



**Herefordshire and
Worcestershire**
Clinical Commissioning Group

Green Plan

2021-2022

Contents Page

Foreword	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Sustainable NHS	6
3. About Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG	8
4. Green Plan	10
5. Governance and Reporting	12
6. Next Steps	12
7. Conclusion	13

Foreword

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (HWCCG) Green Plan has been developed to build upon previous work undertaken by the CCG to reduce the environmental impact of its activities while supporting the NHS Long Term Plan focus on sustainable healthcare delivery and most importantly responding to the recently published 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS' report.

It could be questioned why would the CCG be prioritising work to tackle climate change at a time which is still being dominated by the global pandemic COVID-19, the most pressing health emergency facing the NHS?

The answer is simple; climate change is also a health emergency.

It poses the most profound long term threat to the health of the nation. Unabated it will disrupt care and affect patients and people at all stages of their lives. With poor environmental health contributing to major diseases, including cardiac problems, asthma and cancer, the CCG needs to respond at a much faster pace and have a clear plan of action to contribute to the NHS target of being carbon neutral by 2040.

The impacts of climate change are unlikely to be felt equally. Those people on low incomes, who are already more likely to have worse health, will suffer first and most from weather extremes, food shortages and flood damages, causing further health problems and subsequently increasing health inequalities. Therefore, the CCG will continue to promote and deliver a culture of carbon management reduction for healthcare across the two counties.

The pandemic has clearly highlighted that community health is dependent on a healthy planet and sustainable economic development is dependent on the health of communities. This further reinforces the importance of the CCG's role not only as strategic system manager and a leader of the local health system, but as an employer too. By setting high standards, modelling certain behaviours and acting where possible as an exemplar to delivering a Greener NHS and in particular carbon reduction, the CCG will continue to minimise the environmental impact in how it operates. This approach will also contribute to local economic development and social improvement and enhances health and wellbeing, while being resilient to the effects of a changing climate and ensuring a resilient supply of goods and services.

The CCG will proactively involve its dedicated workforce, providers, suppliers, Integrated Care System partners and others in the delivery of its Green Plan to maximise the impact that can be achieved. We know our partners are facing increasing demands on services at a time when the economic position of the country is in a difficult situation. Therefore, working smarter to achieve more with increasingly stretched resources will be essential and will support the development of a system wide Green plan as the CCG becomes part of the Integrated Care System

The CCG will continue to refresh the Plan as this important agenda develops, informed by national and more local intelligence. While progress updates will be provided to the CCG Governing Body on a six monthly basis.

1. Introduction

A Green Plan is a Board/Governing Body approved document that assists NHS organisations to clarify their objectives on sustainable development and set out a plan of action. This Plan has primarily been developed in response to the NHS Long Term Plan and ‘Delivering a ‘Net Zero’ NHS’ report which both reinforce the urgent need for all NHS organisations to take action to reduce carbon emissions arising from their operations and embed sustainability within their strategies and cultures.

Therefore, the Green Plan describes the global and national context, strategy and policy; the commitments made by the NHS and sets out how Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG will operate in a sustainable way and reduce its carbon emissions. All actions will be supported by clear targets for measuring success over years to come once the CCG’s carbon footprint has been calculated.

The scale of the challenge is clear, climate change poses a major threat to our health as well as our planet. The environment is changing and that change is accelerating, and this has direct and immediate consequences for patients, public and the NHS. This is why in January 2020 the programme ‘For a Greener NHS’ was launched which was followed by the ‘Delivering a ‘Net Zero’ NHS’ report being published in October 2020. This latter provides a clear plan of being the world’s first ‘net zero’ national health service and covers both the care the NHS provides (NHS Carbon Footprint) and the entire scope of NHS emissions (the NHS Carbon Footprint plus).

While the NHS is already a world leader in sustainability, as the biggest employer in this country and comprising nearly a tenth of the UK economy, it is both part of the problem and part of the solution. The NHS has a carbon footprint of approximately 20 million tonnes of CO₂, making it the largest public sector emitter of Greenhouse gases in the country. Around 60% of the total footprint is from procurement of goods and services, with the rest split between energy consumption in NHS buildings and travel.

