

Policy: Environmental Policy

Our policy setting out our environmental roles, responsibilities and goals.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, suppliers and contractors across our supply chain.

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Approver	Board
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Equality impact assessment	EIA carried out We recognise that we have a part to play in reducing the environmental impact of global warming and other environment challenges, and the impact that has on health inequalities.

1. Introduction

At the Stroke Association we believe in better. By improving our environmental sustainability, we won't just meet our contractual obligations – we'll play our part in limiting the damaging effects of climate change on stroke survivors, as well as creating a greener world for all of us.

The planet is facing twin threats:

- (1) the impact of global warming on weather, water resources and human and animal habitation, leading to worsening health outcomes and increased health inequality.
- (2) the threat of imminent and irreversible catastrophic biodiversity loss through over-consumption and pollution.

At the Stroke Association we recognised that the twin challenges of catastrophic climate change and irreversible biodiversity loss are global challenges that we can only play a small part in. However, we recognise that we must be part of the response of the UK – the world's sixth largest economy – to meeting this challenge.

Environmental destruction will take renewed corporate and political power to tackle. We will support voluntary sector membership organisations to hold these sectors to account and promote good environmental governance. As a good corporate citizen, we will follow and promote the use of good governance and follow all relevant corporate and charity governance codes. As part of the climate and clean air coalition we will work with others to help reduce the impact of air pollution on stroke.

We place carbon reduction and our commitment to Net Zero at the heart of our environmental policy, but we recognise that being a good corporate citizen is more than that. We recognise that our environmental policy cannot look only at the effect of our activities on climate change. We will also play our part in developing a better world for our beneficiaries and staff by recognising our moral obligations to enhance our environment and reduce negative externalities such as pollution and biodiversity loss, e.g. by minimising plastic pollution.

This updated policy replaces the Environmental Policy approved in June 2023 and incorporates the Green Plan approved by EDT in January 2022. The policy also reflects the adoption of the Ethical Investment Policy and the Carbon Reduction Policy.

2. Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

- **all staff**, including permanent and temporary colleagues, as well as colleagues on fixed term contracts.
- **volunteers**, including trustees and people on student placements
- **Suppliers and Contractors**, across our supply chain

3. Environmental roles and responsibilities

We all have a responsibility to be aware of how our work impacts the environment. We have a contractual duty to reach net zero emissions by 2045 and to achieve an 80% reduction by 2036-39, this is encompassed by our Carbon Reduction Plan. The requirements of the Carbon Reduction Plan underpin this environmental policy. The majority of our NHS England contracts follow the [NHS England standard contract 2024/25 shorter form](#), which attaches this Green NHS service condition to our contracts with them:

Service Condition 18 Green NHS

18.1 In performing its obligations under this Contract the Provider must take all reasonable steps to minimise its adverse impact on the environment. The Provider must demonstrate to the Co-ordinating Commissioner how it will contribute towards a "Green NHS" with regard to Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service commitments by taking specific actions and making appropriate adaptations with the aim of reducing air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and the impact of climate change.

On an annual basis the Coordinator Contract Led team review any new contract requirements for the coming year and share these with the relevant teams within the organisation.

We encourage environmental responsibility among our staff, volunteers, visitors, trustees, contractors and suppliers. Our environmental objectives and actions are encapsulated in our Green Plan – see Appendix One.

Our Chief Executive and Executive Directors will support this by making sure that the requirements outlined in this policy and the associated procedures are fully resourced and implemented. The risks associated with the transition to net zero will be recognised in our risk register.

4. Our Environmental Goals

Our Carbon Reduction Plan requires us to reduce our CO₂e¹ emissions by 80% by 2036-39 and 100% by 2045. This is a requirement on all NHS England sub-contractors with our level of funding under the Health and Care Act 2022, with similar requirements in other nations across the UK.

We've set some goals that will help us get there:

- We'll share our environmental aims across the charity.
- We have committed to reducing the carbon intensity of our investments in line with the Carbon reduction plan
- We will measure and reduce our CO₂e emissions across all aspects of our activities. This means measuring:
 - Scope 1 – emissions from the direct burning of fossil fuels in our buildings and vehicles driven as part of our activities
 - Scope 2 – emissions from bought in electricity in our buildings
 - Scope 3 – emissions from the purchase, recycling and disposal of good and services across our entire supply chain. This includes the full lifetime emissions of bought in goods.
- We'll improve awareness of clean energy and green technology across our charity and adopt these in our buildings
- We will collaborate with and learn from the wider voluntary sector and health networks to reach our net zero and wider environmental goals including the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, the Richmond Group, the Association of Medical Research Charities, the Charity Finance Group, the Charity Sector Procurement Group, the Clean Air Coalition and the Charity Excellence Framework Environmental Sustainability policy.
- We'll reduce travel mileage by encouraging digital collaboration, remote working, collaborative workspaces, public transport, and the use of Ultra-Low Emission transport options. We will compare emissions from travelling to meetings to emissions from online meetings and recommend reductions based on evidence.

