



# The Green Plan **2022/25**



## Our Trust has welcomed the requirement to develop and implement this Green Plan which will build on the progress already achieved in our previous Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP).

Climate change represents a significant health challenge for the 21st century and this Green Plan details a proactive approach that our Trust can take to do our part to reduce the impact that climate change will have on the people of Wirral, Cheshire East, St Helens and Knowsley. We firmly believe that making our Trust as environmentally, economically and socially sustainable as possible helps us to fulfil this aim. Implementing the actions presented within this Green Plan will help ensure that the Trust is creating the best environment for our staff and patients.

We need to embed sustainability within our organisations and must work together with our partners across the North West and the NHS to improve sustainability. We will collaborate with our partners to help meet our own internal objectives and the wider regional level and national level objectives. For our Trust to be a truly sustainable organisation, we need all our staff to play their part in delivering this Green Plan and we strongly encourage all our colleagues to work together to achieve these aims.

**Please note that all photography used in this document was taken before Covid-19 restrictions came into place.**



## Introduction

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust aspires to be a truly environmentally sustainable NHS Trust, ready to contribute to the ambitious objective of a Net Zero NHS by 2040. This Green Plan sets out the organisation wide approach, from the Trust's strategic objectives, to the S.M.A.R.T targets and environmental improvements already taking place which the success of the plan depends on. This Green Plan will guide the Trust's sustainability journey over the next 3 years (2022/23-2024/25).

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust recognises this Green Plan can only be successful if it places the Trust's workforce and local community at the heart of the strategy.

With over 2,000 employees providing a diverse range of community health services, the workforce is the Trust's most important and valued resource. This plan will set out how the

Trust will engage with staff to tap into their potential and empower them to make a valuable contribution towards the NHS journey to Net Zero.

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust faces unique challenges due to the demographic make up and socio-economic conditions of the local populations we serve across Wirral, Cheshire East, St. Helens and Knowsley. 32% of Wirral's population live in the top 20% most deprived areas in England, while the community performs worse than the national average in terms of both fuel, poverty and respiratory deaths under the age of 75 (<https://www.wirralintelligenceservice.org/this-is-wirral/wirral-population/>).

Our organisation reaches into Cheshire East, St. Helens and Knowsley and we work collectively at local level here, as we do in Wirral, using an Assets Based approach to bring together our buildings, places, people, knowledge and





enthusiasm to drive our green agenda forward. Working with our staff and the local communities we serve, encouraging involvement for regeneration processes as well as creating strong, sustainable and cohesive communities.

Our approach builds on a 'done with' methodology ensuring staff and communities feel empowered to ensure sustainability and a strengths-based, needs-led approach. Our commitment is to continue taking social value and net zero beyond scope and to develop value at the centre of our communities driven by our people.

Demographics in Cheshire East vary from the very affluent areas to wards similar to those deprived areas in Wirral. St Helens is the 26th most deprived Local Authority in England out of 317, with Knowsley being the 2nd most deprived borough in England.

We promote good health and care across our communities, recognising the vision for our staff and communities is to have a **thriving community where health and wellbeing is part of a borough that is well, economically, socially and environmentally**. The stark differences in health inequalities between wards in St Helens compared (not too dissimilar to Wirral) to other areas within Cheshire and Merseyside, we can bring our social value expertise and recognition to drive social value excellence and net zero carbon into all geographical locations of our business.

As such, when defining the objectives and targets of this Green Plan, the trust has taken a triple bottom line approach, taking into account economic and social benefits as well as environmental performance, in an effort to maximise the benefits to the local community.



## Sustainability at the Trust

The Trust has long since recognised the importance of incorporating sustainability into operations, and the Green Plan will build on the previous successes of the Trust's Carbon Reduction Strategy (2009) and Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP). Through a consolidation of the Trust's estates, investment in energy efficiency measures and installation of Solar PV at 2 sites the Trust has already made significant reductions in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions, with a 44.7% reduction between 2013 and 2018.

While this represents a significant achievement, like Greener NHS, the Trust recognises the importance of increasing ambition to ensure

the NHS can meet the 2040 Net Zero target and make a significant contribution to the UK and wider global climate change agenda.

The Trust has also successfully implemented and maintained an Environmental Management System (EMS) to manage the most significant environmental impacts of its operations. The EMS has put in place a framework for managing the Trust's environmental data and introduced a standardised approach to managing environmental risks. This continues to drive continuous environmental improvement across the Trust and has been certified to the prestigious ISO14001:2015 standard since 2017.





## Sustainability across NHS England

While the plan is focused on the Trust's own objectives, targets and actions, the Green Plan has incorporated the requirements of national commitments, including 2021/22 NHS Standard Contract, Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service and 2021/22 NHS Planning Guidance. Key national commitments include:

### As per the NHS Standard Contract 2021/22

- Every trust to ensure a Board member is responsible for their net zero targets and their Green Plan. Similarly, every ICS is asked to designate a Board-level lead to oversee development of their Green Plan.
- Every trust to procure 100% renewable energy from April 2021, with supply contracts changing as soon as possible.

