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Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

HEIW Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy 2021-2024



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Introduction and guidance for staff

This is the approved HEIW Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy 2021-24.

This strategy has been developed by the Biodiversity and Climate Change Staff Stakeholder Group, with voluntary membership from across the organisation (see Appendix 1) and has been approved by the Executive Team. The strategy takes into account feedback received from staff engagement in May 2021.

This document sets out the strategy for future action and initiatives, to ensure we are able to focus on the 'Areas of Action' that we believe will generate the greatest impact and through which HEIW will be able to deliver effective change and improvement. These will be used to develop a detailed action plan in early 2021-22.

As staff in HEIW, NHS Wales and the public sector in Wales, we are expected to respond to requirements for two distinct agendas across our existing work and in planning future activities:

- 1) **Biodiversity** – in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 6 duty – reporting directly to Welsh Government every three years (next report due in 2022)
- 2) **Decarbonisation** – in line with the All Wales NHS Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030 (published 24 March 2021) – reporting likely via NHS Wales (NWSSP) to Welsh Government (Decarbonisation Board) but, at the time of writing (May 2021), yet to be confirmed

HEIW must meet separate requirements for these agendas, but the HEIW Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy encompasses both, to take advantage of obvious and natural links where possible.

As individuals, we may well also be considering our personal contribution and making lifestyle changes to support the wider effort. We hope that this strategy will also help us to take positive steps to change beyond our working lives.

Whatever your situation, as a member of our staff, HEIW is calling you to action.

For further information, to forward comments or ideas, or to get involved with the Staff Stakeholder Group, please refer to the Biodiversity and Climate Change intranet pages: [Biodiversity and Climate Change \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Or contact Justine.Cooper@wales.nhs.uk

Context

The recognition of the impact of climate change on our planet and our health has been building slowly for some time, but the focus on the urgency to address it is relatively recent.

National Direction

In April 2019, Welsh Government, with the backing of the Senedd, declared a [Climate Emergency for Wales](#). To implement decarbonisation, Welsh Government has put in place binding legislation, strategies, and ambitions to drive carbon reduction activity in Wales. In March 2019 the First Minister for Wales launched Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales. This sets out Welsh Government's plan for decarbonisation in Wales. It also further states the ambition for the public sector to be net zero by 2030, and the specific policy to reduce emissions in the health sector.



The [NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030](#) was published on 24th March 2021 and will guide the work of all NHS organisations to reduce carbon emissions across key areas, including buildings, transport, procurement and approaches to healthcare (which includes an initiative associated with agile working). Our expectations for how this will impact HEIW had already been accounted for in the 2021-24 Plan on a Page for Strategic Objective 5.5, but the published delivery plan will be reviewed in detail now that it is finalised.

Climate change alters temperature and weather patterns, and so it is also impacting on plant and animal life and causing a decline in biodiversity. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 incorporates the Section 6 duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. It is supported by the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Wales, produced by the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board and set out in the [Nature Recovery Action Plan \(NRAP\) for Wales 2015](#).

In 2020, the [NRAP](#) was refreshed:

“to take into account the growing evidence around the scale of the loss of biodiversity and the changing policy context in Wales. This includes the legislative framework and the Natural Resources Policy, the expected impacts of our exit from the EU, the escalating ecological crisis and the need to respond urgently to that alongside the response to the climate emergency.

The Coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has placed fresh emphasis on the need to clarify the urgent priorities for biodiversity and a green recovery.”

The objectives set out in 2015 (see Appendix 2), to which we have mapped our strategy, remain unchanged, but several immediate priorities have been identified for further action. One of these, ‘Aligning the responses to the climate emergency with the biodiversity crisis’ recognises the importance of the link between climate change and biodiversity. Our strategy reflects this and addresses our intentions for both maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and tackling the effects of climate change via decarbonisation.

HEIW Approach

As a public body, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is subject to the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Section 6 duty. HEIW is also governed by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its 7 goals and, in this case, particularly developing ‘a resilient Wales’.

We are actively working towards the Welsh Government (WG) ambition for a net zero carbon public sector in Wales by 2030 and will collaborate with NHS Wales colleagues to support the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan. The WG ambition will be a clear focus for all NHS and all public sector organisations over the coming decade and beyond.

In 2021, HEIW has committed to delivering a programme of changes to reduce its carbon emissions, offset necessary emissions and to maintain and enhance the resilience of biodiversity through the normal business of its functions. Strategic Objective 5.5, ‘Implement organisational changes to meet the requirements regarding biodiversity and climate change’ sits under the organisation’s Strategic Aim 5, ‘To be an exemplar employer and a great place to work’.

