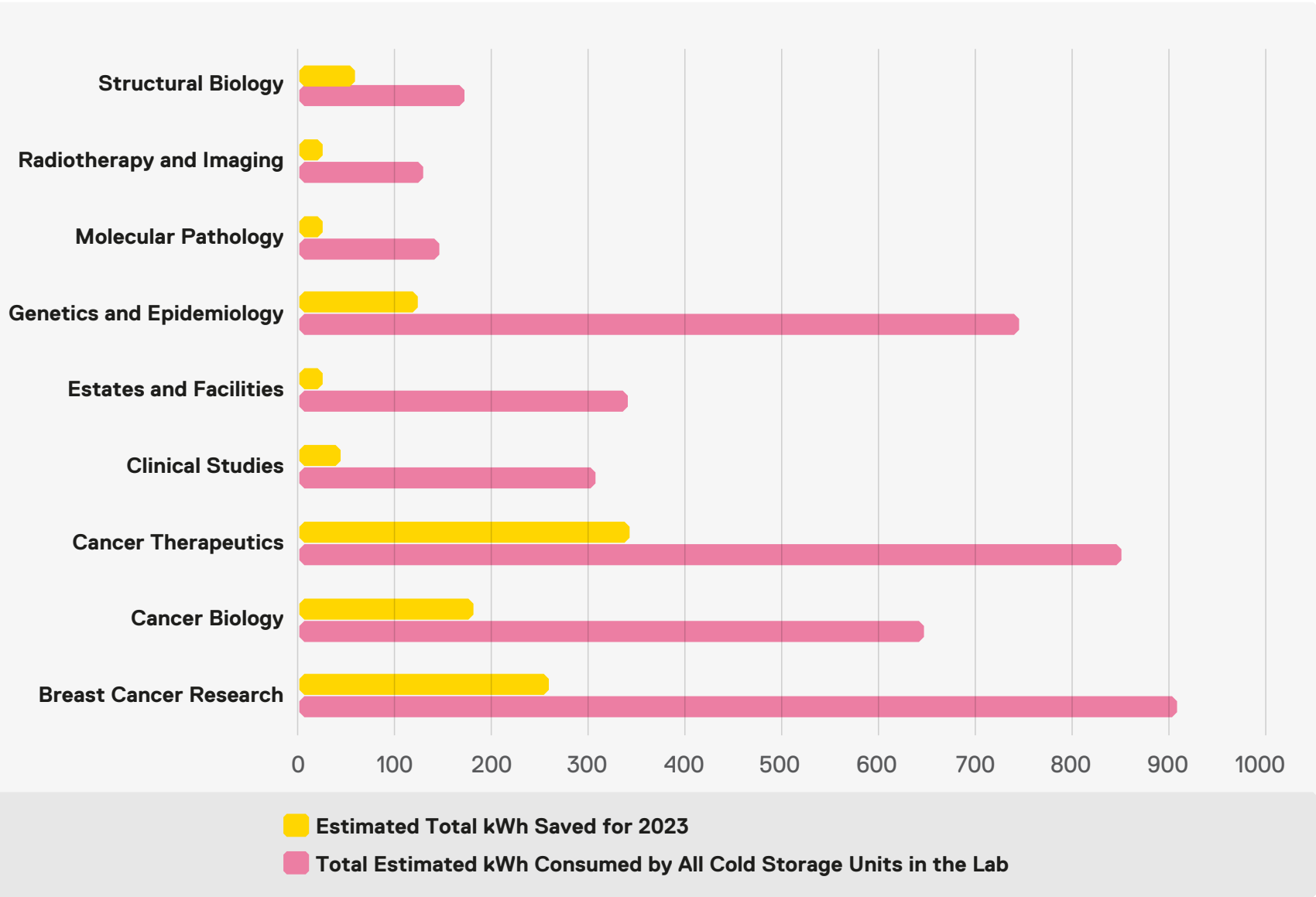
As indicated in the graph full defrosts play an important role in achieving energy savings, contributing to 14.6% of the total energy savings, alongside other maintenance tasks such as cleaning filters and coils.

To emphasise this importance, we organised a dedicated Big Defrost day.

kWh saved per activity 2023



Total Versus Saved Energy Over 6 Months (Kwh)





# Pillar 4

## Sustainable Procurement

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Our supply chain is varied, it consists of facilities services, laboratory equipment, laboratory consumables, construction materials and many other types of products. The environmental and social risks and opportunities from such a diverse supply chain are complex and wide-ranging.

Addressing these challenges is crucial for the ICR. 93% of our climate impact comes from procurement activities. Decarbonising procurement is a top priority and a challenging effort we are focused on.

