

RUH Green Plan 2025-2028

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Foreword

At the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH), we recognise that climate change is a health issue as well as an environmental one. Its impacts are already being felt across our community, shaping demand, affecting services, and testing the resilience of our estate and healthcare system.

The RUH is Bath and North East Somerset’s acute hospital and a major anchor institution in the area, and one of its largest employers. We serve a catchment of around 500,000 people across Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), Wiltshire and Somerset, working alongside partners across the BSW Hospitals Group. We therefore have a responsibility to lead by example. This Green Plan sets out a bold and practical roadmap to reduce our environmental footprint, embed sustainability into our operations, and contribute to the NHS’s ambition to become the world’s first net zero health service.

This is about more than carbon. It’s about ensuring the care we provide today, does not compromise the ability of future generations to enjoy the same opportunities, resources, and quality of life. By embedding sustainability into everything we do, we are building a health system that is resilient, equitable, and fit for the future ensuring we develop a positive legacy for future generations.

This Plan reflects our values and sets out clear, measurable actions across clinical care, estates and facilities, digital, travel and transport, supply chain and procurement, medicines and medical gases, waste, food and nutrition, biodiversity, and climate adaptation.

Delivery will require collaboration across every specialty and partner organisation. Responsibility will be embedded through a Sustainability Steering Committee, specialty leads, and an implementation tracker with quarterly reporting.

We are proud of the work behind this Plan and confident in our ability to deliver it. We will report progress quarterly through our governance route and publish an annual update for transparency. We will ensure that the care we provide today protects the health of tomorrow.



Introduction

The NHS continues to play a vital role in addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Responsible for around 5% of the UK’s carbon emissions and 3.5% of all road travel, the NHS has a unique responsibility and opportunity to lead the way in delivering sustainable healthcare.

Climate change is recognised as a threat to health, worsening inequalities and increasing demand on services. As a healthcare provider, we recognise the direct impact of the environment on the wellbeing of our patients, staff, and local communities.

Our Green Plan (2025–2028) sets out a clear framework for reducing our environmental footprint, improving resource efficiency, and contributing to the shared goal of becoming the world’s first net zero health service. We will strengthen our commitment to high-quality care, delivered today without compromising the needs of future generations. Following successful board approval, this Green Plan will be published on the RUH website and submitted to NHS England. This will be accompanied by annual reporting arrangements.

This Green Plan currently covers the RUH Combe Park site. Sulis Hospital and other community premises are not within scope at this stage due to governance and resourcing boundaries. As the BSW Hospitals Group operating model develops in 2025/26, we will review scope in conjunction with the latest guidance.

1.1 Organisational vision

The Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) sits within the Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) integrated care system (ICS), which brings together an integrated care board, three hospital Trusts, private providers, two mental health Trusts, an ambulance Trust and voluntary sector organisations. The partner organisations that make up BSW Together are working to improve the health and wellbeing of local people, tackle inequalities, achieve better outcomes and access for everyone, ensure that health and care services are consistent, of high quality, and make the most efficient use of our resources.

At the Royal United Hospitals (RUH), our vision is to be a place where everyone matters; everyone refers to the people we care for, the people we work with, and the people in our community. Our goals reflect a deep commitment to people. For our staff, we aim to create an environment where everyone can perform at their best by living our values, investing in development, and embracing diversity. For our patients, we focus on delivering high-quality, compassionate care that responds to what matters most to them. For our community, we collaborate with partners to create one of the healthiest places to live and work, leveraging shared resources and addressing health inequalities together. This can be found in Figure 1 below.

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Figure 1: Trust Strategic Objectives

The RUH’s values form the foundation of its culture, emphasising kindness, civility, and a strong commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and increasingly, environmental responsibility. These values guide how the Trust brings its strategy to life for all staff and patients. Central to this approach is *Improving Together*, the Trust’s improving system, which empowers staff closest to the challenges to lead change through structured quality improvement methods. This system supports the annual setting of breakthrough objectives and mission-critical projects, ensuring progress is measurable and aligned with the Trust’s vision. Over the longer term, five strategic initiatives digital enablement, culture and leadership, clinical transformation, financial resilience, and future planning shape the Trust’s direction for the next 3–5 years. Sustainability is embedded across these priorities, ensuring that improvements not only deliver meaningful impact for patients and staff, but also contribute to a healthier planet and a Net Zero NHS. The Trust priorities and breakthrough objectives for 2025/26 can be seen in figure 2.

