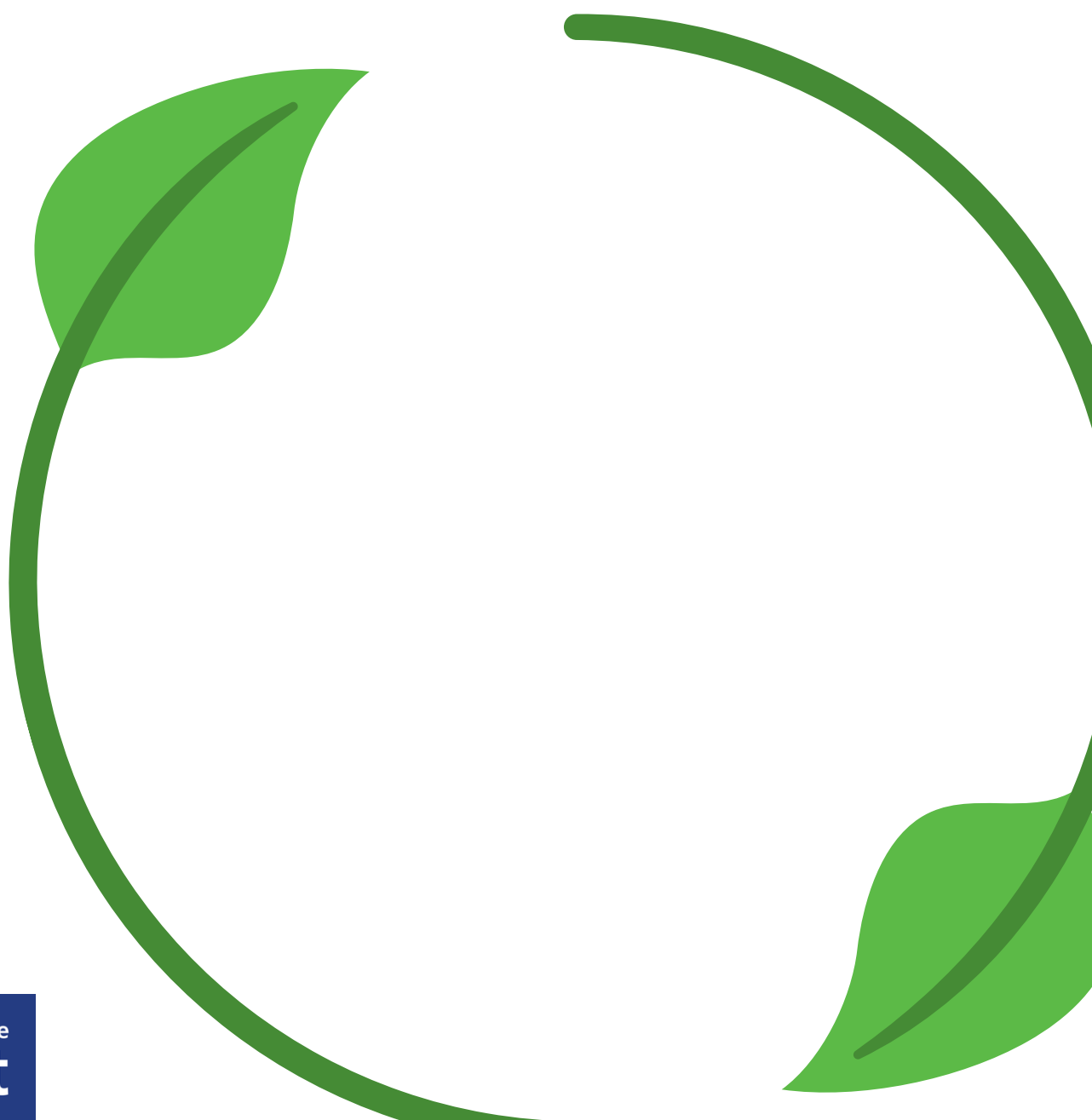


# Green Plan

2025 - 2028



# Foreword

Our Green Plan outlines the actions and initiatives we aim to deliver to address our sustainability and net-zero targets.

Sustainability is fundamental to maintaining high-quality care, helping us meet the needs of today while ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same opportunities and resources.

