

Supporting Sustainable Healthcare

How Investors in the Environment helps healthcare organisations turn sustainability ambitions into practical action



www.genee.org.uk



SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS HEALTHCARE.

Healthcare organisations are leading the way in sustainability. Across the sector, organisations are investing in more energy-efficient buildings, reducing waste, transforming procurement, engaging staff and embedding sustainability into the delivery of patient care. Environmental sustainability is no longer viewed as a standalone initiative, it is becoming a fundamental part of delivering high-quality, resilient healthcare.

The NHS was the first health system in the world to commit to becoming Net Zero, recognising that climate change is not only an environmental issue, but one of the greatest long-term threats to public health. Today, healthcare is estimated to account for around 4–5% of the UK's carbon footprint and approximately 40% of all public sector emissions, making the sector uniquely placed to drive meaningful environmental change. At the same time, the NHS is the UK's largest public energy user, operating more than 13,500 buildings across approximately 27 million square metres of estate.

For healthcare organisations, sustainability is about far more than reducing carbon emissions. It is about creating healthier environments for patients and staff, building resilience against climate change, reducing operating costs, strengthening supply chains, improving resource efficiency and demonstrating environmental leadership to communities, regulators and partners.

At a glance...

40%

NHS contribution to public sector emissions

13.5K

Buildings operated by the NHS across England

1st

World's first healthcare system to commit to Net Zero

5%

Healthcare contribution to UK's carbon emissions



HEALTHCARE IN FOCUS.

Sustainability is becoming a strategic priority across healthcare.

Healthcare organisations have been making significant progress in reducing their environmental impact, but the expectations placed upon the sector continue to evolve.

Alongside ambitious Net Zero targets, organisations are responding to increasing expectations from regulators, commissioners, patients, suppliers and partners to demonstrate measurable environmental performance.

For many organisations, sustainability is no longer just about individual projects. It is becoming an integral part of organisational resilience, financial planning, estates management and service delivery.

Having a structured Environmental Management System helps organisations respond confidently to these changing expectations while ensuring sustainability remains practical, proportionate and focused on continual improvement.

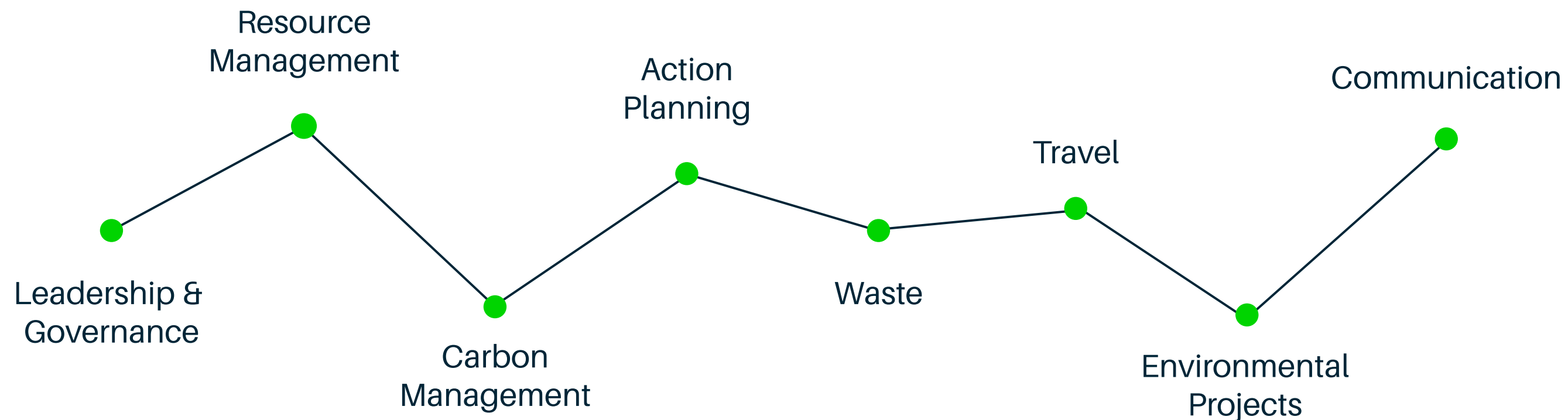
Sector priority		How iiE helps
NHS Net Zero commitments		Structured environmental management
Green Plans		Practical implementation and action planning
Procurement expectations		Demonstrating continual improvement
Scope 3 emissions		Independent review and supplier engagement
Estates decarbonisation		Monitoring performance and identifying opportunities
Financial pressures		Driving efficiencies and reducing waste

PROVIDING THE FRAMEWORK FOR **CONTINUAL** IMPROVEMENT.

