

REPORT TO THE TRUST BOARD: PUBLIC
20 May 2021

Title	Sustainability and Value Steering Group
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Purpose of the report

The report outlines the rationale, process and implications of declaring a climate and ecological emergency at East London NHS Foundation Trust. A declaration aligns with trust values, our commitment to improving population health and our role as an anchor organisation.

Summary of key issues

Experts agree that climate and ecological breakdown is the greatest single current threat to human health.

Mental health impacts related to extreme weather events, environmental degradation, air pollution, migration, and awareness of the climate catastrophe are increasingly being recognised.

Numerous authorities and trusts have declared a climate and ecological emergency as a means of demonstrating a commitment to accelerated action, with predicted positive health benefits.

Action on the root causes of the climate and ecological emergency will save and improve lives, reduce inequalities and add value to the work of the Trust.

We recommend a declaration that involves:

- A recognition of the threat posed to public health by climate change and the need for action appropriate to the threat.
- A commitment to carbon reduction plans
- Ongoing work with partners to promote and protect public health.

We recommend a carbon audit of current emissions and a Green Plan co-produced and led at Board level.

Strategic priorities this paper supports (please check box including brief statement)

Improved population health outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Improved experience of care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Improved staff experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Improved value	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Committees/meetings where this item has been considered

Date	Committee/Meeting
	The report has been approved by the Anchor Steering Group and by the Board of Directors.

Implications

Equality Analysis	This report has no direct impact on equalities.
Risk and Assurance	This report has no legal or health and safety implications
Service User/Carer/Staff	The declaration is likely to affect all directorates and service groups in the Trust.

Financial	Any additional funding required will be identified following carbon audit.
Quality	Expertise developed in the Quality Improvement Programme will be utilised to deliver on the trust's carbon reduction plan.

Supporting documents and research material

a. None
b. None

Glossary

Abbreviation	

Purpose of the Report

1.0 Context

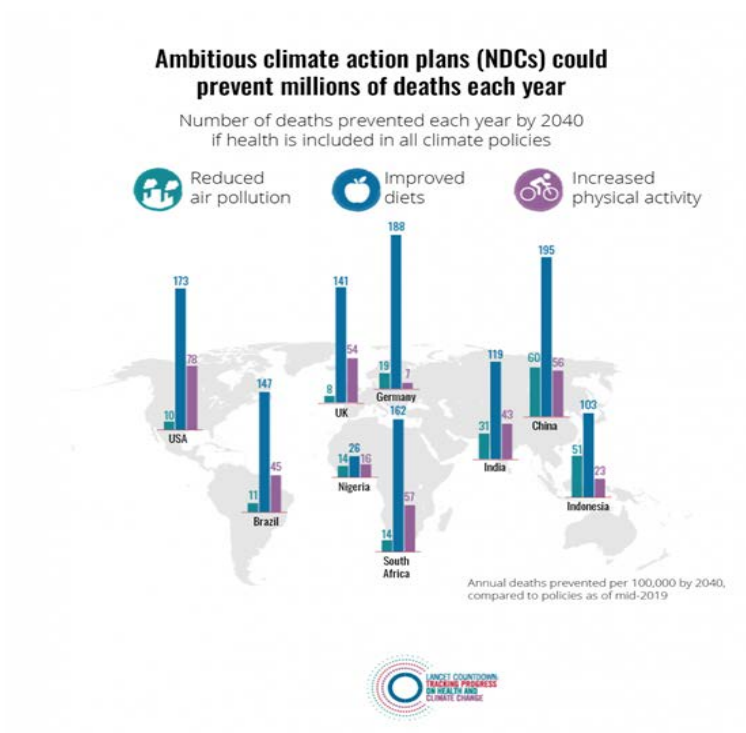
- 1.1 In addition to the UK Parliament in May 2019 and the EU Parliament 6 months later, 450 local authorities across the country have declared a climate emergency. At least 1,769 jurisdictions in 30 countries have declared a climate emergencyⁱ. There is no single definition of what declaring a 'climate emergency' means but for many local authorities it includes a commitment to carbon-neutrality by 2030.
- 1.2 Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was the first NHS trust in the UK to declare in June 2019. They set a target date of 2030 for net zero on directly controlled (scope 1) emissions. Declarations have been made by 2 mental health trusts to date: Nottinghamshire Healthcare on 31 October 2019 and CNTW (Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust) in March 2020. Other mental health trusts including Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust are in process of preparing Green Plans with a target of net zero emissions by 2030. In March 2021 Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children became the first London hospital to declare a Climate and Health Emergency with a target for net zero on direct emissions by 2030.
- 1.3 Declarations by NHS trusts are a reflection of the overwhelming evidence that climate and ecological breakdown is the greatest threat to population healthⁱⁱ, mediated via extreme temperatures and weather events, breakdown of natural systems, and downstream socio-economic impacts.
- 1.4 Greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced significantly by 2030 to give us any chance of avoiding the more catastrophic effects of global warming, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Changeⁱⁱⁱ. In 2019 the authors of the Lancet Countdown^{iv} (set up to monitor progress against the 2015 UN Paris Climate Change Agreement^v) noted that, despite the agreement, emissions continue to rise globally. As a result of this, we are on course to see a 4 degree warming by the end of the century without immediate accelerated interventions to change course, reduce emissions and protect ecosystems.

