

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting:	Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Meeting date:	Monday 9 February 2026
Title:	Annual Climate Emergency and Sustainability Report 2024/25
Responsible Director:	Nicola Graham – Director of Infrastructure & Support Services (I&SS)
Report Author:	Fraser McNeil – Head of Estates Alastair Kay – Climate Change, Energy and Sustainability Manager Helen Gemmell – Assistant Director of Estates & Support Services

1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Decision

This paper relates to:

- Annual Operational Plan
- Government policy/directive

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

2. Report summary

2.1 Situation

NHS Ayrshire & Arran Board Members are asked to review and approve the 2024/25 Annual Climate Emergency and Sustainability report requested by Scottish Government which forms part of the requirements in policy DL38(2021). This is the third year of reporting for Scottish Government (SG) where they require a summary report of our climate and sustainability activities across the organisation.

2.2 Background

As part of the duties placed on public bodies within the Climate Change Act Scotland 2019, we are mandated to report on our progress in meeting the requirements in the act around what actions we are taking towards climate change mitigation, adaptation, sustainable procurement, and board governance. Also within the act it states we are

required to “*Act Sustainably – putting sustainable development as a core value*” requiring us to act in a manner which is considered most sustainable.

All decision making should encompass social, economic, and environmental factors as set out in our climate change and sustainability strategy 2021-32 document over the short and longer terms, considering our impact on carbon emissions and the NHS net zero target date of 2040.

2.3 Assessment

As part of the leadership requirements, we must establish strong governance structures for reporting of performance and demonstrate how we are implementing the National policy and strategy.

The information contained within the report was compiled from a number of sources, from internal systems, national systems and some required to be complied using manual calculations due to the absence of reporting systems for some of the workstreams.

The Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational group (CESOG) and Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategic group (CESSG) are responsible for overseeing this area of compliance and obtaining assurance and to ensure sufficient resource is in place to complete all national reporting requirements.

Significant progress has been achieved this year in advancing climate change and sustainability goals. Overall, we achieved a 7% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions against an emissions reduction target of 3%.

Key highlights include:

- During the reporting period, significant progress was made in reducing environmental impacts across multiple areas. Fossil fuel consumption decreased by 18%, delivering savings of over 10 million kWh of gas and contributing to a 7% reduction in building-related emissions. Fleet emissions saw a notable 14% reduction, supported by an 8% decrease in emissions from grey and lease fleets.
- Further improvements were achieved in other operational areas, with medical gas emissions down by 8%, waste-related emissions reduced by 5%, and water consumption lowered by 16%. Business travel also demonstrated positive change, with overall emissions reduced by 6%. These results reflect a strong commitment to sustainability and operational efficiency.
- Efforts to further reduce emissions continue and is being achieved through collaborative efforts, careful planning and targeted interventions to ensure meaningful progress is maintained toward environmental goals.

Table 1 outlines the key achievement areas of this work for 2024/25

Source	2023/24 emissions (tCO ₂ e)	2024/25 emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage change – 2023/24 to 2024/25
Building energy	20,198	18,751	-7.1%
Non-medical F-gas	31	21	-32%
Medical gases	1,072	987	-8%
Metered dose inhaler propellant	5,899	5,260	-11%
NHS fleet travel	674	583	-14%
Waste	450	427	-5%
Water	95	80	-16%
Business travel	1,251	1,175	-6%
Total emissions	30,445	28,241	-7%

In 2024/25, emissions were 28,241 tCO₂e, slightly above the projected Net Zero trajectory target of 27,901 tCO₂e. We remain committed to accelerating progress and are confident that continued efforts will drive us closer to our goals in the coming years.

2.3.1 Quality/patient care

This will not directly affect patient care at this time but reviewing services which consider the Environmental and Sustainability impact will result in better health outcomes for our local population in coming years.

2.3.2 Workforce

This work has no direct impact on workforce.

2.3.3 Financial

This work has no direct financial impact.

2.3.4 Risk assessment/management

The completion of this report has no operational risks associated to it. There is an operational risk and issues register for this programme of work which is updated on a regular basis.

2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities

The community wealth building element of the strategy will help to address health inequalities through the provision of local employment, local procurement and better access to services.

2.3.6 Other impacts

- Compliance with Corporate Objectives as this report evidences the boards progress in meeting the key deliverables associated with our Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy (2021 – 2032) to the end of March 2025. The strategy has now been updated (2025 – 2032) and will form the basis for future annual reporting.
- Relates to the following Best Value themes through improving our sustainability performance

- Vision and Leadership
- Effective Partnerships
- Governance and accountability

- Use of resources
- Performance management
- Sustainability (cross-cutting)
- Equality (cross-cutting - see 2.3.5)

X
X
X

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

The Board has carried out its duties to involve and engage external stakeholders where appropriate and relevant teams have been consulted in the compilation of information contained within this report.

2.3.8 Route to the meeting

The content of this annual based report will required to be presented and approved by the following groups prior to final submission to Scottish Government.

- Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group, 12 January 2026
- Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategic Group, virtually
- Corporate Management Team, 28th January 2026
- NHS Board, 9th February 2026

2.4 Recommendation

For decision. NHS Board members are asked to review the report content and approve this report. Following approval, the report will be shared with Scottish Government as part of the annual reporting requirements.

3. List of appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Annual Health Board Climate and Sustainability Report 2024-25

Annual Climate Emergency and Sustainability report 2024/25

NHS Ayrshire and Arran

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1. Introduction

NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Climate Emergency and Sustainability report covers the reporting period from 01st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Climate change is recognised by the World Health Organisation, the Scottish Government and the UK Health Security Agency as one of the most significant threats to public health, with wide-ranging impacts on individuals, communities, and health systems. The actions we take now across air quality, energy efficiency and sustainable housing are directly linked to improved health outcomes, including reductions in respiratory and cardiovascular disease, better mental health and lower hospital admissions

Health care itself has a complex relationship with the environment, whilst delivering essential services. The delivery of care within facilities and the services it provides generates an environmental footprint. This takes the form of greenhouse gas emissions, clinical waste and resource consumption.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran is the 7th largest energy user across NHS Scotland Healthboards and provides a range of community-based and acute hospital services for around 363,500 people (2022) living within the North, South and East Ayrshire local authority areas. There are 2 acute general teaching hospitals providing a range of specialist medical and surgical services. In total, NHS Ayrshire and Arran employs 12,000 staff with 3 Integrated Health and Social Care Partnerships. Primary care facilities in NHS Ayrshire and Arran include health centres, clinics and community hospitals.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran is committed to minimising its environmental footprint and supporting the Scottish Government's climate change targets, as set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties. By eliminating pharmaceutical waste, reducing emissions, and promoting sustainable practices, we aim to protect both planetary and population health, recognising that climate action presents one of the greatest health opportunities of the 21st century.

As we drive our own climate change and sustainability strategy, we also work in partnership with the local councils across a variety of subjects within the climate change agenda. We participate in the North Ayrshire Climate Change Steering Group, along with its subgroups in decarbonisation, transport, adaptation, greenspace and biodiversity, and waste management. In South Ayrshire we have representation on the South Ayrshire Sustainability Partnership and attend the subgroups for food, energy, greenspace, and transport. We work with East Ayrshire Council alongside their local planning actions for climate change and LHEES strategy development.

