

# **Environment and Sustainability Strategy 2025-30**

It's our world, let's make a difference



### Contents

)3	Introduction
)4	Scene setting
)6	Our journey so far
8(	Our environment and sustainability vision
0	Our strategic framework
11	Making our environment and sustainability strategy a reality
15	Measuring success

### **Introduction from Chief Executive**

The health of our environment and the health of the public are deeply connected - and at NHSBSA, we're committed to playing our part in delivering a sustainable future.

The purpose of the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) is to deliver business service excellence to the NHS and help people live longer, healthier lives. As a public sector organisation delivering on behalf of the taxpayer, we recognise the important role we play in society and the positive impact we can have. We're an integral part of the communities we serve, as both a great service provider and an employer of choice.

Our organisation's strategy includes bold and ambitious targets we've set to achieve our goals. These centre on our people, our customers, delivering value and efficiency, and being a good corporate citizen, minimising our environmental impact and maximising our social impact. This Environment and Sustainability Strategy directly supports the achievement of our strategic goals.

We're passionate about creating the best place any of us have worked. Our people are crucial to our overall success and collectively contribute to building a positive culture. The strong sense of community and belonging we have is a fundamental part of what makes the NHSBSA a great place to work, and having a positive environmental impact is integral to that. People are at the heart of

our environmental sustainability approach. Across our organisation, colleagues champion and drive initiatives that integrate sustainability into our thinking and reduce our environmental impact, turning ambition into results. By working collaboratively, we ensure our efforts are understood, embraced, and embedded in everything we do.

We're committed to environmental sustainability as a core driver of public value and organisational resilience. Our approach promotes smarter resource use and enhances service delivery thereby contributing to better health outcomes, reduced environmental impact, and long-term system sustainability. Environmental responsibility is not just a strategic priority; it's central to how we deliver value, meet stakeholder expectations, and respond to the climate emergency with urgency and purpose.

Through our **Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)** goal, we've pledged to operate in an environmentally sustainable way. A key commitment is achieving net zero by 2030, which involves rapid and deep decarbonisation of our estate and operations, reducing emissions, improving resilience, and lowering costs. But our ambition goes further. We aim to drive positive environmental impact across our supply chain, enhance digital sustainability, and eliminate waste at source.

Under our **value and efficiency** goal, we're focused on delivering taxpayer value by eliminating inefficiencies, streamlining processes, investing in technology, and optimising resource use. These actions not only improve productivity and service quality but also reduce our environmental footprint, demonstrating the strong alignment between sustainability, value and efficiency.

We've made great headway over the last few years on our Environment and Sustainability aims, including the progress on our journey to net zero. However, we recognise that while we have much to be proud of, we have more to do and, only by focusing on our goals and taking bold action, will we continue to become more environmentally sustainable.

This strategy is more than just a document and I invite every one of you to be part of it. Whether you're leading a team, managing a project, or simply making daily choices, your actions matter. They matter for the communities we serve and the generations that follow.



Michael Brodie
Chief Executive
NHS Business Services Authority

# Scene setting

Over the past few years, we have elevated the urgency and ambition of our approach to deliver on our goals. We've worked across the organisation to build momentum and drive meaningful change. Our successes include:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 65%

Cutting water use by 72%

- improving efficiency of services, helping to half our waste
- embracing digital solutions that stop paper at source
- advancing our approach to digital sustainability
- embedding environmental improvement into procurement and estate management activities

These achievements reflect the dedication of colleagues, the support we've generated and the strength of our strategic approach. But as we see the early impacts of the climate emergency unfold, we know there's more to do.

In 2024, the world experienced the hottest year on record, with global average temperatures exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels for the first time. As the climate continues to warm, associated changes in weather patterns are presenting growing challenges for health and emergency-response systems. For instance, heatwaves in the UK have been linked to increased pressure on healthcare services and higher rates of heat-related illness.

Furthermore, we continue to consume resources at a faster rate than the planet can regenerate - our current rate if resource use would require 1.7 Earths to sustain. These consumption habits are placing pressure on ecosystems, supply chains, and long-term service resilience, with global demands expected to rise significantly in the coming decades.

