



ANNUAL CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2024/25

APRIL 24 – MARCH 25



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INTRODUCTION

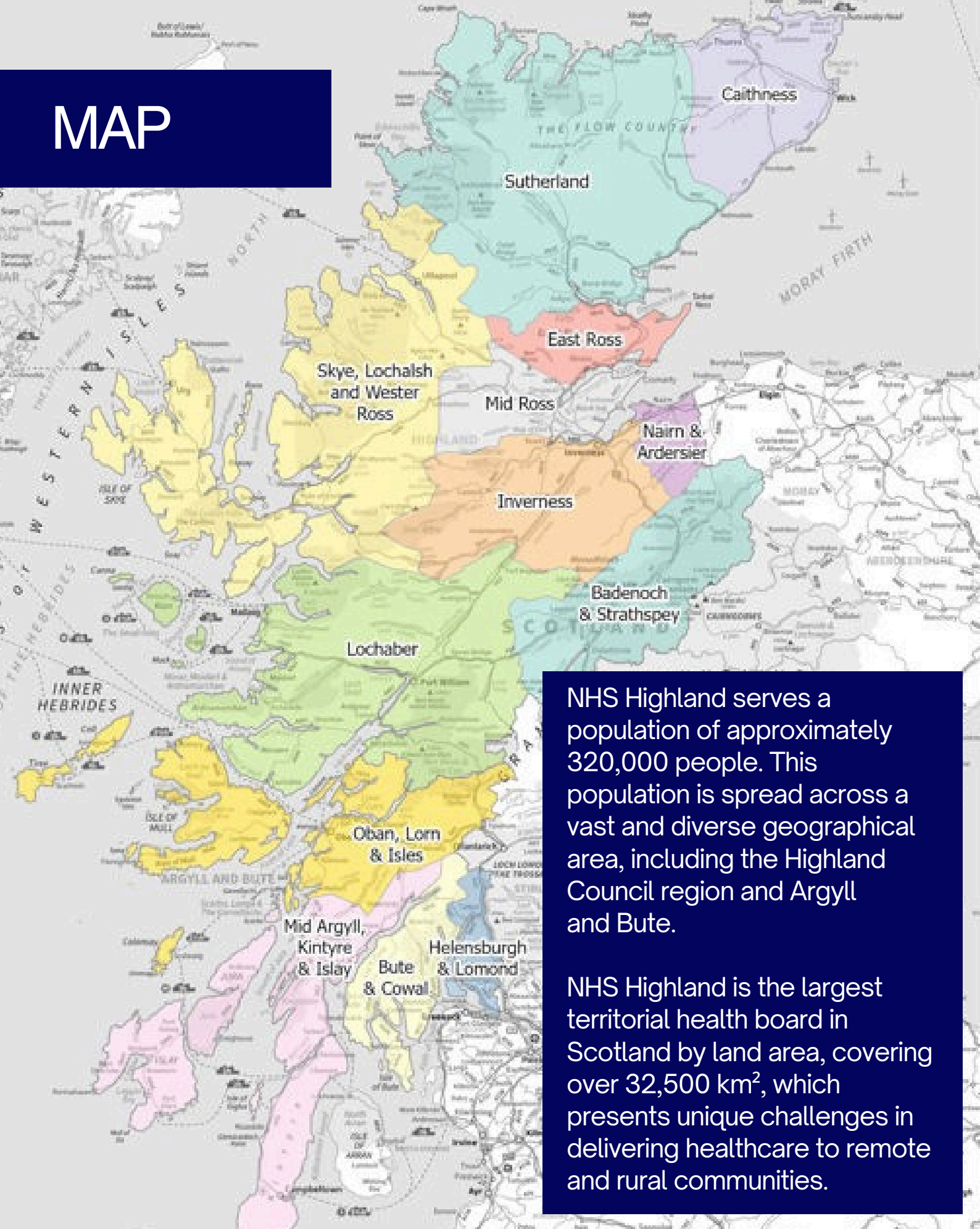
As one of Scotland's largest and most geographically diverse health boards, NHS Highland presents its Climate Emergency and Sustainability Annual Report for 2024/25.

This report outlines our continued commitment to delivering high-quality healthcare while embedding sustainability into every aspect of our operations.

Our ambition is to lead by example - protecting the health of our communities today while safeguarding the environment for future generations.



MAP



NHS Highland serves a population of approximately 320,000 people. This population is spread across a vast and diverse geographical area, including the Highland Council region and Argyll and Bute.

NHS Highland is the largest territorial health board in Scotland by land area, covering over 32,500 km², which presents unique challenges in delivering healthcare to remote and rural communities.



SITES

28 Hospitals
43 HCs/Clinics
16 Community Bases/Houses
37 Leased Properties
3 PFI
1 Commercial Laundry
1 Headquarters
20 Health and Social Care premises
(care homes/drop-in centres)

NHS Highland's services are delivered through a network of acute hospitals, community hospitals, health centres, and integrated health and social care teams. **Raigmore Hospital** in Inverness remains our largest acute site and a hub for specialist care.

The estate is a mix of modern and historic buildings which have various infrastructure challenges. The area of the NHS Highland estate presents unique challenges for sustainability meaning teams must often think differently and consider wider innovations in the area to progress the sustainability agenda.

There are several energy efficiency schemes, waste management processes, transport, fleet & active travel promotions and green space development projects in place.



NHS Highland is also home to **The National Treatment Centre in Inverness**. This facility opened in April 2023 to deliver specialist ophthalmology and orthopaedic care to patients across Scotland. It was developed to help reduce waiting times and increase surgical capacity across Scotland.

NHS Highland employs approximately 10,500 staff across its health and social care services.

As well as provision of health services NHS Highland also provides adult social care services in the Highland Council area, which contributes to its larger workforce.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE



NHS Highland's Environment and Sustainability Board is Chaired by Richard MacDonald who is the Boards Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Planning and is Executive Lead for NHS Highland.

The Environment and Sustainability Board reports directly to the Finance, Recovery and Performance Committee. Several groups report into the Environment and Sustainability Board including Waste Management Steering Group, Energy Group, Active and Sustainable Travel, Greenspace and Biodiversity, Green Theatres and EMS.

The Board is comprised of representatives from Clinical Care, Estates and Facilities, Procurement, Travel and Transport, Finance, Public Health and Pharmacy and is responsible for delivering the board's climate action plan in line with the NHS Scotland Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2022–2026. Gerald O'Brien is the current appointed Non-Executive Director and Sustainability Champion who represents on this board.

The Environment and Sustainability Board are currently developing an NHS Highland strategic action plan which will focus and promote the direction of the Board with regards to this wider agenda.

ACTION PLAN

Advance Sustainable Healthcare Practices

- Support the development of a greener healthcare system across NHS Highland.
- Lead and implement practical and organisational initiatives that promote environmental sustainability for the benefit of staff, patients, and the wider community.
- Embed sustainability into service planning, infrastructure, and clinical delivery.

Empower Staff and Community Engagement

- Encourage active participation from stakeholders in environmental and sustainability efforts.
- Act as a central contact point for individuals and teams seeking to enhance NHS Highland's environmental performance.
- Build strong communication channels with internal departments and external partners to foster collaboration on sustainability goals.

Provide Strategic Environmental Guidance

- Monitor and advise on external developments that may contribute to NHS Highland's environmental impact or carbon footprint.
- Recommend mitigation strategies to reduce negative environmental effects.
- Challenge practices that pose environmental risks and advocate for responsible, innovative forward-thinking approaches.

ACTION PLAN

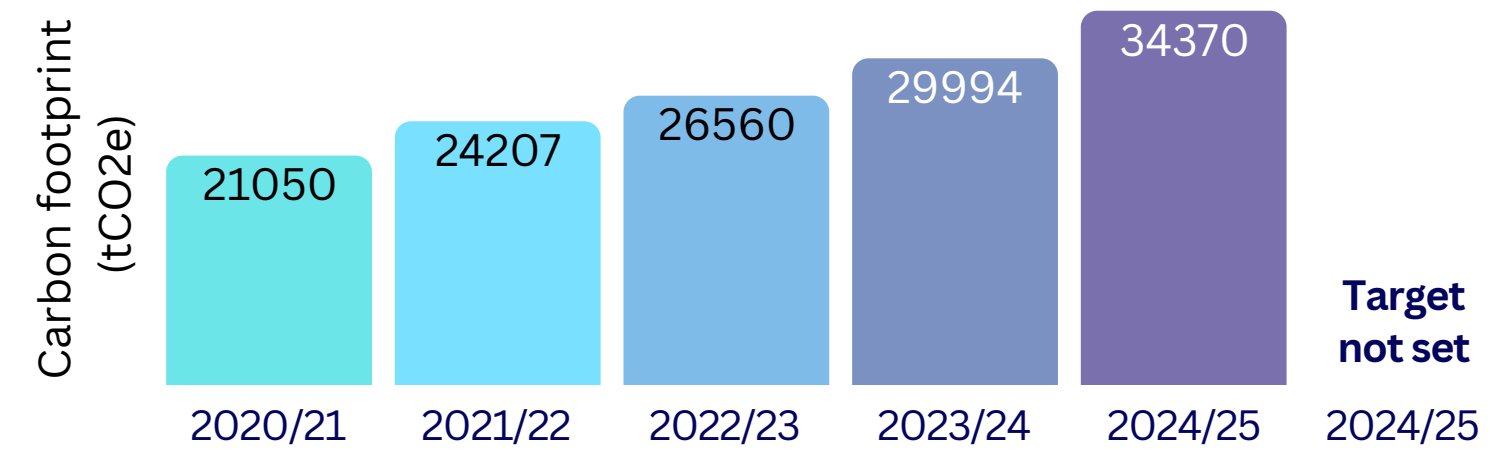


Several projects have been ongoing over the last year:

- Installation of the Pure Water system
- LED lighting upgrades
- Sharing stories of colleague's achievements across NHS Highland during Climate Week 2024
- Smart meter installation at Raigmore accommodation.
- Heat meter replacement - Lawson Memorial and Raigmore accommodation.
- Heavy fuel oil removal and gas oil installation in tank 1, Raigmore Boiler House.
- EDF RTS meter changeover and smart meter roll out.
- EV charging installations in various areas including Argyll & Bute.
- EV charging software migration works.
- Bike shed relocation from New Craigs to Raigmore
- Bike shed erection in Ullapool, Broadford and Stadium Road
- Hi bike charge point installation at Raigmore
- Increased engagement from staff, patients and visitors with the New Craigs Hospital greenspaces.
- Various waste management projects, including clinical waste reduction programme, promotion of national waste training, implementation of new non-clinical waste contract, including paper towel recycling.