- 1.5 Devastating effects on human health are outlined in the Lancet Countdown, along with the immense benefits to health of fast and effective action to reduce emissions and mitigate climate and ecological breakdown. The authors are clear that the climate emergency is a health emergency that demands the urgent attention of healthcare professionals and healthcare organisations. One of most useful effects of declaring a climate and ecological emergency is in publically stating an awareness of the climate emergency as a health emergency, thus adding to a groundswell of calls for action.
- 1.6 The delivery of healthcare globally is estimated to produce between 4 – 6 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions. In the UK 5 per cent of all emissions stem from NHS work. As a result of greenhouse gas emissions we have seen extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, and poor air quality, and will see increasing exposure to severe storms, heatwaves, flooding, wildfires, with impact on crop yields, food security, exposure to infectious disease, predicted migration of 200 million globally by 2050^{vi}, and civil unrest. Deforestation, degradation of the natural environment, monocultures in farming, and use of plastics compound these problems. At the current rate of soil degradation, there are 60 years of farming left^{vii}. Air pollution alone - linked to heart disease, stroke, dementia and lung cancer - contributes to around 36,000 deaths annually in the UK ^{viii}and 7 million deaths a year globally.
- 1.7 In recognition of the benefits of reducing healthcare related emissions, the NHS Long Term Plan set targets for reduction in the carbon footprint of NHS provider organisations. The NHS Standard Contract 2020/21 requires NHS provider organisations to take all reasonable steps to minimise adverse effects on the environment, and to maintain and deliver a Green Plan, approved by the Governing Body. We must also quantify environmental impacts, publish progress data in our annual reports, and publish clear plans on our contribution to a Greener NHS.
- 1.8 The Greener NHS report 'Delivering a NetZero National Health Service' was published in October 2020. As a result of this commitment, Trusts are increasingly likely to be expected to deliver best practice efficiency standards and adoption of new innovations to reduce waste, water and carbon, in addition to reducing single-use plastics. The national programme will include opportunities to create value such as the NHS Energy Efficiency Fund. The Greener NHS initiative asks for a board-level net zero lead, and identifies emissions reduction as a key responsibility for all staff.
- 1.9 As part of the NHS Plan – NHS organisations are also expected to develop their Anchor Organisation programmes of work. A core part of this work is 'reducing its organisational environmental impact' The NHS is responsible for 40% of public sector emissions.

2.0 Rationale for a Declaration at East London NHS Foundation Trust

- 2.1 A declaration means we recognise the crisis and intend to become a net zero organisation that promotes the vast public health benefits and opportunity to drive down health inequalities linked to action on the climate and ecological emergency.
- 2.2 A declaration aligns with ELFT's values and responsibilities as a healthcare provider, is entirely consistent with ELFT's commitment to tackling population health outcomes, recognising the impact of social determinants on health and acting as an anchor institution locally.

Saving lives: reduced mortality and morbidity



Action taken to reduce emissions overwhelmingly leads to lives saved and improved health outcomes for individuals and communities.

Aligns with trust values and those of the wider healthcare system

Reducing our environmental impact is one of the key pillars of being an anchor institution and is one of the four social values we are including in our contracting and procurement work. In this way, as a trust, we use our economic leverage to deliver public health benefits. Proponents of a Green New Deal advocate for community wealth building and centering of local

marginalised communities.

This proposal has been agreed by and is supported by the Trust's Anchor Steering group and by our Board of Directors. The climate and ecological emergency is fundamentally a public health emergency. According to the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (UKHACC) an alliance of 21 health organisations including the Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Psychiatry, Royal College of General Practice, the British Medical Association, the British Medical Journal, and the Lancet: 'Climate change undermines the foundations of health in the UK and worldwide'^{ix}.

Driving down inequalities

The harm caused by climate change disproportionately affects poorer communities, including those served by ELFT. Effects fall disproportionately on young people and the over 65s, refugees, homeless people, and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

Air pollution disproportionately affects our communities, linked to 1 in 16 deaths, with all London boroughs exceeding the WHO guideline limits and Newham having the worst level of air pollution in the UK as a whole.

Globally, exposure to the climate emergency is greatest in low income countries, to which many of our local communities are linked by family ties. A climate and ecological emergency has already been declared by local authorities in Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Luton and Bedford.