Investors in the Environment (iE) is an independently audited Environmental Management System designed to help organisations embed sustainability into the way they operate.

Rather than introducing another strategy or creating additional reporting requirements, iE provides a practical framework that helps organisations organise existing activity, identify opportunities for improvement and demonstrate measurable progress year after year.

Through annual independent audits and ongoing support, members review every aspect of their environmental management, including:



For healthcare organisations, where sustainability spans estates, procurement, clinical services, travel, facilities management and workforce engagement, having a structured framework helps ensure that individual initiatives become part of a coordinated, organisation-wide approach.

TURNING SUSTAINABILITY AMBITION INTO STRUCTURED ACTION.

Healthcare organisations are already delivering a wide range of sustainability activity, from reducing energy use and waste to improving travel, procurement and staff engagement.

However, within large and complex organisations, individual projects can often sit across different departments, strategies and reporting systems. Investors in the Environment helps bring this activity together within one practical Environmental Management System.

The framework supports organisations to:

- Understand their environmental impacts
- Set clear priorities and measurable targets
- Assign ownership and responsibilities
- Monitor performance
- Review progress
- Identify opportunities for improvement
- Demonstrate continual improvement

Through annual independent audits, ongoing support and practical recommendations, iiE helps healthcare organisations understand not only what they are doing well, but where they can strengthen their approach next.



For NHS Trusts, the framework complements Green Plans, Carbon Reduction Plans and existing governance structures. Rather than replacing these, iiE provides an independent review of how effectively they are being implemented across the organisation.

DESIGNED FOR COMPLEX HEALTHCARE ORGANISATIONS.

One of the greatest strengths of Investors in the Environment is its flexibility, because every healthcare organisation is different.

Some operate multiple hospital sites. Others deliver community services across hundreds of locations. Some have dedicated sustainability teams, while others are just beginning their environmental journey.

The framework adapts to the organisation whilst maintaining a consistent approach to environmental management.

Across our healthcare members we've supported organisations with:

- Environmental governance
- Green Plans
- Carbon management
- Scope 3 emissions
- Waste and circular economy
- Sustainable procurement
- Active travel
- Staff engagement
- Green Champion networks
- Environmental reporting

Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach, iiE helps every organisation build on the work already underway.



ENGAGING PEOPLE ACROSS HEALTHCARE.

Healthcare organisations employ thousands of people across clinical and non-clinical roles, often working across multiple sites and shift patterns.