HEIW’s Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy sets out the organisation’s high-level aspirations and intentions to meet requirements, to call its staff, stakeholders, partners and suppliers to action, and to make positive changes now to achieve longer-term goals for Wales.

HEIW submitted its first environment report to WG in December 2019. The next report will be published in 2022 and every three years thereafter.

Additional supporting considerations that set the context for this work include:

- The significant impact of COVID-19 on business practices and [green recovery plans](#)

- WG's plan to go [beyond recycling](#) and make the circular economy in Wales a reality where we keep resources in use and avoid waste
- WG's long-term ambition for 30% of the workforce in Wales to be [working remotely](#).

It is hoped that our engagement with and support for staff will encourage and enable all of us to make personal as well as professional choices, should we wish to do so.

This strategy has been formulated in line with HEIW's strategic aims, as well as Wales' well-being goals. It takes into account feedback received from staff at events in February 2020, October 2021 and January 2021, as well as engagement on the strategy specifically in May 2021, as part of our commitment to involve staff and embed thinking across the organisation.

Notes

This strategy is to be read in conjunction with HEIW's Annual Plan IMTP 2021-22 (and subsequent annual plans covering the same period).

What HEIW has done so far

Engagement and direction setting

In February 2020, we facilitated an activity at the HEIW Staff Conference which helped to provoke thinking about this important area of work. Soon after, we established an internal stakeholder group with representatives from across the organisation who had an interest in the work of the group (Appendix 1).

Over a period of six months, the group reviewed the legislation and requirements and developed what we have termed our priority 'Areas of Action', with a key goal and objectives for each. We have developed a communications and engagement plan, from which a number of actions have already been achieved, including the official launch of the group and the organisation's Biodiversity and Climate Change intranet pages in October 2020, presentations at staff conferences and events in 2020 and early 2021, and regular blogs from group members. The Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy 2021-2024 was drafted ready for staff engagement in early 2021.

The stakeholder group continues to engage with all staff via staff events and the intranet, ensuring that staff are aware of the work being undertaken and future plans, as well as creating opportunities for all staff to contribute to the discussion and become more involved if they would like to do so. At the time of writing, the most recent staff event took place on 25 January 2021, where staff were asked to post

Top themes from the HEIW staff event on 25th January 2021:

Continued home/remote and flexible working and reduced travel associated with work, aligned to an agile working policy

More and faster charging points for electric vehicles in the carpark

More recycling options in Ty Dysgu, including allowing staff to bring more of their recycling from home to be recycled via work

More plants in the grounds of Ty Dysgu and in the office

their ideas for how HEIW could help them to deliver a reduction in carbon emissions.

The stakeholder group will consider these as part of its wider work to develop a detailed action plan in line with this strategy.

Being proactive

Since its inception in October 2018, HEIW has continued to make improvements to its custom-fitted offices in Ty Dysgu.

Since October 2018, HEIW has:

Installed LED lighting and motion sensors indoors and out

Implemented a recycling scheme to deal with our most commonly used recyclables, including food, plastics, batteries, and toner cartridges

Monitored waste and how much is recycled via reports from our disposal partners

Started using 100% green energy, via work with our partners, NWSSP

Increased the allowance via the Cycle to Work scheme to £2500 to support staff to make more sustainable transport choices

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced us to consider and adopt new ways of working that, over the period of a year and ongoing, have become embedded in our practices and in the delivery of our services. These have had an immediate and positive impact on reducing our carbon emissions. For HEIW, these are in the areas where we believe we can continue to make a difference by keeping emissions low, such as reduced travel, by staff and others with whom we work or to whom we provide services, a reduction in our use of consumables and in printing, and delivery of more services virtually. We have already begun to consider the benefits of these new ways of working and we are committed to adopting these on a permanent basis where they meet business needs at the same time as reducing carbon emissions and helping to maintain and enhance biodiversity.

Our Biodiversity and Decarbonisation Strategy for 2021-24 is now in place and we are developing detailed plans for each of our 'Areas of Action' (see pages 7-10) in early 2021-22. These will enable HEIW to take the next steps to challenge our organisation to think and behave differently in order to prepare for a more sustainable future for us all.

What we are going to do in 2021-24

Through our four 'Areas of Action' (see pages 7-10), HEIW will support:

1. the [Section 6 duty on biodiversity in the Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#);
2. the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) 2015 objectives (Appendix 2); and
3. the [NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030](#) initiatives and targets.

We have determined these Areas of Action as priorities for:

- ensuring our success in supporting the NRAP objectives; and
- implementing a programme of incremental targets to reduce our carbon emissions in line with the NHS Decarbonisation Plan (as we move towards a net zero carbon position across the public sector in Wales).

