

**East of England Community Health and Care
NHS Trust**

GREEN PLAN for 2025-26 to 2027-28

Our 3-year Strategy towards net zero



1.0 Foreword

We are proud to introduce our Green Plan, outlining our progress to 2025 and our continuing commitment to sustainability, health equity and the wellbeing of future generations.

In our role as a community trust, we are uniquely placed to understand the close relationship between environmental health and public health. The air we breathe, the energy we consume, and the waste we produce all have a direct impact on the communities we serve. That's why this plan is not just about reducing carbon emissions, it's about creating healthier environments, building resilience and ensuring that our services remain safe, effective and sustainable for years to come.

Our services, travel and supply chain contribute to carbon emissions and waste. While we're proud of the progress made over the past three years, we remain acutely aware of the scale of the challenge ahead.

This Green Plan sets out our strategic ambitions and actions to become a greener, more responsible organisation. It is rooted in the values that define the NHS: compassion, integrity and a commitment to care. We know that real change requires collective effort, and we are inspired by the passion and innovation shown by our staff, partners and local communities in driving this agenda forward.

Together, we can make a meaningful difference; not only in how we deliver care, but in how we care for the planet.

Matthew Winn
Chief Executive

Lynda Thomas
Chair

Addendum: Following the Board approval in September 2025 and the merger of NCHC and CCS this Green Plan now we have become East of England Community Health and Care Trust continues with its commitment to our nine priorities remain core to our journey and we are pleased to confirm significant progress in decarbonisation due to solar and battery installations across our Norfolk and Cambridgeshire estate. This will produce considerable savings for our new Trust which can be reinvested in patient services. This document has been updated to recognise the merger of our two organisations.

2.1 Our community services – East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust

The East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust (EEC) delivers outstanding community healthcare across 150+ sites, supporting 3.3 million people with a skilled workforce of over 4,800. Services span community nursing, dentistry, children’s health, therapies, sexual health, and physiotherapy across Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Suffolk, and Luton.

Figure 1 – Operational service areas:



As Norfolk Community Health and Care Trust and Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust both were rated ‘Outstanding’ by the Care Quality Commission, and as of 1 April 2026 now merged into the East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust. The Trust prioritises quality, accessibility, and sustainability—bringing care closer to home and reducing hospital dependency.

We continue at an accelerated pace to implement digital care and remote models, improving access while cutting emissions. Our Green Plan targets nine sustainability priorities aligned with NHS Carbon Footprint and Carbon Footprint Plus goals, driving measurable change across operations.

2.2 Our vision for a sustainable future

In our capacity as a leading community health care trust, we aim to deliver care that improves wellbeing while protecting the planet. Our commitment is clear: create lasting economic, social, and environmental value for the communities we serve. We’re embedding sustainability into every part of our operations—ensuring today’s care is effective, equitable, and environmentally responsible, without compromising the health of future generations.

Our vision is anchored in three core pillars:

Economic Sustainability:

We will optimise our resources—people, assets, and infrastructure—to deliver best-

value care with minimal environmental impact. By aligning our investments with the broader health systems we operate within, we ensure financial responsibility that supports long-term resilience and low-carbon service delivery.

Social Sustainability:

We will place people and equity at the heart of our mission—working with our staff, patients, and partners to co-design inclusive, forward-looking models of care. Our focus on quality of life, accessibility, and opportunity will include investment in apprenticeships, education, and innovation that supports the next generation of NHS professionals.

Environmental Sustainability:

We will lead by example in reducing our carbon footprint and improving environmental stewardship across our estate and services. Through sustainable procurement, smarter travel, energy efficiency, and waste reduction, we will build a greener NHS that protects the health of our planet alongside the health of our population.

Together, we are creating and delivering health, care and wellbeing that is not only outstanding—but sustainable, for generations to come.

2.3 Our journey so far

Our evolving three-year Green Plan takes a flexible, collaborative approach—driven by innovation, digital transformation, estate audits, and patient feedback. It aligns with NHS and government net-zero targets while enhancing care quality and staff wellbeing.

Recognising that sustainability is a shared mission, we're working across health systems to create lasting social value. By integrating environmental, financial, and community-focused goals into every aspect of our operations, we aim to deliver care that benefits both people and planet.

EEC has taken a strategic, long-term approach to sustainability—streamlining estates and improving procurement. These efforts will continue to lead to lower emissions, better resource use, and stronger financial performance.

To date, we've reduced the environmental impact of our buildings by consolidating office space, adopting flexible service models including increasing digital interactions and new care models, and investing in low-energy infrastructure (efficient heating, LED lighting, and smart energy monitoring). We established a growing network of Green Champions, gained service sustainability recognition, and are pleased to be able to confirm the complete electrification of our fleet by 2027 following investment in EV charging infrastructure.