### As per Delivering a Net Zero NHS

- Ensure that, for new purchases and lease arrangements, systems and trusts solely purchase and lease cars that are ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEVs) or zero emissions vehicles (ZEVs).

- Develop a green travel plan to support active travel and public transport use for staff, patients and visitors.

### As per NHS Operational Contracting and Planning Guidance 2021/22

- Where outpatient attendances are clinically necessary, at least 25% of outpatient activity should be delivered remotely, resulting in direct and tangible carbon reductions.



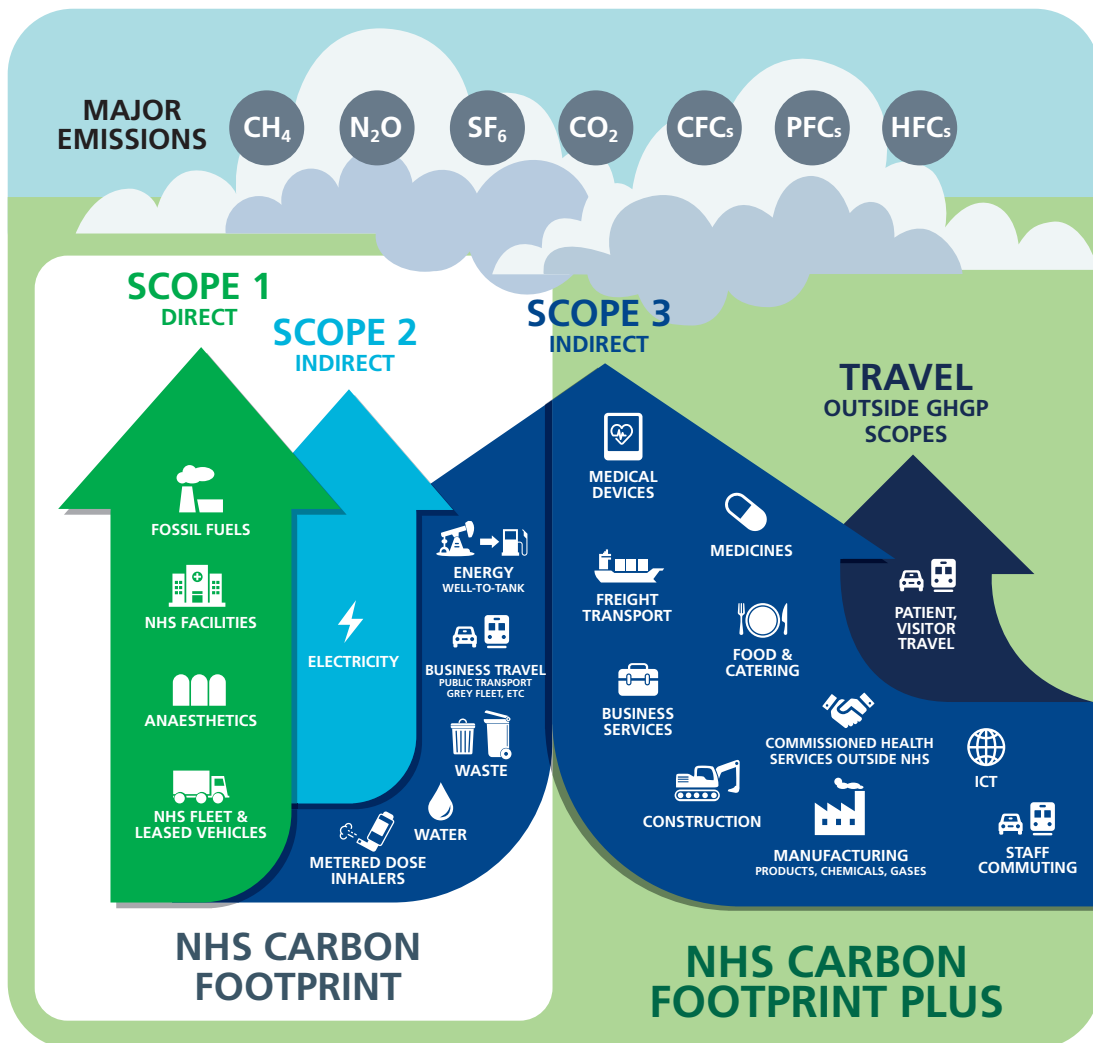
**NHS**



# 1. Organisational Vision

As the previous section demonstrates, the Trust has established an effective approach to managing its environmental impacts across operations. While the Trust is proud of its achievements to date, it recognises there is still more to be done particularly in light of Greener NHS' commitments to be net zero in its own operations by 2040, and throughout the value chain by 2045 (NHS carbon footprint plus), and the renewed focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

As such, the Trust looking to build on past successes, has taken into account the interventions which are most likely to benefit the local community while meeting the requirements of national commitments, in forming the following objectives and targets. These Objectives and targets are designed to guide the Trust on its sustainability journey over the next 3 years (2022/23 to 2024/25).



