

2025

Green Plan 2026-30

WALSALL HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST

Preface

Climate change is now widely recognised as the most significant public health challenge of our time. Its effects—rising respiratory illness, widening health inequalities, and increasing strain on our services—are already evident within our communities. The responsibility to respond falls to all of us, and it is a responsibility that Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is proud to embrace.



The Green Plan 2026–2030 sets out an ambitious and pragmatic strategy for meeting the environmental, regulatory, and social challenges facing our Trust. It is rooted in a clear commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions, in line with NHS England’s targets for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2040, and Scope 3 by 2045. Our aim is to embed sustainability into every aspect of care, ensuring that environmental responsibility becomes integral to our core business—improving health outcomes while safeguarding the future of the communities we serve.

Recent years have seen considerable progress. The near elimination of harmful anaesthetic gases, substantial diversion of domestic waste from landfill, and early adoption of digital and procurement innovations all stand as evidence of what determined collective action can achieve. Yet, there is much more to do. The Green Plan does not shy away from addressing our ongoing challenges—managing the impacts of an expanding estate, modernising ageing infrastructure, and reducing supply chain emissions will require sustained effort, investment, and collaboration.

Delivering on these goals is not the work of one team alone. This Green Plan was developed in partnership with our staff, system partners, and local stakeholders. Together, we have established a robust framework for action: setting clear objectives, measurable targets, and transparent governance. This approach ensures that every decision is informed by evidence, guided by the latest national and international standards, and aligned with the NHS’s wider ambition for a greener, more resilient health service.

Sustainability is not a discrete project, but a guiding principle woven through our organisation’s culture and daily practice. By championing innovation, strengthening collaboration, and supporting our staff to make sustainable choices, we are laying the foundations for lasting change—delivering benefits not only for today’s patients, but for generations to come.

Sincere thanks are owed to all colleagues, partners, and members of our community whose expertise, energy, and commitment have shaped this plan. The journey to net zero will be complex, but by working together, we will create a healthier, fairer, and more sustainable future for all.



Joe Chadwick-Bell

Chief Executive

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

Statement from the Trust Executive Lead for Sustainability

Tackling climate change is one of the defining challenges for the NHS and the communities we serve. At Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, we recognise that the health and wellbeing of our patients, staff, and local residents are inextricably linked to the health of our environment. Our Green Plan 2026–2030 sets out a bold, practical vision for how we will play our part—meeting our responsibilities, improving quality of care, and shaping a healthier, more resilient future.



We have already demonstrated what determined, collective action can achieve. From major reductions in harmful anaesthetic gases and improved waste management to digital innovation and greener ways of working, these achievements are testament to the commitment and expertise of colleagues across the Trust. But we know there is much more to do if we are to achieve our ambition of reaching net zero carbon emissions and building lasting resilience into our services.

This plan is the result of genuine collaboration. Staff from every discipline, system partners, patients, and members of our community have all contributed their insight and energy. Their voices have shaped a strategy that is ambitious but realistic, underpinned by strong governance and transparent reporting. The Green Plan aligns with both local priorities and the wider NHS ambition for sustainability, ensuring that our work supports not only Walsall but also the health system nationally.

Sustainability cannot be the remit of a single team or function. It must become part of our everyday thinking and practice—from the boardroom to the bedside, from estates to digital, and in every interaction with patients and partners. Each of us, in every role, has a vital part to play. By working together and supporting each other, we can accelerate our progress and deliver real, lasting benefits for current and future generations.

As we deliver this Green Plan, we will continue to share our progress, learn from others, and remain open to new ideas and innovation. By putting environmental responsibility at the heart of every decision, we are investing in the long-term health of our communities, our Trust, and the NHS.

My thanks go to all colleagues, patients, partners, and members of the public who have helped shape this plan. Together, we will ensure Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust remains at the forefront of sustainable healthcare—delivering positive change for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Evans', written in a cursive style.

Simon Evans
Executive Lead for Sustainability
Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

Quality information

Prepared by

Janet Smith
Head of
Sustainability

Verified by

Sustainability
Group

Approved by

Simon Evans
Group Deputy
CEO & Chief
Strategy Officer

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorised	Name	Position
V.01	05.06.21	First draft	Janet Smith	Janet Smith	Joint Head of Sustainability – Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
V.05	16.06.25	Revision to incorporate submissions from Estates & Facilities, Pharmacy & PFI	Janet Smith	Janet Smith	Joint Head of Sustainability – Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
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V.07	28.07.2025	Revision to add comments from J. Watkiss, Group Head of Library, Knowledge, and Education Centre Services	Janet Smith	Janet Smith	Joint Head of Sustainability – Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
V.08	29.07.2025	Revision to Estates section timescales and activity alignment with RWT Green Plan with Stew Watson, Group Estates Development Director & Jane Longden, Divisional Director Estates & Facilities	Janet Smith	Janet Smith	Joint Head of Sustainability – Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
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V1.0	16.09.2025	Group Trust Board Approval	Group Trust Board	Sir David Nicholson	Group Chair of the Board

Prepared for:

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

Prepared by:

Janet Smith
Head of Sustainability

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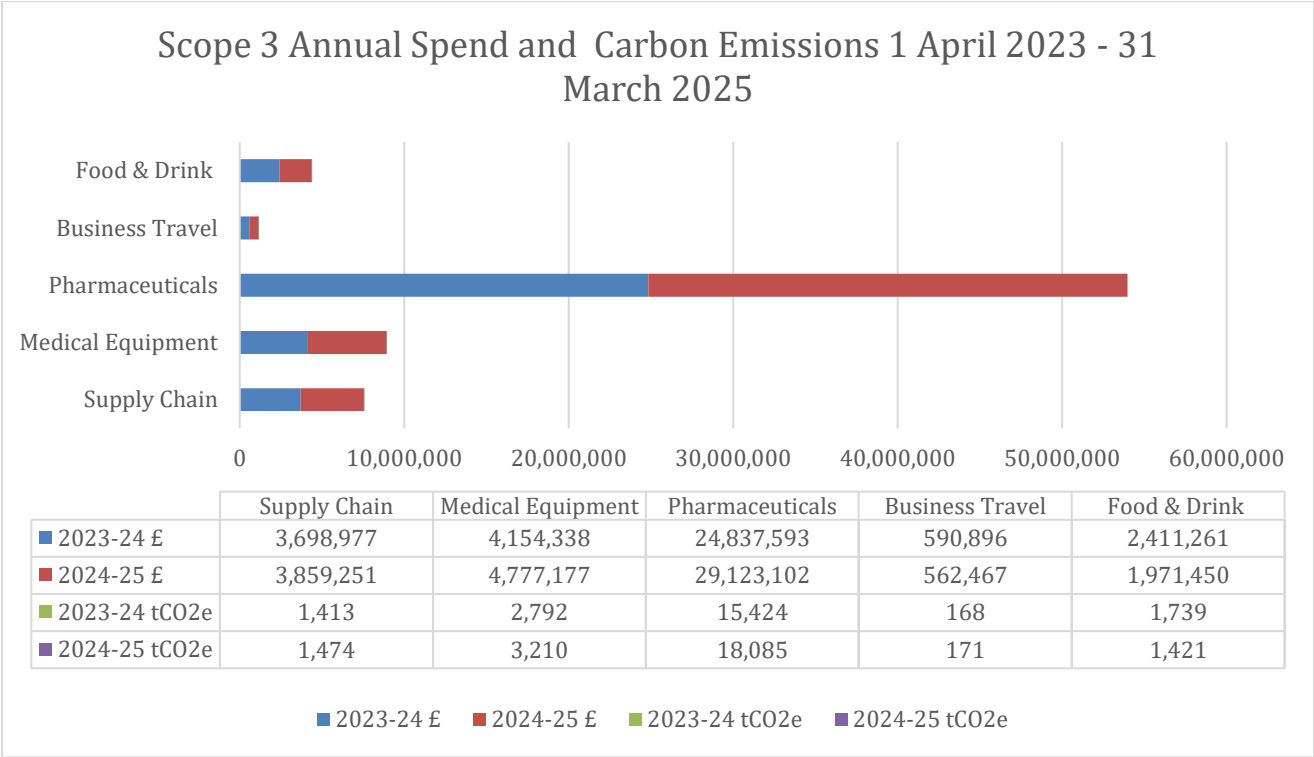
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Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Green Plan (2026–2030)

1. Executive Summary

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust (WHT) is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions in line with NHS England’s targets—net zero for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2040, and Scope 3 by 2045. This Green Plan (2026–2030) sets out a strategic roadmap to reverse the current upward emissions trajectory and embed sustainability across all operational domains.

In 2019–20, the Trust’s total carbon footprint was established at 51,264 tCO₂e. This included emissions from direct sources (Scope 1), purchased energy (Scope 2), and indirect sources such as procurement, travel, and waste (Scope 3). By 2024–25, Scope 1 and 2 emissions had increased by 214 tCO₂e (1.93%), due to a higher than expected rise in oil consumption—from 303 MWh to 1,119 MWh—resulting in oil-related emissions increasing from 97 tCO₂e to 366 tCO₂e. This spike can be associated with a 24.9% expansion of the estate following the opening of the Urgent Care and Emergency Centre. Meanwhile, Scope 3 emissions rose by 13.1%, from 21,535 tCO₂e to 24,362 tCO₂e, driven primarily by increased emissions from pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.



Despite these challenges, the Trust has made measurable progress. Desflurane usage was reduced by 97%, saving 416 tCO₂e, and nitrous oxide emissions fell by 79%, from 688 tCO₂e to 146 tCO₂e. Waste management performance improved significantly, with 98.17% of domestic waste diverted from landfill. The introduction of reusable tourniquets saved 454 kg of clinical waste and delivered cost savings. Electricity-related emissions decreased by 9.01%,

reflecting improved energy efficiency and the Trust's commitment to 100% renewable electricity procurement.

However, the Trust faces persistent risks. These include outdated heating infrastructure, inadequate ventilation in clinical areas, and a lack of electrical resilience. The absence of a completed Heat Decarbonisation Plan and delays in capital investment threaten to lock in fossil fuel dependency. Additionally, the lack of a formal Sustainable Travel Plan and limited Scope 3 monitoring across commissioned services and procurement processes constrain progress and increase the risk of non-compliance with NHS England's Net Zero Supplier Roadmap (NHS England, 2024).

The 2026–2030 Green Plan sets out a clear and strategic approach to reversing the current emissions trajectory and supporting the NHS's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions. It outlines key interventions that not only improve patient care and population health but also reduce health inequalities and address the urgent challenges of climate change and sustainability. For Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, the plan provides a framework for making informed, sustainable investments that enhance efficiency and deliver value for money. The Trust is committed to playing its part in the NHS's collective journey to net zero, building on progress to date and applying lessons learned to drive meaningful change across the health and care system.

The refreshed Green Plan will set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) actions and associated KPIs across all focus areas, underpinned by robust governance and monitoring arrangements. Engagement with key stakeholders, including clinical and operational staff groups, will inform the refresh. The updated Green Plan will prioritise:

- **Workforce & Leadership:** Strengthening sustainability leadership and delivering core and specialist training across the Trust-wide.
- **Net Zero Clinical Transformation:** Appointing a clinical lead and targeting high-impact areas including critical care, perioperative services, mental health, emergency care, diagnostics, and medical pathways.
- **Digital Transformation:** Embedding sustainability in digital service design, IT hardware lifecycle, and hosting practices.
- **Medicines Management:** Advancing the Nitrous Oxide Waste Mitigation Toolkit and promoting low-carbon, high-quality respiratory care.
- **Travel & Transport:** Developing a Sustainable Travel Plan that supports active travel, public transport, and zero-emission vehicles, including options in staff benefit schemes.
- **Estates & Facilities:** Creating a Heat Decarbonisation Plan, expanding onsite renewable energy, and updating the Estates Strategy to align with clinical and net zero Objectives. Investment will focus on critical infrastructure to reduce backlog and enhance resilience.
- **Food & Nutrition:** Measuring food waste and promoting seasonal, healthier, lower-carbon catering options.

- **Waste Management:** Eliminating landfill disposal, improving clinical waste segregation, and achieving compliance with national waste regulations and HTM 07-01 standards.
- **Procurement & Supply Chain:** Embedding sustainability into procurement governance, engaging suppliers through the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment, and reducing Scope 3 emissions through product switching and rationalisation.
- **Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:** Enhancing infrastructure resilience, integrating climate risk into service continuity planning, and aligning with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard and EPRR requirements.

Governance of the Green Plan will be led by the Group Chief Strategy Officer, supported by the Head of Sustainability, Sustainability Group and Clinical Lead for Sustainability. Progress will be monitored through quarterly reporting to the Trust Board and aligned with NHS England’s frameworks, including the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). By aligning operational priorities with environmental responsibility, this Green Plan positions WHT to meet its statutory obligations, enhance climate resilience, and deliver sustainable, high-quality care for the communities it serves.

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust recognises the critical role of environmental sustainability in effective leadership and governance. This Green Plan has been developed in accordance with the expectations set out in the Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) Single Assessment Framework, particularly the “Well-led” domain, which calls on NHS providers to address the health impacts of climate change, reduce their environmental footprint, and support the NHS’s net zero objectives (CQC, 2024). The plan is also informed by the scientific consensus of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which identifies climate change as a significant and escalating threat to public health—intensifying respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, facilitating the spread of infectious diseases, and exacerbating mental health challenges. In response, the Trust has committed to mitigation and adaptation strategies such as resilient infrastructure, sustainable procurement, and climate-informed healthcare planning (IPCC, 2023). Furthermore, the Green Plan aligns with the disclosure principles of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), ensuring that climate-related risks and opportunities are transparently integrated into governance, strategy, risk management, and performance metrics (UK GOV, 2023). By embedding these principles, the Green Plan not only meets regulatory and scientific expectations but also enhances the Trust’s capacity to deliver equitable, high-quality care in an increasingly climate-affected world.

2. About Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust (WHT) was established on 1 April 2011 through the merger of Walsall Hospital Trust and Walsall Community Health. The Trust provides integrated care to approximately 270,000 residents across Walsall, South Staffordshire, and the wider Black Country.

As the sole provider of NHS acute care in Walsall, the Trust delivers inpatient and outpatient services at Walsall Manor Hospital, alongside a wide range of community-based services. These include home-based care, smoking cessation support, drug, and alcohol services, and comprehensive medical, nursing, and therapy care for individuals living with cancer and other serious illnesses.

Walsall Manor Hospital offers the full spectrum of district general hospital services under one roof. A major £170 million redevelopment of the Pleck Road site was completed in 2010, and ongoing upgrades ensure the hospital remains equipped with state-of-the-art operating theatres, treatment areas, and medical equipment. In 2024, the Trust opened a brand-new £36 million Urgent and Emergency Care Centre, replacing the previous facility and significantly enhancing the hospital's capacity to meet increasing patient demand with a modern, fit-for-purpose environment.

The Trust operates across multiple sites, including:

- Walsall Manor Hospital
- 18 non-inpatient sites
- 16 leased sites managed by NHS Property Services

In addition to acute care, the Trust delivers high-quality, friendly, and effective community health services from around 60 locations, including health centres and GP surgeries. These services extend beyond Walsall, with multidisciplinary teams providing rapid response and home-based care, enabling patients with long-term conditions and frail elderly individuals to receive care in their own homes.

