

Health Innovation *East*



Environmental Sustainability Toolkit

January 2026



Health
Innovation
Network
Local change, national impact



Office for
Life Sciences





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Introduction to the Toolkit

Environmental sustainability/net zero and the NHS is a rapidly developing area. Ambitious goals have been set by the NHS and build on [progress of the past 10 years](#).

This toolkit covers some of the key aspects to consider when engaging with the NHS:

- Aligning innovations with the ambitions/targets of the NHS at a national, regional and local (including system (ICS), place and neighbourhood)
- How net zero is being built into the NHS supply chain
- The areas of greatest challenge/opportunity for reducing carbon emissions.

Health Innovation East: supporting innovators in navigating the NHS and net zero

Innovator support

Innovation will play a key part in making the NHS more environmentally sustainable. We are working with regional and national sustainability networks to help identify innovations that will make an impact.

Gain deeper knowledge and skills with BSI training programmes

BSI offers sustainability courses to help organisations understand and implement sustainable practices. These courses are important given the increasing global focus on sustainability due to factors like climate change, regulations, competitive advantage, cost savings, and stakeholder expectations.

To find out how Health Innovation East can support you in navigating the NHS and net zero, through training and other services.

Health Innovation East  About us  How we can help  Our work  Events Insights  Contact



Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service strategy

Environmental sustainability/Net Zero and the NHS is a rapidly developing area. Ambitious goals have been set by the NHS and build on [progress of the past 10 years](#).

The NHS is aiming to be the world's first net zero national health service and has set two targets:

1. The NHS Carbon Footprint (emissions directly controlled) to reach net zero by 2040 (with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032)
2. The NHS Carbon Footprint Plus (emissions from the NHS supply chain), to reach net zero by 2045, (with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039)

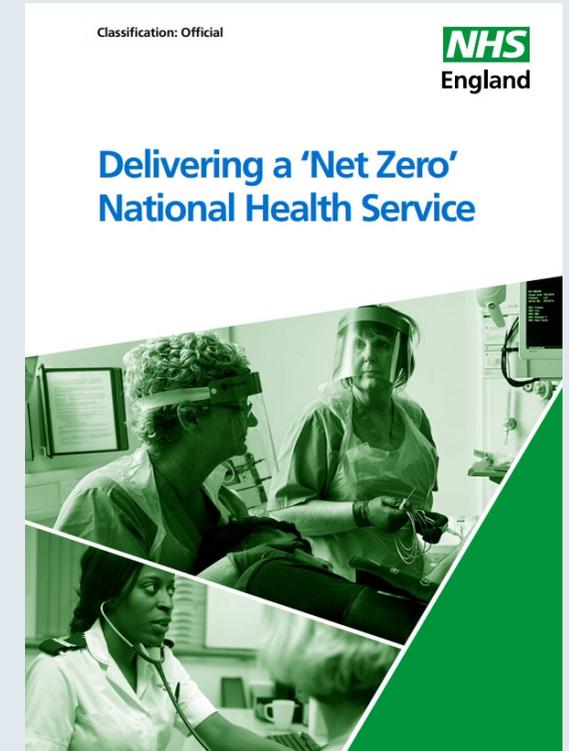
With this in mind, net zero is now being built into the NHS procurement process.

For all new contracts above £5 million per annum, the NHS requires suppliers to publish a Carbon Reduction Plan for their UK Scope 1 and 2 emissions and a subset of scope 3 emissions as a minimum (aligning with PPN 06/21).

From April 2024, this requirement is proportionately extended to cover all new procurements.

Therefore, it is vital you start to consider the sustainable value of your solutions and incorporate it into your business case going forward. [Learn more here](#)

$$\text{Sustainable value} = \frac{\text{Outcomes for patients and populations}}{\text{Environmental + social + financial impacts (the 'triple bottom line')}}$$



[View the Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service strategy](#)

NHS Green Plans

- Every NHS Trust and integrated care system (ICS) in England now has a Green Plan
- Trusts and integrated care boards (ICBs) will meet the duty of the 2022 Health and Care Act through the delivery of their localised Green Plans. Every Trust and ICB in the country now has a board-level lead responsible for delivery.
- It is useful to understand how NHS organisations were advised to [produce a Green Plan](#).