While the scale of the climate challenge is considerable, this is a key moment to reflect on the foundations we've laid and set out the meaningful action we can take to further build on our progress to date.

Environmental sustainability is fundamental to improving health outcomes and delivering public value. Poor environmental conditions are closely linked to poor health, while efficient, sustainable systems can enhance access to care, reduce costs, and benefit overall health outcomes. That's why addressing our environmental impact is a fundamental part of our NHSBSA strategy for 2024-29, supporting our value and efficiency goals and ESG performance.

Our environment strategy underpins our organisation's strategy, setting out our vision, goals, and objectives for the next five years. It is shaped by our double materiality assessment, making sure we focus on the most significant sustainability issues linked to our key risks, impacts, and stakeholder expectations. We have also considered the evolving external landscape, including anticipated updates to the Greening Government Commitments and new policy developments around sustainable procurement and ESG reporting, which continue to influence and guide our strategic direction.

As we look ahead with renewed urgency and purpose, it is also important to reflect on how far we have come. The progress we have made lays a strong foundation for the next phase of our journey defined by progress, purpose, and collective action.



# Our journey so far

Since the launch of our environment strategy for 2022–25, we have made significant strides in embedding sustainability into the heart of our operations, services, and culture. We are extremely proud of our key achievements so far.

Here are just some ways we have made a difference during our previous strategy period:



Our people and **culture**: Strengthened our Environment Network and trained **56** colleagues in high impact/influence areas in Carbon Literacy



Waste management: Halved total waste, 0% to landfill, and increased recycling rates to 88%



**Greenhouse gas** emissions: Achieved **65%** reduction against 2017/18 baseline nearing our **69%** target and exceeding the Greening Government Commitment (GGC) target of 44%



**Water consumption:** Reduced by 72%, exceeding GGC target of **8%** 



#### **Digital** transformation:



Expanded digital services, reducing paper use and removing waste at source



#### **Energy efficiency**:



Delivered LED upgrades, additional Solar PV installations, and estate consolidation, contributing to reduced energy use and emissions



#### **Sustainable** procurement:

Embedded environmental criteria into contracts, launched a Supplier Net Zero Roadmap, and strengthened social value integration



#### **Climate adaptation**:

Completed climate risk assessment and engaged risk leads to embed climate-related risks into local registers



#### **Governance**:



Colleague engagement, carbon literacy training, and support for ecoanxiety have helped embed sustainability into our culture

#### volunteering: Enhanced nature



recovery efforts at Stella House and supported over **2,100** hours of environmental volunteering, including the largest NHSBSA event at Footprints on the Moon

**Biodiversity and** 



## Our environment and sustainability vision



Creating a healthier future by delivering sustainable services that protect our planet, support our people, and strengthen the health and care system.

#### **Our environment goals**

We have set out long-term environment goals across three core areas:

#### 1. Mitigate climate change

- a) By 2030, GHG emissions we can control will be net zero
- **b**) By 2040, GHG emissions we can influence will be net zero

#### Net zero by 2030 scope

- ▼ Emissions from the combustion of fuel, for example in boilers and generators
- Fugitive emissions arising from emissions leaks, for example from refrigeration and air conditioning units
- Emissions from energy used, either self-generated or from sources supplied by another purchase, including for electricity, heat, steam, and cooling
- ▼ Emissions resulting from the use of vehicles owned or leased by the department
- ▼ Emissions resulting from business-related travel (excluding staff commutes and international flights) on public transport or employee owned or leased vehicles
- Transmission and distribution losses of electricity

#### Net zero by 2040 scope

▼ Emissions resulting from the Purchase goods and services

# 2. Minimise waste, promote resource efficiency and move towards a circular economy

- **a**) Reduce waste and resource use by prioritising reuse, eliminating single-use items, and designing out waste at source
- **b**) Drive digital transformation and influence policy to support long-term reductions in material use and maximise environmental impact

# 3. Empowering our people and developing our culture to drive positive environmental change

We will embed environmental sustainability into our organisational culture, recognising that our people are critical to achieving our environmental goals

By fostering a sense of belonging, purpose, and shared responsibility, we will:

- **a**) Engage senior leaders and those in high impact/ influential roles, building understanding and ownership to drive the delivery of our strategy
- **b**) Strengthen engagement across the organisation by deepening connection to our strategy and embedding sustainability



# Our strategic framework

To achieve our environmental ambitions and meet government commitments, we have developed a framework that sets out our priorities and the enablers that support delivery.

