



# Sustainability and Greenspace Progress Report

A report outlining sustainability progress and an update to the Greenspace Strategy

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## Progress Overview

This mid-year sustainability report updates the NHS Fife Board and Executive Director Group (EDG) on NHS Fife's significant progress and achievements in sustainability initiatives. It serves as a follow-up to the 2022-2023 Annual Climate and Sustainability Board Report published in January 2024, providing a comprehensive overview of ongoing efforts to integrate sustainable practices within our operations.

Our 2023-2024 Annual Report is set for submission to the EDG in November 2024 and will be published in January 2025, as per policy DL38.

Additionally, this report provides an update on the progress of the Board-approved Greenspace Strategy, highlighting the important greenspace projects that align with our commitment to fostering a healthier and more sustainable environment for our staff, patients and the wider community.

By detailing our accomplishments and ongoing initiatives, this report aims to keep the Board informed and engaged with the critical work being done to advance our sustainability goals.



## Net zero, Emissions Reduction and Energy Savings

NHS Fife is playing a key role in Fife's ambitious journey towards net zero, as part of the collaborative initiative known as "The Big Energy Move." in partnership with Fife Council, Fife College, St. Andrews University and other local large organisations in Fife. We are at the forefront of addressing the increasing energy demands necessitated by the electrification of heat.

Our efforts are focused on installing renewable technologies across our sites to reduce energy consumption, cut emissions and alleviate pressure on the local grid. This approach supports the expansion of heat networks in line with Fife Council's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES), a critical component driven by the Scottish Government.

Through these actions, NHS Fife is reducing its carbon footprint and contributing significantly to the region's sustainable energy future and Fife's Council Climate Fife 2024 Strategy by ensuring the best use of our land and assets and that these align with the most appropriate sustainability solution.



### **Achievements:**

- Over £3 million invested in energy-saving and building improvement initiatives over three years, generating approx £1 million in savings.
- Released over £280,000 this financial year by identifying errors in energy and water billing.
- Installed 550kw of solar PV systems across multiple NHS Fife sites.
- Building fabric has been enhanced and windows upgraded to improve insulation and to increase energy efficiency.
- Building Management Systems (Heating Controls) have been upgraded.
- A heat recovery unit has been recently installed in the laundry facilities to capture and reuse heat from waste water. This has an estimated savings of £100k pa.
- Strategies have been implemented to optimise the efficiency of our air conditioning systems and large freezers and chillers.
- Lighting systems have been upgraded to energy-efficient LED technology.
- We have partnered with Scottish Water and the Scottish Government to explore heat recovery from waste water for the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy (VHK) site.
- Procurement Initiative (PIN): Recently published a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to test the market for fully funded renewable technology solutions. (Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), additional solar PV installations, solar car park hubs and EV charge hubs).

Our procurement initiative not only aims to generate renewable energy, but to reinvest benefits into the community, eg funding renewable technology training for Fife residents as one option. This will also create income generation opportunities for NHS Fife.

We will collaborate with Fife Council to ensure sites are prioritised to align with the big energy move and their priorities for heat networks.



## Staff Communication and Engagement

Implementing sustainable practices and addressing climate change within an organisation requires employees to understand what climate change is and how it affects the organisation and their job roles. In line with our 2030 Greenspace Strategy and the National Sustainability Strategy, NHS Fife has been working on providing environment and sustainability training.

We are developing a 'Carbon Literacy for Healthcare Toolkit' with Fife Council, adapted from the NHS England toolkit for Scottish context. This peer-led training typically spans for eight hours and is best delivered to groups of ten to fifteen people. The course is nearly complete and will soon undergo accreditation. We aim to launch the first session on the 'Carbon Literacy Action Day' which is on 14 November 2024. Initially, we plan to train the National Sustainability Assessment Tool (NSAT) working group, but with NSAT no longer a reporting mechanism, we will need to reassess the rollout strategy.

### Achievements:

- Carbon Literacy Training: We have developed a 'carbon literacy for healthcare toolkit' in collaboration with Fife Council, tailored to Scottish context. The course is near completion and will soon undergo accreditation.



