



NHS Lanarkshire

Biodiversity Report

2018 - 2021



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 NHS Lanarkshire is one of 14 NHS Boards (excluding special Boards) in Scotland and provides a range of community based and acute hospital services for more than 653,000 people living within the North and South Lanarkshire local authority areas. There are 3 district general hospitals in the area: University Hospital Monklands, University Hospital Wishaw and University Hospital Hairmyres each with an accident and emergency department and providing a range of specialist medical and surgical services. In total, NHS Lanarkshire employs over 11,500 staff.
- 1.2 NHS Lanarkshire's primary care facilities include health centres, clinics and community hospitals, and the Board also operates a Laundry facility which provides services for a number of Boards across central and southern Scotland.
- 1.3 Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their responsibilities. Following an amendment in the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011; every three years public bodies are also required to publish and make publically available their report on the actions they have taken to meet their biodiversity duty. NHS Lanarkshire's last report was published online in January 2018 following approval by the Board. This report highlights progress made in the period since.

2.0 Governance

- 2.1 NHS Lanarkshire has a long running Sustainability & Environment Group, chaired by the Board's Director of Strategic Planning & Performance and who is also the Boards Sustainability Champion. The Group is responsible for delivery of the various Chief Executive letters (CEL) and acts as a reference group for other relevant national mandatory and statutory legislation, such as CEL 2 (2012) "A Policy on Sustainable Development for NHSScotland 2012".
- 2.2 The Group also has the remit to develop and implement a staff engagement programme to increase staff and public awareness of sustainability and environmental initiatives and engage with appropriate stakeholders in the delivery of all sustainability and environmental projects as part of NHS Lanarkshire's Sustainability and Environment programme.
- 2.3 The Group is responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating risk management for strategic sustainability planning, climate change adaptation, biodiversity and service improvement across all NHS Lanarkshire Services, and produces reports on the Board's energy performance and carbon emissions to meet Scottish Government requirements around annual climate change and sustainability reporting.
- 2.4 The Lanarkshire Greenspace Health and Wellbeing Partnership was the first of its kind nationally and was established in 2013. The programme recognised the benefits of greater coordination between health and environment sectors to achieve health benefits from green space and included members from the statutory and voluntary sectors locally, as well as national partners such as Scottish Natural Heritage and Paths for All.
- 2.5 In 2017, an opportunity arose for NHS Lanarkshire to connect with the national "Our Natural Health Service Action Programme" and become one of four Local Green Health Partnerships across Scotland which co-ordinate cross-sectoral action between the health, social care and the environmental sectors. Both North & South Lanarkshire has urban and rural geographies and partners capitalise on environmental assets locally for the improvement of health and well-being.

3.0 Mainstreaming

- 3.1 NHS Lanarkshire publishes an annual Sustainability report. The report provides an update on NHS Lanarkshire's progress towards the Scottish Government's Sustainable Development aims and

objectives, and how these are being integrated into the delivery of core business. In addition, it is consistent with NHS Lanarkshire's Property and Asset Management Strategy (PAMS) 2017 - 2022, approved by the Board in September 2017.

- 3.2** Underpinning the Scottish Government's Purpose are the 5 Strategic Objectives of a Scotland which is: Wealthier and fairer; Smarter; Healthier; Safer and Stronger, and Greener. As both a significant employer and consumer of resources, NHS Lanarkshire is in a strong position to make a contribution to these goals through continuous improvement in sustainability and environmental performance.
- 3.3** The LGHP is successfully raising awareness of the benefits of green health and encouraging health & care professionals to reflect on their services and practice to encourage connections with nature. Integration of green health within local plans and strategies are also evident such as: Healthy Weight, Sustainability, Falls and Frailty, Good Mental Health For All and North and South Partnership strategic commissioning plans. A raft of work is continuing to also explore involving NHS volunteers to help connect patients with nature.
- 3.4** All NHS Boards and special Boards report annually on their performance on Sustainability and are scored against 16 key areas that are aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. All Boards have a baseline score and report annually to Health Facilities Scotland.

