



A care system support organisation



NECS2025

Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy



Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 1

Information Reader Box

Directorate	Organisational Development and Corporate Services
Publications Gateway Reference	NECS2025
Document Purpose	NECS2025 sets our Corporate Social Responsibility approach and key areas of focus.
Document Name	NECS2025 Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy
Author	Aimee Tunney, Governance & Assurance Manager, North of England Commissioning Support
Publication Date	23/05/2024
Approving Body	Executive Group
Target Audience	To all employees including temporary agency staff, volunteer contractors
Additional Circulation List	External Publishing (NECS website)
Description	NECS2025 sets our Corporate Social Responsibility approach and key areas of focus.
Cross Reference	NECS Business Strategy, the NECS Estate Strategy 2018-2023
Superseded Document	NECS2025 Corporate Social Responsibility (v1)
Action Required	To note for compliance with the strategy.
Timing/Deadlines	2022 - 2025
<h3>Contact Details (for further information)</h3> <p>Aimee Tunney, Governance & Assurance Manager Email: necsu.csr@nhs.net</p>	
<h3>Document Status</h3> <p>This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version posted on the intranet is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled. As a controlled document, this document should not be saved onto local or network drives but should always be accessed from the intranet.</p>	

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 2

CONTENTS

1.NECS2025 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESONSIBILITY (CSR) STRATEGY	4
2.NATIONAL POLICY	6
3.SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS	8
4.NECS2025 GOVERNANCE	9
5.MEASURE AND REPORTING	10
Appendix 1: NECS' Areas of Focus	20

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 3

1. NECS2025 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) STRATEGY

NECS (North of England Care System Support) is an NHS organisation established in 2013 as part of NHS England. NECS is a care system support organisation that works to help health and social care customers meet their strategic and operational goals to improve outcomes and increase efficiency. NECS, like other commissioning support units (CSUs) across the country, operates on an income-only basis with all operating costs recovered from income received for the services we deliver.

NECS is unique in the health and care sector. As an operating unit of NHS England, we operate as a 'not for profit' business.

We are continuously improving healthcare through supporting system wide working with extensive engagement across a range of customers including (but not exhaustive) Integrated Care Systems and Boards (ICS and ICB), NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts, Voluntary Sector organisations, Primary Care Networks, GP Federations and individual GP practices. We offer core service portfolios designed to reflect all the key elements of the commissioning life cycle providing an integrated, flexible and expert service.

Our approach and commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is driven by our Vision, Mission and Social Purpose. NECS has a clear social purpose to reduce inequalities, create jobs and generate wealth for our communities. Sustainable business is at the heart of our success to date and our plans for the future and we are committed to creating a sustainable inclusive society.

Vision
To make life changing improvements to communities

Mission
Solutions together - outcomes better

Social Purpose
To make our own direct contribution towards reducing health inequalities, by creating jobs and generating wealth for the communities we serve

NECS' core values, vision and social purpose define who we are, how we will behave and the commitment we have to making life-changing improvements to the communities we serve.

We are working with our supply chain to ensure social value and net zero is a principle within all procurement decisions. We are supporting innovation and creating opportunities to engage with local suppliers within the communities in which we operate.

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 4

We care about climate change, and as an operating unit of NHS England, we have a crucial part to play in reducing carbon emissions. We have made some significant progress to reduce our carbon footprint and are working together with our NHS partners in the North East and North Cumbria to deliver their ambition to be the greenest region in England by 2030. We are growing our green network to ensure we really are doing everything we possibly can both as an organisation and as individuals to drive down our carbon footprint and deliver the [Greening Government Commitments](#) and do our part to contribute to [Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service](#)".

NECS is committed to achieving **'Net Zero' for carbon emissions we can control** (the NHS Carbon Footprint) **by 2040** and is committed to achieving **Net Zero for carbon emissions we can influence (NET Zero Footprint Plus) by 2045**.

NECS is proud of our achievements and is confident that future success will be grounded on the same core themes that have been fundamental to our success to date.

NECS2025 underpins the [NECS Business Strategy](#), the [NECS Estate Strategy](#) and the ['NHS People Plan 2020/21 action for us all'](#)¹.

As part of our strategic objectives, NECS has committed to 'Continue to develop NECS's approach to Corporate Social Responsibility, particularly focusing on what is required to further develop our approach to sustainability and our Carbon Reduction Plan, to achieve Net Zero by 2045'.

NECS2025 embodies who we are as an organisation through our commitment to our planet and communities and as is a key enabler to reducing inequalities, creating jobs and generating wealth for our communities. NECS2025 will allow us to meet local and national legislation and guidance.

NECS2025 along with other corporate documents will support the organisation against its objectives relating to ISO14001 Environmental Management

As NECS continues its CSR journey, the organisation recognises the great challenges and opportunities there are ahead. NECS2025 sets our CSR approach and outlines our key areas of focus

1.1 Key Areas of Focus

NECS is committed to achieving **'Net Zero' for carbon emissions we can control (the NHS Carbon Footprint) by 2040** and to achieving **Net Zero for carbon emissions we can influence (NET Zero Footprint Plus) by 2045**.

NECS has identified four areas of focus:

- a) **Carbon Reduction (including travel and transport, natural resources)**
- b) **Social Value & Supply Chain**
- c) **Adaptation**
- d) **Engagement and Communications (underpinning enabler)**

¹ We-Are-The-NHS-Action-For-All-Of-Us-FINAL-March-21.pdf (england.nhs.uk)

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 5

Our key areas of focus are outlined in further detail at appendix 1. Each area of focus has a lead identified from the NECS CSR steering group.

