

Our Green Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29

Summary Document



Welcome from UHNM Chief Executive Officer

According to the World Health Organisation climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century.

At UHNM we recognise that the NHS is responsible for the nation's health, and this is directly affected by climate change. We are already seeing the effects of pollution and severe weather in our own departments, wards and clinics.

Looking after our environment has many benefits for health and wellbeing, through cleaner air, improved access to green spaces, healthier food as well as the ability to protect vulnerable members of the community from the effects of extreme weather.

Therefore, the Trust is fully committed to supporting the NHS ambition to be a Net Zero health service.

Our Green Plan for 2025/26 – 2028/29 places a strong emphasis on empowering our employees to embed sustainability in their everyday working lives, supporting them to deliver low carbon care for our patients. This Green Plan aligns to Our Strategy 2025-35 and our commitment to continually develop new approaches to support the NHS to Achieve our net zero carbon targets. It recognises the importance of leadership, employee development and digital innovation as enablers to reaching our Net Zero goals.

We also value the contribution of our partners; our Local Authority and system NHS colleagues, as well as our two local universities, whose next generation of students are pivotal to bringing sustainability into their practice from the start.

The priorities outlined in this strategy were co-produced with our employees and our partners, who have approached this challenge with a sense of optimism, enthusiasm and a desire for collaboration. This is a significant challenge, but one that we feel we can achieve if we all work together and harness our enthusiasm for making a difference, hard work and innovation, alongside a dedication to providing the best possible care for our patients.

This is an exciting opportunity for our Trust, and I look forward to what we can achieve together.

Dr Simon Constable
Chief Executive of UHNM



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Welcome from UHNM Net Zero Clinical Lead

"I am very pleased to have taken on the role of the UHNM Net Zero Clinical lead. I have been passionate about the environment for a long time and this is a wonderful opportunity to make positive changes throughout the Trust. This is exciting because many of the changes made to reduce environmental impact provide benefits for colleagues and patients too."

Dr Andrew Bennett,

Net Zero Clinical Lead

Global warming is being accelerated by human activity and its effects are broad ranging, including the impacts on food security, the increasing the risk of extreme weather events and increasing risk of disease.

Whilst we may assume that these effects are taking place many thousands of miles away the truth is that these changes are also happening much closer than we might imagine. We have all felt the effects of the increasing number of heat waves throughout the UK in recent years and air pollution is prominent in the Midlands with Stoke-on-Trent found to have the worst air polluted city centre in the country.

Having taken on the role of the UHNM Net Zero clinical lead in 2023 it has been brilliant to hear from individuals throughout the Trust who have been championing sustainable practices in their workplace. Moving forward we need to ensure that sustainable practice is embedded throughout every area of the Trust, through every decision that is made, whether it is a large-scale construction project or an everyday decision about travel, PPE or equipment required for a clinical procedure.

Building on the work from the previous UHNM Green Plan, this paper represents the exciting next stage in UHNM's plan to reduce carbon emissions. This plan outlines the Trust's strategy across multiple areas to support the delivery of Net Zero NHS targets. Whilst targeting net zero, it is vitally important to remember that many of the changes made to reduce environmental impacts also provide benefits to patient care and employee wellbeing. So, I look forward to working with everybody at UHNM as we strive to make the Trust a happier, healthier and more environmentally friendly healthcare provider.

Dr Andrew Bennett

UHNM Net Zero Clinical Lead /

Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine

University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust

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“There is no trade-off between climate responsibilities and reducing waiting lists. Indeed, often health and climate are mutually reinforcing goals: cleaner air is good for the environment and for respiratory health.”

Professor the Lord Darzi

Director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation at Imperial College London

According to NHS England hitting our national net zero target will **save over 2 million life years** through cleaner air, healthier communities and a more resilient health service.



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Foreword

Health and care provision contributes a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions, approximately 5% of the UK's carbon footprint is directly related to the NHS. It is therefore vital that the NHS acts to drastically reduce our impact on the environment.

It is recognised that climate change has a direct impact on health, contributing to cardiovascular disease, asthma, and cancer. Furthermore, action to tackle climate change also reduces the burden of disease from air pollution, obesity, and poor diet whilst addressing health inequalities faced by many of our population.

In July 2022 the NHS announced its ambitions to be the world's first Net Zero health service. The [Delivering a Net Zero NHS guidance](#) details the key actions for NHS organisations including the 2 main targets:

- to reach Net Zero by 2040 for the emissions we control directly
- to reach Net Zero by 2045 for those we can influence, such as transport, catering, and the goods we buy.

As an anchor organisation, our long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the population. The Trust recognises that we are an integral part of the local community, as an employer and as a core public service provider. It has an important role to support the community to thrive, be more sustainable, resilient and healthy in changing times and climates.

UHNM is fully committed to delivering Net Zero, for the benefit of our employees, our patients and our population. We recognise our responsibility to support NHS to decarbonise, and this is reflected within Our Strategy 2025-35. Our Green Plan for 2025/26 – 2028/29 aims to make sustainability meaningful and achievable and sets out how we will achieve our ambition to lead the way in sustainability in healthcare by:

Tapping into the **passion and enthusiasm of our colleagues and partners**,
empowering them to **embed sustainability in everything we do**

We believe that strong engagement is as crucial to developing a meaningful and deliverable Green Plan. We have taken a collaborative approach to developing this document, working with key stakeholders to develop and agree our sustainability goals for the next three years.

Introduction

This document is a summary of the main Trust Board approved 2025/26 - 2028/29 Green Plan.

The purpose of our Green Plan

- Outline UHNM's sustainability strategy for the next 3 years.
- Describe our commitment, targets, objectives, and plans to mitigate effects of climate change and support Net Zero.
- Provide guidance for our employees to empower them to make a difference
- Set out how we will work with our partners and stakeholders.

The Green Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29 is a refresh of the previous 2022/2025 Green Plan and has been refreshed in line with NHS England national Green Plan Refresh guidance.

We sought to engage with as many of our colleagues and stakeholders as possible to ensure that our Green Plan is both meaningful and achievable:

- Focus Group workshops were held for each Area of Focus.
- Engagement with colleagues on the ground, clinical leads and managers responsible for delivering our sustainability targets.

Our Green Plan was approved by the Trust Board on 10th September 2025.

