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Executive Summary

The NHS ambition to be the first Net Zero health system in the world and the NHS 2040 & 2045 targets set by Government has provided greater focus on sustainability.

Climate change presents an immediate and growing threat to health. The UK is already experiencing more frequent and severe floods and heatwaves, as well as worsening air pollution. Up to 38,000 deaths a year are associated with air pollution alone, disproportionately affecting the most deprived and further exacerbating health inequalities.

This refreshed Green Plan for North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust covers the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

We recognise that if we are to provide the best possible care to our patients and improve their quality of life, we need to significantly reduce our impact on the environment.

Stacey Hunter
Group Chief
Executive Officer

Steven Taylor
Group Director of Estates
and Net Zero Board
Level Lead

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United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve the lives and prospects of everyone everywhere.

The 17 goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, with the intention of achieving the Goals by 2030.

Our Green Plan, Social Value Charter and Anchor Framework are aligned to the goals, and we will continue to work with our partners to encompass them at the heart of our work.

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Introduction to North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust provides integrated hospital and community healthcare services to around 400,000 people across Hartlepool, Stockton, and parts of County Durham.

The Trust operates from the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool, as well as various community settings including Peterlee Community Hospital and the recently constructed Tees Valley Diagnostic Centre in the centre of Stockton.

North Tees and Hartlepool is one of the largest employers in the Tees Valley with close to 5,500 medical, nursing, clinical and non clinical staff with every member of our organisation being committed to providing the very best care to our patients, whether they are being treated in our hospitals or out in the community.
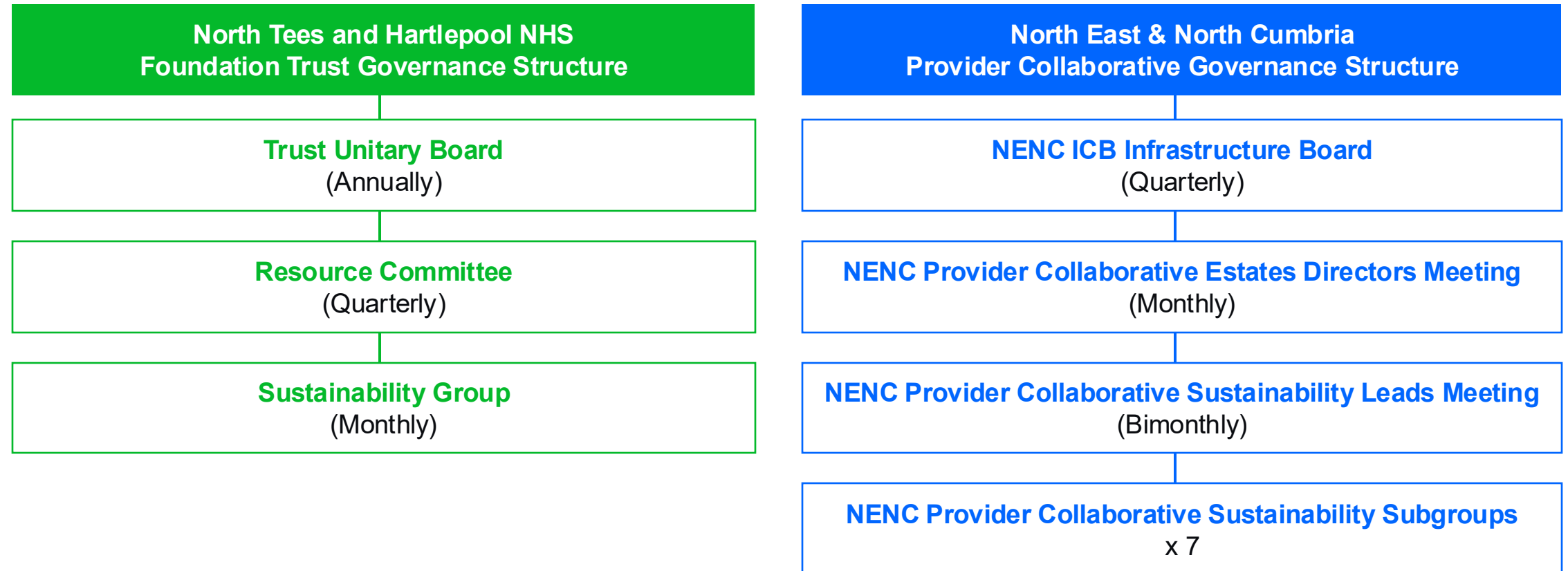
The Tees Valley is home to approximately 678,000 people. Over a third of these residents live in the 20% most deprived areas of England, according to the North East Combined Authority in 2024. The Tees Valley faces air quality challenges, particularly due to emissions from the industrial cluster near the River Tees. This area has some of the highest emissions of any area in the UK, both in real terms and per capita.