NHS Green Plan overview example

Overview of the focus areas from page five of the [Suffolk and North East Essex \(SNEE\) ICS Green Plan](#)



These seven areas are included in the NHS Net Zero strategy [here](#) - NHS Trusts and ICSs have since added to these (the focus areas can vary in different plans).



Health and Care Act 2022

2022 CHAPTER 31

PART 1

HEALTH SERVICE IN ENGLAND: INTEGRATION, COLLABORATION AND OTHER CHANGES

NHS England

9 NHS England: duties in relation to climate change etc

After section 13NB of the National Health Service Act 2006 (inserted by section 8 of this Act) insert—

13NC Duties as to climate change etc

- (1) NHS England must, in the exercise of its functions, have regard to the need to
 - (a) contribute towards compliance with—
 - (i) section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008 (UK net zero emissions target), and
 - (ii) section 5 of the Environment Act 2021 (environmental targets), and
 - (b) adapt to any current or predicted impacts of climate change identified in the most recent report under section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008.
- (2) In discharging the duty under this section, NHS England must have regard to guidance published by it under section 13ND.

13ND Guidance about discharge of duty under section 13NC etc

NHS England may publish guidance about the discharge of—

- (a) the duty imposed on it by section 13NC;
- (b) the duty imposed on integrated care boards by section 14Z44;
- (c) the duty imposed on NHS trusts by section 26B;

Health and Care Act 2022 commitments

- On 1 July 2022, the NHS became the first health system to embed net zero into legislation, through the [Health and Care Act 2022](#)
- This places duties on NHS England, and all trusts, foundation trusts, and integrated care boards to contribute towards statutory emissions and environmental targets.
- The Act requires commissioners and providers of NHS services specifically to address the net zero emissions targets.
- It also covers measures to adapt to any current or predicted impacts of climate change identified within the 2008 Climate Change Act.

Design for Life roadmap

Published 16 October 2024



Department
of Health &
Social Care

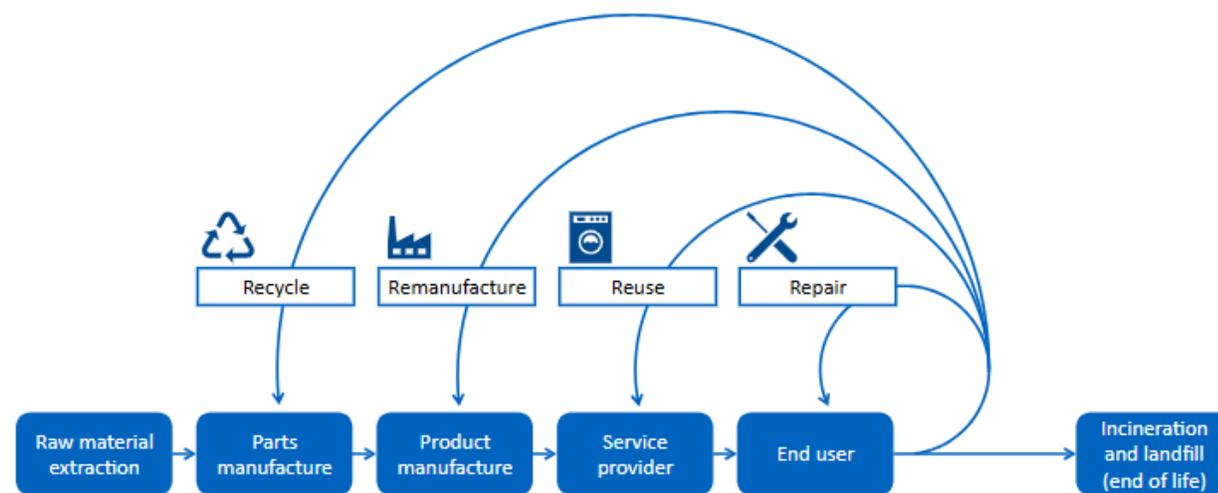
The **Design for Life** programme, promotes a circular approach to medtech. This involves designing, procuring, and processing medical products for reuse, remanufacturing, or recycling, preserving their value for as long as possible.

