



Somerset
NHS Foundation Trust

Green Plan 2025-2028

Foreword by David Shannon

As the Executive lead for the Green Plan within the Trust, net zero carbon and sustainability will inform the decisions that we make and the strategic direction of the Trust.

We recognise that individuals will want to take action themselves. Through staff engagement we will enable colleagues to exercise their passion for the wellbeing of the planet, as well as the wellbeing of those using our services. The Green Plan aims to tackle not only the climate emergency, but also strives to reduce our reliance on single use plastics, improve biodiversity on our sites to mitigate the ecological emergency and seek to improve our resilience as an organisation to climate related weather events such as heat waves.

We have links with our system partners Somerset ICB and Somerset Council to enable a joined-up approach to net zero carbon in Somerset, in recognition of the importance that our organisation plays in the social, economic and environmental issues that are present in Somerset.

The Strategic Sustainability Group will lead delivery of this Green Plan, with senior leadership from clinical and non-clinical departments, formed to collaboratively drive forward sustainability improvements and achieve our objectives.

David Shannon, Executive Director of Strategy and Digital Development

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust provides healthcare services across most of Somerset. Once combined, the trust will deliver acute, community, and mental health services throughout the county and even beyond Somerset's borders.

Somerset is a unique place. Nearly half the population lives in rural areas, and around one in four residents is over 65. That means we need to think carefully about how we deliver care and how we do it sustainably.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust provides a wide range of services for the whole of Somerset, as well as parts of North and West Dorset. We work with health and social care partners in Somerset to ensure that we deliver outstanding services that meet the needs of our population. The local Integrated Care Boards commission the Trust's general services while specialist services are nationally commissioned.

The Trust provides acute services from Musgrove Park Hospital (MPH) in Taunton, which has around 700 inpatient beds, and Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) in Yeovil, which has around 330 beds. We also operate 13 community hospitals (with over 220 beds), providing inpatient, outpatient and diagnostic services, six Urgent Treatment Centres and one Minor Injuries Unit.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust's community services are wide-ranging and include district nursing, stroke services, podiatry, physiotherapy, acute home treatment for frailty and respiratory care, dental care, and diabetic eye screening. These services are provided in a range of settings including community team facilities, GP surgeries, local clinics, and patients' homes.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health inpatient services and specialist healthcare for adults with learning disabilities from ten mental health wards across four sites.

Within our trust we are privileged to work with over 15,000 colleagues who deliver or support our patient services. From therapists to nurses, doctors, researchers, scientists, porters, cleaners, kitchen staff, accountants, those who teach and the receptionists who welcome our patients, the contribution of all of our colleagues is invaluable and together we make up our trust.

In addition to providing a wide range of patient services, we also contribute to training the next generation of health professionals and conduct research that will help to advance clinical practice and treatments in the future.

Why do we need a green plan?

This Green Plan is our commitment to delivering all of this in a way that's environmentally responsible, future-focused, and aligned with the needs of our people and planet.

Climate Change and Health: Why It Matters to Us

At the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow (2021), the World Health Organization (WHO) made a powerful connection: climate change isn't just an environmental issue — it's a health issue too.

- Their report highlighted how tackling climate change through mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity protection can bring wide-ranging benefits to people's health. And the links are clear:
- Heatwaves are becoming more frequent, leading to more hospital admissions for heat-related illnesses.
- Air pollution, caused by burning fossil fuels and wood, contributes to respiratory conditions and other serious health problems.
- Extreme weather events, which are expected to become more common, can have a significant impact on mental health.

Some of the outcomes from COP26 — like the UK's commitment to end the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030 — will also bring major health benefits. But it's not just about cleaner cars. We need to encourage active travel too, helping more people to walk or cycle as part of their daily lives.