#### Our environment strategy priorities

To achieve our environment goals, we will be prioritising a number of core areas.

#### **Our environmental outcomes**

#### Mitigate climate change

**Energy:** Reduce energy onsumption and deploy onsite low-carbon and renewable energy.

**Sustainable Travel:** Transition to active and low carbon modes of transport to reduce our carbon impact and improve air quality.

#### Improve use of resources

**Water conservation:** Reduce water use across our estate.

#### Waste and resource efficiency:

Removing waste from our services and operations at source, increasing the proportion that is reused and recycled.

#### **Adapt to climate change**

We continue to enhance our understanding of climate-related risks and implement adaptation strategies to safeguard our estate and operations.

#### **Enhance our natural environment**

We enhance biodiversity across our estate and beyond by creating space for nature to thrive, while empowering people to connect with and care for the natural environment through volunteering.

#### Our enablers support the delivery of our environment and sustainability priorities

Our people and culture Educate, engage and raise awareness to embed environment best practice and sustainability into our thinking and processes across our organisation.

**Good governance** Maintain an effective governance framework which ensures continual improvement and a commitment to fulfil our compliance obligations.

**Sustainable procurement and business change** Have an environmentally responsible, ethical, inclusive, transparent supply chain.

**Sustainable technology and digital services**Ensure our responsible and resilient ICT and digital services deliver measurable and tangible sustainable outcomes. Innovate and use our digital expertise to transform the way we deliver our services to reduce reliance on paper-based services and plastic cards.

# Making our environment and sustainability strategy a reality

To achieve the ambitious priorities set out in this strategy, we have identified the following objectives to be delivered by 2030

#### Mitigate climate change

Reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact by improving energy efficiency, accelerating the transition to low-carbon energy sources, and embedding more sustainable travel practices across our organisation. This section is supported by our Energy and Sustainable Travel priorities.



#### **Energy**

Reduce energy use and install onsite low-carbon and renewable energy sources.

By 2030 we will:

- continue to optimise the way we use and manage our buildings, making sure estate changes meet our environmental performance criteria, contribute to energy efficiency, and carbon reduction goals
- improve the intelligence of buildings with real time energy monitoring and controls, enhancing our energy management practices
- upgrade our estate to make it more energy efficient

- and deploy further onsite low carbon and renewable technologies
- update and enhance our Carbon Management Plan to incorporate planned sustainability projects, supporting accurate carbon projections and environmental planning
- develop a carbon offsetting approach to offset our residual emissions