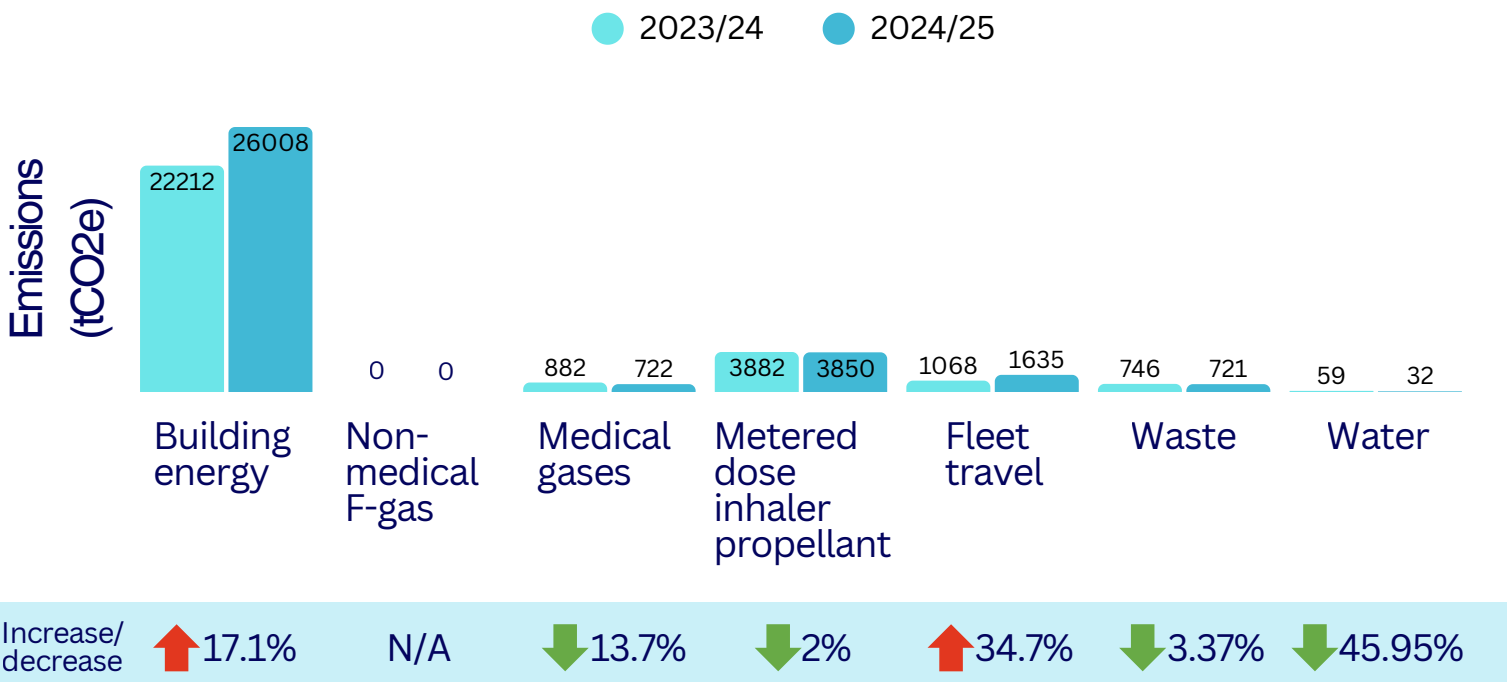
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

2040 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets



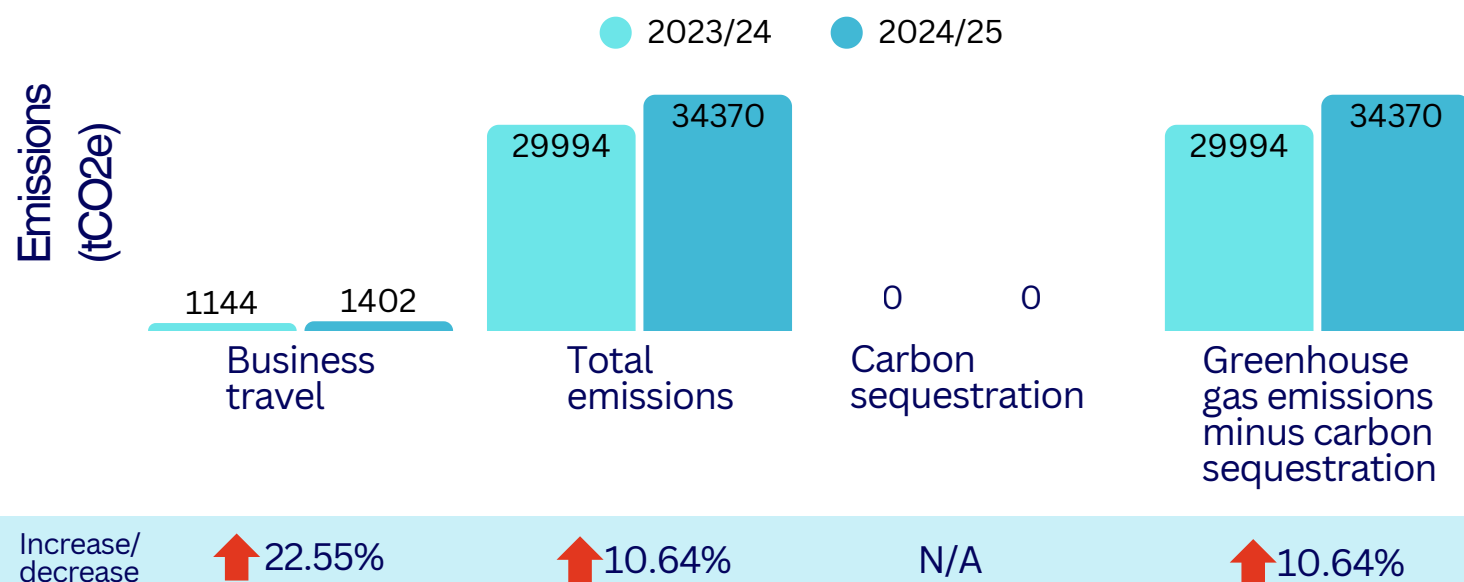
NHS Highland aims to become a **net-zero organisation by 2045** for the sources of greenhouse gas emissions set out in the table below. The table sets out the number of emissions produced annually by NHS Highland.

Greenhouse gas emissions 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)

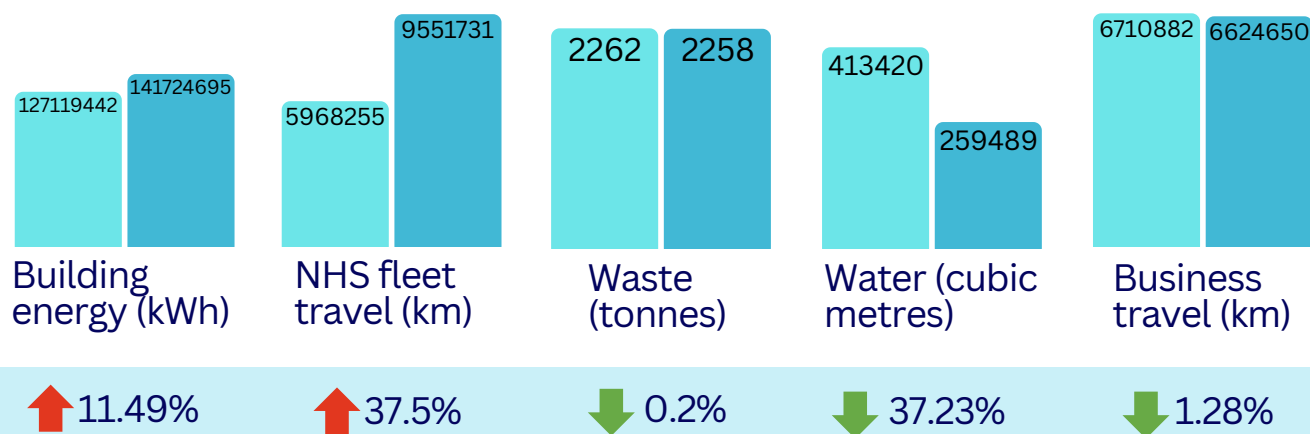


SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Greenhouse gas emissions 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)



key resources NHS Highland used over the last two years



2045 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets

We are working to support reductions to greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2045 for sources of emissions over which we have less control and influence – emissions from the production and supply of the goods and material we use, patient travel and staff commuting. We currently have no data for this area however this is something that we will review in the coming year.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Climate change makes existing health risks worse and introduces new challenges, ranging from the spread of infectious diseases to the intensification of heatwaves and extreme weather events that will impact the health of the population, healthcare assets and services.

NHS Scotland plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the life and health of communities by developing climate-resilient health systems capable of responding to these evolving threats. The changing climate is increasing risks for health and health services. More information on these risks in the UK can be found in the UK Climate Change Committee's Health and Social Care.

Briefing available here: <http://www.ukclimaterisk.org/independent-assessment-ccra3/briefings/>



What are the main risks from climate change that the Health Board has identified through its Climate Change Risk Assessment?

Does the Health Board have a plan to reduce those risks?

NHS Highland, as the pilot Board in 2019, conducted a comprehensive Climate Change Risk Assessment to identify vulnerabilities across its healthcare estate and services. While many of the risks identified have remained consistent over time, NHS Highland acknowledges that further work is needed to fully address and mitigate these risks.

NHS Highland is now working collaboratively through Highland Adapts, contributing to a region-wide CCRA that encompasses broader climate resilience planning across the Highland area.

This integrated approach will support regional prioritisation, shared learning, and coordinated adaptation efforts across sectors.

Risks and measures are identified below:



Higher Temperatures & Heatwaves

Risks: Overheating in hospitals, increased Legionella and other risk, surge in heat-related illnesses.

Measures: SMART heating controls, improved ventilation, solar shading, pipe insulation.

Drought & Dry Weather

Risks: Water shortages affecting hospitals, laundries, and greenspaces.

Measures: Contracts with water suppliers, drought-tolerant landscaping, greywater systems.

Heavy Rain & Subsidence

Risks: Water ingress, structural damage, increased maintenance needs.

Measures: Prioritised maintenance, soil investigations, underpinning vulnerable buildings.

Storm Surge & Coastal Erosion

Risks: Transport disruption, building damage, energy infrastructure failure.

Measures: Integrated transport services, flood resilience upgrades, emergency accommodation planning

Flooding (Fluvial, Pluvial, Coastal, Sewer)

Risks: Access route closures, power outages, sewage backup, increased patient demand.

Measures: Flood risk assessments, SUDS retrofitting, backup systems, business continuity plans.

Cold Spells (Snow, Ice)

Risks: Transport disruption, frozen pipes, increased emergency admissions.

Measures: 4x4 fleet expansion, cold weather plans, pipe insulation reviews.

Combined Climatic Effects (Storms, Lightning, Fog)

Risks: Roof damage, IT outages, emergency system strain.

Measures: Maintenance prioritisation, backup power, emergency evacuation protocols.

What main actions has the Health Board taken to reduce those risks since the last report?

What main actions are going to be carried out to reduce those risks in future years?

