

By Craig Brown, Head of Sustainability & Environmental Performance at NHS Lanarkshire

Driving Sustainability from within: The Environmental Sustainability Team at NHS Lanarkshire



What does energy management mean at NHS Lanarkshire?

NHS Lanarkshire is the 3rd largest NHS board in Scotland by population, serving ~ 665,000 people and covers two local authority areas, North and South Lanarkshire Councils. The board covers an area of more than 4,732km², employs around 14,000 staff and manages land and buildings covering an area of 1.2km².

NHS Lanarkshire spends approx. £20million/year on utilities (gas, electricity, water, fuel oil). The majority of this is linked to gas and electricity consumption. Energy management will therefore continue to form the largest part of NHS Lanarkshire's net zero route map towards our target in 2040, as building energy use is the board's single largest carbon emission source (~58% of reportable emissions).

We want to lead by example, as an anchor organisation, and led on the formation of a cross public sector sustainability working group to encourage collaborative working with North Lanarkshire Council,

South Lanarkshire Council, Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. This group has been great for sharing ideas, and we will continue to try and find projects which bring maximum benefit to as many local public sector organisations as we can.

Can you explain the return-on-investment that the team brings to the organisation?

NHS Lanarkshire has a small Environmental Sustainability Team and doesn't have a single person focussing 100% of their time on energy management. Recently, the

team has expanded from two posts to three full time posts. The intern programme was started in 2023 by the current Head of Sustainability, and we have continued to build on this each year.

The future aspiration is to take on further resource to look at energy specifically with the goal of creating an Energy Management System based on ISO50001 principles. We also aim to support the development of an Environmental Management System based on ISO14001 principles, and have more of a focus on all aspects of transport



NHS Lanarkshire Environmental Sustainability Team: (left to right) Kayla, Caitlin, Kirsty, Craig

and travel. The expansion of the team will allow us to focus on:

- Energy & Sustainability Audits
- New Energy Management System
- Key Stakeholder Monthly Reports
- Full desktop analysis of AMR data

We hope this will deliver reductions in the region of 1% per year to



begin with. Savings will also be achieved through energy efficiency projects delivered in the last financial year. Building on the great success of these, the intention is to delve into the utilities data working closely with the Property and Maintenance Teams to increase the efficiency of operations of the buildings; i.e., tweaking heating and cooling strategies, adding additional lighting controls and eliminating unnecessary kit, etc.

Since 2015/16, NHS Lanarkshire have reduced emissions linked directly to the consumption of natural gas and electricity by ~ 23% (comparison, FY 2024/25 – unpublished figures). This has reduced consumption of electricity by 9% (~2,900 MWh) and gas consumption by just under 6%

(5,100 MWh).

How are responsibilities shared in the team?

The small Environmental Sustainability Team covers a wide remit. We like to believe we punch well above our weight and have ambitious plans, which are being supported by the organisation.

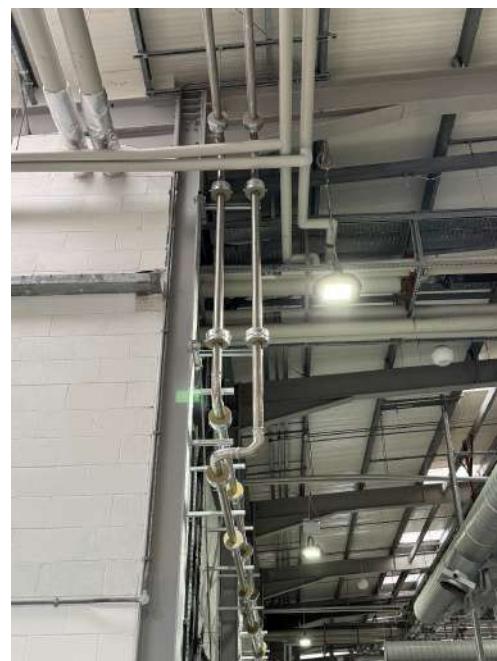
At present, we have three members of staff who make up the core Environmental Sustainability Team. Craig Brown (Head of Sustainability & Environmental Performance), Kirsty (Energy & Sustainability Manager) and Emily (Energy & Sustainability Officer). The team is supported by a number of internship placements throughout the year. We are entering the third year supporting an Environmental Sustainability Internship

Programme in conjunction with Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) to provide industrial placements for some of their students from the BSc Environmental Management course. Kayla who joined the team in October is currently focussed on an analysis of our business mileage. She is also working on our Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), which is due for submission to Scottish Government this year. Caitlin recently joined us temporarily as part of the NHS Scotland Graduate Management Trainee programme. She is working to develop a high level Net Zero Route Map. This will help visualise all of the key targets and really begin to focus on the

compounding impact of lack of funding and action because of this. In the last year, we have also worked with students from GCU's Masters in Urban Climate and Sustainability (MURCS) programme. Sofia produced NHS Lanarkshire's Greenspace & Biodiversity Vision, which was a great piece of work to progress this key deliverable area. Last year was the first year we worked with students from this programme and we hope to continue this in 2025/26.