We are committed to meeting the NHS target of Net Zero for the Direct Carbon Footprint by 2040 and Carbon Footprint Plus by 2045.

I'm really pleased that we've made significant strides forward in this area, including the installation of energy-efficient lighting, the development of a Heat Decarbonisation Plan, and the introduction of air source heat pumps and solar panels in new buildings.

Our climate change adaptation strategy focuses on strengthening resilience to extreme weather and environmental risks through initiatives such as a Climate Change Risk Assessment and enhancing travel incentives like electric vehicle charging points and active travel programmes.

There is lots more we need to do and for sustainability to be successfully embedded, it must be integrated into all aspects of the organisation and this is where our staff are really helping us to make progress.



We now have more than 100 Sustainability Champions across the Trust and have introduced sustainability and Net Zero goals as part of staff inductions and training.

These initiatives are over-seen at Board level, with many staff playing an active role in achieving these ambitious targets.

Working together, I hope we can meet the challenges of the climate emergency while ensuring we continue to provide high-quality care to our patients.

I am proud of the vital role that our staff and partners are playing in delivering this Green Plan and ensuring that sustainability becomes an integral part of everything we do.

**Cara Charles-Barks**  
Chief Executive

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C.C.B.' followed by a flourish.

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## About us

Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides services across the acute hospital, and collaborates with partners to care for people out in the community. These services include medicine and surgery, services for women and children, urgent and emergency care, diagnostic and clinical support services.

The main site is based in Swindon, close to junction 15 of the M4 motorway and approximately 2.7 miles (4.3km) from Swindon city centre. There are currently around 400 core beds.

The Trust employs over 5,000 staff and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) the current population is 874,000 which is anticipated to grow to over one million by 2026. The geography is a mixture of large rural areas and densely populated city centres with many diverse communities with varying health and care needs. The Trust's aim is to ensure that everyone receives the high-quality care they need, regardless of where they live across the region.

## Our vision

Our vision is to provide great services for local people at home, in the community and in hospital, enabling independent and healthier lives. We have four strategic pillars, which are our priorities that we want to be known for.

- Outstanding care – continuous quality improvement and co-creation of services with local communities, with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Valued teams – our teams of staff and volunteers feeling valued and knowing their contribution to our future success, enabling them to deliver high quality care.
- Better together – collaborative and integrated working to improve quality of care and address health inequalities in our local communities.
- Sustainable future – maximise research and innovation opportunities to support quality improvement, spend wisely, and deliver on carbon net zero.

We believe our vision and pillars give us a clear direction and ambition for our organisation as we go forward. We know that we can't do this on our own and our staff, volunteers, partners, and communities will be integral to everything we do. As we work to develop our group model with colleagues at hospitals in Bath and Salisbury, we look forward to seeing the benefits of greater collaboration on the care we are able to provide to our patients.



# Sustainable future

Maximise research, innovation and digital opportunities to support quality improvement, spend wisely, and deliver on carbon net zero.

## Developing this plan

In refreshing our Green Plan, we undertook a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process to ensure it reflects the priorities, insights, and expertise of those involved in or affected by our sustainability efforts. Including consultations with Serco, our facilities management provider, The Hospital Company, clinical leads, and several subject matter experts. We engaged with staff across the Trust and invited feedback from members of the public to ensure a broad and inclusive perspective.

Throughout this process, key themes emerged, including the need for greater emphasis on practical, implementable actions, clearer communication of sustainability goals, and stronger alignment with clinical priorities. In response, the Green Plan includes more detailed action plans, enhanced monitoring and reporting mechanisms, and a commitment to integrating sustainability into everyday clinical and operational decision-making.

We have carefully considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legal duties. Our engagement approach was designed to be inclusive and accessible, and the Green Plan reflects a commitment to addressing health inequalities and ensuring equitable access to low-carbon, high-quality care. This includes assessing the potential impact of sustainability initiatives on different population groups and ensuring that our actions support both environmental and social sustainability goals.

## Working with our partners

Delivering on our Green Plan requires strong and sustained collaboration across the healthcare system. We work closely with our partners, including colleagues at the Royal United Hospitals Bath and Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, to share learning, align efforts, and standardise best practice across organisations. This collaborative approach helps ensure that sustainability initiatives are scalable and impactful across the wider system.

