



Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy

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Lead Author:	Energy & Sustainability Manager		
Lead Executive:	Director of Public Health		
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Equality Impact Assessed:	Yes	Equality Impact Assessment date:	Jan 2026
Data Protection Impact Assessed:	No – Not required	Data Protection Impact Assessment Date:	N/A

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Summary & Aim	Key Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the activities of NHS Dumfries and Galloway, those activities under its control and from electricity, steam and heat purchased by NHS Dumfries and Galloway in line with the Scottish Government’s targets. • To maximise NHS Dumfries and Galloway’s contribution to reducing emissions which are linked to its activities but are from sources which it does not own or control, to net-zero by 2045. • To mitigate the effects of climate change on the services provided by NHS Dumfries and Galloway. • To establish a culture of stewardship, where healthcare professionals are mindful of the resources they use and deliver more sustainable care. • To establish NHS Dumfries and Galloway as part of the Circular Economy through designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and contributing to the regeneration of natural systems. • To increase NHS Dumfries and Galloway’s contribution to promoting green space, tackling the ecological emergency and restoring biodiversity. • To minimise NHS Dumfries and Galloway’s use of physical and natural resources • To ensure NHS Dumfries and Galloway works with our partners and communities to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for NHS Dumfries and Galloway to maximise its contribution to mitigating and limiting the effects of the global climate emergency and for the development of an environmentally and socially sustainable health service in line with NHS Scotland’s Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy (2022-2026).
Target Audience	Previous Names
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Policy • Sustainability Policy

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Equality and Diversity Statement

NHS Dumfries and Galloway recognise that some communities within society are more likely than others to experience discrimination, prejudice and inequalities. The Equality Act 2010 specifically recognises the protected characteristics of **age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership**. The Fairer Scotland Duty, also requires NHS Dumfries and Galloway to actively consider how socio-economic disadvantage can be reduced when making strategic decisions.

The New Armed Forces Covenant Statutory Duty places an expectation on NHS Dumfries and Galloway to consciously consider the Armed forces Covenant when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces community and help improve their access to public services.

Consideration on all of the protected characteristics, the Fairer Scotland Duty and the Armed Forces Covenant are included within the Equality Impact Assessment process and documentation, which must be completed as part of the Policy Development Process.

NHS Dumfries and Galloway is committed to promoting and advancing equality, removing and reducing discrimination and harassment and fostering good relations between people that hold a protected characteristic and those who do not. This applies both in the provision of services and as our role as a major employer. NHS Dumfries and Galloway believe that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and is committed to the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination practice.

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1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

- 1.1 The planet is in the midst of a climate emergency as a result of human activity and urgent action is required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to the changes caused by climate change and achieve an environmentally sustainable society.
- 1.2 Climate change presents a serious risk to the health of people around the world and has been described by the Lancet Commission on Managing the Health Effects of Climate Change as “*the biggest global health threat of the 21 century*”¹.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for NHS Dumfries and Galloway to maximise its contribution to mitigating and limiting the effects of the global climate emergency and for the development of an environmentally and socially sustainable health service in line with [NHS Scotland's Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#). It sets out the requirement for NHS Dumfries & Galloway to undertake work in line with the strategy and [DL \(2021\) 38](#) A Policy For NHS Scotland On The Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development.
- 1.4 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will seek to ensure that climate impacts are integrated into all planning, management decisions and operational practices in order to respond fully to global climate emergency and achieve an environmentally and socially sustainable health service.

2. POLICY AIMS

- 2.1 NHS Dumfries and Galloway aims to achieve the following:
 - To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the activities of NHS Dumfries and Galloway, those activities under its control and from electricity, steam and heat purchased by NHS Dumfries and Galloway in line with the Scottish Government's targets.
 - To maximise NHS Dumfries and Galloway's contribution to reducing emissions which are linked to its activities but are from sources which it does not own or control, to net-zero by 2045.
 - To mitigate the effects of climate change on the services provided by NHS Dumfries and Galloway.
 - To establish a culture of stewardship, where healthcare professionals are mindful of the resources they use and deliver more sustainable care.
 - To establish NHS Dumfries and Galloway as part of the Circular Economy through designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and contributing to the regeneration of natural systems.
 - To increase NHS Dumfries and Galloway's contribution to promoting green space, tackling the ecological emergency and restoring biodiversity.

¹ Lancet Climate Change Commission

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- To minimise NHS Dumfries and Galloway's use of physical and natural resources
- To ensure NHS Dumfries and Galloway works with our partners and communities to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

2.2 The aims of this policy must be fully integrated into all planning, management decisions and operational practices across NHS Dumfries & Galloway in order to respond fully to global climate emergency and achieve an environmentally and socially sustainable health service. Successful delivery of projects will be subject to agreed financial planning processes. Prioritisation will be required within available capital, revenue envelopes and against appropriate project criteria.

