

# The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

## Environmental Policy and Strategy

Effective: February 2009

Review: February 2012

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust recognises that in pursuing its activities, it has a responsibility and should take the opportunity to protect and nurture the environment. By exercising proper control over its activities the Trust will promote the use of sustainable resources and discourage wasteful or damaging practises.
- 1.2 This Environment Policy sets out the Trusts aims and objectives for safe guarding the environment. Wherever practicable the Trust will strive to meet established government targets on the conservation of resources in order to reduce its impact on the environment.
- 1.3 Under the authority of this policy will be a series of specific policies aimed at identified environmental issues. The specific policies set the standards for managing these issues and will be further supported by further guidance aimed to assist those with delegated responsibility for meeting the standards. Examples of current policies are Health and Safety, Waste, and Transport, the list of policies will be continually updated, new policies will be developed and added as they are formulated.

### **2 This Policy**

- 2.1 Applies to all land, premises and activities within the control of The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust
- 2.2 Is consistent with the United Kingdom's commitment to sustainable development;

### **3 Responsibility**

- 3.1 The main responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Chief Executive of the Trust. Day to day management is delegated to all managers within directorates and departments, in order to minimise all environmental impacts.

### **4 Reporting**

- 4.1 All departments will be required to include a section on greening their operations in their annual reports, which are published and sent to the Trust Board.

## **5 Adherence**

- 5.1 All staff, contract staff, agencies, and organisations working for the Trust and their contractors (when working within the Trust) are required to follow the principles of this policy and related guidance and to assist the Trust to meet its objectives.

All staff must also abide with the Government's procurement policy which is to achieve value for money (taking account of whole life costs, quality and other benefits to meet the Trusts requirements), EC procurement rules and international agreements on trade – see Treasury and DETR's note on Environmental Issues in Purchasing and Part 1 of DETR's "Green Guide for Buyers".

## **6 Aims**

- 6.1 The Trust continually aims to improve its environmental performance by:

- Promoting sound environmental policies and practices throughout the Trust
- As a minimum complying with the requirements of relevant legislation
- Promoting environmentally responsible procurement of goods and services
- Reducing waste production as far as is practicable, to reuse or recycle materials where appropriate and to regulate the treatment and disposal of residual waste
- Reducing and where practicable prevent pollution
- Minimising the impact of transport on the environment arising from its own vehicles and those brought onto Trust premises
- Reducing where possible the Trusts use of Energy and Water, and being environmentally responsible for the use of all utilities
- Minimising the adverse environmental impact of any new Trust developments
- Maintaining the Trusts Estate in an environmentally sensitive way
- Minimising the adverse environmental impact of the decommissioning and disposal of Trust assets
- Communicating within the Trust and to the outside community the Trusts environmental performance

- Raising awareness of all Trust employees of the Trusts environmental impact, activities and performance, and to promote individual good practice.

## **7 Objectives**

7.1 The Trust will preserve natural resources and reduce pollution by striving to achieve the following objectives

### **(a) Waste**

To reduce the solid waste produced from the Trust premises by using resources more efficiently and improving recycling schemes, and to ensure that:

- All waste is dealt with in accordance with legal requirements and best practice,
- Training to key staff covers legal requirements and best practice; and
- All staff are encouraged to practice the 3 R's i.e. reduce, re-use and recycle.

### **(b) Hazardous Substances**

- To minimise their use and to use less hazardous substances or techniques where these are sufficient for the task;
- To ensure that hazardous substances are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with legislation and best practice;
- To encourage the use of building materials, furnishings etc which are low emitters of formaldehyde, volatile organic compounds and other potentially hazardous substances; and
- To continue to discourage smoking through education and by prohibiting it except in areas designated for patients only.

### **(c) Traffic congestion and vehicle emissions**

- To reduce congestion and pollution from commuting, official travel, fleet management, visitors and deliveries from commercial vehicles by:
- Requiring green transport plans based on the detailed guidance in DETR's A Guide to Green Transport Plans – advice to Government Departments' to be drawn up.
- Reviewing staff travel and subsistence rules and mileage rates by as a further means of encouraging staff to consider forms of travel and communication which are less polluting than cars such as walking, cycling, public transport, tele-working, video-conferencing and e-mail.