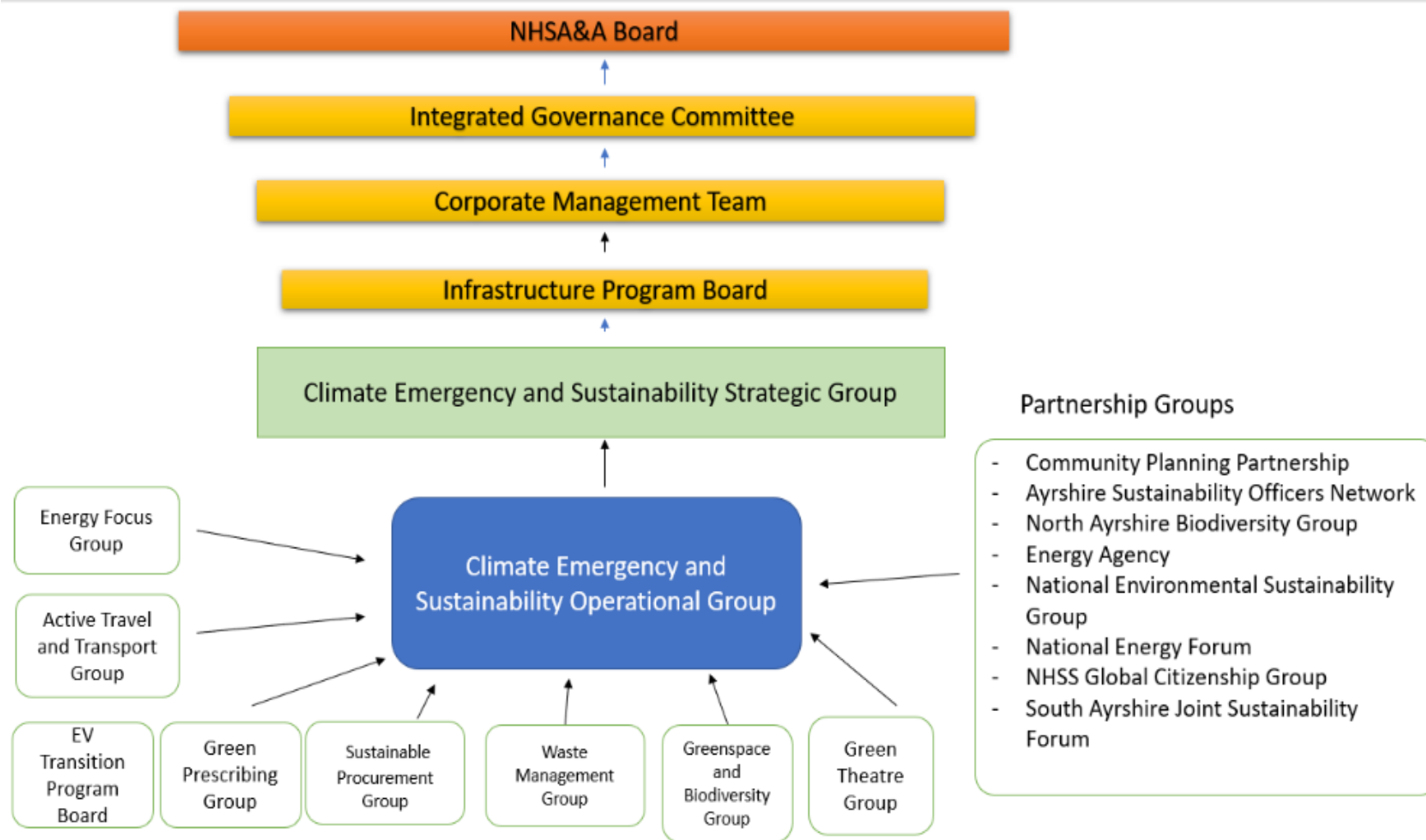
2. Leadership and governance

NHS Ayrshire and Arran's leadership and governance arrangements for climate emergency and sustainability are designed to ensure full compliance with the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. These duties require public bodies to act in the way best calculated to contribute to emissions reduction targets, deliver adaptation programmes, and act sustainably in all operations.

The Board has established clear executive leadership and robust governance structures. The Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group (CESOG) chaired by the Director of Infrastructure and Support Services, is responsible for delivering the Board's climate change and sustainability requirements. This includes ensuring compliance with the Chief Executive's Letter CEL(2021)38 "A Policy for NHS Scotland on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development" and the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2019. CESOG's remit covers operational delivery, compliance, risk management and the embedding of processes for monitoring and evaluation. The group also leads on staff engagement, project delivery and the promotion of sustainability initiatives across the organisation.

Executive roles in climate change and sustainability are clearly defined with an executive lead and a board sustainability champion in place, as required by national policy. The operational group (CESOG) is chaired by the executive lead for sustainability and reports directly to the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategic Group (CESSG), which is chaired by the Board's sustainability champion. The champion's role is to challenge the organisation to ensure policy requirements are met and to oversee progress on sustainability and climate change actions. This governance route ensures direct reporting to the corporate management team, Integrated Governance Committee and ultimately the Board. The strategic group holds overall responsibility for delivering on policy and strategy, both internally and as set out by the Scottish Government.

Performance is monitored through regular reporting to the Strategic Group and the Board, with a focus on delivery of commitments, continuous improvement and engagement. The CESOG's remit includes developing and promoting climate change and sustainability initiatives, engaging staff to increase awareness of environmental issues and leading projects that support the Board's actions on climate change and sustainability.



3. Summary of impacts

2040 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets

2040 Net-Zero emissions	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Target (2024/25)
Carbon footprint (tCO ₂ e)						62.5%
Scope 1	15,377	14,637	12,842	12,549	10,766	
Scope 2	6,032	5,627	5,112	5,355	5,355	
Scope 3	11,655	12,601	12,771	12,541	12,093	
Total Emissions	33,064	32,865	30,725	30,445	28,214	27,901

NHS Ayrshire and Arran aims to become a net-zero organisation by 2040 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 Ayrshire and Arran.

Greenhouse gas emissions 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO ₂ equivalent (tCO ₂ e)					
Source	2023/24 emissions (tCO ₂ e)	2024/25 emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage change – 2023/24 to 2024/25	2024/25 – target emissions	Difference between actual and target emissions – 2024/25 (percentage)
Building energy	20,198	18,751	-7.1%	-3%	-4.1%
Non-medical F-gas	31	21	-32%	-3%	-29%

Greenhouse gas emissions 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)					
Source	2023/24 emissions (tCO2e)	2024/25 emissions (tCO2e)	Percentage change – 2023/24 to 2024/25	2024/25 – target emissions	Difference between actual and target emissions – 2024/25 (percentage)
Medical gases	1,072	987	-8%	-3%	-5%
Metered dose inhaler propellant	5,899	5,260	-11%	-3%	-8%
NHS fleet travel	674	583	-14%	-3%	-11%
Waste	450	427	-5%	-3%	-2%
Water	95	80	-16%	-3%	-13%
Business travel	1,251	1,175	-6%	-3%	-3%
Total emissions	30,445	28,241	-7%	-3%	-4%

The table below sets out how much of key resources we used over the last two years:-

Source	2023/24 Use	2024/25 Use	Percentage change – 2023/24 to 2024/25
Building energy (kWh)	97,267,073	99,291,178	+2%
NHS fleet travel (km travelled)	6,033,532	6,793,364	+11%
Waste (tonnes)	4,558	3,017	-34%
Water (cubic metres)	328,088	330,479	+0.5%
Business travel (km travelled)	7,774,431	7,247,185	-7%

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. The following table sets out the latest estimates we have for these emissions:

Source	Latest estimate, Tco2e	Year of estimate
Supply chain	330,000	2020
Patient travel (to and from appointments) (measuring ambulances, taxis and bus transport only provided to patients by NHS)	No data currently available 101	2025
Staff commuting	No data currently available	

4. Climate change adaptation

Climate change is intensifying existing health risks and introducing new challenges for Ayrshire and Arran, including the spread of infectious diseases, more frequent heatwaves and extreme weather events. These changes impact the health of our population, the resilience of our healthcare services and the integrity of our facilities. NHS Scotland plays a pivotal role in developing climate-resilient health systems capable of responding to these evolving threats.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran has completed a first draft of our climate change risk assessment with adaptation plan. This assessment addresses current and future risks to our built environment, including new developments and provides a risk score for each.

A risk of flooding has been identified at a number of key sites across NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The Steps outlined below are being taken to reduce this risk at Ayrshire Central Hospital.

Action taken: Tree planting was carried out this year at Ayrshire Central Hospital in collaboration with North Ayrshire Council as part of a wider green health and biodiversity initiative. This program is led by NHS Ayrshire & Arran and supported by The Conservation Volunteers (TVC) and the North Ayrshire Green Health Partnership.

The planting brings several benefits to the site. It improves rainfall infiltration, which is particularly important as the area is prone to flooding. The trees act as natural windbreaks, helping to protect infrastructure, while also enhancing soil fertility, retaining moisture, and mitigating the impact of heavy downpours. In addition, the trees support local biodiversity, creating habitats for wildlife and flora.

The expanded green space will also provide wellbeing benefits for patients and staff, strengthening outdoor pathways and promoting mental health.

Over the next year, our priority is to fully embed the delivery and ongoing monitoring of the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan within the established governance structures of NHS Ayrshire and Arran. This work will be overseen and implemented through the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group (CESOG) and the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategic Group (CESSG), ensuring that climate adaptation is integrated into our Board's strategy and action plans. By assigning clear ownership for monitoring and reporting, broadening the scope of assessment to encompass the entire organisation, and formally integrating climate risks into our corporate risk register, we will strengthen our resilience to climate impacts and meet our statutory duties.

