

Sustainability Policy

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Version History			
Version	Notes on revisions/modifications and who document was circulated or presented to	Date	Lead Policy Author
Version 1.0	Amalgamation of Trust Policies for the following : Waste Energy Environmental Management	15 th December 2014	Alan Metcalfe
Version 2.0	This Policy was reviewed by the Head of Specialist Estate Services, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development and circulated for consultation to Trust Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.	February 2016	Alan Metcalfe
Version 3.0	Sustainability remit widened Responsibilities expanded	15 th November 2021	Trevor Burns

Version 4.0	Constitution of a Sustainability Committee requirement and terms of reference This Policy was reviewed by the Sustainability Manager in conjunction with the Energy Manager, Head of Estates Development Services, Assistant Director of Estate Services and Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates Amendments made to Policy incorporating most current legislation (NI Climate Act 2022) and the updated 5 year Sustainability and Estates Strategies 2025-30 This Policy was drafted by the Head of Estate Development Services, reviewed by the Assistant Director of Estate Services, Director of Finance Procurement and Estates, and circulated for consultation to Trust Directors.	27th Nov 2025	Andrew Cunningham
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy describes the Southern Health & Social Care Trust (hereafter known as the Trust) approach to the management of sustainability. The principles of this policy apply to the holistic management of the environment across the Trust.

The Trust considers its environmental impact is of significant importance and an integral part of its commitment to ensure the health and wellbeing of the community it serves.

This Sustainability Policy incorporates the Trust responsibilities in respect of Environmental/Waste/Carbon Management, Water Efficiency and Energy Efficiency and Management.

The Trust also acknowledges its statutory obligations under the Climate Act NI 2022 to monitor, report and reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and to prepare mitigation and adaptation measures across all operational activities.

In support of the Policy, the Trusts Sustainability Strategy underpins and drives the Policy. The Trust will endeavour to be as efficient as possible in the use of environmental resources and aim to maximise resources available for high quality healthcare.

The Trust recognises environmental standards are laid down by statutory legislation. It will maintain compliance with this legislation and utilise the Trust's Sustainability Committee for Environmental Management and Waste Management and future standards/ guidance to improve environmental performance and sustainability.

2.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all activities related to Sustainability including;

- Corporate Approach
- Asset Management and Utilities
- Travel and Logistics
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Capital Projects / Estates Development
- Green spaces and Biodiversity
- Sustainable Care Models
- Sustainable Use of Resources
- Carbon/Greenhouse gases (GHG's)

This also includes statutory management of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions across Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 categories in line with the Climate Act NI.

This policy shall apply to all premises and land under the control of the Trust and all employees.

3.0 PURPOSE AND AIMS

3.1 Purpose

To articulate how the Trust will strategically meet its obligations in respect of sustainability.

3.2 Aims

The aims of this policy are set out below:

3.2.1 Corporate Approach

- The Trust aims to educate staff, patients and visitors on what is being done to use resources sustainably and encourage a “Single Planet Living” approach at work and at home.
- Staff will be advised on how they can contribute to the Trust’s overall environmental performance through the development of:
 - E-learning
 - Intranet / Sharepoint information
 - Global e-mails
 - Operational Management Plans
- All staff managers must ensure their staff have access to this Policy, understand its content and are aware of its aims and purpose.
- This policy aims to articulate the Chief Executive and Trust Board commitment to eliminate or minimise risks to the environment arising from management of the Estate.
- Ensure the Trust has in place suitable and robust governance arrangements to support the management of the environment.
- That this Policy, in tandem with the Estates Sustainability Strategy and Estates Strategies (2025-30) will provide the framework within which SHSCT will deliver against its aims and objectives re Sustainability, Trustwide.

3.2.2 Asset Management and Utilities

- Erect Display Energy Certificates (DEC’s) and provide guidance to managers on how the grading of Trust buildings can be improved.
- Develop and use Energy Monitoring Targeting software (EMT) to assist in effectively monitoring energy usage and set targets for improvements.

- Promote the efficient use of energy and where economically viable invest in such technologies to maximise benefit to the Trust.
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions from buildings.
- Reduce water consumption.

3.2.3 Travel and Logistics

- The Trust aims to deliver a Healthy Travel Strategy to reduce the impact of the Trust carbon footprint.
- Promote low carbon transport to reduce environmental impact of Transport fleet.
- Promote use of video/teleconferencing to reduce business mileage.
- Increase the number of electric charging points to develop Trust fleet.

3.2.4 Climate Change Adaptation

- Invest in Climate Change mitigation and adaptation technologies.
- Maximise green spaces to help mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Ensure vulnerable communities are supported during any extreme weather events.