(d) Paper

- To reduce the use of paper, e.g. by double sided printing and copying and maximising the use of alternative technologies and electronic media;
- To use recycled paper comprising genuine post consumer waste (including agri-pulp).
- To ensure that any virgin pulp used in its manufacture comes from sustainably managed woodlands and that both the virgin pulp and the recycling process is chlorine free, i.e. manufactured using non chlorine bleaching agents such as oxygen, per acetic acid, sodium peroxide or more efficient pulping techniques; and
- To ensure that material published or printed by the Trust is, where necessary, sealed using a water miscible varnish (not a plasticized finish) and is bound using a water-based adhesive or other material, which does not impede recycling.

(e) Bio-degradable Substances

To use fully biodegradable substances such as wood, cardboard and vegetable based oils where they provide the best environmental option and value for money.

(f) Wood

- To purchase sustainably produced timber and timber products (such as furniture, veneers and joinery, fittings,) by, for example, specifying in orders and contracts that suppliers provide documentary evidence (which has been or if necessary can be, independently verified) that the timber has been lawfully obtained from forests and plantations which are managed to sustain their biodiversity, productivity and vitality, and to prevent harm to other ecosystems and any indigenous or forest-dependent people.

**Note. Such evidence might take the form of a certificate issued under a credible, preferably independent, verification scheme; or other documents, which demonstrate the operation of an environmental management system incorporating forest management criteria that conform with internationally recognised principles such as the Helsinki Guidelines. (More information on these and other options available can be found in DETRs Green Guide for Buyers).**

- To ensure that timber procurements are in accordance with international agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- To consider buying reclaimed timber or products made from reclaimed timber where it is cost effective and practicable to do so

- To put in place procedures for monitoring their timber procurement policies, exchanging information and examples of best practice with other Government Trusts and Agencies.

(g) Litter

To comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 by keeping the Trusts grounds clear of litter and refuse – taking account of the statutory Code of Practice on litter.

(h) Energy

To improve energy efficiency on the Trusts estate by;

- Promoting best practice
- Buying energy efficient equipment which achieves value for money;
- Introducing new techniques and technologies for using energy more efficiently without loss to productivity or comfort; where practicable (and taking advantage of public private partnerships)
- Meeting more of the Trusts electricity needs from internal combined heat and power (CHP) systems.

The Trust as a minimum will so far as is practicable strive to meet the latest Government Targets.

(i) Water

- To monitor water consumption across the estate;
- To use the information to develop benchmarks against which targets can be set to reduce water consumption by:

Following best practice;

Where feasible, installing flow restricting devices, waterless urinals and more efficient technologies where it is economic and practicable to do so; and where appropriate, specifying water-efficient appliances and equipment.

(j) Horticulture

- To substitute the use of all slow renewables such as peat with organic wastes such as compost, manure, leaf mould, bark chippings and coir for improving the soil; and
- To maintain grounds on the Trusts estate by using good husbandry and encouraging native flora and fauna.

(k) Climate Change:

To reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by:

- Reducing energy consumption in buildings (see 7(h) above);
- Encouraging the supply of 'green electricity' through purchase where it provides value for money; and
- Considering the feasibility of generating electricity on suitable sites from renewable sources such as wind turbines and other developing technologies such as photovoltaic cells as they become competitive; to control, where feasible, other gaseous and non gaseous pollutants which contribute to climate change. For example, by:
  - Switching where possible from hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs – used as refrigerants and in fire extinguishing systems), perfluorobutane (fire extinguishing systems) and sulphur hexafluoride (insulating switch gear) to environmentally preferable substitutes having a low or zero global warming potential;
  - Reducing emissions of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and oxides of nitrogen by cutting vehicle emissions (see 7(c) below).

(l) Ozone-Depleting Substances:

- To ensure that no products are purchased which contain chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), halons, carbon tetrachloride, 111 trichloroethane, or any other ozone-depleting substances where suitable alternatives exist;
- To comply with Sections 33 and 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 by continuing to prevent the venting of ozone-depleting substances from equipment and ensuring that they are recovered for recycling or destruction using appropriate technology;
- To extend the leakage control programme through regular servicing of all refrigeration and air conditioning equipment containing ozone depleting substances in compliance with professional codes of practice.