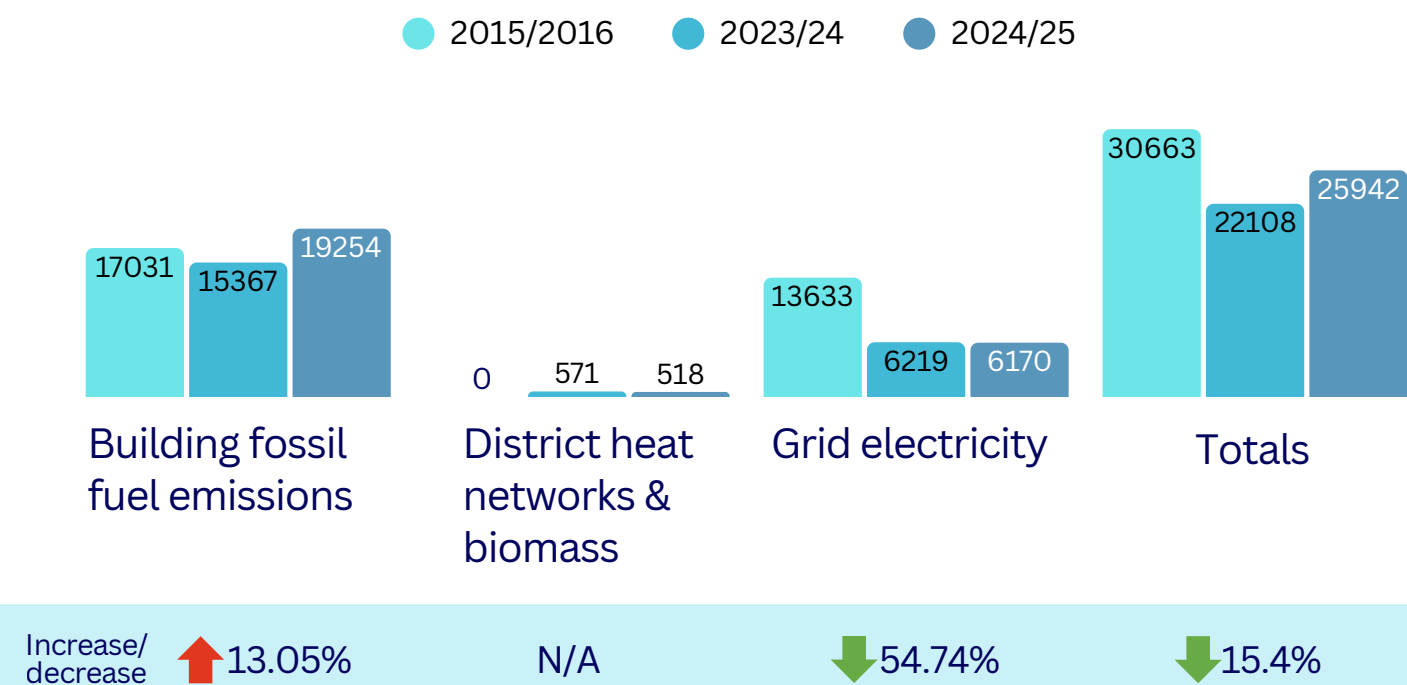
Adaptation Measures	Scoring & Monitoring	Strategic Gaps & Recommendations
<p>Most risks are managed through a “Treat” approach, with some “Tolerate” where mitigation is less feasible.</p> <p>Common themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Infrastructure upgrades (ventilation, insulation, flood resilience).• Emergency planning and inter-agency coordination.• Monitoring systems for overheating, water quality, patient surges.	<p>Residual risk scores often remain high, indicating ongoing vulnerability despite mitigation.</p> <p>Monitoring includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incident tracking (e.g. overheating, odour, patient admissions).• Regular inspections and reassessments.• Integration of SMART systems and contingency planning.	<p>NHS Highland recognise that there is a significant amount of work outstanding and will work with NHS Scotland Assure to further develop and update the overall CCRA.</p>

BUILDING ENERGY

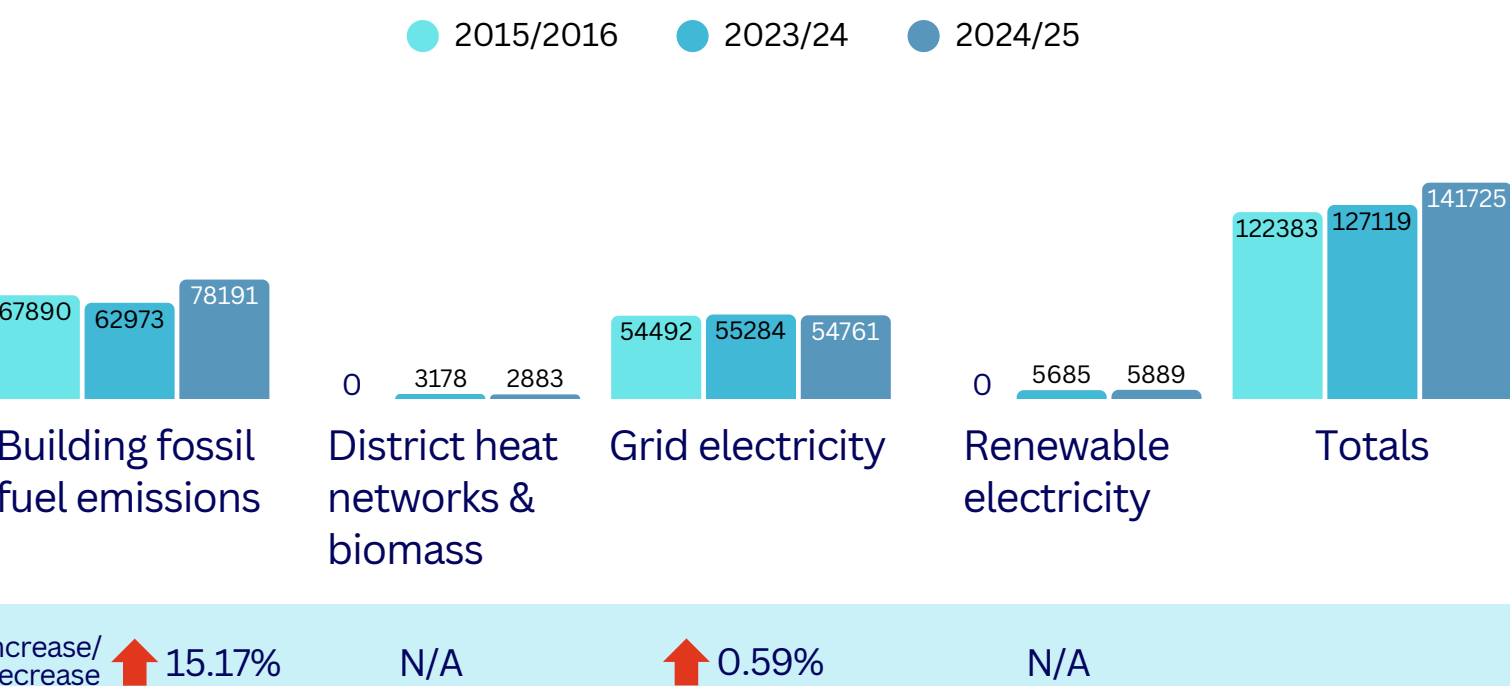
NHS Highland aims to align with the Scottish Government targets of heat decarbonisation by 2038. To achieve this the board will look to integrate a mix of renewable and emerging technologies. For specific sites where there may be a need for combustion and it is appropriate, less carbon-intense fuel sources like hydrogen may be introduced.

NHS Highland has 149 buildings. In 2024/25, NHS Highland's building energy demand contributed to 25,941.77 tonnes of CO₂. This was an increase of 17.34% from the year before. In 2024/25, NHS Highland used 141,724,695MWh of energy. This was an increase of 15.80% from the year before.

Building energy emissions, 2015/16, 2023/24 & 2024/25, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)



Building energy use, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, GWh



What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce emissions from building energy use?

Energy Monitoring & Efficiency

LED lighting replacements at various sites across the region.
Where appropriate, the implementation of sensor controls for lighting.
Smart emergency lighting system.
Smart meter installation at Raigmore accommodation.
Heat meter replacements at Lawson Memorial and Raigmore accommodation.
EDF RTS meter changeover and smart meter roll-out for better energy tracking.

Fuel Transition

Heavy fuel oil removal and gas oil installation in Tank 1 at Raigmore Boiler House, reducing reliance on higher-emission fuels.

Low-Carbon Transport Infrastructure

EV charging infrastructure installations at various buildings across the region.
EV charging back-office software migration to provide improved management functionality and monitoring.
Hi-bike charge point installation at Raigmore to support active travel multi-agency scheme for Inverness.

What are we looking to achieve in 2025/26 to reduce emissions from building energy use?

Major Low-Carbon Installations

CHP (Combined Heat and Power) installation at Raigmore.
Biomass boiler installations at Lochgilphead and Ross Memorial (Biomasses previously in use at St Vincents and Ian Charles to be relocated due to building closures).
LED Lighting replacement.
BMS upgrades.
Theatre ramp back of ventilation equipment.

Energy-Efficient Refurbishment

NCZ refurbishment of Robertsons Health Centre, Alness
Continued discussions with the Highland Council around NHS Highland sites being integrated to District Heating Schemes current being studies for feasibility.

What projects are we planning for the longer-term to reduce emissions from building energy use?

Funding-dependent projects

Major upgrades and decarbonisation initiatives will rely on the availability of capital or grant funding streams and internal resource availability to deliver them.

Ongoing building audits

Continuous assessment of estate to identify energy efficiency opportunities, such as:

- Heat decarbonisation
- Building fabric improvements (insulation, glazing upgrades, etc).
- Renewable energy installations (solar PV, biomass, heat pumps, etc).
- Advanced energy monitoring and smart controls.

Additionally, NHS Highland is aware that introducing the measures above will reduce emissions but there may need to be intervention where appropriate with teams to change processes and culture to instil sustainable working practices and achieve Neutral Carbon Zone status (NCZ).

To support this, NHS Highland will be looking to provide building users information for localised simple ways that they can use to reduce energy consumption.

SUSTAINABLE CARE

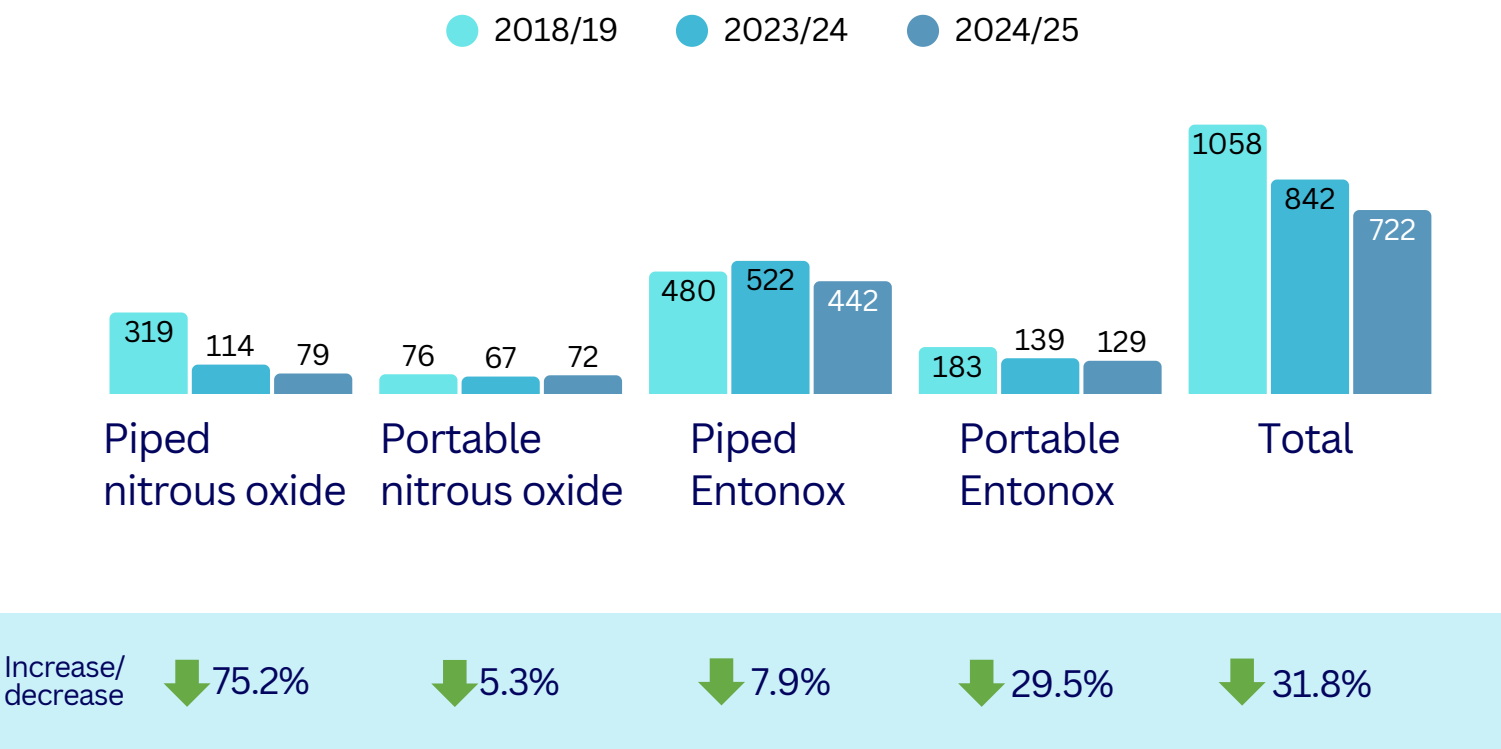
The way NHS Highland provides care has an influence on the environmental impact and greenhouse gas emissions. NHS Scotland has three national priority areas for making care more sustainable – anaesthesia, surgery and respiratory medicine.