In 2024, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust formed University Hospitals Tees with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to enhance collaboration and improve patient outcomes across the Tees Valley.

The shared University Hospital Tees approach to sustainability aligns closely with our NHS role in addressing healthcare inequalities, ill health prevention, and health improvement. We recognise that the indirect and direct impacts of the climate crisis are likely to widen health inequalities in the UK. Therefore, it is crucial that health equity is considered as we develop policies and approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, ensuring their benefits are equally distributed.

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Governance and Accountability

| North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Governance Structure	North East & North Cumbria Provider Collaborative Governance Structure
Trust Unitary Board (Annually)	**NENC ICB Infrastructure Board** (Quarterly)
Resource Committee (Quarterly)	**NENC Provider Collaborative Estates Directors Meeting** (Monthly)
Sustainability Group (Monthly)	**NENC Provider Collaborative Sustainability Leads Meeting** (Bimonthly)
	NENC Provider Collaborative Sustainability Subgroups x 7

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What is a Green Plan and why do we need it?

To support the NHS net zero ambition, each trust and integrated care system should have a Green Plan. It sets out aims, objectives, and delivery plans for carbon reduction and is signed off by the Trust Board, with a board level 'net zero lead' responsible for overseeing its delivery.

Given the pivotal role that integrated care systems (ICSs) play, each system will also develop its own green plan, based on the strategies of its member organisations.

There are several key legislative drivers for change, and specific guidance as to why we need this Green Plan.

- The Paris Agreement 2015 – global, legally binding international treaty with goal of limiting global temperature increase to below 2°C (compared to pre-industrial levels).

- Climate Change Act 2008 - legally binding UK Government targets for the reduction of carbon emissions. The NHS has a duty to respond to meet these targets which are enshrined in law.

- Net Zero by 2050 – binding target for UK Government, regulators and business to meet net zero by 2050.

- The Environment Act 2021 – legally binding targets driven by improving air and water quality. Public bodies held to account on environmental obligations.

- Delivering a Net Zero NHS statutory guidance – set out target of net zero by 2040, duties on all Trusts to contribute.

- Health and Care Act 2022 – the NHS became the first health system to embed net zero targets outlined in the Delivering a Net Zero NHS guidance into legislation.

- CQC Well Led – staff and leadership awareness of threats, educated and empowered to help reduce impacts.

- Comply with applicable legal duties, including the duty to reduce inequalities, the Public Sector Equality Duty, and the duty to have regard to all likely wider effect of decisions.
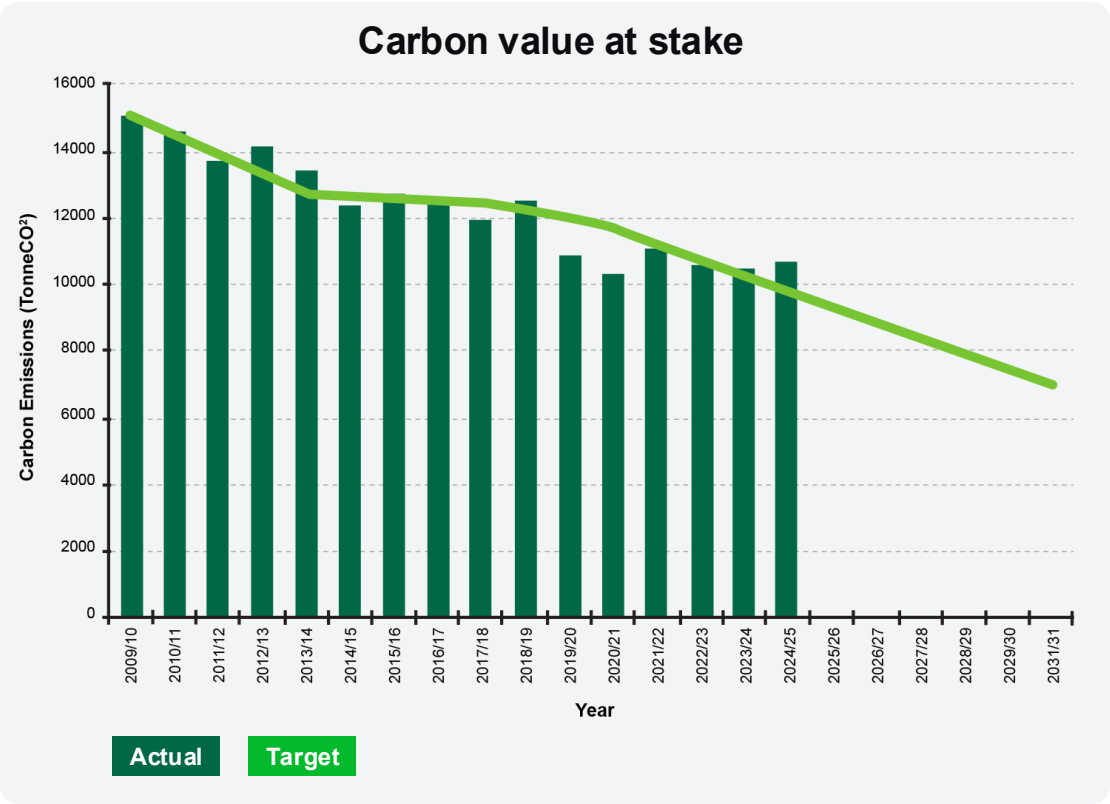
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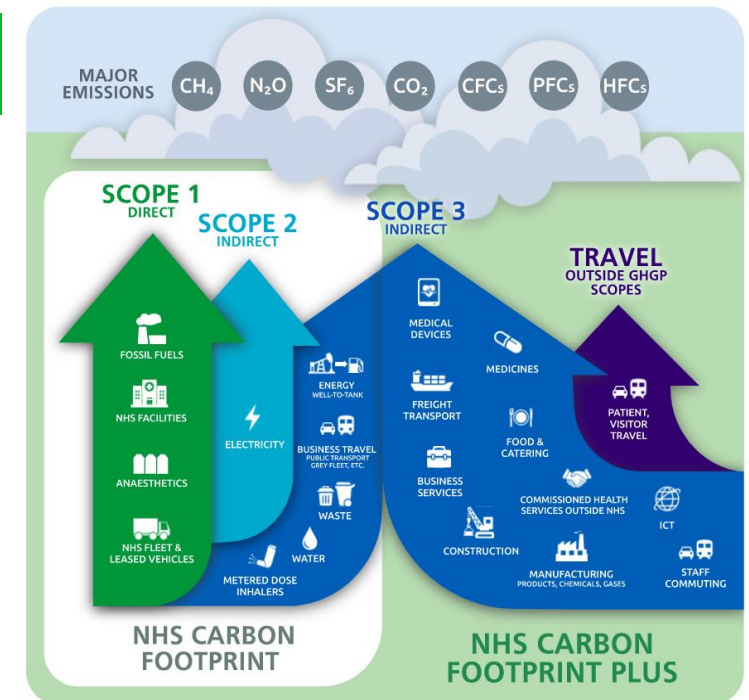
Our Trust Vision