- National Environmental Sustainability Training: We have promoted the environmental sustainability eLearning course to staff which is available on TURAS to raise awareness around key sustainability concepts to NHS Scotland employees.
- Sustainability Ambassador Programme: We are currently in the process of setting up a network of Sustainability Ambassadors within NHS Fife to promote sustainability initiatives and bridge the gap between the Sustainability team and employees.
- One Young World Summit: We are celebrating the success of Yasmine Morgan, Sustainability Officer with NHS Fife, being accepted as a scholarship recipient to attend the 2024 summit in Montreal, focusing on global issues such as climate change and health inequality.
- Other Communications: The NHS Fife website has been updated with new sustainability content and sustainability pages on Stafflink are continually refreshed promoting initiatives and events throughout the year.
- We have worked closely with the Communications team to highlight Scotland's Climate Week. This will involve a range of internal and external communications; placing a particular spotlight on our Sustainability team and the range of projects we are working on.



## Active Travel

NHS Fife has made significant strides in promoting active travel as part of its broader sustainability goals. Through partnerships, new initiatives and continuous engagement with staff, we are fostering a culture that supports cycling and other forms of active transportation.

Our efforts aim to reduce the carbon footprint and enhance the health and well-being of our employees.

### Achievements:

- Hosted a Dr Bike event and a Cycling Awareness event at VHK in collaboration with Greener Kirkcaldy.
- Cycling training opportunities have been promoted to staff which offer beginner, intermediate and advanced levels to boost confidence and encourage cycling to work.
- We achieved the Cycling Friendly Employer award for VHK which is accredited by Cycling Scotland.
- We are in the process of implementing a new e-Bike Scheme at VHK.
- We have established the NHS Fife Active Travel Group which is open to all staff interested in active and sustainable transport.



- A year-round successful Cycle-to-Work Scheme for staff has been launched.
- Alongside Public Health Scotland, we have updated the GIS maps to include NHS Fife Active Travel isochrone maps which showcase areas within a 30-minute walk or cycle from key hospital sites. We have plans to share these with staff to encourage active travel.

#### Ongoing Projects:

- We are preparing for an Annual Travel Survey in partnership with Mobility Ways to monitor commuting behaviour and assess change.
- Dr Bike events, led rides and cycle training as part of a broader cycling programme are planned in the future.
- We have applied for funding from Cycling Scotland to improve and upgrade cycle storage facilities at VHK.
- We continue to collaborate with Stagecoach to increase staff discounts on bus travel, with a trial period in place to evaluate demand.
- We continue to organise events with Stagecoach at main sites to promote bus travel alongside travel surveys.
- We are identifying changing facilities and look to upgrade, wherever possible.
- We continue with the development of a Travel Strategy which is focused on active and sustainable travel.

## Sustainable Care

### Nitrous Programme

The national figures for the use of nitrous show NHS Fife in bad standing, however, this is due to the way the figures have been reported and the timelines of events.

The nitrous manifolds completely ceased use in October 2023 and there were several returns which appear to have affected our figures for 2023/24. The most recent report shows no piped nitrous this year.

We decommissioned the QMH manifold in summer 2023 and the VHK in October 2023. We then had to wait for the manifold cylinders to be uplifted by BOC (which happened in December) and the way that was reported has impacted our figures.

There is still use of nitrous cylinders in dentistry (mix with O<sub>2</sub> via machine) and Entonox (nitrous/O<sub>2</sub>) in maternity, plaster rooms, minor injuries (legitimately).

Our pharmacy team has the full report from NSS going back a few years and plans to analyse the usage and discuss it with the specialities/medical gas committee accordingly. Work is also progressing



specifically around Entonox and usage is being tracked. We are projecting the lowest use of nitrous since reporting began. Our biggest concern at present is exposure in relation to midwifery and the use of Entonox and we are introducing an alternative to Entonox in ED imminently.

One of Fife's consultants is leading on the green ED programme and has made successful improvements already and continuing on this work to support the board with accreditation.

Some of the theatre achievements, a full list is available via a tracker.

- Promoting TIVA.
- Reduce desflurane.
- Switch from tympanic to temporal thermometer.
- Switch to reusable slide sheets (£30k saving).
- Switch to reusable BP cuffs (£43k saving).
- Neptune system in place at QMH.
- Reviewing HVAC (ventilation operating times).

