



Greening your ward

Crib sheet

How to use this crib sheet

This crib sheet was created by our staff, for our staff, to enable greener care

Congratulations on discovering our How to Green Your Ward crib sheet! We designed this to make it easier to deliver greener care for our patients and reduce our environmental impact, so that we can improve the health of our communities. Here you will find tools and resources, information, and green actions with step-by-step instructions that you can use in your own ward or local area to generate green ideas and take action today. You will also find a handy accompanying excel sheet to enable easier tracking of green actions in your ward or work area.

If you are a Green Champion you can use this crib sheet to assist your ward to increase their Green Plan score in the Ward Accreditation Programme. Any staff member who wants to help green their ward or work area can also make use of the crib sheet to help deliver green actions.

A top tip when carrying out green actions is to always prioritise patient safety and quality of care.

We hope you find this useful as a way to start thinking about how to deliver greener care for your patients, and for practical steps you can start taking today. This will help us address climate change and reduce unnecessary waste while at the same time taking excellent care of our patients.

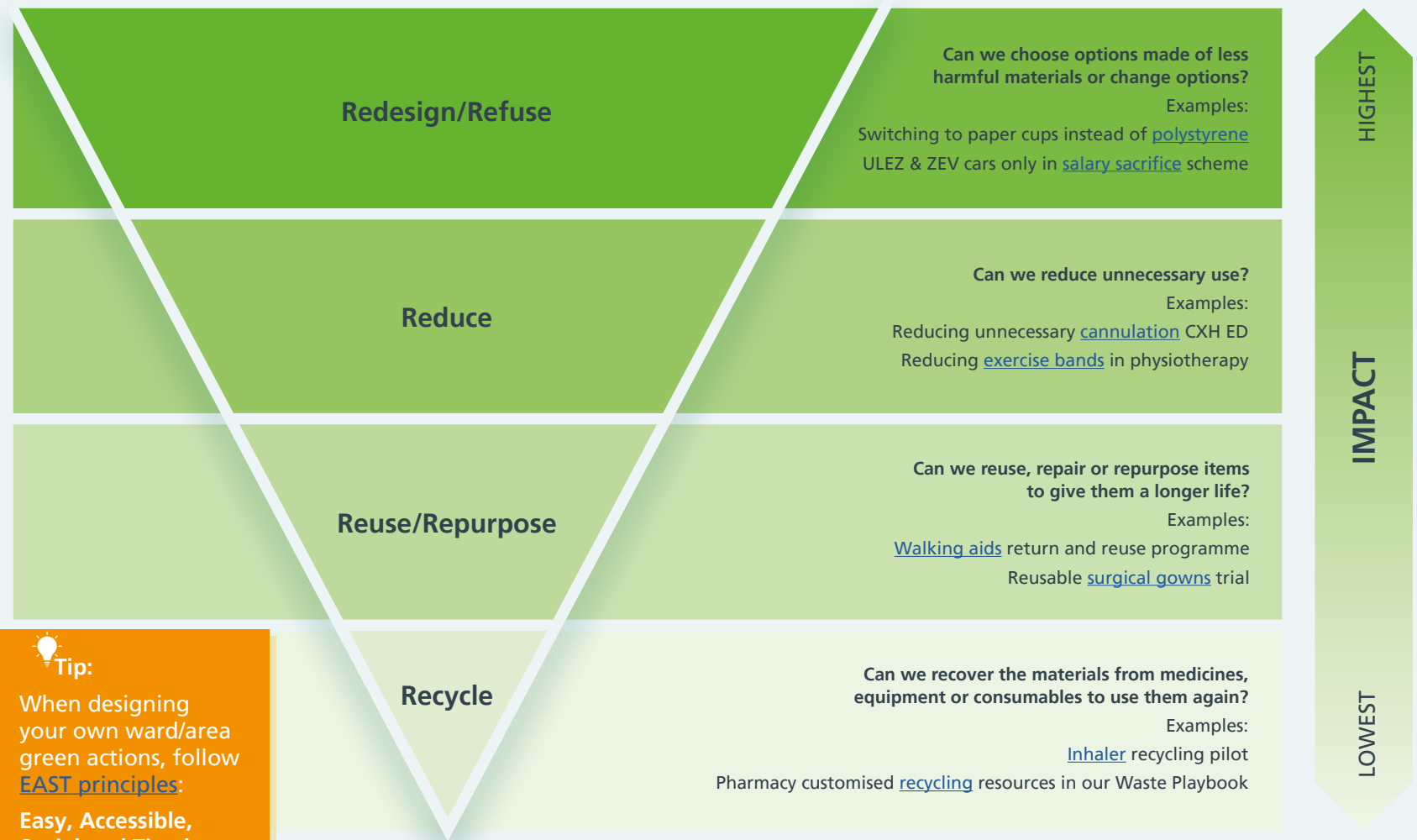
**To get started select 2-3 green actions
that are achievable in your ward/area.
Every small step adds up.**



Useful tools to generate green ideas

Waste hierarchy – The 4 R's

Not sure where to start to reduce waste? The 4Rs' can be used to think about ideas to reduce waste to deliver greener care. The highest potential for reducing waste lies at the top of the inverted pyramid, or upstream where the waste is created. Examples of real projects that staff have completed are listed. Is there any waste that is unique to your ward or local area that could be targeted with a new approach?