## 1.1 Objectives and Targets

While the Green Plan is designed to cover a three year period, the Trust recognises this is a live document and these objectives and targets are subject to change, as priorities shift both in the global and local climate change agenda. As such, these targets will be reviewed, and if necessary updated, on an annual basis.

### 1. Maintain and improve processes for the effective management of the Trust's environmental impacts, while increasing engagement with employees.

- a. Set up a "Sustainability Champions" working group to influence environmental decisions made within the trust, with representation from all relevant departments
- b. Highlight sustainability learning opportunities throughout the workforce
- c. Maintain EMS ISO 14001 accreditation

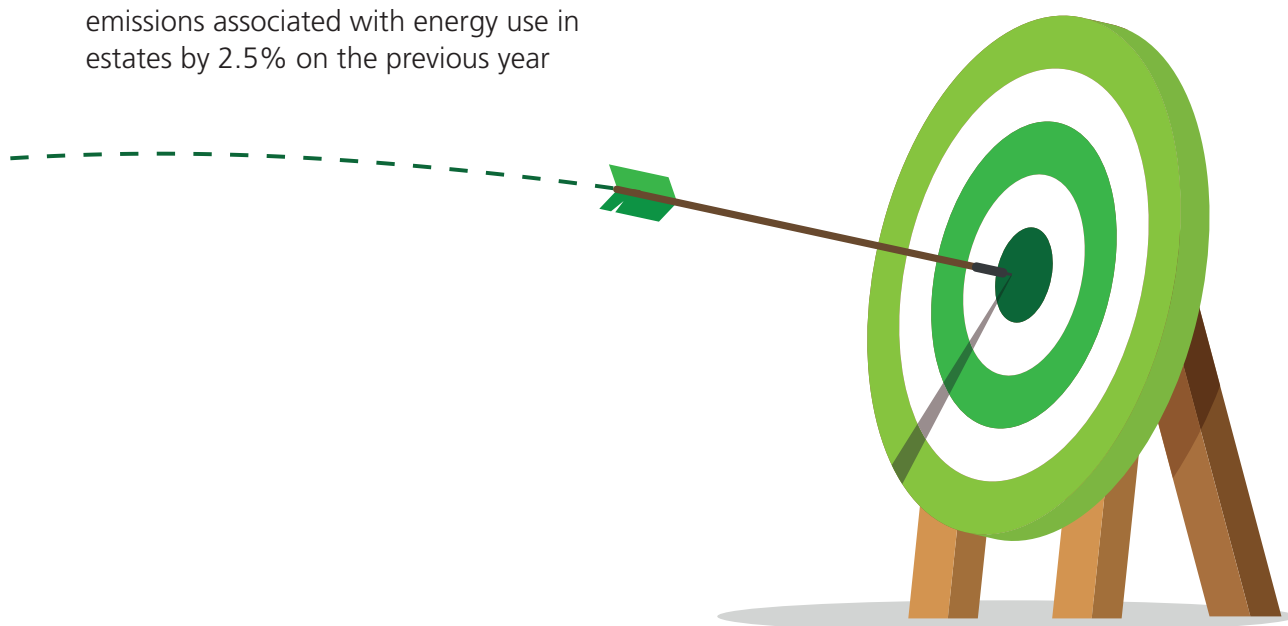
### 2. Reduce direct emissions resulting from the Trust's own operations

- a. Continue to meet the Trust's long-standing target to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use in estates by 2.5% on the previous year

- b. Procure only ultra-low or zero emissions when purchasing or leasing new vehicles
- c. Promote digital technology as a low carbon alternative to face-to-face meetings

### 3. Work with suppliers, employees and service users to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout, and beyond, the Trust's direct value chain

- a. Maintain and improve procurement policy and decisions to better integrate environmental concerns
- b. Raise awareness of low carbon travel opportunities including the availability of tax exemptions and government grants among staff, as part of a wider green travel plan to support active travel and public transport use for staff, patients and visitors
- c. Increase electric vehicle charging infrastructure at Trust sites.







## 2. Areas of focus

As part of the Green Plan, the Trust has identified eight areas of focus to be included. The plan will hereby identify the actions already taken within these key areas, and the actions the Trust is taking to continue making improvements over the term of the plan.