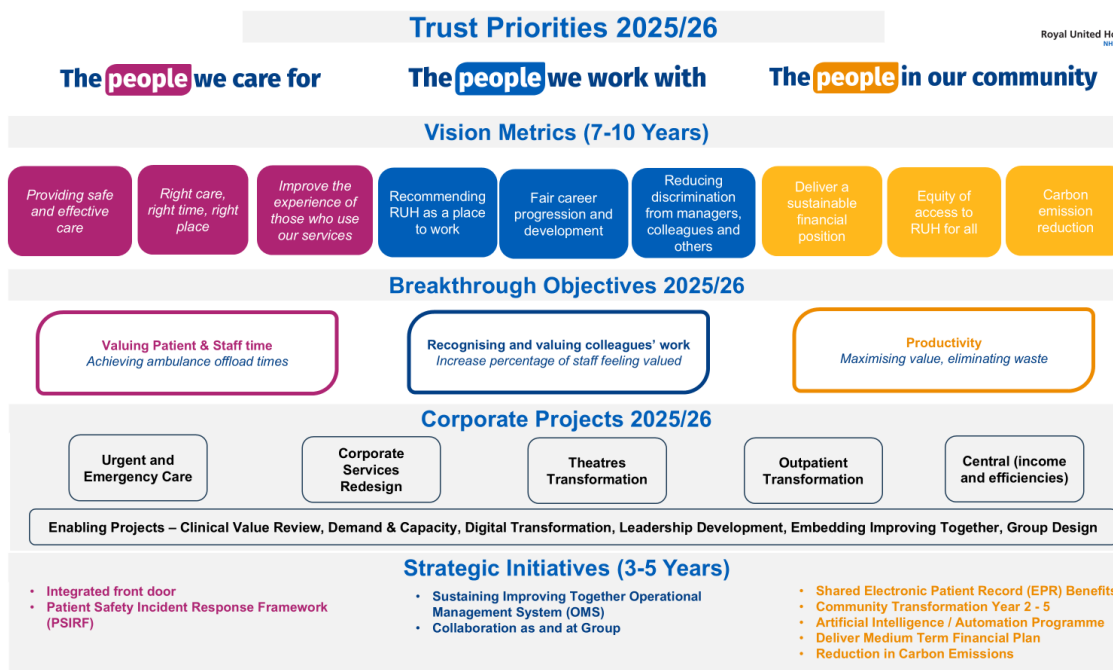


Figure 2: Trust Strategic Priorities 25/26

1.2 Anchor Organisation

The RUH is one of the biggest employers in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) and the only acute Hospital Trust, the agreement commits us to collaborative action to help the region thrive, including a focus on climate and nature. Through this partnership we renew our commitment to joint work on research and innovation and on initiatives that address climate change and its impacts on health and care within our community.

2. Green Plan Governance

Our Green Plan will be governed for transparency, accountability and delivery. Clear leadership and an annual review are needed to ensure progress against this strategy is delivered consistently and efficiently with new priorities, guidance, technology and other enablers to meet our ambitious net zero emissions target.

A Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC), chaired by the Board-level Net Zero Lead, will coordinate implementation and maintain the Green Plan tracker. The SSC will report quarterly to the Non-Clinical Governance Committee and provide an annual update to the Trust Board. Until the SSC is established, the Estates & Facilities Board will provide interim oversight.

At the time of writing, the SSC is being established. Membership will include executive and clinical leaders, divisional representatives and subject-matter experts (e.g. estates, procurement, pharmacy, digital), alongside existing sustainability working groups such as Green Theatres.

Actions and targets will be monitored through the Green Plan implementation tracker with named owners, baselines, measure and due dates. Divisional and specialty leads will be accountable for delivery, with escalation through established performance routes.

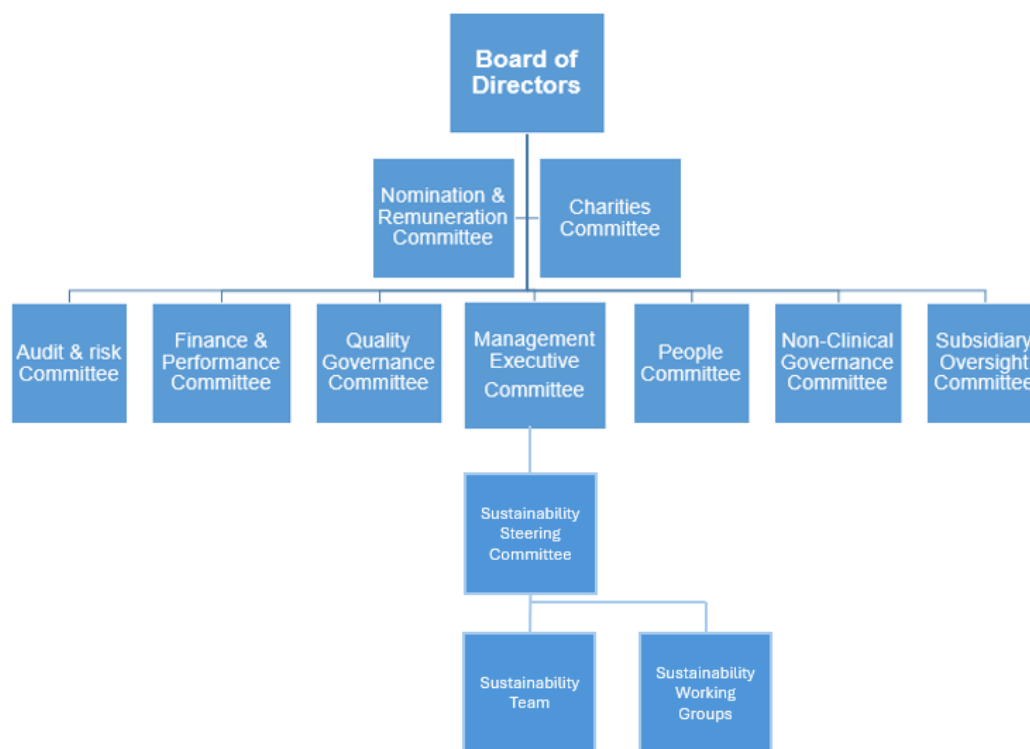


Figure 3 Governance Reporting Structure

The Green Plan will be formally reviewed each year as part of the Trust’s governance cycle. These reviews will assess delivery against identified targets, incorporate new national guidance, and reflect emerging technologies or staff-led initiatives. Outcomes will inform updates to the action plan and ensure alignment with broader Trust strategies and priorities.

Other forms of reporting mechanisms are also in place for example the Task Force on climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) with the aim to promote clear and consistent reporting on climate related financial risks, governance, strategy, metrics and targets.

2.1 Progress Reporting Mechanism

Delivery will be tracked via the implementation tracker and existing data sources (e.g. energy and utilities, waste contractor reports, fleet and travel metrics). Quarterly dashboards will summarise progress, exceptions and risks.

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Some sustainability indicators are already reported on a national level and tracked through a range of systems, such as the Greener NHS Dashboard and ERIC data. This includes key indicators such as anaesthetic gases, inhalers and building energy use.