We have also engaged with Swindon Borough Council to align our environmental sustainability priorities with local area needs, supporting a place-based approach to reducing emissions and promoting community-wide health and wellbeing.

Our role as an exemplar site for sustainability and infection prevention and control (IPC) improvement projects, demonstrates our commitment to regional leadership. The outcomes have been widely shared, supporting the spread of evidence-based, low-carbon practices across neighbouring Trusts and healthcare settings.

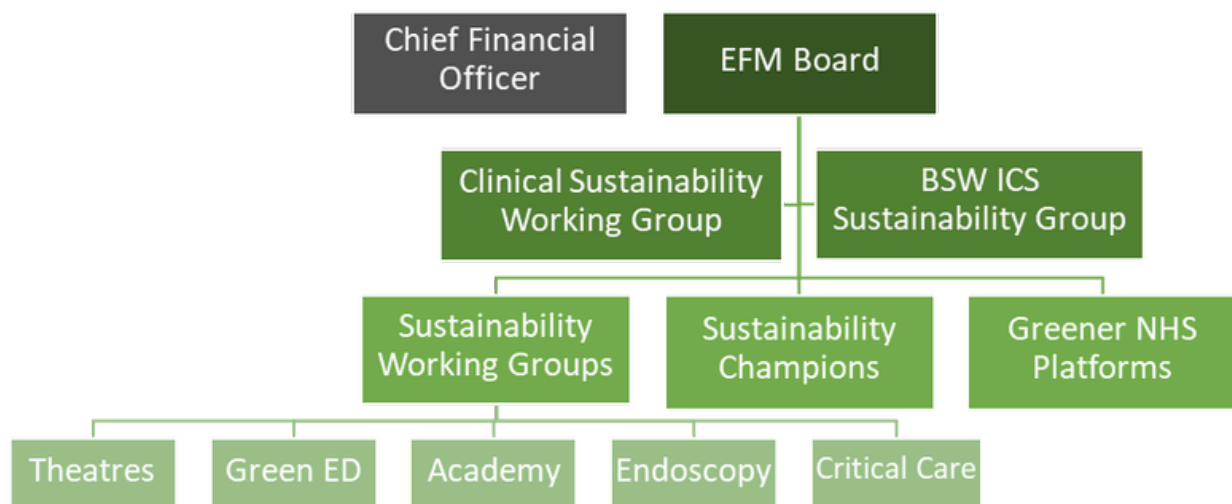
We remain committed to engaging in research and innovation activities that support the NHS's net zero ambition. This includes exploring technologies, clinical models, and operational approaches that reduce emissions while improving patient care. Through these partnerships and initiatives, we aim to play a proactive role in supporting the transition to a net zero NHS across our local system and beyond.

# Green Plan Governance and Accountability

The delivery of the Green Plan is managed through the Estates Management Board, with the Chief Financial Officer serving as the designated board-level lead for net zero initiatives. The Chief Financial Officer holds overall accountability for the successful implementation of the Green Plan, supported by a clearly defined operational structure.

This plan has been developed with input from senior staff across a broad range of disciplines and functions, including estates and facilities, procurement, clinical teams, finance, transport, and human resources. Furthermore, the plan has been shaped by insights from existing sustainability groups and networks, as illustrated in the figure below.

Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW) Partnership represents the Trust's Integrated Care System (ICS). This Green Plan will be integrated with other Green Plans within the ICS to create cohesive, system-wide strategies aimed at accelerating net-zero progress across the region.



## Reporting process

Progress against the Green Plan will be formally reported annually to the Trust EFM Board and in the published annual report. The reporting on progress will consider:

- Narrative updates on progress to date and key achievements
- Delivery of key milestones and risks to future delivery
- Quantitative assessment of progress against defined targets where applicable.

# Progress to date

## Carbon targets

The Trust is aligned to the national NHS Net Zero targets:

Net Zero Carbon by 2040 for our NHS Carbon Footprint, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032.