3.2.5 Capital Projects / Estates Development

- Ensure specifications and design of energy efficient buildings are applied to support the sustainable use of energy and reduce carbon emissions such as Sustainable Development Design Brief (SDDB), BREEAM Healthcare, RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA).
- Acknowledge the impact of Trust buildings on the surrounding area by controlling pollution such as emissions to air, land and water.
- Planned development to consider a broader approach to sustainability including transport, service delivery, and stakeholder engagement in line with

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method).

- Develop Sustainability guidelines for work schemes
- Include Whole Life Costing approach to building design

3.2.6 Green Spaces and Biodiversity

- Take positive action to develop, conserve and enhance biodiversity on sites.
- Promote “Natural Capital” for physical and mental health and wellbeing by providing opportunities for staff in initiatives such as gardening projects.

3.2.7 Sustainable Care Models

- Embrace new digital technologies to reduce the environmental impact of care.
- Work with stakeholders to create a healthy environment for patients.

3.2.8 Our People

- Provide a healthy working environment and promote opportunities to enhance personal wellbeing and Corporate Responsibility programmes.
- Deliver programmes to raise Sustainability awareness for staff.
- Raise the Trust’s Sustainability profile.
- Provide opportunities for staff to improve health and wellbeing through work-based activities such as Bicycle User Group.

3.2.9 Sustainable Use of Resources

- Aim to reduce waste arising from construction and operation of its buildings and encourage waste diversion from landfill.
- Categorise waste in accordance with current legislation i.e. clinical, domestic, pharmaceutical etc.

- Manage waste ensuring safe segregation, handling, transport, storage, treatment and/or recycling/disposal and treatment of waste.
- Promote sustainable waste management. Prevent, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover and Dispose.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for recycling/disposal of all waste types which are good value for money and meet current and future changes in legislation.
- Work with suppliers on Sustainability by Greening the Supply Chain.

3.2.10 Carbon / Green House Gases

- The Trust will endeavour to procure its products, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money, but also minimise damage to the environment.
- This includes working in partnership with suppliers and contractors to minimise the environmental and social impacts of the goods and services that we purchase and proactively targeting goods and services that have lower environmental impact.
- Develop and deliver an annual programme of carbon reduction projects.
- Reduce carbon emissions associated with patient travel and supply chain.
- Engage with suppliers on Sustainability and carbon reduction.
- Measurement of Carbon of selected Construction Projects using RICS whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA)

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY STATEMENT

The Trust recognises that our activities and the way we deliver them can have a negative and positive impact upon the environment and therefore impact our employees and local communities.

The Trust recognises its duties to eliminate or minimise risks to the environment arising from its activities and from installation, maintenance and operation of its Estate.

The Trust will comply with statutory obligations under the Climate Act NI 2022, including preparing and submitting Climate Change Mitigation Reports and Climate Change Adaptation reports along with undertaking carbon reporting across all scopes.

The Trust aims to work within available resources to protect the environment and improve healthcare and are committed to;

- Making the best use of scarce resources i.e. energy, water, buildings and supplies
- Improve efficiency and reduce waste.
- Reduce our carbon footprint.
- Protect our environment and prevent pollution caused by what we do.
- Fulfil our compliance obligations with all relevant environmental legislation.
- Continually improve our policies and procedures to improve environmental performance.
- Operating in an energy efficient way to reduce consumption and emissions
- Invest in energy/carbon efficiency projects
- Inform and motivate staff to reduce energy consumption, water consumption and waste generated.
- Promote within available resources compliance with all statutory legislation, guidance and good practice across the Estate including any new build or refurbishment projects.
- Increase staff awareness and encourage adoption of good house-keeping practices by providing information to staff on all sustainability issues.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Trust Board

The overall responsibility for the management of sustainability resides with the Trust Board.

The Trust Board's responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy will be managed through the Chief Executive.

5.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring

- Current Sustainability legislation and other applicable guidance/ instructions as determined by the Department of Health NI are met.
- Appropriate Sustainability policies and arrangements are in place.
- Sufficient resources are allocated to establish and maintain competent Sustainability support and advice.
- Programme of investment in Sustainability initiatives are included in the Trust's Annual Business Plan
- The active promotion of sustainability

5.3 Lead Director for Sustainability

The Chief Executive has appointed the Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates as the Executive Director for Sustainability with responsibility for establishing and maintaining;

- The implementation of the Sustainability Policy
- Sustainability arrangements within the Trust
- Provision of necessary resources to implement policy and sustainability arrangements
- Actively promoting sustainability
- Ensuring the Trust meets climate reporting obligations
- Overseeing statutory mitigation/adaptation reporting

This function will be supported by the Assistant Director of Estates.