5. Building energy

We aim to use renewable heat sources for all the buildings owned by NHS Ayrshire and Arran by 2038. NHS Ayrshire and Arran have 136 buildings comprising of acute sites, community hospitals, health centres and clinics. In 2024/25, 18,751 tonnes of CO2 equivalent were produced by NHS Ayrshire and Arran use of energy for buildings. This was a decrease of 7.1 % on the previous year. In 2024/25, NHS Ayrshire and Arran used 99,291,178 kWh of energy. This was an increase of 2% on the previous year.

Building energy emissions, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)				
(Includes scope 3)	2015/16 energy emissions	2023/24 energy emissions	2024/25 energy emissions	Percentage change 2015/16 to 2024/25
Building fossil fuel emissions	14,727	12,356	10,323	-16%
District heat networks and biomass	391	650	1,204	+308%
Grid electricity	17,138	7,108	7,123	-58%
Totals	32,256	20,114	18,650	-42%

Building energy use, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, MWh				
	2015/16 energy use	2023/24 energy use	2024/25, energy use	Percentage change 2015/16 to 2024/25
Building fossil fuel use	64,940,748	64,565,686	56,135,827	-13.5%
District heat networks and biomass	8,793,466	10,088,025	18,347,494	208%
Grid electricity	29,809,637	25,861,947	25,861,425	-13.3%
Renewable electricity	157,814	225,968	223,370	+42%
Totals	103,701,665	100,741,626	100,568,116	-3%

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

Installation of Smart LED Lighting Across Acute Care and Health Centre Facilities.
Increased management oversight on performance of Biomass Boiler plant across our sites.
Increased organisational awareness.
- What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce emissions from building energy use?*

We secured core funding from the Scottish Government, which has been directed towards installing new power supplies to support decarbonisation efforts. In addition, we have continued our smart LED lighting programme, completing a full community hospital installation. We are also undertaking two decarbonisation studies on major hospital sites to develop a project pipeline for future funding opportunities.

- *What projects are we planning for the longer-term to reduce emissions from building energy use?*
Focus on increasing onsite renewable generation through a wind turbine project and exploring renewable private wire connections to local solar farms. In addition, we are progressing work on the DPS Renewable Energy Framework for sleeved power and have issued a West of Scotland PIN notice to support the procurement of third-party renewable energy.

6 Sustainable care

The way we provide care influences our environmental impact and greenhouse gas emissions. NHS Scotland has three national priority areas for making care more sustainable – anaesthesia, surgery and respiratory medicine.

6.1 Anaesthesia and surgery

Greenhouse gases are used as anaesthetics and for pain relief. These gases are nitrous oxide (laughing gas), Entonox (a mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide) and the 'volatile gases' - desflurane, sevoflurane and isoflurane.

Through improvements to anaesthetic technique and the management of medical gas delivery systems, the NHS can reduce emissions from these sources.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran total emissions from these gases in 2024/25 were 842, a decrease of 179 tonnes from the previous year.

More detail on these emissions is set out in the tables below:

Nitrous oxide and Entonox emissions, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)				
Source	2015/16 (baseline year)	2023/24	2024/25	Percentage change 2015/16 to 2024/25
Piped & portable nitrous oxide	432	339	268	-38%
Piped Entonox	744	581	564	-24%
Portable Entonox	84	101	105	+25%
Total	1260	1021	842	-33%

Volatile medical gas emissions, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO2 equivalent (tCO2e)				
	2015/16 (baseline year)	2022/23	2023/24	Percentage change 2015/16 to 2024/25
Desflurane	695	0	0	-100%
Isoflurane	0.2	0	1	400%
Sevoflurane	68	52	50	-26%
Total	763	52	51	-93%

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

We have fully depleted our stocks of desflurane, removed it from the standard ordering list, and reclassified it as a special-order product.

At University Hospital Ayr, we have decommissioned the existing nitrous oxide manifolds achieved through a collaborative approach.

Additionally, we conducted an assessment of anaesthetic equipment gas flow, comparing measured flow against actual usage and shared findings.

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

Work has been undertaken within Dentistry to transition from piped gases to cylinder-based systems and to explore market solutions for gas scavenging.

Additionally, we have decommissioned gas manifolds at University Hospital Ayr, Northwest Area Centre, and Ayrshire Central Hospital, moving these sites over to cylinder use achieved through a collaborative approach.

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.

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

- *What are we doing in 2025/26 to make surgery more sustainable? Key areas of focus include:-*
 - Review existing AGSS systems currently in use across Acute Hospitals.
 - Assess optimisation opportunities for HVAC setback controls within Acute Hospitals. A Short-Life Working Group (SLWG) has been established, including key stakeholders (Theatres, Clinical, IPCT, Hospital Management), to evaluate options.
 - Review and report on Neptune systems installed at Ayr and Crosshouse theatres.
 - Expand peri-operative paracetamol change from intravenous to alternative administration—already implemented at Ayr, with rollout planned across all theatres.
 - Embed waste segregation practices in theatres to be review by new Waste Manager to improve recycling rates and establish baseline data.
 - Standardise the use of reusable theatre hats across all sites.
 - Implement the “Rub Not Scrub” programme, sharing national training resources with theatre teams.
 - Reduce instrument trays, starting with orthopaedics as the first specialty to address this.
 - Reduce plastic waste by eliminating wrapping for contaminated instruments.
 - Minimise use of battery-operated pulse lavage, with initial discussions raised with Orthopaedics.
 - Address single-use HoverMatts in AMU by transitioning to reusable alternatives.
 - Promote “Green Wards” initiatives, encouraging sharing of ideas and best practices.
 - Introduce VR headsets as an alternative to sedation where appropriate.
 - Upgrade theatre lighting to LED, noting that equipment lighting has already been converted.
 - Integrate green champion groups from Endoscopy, Renal, and Labs into the Green Theatre Group to strengthen collaboration.

6.3. 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 F-Gas use in inhalers in NHS Ayrshire and Arran were 5899 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent in 2023/24.

Inhaler propellant emissions, 2015/16, 2023-2024 & 2024-2025, tonnes CO ₂ equivalent (tCO ₂ e)				
Source	2015/16 (baseline year)	2023/24	2024/25	Percentage change 2015/16 to 2024/25
Primary care	6022	5763	5151	-14%
Secondary care	179	136	108	-40%
Total	6201	5899	5259	-15

- *What did we do in 2023/24 to reduce emissions from inhalers?*
 - Local guidelines were changed from MDI-first to a DPI-first format, with greener DPI and soft-mist devices moved into separate, green-coloured sections which were located at the start of the guidelines in order to encourage preferential use of these devices. MDI options were located in a separate table after the MDI options, shaded yellow to differentiate from the greener options.

- *What are we doing in 2024/25 to improve patient care and reduce emissions from inhalers?*
 - We are actively promoting the use of new prescribing guidelines at GP prescribing meetings and among key prescribers. Specialist nursing colleagues are supporting this by encouraging greener prescribing practices among practice nurses, while ensuring pharmacy teams understand both the guidelines and the rationale for change. Pilot switching initiatives have already commenced in selected practices.
 - Reducing the overuse of SABA inhalers remains a key clinical priority. This message is consistently reinforced during training sessions delivered by respiratory specialist nurses and senior pharmacists at educational meetings with GP practices.
- *What are we doing to raise awareness with staff and patients, including primary care?*
 - Educational sessions have been delivered to healthcare professionals in primary care, and posters are currently in development to raise patient awareness. These will be displayed in waiting areas and clinical rooms. Patients are also being counselled on the transition to dry powder inhalers during annual reviews. Additionally, plans are in place to share the poster content via social media platforms to further extend reach.

6.4. Other sustainable care action

- *What else did we do in 2023/24 to make care more sustainable?*
 - Diabetes in Dalmellington: Living and Caring is a two-year SG VIF pilot project that aims to improve the self-management of pre-diabetes and diabetes to reduce the incidence of diabetes and its complications, enabling people to live longer and healthier lives, whilst ensuring this is delivered in an equitable and sustainable way which recognizes the importance of planetary health. Quality improvement methods have been utilised to identify health impacts through process and outcome markers. Alongside this runs an evaluation of the Diabetic Eye Screening Service pre- and post-intervention to determine if the carbon footprint of this service has been reduced, the results of which will inform future service design as well as be submitted to peer review publication to contribute to the much-needed literature on sustainability and planetary health.
 - We have been working with external consultants on the development of a whole system plan and redesign of services. This will bring sustainable benefits such as care closer to home, centralising expertise on single sites and improving the patient journey.
 - Increase the use of video consultations – exploring an uptake of NearMe software, working with appropriate specialities around this. An example of this is in social care in South Ayrshire. Medical specialities have been asked who can move to non-face to face. Pre op assessments are being addressed using near me to help reduce face to face consultations.