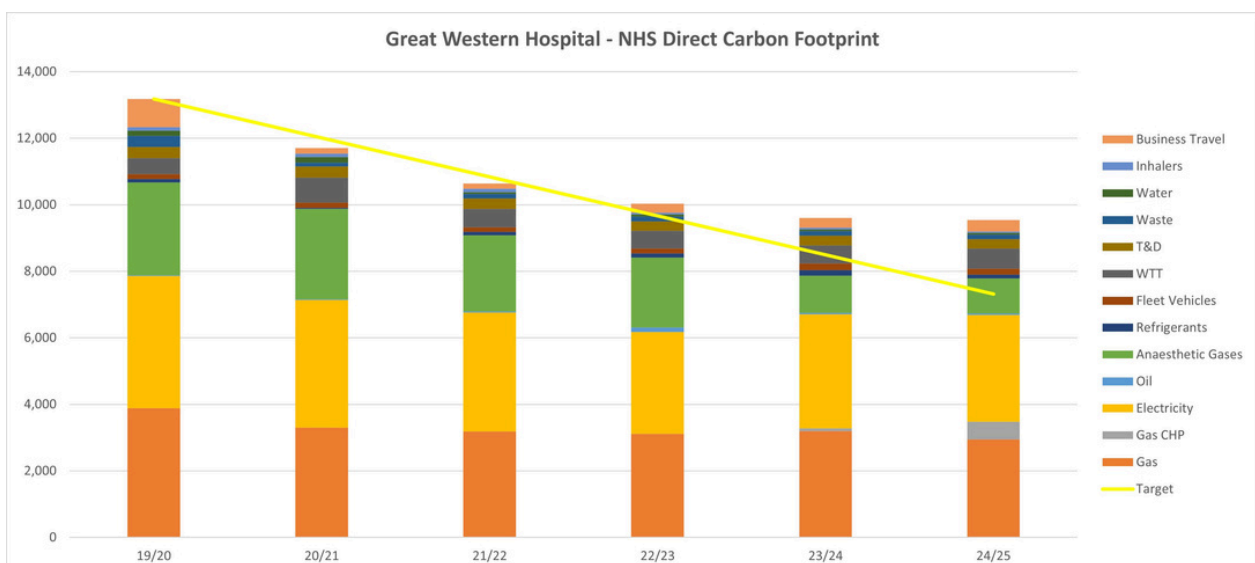
Net Zero Carbon by 2045 for our NHS Carbon Footprint Plus, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039.

## Carbon footprint

Although there is no requirement for NHS organisations to calculate and report organisational carbon footprints the Trust recognises that it has a significant Carbon Footprint. This encompasses the main site but also community sites that the Trust operates out of.

The Trust's NHS Direct Carbon Footprint has been estimated for scope 1 and 2 emissions and encompasses specific scope 3 emissions including energy generation, business travel, waste, water and metered dose inhalers.

Work is underway to further understand full scope 3 emissions for the Trust's Carbon Footprint Plus. The nature of scope 3 emissions means it is challenging to accurately measure, nevertheless these emissions are likely to be far larger than scope 1 and 2 emissions combined.



# Green action plan



# Estates and Facilities

Estates and facilities contribute significantly to the Trust's carbon footprint. The Trust aims to meet the NHS target of Net Zero for the NHS Direct Carbon Footprint by 2040 and 2045 for the Carbon Footprint Plus.

A Heat Decarbonisation Plan has been developed that sets out the strategy for reducing emissions from heating and moving to a low carbon energy source. The Trust will look to implement this plan alongside the Green Plan.

The Trust has already installed LED lighting across the Great Western Hospital site which has reduced the electrical demand for lighting by approximately 30%. A combined heat and power plant (CHP) has also been installed and once commissioned this will allow the Trust to further reduce direct carbon emissions.

The new Urgent Treatment Centre and Integrated Front Door new build developments both have BREEAM Excellent ratings and are supplied by the new Energy Centre which uses air source heat pumps and solar photovoltaic panels to help decarbonise the energy demand. It is unlikely that the local infrastructure can support a wider transition to air source heat pumps due to capacity limitations until 2035 which will likely delay the removal of fossil fuels from site.

## Actions

1. Improve energy efficiency by installing measures such as LED lighting, insulation and double-glazed windows where appropriate.

2. Develop business cases to deliver the measures outlined in the Heat Decarbonisation Plan with funding through external sources if not internally. Business cases should look to replace fossil fuel heating systems with lower carbon alternatives and increase the use of renewable energy through on-site renewable energy.

3. Ensure all applicable new building and major refurbishment projects are compliant with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard.