What This Means for Somerset

Climate change will affect our sites and the communities we serve in several ways:

- Heat stress: Our buildings could become hotspots during heatwaves; potentially increasing patient stays and affecting staff wellbeing.
- Flooding: More frequent flooding could damage homes and livelihoods, causing stress and anxiety. It could also impact local food production — a key part of Somerset's economy.
- Air quality: Burning fossil fuels in buildings and vehicles harms air quality. Our healthcare sites should be places where people can recover in clean, healthy environments. Improving green spaces and biodiversity on our sites can also boost staff wellbeing.

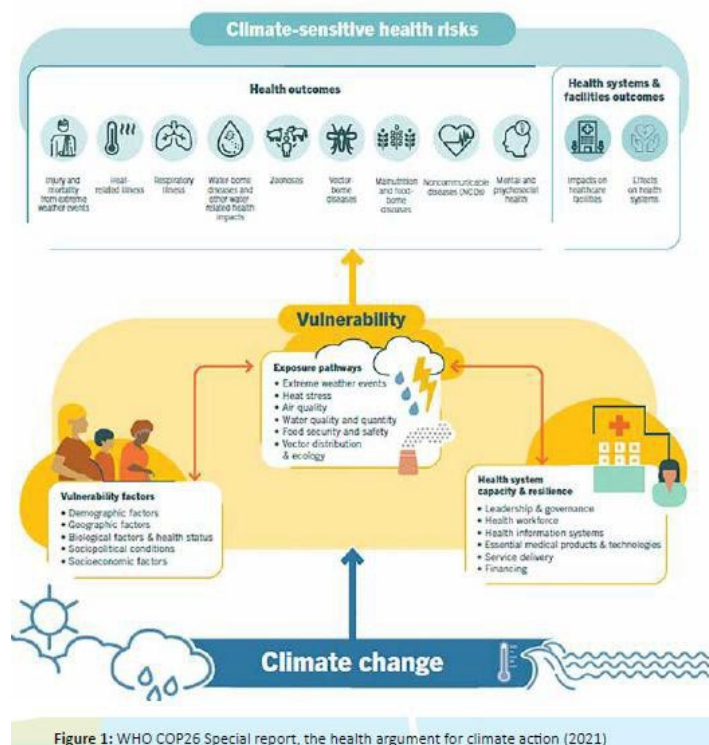
Health and Sustainability Go Hand in Hand

The good news? Many of the actions we take to reduce carbon emissions also improve health. For example:

- Promoting walking and cycling helps reduce respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, some cancers, diabetes, and obesity.
- Creating urban green spaces not only helps with climate adaptation but also reduces exposure to pollution, lowers stress, and provides places for physical activity and social connection.

Research shows that if we align climate action with the Paris Agreement targets, we could save millions of lives — thanks to better air quality, healthier diets, and more active lifestyles.

Figure 1: WHO COP26 Special report, the health argument for climate action (2021)



A shift to more nutritious plant-based diets in line with WHO recommendations, as a third example, could reduce global emissions significantly, ensuring a more resilient food system.

Our vision

To allow the people of Somerset to live well for longer, we must take action to minimise our impact on the local and global environment.

Our Green Plan will work to provide buildings that utilise zero carbon energy. Our services will seek to minimise the use of resources, and we will improve ecology and biodiversity on our sites recognising the impact this has on well-being of our patients, colleagues and visitors.

Our colleagues will be the driving force of changes in our clinical practice to improve sustainability. Colleague engagement activities will promote sustainable change with links to

quality improvement processes and other change programmes across our services, to drive sustainable decision makings.

Carbon footprint

Figure 2: Greenhouse Gas emissions scopes in the context of the NHS, Delivering a ‘Net Zero’.