## Climate Change Adaptation

We are enhancing the resilience of our facilities and services by integrating climate risk assessments into our resilience plans. We work closely with the Resilience team on this matter.

We continue to enhance the green spaces around our facilities, promoting biodiversity and integrating nature-based solutions into our site management practices.

We are currently developing site management plans and updated biodiversity audits to facilitate long-term improvement and are looking at ways to better manage our outdoor space.

### Achievements:

- Research has been conducted for sites at risk of flooding through NHS Scotland Climate Mapping Tool:
  - 14 coastal sites at potential risk of flooding by 2080
  - Den Burn, VHK has been risk assessed for flooding with Fife Council
- We are trialing nature-based solutions with technical surveys being carried out in conjunction with NHS Assure.
- Work continues with Sniffer who have been commissioned by CRSES (Climate ready South East Scotland) to identify risks and opportunities.





## Greenspace and Biodiversity

Following the publication of the NHS Fife Greenspace Strategy, the Sustainability team has undertaken several projects to assess the Board's green estate. Following this, we looked at how to adapt and utilise these spaces to benefit staff and patients, the wider community, generate green energy and support biodiversity.

Below is a summary of key projects that meet the Greenspace Strategy's themes of energy, wellbeing, food, climate, nature and skills. We have a full action and project tracker to monitor and evaluate progress.

### Achievements:

- Neil McCormick, Director of Property & Asset Management, NHS Fife joined the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT) as a member of their Board of Directors.
- Climate literacy training has been developed for key staff within NHS Fife which will be rolled out within the coming months.
- Lynebank Hospital, Dunfermline has had a full site Greenspace consultation with staff.
- We have joined FCCAN (Fife Communities Climate Action Network).



- Engagement events have taken place with local community groups and a suite of documents has been created to enable best use of our spaces and to manage projects.
- We attended Tree in the Park along with other local organisations and businesses.
- We have joined the Dunfermline Greenspace Forum.
- The Oak Tree Planting Project have been delivered across the broad NHS Fife estate.
- A Seed Funding application has been submitted for a Pain Management Garden within one of the courtyards at Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline. This will include raised beds, vertical gardens and create an outdoor exercise space for rehabilitation. The garden is planned to be fully wheelchair accessible.
- A Seed Funding application has also been submitted for Lynebank Hospital, Dunfermline to incorporate a whole site design following a recent staff consultation.
- Our greenspace management processes have been updated in conjunction with the FCCT. We continue to lower the amount of mowed grass on sites to encourage the establishment of wildflower meadows which have a higher biodiversity net benefit.

### **Ongoing projects**

- Discussions continue with Fife Council for the best use of land owned by NHS Fife for gardening allotments. This supports the Fife Council Allotment Strategy and the Food4Fife Strategy.



- Greenspace and biodiversity audits - these will assess the way the Greenspace is currently used on our sites and what potential projects can be beneficial including techniques to support existing biodiversity and encourage new species.
- Linking into the Fife biodiversity action plan via the FCCT.
- We are hopeful that an NHS Scotland wide UK Habitat Survey will be carried out within the next year which will provide a more detailed analysis of biodiversity and encourage protection of these species.

## Waste

NHS Fife is committed to improving waste management across our facilities with an emphasis on sustainability and efficiency. Our efforts include the formation of dedicated groups to enhance waste management practices, successful implementation of resource-sharing platforms and progress towards national waste targets.

### Achievements:

- The Sustainable Waste Improvement Group is now established within NHS Fife, which focuses on supporting the existing waste management group to encourage the correct use of bins and raise awareness on waste management.
- The Warp-it system was launched in March 2024, which now has over 500 staff members signed up and has generated over £50,000 in savings by reducing waste and administrative costs.
- We have successfully met two out of four national waste targets, with ongoing efforts to achieve the remaining goals.
- A new Glass recycling system is in place preventing glass going into the domestic waste stream.
- Collaboration continues with Head of Nursing, NHS Fife to identify areas to target for improvement and working alongside the Programme team to run a test of change.