Air pollution is linked to killer conditions like heart disease, stroke and lung cancer, contributing to around 36,000 deaths annually. Research suggests that up to one third of new asthma cases might be avoided as a result of efforts to cut emissions. This is because the drivers of climate change are also the drivers of ill health and inequality.

We know the changing climate is getting worse, with nine out of 10 hottest years on record occurring in the last decade and almost 900 people killed by heatwaves in England in 2019.

Most areas of the NHS have taken notable steps to reduce their carbon footprint in response to the commitments of the Climate Change Act 2008, where national targets for the reduction of carbon emissions were set. While only an approximation, it is estimated a 62% reduction in the NHS Carbon Footprint has been achieved so far which exceeds the 37% requirement for 2020 outlined in the Climate Change Act.

The interrelationship between the current global pandemic COVID-19 and the environment has further highlighted the importance of the NHS reducing its environmental impact as a matter of priority. Locally, the pandemic has accelerated the roll out of digital equipment by the CCG to primary care to ensure all clinicians across Herefordshire and Worcestershire are able to operate from home if needed. This approach delivers significant carbon reduction benefits while also supporting sustainability commitments of the NHS Long Term Plan. Conversely, some elements of the response has increased the impact on the environment, through greater need for personal protective equipment, single use plastics, cleaning products, ventilators and other associated equipment.

The proactive action already being taken by Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG in reducing its carbon emissions is set out in the 'About Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG' Section of this Green Plan. That said, it is without question the CCG needs to push ahead at pace its current response to the health emergency that climate change brings. Together with this Green Plan, the recently published NHS net zero targets, the commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan, the 2020 NHS Operational Planning and Contracting Guidance, the Standard Contract and significant experience in sustainable healthcare, the CCG will need to mainstream the principles of sustainable development into everything it does

2. Sustainable NHS

For the NHS, the challenge is to deliver high quality care and continually improve health and wellbeing for now and for future generations and all within the available social, financial and environmental resources. Sustainable development therefore promotes the idea that social, environmental and economic progress are all attainable within the limits of our earth's natural resources.

The NHS has a very large carbon footprint as a major buyer of goods and services from local, national and international economies and as such, has a significant opportunity to improve economic, environmental and social sustainability. Being sustainable will enable all NHS organisations to make the most of existing resources. Therefore, in practice this will require the CCG to ensure the following principles are mainstreamed into all decision making:

- Planning services which are efficient and effective
- Buying services which provide highest quality at best value and which have the least impact on the environment
- Avoiding duplication, inefficiency and waste
- Focus on preventative, proactive care
- Patients and public engagement and involvement in planning and design of services
- Building resilience and protecting and developing community assets and strengths
- Making best use of all the resources we have
- Minimising carbon emissions

This approach should also help to reduce inappropriate demands, reduce waste and incentivise more effective use of services.

Both the NHS Long Term Plan commitments and the targets in 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS', clearly set out the contribution the NHS can make to the sustainability agenda. The CCG will consider the contribution it can currently make to some of these areas as part of this Green Plan.

The NHS Long Term Plan commitments towards environmental sustainability in the NHS focus on reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, and reducing the use of avoidable single use plastics.

There are two key targets that underpin the NHS net zero commitment which are based on the scale of the challenge posed by climate change. They are:

- For the emissions the NHS control directly (the NHS Carbon Footprint), net zero by 2040, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032.
- For the emissions the NHS can influence (NHS Carbon Footprint plus), net zero by 2045, with an ambition to reach 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039.

Delivering these targets will require action across every part of the NHS. However, the main areas of action can be categorised as follows:

- Direct Interventions: within estates and facilities, travel and transport, supply chain and medicines.
- Enabling actions: including sustainable models of care, workforce, networks and leadership and funding and finance mechanisms.