### 2.1 Workforce and System Leadership

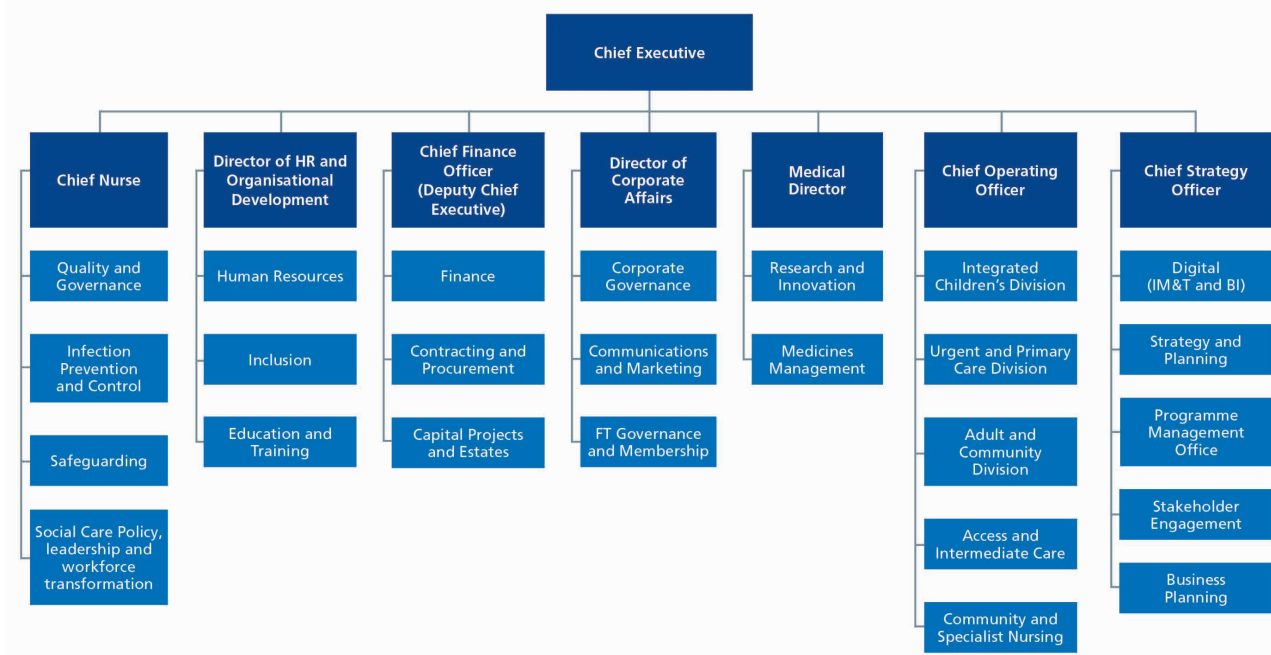
The Trust understands that effective environmental intervention and decisions can only be brought about through strong leadership and accountability, combined with an approach which engages and empowers the entire workforce to contribute to improved environmental performance.

#### Where we are

The Trust has implemented a rigorous structure for environmental decision making across the business, ensuring there is accountability at senior level and opportunities for engagement

and development with the Trust's environmental impacts across the workforce.

Sustainability is overseen at Board level, with the Chief Financial Officer/ Deputy Chief Executive the Board level lead responsible for net zero commitments and this Green Plan. Sustainability decisions are supported by the Estates Management Group and the Health, Safety, Security and Resilience Group. Both groups meet remotely, on a quarterly basis, to discuss sustainability ideas and to develop business cases for Board approval.



Engagement with environmental issues has been encouraged throughout the workforce through the implementation of environmental awareness and recycling initiatives across the Trust. Environmental awareness has been raised among staff via screen savers on organisation PCs, Staffzone and staff bulletins. The Trust has also introduced recycling initiatives targeting difficult to recycle items including used batteries, cardboard, toner and printer cartridges and plastics from goods delivered.

System leadership is further supported by the Trust's ISO 14001 accredited EMS. The EMS puts in place a standardised approach for managing the Trust's significant environmental impacts and the collection of environmental data to support decision making. The EMS has supported the Trust to develop and continuously improve processes to manage environmental risks and opportunities, which have helped improve energy efficiency and reduce waste to landfill across their Estate. Furthermore, the EMS has introduced processes for the distribution of environmental information throughout the Trust, encouraging further engagement from the workforce.

## Going forward

The Trust is implementing plans to further engage the workforce in environmental decision making. Key to this will be the introduction of a group of Sustainability Champions, from a

diverse range of departments across the Trust. Through engaging with a wide variety of business areas, the Trust hopes to identify new and innovative responses to the climate change agenda from a wide variety of perspectives and expertise. The Trust aims to have in place a Sustainability Champions group by the start of 2022/23, with representation from the following departments:

- Estates
- HR
- IT
- Procurement
- Medicines Management
- Clinical/Operations
- Finance
- Transport
- Communications

Furthermore, the Trust plans on fostering greater environmental awareness through identifying and encouraging uptake of sustainability focused learning opportunities within the NHS. A recent example of this would be encouraging staff to complete the 000 Building Net Zero NHS via the ESR E-learning program. Finally, the Trust will continue to maintain ISO 14001 accreditation for its EMS, ensuring the appropriate processes are in place for managing environmental risks and improving performance.