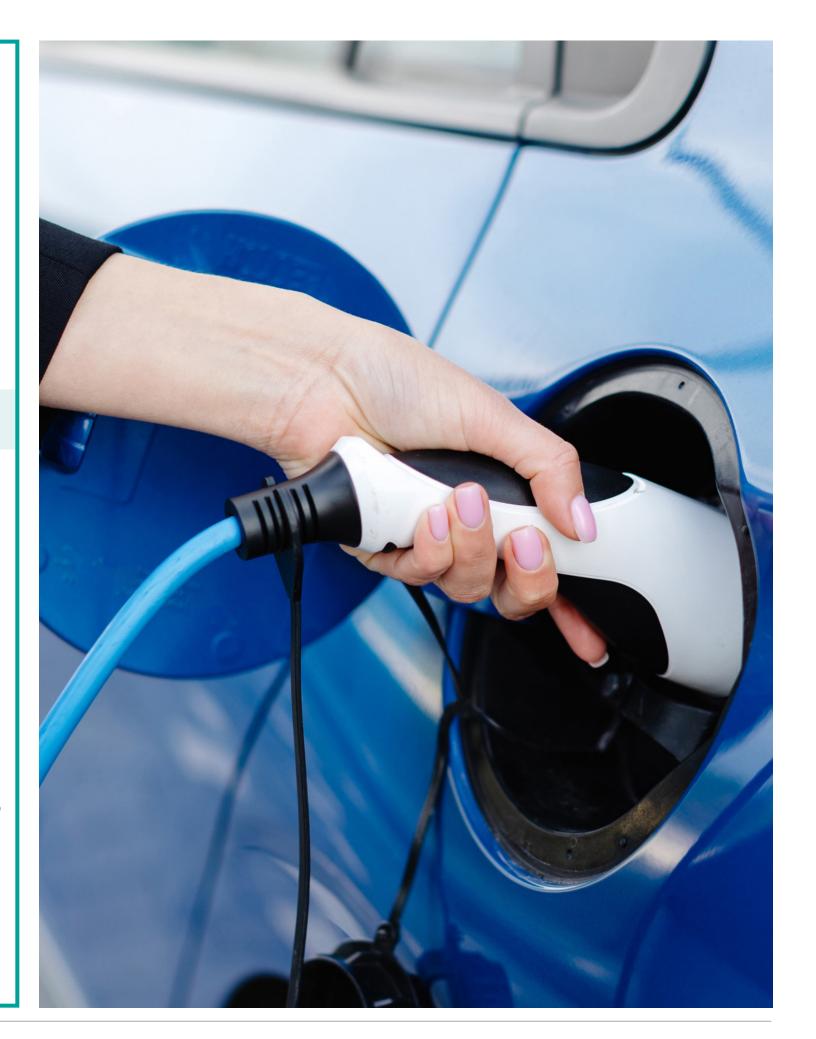


#### **Sustainable travel**

Transition to active and low carbon modes of transport to reduce our carbon impact and improve air quality.

By 2030 we will:

- develop a plan by 31 March 2026 to improve the sustainability of our business travel and commuting
- support a shift towards low-carbon modes of business travel, including transitioning 100% of our fleet to zero emission vehicles by 31 December 2027, in line with Government Fleet Commitment
- expand our charging facilities across our estate to support uptake of electric vehicles



#### Improve use of resources

We are committed to conserving our natural resources by using them more efficiently across our operations. Through smarter design, innovation, and responsible consumption, we aim to reduce waste, minimise water use, and extend the life of materials.



#### Water

By 2030 we will:

- continue to use our enhanced water metering to monitor consumption trends, identify increases in water consumption and opportunities for improvement
- continue to integrate water efficiency opportunities within estates upgrades, ensuring our estate becomes increasingly water-efficient over time



#### **Waste and resource efficiency**

We aim to embed resource efficiency across our services and operations, reducing waste and encouraging reuse when possible. Through smarter service design, digital innovation, and strategic partnerships, we will drive long-term environmental benefits.

By 2030 we will:

- identify opportunities to eliminate waste at source and expand our reuse schemes to reduce our use of resources
- continue to develop modern, secure and scalable digital services and technology platforms to reduce waste and minimise the use of paper and plastic cards, driving uptake of our digital services to maximise impact
- work closely with our sponsors to influence policy changes and service design, to reduce waste and resource use long-term and deliver environmental and efficiency benefits
- assess procurements with waste and resource efficiency in mind, to reduce the amount of goods we purchase, and ensure their disposal is considered at the outset



#### Our people and culture

We will educate, engage and raise awareness to make sure environmental best practice and sustainability guides our thinking and processes across our organisation.

By 2030 we will:

- review and enhance our environment and sustainability training to provide colleagues at all levels with the knowledge and confidence to take meaningful action to support our sustainability goals
- develop and deliver an annual environmental communications and engagement plan and promote use of our Climate Action Toolkit
- continue to strengthen our Environment Network to foster a culture of environmental sustainability through collaboration, education, and action



# Sustainable procurement and business change

We are building an environmentally responsible and transparent supply chain that supports our sustainability goals and delivers against government policy. We'll embed sustainability into business change by integrating environmental considerations into governance and decision-making.