Apart from the internships, we are very lucky to be supported by a wide network of excellent colleagues, who are supporting different elements of environmental sustainability. Heading up our key workstreams are:

1. Energy & Capital Assets



2. Waste

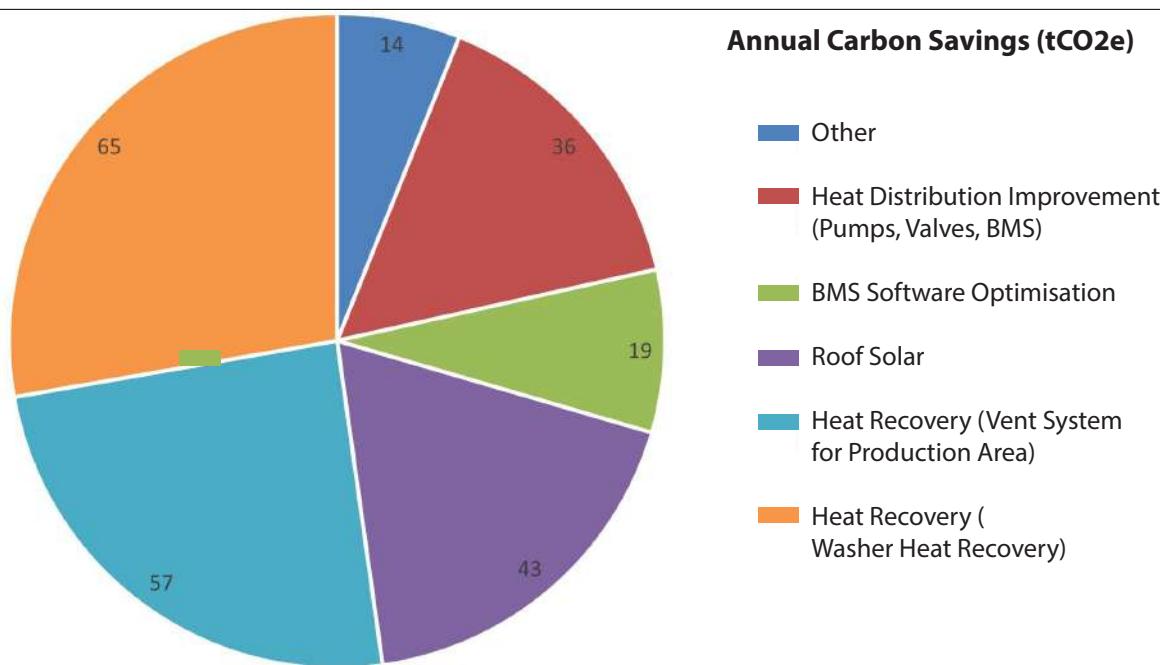
3. Procurement

4. Clinical

5. Greenspace & Biodiversity

6. Active Travel & Transport

We have an excellent and close working relationship with our Property and Maintenance



colleagues, who support on a wide range of projects. The Environmental Sustainability and Net Zero agenda could not be progressed without the buy-in from all of our fantastic colleagues, so really this is a thank you to them.

How is information regarding energy management and the work that the team undertakes communicated to various stakeholders in the organisation?

The NHS Lanarkshire Communications Team are always supportive of ideas we have. They have delivered screensaver campaigns, articles, social

media posts and have dabbled in newsletters. With a renewed focus on communications, we are developing ideas for further campaigns throughout 2025/26. We have an ambition to do even more communications to keep all of the NHS staff involved. There are so many amazing things happening in NHS Lanarkshire, Environmental Sustainability and Energy Management forms a small part of that.