As one of the largest employers in the Tees Valley, we have a responsibility to our staff, our patients and our community to play a leading role in thinking 'green' and making long lasting changes.

We are on an ambitious journey to achieve net zero carbon emissions as an organisation – creating sustainable healthcare for the patients of today and tomorrow by actively protecting the environment.

It's only by working together – with staff, patients and our community – that we can make the difference we need to.

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Our Green Plan Aims

- Sustainable procurement of goods that can be recycled and not just single use
- Reducing carbon emissions and our carbon footprint
- Encouraging sustainable travel and transport for staff and visitors
- Making our clinical pathways more sustainable
- Reducing our water consumption in key areas
- Increase our recycling of waste
- Work towards climate change adaptation
- Maximise the sustainability of our building and green spaces
- Encourage our workforce to commit to a carbon free future

Carbon Emissions

Carbon value at stake

Actual **Target**

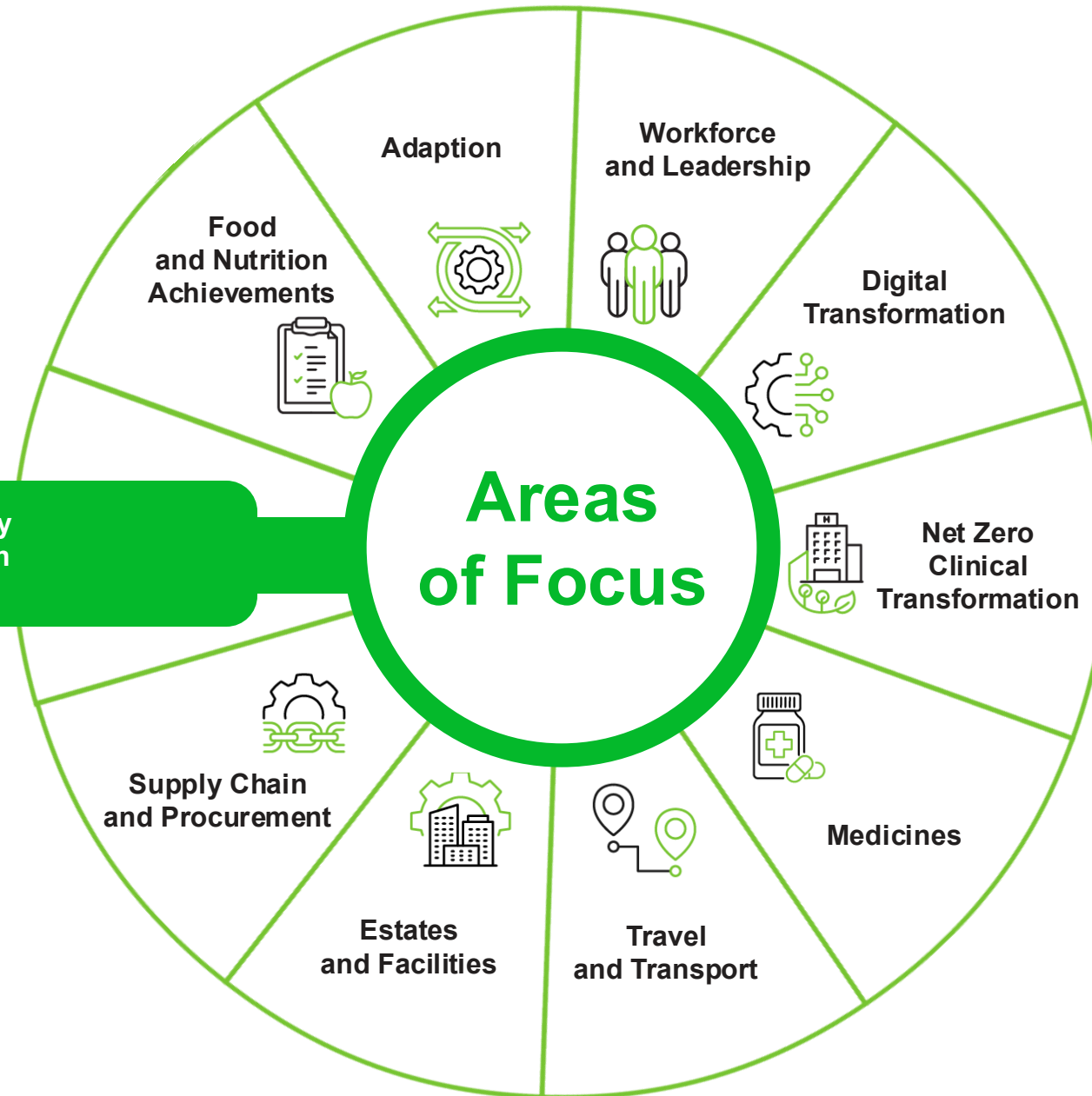| Year	Tonnes CO$_2$
2018/2019	12422
2019/2020	10847
2020/2021	10292
2021/2022	11034
2022/2023	9438
2023/2024	9760
2024/2025	10604

Note:

1. More intense use of estate 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 driving up carbon tonnages.

2. The decarbonisation scheme at UHH will bring us in line with set target.

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Carbon Emissions

Area		Greenhouse Gas Emissions					
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Finite Resources	Electricity	4811 MWh	3695 MWh	3725 MWh	£835,929	£1,038,416	£1,197,209
		1135 tCO2	757 tCO2	771 tCO2			
	Gas	48,905 MWh	51,032 MWh	51,699 MWh	£1,981,754	£2,152,298	£1,894,838