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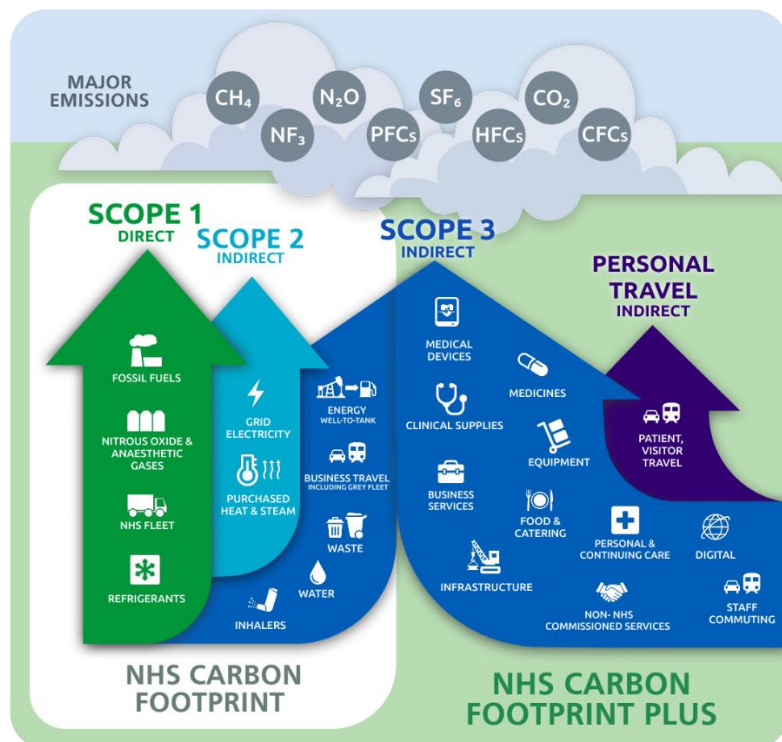
Drivers for Change

- Our duty to provide the best possible care to our patients, and our responsibility for the health of our population and our employees.
- Legislative requirements and national policy, including the national Net Zero Carbon targets which are embedded into the NHS Standard Contract.
- Our Green Plan supports the delivery of the Trust Strategy recently launched in 2025. Our commitment to Net Zero promotes the health and wellbeing of our People, our Patients and our Population through enabling low-carbon care, travel and infrastructure, in line with the Trust's goal to boost high quality and digitally enabled care and improve the health of our population.
- Our Green Plan aligns with the new NHS 10 Year Plan ambition to shift from hospital to community; analogue to digital and prevention over sickness.

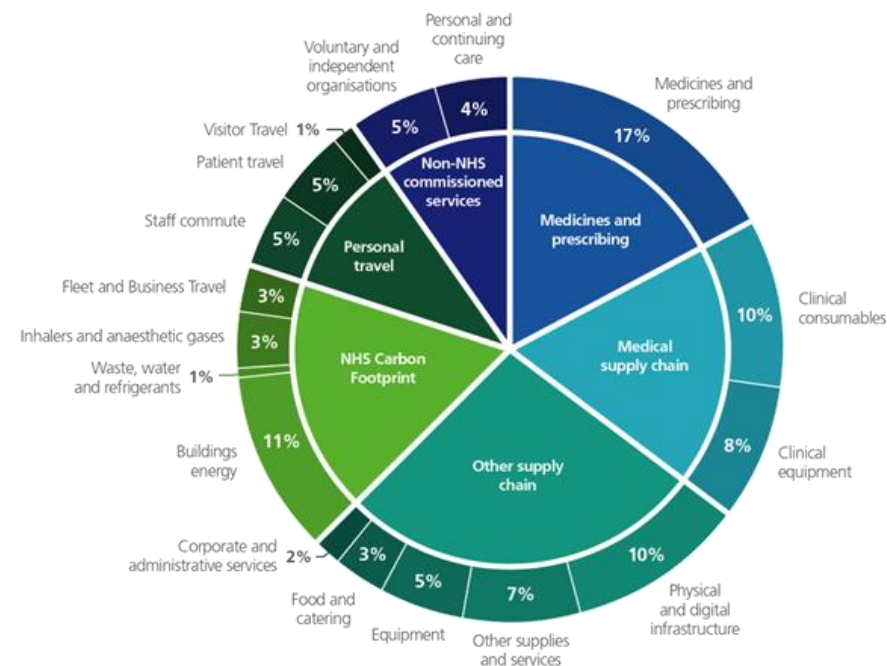
- Our Green Plan supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



Emissions Reduction Targets



Sources of carbon emissions by proportion of NHS Carbon Footprint Plus (Scope 3)



Direct emissions (Scope 1 and Scope 2): emissions that we directly control, such as fossil fuels, fleet, waste and anaesthetic gases.

- **Target:** Achieve Net Zero by 2040 (with an ambition for an 80% reduction (compared with a 1990 baseline) by 2028 to 2032)

Indirect emissions (Scope 3) are those that we can influence (e.g. medicines, food, supplier emissions and employee / patient travel).

- **Target:** Achieve Net Zero by 2045 (with an ambition for an 80% reduction (compared with a 1990 baseline) by 2036 to 2039)

Our Priority Sustainability Schemes

Low Carbon Care Framework

The environment is a big concern for many of our colleagues and many are really keen to make a difference but perhaps are not quite sure where to start.

Our Low Carbon Care Framework employee **development and recognition** scheme, developed in partnership with our Net Zero Clinical Lead and Associate Deputy Chief Nurse, aims to support colleagues to take action on climate change and gain recognition through accreditation and awards.

We will be working with **Students Organising for Sustainability**, an independent charity formed from the National Student Union. Our Low Carbon Care Framework will be managed through their award-winning **Green Impact programme**, which offers sustainability learning and awards to embed sustainable practices across organisations.

The Framework is all about **Teamwork, celebration and having fun**. It is for clinical and non-clinical teams to work together to make small but impactful changes towards a sustainable UHNM.

The Framework outlines levels of actions, divided into bronze, silver and gold. Addressing these actions supports the attainment of Net Zero targets whilst creating efficiency savings and maintaining or improving patient care.

Achievements will be showcased throughout the year in the form of case studies and communication bulletins.

"I am looking forward to my new role as a Low Carbon Care Framework Team Leader. I know that, with the help of my incredible colleagues and our supportive Ward Manager, together we can make small changes to lower our carbon footprint and encourage others to do the same"

Laura Brown,
Staff Nurse

Keep Warm, Keep Well *Transforming health and the environment*

UHNM's award winning 'Keep Warm, Keep Well' community energy scheme seeks to prevent readmissions of vulnerable patients whose health conditions are at risk of being exacerbated by living in a cold and damp home.

The scheme comprises a partnership between UHNM, Staffordshire Community Energy and Staffordshire fuel poverty charity 'Beat the Cold'.

Clean energy generated by solar photovoltaic panels on the hospital estate generates income which accumulates a 'community fund' which is spent on alleviating fuel poverty in Staffordshire. This is currently being achieved through a unique partnership whereby Staffordshire charity 'Beat the Cold' delivers an intervention to vulnerable patients.

With the energy market experiencing unprecedented cost rises, the KWKW scheme is more pertinent now than ever. Stoke-on-Trent has been cited as having amongst the highest levels of fuel poverty in the UK which is regarded as a driver of health and social care demand.

We have therefore made it a priority to expand and develop this scheme so we can reach more vulnerable people. We plan to use the One Health and Care digital shared care record to proactively identify the most vulnerable patients to be referred. A focus will be given to those with a Respiratory diagnosis with the aim of preventing the exacerbation of conditions and emergency hospital admissions as a consequence of residing in a cold, damp home.

