

Protecting our Environment

**A Commitment to Sustainable Development
by Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust**

FOREWORD

We are delighted to introduce this new Commitment to Sustainable Development for Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

As a healthcare provider, we aim to be 'good corporate citizens' by delivering care in a sustainable way, minimising our impact on the environment and delivering benefits to the wider community.

This commitment is a statement of the Trust's determination to ensure we minimise our impact on the environment while meeting our pledge to put patients first. The associated Sustainable Development Action Plan sets out in more detail how we will improve our environmental performance by reducing our carbon footprint, while also saving money through energy efficiency, waste reduction and careful use of resources.

Along with our Board colleagues and on behalf of colleagues throughout the Trust we fully endorse this commitment and the associated plan. We aim to support staff, visitors and the wider community to help us deliver sustainable healthcare now and in the future.

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Andrew Liles
Chief Executive

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Aileen Mc Leish
Chairman

Commitment to Sustainable Development

Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is committed to being a sustainable healthcare provider that acts responsibly to minimise our impact on the environment and reduce our carbon footprint in line with national targets and legislative framework.

The Trust's Sustainable Development Steering Group has produced this Commitment to Sustainable Development and associated Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) to meet the Government's key sustainable development priorities, taking into account the changing nature of healthcare delivery and technology in the 21st century.

The Trust is committed to minimising our impact on the environment and reducing our carbon footprint in the following ways:

- Estates, including energy use and water use.
- Waste management and recycling
- Travel and transport, including promoting more sustainable forms of travel such as public transport, walking and cycling
- Procurement, or purchasing goods and services, which includes manufacture, transport and packaging.
- Catering, including using local producers, reducing delivery frequency and distance, reducing use of disposables etc
- Workforce – engaging our staff and embedding sustainability in our organisational values.

We also recognise that reducing our use of energy and other resources will result in financial savings that can be re-invested in delivering high quality healthcare to our patients.

The key ingredient to delivering change is the involvement of our employees, suppliers and other stakeholders, so that we can ensure that we deliver a significant reduction in our carbon footprint over the next three years.

The SDAP will be monitored regularly to ensure that we are meeting our Commitment to Sustainable Development. The Commitment itself will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

The successful implementation of this Commitment requires us to embed sustainability throughout the organisation, giving every employee the opportunity to play their part. It is essential that each of us draws inspiration from this Commitment and our values so that Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust can protect our environment while providing sustainable healthcare into the future.

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Chris Bell,
Associate Director of Estates and Facilities
Chair of the Trust's Sustainable Development Steering Group

Making our commitment a reality

What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is about meeting our needs today without compromising the ability of others to meet their needs in the future. It involves joining up our economic, social and environmental goals.

We know we cannot keep using resources in the way we have in the past, because of the cost and the damage we are doing to our planet. In the interests of ourselves, our children and the wider population, we will need to do things differently in future.

Living more sustainably can save everyone money, whether at work or in our home lives.

Why is sustainable development important for the NHS?

The NHS is the 5th largest employer in the world, with more than 1.7 million staff across the UK. The NHS accounts for 25% of public sector emissions in the UK, so reducing the NHS's carbon footprint will make a big dent in the UK's carbon footprint.

The NHS must set an example as a leading public sector organisation.

The Government's Climate Change Act 2008 is a long term legally binding framework to reduce carbon emissions in the UK and therefore minimize our contribution to climate change. Starting from a 1990 baseline, organisations are required by law to reduce CO₂ emissions by 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050.

The NHS has a separate short-term target of 10% reduction in carbon emissions by 2015 based on a 2007 baseline.

Improving the sustainability of the NHS will achieve health benefits for staff, patients and populations, as a sustainable lifestyle is a healthier lifestyle. Sustainability also saves money through energy efficiency, waste reduction and careful use of resources – money that can be ploughed back into good patient care.

Why is sustainable development important for us?

As a sizeable public sector employer and healthcare provider, Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a large consumer of energy and water and producer of waste and CO₂: Our 2007 baseline carbon footprint is 42,500 tonnes, meaning we must find ways to save 4,250 tonnes of CO₂ in the next three years, so that our footprint must be a maximum of 38,250 tonnes by 2015.

The composition of our footprint is currently:

Energy	34%
Travel and Transport	9%
Waste / Water	0.5%
Procurement	56.5%

As an employer, service provider and procurer of goods and services, the Trust can use its position and buying power to influence partners and suppliers to adopt similar attitudes towards sustainability.

How will we embed sustainable development in our values?

The values embedded throughout the Trust support the development of a sustainable Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

- **Patients first** – we will continue to put patients first through providing a healthy and sustainable environment which is conducive to the highest quality standards with respect to patient safety, experience and outcomes
- **Personal responsibility** – delivering sustainable care while protecting our environment requires total commitment from every employee
- **Passion for excellence** – we will incorporate best practice as recommended by the NHS Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) and other associate bodies and will continue to develop the SDAP with the help of colleagues, stakeholders and partners. We will seek appropriate accreditation for the Trust as a provider of sustainable care.
- **Pride in our team** – the Trust will work with colleagues, suppliers and stakeholders to reduce waste, use of energy and our carbon footprint

How will we put 'protecting our environment' into practice?

The Sustainable Development Steering Group was established by the Trust Board in 2011 to ensure that sustainability is embedded in the fabric of the organisation. Chaired by the Associate Director of Estates and Facilities, the group has overall responsibility for delivery of the Sustainable Development Action Plan and for reduction of our carbon footprint by 10% by 2015. It is also responsible for engaging all staff to support successful delivery of the plan.

The purpose of the SDAP is to ensure that the Trust becomes a leading low carbon sustainable organisation in accordance with:

- Government Strategy
- Climate Change Act (2008)
- Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme
- Audit Commission requirements
- DH Climate Change Plan
- Monitor Regulatory requirements
- HM Treasury Sustainability Reporting requirements
- Advice provided by the NHS Sustainable Development Unit.

We will measure the success of the action plan by measuring and reporting on the reduction of our carbon footprint against the 2007 baseline each year.

How can staff get involved?

We are committed to embedding sustainable development into every aspect of the employee pathway, including job design and descriptions, recruitment, induction, appraisal (objectives and personal development plans), as well as awards and other recognition schemes.

The Sustainable Development Group has set up a sub-group to lead on engaging staff so that sustainable development and 'Protecting our Environment' becomes embedded in the fabric of our organisation. A communications and engagement plan has been developed to support delivery of our Commitment to Sustainable Development and of our SDAP goals. The engagement programme will be underpinned by:

- This Commitment to Sustainable Development
- Using existing staff engagement channels including Team Briefing and the new Sounding Board to inform development of the programme
- Inclusion of sustainability in the staff induction programme from March 2013.
- A programme of activity for Climate Week 2013, a national movement supported by every major political party, the NHS Sustainability Unit and the NHS Confederation
- Engaging staff to develop their own ideas for how they can work more sustainably in their own areas
- Recruiting 'Sustainability Champions' in wards, areas and departments across the Trust who can implement sustainability initiatives at local level.

Want to know more?

For further reading and general information about climate change and health try the following websites:

- [NHS Sustainable Development Unit](#)
- [NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy](#)
- [Climate Week 2013](#)
- [World Health Organisation – Climate Change and Health](#)