



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Climate Emergency Plan

2026-2031

Caring for People and Planet





Contents

- Foreword4
- Climate Emergency Plan 2026-2031 – Plan on a Page6
- Introduction8
- Developing Our Climate Emergency Plan..... 11
- Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle (Shine)..... 12
- Our Progress So Far 14
- Progress Towards Embedding Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle..... 16
- Our Impact So Far (2020-2026) 18
- What We Want To Achieve20
- How We Plan To Achieve It21
 - People 22
 - Care 23
 - Energy and Water..... 24
 - Journeys 25
 - Waste and Resources 26
 - Procurement..... 27
 - Buildings..... 28
 - Biodiversity 29
- Governance and Accountability31
- Working Together.....32
- Conclusion.....35
- Contact Details.....37



Foreword

At Newcastle Hospitals, caring for people has always been at the heart of what we do. Every day, our staff provide high-quality care that saves lives, improves wellbeing and supports our communities. Today, that commitment must extend further. To provide high quality care for people now and in the future, we must also care for the planet on which our health depends. This commitment is reflected in our Trust Strategy, **Caring, Improving and Learning Together 2026-2031**, which sets out how we will deliver excellent, compassionate and innovative healthcare in a sustainable organisation fit for the future.

Caring for People and Planet

The climate crisis is the greatest threat to health and care this century. It is already affecting the health of our population, increasing inequality, driving demand and placing pressure on the systems that enable safe, effective care. As a large and complex healthcare organisation, we also recognise our own environmental impact — and our responsibility to reduce it. As an anchor institution within our city and region, we have a unique role to play, working alongside partners across local government, academia and the voluntary sector to support a coordinated response to the climate emergency that improves both environmental and population health. This Climate Emergency Plan (CEP) 2026-2031 sets out how Newcastle Hospitals will respond. It describes how we will continue to deliver

excellent patient care while reducing our environmental impact, increasing resilience and supporting the long-term future of the NHS. It reflects our belief that sustainability is not separate from our core purpose, but integral to it. The Plan is also a key enabler of our strategic priorities. By helping us reduce environmental impact, strengthen resilience and deliver better value, sustainability supports our ambition to join up care, advance care and support great care across our organisation and the wider health and care system.

Sustainability as Part of High-Quality Care

A sustainable healthcare system is one that delivers high quality outcomes for patients today while safeguarding the ability to meet future needs. It is preventive rather than reactive, uses resources wisely, and is resilient to shocks and change.

These principles align closely with the NHS 10-year vision and its three critical shifts: moving care closer to home, focusing on prevention rather than treatment, and using digital innovation to improve access and efficiency. When designed well, these shifts benefit both people and planet.

At Newcastle Hospitals, sustainability means delivering care that is clinically excellent, financially affordable and environmentally responsible — improving value while reducing harm. By **joining up care**, we can reduce unnecessary journeys and deliver services closer to home. By **advancing care**, we can use innovation, improvement and research to develop more sustainable models of care. By **supporting great care**, we can make better use of our resources, create healthier environments and empower our people to contribute to a more sustainable future.

Caring for People and Planet: Our Organisational DNA

To achieve this, sustainability must be embedded into how we work every day. It cannot sit alongside our priorities; it must be woven through them.

We describe this as **Caring for People and Planet**.

- The Plan adopts a DNA metaphor (as illustrated in the top right of this page) to reflect this approach:
- A **blue strand**, representing our core NHS purpose: caring for people through quality, safety, experience and outcomes.
 - A **green strand**, representing our responsibility to care for the planet by reducing carbon emissions, using resources efficiently and building resilience.

These strands are interdependent. Together, they form the DNA of sustainable healthcare. Our Shine (Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle) themes connect the two, ensuring that environmental sustainability strengthens — rather than distracts from — our ability to deliver excellent patient care.

From Commitment to Action

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Newcastle Hospitals has made important progress, learned

valuable lessons and built strong foundations. **We have also been clear about the scale of the challenge, and the need to translate ambition into deliverable, system-wide change.** This Climate Emergency Plan moves us from commitment to embedded action, setting out how sustainability will be integrated into decision making, governance, clinical practice and culture over the next five years. It will help ensure that the way we join up care, advance care and support great care delivers benefits not only for today's patients but also for future generations.

As part of the NHS — one of the most respected public institutions in the UK — we recognise our moral responsibility to lead by example. We will use our influence and reputation to support and empower our staff to make more sustainable choices, both at work and at home, helping to build a culture where environmental responsibility is a core component of delivering high quality care.

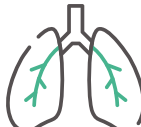
Above all, the Plan reflects a simple but powerful commitment: to deliver excellent care today without compromising the health of future generations. By caring for people and planet together, and working in partnership across our city and region, we will help create a healthier, fairer and more sustainable future for our patients, our staff and our communities.


Rob Harrison
Acting Chief Executive,
Newcastle Hospitals


Sir Paul Ennals
Chair,
Newcastle Hospitals



Climate Emergency Plan 2026-2031 – Plan on a Page

Our Vision for Sustainability			
Delivering Sustainable Healthcare for People and Planet			
Our 3 Goals			
ZERO CARBON CARE		CLEAN AIR	ZERO WASTE
 Halve our carbon footprint by 2031 Net Zero Carbon (carbon footprint plus) by 2040		 100% ultra low emission fleet by 2031 All journeys to our sites to be active or sustainable by 2040	 Reduce waste by 10% by 2031 All our waste becomes a resource in a circular economy by 2040
Shine Priority Action Areas			
PEOPLE	CARE	JOURNEYS	PROCUREMENT
 Inspire, inform and empower our people to deliver sustainable healthcare	 Develop low carbon care pathways adapted to a changing climate	 Embed active, clean, low carbon travel	 Buy less and buy better, working with our supply chain to decarbonise
ENERGY & WATER	WASTE & RESOURCES	BUILDINGS	BIODIVERSITY
 Reduce energy and water use, whilst transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy sources	 Dispose of less, reuse and recycle more	 Provide healthy, resilient and sustainable estates	 Develop therapeutic green space to support patient recovery and staff wellbeing
Strategic Alignment		How We Measure Success	
Aligned to Trust Strategy 2026-2031: - Supporting Great Care → sustainable use of our resources - Advancing Care → clinically-led sustainable quality improvement - Joining Up Care → efficient, preventative care models		Aligned to wider strategic priorities: - NHS 10-year plan → delivering a Net Zero NHS, reducing health inequalities - North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System and Newcastle City Council net zero targets Key metrics: - Carbon emissions (tCO₂e) trajectory vs carbon budget - Clean Air Hospital Framework score - Staff commute modal split - Waste and recycling rates - Energy and water consumption - Supplier engagement (5 Step Net Zero framework) - Staff engagement (Green Champions, SusQI projects)	

Delivering Sustainable Healthcare at scale – caring for People and Planet in everything we do

Introduction

The Next Phase of Our Climate Emergency Response

This Climate Emergency Plan 2026–2031 sets out the next phase of Newcastle Hospitals’ response to the climate emergency and supports delivery of our over-arching Trust Strategy 2026–2031.

In 2019, we were the first healthcare organisation in the world to publicly declare the climate emergency as a health emergency, and we committed to act accordingly. Our first Climate Emergency Strategy (2020–2025) established a clear ambition: to align with the Paris Agreement and limit our organisational contribution to global warming to 1.5°C. This included adopting a science-based carbon budget, developed with the Tyndall Centre, which defined the scale and pace of emissions reduction required. It also set ambitious targets to reduce air pollution and waste.

We deliberately set our ambition high — reflecting both the urgency of the climate crisis and our responsibility as a large and influential healthcare organisation, and our role as an anchor institution within our city and region, working in partnership to improve both population health and environmental sustainability.

Progress and Reality

We have made real progress — but we are not on track to meet our original ambition.

Over the past six years, we have made meaningful improvements. We have established strong foundations through our Shine programme,

strengthened leadership and governance, and embedded sustainability across key areas including clinical practice, estates, travel and procurement. We have delivered measurable improvements in carbon reduction, air quality and waste, while building staff engagement and capability across the organisation.