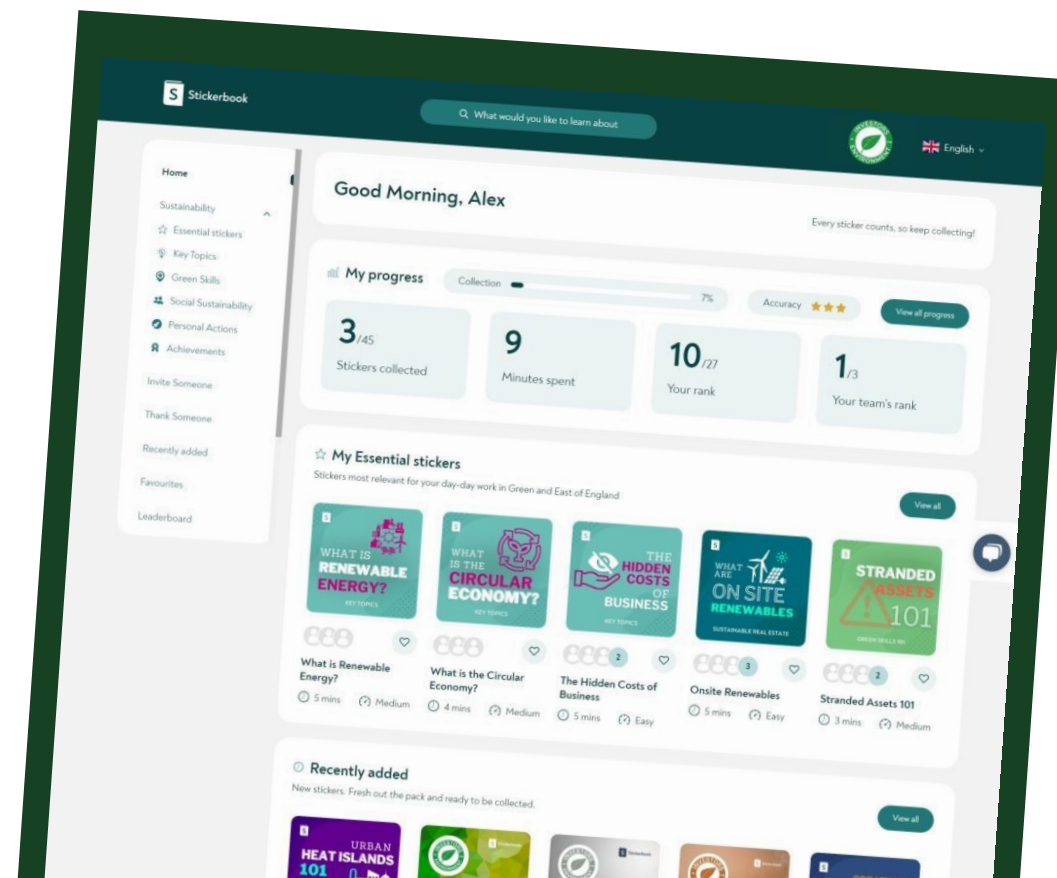
The challenge: creating meaningful engagement across diverse teams.

As part of Investors in the Environment membership, organisations receive access to Stickerbook - an interactive microlearning platform that makes sustainability training engaging, accessible and enjoyable.

Staff complete short learning sessions covering key sustainability topics, collecting digital stickers as they progress.

Features include:

- Five-minute learning sessions
- Interactive quizzes
- Digital sticker collections
- Team leaderboards
- Friendly competitions
- Department challenges
- Individual progress tracking



Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Bradford Teaching Hospital rolled out Stickerbook to their Green Champions network.

In just seven days, staff collectively earned over **300 stickers**, demonstrating both high levels of engagement and a strong appetite for practical sustainability initiatives.

“As a new member of Investors in the Environment, Stickerbook has been a fantastic way to energise our Green Champions network and engage staff straight away. It is easy to use, inclusive, and has helped turn sustainability into something positive and motivating. Gaining over three hundred stickers in our first week alone shows how keen our staff are to get involved when given the right tools.”

Robert Dadzie, Head of Sustainability
Bradford Teaching Hospitals

SHARED LEARNING.

One of the most valuable aspects of working with Genee is the opportunity to learn from other healthcare organisations.

As the Northern delivery partner for Investors in the Environment, we work with healthcare organisations across the North East and North West, including large NHS Trusts, community providers and specialist healthcare organisations.

Every audit gives us insight into practical solutions that are already delivering results. Rather than starting from scratch, organisations benefit from a growing network of shared experience and proven practice.