¹ CO₂e is carbon dioxide equivalent emissions: this recognizes the effects of other greenhouse gases.

- We will discourage air travel and normally limit it to only where the surface transport journey would take more than seven hours, even where surface transport is more expensive.
- We will listen to, and work with staff and volunteers, to improve environmental efficiency. We'll consult with staff and volunteers to find ways to commit to saving energy, including travel and home working arrangements. We will survey staff on their home-working hours and arrangements.
- We'll seek to work with suppliers who make every effort to minimise their impact on the environment, and make sure we understand our suppliers' CO₂e emissions and commitment to reductions. We will use supplier data, where available, to measure our emissions.
- We recognise the threat of air pollution to stroke survivors in our [Air Pollution Policy Position](#).
- We'll support the UK Government's [net zero strategy](#) and [ten point plan for a green industrial revolution](#).
- As part of their supply chain, we will work with the NHS across the UK to ensure commissioned services meet their carbon reduction requirements.
- We will commit, through procurement, to reducing the use of one-off plastics as part of our contribution to reducing biodiversity loss.
- We will ensure that our buildings and facilities provide a positive working environment for our people, and are sympathetic to the neighbourhoods we work in. We will use renewable energy where possible and work on the basis of the Four Rs – *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* and *Recover*.

5. Working in a more environmentally friendly way

By looking at our Scope 3 emissions we will be able to target our biggest CO₂e emissions and take action accordingly. Until we have data on the scale of these, we will not be able to target reductions. We expect areas like travel, home working and printed materials to be significant contributors to our emissions and we will seek to target these.

We also recognise that particulate matter emissions are one of the major risk factors for ischaemic stroke.² Short and long term exposure to air pollution can increase the risk of developing hypertension, one of the biggest risk factors for stroke. It is also estimated that air pollution is responsible for 14% of all stroke-related deaths and around 11,000 deaths from heart attack or stroke in the UK annually.

The NHS, the largest employer in Britain, also has plans to become the first net zero national health service. They plan to reduce air pollution from many of its sources that will reduce business mileages and fleet air pollutant emissions. By reducing our emissions from travel, we will also reduce our own particulate matter emissions.

Travel

We will examine the emissions from online tools like Teams and Zoom for meetings and compare them to the emissions from travelling to meetings. If we do need to travel we use train or other public transport wherever possible, in line with our [expenses policy](#). We avoid air transport wherever possible.

We will develop schemes to encourage the use of Electrical Vehicles and e-bikes.

Remote working and collaboration

Most of our staff are remote workers, and we keep the use of office locations for support services to a minimum. We actively encourage our people to use renewable energy and reduce energy both within their home and when using collaborative spaces.

Full Life Cycle Emissions from the Production of Printed Materials

We will assess the full life cycle emissions from printed products and reduce these in accordance with our net zero commitment. This means being aware of the environmental impact of the production and eventual disposal of printed material, whether by us (as waste) or by the end user. We will ensure stock levels are adequate but not excessive, so that we do not have large quantities of out-dated

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0269749122010417#:~:text=Highlights%20The%20public%20awareness%20of%20the%20harm,PM%202.5%20warning%20system%20for%20stroke%20is%20necessary.>

stocks and to ensure that we can always deliver orders on time so that staff do not keep their own contingency stocks.

We will encourage the use of QR codes so that customers can download their own copies of materials.

Healthy and Sustainable Food and Drink

We support the use of healthy and sustainable food and drink at our own events, which we will be informed by emerging scientific evidence.

Current Good Practice

We will continue our work on sharing information and environmental practices such as the staff volunteer page and map so that we can reduce excess travelling in volunteer days, and the staff jammer recycling page.

Environmental Incidents

Our incident management protocols ensure that in the event of an incident that could have an environmental impact such as a flood, chemical or oil leak in our buildings, we report and follow up in the appropriate manner.

Environmental Management

The ED Finance will work with the rest of EDT, the AD Business Support, the Head of Logistics and Supply and the Health, Safety and Workspaces Business Partner and others to ensure that we actively monitor, manage and reduce our CO₂e emissions. A staff environmental working group will support this work.

Appendix One – Green Plan

Our Green Plan is the start of our journey to provide concrete steps in meeting our environmental goals, we will update this regularly to reflect progress and in response to new insights.