These achievements demonstrate that caring for people and planet can go hand in hand — improving patient care, productivity and environmental performance together.

However, we must also be clear about what we have learned. While our original ambition — to achieve a 90% reduction in controllable emissions by 2030 — was grounded in climate science, it assumed a rate and scale of transformation that has proven more challenging to deliver in practice within the constraints we face. Many of the pressures outlined in our Trust Strategy — including increasing demand, ageing infrastructure, fragmented pathways and financial constraints — have limited the pace at which emissions can be reduced. We have also learned that a significant proportion of our emissions is embedded in the way healthcare is currently designed and delivered, requiring system-wide change, long-term capital investment, national policy alignment and supply chain transformation — much of which sits beyond the direct control of a single organisation.

How we deliver care today shapes both patient outcomes and planetary health. In some areas, the way care is currently delivered drives unnecessary activity, duplication and waste, increasing both cost and

environmental impact. Without redesigning how we provide care, our models will remain both financially and environmentally unsustainable.

In light of this, we are resetting our trajectory. This Plan introduces a revised and more deliverable target: a 50% reduction in our controllable emissions by 2031 (the next key milestone for our Zero Carbon Care goal). This reflects what we have learned over the past five years — maintaining ambition while aligning it more clearly with what can be achieved through our own actions and through sustained, system-wide transformation.

Recognising this gap provides clarity on what must change over the next phase of our climate emergency response.

From Foundations to Transformation

This Plan moves us from establishing the foundations of change to delivering transformation.

It builds directly on what we have learned since 2019 and aligns with our strategic priority of supporting great care through the sustainable and responsible use of resources.

It marks a shift:

- from establishing foundations to delivering transformation at scale
- from individual initiatives to whole-system change across pathways, infrastructure and behaviours
- from ambition to clear accountability for delivery and measurable impact



This shift is underpinned by a clearer understanding of where we can have the greatest impact, and how quickly change can be delivered in practice — enabling us to focus effort where it will drive the most meaningful and sustained reductions in emissions. This reflects the broader direction of our Trust Strategy: improving how care is designed, reducing inefficiency and waste, and ensuring that resources are used to deliver maximum value for patients.

Embedding Sustainability into How We Deliver Care

Sustainability is how we deliver better care — not an additional priority. Environmental sustainability is not separate from our core purpose; it is integral to it.

The Trust Strategy makes clear that delivering high-quality care depends on how effectively we design pathways, use resources and support our people and systems.

Sustainability is part of this — enabling better outcomes, better value and more resilient services.

Through our Shine programme, we are embedding sustainability across:

- clinical care and quality improvement
- estates, infrastructure and digital systems
- procurement and supply chains
- workforce engagement and behaviours

As part of this, we recognise that our workforce is central to delivering change. As part of the NHS — one of the most trusted and respected public institutions in the UK — we have a responsibility to lead by example, supporting our staff to understand the impact of their choices and empowering them to act sustainably in their daily work and in their lives beyond the workplace.

This supports the shift described in our Trust Strategy towards:

- more joined-up, efficient and preventative care
- reduced duplication, delay and avoidable activity
- improved productivity and value for money
- a resilient organisation fit for the future

Reducing carbon, waste and pollution is a direct outcome of better designed, higher-value care. In this context, caring for people and planet means delivering care that is not only clinically excellent, but also efficient, responsible and sustainable for the future.



Looking Ahead

The next five years are critical to accelerating change. We have established the leadership, capability and commitment to act.

The challenge now is to accelerate progress by addressing the systemic barriers identified in our Trust Strategy — including infrastructure constraints, service design and resource pressures.

Working as an anchor institution, in partnership with organisations across our city and region, will be fundamental to achieving this — recognising that many of the changes required extend beyond the boundaries of our organisation.

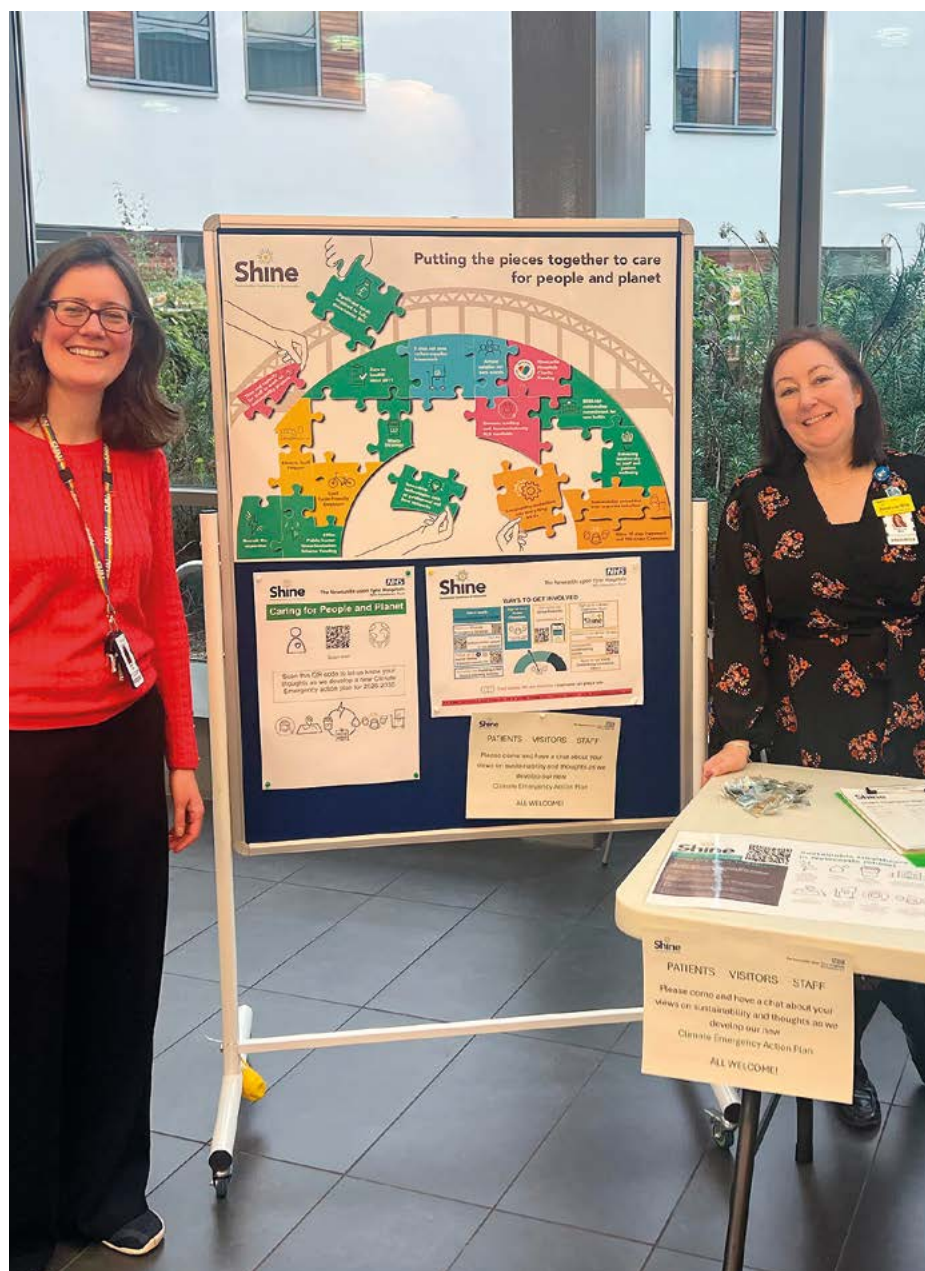
Our revised target does not reduce our commitment — it strengthens it by providing a clear, deliverable pathway for action. It enables us to embed sustainability in core decision-making, scale proven approaches, and drive the structural changes required to deliver lasting impact.

This Climate Emergency Plan provides a clear and aligned framework for doing so:

- supporting delivery of our strategic priorities
- improving efficiency and reducing waste
- strengthening organisational resilience
- and contributing to better health outcomes for our population

By embedding environmental sustainability into how we deliver care, we will bring **our vision of delivering sustainable healthcare in Newcastle for people and planet** to

life — supporting our ambition to be an organisation that people trust for their care, are proud to be part of, and value as a partner in improving health outcomes.