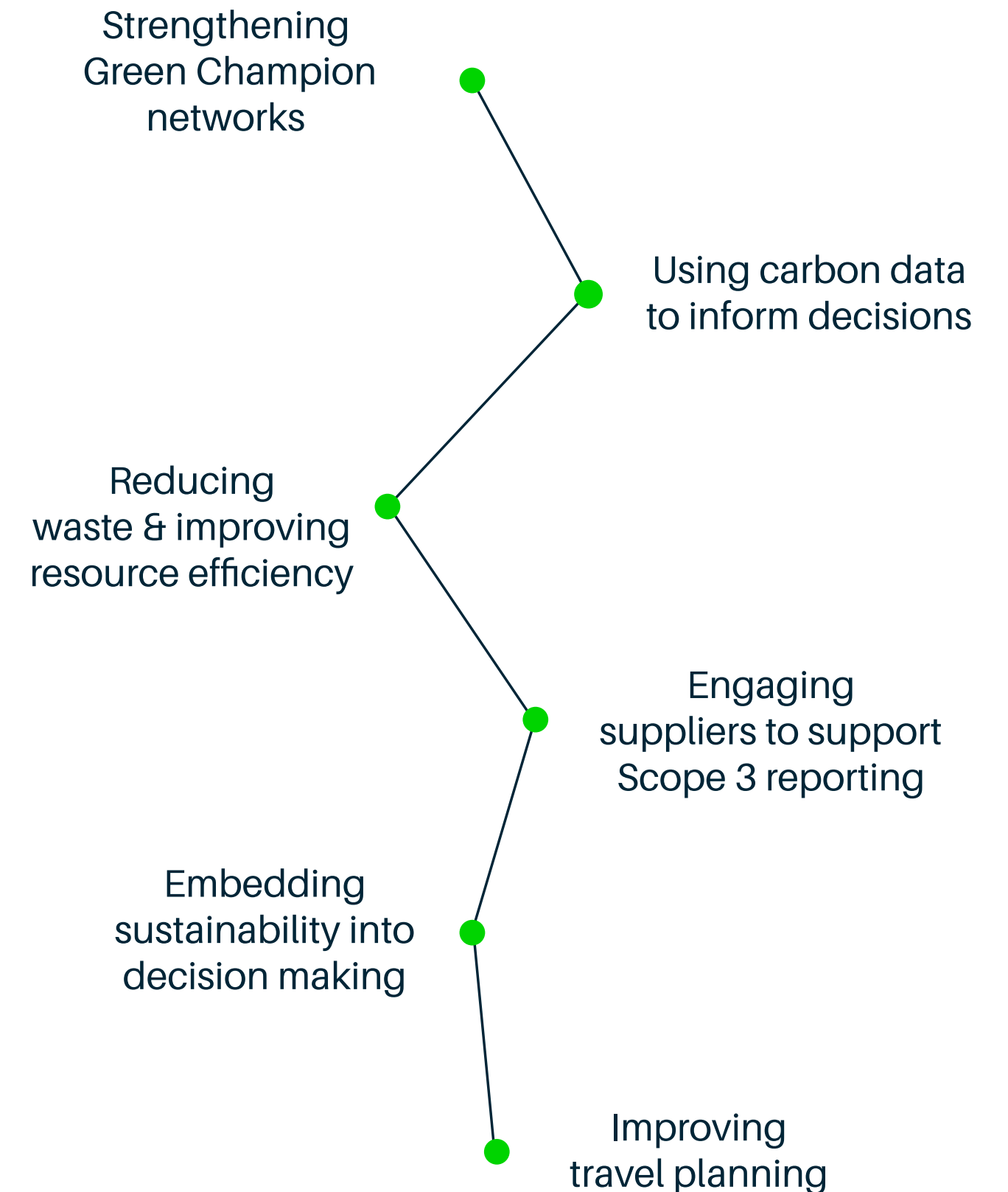


"Because we work with multiple healthcare organisations, we're able to share practical ideas, examples, and approaches that have already been tested elsewhere. That gives organisations confidence that they are building on proven practice rather than starting from scratch"

Jo Holmes

Managing Director, Genee

How our healthcare members are currently driving sustainability:



CASE STUDY: LEADING THE WAY ON SCOPE 3

For many healthcare organisations, Scope 3 emissions represent the biggest sustainability challenge.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has recognised this challenge and taken a collaborative approach to supplier engagement.



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Rather than simply requesting carbon data from suppliers, the Trust has focused on creating opportunities for learning, discussion and shared understanding.

Working alongside Genee and regional partners, the Trust helped deliver the North East Public Sector Sustainable & Social Value Supplier Event, bringing together hundreds of suppliers from organisations of every size to better understand the growing sustainability expectations across the public sector.