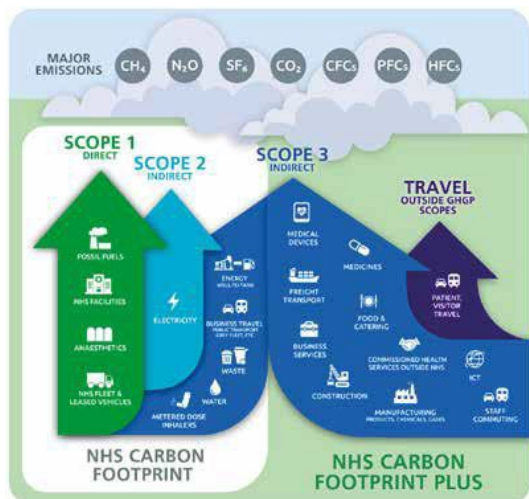
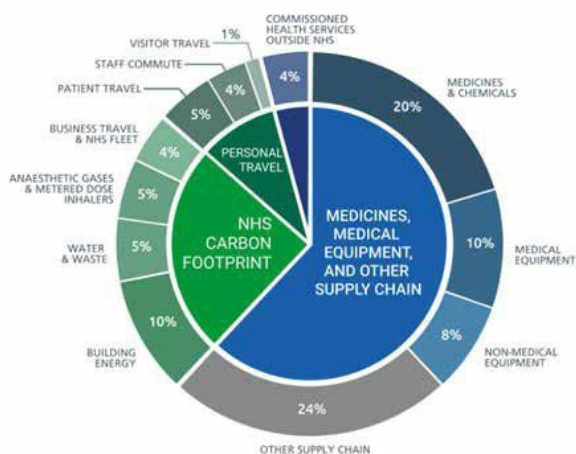


Figure 3: Sources of carbon emissions by proportion of NHS Carbon Footprint plus,

Delivering a ‘Net Zero’ NHS (2020).



The report ‘Delivering a ‘Net Zero’ NHS’ (2020) published by NHS England and Improvement (NHSE and I), included a calculation of the carbon emissions of the NHS associated with the Scope 1 and 2 (NHS carbon footprint) and Scope 3 (NHS carbon footprint plus).

Our progress so far

The first Green Plan was developed in 2022 and work across the Trust by many teams has been ongoing. We have had success in many areas including receiving grant funding for heat decarbonisation plans, LED lighting and replacing the oil-fired heating system at Wincanton Community Hospital with an air source heat pump and solar panels. Electric vehicles are in use by our facilities team at Yeovil District Hospital and installation of EV charging points at other sites will allow more to be introduced during delivery of this green plan.

Clinically, teams across the Trust have delivered projects to introduce reusable theatre hats to Orthopaedic theatres at Musgrove Park Hospital, the Pee in Pot (PIP – a pulp urine collection pot to replace single use plastic and streamline the analysis of the specimen) has been launched nationally, nitrous manifolds have been decommissioned and desflurane is no longer in use at the Trust. The ‘Show me your meds please’ project has shown the scale of the challenge in reducing medicines waste across the county. Food waste recycling has been introduced to the majority of sites. The sustainability working group led by Isabella Fisk has developed a set of Nurturing Nature in the NHS resources that demonstrate how nature connections can benefit colleague and patient wellbeing, highlighting the importance of maintaining valuable natural habitats in Somerset and on our sites.

- Travel Survey undertaken across the Trust.
- Decarbonisation plans developed for all owned community hospitals and mental health sites. Also developed for Yeovil District Hospital and an energy infrastructure plan undertaken for Musgrove Park Hospital.
- Greener Care Action Group established and ongoing meetings to develop clinical sustainability projects. Projects underway include, reusable theatre hats, surgical set optimisation and theatre recycling focus.
- LED lighting installations at Yeovil District Hospital, Musgrove Park Hospital, South Petherton and Minehead community hospitals.
- Air source heat pumps and solar panels installed at Wincanton Community Hospital and Priorswood Records Office.
- Desflurane is no longer used across the Trust.
- Nitrous reduction project has taken place at MPH.

Figure 4: Our green achievements 2022-2025



Areas of focus

This Green Plan outlines our commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions and enhancing sustainability across all our operations. The previous Green Plan set out a broad context of increasing visibility of sustainability issues whilst setting out a baseline position for the organisation. There has been good progress on these objectives and tangible benefit in specific areas. These include the development of carbon reduction initiatives as well as the development of innovations which have been shared across the NHS and are now commercially available.