Developing Our Climate Emergency Plan

Our previous Climate Emergency Strategy included an action plan that ran from October 2020 to March 2026. During 2025/26 we worked with Trust senior leaders to include environmental sustainability as a key priority in the new Trust Strategy 2026-2031. Our Climate Emergency Plan is included as a key strategic delivery plan that supports delivery of the overall Trust Strategy.

In developing this Climate Emergency Plan we have consulted with staff, patients, visitors and our partners across the city, region, nationally and internationally.

Our annual staff surveys show that 98% of staff think it is important for the Trust to work in a more environmentally sustainable way

Our most recent engagement survey asked what we should prioritise in this plan – we received almost 300 responses which highlighted (in order of preference): waste reduction; energy efficiency & renewables; clean air & sustainable travel; sustainable food & nutrition; resource efficiency and sustainable suppliers. All of which have been incorporated into the refresh of our vision, goals and Shine priority area actions in this Climate Emergency Plan.

Direct engagement with our patients, carers and local residents, via our Partnership and Involvement Panel (PIP), generated positive feedback and suggestions to further emphasise the direct benefits to patients that will

be achieved through delivering the plan. We have incorporated this feedback into our plan and committed to providing regular updates on this benefits realisation to PIP.

Our collaborative work with other anchor institutions in Newcastle, our regional partners in the Great North Healthcare Alliance and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, have helped inform local and regional sustainability priorities as well as honing the content of this plan. As members of the Shelford Group, and Health Care Without Harm's Global Green and Healthy Hospitals, we have helped steer national and international policy commitments for climate action, as well as ensuring our own strategy helps others in our sector to chart a course for healthcare that cares for both people and planet.

"Looks good. It would be helpful to make more explicit how this will improve the day-to-day experience for patients and visitors."

PIP member feedback on draft version of this plan



Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle (Shine)

Our **Shine (Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle)** programme is the organisational framework through which we deliver this Climate Emergency Plan. Developed over the past decade, Shine has evolved from an early focus on environmental performance into a comprehensive approach for delivering **sustainable healthcare — caring for people and planet together.**

Shine provides a clear and practical method for embedding sustainability across everything we do. It connects our environmental ambitions with clinical quality, operational efficiency and staff engagement, ensuring that sustainability supports — rather than sits alongside — the delivery of excellent patient care.

Through the eight Shine priority areas shown below, we translate strategy into action. These themes reflect the key areas where we can reduce our environmental impact while improving health outcomes, experience and value. Together, they provide a structured, whole-organisation approach to delivering our Climate Emergency Plan and driving long-term, sustainable change. You can read the detailed action plans for each Shine priority area from page 22 of this Plan.



Energy & Water
Reduce energy and water use, whilst transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy sources



Buildings
Provide healthy, resilient and sustainable estates



Waste & Resources
Dispose of less, reuse and recycle more



Biodiversity
Develop therapeutic green space to support patient recovery and staff wellbeing



Journeys
Embed active, clean, low carbon travel



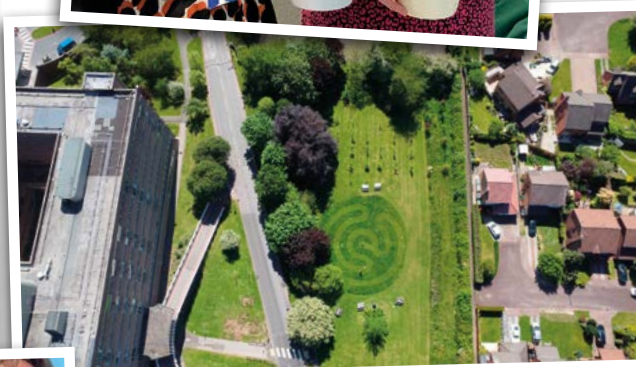
Procurement
Buy less and buy better, working with our supply chain to decarbonise



Care
Develop low carbon care pathways adapted to a changing climate



People
Inspire, inform and empower our people to deliver sustainable healthcare



Our Progress So Far

This provides a high-level summary of progress towards our three long-term goals, the following page describes our progress towards embedding Shine into our DNA.

Zero Carbon Care

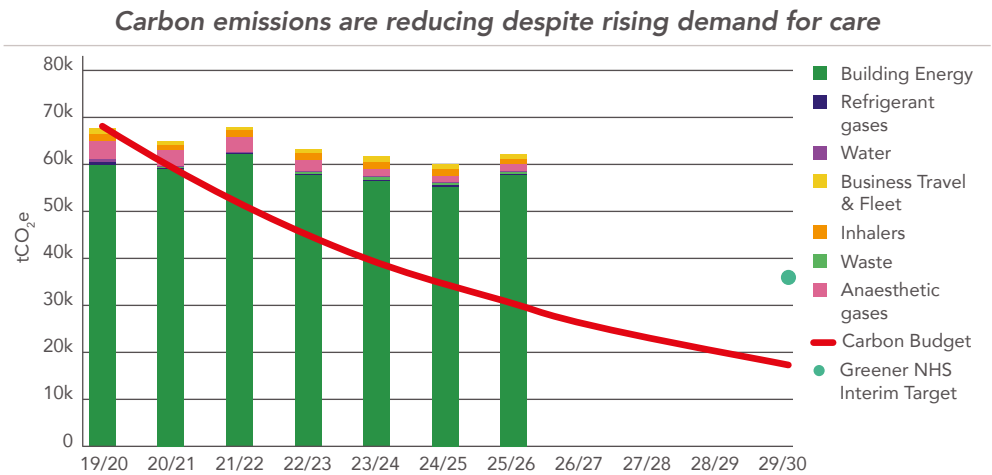


Figure 1: Newcastle Hospitals Carbon Footprint

We have reduced our carbon footprint from our 2019/20 baseline while continuing to deliver increasing levels of healthcare activity.

This progress reflects a combination of estate decarbonisation, clinical change and service redesign.

What we have achieved

- Delivery of major estate decarbonisation projects, including PSDS-funded investment
- Significant reductions in anaesthetic gas emissions, including the phase-out of desflurane
- Expansion of digital and remote care, reducing unnecessary travel
- Improved energy efficiency across parts of the estate

These achievements demonstrate that caring for people and planet can be delivered together — improving outcomes while reducing environmental impact.

What the data shows

- A downward trend in total carbon emissions
- Progress broadly aligned with early-stage carbon budget expectations, with more significant savings projected in the next phase

Challenges we must address

- Ageing infrastructure and reliance on fossil fuel-based energy systems
- Increasing demand for care driving higher energy use
- Scale and pace of capital investment required for heat decarbonisation

Progress to date is positive – but not yet at the pace required

Clean Air

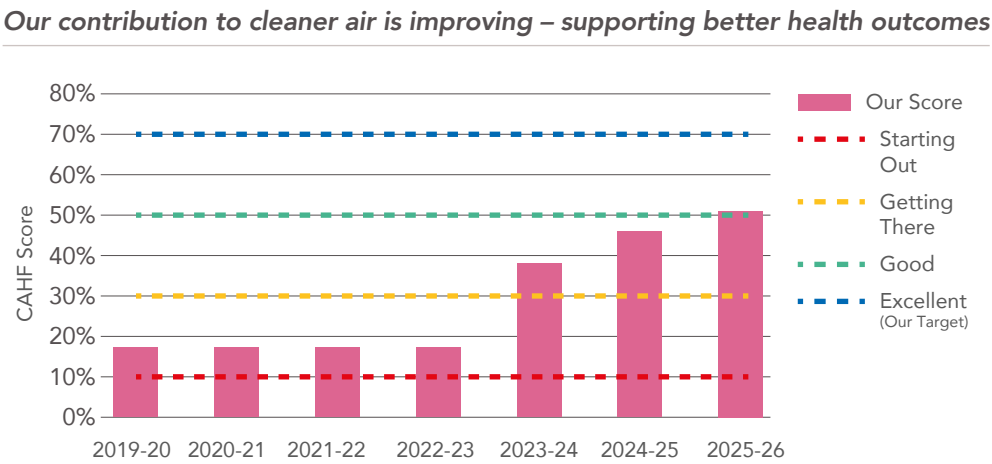


Figure 2: Our Clean Air Hospital Framework (CAHF) Progress

We have made strong progress in improving air quality across our sites and services. Our Clean Air Hospital Framework (CAHF) score has increased significantly from 17% (Starting Out) in 2019/20 to 50% (Good) in 2025/26.

