



2025-2030 Enabling Strategies

PILLAR 3

Green Strategy

2025-2030



Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust



Strategic Context

This document illustrates our strategy supporting Pillar 3:

Green Plan



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INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the NHS launched its 'Campaign for a Greener NHS' which culminated in the publication of the report 'Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service'. Underpinning the report is an understanding that climate change undermines the core foundations of good health, contributing to cardiovascular disease, asthma, and cancer.

Action to tackle climate change reduces the burden of disease and contributes to the shared vision within Sussex to support people to live for longer in good health; reduce health inequalities; improve patient experience; support staff and deliver affordable and sustainable health care.

This document sets out the QVH ambition to support the delivery of:

- Net zero by **2040** for the emissions the NHS controls directly
- Net zero by **2045** for the emissions the NHS has the ability to influence.

In 2022 QVH published its Green Plan which focused on eight elements identified in the 'Care without Carbon' (CWC) framework¹. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to date as outlined in this document and this strategy will build on this progress and transition the outstanding milestones into the new strategic priorities.

We recognise that NHSE will be publishing guidance for a green plan refresh in the autumn of 2024 which will need to be considered in line with delivery milestones of this strategy. The guidance will shape how we work towards statutory targets set out in the Health and Social Care Act as a system and how individual organisations will contribute, with associated timescales for the development of local plans.

¹ CWC was developed at Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust and provides an integrated and holistic approach to sustainability within the NHS



IN THE WORDS OF PATIENTS, CARERS AND STAFF

It starts with us. Everything we are aiming to achieve in this green strategy is about making sure that QVH is able to provide an even better experience for patients, staff and communities in a greener, modern environment.

Some ambitions of our staff and patients include:



“Have an estates infrastructure that is effective and green.”

“Improved efficiencies, greener working processes.”

“Better alternative transport access.”

VISION AND VALUES

Our vision has been co-produced with patients and staff and aligns to the Trust ambition to be a provider of specialist and regional services and to deliver an innovative offer for the local population.

We want all of our staff to feel valued and supported in their personal wellbeing and their professional ambition, to be proud of the work they do for our patients and each other, and to embody the Trust vision. Our vision is underpinned by our values, which have been refreshed alongside the development of our five year strategy.

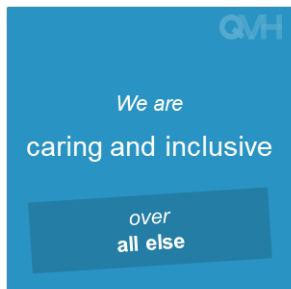
Living our values requires us to:

- Regularly and purposefully review what our values and strategy mean for QVH, as individuals, as teams and as an organisation.
- Recognise the prejudice in all of us, even when we cannot see it for ourselves.

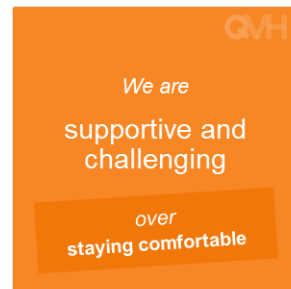
Our vision is:

To be a centre of excellence that rebuilds lives and supports communities for a healthier future

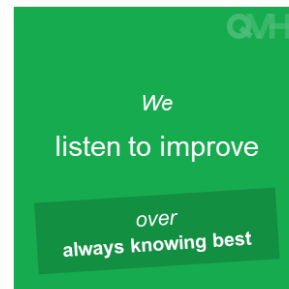
To achieve that, our values are:



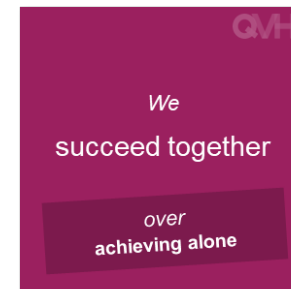
We treat everyone with respect, kindness and compassion.
We are inclusive and celebrate diversity.



We take time to support and look out for one another.
This includes sometimes challenging and holding one another to account, even if it feels uncomfortable.



We seek out and listen to feedback from patients, colleagues and partners with openness, and act with honesty and transparency to continuously improve the quality of our care.