Developed collaboratively with over 80 stakeholders from the UK medtech industry, healthcare, and academia, the programme is widely supported across the sector, aiming to unlock these opportunities nationwide.

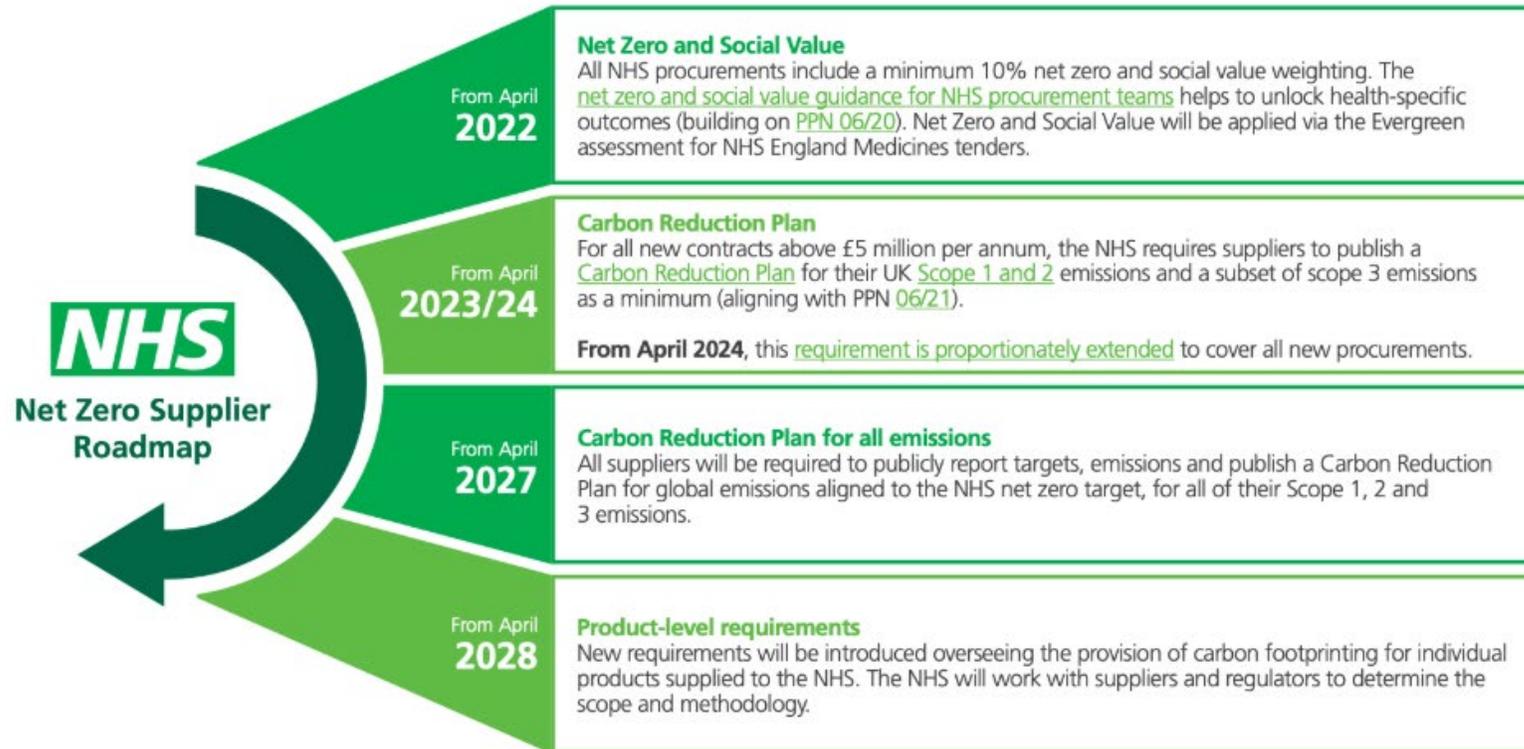
The vision

By 2045 the UK will have transitioned away from all avoidable single-use medtech products towards a functioning circular system, safely transforming the sector to deliver enhanced resilience, increased economic growth, better value for patients and the NHS, and minimised environmental impacts.