What we have achieved

- Transition towards ultra-low emission and electric fleet vehicles
- Measures to reduce vehicle idling and improve site access
- Promotion of active and sustainable travel
- Increased use of virtual care reducing avoidable journeys

This progress reflects the direct link between air quality and population health, particularly for our most vulnerable patients.

What the data shows

- Significant improvement in CAHF score since baseline
- Growing maturity across multiple components

Challenges we must address

- Accelerating transition to electric fleet vehicles
- Infrastructure and space constraints across sites
- Dependence on wider system factors (transport, city infrastructure)

Achieving a CAHF score of 'Excellent' will require faster progress and stronger system-wide collaboration

Zero Waste

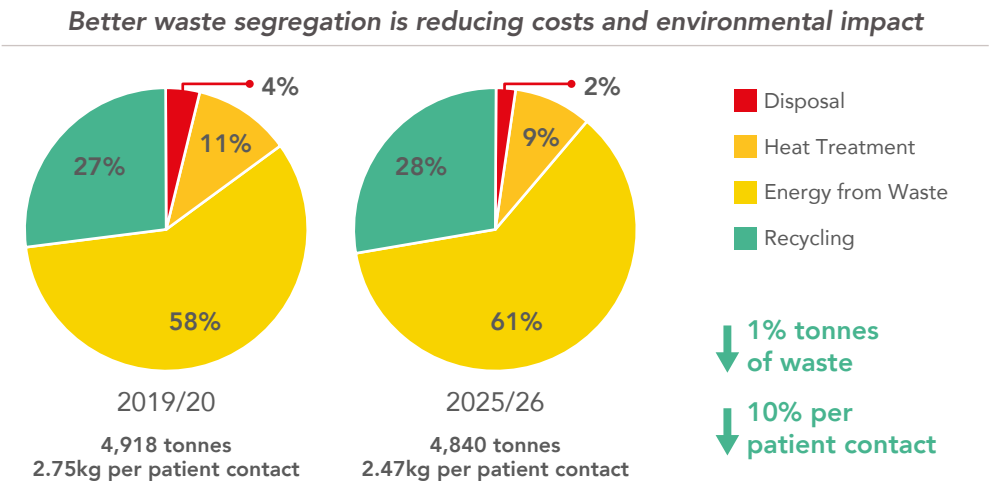


Figure 3: Waste Performance

We have improved how we manage waste and resources, with less waste produced and more materials reused, recycled or recovered.

What we have achieved

- Improved segregation, reducing reliance on the need for high-cost high-environmental impact hazardous waste treatment
- Increased recycling rates
- Strong staff engagement through training and audits
- Early adoption of reuse and circular approaches

These improvements support safer care, lower costs and reduced environmental impact as well as ensuring our compliance with developing legislation.

What the data shows

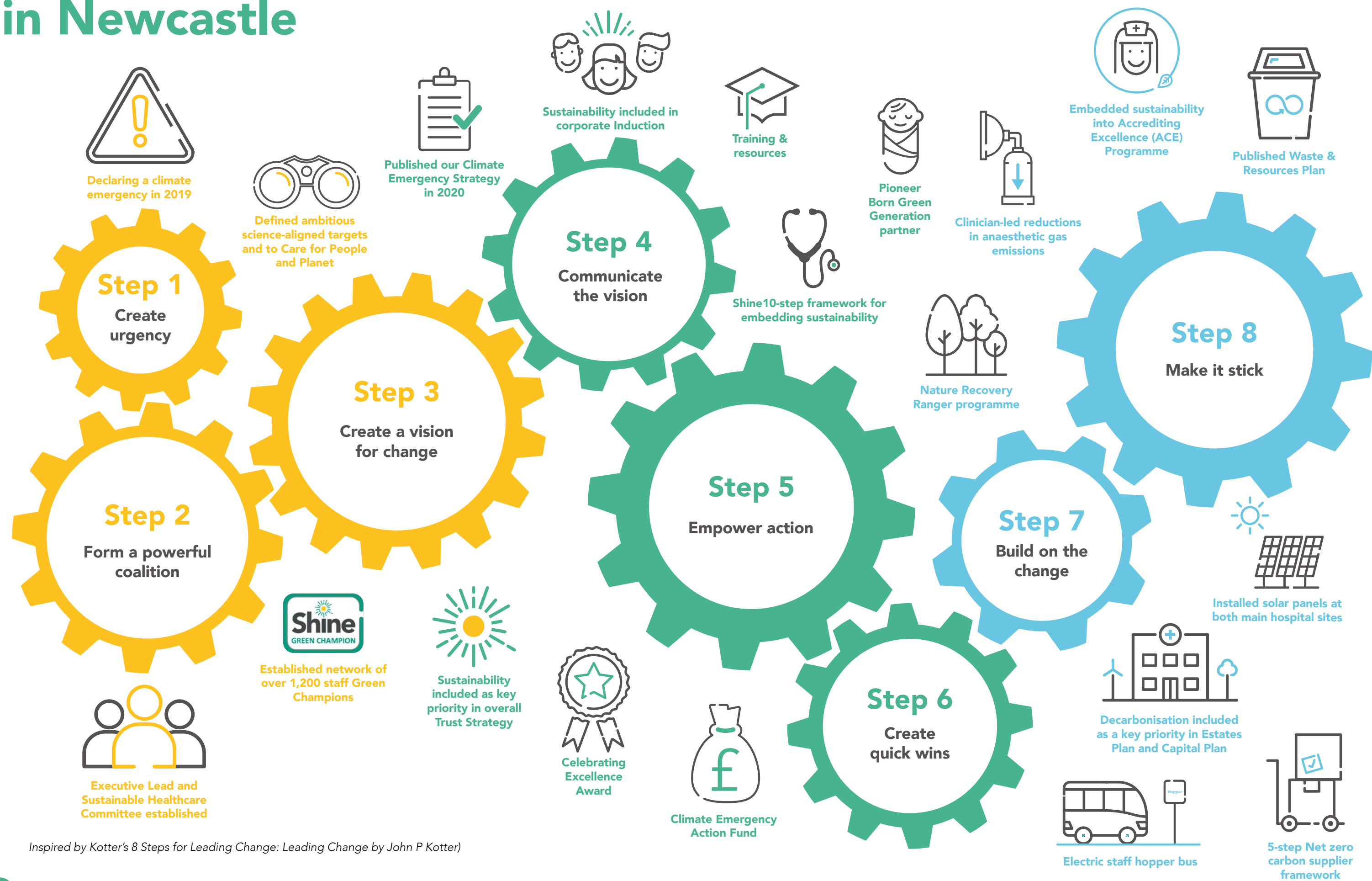
- Increasing proportion of waste managed higher up the waste hierarchy
- Stabilisation of total waste produced despite rising clinical activity levels

Challenges we must address

- Reducing total waste generation
- Embedding consistent behaviours across services
- Reducing reliance on single-use products and packaging and increasing reuse where clinically feasible

The next phase requires a culture shift from managing waste to preventing it

Progress Towards Embedding Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle



Inspired by Kotter's 8 Steps for Leading Change: Leading Change by John P Kotter)



Our Impact So Far (2020-2026)



Saved over **£2.75m** through staff-led sustainability projects



Recognised **32 staff sustainability projects** with Shine Awards



Over **430 tonnes of carbon avoided** through our use of **nitrous cracking technology** in maternity services



Implemented **25 green space projects** across our estates



Over **2,000 suppliers engaged in carbon reduction** through six annual events



Supported **830 members of staff to actively commute** through our cycle to work scheme



Awarded **6 Celebrating Excellence 'Shine' category winners** in our annual staff awards



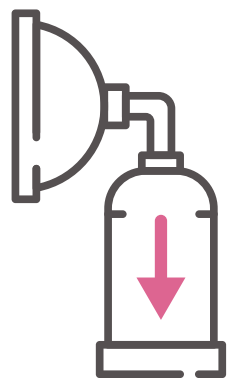
Delivered **sustainability and waste training to 3,700 staff** at corporate inductions