ANAESTHESIA AND SURGERY

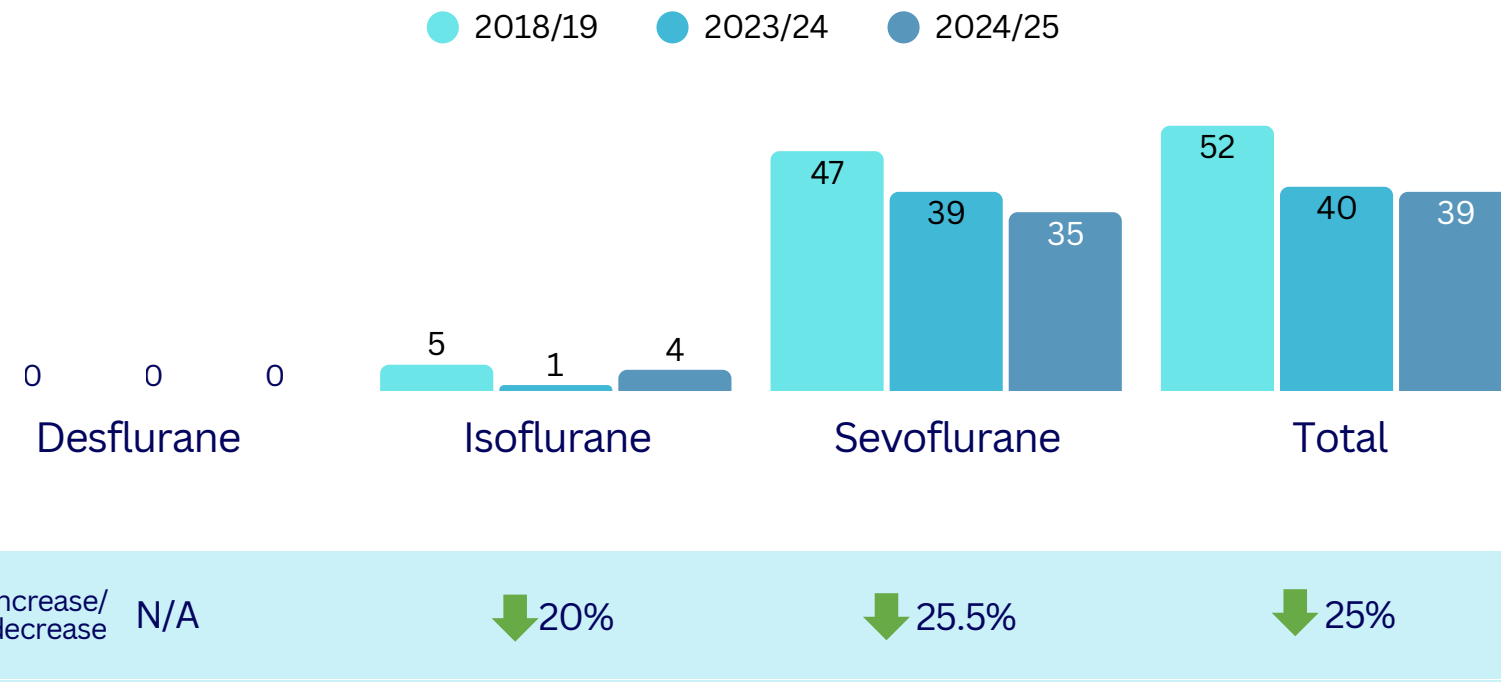
Healthcare organisations have historically used medical gases for anaesthetics and pain relief but unfortunately these gases are harmful to the environment when released into the atmosphere. Medical gases traditionally used are nitrous oxide (laughing gas), Entonox (a mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide) and the ‘volatile gases’ - desflurane, sevoflurane and isoflurane.

Through the reduced use of, and improvements to, anaesthetic techniques and the management of medical gas delivery systems, the NHS has been able to reduce emissions from these sources. NHS Highland total emissions from these gases in 2023/24 were 842tCO₂e which was a decrease of 25.65% from the year before.

Nitrous oxide and Entonox emissions, 2018/19 (baseline year), 2023/24 & 2024/25, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)



Volatile medical gas emissions, 2018/19, 2023/24 & 2024/25, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)



What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce emissions from anaesthetic gases?

What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce emissions from anaesthetic gases?

Promotion of Low-Flow Inhalational Anaesthesia

A collaborative initiative at the Belford in Fort William and Raigmore in Inverness applied Nudge Theory to encourage minimal fresh gas flow during anaesthesia. The project achieved a mean volatile agent efficiency improvement from 54% to 63% and reduced average fresh gas flow from 1.4l/min to 0.9l/min across the department. The work was recognised with 1st prize for Best Poster at the Scottish Society Annual Meeting and is now being prepared for publication.

Block Rooms

As part of wider National Green Theatre Programme action, NHS Highland has been testing a "block room" model which improves theatre efficiency and decreases general anaesthesia use in favour of regional anaesthesia.

Methoxyflurane Assessment

A clinical evaluation is underway to assess the use of methoxyflurane inhalers as an alternative to Nitrous Oxide in Endoscopy. The trial is currently on hold due to a patient safety concern and is awaiting review by the clinical lead before proceeding.

National Green Theatres Programme

A National Green Theatres Programme was officially launched in 2023 to help reduce the carbon footprint of theatres across NHS Scotland and enable more environmentally sustainable care by:

- Working with clinicians and professionals to develop actions that reduce carbon emissions, waste and resource use.
- Supporting Boards to implement, measure and report on these improvements.

The Green Theatres Programme is based on actions developed by frontline staff and the Green Theatre Project at Raigmore, NHS Highland.

What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce emissions from anaesthetic gases? cont.

In 2024/25, NHS Highland did the following to make operating theatres more sustainable:

Reusable Hover Mats

Local team proposed replacing single-use hover mats for bariatric patient transfers with reusable alternatives. This initiative includes projected cost savings and engagement with Laundry and Infection Prevention Control teams. The proposal has been ratified as a national action.

What are we doing in 2025/26 to make surgery more sustainable?

Local Anaesthetic Infusion Pumps

Proposal to reduce single-use plastics by introducing reusable pumps. A local SBAR has been presented to the National Green Theatre Programme SDG, and an Outline for Change is currently being prepared.

Tiny Air Trial at NTC Highland

Staff usability study is currently underway to support the Decontamination Expert Group's assessment of a technological innovation for pre-washing surgical tools before being processed at the Central Decontamination Unit.

Dental Unit Water Assessment

Evaluation of the role of IF Water in dental unit cleaning processes.

AGSS Study

Ongoing work to summarise and publish findings on the utility of AGSS in modern anaesthetic practice. Plans include a clinical trial, with funding streams currently being explored.

Comparator Trial

Conduct a comparative study of laparoscopic cholecystectomy practices in Nepal versus Scotland, incorporating the National Green Theatre Programme learning process.

Collaborations

Work in partnership with the University of Aberdeen, #AfterSingleUse at the University of Edinburgh, and potentially Mahmood Bhutta (University of Brighton).

Innovation Support

Continue providing support for ongoing sustainability and efficiency innovations.

Endoscopy Assessments

Evaluate the performance and sustainability impact of Stryker Neptune suction units.
Assess IF Water systems for local sterile water provision in endoscopy settings.

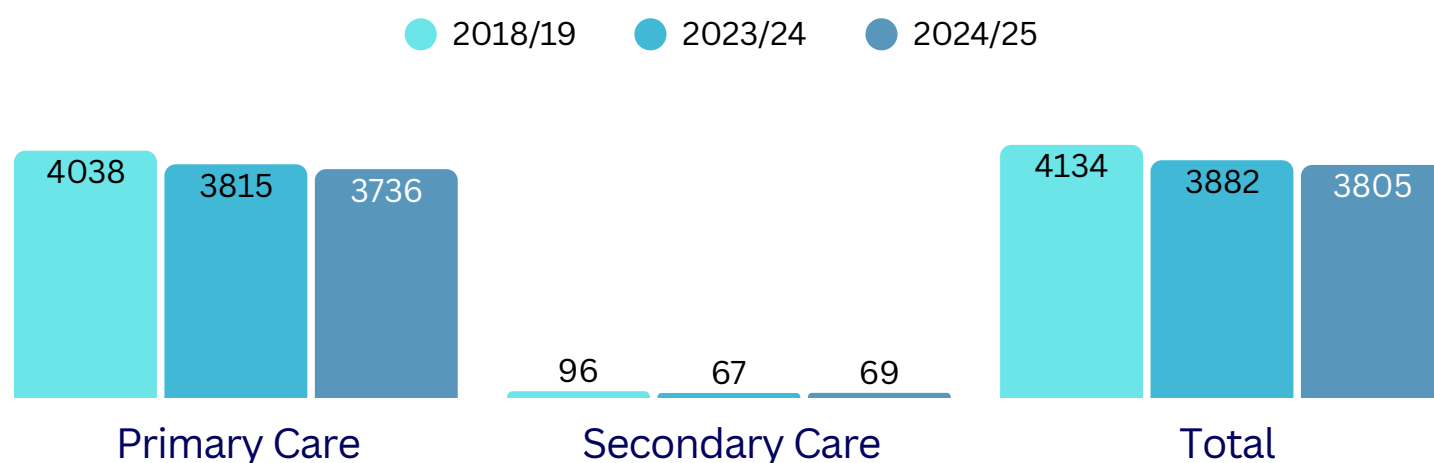
SUSTAINABLE CARE

RESPIRATORY MEDICINE

Greenhouse gases are used as a propellant in metered dose inhalers used to treat asthma and COPD. Most of the emissions from inhalers are from the use of reliever inhalers – Short Acting Beta Agonists (SABAs). By helping people to manage their condition more effectively, we can improve patient care and reduce emissions.

There are also more environmentally friendly inhalers such as dry powder inhalers which can be used where clinically appropriate. We estimate that emissions from inhalers in NHS Highland was 3882 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent in 2023/24.

Inhaler propellant emissions, 2018/19 (baseline year), 2023/24 & 2024/25, tonnes CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e)



Increase/
decrease

↓ 7.4%

↓ 28.12%

↓ 7.96%

What did we do in 2023/24 to reduce emissions from inhalers?

What are we doing in 2024/25 to improve patient care and reduce emissions from inhalers?

What are we doing to raise awareness with staff and patients, including primary care?

From the secondary care team's perspective, there has been significant progress, largely driven by the airways disease specialist nurses.

Key developments include:

Implementation of locally adapted asthma guidelines

Based on BTS/NICE/SIGN 2024 recommendations. Emphasis on the AIR/MART regimen for most asthmatics, typically using DPI devices, replacing salbutamol MDIs as relievers.