## 2.2 Sustainable Models of Care

Embedding net zero principles across all clinical services is critical, with this section considering carbon reduction opportunities in the way care is delivered. Examples may include the provision of care closer to home; default preferences for lower-carbon interventions where they are clinically equivalent; and reducing unwarranted variations in care delivery and outcomes that result in unnecessary increases in carbon emissions.

### Where we are

We are currently liaising with Quality Leads to establish an action plan to improve the

sustainability of our care models, so we can continue to provide high quality care without having a negative environmental, social or economic impact.

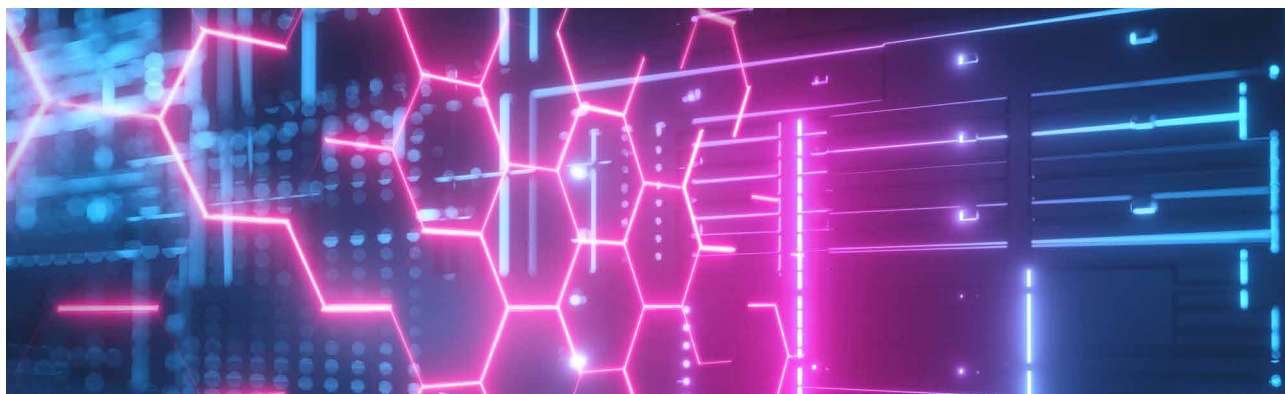
### Going forward

The Trust will work closely with Quality Leads to establish a benchmark for the current sustainability of our care models and develop an action plan for reducing the impact of our care delivery going forward.



## 2.3 Digital Transformation

Throughout the global economy, digital transformation is offering significant opportunities to decarbonise the world of work. The Trust recognises this is also true within the NHS and is exploring opportunities to reduce its carbon footprint through embracing new ways of working.



### Where we are

The direct alignments between the digital transformation agenda and a net zero NHS are clear. The Trust has attempted to harness the potential the digital revolution could have in reducing the Trust's carbon footprint through advertising technological alternatives to carbon intensive practices, such as encouraging the use of online video conferencing as opposed to travelling, with subsequent carbon emissions, to attend meetings in person, and discouraging the use of printing, paper records and postage. Examples of this are the Estates Management Group and the Health, Safety, Security and Resilience Group meetings, which are all held remotely rather than in person. Since early 2020 all outgoing mail has been issued electronically rather than in physical copy, reducing carbon emissions associated with printing and mail delivery.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has forced many organisations, including the Trust, to consider their approach to meeting stakeholder demands both internally and externally. Following the introduction of social distancing rules and work from home guidance, the Trust adopted the approach that all meetings should be held over video conferencing unless absolutely

necessary. Following this, the Trust made the decision to reassign over 75% of rooms previously available for meetings to other uses. Since the more recent relaxing of social distancing regulations, the Trust has opted to continue with this allocation of rooms available for meetings and encourage the use of video conferencing unless there are specific benefits to holding a meeting face to face.

### Going forward

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust is a leader in Virtual Ward development where health care professionals can support patients at home by monitoring blood pressure, pulse rate, Oxygen levels and weight by phone. Any concerns can be escalated to the correct pathway of care for example, GP review, Matron visits, rapid response visit or if required Accident and Emergency. This type of health care enables patients to be supported at home reducing their fears and anxiety, empowering them to manage their condition thus reducing hospital visits and improving outcomes and quality of life. Reduction in travelling and home visits will have a positive outcome on the Trust Carbon reduction figures.

## 2.4 Travel and Transport

The Trust recognises travel and transport as one of its most significant environmental impacts and has been identified as a priority for future management and carbon reduction opportunities. The Trust's environmental impacts includes greenhouse gas emissions arising from:

- Business travel by road
- Staff commuting
- Patient and visitor travel
- Transport of purchased goods and services

### Where we are

The Trust has made significant steps to reducing its environmental impacts both in terms of encouraging active travel and investing in low emissions vehicles and infrastructure.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has affected how the Trust communicates with patients, and many clinical services are now subject to a telephone triage communication prior to physical patient appointments, thus minimising the need for patients to travel and be seen at clinics.