Progress is reported annually under the Greener NHS and GAM frameworks, using two key assessments:

- Carbon footprint analysis (Scopes 1,2 and expanding to Scope 3)
- Green Plan delivery tracking across all sustainability goals

By 2028, we will commit to complete all actions included in this plan, aspiring to expand our emissions reporting to include full Scope 3 coverage—ensuring transparency and accountability in our journey to net zero.

Since 2008, the NHS has tracked its carbon footprint, guided by the Climate Change Act and the 'Delivering a Net Zero NHS' roadmap, which targets an 80% reduction by 2032 and full net zero by 2040.

To support this, EEC conduct annual carbon footprint assessments covering Scopes 1, 2, and key Scope 3 emissions—tracking energy, travel, procurement, waste, and water.

Progress is monitored through measurable actions, reported to the Board and via dashboards and annual sustainability reports.

Carbon data from 2019–2024/25 shows year-on-year fluctuations of the Trust contributing to NHS-wide emissions. (From 1 April 2026, emissions reported present a unified picture of EEC impact through greenhouse gas emissions.)

East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust:

Summary - tCO2e

Year	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total
2019/20	2714.12	1343.96	3804.3	7862.38
2020/21	2587.19	1162.1	2738.32	6487.61
2021/22	2606.44	1065.24	2815.83	6487.51
2022/23	2587.32	1048.48	2609.92	6245.72
2023/24	2355.56	1315.7	2961.25	6632.51
2024/25	2848.56	1474.27	3085.22	7408.05
Grand Total	15699.19	7409.75	18014.84	41123.78

3.0 Our focus and how you can help

Our Green Plan targets key priority areas aligned with NHS net-zero goals, with clear actions set over the next three years. Success depends on everyone — staff, partners, and the wider community — and over the next three years we will work together to embed sustainability into daily practice.

Get Involved:

- **Champion sustainability in your team**
- **Choose greener travel options**
- **Support low waste clinical and estate practices**
- **Promote sustainable procurement and stock management**
- **Reduce food waste and encourage healthy low carbon eating**
- **Stay informed and complete sustainability training**

3.1 Priority One – Empowering our workforce

Embedding sustainability in healthcare starts with **culture change**—led by strong leadership and supported by every staff member. Over the lifetime of this plan, we will embed:

- **Net Zero Champions**
 - Continue to grow our network of Green Champions, with the aim to have all service represented by September 2026 staff leading local green initiatives
 - Our Green Champions Newsletter will include hosting awareness sessions and gathering feedback
 - Ensuring our Green Champion for Quality Improvement and service redesign drives forward initiatives and awareness
- **System-Wide Engagement**
 - Continue active participation in local and regional sustainability events and research
 - Investment in apprenticeships and green career pathways
- **Training and Development**
 - Carbon literacy and role specific sustainability training
 - Led by a Sustainability Subject Matter Expert
 - Embedded in staff development plans
- **Green Staff Benefits**
 - Continue to provide the option of electric and hybrid vehicles when choosing a lease car – aim to continue with growth in staff take up
 - Promote the cycle to work scheme
 - Support for hybrid roles and flexible working
 - Alignment with the Health and Care Act 2022
- **Tracking progress**
 - Workforce plans and training completion rates
 - Annual reporting to ensure accountability

3.2 Priority Two - Transforming care for a sustainable future

Sustainability isn't just a goal — it's now a core principle of quality healthcare. As climate risks grow and resources tighten, we must rethink how care is delivered to protect both people and the planet.

- **Whole systems and community centred care**
 - We are redesigning services with primary Care Networks and local communities – ensuring care is accessible, relevant, and co-created with patients
- **Integrated Local and at home care**
 - We are shifting care from hospitals to home
 - Hospital at Home models for adults and children
 - IV therapy and virtual wards
 - Reduced travel equals lower emissions

- **Digital Innovation**
 - Online sexual health kits
 - Continued promotion of virtual MSK classes
 - Remote heart failure monitoring
- **Service planning with Net Zero in mind**
 - From 2025/26 every service plan will include a Net Zero impact analysis
- **What is next?**
 - Remote monitoring pilots to reduce product use and in person visits
 - Home First Hub to deploy clinicians at the right time
 - Carbon hotspot mapping in clinical pathways – gathering and analysing the data
 - Clinical sustainability lead appointed to drive innovation
 - Sustainability Impact Assessments embedded in all digital projects
- **How we will measure success**
 - Reduced service user travel miles as a proportion to total service users
 - Increased research engagement from our staff and service users
 - Annual Reporting on emissions and progress against clinical hotspots