Implementation over 2025 – 28 will prioritise high-impact, feasible actions, sequencing estates investments alongside clinical and operational change. Where helpful, the NHS Green Plan Support Tool will be used to structure metrics and reporting. Carbon offsetting is not within scope of this report and not a mechanism in which we will rely upon to achieve our sustainability targets

3. Target Alignment

In 2020 the Trust aligned its environmental commitments with BANES and other anchor institutions. This was limited to: Achieving Carbon Net Zero for scopes 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 and outlined in the sustainable Development management Plan (September 2020).

Significant progress and development have been made. However, since these targets were set it has become increasingly clear that the level of investment required in such a short timeframe to achieve these commitments far outweighs the possible investment opportunity from within the NHS, central government funding as well as permissible private sector investment. Local city-wide electrical infrastructure limitations are also impactful towards our decarbonisation journey where the installation of low carbon technologies such as heat pumps require large scale electrical upgrades.

Furthermore, in 2024 the Trust formalised a partnership with Salsbury Foundation Trust and Great Western Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, forming the BSW Hospital Group. Both these Trusts already have aligned their carbon reduction commitments to that of NHS England. These are:

1. To be Net Zero Carbon by 2040 for our NHS Carbon Footprint, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032.
2. To be Net Zero Carbon by 2045 for our NHS Carbon Footprint Plus, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039.
3. Eliminate desflurane use except where clinical essential by 2030.
4. All new vehicles owned and leased will be Zero Emissions (excluding ambulances) by 2027
5. All vehicles owned and leased will be Zero emissions (excluding ambulances). All non-emergency patient transport services will be undertaken in zero emission vehicles by 2035

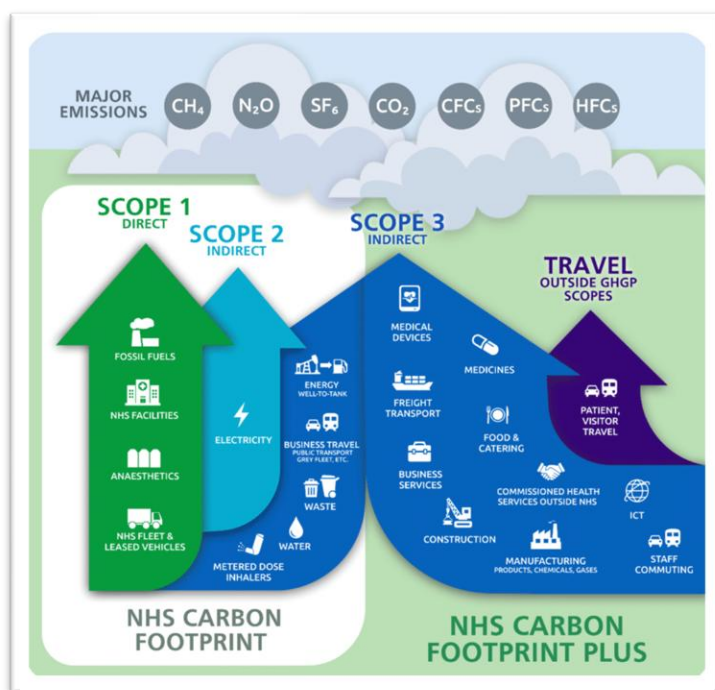


Figure 4: NHS Carbon Footprint

Recognising the challenges above, the RUH is realigning its carbon reduction targets to that of both the BSW Hospitals Group and wider NHS England. Our updated targets as outlined above reflects both the complexity of decarbonising the healthcare estate and our ongoing commitment to sustainability. This ensures a much more realistic yet ambitious approach to decarbonisation, enabling the BSW Hospitals Group to work more cohesively in its approach.

4. Progress to date

The Trusts Scope 1 and 2 emissions have been monitored as much as practical since 2017/18 where granularity and data sources have improved year-on-year. Work is continuously underway to improve existing reporting mechanisms, form of data collection as well as improved investigations into Scope 3 emissions. We acknowledge that the more emission sources we uncover with improved reporting, will likely result in our total emissions rising before they fall.

This helps to identify the significant challenge to achieve carbon reduction in the healthcare sector, this position isn't unique to the Trust and will be experienced by the whole NHS, significant investment is required to make large reductions across Scopes 1,2 and 3.

While Scope 1 and 2 emissions are more readily measurable and have been the primary focus of our carbon reduction efforts to date, we recognise that Scope 3 emissions, those arising from our supply chain, procurement, staff commuting,

patient travel, and waste represent a substantial share of our footprint. The Trust is committed to improving the granularity and accuracy of Scope 3 data collection over the course of this Green Plan. We will work collaboratively with suppliers, system partners, and national programmes to enhance reporting mechanisms, identify high-impact areas, and embed sustainability criteria into procurement and operational decisions. As data quality improves, we will refine our strategies to ensure that Scope 3 emissions are effectively addressed as part of our journey to net zero.