UHNM has been awarded both BMJ and HSJ winner awards for KWKW. KWKW was named as winner of the Community Energy Initiative at the 2025 Regen Green Energy Awards.



Net Zero Plan on a Page



Our Green Plan has nine Areas of Focus, each with their own nominated lead who is responsible for reviewing and delivering the agreed objectives. A summary of the UHNM approach is detailed below:



Our Workforce

Vision

A culture of sustainable working delivered by empowered and motivated staff who are supported by inspired green leaders.

Areas of Action

- Launch the Low Carbon Care Framework
- Trust Board ownership
- Celebrate achievements



Our Estate

Vision

A low carbon biodiverse UHNM estate

Areas of Action

- Energy decarbonisation
- Improved access to Green Spaces
- Proactively explore alternative Waste disposal options



Our Procurement

Vision

A sustainable procurement culture with processes to support our approach.

Areas of Action

- Collaborate with suppliers to maximise the wider social, economic and environmental benefits
- Minimise waste from products and packaging.
- Introduce sustainable alternatives



Our Care

Vision

High quality low carbon care

Areas of Action

- Innovation and team working to reduce carbon emissions
- Expand Keep Warm, Keep Well to increase its patient reach
- Focus on low carbon care in Theatres Services



Our Medicines

Vision

Good respiratory health supported by reduced emissions from improved medicines use and disposal

Areas of Action

- Reduce waste from N₂O
- Promote good practice in inhaler use
- Medicines waste reduction project



Our Food

Vision

Healthy, nutritious low carbon meals, minimal food waste

Areas of Action

- Food Waste Management Plan
- Increase low carbon plant-based choices
- Review suppliers/producers



Our Digital

Vision

The benefits of digital transformation maximised to reduce emissions and improve patient care

Areas of Action

- Use OHC to target referrals to Keep Warm, Keep Well
- Electronic patient record / digital patient correspondence
- Good data hygiene habits



Our Travel

Vision

Reduced CO₂e emissions from vehicle travel to our sites.

Areas of Action

- Sustainable Travel Plan December 2026
- Community of active commuters
- Decarbonised fleet



Adaptation

Vision

Our services and our buildings are resilient to a changing climate

Areas of Action

- System-wide EPRR approach
- Update Business Continuity Plans
- Contractor Briefing Document to include climate adaptation in building design.

How we will deliver our Green Plan

Progress on the delivery of the Green Plan actions and targets are formally reported biannually (April and September) to:

- Finance and Business Performance Committee (FBPC) (Trust Board subgroup)
- Sustainable Development Steering Group.

Each Areas of Focus has an assigned 'Operational Lead', 'Responsible Lead' and 'Responsible Director'.

Overall Operational Lead:

Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager

Responsible Leads:

Jess Brownsword, Deputy Head of Transformation & Sustainability

Louise Stockdale, Head of Transformation & Sustainability

Responsible Director:

Lorraine Whitehead, Director of Estates, Facilities & PFI

Net Zero Clinical Lead:

Dr Andrew Bennett, Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine

Our Green Plan will be delivered through collaboration with partners, external organisations, and integrated care systems.

Our Partners

- Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System
- Integrated Care Board / Other NHS Trusts
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- NHS England Midlands Green Team
- Sodexo Health & Care – facilities management service providers (PFI estate)
- Project Co – our PFI building owners
- Keele University and the University of Staffordshire

Our priority programmes will be delivered through our dedicated sustainability working groups.

Sustainability Working Groups

Sustainable Transport Working Group
Sustainable Procurement Working Group
Sustainability and Net Zero Capital Sub-Group
Nitrous Oxide Waste Reduction Group

Sustainability team also feeds into:

- Waste Working Group
- Food Standards Working Group
- Joint Energy and Water Group

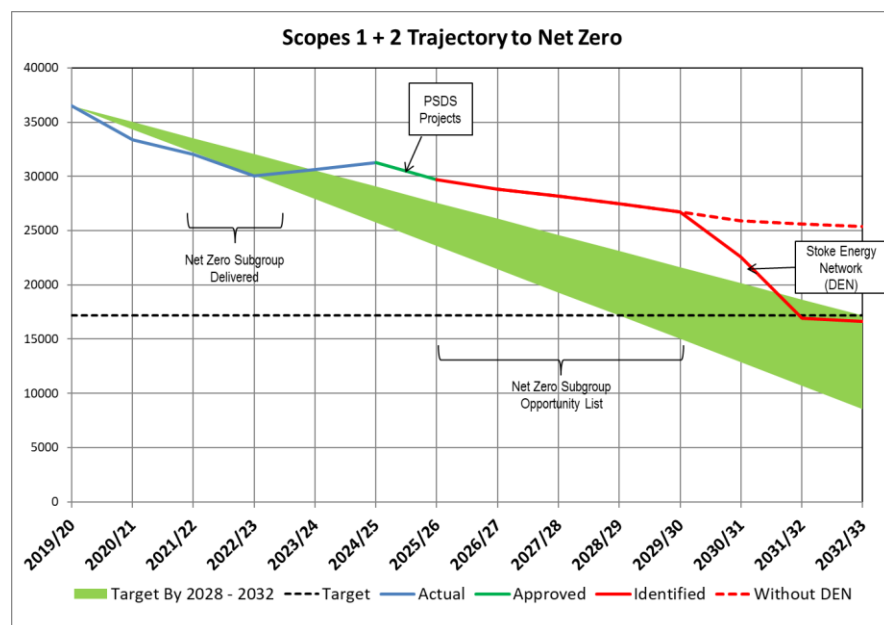
UHNM Net Zero Trajectory

The national target set by NHS England is for all trusts to achieve:

- Net Zero by 2040 for emissions that we directly control (Scope 1 & 2)
- 80% reduction (compared with a 1990 baseline) by 2028 to 2032

These include emissions from our buildings, energy and water usage, anaesthetic gases, waste and business travel.

UHNM has set an internal target to reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 47% (17,237 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e) emissions) between 2028-2032 compared to our 2019/20 baseline of 36,675 tCO₂e.



The table above shows the trajectory against this target as at 2024/25.

The main carbon savings will be delivered by:

- Estates decarbonisation through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) delivered in 2024/25: Reducing annual emissions by 941 tCO₂e.
- Expansion of solar panelling across the Trust: Reducing annual emissions by 296 tCO₂e.
- Potential connection to the Stoke-on-Trent District Heat Network: Reducing annual emissions by 3,298 tCO₂e in 2030/31 and 5,433 in 2031/32 and 8,731 tCO₂e in subsequent years.
- Decommissioning nitrous oxide piped supply: Reducing annual emissions by 350 tCO₂e.

Performance against our trajectory is reported through our bi-annual sustainability report.

Funding

Sustainability and Net Zero Carbon is allocated the following annually recurrent budgets:

- Revenue - £20,000
- Capital - £100,000

Business Cases and Capital Bids are generated where projects are identified that don't fit into the above allocation values. Given the financial constraints on the NHS these are usually on an invest to save basis.

Additionally, the sustainability team proactively apply for external grant funding where available and applicable.