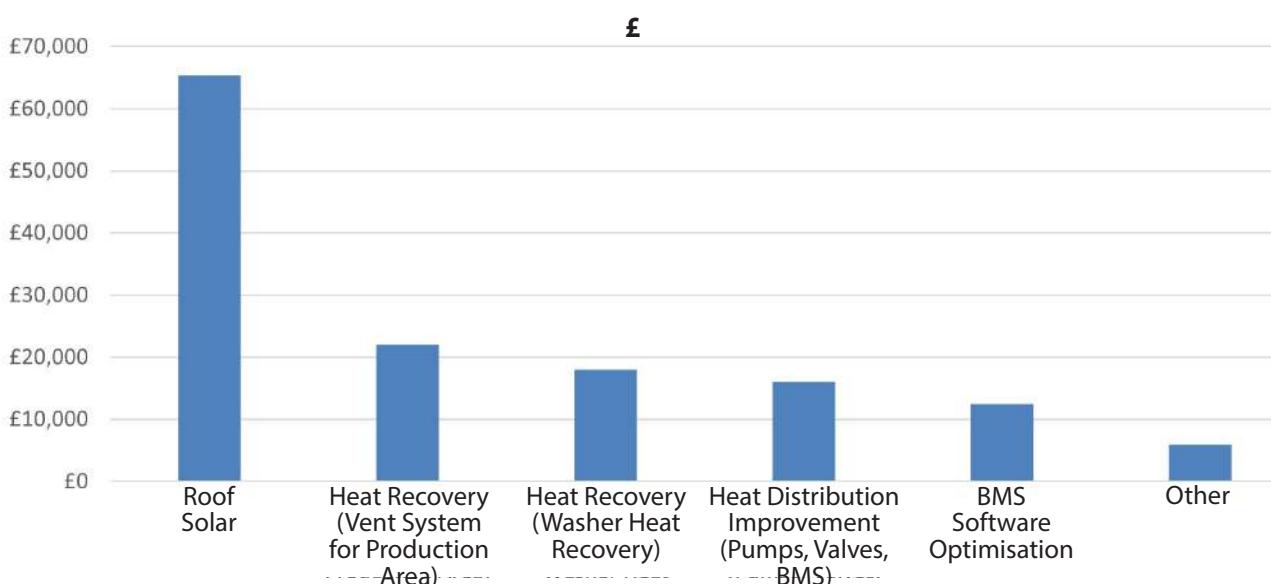
Can you describe a recent project that highlights the team's work?

The main project delivered over the

past 12 months, was a ~ £2million investment in energy efficiency supported through the Scottish Governments Greening Public Sector Estate Decarbonisation Scheme (GPSEDS). This delivered decarbonisation projects across two of our sites, Kirklands HQ and West of Scotland Laundry (WoSL). Additionally, we upgraded the Building Management Systems across further 25 sites.

These projects targeted:

- Roof / Loft Insulation
- Draught Proofing
- Insulation (Pipework)
- Heat Distribution Improvement



(Pumps, Valves, BMS)

- BMS Software Optimisation
- Roof Solar
- Heat Recovery (Vent System for Production Area & Washer Heat Recovery)
- BMS upgrades

Collectively these projects should save a minimum of 200 tCO₂e per year.

A massive thank you has to go to the Property and Support Services Division (PSSD). Senior leads, maintenance staff and project management support – they have been so helpful! I look forward to delivering many more initiatives working in conjunction with them. The continued support of our work stream leads is a huge help, and we wouldn't have made the progress we have without all of their buy-in.

We are very pleased with the expected savings from the projects delivered in the last financial year, and hope to use this as a kickstart for an Environmental Sustainability Programme of works as we strive for net zero by 2040.

Does your organisation offer any training to the team and wider staff?

The team are constantly striving to expand their knowledge around environmental sustainability of which building energy use is a big part of. As of this year, all of the current Environmental Sustainability Team went through IEMA accredited 'Internal Environmental Management System Auditor Course'. The Head of Sustainability and Environmental Performance has also been a long standing member of the EMA and is a chartered energy manager

through the Energy Institute. The intention moving forward is to harness some of this knowledge by working with Sustainability or Energy Champions at a more local level with the organisation. We have



run staff webinars in the past with the Energy Saving Trust. These were aimed at showing staff how they could reduce energy and emissions at home, with the hope that this would have some carry over into the workplace.



Are the team's achievements acknowledged by the organisation?

Yes, the Environmental Sustainability agenda is very well supported within the NHS Lanarkshire.

Martin Hill, Chair of the Board at NHS Lanarkshire is the organisation's sustainability champion. Martin has really bought into this agenda at both a professional and personal level, which we are very grateful for. We also have Jacqui McGeough

– Deputy Director of Planning, Property & Performance as our executive lead for Environmental Sustainability. Jacqui is very keen on further developing the Environmental Sustainability Team, and she has been excellent advocate of what we have managed to achieve so far.

What are the plans for the future?

We have a pipeline of projects, which have been developed and are waiting for the outcome of funding bids. These will take around 10 of our buildings much closer to net zero, but will take a number of years to fully

deliver. Projects cover upgrades such as:

- Solar PV (roof mounted and solar car ports)
- Insulation
- LED
- Air/Ground Source Heat Pumps

- Further BMS upgrades
- Draft proofing
- Glazing

Some of our energy reductions will be covered by business as usual, maintenance and replacement work. We also have a series of

projects which focus on adding further value, which is not energy specific. For example, greenspace & biodiversity, active travel and transport and waste reduction.

We are working to improve data quality for reporting purposes and plan to launch a campaign around energy efficiency, targeted towards our 14,000 staff and raising awareness on how their actions can impact positively.