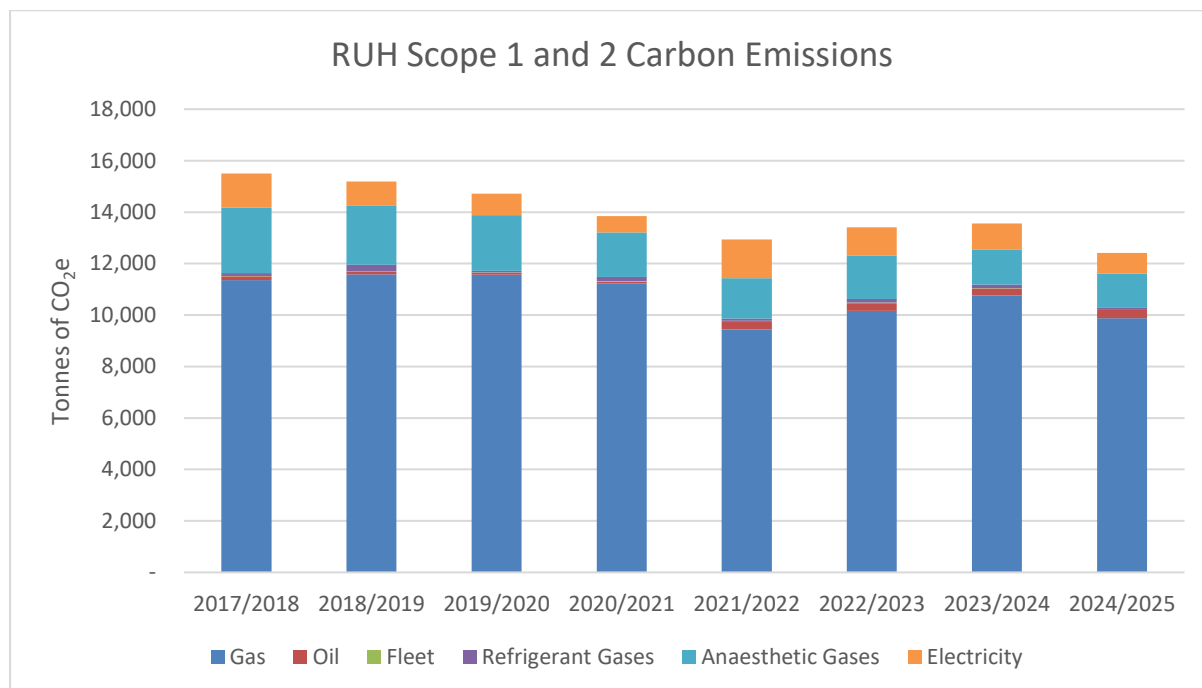


Figure 5: RUH Carbon Emissions (Scope 1 and 2)

5. 2025 Green plan areas of focus

In line with NHS England’s Green Plan framework, we have structured this plan around the recommended nine areas of focus, which ensure action across both clinical and non-clinical domains. In addition, recognising the health and wellbeing value of the natural environment as well as our site geography, we have introduced an additional area of focus: Green Spaces and Biodiversity.

Improving Together methodologies including A3 thinking will be utilised to encourage collaboration, root cause analysis and continuous improvement. Progress will be monitored through a Green Plan implementation tracker, quarterly reports and annual assurance to hold each focus area accountable for progress. The tracker will identify actions, timelines, performance metrics, and responsible leads. This tracker will be reported up to E&F board (and once established, the Sustainability Steering Committee) to support decision making at both operational and strategic levels. Progress will also be monitored through BSW Hospitals Group collaboration and progress reporting.

5.1 Workforce and System Leadership

NHS staff overwhelmingly support greener policies with 87% of them supporting the NHS's net zero ambition (NHS England 2021), therefore it is important for the Trust to embed sustainability into everyday practices which requires a collective commitment from leaders, staff, and system partners across BANES and the wider NHS. Through embedding sustainability into every day decision making, quality improvement and business case investments, we create a momentum for change across RUH.

We will continue to grow capability in “green skills” across all parts of the Trust. All staff will have access to core sustainability training (including Building a Net Zero NHS e-learning), with uptake targets agreed annually. We will expand induction content, offer role-specific modules, and support teams to understand the links between climate, care quality and health outcome.

We work with partners across the BSW Hospitals Group, Greener NHS and local organisations (including the Student Community Partnership) on shared priorities such as climate adaptation planning and sustainable travel. These networks help maintain focus on the Net Zero ambition and enable local learning and spread of good practice.

2024 saw the first SusQI program where sustainable healthcare practices were encouraged to partake in a Green Team competition. These included [eliminating single use plastics in catering](#) and [reducing linen used in endoscopy](#), this has demonstrated that sustainability can become a core consideration across all departments.

Our Sustainability Champion Network brings together staff from every directorate to drive change, promote sustainability and share learning. We will continue to support, expand and recognise this network, ensuring representation from all divisions and enabling protected time where possible to inspire action across the Trust

Progress in Action

- Over 100 sustainability champions and several clinical working groups for example green theatres Group.
- Shared BSW Hospitals Group Sustainability engagement platform and app
- Sustainability criteria added to the Ward Accreditation
- Continual engagement with Student Community Partnership with local anchor institutions including two local universities and local council working across city wide sustainability initiatives including travel and transport, local energy infrastructure and system working.
- Green team competition completed across the Trust with representation from Anaesthetics, Catering, Radiotherapy, Endoscopy and Biologics Pharmacy.

Action plan

Action / Goal	Measurement	Delivery
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Embed sustainability values into staff induction process	% increase number of induction sections with sustainability included	2026
Senior leadership and Board specific training for Net Zero awareness/Carbon Literacy	% of Executive Director and leadership roles completed	2028
Encourage sustainability training programmes to teams as outlined in the 'Greener NHS Training Hub'	Staff completion rates reported annually; target \geq %	Annual
Sustainability focused QI projects	Number of QI projects completed focusing on sustainability with estimated Co2e benefits recorded	Annual
Expand sustainability champions network, with lead from each directorate	Membership of sustainability champions network group	2028
Keep updated the intranet page about the Green Plan and Sustainability information	Intranet page number of updates a year	Annual
Staff engage on sustainability programmes	Publish an annual comms plan; monthly bulletin; host an annual Sustainability Day event	Annually
Include sustainability in all future job descriptions	Job description template to be updated and mandated for use.	2028
Begin to embed sustainability in every day decision making, quality improvement and business case investment templates	Sustainability metrics and impact assessment implemented for major business case decision	2028

5.2 Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is an integral part of the future of the NHS and one of the three focus areas of the new NHS 10 Year Plan. Digital will provide safer and more efficient models of care by leveraging shared platforms and digital services whilst reducing duplication, paper and travel needs.

RUH will align with the NHS digital strategy across the BSW Hospitals Group focusing on a single Electronic Patient Record (EPR), paper-light workflows, virtual services, data-driven improvement and energy-efficient infrastructure. This will allow us to be more agile and adaptive in our fast-paced environment.