A carbon impact poster has been distributed to all GP practices and ED departments, highlighting green, amber, and red footprints and encouraging inhaler recycling via community pharmacies.

Updated inhaler guidelines

DPI devices are now recommended as first-line treatment instead of MDIs.

Educational video

Linked to the new guidelines and shared via the Pink One platform to support dissemination.

Formulary update

The low-carbon footprint MDI version of Trixeo has been added.

Acute asthma management in A&E

Patients now receive prepacked medication including 7 days of prednisolone and DPI inhalers.

Placebo DPIs are available to provide inhaler technique training before discharge.

Primary care education

Corrine Clark is delivering ongoing asthma education sessions.

Inpatient therapy review

Asthma and COPD patients have their inhaled therapy assessed, with a view to switching to DPI where appropriate.

Within primary care systems, an asthma Quality Improvement (QI) toolkit has been distributed to all Cluster Quality Leads, some of whom attended a development day where the toolkit was presented.

The toolkit outlines potential projects for clusters and practices to improve patient engagement and understanding, enhance clinician knowledge, and tackle the over-ordering of short-acting beta agonists (SABA).

It includes an NHS Highland leaflet for patients invited to asthma recall appointments, explaining updated guidance, as well as a separate leaflet for those identified as overusing SABA.

Blue inhalers are no longer recommended

Reliever inhalers - known to many as their 'blue' inhaler, are no longer recommended because they don't treat the cause of symptoms. They temporarily help breathing by expanding the airways but they do not reduce the inflammation (swelling) that causes the tightening of the airways. If this inflammation isn't treated, patients are at a higher risk of a severe asthma attack, which may require admission to hospital and could even be life-threatening.



Introducing combination inhalers

A combination inhaler includes both reliever and preventer medication replacing your need for separate preventer and reliever inhalers. For most patients, one inhaler will be all you need.

You could be eligible, even if your asthma is well controlled.



A more effective treatment

Combination inhalers work quickly and last longer than the old blue relievers with less risk of hospital admission or more serious complications.

Make sure to attend your annual review!

Remember, all people with asthma require a yearly review. When attending your review ask your nurse, doctor or pharmacist about changing from a reliever inhaler to a combination inhaler. It's optional but could help you better manage your asthma.



Practice pharmacists and pharmacy technicians employed by the health board have been trained to identify patients requesting excessive SABA. This work has been approved by primary care pharmacy leadership as part of the pharmacists' remit.

When excess SABA use is detected, the pharmacist attaches the relevant leaflet to the prescription, prompting a discussion with the community pharmacist when the patient collects their medication.

An aide-memoire has been provided to community pharmacists to support these conversations, and an education session for them was delivered earlier this week. This approach aims to reach patients who do not respond to practice communications or attend annual reviews, using the point of contact with community pharmacists to reinforce the message.

Practices now have the tools to implement this work, and the involvement of practice and community pharmacists should help spread awareness and support practices. However, the level of engagement achieved so far is unclear. A major challenge remains patient behaviour, as those most reliant on SABA are often the most resistant to change. Unlike other medications, such as opioids, we cannot refuse SABA to compel attendance, so alternative strategies are required.

For monitoring, practices can use the Scottish Therapeutics Utility, while health board level data is available through the National Therapeutics Indicators, last updated in June. Highland performs well on most metrics, except for the proportion of patients on SABA monotherapy. Data showing the impact of these interventions is not yet available.

SUSTAINABLE CARE

OTHER SUSTAINABLE CARE ACTION

What else did we do in 2023/24 to make care more sustainable?

What else are we doing in 2024/25 to make care more sustainable?

Various sites are now involved in the Green Endoscopy programme. Other projects will progress in 2025/26. As the Green Healthcare programme develops NHS Highland will become increasingly involved in this to align with the overall agenda, however this needs to be realistic in terms of infrastructure available and contracts that are currently in place.

The transition to digital patient records has significantly reduced paper usage and eliminated the need for extensive physical storage. This initiative supports our sustainability goals by lowering environmental impact, improving operational efficiency, and enhancing data security.

By reducing reliance on paper, we are cutting waste, streamlining workflows, and ensuring faster, safer access to patient information across the organisation.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT



Domestic transport (not including international aviation and shipping) produced 28.3% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions in 2022. Car travel is the type of travel which contributes the most to those emissions, this is particularly problematic for NHS Highland due to the vastness and geographical spread of the region.

NHS Scotland is supporting a shift to a healthier and more sustainable transport system where active travel and public transport are prioritised.

NHS Highland has a clearly defined transport strategy which defines the options that should be considered by staff before looking to arrange travel.

What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce the need to travel?

NHS Highland has implemented several initiatives to reduce travel and promote sustainability.

NHS Highland's Together We Care Strategy (2022–2027) outlines its commitment to:

- Reducing the need to travel to appointment for staff, NHS Highland offers virtual appointments through a secure video consulting service called Near Me.
- Supporting active travel—making it easier to walk, wheel, cycle, and use public transport to access NHS services.
- All NHH staff are encouraged to consider whether their role, actions or activities in the workplace can be held virtually or are required to be held in person. In this way the use of MS Teams for virtual meetings has continued. Where applicable to their role, and in line with national policies, staff can work flexibly and remotely – as such travel for commuting and for work is reduced.
- NHS Highland encourages lift and car share where possible.





What did we do in 2024/25 to improve active travel?

Across the whole NHS Highland geographical area steps have been taken to encourage staff to use active travel modes.

At Raigmore Hospital, NHS Highland has taken specific steps to encourage staff to use active travel modes:

- Increased secure cycle parking infrastructure.
- Introduced bikes and e-bikes for staff to use during work journeys.
- Improved changing and showering facilities.
- Provided bike maintenance tools and “bike doctor” mechanic sessions.
- HITRANS Hi Bike scheme – docking station for their e-bikes installed at Raigmore Hospital

Some of the schemes identified were collaborative works with other stakeholders to better connect hubs across Inverness to allow alternate, consistent options for anyone needing to commute in the city.

Cycle to Work Scheme available to staff

Limit = £10,000

Hire Periods available = 6, 12, 18, 24 months.

Total bikes ordered 2024= 254

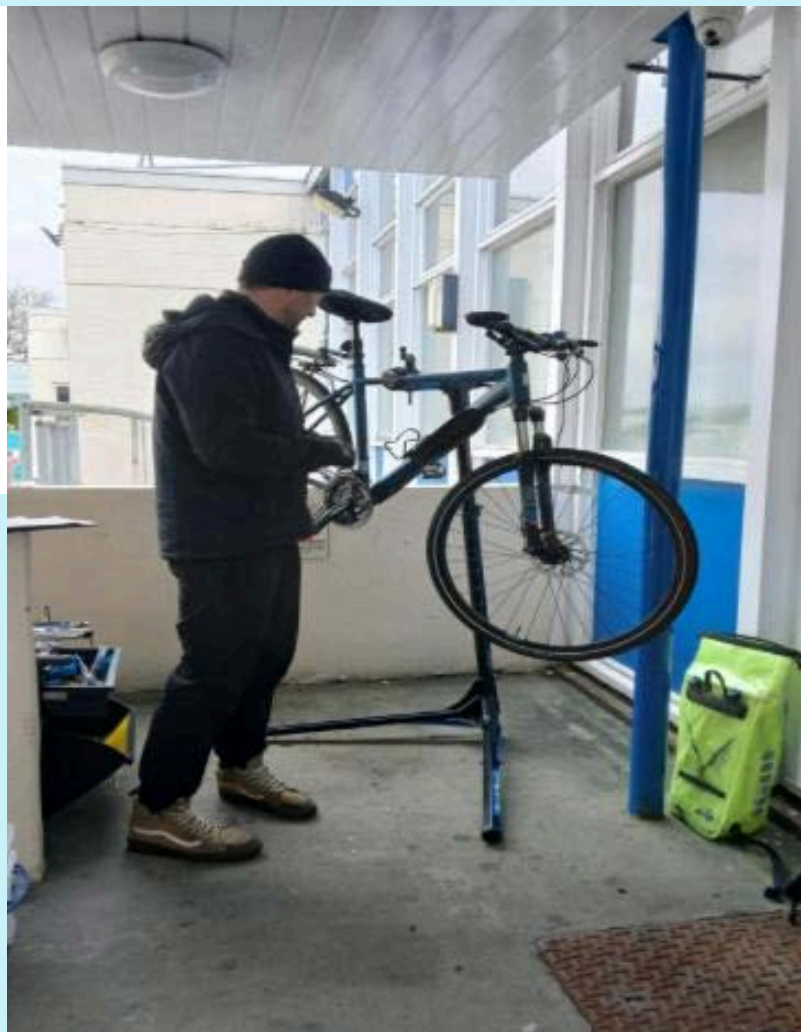
Bike Doctor sessions

We were successful in our application to the HITRANS People and Place Programme to part-fund provision of 4 “bike doctor” mechanic sessions held in March 2025 across 4 NHS Highland sites (3 North Highland and 1 Argyll & Bute)

Bike storage scoping exercise

4 storage units previously purchased through a Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust (previously Sustrans) funded NHSH post, to be erected at Broadford Hospital, Ullapool Health Centre, The Mackenzie Centre and Ach-an-Eas Care Home.

- 1 bike storage unit identified to be relocated from Larch House to Stadium Road due to completion of NHSH lease at Larch House
- 3 bike storage units identified to be relocated from New Craigs to Raigmore due to adjacent buildings being demolished



Sustainable Travel advice

Colleagues moving work base from Larch House to Assynt House were supported with ideas for sustainable travel and active travel maps supplied by HITRANS were distributed [Inverness Active Travel A2 2021 update June 2021](#)

What did we do in 2024/25 to improve public and community transport links to NHS sites and services?



A new bus route passing through Raigmore has been introduced and communicated to NHS Highland staff, highlighting that NHS Highland employees can now access a 10% discount on Stagecoach services. Additional travel concessions have been considered, including the ScotRail Highland Railcard, to further enhance affordability for staff.

We continue to build strong partnerships with HITRANS, the Regional Transport Partnership, to support ongoing collaboration in promoting sustainable travel across the Highlands. This includes initiatives that encourage active travel.

Members of NHS Highland's Energy and Environmental Sustainability (EES) team, Public Health team, and the Chair of the Active Travel Subgroup of the NHH EES Board took part in key sector networking events held in Inverness:

- 26 February 2025 – HITRANS hosted Making Connections: Active Travel Networking Event
- 6 March 2025 – Public Health Scotland convened Collaborating Towards a Healthy, Equitable and Sustainable Future in Transport

What are we going to do in 2025/26 to reduce the need to travel?

NHS Highland will continue to promote alternative options such as the Near Me network. Encouragement of phone and online appointments is crucial, making sure information goes out to patient networks without the need for in-person appointments.

A staff travel survey will be launched once the NHS Assure national survey becomes available, ensuring alignment and consistency in data collection. NHS Highland continues to support departments and teams when staff are relocated and experience a change in their designated work base. This includes providing tailored initiatives and relevant travel information to ease the transition.

What are we going to do in 2025/26 to improve active travel?

The NHS Highland Active Travel Group has piloted an online interactive map to gather input from colleagues who walk, wheel, or cycle to work. Staff were invited to share their actual commuting routes, and the insights gathered will inform the future development of this project.