		10535 tCO2	8998.52 tCO2	9310 tCO2			
	Oil	284, 547 kWh	33, 832 kWh	142, 827 kWh	£80,266	£0	£0
		72.9 tCO2	8.6 tCO2	36.2 tCO2			
Waste	Total Waste	1281.4 t	1330 t	1360 t	£341,072	£370,798	£294,515
Hazardous Waste	Clinical waste to alternative treatment of incineration	300 t	251 t	171 t			
		67.8 tCO2	56.7 tCO2	1.1 tCO2			
Non-hazardous Waste	Landfill	0 t	0 t	0 t			
		0 tCO2	0 tCO2	0 tCO2			
	Re-used / Recycled	67 t	201 t	172 t			
	Incinerated with Energy Recovery	898 t	926 t	999.8 t			
	Electrical Waste (WEEE)	16.4 t	14.1 t	17.2 t			
Travel	Commercial Vehicles Diesel	0	0	0	£0	£0	£0
		0 tCO2	0 tCO2	0 tCO2			
	Lease Vehicles Petrol	191,018 miles	199,028 miles	175,359 miles	£51,080	£79,611	£70,143
		49.7 tCO2	40.2 tCO2	36.5 tCO2			
	Lease Vehicles Diesel	23,939 miles	9,296 miles	3,811 miles	£8,107	£3,720	£1,525
		6.5 tCO2	2.3 tCO2	1.0 tCO2			
	Business Miles	1,204,089	1,230,670	1,112,747	£303,921	£492,268	£445,099
		330.4 tCO2	296.1 tCO2	296.1 tCO2			
Water	Water Consumption	142,623 m3	121,796 m3	121,048 m3	£367,339	£406,944	£443,212
		49.1 tCO2	41.9 tCO2	45.7 tCO2			

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Over the next 3 years we will focus on priority actions across the areas of focus identified in the updated Green Plan guidance as follows:

Areas of Focus

- Adaption
- Workforce and Leadership
- Digital Transformation
- Net Zero Clinical Transformation
- Medicines
- Travel and Transport
- Estates and Facilities
- Supply Chain and Procurement
- Food and Nutrition Achievements

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Workforce and Leadership

The transition to a net zero NHS will be driven by its people. There is already strong support for a greener future; 9 in 10 staff support the NHS net zero ambition, while 6 in 10 say they are more likely to stay in an organisation taking decisive climate action (YouGov, 2023).