- New waste bins are on trial in Ward 8, VHK to assess their benefit.
- Updated posters and bin labelling have been applied. Work continues.
- Pharmacy, Dental, and GP surgeries in Fife have all been updated on the no recyclable materials which are to be placed into returns eg packaging and non-NHS products.

Ongoing Projects:

- We are exploring funding routes for new bins.
- Mandatory waste training is in the process of being put in place.
- Future roadshows are currently being put into place.
- One of NHS Fife Consultants is a lead for Green ED and has been supporting NHS Fife with initiatives, including waste.

## Transport

The transport team have made significant progress with the fleet agenda.

NHS Fife has procured a further sixteen electric vehicles from March 2023. This takes our total EV quantity to fifty-eight vehicles. (fifty-five leased vehicles and three asset owned vehicles).

### Achievements:

- Fleet Reduction: The Transport Department recently ran numerous utilisation reports via Questar to collate analytical data of vehicle behaviour and usage. On review, we were able to remove nine asset-owned vehicles from the profile.
- Infrastructure Update: NHS Fife secured funding via Transport Scotland of £386,115.30. This supported infrastructure installations across seven sites within NHS Fife. Ranging from single, dual 7.3kw chargers, 40Kw rapid chargers and the replacement of one public accessible 7.3kw dual charger in the Diabetic Centre.
- We have introduced an EV charging Hub on the VHK site. This will facilitate the charging of our 3.5 tonne Luton vehicles for our 2030 decarbonisation objective.
- Transport Duties - Reviewed: The Transport Department has recently reviewed all vehicle duties. We have identified and been able to merge several together. This will allow a further



reduction of two vehicles: (radiation run and stationery duty combined) and (clinical waste and waste medicine combined).

- Enterprise Car Club Relaunch: The Enterprise Car Club was relaunched in May 2024 with the introduction of monthly utilisation reports. This has and will continue to support access and usage and encourage best practice. From the data provided, we have decreased our vehicle quantity from thirty to twenty-seven.
- NHS Fleet Fuel Usage: With the further introduction of electric vehicles, NHS Fife has seen a reduction of fuel usage year-on-year from 2022-23 to 2023-24 by 21,282 litres. This equates to 52,305 CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- Future Infrastructure: We are awaiting potential funding via Transport Scotland. This is currently being discussed at our bi-monthly Transport meetings.
- Progression continues with the setup of an EV Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme.

## Environmental Stewardship

### **Collaborative Place Based Working**

Adopting a place-based approach to climate is beneficial because it allows for tailored solutions that address a local area's specific environmental, social and economic needs. This approach encourages collaboration between public bodies, local businesses, and communities while ensuring that climate action is relevant, effective, and sustainable. It enhances resource efficiency by pooling local assets like land, transport and renewable energy and supports the development of locally appropriate climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Ultimately, it fosters community engagement and ownership, driving more impactful, long-term results.

We are a Fife Council ACE (Addressing the Climate Emergency) Board member and have been working on six place-based collaborative priorities.

These priorities are:

- Transport, buildings, community land assets, renewable technology, climate adaptation and waste.

These priorities support NHS Fife's policy and strategy and the Climate Fife 2024 Strategy.





We are active members of many Fife-based and National Working Groups, covering all subjects within the sustainability agenda.

We attend the Regional Board meeting with Lothian and Borders and work closely on sustainability initiatives.

### **Environmental Management System (EMS)**

An EMS is similar to that of a health and safety system or quality system but with a focus on the environment. It aims to streamline communication, improve environmental compliance and reduce the risk of climate impacts. The Environmental Management Policy, which was approved by the EDG in April 2024, has been published on the NHS Fife website.

The Policy will aid the Board in assessing its environmental responsibility across departments such as Procurement, Estates and Clinical Services and allow NHS Fife to lead the way in Scotland in delivering a sustainable health service that achieves its environmental targets, including the achievement of Net Zero. For more information see [Sustainability | NHS Fife](#).

We have started building the EMS which will enable us to monitor our legal compliance, be able to control documents, have a method of reporting and have clear audit and communication trails.