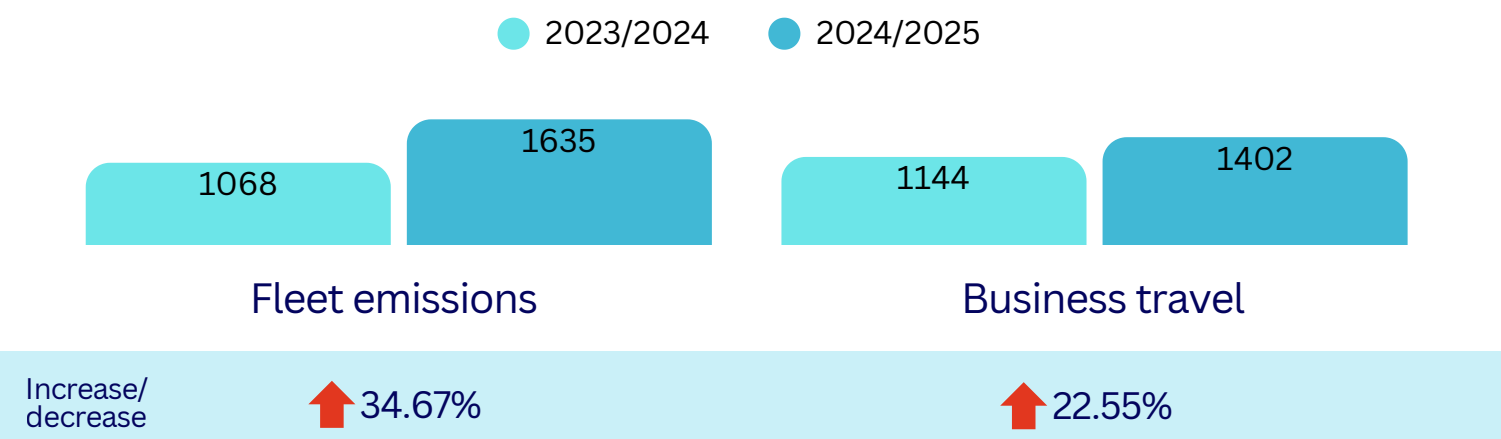
Further actions will be developed based on the findings of a recent scoping exercise on bicycle storage across NHS Highland estates, aiming to improve cycling infrastructure and support active travel.



What are we going to do in 2025/26 to improve public and community transport links to NHS sites and services?

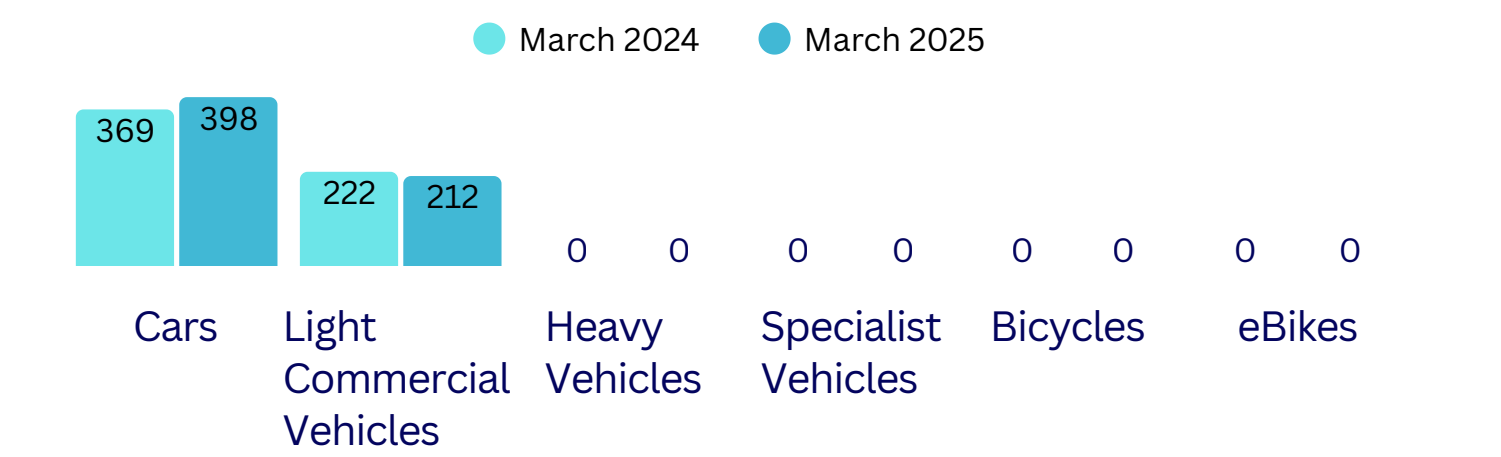
To foster a broader understanding of travel and transport within the context of wellbeing and place-making, NHS Highland will consider using the Public Health Scotland resource: The Shaping Places for Wellbeing approach. This will help engage staff in seeing the wider vision for sustainable travel and its role in creating healthier, more equitable communities.

Fleet and Business Travel - greenhouse gas emissions, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)



NHS Highland is working to reduce where appropriate the use of petrol and diesel fuelled vehicles from its fleet. The lack of available charging infrastructure and the rurality of areas may require hybrids to be deployed rather than a pure EV.

Fleet vehicles, numbers



Since the removal of funding and posts from Sustrans there are less than 20 bikes in NHS Highland, there is no formal process currently in terms of ongoing maintenance and insurances as there was previously. This position is currently under review.

GREENSPACE AND BIODIVERSITY



BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity, or the wide variety of living organisms within an environment, has declined at a rapid rate in the last 50 years. Evidence demonstrates that these trends are attributed to human activities, such as land use change, habitat degradation & fragmentation, pollution, and the impacts of climate change.

The State of Nature report published in 2023 has highlighted the decline of nature across Scotland, with 11% of species now classed as threatened with extinction. Public bodies in Scotland have a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 ([Nature Conservation Scotland Act 2004](#)) to further the conservation of biodiversity, taking care of nature all around us. Furthermore, the [Wildlife and Natural Environment \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#) requires every public body to summarise their activities to meet this duty, through the production of a publicly available report.

What actions have been taken to identify, protect and enhance biodiversity across your organisation?

A habitat survey has been completed for selected NHS Highland sites, supported and funded by NatureScot and provides a comprehensive review of the habitats associated with NHS Highland estate, in terms of nature and biodiversity. This survey is based on draft estate boundaries and so all figures are approximate. The survey used the UK Habitat Classification System.

NHS Highland have begun work with NHS Assure and the NHS Highland Property Team to clarify boundary data records.

What actions have been taken to contribute to the NHS Scotland Estate Mapping programme, or to develop an internal mapping programme?

What actions have been taken to mainstream biodiversity across the organisation?

NHS Highland is taking steps to embed biodiversity considerations across its operations and estate management practices. One example includes the maintenance of grounds at Raigmore, which is carried out by internal staff from the Estates team, including a dedicated groundsman.

This approach allows for greater control over land management practices and supports the integration of biodiversity-friendly methods.

Further opportunities to mainstream biodiversity are being explored, including:

- Promoting nature-based solutions and pollinator-friendly planting schemes.
- Reviewing grounds maintenance schedules to support seasonal biodiversity needs.
- Identifying areas across the estate that could be enhanced for habitat creation or ecological connectivity.

These actions align with NHS Highland's broader sustainability goals and contribute to Scotland's national biodiversity strategy.

How have nature-based solutions been utilised to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies?

NHS Highland recognises the critical role of nature-based solutions in responding to the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. These approaches offer co-benefits for environmental resilience, staff wellbeing, and the wider community. Opportunities to enhance biodiversity across NHS Highland sites are currently being reviewed, with a focus on the

2025/26 period. This includes identifying areas within the estate where ecological improvements such as pollinator-friendly planting, habitat creation, and sustainable land management can be implemented.

Nature-based solutions are being considered not only for their environmental value but also for their potential to contribute to climate adaptation, reduce carbon emissions, and improve the quality of outdoor spaces for staff and patients.

What surveys, monitoring or assessment of biodiversity have been undertaken?

If you have, what systems have been developed to continue monitoring long-term?

NHS Highland has begun to explore systematic approaches to assessing and monitoring biodiversity across its estate. As part of this effort:

The results of the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey are currently under review. These findings will inform the development of a long-term biodiversity monitoring framework, enabling consistent tracking of ecological changes and habitat quality over time.

While formal systems for ongoing biodiversity monitoring are still in development, this initial scoping exercise represents a foundational step toward establishing a structured and repeatable process for ecological assessment.



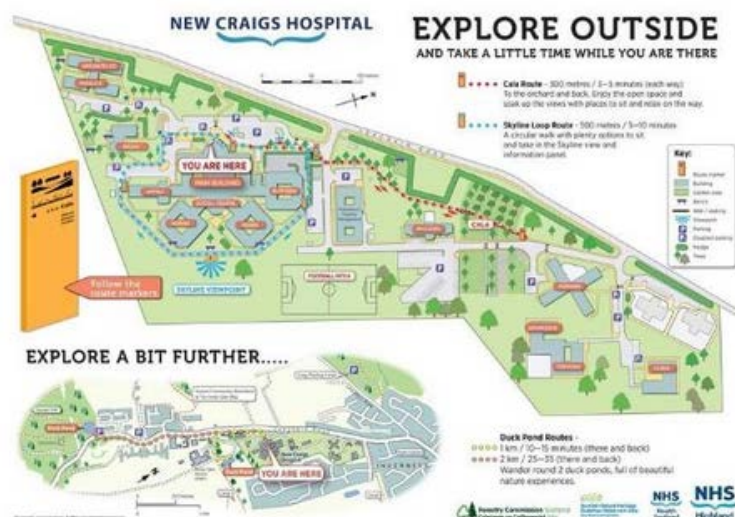
GREENSPACE

The design and management of the NHS Scotland green estate for human and planetary health, offers an opportunity to deliver a range of mutually beneficial outcomes. These include action on climate change (both mitigation and adaptation), biodiversity, health and wellbeing for patients and staff, community resilience building and active travel.

Greenspace programme at New Craigs Hospital

Greenspaces for patients' staff and visitors to enjoy and benefit in terms of health and wellbeing. Partnership working with Apex Scotland who maintain the specific greenspace areas, providing an opportunity for individuals in a supported environment. The New Craigs Hospital orchard has been revived over the past two years through a Greenspace project, supported by the hospital's senior management team, and run collaboratively between Public Health, Nutrition and Dietetics and Occupational Therapy.

During Climate Week 2024 staff and patients harvested over 50kg of apples which were shared amongst staff, patients and visitors as well as being enjoyed in home bakes from the on-site café. The Dementia Garden enables the patients at Ruthven ward to enjoy outdoor space in a safe secluded area.



Scoping for involvement in a Design HOPES research Flax growing at New Craigs- a circular economy project that links the Green Theatres Programme to Greenspace, biodiversity and social and cultural aspects of sustainability. The specific aim for NHSH is to explore staff engagement in a specific greenspace project (seen as an opportunity to improve staff health and wellbeing at work). Potential to use some of the designated greenspace for growing the flax.

Raigmore Gardens group at Raigmore Hospital

A programme that links NHS staff with residents of a neighbouring housing scheme (Raigmore Estate) through greenspace growing projects. The group consists of staff that have partnered with residents of the local housing estate to set up as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO).

Employment of a therapeutic gardener in collaborative contract with the Highland Third sector but managed by NHSH Public Health Team.

Work has begun to enhance the garden area at the Birnie Centre on the Raigmore Hospital site and specific activity held in the space e.g. winter bulb planting for Climate Week 2024.

Greenspace area by the main bike storage at Raigmore hospital main entrance

Plans to develop the greenspace area adjacent to the bike storage to improve aesthetics and create a space for nature and for people.