3.3 Priority Three – Driving sustainability through digital innovation

Technology is at the heart of our journey to a greener, smarter NHS. By embedding innovation, research, and digital tools into care delivery, we're building a system that's not only efficient — but sustainable. Our Digital Sustainability Strategy is:

- **Built on strong foundations**
 - Sustainability is embedded across all services and systems
 - Every digital initiative supports environmental, financial and social value
- **Using smarter, greener tools**
 - Increase the number of remote consultations, modernising our estate and monitoring reduced travel and emissions
 - Digital-first care models lower power use and streamline operations
- **Pandemic drive progress**
 - Rapid adoption of video consultations and digital telephony preserved care quality whilst cutting carbon
- **What is already working**
 - Online support for patients
 - Digital referrals and consent forms
 - SMS appointments and results
 - Integrated lab results in patient records
 - iPads in care homes for MDTs
 - Ongoing rollout of video platforms
- **What is next**
 - Expand telephony, video and online services
 - Extend device lifecycles to reduce hardware waste
 - Implement advanced telephony for better service and sustainability
 - Pilots of secure messaging and Ambient AI for clinical documentation

- Annual Digital Maturity Assessments
- Sustainability embedded in all new digital business cases
- **How we will measure success**
 - By the end of 2026 we will establish a targeted baseline carbon footprint for digital services
 - Continue to engage services and report progress on key digital infrastructure
 - Procurement guided by the Technology Code of Practice
 - Promote through our Green Champions circular device strategy: refurbish, reuse and reduce waste

3.4 Priority four – Greener Travel, Smarter Movement

The pandemic reshaped how we work—and travel. With fewer business miles and more remote meetings, we saw real environmental benefits. Now, we're committed to keeping that momentum going.

Our travel transformation goals:

Zero emission fleet by 2029

- Transition all fleet vehicles to electric (ZEVs) ahead of government targets
- Expand EV options through salary sacrifice schemes
- Install more charging points across Trust-owned and leased sites

Smarter business travel

- Encourage essential travel only
- Promote digital meetings to reduce mileage
- Use route planning tools to optimise journeys

Supporting sustainable staff travel

- Promote public transport routes to clinics and bases
- Encourage car sharing where practical
- Expand cycle-to-work schemes and active travel options
- Continue hybrid working to reduce building and travel footprint

Efficient logistics

- Collaborate with providers to streamline deliveries
- Promote eco-driving practices for staff and delivery vehicles
- Monitor and report mileage to highlight and reduce unnecessary travel

What is next

- Launch a comprehensive sustainable travel strategy
- During 2025 we will ensure our main sites have a local travel plan
- Full transition to zero-emission fleet from July 2026

How we will measure success

- Audits and annual reports
- By March 2026 establish a fleet vehicle carbon baseline to enable benefits monitoring as we switch to EV
- Yearly monitoring of business miles collected from our mileage claims systems

3.5 Priority five – Greener Buildings, Healthier Communities

We're transforming our estates to support a **Net Zero NHS**—reducing emissions, improving efficiency, and creating healthier spaces for patients and staff.

From High-Carbon to Circular Economy:

The East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust is shifting from a high-waste, high-carbon model to a zero-waste, net-zero future. This means :

- Smarter buildings
- Sustainable systems
- Empowered staff

Our 4-step decarbonisation strategy

1. Energy-saving upgrades
2. Electric-led systems (e.g. LED lighting)
3. Innovative energy sources
4. On-site renewables (solar, heat pumps)

What we have already achieved

- LED lighting across sites
- Heating and ventilation upgrades
- Digitally managed estates
- Reduced estate footprint
- BREEAM-rated new builds

Future focussed developments

- **Princess of Wales Hospital (Ely)**
 - Digital first clinics
 - Solar panels and heat pumps
 - Public transport access
 - Sustainability-first design
- **Norwich Community Hospital – Willow Therapy Unit**
 - £20M modular build
 - Air source heat pumps
 - Solar energy
 - BREEAM Excellent rating

What is next

- Reduce on-site energy use
- Promote reuse, repair and waste reduction
- Cut single-use items and packaging
- Embed behavioural changes across teams

Energy, Water and Waste

We're reviewing water use and decarbonising heating systems. Staff will be supported with training and tools to make informed, sustainable choices.