Figure 1: circular economy system



NHS Net Zero Supplier Roadmap



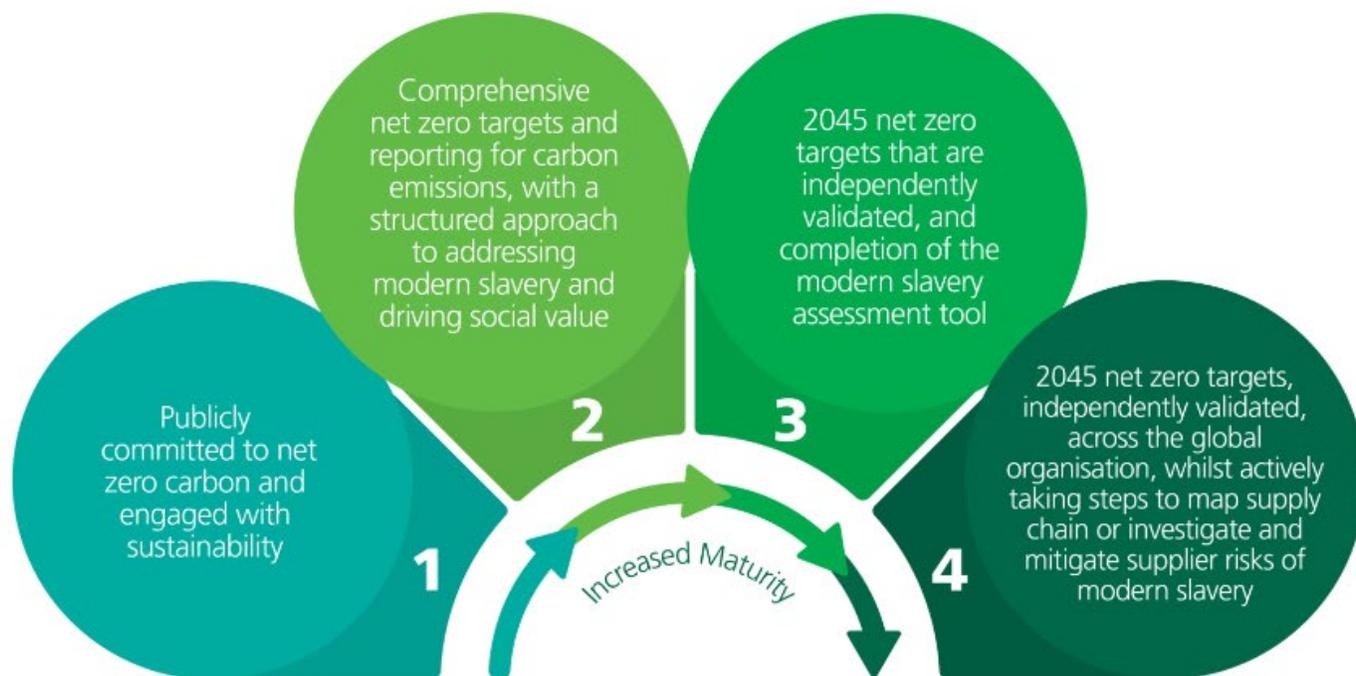
Published November 2023 | [england.nhs.uk/greenernhs](https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs)



Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment

Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment

Summary of Maturity Criteria



england.nhs.uk/evergreen

June 2023

The Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment is an online tool for suppliers to engage with the NHS on their sustainability journey and understand how to align with the NHS net zero and sustainability ambitions, including those set out in the NHS net zero supplier roadmap.