HEIW Areas of Action:

- 1. Engaging and supporting our staff*
 - 2. Sustainable procurement*
 - 3. Developing Ty Dysgu and supporting our local communities*
 - 4. Environmental sustainability*
-

The Areas of Action are set out in more detail in the following pages. They form the framework for a more detailed set of actions to support the NRAP objectives and the NHS Wales decarbonisation initiatives and targets and to achieve our ambitions.

Our detailed action plans will be developed in 2021. We will report internally against our action plans. We will report externally to Welsh Government against the NRAP objectives and the NHS Wales decarbonisation initiatives and targets.

Our Areas of Action

Area of Action 1: Engaging and supporting our staff

What we mean by this:

This is our first area of action because it is critical to the delivery of this strategy. Our staff will generate ideas, lead and drive through initiatives, and support and make changes. For us all to be able to achieve what is required, we need to share and provide access to expert and reliable information, guidance and support. We need to be engaging on the topic and model the kind of behaviour we would like to see at all levels of the organisation.

Our goal: To raise awareness and engage internally and externally on an ongoing basis

Our objectives:

1. Engage with staff on development of this strategy and on future plans and initiatives
2. Engage with and support staff to implement and adopt new and transformative initiatives
3. Embed biodiversity and decarbonisation in the delivery of our strategic plans
4. Collaborate across internal and external networks to develop initiatives that bring wider benefits
5. Celebrate our successes internally and externally

Our intentions:

- We will embed an emphasis into the development of our strategic plans on reducing and offsetting carbon emissions, driven by the Welsh Government aim for a net zero carbon public sector in Wales by 2030, the NHS Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. We will embed a similar emphasis on maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and promoting the resilience of ecosystems, in line with the Section 6 duty in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- We will work to reduce carbon emissions organisation wide and so, to help our staff help us achieve reductions, a key area of focus for us is to raise awareness and engage internally and externally on an ongoing basis, including the application of an agile working policy.
- We will implement an appropriate framework of governance, and support for delivery, including staff development, signposting to information and tools, and opportunities for staff involvement in projects and initiatives. These will ensure we are able to embed thinking and action within our organisation, and further support individuals to gain knowledge and understanding so that they are able to consider and make changes both at work and in their personal lives, if they choose to do so.

- We will measure engagement internally and externally via intranet, website and social media views, likes and comments related to specific pages, blogs and posts. We will continue to engage with staff and ask for direct feedback at staff conferences and events and via calls to action, as well as running regular polls to take quick readings of current engagement levels. We will monitor interest and engagement in specific activities and initiatives when we develop and implement our detailed action plan, and we will continue to communicate and celebrate our successes with all our stakeholders.



Area of Action 2: Sustainable Procurement

What we mean by this:

We want to be able to ensure that HEIW is only procuring goods and services that are sustainably managed or produced and we want to be able to influence this internally and externally, as far as is possible.

Our goal: To undertake sustainable procurement of goods and services

Our objectives:

1. Ensure the supplies we use internally in Ty Dysgu and externally for work purposes are from sustainable sources
2. Reduce the amount of printing we undertake for work purposes on and off site
3. Improve/expand our existing recycling scheme
4. Ensure procurement of products and services is sustainable by liaising with NHS Procurement and understanding the requirements of the framework
5. Consider opportunities to procure goods that are biodegradable/made from re-used/recycled materials

Our intentions:

- Within the NHS Wales procurement systems, we will ensure that the supplies we use in Ty Dysgu are from sustainable sources and are environmentally friendly, including paper and products being used by our contractors, such as cleaning products and paint.
- We will monitor and, where possible, improve our recycling scheme.
- We will work with NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) Procurement to understand the requirements in place for suppliers on the NHS Procurement Framework and to consider other opportunities to procure goods that are made from re-used or recycled materials.
- We will set targets for the reduction of printing at Ty Dysgu and will consider options for how we might also ensure supplies of paper that we use external to Ty Dysgu are from sustainable sources.

Area of Action 3: Developing Ty Dysgu and supporting our local communities

What we mean by this:

When we talk about developing Ty Dysgu in relation to biodiversity, we mean the grounds and internal offices of the building. This also relates to Area of Action 4 and environmental sustainability in terms of the carbon efficiency of the building.

Supporting our local communities is about building relationships and making a positive difference to the environment for everyone who works or lives there. This links naturally to the health and wellbeing of our own staff and our national remit for the health and wellbeing of the NHS Wales workforce.

