

Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy.



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST, CHANGING LIVES.

Introduction

I am pleased to present Northern Healthcare's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy, setting out our commitment to having a positive impact on the environment, social responsibility, and robust governance practices.

As a specialist supported living provider, we recognise that sustainability, inclusion, and ethical governance are essential to creating environments where individuals can truly thrive. Our ESG strategy is a reflection of our PROUD values and our dedication to making a meaningful impact. We recognise that our actions today will shape the future, and we are committed to leading by example.

This strategy outlines our key goals and initiatives across three pillars: Environmental, Social and Governance and each pillar serves as a foundation for our efforts to drive positive change. We are dedicated to reducing our environmental footprint, enhancing the wellbeing of our employees, the people we support and communities, and ensuring transparency and accountability in all our business practices.

By prioritising sustainability, fostering a culture of wellbeing and inclusivity, and upholding the highest standards of governance, we aim we aim to build a resilient and responsible organisation that not only meets the needs of our stakeholders but also contributes to a better and more sustainable future for all.

Nicola Forshaw
Chief Executive Officer



Our Vision

Our Strategy is defined by the following key goals:



Caring for our planet

Ensure our impact on the environment is minimal and committing to helping our team members and the people we support to care for and nurture our planet.



Commitment to wellbeing

Strive to be an industry leader in our commitment to the physical and mental health, wellbeing and development of all our team members and the people we support.



Cultivate successful partnerships

Commit to working with suppliers who have strong social and economic values and work with our suppliers, community, and the people we support to achieve our goals.



Continuous stakeholder engagement

Remain accountable by being open and transparent, promoting diversity and inclusion, upholding strong governance, and fostering a safe, supportive workplace.

Our Stakeholders

- The people we support
- Our team
- Families and representatives
- Suppliers
- Housing providers
- Regulators
- Local Authorities
- Investors

Our Journey So Far



Our ESG strategy is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a shared blueprint to address the global challenges we face. Our key goals align with 7 of the 17 SDGs.



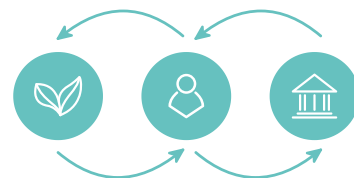
While we are at the beginning of our ESG journey, we have already made great progress in key areas. Our commitment to putting people first and changing lives has naturally produced ongoing initiatives and various achievements.

Our Sustainability

The steps we've taken:

- **Waste Reduction:** All our services and Central Office promote recycling, use reusable bags, and donate unwanted furniture to local charities. Furnishings are repaired or recycled, and a digital care planning system helps reduce paper use.
- **IT Equipment:** Refurbishing and re-using all devices where possible and a new recycling programme has been implemented for all damaged devices.
- **ESOS Compliance:** We have recently fulfilled ESOS Phase 3 requirements, which has heightened our awareness for active change and additional monitoring of energy usage.
- **Flexible Working:** Flexible working options are in place to reduce the need for travel and we promote the use of virtual meetings where possible.
- **Energy Usage:** Our services all actively encourage the team and people we support to turn off lights and appliances when not in use.
- **Emissions:** Our services all actively encourage car sharing where possible for team members to attend training sessions.

Our People

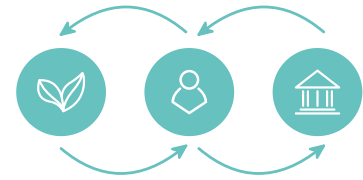


The steps we've taken:

- **Staff Benefits:** We offer a comprehensive benefits package that includes an employee assistance programme, death in service insurance and other perks to support our employees' wellbeing.
- **Flexible Working:** We encourage a healthy work-life balance by offering flexible working arrangements, including remote work options and flexible hours where possible.
- **Gender Pay Gap:** Committing to transparency and action to address, close and report on the gender pay gap within our organisation.
- **Ongoing Training and Development:** We provide continuous learning and development opportunities to help our employees grow and advance in their careers. Our new Future Leaders Programme has recently been introduced to support members of our team in the next steps of their career.
- **Health & Safety:** Ensuring a safe working environment through rigorous health and safety protocols.
- **Volunteering Opportunities:** Encouraging employee and people we support volunteerism and providing opportunities for community service.
- **Fundraising:** Our Central Office and services regularly undertake fundraising opportunities for various charities including Mind.