A summary of the interventions identified in the report to meet these targets and decarbonise the health service are outlined below:

- **Our care:** by developing a framework to evaluate carbon reduction associated with new models of care being considered and implemented as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.
- **Our medicines and supply chain:** by working with suppliers to ensure that all of them meet or exceed our commitment to net zero emissions before the end of the decade.
- **Our transport and travel:** by working towards road-testing for what would be the world's first zero emission ambulance by 2022, with a shift to a zero-emission vehicle by 2032 feasible for the rest of the fleet.
- **Our Innovation:** by ensuring the digital transformation agenda aligns with the ambition to be a net zero health service and implementing a net zero horizon scanning function to identify future pipeline innovations.
- **Our hospitals:** by supporting the construction of 40 new 'net zero hospitals' as part of the Governments Health Infrastructure Plan with a new Net Zero Carbon Hospital Standard.
- **Our heating and lighting:** by completing a 50m LED lighting replacement programme, which, expanded across the entire NHS, would improve patient comfort and save 3billion during the coming three decades.
- **Our adaptation efforts:** by building resilience and adaption into the heart of our net zero agenda, and vice versa.
- **Our Values and Governance:** by supporting an update to the NHS Constitution to include the response to Climate Change, launching a new national programme For a Greener NHS, and ensuring that every NHS organisation has a board-level net zero NHS lead, making it clear that this is a key responsibility for all our staff.

The areas and activities covered by the above interventions are wide ranging which further demonstrates the scale of the challenge and work required across all areas of the NHS to tackle the reduction of carbon emissions. Some of these areas will link directly to the six areas that the CCG will focus on delivering over the next two years as outlined in Section 4.

3. About Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was formed in April 2020 following a merger of the four CCGs which covered these two county areas. It is a clinically led organisation employing approximately 300 members of staff at the three office sites located in Worcester, Bromsgrove and Hereford and serves a population of roughly 800,000 across the geographical footprint and represents 83 GP practices in the area.

The CCG's vision for the Green Plan is '**to maximise carbon reduction through our actions as a commissioning organisation and as a system leader**'. The vision reflects the importance of the evolving priorities for the NHS that are associated with Climate Change as set out in the recently published 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS' and reinforces the urgent need for the CCG to reduce carbon emissions and embed sustainable healthcare into strategies and the culture of the organisation.

The CCG in its role as a strategic system manager, leader of the NHS system across Herefordshire and Worcestershire and as an employer, recognises the importance of the decisions it takes and those of its providers for managing the environmental impact, ensuring energy consumption is as efficient as possible, minimizing waste and pollution, enabling the best use of resources, building resilience to a changing climate and nurturing community assets. Indeed, through reduced carbon emissions, better staff awareness and robust procurement practices, this will complement the Green Plan's vision and wider strategic objectives. The Plan will also help the CCG to:

- Meet minimum statutory and policy requirements of carbon reduction and sustainable development
- Become a leading green and sustainable organisation with an excellent reputation for carbon management
- Save money through increased efficiency and resilience
- Improve the environment in which care is delivered, for both patients and staff
- Support and encourage providers and suppliers to improve the sustainability and carbon reduction of their services
- Have robust arrangements in place to monitor progress

Over the last two years, various actions have been undertaken by what was then four CCGs and now as a merged CCG to reduce the environmental impact of activities undertaken while also supporting the NHS Long Term Plan focus on sustainable health care delivery. They include:

- Signed up to the NHS Plastics Pledge to reduce single use plastic
- Green Social Prescribing initiatives are being developed. They will provide local systems with the opportunity to work with partners to systematically embed green prescribing into local social prescribing schemes at an individual, community and whole system level and with a particular focus on supporting mental health issues
- The internal staff Health and Wellbeing Group continues to raise awareness and further employees understanding about 'green' issues through a range of delivery tools. In July 2020, the focus was on how to become plastic free

- The CCG already considers sustainability at both selection stage (such as PQQ) and award tender stage for commissioning activities in response to The Social Value (Public Services) Act 2012
- Thirteen employees so far have used the National NHS Fleet Solutions Scheme for leasing an electric car
- Appointment of a Director of Digital Health and Infrastructure to support the digital transformation agenda and to drive down residual emissions from digital services
- First NHS body in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire system to have Microsoft Teams technology available to support its staff and GPs in working from home since the COVID-19 pandemic began

In line with the Net Zero NHS report, the CCG will start to review what mechanisms need to be put in place for measuring the impact that the above initiatives and others are having in reducing the CCG's carbon footprint.