We have organised our plans into three sections which cover: (1) Being a Good Citizen and Neighbour; (2) Supporting Biodiversity, and: (3) Meeting our Net Zero Obligations.

Ref No	Objective	Action	Aim for Completion	Responsibility	Date Action Completed and/or progress note
1. We are a Good Citizen and Neighbour					
1.1a	Ensure that our properties are clean and well-presented	We will ensure that our properties are well-maintained and in fitting with the neighbourhood.	Ongoing	ED People/ Health, Safety and Workspaces Business Partner	Not Applicable
1.1b		We will ensure that noise pollution is minimised and in fitting with the neighbourhood.	Ongoing	ED People/ Health, Safety and Workspaces Business Partner	Not Applicable
1.1c		We will dispose of waste cleanly and ensure that bins are not overflowing. We will support environmental initiatives undertaken by estate managers.	Ongoing	ED People/ Health, Safety and Workspaces Business Partner	Not Applicable
1.2a	Promote good governance in support of environmental sustainability.	Support voluntary sector membership organisations who will hold governments and corporates to account for their action on the environment on our behalf.	Ongoing	CEO / AD Systems Engagement	Not Applicable

1.2b		Pay our taxes fairly and on time to help support good governance (<i>and</i> a fully-funded health and social care system)	Ongoing	ED Finance	Not Applicable
1.2c		Ensure our investments reflect our corporate values through the application and monitoring of our Ethical Investment Policy	Ongoing	ED Finance	Not Applicable
1.2d		Reduce the environmental impact of our investments by progressively reducing their carbon intensity, and working with our investment manager to promote improved environmental standards in the companies we invest in.	Ongoing	ED Finance	Not Applicable
2. We will Support Biodiversity					
2.1a	We will ensure that our actions support biodiversity.	Support the use of environmentally responsible food and drink at our own events.	Ongoing	ED Customer Experience / AD Communications	Not Applicable
2.1b		Minimise, and try to eliminate, single use plastics in our operations. Ensure that any single use plastics are disposed of cleanly and do not enter water courses.	Ongoing	ED Finance / AD Business Support	Not Applicable

2.1c		Reduce pollution through the purchase of clean fuels and the full disposal of commercial waste in our properties	Ongoing	ED People/ Health, Safety and Workspaces Business Partner	Not Applicable
3. We will meet our Net Zero Commitment by 2045					
3.1a	Calculate current CO2e emissions and estimate emissions from a suitable baseline year	Extend calculation of current Scope 3 emissions to all significant sectors. Estimate these in line with the Carbon Reduction Policy. Using supplier data where available, followed by consumption data, followed by expenditure data.	June 2025	ED Finance	
3.1b		Attempt to estimate calculations for baseline year e.g. 2019-20	March 2025	ED Finance	
3.1c		Estimate emissions due to home working and employee commuting.	March 2025	ED People / ED Finance	Done
3.1d		We will review the policy and adhere to requirements emanating from the NHS primarily in Wales, where we have commissioned contracts, but also Scotland and Northern Ireland.	December 2024	ED Finance	
3.2	Define Plans for reduction of each area of CO2e emissions	Review Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and set targets for their reduction	March 2025	ED Finance	

3.3a	Improve purchasing practices to support our Ethical Policy and to reduce our carbon footprint and particulate matter emissions.	Review of the Procurement Policy to ensure it is aligned with all other policies in relation to Environmental Control.	March 2024	AD Business Support	Done
3.3b		Devise plan to improve life-cycle efficiency in relation to purchasing and replacing products and services. Fleet and Hire Vehicles - exclusively Zero and Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles via partner suppliers.	June 2025	AD Business Support	
3.3c		Encourage activities that decrease our own particulate matter emissions.			
3.4	Implementation of Environmental Training and Awareness in line with policy objectives	Communication Plan in order to effectively communicate our aims throughout our charity. Consider the best way to raise environmental awareness amongst staff and volunteers. Encourage environmental responsibility amongst our staff, volunteers and trustees. (partnering with recognised charities/initiatives)	March 2025 Ongoing Ongoing	People and Development	tbc tbc Not applicable
3.5	Ongoing improvements to our internal processes	Reduce travel mileage by encouraging digital platforms and smart	tbc	AD Technology	tbc

	and digital platforms to reduce our carbon footprint	collaborative locations. Raise awareness of the environmental impact of excessive email sending and retention, and the environment impact of AI technologies			
3.6	Ensure the risks from implementing, or failure to implement, the environmental policy are recognised so that action can be taken.	Ensure risk register is updated from Q3 2024/25 to reflect the risks around our environmental goals	December 2024	ED Finance	Done