The Trust recognises encouraging active travel to staff and patients as an opportunity to reduce carbon emissions, whilst also providing health benefits. Active travel such as walking and

cycling, are a low-cost form of transport, which produce zero emissions while providing commuters with an opportunity to exercise. In order to encourage uptake of active travel among staff and patients, the Trust has focused on installing the infrastructure to enable commuters to engage in active travel comfortably. Key to this is the removal of barriers which would discourage commuters from engaging in active travel. To this end the Trust has:

- Produced and disseminated a Trust walking plan and cycling map, indicating distances and estimated times to popular sites across the region
- Promoted the cycle to work scheme by assisting staff in purchasing a bicycle in the most cost-efficient way
- Invested in secure cycle storage facilities at sites across the Estate
- Installed changing and shower facilities at feasible sites

In line with Delivering a Net Zero NHS, the Trust is committed to ensuring that all new vehicles purchased and leased by the Trust are either ultra-low or zero emissions vehicles. In order to future proof itself from the ongoing shift to



electric vehicles, the Trust has been an early adopter of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, installing six electric vehicle charging points at St Catherine's Health Centre. As well as the Trust's fleet, these charging points are available to both staff and patients for use on their own vehicles, so far servicing up to 20 unique vehicles per month and contributing to a reduction in emissions beyond the Trust's own footprint. Furthermore, the charging station tariffs have been set as to only cover their own costs.

The Trust has also identified the use of public transport as a low carbon alternative to staff and patients travelling to sites in their own vehicles. To this end, the Trust has worked to ensure public transport information, such as bus/train routes and timetables, is available to staff, patients and visitors, helping to make their journeys as efficient and comfortable as possible.

### Going forward

To build on much of the good work already completed, the Trust will continue to distribute and update communications encouraging active travel. The Trust will also work to identify any opportunities to improve the active travel infrastructure across the building Estate.

The Trust will continue to expand procurement of either ultra-low or zero emissions vehicles, as well as investing in the required infrastructure. The Trust is committed to meeting the requirements of Delivering a Net Zero NHS and will continue to only procure low emissions vehicles when upgrading the fleet. Furthermore, the Trust is committed to the expansion of electric vehicle infrastructure having recently produced and submitted a business case for the installation of four further charging points at St Catherine's Health Centre, exploring further potential emission reductions and economic gains.

Finally, the Trust has identified an opportunity to reduce emissions from their employee's travel through highlighting government incentives and benefits in kind to staff. The Trust will work to disseminate information to staff of government incentives for the purchase of electric vehicles, such as the plug-in grant, in order to reduce staff's emissions both at work and in their home lives. Furthermore, the Trust will work to raise awareness of benefits in kind encouraging the use of public transport, including season ticket loans reducing the tax paid by employees for public transport.



## 2.5 Estates and Facilities

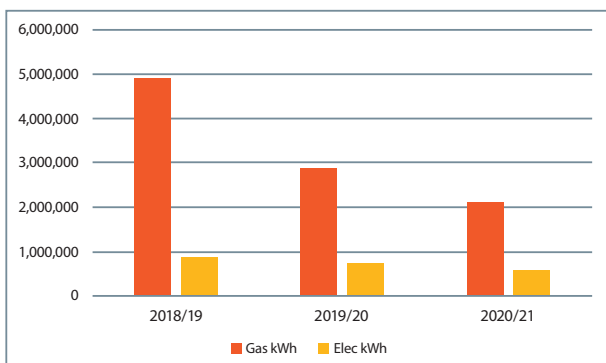
Efficiency savings and technological improvements across the Trust’s estates portfolio, have played a key role in the emissions reductions achieved as part of the SDMP and Carbon Reduction Strategy. This has been achieved through a consistent reduction in energy usage and an expansion of renewable alternatives to fossil fuels for both electricity and heating.

The Trust has also made strides in reducing the environmental impacts of waste produced on site, through embedding the waste hierarchy into operations, diverting waste from landfill and encouraging recycling.

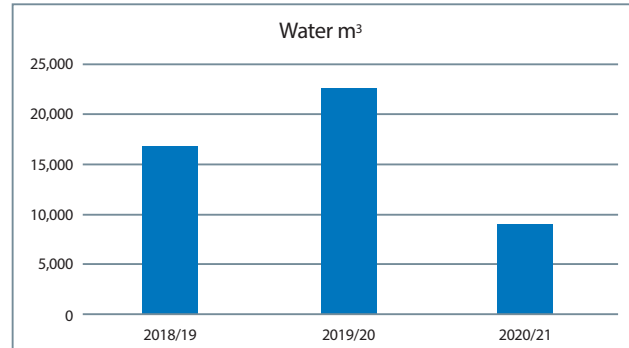
### Where we are

The Trust has achieved significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions as part of Carbon Reduction Strategy first produced in 2009. Recognising the potential long term environmental and cost saving benefits of reducing energy consumption from the National Grid, the Carbon Reduction Strategy first focused on investment in energy efficiency across the estates portfolio through replacing old building stock, improving insulation where feasible in existing properties, installing, and optimising building controls and the installation of efficient LED lighting across all owned properties.