Design to creatively consider 'desire lines' taken by individuals walking from the car park to the main hospital entrance.

Application to be made to endowments' funding to make the project viable



Land agreements between NHS Highland and external organisations

We are working to develop greenspaces on NHS Highland sites with the aim to benefit patients, staff and visitors as well as residents in the neighbouring community. NHS Highland are exploring different land agreements that can be used that will enhance the long-term sustainability in managing and maintaining these projects.

Community Asset Transfer offers a legal framework for communities and interested parties to transfer ownership of NHS Highland land for community benefit, e.g. Aviemore Allotments

Regular attendance by community groups to undertake therapeutic gardening projects on the site

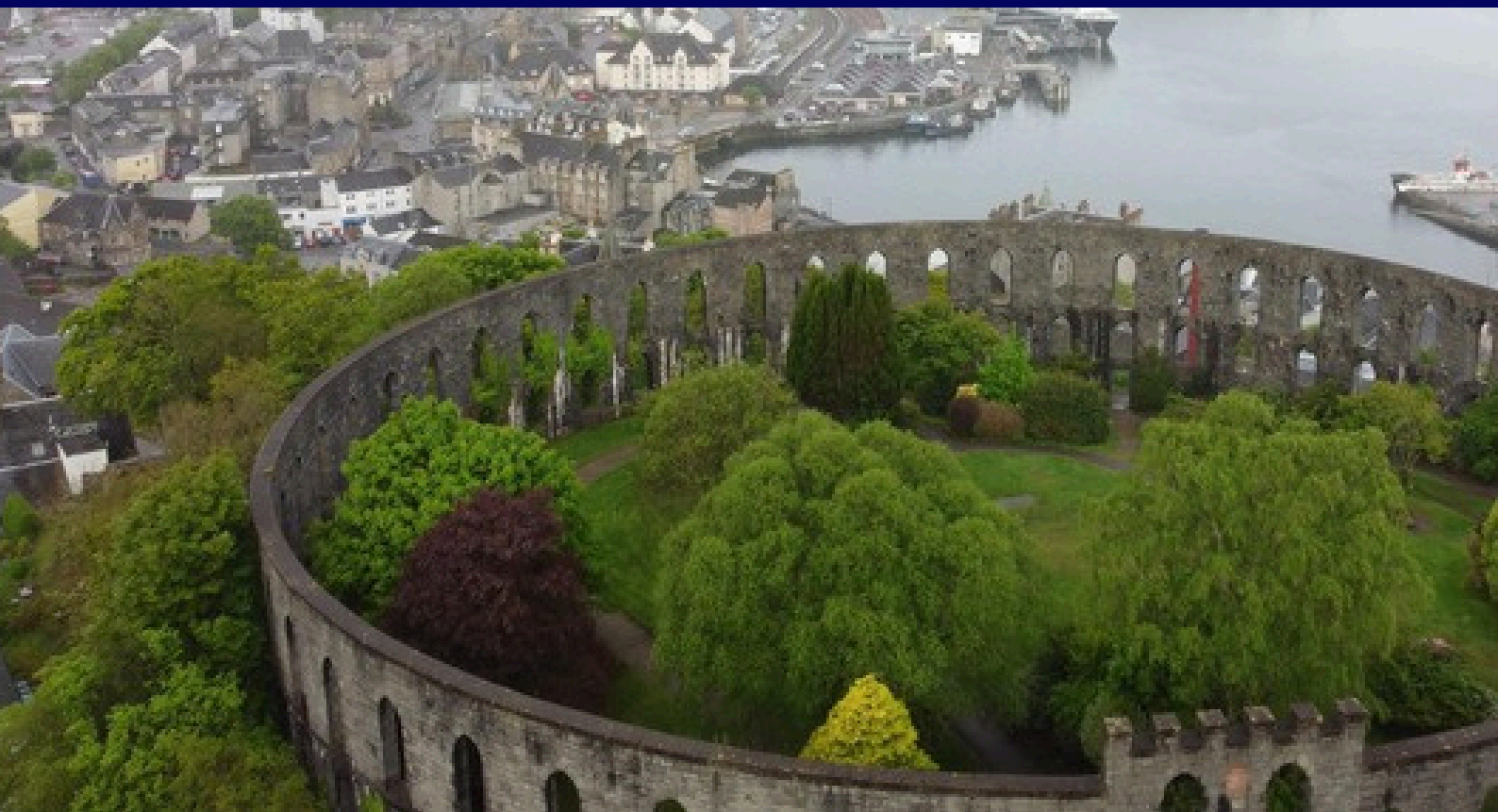
NHS Highland named Co-Investigator with Design HOPES

greed commitment for contribution of co-investigator based in the Sustainable Communities Research Group.

Main projects: development of an engagement tool to guide the design and enhancement of NHS estates greenspaces that benefit both human health and biodiversity.

Community participation in development of NHS Estates Greenspaces, liaison with Dumfries and Galloway as a fellow remote and rural health board to promote growing food at home.

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT, CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE



The greenhouse gases produced in creating the goods and materials used by NHS Highland are currently not reported.

We aim to reduce the impact that our use of resources has on the environment through adopting circular economy principles, fostering a culture of stewardship and working with other UK health services to maximise our contribution to reducing supply chain emissions to net-zero by 2045.

What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce the environmental impact of and the quantity of the goods and services we buy?

What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce the environmental impact of the goods and services we buy?

PROCUREMENT

NHS Highland's procurement policies contribute to climate change duties by integrating climate considerations into the purchasing process, such as using selection criteria for energy efficiency, low-carbon technologies and including contract requirements that mandate suppliers to reduce emissions. As a public body, NHS Highland is required to develop strategies, report on progress, and scrutinise our procurement needs to ensure they align with climate targets and minimise negative environmental impacts throughout a product's or service's lifecycle.

NHS Highland's Procurement Strategy (2025-2030) was implemented with the integration of best practice tools and policy guidance as provided by the Scottish Government and NHS National Services Scotland. The boards Procurement Strategy (2025-2030) sets out NHS Highland's objectives and key priorities in relation to the board's response to the climate emergency, minimising the environmental impact and waste reduction.

NHS Highland has committed to carrying out our procurement activities in an environmentally responsible manner by entering into agreements and contracts with suppliers that share and adhere to the boards vision. To demonstrate this commitment, suppliers are required to accept and comply with the principles of the Sustainable Supply Chain Code of Conduct. More information can be found on the [NHS Highland website Procurement page](#).

NHS Highland work with our suppliers to reduce emissions, promote circular economy principles like reuse and recycling, and drive innovation in climate-friendly products and services. The board uses its buying power to align organisational spending with climate goals which should ensure that projects are built to be resilient to the effects of climate change.

NHS Highland has actively implemented products from the suite of national contracts available to us from National Procurement where many factors, such as sustainability are included. National Procurement ensure that all boards across Scotland are aware of their climate change duties during the procurement process and actively request information from their suppliers in line with the Procurement to Reform Act (Scotland) 2014 to ensure compliance with national environmental standards.

NHS Highland's locally managed procurement activity is conducted in accordance with our obligations under the sustainable procurement duty to take account of social, economic and environmental issues during tender and evaluation procedures. Our Commodity Strategy templates and Standard Operating Procedures require specific consideration to be given through supplier selection, the inclusion of relevant and proportionate requirements in the specification and the evaluation of relevant and proportionate award criteria.

As part of the Procurement to Reform Act (Scotland) 2014 we must follow our sustainable procurement duty which requires NHS Highland to take account of social, economic and environmental issue where possible. Ensuring that as board and where appropriate to do so, we reduce, reuse and recycle resources.

<https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/about/publications-and-public-records/procurement/>

Furthermore, as part of the Single Procurement Document (SPD) there are questions regarding the environmental impacts and bidders are invited to submit accreditations such as ISO14001 Environmental Management. NHS Highland also include Fair Working Practices into Technical Questions for the bidders to complete, this will include information such as employment practices and looking at community benefits.

<https://www.procurementjourney.scot/espdspd/spd-guidance>.

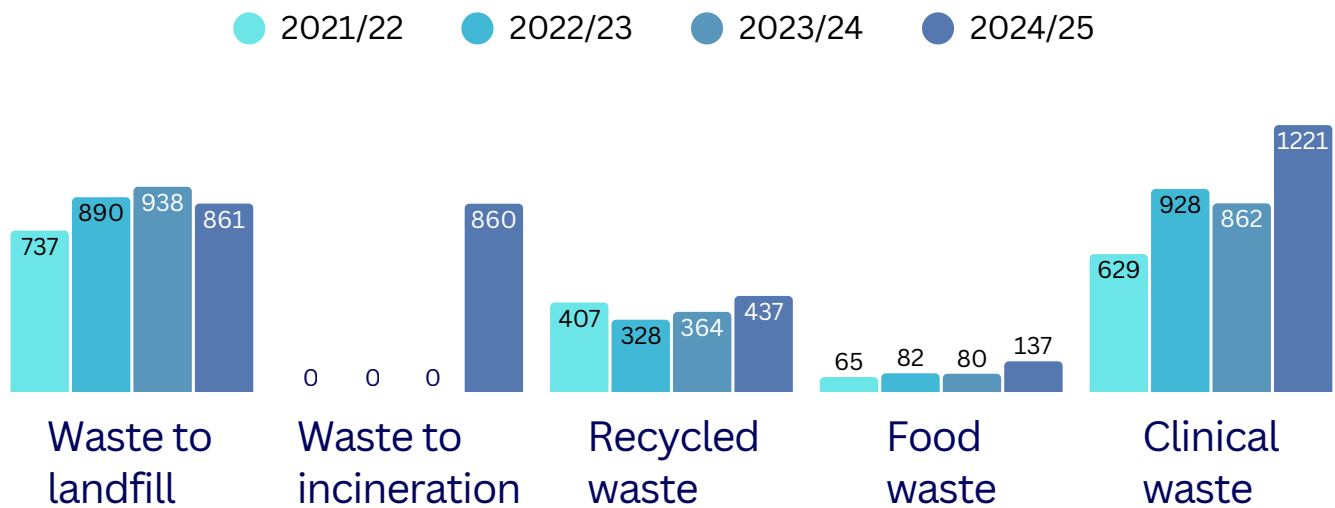
NHS Highland Procurement Senior Management Team are represented at several local and National Policy Groups including the Sustainable Procurement Steering Group, National Green Theatre Programme and as an anchor organisation working in collaboration with Public Health.

WASTE & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

NHS Highland is constantly reviewing options to reduce the amount of waste produced and for ensure that correct segregation is applied increasing resource efficiency and reuse where possible.

The table below sets out information on the waste NHS Highland produced and its destination for the last four years:

Waste produced, 2021/22 - 2024/25, tonnes



Increase/decrease	↑ 14.4%	N/A	↑ 6.86%	↑ 52.55%	↑ 48.41%
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NHS Highland has set targets to reduce the amount of waste produced and the tables below provide information on performance against those targets:

Reduce domestic waste by a minimum of 15%, and greater where possible compared to 2012/2013 by 2025		Ensure that no more than 5%, and less where possible, of all domestic waste is sent to landfill by 2025	
TARGET	reduce domestic waste by 15%	TARGET	reduce waste sent to landfill by 47 tonnes
PERFORMANCE	reduced by 489 tonnes	PERFORMANCE	reduced by 860.3 tonnes - all waste is sent for incineration (Heat/Power)
OUTCOME	ACHIEVED	OUTCOME	ACHIEVED

Reduce the food waste produced by 33% compared to 2015/16 by 2025		Ensure that 70% of all domestic waste is recycled or composted by 2025	
TARGET	reduce food waste by 67 tonnes	TARGET	recycle or compost 445 tonnes
PERFORMANCE	reduced by 69 tonnes	PERFORMANCE	reduced by 429 tonnes Further increase of 16 tonnes required
OUTCOME	ACHIEVED	OUTCOME	NOT ACHIEVED YET

NHS Highland's Waste Steering Group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the boards Waste and Resource Manager. This meeting reports to and is represented at the NHS Highland Environment & Sustainability Board.