Evergreen Sustainable Supplier Assessment – Maturity Criteria Matrix

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Environmental measures in effect (e.g. carbon reduction projects)	Required	Required	Required	Required
Scope of net zero target and emissions provided (publicly available)	Scope 1, 2 and a subset of scope 3	Scope 1, 2 and all relevant scope 3	Scope 1, 2 and all relevant scope 3	Global entity and reporting entity: Scope 1, 2 and all relevant scope 3
Geographical boundary of net zero target and emissions provided (minimum)	UK boundary	UK boundary	Global boundary	Global boundary
Net zero target year (minimum and publicly available)	2050	2050	2045	2045
Validation of net zero target and verification of emissions provided	Not required	Not required	Required for reporting entity	Required for reporting entity and global parent company (targets only)
Entity providing target information	Reporting entity	Reporting entity	Reporting entity	Reporting entity and global parent company
Higher performer – transparency reporting (e.g., CDP, EcoVadis or B Corp)	Not required	Not required	Not required	Required
Public modern slavery statement	As per legislative requirements	Required	Required	Required
Modern Slavery Assessment Tool	As per legislative requirements	As per legislative requirements	Required	Required
Identifying and mitigating modern slavery risks	As per legislative requirements	As per legislative requirements	As per legislative requirements	At least one of the following: - Actively taking steps to map supply chain - Actively investigating incidents and mitigating high risks found
Corporate social value programme	Not required	Required	Required	Required

[england.nhs.uk/evergreen](https://www.england.nhs.uk/evergreen)