The vast majority of effective measures to tackle the crisis have social justice at their core.

Better mental health outcomes

Mental health impacts of the climate emergency are increasingly being recognised, including in a forthcoming position statement from the Royal College of Psychiatrists to coincide with their declaration of a climate emergency. Clinicians at ELFT are involved in supporting the college to deliver that statement.

Staff and service user engagement

Action on the climate crisis has the potential to motivate the workforce, and build employee morale and commitment to the organisation, in a context in which recruitment is a major challenge.

Opportunity to establish networks and integrate work with partner organisations

A declaration sends a signal to partner organisations and others in our communities, and allows us to establish effective networks. As an example, the drafting of this declaration has driven the establishment of a network of 6 mental health trusts who are working on net zero plans.

Improving value

In addition to alignment with core values, and the ethical argument for urgent action on the climate and ecological emergency, positive action on greenhouse gas emissions has the potential to produce efficiencies and improve value. The Greener NHS report give examples including the use of renewable energies at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital and Operation TLC (Turning off equipment; Switching off lights; and Closing doors) at Bart's Health NHS Trust which saved £500,000 in reduced energy consumption. For GP practices in the trust, the Green Impact for Health toolkit, produced by the Royal College of General Practitioners provides comprehensive guidance on emissions reductions interventions that add value.

'Health institutions can realise substantial financial benefits through spending less on energy, maintenance, supplies and other factors and though reducing waste, even when up front investments are taken into account' (Salas et al, BMJ, 17 October 2020).

Demonstrating leadership

ELFT has the opportunity to demonstrate climate health leadership and our commitment to local population health outcomes through the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency, and the development of a focused Green Plan (Net Zero) to replace our Sustainable Development Strategy and enable accelerated intervention. In development and delivery of the strategy, ELFT will draw on its expertise in quality improvement.

3.0 Recognised mental and community health effects of climate and ecological breakdown

Recognised mental and community health effects of climate and ecological breakdown	
Flooding	In one UK study of flood victims, 20% were diagnosed with depression, 28.3% with anxiety and 36% with PTSD ^x . Another study found psychological impacts were more commonly reported than physical effects. Psychological distress, anxiety, and depression 2 – 5 x higher among individuals who reported flood water in the home compared to non-flooded individuals. ^{xi}
Drought	Association with depression ^{xii} and suicide ^{xiii} internationally
Heat	Heat stress Heat-related violence Association with anxiety and depression Increased suicide rates at hotter temperatures ^{xiv, xv} Psychotropic side effects and increased rates of delirium People with mental health problems are three times more likely to die from a heat wave than those without.
Food insecurity	Psychological distress, psychiatric illnesses and poor child development ^{xvi} .
Air pollution	Association between long-term exposure to air pollution and depression and anxiety Possible association between short term exposure and suicide. Air pollution thought to be responsible for 6% modifiable risk of dementia ^{xvii, xviii} Air pollution associated with developmental disorder in children Linked to asthma, heart disease, lung cancer and low birth weight, increased risk for respiratory diseases
Migration	Projections of 200 million displaced people to follow increasing climate disasters Higher rates of psychosis linked to forced migration ^{xix} .
Loss of home, habitat, biodiversity and ecosystems; facing the painful reality of the climate crisis	Climate grief Climate anxiety In November 2020, the RC Psych launched its first resource to support children & young people to manage fears about the environment.

4.0 Implications of a Declaration

- 4.1 A climate and ecological emergency declaration identifies the Trust as an organisation with a commitment to tackling the climate change, which aims to mobilise and act at a scale and speed appropriate to the crisis.
- 4.2 'An organisation declares a climate emergency to acknowledge that climate change is a drastic issue, requiring coordinated and proactive mitigation and preparation'. NHS Sustainability Development Unit
- 4.3 In Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service, published in October 2020, Simon Stevens set out targets for the NHS as a whole to deliver:
- Net zero by 2040 on directly controlled emissions (**80% by 2028-32**) (The Greenhouse Gas Protocol Scope 1)
 - Net zero by 2045 on emissions we can influence (**80% by 2036-39**) (The Greenhouse Gas Protocol scopes 2 and 3)
- 4.4 For ELFT, the declaration of a climate emergency implies:
- A recognition of the threat posed to public health by climate change and the need for action appropriate to the threat.
 - A commitment to carbon reduction plans
 - Working with partners to promote and protect public health.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the Board approve the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency and commit the trust to set targets in line with other London mental health trusts, i.e. net zero direct emissions by 2030 and net zero indirect emissions by 2040 from a 2020 baseline, with the understanding that accelerated action is optimal and that early adoption of emission reduction action is likely to create a virtuous domino effect of action and innovation.
- 4.6 **Action to follow a declaration would include:**
External and internal communications about the decision, the commitment and the opportunity to be involved in delivering a plan.