4. Enhance biodiversity on site as much as practically possible with particular reference to the expansion land development and ensure any invasive species are controlled on site.

# Adaptation

The Trust has a corporate risk register which includes the impacts of climate change and being able to respond to extreme weather conditions, in addition to environmental impacts on health. Climate change adaptation focuses on reducing the effects of extreme weather and rising temperatures, recognising that even with efforts to limit humanity's impact on the climate, some consequences are inevitable and require proactive preparation.

It involves making sure our estates and local environments are equipped to handle climate-related challenges, such as more frequent and severe flooding, increased risk of water shortages, and longer, more intense heatwaves.

Given these realities, it is crucial that the NHS in England adapts to the evolving climate; both to minimise disruptions to healthcare services and to help communities strengthen their resilience. This will be essential in managing the likely rise in healthcare demand as climate-related hazards become more common and severe.

As part of working within the Group Hospitals comprised of Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire the Trust has developed a Climate Change Risk Assessment to assess vulnerabilities, evaluate risks to healthcare services, and outline practical steps to build resilience. The report provides a local climate risk assessment, examples of current adaptation efforts, a tailored action plan, and

recommendations for next steps to help the NHS prepare for increasingly severe weather events and their impacts on public health and service delivery.

## Actions

1. Continue to comply with the adaptation provisions within the NHS Core Standards for emergency preparedness, resilience and response (EPRR) and the NHS Standard Contract to support business continuity during adverse weather events.

2. Continue to prepare for severe weather events and improve climate resilience of local sites and services by implementing the Climate Change Adaptation Plan actions.

3. Factor in the effects of climate change when making infrastructure decisions and designing new facilities, including enhancements like improved green spaces, drainage systems and passive cooling solutions.

4. Continue to ensure adequate cascading of weather health alerts and relevant messaging across the organisation, in line with the government's Adverse Weather and Health Plan.

# Travel and transport

The Trust offers a range of active travel incentives, including Cycle to Work, bus and train ticket schemes, and car-sharing programs. Staff who choose to cycle or walk to work also have access to secure bike parking, as well as changing facilities with showers and lockers. Since the onset of the pandemic, flexible home working arrangements have been encouraged where feasible, helping to reduce commuting distances and associated carbon emissions.

A Travel Plan has also been developed for the main site with various action plan measures being incorporated which enabled the Trust to achieve the Modeshift STARS Silver level accreditation.

The Trust has also installed electric vehicle charging points at Commonhead in preparation for the transition of our fleet vehicles over to electric vehicles. Whilst there is currently no electrical capacity at the main site for staff or visitor electric vehicle charging this is something the Trust aims to develop as part of the long-term infrastructure plan.

## Actions

1. Offer only zero-emission vehicles through vehicle salary sacrifice schemes from December 2026 onwards for new lease agreements.
2. Make arrangements to purchase, or enter into new lease arrangements for, zero-emission vehicles only from December 2027 onwards.
3. Achieve the Gold level Modeshift STARS accreditation.



# Supply chain and procurement

The Trust's supply chain plays a key role in the NHS Carbon Footprint Plus. Although the Trust does not have direct control over these emissions, the NHS leverages its purchasing power to collaborate with suppliers and drive change. The NHS's long-term goal is to cease purchasing from suppliers who are not net zero within the next decade.

The Trust already embraces circular economy principles by refurbishing walking aids as part of its reuse initiative and is part of the Circular Economy Healthcare Alliance, which focuses on minimizing single-use medical devices and consumables by promoting reuse where clinically feasible and appropriate. This approach will be integrated into our product and supplier selection criteria during the procurement process, as well as in the development of skills, knowledge, and processes within our Trusts to support this transition. This membership supports the Trust's vision to see an NHS with a net zero, fair, and transparent supply chain free of modern slavery through building a sustainable, ethical, and low-carbon supply chain that supports high-quality patient care while reducing environmental impact.

All NHS procurement processes include a minimum 10% weighting for net zero and social value considerations. For contracts exceeding £5 million annually, the NHS mandates that suppliers submit a Carbon Reduction Plan that covers at least their UK Scope 1 and 2 emissions,

as well as a portion of their Scope 3 emissions.

As a Private Finance Initiative (PFI), the Trust collaborates with The Hospital Company and Serco to align sustainability targets at the Great Western Hospital main site.