The Trust's Palliative Care Centre in Goscote serves as the hub for a wide range of palliative and end-of-life services. Both centre-based and community teams provide expert care for people with serious illnesses, while also supporting their families and carers.

3. Drivers for Change

The imperative for sustainability at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is driven by a convergence of environmental, regulatory, financial, and social factors. These drivers underscore the urgency of embedding sustainability into every aspect of healthcare delivery:

- 3.1. *Climate Emergency*: The NHS has declared climate change a health emergency. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and air pollution are already impacting public health and healthcare delivery.

3.2. *Regulatory Compliance*: NHS England requires all Trusts to achieve net zero emissions for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2040, and Scope 3 by 2045, in line with the NHS England ‘Delivering a Net Zero NHS (NHS England, 2020). This is supported by the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Health and Care Act 2022, embedding sustainability into NHS governance. Trusts must also comply with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard, the Travel and Transport Strategy, and national waste regulations. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) assesses environmental sustainability under its Well-Led framework. Additionally, NHS organisations are expected to align with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), addressing climate risk through four pillars: governance, strategy, risk management, and metrics and targets—reflected in Green Plans and annual reporting.



3.3. *Financial Pressures*: Rising energy costs and inflationary pressures on procurement make energy efficiency and waste reduction essential for financial sustainability.

3.4. *Health Inequalities*: Environmental degradation disproportionately affects vulnerable populations. Sustainable healthcare practices can help reduce health inequalities by improving air quality, access to green spaces, and resilience to climate-related health risks.

3.5. *Workforce Expectations*: Staff increasingly expect their employers to act on climate change. Embedding sustainability supports recruitment, retention, and staff wellbeing.

3.6. *Public Accountability*: Patients and the public expect the NHS to lead by example. Transparent reporting and visible action on sustainability enhance trust and reputation.

These drivers collectively reinforce the Trust’s commitment to delivering high-quality, low-carbon care that meets the needs of current and future generations.

4. Sustainability and the Green Plan

Sustainability is not a standalone initiative but a core principle that underpins the Trust’s strategic vision. The Green Plan (2026–2030) serves as the blueprint for embedding sustainability across all operational domains, ensuring that environmental responsibility is integrated into clinical care, estates management, procurement, and workforce development.

Key principles guiding the Green Plan include:

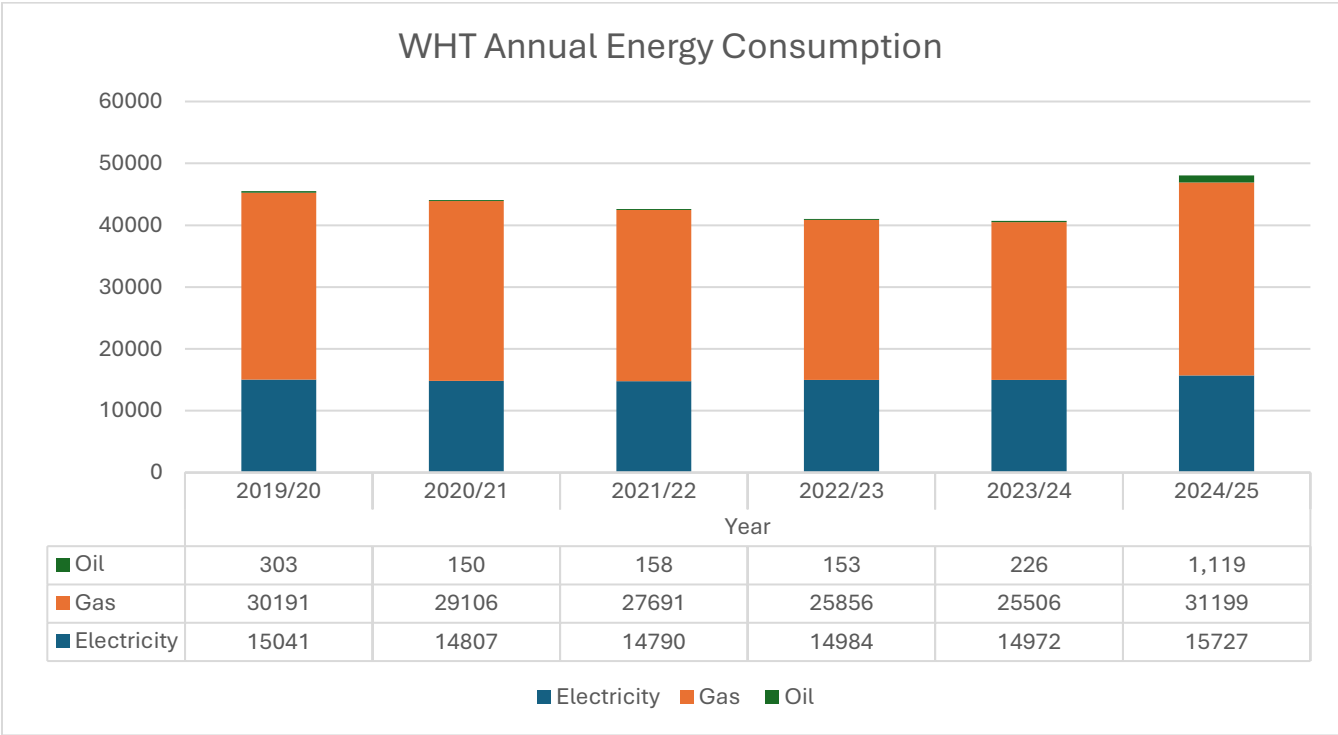
- **Prevention and Resilience**: Designing services that prevent illness and build resilience to climate impacts.
- **Efficiency and Innovation**: Leveraging digital transformation, lean processes, and low-carbon technologies to reduce waste and emissions.

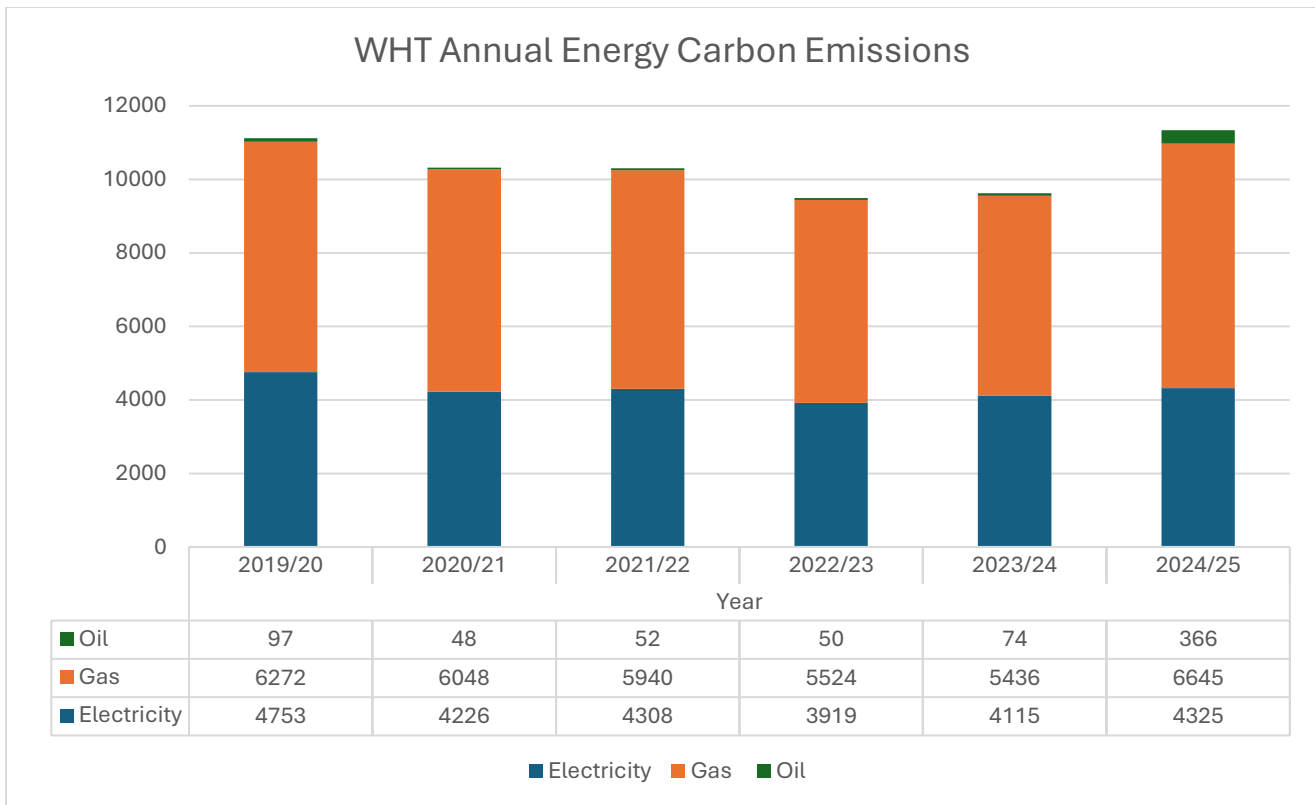
- **Collaboration and Co-Design:** Engaging staff, patients, and partners in co-creating sustainable solutions.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring that sustainability efforts address health inequalities and promote social value.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Setting SMART targets, monitoring progress, and reporting outcomes to stakeholders.

The Green Plan aligns with national frameworks such as the NHS Net Zero Strategy, the ICS Infrastructure Strategy (NHS England, 2024), and the NHS Long Term Plan. It also supports the Trust’s broader mission to deliver safe, effective, and compassionate care while safeguarding the environment for future generations.

5. Estates & Facilities

Estates and Facilities is central to the Trust’s decarbonisation strategy, representing both a significant source of emissions and a critical opportunity for transformation. The Trust’s estate has expanded by 24.9% since 2019–20, primarily due to the commissioning of the Urgent Care and Emergency Centre. This growth has contributed to an 5.51% increase in total energy consumption and a 277% rise in oil-related emissions—from 97 tCO₂e to 366 tCO₂e—between 2019–20 and 2024–25 (refer charts below). While electricity-related emissions have decreased by 9.01% due to improved efficiency and the procurement of 100% renewable electricity, overall, Scope 1 and 2 emissions have increased by 1.93%.





The Trust’s estate also faces critical infrastructure risks, including outdated heating systems, inadequate ventilation in clinical areas, and insufficient electrical resilience (WHT Sustainability Risk Assessment, 2025). These issues not only hinder energy efficiency but also pose risks to patient safety and service continuity, particularly in the face of climate-related events such as extreme heat and power outages.

This section of the Green Plan aligns with the NHS Net Zero Estates Delivery Plan (NHS England, 2025) and the Black Country ICS Infrastructure Strategy (NHS England, 2025). It supports the ICS’s direction of travel by prioritising decarbonisation, resilience, and capital efficiency across the system. The Trust’s actions are designed to contribute to system-wide emissions reductions and to ensure that estate development is consistent with the ICS’s 10-year infrastructure strategy and capital investment priorities. Furthermore, the updated Estates Strategy will integrate recommendations from the most recent Darzi Review and the Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England (DHSC, 2025), ensuring that the estate supports clinical transformation, prevention-focused care, and sustainable healthcare delivery through flexible, digitally enabled, and patient-centred environments (Darzi Review, 2025).

Objective 1: Update the Trust’s Estates Strategy to align with net zero, ICS infrastructure priorities, and the Darzi Review by Q4 2025–26

The Trust will revise its Estates Strategy to reflect its decarbonisation Objectives, climate resilience requirements, and the strategic direction set out in the Black Country ICS Infrastructure Strategy. This update will ensure that all future capital planning is aligned with system-wide sustainability objectives, including the NHS Net Zero Building Standard (NHS

England, 2025). In addition, the revised strategy will integrate the recommendations of the Darzi Review, ensuring that the estate is designed and managed to support clinical transformation, patient-centred care, and sustainable healthcare delivery. Completion is targeted for June 2027.

Objective 2: Complete a Six Facet Condition Survey across the estate by Q1 2027–28

To inform strategic investment and risk management, the Trust will undertake a comprehensive Six Facet Condition Survey, funded through system capital allocations. This survey will assess the estate's physical condition, statutory compliance, space utilisation, functional suitability, quality, and environmental performance. The resulting evidence base will support the prioritisation of decarbonisation and resilience interventions, directly shaping the updated Estates Strategy. The survey will be aligned with the Black Country ICS backlog strategy, with the ICB currently identifying test buildings across the group to ensure the adequacy of data collection for assessing the overall backlog position. WHT has nominated the Modular ward block as a test site, which, if approved, may be completed by Q1 2026–2027; on its current trajectory, this could extend to 2029–2030.

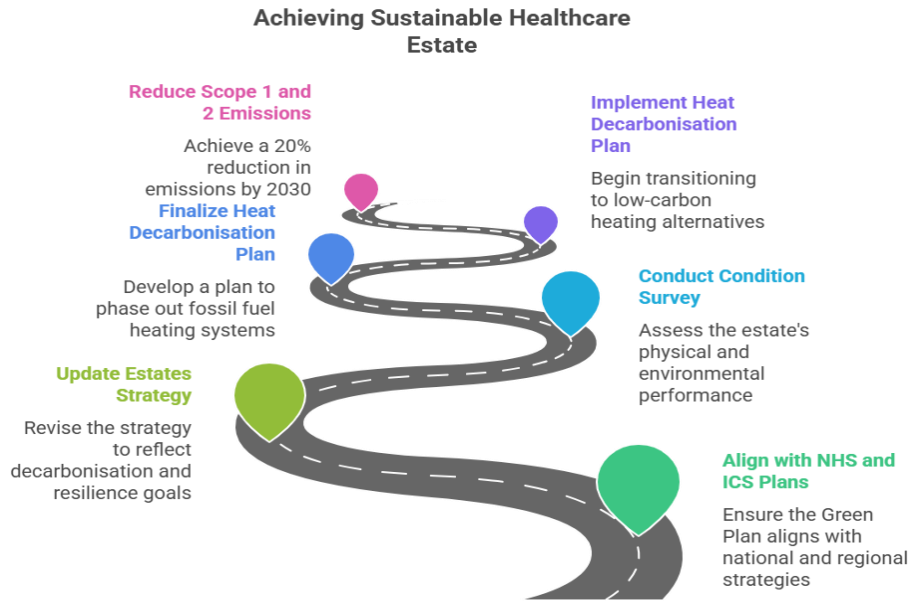
Objective 3: Finalise and implement a Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) by Q4 2026–27

The Trust, with support from the Midlands Net Zero Hub and funding from NHS Midlands, will develop and implement a comprehensive Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) to phase out fossil fuel heating systems, with a particular focus on eliminating oil-based systems. The HDP will outline a phased strategy for transitioning to low-carbon alternatives such as air-source and ground-source heat pumps, or connections to district heating networks. This initiative is driven by the significant rise in emissions associated with oil use and aligns with the objectives of the NHS Net Zero Estates Delivery Plan (NHS England, 2021).

The HDP will be finalised by March 2026, with implementation beginning immediately thereafter. The Trust aims to achieve full removal of oil-fired boilers by 2029, subject to the availability of capital funding. This transition will substantially reduce Scope 1 emissions, enhance energy resilience, and ensure the Trust remains compliant with the carbon emissions limits set for small emitters under the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS).