Nature and Biodiversity

We are integrating green infrastructure and nature-based solutions on our estate:

- Nutrient neutrality compliance
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in all new projects
- Tree planting, NHS Forest initiatives

- Nature recovery networks

How we will measure success

- 100% renewable electricity procurement within the lifetime of this plan
- LED coverage expansion with 100% phased programme within the lifetime of this plan
- Increase in solar installations registered for energy export into the main grid
- Increased coverage sub-metering and DEC certification across our estate
- Annual reporting and self-assessment tools



3.6 Priority six – Greener Medicines, Smarter Supplies

We are rethinking how we use and manage medicines and clinical supplies – reducing waste, cutting emissions and supporting a healthier planet.

Sustainable medicines and devices

- Prioritising low packaging, recyclable products
- Promoting low carbon alternatives like oral medicines and inhalers
- Conducting annual audits of prescribing patterns
- Training prescribers to make greener choices

Though we are not major users of high impact medicines like anaesthetic gases, we are committed to sustainable practices across all clinical areas.

Smarter supply management

- Reducing use of non-sterile gloves and single use items
- Standardising procurement to meet NHS sustainability standards by 2027
- Supporting staff with education on waste reduction

Empowering staff and patients

- Promoting social prescribing to reduce reliance on medication
- Leveraging remote care technologies to cut travel emissions
- Ensuring all medical devices are fit for purpose and future ready

How we will measure success

- Review use of single use items
- Increased uptake of low carbon inhalers
- Supplier compliance with NHS sustainability standards
- Continue to empower our Green Champions to improve staff awareness and engagement

3.7 Priority seven - Greener procurement, smarter spending

With 62% of NHS emissions linked to the supply chain, sustainable procurement is one of our biggest opportunities to drive change – and we are taking action.

Our commitment to sustainable buying

- All contracts will include a net zero and social value criteria – expanding beyond the current 10% minimum
- Suppliers must report emissions and have carbon reduction plans; ideally certified via the Evergreen Framework
- We will prioritise low-impact products like recycled paper and compostable alternatives to single use plastics

Transforming how we buy

- Eliminate high carbon products from catalogues
- Embed sustainability into procurement governance
- Support regional leads to align with NHS wide strategies
- Follow the NHS Net Zero Supplier Roadmap to 2040

Smarter supply chain management

- Introduce reusable alternatives in clinical improvement projects
- Train finance and procurement teams on social value criteria
- Appoint a dedicated sustainability lead to oversee transformation
- Review and classify contacts annually for strategic alignment

How we will measure success

- Reduction in single use product volume and spend
- Compliance with NHS sustainability standards

3.8 Priority eight – Food, catering and nutrition

Food is a powerful tool for health and sustainability. The NHS is committed to serving meals that nourish patients and staff while protecting the planet.

Our sustainable catering vision

- Prioritise seasonal, plant-based and locally sourced ingredients
- Align food services with public health and net zero goals
- Support the National Food Strategy target to reduce meat consumption by 30% by 2032

What we are doing

- Expanding plant-based and seasonal menu options – targeting 30% by 2026
- Educating staff and patients on sustainable food choices
- Collaborating with dietetics to ensure meals support health and wellbeing

Greener catering operations

- Remove macerators and expand use of digestors and composting
- Work with suppliers to improve sustainability credentials

Innovation and engagement

- Use recipes from the NHS low carbon menu bank
- Promote participation in the NHS Chef of the Year

How we will measure success

- Track progress through audits, satisfaction surveys and staff engagement
- Reduce food waste by 20% over the lifespan of this plan
- Introduce digital meal ordering across all wards by 2026
- Monitor take up of increased menu options

3.9 Priority nine - Planning for climate resilience

Climate change is already impacting healthcare. From extreme weather to flooding, the Trust is preparing to keep services running – whatever the conditions. During the period of this plan we will ensure:

Built in resilience

- Climate risks are embedded in our Business Continuity Plans
- Flood prone areas are identified, with backup clinical sites ready
- Lessons from the pandemic have strengthened our ability to deliver virtual and home-based care

Future-proofing our estate

- New buildings prioritise energy efficiency and heat resilience
- Portable cooling units are available for extreme heat events
- Long term asset planning includes climate risk assessments, aligned to NHS England guidance

Our adaptation strategy is aligned with NHS Core Standards and NHS Standard Contract and is embedded through:

- Emergency preparedness
- Business continuity
- Estate development

4.0 Governance and Communication

Responsibility for delivering the Green Plan sits with the Executive Team, led by the Chief Finance and Resources Officer. Progress is overseen by the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and reported annually to the Board and Integrated Care System. Each service area integrates sustainability goals; supported by a new Sustainability Impact Assessment to evaluate climate risks and benefits in decision making.