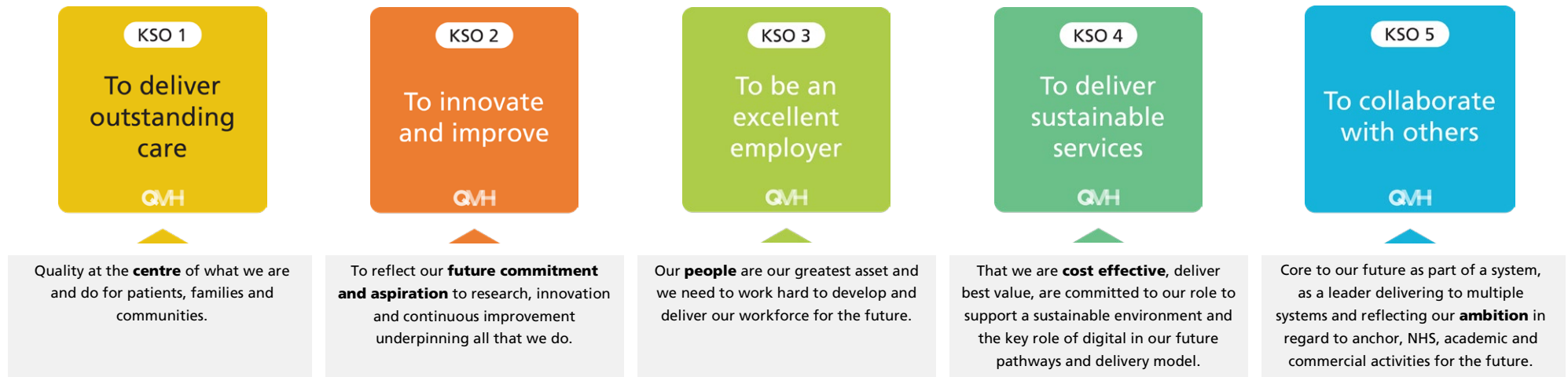


We value working together in teams, within QVH and with local partners, to provide outstanding care and support each other to deliver shared goals.

TRUST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our new key strategic objectives guide our priorities and focus. They frame everything from significant service level decisions through to individual objectives with a view to delivering improved outcomes for our patients and populations and improving our staff experience. Our green strategy is core for the ambitions of our objectives including innovation, improvement, sustainability and collaboration.

Our objectives are:



CONTEXT

The NHS is the largest employer in Sussex, with over **£3bn** spending power and considerable and diverse estates.

As an NHS provider, QVH will align its key priorities within the green strategy to NHS Sussex ICS and partners to contribute to addressing climate change and protect the most vulnerable in society.

Delivering care in a lower carbon, more sustainable way presents a significant health opportunity.

By contributing to supporting staff, patients, carers and communities to live more sustainably, QVH will support better health outcomes for Sussex, the UK and globally.

This is described as a Virtuous Circle of Sustainable Healthcare, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Our green aims are reflected in the 'Care Without Carbon' virtuous circle of sustainable healthcare.



WHY WE NEED TO CHANGE

In Sussex we are expected to see an increase in deaths and illness related to heat, air pollution and diet, damage to essential infrastructure and disruption to supply chains and provision of services, all as a result of climate change.

In vulnerable populations (predominantly those communities who are most deprived and who are already at risk of poorer health outcomes) people are more at risk from the harmful effects of climate change.

Within the public sector the NHS is the largest emitter of CO₂, making up 4-5% of the UK's carbon footprint. Delivering care in a lower carbon way is more sustainable and presents a significant health opportunity to protect the most vulnerable in our society.



BEST PRACTICE AND EVIDENCE BASE

Climate change and health are inextricably linked. Within the public sector, the NHS is the largest emitter of CO₂, making up **5%** of England's carbon footprint.

With **3.5%** of vehicles on the road associated with NHS business, plus waste produced the impact on climate change and the environment is significant.

NHS England (NHSE) has set ambitious targets as set out above. NHSE notes that while the main function of the NHS is to provide health services, it also has a significant part to play as an anchor institution and due to size, scale and reach has potential to significantly influence the health and wellbeing of local populations.