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust support their staff and leaders to learn, innovate and embed sustainability into everyday actions.

A designated board-level net zero lead has been appointed with clear identified operational support.

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.

Promote, and consider setting uptake targets for, core training offers set out on the Greener NHS Training Hub

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.

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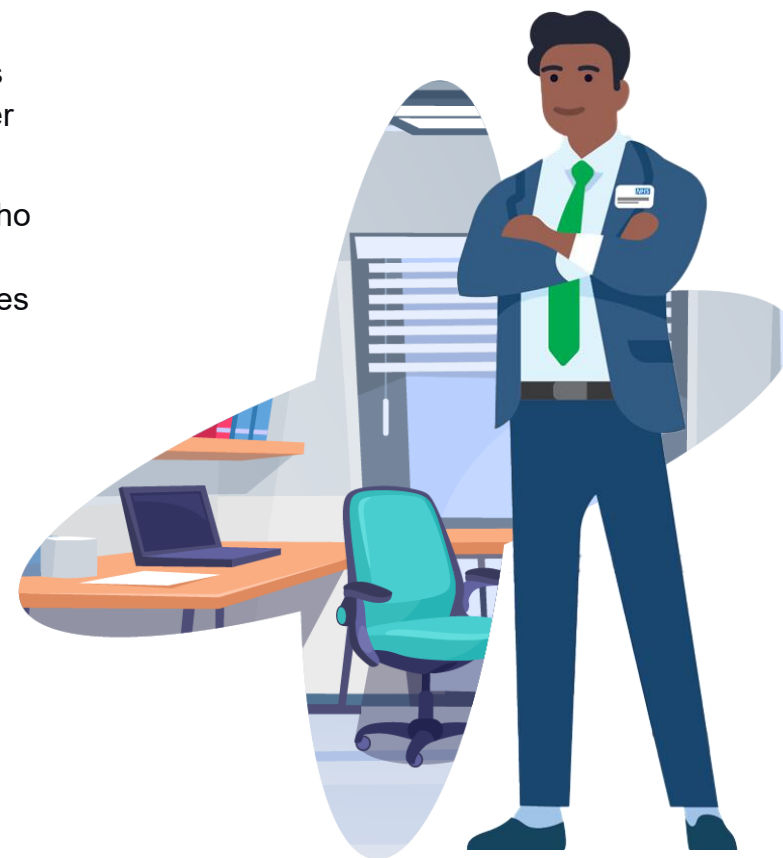
Workforce and Leadership

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Create a culture of sustainable development by ensuring sustainability is embedded into systems and processes	2028
Facilitate the culture change of our staff, patients and visitors attitude towards the environment and sustainability	2028
Work in partnership with neighbouring NHS trusts and public authorities to enhance the delivery of the Green Plan and share best practice.	2028
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	2028

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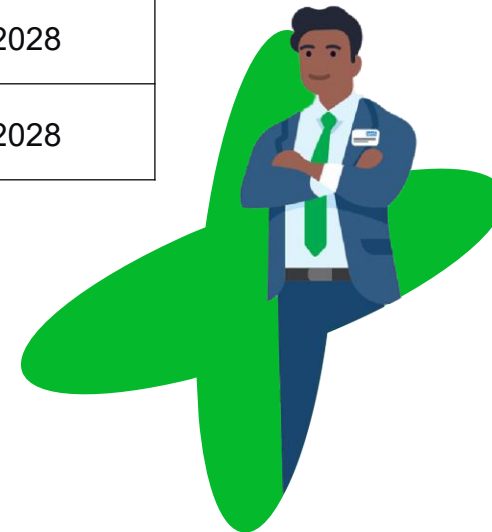
Digital transformation

The Trust continues to roll out electronic prescribing across the organisation, which has allowed us to remove the paper charts in the areas where it has been introduced. After completing all adult inpatient wards, we are now looking to introduce it to Critical Care areas, including general critical care and neonates. Later this year, we will also be rolling out the Electronic Record into Outpatients, which will allow outpatient prescriptions to be sent to pharmacy electronically.