4.0 Actions taken to Improve Biodiversity Conservation

4.1 Grounds Maintenance

The Grounds and Maintenance staff are responsible for a wide range of horticultural related activities, including the maintenance of grass in NHS Lanarkshire sites, the planting of flower and shrub beds, path maintenance (weed control) and pruning and inspection of trees. All staff were given training on the identification and management of non-native species, particularly regarding the negative effects caused by invasive non-native species including; economic cost, structural damage, environmental degradation, aesthetic degradation, biodiversity loss, loss of land function, access restrictions and increased risk to human and animal health and safety. The Board also keep a tree inventory and carries out an annual survey of trees on all sites.

4.2 Partnership Working & Biodiversity Communications

- 4.2.1** For the last 5 years NHS Lanarkshire has run a social prescribing programme 'Gardening for Health' (GFH) which is part of the NHS Well Connected programme and is based in Lanark. This has expanded to being provided in 5 community hospital sites as well as current developments with University Hospital Hairmyres and older adults mental health wards. The GFH programme provides patients with a range of therapeutic horticulture and green activities, which can contribute to their recovery programme and improve self-management of long-term conditions.
- 4.2.2** NHS Lanarkshire have also been working with Scottish Forestry, Green Exercise Partnership on an NHS Greenspace project to maximise the use of green space for the benefit of staff, patients, carers and visitors and to promote green exercise on these sites.
- 4.2.3** Lanarkshire Green Health Partnership (LGHP) was established in March 2018 and is a cross sectoral collaboration working together to connect people with nature and maximise the use of health inducing green assets. Our Natural Health Service provides benefits to physical, mental and social health and can help to reduce inequalities in health through access to quality greenspace. The social impact of quality greenspace is particularly relevant to older adults where there is some evidence that people in areas with less greenspace report more loneliness and less social contact.
- 4.2.4** The LGHP is raising awareness and confidence of the health and social care sector workforce and the public to connect with nature. This is being achieved by offering holistic care for prevention, treatment and mitigation of ill health by:

- Ensuring outdoor activities are promoted, valued and integrated into how we provide health and care services.
- Calling for action from many organisations.
- Shaping work around local health priorities.

5.0 Biodiversity Highlights & Challenges

5.1 The immediate challenges for NHS Lanarkshire are to identify and prioritise climate change impacts posing greatest threat to the organisation. This is part of the Workplan for 2021-22 and will be carried out using the newly developed NHS Scotland Climate Change Risk Assessment Toolkit.

5.2 It is also a priority for the organisation to develop an NHS Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and where practical local BAPs.

5.3 The Lanarkshire Green Health partnership has made huge progress with partners offering green health opportunities such as walking, cycling, gardening and volunteering as well as enjoying being out in greenspace. Actions have involved:

- Development of gardening sessions at 5 community hospitals for inpatients and outpatients.



- Integration of green health activities to existing referral pathways such as Physical Activity Prescription, Active Health, Well Connected and Weigh to Go



- Raising awareness of the benefits of nature with over **600** health & social care professionals
- Identification of over **150** green health activities across both Health & Social Care Partnerships
- Development of a green health directory for staff and the public to find out what is available: www.bit.do/lan-greenspace

- Infrastructure changes and resources developed to improve active travel
- Quality improvement priorities identified through GIS mapping of SIMD 1 & 2 areas and quality of greenspace surrounding these communities.
- Recruitment of a Health Improvement Senior post for Active Travel and in partnership with Sustrans, a Workplace Engagement Officer for Active Travel for the NHSL workforce.

6.0 Monitoring

6.1 NHS Lanarkshire is committed to Monitoring outcomes of specific activities using biodiversity indicators that will be developed in the next reporting phase.

6.2 As the nature of biodiversity is variable over time and seasons, and wildlife and animals are not a permanent feature then the new indicators proposed will be designed to monitor biodiversity directly and show actual impacts of actions and activities rather than just measurements of the process.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

7.1 For the next three year reporting period, it is proposed to increase the Biodiversity Duty actions within the NHS Lanarkshire Climate Change Duties report that is published annually and reported to Health Facilities Scotland and Scottish Government Health & Social Care Department.

7.2 NHS Lanarkshire will also have completed an assessment of the quality of Greenspace in the NHS Lanarkshire estate.

7.3 NHS Lanarkshire will monitor performance on Biodiversity & Nature section in the Sustainability Assessment Toolkit and increase the score from a baseline of 30% to 45%.

7.4 NHS Lanarkshire have confirmed site selection for the new University Hospital Monklands and it will be an important part of the design process to build in biodiversity and biophilic design.