Its impact is determined by choices around function, leveraging of resources and maximising the social and economic value it brings to local communities.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

QVH’s green strategic priorities are aligned to the CWC eight elements, meeting the ambition of the approach developed in the framework.

These elements are designed to ensure we continue to have an integrated and holistic approach to our sustainable healthcare programme.

The eight elements include;

- Evolving care
- Places
- Culture
- Circular economy
- Journeys
- Wellbeing
- Climate adaptation
- Partnership and collaboration.



Three of these elements will be included in their respective enabling strategies, and are therefore not included in this document;

- Culture – People and Culture Strategy
- Wellbeing – People and Culture Strategy
- Partnerships and Collaboration – Partnerships Strategy.



Pillar 1 – Evolving care

ICS ambition:

“We want to make improvements which help us to improve the health outcomes for our population at the same time as reducing our impact on the environment.”

QVH’s approach to delivering the evolving care element is to develop and enable lower carbon and more sustainable models of care. Reaching the net zero carbon by 2040 requires a significant shift in care delivery and requires clinical input. Supporting clinical teams to develop and enable lower carbon, more sustainable models of care is therefore essential.

Work has commenced at QVH to focus on opportunities to help people remain well, minimise preventable ill health, health inequalities and unnecessary treatment, and supporting the independence and well-being of our patients and staff. These streamlined processes and pathways allow the minimisation of waste and duplication, within the Trust and the wider health care system to ensure delivery of safe and effective care.

Analysis of the clinical services we provide to identify areas of priority has been undertaken to develop areas for action based upon carbon impact.

Examples of initiatives include:

- The increased use of intravenous anaesthetics to reduce the use of desflurane gases. QVH have been one of the foremost users of this technique.
- Removal of desflurane vaporisers from routine use across the theatre complex.
- Reduced the use of single waste Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). From 2020/21 to 2023/24, QVH spend on single waste PPE reduced by **75%**.
- Ceasing the use of single use anaesthetic trays has saved circa **2.2 tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalents and **187,975 litres** of water per year.
- Virtual care where clinically appropriate. Up to **25%** of our outpatient appointments are now being conducted virtually.



QVH ambition:

“Develop and enable lower carbon, more sustainable models of care. Clinical projects delivering positive, measurable sustainability benefits developed within our five highest impact services.”

Our commitments:

- We will continue to integrate our sustainable healthcare principles where feasible at a strategic level across the Trust.
- We will support our clinicians to deliver against these principles and make more sustainable choices when delivering care.

We will set clear and specific priorities including:

- Reduce the impact of medical gases, implementing a full action plan to monitor reduction in medical gases and the associated impact.
- Waste segregation will be promoted and sustainably implemented, with appropriate communication, engagement and signage.
- A strategic approach to embedding sustainable care principles including optimising the use of technology, digital enablers and continuous improvement principles.



Pillar 2 – Places

ICS ambition:

“Working in partnership we will enable these plans by developing shared objectives, common standards, targets and strategy on the route towards net zero carbon.”

QVH's estate contributes to direct carbon emissions as an NHS trust, and this strategy aims to continue to minimise the impact on the environment and support visitor and staff wellbeing as well increasing local biodiversity. QVH will use low energy solutions and purchase energy through renewable sources where possible.

A full review of the Building Management System (BMS) has sought opportunities for carbon reduction. For example, the continued installation of variable speed drivers to larger fan motors, connected to the BMS, enables efficiency gains to be closely monitored and can now be calculated accordingly.

The programme to replace existing lighting with low energy and low maintenance LEDs continues, with all key areas now lit with energy efficient lighting. This provides a 70% energy reduction to the Trusts lighting energy demand.



QVH ambition:

“Ensuring QVH places are low carbon and protect local biodiversity whilst supporting wellbeing for staff, patients and visitors.”

Our commitments:

- QVH will continue to reduce energy and carbon consumption across our estate and cut our carbon emissions in line with net zero carbon targets.
- QVH will aim to provide, where feasible, comfortable and sustainable environments that promote excellent patient care, good places to work and support local community wellbeing.