Secured over **£46m to decarbonise our estate** and included further investment in our five-year capital plan



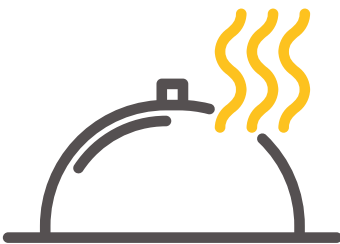
Developed a network of over **1,200 staff Green Champions**



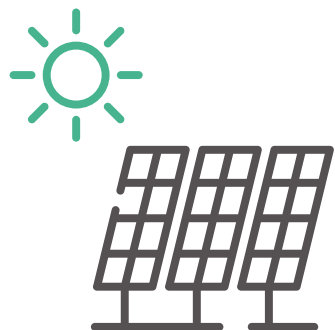
50% reduction in anaesthetic gas carbon emissions



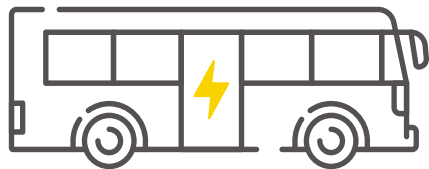
Recycled over **9,750 tonnes** of waste and continued to send zero waste to landfill



350 Meat Free Mondays in our bistros and restaurants



Installed **1,293 solar panels** that now generate almost **350 MWh of clean energy** each year



Avoided **310 tonnes of carbon** and associated air pollution with our **electric staff hopper buses**

What We Want To Achieve

Our Climate Emergency Plan will deliver benefits for patients and local communities, save money that can be used for frontline care, and improve our environmental performance.

Our Vision

Delivering Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle (Shine) for People and Planet.

Our Goals

To achieve our vision we have set three long-term goals:

1. Zero Carbon Care

- By 2031 our Carbon Footprint will be reduced by half
- By 2040 our Carbon Footprint Plus will be net zero

2. Clean Air

- By 2031 the vehicles we own will generate ultra low levels of air pollution
- By 2040 all travel to our sites will be active or sustainable, generating lower levels of air pollution

3. Zero Waste

- By 2031 we will reduce the amount of waste we dispose of by 10%
- By 2040 all our waste will become a resource within a circular economy



How We Plan To Achieve It

The following section of our strategy outlines what we want to achieve in each Shine priority area, during the life of this five year strategy, as well as how we aim to achieve it and how we will measure it.

To provide high quality care for people now and in the future, we must also care for the planet on which our health depends

Rob Harrison
Acting Chief Executive,
Newcastle Hospitals

Sir Paul Ennals
Chair,
Newcastle Hospitals

People



WHY?	Why this theme matters	Our workforce is central to delivering sustainable healthcare. Staff wellbeing, skills, engagement and empowerment are essential to providing high quality care while reducing environmental impact. The PEOPLE priority area focuses on enabling and supporting our workforce to embed sustainable practice into everyday roles, strengthening care delivery while contributing to environmental sustainability.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Flexible working and place based roles support new models of care. Treatment → Prevention: A healthy, supported workforce is better able to promote prevention and wellbeing. Analogue → Digital: Digitally confident staff can adopt new models of care and ways of working.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Workforce and Leadership . Secondary links: Net Zero Clinical Transformation, Digital Transformation, Transport and Travel (commuting and flexible working).
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Engagement and leadership at all levels are critical enablers of sustainable change. Sustainability is most effective when framed around patient benefit, staff wellbeing, cost saving and quality improvement. Competing pressures and limited time can be barriers without clear organisational support.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	Environmental sustainability will be a shared responsibility across the Trust, with staff supported, skilled and empowered to care for people and planet as part of their roles.
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Embed environmental sustainability into how we run our organisation 2. Educate and support our Green Champions to deliver environmentally sustainable healthcare 3. Advocate for climate emergency action beyond our boundaries
	Measuring success	• Number of business processes with sustainability embedded (i.e. Clinical Board performance reviews, Accrediting Excellence (ACE) Programme, business case Sustainability Impact Appraisals (SIAs) etc.) • Number of staff Green Champions • Number of staff-led sustainability projects that receive a Shine Award • Number of engagement and education events
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Executive Director of People & Commercial Innovation (working with the Director of People and Organisational Development) Delivery through: HR Sustainability Group (liaison with Sustainability Team, Staff Networks, Trust Education Group, Employment Partnership Forum and Patient Engagement Forum). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Care



WHY?	Why this theme matters	How we design and deliver care has the greatest influence on both health outcomes and environmental impact. Clinical decisions shape carbon emissions, resource use, patient experience and value. By embedding sustainability into models of care, we can improve quality, reduce harm and support the long term resilience of the NHS. The CARE priority area ensures that delivering excellent patient care and reducing environmental impact go hand in hand.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Redesigning pathways to deliver care closer to home reduces unnecessary hospital activity and travel while improving patient experience. Treatment → Prevention: Sustainable care prioritises prevention, support for self management, reducing avoidable illness and demand for resource-intensive acute care. Analogue → Digital: Digital and virtual care options support timely access, more personalised care and reduce travel emissions.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Net Zero Clinical Transformation . Secondary links: Medicines, Transport and Travel, Digital Transformation, Workforce and Leadership .
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Clinically led initiatives deliver the greatest and most durable carbon reductions. Sustainable care is most successful when aligned with quality improvement and patient benefit. Data, engagement and clinical leadership are critical enablers, while time, awareness and system complexity can be barriers.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We will embed environmental sustainability into all our Quality Improvement processes and deliver over 100 staff-led sustainable quality improvement (SusQI) projects , with every Clinical Board reporting quarterly on reductions in their environmental impact.
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Continue to reduce emissions from anaesthetic gases, with a focus on nitrous oxide waste mitigation 2. Ensure SusQI is embedded in our quality improvement processes and engage with Clinical Boards to implement projects with triple bottom line improvements 3. Implement a Climate Adaptation Plan to ensure our patients receive excellent care in a changing climate
	Measuring success	• Carbon emissions from anaesthetic gases and inhalers (tCO₂e) • Number of Quality Improvement projects with sustainability co benefits • Number of Clinical Boards regularly reporting on reductions in their environmental impact • NHS Climate Adaptation Framework maturity progress
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Medical Director and Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery & AHPs Delivery through: Models of Care Group (liaison with Clinical Boards, Digital, Pharmacy and Transformation programmes). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Energy and Water



WHY?	Why this theme matters	The provision of energy and water are fundamental to safe, effective healthcare and are major contributors to the financial cost and environmental impact of delivery. Efficient, low-carbon energy and water provision supports patient safety, staff wellbeing and system resilience while reducing harmful emissions and resource pressures. The ENERGY AND WATER priority area focuses on ensuring our estate uses energy and water efficiently and responsibly, supporting high quality patient care while transitioning to low carbon, resilient systems that are fit for the future.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Efficient infrastructure enables modern, fit-for-the-future models of care delivered in the right setting. Treatment → Prevention: Reliable, climate resilient environments support healthy recovery for patients and wellbeing for staff. Analogue → Digital: Smart systems with data driven monitoring and digital controls reduce waste and optimise performance.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan alignment: Estates and Facilities . Secondary links: Clinical Transformation (resilient environments), Workforce and Leadership (skills, engagement), Digital Transformation (energy and water metering, data and controls).
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Investment in energy and water efficiency delivers multiple benefits: lower operating costs, reduced emissions and improved estate resilience. Demand for energy and water has increased year-on-year, alongside ageing infrastructure, these remain key resilience risks. Generating electricity at our hospitals, via fossil gas combined heat and power (CHP) engines, has limited our ability to benefit from UK grid electricity decarbonisation. Significant external capital funding for de-steaming has been secured at Freeman Hospital but remains a challenge for the RVI.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We will reduce our building energy carbon emissions by at least 50% from our 2019/20 baseline through capital investment in energy efficiency and delivery of our £46m PSDS 4 decarbonisation project .
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Implement automated energy and water metering and digital controls across the estate. 2. Reduce energy demand through capital investment in building fabric, efficiency upgrades and optimisation. 3. Deliver a phased heat decarbonisation programme, including renewable energy generation, aligned to the Trust net zero pathway.
	Measuring success	• Total energy (kWh) and water (m³) consumption • Total on site renewable generation (kWh) • Energy and water carbon emissions (tCO₂e)
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Director of Estates, Facilities & Strategic Partnerships. Delivery through: Estates Decarbonisation Group (liaison with Estates Strategy Group, Capital Management Group, Emergency Preparedness, Resilience & Response (EPRR)). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Journeys