Our goal: To increase the resilience of our natural environment at Ty Dysgu and through collaboration with our local communities

Our objectives:

1. Develop the small area on site at Ty Dysgu, considering opportunities to enhance biodiversity
2. Investigate opportunities to get involved in community projects in our local areas
3. Consider effective ongoing use of Ty Dysgu by us and by others

Our intentions:

- We will seek advice from charities and wildlife organisations to help us to determine the best use of the small area we have available. We will consider options for planting and encouraging wildlife, such as birds, bees, butterflies and insects, and we will seek to improve our immediate environment for health and wellbeing purposes, for our staff and for others who visit our premises.
- We will investigate opportunities to get involved in community projects in our local areas by developing links with our communities, both local to Ty Dysgu and to our homes. These might be projects that we lead, or ones that we decide to sponsor, either directly via the HEIW budget, or through fundraising efforts. We will investigate more formal arrangements for staff volunteering to provide support for local projects or events and will seek opportunities to contribute to mitigation of the effects of climate change, such as flooding. We will link projects to our local and national remits for health and wellbeing of our staff and the NHS Wales workforce and look for opportunities to share good practice or collaborate with other NHS Wales organisations.
- Within NHS Wales procurement frameworks, we will ensure contractors are using environmentally friendly products and continue to monitor the use of Ty Dysgu by our staff and by others to determine best use of our facilities.

Area of Action 4: Environmental sustainability

What we mean by this:

This Area of Action is directly related to reducing carbon emissions where we can, in our existing work and in planning for future activities, to play our part in achieving the targets in the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Plan, in line with the Welsh Government ambition for a net zero carbon public sector in Wales by 2030.

Our goal: To reduce HEIW's carbon footprint

Our objectives:

1. Monitor our carbon footprint and take appropriate action that will have the greatest impact on reducing it
2. Promote existing schemes and new initiatives that we develop
3. Set targets in line with Welsh Government/NHS targets and our organisational aspiration and report performance regularly via existing mechanisms
4. Collaborate with networks across NHS Wales, other public sector organisations and in our local communities to share and develop knowledge, understanding and best practice

Our intentions:

- We will respond to the Welsh Government Energy Support (WGES) report 2020, by engaging WGES to undertake detailed feasibility studies for solar panels and improvements to our heating and cooling system. We will consider a range of initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and to support staff to make the necessary changes at work and at home, such as more and faster electric vehicle charging points, in line with the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030.
- We will ensure we are collaborating with NHS colleagues and others to implement the initiatives and actions outlined in the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Plan, to build our knowledge and understanding, and to consider any appropriate new or proposed means for reducing carbon emissions.
- We will develop targets to help us reduce our carbon emissions incrementally between 2021 and 2030, and beyond. We will develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure our progress and report regularly internally and quarterly via organisational performance reporting.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Biodiversity and Climate Change Staff Stakeholder Group membership

Member	Title	Directorate
Ben Baker (Project Support)	Project Support Officer	Planning, Performance and Corporate Services
Beckie Chandler (currently on maternity leave)	Workforce Strategy and Planning Officer	Workforce and OD
Justine Cooper (Chair)	Planning and Performance Business Partner	Planning, Performance and Corporate Services
Georgia Croft	Receptionist and Administrative Assistant	Executive Support
Sion Ford	Careers and Widening Access Officer	Workforce and OD
Liz Hargest	Education Development Manager	Nursing
Jo Hendry	Digital Support Officer	Digital
Lauren Howells (Administrative Support)	Administrative Assistant, Planning, Performance and Corporate Services	Planning, Performance and Corporate Services
Rachel Mooney	Programme Lead (National Endoscopy Training)	Nursing
Sian Parker Hornsey	RSU Manager (Revalidation and Quality) Revalidation Support Unit	Medical
Claire Smith	Workforce Programme Manager	Workforce and OD
Rebecca Vincent (Communications Support)	Senior Communications Officer	Workforce and OD

Appendix 2: HEIW's Areas of Action mapped against the Nature Recovery Action Plan 2015 (NRAP) objectives

NRAP Objectives		HEIW Areas of Action			
		Engaging and supporting our staff	Sustainable procurement	Developing Ty Dysgu and supporting our local communities	Environmental sustainability
1	Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels				
2	Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management				
3	Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation				
4	Tackle key pressures on species and habitats				
5	Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring				

6	Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery				
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References

- [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)
- *Making Space for Nature*, Public Health Wales, December 2019
- *NHS Wales and the Biodiversity Duty*, [Health & Sustainability Hub, Public Health Wales](#) (with support from Natural Resources Wales)
- [NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-2030](#), NHS Wales/The Carbon Trust, March 2021
- [The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales 2015, Setting the course for 2020 and beyond: Our Strategy for Nature, 2015 \(NRAP 2015\)](#), Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board [members represent both land and sea managers, Natural Resources Wales, the environmental third sector, local authorities, Wales Biodiversity Partnership and Welsh Government]
- [The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2020-21 \(NRAP 2020-21\)](#)
- Wales Biodiversity Partnership, www.biodiversitywales.org.uk
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)