Our Employees, Partners and Colleagues



Every member of staff is responsible for helping reduce our carbon footprint. Our colleagues are best placed to contribute through small changes to their own practice and by influencing and leading others.

2022-2025: What we have achieved

- **Net Zero Clinical Lead** appointed:
Dr Andrew Bennett, Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine
- **Board Level Net Zero Lead** appointed:
Lorraine Whitehead, Director of Estates, Facilities and PFI
- Increased **employee engagement** and raising awareness of how our colleagues can make a difference.
- Opportunities for colleagues to present their sustainability project **case studies** and showcase their achievements.
- Network of over 300 '**SWITCH To a Sustainable UHNM**' **champions** who have worked hard to spread the word within their teams.
- 'Building a Net Zero NHS' **sustainability training** has been made available to all employees on ESR.
- Sustainability training provided to **Foundation Year doctors**.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England	Organisations should support their staff and leaders to learn, innovate and embed sustainability into everyday actions:
Green Plan Refresh Guidance	• Appoint a designated board-level net zero lead • Assess workforce capacity and skill requirements • Promote, and consider setting uptake targets for, core training offers set out on the Greener NHS Training Hub • Promote specialist training for employee groups who underpin the delivery of green plans, such as board members, procurement, finance, estates and facilities staff and clinicians
UHNM Objectives	➤ There is a positive workplace culture whereby carbon reduction and sustainability is fully embedded ➤ Executives and the Board are committed to delivering the Green Plan and its statutory obligations ➤ All Trust employees are engaged, empowered and motivated to take action on sustainability and to deliver high quality care today that does not compromise the ability to deliver care in the future
Our Actions	
Low Carbon Care Framework (LCCF)	
• 1 team per month registered with LCCF and actively working towards accreditation • Teams achieving bronze, silver and gold accreditation at the end of the full year LCCF cycle • Biannual increase in SWITCH Champions • Report LCCF attainment within each Care Group at the Trust Performance Review Meetings?	September 2025 onwards
Workforce and Leadership	
• Dedicated training and development delivered to the Trust Board • Increase uptake of sustainability training (core ESR training and specialist training offered to specific employee groups). • Key messages around sustainability to be included in the Trust Induction. • Sustainability to be covered in the Appraisal process.	September 2025 onwards September 2025 onwards
Communication and Engagement	
• Sustainability communication plan produced • Trust intranet page refreshed with rolling monthly feature.	2025/26 and 2027/28 2025/26 2025/26
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager	

Net Zero Clinical Transformation

The NHS is responsible for the nation's health and our health is directly affected by climate change. Much of the NHS environmental impact arises from clinical decisions made every day, including choices of medicines, equipment and consumables for investigations and procedures. Clinical processes also affect how many journeys are needed and how many days a person spends in hospital.



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2022-2025: What we have achieved - Our colleagues are making a difference every day

Scott Taylor, Deputy Endoscopy Manager is the local champion for the national '**Green Endoscopy**' initiative led by JAG and BSG. Scott is leading the green revolution by encouraging and supporting his colleagues to think green. The Endoscopy team have implemented a number of initiatives for example an alternative polytrap product which has zero plastic packaging.

Our Net Zero Clinical Lead, Dr Andrew Bennett, Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine established a **Green ED** group in 2023:

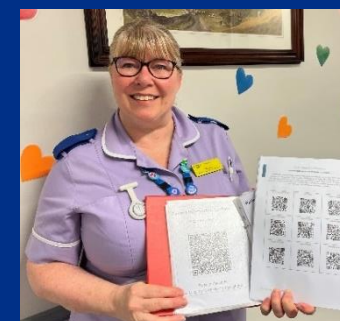
- Both emergency departments now use Pentrox as an alternative to Entonox where possible
- QR codes have replaced paper leaflets in the paediatric area
- Single use plastic catering items removed from the emergency departments.



Re-usable sports water bottles are given to radiotherapy patients for them to bring to their regular appointments - led by Keren Barker, Advanced Practitioner, with the support of the UHNH Charity.

The **adult orthoptics service** have reduced paper use by 90% (led by Claire Carrick, Head of Orthoptics)

The **Urology specialist nursing team** have taken the initiative to redesign the outpatient care pathway in Urology outpatients to reducing patient travel to hospital. This is supported by an innovative tool to capture carbon savings developed by Kerry Redfern, Urology Patient Navigator.



Jayne Moss, Nursing Assistant in Dermatology, has also reduced paper in her department by creating a folder of QR codes available in all clinic rooms for patients to digitally access patient information leaflets.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Trusts to identify a clinical lead with oversight of net zero clinical transformation with formal links into board-level leadership and governance Trusts to focus on reducing emissions and improving quality of care for at least one clinical area for example by: • Establishing a clinical lead and multidisciplinary working group • Completing quality improvement project(s) in the clinical area(s) that focus on a measurable reduction in emissions, with co-benefits for outcomes and quality of care, efficiency and reducing healthcare inequalities • Sharing learning and outcomes, for example, through clinical networks, the ICB and NHS England
UHNM Objectives	➤ Deliver high-quality, preventative, low-carbon care to our patients, moving to out-of-hospital and digitally-enabled care where clinically appropriate. ➤ Support our clinical teams to embed sustainability in their practice, celebrate achievements and spread learning across the Trust. ➤ Support our Theatres Department to be a pioneer in best practice sustainable care delivery.
Our Actions	Timescale
• Establish Clinical Sustainability Group (quarterly) chaired by NZ Clinical Lead • Launch the Low Carbon Care Framework Keep Warm Keep Well • Keep Warm, Keep Well (KWKW) Clinical engagement, patient referral criteria and process agreed • Approval to access and use the One Health and Care (OHC) digital shared care record to target and refer patients into the KWKW scheme • Data-led, targeted referrals via OHC to commence Theatres • Multidisciplinary working group established in Theatres with identified clinical lead. • Development of sustainability projects in Theatres. • Theatres case studies shared with clinical networks.	2025/26 September 2025 December 2025 2025/26 April 2026 December 2025 2025/26 December 2026
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Responsible Clinical Lead: Dr Andrew Bennett, Net Zero Clinical Lead	

Digital Transformation



Between 10 and 15% of emissions across the healthcare sector comes from technology, therefore digital sustainability is an essential component of moving towards net zero. Adopting digital tools to enable improvements in care delivery goes hand in hand with reducing the carbon footprint through alternatives to face-to-face appointments, facilitating targeted early interventions and streamlining the patient pathway.

2022-2025: What we have achieved: Case Studies

My Pregnancy Notes

Pregnant women at UHNM can now access their maternity records online thanks to the trust's participation in a national project to provide a web-based platform enabling women to interact with their digital care plans.

Lucy Boot, Digital Midwife at UHNM, joined the Self-referral and Personal Health Record project which launched www.mypregnancynotes.com. Through the platform women can access information about their pregnancy, their care plan, and supplementary information for their child's health. Women can input information about their pregnancy journey, support needs and preferences, and choose where they prefer to have their appointments.