Tip:

When designing your own ward/area green actions, follow [EAST principles](#):

Easy, Accessible, Social and Timely.

Cleaner Air



Why this goal is important for health

Air pollution contributes to lung and heart disease in our local population, and often affects those in the poorest demographics the most. Reducing or replacing the use of fossil fuels are the primary methods to reduce air pollution. Everyone loves clean, fresh air!



Green actions

- Encourage your colleagues to take public transport or active travel instead of driving to work. Also links to Goal 3 Smarter Travel.



Useful information

- The Trust offers a [public transport season ticket loan](#) to help staff.
- Air pollution levels can be checked in real-time by looking at the [Breathe London](#) air quality website. We have a sensor for this network installed at Charing Cross Hospital.

Reduced Energy Use



Why this goal is important for health

Reducing energy use in the first instance (and using more renewable energy second) is the best way to reduce air pollution and climate change emissions. Slowing down climate change reduces extreme weather events and protects our food and water systems. Cleaner air is healthier air.



Green actions

- Add to ward checklist: Please ensure lights are turned off when rooms are not in use.
- Add to ward checklist: Please ensure windows are always closed when heating or air conditioning is active (where IPC guidance allows). If the windows do need to be opened, please ensure the AC is switched off.
- Turn down all monitors to 40% brightness level in 'settings' on each computer. This was studied in CXH ED by a team of doctors and they found staff mostly did not notice the difference, and the reduced brightness level did not have any negative impact on doctors' ability to read X-rays and scans. This should not be actioned on high-fidelity radiology reporting room monitors.
- Add to ward checklist: Please turn off unused (and non-critical) machines/equipment, especially at night. Check appliances are not left on standby



Useful information

- Note that our current heating system is controlled centrally in many areas and it is not possible to control the thermostats locally.
- Estates and Facilities staff are installing automatic sensor lights that switch off when a room is unused in areas where it is practical to do so – there is no need to request this directly.

Smarter Travel



Why this goal is important for health

Reducing car travel from combustion engines reduces climate change emissions and air pollution. Public transport is more energy efficient than electric cars. Active travel through walking, running or cycling are the most energy efficient forms of travel, and exercise is a great way to stay healthier. Smarter travel reduces emissions, air pollution and energy use and enhances the benefits from goals 1 and 2.



Green actions

- Colleagues may want to work from home if practical and suitable for their role, and approved by your line manager. Follow Trust work from home guidance.
- Promote active travel or commuting to work with your colleagues – e.g. run/walk/cycle to work more often. We have an active [Bike User Group](#) to support cyclists. Replacing car journeys with public transport and running/walking/cycling, where practical, reduces emissions.



Useful information

- The Cycle To Work scheme enables you to buy a bike for cycling to work at a discount.
- Replacing part of your commute with active travel may be more practical – for example getting off one train station earlier to walk more.

Innovative Water Use



Why this goal is important for health

Improving our efficiency of water use ensures we maintain supplies in the drier summers for our local communities. Water is life!



Green actions

- Report water leaks to the Estates and Facilities helpdesk promptly – phone extension 35588.



Useful information

- Estates and Facilities staff are able to install tap sensors and timers to reduce water wastage, and can install low flow showerheads in some areas of the Trust where it is possible to do so. There is no need to request this work to be done, as it is already in progress.

Better Waste Management



Why this goal is important for health

Segregating waste correctly lowers the greenhouse gas emissions from waste disposal. This helps to slow down climate change.