The CCG's carbon footprint has not yet been calculated and is therefore proposed as one of the first actions to be undertaken as part of this Green Plan. This will enable a baseline figure to be established which the CCG can then use to set realistic reduction targets for carbon emissions. An organisation-wide carbon footprint analysis would normally include energy use in buildings, travel, waste, procurement, data transmitted and commissioned services. The carbon reduction targets can then be monitored and reported accordingly.

4. Green Plan

The specific areas that the Green Plan will initially focus on are set out below. There are also direct links with some of the interventions which are required to be undertaken to meet the NHS Net Zero targets, as described under Section 2.

Carbon Emissions

Carbon emissions are an important indicator of the environmental impact of the CCG. As published in the 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS report, there is a need for urgent action on addressing climate change; the link from climate change to public health impacts and NHS resource pressures.

Emissions arising from climate change stem from activities directly or indirectly undertaken by the CCG, measured in its 'Carbon Footprint'. This includes the operation of the buildings the CCG works from and associated facilities (use of energy and water), the generation and management of waste and travel and transport of CCG staff on CCG business. Emissions arising from these activities amount to the CCG's CORE Carbon Footprint (those ones that can be directly controlled by the CCG). Other sources of emissions which the CCG can influence in conjunction with relevant partners are the commissioning of healthcare services, procurement of goods and services and staff commuting.

While the CCG will actively pursue delivering 'Net Zero' emissions by 2040 in line with the 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS' report, it is important that the CCG establishes what its carbon footprint is so that a route map of realistic targets can be set.

Objective 1 – Establish the CCG's Carbon Footprint for 2020/21

The CCG's organisation-wide carbon footprint for 2020/21 is currently being calculated. It is acknowledged that due to the ongoing pandemic COVID-19, the baseline figure may not be truly representative given the significant number of employees who continue to work from home rather than working from one of the three main office sites. That said, remote working will be encouraged to continue post the pandemic given the significant carbon reduction benefits it offers.

Objective 2- Reduce the environmental impact of staff travel

Emissions from CCG staff commuting to work have not yet been quantified. However, moves to embed a sustainable working culture and reduce the impact of business and commuting travel were accelerated as a result of the CCG's immediate response to the COVID -19 pandemic, by enabling employees to work from home. The reduction in business miles also supports the Long Term Plan's commitment to improve air quality. The CCG will therefore seek to build on this as appropriate, ensuring that this reflects effective and appropriate working practices and delivery of quality services. The CCG will also ensure that any car leasing schemes restrict the availability of high emission vehicles.

Objective 3 – Reduce the CCG’s carbon emissions from the procurement of goods and services while enabling social value

Procurement of goods and services contribute towards significant carbon emissions as well as creating opportunities to generate environmental improvement and social value. The CCG annually administers £1.19B of public funds and considers sustainability at both selection (such as PQQ) and award tender stages as part of its obligations under 2012 Public Services (Social Value) Act. On an annual basis, the CCG will reflect in its annual report the impact of its procurement, and on the extent to which it has used its purchasing capacity to implement change. This will include asking the CCG’s main three providers: Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, and Wye Valley NHS Trust to report on performance against their Sustainable Development Management Plans (SDMPs) or Green Plans and achievement against carbon management targets. As the global pandemic has highlighted, resilience of supply is also important, potentially impacting on location of sourcing, employment and skills as well as environmental impacts.

Objective 4 – Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan

Strong and healthy communities support people to minimise their impact on the environment and be resilient to change in the world. These communities are well connected and better prepared for environmental and climate changes, including the impacts of severe weather events such as heat waves, cold snaps and flooding. The CCG will co-ordinate collaborative working to build resilience to climate change and adverse events with key partners through the development of a climate change adaptation plan. The plan will help to understand and harness the assets that exist in local communities to enable a more sustainable delivery of health and care. There are inevitable links between the climate change adaptation plan and other key areas such as local air quality (transport and travel), as well as procurement (opportunities for social value from procurement of services). There is also a link to carbon emissions.