#### By 2030 we will:

- continue to embed environmental considerations across the commercial lifecycle in line with central government policy, and driving consistent, measurable impact
- set a clear and achievable interim target by 2028 to drive progress towards our **Net Zero by 2040** goal
- strengthen and embed our approach to social value, making sure we are aligned with central government policy and organisational goals, and consistently integrate social value into all relevant procurement and contract management activities
- embed environmental considerations into the governance framework for programme and project delivery, with a focus on sustainability throughout our decision making



#### Sustainable Information Communication Technology (ICT) and digital services

We will make sure our responsible and resilient ICT and digital services deliver measurable and tangible sustainable outcomes; by innovating and using our digital expertise to transform the way we deliver our services.

#### By 2030 we will:

- continue to digitise our services and increase the adoption of digital solutions to reduce reliance on paper and plastic cards
- promote a circular economy by maximising reuse of functional ICT equipment, with any remaining items recycled
- improve our understanding of our hosting and device emissions and develop projects to improve performance
- embed environmental considerations into project delivery, making sure sustainability is integrated in system design and development
- establish methodology to quantify the benefits of our digital services improvements

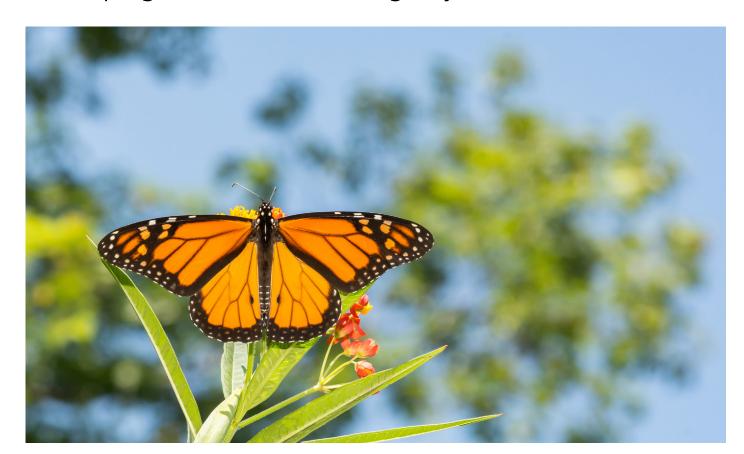


#### **Enhance our natural environment**

We enhance biodiversity by creating space for nature to thrive across our estate and through our volunteering programmes.

#### By 2030 we will:

- review, update and implement our Biodiversity Plan for our estate, prioritising sites with greatest potential
- create and improve spaces that enhance biodiversity
- continue to adapt estates management practices to place a greater focus on nature recovery
- continue to offer and enhance our environment-based campaigns and volunteering days





#### Climate change adaptation

Understand climate-related risks that impact our estate and operations and develop plans to respond to these risks.

#### By 2030 we will:

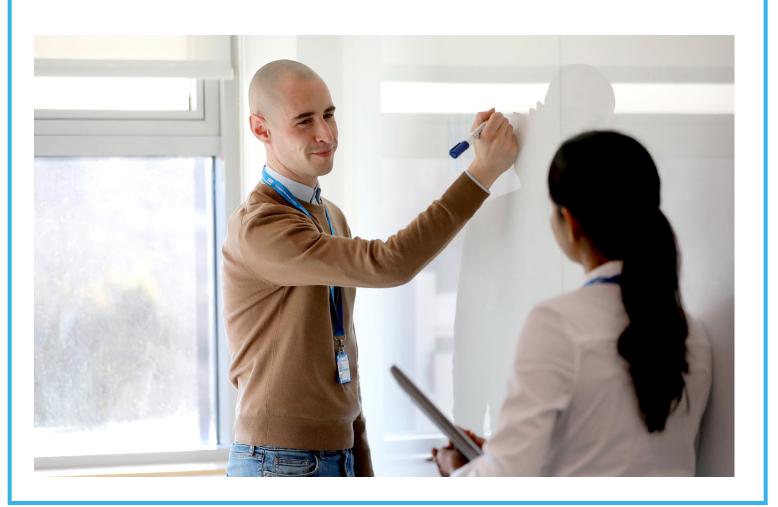
- refresh our Climate Change Risk Assessment across our estates and operations maintain our understanding of risks and identify areas that need more resilience
- refresh our Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, including existing or planned actions in response to risks identified
- integrate climate change risk and adaptation into our existing risk management and business continuity systems
- improve awareness and understanding of climaterelated risks within our Risk Management Group
- embed climate change adaptation into our investment and business case proposals where appropriate

#### **Good governance**

Maintain an effective governance framework which ensures continual improvement and commitment to our compliance obligations.