June 2023

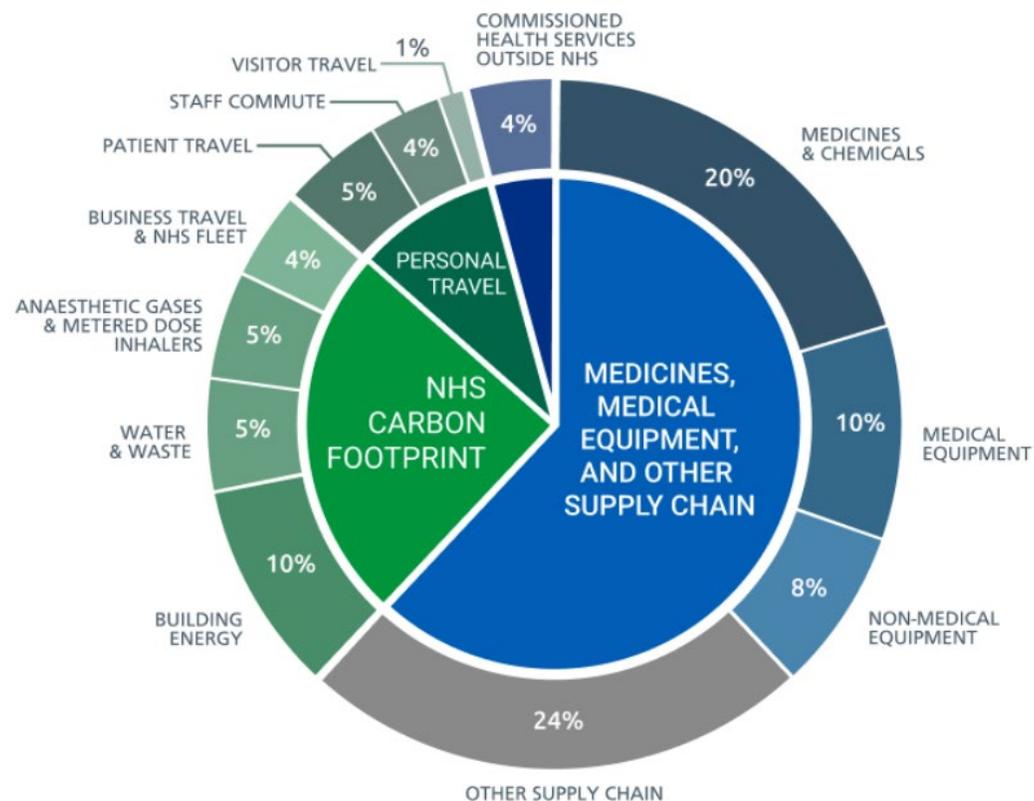


Sources of carbon emissions by proportion of NHS Carbon Footprint Plus

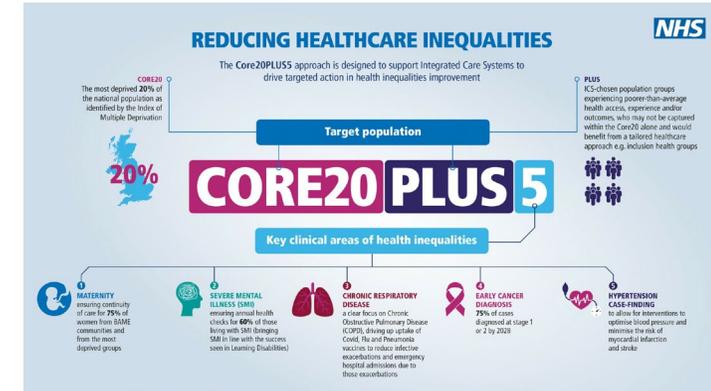
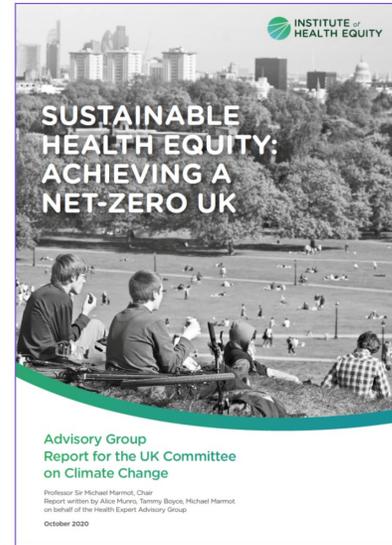
The greatest areas of opportunity – or challenge – for change are in the supply chain, estates and facilities, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and travel.

'Sources of carbon emissions by proportion of NHS Carbon Footprint Plus'

(Page 13/14 – Delivering a 'Net Zero' national health service)



Health inequalities, social value and climate change



Existing health inequalities are being exacerbated by climate change. It has a greater impact on the most vulnerable in society and will increase the pressure on NHS services.

The [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) show how health, climate and social value are tightly knitted together.

To make the biggest impact, the climate crisis and inequality must be tackled simultaneously as highlighted by [Sustainable Health Equity: Achieving a Net Zero UK report](#)

One national NHS England approach to support the reduction of health inequalities is [Core20PLUS5](#) where many of the key clinical areas of health inequalities can be at least partly tackled through a move towards net zero,

Further resources

- **Health Innovator Network Net Zero Innovator Support package** : Health Innovation Kent Surrey Sussex and Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley have produced a [guide](#) to help innovators working with the NHS towards its net zero ambitions. The guide is a comprehensive one-stop-shop, as well as providing links to further resources supporting carbon reduction and sustainable development. It includes a step-by-step guide and self-assessment checklist for innovators on achieving net zero.
- **How to calculate your business' carbon footprint blog** – outlines the key factors to consider
- **Estates Returns Information Collection (ERIC)**- Utilise data to help identify key issues and back up your value proposition with real statistics from the NHS.
- **Greener NHS bulletin** – updates on the progress to net zero and how to get involved in building a greener NHS
- **Greening Government Commitments 2021-2025** – setting out targets for UK government departments and their agencies, including to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and setting out commitments, including to improve sustainable procurement
- **Sustainability in quality improvement - Measuring the impact** – measuring environmental and social outcomes
- **Supply chain digital toolkit** – what a supply chain needs in a circular economy
- **The Health Foundation - sustainability resources** – range of useful articles from 2021
- **NHS England Central Commercial Function (CCF) LinkedIn page** - providing key supply chain/procurement updates
- **Energy Systems Catapult**- Turboboosting clean tech innovators to thrive now and in the Net Zero system of the future