- Pharmacy waste reduction initiatives
 - Use of the Neptune waste capture system in both acute hospital sites with pilot's introduced in both Ayr and Crosshouse hospitals. Full business cases are being worked through the help develop the technology to be taken forward, though capital will be required to make these savings, and these will come from differing budgets out with theatre budget, so wider savings discussions are needed here.
 - CD forum – asking clinical departments if they have an environmental sustainability strategy in place. Most of the Royal colleges have a national guidance on this, each department should be developing these strategies locally and carrying out projects to reduce the department's environmental footprint.
- *What else are we doing in 2024/25 to make care more sustainable?*
 - We continue to review how we communicate with patients and explore digital solutions to reduce our reliance on paper and postage.
 - Transition to rechargeable hearing aids for patients across Ayrshire.
 - Continue promoting Near Me consultations to reduce travel and improve accessibility.
 - Collaborate with the Board's appointed external financial support resource (e.g., Viridian) on improvement plans that align with realistic medicine principles, ensuring future care models focus on cost savings and financial sustainability.
 - Optimise blood testing and test requests in labs and CDFs by reducing unnecessary tests and preventing repeat requests. This includes reviewing historical test results, developing systems to track test activity, and implementing digital automation—similar to the successful urology department innovation for automated patient notifications.
 - Expand green teams in clinical areas (endoscopy, renal, labs) to share best practices and link with national groups feeding into the Green Theatre Programme. Leads have been established in key hospitals to drive sustainable initiatives.
 - CDU process improvements, including discussions on pre-washing instruments to enhance throughput.
 - Reduce single-use plastics, such as eliminating bottled water purchases and introducing in-house filtered water solutions.

7. 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.

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

- *What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce the need to travel?*
 - The continued use of Microsoft Teams and Office 365 supports remote working and reduces the need for travel to meetings. Expanding the availability of dedicated Distributed Working Zones across the estate will further minimise travel distances by enabling staff to work closer to home, helping to cut emissions and lower costs
- *What did we do in 2024/25 to improve active travel?*
 - A new Active Travel and Sustainable Transport Subgroup of the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group (CESOG) was established in May 2024. Chaired by Public Health and vice-chaired by ISS, the subgroup brings together partners including NHS Assure, SPT, and local authorities to provide governance and oversight for initiatives that promote active and sustainable travel.
 - The NHS Ayrshire & Arran Sustainable Travel Action Plan, approved by CESOG in March 2025, prioritises actions around governance, monitoring, and reporting; reducing the need to travel; enabling active travel; promoting public, community, and shared transport; and reducing single-occupancy car use.
 - We have also maintained and promoted Cycle Friendly Employer (CFE) Awards for our largest sites and secured a new CFE award for the Three Towns Resource Centre in 2024.

Site	Award	Date
University Hospital Crosshouse	CFE Award	June 24 – June 27
University Hospital Ayr/Ailsa	CFE Award	June 24 – June 27
Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH)	CFE Plus Award	March 24 - March 27
Three Towns Resource Centre	CFE Award	July 24 – July27

Figure 1 - Cycle Friendly Employer Awards (CFE)

Additional sites are now being considered for Cycle Friendly Employer (CFE) Awards, including East Ayrshire Community Hospital, Biggart, North Ayr, and Girvan—all of which already have some cycling infrastructure in place. A short staff survey was conducted across six larger community sites in late 2024 to identify further locations with requirements or interest in cycling facilities. As a result, Brooksby is now under consideration and another site with active cyclists but no facilities is awaiting feedback on potential space for improvements.

We also continue to monitor and promote the Cycle to Work (CTW) scheme, with Figure 2 below illustrating the number of applications since 2022.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of applications</i>
2022 - 2023	71
2023 - 2024	81
2024 - 2025	71

Figure 2 – number of applications to CTW scheme

In late 2024, NHS Ayrshire & Arran commissioned Stantec as specialist consultants to complete a Parking and Transport Study at Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH). This work is informing ongoing discussions and plans to secure funding for increased parking capacity following land sales, improve traffic flow and safety, and promote behaviour change initiatives to reduce travel demand on peak days.

We have also secured funding and support from Ayrshire Roads Alliance for an Active and Sustainable Travel Intern to work across East and South Ayrshire, fostering collaboration with partners such as the North Ayrshire Council Travel Smart Officer and Stagecoach. The Graduate Intern, employed via Bright Green Business and holding an Honorary NHS A&A contract, began on 27/01/25 and was initially appointed until 25/07/25, later extended to 31/10/25. The intern contributed to a Sustainability Webinar Series arranged by South Ayrshire Community Planning partners, providing input on active travel.

Partnership working has continued with organisations including North Ayrshire Council's Travel Smart Officer, Love to Ride, Paths for All, Stagecoach, and Intelligent Health to deliver campaigns and activities that engage staff. These include local bike maintenance sessions, Bikeability cycle instructor courses, Bike Week, Cycle September, Cycle to Work Day, the Ayrshire Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Festival, Beat the Street, World Environment Day, Walking Workplaces, and Stagecoach travel discounts for NHS staff.

The Travel Smart Officer attended weekly staff engagement sessions at Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH) and Corporate Induction sessions, providing personalised travel planning, maps, and information on the Cycle to Work (CTW) scheme and available facilities. After an initial induction period, the Active Travel Intern also began delivering Corporate Induction sessions, sharing delivery on a fortnightly basis with the Travel Smart Officer.

<i>North Ayrshire – Travel Smart Activities Quarter 1 2024</i>	<i>Number completed or engaged with</i>
<i>Personalised Travel Plans</i>	9
<i>Info stall/inductions</i>	269
<i>Nordic Walk</i>	14
<i>Security Bike Marking</i>	4

Figure 3 – examples of staff activities/engagements

In December 2024, NHS Ayrshire & Arran launched a new VIVA Engage Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling page, which currently has 86 members. The page is used to promote activities, share updates, and encourage networking among staff.

As part of the Walking Workplaces programme with Paths for All, a staff survey was completed and supported by an information stall at University Hospital Ayr (n=246). An action plan has since been developed to address feedback. The NHS Ayrshire & Arran Staff Wellbeing Lead also partnered with Paths for All to deliver the Better Points Reward Programme (Feb–March 2025), encouraging staff to walk and earn points redeemable for vouchers or charity donations via the app.

Multi-mode travel initiatives promote active travel by combining walking, wheeling, or cycling with public transport. NHS discounts offering staff 10% off Stagecoach tickets have been promoted alongside the Under-22s concessionary travel scheme. Stagecoach supported this by hosting information stalls across seven sites in January/February 2025, encouraging staff to sign up for discounts and consider alternatives to car travel.

A bike amnesty at Ayrshire Central Hospital helped return unused bikes to circulation for those who need them most. Four bikes and numerous accessories were collected on the day, with two additional bikes pledged by staff following discussions. Staff were also signposted to sources for second-hand bikes, recognising that travel costs can be a barrier for many.



We have continued to influence active travel and transport policies and action plans, as well as new local developments, by responding to consultations to ensure spaces and places are designed to support active travel. Our responses also emphasise the importance of connecting to public transport networks to enable multi-modal journeys. In addition, we have participated in Community Advisory Groups in South Ayrshire to help shape active travel routes and worked closely with local authority planning colleagues on Local Development Planning to create environments that optimise health and wellbeing.

Examples of recent contributions include:

- Commenting on the SPT Rural Transport Appraisal and Action Plan – July 2024.
- Responding to the SPT Regional Active Travel Consultation – August 2024.
- Providing input to the Scottish Government consultation on The Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) – May 2024.
- Promoting and supporting the North Ayrshire Community Transport Consultation (Feb–June 2024), including participation in an interview with SWECO.