Lucy registered with the [Good Things Foundation](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org) National Databank. The Good Things Foundation are a digital inclusion charity aimed at addressing digital exclusion within healthcare services, particularly for those facing financial constraints. Women identified during screening as requiring additional support to access the internet are provided with a gifted SIM card with enough data for the duration of their pregnancy. This has the added benefit that women can use google translate or download cartoons to keep their older children occupied during midwife appointments.

A Smarter Way to Care: How a New Digital Tool Is Helping



A new digital tool developed at Royal Stoke is changing the way we plan care for some of our most vulnerable patients. The High Risk of Delayed Transfer of Care (HRD) tool has helped us reduce the average hospital stay

for re-admitted patients by more than a day – saving 40kg CO₂e per patient¹. In the first three months alone, the tool flagged almost 2,000 patients where we were able to make a significant difference.

By using existing GP, social care and hospital health records, the tool flags patients who are likely to experience delays in being discharged such as those who are frail, living alone, or need additional care support at home. That means we can get the right people involved from the start, plan earlier, and support a smoother, safer journey out of hospital and back home.

¹ Inpatient bed day – low-intensity ward – 37.9 kgCO₂e/ bed day - Source: *Care pathways guidance on appraising sustainability* (Sustainable Development Unit, 2015) Available from: <http://www.sduhealth.org.uk/areas-of-focus/carbon-hotspots/pharmaceuticals/cspm/sustainable-care-pathways-guidance.aspx>

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Trusts to maximise the benefits of digital transformation to reduce emissions and improve patient care, for example, by reducing the use of paper, virtual pathways Trusts to consider opportunities to embed sustainability in digital services • Circular and low-carbon approaches to IT hardware management • Consider low carbon hosting, promoting good data hygiene (e.g. deduplication, archiving), engaging with suppliers	
UHNH Objectives	➤ Move to out-of-hospital and digitally-enabled care where clinically appropriate ➤ Prioritise sustainability in the procurement, design and management of digital services. ➤ Our colleagues are aware of the carbon impact of digital activity and practice good data hygiene habits.	
Our Actions		Timescale
To establish a method of tracking sustainability benefits from digital workstreams		
Keep Warm, Keep Well • 352 targeted patient referrals into KWKW each year, using the One Health and Care (OHC) digital shared care record • 50% KWKW referrals converted to intervention.		To be achieved 31st March 2027 Reported monthly from April 2026
Digital Services • 25% outpatient appointments non-face to face • Increase % of patients signed up to digital correspondence – by 1% each year • Establish baseline for inpatient and outpatient correspondence and agree target to reduce printing and postage year on year. • All unwanted hardware to be redistributed or recycled.		Reported monthly from September 2025 Reported monthly from September 2025 2025/26 Reported quarterly
Low Carbon Care Framework • 10 Low Carbon Care Framework teams per year who have initiated actions to reduce paper • 10 Low Carbon Care Framework teams per year who have initiated actions to reduce their digital carbon footprint		By 30 th September each year By 30 th September each year

Our Medicines



“The greenest asthma is the best controlled asthma”

Professor Will Carroll, Consultant Paediatrician, UHNM



NHS

Staffordshire and
Stoke-on-Trent
Integrated Care Board

Return your used inhalers to a pharmacy to help reduce your carbon footprint

The propellants used in **some inhalers** are powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to **climate change**. Even after an inhaler is finished it still contains these environmentally damaging gases.



Make sure your patients return all used inhalers to your local pharmacy for safe disposal

Returned inhalers will be incinerated which will destroy the greenhouse gases and prevent inhaler plastics going to landfill.

Don't throw used inhalers into your general waste or recycling bins! Landfill disposal of inhalers is harmful to the environment due to left over gases being released into the atmosphere. Plastics from inhalers cannot be recycled using domestic recycling schemes.



Make each puff count!

Ensure patients order inhalers only when required to reduce waste.



Please speak to your patient if they have concerns about the environmental impact of their inhaler - **its important they don't stop using their inhaler.**

Medicines account for around 25% of NHS emissions. A few medicines account for a large portion of these, for example, anaesthetic gases (2% of NHS emissions) and inhalers (3%). Pollution worsens air quality and negatively affects respiratory health, causing the onset of, and exacerbation of existing, respiratory conditions such as asthma and COPD.

2022-2025: What we have achieved

Reduced the use of **anaesthetic gases** which have a particularly high carbon footprint:

- Desflurane (3.7kg CO₂e per litre) is no longer in use from August 2023.
- 7% reduction in emissions from pure Nitrous Oxide (0.6kg CO₂e per litre) in 2024/25 compared to 2019/20 baseline.
- 18% reduction in emissions from Entonox (0.3kg CO₂e per litre) in 2024/25 compared to 2019/20 baseline.

Case Study: The 'Green Whistle'

Inhaled methoxyflurane (Penthrox) is an alternative to Entonox which has a carbon impact of 117.7 times less than Entonox. Penthrox was rolled out to both Emergency Departments at the end of 2024 and has seen significant patient benefits including reduced procedure length of time and reduced waiting times before undergoing the procedure. The results from the audit carried out from the initial trial highlight a 78% success rate.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

Legislative Requirements	NHS Standard Contract 2025/26 Service Condition 18.4.2: Climate Change - reduce environmentally-damaging: - Emissions from use and atmospheric release of N₂O - Emissions from fluorinated gases used in anaesthetic agents, reducing the proportion of desflurane to sevoflurane used in surgery to <2% volume - Propellant asthma inhalers (prescription and disposal)	
NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Key actions: - reduce nitrous oxide waste from medical gas pipeline systems - 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	
UHNM Objectives	➤ Support clinical teams to reduce emissions from anaesthetic gases ➤ Support best practice management of inhaler use and disposal ➤ Support clinical teams to reduce and correctly dispose of medicines waste	
Our Actions		Timescale
- Decommission all pure Nitrous Oxide manifolds across the Trust - Reduce emissions from Nitrous Oxide and Entonox by 9-14% compared to 2024/25 baseline - Roll out of Pentrox in at least one other clinical area - Encourage Sustainable Principles for the prescribing of Metered-Dosed Inhalers and Dry Powder Inhalers - Promote safer disposable scheme for used inhalers - Reduction and correct disposal of waste from prescription medicines		2025/26 2025/26 2026/27 Ongoing 2025/26 2025/26
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Responsible Clinical Lead: Dr Andrew Bennett, Net Zero Clinical Lead Key Stakeholders: Theatres and Anaesthetics clinical teams, Paediatric and Respiratory clinical teams, Pharmacy, Primary Care		

Travel and Transport



Around 3.5% of all road travel in England (equivalent to 9.5 billion miles) is linked to the NHS, contributing approximately 14% of its total emissions. This includes business travel, employee commutes, patient and visitor journeys. As a large acute Trust with over 13,000 members of staff and regional specialist services, UHNM generates significant travel demand, contributing to local traffic and congestion.