Green actions

- Encourage your colleagues to complete the Intro to Greener Care LEARN education module; it only takes around 12 minutes to complete.
 - Switch to recycled A4 printer paper. Speak to the person who orders paper for your ward.
 - Optimise your bins and bin placement by following instructions in our 'Waste Playbook' from the Green Plan page on the intranet.
 - Encourage your colleagues to watch our 'Beyond Rubbish' animation on the Green Plan intranet page (only 4 minutes to watch).
 - Order more recycling bins if needed. Order code for Wybone Recycling 80litre bin: BC/80G/LDMR2/VR.
 - Request full size bin lid labels to convert orange bins into tiger bins
- where clinically appropriate from the Trust waste manager. Heavy duty tiger bags can be ordered on e-procurement (code: MVN1276) for those areas (e.g. theatres) who deal with heavier clinical waste.
- Set computers to print double sided by default to reduce paper consumption by 50%. Contact ICT Helpdesk to set this up for each computer in your ward/area.
 - Perform a bin waste audit to measure contamination, help your colleagues learn about waste separation, then repeat the audit to measure improvement in contamination levels.
 - Revert bins back to the correct bin bag type after an infectious disease outbreak is declared over. Check with your ward matron and IPC to confirm an outbreak is declared over.

Useful information

- Most clinical waste can go into tiger striped bins. Tiger bins are for non-infectious clinical waste, and orange bins are for infectious clinical waste (or heavily soiled clinical waste).
- Did you know? Tiger bin waste causes HALF the greenhouse gas emissions in its disposal compared to orange!

Reduced Plastics



Why this goal is important for health

Plastic waste is finding its way into our water, soil and living environments when not disposed of correctly. This has a negative effect on our health. Reducing single-use plastic waste in the first instance is the most effective way to prevent this. Recycling can ensure more of it is reused rather than disposed of in the domestic waste stream in our hospitals. Plastic is a hot topic our staff really care about!



Green actions

- Review regular medicines used on the ward for single use plastics packaging to see if the packaging can be recycled, and tell your colleagues about these packaging types.
- Locate a recycling bin near to drug preparation areas to aid recycling of medicines packaging.



Useful information

- Our '[Waste Playbook](#)' contains a list of plastics that can be recycled in our hospitals based on symbols. You can download this from our Green Plan intranet page by searching for 'Green Plan'.
- Only clean, non-clinical waste plastics are suitable for recycling.

Sustainable Medicines



Why this goal is important for health

Some medicines such as inhalers and anaesthetic gases emit greenhouse gases directly. Switching to lower impact gases or reducing their consumption can help slow the effects of climate change. Other medicines have vastly different greenhouse gas emissions in their production and distribution. Switching to lower carbon alternatives, and lower packaging waste alternatives, reduces climate change and waste disposal emissions.



Green actions

- Change your ward practice to prescribe Dry Powder Inhalers (DPIs) where clinically appropriate instead of Metered Dose Inhalers (MDIs). MDIs emit greenhouse gases and dry powder inhalers do not. For example – salbutamol inhalers for adults. Alternatively, prescribe lower carbon emission equivalent MDIs if DPIs are not suitable or available.
- Conduct a medication use audit to ensure rotation of medicines stocks and reduce over-ordering of medicines.
- Implement a process to ask patients to bring their own medications where clinically appropriate and safe, to reduce consumption of ward meds.



Useful information

- Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) is a rapidly developing method to enable comparison of the carbon footprint of different medicines. Keep an eye on the latest LCA research for opportunities to identify medicine switches to lower carbon alternatives where clinically appropriate.
- Intravenous drugs are currently thought to have a much higher carbon footprint than their oral equivalents. Switching from IV to oral where clinically appropriate reduces climate change emissions.

Innovative Care



Why this goal is important for health

New ways to deliver care that are greener can benefit all of our other Green Plan goals and improve health. For example, new diagnostics or treatments that use less equipment or cut down on patient transport journeys can have a myriad of health benefits for our patients and local communities. Get creative and who knows what new ideas may come to you!

Green actions

- Create pathways for virtual clinics to replace some face-to-face consultations where clinically appropriate – e.g. can some be done by telephone? Follow Trust guidance from the Digital Transformation team on virtual clinics and outpatient processes.
- Introduce green messages and green actions reminders into regular ward meetings to nudge positive behaviours in your colleagues.
- Tell patients what the ward is doing to care better for nature and reduce our environmental impact, e.g. on patient noticeboard areas.
- Add your green action plans and/or Green Plan resources to your staff or ward noticeboard. You can customise it to your own style!
- Encourage your colleagues to join the Green Community Network to keep updated with the latest green projects across the Trust. Search for 'Green Plan' on the intranet to locate the signup form.
- Appoint a ward/area green champion/s whose responsibility is to teach colleagues about green actions, our waste resources and how to be greener. Identify an enthusiastic member or members of your team for this role.
- Add a green section to your ward or departmental induction for your new staff that signposts Green Plan resources.
- Ask questions and generate ideas about green actions in your ward/area 'Improvement Huddles'.

Useful information

- There are a number of innovative green ideas that have been successfully implemented in other NHS Trusts that could also be done in ours.