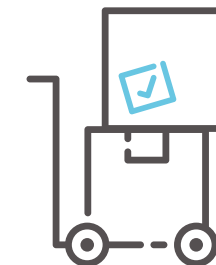
WHY?	Why this theme matters	How patients, staff and visitors travel to, from and between our sites has a significant impact on access to care, experience, health outcomes and carbon emissions. Travel contributes to congestion, air pollution and inequality, while also affecting staff wellbeing and productivity. The JOURNEYS priority area focuses on enabling safe, convenient and sustainable travel choices that support high quality care and healthier communities, while reducing environmental impact.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Care closer to home reduces unnecessary travel and supports more equitable access to services. Treatment → Prevention: Active travel and cleaner air support physical and mental health, contributing to prevention aims. Analogue → Digital: Virtual appointments and digital communication reduce the need for travel while improving flexibility and access.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Transport and Travel . Secondary links: Net Zero Clinical Transformation (virtual care, closer to home), Workforce and Leadership (staff travel), Estates and Facilities (site planning and access).
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Travel demand is closely linked to how services are designed and scheduled. Digital and remote options can significantly reduce journeys when clinically appropriate. Behaviour change is most successful when sustainable options are convenient, affordable and clearly supported by the organisation. Partnership working is critical to enable wider system change and reduce health inequalities.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We will aim for 100% of our Trust fleet vehicles to be electric and deliver on commitments in our Travel and Transport Plan that enable 70% of our people to commute to work by active or sustainable modes (walking, cycling or public transport) and achieve a score of Excellent on the Clean Air Hospital Framework .
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Reduce carbon emissions from our Trust fleet by transitioning to electric vehicles 2. Support staff to commute by active or sustainable travel through improved infrastructure and discount schemes 3. Improve our Clean Air Hospital Framework score to minimise pollution and protect public health
	Measuring success	• Carbon emissions from transport and travel (tCO₂e) • Percentage of Trust vehicles that are ultra-low emission • Staff travel survey data (active and sustainable commuting modal split %) • Clean Air Hospital Framework maturity score
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Director of Estates, Facilities & Strategic Partnerships. Delivery through: Trust Travel Group (liaison with Clinical Boards, Digital, Estates and HR Teams). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Waste and Resources



WHY?	Why this theme matters	Waste is a highly visible and costly by product of healthcare delivery. Reducing waste improves efficiency and safety, reduces costs and environmental impact while supporting high quality care. The WASTE AND RESOURCES priority area focuses on prevention, reuse and improved resource efficiency, supporting safer, more sustainable care and better value for patients and the organisation.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Reduced waste through redesigned pathways. Treatment → Prevention: Preventing waste mirrors preventing avoidable illness and harm. Analogue → Digital: Digital systems reduce paper and resource use.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Waste and Resources . Secondary links: Net Zero Clinical Transformation, Procurement, Workforce and Leadership .
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Waste reduction is most effective when staff understand the clinical, financial and environmental benefits. Correct segregation is essential to delivering safe healthcare, and collaboration with Procurement and Clinical Boards supports long term reduction in consumables spend, disposal costs and environmental impact.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We will reduce total waste by 10% from our 2019/20 baseline and achieve a recycling rate of 35%, through buying less and buying better, increasing reuse, and further improving waste segregation.
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	Reduce waste by buying less, buying better, and reusing more Improve our recycling rate, with a focus on food waste recycling - Focus on staff training and engagement to achieve waste hierarchy improvement, with cost and carbon savings
	Measuring success	- Total waste (tonnes) and waste per unit of activity (kg per patient contact) - Recycling rate (both as a % of all waste and a % of non-clinical waste) - Improvements in ward waste audit scores (number of wards improving waste audit scores over the period of this CEP)
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Director of Estates, Facilities & Strategic Partnerships. Delivery through: Waste Management Group (liaison with Estates, Infection Control, Clinical Boards and Procurement). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Procurement



WHY?	Why this theme matters	Purchased goods and services are a major source of emissions and resource use. Sustainable procurement reduces carbon, waste and cost while supporting quality, resilience and ethical supply chains. The PROCUREMENT priority area focuses on ensuring that procurement decisions support high quality patient care while reducing environmental impact and strengthening sustainable, resilient supply chains.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Supporting suppliers that enable community based and place based care. Treatment → Prevention: Procuring products and services that reduce avoidable harm and waste. Analogue → Digital: Digital procurement improves transparency, efficiency and demand management.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Supply Chain and Procurement . Secondary links: Medicines, Estates and Facilities, Net Zero Clinical Transformation .
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Engagement with suppliers drives the greatest impact. Collaboration with other public sector procurement organisations increases supplier engagement. Clear standards and specifications support environmentally sustainable choices without compromising care quality. Data availability and market readiness vary across goods and services categories. Our suppliers are keen to support our net zero ambitions but some require help and guidance to improve.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We want to buy less and buy better , by further embedding sustainability into our procurement processes , procuring 90% of goods and services from suppliers engaged in our 5 Step Net Zero Supply Chain framework and promote sustainable food choices on our menus .
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	Embed sustainable procurement into our procurement processes Actively engage with our suppliers to influence a reduction in our procurement carbon emissions Promote sustainable food choices and reduce the carbon footprint of the food we provide to our patients, staff and visitors
	Measuring success	- Procurement carbon emissions (tCO₂e) - Number of suppliers engaged at each stage of our 5 Step Net Zero framework (and % of procurement with those suppliers) - Food carbon emissions (tCO₂e)
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Chief Finance Officer (working with Procurement & Supply Chain Director). Delivery through: Sustainable Procurement Steering Group and Food and Drink Sustainability Group (liaison with Clinical Boards, Capital Management Group and Supplies & Services Procurement Group). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.



Buildings



WHY?	Why this theme matters	Our buildings are fundamental to delivering safe, effective and high quality healthcare. Well designed, modern environments support better patient outcomes, improved experience and staff wellbeing. They also play a critical role in reducing energy use, carbon emissions and operational costs. The BUILDINGS priority area focuses on ensuring our estate enables excellent clinical care while transitioning to energy efficient, low carbon and resilient infrastructure that is fit for the future.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Flexible, adaptable buildings support evolving models of care and integration with community services. Treatment → Prevention: High quality internal environments (e.g. air quality, thermal comfort) support recovery, reduce risk and promote wellbeing. Analogue → Digital: Modern infrastructure enables digitally enabled care, advanced diagnostics and more efficient service delivery.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Estates and Facilities . Secondary links: Transport & Travel, Digital Transformation, Climate Adaptation .
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Embedding environmental sustainability early in capital planning delivers long term benefits for both patient and planetary care. Upgrading ageing infrastructure with modern energy efficient, low-carbon technologies improves patient and staff wellbeing, safety and operational resilience in a changing climate.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	Our buildings will consistently support high quality care delivery with modern, energy efficient and low carbon environments. The estate will be more environmentally sustainable, better aligned to clinical need and more resilient to a changing climate.
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Deliver our Estates Strategic Delivery Plan with targeted investment in energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects. 2. Embed the NHS Net Zero Building Standard and a BREEAM Outstanding design-brief into all new build capital projects. 3. Adapt our estate for the predicted increase in extreme weather events due to our changing climate.
	Measuring success	• Number of capital schemes achieving the NHS Net Zero Building Standard and BREEAM • Capital investment in energy efficiency and net zero carbon estates projects (£ annually) • Estate condition and energy performance metrics • Estates Climate Adaptation Plan measures implemented
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Director of Estates, Facilities & Strategic Partnerships. Delivery through: Capital Management Group (liaison with Estates, Clinical Boards, Capital and Sustainability Teams). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.