Our strategic aims are aligned with the NHS's broader net zero ambitions and focus on key areas where we can make the most significant impact. The aims are:

- **Workforce and leadership:** To foster a culture of sustainability throughout the organisation, empowering our workforce and leadership to drive green initiatives including net zero clinical transformation.
- **Estates and facilities:** To achieve net zero carbon for all energy use in our buildings, ensuring a sustainable and resilient estate. Also to consider how our operations including waste, and food and nutrition, can be more sustainable.
- **Travel and transport:** To significantly reduce emissions from all travel and transport associated with our services, promoting sustainable options for our colleagues and service users.
- **Supply chain and procurement:** To work collaboratively with our supply chain, including medicines, to reduce our environmental footprint. We will reduce single use and seek to introduce circular economy principles.
- **Digital Transformation:** To embed net zero principles across all clinical services through digital transformation, leveraging technology for environmental benefit.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Develop our sites to be resilient to the effects of climate change.

Achieving these aims will require the active engagement of Senior Leaders and colleagues from all areas across the Trust.

Our six core aims have specific objectives to achieve for the three-year duration of this Green Plan, with actions aligned to achieving these objectives. The focus of the Green Plan for the next three years will be on the areas of significant carbon emissions where we believe interventions and actions can make a marked reduction in our carbon footprint.

We will use a Green Progress Tracker to monitor progress of the actions to achieve these objectives. The tracker will be reported at each meeting of the Strategic Sustainability Group and used to report progress to the Executive Committee and Trust Board.

Workforce and leadership

Objective:

To increase from baseline (April 2025), colleague engagement in sustainability initiatives by 25% by 2028, as measured by number of members in the Greener Care Action Group, proportion of colleagues completing sustainability-focused training modules and number of submissions to internal and external awards focussed on environmental achievements.

Actions:

Define the roles and responsibilities of those on the Strategic Sustainability Group and Greener Care Action Group, ensuring they have the necessary support and resources to implement initiatives within their areas.

Evaluate the impact on sustainability of all QI projects, encouraging colleagues to identify and implement environmentally beneficial improvements in their daily work.

Develop sustainability lead in each service group to allow for development of ideas and action. Foster independent decision making and action-taking to maximise impact.

Develop a communications plan, including monitoring and tracking of Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions sources within the Trust, and a programme of sustainability events to be held at various Trust sites up to 2028, promoting the Greener Care Action Group and sustainability awards.

Estates and facilities

Objective:

Using the Heat Decarbonisation Plans developed for each of our owned sites, develop an estate decarbonisation plan identifying and prioritising work to achieve an 80% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions from the estate by 2032, through significant improvements in energy efficiency, the transition to low-carbon heating systems, and increased on-site renewable energy generation across all NHS properties.

Actions:

Develop a prioritised plan for decarbonisation of our owned sites over 10 years to meet the 80% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions.

Identify sites with low levels of LED lighting and create a plan identifying and prioritising the installation of LED lighting across the Trust estate. Use this information to apply for funding when available.

Continue to work with Somerset Council on the business case to develop a district heat network in Taunton.

Explore opportunities to maximise the installation of solar PV panels on suitable roof spaces and available land, including car parks.

Actively pursue funding opportunities from government schemes and other sources to finance decarbonisation projects.

Travel and transport.

Objective:

To achieve an 80% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 transport-related carbon emissions by 2032 for our fleet, through the transition to a fully zero-emission fleet for all new owned and leased vehicles from 2027, and by promoting car sharing, active travel and public transport use among staff, patients, and visitors.

Actions:

By the end of 2025 create a detailed roadmap for phasing out petrol and diesel vehicles and replacing them with electric vehicles (EVs) to include timelines, budget allocation, and procurement strategies and include charging infrastructure needs.

By the end of November 2026 create a green travel plan that encourages active travel and public transport use for staff, patients, and visitors.

Develop promote and facilitate car-sharing schemes for colleagues.