Sustainable Catering



Why this goal is important for health

Sustainable catering is an opportunity to reduce plastic waste from disposable cutlery and crockery used in staff areas. Reducing single-use plastics reduces the risk of plastic waste entering the environment and contaminating water and land. Increasing the proportion of plant-based meals we eat reduces climate change emissions relative to most meat-based meals. There are health benefits associated with increased vegetable and fruit intake as part of a healthy balanced diet. Starting with what we eat and drink every day is good as it all adds up!



Green actions

- Ask staff to donate old plates and cutlery for staff rest areas to reduce reliance on single-use plastic items, or to bring in their own reusable or wooden items.
- Order paper cups to eliminate plastic/polystyrene cups. Every ward/area has a regular stock order list held by Eleanor. Changes can be made to this stock list by submitting a request form to Eleanor – you can ask for the plastic/polystyrene cup ordering code to be removed from this list. Alternative paper cup ordering codes can be found on the NHS Supply Chain website. One cost neutral paper cup code is: MPC:12200285 Aqua Swirl.

There are multiple paper cup options for both hot and cold drink suitability, and temporary cones for patient use.

- Encourage your colleagues to eat more plant-based meals from staff dining facilities. Plant-based meals generally have a lower carbon footprint than meat-based meals.
- Encourage your colleagues to bring their own reusable coffee mugs and water bottles to work to reduce the use of single-use plastic coffee cups and water bottles in the local area. This is a good opportunity to save money and signal to others that we care about the environment.



Useful information

- Patient and staff catering is an opportunity area being explored by the Green Team to increase the proportion of plant-based meals, which generally have a lower carbon footprint than meat-based meals.

Greener Facilities



Why this goal is important for health

Greener facilities enable spaces to be used with a lower environmental impact. They also enable the reuse of commonly used items such as walking aids and inhalers through designing return and collection systems. Reusing materials and reducing energy use helps reduce waste and tackle climate change, enabling health benefits associated with both. How does your physical workspace help or hinder greener care?

Green actions

- Install a plumbed water cooler for staff and patients to reduce use of single-use plastic bottles. Talk to Estates and Facilities and your budget controller to determine if this is practical for your area. Helpdesk – phone extension 35588.
- Create new digital documents to replace paper-based processes. For example-create a digital communications daily diary instead of a paper notebook.
- Walking aids: Tell patients they are 'on loan for as long as you need them', and 'you can return them to the hospital'. Save the below message as a cerner autotext to add to the discharge summary:

"Following your (operation/ admission), you have been provided with a (pair of crutches / walking frame) on loan from the hospital, for as long as you need them/it. When you have finished using your walking aids, please return them/it to us so that we can check and clean them, and then reuse them for future patients. You can return them to Charing Cross Hospital: Therapies Department or Fracture Clinic, and St Mary's Hospital: Outpatients or Fracture Clinic. At Hammersmith Hospital return to the Therapies Department.

If you are unable to return to the hospital, please visit [recyclenow.com/walking aids](https://recyclenow.com/walking-aids) to find your nearest return point."

Useful information

- Imagine how you might use your spaces to better facilitate greener care in your ward or local area.

Sustainable Research



Why this goal is important for health

Research enables us to measure progress against green goals, and to progress health benefits for our communities. All kinds of research from small audits to more ambitious GreenQI projects can help to further our understanding and enable us to innovate and accelerate goal number 8. Research is a big word, but any type of learning activity on green actions counts as research!



Green actions

- Start a sustainability audit (basic research) in your ward or department. For example, you could audit the location of your bins, and the numbers of each type of bin. Search 'better waste' on the intranet and download our Waste Playbook for tips on how to conduct a bin audit.
- Map a specific patient pathway to document staff/consumables/equipment use and carbon emissions to identify opportunities for waste and/or emissions reductions by altering steps in the pathway. For example you could map routine hip replacement surgery.
- Launch a Green Quality Improvement project focused on delivering greener care. This can be utilised for your Personal Development Plan, and can also form part of your Ward Improvement Plan. The Improvement Team offers a wide range of courses and training to enable you or your colleagues to upskill in improvement methods to support Green QI project teams.



Useful information

- Go to the SusQI website for guidance and templates on value process mapping – <https://www.susqi.org/templates>.

Redeveloped Hospitals



Why this goal is important for health

Refurbished areas of our hospitals or new hospital facilities enable us to build greener care considerations for patients and staff from the foundation up. This changes the way spaces are used, energy efficiency, lower waste generation and better waste segregation to enable the health benefits of the other goals to be progressed further. If your space was refurbished or rebuilt how could greener care be considered?



Green actions

- Discuss with ward leaders how greener care can be enabled in your ward or area if it is due to undergo refurbishment or be moved to a new space in the near future.



Useful information

- The government's New Hospitals Programme intends that all new hospitals will be built to net-zero standards in the foundational designs.