A patient engagement portal (PEP) was introduced to the Trust in 2023 which has allowed patients to get access to their appointments and letters through the app on their phone. Around 75% of patients choose this method meaning the Trust has been able to reduce the number of letters it prints and posts out to patients. The Trust has also introduced voice recognition software which integrates with the PEP. This allows clinicians to dictate their clinic letters directly into the PC which is converted to text and uploaded up to the PEP, again reducing the amount of paper letters that are sent to patients through the post. All this saves paper, printing, electricity and reduces emissions from the delivery of letters by the postal service.

The PEP has also replaced the Attend Anywhere video consultation service since April 2024, and due to it being integrated into the same app, we have seen an increase in patients taking up the service. This saves patients from having to travel to site, cutting down emissions, but also allowing clinicians to run the clinic from a single office or even from home. will be integrated to the NHS app. This will reduce the amount of appointment letters printed as patients will receive their letters electronically via the app saving paper, printing, and electricity.

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Digital transformation

The Trust continue to consolidate its server estate onto to smaller and more environmentally friendly virtual servers which allow multiple systems to be hosted on a single piece of hardware. At the same time it is still exploring the use of cloud hosting where this is appropriate, where systems are held in large multi-organisational data centres. While data centres have their own environmental challenges, companies like Microsoft are continually looking at more sustainable ways to build, power and cool data centres that allow it to meets its own green goals.

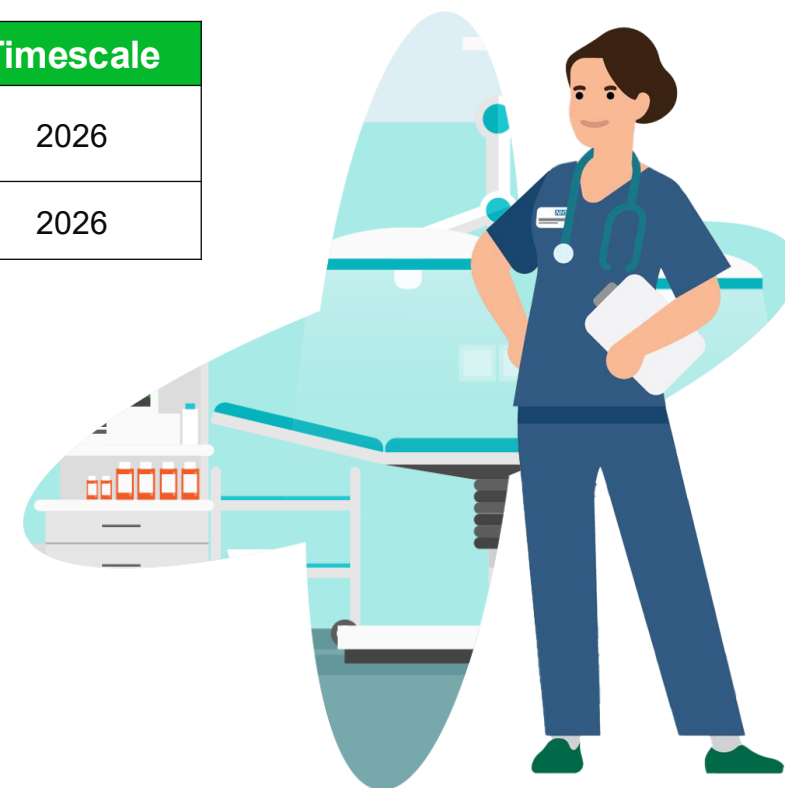| Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Roll out of an electronic record into Critical Care areas removing the need for the paper charts, paper prescribing and other paper records	2028
Consolidated data centres across the group. Rationalisation of data centres and servers across the group, allowing for smaller onsite data centres to be decommissioned saving on power and cooling	2027
Continue to look at Cloud services where appropriate to reduce onsite server hardware.	2027 onwards
Standardised equipment. Look to standardise equipment and builds across University Hospitals Tees, allowing equipment to be shared across the group	2027
The ambition for University Hospitals Tees is to have a single shared Electronic Patient Record (EPR) across the group, allowing all clinical staff to see a single shared record. This will remove the need for notes to be printed out transported between sites.	2027/28
Maintain the recycling of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)	2028

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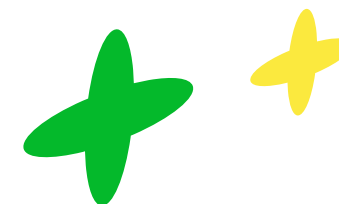
Net Zero Clinical Transformation

The NHS is committed to moving to out-of-hospital and digitally-enabled care where clinically appropriate, improving prevention of ill health and reducing health inequalities. These changes also underpin our commitment to net zero.

Net zero clinical transformation should ensure high-quality, preventative, low carbon care is provided to patients at every stage.