By utilising digital services, tools, apps and AI we can consolidate systems, design digital pathways that reduce unnecessary visits. We also need to acknowledge that using Digital technology produces carbon emissions. We need to ensure that digital solutions are introduced sustainably and equitably, we can do this by optimising device power use and lifecycle and migrate appropriate workloads to efficient cloud services. All changes will also meet information governance, cyber security and clinical-safety standards, with inclusive design to avoid digital exclusion.

Progress in Action

- HALO self-service portal launched for digital and HR services, providing a single front door and faster resolution.
- Significant progress toward a single EPR, with foundations in place for Trust-wide deployment.
- Computers on Wheels (COWs) enabled on all wards, giving real-time access to records and reducing paper.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Completion of electronic patient record system	Migration to single electronic record system across BSW with legacy systems decommissioned	2026
Implementation of PC power management to non-clinical PCs	Policies applied to % of non-clinical PCs/ laptops with verified energy savings	2026
Energy efficient device refresh (workstations and laptops)	30% of all workstations and laptops measured through asset register	2026
Investigating deployment of AI to improve existing processes	Number of processes successfully integrating AI	2028
Digitalisation of more paper-based processes and systems	Number of systems moved from paper based processed and estimated amount of carbon saved	Annual
Circular IT and end of life management	30% of workstations and laptops WEEE compliant disposal records	2028
Promoting good data hygiene by reducing archived and duplication of documents to reduce IT hosting carbon footprint	Number of initiatives communicated to staff	Annual
Migrate appropriate on premises workloads to efficient cloud systems	Number of systems migrated to cloud	2028

Improve efficiency of hosted data centre	Number of initiatives to improve efficiency	2027
Vendor cloud migration for data-heavy services (e.g., PACS, pathology)	Number of systems migrated to supplier/vendor cloud servers	2027

5.3 Estates and Facilities

The physical estate is responsible for a large proportion of the NHS Carbon footprint. Mainly resulting emissions are from fossil fuel heating making up a large proportion of scope 1 emissions. A Heat Decarbonisation plan was developed in 2022 for the Combe Park Site aiming to address the required steps to decarbonise heating infrastructure and migrating towards low carbon equivalent systems.

Along side these major plant upgrades, sustainable design practices, smaller scale projects, behaviour change, smart monitoring and controls and targeted efficiencies will deliver early savings and improve comfort for patients and staff. New developments will be compliant with the NHS Net Zero Buildings Standards and BREEAM ensuring whole life carbon efficiency and resilience are designed in from the outset.

Progress in Action

- Dyson Cancer Centre (2024) opened with high-performance fabric, on-site renewable generation and extensive smart monitoring/controls; certified BREEAM Excellent.
- Two-year Heat Decarbonisation Programme mobilised with a £21m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant to deliver priority works and enabling infrastructure.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
All new developments align with NHS Net Zero building strategy	Compliance with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard (NZBS) evidenced at RIBA 2/3/4, including TM54 operational energy modelling, whole-life carbon assessment, and a post-occupancy evaluation plan. Target BREEAM Excellent (or higher where feasible).	Annual
Deliver PSDS funded heat decarbonisation programme	Successful delivery of full project scope and reported emissions saving	2026 and annual monitoring
Targeted sustainable retrofitting of the estate	Number of retrofit programs successfully implementing sustainability measures	Annual

Removal of all oil heating systems as a primary source	Successful removal of last oil boiler from Combe Park site	2028
Increase percentage of onsite renewable energy generation	% of energy (kWh) of onsite renewable electricity generation	Annual
Reduce reliance on fossil fuel heating	Removal of fossil fuel heating plant % amount of heat provided through non fossil fuel sources such as heat pumps	Annual
Improve thermal performance of inefficient building fabric	Number of projects addressing thermal performance	Annual
Increase proportion of LED lighting	Number of LED lights installed	Annual
Sub metering and BMS analytics	Increasing quantity of sub metering and BMS coverage monitoring high energy use systems	Annual

5.4 Waste management

Waste generated by healthcare activities contributes significantly to the NHS’s environmental footprint, accounting for up to 30% of total carbon emissions. The RUH is committed to transforming our waste management practices in line with the NHS Clinical Waste Strategy and broader Net Zero goals focusing on segregation, reuse and a circular approach.

We are actively working to increase recycling rates which stands at 16% ongoing efforts include staff engagement, clearer signage and improved bin infrastructure. This together with initiatives such as 20/20/60 where we are targeting 20% of waste to be correctly classified as clinical, 20% offensive and 60% domestic will bolster our achievements in sustainable waste segregation.

Progress in Action

- Increased number of paperless systems and processes.
- Re distribution of waste paint products to local charity organisation.
- BSW Hospital Group wide waste contract review to drive improved performance and value.
- New endoscope washing equipment installed, reducing single-use items and improving processing efficiency.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Implement reusable sharps containers Trust-wide.	% clinical areas with reusable sharps bins	2027

	Volume of sharps collected in reusable bins	
20:20:60 waste segregation with quarterly ward audits	Quarterly waste audits on wards	2026
Gap analysis to identify learning from other Trusts on auditing and reporting requirements	New processes implemented	2027
Digitalisation of waste auditing and reporting	Number of ward / departmental segregation audits completed digitally	2026
Roll out food-waste collection to all remaining staff/office areas	Increase number of areas covered for food waste collection	2026
Launch repair & reuse scheme (“repair shop”) for equipment/uniforms/furniture where safe	Successful launch of scheme and number of items or tonnes of waste avoided	2028
Increase engagement for improved recycling uptake	Increase amount of recycling (% overall waste) working towards 20/20/60	Annual
Continual support of clinical and pharmaceutical sustainable waste transformation	Number of projects supported, and amount of waste redirected from landfill or recycled appropriately	Annual

5.5 Food and Nutrition

Food and catering services are estimated to contribute around 6% of the NHS’s total carbon footprint, with impacts arising from food production, transportation, preparation and waste. The RUH are embedding sustainability into every aspect of our food services from sourcing and preparation to waste reduction all whilst supporting the health and wellbeing of patients, staff, and visitors.