We will set clear and specific priorities including:

- QVH will monitor the use of energy and water, with appropriate data, to identify areas of efficient consumption. This will include developing local strategies for high use areas and to identify ways to reduce energy consumption within our buildings for low/zero cost savings.
- QVH will develop future bids for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme etc. where appropriate and will propose investment grade proposals for a range of carbon reduction and associated green strategic projects.
- QVH will drive the Trust’s sustainability ambitions in estates and facilities projects, for example ensuring all major new works or builds adhere to net zero carbon emissions (NZC) targets.
- QVH will engage with local partners to develop biodiversity, whilst preserving and enhancing green spaces within our estate for the wellbeing of staff and patients. We will remain committed to purchasing 100% renewable electricity where practical to do so.



Pillar 3 – Circular economy

ICS ambition:

“Respecting our health and natural resources by creating an ethical and circular supply chain.”

A circular economy is a model of resource production and consumption, in any economy, that involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. This enables the life cycle of products to be extended.

70% of emissions are associated with the goods and services used across Sussex. It is therefore critically important that we continue to take a different approach to how we treat resources and the people who produce and distribute our products. Adopting a circular economy supports sustainability and social responsibility.

This includes considerations relating to procurement activity, minimising waste and enabling the reuse and recycling goods.

The development of joint procurement approaches across Sussex will stimulate market change by potentially expanding plant-based, seasonal and locally sourced choices, as well as establishing the opportunity for larger scale contracts that can be more efficient with lower maintenance and logistics costs for service providers. We will also, where feasible, undertake more ambitious workforce and patient behaviour projects, such as all partners working together to reduce medicines waste and

increase the return and reuse of medical devices. This could potentially enhance patient experience, support patient empowerment, provide local employment, and increase sustainability by reducing costs, carbon emissions, and the use of raw materials.

To do this our procurement processes will consider the most sustainable options, ensuring we integrate sustainability criteria into our procurement decision making. QVH have embedded the minimum social value of 10% criteria for all procurement tenders as from April 2022 in line with national requirements.

Recycling facilities are available across the QVH site, enabling the recycling of 30 tonnes of waste each year. From this we have moved to the use of biodegradable cups, with approximately 30 tonnes of single use plastics avoided each year from the initial 438,000 cups used. In line with this initiative, we are now procuring these cups from a central depot, therefore reducing the travel required to one lorry three times per week. The management of waste items through circular economy initiative known ‘War on Waste’.



The ultimate objective is to remove the notion of 'waste' and treat every item as a resource that can be used again at the end of its use within the business. QVH has also committed to recruit a Waste and Environmental Manager, to oversee the management of all waste contracts, recycling opportunities and ways of improving our carbon footprint.

QVH will continue the significant work to reduce the carbon footprint of our food and catering services, working with non-clinical and clinical colleagues to increase access to healthy, nutritious plant based meals whilst reducing the reliance upon high carbon foods such as beef and lamb. We will also minimise our use of single plastic items and replace with more sustainable alternatives.



QVH ambition:

“Respecting our health and natural resources by creating an ethical and circular supply chain.”

Our commitments:

- QVH will outline its approach to adopting the circular economy within the procurement policy. This will ensure that procurement decision making will take into consideration the full lifecycle of the products, whilst also taking into account social, environmental, and economic considerations when purchasing goods and services.
 - QVH will continuously reduce its total waste production, optimise the segregation of materials for recycling and increase the reuse of products.
 - QVH will aim to establish measurable reductions in the carbon footprint and environmental impact of our supply chain where feasible through the procurement process.
 - QVH will work with suppliers to identify ways to measurably improve the health and wellbeing of staff to support our supply chains, by ensuring that wherever possible suppliers have the appropriate support in place for staff wellbeing, aligned to QVH values, and consideration is given to procurement of manufactured electronic goods.
- In 2024/25, QVH procurement professionals will undertake participation in Sustainability and Social Value training to support ongoing identification of procured goods and services that have the most severe impact on society, the environment and the economy.
- Next steps include the identification of products, either high volume or spend, that are used by the Trust and deliver a measurable reduction in carbon emissions. The development of a programme to reduce the environmental impact from office paper through the implementation of the QVH Electronic Patient Record (EPR) will be key to the success of the trusts paperless scheme. QVH will work collaboratively with other NHS partners across Sussex to identify opportunities for joined up projects, including through the Sussex and Surrey Waste Group.