- Attending Community Advisory Groups in South Ayrshire focused on active travel routes and activities.
 - Commenting on the concept design for the Kilmarnock Infinity Loop, an active travel route.
 - We have provided feedback on plans for the Ayrshire Engineering Park and Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor Project, which will be located opposite University Hospital Crosshouse. Our input focused on ensuring the development supports active travel, sustainable transport connections, and health-promoting design principles.
- *What did we do in 2024/25 to improve public and community transport links to NHS sites and services?*
 - In addition to the examples noted above, Public Health is supporting a one-year community bus pilot in rural South Carrick. This initiative, delivered in partnership with South Ayrshire Community Transport, aims to provide and evaluate additional bus services during times when no public transport is available. The service includes links to local GP practices, a Sunday bus service, and evening routes connecting to after-school clubs and youth activities.
 - Twenty NHS staff from the Community Mental Health Team have completed Walk Leader Training, delivered by The Trinity Active Travel Hub, to promote walking as part of active travel and wellbeing.
 - As part of Poverty Week, the My Bus service was promoted, recognising that transport is often a barrier to living healthy and active lives.
 - *What are we going to do in 2025/26 to reduce the need to travel?*

We will continue current activities and, as a Subgroup, work collaboratively with colleagues to deliver actions outlined in the Board's Sustainable Travel Action Plan, including:

- Support greater uptake of remote consultation tools such as Near Me within specific clinical services.
- Explore options for coordinating multiple appointments to reduce unnecessary travel for patients.
- Work with the Digital Team to promote availability and provide training on facilities for hybrid meetings and distributed working.
- Promote the revised Active and Sustainable Travel booklet for NHS Ayrshire & Arran staff during Corporate Induction. This resource highlights the sustainable travel hierarchy and encourages working from home, use of distributed working zones, and active and sustainable travel options.

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

We will continue current activities and, as a Subgroup, collaborate with colleagues to deliver actions outlined in the Board's Sustainable Travel Action Plan, including:

- Explore the feasibility of a pilot programme for e-bikes and e-cargo bikes for staff delivering community services, drawing on successful examples from elsewhere in NHS Scotland.
- Assess the support required by primary care to promote active travel among staff, patients, and visitors.

These activities are closely aligned with the Staff Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Framework, which will be implemented.

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

Established subgroups will continue collaborating with colleagues to progress actions within the Board's Sustainable Travel Action Plan, including:

- Identifying opportunities to expand community-led and demand-responsive transport to healthcare sites (e.g., through pilot projects in rural areas or for specific services).
- Exploring incentives to encourage staff, patients, and visitors to use public transport (e.g., discounted food on selected days with proof of a valid ticket).
- Ensuring patients have easy access to comprehensive information on transport options and travel reimbursement entitlements, including community transport services.

Fleet and Business Travel

Greenhouse gas emissions, tCO2e (includes scope 3 WTT)	2023/24	2024/25	Percentage change
Fleet emissions	846	730	-14%
Business Travel			
Grey and lease vehicles	1026	944	-8%
Staff Travel (taxi, buses, planes, trains, ferry's, hotel stays)	243	161	-34%
Patient Travel (stagecoach, ambulances, taxis)	19*	101	-

***Initial data – 2024/25 data improvements required to capture more patient transport sources**

We remain committed to transitioning our Fleet to zero-emission vehicles by removing all petrol and diesel-powered vehicles. As evidence of this commitment a full review of transport operations and fleet began in Q4 2024–2025, with the following actions underway:

- **Transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs):** Pool cars with combustion engines have been replaced with EVs, and focus has shifted to medium commercial vehicles. We are working toward the 2025 goal of converting all small and medium fleet vehicles to EVs.
- **Commercial Leasing Review:** Exploring bulk deals and vehicle leasing options to optimise costs and support the transition from fossil fuel to electric vehicles.
- **Telematics Data Analysis:** Increased used of data from telematics to assess vehicle usage, right-size the fleet, and reduce overall vehicle numbers.
- **Route Optimisation:** Implementing planning tools to reduce mileage and fuel consumption.
- **Delivery Scheduling:** Adjusting delivery times to avoid congestion and minimise delays.
- **Idle Time Reduction:** Monitoring and reducing unnecessary vehicle idling through telematics to save fuel and reduce wear.
- **Driver Training & Monitoring:** Improving fuel efficiency through targeted training for identified staff.

This work will continue into 2025–2026, alongside development of a comprehensive transport strategy covering fleet and business vehicle use. To support the EV transition, installation of charging points across all sites is ongoing, utilising available capital funding.

The following table sets out how many renewable powered and fossil fuel vehicles were in NHS Ayrshire and Arran fleet at the end of March 2024 and March 2025:

	March 2024		March 2025		
	Total vehicles	% Zero tailpipe emissions vehicles	Total vehicles	% Zero tailpipe emissions vehicles	Difference in % zero tailpipe emissions vehicles
Cars	248	54%	251	84%	30%
Light commercial vehicles	107	7%	118	9%	2%
Heavy vehicles	2	0%	2	0%	0%
Specialist vehicles	8	0%	8	0%	0%

There were no bicycles or e-Bikes in NHS Ayrshire and Arran's fleet between the end of March 2024 and March 2025:

The following table sets out the distance travelled by our cars, vans and heavy vehicles in 2024/25

Distance travelled, kms	Cars	Light commercial vehicles	Heavy vehicles	Specialist vehicles	Total
2023/24	2,177,206	1,238,277	290,849	42,730	3,749,062
2024/25	2,483,861	1,640,336	41,399	55,605	4,221,201
Percentage change	+12%	+25%	-85%	+23%	+11%

Business travel is staff travelling as part of their work in either their own vehicles or public transport. It covers travel costs which are reimbursable and doesn't cover commuting to and from work. The table below shows our emissions from business travel by transport including scope 3 emissions WTT

Business travel emissions, tCO2e	Cars	Public transport	Flights	Hotel Stays	Total
2021/22	1,417	7	5	1	1,433
2022/23	1,273	15	30	4	1,322
2023/24	1,198	29	97	8	1,332
2024/25	1,196	32	28	7	1,263
Percentage change	-16%	+78%	+28%	+85%	-12%

To support the transition to a fully electric fleet, work on the installation of EV charging points across all our sites continued. At the end of 2024-2025, the following infrastructure had been installed across NHS Ayrshire and Arran sites.

Health Board	Site Name	3.6kW	7kW	22kW	50kW	Total
NHS A&A	University Hospital Ayr (UHA)				1	1
NHS A&A	University Hospital Crosshouse (UHC)		2	1		3
NHS A&A	Ailsa Hospital		7		5	12
NHS A&A	Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH)		3		3	6
NHS A&A	Biggart Hospital					0
NHS A&A	Arran War Memorial			2		2
NHS A&A	Girvan Hospital		2		2	4
NHS A&A	East Ayrshire Community Hospital (EACH)					0
NHS A&A	Cumnock Tanyard Surgery					0
NHS A&A	Patna Resource Centre			2		2
NHS A&A	Newmilns GP			1		1
NHS A&A	Three Towns Resource Centre			3		3
NHS A&A	Brooksby Medical Centre			2		2
NHS A&A	Ardrossan Health Centre			1		1
NHS A&A	Kilbrinie Health Centre			2		2
NHS A&A	Lady Margaret Hospital, Millport			1		1
NHS A&A	Arrol Park Resource Centre				1	1
NHS A&A	North Ayr Health Centre			3		3

During 2025-2026, further installations are planned to better enhance the charging infrastructure across NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The focus will be on smaller sites to support community nursing teams, increasing commercial charging capacity to support the transition to an EV commercial fleet, and the installation of disability

friendly charging where feasible. Work is planned to extend the charging infrastructure to allow public charging across all NHS Ayrshire and Arran sites. This will be progressed as part of the procurement of a new supplier for back-office software in light of Charge Place Scotland's withdrawal from NHS provision.

8. Greenspace and biodiversity

Biodiversity

Biodiversity, or the wide variety of living organisms within an environment, has declined at a rapid rate in the past 50 years. Evidence demonstrates that these trends are attributed to human activities, such as land use change, habitat degradation and 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 ([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?*

In May 2024, a new Subgroup of the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group (CESOG) was established to provide governance and oversight for initiatives aimed at improving NHS greenspaces and biodiversity, in line with the Board's Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy. The group is co-chaired by ISS and Public Health and brings together key partners, including local authority colleagues and third-sector organisations such as The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).

NHS Ayrshire & Arran secured endowment funding, while TCV obtained support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, enabling the continuation and expansion of conservation work at University Hospital Ayr, Ailsa, and Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH). This includes a dedicated full-time staff member who leads weekly volunteer sessions on-site through the Green Gym initiative. Activities range from species identification and recording, tree and plug planting, seed sowing, and creating habitats for wildlife, to citizen science projects. Health walks have also been delivered, allowing participants to enjoy natural spaces while learning about biodiversity and contributing to environmental monitoring.

TCV has also delivered four closed-group programmes (each an eight-week block) with patients in a community mental health facility, long-term care wards, and a community rehabilitation facility. These sessions focused on practical and educational activities, including:

- Pollinators – learning about pollinator species, planting flowers to support them, and creating four mini bug hotels.
- Regrowing Food – exploring food waste reduction and composting techniques.
- Horticulture – correct planting methods and seed sowing using different techniques.
- Bird Identification – engaging activities such as bird bingo and memory games.
- Nature Journaling – developing observation skills and mindfulness in nature.
- Sensory Exploration – discovering shapes, textures, smells, and colours in natural environments.
- Additionally, 12 shrubs and 15 plants (including lamb's ear, strawberries, and daffodils) that required rehoming were successfully transplanted.