5.4 Directors

Directors are required to establish arrangements to ensure sustainability policy and procedures are adhered to within their Directorate

Manage sustainability within their directorates to ensure resources are efficiently and effectively

Actively promote sustainability

Directors must appoint a member of staff to the Sustainability Committee at an appropriate managerial level that will enable them to implement Committee actions and provide updates on actions to the Sustainability Committee.

Directors must ensure climate related information is provided to support carbon reporting obligations.

5.5 Assistant Director of Estates

Is responsible for;

- Supporting the Lead Director for Sustainability, managing and co-ordinating Trust wide initiatives to ensure the Trust meets its legal requirements.
- Chairing the Trust's Sustainability Committee
- Assisting with the implementation of this policy and will report back to the Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates on Sustainability issues addressed.
- Proactively seeking funding and resource to take forward sustainability schemes
- Actively promoting sustainability

5.6 Head of Estate Development Services

Is responsible for ensuring;

- The Sustainability Manager and Energy Manager have sufficient resources/ support to effectively manage sustainability (or escalate to senior management)

- Work schemes under their remit are carried out in accordance with Trust Sustainability procedures
- Providing prioritised sustainability work schemes to Assistant Director of Estates
- Active liaison with Sustainability Manager and Energy Manager on all work schemes under their remit
- The active promotion of sustainability

5.7 Line Managers

Are responsible for;

- Supporting their Director in implementing directorate responsibilities and to establish local sustainability arrangements
- Implementing Trust sustainability procedures
- Provide information, instruction and training to staff under their control in relation to sustainability issues
- Actively promoting sustainability

5.8 Staff

Are responsible for;

- All Trust staff have a responsibility to adhere to the principles and aims of this Policy and ensure that they operate in accordance with its supporting procedural arrangements.
- Use resources efficiently and effectively

5.9 Sustainability Manager

The Sustainability Manager is responsible for;

- Providing specialist advice and guidance to the Lead Director, Assistant Director of Estates, Sustainability Committee and senior management on sustainability objectives for the Trust and develop a Sustainability strategy and associated environmental plan.

- Developing and advising on the implementation of the Trust Sustainability Policy, associated procedures and new legislation.
- Monitoring sustainability issues throughout the Trust and ensuring procedures are adhered to.
- Ensuring that information required in relation to sustainability issues is provided in an accurate and timely manner.
- Ensuring that all legal requirements are identified and communicated to senior management.
- Leading a programme of sustainability initiatives through behaviour change
- Developing and maintaining a prioritised list of sustainability improvement work schemes
- Reporting performance of sustainability in the Trust.
- Promoting sustainability and best practice

5.10 Energy & Carbon Manager

The Energy Manager is responsible for

- Providing specialist advice and guidance to the Lead Director, Assistant Director of Estates, Sustainability Committee and senior management on energy, carbon, and water management, fully aligned to the requirements of the NI Climate Change Act (2022).
- Developing and advising on the implementation of the Trust Sustainability Policy, associated procedures and new legislation regarding energy and water management
- Leading the development and implementation of carbon management plans that ensure the Trust can report, reduce and forecast Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions across all scopes (Scope 1, Scope 2 and relevant Scope 3), including emissions from energy use, fleet, procurement categories, waste and water use.
- Monitoring and validating all energy and water consumption data, and ensuring robust processes for GHG calculation, emissions factors, whole-estate carbon accounting and climate-risk data
- Ensuring that information required in relation to energy and water management sustainability issues is provided in an accurate and timely manner.

- Leading a programme of carbon and energy-reduction projects that support compliance with interim targets under the Climate Change Act (e.g. 48% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030) and Trust sustainability strategies.
- Developing and maintaining a prioritised schedule of carbon, energy and water improvement work schemes, ensuring they reflect both mitigation (emissions reduction) and adaptation (resilience to climate-related risks such as heatwaves, overheating, storms, flooding, water scarcity).
- Preparing annual performance reporting on energy, water and carbon including total emissions, trajectory to net zero, progress against scopes, and climate risk indicators for inclusion in internal governance papers, Sustainability Committee reports and Trust Board updates.
- Ensuring that all emerging legislation, guidance and statutory reporting duties relating to carbon, energy and climate resilience are identified and communicated to senior management.
- Actively promoting sustainability and demonstrating leadership on behaviour change, awareness and best practice in energy, water and carbon management.

5.11 Sustainability Committee

The Trust shall maintain a Sustainability Committee with the responsibility for;

- The review of all sustainability matters
- Development, implement and monitoring of policy and procedures
- Make recommendations for remedial actions
- Promotion of sustainability

The Committee shall be under the chairmanship of the Assistant Director of Estates or as nominated by the Assistant Director of Estates.

