1.0 Introduction

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. The population increased significantly in 2014-15 with the addition of 4 Camglen sites, aligning NHS Lanarkshire boundary with the 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.

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.

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 publicly available their report on the actions they have taken to meet their biodiversity duty. NHS Lanarkshire’s last report was published online in January 2015 following approval by the Board. Whilst these reports are welcome at any time, in this round they must be available online by the beginning of January 2018.

2.0 Governance

NHS Lanarkshire has a long running Sustainability & Environment Group, chaired by the Boards 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 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” and CEL 14 (2010) “Sustainable Development: Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model for NHSScotland”.

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 initiatives as part of NHS Lanarkshire’s Sustainability and Environment programme.

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.

3.0 Mainstreaming

NHS Lanarkshire publishes an annual Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP). The SDAP 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.

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.
4.0 **Actions taken to Improve Biodiversity Conservation**

4.1 **Grounds Maintenance**

A review of the grounds and gardens maintenance programme was completed in 2015. 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.

4.2 **Partnership Working & Biodiversity Communications**

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. In 2017 an opportunity arose for NHS Lanarkshire to connect with the national “Our Natural Health Service Action Programme” and become one of five Local Green Health Partnerships across Scotland which will 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 will seek to capitalise on environmental assets locally for the improvement of health and well-being.

NHS Lanarkshire has also been working with the Clyde & Avon Valley Partnership, particularly on the Make Your Way campaign. This is a new project encouraging local people to walk and cycle more whilst exploring the rich heritage of their local area. Make Your Way is focussed on the communities of Larkhall, Lanark, Carluke, Stonehouse and Glassford, and includes multiple ways for people to get involved, including activities like Dorodango mud ball challenges, walks with periscopes, art workshops, creative place name activities and creating new art installations to mark certain walking routes.

In late 2016 NHS Lanarkshire has won an award for offering people with mental health issues the chance to bloom in confidence by tending flowers at local railway stations. The Adopt a Station gardening project, a partnership between NHS Lanarkshire’s mental health occupational therapy service and social enterprise Clydesdale Community Initiatives (CCI), scooped the prize for Outstanding Teamwork at the Community Rail Awards. The initiative sees people who are supported by mental health occupational therapists volunteering to brighten up five stations - Coatbridge Central, Coatbridge Sunnyside, Hamilton West, Whifflet and Wishaw.

For the last 3 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. The GFH provides patients with mental health issues a programme of therapeutic horticulture and green activities which can contribute to their recovery programme and improve self management of long-term conditions.

NHS Lanarkshire have also been working with 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.
5.0 Biodiversity Highlights & Challenges

Since the last report NHS Lanarkshire has become one of only 4 Health and Wellbeing Partnerships.

The immediate challenges for NHS Lanarkshire are to identify and prioritise climate change impacts posing greatest threat to the organisation.

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

6.0 Monitoring

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

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 SUMMARY

For the next three year reporting period, it is proposed to expand the Biodiversity Duty actions within the NHS Lanarkshire Sustainable Development Action Plan that is published annually and reported to Health Facilities Scotland and Scottish Government Health & Social Care Department.