Objective 4: Reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 20% from 2024–25 levels by March 2030

The Trust aims to reduce its combined Scope 1 and 2 emissions from the 2024–25 baseline of 11,336 tCO₂e to 9,069 tCO₂e by March 2030. This will be achieved through a combination of energy efficiency upgrades, renewable energy generation, and infrastructure modernisation. Interventions will include LED lighting, building fabric improvements, and smart energy management systems. These efforts will be monitored through energy audits and emissions reporting and aligned with the NHS Net Zero Estates Delivery Plan (NHS England, 2021).



Supporting Actions

From 2025 to 2030, the Trust is undertaking a coordinated programme of improvements to build a resilient, energy-efficient, and compliant estate. This work will ensure the updated Estates Strategy reflects net zero targets, ICS infrastructure priorities, and the recommendations of the Darzi Review. The planned actions are intended to strengthen the evidence base for investment, support effective risk management, and help deliver the Heat Decarbonisation Plan. By following this approach, the Trust aims to achieve a 20% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030, with all projects delivered in line with available capital and statutory obligations, supporting the wider Green Plan and Estates Strategy.

Action 1: Upgrade insulation and heating controls across priority buildings from Q4 2026–30

The Trust will complete Phase 3b of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) by Q4 2026–27, delivering targeted energy efficiency upgrades including pipe insulation, LED lighting, and the installation of air-source heat pumps.

To further enhance thermal performance, the Trust will implement a phased programme to upgrade insulation and install modern heating controls across buildings identified as energy inefficient. These measures will reduce heat loss, improve temperature regulation, and contribute to long-term energy savings.

As PSDS Phase 3b represents the final round of external funding secured by the Trust for this scheme, all remaining insulation and heating control upgrades will be financed through internal capital allocations. The Trust will also continue to actively pursue any future government funding opportunities that may arise. Completion of this specific upgrade programme is targeted for 2030.

Action 2: Replace all failing fire and smoke dampers across the estate from Q2 2026–30

To mitigate risks to fire safety and energy efficiency, the Trust will replace all end-of-life fire and smoke dampers identified in the 2024–25 infrastructure survey. Although current dampers remain functional and are predominantly heat-controlled, replacement will be prioritised in accordance with the Trust capital priorities, aligning with potential future refurbishments and capital works. This approach will ensure statutory compliance, enhance airflow control, and support ongoing improvement of the estate. The programme will be delivered through the Estates and Facilities capital programme, with completion targeted for September 2030.

Action 3: Overheating and Cold Weather Risk Assessment 2027-28 and implementation of Mitigation/adaptation solutions in High-Risk Areas from Q2 2027-28

The Trust will undertake a comprehensive assessment of thermal comfort risks across all clinical and patient-facing environments, with particular attention to older buildings that are especially vulnerable to extreme weather conditions, including elevated summer temperatures and cold snaps. This assessment will inform the identification of high-risk areas requiring targeted intervention.

Where risks are identified, appropriate mitigation measures—such as passive cooling, solar shading, improved insulation, and enhancements to natural and mechanical ventilation—will be specified within a refreshed mitigation and adaptation plan. Risk assessments will be completed by December 2026, and the mitigation and adaptation plan will be finalised by March 2027. Implementation of the measures will commence immediately thereafter, with all identified high-risk areas addressed by 2030. The risks assessment will be completed using the NHS Climate Change Risk Assessment Tool.

Action 4: Audit and upgrade ventilation systems in all clinical areas from Q1 2026–30

To enhance indoor air quality and reduce energy inefficiencies, the Trust will undertake a comprehensive audit of ventilation systems across all clinical areas. Systems found to be non-compliant with NHS ventilation standards will be prioritised for upgrade, ensuring alignment with both patient safety and sustainability objectives.

This programme of works will be phased and incorporated into the Trust's capital investment strategy, with completion targeted by March 2030. Initial upgrade activities will be supported by the £1,170,000 awarded to the Trust through the 2025–26 Estates Safety Fund, recently allocated by the Government. Subsequent works will be financed through internal capital allocations, subject to prioritisation within the wider estates programme. Will target the energy safety fund to support completion of this work

Action 5: Secure NHS Energy Efficiency Funds and other central government funding for priority infrastructure projects from Q4 2025–30

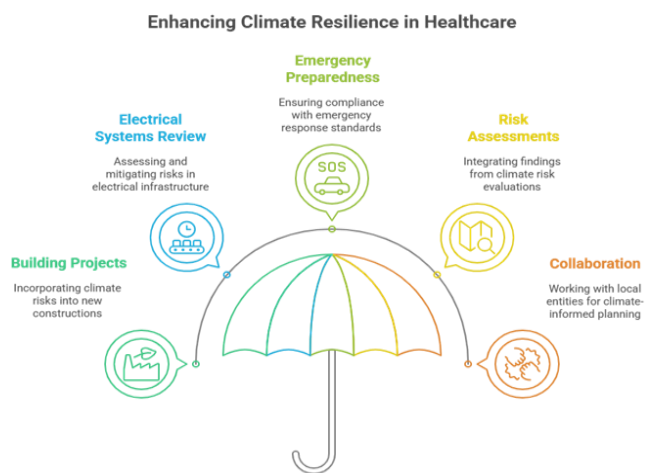
With the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) now closed and Phase 3b already funded and nearing completion, the Trust will prioritise securing alternative funding to support delivery of the Heat Decarbonisation Plan and other critical infrastructure upgrades. Key funding options include the NHS Energy Efficiency Funds and the NHS Estates Safety Fund. The Sustainability, Finance, and Estates teams will work collaboratively to identify and develop

robust applications to these, and other relevant funding streams, ensuring proposals are closely aligned with the Estates Strategy and the Trust’s broader capital plans. A well-defined Estates Strategy and appropriate capital allocation are essential to enable the delivery of priority projects—specifically, the solar PV scheme (subject to £1 million in funding) and window replacement (subject to £500,000 in funding). Progress on these projects will be reviewed regularly, with the objective of securing the necessary funding and achieving substantial delivery by Q4 2030, reflecting current resource availability and the Trust’s strategic priorities.

Climate Impact Mitigation and Adaptation

In line with NHS England’s adaptation guidance (NHS England, 2025), the Trust will embed climate resilience into its estate planning. This includes:

- Factoring climate risks into all new building and refurbishment projects, including passive cooling, green space, and drainage systems.
- Conducting a resilience review of electrical systems and developing a continuity risk register by Q3 2025–26
- Ensuring compliance with the NHS Core Standards for Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) (NHS England, 2023).
- Integrating findings from overheating and flood risk assessments into the Estates Strategy.
- Collaborating with the ICS and local resilience forums to ensure mutual aid and emergency planning are climate informed.



Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Assets

The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) partner at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is contractually required to ensure that all assets under their management are maintained at, or improved to, condition B by the end of the concession in January 2041, in preparation for hand back. This obligation is supported through a combination of regular condition surveys, trend analysis of reactive maintenance tasks, and detailed risk assessments, which collectively ensure that no asset deteriorates to condition C or below. In line with this commitment, the lifecycle works scheduled over the next five years are focused on advancing energy efficiency and sustainability across the PFI estate. Planned initiatives include increasing the number of Air Handling Units (AHUs) from one in 2025 to nine by 2029, alongside the installation of 32 Variable Air Volume (VAV) boxes—both aimed at enhancing the overall energy performance of the buildings. Additional measures encompass the installation of four new air conditioning

chillers and 79 split air conditioning units, each contributing to reduced energy consumption. Furthermore, 32 refrigerators will be upgraded, including the transition to refrigerant gases that comply with the latest environmental standards. Upgrades to lighting infrastructure are also a key element of the programme; Phase 1 of the internal, emergency, and external LED lighting works has already been completed in Block 97 (2024/25), with further improvements planned for Block 98 and external lighting areas between 2025 and 2027. Collectively, these works form part of a proactive, structured approach by the PFI partner to optimise asset performance, drive down energy usage, and align with the Trust’s overarching sustainability objectives.

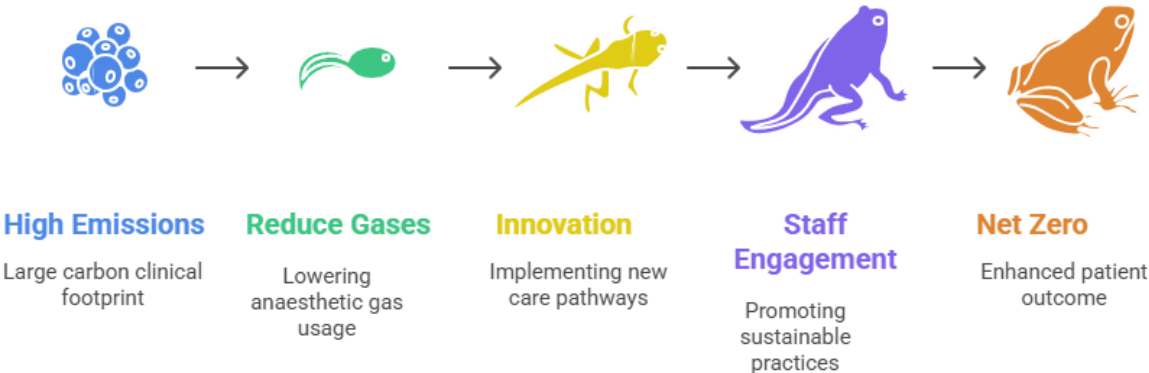
Monitoring and Governance

Progress against these objectives will be overseen by the Trust’s Sustainability Group and reported quarterly to the Board. Metrics will include energy consumption, emissions reductions, and delivery milestones. This governance structure ensures alignment with the NHS Net Zero Estates Delivery Plan (NHS England, 2025), the ICS Infrastructure Strategy (NHS England, 2025), and the Trust’s statutory obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Health and Care Act 2022.

6. Clinical Transformation

Clinical transformation is a cornerstone of the Trust’s journey towards net zero, offering substantial opportunities to reduce emissions while enhancing patient outcomes and service quality. The NHS has identified clinical care as a major contributor to its carbon footprint, particularly due to anaesthetic gases, inhalers, and high-intensity care pathways. Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust has already made measurable progress in this area, notably achieving a 97% reduction in desflurane use and a 79% reduction in nitrous oxide emissions between 2019–20 and 2024–25 (WHT TMC Sustainability Report, 2025). These achievements reflect the Trust’s capacity to deliver meaningful change through clinical leadership, innovation, and staff engagement.

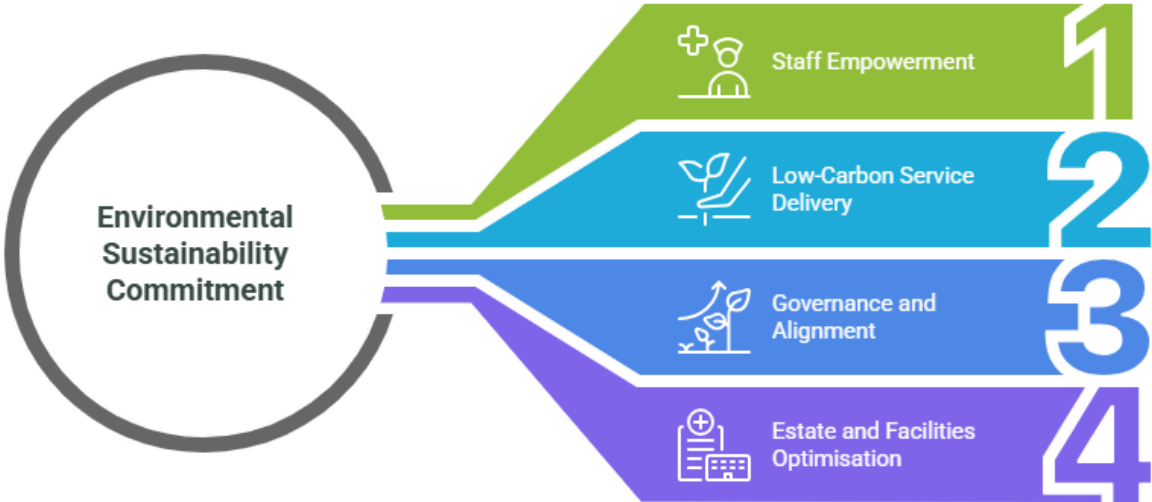
Clinical Transformation to Net Zero



The Trust’s approach to clinical transformation aligns with the NHS Net Zero Clinical Transformation Framework and supports the broader objectives of the Black Country Integrated Care System (ICS). It prioritises high-impact areas such as perioperative care, emergency services, and respiratory pathways, where clinical decisions and service design can significantly influence carbon emissions.

Guided by the Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) Environmental Sustainability Quality Statement, the Trust is committed to embedding environmental responsibility throughout its clinical transformation agenda. This statement underscores the importance of healthcare providers understanding and reducing their environmental impact, empowering staff, and embedding low-carbon care into service delivery. In response, the Trust will equip staff and leaders with the knowledge and tools required to minimise the environmental impact of care, while promoting preventative, high-quality, and low-carbon healthcare. Services will be designed and delivered in the most appropriate setting, thereby reducing unnecessary interventions and associated emissions

Embedding Environmental Responsibility in Healthcare



The Green Plan will be governed at board level and aligned with the ICS’s sustainability strategy. Staff will be supported to understand and reduce their individual carbon footprints through targeted training and engagement. Simultaneously, the Trust will optimise its estate and facilities by enhancing energy efficiency, expanding the use of renewable energy, and reducing waste. These principles will underpin all clinical transformation objectives and initiatives.

The following objectives and supporting initiatives will guide the Trust’s efforts over the 2026–2030 period.

Objective 1: Eliminate desflurane use Trust-wide by Q2 2026–27

The Trust will eliminate the use of desflurane, a volatile anaesthetic with a high global warming potential, across all clinical areas. This objective builds on the Trust's success in reducing desflurane usage from 113 litres in 2019–20 to just 3 litres in 2024–25—a 97% reduction that saved 416 tCO₂e. The final step will involve ceasing all procurement and use of desflurane, supported by clinical education, procurement controls, and alignment with national guidance on anaesthetic gas decommissioning. The target is to achieve zero litres used by September 2026.

Objective 2: Reduce Entonox emissions by 25% by March 2030

Entonox (a 50:50 mix of nitrous oxide and oxygen) remains a significant source of emissions, with usage increasing by 22.7% between 2019–20 and 2024–25, resulting in a 23% rise in associated emissions—from 803 tCO₂e to 986 tCO₂e. The Trust will implement targeted interventions to reduce Entonox emissions by 25%, bringing them down to 740 tCO₂e or lower by March 2030. This will include reviewing clinical protocols, investing in gas capture and destruction technologies, and promoting alternatives where clinically appropriate. Monitoring will be embedded in pharmacy and estates reporting systems to track progress.

Objective 3: Implement Net Zero Clinical Pathways in perioperative, emergency, and respiratory care from Q3 2026–30

The Trust will embed low-carbon principles into clinical service design by implementing Net Zero Clinical Pathways in three high-impact areas: perioperative care, emergency services, and respiratory medicine. This will involve appointing clinical leads for each pathway, establishing multidisciplinary working groups, and integrating sustainability into quality improvement initiatives. Emissions reductions will be tracked using pathway-specific metrics, and co-benefits such as improved patient outcomes and reduced variation in care will be documented. Implementation will begin by Q3 2026–27, with learning shared across the ICS and national networks.