Stoke-on-Trent faces some of the UK's poorest air quality, exceeding WHO pollution limits. Reducing travel-related emissions is a national priority, with a focus on active travel and electric vehicle infrastructure. Improving travel options will ease parking demand, support cleaner air, and promote health and wellbeing for employees, patients, visitors, and the wider community.

2022-2025: What we have achieved

Active Travel:

- Cycle to Work salary sacrifice scheme launched
- Partnered with Staffordshire Police for free bike tagging and maintenance events.
- 200 colleagues joined the UHNM Sports & Social Strava group for walking, running, and cycling.
- Heritage walking routes created around Royal Stoke with info on listed buildings.

Electric Vehicles:

- Colleagues saved 28 tonnes CO₂e using EVs plugged into UHNM's 48 charging points.
- In 2024/25, 79% of vehicles ordered via salary sacrifice were electric, 17% hybrid, thanks to attractive offers.

Partnerships:

Strong engagement with Local Authority transport teams and the Bus Service Improvement Programme via the Sustainable Transport Working Group.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Key actions: • Develop a sustainable travel plan by December 2026 (focus on active travel, public transport and zero-emission vehicles, supported by a clear understanding of employee commuting) • Offer only zero-emission vehicles through vehicle salary sacrifice schemes from December 2026 onwards • Make arrangements to purchase, or enter into new lease arrangements for, zero-emission vehicles only from December 2027 onwards. NHS Long Term Plan: Improving air quality by cutting business mileage by 20% by 2023/24; ensuring that at least 90% of the NHS fleet uses low-emissions engines (including 25% ultra-low emissions) by 2028.	
UHM Objectives	➢ To assist employees, patients and visitors to travel by active and low carbon modes (walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicles) ➢ Partnership working with local authorities and bus services to ensure the wider infrastructure best serves patients, colleagues and visitors to our hospitals. ➢ Work towards decarbonisation of our Fleet	
Our Actions		Timescale
• Carry out employee travel survey • Develop refreshed sustainable travel plans (focus on active travel, public transport and zero-emission vehicles, supported by a clear understanding of employee commuting) • Increase rates of employees commuting by active travel and public transport (against the 2025 Trust Travel Survey baseline. • Offer only electric or hybrid vehicles through salary sacrifice scheme • Increase the % of car parking spaces that have EV charging points to 10% • Progress towards full fleet electrification - interim target: 46% of fleet vehicles to be electric or hybrid • Provide on-site electric charging facilities for electric ambulance fleet by 2028/29. • Promote patient access to site via public transport through patient correspondence		2025 December 2026 2028/29 2026/27 2028/29 July 2026 2028/29 Start 2025/26
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager, Stuart Ramsdale, Transport Manager Key Stakeholders: Transport Services, Facilities Management, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council, Bus Service Improvement Programme, Apcoa car parking management		

Estates, Facilities & PFI Services

*Emissions relating to estates
and facilities services account
for more than 60% of the NHS
Carbon Footprint.*



*At UHNM in 20/24/25 emissions from energy
and water made up 71% of all emissions that
we can control.*



*The Trust disposes of
4,300 tonnes of waste at a
cost of 600,000kg CO₂e
per annum.*



2022-2025: What we have achieved

Our Energy

Significant investment has been put into improving **energy efficiency** which will save around 2,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions through the lifetime of the equipment.

- LED Lighting across the Trust
- Loft Insulation
- Cavity Wall Insulation
- Solar Panels on the roof of the Main Building at County Hospital, providing renewable electricity to help to power the new breast care unit.
- Pipework Reconfiguration and Insulation in plant rooms
- Double Glazing at County Hospital.

£4.6m of grant funding was secured towards a £6m project to **decarbonise heat** and improve energy efficiency at Royal Stoke over 2023 to 2025:

- Air Source Heat Pumps
- LED lighting
- Solar photovoltaic panels

Overall Impact:

- 941 tonnes of annual CO₂ equivalent emissions
- Air quality improvements
- Replacement of end-of-life boilers
- Major site risks removed (steam distribution)

Our Buildings and Green Spaces

- **Net Zero Capital Subgroup** established to strengthen the partnership between sustainability and capital development, and to embed sustainability into capital purchasing decisions.
- **50 sapling trees** provided by NHS Forest have been planted at Royal Stoke.
- **Meadows** planted across the site to provide local biodiversity enhancements for bees and pollinators.
- Two **staff gardens** created at County Hospital for colleagues to use for relaxation and wellbeing, with a third garden planned for next 2026/27.
- The theme for the gardens is '**Reuse, Re-purpose**' – building materials were salvaged and reused in the gardens to make the pathways, planters and decorative art in the mindfulness areas.
- Produce from the **vegetable plot** is being used by our in-house Catering Services at County to make soups and seasonal meals.

Our Waste

- '**Waste Reset**' audits to support teams to understand how to segregate waste and ensure they have the correct equipment.
- All non-recyclable waste produced at both hospital sites is incinerated at a local **Waste to Energy** facility. Therefore zero waste from the Trust goes into landfill.
- County Hospital: on-site facilities to separate and process **Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR)** - paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass.
- Royal Stoke: DMR and glass recycling at Royal Stoke in three non-clinical areas (Springfield Building, D-Block and Thornburrow Building).
- Compliance with the **Simpler Recycling legislation** (March 2025)



2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

Our Buildings and Green Spaces

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Organisations should ensure all applicable new building and major refurbishment projects are compliant with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard	
UHNH Objectives	➤ Maximise access to natural spaces for the benefit of health and wellbeing.	
Our Actions		Timescale
Capital projects - Ensure that new or refurbished buildings are compliant with the NHS Net Zero Carbon Building Standard. - Contractor Briefing Document to be produced and issued to designers and contractors for relevant building projects. - Achieve BREEAM Excellent rating for new buildings and Very Good for refurbishment projects where possible.		2025/26 onwards
		2026/27
		From 2025/26
Green Spaces Explore opportunities with walking charity Living Streets to create a Nature Recovery Programme for both colleagues and patients.		2028/29
Operational Leads: Charlie Cox, Energy Manager, Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Key Stakeholders: Estates & Facilities, Capital Development Team, Sodexo (PFI), Project Co		

Our Energy

Legislative Requirements	NHS Standard Contract 2025/26 • Service Condition 18.4.1: Phase out oil and coal for primary heating. • Service Condition 18.5: The Provider must ensure that with effect from the earliest practicable date (having regard to the terms and duration of and any rights to terminate existing supply agreements) all electricity it purchases is from Renewable Sources.	
NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Organisations should focus on: • Improving energy efficiency (e.g. LED lighting, insulation and double-glazed windows) • Replacing fossil fuel heating systems with lower carbon alternatives • Increasing use of renewable energy by investing in on- or near-site renewable energy generation • Developing a Heat Decarbonisation Plan and develop business cases to deliver identified measures.	
UHNM Objectives	Decarbonisation of the UHNM estate: ➤ Invest in schemes that will deliver long-term energy efficiency ➤ Increase on-site generation of renewable energy ➤ Decarbonise heat and power at Royal Stoke through connection to District Energy Network	
Our Actions		Timescale
Ensure preparedness for funding applications through completed feasibility studies which include cost and design information. • Increase LED lighting coverage by 5% each year. • Continue building insulation and double glazing. • Expansion of solar panelling (either rooftop or canopies) across both sites • Progress connection to Stoke-on-Trent District Energy Network • Develop a solution to decarbonise heating at County Hospital • Develop and report on energy decarbonisation trajectory • Improve coverage of energy and water meters and make the data available in a metering software package.		From 2025/26 2026/27 onwards Reach 2MW capacity by April 2026 Ongoing 2028/29 2025/26 2025/26 onwards
Operational Leads: Charlie Cox, Energy Manager, Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Key Stakeholders: Estates & Facilities, Capital Development Team, Sodexo (PFI), Project Co, Stoke-on-Trent City Council		