3. POLICY SCOPE

3.1 The policy applies to all staff, patients, visitors, contractors and other people who work within NHS Dumfries & Galloway premises or on NHS Dumfries & Galloway grounds (e.g. students, staff on placement voluntary workers, workers from other organisations to whom the buildings are leased, contractors, or personnel with honorary contracts).

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Net zero** means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted into the atmosphere and those removed.

5. DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will implement a strong governance structure to ensure delivery of this policy's aims and agreed areas of work. A Non-Executive Board Director will be appointed as a Climate Champion and an Executive Director will provide Executive Leadership to this agenda.

5.2 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will establish a Climate Emergency and Sustainability Group chaired by the Non-Executive/Executive Director. The membership of each Climate Emergency and Sustainability Group must be of sufficient diversity to ensure that the aims of this policy are fully integrated into all planning, management decisions and operational practices across NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

5.3 The Climate Emergency and Sustainability Group will report to the Boards Performance and Resources Committee with onward reporting to the NHS Board.

5.4 An annual report on progress towards delivery on this policy and areas of activity will be presented to the NHS Board on an annual basis by December each year.

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- 5.5 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will assess their progress towards net-zero emissions via their annual Public Bodies' Climate Change Duties Report (PBCCDR) which is to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 30 November each year.
- 5.6 The Non-Executive Director and Executive Lead will attend relevant National groups in relation to this agenda.
- 5.7 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will have a clear communications plan to ensure that staff, patients and the local community are aware of our sustainability plans, policies and processes in addressing the climate emergency, and to support them to make sustainable choices.
- 5.8 All staff are asked to consider the climate impact of their work and where possible seek to minimise it, without compromising quality of patient care.

6. PROCESS / PROCEDURES

- 6.1 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take action across the following areas:
- 6.2 Achievement of Net-zero
- 6.3 In line with the Scottish Government [DL/Strategy](#) NHS Dumfries and Galloway will undertake the following actions to support delivery of Net Zero by 2045
- 6.4 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take sufficient action to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from its activities, the activities under its control and from the electricity, steam and heat purchased by it:
- by at least 75% by 2030.
 - by 90% by 2040.
 - to net-zero by 2045.
 - (compared to 1990 levels.)
- 6.5 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take sufficient action to influence a reduction to those emissions which are linked to its activities but are from sources which it does not own or control to maximise its contribution to reducing carbon emissions:
- by at least 75% by 2030.
 - by 90% by 2040.
 - to net-zero by 2045.
 - (compared to 1990 levels.)

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Climate change adaptation

- 6.6 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will have in place a Climate Change Risk Assessment covering all operational areas and produce and implement a Climate Change Adaptation Plan to ensure resilience of service under changing climate conditions. The risk assessment will be formally reviewed every 5 years
- 6.7 Appropriate risks from the Risk Assessment will be included in NHS Dumfries and Galloway's risk register.

Sustainable care

- 6.8 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will foster and promote a culture of stewardship, where health and care professionals are mindful of the resources they use and share a vision of green and sustainable healthcare.
- 6.9 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will support our workforce to consider the environmental impacts of treatments when making decisions about the care they provide. This must not adversely impact on the quality of care provided.
- 6.10 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will provide opportunities and promote education and training to staff on the principles of practising sustainably.
- 6.11 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will aim to support the growth of the clinical green network.
- 6.12 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will recognise the link between climate change, sustainable care, illness prevention, public health and realistic medicine and will draw on staff from a range of background to support these links. We will endeavour to engage with the people of Dumfries and Galloway to encourage self-management and self-care.
- 6.13 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will promote sustainable medicines use through medication review, reducing medicines waste and encouraging use of non-pharmacological approaches to disease prevention and management.

Waste Management

- 6.14 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will undertake action to design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use and contribute to the regeneration of natural systems.
- 6.15 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will reduce its waste by a minimum of 15% compared to a 2011 baseline and take action to reduce its waste beyond the minimum where practicable.

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- 6.16 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take action to minimise or maintain the amount of its waste which goes to landfill to 5% or less of the total.
- 6.17 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take action to reduce the food waste it produces.
- 6.18 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will put in place a system for recording the volume and type of waste which it generates and the destination of that waste.
- 6.19 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will identify, assess, and take action to reduce and eliminate the pollution (including toxic chemicals, micro-plastics and pharmaceutical residues), arising directly from its activities.
- 6.20 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will monitor its water usage and take action to reduce unnecessary water consumption.

Biodiversity and Greenspace

- 6.21 Dumfries and Galloway as a region has a significant amount of high quality outdoor space. In keeping with our local environment. NHS Dumfries and Galloway will take action to increase biodiversity and use of its greenspace to benefit the health and wellbeing of our staff patients and local communities.
- 6.22 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will assess the extent and quality of the greenspace we have; the contribution our estate makes to biodiversity and undertake action to improve the contribution of our estate to biodiversity.
- 6.23 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will manage our greenspace to increase provision and improve access, quality and regular use by staff, patients and the local community.
- 6.24 We will collaborate with local partners to improve the natural links between NHS greenspace and other local areas of greenspace.
- 6.25 Should NHS Dumfries and Galloway consider embarking on actions that would result in the loss in quantity or quality of our greenspace or reduce our contribution to biodiversity, we will notify the appropriate government team.