Supporting Initiatives

To support delivery of these objectives, the Trust will implement the following initiatives:

- *HVAC and AGSS optimisation:* The Trust will introduce automatic setback of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and anaesthetic gas scavenging systems (AGSS) during nights and weekends when theatres are not in use. This will reduce unnecessary energy consumption and emissions during unoccupied periods.
- *Virtual outpatient appointments:* The Trust will extend the implementation of virtual outpatient services, reduce patient travel emissions and improving access to care. This will be supported by digital infrastructure upgrades and clinical engagement to ensure appropriateness and equity.
- *Walking aids reuse scheme:* A reuse scheme for walking aids will be implemented to reduce procurement-related emissions and clinical waste. Returned equipment will be inspected, refurbished, and redistributed in line with infection control standards.

- *Green Emergency Department (GreenED)*: The Trust will adopt the GreenED framework, as outlined in the GreenED Handbook developed by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, to embed sustainability into emergency care. This structured approach supports emergency departments in reducing their environmental impact while maintaining high standards of clinical care. Key actions will include reducing reliance on single-use items, optimising diagnostic pathways to avoid unnecessary investigations, and improving patient flow to reduce avoidable admissions and associated emissions. The Trust will also explore accreditation through the GreenED programme and integrate the framework's principles into emergency department quality improvement initiatives.
- *Critical care sustainability toolkits*: The Trust will implement NHS-endorsed sustainability toolkits in critical care settings, guided by the Intensive Care Environmental Sustainability Recipe Book. This resource outlines actionable, evidence-based strategies to reduce emissions while maintaining excellent patient care. Key themes include lean service delivery, low-carbon alternatives, and empowering staff and patients to participate in sustainable practices. The Trust will prioritise interventions such as reducing unnecessary investigations, optimising procurement, and waste management, and embedding sustainability into quality improvement initiatives. These efforts will be supported by multidisciplinary collaboration, continuous education, and the use of the Recipe Book's tracker to monitor progress and share learning.

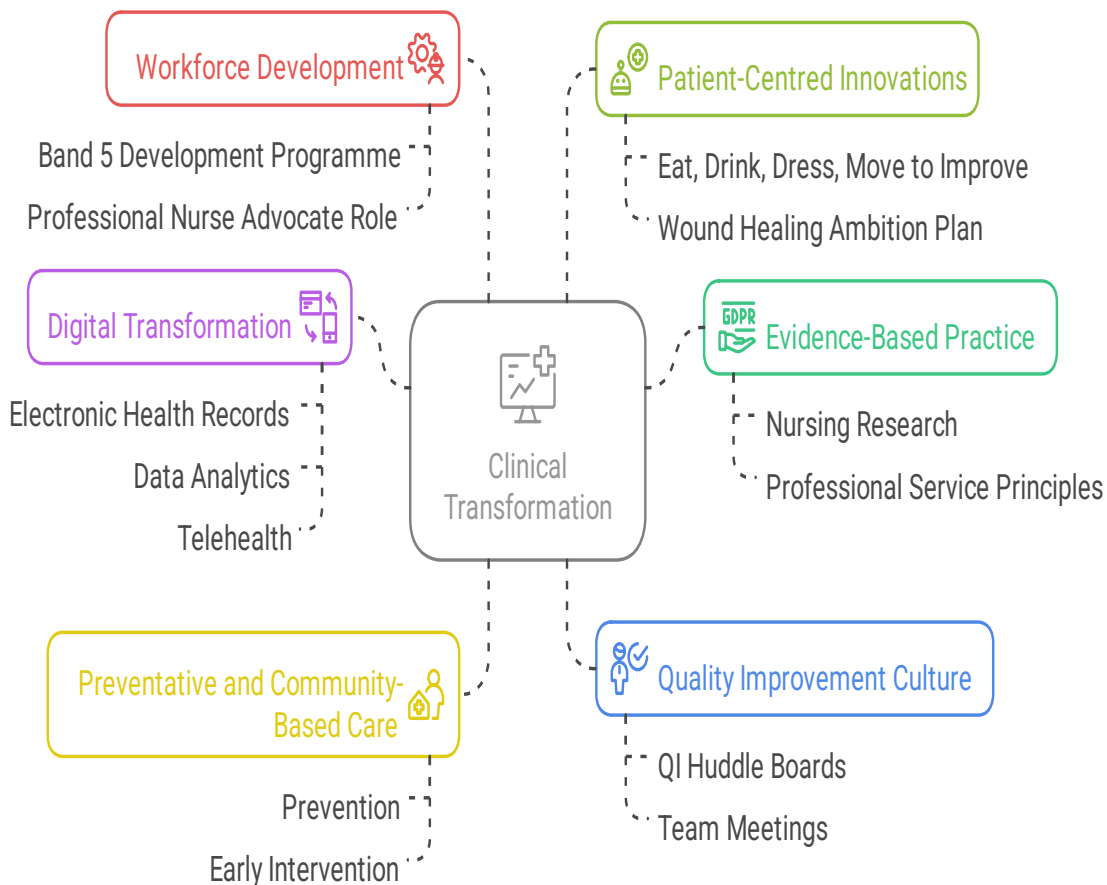
Quality Framework Integration

The Trust will integrate the following key themes from the Quality Framework 2025–2028 into its clinical transformation efforts:

- *Evidence-Based Practice*: The framework is grounded in nursing research and professional service principles, emphasizing the impact of structured frameworks on patient outcomes.
- *Digital Transformation*: Transition from analogue to digital systems is a national priority. This supports improved documentation, risk assessment, and care delivery. Initiatives include the use of electronic health records (EHR), data analytics for emissions tracking, remote monitoring and telehealth, virtual care models, digital infrastructure upgrades, and staff training in digital tools.
- *Preventative and Community-Based Care*: Focus on shifting care from hospitals to communities, emphasizing prevention, early intervention, and holistic care.
- *Quality Improvement (QI) Culture*: Embedding QI into business-as-usual (BAU) through QI Huddle Boards, QI projects, team meetings, and 1:1s.
- *Workforce Development*: Initiatives like the Band 5 Development Programme, Professional Nurse Advocate Role, and Health Care Support Worker development, aligned with career frameworks and leadership development.

- *Patient-Centred Innovations*: Initiatives such as “Eat, Drink, Dress, Move to Improve” and the Wound Healing Ambition Plan, focusing on improving patient experience and outcomes.

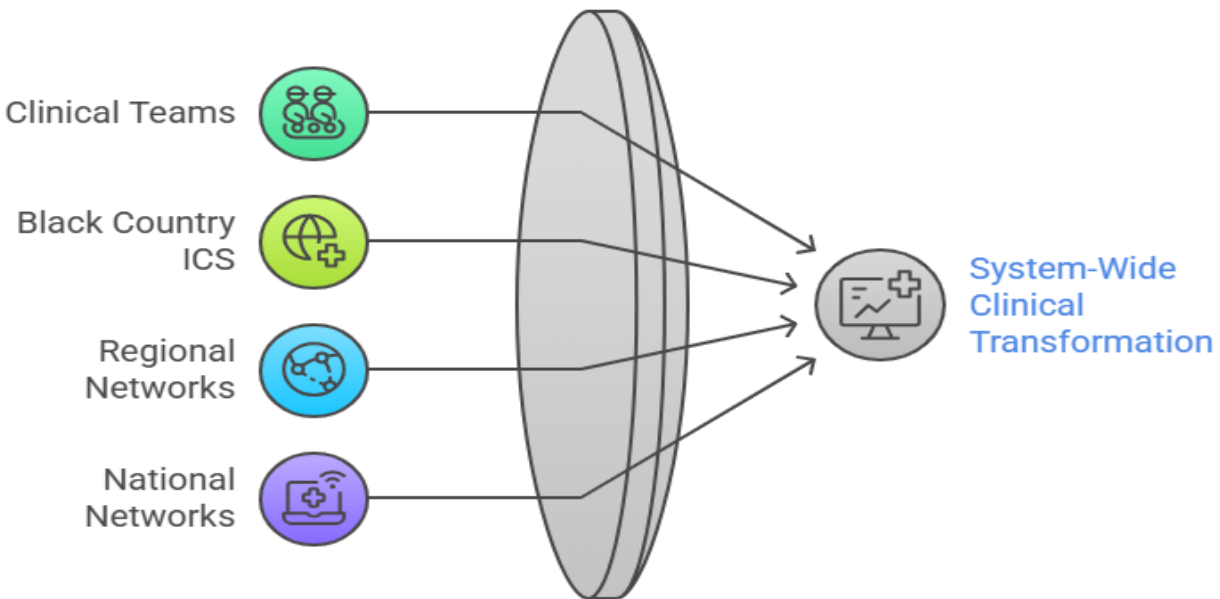
Trust's Clinical Transformation Themes



Collaboration and Networking

Clinical teams will also collaborate with colleagues across the Black Country ICS, as well as regional and national networks, to share best practice, accelerate innovation, and ensure alignment with system-wide clinical transformation Objectives.

Collaborative Healthcare Innovation



7. Travel and Transport

Travel and transport represent a critical area of focus within the Trust's sustainability strategy, contributing significantly to both direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. As a healthcare provider with a large and diverse workforce, extensive patient services, and a growing estate, the Trust's travel-related activities encompass staff commuting, patient and visitor travel, business mileage, and fleet operations. These activities contribute to Scope 3 emissions, which are challenging to measure and mitigate due to their indirect nature.

In alignment with the NHS Net Zero Travel and Transport Strategy and the Greener NHS agenda, the Trust is committed to reducing the environmental impact of its travel footprint while enhancing accessibility, equity, and wellbeing for staff and service users. This commitment is underpinned by a recognition of the co-benefits of sustainable travel, including improved air quality, reduced congestion, enhanced physical activity, and long-term cost savings.

The following objectives and actions outline the Trust's approach to embedding sustainable travel principles across its operations. They reflect a balance of ambition and pragmatism, ensuring that the Trust not only meets its statutory obligations but also leads by example in the transition to a low-carbon healthcare system.

Objective 1: Publish and implement a Sustainable Travel Plan by Q4 2026–27

The Trust recognises that travel and transport are significant contributors to its overall carbon footprint, particularly within Scope 3 emissions. In response, it has committed to the

development and implementation of a comprehensive Sustainable Travel Plan (STP) by the final quarter of the 2026–27 financial year. This plan will serve as a strategic framework to promote low-carbon travel behaviours among staff, patients, and visitors, while also aligning with national NHS targets and regional sustainability priorities.

The STP will prioritise a modal shift towards active travel, including walking and cycling, as well as increased use of public transport. To support this, the Trust will invest in infrastructure enhancements such as secure cycle storage, shower and changing facilities, and improved pedestrian access across its estate. In parallel, the plan will encourage the adoption of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) through the provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging points and the inclusion of EV options within staff benefit schemes.

A key innovation within the STP will be the integration of digital engagement tools to facilitate behaviour change and monitor progress. The Trust has adopted two NHS-supported platforms: the Kora app and KINTO Join. Kora enables staff to automatically track their travel emissions and rewards sustainable choices through a gamified points system. These points can be redeemed for discounts on environmentally responsible products, thereby incentivising long-term engagement. KINTO Join complements this by offering a platform for carpooling, validating active travel, and enabling staff to participate in team-based sustainability challenges. Both tools are provided at no cost to the Trust and offer robust analytics to support emissions reporting and strategic planning.

The Trust aims to achieve a 10 per cent reduction in staff commuting emissions by 2030, using 2019–20 as the baseline year. Additionally, it seeks to increase the proportion of staff using active or public transport by 15 per cent by 2028. These targets will be supported by the phased rollout of EV charging infrastructure across all major Trust sites by 2027. Progress will be monitored through data collected via Kora and KINTO Join, supplemented by periodic staff travel surveys.

The STP is both achievable and relevant. It is underpinned by national guidance from NHS England, supported by local authority partnerships, and reinforced by the Trust's internal sustainability governance structures. The absence of a formal travel plan to date represents a critical gap in the Trust's net zero strategy, and addressing this will mitigate reputational and regulatory risks associated with non-compliance.

Key actions to deliver this objective include conducting a baseline travel survey in Q4 2025–26, launching Kora and KINTO Join Trust-wide in Q1 2026–27, and engaging with staff and local transport providers throughout Q2. By Q3 2026–27, sustainable travel planning will be embedded into all new site developments and capital projects. The plan will be finalised and published by March 2027, with ongoing monitoring and reporting led by the Trust's Sustainability Group.

Objective 2: Transition 100% of new fleet vehicles to zero-emission by December 2027

In alignment with NHS England's Net Zero Travel and Transport Strategy, the Trust has committed to ensuring that all new fleet vehicles procured from April 2026 onwards are zero-emission. This objective reflects the Trust-wide's broader commitment to decarbonising its operations and reducing Scope 1 and 3 emissions associated with transport.

The transition will encompass all non-emergency vehicles, including pool cars, logistics vans, and patient transport vehicles. The Trust will prioritise the electrification of its fleet, supported by the installation of EV charging infrastructure across its estate. Where appropriate, alternative zero-emission technologies such as hydrogen fuel cells will also be considered, particularly for vehicles requiring extended range or rapid refuelling capabilities.

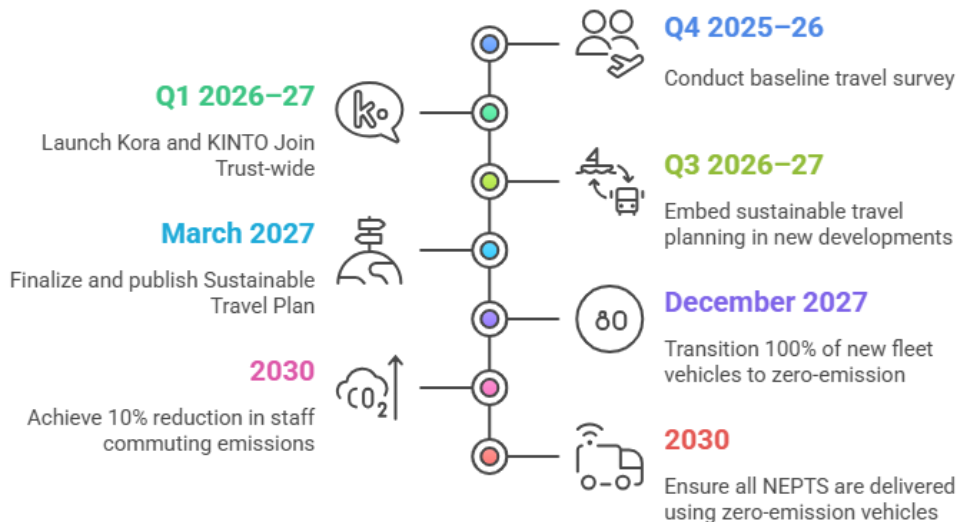
This objective is measurable and time-bound. The Trust aims to reduce fleet-related emissions by 50 per cent by 2028, relative to the 2019–20 baseline. The transition will be phased, beginning with a comprehensive audit of the existing fleet and usage patterns in Q3 2025–26. A detailed Fleet Transition Plan will be developed in Q4 2025–26, outlining procurement timelines, infrastructure requirements, and staff training needs.