#### By 2030 we will:

- monitor our environment performance at board level, with a designated SRO for GGC
- maintain and enhance ISO14001 EMS certification





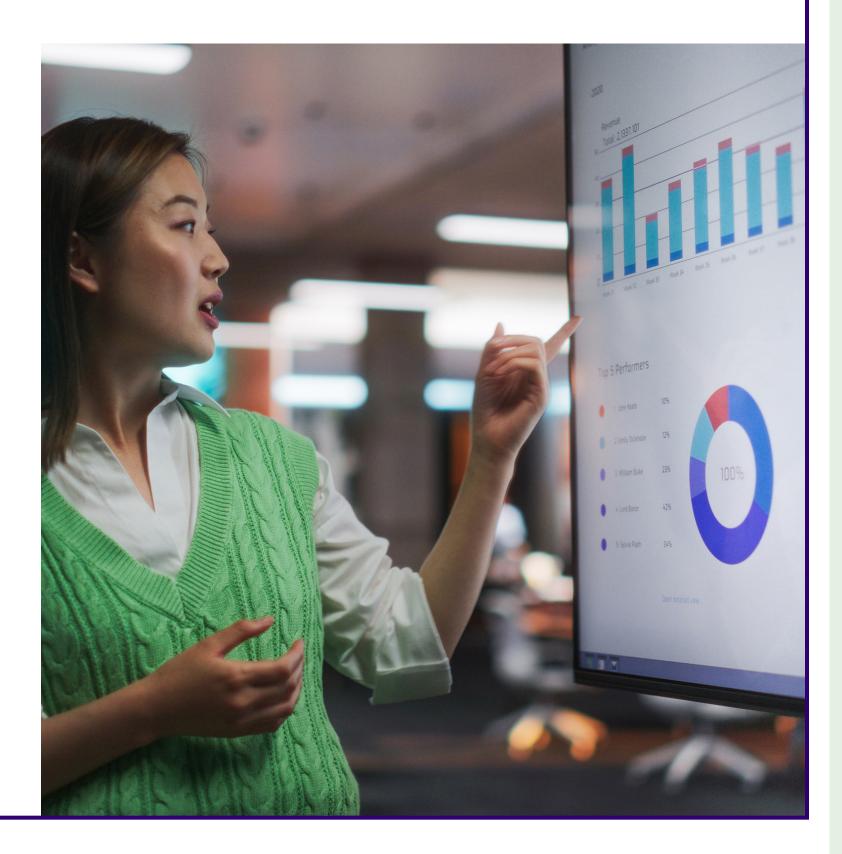
## Measuring success

We monitor our environmental performance through a range of methods, gathering data and insights from relevant functions across the organisation.

Our suite of environment key performance indicators (KPIs) which are in line with the Greening Government Commitments, allows us to track progress against our objectives, targets, and actions. We aim to exceed these targets wherever possible.

Our performance is reviewed and reported quarterly by our Environment Committee for regular oversight. At year-end, we report progress through our annual report and environment and sustainability annual report. We also provide annual updates to our leadership team and the NHSBSA Board to provide senior and executive-level oversight and show how our progress supports our strategic organisational goals.

Our externally certified ISO Environmental Management Systems is subject to an annual external audit. This includes site visits, document and procedure reviews and assessments of how well the system is embedded in our operations. The audit assesses and measures how were managing our environmental responsibilities and our commitment to ongoing improvement, which enhances our ability to deliver on strategic priorities.



# **Environment and Sustainability Strategy 2025-30**

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