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Identify a clinical lead with oversight of net zero clinical transformation, with formal links into board-level leadership and governance	2026
Share learning and outcomes, through clinical networks, the ICB and NHS England	2026

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Medicines

Medicines account for around 25% of NHS emissions.

A few medicines account for a large portion of these emissions, for example, anaesthetic gases
(2% of NHS emissions) and inhalers (3%).

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Removal of all nitrous oxide across the organisation	2 year target
Optimise respiratory care to reduce carbon footprint related to inhalers and improve respiratory disease outcomes	2 year target
Ongoing improvement of IV to oral switches of medications as clinically appropriate	2 year target
Campaigns for patients and staff promoting reduced medication waste	2 year target
Reduction of single use plastics used in relation to the supply or administration of medication (Reduce plastic bottles and use glass bottles) 3 year target	2 year target
Optimising inhaler choice (considering clinical appropriateness , the environmental impact of inhalers and patient preference)	2 year target

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Travel and Transport

The NHS fleet is the second largest in the country, consisting of over 20,000 vehicles. It directly contributes to harmful air pollution.

The NHS Net zero travel and transport strategy outlines a roadmap to decarbonise NHS travel and transport, while also providing cost-saving and health benefits.

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Develop a sustainable travel plan by December 2026, to be incorporated into the green plan (as an annex), focusing on active travel, public transport and zero-emission vehicles, supported by a clear understanding of staff commuting	2026
Invest in a dedicated Lift-share / car share platform	2026
Regional agreement on anti-idling campaign	2026
Regional feasibility study for EV charging infrastructure	2027
Continue partnership working with local authorities and local transport authorities to maximise funding and infrastructure opportunities 2028	2028
Establish and maintain a cycle to work scheme for up to 500 cyclists	2028

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Estates and Facilities

Across University Hospitals Tees we are striving to reduce our impact on the environment and carbon emissions in the way in which we work and the use of resources. A significant proportion of our carbon emissions relate to the burning of fossil fuels in the form of gas as our primary source of heat generation.

Our estates and facilities teams have been actively planning to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels as part of our decarbonisation journey and securing this latest government funding is a big step towards achieving this. University Hospital of Hartlepool's successfully secured £13.4million for funding to improve heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and lighting.

The works will help the group achieve its goal of achieving net zero for carbon emissions by 2040 – in line with national NHS targets.

As a key community partner, and one of the largest employers in the region, it is important that we play our part in helping reduce our carbon emissions and the effects of climate change on the environment. Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and finding ways to work with increased efficiently also enables more funds to be invested in patient care.

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Increase communication around energy consumption and carbon reduction	2026
Increase EV charging points	2028
Apply for grants associated with energy saving	2028
Capital projects – new builds to be built to the NHS Net Zero Carbon Building Standard and achieve BREEAM outstanding	2028
Achieve clinical waste segregation targets of 20:20:60 HTI, AT & OW	2028

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Supply Chain and Procurement

The NHS net zero supplier roadmap outlines steps suppliers must follow to align with the NHS net zero ambition between now and 2030.

Roadmap implementation is a shared responsibility across trusts, systems, regional procurement hubs and nationally.

Organisations should also seek to embed circular solutions, such as using reusable, remanufactured or recycled solutions when clinically appropriate, which are often cost-saving.

Key actions for systems and trusts: embed NHS net zero supplier roadmap requirements into all relevant procurements and ensure they are monitored via KPIs 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

In addition, trusts should: reduce reliance on single-use products, considering how to safely build this work into clinical improvement projects (see Net zero clinical transformation and Annex B: selected resources for additional support tools).

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Reduce and avoid use of single use plastics	2028
Adopt innovation	2028
Understand the CO2 footprint of our procured items	2028
Remove antimicrobial coated curtains	2027
Trial reusable tourniquets and evaluate cost and CO2 savings	2026

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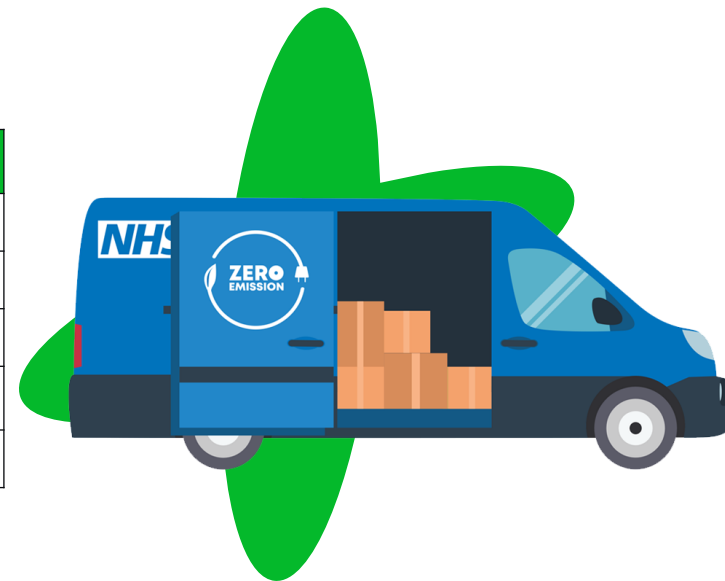
Food and Nutrition Achievements

- **Waste Review:** Food storage, waste and vegetarian options are being reviewed alongside patient experience within ongoing benchmarking work.