The initiative is achievable, supported by NHS procurement frameworks and supplier agreements that prioritise low-carbon technologies. It is also relevant, given the Trust's exposure to financial and reputational risks associated with fossil fuel dependency. By aligning fleet procurement with the NHS Net Zero Supplier Roadmap, the Trust will enhance its eligibility for sustainability-linked funding and demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship.

By December 2027, all new fleet vehicles will be zero-emission. Furthermore, by 2030, the Trust will ensure that all non-emergency patient transport services (NEPTS) are delivered using zero-emission vehicles, and that all newly procured ambulances meet the same standard. The use of fleet telematics will be expanded to optimise routing, reduce mileage, and support real-time emissions monitoring.

This transition will not only contribute to the Trust's net zero targets but also improve local air quality, reduce operational costs over the vehicle lifecycle, and enhance the resilience of transport services in the face of future regulatory and environmental pressures.

Transitioning to Sustainable Travel and Fleet



8. Digital Transformation

Digital transformation plays a critical role in supporting Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust’s ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions. By embedding sustainability into digital infrastructure, service design, and operational practises, the Trust can reduce emissions, enhance care quality, and improve system efficiency. This section outlines the Trust’s objectives and supporting actions for digital transformation, alongside the implementation challenges and mitigation strategies.

Objective 1: Embed sustainability criteria into all digital service design and procurement by Q2 2026–27

The Trust will ensure that all new digital systems and services are designed and procured in accordance with sustainability principles. This includes aligning with the NHS Greening Government ICT and Digital Services Strategy (Gov.uk, 2020) and incorporating carbon reduction, energy efficiency, and circular economy considerations into procurement specifications. Sustainability criteria will be embedded into tender documentation and supplier evaluation processes, with compliance monitored through procurement audits. This objective will be delivered by the end of Q2 2026–27 and will support the Trust’s broader commitment to responsible resource use and supplier engagement.

Objective 2: Reduce emissions from IT hardware lifecycle by 25% by March 2030 (baseline: 2024–25)

To reduce emissions associated with IT hardware, the Trust will implement a comprehensive lifecycle management strategy. This will include extending the lifespan of devices through refurbishment and leasing models, adopting energy-efficient configurations, and enforcing PC

power-down policies across the estate. The Trust will also explore opportunities to procure remanufactured equipment where clinically and operationally appropriate. Emissions reductions will be tracked using lifecycle analysis tools and IT asset management systems, with progress reviewed annually. The target is to achieve a 25% reduction in emissions from IT hardware by March 2030, relative to the 2024–25 baseline (Gov.uk, 2020).

Objective 3: Expand virtual care pathways to reduce patient travel emissions by 15% by March 2029 (baseline: 2024–25)

The Trust will expand its use of virtual care pathways, including remote consultations, digital triage, and remote monitoring, to reduce the need for patient travel. This will contribute to a 15% reduction in travel-related emissions by March 2029, using 2024–25 as the baseline year. The expansion will be supported by investment in digital infrastructure, clinical engagement, and patient education to ensure services are accessible, equitable, and clinically appropriate. Monitoring will be conducted through patient travel surveys and emissions modelling, with findings used to inform further service redesign (NHS England, 2021).

Objective 4: Implement low-carbon data hosting and storage practices by Q4 2026–27

The Trust will transition to low-carbon data hosting solutions by migrating to cloud services powered by renewable energy and promoting data hygiene practices such as deduplication, archiving, and deletion of redundant data. These measures will reduce the energy intensity of data storage and support the Trust’s broader digital sustainability Objectives. Implementation will be completed by the end of Q4 2026–27, with annual audits conducted to assess data centre energy use and emissions. This objective will ensure that the Trust’s digital infrastructure is aligned with its net zero ambitions (Gov.uk, 2020).

Digital Transformation for Sustainability

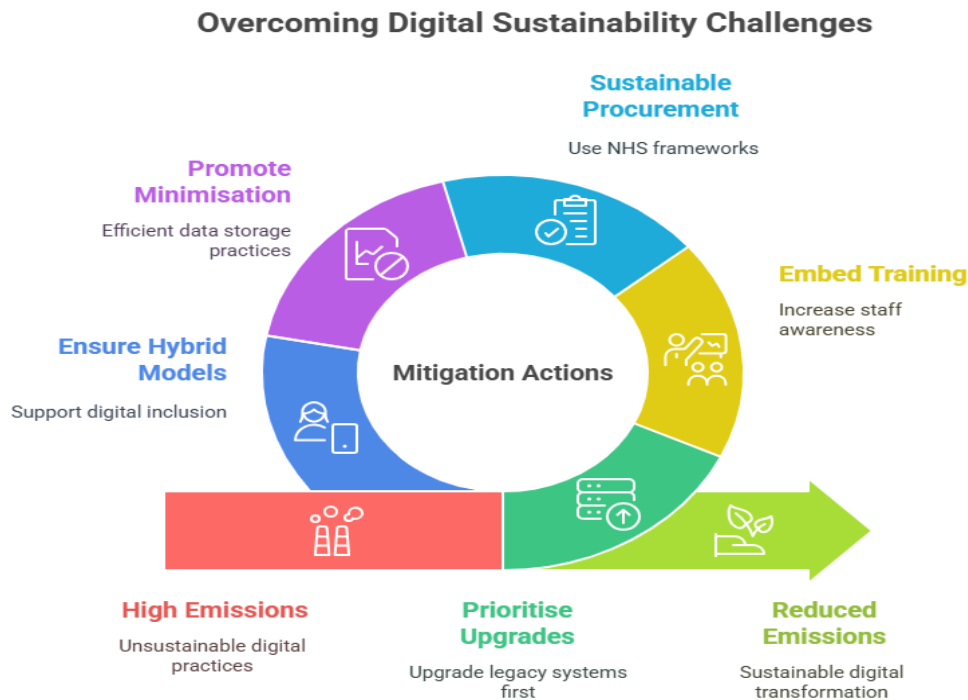


Supporting Actions

To support delivery of these objectives, the Trust will complete a Digital Maturity Assessment by Q1 2026–27 to identify gaps and opportunities for embedding sustainability into digital services (NHS England, 2021). A Trust-wide Sustainable IT Policy will be developed and published by Q2 2026–27, setting out expectations for energy-efficient device use, responsible procurement, and data management. Staff training on sustainable digital practices will be delivered through the Greener NHS Training Hub, ensuring that all relevant personnel are equipped to support the Trust’s digital sustainability agenda (NHS England, 2021). In addition, all digital suppliers will be required to complete the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment by Q3 2026–27, reinforcing the Trust’s commitment to responsible supply chain management (NHS England, 2021).

Implementation Challenges and Mitigation

Anticipating implementation challenges is a fundamental component of delivering the Trust's digital transformation objectives. As digital technologies become increasingly embedded across clinical and operational domains, it is essential to identify potential barriers early and respond with targeted mitigation strategies. This proactive approach will support the effective integration of digital solutions, safeguard continuity of service delivery, and ensure that the environmental, clinical, and operational benefits of digital innovation are fully realised. By embedding risk management into the planning and execution of digital initiatives, the Trust will enhance resilience, promote inclusivity, and maintain momentum towards its net zero Objectives.



Digital transformation is integral to achieving the Trust's net zero Objectives. By embedding sustainability into digital practices, the Trust can reduce emissions, improve care quality, and enhance operational efficiency. The outlined objectives and actions provide a clear roadmap for integrating digital sustainability into the Trust's operations, supported by robust governance and monitoring mechanisms. This approach will ensure that digital innovation contributes positively to the Trust's environmental and clinical outcomes.

9. Waste Management

Effective waste management is central to the Trust's commitment to environmental sustainability, regulatory compliance, and public health protection. The Trust recognises the urgent need to modernise its waste infrastructure and operational practices in line with national policy frameworks and local sustainability objectives.

Current Infrastructure Challenges

The existing waste compound at Walsall Manor Hospital is currently inadequate to support compliance with statutory requirements, including Health Technical Memorandum (HTM) 07-01: Safe and Sustainable Management of Healthcare Waste and the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) regulations. These deficiencies compromise the Trust's ability to ensure appropriate waste segregation, secure storage, and environmental protection. In response, the Estates Development and Estates & Facilities teams are jointly developing a capital business case to address these infrastructural shortcomings and achieve full regulatory compliance by December 2026.

Waste Management Objectives

In support of the Trust's broader sustainability ambitions and in alignment with national and regional policy frameworks, the following objectives have been developed to guide the transformation of waste management practices across the estate. Each objective is designed to deliver measurable environmental benefits, ensure regulatory compliance, and promote resource efficiency. The targets are time-bound and grounded in baseline data from 2023–24, with progress monitored through structured audits, reporting mechanisms, and stakeholder engagement.

Objective 1: Implement food waste recycling across all catering and clinical areas by September 2026

The Trust will introduce a dedicated food waste recycling system to divert organic waste from landfill and incineration. This will involve the installation of food waste bins in kitchens, wards, and staff areas, alongside staff training on correct segregation. Partnerships with licensed food waste processors will ensure compliance with environmental regulations. Implementation will be phased and monitored through waste contractor data and internal audits, with full rollout targeted for completion by September 2026.

Objective 2: Eliminate landfill disposal of domestic waste by December 2026

To eliminate the environmental and financial burden of landfill disposal, the Trust will enhance waste segregation at source and increase diversion to recycling, reuse, and energy recovery. This will be supported by improved infrastructure, staff engagement, and regular performance monitoring. The Trust will work closely with waste contractors to ensure zero landfill compliance and will track progress through monthly waste reports. The target is to achieve zero landfill disposal of domestic waste by December 2026.

Objective 3: Achieve compliance with the 20:20:60 clinical waste treatment model by March 2027

The Trust will optimise clinical waste segregation to align with the NHS's 20:20:60 treatment model—ensuring 20% of waste is directed to high temperature incineration, 20% to alternative treatment, and 60% to offensive waste streams. This will be achieved through staff training, updated signage, and regular audits. Waste data will be reviewed quarterly to assess

compliance and identify areas for improvement. The target is to meet the 20:20:60 model by March 2027, based on 2023–24 waste profiles.

Objective 4: Reduce domestic waste generation by 40% by March 2029

To reduce overall waste volumes, the Trust will implement waste prevention initiatives including sustainable procurement, digitalisation of processes, and staff awareness campaigns. Opportunities to eliminate single-use items and packaging will be prioritised. Progress will be measured against the 2023–24 baseline using total domestic waste tonnage data. The Objective is to achieve a 40% reduction in domestic waste generation by March 2027.

Objective 5: Increase the recycling and reuse rate to 50% by March 2030

To improve resource efficiency and reduce environmental impact, the Trust will implement a consistent recycling system across all departments. This will include the provision of clearly labelled bins for paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, and glass, supported by staff training and engagement campaigns. Reuse initiatives will be promoted through internal redistribution schemes and sustainable procurement practices. Progress will be monitored through waste audits and contractor reports, with the aim of achieving a 50% recycling and reuse rate by June 2030, using 2023–24 as the baseline year.

Waste Management Plan Implementation



Supporting Actions

- **Compliance with HTM 07-01 and IPPC Standards.** To ensure full compliance by December 2026, the Trust will:
 - Install compliant waste storage facilities with secure, ventilated, and weather-resistant enclosures
 - Conduct quarterly waste audits to assess segregation accuracy and storage conditions
 - Update waste handling protocols and signage in accordance with HTM 07-01 guidance by September 2026
- **Staff Training and Engagement.** Staff training is a critical enabler of effective waste management. The Trust will implement a structured training programme to ensure all personnel understand their responsibilities and are equipped to manage waste safely and sustainably. Key actions include:
 - Delivering mandatory induction training to 100% of new staff within their first month of employment, beginning April 2026.
 - Providing annual refresher training to all clinical and non-clinical staff by December each year, with a minimum 90% completion rate.
 - Launching role-specific training modules for porters, domestic staff, and facilities teams by October 2026.
 - Distributing visual guides and signage in all departments by September 2026.
 - Introducing a staff feedback mechanism (e.g., surveys and incident reporting) by November 2026 to inform continuous improvement
- **Implementation of Simpler Recycling for Workplaces Guidance (DEFRA, 2025).** To meet the requirements of the Simpler Recycling for Workplaces guidance, the Trust will:
 - Roll out segregated recycling bins for paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, glass, and food waste in all departments by March 2027.
 - Achieve a minimum 90% bin availability rate across all clinical and non-clinical areas by the same date.
 - Conduct biannual contamination audits from April 2026 to March 2030 to ensure recycling quality and identify training needs

Implementation Challenges and Risks

The successful implementation of the Waste Management Strategy is contingent upon proactively identifying and mitigating a range of operational, financial, and behavioural risks. Failure to address these risks could result in significant consequences for the Trust, including regulatory non-compliance, reputational damage, increased operational costs, and missed sustainability targets.

Risk	Description	Potential Impact to the Trust	Mitigation Strategy
Infrastructure delays	Delays in upgrading the waste compound and storage facilities may prevent compliance with HTM 07-01 and IPPC regulations.	Non-compliance with statutory requirements, potential enforcement action, and reputational harm.	Phased implementation, early contractor engagement, and integration with capital planning cycles.

Staff non-compliance	Inconsistent adherence to waste segregation protocols due to insufficient training, high turnover, or operational pressures.	Increased contamination, higher disposal costs, and failure to meet recycling targets.	Mandatory training, visual prompts, regular audits, and departmental accountability.
Waste stream contamination	Incorrect segregation of waste streams, particularly clinical and recyclable waste.	Compromised recycling efforts, increased carbon footprint, and financial penalties from waste contractors.	Clear labelling, targeted training, and feedback mechanisms to reinforce correct practices.
Financial constraints	Limited capital or operational budgets may delay infrastructure upgrades or training programmes.	Inability to meet strategic objectives, reputational risk, and inefficient resource use.	Prioritised investment, phased roll-out, and alignment with existing funding streams.
Contractor performance	Reliance on third-party waste management providers introduces risks related to service quality, compliance, and continuity.	Service disruption, non-compliance, and increased costs due to contract breaches or inefficiencies.	Robust contract management, performance monitoring, and contingency planning.
Data inaccuracy	Inadequate tracking and reporting systems may impair the Trust's ability to monitor progress and demonstrate compliance.	Poor decision-making, lack of transparency, and inability to report to regulators or ICS partners.	Implementation of digital waste tracking systems by June 2026, supported by regular data audits.
Cultural resistance	Resistance to behavioural change among staff or departments may undermine implementation efforts.	Slow adoption of new practices, inconsistent performance, and reputational risk.	Change management strategies, leadership engagement, and recognition of good practice.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

Progress will be tracked through monthly Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), with detailed reports presented quarterly to the Trust Board and the ICS Sustainability Network. Core metrics will include waste volumes broken down by type and treatment route, rates of recycling and reuse, completion rates for relevant training, and scores from audit compliance checks. These measures will ensure consistent oversight and support ongoing improvements in sustainability performance.

10. Procurement and Supply Chain

Supply chain emissions constitute a significant and growing component of the Trust's Scope 3 carbon footprint. In 2024–25, emissions from general supply chain activities and medical equipment increased by 4.3% and 15%, respectively. These trends underscore the need for sustained action throughout the 2026–2030 Green Plan period to decouple procurement growth from carbon intensity.