Our People



The steps we've taken:

- **Open Conversations:** Through our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and AAB People (formerly See Hear Speak Up) programme.
- **Recruitment & Retention:** Implemented a new recruitment website, making the journey for application to onboarding as seamless and stress free as possible, with open communication at each step. We have also put in place various strategies to help nurture and retain our talented teach including extra annual leave on 2nd and 5th work anniversaries.
- **Recognition:** Our annual Northern Healthcare Awards celebrates the amazing achievements of our team members who truly go above and beyond and make a difference to the lives of the people we support. Nominations are made by colleagues, external professionals and people we support. We also have a monthly PROUD Values Champion, which recognises those team members who consistently display our values in everything they do.
- **Support:** Our Buddy Champion programme means all support workers are allocated a “buddy” who will be responsible for helping new team members to settle in and answer any questions they have.
- **Wellbeing Fund:** A dedicated monthly budget for each service. The team can decide how best to spend each month to improve their wellbeing..



Our Partnerships

The steps we've taken:

- **Engagement:** Regularly engaging with our team members and the people we support through surveys to gather feedback, address their concerns and listen to their ideas for continuous improvement.
- **Collaboration:** We regularly support national campaigns in the health & social care sector and work with third parties to secure funding for further training and initiatives in our services.

Our Business

The steps we've taken:

- **Transparency:** Maintaining transparency in our operations and reporting practices and encouraging feedback from people we support, carers and teams.
- **Meetings:** Monthly Governance meetings are held to ensure a flow of information through every area of the organisation; from service delivery to Governance, back up to the Senior Management Team, Senior Executive Team and Board.
- Regular Senior Management Team, Safeguarding and CEO Advisory Group meetings are held to facilitate communication, collaboration and transparency, allowing team members to stay informed and aligned with the company's goals and initiatives.
- **Cybersecurity:** We have been certified for the Government-backed Cyber Essentials scheme and have implemented essential security measures to protect our organisation against cyber threats. By achieving this certification, we are reinforcing our dedication to safeguarding our data and maintaining the trust of our stakeholders.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation.
- **Anti-Corruption:** Implementing strict anti-corruption/bribery policies and procedures.
- **Human Rights:** Upholding human rights and ensuring fair labour practices across our supply chain.
- **Crisis Management:** Developing and implementing robust crisis management plans.
- **Compliance:** Ensuring compliance with all relevant laws, regulations, and standards.

Environmental Strategy

This strategy outlines our key goals and initiatives aimed at reducing our environmental footprint, by prioritising sustainability and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Energy Saving

As part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, we are beginning to measure and collect data that will guide our efforts. This involves tracking our energy consumption, emissions, and other environmental impacts across all our operations. By gathering and analysing this data, we can identify areas for improvement and develop targeted strategies to reduce our carbon footprint. This data-driven approach will ensure that our journey to net zero is informed, effective, and aligned with our sustainability goals. Key initiatives include:



Energy Efficiency: Implementing energy-saving measures across all our facilities to reduce energy consumption and engaging with housing providers and landlords where we are unable to implement measures ourselves.




Greener Transport Options: Encouraging the use of public transportation, carpooling, and the adoption of electric or hybrid vehicles among our employees. We will also explore opportunities to support cycling and walking initiatives to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.



Carbon Offsetting: Investing in certified carbon offset projects to neutralise our remaining emissions.

ESOS

In 2024, we were eligible to participate in the Energy Saving Opportunities Scheme (ESOS) for the first time. We have undertaken this initiative and successfully completed our ESOS Action Plan. This involved a thorough assessment of our energy usage and identifying opportunities for improvement. We will now start to implement our recommended measures and will submit our Action Plan progress updates in December 2025 and 2026.



By the end of the Action Plan period we aim to reduce our energy consumption by 70, 938 kwh.

Resource Management

We will adopt sustainable practices for resource management, ensuring the efficient and responsible use of natural resources. Key initiatives include:



Waste Reduction: Minimising waste generation through recycling wherever possible and striving to find alternatives where this is not possible, reusing materials, and reducing single-use plastics.