## ICR Procurement Team Structure, Processes and Activities

- ♦ **Reduction of over-ordering of laboratory consumables**
- ♦ **Procurement of more sustainable alternatives for laboratory equipment**
- ♦ **Evaluation of suppliers' sustainability practices and carbon emissions**
- ♦ **Potential enhancements in laboratory consumables procurement through product lifecycle analysis, emission reduction, and waste minimisation**

To support our sustainability strategy and net zero objectives while optimising value for ICR's supply chains, we have introduced new roles focusing on Supply Chain & Sustainability, for example appointing a Supply Chain & Sustainability Manager, that will lead the way in sustainable procurement.

The ICR actively participates in the London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC), assessing social-related risks like child labour, modern slavery, and illegal work practices. We comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, including risk assessments in our operations and supply chain.

We are also a member of Electronics Watch, dedicated to improving working conditions in global electronics supply chains. Our partnerships with Electronics Watch, LUPC, and industry peers underline our commitment to responsible procurement and addressing human rights concerns in our supply chains.

### Some actions we have taken:

- We showcased greener products on World Environment Day in Sutton and Chelsea and received samples from suppliers to support this initiative;
- Engaging with suppliers to better understand their commitment to sustainability;
- We have revised our ordering procedures to use our ERP system for redirecting external orders of in-stock items, decreasing the environmental impact of individual deliveries;
- We signed up to Information Technology Asset Disposal (ITAD) scheme to recycle or refurbish a range of equipment, including laptops, desktops, iPads, tablets, smart phones, servers,
- We continue to focus on procuring equipment that is energy efficient and recycling or re-using where possible.

## Energy Procurement

ICR has been buying low carbon energy since September 2020. For our future supply we are looking to purchase our energy via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the aim to reduce and reduce the risk of energy price rises through stabilising our costs.

## Evolve Project – Review of Laboratory Consumables Procurement

In order to deliver both environmental and economic benefits, we have completed a project where we reviewed £1.6m of laboratory consumables costs in six categories (Tips, Pipettes, Flasks, Plates, FBS, Gloves & Tubes) across 7 key ICR suppliers.

The project entails categorising suppliers' expenses, evaluating their sustainability practices targets and assessing the carbon emissions associated with their operations. This ongoing strategy has the potential to enhance the value of laboratory consumables procurement research.

The strategy can be achieved by pursuing environmental benefits through the inclusion of product lifecycle analysis, reducing scope 3 emissions, reducing the variety of similar products stocked, and minimising plastic and waste.

We conducted an analysis of our annual delivery patterns to the ICR, which revealed a total of 2,646 deliveries from the 7 relevant suppliers. If we transitioned to a weekly delivery schedule for each supplier, we could potentially reduce our deliveries by around 57%, leading to a potential annual reduction of 36,815 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> in our carbon footprint.

We are reaching out to our top 100 suppliers, which collectively account for 70% of our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, to further integrate sustainability into our supply chain and reduce emissions.