Objective 5 - Raise awareness of sustainability and communicating the CCG’s Green Plan

Sustainable and resilient services rely on a culture that understands and values environmental and social resources alongside financial costs. Engagement at all levels with the public, service users, trade unions and staff can provide the basis for positive action. The CCG’s dedicated workforce will be supported to deliver the Green Plan’s objectives, which will include a focus on direct and indirect impacts. The internal Health and Wellbeing Group will play a key role in helping to ensure there are regular articles in the CCG’s weekly newsletter, to share good news stories on carbon reduction and sustainability with the press office, be involved in local and national sustainability campaigns and encourage staff to get involved and run annual sustainability awards to recognise the most environmentally and socially sustainable team. The CCG will seek to act as an exemplar to its community and partners while encouraging positive change to take place at home as well as within the CCG’s sites.

Objective 6 – Enable sustainability as a factor, among others, to underpin high quality care

Sustainable models of care can deliver better health and wellbeing by enhancing, enabling and integrating approaches to care, building resilience with individuals and their communities

whilst reducing environmental impacts. This means considering sustainability impacts within models of care, while ensuring clinically effective, safe and high quality healthcare services. Some environmental impacts may for example arise from the implementation of virtual consultations, where this is deemed to be the most effective way of providing relevant healthcare. This will reduce travel impacts. Certainly virtual consultations have played a major role across healthcare settings in Herefordshire and Worcestershire since the pandemic COVID-19 began. The CCG will also continue in consultation with primary care and GPs to encourage the use of evidence based therapies, where appropriate which may include encouraging lifestyle changes e.g. exercise and dietary advice, use of green spaces, nature and recovery gardens over invasive procedures and pharmaceuticals. The environmental impact and toxicity of products and pharmaceuticals should also be considered, as appropriate. It will also be important that when models of care are reviewed any environmental impacts are identified and addressed including eliminating any waste and unnecessary use of resources.

5. Governance and Reporting

Clear leadership and governance are both vital if the CCG is to successfully deliver the commitments outlined in this Plan and to drive forward at pace a robust response to address climate change. The Green Plan has been approved by the CCG's Governing Body who will receive six monthly progress reports on the delivery of the Plan. The CCG Chair, Dr Ian Tait has the Governing Body level statutory role for this area of work and Hana Taylor, Associate Director of Corporate Services is the Executive Lead and ICS/STP Lead. Delivery of the Green Plan will be co-ordinated through the CCG's corporate services team together with the support of the internal health and wellbeing group. While all staff have responsibility for reviewing and mainstreaming sustainability and carbon management into their areas of work. The activity delivered will be detailed in the annual report of the CCG, as this is now a specific requirement of the report.

6. Next Steps

The most recent Green Plan guidance has been used to help develop this Plan which currently does not reflect the targets or actions required by the 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS' report. The Sustainable Development Unit for the health and care system in England have advised that refreshed Green Plan guidance will be published sometime during 2021/22 and in the meantime, it is important that any Green Plans which are being developed also reflect the targets and key themes from the 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS' report. This is the approach that has therefore been taken with developing this Plan. Once the CCG's carbon footprint has been calculated, this plan will be reviewed and refined with smart targets so the effectiveness of the work undertaken can be measured accordingly.

7. Conclusion

Though the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a huge challenge for the CCG, in many ways it has helped it become much more ambitious in what can be achieved and has certainly accelerated the adoption of digital technology to enable teams of staff to work from home and support primary care too with video-call contact for patients, as appropriate. This digital approach will continue to have significant environmental benefits in the way services are delivered both now and in the future. The pandemic has also clearly brought into focus the urgent need for all sectors of the NHS to act now in reducing their environmental impact, while ensuring that plans are in place to deal with the current and projected impacts of climate change.

This initial Green Plan is therefore a working document for the CCG and will continue to be updated and developed as work is progressed and in line with any new national guidance issued. While the involvement of staff and partners will be encouraged to help shape this important agenda further and ensure all activity has the greatest impact possible for the delivery of both sustainable healthcare and net zero carbon emissions by 2040 across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, whilst positively contributing to the national and global situation.