Further resources - continued

- **SEE Sustainability:** aimed at GP practices SEE sustainability offer primary care organisations support to improve their carbon literacy and understand how to support the net zero initiative. <https://seesustainability.co.uk/>
- **Do Nation:** An employee pledge programme for 3+ months and see a shift in attitudes and behaviours around sustainability in your workplace. <https://onpurpose.org/en/our-community/en-do-nation/>
- **CarbonTraaC:** Carbon TRACC is a leading provider of ISO 14064 & Carbon consultancy and training services in the UK and Ireland <https://www.carbontracc.com/>
- **Eco Sourcing Hub:** Support both health providers and suppliers in understanding their environmental impact and fulfilling their legal requirements under the Green NHS initiative and the Public Contracting Note PPN 06/21. <https://ecosourcinghub.co.uk/health/>
- **Health Declares:** A group of health professionals from across the UK who are committed to acting and advocating to protect planetary and human health. <https://healthdeclares.org>
- **HealthcareLCA environmental impact assessment database:** HealthcareLCA serves as an up-to-date repository, bringing together new and existing assessments into one centralised and publicly accessible database. <https://healthcarelca.com/>
- **Sustainable healthcare coalition:** a healthcare sector led group that looks for the greatest opportunities to inspire sustainable practices in healthcare through the collaboration of its members. The website provides some great resources including a [General practice non-clinical carbon calculator](#) and a [Care Pathways Carbon Footprint Calculator](#). More info: <https://shcoalition.org/>
- **Other carbon calculator examples** [Carbon Footprint Ltd](#), [Sustainable Healthcare Coalition](#), [MacKay Carbon Calculator](#) and [Carbon Trust](#)

Hospital Trusts – Sustainability guides:

BEDFORDSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Sustainability - Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://media.cuh.nhs.uk/documents/Green_Plan_2_-_Accessible_-_tagged.pdf
CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/cpft-strategy-2023-2026/
CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY SERVICES NHS TRUST	https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/media/j4ulkk0c/cambridgeshire-community-services-nhs-trust-green-plan.pdf
EAST AND NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE NHS TRUST	https://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/about/trust/sustainability/
EAST OF ENGLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST	Sustainability Strategy 2024-2025 EEAST (eastamb.nhs.uk)
EAST SUFFOLK AND NORTH ESSEX NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Energy and sustainability - East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (esneft.nhs.uk)
ESSEX PARTNERSHIP UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.eput.nhs.uk/about/trust/green-plan/
HERTFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY NHS TRUST	Microsoft Word - HCT Green Plan for website including foreword
HERTFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	hpft-green-plan-v20.pdf
JAMES PAGET UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.jpaget.nhs.uk/media/irad4eys/james-paget-green-plan-2025-2028.pdf
MID AND SOUTH ESSEX NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	You Exec (https://youexec.com) (mse.nhs.uk)
MILTON KEYNES UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.mkuh.nhs.uk/green-plan
NORFOLK AND NORWICH UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust » NNUH Green Plan
NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Our Strategies Norfolk and Suffolk NHS (nsft.nhs.uk)
NORFOLK COMMUNITY HEALTH AND CARE NHS TRUST	Sustainability NCH&C (norfolkcommunityhealthandcare.nhs.uk)
NORTH WEST ANGLIA NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk/trust-strategy/
ROYAL PAPWORTH HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Providing sustainable healthcare at Royal Papworth Hospital
THE PRINCESS ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL NHS TRUST	https://www.pah.nhs.uk/about/the-new-princess-alexandra-hospital/design/sustainability/
THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL, KING'S LYNN, NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	https://www.qehkl.nhs.uk/about-us/our-strategy/
WEST HERTFORDSHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST	https://www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/application/files/7817/3264/1786/West_Herts_Green_Plan.pdf
WEST SUFFOLK NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	Sustainability (wsh.nhs.uk)

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