We are reshaping menus to lower environmental impact without compromising nutrition or choice increasing plant-forward options and reducing the volume of carbon-intensive red meat. Vegetarian and vegan options are placed prominently on patient and retail menus to increase visibility and uptake. We will continue to cater for individual dietary, cultural, religious and medical needs, and our retail offer will reflect the community’s diversity.

Through active collaboration with our food procurement partners, RUH has maintained a strong commitment to local sourcing, with approximately 80% of suppliers located within a 60-mile radius of the hospital. This approach not only reduces food miles and associated emissions but also strengthens ties with the

regional economy and ensures fresher, seasonal produce for our catering services. Our procurement partner's dedication to sustainable practices was nationally recognised with the award for Best Sustainable Food Procurement Company in 2024, reinforcing the quality and environmental integrity of our supply chain.

Progress in Action

- Trust-wide tablet-based patient meal ordering rolled out improving efficiency, reduced paper, better data on over-production and waste.
- Bring your own container discount
- 50/50 split of vegetarian/vegan and meat options introduced in retail outlets.
- Seasonal menu changes implemented.
- Patient kitchen refurbishment (2025): all gas appliances removed, following successful all-electric transition in retail kitchens in 2024.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Maintain a ≥50/50 split of vegetarian and vegan meals compared to meat meals in retail outlets	Review of menu split, and sales data recorded	Annual
Continue to change patient menu twice a year in conjunction with seasonality championing healthy and low carbon choices	Review of menu following dietitian sign off	Annual
Continue to change retail menus four times a year in conjunction with seasonality championing healthy and low carbon choices	Review of menu and sales data recorded	Annual
Implement increased portion controls for patient meals as proposed by catering dietitian recommendations	New serving guidelines and utensils implemented	2026
Deploy reusable cup scheme in all Trust catering outlets	Number of and % reusable cups and decrease number of disposal cups	2027
Deploy reusable takeaway containers in all Trust catering outlets	Number of and % reusable containers and decrease number of disposal containers	2028
Achieve bronze accreditation with 'Food for Life'	Accreditation achieved	2027
Achieve Silver accreditation with 'Food for Life'	Accreditation achieved	2029
Reduce amount of food waste from catering outlets and patient kitchens by 20%	% reduction	Annual

Continual food waste audits across all wards and training with ward staff	Number of audits completed each year and correlation of results	Annual
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5.6 Green spaces and Biodiversity

Alongside the core Green Plan requirements, RUH is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural environment across our 52-acre Combe Park site because it supports patient recovery, staff wellbeing and climate resilience (shade and cooling, rainwater management, air quality and habitat).

Access to attractive, accessible green space offers places for rest and reflection for patients, visitors and staff, and can help during times of stress or illness. Our programme will improve the quality and accessibility of outdoor spaces, increase habitat diversity and tree canopy, and integrate nature-based solutions into estate planning. Trees across the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order, and we will maintain and add to this natural asset.

Progress in Action

- Continual successful NHS Forest implementation has seen the planting of over 100 trees in recent years through staff engagement activities.
- Increased collaboration with local authorities arboriculturists has seen a 10% increase in tree canopy cover since 2019.
- Biodiversity Plan created in conjunction with NHS Forest.
- Wellbeing garden for patients, visitors and staff based on forest garden principals incorporating the existing Lansdown Courtyard Pond area.
- Bird boxes installed in 2023.
- Development of guided tree walk around the site, in conjunction Bath Urban Treescape to encourage site awareness and wellness for staff, patients and visitors.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
BioBlitz Survey as an established baseline	Number of different species identified and mapped	2028 + Annual
Increase number of biodiversity features	Number of new initiatives or features	2028
Grounds contractor to use electric vehicles and tools only	Procurement of new contract utilising 100% handheld tools to be electric battery powered. Electric or HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable	2028

	Oil) to be used for larger equipment and vehicles	
Continue working with our charity and community partners on green space design and use.	Number of charity volunteers and changes made	Annual
Increase accessibility of outside spaces so they can be enjoyed by all patients and staff.	Number of improvements made to outside spaces	2027
Continue engagement with external funding opportunities to maximise opportunity for biodiversity development onsite	Number of successful funding applications	Annual

5.7 Medicines and Medical Gases

Medicines and medical gases are essential to the delivery of healthcare, but they also represent a significant source of carbon emissions. It is estimated that this is approximately 25% of the NHS carbon footprint.

We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of medicines and gases through a combination of sustainable procurement, low-carbon alternatives, and preventative healthcare approaches. Our focus is to maintain zero desflurane, eliminate nitrox oxide losses (both of which are anaesthetic gases), support greener inhalers where clinically appropriate and reduce medical waste through better prescribing, returns and packaging.

Progress in Action

- Decommissioned nitrous oxide manifolds in 2024 and Desflurane has not been used since 2023.
- Ward deliveries for medicines and prescriptions made in reusable bags
- Medication return scheme back to pharmacy department including inhalers back into stock.
- Trust prescribing follows BSW guidance of which propose green inhalers where clinically appropriate, including dry powder inhalers.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Achieve bronze accreditation for Greener Pharmacy	Bronze achieved	2026
Maintain zero desflurane use and to only be used where clinically required	Quantity delivered or used	Annual
Investigate trial for waste segregation/ recycling / take back scheme for inhalers	Quantity of inhalers recycled	2027

Work with supply chain on packaging circular economy initiatives	Contracts with circular economy in use and number of initiatives targeting packaging recyclability	2028
Promote sustainable inhalers for patients where clinically appropriate	Increase of sustainable inhaler use	2027
Nitrous oxide stewardship (loss prevention & restricted use)	Nitrous Oxide to only be used where clinically needed. Records for deliveries and leak checks	Annual

5.8 Net Zero Clinical Transformation

As part of our commitment to the NHS’s Net Zero ambition, the RUH is aligning its clinical transformation strategy with the national direction set out in the 2025 NHS 10-Year Plan. Two key shifts outlined as moving care from hospitals to the community and prioritising prevention over treatment, these will be central to our approach.