The event welcomed:

368 overall attendees

73% of attendees
were suppliers to
the Public Sector

Five lessons for healthcare organisations

- Start engaging suppliers before procurement requirements become mandatory.
- Make sustainability conversations collaborative, not compliance-driven.
- Provide practical support alongside expectations.
- Bring together organisations of all sizes to share learning and good practice.
- View supplier engagement as an ongoing partnership rather than a one-off exercise.

What makes this approach particularly valuable is that it demonstrates how healthcare organisations can influence emissions far beyond their own estates. By working collaboratively with suppliers, Newcastle Hospitals is helping build capability across its supply chain, improving the quality of sustainability data and supporting businesses of all sizes to prepare for the growing environmental expectations of the healthcare sector.

CASE STUDY: EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS A COMPLEX ORGANISATION

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust employs around 28,000 staff across 10 hospital sites, providing a challenging environment for delivering a consistent approach to sustainability across a diverse organisation.

Rather than sustainability sitting within a single department, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust has embedded environmental management into organisational governance, ensuring that sustainability informs decision-making across one of the UK's largest healthcare organisations.

The Trust has set ambitious targets to achieve **Net Zero for its direct emissions by 2038 and its wider carbon footprint by 2045**, recognising that meaningful progress requires strong governance, clear accountability and continual review

The Trust's Green Plan provides a clear strategic direction, supported by a Sustainability Steering Group that brings together expertise from across the Trust to monitor progress, review performance and coordinate delivery. Regular reporting, carbon budget monitoring and annual sustainability reporting ensure that environmental performance remains visible at senior leadership level and informs ongoing decision-making.

Recent initiatives include:

- Expanding virtual outpatient appointments
- Reducing the use of high-carbon anaesthetic gases
- Improving waste management
- Investing in sustainable travel



Manchester University
NHS Foundation Trust

Five lessons for healthcare organisations

- Build sustainability into organisational governance
- Use regular performance monitoring to inform decisions
- Connect environmental projects through action plans and clear governance structure
- Ensure sustainability is visible at Board level and supported across all departments
- Recognise that continual improvement comes from strong systems as much as individual projects.

“

Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has set an ambitious Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. Working with Genee and the iiE scheme has helped us to further develop our environmental management system within the Trust and get an outside perspective on how we are measuring, reporting, and reducing our impacts.

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Anna-Lisa Mills, Sustainability Manager
Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

“

Northumbria Healthcare have worked with Genee since rejoining the iiE scheme in 2023, after previously holding the Green accreditation. Genee have provided fantastic support and guidance throughout our time working together, particularly at the start of our iiE journey. We regained the Green accreditation in summer 2025, one year earlier than we anticipated. Genee have provided comprehensive recommendations for areas for improvement which have supported the development of our Net Zero Northumbria Action Plan and setting a clear pathway to improving and retaining the Green accreditation. Thank you Jo and the Genee Team for their ongoing expertise and support!

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**Clare Winter, Head of Sustainability & Net Zero
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

TURNING SUSTAINABILITY AMBITION INTO STRUCTURED ACTION.

At Genee, we believe environmental management should be practical, supportive and focused on continual improvement.

As the Northern delivery partner for Investors in the Environment, we've supported healthcare organisations of all sizes, from specialist providers to some of the UK's largest NHS Trusts.

We understand the challenges healthcare organisations face because we see them every day.

Through independent auditing, practical advice and ongoing support, we help organisations build on the work they're already doing, strengthen their environmental management systems and identify realistic opportunities for continual improvement.

Our members also benefit from the insight gained from working across the healthcare sector, giving them access to practical examples and proven approaches that have already delivered results elsewhere.

Whether you're developing your first Environmental Management System or looking to strengthen an established sustainability programme, we're here to help turn ambition into measurable action.

All of our membership plans include:

Dedicated Account Manager

Independent Annual Audit

Written Audit Report & Recommendations

Environmental Management System Templates

Regular Support Meetings

Stickerbook Microlearning Platform

Networking & Best Practice Sharing

Awards & Recognition

Marketing Toolkit

Ongoing Technical Support

and more.

EVERY **ACTION** MAKES A DIFFERENCE

BUSINESS THAT'S BETTER FOR THE PLANET

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