Food waste: Minimise food waste by starting allotment projects where possible, allowing the people we support to grow only what they need. Additional surplus produce can be shared within the community, further reducing waste.



Medicines: Consider waste reduction and disposal methods



Accurate Procurement: Establish a sustainable procurement policy

Eco Protection & Biodiversity

We recognise the importance of protecting ecosystems and biodiversity. Our commitment includes:



Ecosystem Restoration: Participating in rewilding and habitat restoration initiatives at our services where possible. Allotment projects will provide opportunities to set up compost bins to recycle organic waste and enrich the soil naturally.



Pollution Prevention: Implementing measures such as greener transport options, working with sustainable suppliers and minimising waste to prevent pollution and mitigate environmental impacts of our operations.



Education: We will commit to providing educational resources for our teams and the people we support to help them understand the importance of sustainability and how they can contribute by reducing their own carbon footprint. By empowering our community with knowledge and tools, we aim to foster a culture of environmental responsibility and collective action towards achieving net zero.



Social Strategy

Everyone needs support at times, and our team values the power of a helping hand. As we grow, we'll bring more laughter, empathy, and happiness to people's lives—nurturing a culture that empowers our teams and keeps our philosophy, 'Putting people first, changing lives,' at the heart of every decision.

We are always looking at ways to make our company a great place to work. In the past few years, we have made some positive changes to our workplace, but we know improvement is a journey.

In 2021, we were delighted to launch our new Northern Healthcare values. Our values were formed from our team and resident feedback and our collective vision for the future of our team.



We are dedicated to our employees' growth, as we believe continual development for all our employees is crucial to delivering an effective service and as such, we promote development opportunities across the organisation.

We are proud of our team members and we want our team to be proud of the difference they make.

Team Wellbeing & Growth

Our employees are our greatest asset, and we are dedicated to fostering a positive and inclusive workplace. Our objectives include:



Health & Wellbeing Initiatives: Implementing programs and activities that promote physical and mental health, such as wellness workshops, fitness challenges, and access to mental health resources.



Educational Resources for Staff & People We Support: Providing access to educational materials and training programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of our employees and the people we support.



Living Wage: Ensuring that all employees are paid a living wage that meets their basic needs and supports a decent standard of living. Working towards.



Mental Health at Work Commitment: Upholding a commitment to mental health at work by providing support, resources, and a stigma-free environment for discussing mental health issues.



Apprenticeships: We encourage and support our teams to undertake apprenticeships to enhance their skills and knowledge in their area of expertise.



Community Engagement

We are committed to making a positive impact on the communities where we operate. Our approach includes:



Supporting Local Causes: Supporting local initiatives that promote education, health, and environmental sustainability



Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging with stakeholders to understand their needs and address their concerns.





Governance Strategy

A strong governance program is vital to ensuring our organisation's integrity and accountability. Our framework includes monthly governance meetings and full transparency in operations and reporting.

Strong Leadership

Our ongoing actions include:



Board Oversight: Ensuring more active and informed oversight by our Board of Directors on ESG matters.



Leadership Commitment: Demonstrating our strong commitment from senior leadership to drive ESG initiatives.



Accountability: Establishing clear accountability for ESG performance across all levels of the organisation.

Risk Management

We proactively identify and manage risks to ensure the resilience and sustainability of our operations. Our approach includes:



Risk Assessment: Conducting regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential ESG-related risks.

Stakeholder Engagement

We prioritise transparent and effective communication with our stakeholders. Our strategies include:



Reporting: Providing comprehensive and transparent reporting on our ESG performance and progress.



Continuous Improvement: Continuously improving our ESG practices based on stakeholder feedback and industry best practices.



This ESG strategy should be read in conjunction with the suite of other policies available, which are essential to our ongoing strategy.

- Anti bribery policy
- Equality & diversity policy
- Flexible working policy
- Gender pay reporting policy
- Modern slavery and human trafficking policy
- Social value policy
- Corporate social responsibility & environmental sustainability policy
- Data protection and confidentiality policy
- Health & safety policy
- Risk management policy

We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact us by using the details below:

Call: **0161 974 7210**

Email: **contact@northernhealthcare.org.uk**

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