Update business travel policies to prioritise sustainable modes of transport and discourage unnecessary flights or long-distance car journeys.

Supply chain and procurement.

Objective:

To reduce Scope 3 carbon emissions from the Trust's supply chain by 30% by 2032, achieved by actively engaging with our top 50 suppliers to evaluate progress against their carbon reduction plans, increasing procurement from suppliers with verified net zero commitments, and prioritising the use of reusable, remanufactured, and low-carbon products where clinically appropriate.

Actions:

Conduct a review of high-volume single-use products to identify alternatives or opportunities for reuse and remanufacturing, working closely with clinical teams to ensure patient safety and efficacy.

Foster collaboration with clinical, and operational teams to identify opportunities for sustainable product choices and process improvements. Spread sustainable best practice from other service groups or other Trusts.

Explore opportunities to close the loop on materials by working with suppliers on take-back schemes for packaging, end-of-life products, promoting recycling, and reducing waste.

Digital transformation.

Transformation to digital healthcare Embedding net zero principles across all clinical services is essential for delivering sustainable, high-quality care. This section focuses on identifying carbon reduction opportunities through the transformation of care delivery using digital solutions.

We will seek to focus on leveraging existing digital technologies and systems, we aim to streamline both clinical services and supporting functions, enhancing resource efficiency while reducing carbon emissions.

Objectives:

Adopt innovative and interconnected digital technologies to:

- Enhance patient experience, clinical outcomes and overall wellbeing.
- Deliver care in the most appropriate setting, utilising virtual communication and remote monitoring where suitable.
- Reduce travel related emissions for colleagues and patients.
- Minimise reliance on paper-based processes and single use consumables.
- Lower the physical footprint of healthcare services through delivery and digital infrastructure.

Increase access to digital-first options for colleagues and patients. Expand digital infrastructure, patient portals, internal communications tools ensure reliability and ease of use.

Actions:

Increase collaboration through connected, multidisciplinary digital records that are accessible anywhere at any time.

Increase personal ownership and access to health and care records, while supporting environmental sustainability through digital first approaches:

Increase access to digital-first options for both colleagues and patients, supporting more sustainable, efficient and environmentally conscious healthcare delivery.

Transform the digital estate, including the use of cloud technologies and energy efficient solutions, supporting resilient, scalable, and environmentally sustainable healthcare infrastructure.

Transform service delivery through strategic use of automation to improve efficiency, accuracy, and capacity while enabling more sustainable and responsive healthcare system.

Climate change adaptation

Objective:

To assess the resilience of the Trust's infrastructure, services, and patient care pathways to the impacts of climate change by 2028, adapting to long-term climatic shifts, as evidenced by a comprehensive climate change adaptation plan.

Actions:

The development and approval of a comprehensive Climate Change Adaptation Plan by December 31st 2026, identifying key climate risks and mitigation strategies.

Establish a clear system for tracking and reporting climate-related service disruptions, including their cause, duration, and impact, such as surface water flooding on our sites, high temperatures in occupied areas, damage to buildings from severe weather and delays to clinical and non-clinical actions due to climate related events.

Ensure all new infrastructure projects and major refurbishments incorporate climate resilience measures from the design stage, adhering to relevant building standards and future climate projections.

Governance and accountability

The Trust Board has approved the Green Plan. Reporting to the Board will be undertaken annually to demonstrate our progress. A Green Plan update is also included in the Trust Annual Report.

The Green Plan will be championed on the Trust board by the Director of Strategy and Digital Development.

The Strategic Sustainability Group will monitor progress of this Green Plan led by the Executive Director with responsibility for sustainability. The group includes senior leadership from clinical and non-clinical directorates, formed to collaboratively drive forward sustainability improvements and achieve our objectives.

The Green Plan is led by the Head of Sustainability, Energy, and Carbon, within the Estates and Facilities directorate. The Plan is subject to normal Trust governance, including annual topic reporting to the Quality Assurance Group. Projects that utilise capital funds are monitored by the Strategic Estates Group