(m) Pesticides and Artificial Fertilisers

To minimise the use of pesticides and artificial fertilisers, e.g. by switching to natural methods of controlling weeds, insects and fungal pathogens wherever possible and maintaining the fertility of soil.

(n) Asbestos

- To continue to check for the presence of asbestos in all buildings;
- To manage undamaged materials in situ through regular monitoring for signs of deterioration and, where there is deterioration, to seal, encapsulate and label it as appropriate; where it is necessary to remove and dispose of asbestos materials, to do so in accordance with relevant regulations and guidance to minimise the release of fibres and the risk they might pose to the health of workers, staff and visitors; and
- To require, for new applications or where asbestos materials are being replaced, that asbestos free materials be used where these exist, are equally effective and less hazardous.

(o) Batteries

To avoid the use of batteries (especially those with high levels of lead, mercury and cadmium) where there is a better environmental option offering value for money (e.g. Rechargeable or solar cell products) and, where batteries are essential, to recycle them if suitable outlets can be found.

(p) Solvents and paints

To specify against the use by staff and contractors of products containing potentially harmful solvents where they can be eliminated or replaced by low-solvent, or solvent-free products such as water or vegetable based paints, varnishes and glues.

(q) Noise

To comply with statutes, regulations, by-laws and codes of practice to keep noise levels as low as practicable.

## **8 Procurement of Goods & Services**

8.1 Procurement has a very significant environmental impact. The Trust is therefore committed through its buying decisions to:

8.2 Require that all purchases be made in accordance with this policy statement, relevant current and foreseen legislation, its guides for suppliers and buyers and other official guidance;

- Ensure that the practice of its buyers is consistent with this statement by conducting at least one pilot project or environmental audit covering an operational area or function;
- Take account of whole life costs and not just the initial price when assessing value for money;

- Specify recycled products and re-refined mineral oils where practicable and they provide value for money taking account of whole life costs;
- Use the European Commission's mandatory energy labelling scheme by giving preference to the most energy efficient products where they give value for money taking account of whole life costs;
- Make use of environmental labels issued through recognised eco-labelling schemes to help identify environmentally preferable products (*i.e. those with a low environmental impact over their life cycle*);
- Make use of criteria already established under official eco-labelling schemes (where available and relevant to the contract) to improve specifications for products and services;
- Use the Government's 'Green Claims Code' to inform its buyers and challenge suppliers who provide information about their products which may appear to contravene the standards set out in the Code; and
- Evaluate, as appropriate, the environmental performance of tenderer's when relevant to the contract.

## **9 Management of the Trust Estate**

9.1 The Trust will continue to apply best practice in the management of its estate in particular by:

- Ensuring that land owned by the Trust does not pose an actual or potential threat to man and the natural and built environment, e.g. from contamination of the soil, ground water and surface water, hazards to buildings and building materials and the migration of gas;
- Ensuring that the conservation of species and habitats is respected, especially if sites of international or national importance are involved, or where the priorities of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan could be assisted;
- Undertaking Building Research Establishment's Environmental Appraisal Method (BREEAM) assessment when planning new or substantially refurbished premises;
- Introducing high standards of energy and environmental management;
- Improving indoor air quality;

- Adhering to advice on best practice given in guidance such as the-Building Research Establishments and Energy Technology Support Units best practice programmes;
- Building Services Research and Information (BSRIA) Environmental Code of Practice
- The Construction Industry Research & Information Association's (CIRIA) Environmental Handbook for Building and Civil Engineering Projects.

## **10 Monitoring and Auditing**

- 10.1 The Estates Department will co-ordinate and promote the improvement programme to implement the above policies, prepare an annual report on progress to The Trust Board and senior management and publicise developments.

## **11 Other Policies**

- 11.1 Within the context of this document we would refer the reader to the following Trust policies: -
- Energy Policy.
  - Operational Cleaning Plan.

## **12 Monitoring**

- 12.1 This policy shall be reviewed periodically as indicated by the review date on page 1. Comments on the contents or implementation of the policy should be directed to the *Head of Estates*