Photos courtesy of TCV

- What actions have been taken to contribute to the NHSScotland Estate Mapping programme, or to develop an internal mapping programme?
NHS Ayrshire & Arran has successfully developed GIS mapping for greenspace as part of a pilot project and is now progressing work on GIS mapping for biodiversity. This initiative uses ArcGIS technology to provide a visual and data-driven approach to managing and enhancing natural assets across our estate.
arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=735cf471ba634755b45d720d548acd5c&extent=-6.233,55.2075,-1.1626,56.5932
- *What actions have been taken to mainstream biodiversity across the organisation?*
NHS Ayrshire & Arran has signed a Partnership Agreement with the Nectar Network, which provides guidance and support on actions to enhance biodiversity across our sites. Key activities include:
 - Identifying pilot areas at Ailsa and Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH) to increase biodiversity through wildflower and yellow rattle planting, with seeds donated by South Ayrshire Council and the Nectar Network. This work was delivered by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and their weekly Green Gym volunteers.
 - Planning a mosaic meadow at ACH to reduce grass cutting, introduce fruit trees, and create mown paths for staff, promoting both biodiversity and wellbeing.



- Project planning began in 2024 to develop a therapeutic garden space at Kyle Chemotherapy Unit within Ailsa Hospital campus, enhancing the environment for patients undergoing cancer treatment. Since April 2023, NHS Ayrshire & Arran has embedded community benefits into procurement contracts, and discussions commenced with Hewlett Packard Inc. regarding funding support. Expertise from Re-Pollinate, a conservation charity, was engaged to transform an underutilised garden area into a vibrant space that promotes biodiversity, creates habitats for pollinators, and offers green areas for patients, staff, and relatives. The project also supports skills development for individuals on community payback orders.
- A proposal was presented to the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Operational Group (CESOG) in October 2024 and received approval. Work began in January 2025 and was completed in summer 2025. South Ayrshire Council Community Justice unpaid workers contributed labour to assist Re-Pollinate in constructing gabion raised beds and laying paths. Additionally, four bespoke metalwork panels, reflecting wildlife themes and garden colours, were co-designed by patients from Kyle Unit and produced with support from Impact Arts.
- *How have nature-based solutions been utilised to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies?*
NHS Ayrshire & Arran actively contributes to national consultations, including the Scottish Government's Flood Resilience Strategy consultation, which was submitted in July 2024.

- *What actions have been undertaken to raise awareness, engagement and understanding of biodiversity and nature?*

Public Health and I&SS staff actively participate in Local Authority Climate Change and Sustainability groups and subgroups in both South Ayrshire and North Ayrshire. They also attend the North Ayrshire Biodiversity Partnership, contributing to biodiversity action plans, sharing expertise, and networking with subject matter specialists.

In addition, Public Health staff are members of the Public Health Green Health Learning Network, connecting with colleagues across Scotland to exchange knowledge and best practices on green health and biodiversity.

North Ayrshire Green Health Partnership (NAGHP), chaired by NHS A&A - although no longer a funded programme, a Green Health Framework, written by greenspace Scotland was endorsed by the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership in 2024 showing commitment to the ongoing priorities around Green Health Activity in North Ayrshire.

South Ayrshire Green Health and Active Living group sits within South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Population Health workstream and meets bimonthly, with a range of third sector and local authority involvement. NHS Ayrshire and Arran co-chair the subgroup with South Ayrshire Council. Partners have been involved in a number of events which are promoted across NHS channels such as Earth Hour Day (March 2025) which launched South Ayrshire Blue Health Calendar www.bluehealthsa.org.uk - this complements the existing South Ayrshire Green Health Calendar www.greenhealthsa.org.uk NHS Ayrshire and Arran host information about green health on their website www.nhsaaa.net/services/services-a-z/better-health/green-health/ and also have an app which promotes Green Health activities taking place across South Ayrshire (content supplied by the South Ayrshire Green Health and Active Living group). Partnership working with Ayrshire College has taken place, with delivery of green health focused workshops with social studies students from a range of partners. NHS A&A provided input around green health prescribing. A Sustainability webinar series was arranged by South Ayrshire Community Planning partners and NHS A&A provided input around green health.

A press release was written, and photos shared with local press to promote and engage people in activity on site at ACH and UHA and Ailsa. This can be viewed on the NHS A&A website.

<https://www.nhsaaa.net/green-health-activities-available-in-north-and-south-ayrshire/>.

The Conservation Volunteers delivered information stalls at University Hospital Ayr and ACH Oct – Nov 2024, presented at the Green Health and Active Living subgroup to increase awareness of the activities they deliver on a weekly basis on site and offered Community Link Workers the opportunity to visit the site and learn about the activities people could be referred to supporting overall health and wellbeing.

Signage was installed at pilot areas in Ayrshire Central Hospital (ACH) and Ailsa to educate visitors about biodiversity, including messages such as “Bees leave us alone.” These areas were sown with yellow rattle seeds by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to reduce grass dominance and encourage wildflower growth.

The NHS Ayrshire & Arran Staff Wellbeing Lead coordinated World Wellbeing Day activities, which included a visit from the North Ayrshire Council Seed Library to ACH.

During Green Health Week (11–18 May 2024), a comprehensive communications plan was implemented to promote green health across multiple channels, including partner networks, apps, social media platforms, and hospital radio.

A wide range of resources, including the “5 Ways to Wellbeing” poster, were shared to encourage participation in green health activities. These were promoted through networks and apps such as Diabetes MCN, Respiratory MCN, Healthy Weight App, and Pharmacy.

GREEN HEALTH IN AYRSHIRE

What is Green Health and why consider it?

Green Health means improving your health & wellbeing through nature based activities like walking, cycling, outdoor play, environmental conservation, or growing food. There are lots of opportunities in Ayrshire.



5 Ways to Wellbeing



Connect

With nature & other people as an individual or part of a group



Be Active

Join a health walk, community growing or conservation project



Keep Learning

About wildlife, horticulture, greenspaces



Give Back

Put up a bird feeder, grow organic, plant some wildflowers, volunteer outdoors or leave the car behind



Take Notice

Walk, cycle or wheel and take notice of the different seasonal changes to our landscapes



Where do I find out more information on Green Health?

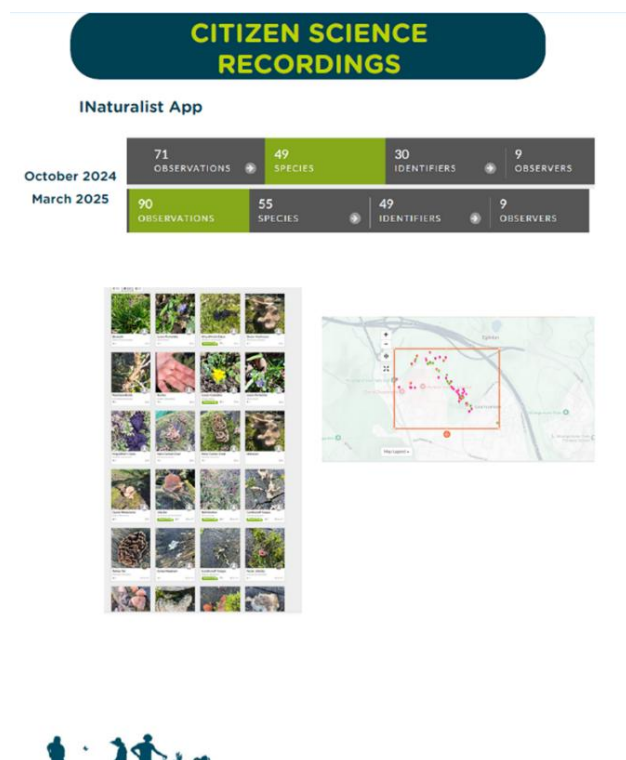
North Ayrshire - visit www.nagreenhealth.org.uk or scan the QR Code

South Ayrshire - download the NHS Ayrshire & Arran app and click on the + sign to add 'Green health'

East Ayrshire - visit www.eastayrshireleisure.com/countryside-outdoor

- *What surveys, monitoring or assessment of biodiversity have been undertaken? If you have – have systems been developed to continue monitoring long-term?*

The TCV Report which includes info such as:



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.

The table below outlines any key greenspace projects and their benefits.