Where targets have been met, NHS Highland shall continue to work towards reduction targets set within Scottish Climate Emergency Sustainability strategy 2022-26.

Use of WARP IT to reuse and recycle amongst NHS employees within NHS Estate premises, this has been extended to include 3rd Party sector such as Highland Council, Social Enterprise organisations such as New Start Highland who support communities with independent living.

Waste Segregation awareness Education through labelling of department waste bins.

Improved segregation and capture of waste designated for general waste disposal through provision of communal recycling stations and removal of individual desk bins in departments such as administration
Increase of source segregation where good quality paper/card is captured for recycling across the operational areas within Highland

Paper towel recycling project within Raigmore Hospital, projected to decrease general waste and increase compostable waste by 91 tonnes end of 2026.

Robust PAA waste audit programme of auditing with the aim to reduce waste designated for non-infectious clinical waste to be diverted to General or Recycling waste.

Clinical waste reduction through removal of Post-Covid Bins in communal clinical corridors

Promotion of National waste training module – Monthly NHS Sway Newsletter updates on waste.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Environmental stewardship means acting as a steward, or caretaker, of the environment and taking responsibility for the actions which affect our shared environmental quality.

This includes any activities which may adversely impact on land, air and water, either through the unsustainable use of resources or the generation of waste and pollution. Having an Environmental Management System (EMS) in place provides a framework that helps to achieve our environmental goals through consistent review, evaluation, and improvement of our environmental performance.

What steps did we take in 2024/25 to develop and implement our EMS?

member of the EES Team attended the ISEP Internal Environmental Management System Auditor course in preparation for the commencement of the proposed work with University of the Highlands and Islands.

ISO14001 Standard

NHS Highland are exploring the development of a KTP contract with the University of the Highlands and Islands to develop our EMS. One

NHS Highland has not yet fully implemented EMS to ISO14001 standard.

What steps will we take in 2025/26 to further develop and implement our EMS?

NHS Highland will continue to engage with NHSScotland Assure team for EMS to develop this work programme. The NHS Highland EES

Officers will receive appropriate training including that provided by NHS Scotland Assure Team.

What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce our environmental impacts and improve environmental performance?

The conversion of Raigmore Hospital’s heating system from HFO to diesel provided a reduction in emissions. The remaining HFO that was stored in a tank in Raigmore

has been cleaned out and disposed of. The introduction of the Pure Water Filtration plant at Raigmore Laundry provided the board with the ability to remove microplastics from the water going down the drain. Additionally, the water being filtered could be recycled reducing the volume of fresh water required. Improved segregation of waste streams via a successful procurement exercise to improve availability of recycling and to reduce what is being disposed of via clinical or domestic waste streams.



What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce our environmental impacts and improve environmental performance?

Progress implementation of EMS system via an agreed programme of work and implementation of a system that meets the needs of the organisation.

What factors have prevented implementation of EMS to ISO14001 Standard for NHS Highland sites still to reach that standard?

We are beginning to create our EMS using the templates and support from NHS Assure. This is a new area of expertise for all members of the EES team so knowledge and understanding is ongoing. A plan of implementation is in development.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

Environmental stewardship means acting as a steward, or caretaker, of the environment and taking responsibility for the actions which affect our shared environmental quality.

This includes any activities which may adversely impact on land, air and water, either through the unsustainable use of resources or the generation of waste and pollution. Having an Environmental Management System (EMS) in place provides a framework that helps to achieve our environmental goals through consistent review, evaluation, and improvement of our environmental performance.

What did we do in 2024/25 to make our construction projects more environmentally sustainable?

NHS Highland is actively applying the Sustainable Design and Construction (SDaC) Guidance to the Lochaber project, adopting a collaborative and inclusive approach. The implementation involves close coordination between the project team, contractors, architects, and extensive engagement with local community stakeholders. This ensures that sustainability principles are embedded throughout the design and construction process, while also reflecting the needs and values of the local population.

What are we doing in 2025/26 to make our construction projects more environmentally sustainable?

In 2025/26, NHS Scotland is strengthening its commitment to sustainable construction through the implementation of the Sustainable Design and Construction (SDaC) Guidance. NHS Highland is actively applying this framework to the Lochaber project, using a collaborative approach that involves the project team, contractors, architects, and community stakeholders. Key actions include:

Early Integration of Sustainability

Sustainability considerations are being integrated from the earliest stages of project planning and design.

Community Engagement

Local stakeholders are actively involved to ensure the project reflects community needs and supports wider environmental goals.

Collaborative Delivery

NHS Highland is working closely with delivery partners to ensure that environmental priorities such as circular economy, energy efficiency, low embodied carbon materials, biodiversity and waste management are addressed throughout the construction process and design.



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The climate emergency undermines the foundations of good health and deepens inequalities for our most deprived communities.

The NHS touches and has a presence in every community across Scotland. We have a responsibility to use our abilities as a large employer, a major procurer and one of the most recognised brands in the world (an ‘anchor’ organisation) to protect and support our communities’ health needs as best we can.



Think Health, Think Nature is the work of the Highland Green Health Partnership which is one of four area wide partnerships developed in Scotland contributing towards “Our Natural Health Service.

A programme which is led by NatureScot aims to encourage more use of the outdoors to tackle physical inactivity, mental health issues and health inequalities. The multi-agency partnership has run since 2018, and although centralised funding has ceased, the partnership continues to meet with dedicated support from NHS Highland staff. NHS coordinates the partnership and leads on some actions.

Think Health Think Nature’s vision

‘By 2030, the natural environment will be valued as essential for the health and wellbeing of the people of Highland. We will work together to support individuals and communities to connect with and enjoy nature, while safeguarding our natural spaces and promoting inclusion’

The actions of the partnership are organised under four key themes, as outlined in their sustainability plan

- Building capacity, skills and understanding.
- Adding value through collaborative working.
- Embedding and integrating.
- Sustainable funding.



Annual reports are available on the website. The website acts as a one-stop shop for all resources and hosts an online directory of services which is searchable by locality area and activity type.

The THTN partnership promotes that ‘Regardless of age and ability, there really is something for everyone and a group or organisation in your local area that can support you to connect with nature’. Communication is facilitated by a monthly newsletter for all interested stakeholders (256 subscribers) and social media presence.

Annually, the partnership coordinates Green Health Week which is a campaign and a celebration of green health across the Highlands. Green Health week provides an annual focus on Green Health with an opportunity for joint campaigning across the Highland Green Health Partnership and is coordinated with other authority areas nationally by NatureScot. This year Green Health Week ran from the 11th-18th May 2024, with the theme of ‘Nurturing the Health of People and Planet’. 38 events ran across Highland in celebration of Green Health Week.

In addition to the existing work programmes of all partners’, key projects currently include:

Stepping Stones

Trialling community-led pathways into nature-based activities for mental health and wellbeing. Healthcare led pathways in partnership with Cairngorms National Park Authority and Cairngorms 2030 Project, employing one whole-time-equivalent green health link worker for the Badenoch and Strathspey area.

RSPB Nature Prescription and associated Turas learning module

The Highland Charter for Nature, Climate and Health, which aims to encourage action among individuals and organisations to put climate, nature, and the benefits of green and blue health at the centre of decision-making and action, so that the natural environment and people have improved health, wellbeing, and resilience.

What are we doing to act as an anchor institution for our local communities?

As part of our commitment to acting as an anchor institution within the local community, we have partnered with Apex Scotland's Inverness hub - a national charity that supports

individuals with experience of the justice system - to maintain the greenspace areas at New Craigs. This collaboration not only enhances the local environment but also provides meaningful opportunities for social inclusion and rehabilitation.

We provided match funding for the Active Health Project, a healthcare referral pathway to support individuals across Highland to become more physically active in whatever way works best for them. This was run by Velocity, a social enterprise set up to promote cycling as a way of helping people adopt healthier lifestyles, encourage sustainable travel and improve emotional wellbeing.

Other projects they run include cycle training for adults and bike rides to help improve people's health and wellbeing. As part of NHS Highland procurement exercises, bidding contractors must demonstrate how they would be able to pass on community benefits to the population demographic of the Highland region. Local charities and communities can apply for funding or may depending on the benefit offered directly from interaction via the community benefits scheme to assist with development of projects.

What are we doing to improve the resilience of our local communities to climate change?



Highland Adapts

Established in 2021 Highland Adapts is a regional climate change adaptation partnership established to strengthen the resilience of the Scottish Highlands in the face of increasing climate-related risks, infrastructure, and essential services, making adaptation a critical priority for NHS Highland and founding partners.

The partnership aims to bring together communities, businesses, land managers, and public sector organisations to deliver coordinated action aimed at creating a climate-ready Highland. Its work is guided by three core principles: fostering collaboration, developing place-based solutions, and ensuring decisions are driven by robust evidence. Highland Adapts ensures that adaptation strategies reflect shared priorities and local realities recognising the unique geography and characteristics of the Highland Region, identifying solutions to meet these specific needs. Evidence driven planning combines climate change risk assessments, health impact analysis and local knowledge to inform response.

NHS Highland is a founder member of the group and sees participation in Highland Adapts as a medium to predict and safeguard health and wellbeing across the region. It is expected that climate change will increase incidences of heat-related illness, respiratory conditions linked to air quality and mental health challenges associated with extreme weather events and displacement. Through Highland Adapts, NHS Highland contributes to developing adaptation strategies that integrate health considerations, ensuring that healthcare facilities, supply chains and emergency response systems remain robust under changing conditions.

Key activities of Highland Adapts include producing regional adaptation strategies and action plans, which is currently ongoing. The partnership also serves as a knowledge hub, enabling stakeholders to share best practices and build capacity for adaptation.

Adult Social Care Buildings

Adult social care buildings within communities tend to become hubs and emergency centres in communities for vulnerable people when climate related events impact upon the area (e.g. power outages, severe storms, etc). Most Adult Social care buildings have contingencies in place for heat and power which allow vulnerable people a place to go for some heat and food if there is sustained outages or damage due to weather events.



CONCLUSION

NHS Highland has made significant progress in embedding sustainability across its operations during 2024/25. Key achievements include advancing low-carbon clinical practices, reducing emissions from anaesthetic gases and inhalers, implementing energy efficiency measures, and promoting active travel and greenspace initiatives as well as focussing on waste segregation, increasing audits and progressing with campaigns, and promotion of training. The adoption of the Sustainable Design and Construction Guidance for new projects and with a focus currently on the Lochaber projects demonstrates our commitment to future-proofing healthcare facilities, while collaborative programmes such as Highland Adapts strengthen regional resilience to climate change.

Despite these successes, challenges remain, particularly in reducing building energy emissions which will be a focus this coming year. Continued focus on heat decarbonisation, sustainable procurement, and cultural change within clinical and non-clinical settings will be essential to meet our net-zero targets by 2045.

Looking ahead, NHS Highland will build on this year's progress by scaling up innovation, deepening community engagement, and integrating sustainability into every aspect of healthcare delivery. By working collaboratively with staff, partners, and communities, we will continue to lead by example protecting health today while safeguarding the environment for future generations.