## Actions

1. Embed NHS net zero supplier roadmap requirements into all relevant procurements and ensure they are monitored via key performance indicators.
2. Encourage suppliers to go beyond minimum requirements and engage with the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment to support a single conversation between the NHS and its suppliers on sustainability priorities.
3. Reduce reliance on single-use products in line with the Circular Economy Healthcare Alliance, considering how to safely build this work into clinical improvement projects.
4. Explore and implement methodology to quantify delivered social value through tendering.

# Food, catering and nutrition

Food and catering services are estimated to contribute around 6% to the NHS's Carbon Footprint Plus. Choosing a healthy, balanced diet low in processed foods that are high in sugar, salt, and fat also supports a lower-carbon lifestyle.

The Trust adheres to the National Standards for healthcare food and drink. By working closely with catering teams, dietitians, and suppliers, the Trust aims to provide healthier, locally sourced meals for patients, staff, and visitors, while reducing emissions from agriculture, transportation, storage, and food waste.

There are actions currently underway to reduce food waste. A digital menu ordering system is used to take patient meal orders as close to mealtimes as possible to reduce food waste. The menu is updated twice a year with seasonally available ingredients, removing dishes that have not been popular in the previous menu and a plant-based menu is available with all menus redesigned to position plant-based menu options first, followed by vegetarian choices and then dishes with higher carbon emissions.

Since the last Green Plan was published, the Trust has introduced a food waste collection service. Collected waste is sent to an off-site anaerobic digester, which powers a combined heat and power plant, contributing to renewable energy generation.

## Actions

1. Continue to measure food waste in line with the Estates Returns Information Collection (ERIC) and set reduction targets.

2. Continue to consider opportunities to make menus healthier and lower carbon by supporting the provision of seasonal menus high in fruits and vegetables and low in heavily processed foods.

3. Engage and educate clinical staff on the environmental impact of food waste and opportunities to reduce patient food waste.



# Medicines

Medicines are responsible for approximately 25% of NHS emissions in England. A significant portion of these emissions comes from a small group of medicines; particularly anaesthetic gases and nitrous oxide, which contribute around 2%, and inhalers, which account for approximately 3%.

To help reduce these emissions, the Trust has decommissioned nitrous oxide on-site and installed a Central Destruction Unit (CDU) to lower emissions from Entonox; nitrous oxide and oxygen, commonly known as gas and air. The CDU breaks down the nitrous oxide into oxygen and nitrogen, both naturally occurring components of the atmosphere.

In line with national guidance, the Theatres Sustainability Working Group has eliminated the use of desflurane; an anaesthetic gas with a high global warming potential. Sevoflurane and isoflurane, which have similar clinical uses but lower environmental impact, are still used.

The Trust has also introduced an inhaler disposal point and is working with its waste provider to explore options for recycling both the inhalers and their propellant gases. In addition to this the Trust is looking to establish a Pharmacy Sustainability Working Group to deliver the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Greener Pharmacy initiatives with bronze, silver and gold levels available.

## Actions

1. Reduce emissions from Entonox (nitrous oxide and oxygen) waste.

2. Support high-quality, lower-carbon respiratory care in secondary care, including supporting patients to choose the most appropriate inhaler(s) in alignment with clinical guidelines, performing inhaler technique checks with patients and promoting the appropriate disposal of inhalers.



# Net Zero clinical transformation

The NHS is dedicated to shifting towards out-of-hospital, digitally-enabled care where clinically appropriate, with a strong focus on preventing ill health and tackling health inequalities. Clinical transformation aligned with net zero aims to deliver high-quality, preventative, low-carbon care throughout every stage of the patient journey.

To support this, the Trust has appointed a clinical sustainability lead who oversees net zero clinical transformation and works closely with board-level leadership and governance. The Clinical Sustainability Group meets monthly to review and discuss projects from various clinical areas, with Sustainability Champions encouraged to participate and share ideas.

The Trust is proud to be the first in the country recognised as a leading example in sustainability and infection prevention and control (IPC). This recognition includes being among the first to earn both bronze and silver Green ED accreditations for sustainable Emergency Department practices; actions include reducing plastic waste and unnecessary cannulations.