Project name/ location	Benefits of project	Details of project
<i>Greenspace for Health Ayrshire Central Hospital</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing Biodiversity</i>	<i>Led by The Conservation Volunteers this project delivered x2 weekly health walks, x1 weekly Green Gym and x2 8 week closed groups for patients. Volunteers participating in a wide range of activities – see end of year report for full details</i>
<i>Greenspace for Health Ailsa Hospital</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing Biodiversity</i>	<i>Led by The Conservation Volunteers this project delivered x2 weekly health walks, x1 weekly Green Gym and x2 8 week closed groups for patients. Volunteers participating in a wide range of activities – see end of year report for full details</i>
<i>Grassland Management</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing Biodiversity</i>	<i>A Partnership agreement was signed with NHS A&A and the Ayrshire Nectar network which supported x2 small pilot projects sowing wildflower or yellow rattle to increase biodiversity within specific areas of the sites at ACH and Ailsa and plans for a new grassland management area at ACH with proposed introduction of fruit trees. These would be delivered with the input from TCV volunteers and support from other partners such as NAC Biodiversity Officer.</i>
<i>Kyle Garden</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing Biodiversity</i>	<i>Project planning began to develop an underutilised garden space within Kyle Chemotherapy ward with funding from Hewlett Packard Inc. community benefits and designs by RePollinate, a conservation charity which aims to create networks of high-quality pollinator habitats through delivery of new community gardens spaces. The project was given the go ahead late 2024 and has been successfully delivered.</i>
	<i>Community Wealth Building Health and Wellbeing Biodiversity</i>	Two new community gardens provided - NHS Ayrshire & Arran

9. Sustainable procurement, circular economy and waste

The greenhouse gases produced in creating the goods and materials used by NHS Ayrshire & Arran are estimated to be 303,028 tonnes of CO2 equivalent every year.

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?*

The 2014 Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act introduced the Sustainable Procurement Duty, which requires public bodies to consider how their procurement activities can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their communities, and act to secure those improvements. All contracts are required to comply with the Boards Standing Financial Instructions and Procurement Operating Procedures and increase use of both sustainability related quality questions within Quick Quote and Tenders where there is a requirement to evaluate on both Cost and Quality ensures the consideration of whole-life value rather than price alone. Embedding sustainability criteria in the evaluation process encourages bidders to demonstrate how they will deliver community benefits, reduce environmental impact, support fair work practices, and contribute to local economic resilience. This approach helps ensure that procurement decisions are transparent, legally compliant, and aligned with the organisation's wider strategic objectives in relation to sustainability and social value.

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

We have developed a Climate Change and Sustainability Impact Assessment to evaluate the environmental implications of capital investments. This tool enables the Board to determine whether projects have a positive or negative impact and to identify mitigation measures where necessary.

Operational improvements implemented over the reporting period include the rationalisation of Lyreco deliveries from five days to three days per week. This change has been achieved without detriment to service levels and has resulted in a measurable reduction in transport mileage and associated emissions, contributing directly to the organisation's carbon reduction targets. In addition to these logistical efficiencies, work is progressing on the development of detailed business cases for the introduction of reusable theatre hats and rechargeable hearing aids. Both initiatives are intended to significantly reduce single-use consumables and associated waste, thereby lowering the organisation's environmental footprint. These proposals also aim to deliver longer-term financial efficiencies through decreased procurement of disposable alternatives. Collectively, these operational initiatives demonstrate a proactive approach to embedding sustainability within day-to-day service delivery, aligning practical improvements with broader organisational commitments to waste reduction, resource efficiency and climate responsibility.

In addition, the Procurement Team support the delivery of Community Benefits through contracts. This approach is underpinned by the NHSScotland Community Benefits Gateway (CBG) a free and easy to use online service that connects NHS Scotland suppliers with third sector community organisations within Scotland who are looking for assistance with community initiatives. Registered charities can submit a community need to the CBG and NHS Scotland will encourage suppliers to bid against the need and support its delivery. There were 7 community benefits delivered in Ayrshire & Arran between 01 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

- *What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce the amount of waste we produce*

Our overarching goal is to minimise waste generation and maximise recycling across all operations.

The table below sets out information on the waste the Board produces and its destination for the last four years:

Type	2022/23 (tonnes)	2023/24 (tonnes)	2024/25 (tonnes)	Percentage change – 2022/23 to 2024/25*
Waste to landfill	0	0	0	0
Waste to incineration	1411	2280	1138	-20%

Recycled waste	405	857	401	-%
Food waste	49	29	19	-61%
Clinical waste	1466	1389	1458	0

*21/22- incomplete data capture . figures calculated using 22/23 as baseline

We have set targets to reduce the amount of waste we produce, and the tables below provide information on our performance against those targets:

Reduce domestic waste by a minimum of 15%, and greater where possible compared to 2012/2013 – by 2025	
Target – reduce domestic waste by (1347 tonnes baseline - 15% = 202 tonnes)	202 (tonnes)
Performance – domestic waste reduced by	209 (tonnes)
Outcome	ACHIEVED
Further reduction required	0 (tonnes)
Ensure that no more than 5%, and less where possible, of all domestic waste is sent to landfill – by 2025	
Target – reduce waste sent to landfill by	1,358 (tonnes)
Performance – waste sent to landfill reduced by	1,358 (tonnes)
Outcome	ACHIEVED
Further reduction required	0 (tonnes)
Reduce the food waste produced by 33% compared to 2015/16 – by 2025	
Target – reduce food waste by (2015 – 80 tonnes)	Reduce to 53 (tonnes)
Performance – food waste reduced by	60 (tonnes)
Outcome	ACHIEVED
Further reduction required	none

Ensure that 70% of all domestic waste is recycled or composted – by 2025	
Target – recycle or compost (1559 tonnes * 75% =	1169 (tonnes) 75%
Performance – recycled or composted	420 (tonnes) 27%
Outcome	NOT ACHIEVED YET
Further increase required	749 (tonnes)

- *What did we do in 2024/25 to reduce our waste?*

Wards, departments and sites continued to receive Pre Assessment Audits, on their waste production. These were used to show compliance and raise awareness on where waste segregation guidance wasn't followed, with actions highlighted to make the processes compliant.

- *What are we doing in 2025/26 to reduce our waste?*

NHS Ayrshire and Arran recruited a dedicated Waste Management Officer, to drive waste compliance, and waste reduction initiatives across the full estate. Mini competition for general waste recycles under National Procurement Framework which will help support an increase in the amount of waste which is recycled rather than going to landfill. It is planned that the new Waste manager will use the information available from implement initiatives which

10. 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?*

We undertook a review of our legal register and impacts and aspects register for EMS which highlighted 76 pieces of legislation which were directly applicable to the board.

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

A review of EMS activity across NHSScotland will be completed to capture best practice and inform future improvement and prioritised investment. As part of our organisational commitment, we will consider the development of a business case that outlines the scope, justification and investment needed to implement an Environmental Management System across the estate.

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

We saw a drastic reduction in the burning of fossil fuels by 18% and our total energy generation from renewables increased to 35% which is the highest in Scotland. We managed to reduce our fossil fuel consumption for our fleet vehicles by 14% which made savings and increased our pool car fleet to electric vehicles to 85%. We installed 25 new EV charging stations which will go live next year and ran in 4 new power supplies for key areas. We introduced paper cups into the wards helping to reduce the use of single use plastic medicine cups, and all wards have now stopped using single use plastic cups for tea and coffee which are served to patients 6 times a day.

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

We have secured funding of £1.1million from government to take forward a variety of projects. We are continuing our EV infrastructure upgrades across all our sites, carrying our LED lighting project at Arran Hospital and we are taking forward decarbonisation planning at our campus site at Ayrshire Central Hospital and Ayr Hospital, allowing us to create a pathway of projects to be undertaken to achieve net zero / carbon balancing at these locations.

- *What factors have prevented implementation of EMS to ISO14001 Standard for any sites in the estate which have not yet reached that standard?*

Progress toward full implementation of an ISO 14001–aligned Environmental Management System (EMS) across the estate continues to be scoped. Key areas of focus and considered mitigation are summarised below.

- **Estate Condition and Infrastructure** - A number of sites operate within ageing or complex buildings where legacy systems limit the ability to introduce the environmental controls, monitoring arrangements and data capture required for ISO 14001.
Mitigation - Integrating EMS within forward maintenance programmes when available. Prioritising installation of essential metering and pollution-prevention measures during planned lifecycle or refurbishment works.
- **Resource and Capacity Pressures** - Operational demands and staff capacity at site level available for developing EMS documentation, maintaining evidence, and fully embedding new processes continues to be reviewed
Mitigation - Introducing a centralised EMS support function to streamline documentation and provide direct assistance to sites, developing simplified templates, checklists and guidance to reduce local administrative burden and aligning EMS activities with existing operational meetings and reporting structures to ensure routine integration.
- **Environmental Performance Data** - Incomplete data prevents the development of robust aspects and impacts registers required for ISO 14001.
Mitigation - Rolling out standardised data-collection processes and centralised reporting tools, working with suppliers and utilities to improve availability and accuracy of consumption data and consider and prioritise additional metering where gaps persist.