### Gas/Electric Usage over the last three years



### Water Usage over the last three years



The Trust has also invested heavily in local energy generation at selected sites, having installed a 4kWp solar PV system at Fender Way Health Centre, as early as 2011, and 100kWp solar array at St Catherine’s Health Centre, which has the potential to replace 40% of the electricity supplied to the site by the National Grid. The Trust has also invested in a bio-fuel boiler at St Catherine’s Health Centre, in an effort to decarbonise the energy consumed in heating the building.

The Trust’s Estates and Facilities team have also made great progress in avoiding the environmental impacts of waste generated on site. The Trust is committed to recycling where possible and collection receptacles for waste cardboard, used lead batteries, printer cartridges and aluminum cans are evident at most of our sites.

Through the introduction of waterless urinals at St. Catherine’s Health Centre the Trust has managed to save over one million litres of water annually.

## Going forward

The Estates and Facilities teams will continue to identify energy efficiency measures throughout the portfolio, building on the success of the Carbon Reduction Strategy and SDMP. These measures, combined with the gradual decarbonisation of the National Grid, mean the Trust remain confident in meeting their long-standing target to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use 2.5% year on year. Furthermore, the Trust will continue to seek out opportunities to install low emission alternatives to energy generated from fossil fuels.

During 2022/23 the Trust will commission and undertake energy efficiency audits across the Estate to identify quantified energy reduction and carbon saving opportunities, to feed into the wider Estates Strategy, which also includes plans to dispose of three of the least energy efficient properties in the Estate.

The Trust has embedded sustainability into the construction of a new site to be added to the Estate. As of 2021, work is continuing on the construction of Marine Lake Health and Wellbeing Centre, a new state of the art healthcare development in West Kirby, relocating the Marine Lake Medical Practice and Estuary Medical Practice. The building has been designed to meet a minimum of BREEAM 'Very Good' demonstrating sustainability credentials in new build. The development is also committed to enhancing green space and biodiversity within the local area, through the provision of community owned wellbeing gardens, providing additional social benefits to the wider Wirral community.





## 2.6 Medicines, Supply Chain and Procurement



The NHS uses products from more than 80,000 suppliers, encompassing medical equipment, food, business and office goods. With more than 60% of the NHS carbon footprint based within the NHS supply chain, we need the support of every supplier if we are to reach net zero by 2045. The Trust recognises the importance of reducing emissions not just from its own operations, but throughout the supply chain.

### Where we are

The Trust has introduced a procurement policy, incorporating sustainable procurement into decision making processes. This policy seeks to ensure sustainability considerations are taken into account in all new contracts, as well as value for money. This ensures consideration is given to competitive markets in which to procure:

- Fair Trade products
- Food and beverage that meet recognised industry standard for animal welfare and environmental protection
- Products produced in accordance with environmental factors that aim to conserve energy, water, wood, paper and other resources, reduce waste and phase out the use of ozone depleting substances and minimise the release of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds and other substances damaging to health and the environment

Furthermore, the policy looks to:

- Work with local suppliers to reflect the place-based system of Wirral and maximise social value
- Work with SMEs to encourage them to address their own environmental impacts and ensure a level playing field

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust has just become the first NHS organisation to be awarded the Social Value Quality Mark.