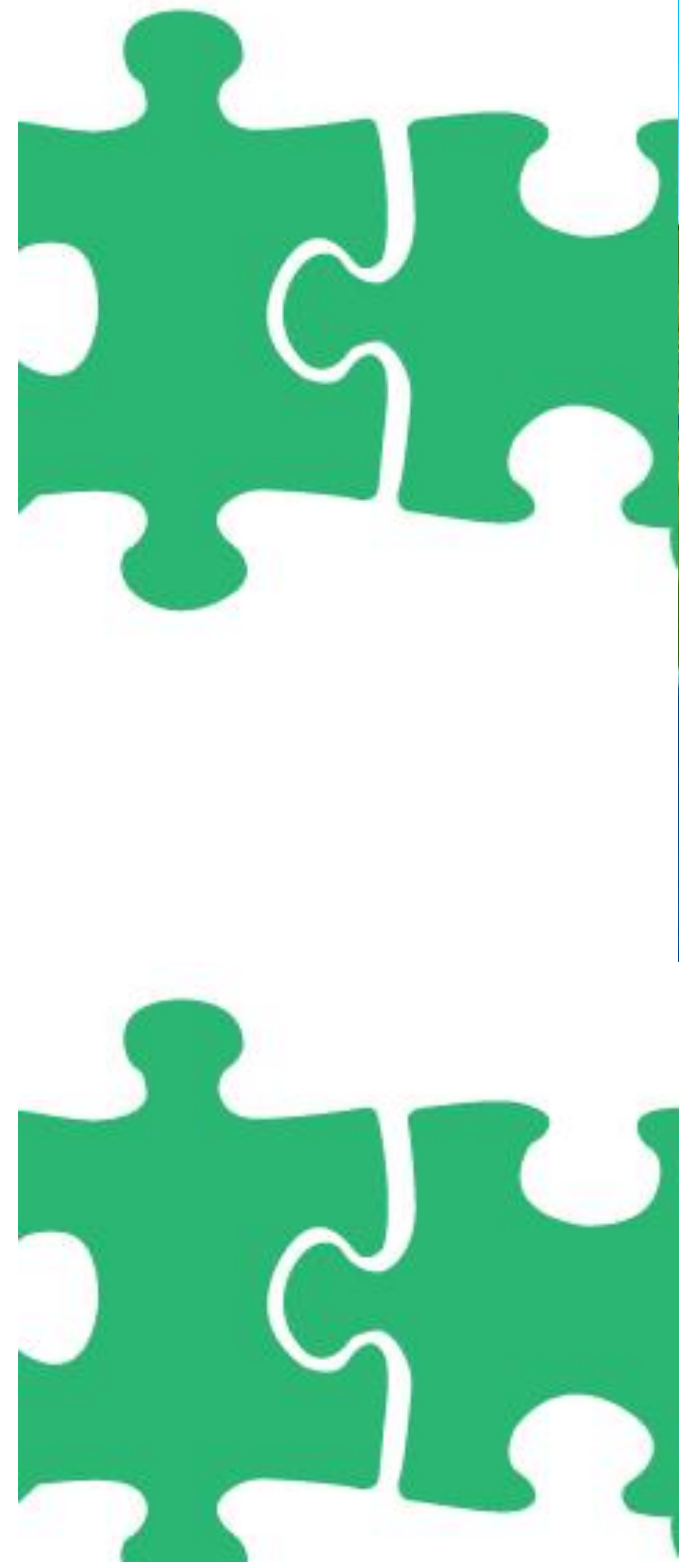


## Conclusion

Overall, we have made significant strides in embedding sustainability across our operations. From promoting active travel and enhancing waste management, to increasing staff engagement and training. Our initiatives are not only aligning with national targets but are also fostering a culture of environmental responsibility within the organisation. The successes highlighted in this report demonstrate our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, improving resource efficiency and supporting the health and well-being of our staff and community. As with any transformative journey, however, there are areas where continued effort and improvements are necessary.

The implementation of the EMS will be a critical next step in providing a structured approach to managing environmental impact, ensuring compliance and driving continuous improvement. To fully realise the benefits of this system, we will require ongoing support and collaboration from the EDG, particularly when securing the necessary resources and embedding environmental considerations into all levels of the decision-making process.

As we look to the future, the commitment of the Board and EDG will be essential in sustaining momentum and achieving our long-term sustainability goals.



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