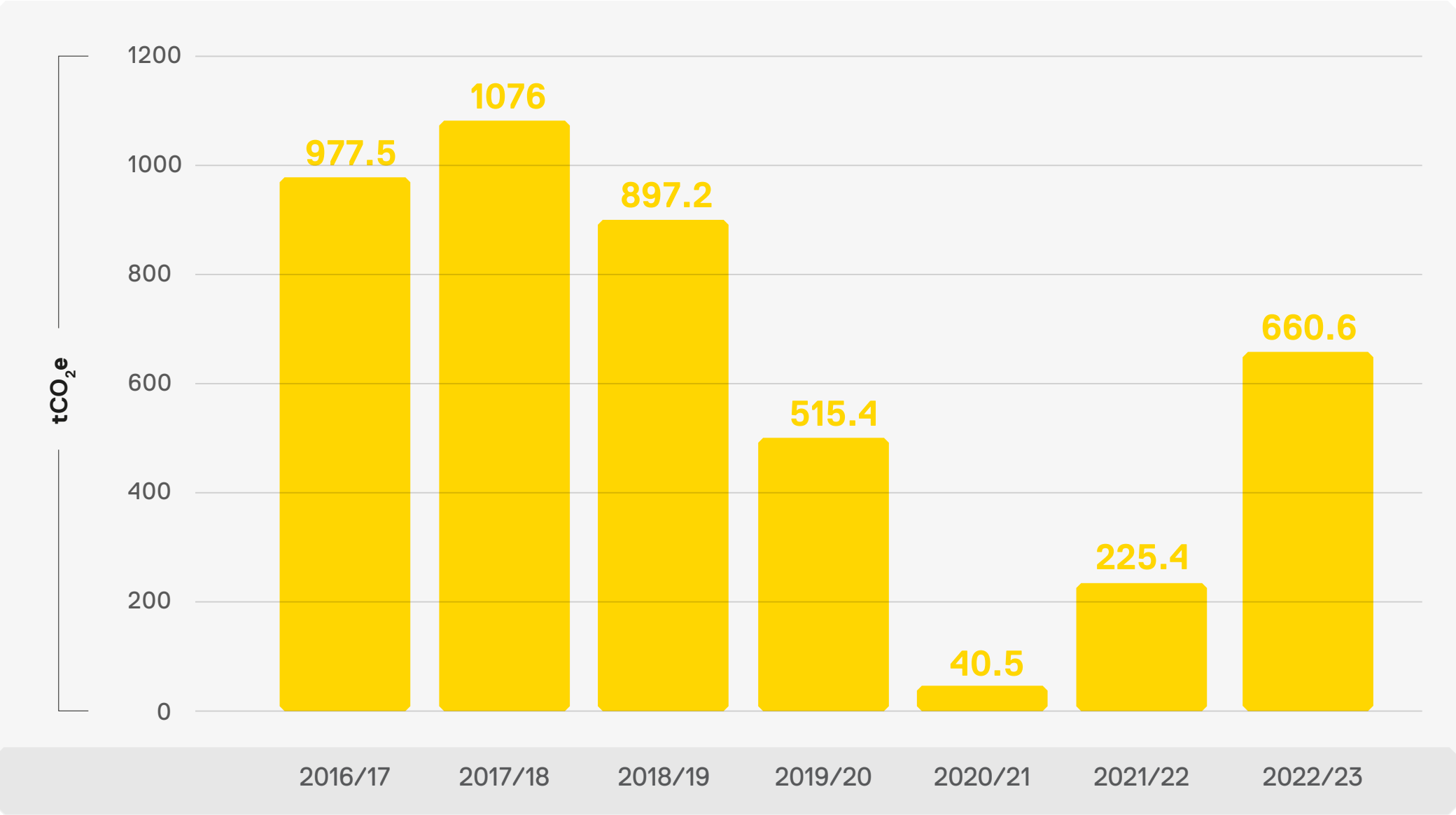
## Business Travel at the ICR

- ♦ **Review of travel policy and promotion of more sustainable travel alternatives**
- ♦ **Introduction of a new travel platform to increase sustainability of business travel**

During the Covid-19 pandemic our business travel emissions were lower than usual, this increased to 225 CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2021/2022, and has tripled to 661 CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2022/2023, 81% attributable to Long Haul travel, the total distance travelled by staff for business was 3,015,676 km.



Business Travel Emissions - Yearly Comparison



We are reviewing our travel policy and promoting greener travel alternatives on our intranet and in collaboration with our travel management company which is introducing a new travel platform to increase the sustainability of our business travel.

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on our achievements in sustainability initiatives, we acknowledge the challenges faced during this period. Reducing our carbon footprint at the rate that we need to, particularly in our laboratories and procurement process, has not been a straightforward task. The increased business travel emissions and the surge in procurement emissions, highlighting the need for more robust strategies in these areas.

Despite the challenges, our action plan offers promising opportunities for further sustainable development. We are dedicated to achieving our goal of net zero emissions by 2040 and our interim target of a 42% reduction by 2029/30. This commitment presents the opportunity to pioneer innovative solutions, not only in reducing our carbon footprint but also in influencing broader sustainable practices in the scientific and educational sectors.

Our commitment to gender equality, race equality, LGBT+ equality, and promoting diversity and inclusion within our institution remains persistent. We have achieved the Athena SWAN Silver Award, recognising our efforts in advancing gender equality, and we are actively working to increase representation and inclusivity.

We plan to update Sutton’s biodiversity plan over the coming years, aligning it with the development of the London Cancer Hub. The focus is to establish a campus that promotes physical and mental wellbeing, promoting healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. Concurrently, we aim to integrate verdant and ecologically rich nature into the site, mitigating climate change effects and enhancing the campus microclimate. This involves incorporating nature-based solutions, efficient building envelopes, and operational systems to reduce environmental impact and move toward net-zero carbon.

In the future, Sutton Council aims to enhance services at Belmont Station through a £14 million government Levelling Up funding, doubling train frequency by 2026 for improved access to LCH and ICR from central London. Collaborative efforts with TfL are underway to enhance local travel links to the Sutton site. Further initiatives include the ongoing tender process for total sustainable waste management, development of a new Green Travel Plan, and the implementation of a new energy management system with building-specific dashboards.

Future actions also involve the implementation of strategies identified in the decarbonisation assessment, the development, and execution of a sustainable procurement action plan, and the relaunch and support of sustainable lab standards, LEAF and My Green Labs, including computational dry labs.

As we look ahead, the ICR reaffirms its dedication to sustainability and its role in shaping the future of scientific research and healthcare, with gratitude to our stakeholders for their invaluable support and collaboration.