Biodiversity



WHY?	Why this theme matters	Nature and biodiversity are fundamental to health and wellbeing. Access to green space supports recovery, mental health, staff wellbeing and more positive care environments. At the same time, protecting and enhancing biodiversity strengthens climate resilience and contributes to wider environmental recovery. The BIODIVERSITY priority area ensures our estate and green spaces actively support both nature and people, contributing to healthier environments and improved wellbeing for patients, staff and communities.
	NHS 10 Year Plan alignment (three shifts)	Hospital → Community: Welcoming, accessible green spaces support community engagement and wellbeing beyond clinical settings. Treatment → Prevention: Access to nature supports physical and mental health, contributing to prevention and recovery. Analogue → Digital: Digital mapping, planning and monitoring tools support smarter land use and biodiversity management as well as patient and staff engagement and education.
	NHS England Green Plan alignment	Primary Green Plan action area: Estates and Facilities (including biodiversity and green space). Secondary links: Workforce and Leadership (wellbeing), Net Zero Clinical Transformation (therapeutic environments), Climate Adaptation and Resilience .
	What we learned from 2020–2025	Green spaces deliver clear benefits for patients, staff and visitors when they are accessible, well designed and maintained. Small scale interventions can have meaningful impact. Partnerships and staff engagement are key enablers, while competing estate pressures can limit progress without clear prioritisation.
WHAT?	Outcomes we want to achieve by 2031	We will improve biodiversity at our hospitals by 20% and ensure all patients, staff and visitors have access to wildlife-friendly therapeutic green spaces to support their health, wellbeing and connection with nature.
HOW?	Priority actions 2026–2031	1. Create and promote the use of therapeutic green spaces to benefit the health and wellbeing of patients, staff and visitors 2. Enhance biodiversity of our green spaces to support nature recovery and infrastructure resilience 3. Deliver nature-based engagement events to promote the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature
	Measuring success	• Total green space area (m²) and quality (annual biodiversity assessment score) for our hospital sites • Number of participants in nature engagement events • Number of species identified within our site boundaries via citizen science projects (i.e. BioBlitz/iNaturalist)
WHO?	Leadership & governance	Executive Lead: Director of Estates, Facilities & Strategic Partnerships. Delivery through: Green Spaces Working Group (liaison with Estates, Clinical Boards, Capital Planning and Sustainability Teams). Oversight via: Sustainable Healthcare Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Trust Board of Directors.



Governance and Accountability

A clear governance structure for accountability and reporting on progress towards this strategic delivery plan is vital.

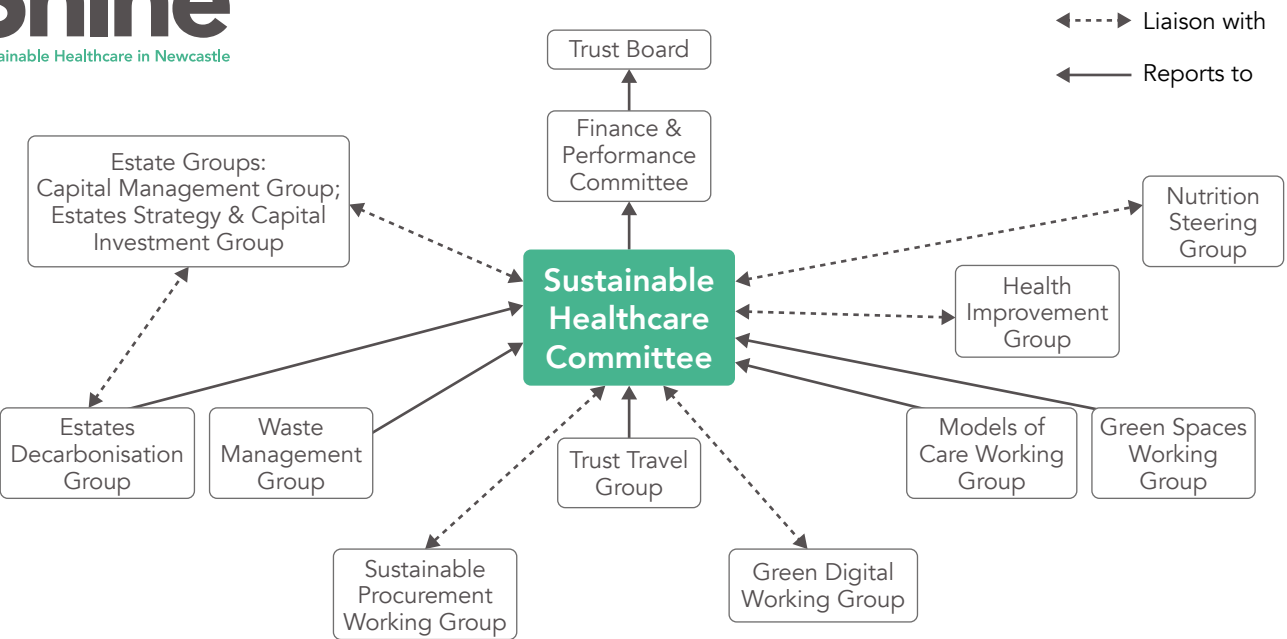
Our **CEO and Chair** are both highly committed to climate emergency action, and they are aided at Board level by our **Executive Lead for Sustainability** and the Executive Director for People and Commercial. Our Executive Lead chairs our Sustainable Healthcare Committee (SHC), which reports into the Trust Board of Directors via the Finance & Performance Committee (see diagram below).

The SHC is a multi-disciplinary committee with senior representatives from: nursing, medical, estates & facilities, procurement, human resources, IT, pharmacy, business continuity and a patient representative. Our **Associate Director of Environmental Sustainability** is our strategic lead for sustainability and heads up our in-house team of sustainability professionals who help coordinate the Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle (Shine) programme of work to deliver on our Climate Emergency Plan commitments.

Reporting Progress

We will report progress towards the commitments in this strategic delivery plan to our Trust Board of Directors:

- Quarterly, in a Shine high-level dashboard included in the Integrated Board Report
- Six-monthly, in formal progress reports
- Annually, in our comprehensive Shine Report, with a summary included in our Trust Annual Report (available publicly on our Trust website)