Additional initiatives include the 'Gloves Off' campaign, which has cut approximately 1.6 tonnes of carbon emissions by reducing glove use, and the introduction of reusable tourniquets. As part of the Theatres working group the Trust is also aligning

with the Intercollegiate Green Theatre Checklist. The Trust's findings and successes have been shared across the NHS to help other organisations implement similar sustainable practices.

## Actions

1. Continue to reduce emissions and improve quality of care for clinical areas:

a) Maintain a clinical lead and multidisciplinary working groups responsible for reducing emissions in the clinical areas.

b) Continue to complete quality improvement projects in the clinical areas that focus on a measurable reduction in emissions, with co-benefits for outcomes and quality of care, efficiency and reducing healthcare inequalities.

c) Continue to share learning and outcomes through clinical networks, Group Hospital Model, Integrated Care Board of Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire and also nationally.

# Digital transformation

The Trust is actively advancing its digital transformation agenda across both clinical and administrative functions. A key milestone was the full implementation of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS). In collaboration with clinical services, a comprehensive suite of electronic clinical note templates has been developed, significantly reducing reliance on paper-based documentation. This transition not only supports environmental sustainability by lowering paper consumption, but also reduces the energy and labour previously required for scanning and digitising physical records.

In the Radiology department, the routine printing of diagnostic reports has been discontinued. These reports are now distributed securely to GP partners via electronic channels, enhancing both data security and environmental stewardship.

The Trust has also deployed digital appointment letters and SMS reminders throughout its Outpatient services. This initiative reduces dependence on printed communications, while improving the efficiency and accessibility of patient engagement.

In alignment with broader digitalisation efforts, the Trust has decommissioned approximately one-third of its printing devices. Remaining printers are certified to Energy Star standards, contributing to a measurable reduction in power consumption. Furthermore, initiatives

to decrease the energy demands of IT infrastructure, such as servers and networking equipment, are underway as part of the Infrastructure Investment Programme. Additionally, the adoption of agile working arrangements has enabled up to 13% of staff to work remotely, resulting in a further decrease in on-site energy consumption during peak operational hours.

## Actions

1. Maximise the benefits of digital transformation to reduce emissions and improve patient care e.g. by reducing the use of paper and providing virtual pathways where clinically appropriate.

2. Supported by the Digital Maturity Assessment, consider opportunities to embed sustainability in digital services, such as:

a) Using circular and low-carbon approaches to IT hardware management, which may include longer device lifetimes, leasing models, buying refurbished or remanufactured equipment and PC power down configuration

b) Considering low carbon hosting, promoting good data hygiene (such as, deduplication and archiving) and engaging digital suppliers.

# Workforce and leadership

For sustainability to be embedded effectively, it must be integrated into all organisational processes. This includes every aspect of activity, behaviour, change management, and strategic planning. Sustainability should be a core consideration across all departments and functions, incorporated into both operational and long-term planning. It is a shared responsibility for all staff, while overall accountability lies with the Chief Financial Officer, who serves as the board-level lead for the Green Plan, supported by clearly defined operational roles.

The Trust acknowledges that staff engagement and behaviour change are essential to delivering sustainable models of care. This work is focused on two key areas. First, sustainability and Net Zero goals are introduced during new staff inductions, with further training available through the Electronic Staff Record (ESR). This provides staff with a broader understanding of Net Zero, alongside mandatory training in clinical waste management.

Second, the Trust has established a network of over 100 Sustainability Champions across the organisation. These individuals are familiar with key sustainability objectives and play an active role in promoting and implementing change within their teams.

In addition, the Trust actively participates in the integrated care

system (ICS), enabling it to contribute to and benefit from system-led sustainability initiatives that are delivered at a local level.

## Actions

1. Assess workforce capacity and skill requirements for delivering the green plan, considering good practice examples such as hybrid roles, apprenticeships, fellowships and NHS estates sustainability career pathways.

2. Managers to communicate and promote sustainability training programmes to their teams as outlined in the 'Greener NHS Training Hub'.

3. Promote specialist training for staff groups who underpin the delivery of green plans, such as board members, procurement, finance, estates and facilities staff and clinicians.

4. Include sustainability in all future job descriptions and annual appraisals to acknowledge that all staff have a part to play in meeting the sustainability and Net Zero goals.