Completion of an updated Carbon Audit. Detailed support on how to deliver this is produced by NHS Sustainable Development Unit^{xx}

Co-development of our Green Plan (Net Zero) using QI methodology and analytics. Work on this has begun via the Sustainability and Value Steering Group. A pathway to net zero will include the following drivers:

- Models of care (prevention, reduction of inequalities, care closer to home, digital care, nature based treatments)
- Procurement, medicines and supply chain, waste and plastics
- Estates, heating, lighting, water and energy - renewable energies and use of estate (energy generation, tree-planting, food production, re-wilding)
- Travel and transport
- Food, nutrition and fitness
- Governance, leadership and collective action (links to NHSEI Net Zero Expert Panel)
- Education, training and awareness

- Research, innovation and adaptation.
- Workforce, co-delivery and networks (includes community influence, circular economy and anchor institution)
- Funding and finance
- Data, analytics and monitoring
- Communications

4.7 It is proposed that work streams for each driver report in to the Sustainability and Value Group and to a Board lead for Net Zero.

4.8 There are already countless examples of sustainable practice and innovation throughout the Trust, for example the apprenticeship scheme recruiting from local communities and the commitment to 100% renewable energy supply at all sites. The Steering Group recognise the considerable work that has gone into ELFT's Sustainable Development Management Plans. Within the newly formed Steering Group sit networks, knowledge, passion and expertise that can lift the organisation to a new level in terms of sustainability planning and action. We will be looking at ways to involve every part of the workforce in these discussions.

4.9 The declaration of a climate and ecological emergency and the stimulus provided by the Greener NHS report, and by wider public debates about the climate crisis afford us an opportunity to engage staff in our aim to become a net zero organisation.

5.0 Action Being Requested

5.1 The Steering Group recommends that ELFT declare a climate and ecological emergency and begin work on carbon audit and Green Plan (Net Zero ELFT).

5.2 The Steering Group recommends that ELFT commit the necessary resource to deliver on these plans following the carbon audit.

ⁱ <https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/category/news/>

ⁱⁱ Costello, A cited in BMJ 2009;338:b2024

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

^{iv} [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)32596-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)32596-6/fulltext)

^v <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

^{vi} <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/01/climate-change-drives-migration-crisis-in-bangladesh-from-dhaka-sundabans/>

^{vii} <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/only-60-years-of-farming-left-if-soil-degradation-continues/>

^{viii} National Health Service, Greener NHS, <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/a-net-zero-nhs/>

^{ix} <http://www.ukhealthalliance.org/>

^x Waite, Thomas David et al. "The English national cohort study of flooding and health: cross-sectional analysis of mental health outcomes at year one." BMC public health vol. 17,1 129. 28 Jan. 2017, doi:10.1186/s12889-016-4000-2 Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5273816/>

^{xi} Sylvia Tunstall, Sue Tapsell, Colin Green, Peter Floyd, Carolyn George; The health effects of flooding: social research results from England and Wales. J Water Health 1 September 2006; 4 (3): 365–380. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2166/wh.2006.031>

^{xii} Cunsolo Willox, A., Harper, S.L., Ford, J.D. et al. Climate change and mental health: an exploratory case study from Rigolet, Nunatsiavut, Canada. Climatic Change 121, 255–270 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-013-0875-4>

^{xiii} Hanigan IC, Butler CD, Kokic PN, Hutchinson MF. Suicide and drought in New South Wales, Australia, 1970-2007. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2012;109(35):13950-13955. doi:10.1073/pnas.1112965109

^{xiv} S Clayton, Mental health and our changing climate: Impacts, implications, and guidance Available at <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/03/mental-health-climate.pdf>

^{xv} <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/9b5f/6448fd50fc2b33707fdeba9f45fec81a34c5.pdf>

^{xvi} Carter KN, Kruse K, Blakely T, Collings S. The association of food security with psychological distress in New Zealand and any gender differences. Soc Sci Med. 2011 May;72(9):1463-71. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.03.009. Epub 2011 Apr 8. PMID: 21481507.

^{xvii} Chen H, Kwong JC, Copes R, Hystad P, van Donkelaar A, Tu K, Brook JR, Goldberg MS, Martin RV, Murray BJ, Wilton AS, Kopp A, Burnett RT. Exposure to ambient air pollution and the incidence of dementia: A population-based cohort study. Environ Int. 2017 Nov;108:271-277. doi: 10.1016/j.envint.2017.08.020. Epub 2017 Sep 13. PMID: 28917207.

^{xviii} [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30367-6/fulltext#seccetitle30](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30367-6/fulltext#seccetitle30)

^{xix} <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4793153/>

^{xx} <https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/nhs%20long%20term%20plan/nhs-long-term-plan-ltp.aspx>