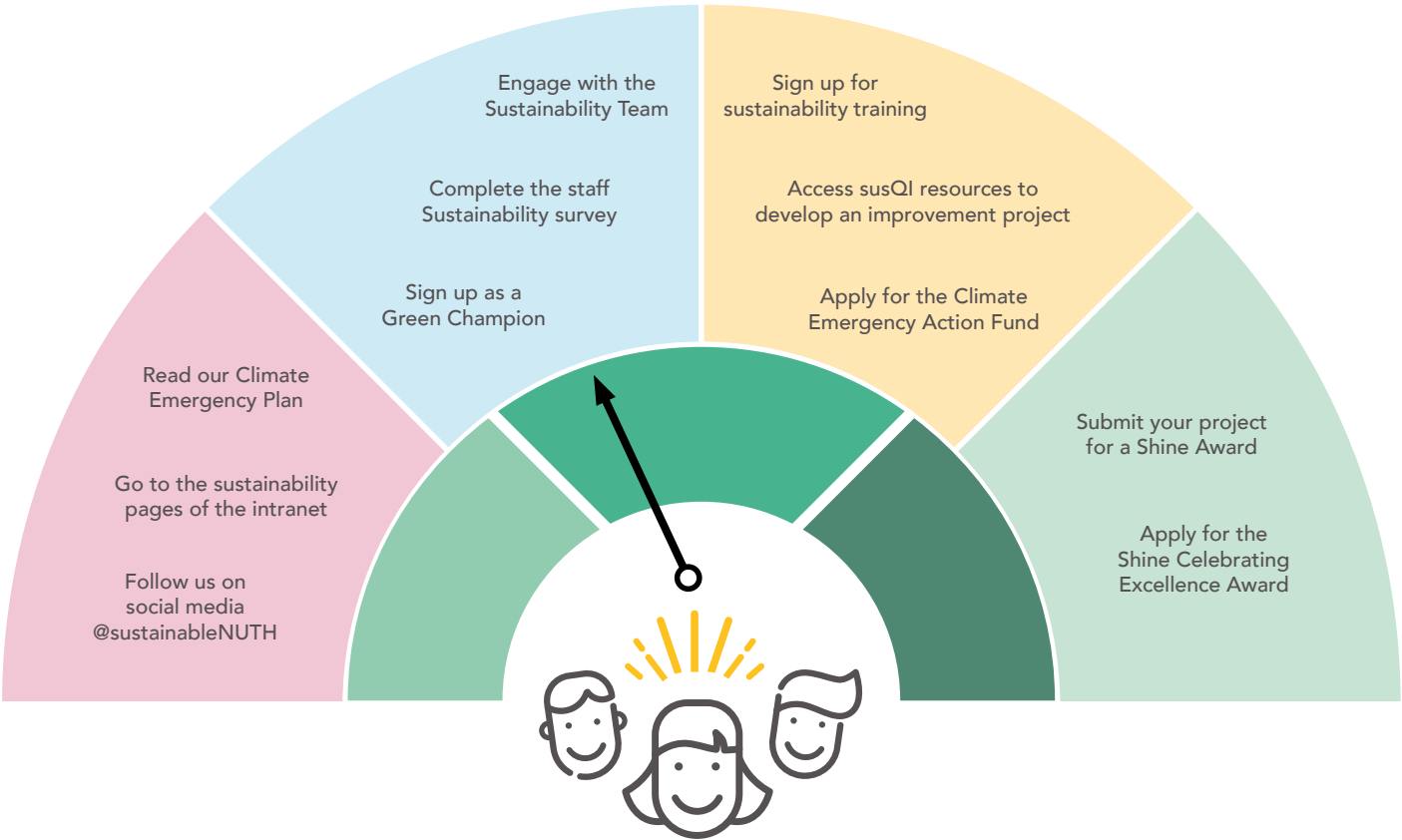


Working Together

To achieve the vision and goals set out in this strategic delivery plan, we need to create a culture and working environment for our people to be empowered and able to act. Tackling the climate emergency can seem overwhelming so we have developed tools and support to enable quick and simple actions to help deliver improvement.

Each of these tools, shown in the diagram below, will help us get one step closer to achieving our vision. All of these tools and other supporting resources can be accessed from the Sustainability pages of the Trust intranet or can be requested from the Sustainability Team at nuth.environment@nhs.net.

Helping us all to Shine



There are already over 1,200 enthusiastic **Green Champions** across the Trust and we are always looking for more. Staff who join the group are added to a network chat group, receive regular emails and newsletters, can attend Green Champion staff network meetings and are educated and empowered on how to support delivery of our Climate Emergency Plan in their everyday roles.

Sometimes sustainability projects require a small amount of funding to get them off the ground, before recurring costs and environmental savings are realised. Applications to our **Climate Emergency Action Fund** are welcome from any member of staff with a sustainability idea that they would like to try in their area of work. Application forms and guidance can be found on our Sustainability intranet page.

If a project is shown to have made a positive impact on one of the key

areas of sustainability it can be submitted for a **Shine Award** and added to our bank of Shine impact stories. Our **Trust Celebrating Excellence Awards** includes a special annual **Shine Award** available for a team, or individual member of staff, that has successfully demonstrated a reduction in the environmental impact of their service or the wider organisation.

Beyond Our Boundaries

Delivering this Plan will also rely on strong collaboration beyond our organisation. As an **anchor institution** within our city and region, we are working alongside other major employers and partners — including local authorities, universities, colleges and businesses — to support a coordinated, place-based response to the climate emergency that improves both environmental and population health.

We are also strengthening our collaboration through the **Great**

North Healthcare Alliance, where addressing the climate emergency is a shared priority. Through this partnership, we are working collectively to deliver meaningful change at scale, sharing learning, aligning approaches and accelerating progress across the North East and North Cumbria through our Provider Collaborative.

At a national level, our work is supported through collaboration with the **Shelford Group** and Greener NHS, enabling us to share best practice, benchmark progress and contribute to system-wide leadership on sustainable healthcare across the NHS. Internationally, we are longstanding members of **Health Care Without Harm's** Global Green and Healthy Hospitals network - a growing global movement of hospitals and health systems dedicated to reducing their environmental impact and promoting both public and planetary health.





Conclusion

This Climate Emergency Plan sets out a clear and credible pathway for the next phase of our response. It reflects what we have learned, the progress we have made, and the scale of the challenge ahead.

At its heart is a simple principle: **caring for people and planet must go hand in hand**. Sustainability is not separate from how we deliver healthcare — it is fundamental to delivering high-quality, efficient and resilient services for our patients now and in the future.

We have been honest about where we are. We have made meaningful progress and built strong foundations, but we know that delivering the pace and scale of change required will demand a sustained, whole-system effort. This Plan sets out how we will move from ambition to action — embedding sustainability into decision-making, redesigning how care is delivered, and working more closely with partners across our city, region and beyond.

As an anchor institution, and as part of one of the most trusted public institutions in the UK, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to lead. By working collaboratively — with our staff, our partners and our communities — we can help shape a healthier, more sustainable future.

Every member of staff has a role to play. Whether through clinical practice, operational decision-making, or the choices we make every day, small actions can combine to deliver significant impact. Through our Shine programme, we will continue to support and empower our people to act — making sustainable healthcare part of how we work, not something extra we do.

The next five years are critical. By focusing our efforts where they will have the greatest impact, scaling what works, and continuing to learn and adapt, we can deliver meaningful and lasting change.



Glossary

Accrediting Excellence (ACE) programme	A framework that provides a comprehensive view of the quality of care delivered across our wards and departments.
Born Green Generation	A Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe initiative, working in partnership with hospitals and universities in Europe to protect current and future generations from the harmful effects of certain plastics and chemicals, while reducing unnecessary plastic waste.
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method used to assess, rate and certify the sustainability of buildings.
Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ e)	A carbon dioxide equivalent or CO ₂ e, is a metric measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their global-warming potential (GWP), by converting amounts of other gases to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide with the same global warming potential.
Circular economy	A regenerative economic model designed to eliminate waste and pollution by keeping products and materials in continuous circulation.
Clean Air Hospital Framework (CAHF)	A self-assessment tool designed to improve air quality across the hospital site, and in the local community.
Climate adaptation	The process of adjusting to actual or expected climate change and its effects.
Climate emergency	A climate emergency declaration is action taken to acknowledge that humanity is in a climate emergency, and urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible damage resulting from it.
Commuting modal split	The percentage of commuters using different transport modes (e.g., car, public transport, walking, cycling, wheeling).
Great North Healthcare Alliance	The Great North Healthcare Alliance is a partnership between the NHS Trusts in Gateshead, Newcastle, Northumbria and North Cumbria.
Green plan	Under the Health and Care Act 2022 all NHS Trusts are required to have a board approved green plan. The Climate Emergency Plan is Newcastle Hospitals’ Green Plan.
Greener NHS	Via NHS England the Greener NHS team works with staff, organisations and suppliers to support the NHS’s world leading ambition to become a net zero national health service.
Integrated Care System (ICS)	A statutory committee jointly convened by Local Authorities and the NHS, comprised of a broad alliance of organisations and other representatives as equal partners concerned with improving the health, public health and social care services provided to their population.
Net zero carbon	Having a balance between the amount of carbon emitted and the amount of carbon absorbed from the atmosphere.
PSDS	The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) provides grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.
Carbon budget	The cumulative amount of carbon dioxide emissions permitted over a period of time to keep within a certain temperature threshold.
Shelford Group	The Shelford Group is a collaboration between ten of the largest teaching and research NHS hospital trusts in England.
SusQI	Sustainability in Quality Improvement (SusQI) is a method to drive incremental change towards a more ethical and sustainable health system.
Ultra-low emission vehicles	As defined by the UK Department for Transport. At the time of publication this is defined as vehicles with less than 75 grams of CO ₂ per kilometre (g/km) from the tail pipe.
Waste hierarchy	The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment.

Contact Details

This CEP has been developed by the Sustainability Team at Newcastle Hospitals, but has been co-produced with staff Green Champions, patients, external partners and our senior leadership team. All information contained within it is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate at the time of publishing.

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