- **Accessibility:** Inpatient menus are now available online to support accessibility and reduce waste at ward level. Menu cards will still be available at ward level.

- **Annual Review:** implementation and monitoring of inpatient kitchen, plate, and trolley food waste now conducted annually.

- **Menu Review:** The inpatient dining menu and waste are regularly reviewed under the Nutrition and Hydration Group, led by dieticians. Feedback is provided to the catering provider.

| Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Policy and Standards Alignment: • Review current compliance with the eight Nutrition and Hydration standards. • Update policies to reflect national and green plan priorities. • Ensure training for relevant staff in food safety, special diets, and allergens.	December 2025
Data Collection and Baseline Measurement: • Conduct PLACE assessments, patient surveys, and waste audits. • Monitor carbon emissions and energy use related to catering. • Gather feedback on current food quality, portion sizes, and dietary options.	2028
Initial Improvements: • Introduce or expand recycling programs. • Trial plant-based menu items and aim to reduce single-use plastics in catering. • Address identified "quick wins" in patient and staff feedback.	2028
Training and Awareness: • Educate staff on sustainable food practices and nutrition-related health promotion.	2027

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Adaptation

Climate change threatens the ability of the NHS to deliver its essential services in both the near and longer term.

Resilience and adaptation should be built into business continuity and longer-term planning to avoid climate-related service disruptions. Partnership working between sustainability leads, public health, emergency response teams and estates leads at trust and system level is crucial.

Key Performance Indicators	Timescale
Conduct a climate change risk assessment for all sites	2026
Develop and implement an Adaptation Plan to ensure the resilience of NT&H services to extreme weather events	2026
Continue working with the NENC ICS Climate Adaptation group to develop a regional approach to climate adaptation	2028

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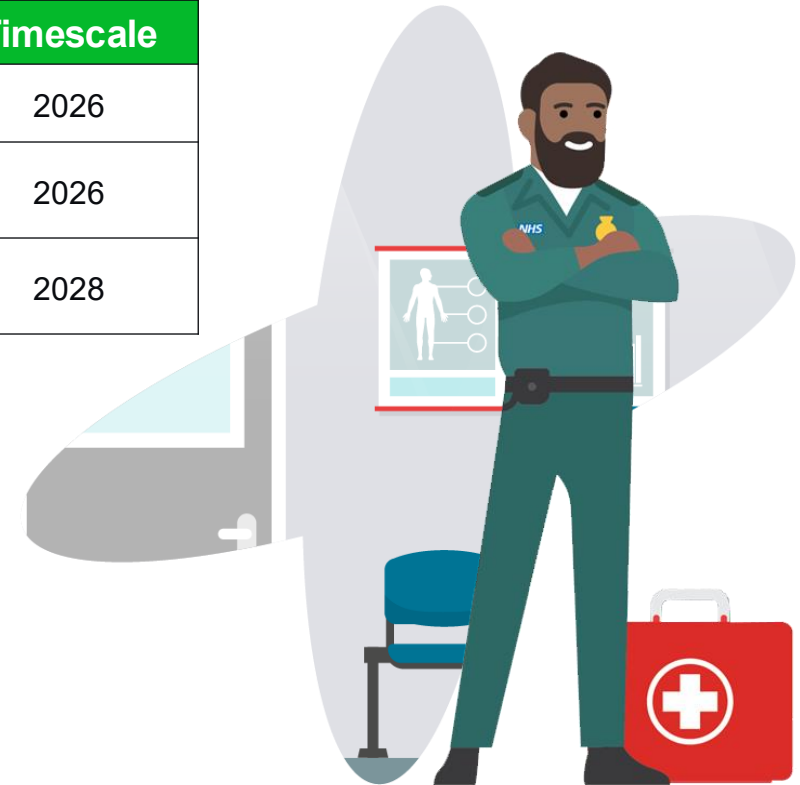
Summary

This Green Plan is a live document and will be regularly reviewed for progress against the action plans.

We will monitor, measure and show our green plan progress by meeting quarterly with sustainability leads for each focus area, reporting routinely to Resource Committee and Board.

Adequate budgets and resources will be needed to achieve our goals and deliver sustainable care.

Climate Change poses many threats to our care population and how we deliver care. This Green Plan will enable us to become an adaptable and resilient organisation.

We will continue an open dialogue with all stakeholders to improve our Green Plans and the care we deliver.

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