Our Waste

Legislative Requirements	New requirements for waste collections came into force on the 31st of March 2025 resulting from the Environment Act 2021: - collections of dry recyclable materials (except plastic film) by 31 March 2025 - collections of food waste by 31 March 2025 - collections of plastic film: by 31 March 2027	
NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Organisations should focus on: - Improving energy efficiency (e.g. LED lighting, insulation and double-glazed windows) - Replacing fossil fuel heating systems with lower carbon alternatives - Increasing use of renewable energy by investing in on- or near-site renewable energy generation - Developing a Heat Decarbonisation Plan and develop business cases to deliver identified measures.	
UHNM Objectives	➤ Proactively investigate alternative, innovative and local low carbon waste disposal options ➤ Develop a long term plan to roll out recycling across both hospital sites	
Our Actions		Timescale
- Compliance with Waste regulations - Support the correct segregation of waste across clinical areas through the Low Carbon Care Framework and SWITCH Campaigns - Expand recycling at Royal Stoke - Proactively investigate alternative, innovative and local waste disposal options such as the proposed new Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) in Stoke on Trent, owned by Stoke on Trent City Council		Ongoing Ongoing 2028/29 Ongoing
Operational Leads: Phill Mountford, Waste Manager, Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Key Stakeholders: Estates & Facilities, Waste Management Team, Procurement, Sodexo (PFI)		

Supplies and Procurement



2022-2025: What we have achieved

- Strong regional collaboration via the North Midlands & Black Country Procurement Group (NMBCPG).
- All clinical trials require a **Sustainability Impact Assessment**, reviewed by the Sustainability Manager.
- **10% Net Zero & Social Value weighting** included in all tenders; suppliers must submit Carbon Reduction Plans or Net Zero Commitments.
- Ongoing efforts to reduce **single-use plastics** and packaging waste:
 - Plastic straw use cut by 99.5% since 2021.
 - New **non-plastic dry wipe** projected to save 7,000+ tonnes CO₂e.
 - HSDU prioritises **repair over replacement** for surgical tools.
- **Eco Box**: Redesigned anti-embolism stocking packaging eliminates plastic and reduces cardboard—saving **7.8 tonnes plastic** and **10 tonnes cardboard** annually.
- **Walking Aid Reuse Scheme**: Patients return aids via local recycling centres for reuse, reducing waste and supporting circular healthcare.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Key actions: • 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 • Reduce reliance on single-use products, considering how to safely build this work into clinical improvement projects.	
UHNH Objectives	➤ Create a sustainable procurement culture and introduce processes to support this approach. ➤ Collaborate with suppliers to maximise the wider social, economic and environmental benefits for our local community and population when developing service specifications and tenders. ➤ Close working across procurement and clinical teams to minimise waste from products and packaging.	
Our Actions		Timescale
• Partnership working with local Procurement Group to achieve NHSE targets within the next 3 years: ○ Embed Net Zero Supplier Roadmap ○ Support suppliers to engage with the Evergreen Assessment • Identify three (one per year) sustainable alternatives and embed these into clinical practice • Trust-wide campaign to reduce couch roll usage • 1/3 reduction in washbowl usage • Reduction in use of gloves • Implement process to ensure items on resuscitation trolleys are redistributed and used before they go out of date. • All services to offer patient information digitally by default.		2028/29 Start 2025/26 2025/26 2028/29 2028/29 2026/27 2028/29
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager, Jane Hamer-Millington, Clinical Procurement Specialist Nurse Key Stakeholders: Clinical Procurement, Black County & North Midlands Procurement Group, Waste Management		

Food and Nutrition



Food and catering services contribute around 6% of total NHS emissions, making them a key area for sustainability efforts. Promoting healthy, low-carbon diets—rich in seasonal, locally sourced produce—can reduce emissions while supporting patient wellbeing. Reducing food waste and improving supply chain efficiency also offer environmental and health benefits. At a local level, the Trust's Food Standards Working Group, formed from the original 2019 Food Group, ensures compliance with these standards through collaboration between catering, dietetics, Sodexo, and the Sustainability Team.