Decentralising care through the development of our care closer to home offering reduces the need for carbon-intensive hospital visits. By expanding community-based diagnostics, rehabilitation, and virtual care pathways, we aim to lower patient travel emissions and reduce reliance on acute hospital infrastructure, during the service redesigns, sustainability will be a key consideration and needs to be embedded throughout, for example sustainability impact assessments as part of both business continuity and service redesign planning.

We are investigating the inclusion of preventative care models into clinical pathways, targeting early intervention and proactive management of long-term conditions. This not only improves patient outcomes but also reduces the environmental footprint associated with high-intensity treatments and emergency admissions.

By shifting the focus from reactive to proactive care, we are enabling a more sustainable, lower-carbon health system one that supports our local populations health while reducing demand on high-carbon intensive hospital services.

Progress in Action

- Theatre sustainability working group implementing key initiatives such:
 - Reusable operating hats
 - Rub don’t scrub campaign to reduce water use
 - Segregation of clinical (tiger bag) and infectious waste (orange bag)
 - Repair of equipment to prevent buying new
 - Ethyl Chloride replaced where appropriate with cold metal sticks

- Successful trial of reusable drapes and gowns in Trauma Assessment Unit.
- Sustainability criteria added to the Ward Accreditation scheme
- Gloves off campaign launched in 2024
- Shift towards digital appointment letters in 2024
- Diabetes specialist nurse hot line launched to reduce ED attendances
- Just in case medication and steroids issued to thyroid and parathyroid patients to reduce ED attendances

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Increase offering of virtual or digital pathways where clinically appropriate, target of 25%	Number of virtual and digital appointments held each year	Annual
Electronic prescribing system, patient prescriptions to be sent to local pharmacy instead of coming to site for collection will also stop courier deliveries to home address	Successful launch of electronic prescribing system	2026
Achieve bronze accreditation - Green ED by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine	Successfully achieve accreditation	2028
Continue to explore the permanent roll out of reusable drapes and gowns following a successful trial in TAU	Contract in place for reusable drapes and gowns. Less disposable items bought	2027
Increase use of digital triage process	Number of specialties using electronic system	Annual
Continue to complete quality improvement projects focusing on clinical sustainability within SusQI methodology.	Number of sustainable QI projects implemented	Annual
Launch preconception care advice for diabetes patients to reduce future medical interventions	Successful launch of service	2027

5.9 Supply Chain and Procurement

A sustainable supply chain and procurement strategy are essential for reducing the environmental impact of healthcare operations. The Trust recognises that, while it does not have direct control over all supply chain emissions, it plays a vital role in influencing change through responsible purchasing and supplier engagement. By prioritising ethical sourcing, low-carbon alternatives, and circular economy principles, we can minimise waste, lower emissions, and enhance resource efficiency.

The NHS leverages its purchasing power to collaborate with suppliers and drive innovation. Its long-term ambition is to cease purchasing from suppliers who are not aligned with net zero goals within the next decade. All NHS procurement processes now include a minimum 10% weighting for net zero and social value considerations. For contracts exceeding £5 million annually, suppliers are required to submit a Carbon Reduction Plan covering at least their UK Scope 1 and 2 emissions, along with a portion of their Scope 3 emissions.

The Trust is committed to embedding sustainability into procurement decisions across all services and departments. This ensures that the products and services we use align with our commitment to a net-zero future and support high-quality patient care while reducing environmental impact. Through collaboration with suppliers, innovation, and responsible purchasing, we aim to create a greener, more resilient healthcare system that benefits both people and the planet.

In support of this, the Trust is actively working to minimise single-use medical devices and consumables by promoting reuse where clinically appropriate.

As part of our ethical procurement approach, the Trust is also committed to eradicating modern slavery from its supply chains. We expect all suppliers to uphold the highest standards of human rights and labour practices, and we conduct due diligence to ensure transparency and accountability. This includes compliance with the Modern Slavery Act and active monitoring of supply chain risks, particularly in high-risk sectors and geographies. Our goal is to ensure that the goods and services we procure are not only sustainable and low carbon, but also free from exploitation and harm.

Progress in Action

- Forced labour policy for solar PV project
- Adoption of Evergreen Supplier Framework as a mechanism to benchmark suppliers
- Social value included in all contract specifications >£5m.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Embed NHS Net Zero supplier roadmap requirements into all relevant procurements and ensure they are monitored via key performance indicators	Number of successfully implemented schemes	Annual
Reduce reliance on single use products in line with Circular Economy	Number of items moved away from single use	Annual

Healthcare Alliance principles		
Continual monitoring of quantified delivery of social value through tendering	Year on year reporting	Annual
Suppliers Day for local SME suppliers	Successful event during 2025	2026
Encourage suppliers to go beyond minimum requirements and engage with the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment. Focusing on Tier 1 suppliers	45% of top 100 suppliers to BSW on framework baseline Mar 25	2027
Encourage suppliers' innovation in tenders' leadings towards sustainability initiatives and carbon reduction	Number of schemes driving innovation through tenders	2027

5.10 Travel and Transport

Reducing travel and transport emissions is a crucial part of achieving a Net Zero NHS, whilst also positively addressing local air quality and public health. Both the RUH and NHS England has ambitious targets to transitioning towards a Net Zero fleet, emergency and patient transport vehicles. Collaborating with South West Ambulance Services, Bath and North East Somerset, local anchor institutions and other local and national organisations will be key to achieving these targets.