11. Sustainable construction

Where there is a need for new healthcare facilities, we want both the buildings and grounds to be safe, nature-rich, sustainable, resilient and accessible.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran has progressed the following capital development projects supported by the Capital Investment Plan, including:

- Foxgrove – National Secure Adolescent Inpatient Services – New Build
- Stewarton Medical Centre - Extension
- Critical Care Redesign – ICU at University Hospital Crosshouse - Review
- Distributed Working Hub – Lister Street, University Hospital Crosshouse - Refurbishment

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

We created a Climate Impact and Sustainability Assessment tool to determine who every pound is spend is going to have either a negative or a positive impact on our climate change goals. This assessment will be formed over two stages and continually develop with projects as they get more advanced. Stage 1 allows for the initial impacts to be assessed, and show wither the project / spend will impact positively or negatively and start to address mitigation requirements if there is a negative impact. The assessment will be developed next year with the wider PSO personnel to develop the assessment and create an agreed format. All board reports should have a brief project section with the high-level assessment outcomes noted for the board to review.

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

NHS Ayrshire & Arran is planning an upgrade of Oncology services at University Hospital Crosshouse. The project will incorporate sustainability measures, including improved building insulation to reduce HVAC plant sizing, upgrades to windows, doors, and lighting, and the installation of water treatment systems at source. These systems will use UV and sonic technology at ward level to break down pharmaceuticals before they enter the wastewater stream, reducing environmental impact.

12. Sustainable communities

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

The NHS touches every community in Scotland. We have a responsibility to use our abilities as a large employer, a major buyer, and one of the most recognised brands in the world – an ‘anchor’ organisation – to protect and support our communities’ health in every way that we can.

- *What are we doing to act as an anchor institution for our local community / communities?*

We have a community wealth building group which oversees all the actions in this area of work and we have produced our boards report for community wealth building <https://www.nhsaaa.net/about-us/community-wealth-building/climate-change/>

Climate change forms one of the pillars of this work, and sustainability spans across all pillars of community wealth building.

Our current actions are:

- Communications and Engagement – promotion of events such as earth hour
- Active Travel – working in partnership with local transport providers, TVC volunteers, Dr Bike sessions, green health opportunities, cycle to work schemes, staff step challenges, sustainable transport strategy work
- Electrification of our Fleet – providing local business support in the creation of our EV infrastructure. Opening up our charging facilities to create an Ayrshire wide charging points for our staff, customers, and public.
- Greening the estate – where we work with volunteer groups to encourage green gym activities, green health partnership working, greenspace and biodiversity partnerships with local communities’ businesses and other public sector bodies.
- Biodiversity – we work in partnership with our local communities and councils on biodiversity planning and strategies feeding into the local development planning process. Creation of guidance for communities and partners on biodiversity and how we can manage our greenspace effectively.
- Local Development planning and Place Based partnership working – working on an Ayrshire wide energy master plan to help decarbonise the area working together with the community and local partners. We work with local climate change and sustainability groups to feed into all three local councils Delivery planning work. We also feed into the Ayrshire Clean Growth Deal work stream. The I&SS and Public Health Directorates regularly

meet with local authority colleagues to review Local Development Plans and provide input from a healthcare service planning and public health perspective.

- Local Heat and Efficiency planning – we are addressing local district heat networks in the Girvan area building up a ESOS to take forward a reclaimed heat project to local council houses, schools, shops, the hospital and local businesses. We also work with local councils on their LHEES delivery plans and tie into local projects. For example, we are working with North Ayrshire council on their delivered solar farm at Nethermain, East Ayrshire council on a potential solar project in Crosshouse along with a data centre district heating project, and South Ayrshire renewable projects around the land at Ayr hospital.
- Ayrshire Clean Growth Workstream – we are involved in the East Ayrshire CORE project funded through this scheme which will enable carbon free community projects, creating and enabling sustainable transport and providing care in the community where we can.
- Energy Efficiency in the homes of patients – this project focuses on our patient groups who have multiple pieces of medical equipment in their homes, where we are linking up funding avenues to make efficiencies and improvement to the person house to reduce their energy bills. This has the impact of us utilising funds to help improve the housing stock across Ayrshire for generations to come, tackling climate actions.

- *What are we doing to improve the resilience of our local community / communities to climate change?*

NHS Ayrshire & Arran is an active member of the Ayrshire Local Resilience Partnership (ALRP), a multi-agency group responsible for coordinating responses to severe weather and other emergencies. The ALRP operates under a Severe Weather Plan, which sets out actions based on the level of warning received and can mobilise volunteer groups when required—for example, the 4x4 vehicle volunteer network. In situations of greatest need, the West of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (WoSRRP) prioritises these services.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, NHS territorial Boards are designated as Category 1 Responders, meaning emergency preparedness and response are core to our operations. The UK Government's National Risk Assessment informs the Community Risk Register, which NHS Ayrshire & Arran contributes to as part of the ALRP. This work addresses a range of climate-related risks, including flooding, heatwaves, storms, high winds, water supply failures, and severe weather warnings issued by the Met Office. SEPA plays a key role in this process, providing daily updates on flooding and drought risks.

The ALRP comprises agencies designated under the CCA as Category 1 and 2 Responders, including Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, SEPA, the Met Office, Scottish Water, and transport operators such as CalMac and Glasgow Prestwick Airport. The impact of climate change is reviewed periodically through the Risk Preparedness Assessment to ensure resilience planning remains robust and responsive.

13. Conclusion

Significant progress has been achieved this year in advancing climate change and sustainability goals. Key highlights include:

- **Fossil fuel use reduced by 18%, saving over 10 million kWh of gas, which contributed to a 7% reduction in building emissions.**
- **Fleet emissions decreased by 14%, with grey and lease fleet emissions down by 8%.**
- **Medical gas emissions fell by 8%, waste-related emissions by 5%, and water consumption by 16%.**
- **Business travel emissions reduced by 6% overall.**

	2024/25 emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage change – 2023/24 to 2024/25
Building energy	18,751	-7.1%
Non-medical F-gas	21	-32%
Medical gases	987	-8%
Metered dose inhaler propellant	5,260	-11%
NHS fleet travel	583	-14%
Waste	427	-5%
Water	80	-16%
Business travel	1,175	-6%
Total emissions	28,241	-7%

Fleet transport emissions continued to decline, with a 14% reduction this year following a 46% drop the previous year—representing a 60% overall decrease. This progress reflects the growing adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) and supporting infrastructure across our sites as part of our fleet decarbonisation strategy. We are on track to transition all car fleet vehicles to electric by December 2025. However, further work is required for medium-sized vehicles under 2.5 tonnes. To support this transition, we invested £1 million this year and have allocated an additional £825,000 for 2025/26.

This year, our circular economy initiatives have driven meaningful change. We began transitioning away from single-use plastic medicine pots, introducing paper alternatives and stainless-steel containers for liquid medicines. Additionally, all single-use plastic coffee and teacups in wards have been replaced with porcelain mugs. These changes reduce waste, eliminate single-use plastics, and deliver added health benefits by avoiding plastic use.

Overall, we achieved a 7% reduction in emissions—well above our 3% annual target. However, we remain behind the overall trajectory to net zero. Last year's stagnation, driven by higher electricity emissions factors and increased service provision to meet growing patient demand, has compounded our carbon reduction challenge. Meeting this target will require significant, sustained investment across all areas of the organisation. This transition will not only deliver environmental benefits but also improve health outcomes and strengthen local economies through a more circular approach to resource use. The Board continues to leverage local, regional, and national funding to advance decarbonisation and emissions reduction initiatives. Despite a challenging financial environment, we are maximising internal resources to deliver on the Board's strategy, annual plans, legislative obligations, and statutory reporting requirements. This includes compliance with NHS Scotland's climate change and sustainability policy and fulfilling public duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Our organisation is driven by an engaged and enthusiastic team committed to creating meaningful change within a safe and collaborative working environment. These efforts are delivering local improvements that align with our strategic goals. Placing people at the heart of decision-making remains central—not only in the care we provide but also in achieving our climate change and sustainability objectives.