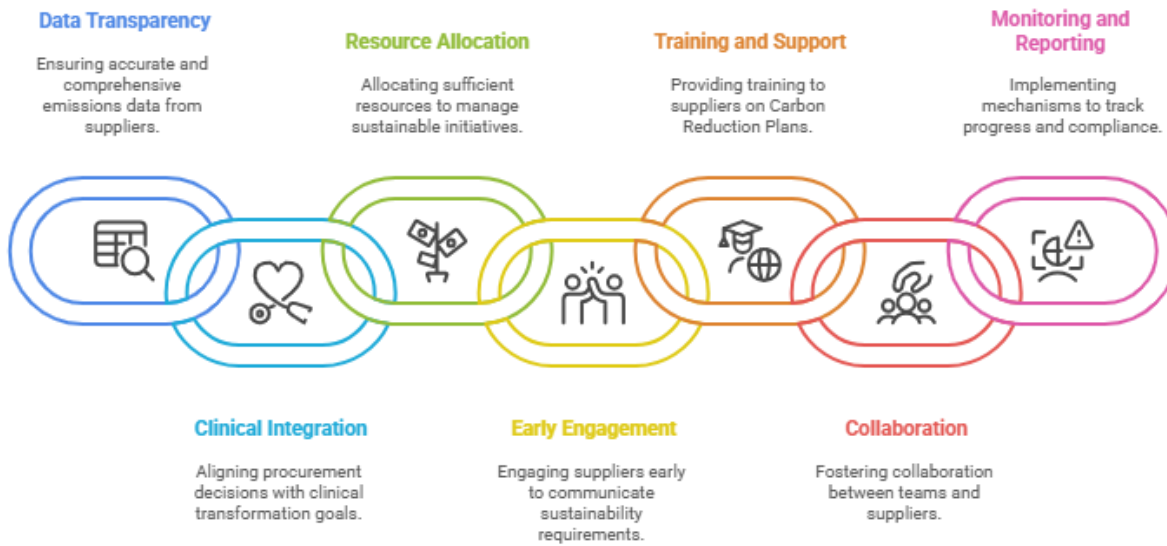
The NHS England Net Zero Supplier Roadmap outlines a phased approach requiring all suppliers to align with NHS net zero targets by 2030. From April 2024, all new NHS procurements must include a minimum 10% weighting for net zero and social value. Additionally, suppliers are required to publish a Carbon Reduction Plan that addresses Scope

1, 2, and relevant Scope 3 emissions. These requirements are enforced through the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment and apply to all contracts, regardless of value.

Complementing this, the Procurement Act 2023 mandates that public sector Trust-wides, including NHS Trusts, embed environmental sustainability and social value into procurement decisions. The Act imposes legal obligations to consider the environmental impact of goods and services, ensure transparency in supplier selection, and demonstrate value for money through sustainable practices.

For Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, these frameworks have significant implications. They necessitate a transformation in procurement governance, supplier engagement, and contract management. The Trust must ensure that all procurement activity complies with these national standards while leveraging them to drive innovation, reduce emissions, and support the delivery of high-quality, low-carbon care.

WHT Sustainable Procurement Framework



Current Position

The Trust has already embedded a minimum 10% weighting for environmental and social value in all procurement activities. All suppliers are required to submit compliant Carbon Reduction Plans as a condition of contract award, ensuring alignment with NHS net zero objectives.

Strategic Alignment with Clinical Transformation

Clinical procurement plays a critical enabling role in delivering the Trust's Net Zero Clinical Transformation objectives. Through its Clinical Products Evaluation Group, Trust Equipment

Group, and Theatre Products Evaluation Group, the Trust is actively reviewing and replacing clinical consumables, medical devices, and equipment with sustainable alternatives. These groups ensure that product selection supports:

- reduction of single-use plastics and high-emission materials.
- adoption of reusable and lower-carbon alternatives.
- alignment with clinical quality improvement and sustainability Objectives.
- delivery of low-carbon clinical pathways in perioperative, emergency, and respiratory care.
- collaborative Step and Ongoing Initiatives

The Trust is an active member of the regional Clinical Procurement and Sustainability Group and has committed to a series of targeted product-switching initiatives to reduce emissions and waste. These include:

- Reduction in couch roll usage *(ongoing)*.
- Transition from single use to reusable infusion bags.
- Continued use of reusable tourniquets.
- Adoption of reusable sterile surgical gowns and reusable theatre caps.
- Implementation of a walking aids reuse scheme.
- Reduction in the use of sterile and non-sterile gloves *(ongoing)*.
- Reduction in pulp bowl usage *(ongoing)*.
- Transition to reusable blood pressure cuffs.
- Phasing out of poly jugs in favour of sustainable alternatives.

In addition, the Procurement Team will work closely with Theatre teams to rationalise procedure packs—ensuring that only clinically necessary items are included, reducing waste, and avoiding unnecessary single-use components. This initiative supports both environmental and financial sustainability while maintaining high standards of patient care.

Strategic Priorities

To address supply chain emissions, the Trust will:

- Strengthen supplier engagement to improve emissions reporting and encourage participation in the Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment.
- Expand Scope 3 monitoring to include lifecycle emissions data for high-impact categories such as medical devices and IT hardware.
- Support clinical transformation by aligning procurement with low-carbon care models and quality improvement initiatives.
- Ensure 100% compliance with Carbon Reduction Plan requirements for all new suppliers.
- Accelerate product switching through the Trust's evaluation groups and regional collaboration.
- Rationalise theatre procedure packs to reduce unnecessary items and packaging.

Supporting Actions and KPIs

Action	Target Date	KPI
Require emissions data from top 10 suppliers in medical equipment and general supply	By Q4 2026–27	80% compliance
Expand Scope 3 emissions tracking and reporting	From Q2 2026–27	Quarterly reports
Reduce emissions from medical equipment procurement	By Q4 2029–30	10% reduction from 2024-25 baseline
Increase procurement of reusable or remanufactured products	By Q4 2027–28	15% increase from 2025–26 baseline
Ensure 100% of new suppliers submit Carbon Reduction Plans	From Q1 2026–27	100% compliance
Deliver 10 targeted product-switching initiatives through evaluation groups	By Q4 2028–29	100% of initiatives implemented and monitored
Rationalise all high-volume theatre procedure packs	By Q2 2027–28	100% of packs reviewed and updated

Implementation Challenges and Mitigation Steps

Challenges

- *Supplier Engagement:* Ensuring suppliers comply with Carbon Reduction Plan requirements and participate in sustainability assessments.
- *Data Transparency:* Obtaining accurate and comprehensive emissions data from suppliers.
- *Clinical Integration:* Aligning procurement decisions with clinical transformation Objectives without compromising patient care.
- *Resource Allocation:* Allocating sufficient resources to manage and monitor sustainable procurement initiatives.

Mitigation Actions

- *Early Engagement:* Engage suppliers early in the procurement process to communicate sustainability requirements and expectations.
- *Training and Support:* Provide training and support to suppliers on how to develop and implement Carbon Reduction Plans.
- *Collaboration:* Foster collaboration between procurement, clinical teams, and suppliers to ensure alignment with clinical transformation Objectives.
- *Monitoring and Reporting:* Implement robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track progress and ensure compliance with sustainability objectives.

The Trust is committed to reducing supply chain emissions through strategic procurement reform, supplier collaboration, and alignment with clinical transformation. These efforts—supported by active participation in the Clinical Procurement and Sustainability Group and a growing portfolio of product-switching and rationalisation initiatives—will contribute to the

NHS's broader net zero ambitions while enhancing care quality, operational resilience, and value for money.

11. Medicines Management

Medicines and pharmaceuticals represent a critical intersection between clinical care and environmental sustainability. Within the NHS, they account for approximately 25% of total emissions, with anaesthetic gases and inhalers contributing significantly to both direct and indirect carbon outputs. For Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust (WHT), the challenge is twofold: to uphold the highest standards of patient safety and therapeutic efficacy, while simultaneously addressing the environmental consequences of pharmaceutical use, procurement, and disposal.

The Trust's emissions data for 2024–25 underscores this tension. While notable progress has been achieved in reducing emissions from volatile anaesthetic gases and nitrous oxide, the increase in Entonox usage and the continued predominance of pharmaceuticals in Scope 3 emissions highlight the need for sustained, targeted intervention. Moreover, the environmental impact of medicines extends beyond clinical application, encompassing packaging, logistics, and waste—areas that are often underreported and difficult to manage.

This section of the Green Plan outlines a comprehensive approach to medicines management that integrates clinical transformation, waste reduction, sustainable procurement, and staff engagement. It builds upon national guidance from NHS England and aligns with the Net Zero Supplier Roadmap, while also reflecting local innovations such as the Trust's medicines take-back scheme and pharmacy-led recycling initiatives.

By embedding sustainability into medicines optimisation, WHT aims not only to reduce emissions but also to enhance operational efficiency, minimise waste, and improve patient care. The actions outlined below are designed to deliver measurable environmental benefits while supporting the Trust's broader commitment to achieving net zero.

Medicines Management Strategy

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to reducing the environmental impact of medicines and pharmaceuticals across their lifecycle—from procurement and prescribing to administration and disposal—while maintaining safe, effective, and equitable patient care. This approach is fully aligned with NHS England's Green Plan guidance and the Net Zero Supplier Roadmap.

Achievements to Date

WHT has made significant progress in reducing the environmental impact of its medicines management practices, particularly in relation to anaesthetic gases and nitrous oxide. The near-total elimination of desflurane—a volatile anaesthetic with a high global warming potential—represents a major milestone, delivering a 97% reduction in use and saving

approximately 416 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e). This achievement not only aligns with national guidance but also demonstrates the Trust's capacity to implement rapid, high-impact clinical change.

Similarly, the Trust has achieved an 86% reduction in emissions from volatile anaesthetic gases overall, and a 79% reduction in nitrous oxide usage, cutting associated emissions from 688 tCO₂e to 146 tCO₂e. These reductions reflect strong alignment with NHS England's sustainability priorities and suggest effective engagement with clinical teams in perioperative and critical care settings. However, these gains are partially offset by a 23% increase in Entonox (a nitrous oxide and oxygen mix) usage, which led to a rise in emissions from 803 tCO₂e to 986 tCO₂e. The cause of this increase remains under investigation, highlighting the need for improved monitoring and control mechanisms for medical gas usage across departments.

Beyond clinical gases, the Trust's medicines take-back scheme has emerged as a valuable initiative, both environmentally and financially. In 2023–24, the scheme diverted significant volumes of unused pharmaceuticals from waste streams and generated savings of approximately £50,000. This initiative not only reduces emissions associated with pharmaceutical disposal but also supports medicines optimisation and cost efficiency. Its success underscores the importance of engaging patients and staff in sustainability efforts beyond the point of care.

In addition, the pharmacy department has taken proactive steps to reduce packaging and operational waste. The transition from plastic to paper pharmacy bags, the introduction of cardboard and paper recycling, and the implementation of Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) reflect a growing commitment to circular economy principles. While these measures are not linked to pharmaceutical emissions, they contribute to the overall sustainability of the medicines supply chain and demonstrate leadership in embedding environmental considerations into routine pharmacy operations.

Despite these achievements, the Trust faces ongoing challenges. Pharmaceuticals remain the largest contributor to Scope 3 emissions, with emissions from this category rising to 18,085 tCO₂e in 2024–25. This trend reflects broader systemic issues, including limited visibility into the carbon footprint of medicines procurement and the complexity of influencing upstream supply chains. Addressing these challenges will require sustained collaboration with suppliers, integration of sustainability criteria into procurement processes, and continued investment in data and reporting capabilities.

Objectives and supporting actions: Reducing Medicines-Related Emissions

The following strategic objectives have been developed to address the Trust's most significant medicines-related emissions sources. Each objective is supported by targeted actions and measurable outcomes to ensure accountability and progress.

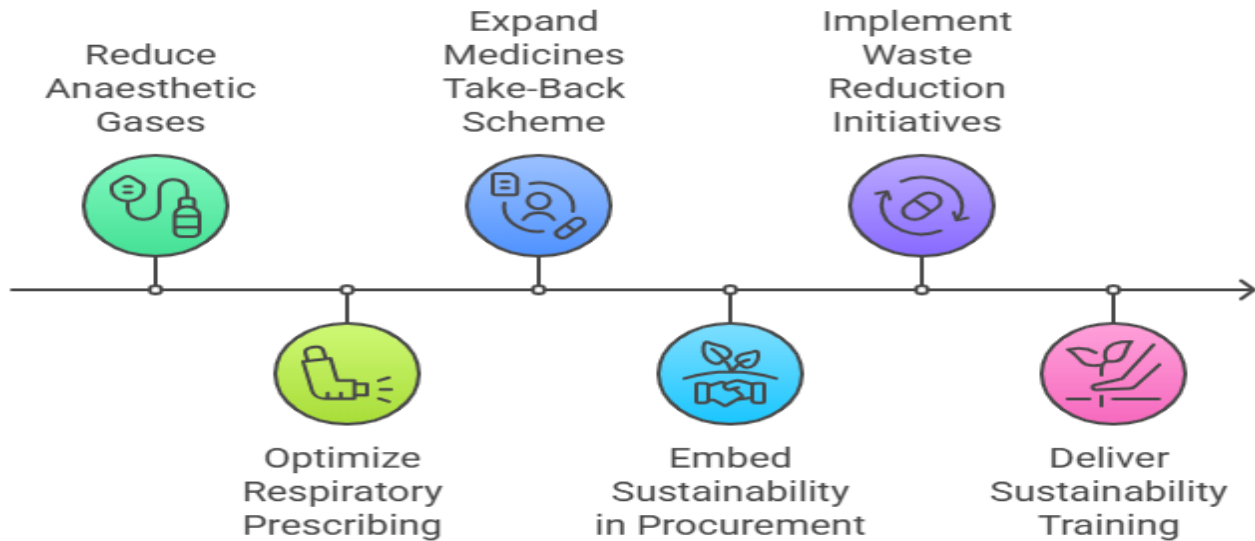
Strategic Objectives

- 1) Reduce emissions from anaesthetic and medical gases by 10% by March 2026.
- 2) Optimise respiratory prescribing to reduce inhaler-related emissions by 15% by March 2027.
- 3) Expand the medicines take-back scheme to achieve £60,000 in annual savings and reduce pharmaceutical waste by 20% by March 2027.
- 4) Embed sustainability into 100% of pharmaceutical procurement contracts by March 2026.
- 5) Implement pharmacy-led waste reduction and recycling initiatives in 100% of pharmacy areas by March 2026.
- 6) Deliver sustainability training to 100% of pharmacy staff by March 2026.

Supporting actions and KPIs (2025–2028)

Action	Target Date	KPI
Ensure the Nitrous Oxide Waste Mitigation Toolkit is adopted throughout the Trust wherever nitrous oxide is in use.	Q3 2025–26	90% reduction in pipeline losses (18-24% of 199Tco2e 2025-26 national target)
Maintain desflurane phase-out	Ongoing	100% compliance
Investigate and reduce Entonox emissions	Q4 2025–26 then onwards	5-8% reduction in Entonox emissions
Expand medicines take-back scheme	Q4 2025–26 then onwards	£60k annual savings and volume of medicines returned
Train 100% of prescribing pharmacy staff in sustainable prescribing of inhalers	Q4 2026–27	Training completion rate
90% of prescribing pharmacist to attend ICB led training session on reduction of SABA prescribing	Q4 2026-27	Training completion rate
Support the inclusion of sustainability criteria in 100% of medicines procurement contracts with procurement team	Q4 2025–26	Compliance rate
Implement pharmacy-led waste segregation and DMR	Q4 2025–26-onwards	100% of pharmacy areas compliant
Implement Inhaler recycling scheme	Q1 2026-27	Number of inhalers recycled
Monitor and report Scope 3 emissions from pharmaceuticals	Annually	Annual emissions report published

Strategic Objectives for Medicines-Related Emissions Reduction



Governance and Monitoring

Progress will be overseen by the Trust's Medicines Optimisation Group in collaboration with the Sustainability Group. Regular updates will be provided to the Trust Management Committee and Board as part of Green Plan reporting.