To specifically target staff commuting emissions the Trust offers a range of sustainable travel initiatives to its staff including:

- Cycle-to-Work scheme with an upper limit of £4,000 enabling more staff to access Electric Bikes.
- E bike hire scheme
- Blue light discount for First Buses
- EV Salary Sacrifice limited to fully electric or plug in hybrid vehicles only.
- Flexible home working arrangements have been encouraged where feasible

The RHU works constantly with the local authority and bus service providers to ensure that both patient and staff needs are met through a regular and on time bus service.

Work is required to understand existing travel emissions baseline datasets whereby more prominent targets can then be developed, utilising modal-shift methodologies.

Progress in Action

- Provision of 6 E bikes for staff to hire as a trial before buying their own
- Several annual sustainable travel roadshows to showcase and demonstrate both active and sustainable travel options
- 3 electric vans added to the fleet
- Air quality monitoring onsite
- Since 2018 540 members of staff have used the Cycle to Work salary sacrifice scheme with over 100 E- bikes ordered since 2019
- In 2022 we launched the car sharing initiative Join My Journey
- 34 electric vehicles were delivered to staff in 2024/25, with a further 7 on order via the electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Improve monitoring of air quality with digital air quality sensors	Successful implementation of new sensor technology in pollution hot spots	2026 with annual reporting
Reduce staff travel emissions by 50% by 2033	Improved reported emissions of staff commuting	2028+
Review EV charging infrastructure against NHSE guidelines for NHS Fleet Vehicles	Number of EV chargers installed compared to number of Electric vehicles in our fleet	Annual
Increase staff engagement with sustainable travel initiatives	Staff travel surveys Calendar of events throughout the year	Annual
Integrate sustainable travel into infrastructure planning and collaborate with the local authority	Number of capital projects positively improving sustainable travel infrastructure	Annual
All new vehicles owned and leased will be Zero Emissions (excluding ambulances) by 2027 Leveraging the NHSE Fleet Review Tool	% of owned and leased fleet that is ultra-low emissions vehicles or zero emission vehicles Reduction in fleet emissions	2027
All vehicles owned and leased will be Zero emissions (excluding ambulances). All non-emergency patient transport services will be undertaken in zero emission vehicles by 2035	% of owned and leased fleet that is ultra-low emissions vehicles or zero emission vehicles Reduction in fleet emissions	2035

Refreshed sustainable travel plan	Completion of new sustainable staff travel plan	2026
Increase accessibility of cycle scheme to more staff bands	Improved uptake	2027
Increase uptake of sustainable travel salary sacrifice schemes	Number of uptakes in year	Annual

5.11 Climate Adaptation

Climate change threatens the day-to-day operation and business continuity of the Trust. Climate change will inevitably impact many aspects of life from building and road infrastructure to public health. Climate change adaptation is taking a proactive approach for example making sure our estate is well equipped to deal with climate related challenges and risks for example increased flooding or subsidence and overheating. The NHS must adapt to minimise disruption to business continuity and healthcare services by acting to address these risks urgently.

BSW Hospitals Group carried out several Climate Adaptation workshops in 2024 with key stakeholders across all three acute Trusts. This focuses on the site-specific actions required to address the risks identified, a full Climate Risk and Adaptation report has subsequently been published.

Progress in Action

- Scenario planning with Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response team.
- BSW Hospitals Group Climate Adaptation Plan and associated risk assessment developed in 2025
- Adaptation leads have been identified to help coordinate climate resilience activity and ensure climate risks are considered across key service areas.
- Climate change is included, alongside sustainability, within the Board Assurance Framework listed as a strategic risk.

Action plan

Action	Measurement	Delivery
Establish a climate adaptation working group that reports into the sustainability steering committee and nonclinical governance committee. With the identification of a named Adaptation Lead.	Successful establishment of working group with tangible actions identified	2026

Continue to actively monitor Climate Adaptation on the corporate risk Register	Comply with adaptation action plan inline with NHS standards for Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response team	2027
Impacts of climate change to be factored into key infrastructural decision including new or relocating patient facilities	BREEAM standards to be addressed for all new builds including green spaces, enhanced sustainable urban drainage and passive cooling designs.	Annual
Continuously improve upon actions within the Climate Adaptation Action Plan	Number of items achieved annually	Annual
Directly address key flood risks identified in the BSW Hospitals Group climate adaptation plan	Mitigation measures implemented to address flooding hotspots	2027
Continue to ensure adequate cascading of weather health alerts and relevant messaging across the organisation, in line with the Government's Adverse Weather and Health Plan.	Number of weather health alerts	Annual

6.0 Glossary of terms

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Definition</u>
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BANES	Bath and North East Somerset
BMS	Building Management System
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
BSW	Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire
COWs	Computers on Wheels
E&F	Estates and Facilities
ED	Emergency Department
EPPR	Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response
EPR	Electronic Patient Record
ERIC	Estates Returns Information Collection
EV	Electric Vehicle
HR	Human Resource
HVO	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
ICS	integrated care system
IT	Information Technology
kWh	Kilowatt Hour
NCGC	Non-Clinical Governance Committee

Net Zero	The balance between the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) that's produced and the amount that's removed from the atmosphere.
NHS	National Health Service
NHS Carbon Footprint	The total sum of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to the National Health Service's activities, encompassing direct and indirect emissions
NHS Carbon Footprint Plus	Emissions that the NHS can influence rather than directly control, encompassing areas like staff commuting, the supply chain
RUH	Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Scope 1	direct greenhouse gas emissions from activities and sources that a company owns or control e.g. fossil fuels, fleet vehicles and Anastatic gas
Scope 2	indirect greenhouse gas emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heat, or cooling that a company consumes, but which are released at the source of production by a third party
Scope 3	indirect greenhouse gas emissions that occur in a company's value chain, both upstream and downstream. E.g. travel, purchasing of goods and waste
SME	Small & Medium Enterprise
SSC	Sustainability Steering Committee
SusQi	sustainable Quality Improvement
TAU	Trauma Assessment Unit
TCFD	Task Force on climate-related Financial Disclosure
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment