

NHS North East London System Green Plan 2025 – 2028

Enabling a net zero health and care
system



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Foreword

The System Green Plan supports the principle to 'Create a Greener and Healthier north east London' in our [Anchor Charter](#).

A progress review of the [System Green Plan 2022- 20225 is available by clicking here](#). We've met our Interim Target of a collective 40% reduction in the emissions we control directly by 2025.

In our second Plan, we set out the journey to Net Zero covering 2025 to 2028 by which time we need to reduce our carbon footprint by 80% based on the 2019/20 baseline.

The emissions from our health care system are contributing to the climate crisis. From the medicines we prescribe to our transport operations, the energy that power buildings and supply chains that stretch around the globe.

We must act to protect our population from the effects of climate change and safeguard the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, while reducing pressure on public services.

The System Green Plan provides strategic direction on the collaboration and culture change required to design low carbon, high quality care to meet our net zero targets.

We have collaborated with our Trusts, Primary Care, Social Care Providers, and Public Health. We are well connected across the region, working closely with other London ICBs, the NHS England Regional Team, London Councils, Transport for London and the Greater London Authority.

This Plan enables staff in the North East London Integrated Care System (ICS) to:

- ✓ **Prioritise shared goals** around low carbon, high quality care and together drive green innovation
- ✓ **Take action** using the toolkits and resources that are available for your work area
- ✓ **Empower staff** to make ambitious changes within their organisation.

In north east London we are going above and beyond the [national framework](#) and have added two additional chapters on Clean Air and Biodiversity. Made possible by the system coming together to share expertise.

This Plan is a set of actions and recommendations building on the productive relationships and innovations from the previous Plan to deliver a Greener NHS.

Co-signed

Ralph Coulbeck, Chief Strategy officer and

Ellie Hobart, Deputy Director of Health Inclusion & Improvement

What is the challenge?

The NHS makes up 5% of the UK's carbon footprint. Carbon is the common measure that is internationally used to measure all of the greenhouse gases emitted by manmade activity.

Our baseline system carbon footprint was provided by NHS England in 2019/20 and does not include health services commissioned by local authorities or Primary Care services.

Target 1 – ICS Carbon Footprint

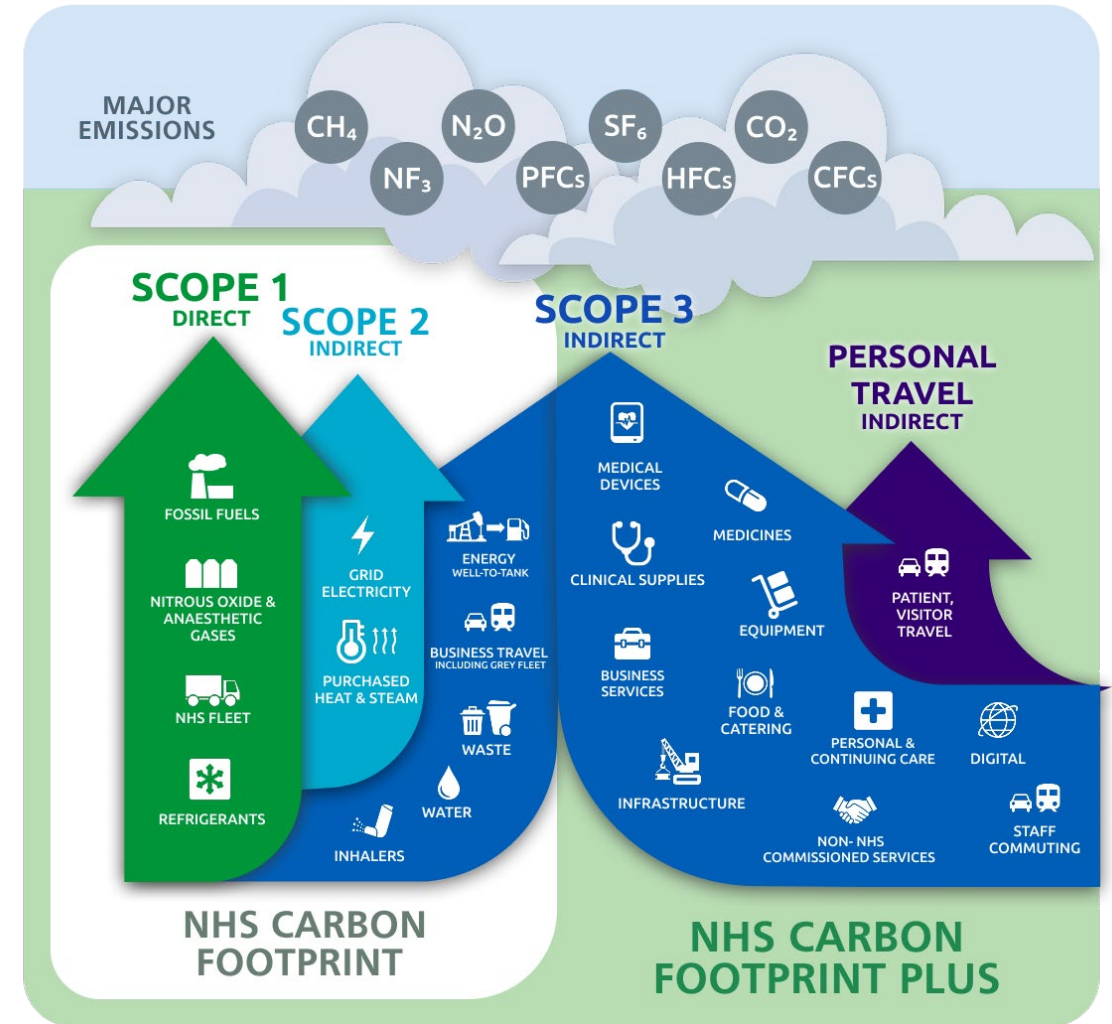
An 80% reduction in the emissions we control directly **by 2028-2032**, and net zero by 2040

Target 2 – ICS Carbon Footprint plus

An 80% reduction in the entire emissions profile **by 2036-2039**, and net zero by 2045

At the time of writing this Plan the NHS North East London collective carbon footprint of our 5 trusts was as follows:

Metric tonnes of CO ₂ emissions (MtCO ₂ e)	2019/20 benchmark	Target to reduce by 40% by 2025	Avoided emissions as of April 2025 (tCO ₂ e)	80% reduction by 2028 would bring us to
Direct Carbon Footprint	136,420	(data pending)	111,364	(data pending)
Carbon Footprint Plus	847,450	(data pending)	(Q4 data pending)	(data pending)



What is a System Green Plan?

The duty for ICB's to act on Climate Change included in the Health and Care Act 2022 and as of 2021 the responsibility for net zero is built into the [NHS Standard Contract](#)

Net Zero is a cross-cutting theme within the [Joint Forward Plan](#) and is situated in the Health Improvement and Inclusion team, in the Strategy Directorate of the Chief Strategy and Transformation Office

In north east London Each NHS Trust has its own Green Plan and Local Authorities have a Climate Action Plan (available on page 47). You can find links to these plans at the end of this document.

When we say 'system' we are referring to all organisations that look after the health and wellbeing of the 2.2 million people that live in north east London.

An ICS Green Plan presents the opportunity to add value by

- providing unified communications and training to NEL staff, patients, and residents
- strategically connecting the climate emergency with its health impacts
- influencing greater health and wellbeing at a neighbourhood level
- applying a population health management approach utilising local level data to respond appropriately – for example, prioritising insulation of poor-quality housing for residents with respiratory disease.
- Saving money via environmentally sustainable decision making.

All organisations can have an impact:

- Our **five NHS Trusts** are reducing waste, offering more plant-based meals, saving energy and transforming clinical practice in all disciplines
- **Local authorities** can share their innovation, expertise and learning on adaptation, climate resilience, active travel, public health and social care.
- A wide range of resources are available to guide **Primary Care** (GPs, community pharmacy and dentistry) to providing lower carbon services. You can find these on page 16.
- **Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise, Faith** (VCSEF) and grassroots groups (such as cycle groups and community kitchens) can teach green skills, increase uptake of active travel and keep people healthy.

The **Integrated Care Board (ICB)** will

- embed environmental sustainability in its strategic commissioning function and provide leadership
- follow this guidance and support suppliers to contribute to carbon emission reductions.

Pooling resources and sharing expertise has proven a considerable benefit to partners in the first Green Plan.

By working in partnership, we create opportunities for the NHS and local authority to deliver shared goals with limited resources. Contributing to a Greener, healthier north east London.

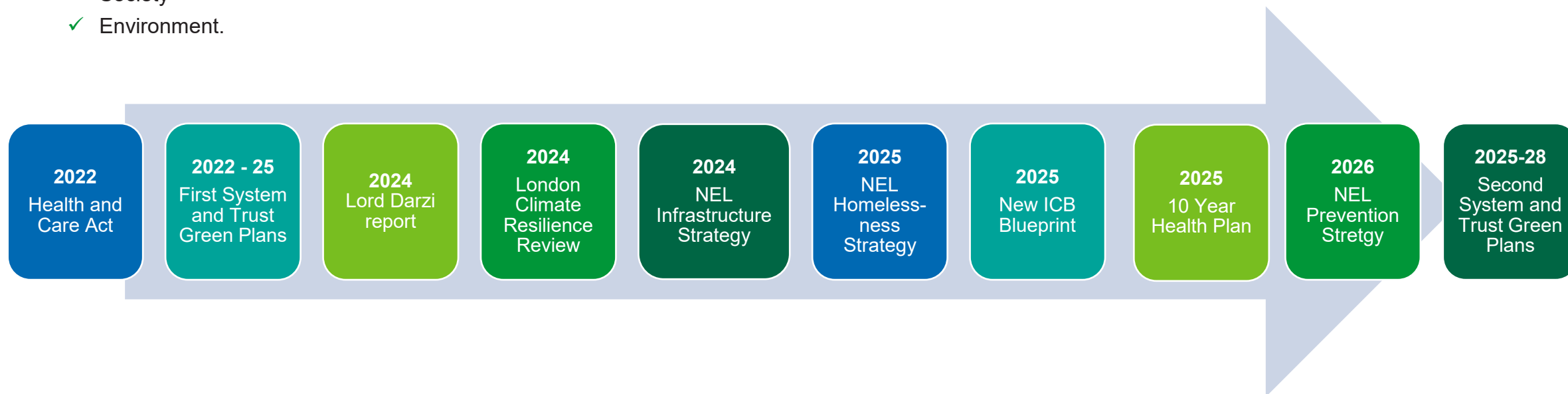
Responding to change – new approach for a System Green Plan

Whilst we develop our strategic commissioning arrangements and build neighbourhood health models, we are committed to bringing in the learning from the past three years to support a greener and healthier north east London. We are currently reviewing our System Strategy and an Operating Framework that will embed a Greener NHS throughout the commissioning cycle.

The System Green Plan 2025/28 provides the information and resources for anyone working in the health and care system to identify the highest carbon emitting activities and transform care pathways.

A sustainable healthcare system isn't just about the cheapest services and budget led decision making. Sustainable Healthcare takes into consideration the impact of the triple bottom line

- ✓ Economics
- ✓ Society
- ✓ Environment.



The 10 Year Health Plan

NEL ICB are ahead of the curve on the NHS's ambition to *“strengthen collaborations with the health community to improve awareness of and communications on the health impacts of air pollution.”*. (p67-68)

In February 2024, we stood up a system wide Clean Air Working Group. We have gone beyond the national green plan framework and added a Clean Air Chapter to this System Green Plan.

We have begun to explore a Population Health Management (PHM) approach to protecting communities from air pollution and trained health professionals on air pollution and health. We have delivered a successful asthma pilot in thirteen Newham community pharmacists funded by DEFRA.

We have secured external investment from the Cadent Foundation to roll out an indoor air pollution and mould training programme and we are working with the GLA and contributing to the shared goals in the Warm Homes plan and Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Formalising the Clean Air programme of work would be welcome as the rates of death due to air pollution and the related long term conditions, such as dementia, is above the national average.

“All NHS bodies will be expected to decarbonise, reduce environmental impact and increase resilience to climate risks in line with the climate change duties set out in the Health and Care Act 2022”. (p43 – 44)

System and Trust Green Plans are in place and the 2025-28 refreshed versions are on track. NEL has met its collective target of a 40% reduction in direct carbon emissions by 2025. NEL Trusts have made Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) bids and applications to benefit from GB energy schemes.

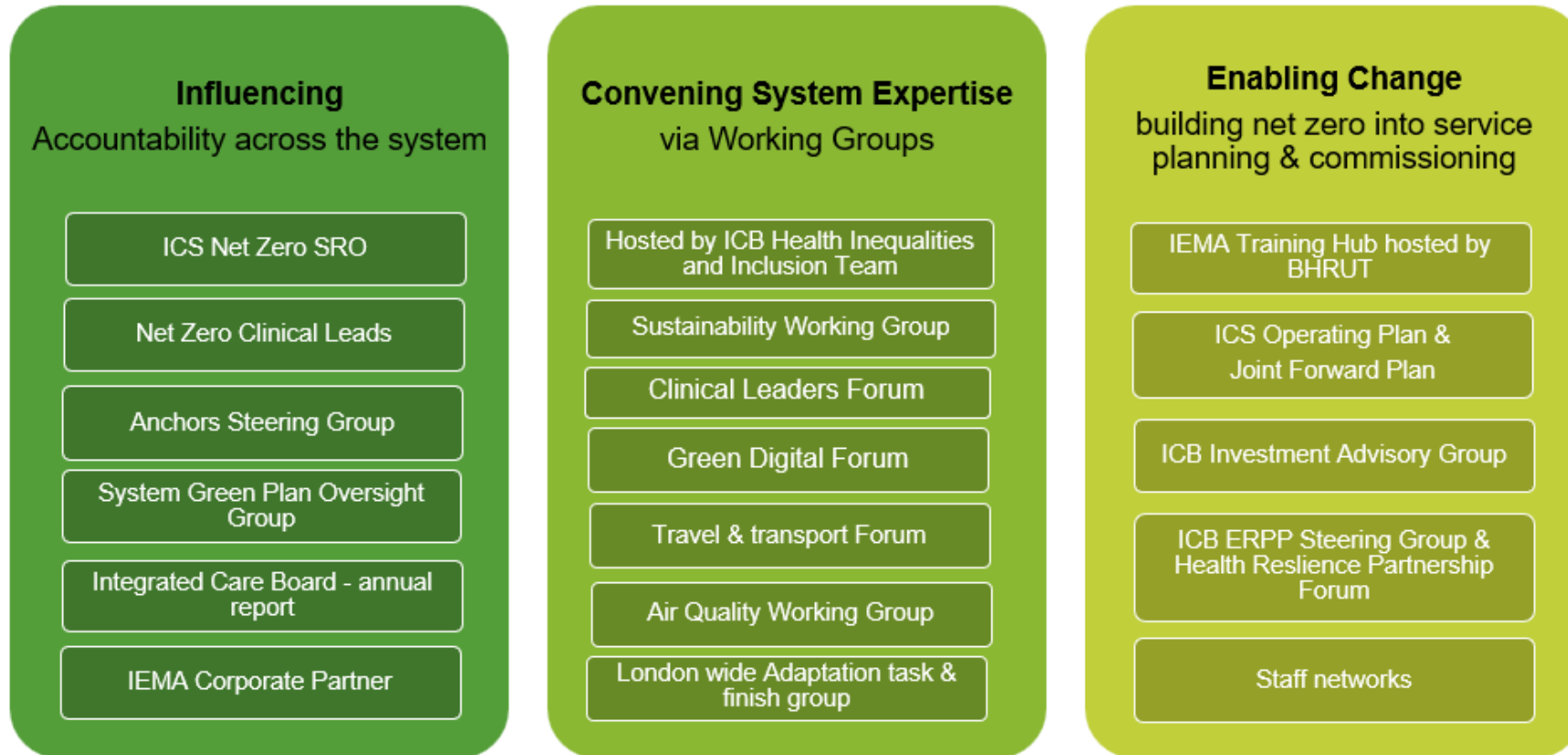
Our next steps are to involve to our wider providers, raise the quality of Carbon Reduction Plans, embed social value in our contracting processes and corporate decision making.

How a System Green Plan enables the 3 key shifts at the core of the government's health mission:

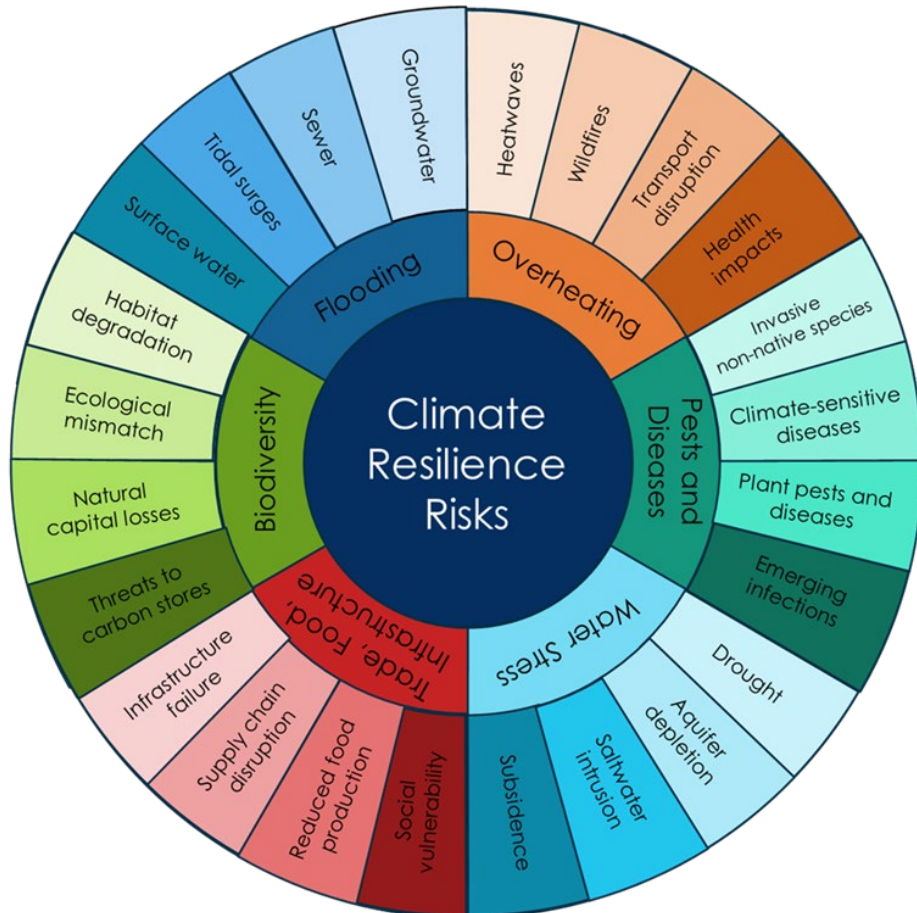
- **from hospital to community** – until now the Greener NHS has been very focused on Trust activity. ICBs will be vital in bringing the System together to avoid the carbon footprint of large hospitals to be transferred to domestic, social care and primary care settings. Virtual Wards use four times less carbon than care in a hospital setting and aligns with the triple bottom line analysis of high-quality care, value for money, and low associated carbon emissions.
- **from treatment to prevention** – Prevention is one of the pillars of sustainable healthcare. It reduces the environmental impact of running health services (medicines, operations, consultations, travel). It addresses health inequalities and empowers low carbon healthful living for everyone (breathing clean air, being active, cultivating and experiencing green spaces, eating plants). As extreme weather events increase, the availability of clean water, nutritious food and safe homes are all at risk. This will seriously compromise disease prevention.
- **from analogue to digital** – it's well understood that by increasing the use of digital technology we can reduce unnecessary travel to appointments, among many other benefits. We must weigh up the benefits to health outcomes with the environmental impact of digital solutions. We want to avoid inadvertently increasing energy and water consumption (for example, in cooling AI data centres) and create less electronic waste by reusing devices and choosing what we equipment we need wisely.

How we deliver the System Green Plan

To enable change in our working culture, we need to support those who lead this agenda with resources and strong governance and enable all ICS staff to shape and deliver the actions in the Green Plan. We have set up a governance structure and convened cross-cutting working groups, some are established and effective, others are in the process of forming.



Climate Change and Health Inequalities



The impacts of climate change, include but are not limited to, warming temperatures, water scarcity, increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Climate change is already affecting **vulnerable communities** and those less able to adapt and protect themselves from its effects.

These impacts threaten our health by affecting the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the weather we experience.

This will include **direct consequence** from climate events and **indirect consequences** from impacts to the social determinants of health.

Action to **mitigate and adapt** to climate change presents an **opportunities and risks** to these social determinants.

By starting with identified **climate impacts** and understanding the direct consequences and social determinants of these, we can choose to **focus and prioritise** collaboration in **target areas** of work.

As these risks are already being felt by our communities, we should consider them alongside a population health approach as a valuable addition to the net zero ambition.

Enablers



Workforce and Leadership

As system enablers, we need to develop the required green skills in health professionals, from all disciplines, so they can contribute to the success of the Green Plan and embed environmental sustainability in their day-to-day activities.

This section is about how we lead the cultural and leadership transformation to build capacity and capability to deliver the Green Plans' goals.

The benefits of green skills and demonstrating leadership:

- Reduces silo working and embeds sustainability in everything that we do
- Improves recruitment and retention by living our values of delivering 'healthcare without harm'
- Brings together agents of change to share and accelerate innovation.

"As clinicians, we have a responsibility not only to care for our patients but also to protect the environment that supports their health. Embedding green skills into everyday practice breaks down silos, drives innovation, and helps us deliver truly sustainable, values-led healthcare."

Dr Amit Sharma, Net zero Clinical Lead

"Just small green changes can lead you along a path of revelation. At every turn you find the decisions and settings which are best for human health are also best for planetary health and vice versa. This applies to medicines, diets, buildings, fresh air, community, fairness, nature; the list is endless. Dive in, no regrets."

Dr Cat Gaynor, Net Zero Clinical Lead



Ref	Workforce and Leadership Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
1a	We will host a workforce and leadership workshop for the system as soon as more is known about the ICB capacity following the restructure and our role in convening the System Green Plan.	x	x	x	x	x	March 2026
1b	We have identified a Board level Representative from the ICB Executive Management Team to ensure the Green Plan (Trusts and ICB) or Carbon Reduction Plan (all other organisations) is enacted. This role involves raising the profile of the effects of climate change on health and embedding environmental sustainability in the organisational culture.	x	x				Complete
1c	Embed Net Zero Clinical Leadership into the revised ICB clinical leadership profile. With the aim of tackling climate issues that intersect with health inequalities, provide clinical input into transformation programmes, develop the workforce and provide peer to peer leadership.	x					March 2026
1d	Green Plan and associated carbon reduction plans to be included in the introduction of all Employee Handbooks and New Starter Induction Packs.	x	x				September 2027
1e	Continue the roll out of introductory and foundation courses in sustainability building on the investment in the first Green Plan to train the trainer. To maximise resources, courses should be open to all health and care staff across the NEL system.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
1f	ICB and Partners to convene topic specific Communities of Practice to share innovation and work collaboratively.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
1g	Commissioners should work through the guidance provided in the useful resources section of this Plan. Depending on what service is being designed, commissioners must familiarise themselves with the relevant section of the System and/or Trust Green Plan.	x					Ongoing
1h	To provide a sustainable healthcare information session for GP and Nurse appraisers.	x	x				March 2026

Useful resources - Workforce and Leadership

[Core training offers set out on the Greener NHS Training Hub](#)

[Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare - elearning for healthcare](#)

5 short e-Learning modules of 30 minutes accessed on the [NHS Learning Hub](#)

1. Building a Net Zero NHS
2. Environmental Sustainability in Quality Improvement
3. Environmental Sustainability in Dentistry
4. Sustainable Endoscopy
5. Green Operating Theatres

[Climate and health: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK](#)

[NHS estates sustainability career pathways](#)

[NHS England » Progress report – delivering a greener NHS: five years on](#)

Greener NHS target for ICBS – currently owned by the ICB

- Q. 1. Does your organisation have an up to date green plan that is approved by your board or governing body, published, and in line with NHS England green plan guidance (2025)?
- Q. 2. Does your organisation have a board-level net zero lead responsible for delivery of your green plan?
- Q. 3. Do you report on progress of delivery against your green plan in your annual report?
-

Clinical Transformation

In north east London our trailblazing staff have contributed to finding sustainable solutions and lead the clinical transformation required to meet the net zero challenge.

Delivering high quality, low carbon health and care services is essential to protect the health of or population and to take pressure off services that are further exacerbated by the climate crisis.

The benefits of sustainable healthcare approach as described by the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare diagram (pictured right) are:

- An opportunity to reduce inequalities and empower patients and staff
- Reduce waste, save money
- Innovation is clinically led.

1. PREVENTION

Promoting health and preventing disease by tackling the causes of illnesses and inequalities

3. LEAN SERVICE DELIVERY

Streamlining care systems to minimise wasteful activities



2. PATIENT SELF-CARE

Empowering patients to take a greater role in managing their own health and healthcare

4. LOW CARBON ALTERNATIVES

Prioritising treatments and technologies with a lower environmental impact

Mortimer, F. The Sustainable Physician. Clin Med 10(2). April 1, 2010. D110-111.



Ref	Clinical Transformation Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
2a	Enable clinical transformation by utilising the wide range of toolkits. Allocating appropriate clinical and administrative staff to work through the guidance and promote its use with the wider workforce. Toolkits are listed on page 16 of this plan and include step by step resources for different specialties.	x	x			x	Ongoing
2b	Maintain the Green Primary Care intranet section to maintain repository of information and to keep the sector informed.	x	x				Ongoing
2c	ICB strategic commissioning - Low carbon design to be built into the design phase of strategic commissioning model to embed Green Commissioning into all phases of the commissioning process.	x	x	x			Ongoing
2d	We endorse the use of the Green Impact for Health Toolkit (link on page 16) and expect all primary care providers to set up a basic account on this free to use portal. We advise to work through the actions in a team made up of one administrator and one clinician as a minimum. We have found that meeting the bronze level is easily achievable.	x	x				March 2028

Useful resources – clinical transformation

<p>Primary Care</p> <p>Green Primary Care – North East London Greener Practice North London Network Green Impact for Health Toolkit - GPs Green Impact for Health Toolkit - Dentistry RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide for Community Pharmacies General Practice non-clinical carbon calculator Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare - elearning for healthcare 2. Environmental Sustainability in Quality Improvement 3. Environmental Sustainability in Dentistry</p> <p>10 Steps for a Greener Sexual Health and HIV Clinic RCGP course about Climate Health Equity</p>	<p>Multidisciplinary</p> <p>CQC expectations of sustainability in the Well Led category Greener NHS Knowledge Hub (NHS Futures Space) Nursing and Midwifery Sustainability Network (NHS Futures Space) Green physician toolkit Sustainable Healthcare Coalition Centre for Sustainable Healthcare Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare - elearning for healthcare Module 2 Environmental Sustainability in Quality Improvement Healthcare LCA database providing greenhouse gas emissions for common medical equipment and procedures Greener NHS 'How to guides'</p>
<p>Secondary Care</p> <p>RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide for Hospital Pharmacies Green Theatre Checklist Green Emergency Department How to produce a carbon footprint of maternity services An integrated framework for net zero urological care Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare - elearning for healthcare Module 2 Environmental Sustainability in Quality Improvement Module 4 Sustainable Endoscopy Module 5 Green Operating Theatres</p>	

Governance and accountability

System leadership



System oversight of Anchor principles



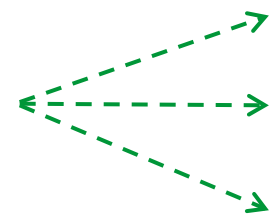
System oversight by Green Plan SROs



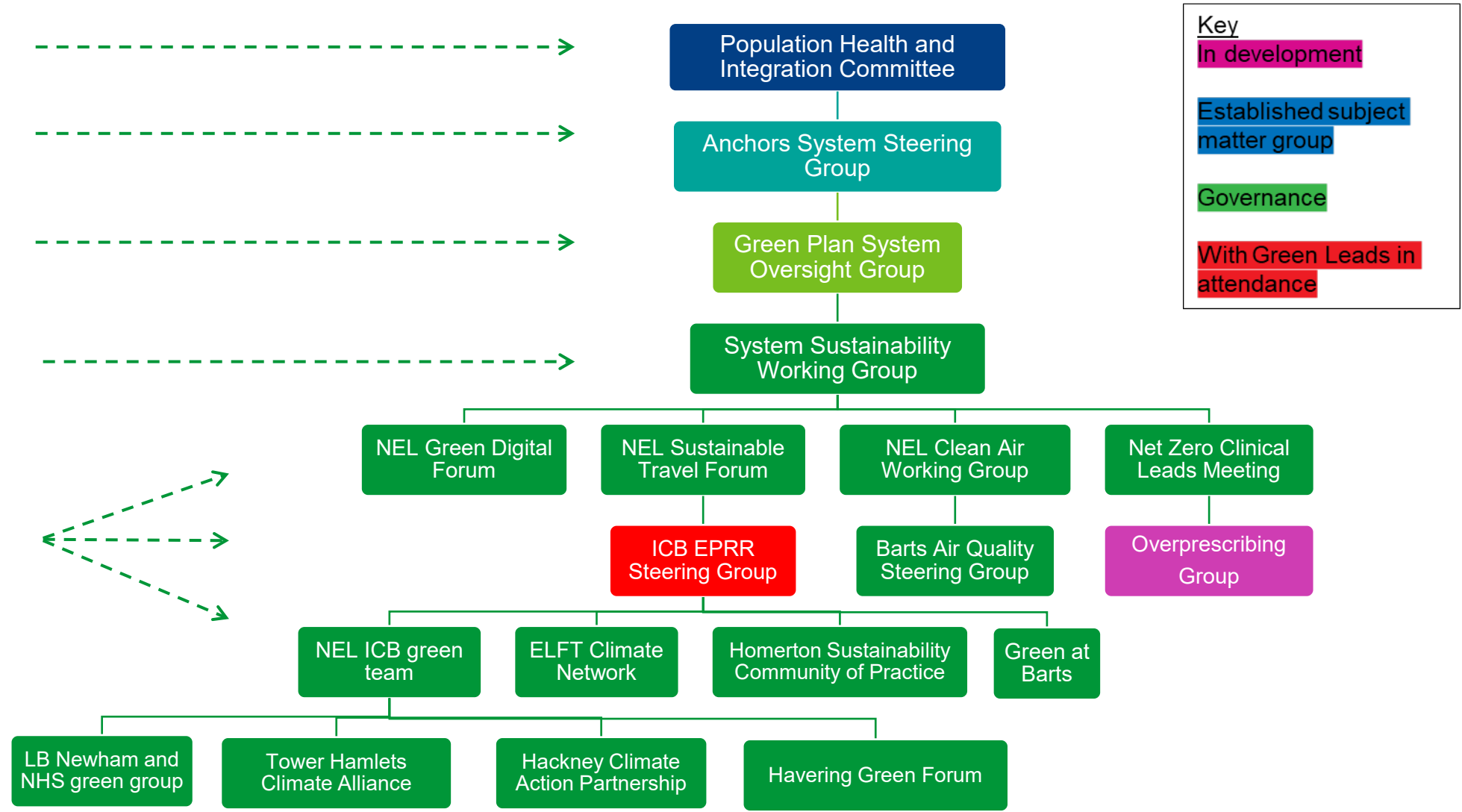
Practical forum for system sustainability leads



Subject specific sub-groups



Place based forums for Councils and NHS



Key

- In development
- Established subject matter group
- Governance
- With Green Leads in attendance

Workstreams



Potential carbon savings

Workstream	2019/20 benchmark Emissions (tCO2e)	2025 actual (Target = 40% reduction)
Carbon footprint (net zero by 2040)		
Medicines	40,490	25,057 (60% reduction)
Energy and Estates	64,770	Energy data for 2024/25 not available
Travel & Transport	31,180	Fleet data for 2024/25 has not been published
Carbon footprint plus (net zero by 2045)		
Medicines	174,700	data for 2024/25 has not been published
Energy and Estates	86,640	data for 2024/25 has not been published
Supply Chain & Procurement	568,590	data for 2024/25 has not been published
Food and catering	55,810	data for 2024/25 has not been published
Travel & Transport	86,640	data for 2024/25 has not been published

Examples of the carbon savings that can be made:

- **Appointment letters by email not post** (letter = 300g CO2e, email = 0.3g) **saves 299.7gCO2e**
- **Dry Powered Inhalers instead of puffer (known as MDI)** (DPI 754g CO2e vs. MDI 28kg Co2e) **saves 27 kgCO2e**
- **Virtual wards** (vs. 1 outpatient appointment) **saves 21.9 kgCO2e per appointment**
- **Refurbishing one walking aid** **saves 64 kgCO2e (£19 per aid)**
- **Serving less red meat** (eating pulses instead of beef) **saves 97.69 kgCo2e**

Comparison...20 kgCo2e equals powering the average UK home for 2-3 days

Medicines

Medicines make up 17% of the NHS's carbon footprint.

Sustainability principles in Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation involves reducing environmental impact through a range of practices including, optimising prescribing, structured medication reviews, waste reduction, and promoting healthy living, while also improving patient care and saving resources.

The benefits of sustainable pharmacy and medicines principles are:

- ✓ **Person-Centred Approach:** Focus on the individual patient, considering their needs and preferences when making medication decisions.
- ✓ **Evidence-Based Choice:** Base prescribing decisions on the latest scientific evidence and clinical guidelines.
- ✓ **Safe Medicine Use:** Ensure medicines are used appropriately and safely, minimizing the risk of adverse effects.
- ✓ **Deprescribing:** Reducing inappropriate polypharmacy. Consider appropriate deprescribing (stopping medicines that are no longer needed).
- ✓ **Lower Carbon Alternatives:** Opt for low-carbon or lower environmental impact alternatives to high-carbon products. Make use of social prescribing offer.
- ✓ **Sustainable Solutions:** Integrate sustainable solutions such as promoting healthy living and preventing ill health into pharmacy practice.



Ref	Medicines Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By when
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
3a	SABA Inhalers - We will continue to reduce SABA overuse/overprescribing, by implementing new asthma guideline promoting Anti-Inflammatory Reliever (AIR) therapy and Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (MART) as the mainstay of asthma management	x	x				March 2028
3b	DPIs - We work to increase the percentage of Dry Powder Inhalers (DPIs) prescribed (as a total of all our inhalers prescribed).	x	x				March 2028
3c	Waste Reduction: Targeting patient reordering systems and promoting the NHS App to reduce over-ordering/over-prescribing.	x	x				March 2028
3d	Antimicrobial stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing length of courses to be more appropriate to type of infection Reducing the use of broad-spectrum antibiotics. 	x	x				March 2028
3e	Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) - We will work to increase the percentage of ONS that are prescribed as powdered options (over ready to drink formulations). ICB will need to establish a baseline to measure reduction and carbon savings.	x	x				March 2028
3f	Promote and encourage the uptake of tablets or capsules from an earlier age. We will work to educate and support children and young people in safely and effectively transitioning from liquid medicines to solid oral dosage forms (tablets or capsules).	x	x				March 2026
3g	Promote the safe, appropriate storage and disposal of medicines. Considering the effect of higher temperatures on efficacy and the rise of the use injectables pens.	x	x				March 2026
3h	Promote the recycling of old and unused blood glucose testing meters.	x	x				March 2026

Useful resources - Medicines

Green Primary Care dedicated section on the NHS North East London GP Intranet	RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide for Community Pharmacies
Adult Respiratory Inhaler Formulary – North East London	RPS Greener Pharmacy Guide for Hospital Pharmacies
NICE Asthma: diagnosis, monitoring and chronic asthma management (BTS, NICE, SIGN)	Principles of sustainable healthcare in pharmacy practice - The Pharmaceutical Journal
Pharmacy Sustainability Network	Pharmacy Declares
Greener PCPA	Every Dose Used Reducing Wasted Medicines Playbook

Progress reporting	<u>Source</u>
Systems (aggregate of primary care data)	
Average inhaler emissions per 1,000 patients	Greener NHS dashboard (from Q1 25/26)
Mean emissions of Short-acting beta-2 agonists (SABAs) inhalers prescribed	Greener NHS dashboard
% of non-SABA inhalers that are MDIs	Greener NHS dashboard



Energy and Estates

The energy it takes to power our buildings is 11% of the NHS's carbon footprint.

The NEL Integrated Care System (ICS) Infrastructure Strategy has incorporated how we can improve the use of our buildings and how we power them over the next ten years.

This chapter will set out how we will work together to make good use of shared estates, decarbonise our energy sources and prioritise retrofit activities.

The benefits of sustainable energy sources and resilient estates:

- ✓ Increasing security and resilience of our energy sources
- ✓ Future proofing the buildings in which we work and deliver care
- ✓ Creating a circular economy saves money and resources.



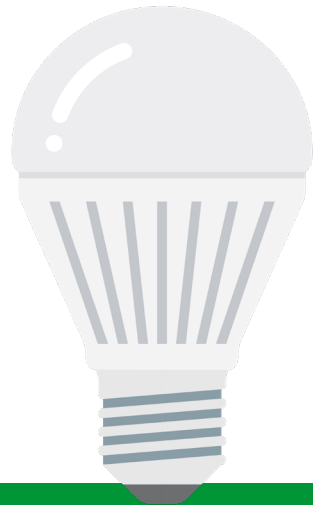
Ref	Energy and Estates Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
4a	NEL infrastructure strategy to embed low carbon and Green Plan ambitions for the system.	x	x	x	x	x	March 2028
4b	As per Local area energy planning (best practice) the system should work together to identify opportunities for including health premises in local schemes such as, Heat networks and Power Purchasing Agreements.	x	x	x		x	March 2028
4c	The system to work together to identify funding and prioritise 'Core and Flex A' buildings that are suitable for retrofit and efficiency projects.	x	x	x		x	March 2028
4d	Identify a site for at least two NHS providers to benefit from a 'circular economy equipment store' to reuse clinical equipment and furniture and walking aids.	x	x	x			March 2028
4e	All NHS organisations to comply with the legal duty around recycling for businesses and non-domestic properties for dry recyclable materials, food waste and black bin waste to be separate (which came into force on 31st March 2025).	x	x	x	x	x	March 2026

Useful resources – Energy and Estates

NHS Net Zero Building Standard (mandatory)	Boiler upgrade scheme
Biodiversity net gain (mandatory)	Simpler Recycling Government Guidance

Greener NHS target for ICBs

Q. 18b. Do you have a walking aids returns scheme that is coordinated across the ICS to support reuse within the NHS (covering all sites)?



Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is utilising technology to streamline health and care, while reducing its associated cost and carbon. We will ensure that patients can be seen in the right place at the right time. We will use technology to help clinicians to make informed decisions about the carbon cost of their care and we will implement projects at scale to reduce our digital footprint across NEL.

We want colleagues to consider the environmental impact of digital solutions and Artificial Intelligence (AI). To stay informed about how they can reduce electronic device waste and energy consumption by understanding the entire lifecycle of the technology that we use.

The benefits of green digital:

- Energy efficient virtual clinics and outpatient appointments run on renewable energy
- Procurement exercises asking suppliers to follow good practice
- Reducing electronic waste by using refurbished devices
- NHS staff with efficiently running machines and receiving relevant training
- Following the [Digital Inclusion framework](#)
- AI only used where needed and CO² of machine learning fully understood
- Climate resilient IT that can protect us and adapt to extreme weather events.



Ref	Digital Transformation Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
5a	Share good practice at the NEL System Green Digital Forum and support the success of the digital transformation chapter. Collaborate on system wide activities such as promoting digital declutter. Looking after the green section of the Digital Strategy	x	x	x			Ongoing
5b	All Trusts and ICB to complete the Digital Maturity Assessment return.	x	x				Complete
5c	Ensure that an Electronic waste policy is in place and that electronic waste is reduced via the re-use of devices.	x	x	x			April 2026
5d	Collaborate with system partners in NEL and across London to reduce digital exclusion and provide access to refurbished devices to those in need to access health services.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
5e	NEL ICS Information Steering Group (members include Local Authorities, ICB, GP IT, Trusts) to receive six-monthly update of the green elements of the digital strategy. All members to report on how they are contributing. The NEL System Green Digital Forum will present examples of innovation and useful resources to this Group when relevant.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

Useful resources – digital transformation

<p>This guidance has been published to assist you in completing your Digital Maturity Assessment return and to provide explanation of the response detail we are looking for to ensure your sustainability agenda is assisting the NHS to achieve the Net Zero Targets.</p>	<p>NHS England's What good looks like framework encourages NHS organisations to prioritise sustainability in the procurement, design and management of digital services to meet the objectives of the Greening government: ICT and digital services strategy</p>
<p>Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps - GOV.UK</p>	<p>Set out actions to prepare for severe weather events and improve climate resilience of local sites and services, including digital services (see Annex B: selected resources for a supporting Climate Change Risk Assessment Tool)</p>

Adaptation and climate resilience



The climate is changing, and this has wide implications for health and care services. The London Climate Resilience Review is unequivocal in calling for more action and makes four specific recommendations to the health and care sector.

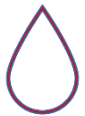
A number of wider climate impacts are increasing in risk, these include **extreme heat, droughts, sea level rise, heavy rainfall, wildfires, emerging pests and diseases, subsidence**, disruptions to **food supply, infrastructure and trade**. Each of these will affect healthcare settings, vulnerable groups and staff, and the way healthcare is delivered and how people manage their own health. Wide impacts will fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable in our society, thereby exacerbating health inequalities.

Three specific risks of immediate concern that London Systems should focus on over the next three years:



Heatwaves and overheating risk

In 2022 London experienced temperatures of over 40 degrees. There were 387 heat related deaths in London. Heatwaves are exacerbated by the Urban Heat Island effect, poor quality housing and overcrowding. The London Climate Resilience Review found that most hospitals do not function well above 30 degrees.



Surface water flooding

In July 2021, twice the usual rainfall fell in a period of 2 hours. 2,000 properties across London were flooded, hospital wards evacuated, and 30 tube stations closed. London is losing permeable ground, and its aging infrastructure is not yet prepared for increased rainfall.



Thunderstorm asthma

Thunderstorm asthma occurs when hot weather, thunderstorms, high pollen count and air pollution coincide. In June 2023, the London Ambulance Service received 7,751 calls in a day, the highest volume since January 2021, because of people experiencing breathing difficulties. London's Urban Heat Island, existing air pollution issue, and local green spaces increase the chances of these occurring simultaneously.

Ref	Adaptation and climate resilience Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
6a	ICB Emergency Preparedness Committee membership to include Green Plan and Health Inequalities representatives. Ensuring all providers and commissioners of NHS-funded services must comply with the adaptation provisions within the NHS Core Standards for emergency preparedness , resilience and response (EPRR) and the NHS Standard Contract to support business continuity during adverse weather events	x					March 2026
6b	Work with local system partners and the region to deliver on the recommendations in the London Resilience Review. By attending relevant task and finish groups, events and become members of the London Climate Ready Partnership.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
6c	Support Trusts to complete and respond to the challenges in Climate Change Risk Assessment Tool .	x	x				Ongoing
6d	Undertake a population health approach to adaptation utilising a case finding approach to protect our most vulnerable communities including but not limited to health inclusion groups and care home residents.	x	x	x			April 2027

Useful resources – Adaptation and Climate Resilience

NHS England » A climate adaptation framework for NHS organisations in England	Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) Tool - Greener NHS Knowledge Hub - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform
Health and Climate Adaptation Report 2025	NHS Core Standards for emergency preparedness
Climate and health: rising to the mental health challenge of climate change » Green Alliance	The London Climate Resilience Review final report 2024
Climate and health: protecting people in the UK from extreme heat » Green Alliance	Health Effects of Climate Change (HECC) report, 2024
MD3384 Delivery Plan – Delivering a Greener, More Climate-Resilient London London City Hall, 2025	Adverse Weather and Health Plan - GOV.UK, 2025
https://www.communitiesprepared.org.uk/climate-connected-communities/	Adapt to thrive: preparing the UK for climate change
Supporting vulnerable people during heat, UK Health Security Agency guidance, 2024 Social care managers – full guidance Healthcare professionals – full guidance Professionals working with homeless people – full guidance Hot Weather Guidance for Carers (NHS learning hub module)	
Data sources	
'Climate Just' data - London Datastore	Climate Risk Map London City Hall
Topic: Environment - London Datastore	Heat-adaptation-in-the-uk policy brief by UEL, CHI and SRI

Greener NHS target for ICBs

Q. 19. Does your organisation have a nominated lead who is accountable for adaptation planning and management?

Q. 20. Does your organisation have a long-term climate change adaptation plan separate from your business continuity plan?

Supply Chain & Procurement

Up to 45% of the NHS carbon footprint is embedded in its supply chain. The items that we buy including medicines, medical equipment, and other purchased goods are counted within our Scope 3 emissions.

We must affect change by asking the providers and contractors that we commission services with to meet environmental standards, reduce emissions and contribute to innovation cycles.

We can leverage this change and generate added value by making sure we include relevant sustainability activities, for the supplier or the local community. Making sure that the social value commitments made at tender stage are embedded in our contracting process will capture much needed added value to staff and communities.

We need to increase the quality of data available to decision makers and contract managers to support achieving a net zero supply chain and contractual objectives.

The benefits of social value and a sustainable supply chain are:

- ✓ Healthier and happier communities, tackling health inequalities
- ✓ Financial savings through sustainable and efficient solutions
- ✓ Supply chain resilience and sustainability
- ✓ Lower emissions deliveries reduce the use of fossil fuels and improve air quality.