12. Food and Nutrition

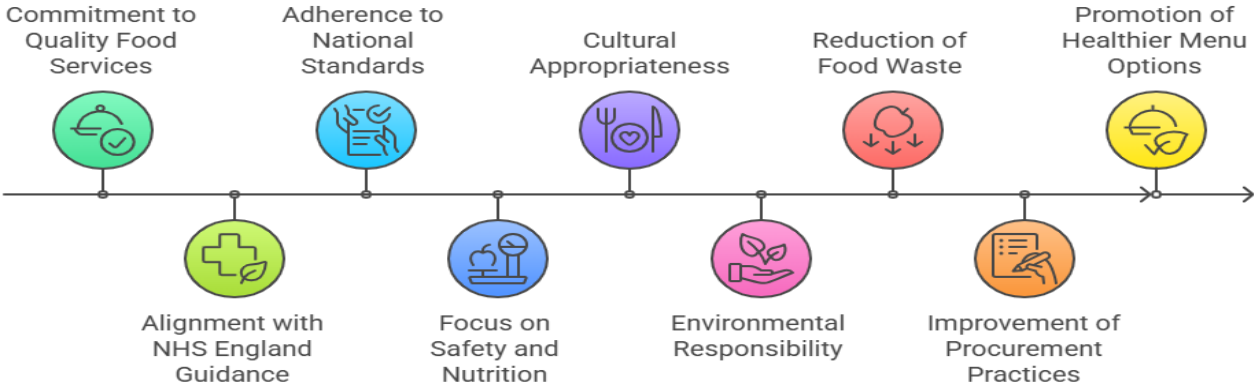
The provision of food and nutrition within healthcare settings plays a critical role not only in supporting patient recovery and wellbeing but also in advancing the NHS's broader environmental sustainability objectives. As a significant contributor to Scope 3 emissions, food procurement, preparation, and waste management represent both a challenge and an opportunity for decarbonisation. In line with national guidance and the NHS England Green Plan framework, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust recognises the need to embed sustainable food practices across its operations. This includes reducing food waste, promoting healthier and lower-carbon dietary options, and aligning procurement with environmental and social value principles. The Trust's approach is shaped by regulatory obligations, operational constraints, and a commitment to continuous improvement in environmental performance.

Vision and Commitment

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to delivering high-quality, healthy, and sustainable food services that support the health and wellbeing of patients, staff, and visitors while contributing to the Trust's net zero carbon Objectives. In alignment with the NHS England Green Plan Guidance (2025) and the National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink, the

Trust will ensure that food services are safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate, and environmentally responsible. These standards provide a mandatory framework for NHS organisations and underpin the Trust’s efforts to reduce food waste, improve procurement practices, and promote healthier, lower-carbon menu options. The Trust’s approach is further informed by the principles outlined in the UK Government’s Healthy Eating: Applying All Our Health framework, which highlights the role of healthcare settings in promoting balanced diets and reducing diet-related health inequalities.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust's Food Service Strategy



Progress to Date

Between 2023 and 2025, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust made measurable progress in embedding sustainable practices into its food and nutrition services. A key achievement was the introduction of food waste weighing systems, which enabled the Trust to establish a reliable baseline and begin tracking reductions in waste volumes. To further support waste minimisation, a food dehydrator was installed, allowing for more efficient processing of organic waste and reducing the volume sent for disposal.

In terms of emissions, the Trust achieved a notable reduction in Scope 3 emissions associated with food and drink procurement. Emissions fell from 1,739 tCO₂e in 2023–24 to 1,421 tCO₂e in 2024–25, a decrease attributed to both improved sourcing practices and a reduction in overall procurement spend. This progress reflects the Trust’s growing emphasis on sustainability criteria in catering contracts and its efforts to prioritise seasonal and lower-carbon ingredients where feasible.

The Trust also made strides in sustainable procurement by embedding environmental considerations into its catering supply chain. While constrained by the requirement to use NHS Supply Chain accredited suppliers, the Trust has begun to engage with these suppliers to assess their carbon reduction plans and sustainability credentials. These early actions lay the groundwork for more ambitious procurement reforms in the next planning cycle.

Key Risks and Challenges

Procurement Constraints: The Trust is required to procure food through NHS Supply Chain accredited suppliers. While this ensures compliance and consistency, it limits the ability to source from smaller, local, or more sustainable producers, reducing flexibility in achieving lower-carbon, locally sourced food options.

- *Scope 3 Emissions Visibility:* Limited data granularity on the carbon intensity of specific food items and suppliers restricts the ability to fully optimise procurement decisions.
- *Waste Compliance:* The Trust must comply with the Simpler Recycling Regulations (effective April 2025), which mandate the separation of food waste from other waste streams.
- *Cultural and Behavioural Change:* Encouraging staff and patients to adopt lower-carbon dietary choices requires sustained engagement and education.

Strategic Objectives

1. *Reduce Food Waste:* By March 2027, reduce total food waste by at least 10% from the 2023–24 baseline of 107 tonnes, through the implementation of food waste weighing systems across all catering sites.
 - Install a second food dehydrator by Q4 2027 to support waste volume reduction and improve segregation.
 - Conduct quarterly audits of food waste data and publish annual performance reports starting in FY 2026–27.
2. *Promote Low-Carbon, Healthy Menus:* Increase the proportion of plant-based main meal options on staff and patient menus to at least 25% by March 2030, with an interim target of 10% by March 2027.
 - Review and revise menus annually to ensure at least 50% of ingredients are seasonal and sourced from within the UK, where feasible, starting in FY 2026–27.
 - Conduct annual nutritional and carbon impact assessments of menus, beginning in Q3 2026.
3. *Sustainable Procurement:* Ensure that 75% of catering suppliers have published Net Zero Carbon Reduction Plans by March 2027, increasing to 100% by March 2030, in line with the NHS Net Zero Supplier Roadmap.
 - Integrate a minimum 10% sustainability weighting into all catering-related procurement tenders by Q2 2026.
 - Submit a proposal to NHS Supply Chain by Q4 2026 requesting flexibility to pilot local sourcing for up to 10% of food spend.
4. *Engage and Educate:* Launch an annual “Sustainable Food Week” campaign starting in Q3 2026, with participation targets of at least 500 staff and 100 patient responses to feedback surveys.
 - Deliver sustainability training to 100% of catering staff by March 2027, with refresher training every two years.
 - Display food waste reduction messaging in all staff canteens and patient dining areas by Q1 2027, with quarterly updates based on waste data.

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress will be monitored through a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures. These include annual submissions to the Estates Returns Information Collection (ERIC) on food waste volumes, Scope 3 emissions reporting specifically related to food and drink procurement, and internal audits of catering operations to assess compliance with sustainability and procurement standards. In addition, feedback from staff and patient satisfaction surveys will be used to evaluate the effectiveness and acceptability of food services, ensuring that sustainability improvements align with user experience and expectations.

13. Workforce and Leadership

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust (WHT) acknowledges that its people are the driving force behind the transition to a net zero health service. Integrating sustainability into leadership, workforce development, and organisational culture is essential to delivering high-quality, resilient, and environmentally responsible care.

Strategic Leadership and Governance

Sustainability is overseen at board level by the Group Deputy Chief Executive & Group Chief Strategy Officer, who serves as the Trust's designated Net Zero Lead. This role is supported by the Head of Sustainability, the Clinical Lead for Sustainability, and the Sustainability Group. This governance structure ensures strategic alignment, operational delivery, and clinical integration of the Green Plan.

The Sustainability Group comprises representatives from Estates and Facilities, Procurement, Clinical Services, HR/Workforce, ICT Services, Infection Prevention, Pharmacy, Patient Experience, Finance, Communications, Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR), the Education Centre, and the PFI Project Company. The group meets monthly and reports bi-monthly through the Finance and Productivity Group, then to the Trust Management Group, and to the Trust Board. Membership is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose, and members are expected to attend at least two-thirds of meetings each year. Governance is in accordance with NHS England's guidelines, including the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), and the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) "Well-led" domain.

Workforce Capacity and Skills

WHT is committed to enhancing sustainability knowledge and capability across all staff groups. By March 2027, all new starters will receive core sustainability training, and 90% of existing staff will complete annual refresher training via the Greener NHS Training Hub. By Q4 2026–27, sustainability responsibilities will be incorporated into all job descriptions. Furthermore, by March 2028, at least three hybrid or fellowship roles focused on sustainability will be established across estates, clinical services, and digital transformation. Sustainability principles will also be embedded into the Trust's business code of conduct by March 2026.

Staff Engagement and Culture

WHT promotes a culture of sustainability through proactive staff engagement and strategic communication. To support this commitment, the Sustainability Newsletter is published monthly, with a target open rate of 75% among clinical teams by Quarter 1 of 2026–27. The Trust also hosts monthly “Sustainability Lunch Hour” sessions, aiming for an average attendance of at least 30 staff per session by Quarter 3 of 2026–27. An external-facing sustainability webpage will be launched by Quarter 4 of 2025–26 and will be updated quarterly with progress metrics and case studies.

By March 2027, each clinical division will appoint at least one recognised Sustainability Champion, who will be supported through quarterly peer learning sessions. The Trust will relaunch the “Bright Ideas” campaign by Quarter 2 of 2026–27 to promote staff-led sustainability initiatives. In addition, an annual Sustainability Awards Scheme will be introduced by Quarter 1 of 2027–28 to celebrate outstanding contributions from individuals and teams.

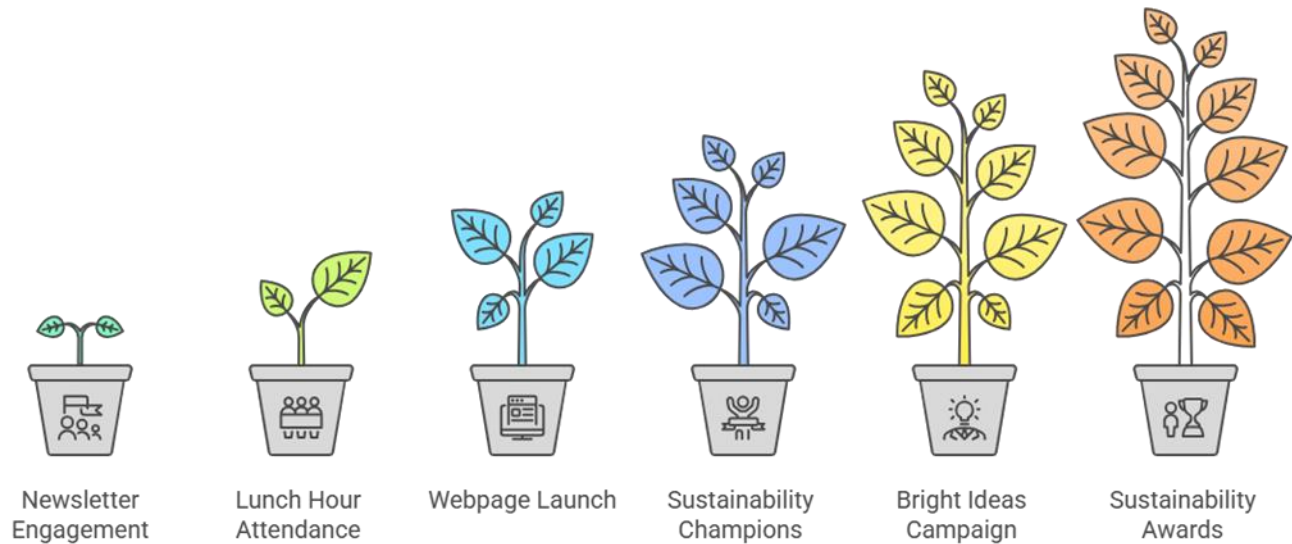
The [Library and Knowledge Services Team](#) is actively contributing to the Trust’s sustainability ambitions. Following the successful acquisition of a national grant—one of only 17 awarded across the NHS—the team have initiated a monthly Sustainability Team Showcases at the Manor Learning and Conference Centre (MLCC). These events offer staff the opportunity to present their initiatives, share practical insights, and foster mutual inspiration across departments. Display materials are provided to facilitate engaging exhibitions. Staff interested in participating are encouraged to contact the Library and Knowledge Services Team.

This initiative supports the Trust’s wider commitment to recognising staff contributions, encouraging cross-team learning, and embedding sustainability into daily working practices.

As a member of the Health Libraries Midlands (HeLM) consortium, the Library and Knowledge Services Team offers access to an extensive catalogue of [sustainability-focused resources](#). These span cutting-edge research, practical guides, and expert literature on environmentally sustainable healthcare practices. Registered members may draw upon these materials to support their professional development and the achievement of organisational sustainability objectives. In addition, colleagues can make use of [BrowZine](#), a digital journal platform that enables users to read, organise and track a wide range of sustainability journals in a single location—enhancing ease of access and encouraging continued engagement with high-quality, topical literature.

Library services also provide access to [KnowledgeShare](#), a personalised evidence-alert platform. This enables registered users to receive tailored updates aligned with their professional interests, including Environmental Sustainability. The service enhances efficiency by eliminating the need for extensive searching, thereby promoting optimal use of available resources.

Achieving Sustainability Culture



Embedding Sustainability in Organisational Processes

From April 2026, all business cases submitted to the Trust Board will include a completed Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA). By Q2 2026–27, sustainability metrics will be integrated into all departmental annual plans and appraisal templates. By March 2027, sustainability will be embedded into at least 80% of active Quality Improvement (QI) projects across the Trust.

Workforce Expectations and Retention

By March 2027, sustainability-related questions will be included in the annual staff survey, with a target of achieving a 10% year-on-year increase in positive responses regarding the Trust’s environmental leadership. The Trust will also continue to promote flexible working, active travel, and digital tools to support staff wellbeing and reduce emissions.

Collaboration and External Engagement

WHT will maintain active participation in the Black Country ICS Sustainability Network and other regional and national sustainability forums. The Trust will also share learning and best practice through external partnerships and NHS sustainability networks.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, the Trust will implement a structured monitoring and evaluation framework for workforce and leadership sustainability actions. From Q1 2026–27, quarterly workforce sustainability dashboards will be published, tracking training uptake, engagement metrics, and progress against Green Plan objectives. An annual review of Sustainability Group membership, meeting attendance, and effectiveness will be conducted, with findings reported to the Trust Management Group. The impact of training programmes will

be evaluated through pre- and post-training assessments and annual staff feedback surveys. Implementation of sustainability responsibilities in job descriptions and appraisal processes will be monitored through HR audits, with a target of 100% compliance by Q4 2026–27. The effectiveness of staff engagement initiatives will be reviewed annually, including participation rates in campaigns, feedback from champions, and outcomes from the “Bright Ideas” scheme. WHT will also participate in at least two regional ICS workforce sustainability initiatives annually and include outcomes in the Trust’s annual sustainability report.

13. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust recognises that climate change is both a public health emergency and a strategic risk to healthcare delivery. In alignment with NHS England’s Net Zero Strategy and the Trust’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan, this section presents a dual approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation—ensuring the Trust reduces its environmental impact while building resilience to the effects of a changing climate.

This approach supports the Trust’s statutory obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Health and Care Act 2022, and aligns with the NHS Net Zero Building Standard (NHS, 2023), the ICS Infrastructure Strategy, and the Care Quality Commission’s “Well-led” framework (CQC, 2024). It also reflects the national priorities set out in NHS England’s Fourth Health and Climate Adaptation Report, including statutory compliance, climate-informed planning, and public health leadership.

Mitigation: Reducing Emissions and Environmental Impact

Mitigation refers to actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit the extent of future climate change. WHT has already made significant progress in this area:

- Achieved a 97% reduction in desflurane use, saving 416 tCO₂e.
- Reduced nitrous oxide emissions by 79%, from 688 tCO₂e to 146 tCO₂e.
- Diverted 98.17% of domestic waste from landfill.
- Introduced reusable tourniquets, saving 454 kg of clinical waste.
- Reduced electricity-related emissions by 9.01% through improved energy efficiency and 100% renewable electricity procurement.

These achievements are embedded in a broader mitigation strategy that includes:

1. Energy and Infrastructure:
 - Improve electrical resilience through infrastructure upgrades by March 2030.
 - Complete the Heat Decarbonisation Plan by March 2027
 - Eliminate fossil fuel heating systems through phased implementation starting in 2030.
 - Install solar PV systems on all suitable Trust-owned buildings by March 2030.
 - Upgrade insulation, ventilation, and BMS across all priority buildings by March 2030.
2. Sustainable Estates Development:
 - Ensure all new builds and refurbishments meet the NHS Net Zero Building Standard from April 2026.

- Integrate passive design features into 100% of new capital projects from 2026 onwards.
3. Operational Efficiency:
 - Reduce reliance on temporary heating/cooling systems by 50% by March 2030.
 - Increase virtual outpatient appointments by 30% by March 2028 to reduce travel emissions.
 4. Sustainable Procurement and Waste:
 - Embed sustainability criteria in 100% of procurement contracts by April 2026.
 - Reduce emissions from medical gases and pharmaceuticals by 10% by March 2027.
 - Expand clinical equipment and devices reuse schemes to all inpatient wards by March 2026.
 5. Clinical Transformation:
 - Eliminate desflurane use Trust-wide by September 2026.
 - Reduce Entonox emissions by 25% by March 2030.
 - Implement Net Zero Clinical Pathways in perioperative, emergency, and respiratory care by December 2027.

Adaptation: Building Climate Resilience

Adaptation involves preparing for and responding to the impacts of climate change that are already occurring or anticipated. WHT's adaptation strategy includes:

1. Infrastructure Resilience:
 - Conduct overheating and flood risk assessments across all sites by December 2026.
 - Complete emergency preparedness upgrades in line with EPRR standards by March 2027.
 - Install flood mitigation systems in all high-risk areas by March 2028.
2. Service Continuity and Health Protection:
 - Identify and map vulnerable service users by March 2027.
 - Integrate climate risk into all clinical service continuity plans by March 2027.
 - Expand virtual care access for at-risk patients by 20% by March 2028.
3. Collaborative Planning:
 - Formalise climate resilience partnerships with Walsall Council and ICS by September 2025.
 - Update the Trust's risk registers to include climate risks by December 2026.
4. Workforce Empowerment and Public Health Leadership:
 - Train 75% of clinical and estates staff in climate resilience and low-carbon care by March 2030.
 - Establish a public health-led climate adaptation working group by June 2027.
5. Climate-Informed Decision-Making:
 - Integrate UKCP18 projections into all capital planning decisions from April 2026.
 - Complete climate risk assessments for all major investments from March 2027.

Governance and Monitoring

The Sustainability Group, chaired by the Head of Sustainability, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation measures. The group includes representatives from estates, clinical services, procurement, digital, and public health, and reports quarterly to the Trust Board. Governance is in accordance with NHS England's guidelines, including the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

The Trust is also an active member of the Walsall Net Zero Partnership, a borough-wide coalition of local organisations, businesses, and public bodies established to coordinate climate action and deliver shared benefits. The Head of Sustainability serves as Vice Chair of the Partnership, reinforcing the Trust's leadership role in shaping local climate strategy and ensuring alignment with borough-wide Objectives.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) include the reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions, the completion of climate risk assessments and adaptation actions, the delivery of infrastructure upgrades aligned with the Heat Decarbonisation Plan, and compliance with NHS EPRR and Net Zero Building Standards.

WHT's climate strategy is comprehensive, evidence-based, and aligned with national priorities. Through statutory compliance, climate-informed planning, and public health leadership, the Trust is reducing its environmental impact and enhancing resilience. These efforts safeguard health outcomes, protect infrastructure, and ensure continuity of care amid a changing climate.

14. Monitoring and Reporting

Effective monitoring and transparent reporting are essential to the successful delivery of the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust (WHT) Green Plan (2026–2030). These processes ensure accountability, drive continuous improvement, and demonstrate progress toward the Trust's net zero commitments. This section outlines the governance framework, performance metrics, reporting mechanisms, and review cycles that will underpin the implementation of the Green Plan.

Governance Structure

Monitoring and reporting will be overseen by the Trust's established sustainability governance framework, which includes:

Group Chief Strategy Officer – Executive lead for sustainability and net zero.

Head of Sustainability – Operational lead responsible for coordination and delivery.

Clinical Lead for Sustainability – Ensures alignment with clinical transformation and quality improvement.

Sustainability Group – Multidisciplinary team representing Estates, Clinical Services, Procurement, Digital, HR, Pharmacy, and other key departments.

Strategic oversight is maintained through bi-monthly updates provided to the Group Finance and Productivity Group, the Trust Management Committee, and the Trust Board.

This structure ensures alignment with NHS England’s frameworks, including the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), and supports compliance with the Climate Change Act 2008, Health and Care Act 2022, and Care Quality Commission (CQC) Well-led domain.

Trust's Sustainability Governance



Performance Metrics and Key Indicators

Each domain of the Green Plan includes SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) objectives with associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These will be tracked using a centralised sustainability dashboard and reported regularly. Core metrics include:

- Carbon emissions (Scopes 1, 2, and 3)
- Energy and water consumption
- Waste volumes and recycling rates
- Sustainable travel uptake and fleet emissions
- Procurement compliance with Carbon Reduction Plans
- Digital sustainability metrics (e.g., IT lifecycle emissions)
- Staff training and engagement rates
- Progress against clinical transformation targets (e.g., desflurane elimination, Net Zero Pathways)

Reporting Mechanisms

Progress will be reported through the following channels:

- Quarterly submissions to NHS England via the Greener NHS Data Collection, shared with the Black Country ICS Sustainability Network
- Bi-annual reporting of Travel and Transport data via the Greener NHS Fleet Data Collection
- Bi-monthly internal reports to the Group Finance and Productivity Group, Trust Management Committee, and Trust Board
- Annual Sustainability Report, aligned with NHS England’s Green Plan reporting requirements and TCFD principles

- ERIC (Estates Returns Information Collection) submissions for estates and facilities data
- Public-facing Sustainability Webpage, updated quarterly with key achievements, metrics, and case studies
- Staff and stakeholder newsletters, including the monthly Sustainability Newsletter

Data Collection and Quality Assurance

Data will be collected through a combination of:

- Digital tracking tools (e.g., Kora, KINTO Join, fleet telematics, IT asset management systems)
- Internal audits (e.g., waste, ventilation, travel, procurement)
- Supplier reporting (e.g., Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment)
- Finance reporting on Scope 3 spends, including emissions associated with procurement categories such as medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and IT
- Staff and patient surveys (e.g., travel behaviour, food satisfaction, training feedback)

All data will be subject to regular validation and quality assurance processes, including biannual audits and cross-departmental reviews.

Review and Continuous Improvement

The Green Plan will be reviewed annually to assess progress, identify barriers, and update actions as needed. This will include:

- Annual review workshops with the Sustainability Group and key stakeholders
- Mid-term review in 2028 to recalibrate targets and priorities
- Lessons learned integration from audits, staff feedback, and external benchmarking
- Adaptation of KPIs to reflect emerging risks, innovations, and NHS policy updates
- Escalation and Risk Management
- Risks to delivery will be monitored through the Trust's Sustainability Risk Register, with escalation protocols in place for:
 - Non-compliance with statutory or NHS requirements
 - Underperformance against key targets
 - Infrastructure or funding delays
 - Data quality or reporting gaps

Mitigation strategies will be developed collaboratively and reported to the Trust Management Committee.

Green Plan Review Cycle



15. Communication

A clear, inclusive, and accessible communications approach is vital to the success of the Green Plan. Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders—staff, leadership, patients, the public, system and regional partners, NHS England, and the wider community—are informed, engaged, and empowered to contribute to our sustainability ambitions. Effective communication underpins transparency, accountability, and a shared sense of ownership in the journey towards net zero.

Staff and Leadership

Our staff and leaders are fundamental to the successful delivery of the Green Plan. The Trust will ensure that key messages and regular updates are communicated through established channels such as staff briefings, the Trust intranet, and leadership meetings. Sustainability Champions, appointed within every department, will play a pivotal role in promoting local engagement, supporting two-way dialogue, and ensuring that staff voices are heard at every stage.

Sustainability will also be embedded in staff induction, ongoing training, and leadership development, equipping all colleagues with the knowledge and tools required to incorporate environmental responsibility into everyday practice. The Trust will promote continuous engagement through feedback opportunities, surveys, and peer learning events, making staff active partners in the delivery and refinement of sustainability initiatives.

System, Regional, and National Partners (including NHS England)

Collaboration beyond the organisation is essential for the success of the Green Plan. The Trust will provide quarterly progress reports to the Trust Board, the Black Country ICS Sustainability Network, and NHS England, supporting system-wide transparency and accountability. Best

practice, lessons learned, and case studies will be shared through regional and national forums to encourage alignment and shared progress across the health and care system. Active participation in workshops, networks, and collaborative projects will further strengthen these partnerships and support innovation.

Patients and the Public

Patients and the public are central to the Trust's mission and the Green Plan's purpose. The Trust will ensure open access to the Green Plan and regular progress updates through the public website, using summaries and infographics to enhance accessibility. Sustainability will also be highlighted during health promotion and public engagement events, with opportunities for questions, feedback, and community participation.

The Trust's social media channels and local media will be used to share key milestones and invite wider involvement, ensuring transparency and building public confidence. Patient and carer feedback will be actively sought through surveys, forums, and suggestion schemes, recognising the value of insight from those who use our services.

Community Stakeholders and Local Partners

Building a sustainable future requires active collaboration with the wider Walsall community and local partners. The Trust will work closely with local authorities, voluntary and community organisations, and suppliers to align efforts and maximise positive impact. Community stakeholders will be invited to participate in Trust-led sustainability initiatives and campaigns, and regular communication will be maintained through newsletters, partnership meetings, and targeted updates, ensuring ongoing engagement throughout the implementation of the Green Plan.

Accessibility and Inclusion

All communications relating to the Green Plan will adhere to NHS accessibility standards and be provided in a range of formats and languages, ensuring that everyone—including those from diverse backgrounds and with additional needs—can engage fully with our sustainability ambitions.

Open, targeted, and inclusive communication will ensure that all staff, partners, patients, and members of the wider community are actively involved in delivering a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable health service for Walsall and beyond. Through this approach, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust empowers every stakeholder to contribute meaningfully to the Green Plan's ambitions and long-term success.

16. Conclusion

The Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Green Plan (2026–2030) articulates a comprehensive and forward-looking strategy to embed sustainability across all facets of healthcare delivery. It responds decisively to the climate emergency, aligning with NHS England's net zero targets and reflecting the Trust's broader commitment to environmental stewardship, clinical excellence, and organisational resilience.

This plan builds upon a foundation of measurable progress. The near elimination of desflurane, substantial reductions in nitrous oxide emissions, and the diversion of over 98% of domestic waste from landfill exemplify the Trust's capacity for innovation and operational change. These achievements are not isolated successes but integral components of a system-wide transformation that spans estates, clinical services, procurement, digital infrastructure, and workforce development.

The Green Plan sets out SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) objectives across key domains, underpinned by robust governance and continuous monitoring. It is informed by national frameworks, including the NHS Net Zero Strategy, the ICS Infrastructure Strategy, and the Care Quality Commission's "Well-led" domain. These alignments ensure that the Trust's sustainability efforts are not only locally impactful but also nationally coherent.

Nevertheless, the Trust acknowledges the challenges ahead. Infrastructure limitations, financial constraints, and the complexity of Scope 3 emissions present significant risks. The absence of a completed Heat Decarbonisation Plan and gaps in Scope 3 monitoring underscore the need for sustained investment, cross-sector collaboration, and cultural change. The Green Plan addresses these risks through detailed mitigation strategies, adaptive planning, and a commitment to transparency and accountability.

Importantly, this plan positions sustainability not as a peripheral concern but as a core principle of high-quality care. It recognises that environmental responsibility is inextricably linked to health equity, patient safety, and long-term service resilience. By reducing emissions, enhancing infrastructure, and promoting sustainable clinical practices, the Trust aims to improve health outcomes while safeguarding the environment for future generations.

In conclusion, the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Green Plan is a declaration of intent and a blueprint for action. It reflects a mature understanding of the Trust's environmental responsibilities and a clear vision for sustainable healthcare. Through collective leadership, evidence-based interventions, and a culture of continuous improvement, the Trust is well-positioned to lead by example in the NHS's journey to net zero.

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Net Zero	Achieving a balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and removed from the atmosphere.
Scope 1, 2, 3 Emissions	Categories of emissions: Scope 1 (direct), Scope 2 (indirect from energy), Scope 3 (indirect from supply chain, travel, etc.).
Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP)	A supplier's documented strategy to reduce carbon emissions across operations.
Desflurane	A volatile anaesthetic gas with high global warming potential.
Entonox	A medical gas mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen used for pain relief.
Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP)	A strategy to eliminate fossil fuel-based heating systems.
SMART Objectives	Goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
PFI (Private Finance Initiative)	A funding model where private firms manage public infrastructure projects.
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning systems.
AGSS	Anaesthetic Gas Scavenging Systems used to capture and remove waste gases.
Digital Maturity Assessment	Evaluation of an organisation's readiness and capability in digital transformation.
DMR (Dry Mixed Recycling)	A recycling stream for mixed dry waste like paper, cardboard, and plastics.
Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)	Evaluation of the environmental impact of business decisions.
GreenED	A framework for embedding sustainability in emergency departments.
Virtual Care Pathways	Remote healthcare services including consultations and monitoring.
TCFD	Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures – a framework for climate risk governance.
EPRR	Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response – NHS standards for crisis planning.
UKCP18	UK Climate Projections 2018 – data used for climate risk assessments.
ERIC	Estates Returns Information Collection – NHS data reporting system.
Kora / KINTO Join	Digital platforms for tracking and incentivising sustainable travel behaviours.