Details of the Committee structure and its terms of reference are included in appendix 1

6.0 LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE, RELEVANT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

Implementation of this policy will be achieved through strong management commitment and the development, implementation and review of documented sustainability procedures.

Directors and the Sustainability Committee will lead the implementation of the policy throughout the Trust.

The Trust will openly communicate the organisation's Sustainability performance to staff, patients, government departments and other interested parties upon request.

The Trust will support relevant environmental initiatives in the community, and support research and development activities aimed at improving the organisation's overall performance.

The trust must annually report and disclose GHG emissions reductions, statutory climate targets and climate adaptation duties.

7.0 EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Equality Commission guidance states that the purpose of screening is to identify those policies which are likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to these.

Using the Equality Commission's screening criteria, no significant equality implications have been identified. The policy will therefore not be subject to an equality impact assessment.

Similarly, this policy has been considered under the terms of the Human Rights Act 1998, and was deemed compatible with the European Convention Rights contained in the Act.

8.0 POLICY APPROVAL

During development, this policy was considered in draft form by:

- Sustainability Manager
- Energy & Carbon Manager
- Head of Estates Development Services
- Assistant Director of Estates Services
- Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates

This Policy was presented in final draft to the Trust Policy Scrutiny Committee and subsequently approved on 31st July 2025.

9.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Following approval of this Policy it will be circulated to Directors for dissemination to all their Trust staff.

The Sustainability Manager and Energy Manager will develop guidance and information for staff which will be available on Sharepoint and as necessary will arrange the provision of training in respect of this Policy.

A copy of this Policy was placed on the Trust's intranet on 31st July 2025.

All Trust managers must ensure that their staff have access to this Policy, understand its content, and are aware of its aims and purpose upon its release.

All Trust staff must comply with this Policy.

10.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all policies are kept under review to ensure that they remain compliant with relevant legislation.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Sustainability Manager and Energy Manager in conjunction with the Head of Estates Development Services, Assistant Director of Estate Services and Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates no later than 5 years after its approval, or earlier if deemed necessary. That review will be noted on a subsequent version of this policy, even where there are no substantive changes made or required.

11.0 SOURCES OF ADVICE AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Line Managers should be contacted in the first instance, in relation to any specific queries on Policy content. Line Managers should then escalate queries which they are unable to address, to the Sustainability Manager and or Head of Estate Development Services.

Guidance and information for staff to be published on Sharepoint by the Sustainability Manager and Energy Manager.

12.0 ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

This document can be made available on request in alternative formats, e.g. plain English, Braille, disc, audiocassette and in other languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

13.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The supply of information under the Freedom of Information does not give the recipient or organisation that receives it the automatic right to re-use it in any way that would infringe copyright. This includes, for example, making multiple copies, publishing and issuing copies to the public. Permission to re-use the information must be obtained in advance from the Trust.

APPENDIX 1

Sustainability Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Constitution

The committee shall be responsible for the review of all sustainability matters

The committee shall also promote compliance with the Sustainability Policy and arrangements

2. Membership

The chair of the Sustainability Committee is the Assistant Director of Estates or their nominated deputy.

- Membership will be made up of;
- Directorate Representatives
- Director of Finance, Procurement & Estates
- Head of Estate Development Services
- Sustainability Manager
- Energy Manager
- Trade Union/ Professional Bodies representative

As required

- Representatives from other disciplines may be co-opted from time to time
- A quorum will be of 5 members (including Chair/ Deputy Chair)
- Secretarial Support will be provided by Estate Services

3. Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will normally be held quarterly. Additional meetings will be arranged as and when required and will follow normal protocols, ie minutes, quorum, etc

4. Authority

The Sustainability Committee is authorised by the Chief Executive to monitor the implementation of the Sustainability Policy and to make recommendations to Governance Committee through the Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates.

5. Purpose

To review policies and procedures, monitor their implementation and promote a sustainable environment.

6. General Responsibilities

The Sustainability Committee has a responsibility to;

- To analyse environmental incidents, reports and other information/ data and make recommendations for remedial action
- Facilitate and support the key objectives of the assurance standards for environment and waste
- Analyse information and reports from enforcement agencies and make recommendations
- The development, introduction and monitoring effectiveness of sustainability procedures
- To comment on relevant Trust policies, procedures and guidance
- Develop and implement new sustainability policies as considered necessary
- Present Sustainability Report to Trust Board
- Directorate representatives are responsible for ensuring actions applicable to their directorate are implemented, providing updates to Sustainability Committee on actions and raising any sustainability issues/ concerns to the Sustainability Committee.

7. Reporting

The minutes of the Sustainability Committee shall be formally recorded and circulated to members, Chief Executive Officer and Directors for circulation to relevant committees/ groups, managers and staff.