Transport

- 6.26 We will take action to reduce the carbon emissions resulting from travel associated with our activities, including those associated with staff and patient travel. Those actions will include:
- 6.27 Actions to reduce the need for travel.
- 6.28 Actions to increase active travel.

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- 6.29 Actions to increase the use of public or community transport to access services.
- 6.30 Actions to reduce car use in support of the Scottish Government's aim to reduce the number of kilometres driven in Scotland by 20% by 2030.
- 6.31 Actions to support a proportionate use of electric vehicles in preference to vehicles powered by fossil fuels.
- 6.32 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will seek to minimise its carbon emissions from its fleet as much as reasonably possible.
- 6.33 We will develop operating procedures the promote sustainable transport and travel.

Facilities

- 6.34 Any new buildings and major refurbishments will be designed to have net-zero greenhouse emissions. Where a net-zero design is not currently practicable, a route map showing how net-zero emissions will be achieved before 2045 will be produced.
- 6.35 In any new buildings and major refurbishments, we will use the Sustainability Design & Construction (SDaC) Guide SHTN 02-01.
- 6.36 Revisions of our Property and Asset Management Strategy will support the achievement of this policy's aims and in particular the requirements to reduce carbon emissions and promote greenspace and biodiversity.

Procurement

- 6.37 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will consider social and environmental sustainability when it is procuring goods and services balancing this with affordability and clinical need.
- 6.38 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will ensure that its supply chain is reviewed to determine the extent of associated greenhouse gas emissions and social and environmental impacts. NHS Dumfries and Galloway will then identify and take action where possible to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and negative social and environmental impacts of its supply chain and to promote positive social and environmental impacts from it.

Resourcing

- 6.39 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will draw on staff from a range of background to support Climate Emergency Response, with specific resource embedded within our estates team regarding sustainability.

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- 6.40 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will appoint an Environmental Management Representative (EMR) with organisation-wide responsibility for the implementation of an effective Environmental Management System to measure, and through which it can continually aim to improve, environmental performance. The Environmental Management System used by an NHS Scotland body must be approved by the SGHSC.
- 6.41 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will appoint a senior staff member as Waste Management Officer as a single point of contact, with responsibility for all aspects of waste management within the organisation consistent with the Scottish Government's commitments towards zero-waste and a circular economy.
- 6.42 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will work across teams to implement this policy in respect of greenspace and biodiversity.
- 6.43 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will appoint an officer with the responsibility, resources and authority to implement this policy in respect of travel.
- 6.44 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will work with a range of clinicians to support implementation of this policy.

Management systems

- 6.45 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will implement the following management standards to further the aims of this policy: ISO 9001 and 14001 or equivalent.
- 6.46 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will Utilise the Environmental Management System to measure performance and monitor continual improvement in line with the Scottish Government key sustainability objectives.

Assessment of Sustainability

- 6.47 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will assess its contribution to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals on a biennial basis using the National Sustainability Assessment Tool provided by NHS National Services Scotland.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The review of the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Policy was undertaken by the Energy and Sustainability Manager within NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Input was sought from the following individuals and groups:

- Head of Estates and Property
- Director of Finance
- Family and Support Services Manager
- Director of Digital

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- Communications Manager
- Health Facilities Scotland, Energy & Engineering
- CES Programme Board

8 TRAINING AND SUPPORT

8.1 NHS Dumfries and Galloway will provide opportunities and promote education and training to staff on the principles of practising sustainably. A range of online learning in relation to climate change is available through TURAS Learn

9 MONITORING

9.1 The monitoring arrangements for this Policy are set out in the table below.

Element to be monitored	Monitoring Methodology	Reporting		
		Presented by	Committee	Frequency
Compliance with the policy	Reported in the annual climate emergency report	Energy and Sustainability Manager	Performance and Resources Committee	Annually

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 As part of the process for reviewing and developing this policy an Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, monitoring of the EQIA will be undertaken by the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Programme Board.

10.2 All Equality Impact Assessments are published on our external website, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

11 DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment was not undertaken when reviewing this policy as the document did not review or handle confidential or personal information.

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12. DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

12.1 Document Amendment History

Version	Section(s)	Reason for update
1.1	All	Required review

12.2 Distribution

Name	Responsibility	Version number
Corporate Business Support Team	Distribution of policy to all Directors and General Managers for cascade	1.1
Directors and General Managers	Cascade of policy to all staff	1.1

12.3 Associated documents

12.4 Action Plan for Implementation

Action	Lead Officer	Timeframe
The actions outlined within this policy will be overseen by the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Programme Board	Director of Public Health (Exec Lead for Climate Change)	Ongoing