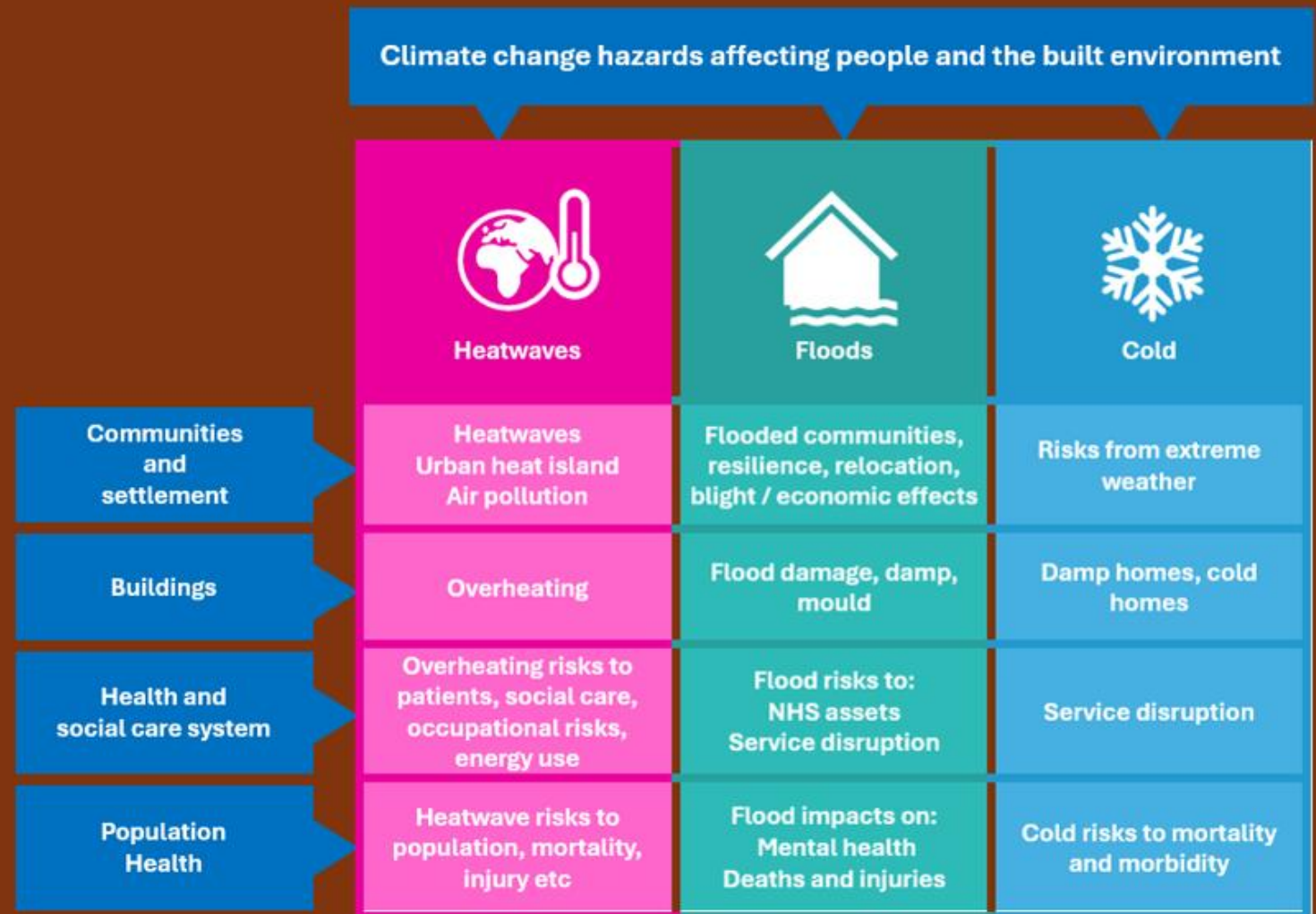
2022-2025: What we have achieved

- Plant-based meals integrated into patient and retail menus, with seasonal updates and Veganuary promotions.
- 78% increase in vegan meal uptake at Royal Stoke (Sept 2024–Feb 2025).
- 98% of meals at County Hospital made in-house, with Midlands-based suppliers.
- Locally sourced milk used at Royal Stoke's Costa outlet (within 1 mile).
- Fresh produce stall at Royal Stoke offers low-packaging, regional fruit and veg.
- Food waste segregation launched at County Hospital and Royal Stoke's Lyme Building; waste converted to renewable energy.
- Coloured crockery at County Hospital improved patient intake and cut food waste by 10% (17.8kg/week).

2025/26 – 2028/29 What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Improving sustainable procurement and reducing food waste Organisations must: - Assess their food and drink services against the Good Buying System (GBS) for food and catering services. - Assess their level of food waste, set food waste reduction targets and minimisation plans using the WRAP approach – ‘target, measure, act’. - Commit to stop procuring single use plastic items for their catering service. - Commit to sustainable alternatives to plastic. - Apply the Net Zero and Social Value Model in all procurement decision-making and ensure suppliers are aware of and complying with the Net Zero Supplier Roadmap.	
UHNM Objectives	➤ Improve access to low carbon healthy meals for our patients and our colleagues, promoting these as an attractive meal choice. ➤ Embed high and compliant standards for both plastic packaging and food waste management from procurement to disposal. ➤ Provide social value through our procurement of food suppliers and contracts.	
Our Actions		Timescale
- Increase low carbon healthy meal options in inpatient areas and retail outlets. - Partner with at least one local supplier on food - Annual reduction of food waste across all sites. - Food waste segregation to be standard practice at both sites with a dedicated sustainable disposal route 50% of ward areas have a waste data set		From 2025/26 2028/29 From 2025/26 2028/29 2028/29
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager, Joe Ronan, Catering Services Manager, Claire Hough, Estates, Facilities & PFI Matron Key Stakeholders: Catering Services, Facilities Management, Sodexo Facilities Management, Retained Estates, Waste Management, Nutrition & Dietetics		

Adaptation



Climate change poses significant risks to health and care services, with extreme weather events—such as heatwaves, cold spells, and flooding—impacting both patient and employee wellbeing, and straining service delivery.

The 2023 UK report on climate-related health effects highlights increased mortality from heat, mental health impacts from flooding, and the potential for health co-benefits through climate adaptation measures like improved air quality and green spaces.

The IPCC and Met Office warn of intensifying weather extremes, with Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent particularly vulnerable to flooding. To ensure resilience, health systems must strengthen infrastructure, supply chains, and frontline preparedness for changing demand patterns.

2022-2025: What we have achieved

- The UHNM EPRR Team engagement with Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent ICB EPRR Leads – embedding our position in the **System Resilience Forum**.
- Dissemination of the **Net Zero Carbon Building Standard** to Estates and Capital Development Teams, raising awareness of sustainable considerations for new building and refurbishments.

2025/26 – 2028/29: What do we want to achieve?

NHS England Green Plan Refresh Guidance	Green Plan Refresh Guidance All providers and commissioners of NHS-funded services must 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. NHS Trusts should: • set out actions to prepare for severe weather events and improve climate resilience of local sites and services, including digital services • 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 • ensure adequate cascading of weather health alerts and relevant messaging across the organisation, in line with the government's Adverse Weather and Health Plan
UHNM Objectives	➤ Our services are prepared for the effects of severe weather events and have mitigating actions in place. ➤ The Trust is a part of a system-wide approach with local planning arrangements for adapting to climate change. ➤ Effective channels of communication are established so our colleagues are informed of upcoming events and how they can keep themselves, their colleagues and their patients safe.
Our Actions • Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and Impact Assessment documentation to be updated to include Climate Adaptation. • Assessment against resilience to climate change and mitigating actions stated in service BCPs. • Contractor Briefing document in place outlining requirement to adapt new builds / refurbishments to reduce risks associated with climate change and severe weather. • Weather health alerts cascaded to all UHNM employees	Timescale From 2025/26 2028/29 2026/27 2025/26
Operational Lead: Jenny Branford, Sustainability Manager Key Stakeholders: Emergency Planning Resilience and Response (EPRR) team, Capital Development	

How you can get involved



Are you passionate about sustainability?

Our **SWITCH** Champions play an active role in making sure that their teams and departments are aware of and engaged with the Trust's Sustainability Agenda.

- Being a Champion is really simple; it's the small actions taken by everyone that make a difference.
- You may be 'called to action' to support the Trust with initiatives in relation to Waste, Procurement, Energy and Water or Sustainable Travel.
- This could simply be sharing monthly updates, supporting the improvement of working practices or encouraging suggestions or feedback to the Sustainability Team.

Low Carbon Care Framework

Are you interested in taking part in our employee development and recognition scheme? Are you keen to be more sustainable in your everyday work?

- Small changes can make a big difference.
- Your achievements will be recognised and celebrated
- We will support you on your journey

Contact SWITCH@uhnm.nhs.uk today and let us know what you're passionate about!

For further information please visit the [SWITCH page](#) on the Intranet.

Further information

For further information about our Green Plan please visit our webpage [Link to full document] where you can find further detail in our full length Green Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29 document.

Or contact our Sustainability team by emailing SWITCH@uhnm.nhs.uk