The NEL Procurement Collaborative will increasingly take ownership of this chapter and convene the system to meet new legislation.



Ref	Supply Chain & Procurement Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By when
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
7a	Embed the use of social value and sustainability within the procurement process utilising the NEL Procurement Policy guidance and agreeing a central set of social Value Themes & Outcomes Measures (TOMs) for NEL from procurement through to contracting.	x				x	April 2026
7b	Ensure the LPP Social Value training is completed by all procurement leads in the ICB.	x	x			x	April 2026
7c	Work with the contracting team to ensure the social value commitments identified during procurement are translated into appropriate outcomes and performance metrics (KPI's) in the resulting contract.	x	x				Ongoing
7d	Require ICB commissioners to check that the social value KPIs are captured and monitored on the ICB Social Value Dashboard on Atamis.	x					April 2026
7e	Capture the Evergreen Assessment status of our suppliers on Atamis.	x	x				April 2026

Useful resources – Supply Chain & Procurement

Design for life roadmap	As of 1 April 2024, the NHS Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) requirements have been proportionately extended to cover all new procurements by NHS organisations as well as organisations acting on their behalf. These requirements, along with the minimum 10% net zero and social value weighting , form the key policies of the NHS Net Zero Supplier Roadmap which sets out the steps that suppliers and NHS commercial teams must take to support the NHS commitment to reach net zero by 2045 .
NHS England Social Value Playbook	
Training: NHS LPP Social Value Curriculum	
Procurement Act 2023 Tools, Templates & Guidance - Central Commercial Function (CCF) Best Practice Hub - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform	
IEMA Circular Procurement Guide	

Greener NHS target for ICBs

Q. 16. How are you managing the inclusion of the minimum weighting of 10% on Net Zero and Social Value in every relevant tender?

Q. 17. How are you managing the inclusion of the Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) and Net Zero Commitment (NZC) requirements for new procurements and new frameworks you are hosting?

[Reporting portal Inclusion of Carbon Reduction Plan and Net Zero Commitment requirements in all relevant procurements](#)

Travel & Transport

14% of London traffic is as a result of people travelling for NHS business or appointments.

Physical inactivity costs the NHS up to £1 billion per annum, with further indirect costs of £8.2 billion.

The air pollution benefits are well known and we have been able to move forward in this work and create a separate chapter on Clean Air.

We have been working closely with Local Authorities and the voluntary sector to increase safe active travel. We need clear consistent messaging that informs, understands behaviours and creates choice for staff and patients.

The benefits of increasing active travel and reducing emissions of our fleets:

- ✓ Keeping moving creates healthier and happier communities
- ✓ Reducing the costs of travel can improve access to healthcare, avoid missed appointments and tackle health inequalities
- ✓ Reducing the dependence on cars in turn lowers carbon emissions.



Ref	Travel & Transport Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
8a	As per NHS England guidance, all NHS organisations are required to have a Travel Plan by 2026.	x	x	x		x	December 2026
8b	Promote access to low emission travel alternatives through staff benefit schemes – including cycle to work schemes, Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) only car scheme, wheels for heroes and any other discounts for NHS staff.	x	x	x		x	Complete - system to maintain
8c	Support the prevention agenda and active travel for business and commuters by partnership working with Local Authorities, TfL and the VCSEF walking, wheeling and cycling groups.	x	x	x	x	x	Complete - system to maintain
8d	Take a population health approach to explore how reduced and/or free travel for IMD 1 groups, who regularly miss medical appointments, can be implemented and the benefits/ impact measured.	x	x			x	March 2028

Useful resources – Travel & Transport

NHS Net Zero Travel and Transport Strategy	Primary Care Travel Survey template
FutureNHS: Net zero travel and transport (login needed)	ICB cycle to work scheme info
Local active travel schemes	
Wheels4Me London https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/cycling-sessions/	Free cycle training (based on where you live or work) Cycle Confident · Home
Cycle Buddies is a free-of-charge, online service that connects new cyclists with people who already cycle – Cycle Buddies - London Cycling Campaign	Cycle Sisters Muslim womens' cycle group charity
London Association of Directors of Public Health - position on Active Travel, Wellbeing and reducing Health Inequalities	

Greener NHS target for ICBs

Q. 8. Have you made arrangements to purchase, or enter into new lease arrangements for, zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) only from December 2027 onwards (excluding ambulances)?

Q. 9. Does your organisation's salary sacrifice scheme for vehicles allow for the purchase of only zero emission vehicles (ZEVs)?

Progress reporting [Does the organisation offer only ZEVs in its salary sacrifice scheme](#)

Q. 11. Which local transport partners does your organisation work closely with?

Q. 12. Has your organisation published a sustainable travel plan within the last 24 months?



Food & nutrition

We need to work as a system to promote nutritious, low emission and thoughtfully sourced food. Diet-related ill health is estimated to cost the NHS and wider UK society £5.1 billion per year. It is estimated that less than 1% of the UK population are meeting the national dietary guidelines.

Our diet (which is low in fibre, high in saturated fats, sugars, salt and processed foods) is causing obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers.

Food production is too often at the expense of nature, through emissions, deforestation, water pollution, biodiversity loss, animal welfare and land use.

In 2019 The EAT-Lancet Commission made up of international leading scientists found that we can feed a future population of 10 billion by following the 'Planetary Health Diet', high in vegetables, fruits, nuts and legumes alongside small portions of meat and dairy.

The benefits of a sustainable diet are:

- ✓ Healthy food can be affordable if we create the right food environments and support local food growing systems
- ✓ By supporting local food systems, we also begin to protect ourselves in the face of likely future food insecurity
- ✓ Nutritious food is fundamental to human health
- ✓ The large environmental impact of our food can be radically reduced
- ✓ Globally we could save 11 million adult lives a year.



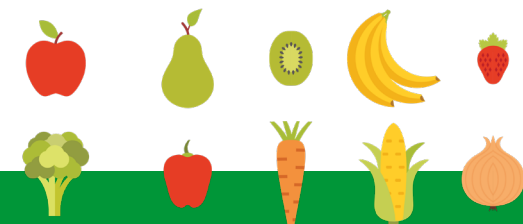
FIGURE 6: PLANETARY HEALTH PLATE

Ref	Food & nutrition Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By When
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
9a	Work with long term conditions leads, public health, primary care and community services to make sure dietary messaging is in line with the Eat Lancet Planetary Health Diet (pictured above) and work together to promote healthy sustainable food environments.	x	x	x	x		March 2028
9b	Support trusts to aim for a Plants First catering policy - Plant-based meals are prioritised, whilst maintaining choice.	x	x				March 2028
9c	Support trusts to source local ingredients and catering companies where possible. Raise awareness across the system of the local Sustainable Food Places.	x	x	x			March 2028
9d	Support all providers to commit to being Fairtrade work places.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

Useful resources – Food & nutrition

The Eat Lancet Planetary Health Diet	See Chapter 7 'Going Green' and 'A checklist for NHS organisation catering managers and chief executives' in the Independent review of NHS hospital food.
Plants First Healthcare	Healthcare Institutions Move Towards Plant-Based Dining — Greener by Default
Sustainable diets primary care webinar recording	Plant-Based Diet Factsheets Plant Based Health Professionals UK
Sustainable Hacks - British Dietetic Association (BDA)	Plant-powered Planet: Building a healthy & sustainable food system – UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

The UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) recommendations to Government include a: “20% shift away from all meat by 2030, rising to 35% by 2050, and a 20% shift from dairy products by 2030”



Biodiversity and Personalisation

We have gone beyond the national Green Plan framework, to add this chapter as we believe in the health benefits of our green and blue spaces. The health and wellbeing benefits of nature-based interventions are well researched. We want to maximise the many parks, forests and waterways in north east London to keep people healthy.

We have the opportunity to connect this work to ill-health prevention, personalised care and maximise the various owners of healthcare land to develop more planting and growing spaces for staff and patients to enjoy caring for.

By improving biodiversity, we strengthen food security, safeguard clean water, and restore natural protections against floods and heat, reducing the financial and health burdens of climate change and nature loss, particularly for the most vulnerable. The benefits connecting biodiversity with personalisation:

- ✓ The potential to deliver significant savings by reducing demand on health services and reducing health inequalities
- ✓ We have a wide range of nature-based interventions that we'd like to increase the uptake of by raising the profile via the Joy platform
- ✓ Green social prescribing contributes to the reduction in medication to treat pain and depression
- ✓ Increasing the number of staff and community volunteers to maintain gardens in healthcare settings saves on maintenance costs.
- ✓ Growing fruit and vegetables reconnects staff and patients with healthy wholefoods while supporting the local food system.



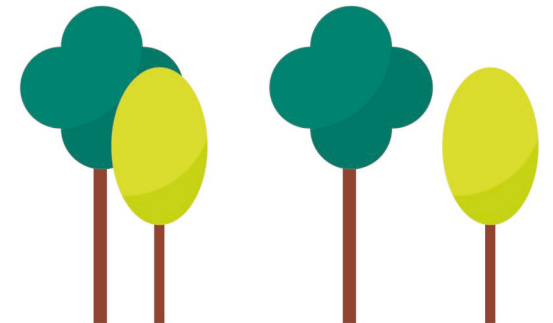
Ref	Biodiversity & Personalisation Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By when
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
10a	Increasing the number and quality of listings on the social prescribing platform, Joy related to; nature based, energy and mould support, and active travel.	x	x	x	x	x	March 2027
10b	Use Joy platform data to analyse uptake and inform needs.	x	x	x	x	x	March 2028
10c	Tackle cost of living and fuel poverty by setting up a health professional referral scheme for the SHINE service. Managed for London by Islington Council.	x	x	x		x	Complete – system to maintain
10d	Support all providers to maximise the use of their own estates for growing plants: creating and supporting green social prescribing while contributing to climate mitigation and adaptation.	x	x		x		March 2028

Useful resources – Biodiversity & Personalisation

Biodiversity net gain (mandatory)	Chief Medical Officer’s annual report 2024: health in cities - GOV.UK Executive summary and recommendations - GOV.UK
Local nature recovery strategies (LNRS) (best practice)	Natural Environment- National Academy for Social Prescribing NASP
Green Social Prescribing Checklist	Green Social Prescribing Innovation Community – joining link
The impact of nature loss and climate change on the cost of living » Green Alliance	Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-Health through Green Social Prescribing– webinar from National Academy for Social Prescribing NASP
Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL)	Nature for Health - A Resource Hub for Healthcare Sites
Nature-Positive Cities World Economic Forum	Tree Equity Score UK
NHS Forests – green spaces and biodiversity toolkit	Biodiversity guidance for businesses
Social and Therapeutic Horticulture information centre	

Case study

[Newham Hospital Forest | SUGi](#)



Clean Air

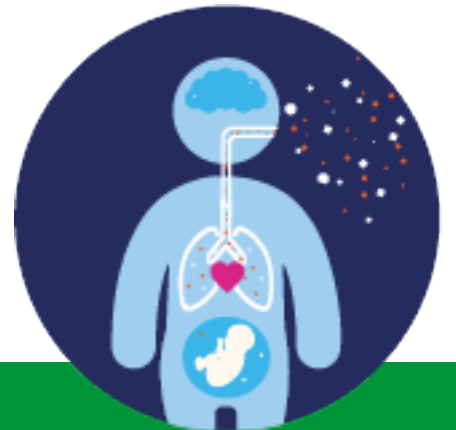
Seven of the 20 places with most deaths related to air pollution in England are in northeast London (source: [Air Pollution Data on Fingertips](#)). Thanks to the implementation of the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) in London we have seen harmful pollution lowered.

There is a strong financial case to address air pollution because without further action, the cost to the health and care system in London is estimated to be £5.49 billion by 2050. As health professionals we still need to understand the legacy that air pollution is having on population health and the subsequent pressure on the NHS.

We know that air pollution affects all life stages and is not just about childhood asthma. It increases the likelihood of cardiac health issues and is a factor to the leading cause of death in the UK, dementia.

The benefits of the NEL System Clean Air Working Group are:

- ✓ Share examples of projects that improve indoor and outdoor air quality, or help manage health that is affected by air quality
- ✓ Identify collectives that will work on future funding
- ✓ To develop Population Health Management (PHM) approach
- ✓ Make better use of Air Quality data to protect communities.



Ref	Clean Air Actions and Recommendations	Owners					By when
		ICB	NHS providers	Local Authorities	VCSEF	London partners	
11a	Work with long term conditions leads, public health, primary care and community services to educate health professionals on the negative health impacts that air pollution has on all life stages and reduce the burden on the NHS.	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
11b	Convene a system wide Clean Air Working Group to design interventions that protect the population from air pollutions. Collaborate on funding opportunities. Working together on local, regional and national campaigns such as Clean Air Day.	x	x	x	x	x	Complete - system to maintain
11c	Monitor progress on clean air partnership working using the ICS Clean Air Framework platform.	x	x	x			Complete - system to maintain
11d	Develop a population health approach to case finding to protect vulnerable communities from indoor and outdoor air pollution.	x	x	x			March 2028

Useful resources – Clean Air

ICS Clean Air Framework	Air Quality Awareness – NEL Training Hub
Chief Medical Officer’s annual report 2022: air pollution - GOV.UK	Air Pollution Pages on GP intranet
Chief Medical Officer’s annual report 2024: health in cities - GOV.UK	London Air Pollution Map & Real-time Air Quality Monitoring Air Aware
City Hall and TfL published the London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) One Year Report,	Health-professionals-resource-pack_air-pollution.pdf
Asthma and Allergy CYP toolkit	GP-resource-pack_air-pollution.pdf
Breathe London website helps Londoners stay informed about air quality	Royal College of Physicians - A breath of fresh air: responding to the health challenges of modern air pollution, 2025
Asthma thematic report	Child deaths due to asthma, anaphylaxis and allergies

How we developed this Plan

We engaged stakeholders during themed workshops to gather success stories and agree on how what we can achieve collectively. The recordings of the stakeholder workshops and slide decks are available via the [NHS North East London Health Equity Academy Future platform](#).

NHS Partner Green Plans 2025-28

[Barts – pending publication](#)
[BHRUT – pending publication](#)
[Homerton – pending publication](#)
[ELFT – pending publication](#)
[NELFT – pending publication](#)

[London Ambulance Service](#)

[NHS Property Services](#)

[CHP \(2022\)](#)

[Tower Hamlets GP Care Group](#)

Local Authority climate action plans

[City of London 2020 - 2027](#)

[London Borough of Barking and Dagenham 2020 - 2022](#)

[London Borough of Hackney 2023 - 2030](#)

[London Borough of Havering 2024 - 2027](#)

[London Borough of Newham 2023 - 2030](#)

[London Borough of Redbridge 2023 - 2026](#)

[London Borough of Tower Hamlets](#)

[London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)



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[NHS England Green Plan Framework](#)

[NHS England » NHS Standard Contract](#)

[FIT FOR THE FUTURE 10 Year Health Plan for England](#)

[NHS England » Neighbourhood health guidelines 2025/26](#)

[Exploring the carbon impact of virtual wards in a large acute hospital, *BMJ Innovations* \(2025\)](#)

[Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service, July 2022](#)

[Digital Inclusion framework](#)

[Air Pollution Data on Fingertips](#)

[Public Health England. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution](#)



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