Pillar 4 – Journeys

ICS ambition:

“Ensuring the transport and travel that links our care and our communities is low cost, low carbon and conducive to good health and wellbeing.”

Travel plays a significant part of the environmental impact across the NHS, with approximately 3.5% of all road travel in England related to patients, staff and suppliers to the NHS. Travel is a significant contributor to the overall Trust carbon footprint, creating air pollution locally and contributing to traffic congestion. This in turn directly impacts upon the wellbeing of our staff and our patient community.

We will encourage staff and patients to eliminate or reduce the number of non-essential journeys and where possible they should consider other more sustainable transport options. The Trust has ambitious plans to use electric vehicles when practical to do so. We will install more electrical charging points to encourage staff and visitors to make the switch to fully electric vehicles when electrical capacity is available.



QVH ambition:

“Consideration given to the transport and travel that links our care and our communities is low cost, low carbon and conducive to good health and wellbeing within our control.”

Our commitments:

- We will work with clinical and digital teams to minimise staff, patients and visitor travel associated with our delivery of care.
- We will transition to low/zero carbon Trust vehicles fleets where feasible.

We will set clear and specific priorities including:

- QVH will improve our data reporting to further understand our carbon footprint for travel and transport to ensure we have an accurate understanding or our impact upon the local and wider NHS.
- QVH will formulate a Travel Plan focusing on; delivering against our net zero carbon commitments, support active travel and public transport methods for staff, patients and visitors, cutting air pollution locally. We recognise the importance of a staff engagement plan as it is key to delivery of the strategy and to build a green culture.



Pillar 5 – Climate Adaption

ICS ambition:

“Building resilience to our changing climate in Sussex.”

As the NHS works to mitigate climate change by reducing emissions to net zero carbon, there is also a need to consider the consequences this brings, not only for now, but also for the future. Impacts of this are already being felt across Sussex, including an increase in the prevalence of heatwaves and extreme weather conditions such as flooding.

These such impacts will no doubt broaden and increase over time. It is therefore important we build resilience into our estate, services and supply chains. We need to move towards adapting to the impact of this, and work collaboratively to mitigate them.



QVH ambition:

“Building resilience to our changing climate in Sussex.”

Our commitments:

- QVH will work together with NHS partners to support addressing climate change risks within our commitments, our service and our estate.
- We will undertake a climate change impact assessment with our partners across Sussex and integrate findings into our business continuity procedures and longer term strategic health planning.
- We will ensure climate related risks are added to the risk register and integrated into the Trust business continuity planning process as they emerge.



INTERDEPENDENCIES

The green strategy demonstrates that there is a strong relationship between climate change and health inequality, as the most vulnerable in our communities most often face the disadvantages of inaction, the delivery of this strategy therefore supports the delivery of the Trust's health inequalities strategy.

Respecting our health and natural resources by creating an ethical and circular supply chain creates an alignment with our financial considerations, as we take into consideration the full lifecycle of the products, whilst also accounting for social, environmental, and economic considerations when purchasing goods and services, to provide best value. This will require close working with the procurement function at QVH.

There is also a strong cultural element to this strategy, where creating a workplace culture of 'being green' will be an important determining factor of success. This strategy therefore has an interdependency with the people & culture strategy, as we think about developing the Trust's culture, and behavioural framework. The Trust's digital strategy will support and enable this, in alignment with element 4, Journeys, ensuring staff can work remotely where appropriate to minimise unnecessary journeys associated with the delivery of care.

The development of a programme to reduce the environmental impact from office paper through the implementation of the QVH Electronic Patient Record (EPR) will be key to the success of the Trust's paperless scheme.

Partnerships and collaboration will also be a crucial part of delivery of this strategy, which will be interdependent with the Trust's partnerships strategy, as we work in collaboration across Kent, Surrey and Sussex with Local Authority, Integrated Care Systems and NHS Providers.