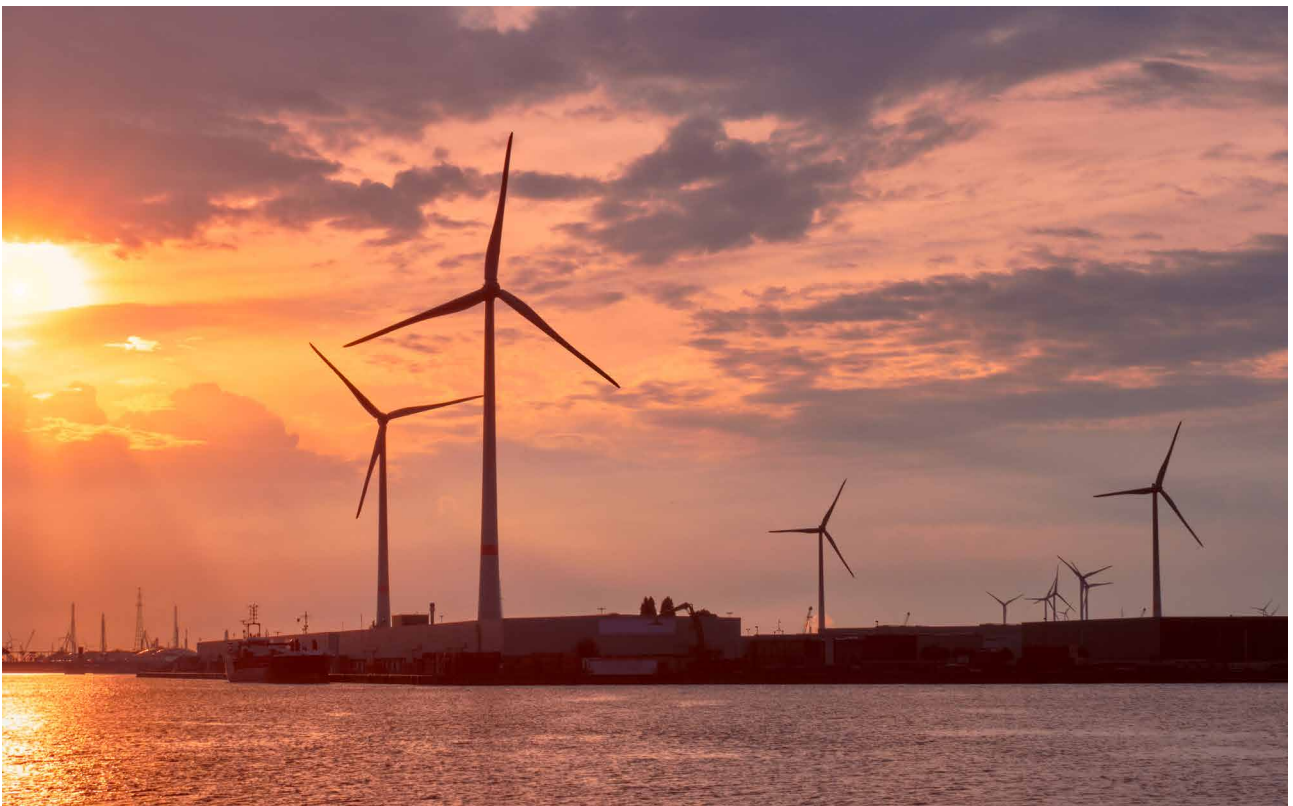


## Going Forward

The Trust is committed to meeting the requirement under the NHS Standard Contract 2021/22 to procure 100% renewable energy, with an aim to achieve this by early 2022/23. Despite the current volatility of the UK energy market, the Trust is investigating the most cost-effective way to introduce 100% renewable (REGO backed) energy contracts.

The Trust will explore opportunities to minimize carbon emissions associated with clinical waste generation, transport and disposal as part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Group.

The Trust will continue to review and update its procurement policy and decisions, in order to maintain high environmental standards throughout the supply chain and identify further opportunities for making further carbon reductions.



## 2.7 Food and Nutrition

The Trust recognises the important role an individual's diets has to play in reducing their carbon footprint. The Trust also understands the multifunctional environmental and health benefits of a locally sourced diet high in fruit and vegetables.



### Where we are

Improving the diets of the communities that use NHS services, has long been an ambition across the organisation. Contributing to this drive, the Trust introduced regular fruit and vegetable 'market stall' at St Catherine's Health Centre (situated in Tranmere - an area historically seen as a 'food desert'), providing staff, patients, and visitors with the opportunity to purchase healthy, low carbon food from local suppliers. This initiative has provided environmental, health and economic benefits and opportunities throughout the Wirral community.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic the Trust has been forced to suspend the fruit and vegetable market stall at St Catherine's Health Centre in order to protect the health safety of our staff and service users, however it is hoped that this will return as soon as possible and possibly expanded to other sites in the Estate.

Although the provision of in-patient meals is limited across the Trust, catering provision for the

in-patient wards at the Community Intermediate Care Centre (CICC) located at Clatterbridge Hospital is based on an 'order on the day' model which means less food waste and no paper menus/forms to be completed/provided.

### Going forward

The Trust will continue to seek opportunities to reduce emissions within its own operations and the local community brought about from food consumed. Discussions are currently underway regarding the introduction of a regular fruit and vegetable delivery to St Catherine's Health Centre which is able to provide the environmental, health and economic benefits of the previous market stall, while ensuring a safe and healthy environment is provided to both employees and service users.

Where catering provision is required, the Trust will adopt best practice to provide patient meals in the most environmentally sustainable way possible.

## 2.8 Adaptation

The Trust appreciates it is not only important to mitigate the causes of climate change, but also adapt to its risks and effects.

### Where we are

The impacts of climate change are wide reaching with the increasing regularity of severe weather events having implications for the Trust's infrastructure, patients and staff. As such, the Trust has published a number of plans detailing their response to extreme weather events, including:

- Cold weather plan
- Heatwave plan

These plans detail processes and responses to expected extreme weather events, ensuring the Trust is able to respond effectively with minimal disruption to services provided and the people who use our services.

### Going forward

The Trust will continue to review existing contingency plans and expand the current plans to include flood risk assessment and management plan. The policies currently sit within the Trust's ISO accredited Electronic Management System (EMS) and are reviewed annually and regularly updated. The Trust will continue to develop the extreme weather plans already in place, responding to the latest recommendations and examples of best practice from other Trusts and further afield.