2. NATIONAL POLICY

In October 2021, the UK government published their '[Greening Government Commitments 2021 – 2025 policy](#)', which set out the actions UK government departments and their agencies will take to reduce their impacts on the environment in the period 2021 to 2025.

The UK government policy set out targets for UK government departments and their agencies to:

- reduce water consumption
- reduce their greenhouse gas emissions
- minimise waste and promote resource efficiency

The UK government also set out commitments for departments to:

- improve sustainable procurement
- develop and deliver Nature Recovery Plans
- develop and deliver Climate Change Adaptation Strategies
- reduce environmental impacts from ICT and digital services

In late 2020, the Greener NHS Programme launched the "[Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service](#)" report, which:

- set out the considerable advances that the NHS has already made in improving the NHS carbon footprint and reducing the environmental impact of NHS services
- provides a clear plan with credible milestones to get to net-zero
- The report also identified proposed targets for the NHS to decarbonise and reduce their carbon emissions:
 - For the emissions we control directly (the NHS Carbon Footprint), we will reach net zero by 2040, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032;
 - For the emissions we can influence (our NHS Carbon Footprint Plus), we will reach net zero by 2045, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036 to 2039

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 6

Official

The NHS 2040 net zero target places the NHS at the forefront of decarbonising healthcare, making it the world's first national health system to commit to become 'carbon net zero', backed by clear deliverables and milestones.

The [Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service" report](#) identified the full scope of emissions from the NHS (figure 1).

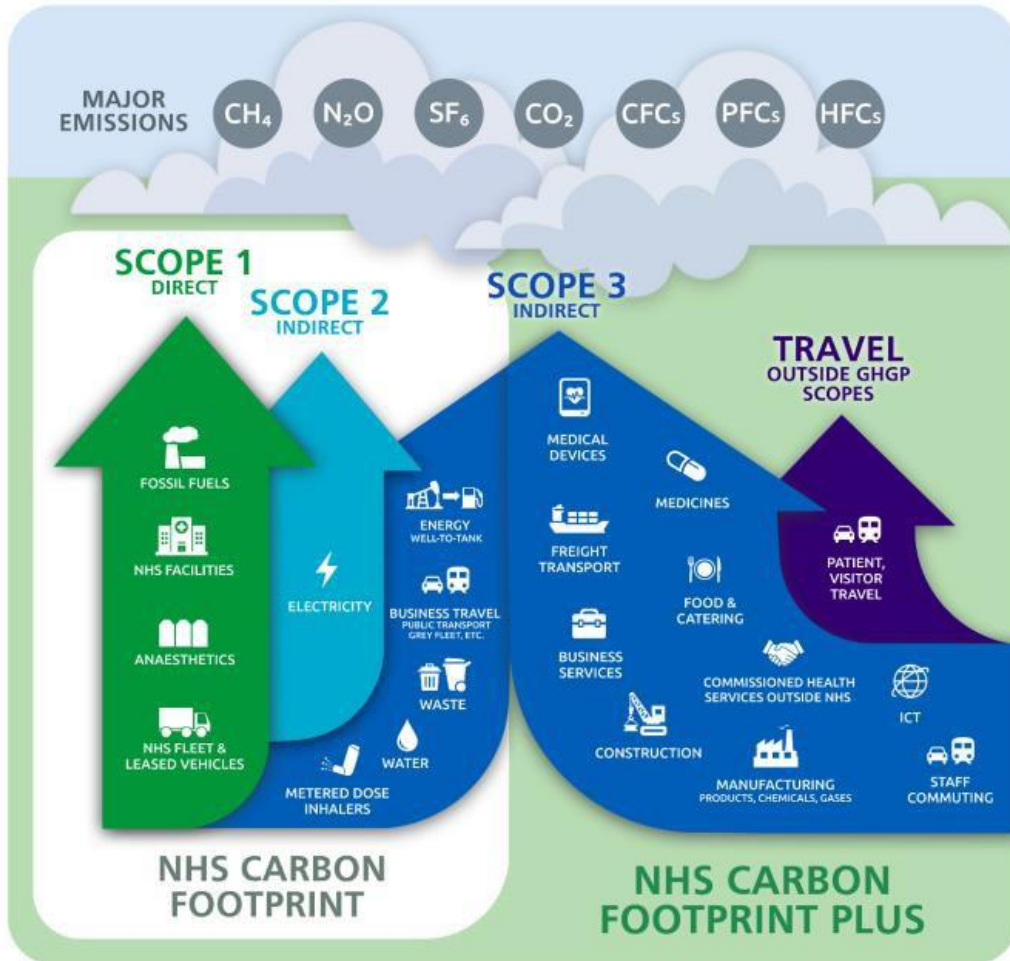


Figure 1: GHGP scopes in the context of the NHS

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 7

2.1 NHS England Green Plan

NHS England (NHSE) is an Arm's Length Body (ALB) to the Department of Health and Social Care, and as such are in scope for the [Greening Government Commitments 2021 – 2025 policy](#).

In 2022, NHSE published their joint Green Plan, in response to the 'Greening Government Commitments' and the Greener NHS Programme 'Delivering a 'Net Zero' National Health Service'.

NHSE's Green Plan has a clear vision and set ambitions (figure 2). The NHSE's Green Plan outlines key areas of focus including:

- Estates and Facilities
- Travel and Transport
- Supply Chain
- Digital
- Workforce and
- Adaptation

Vision

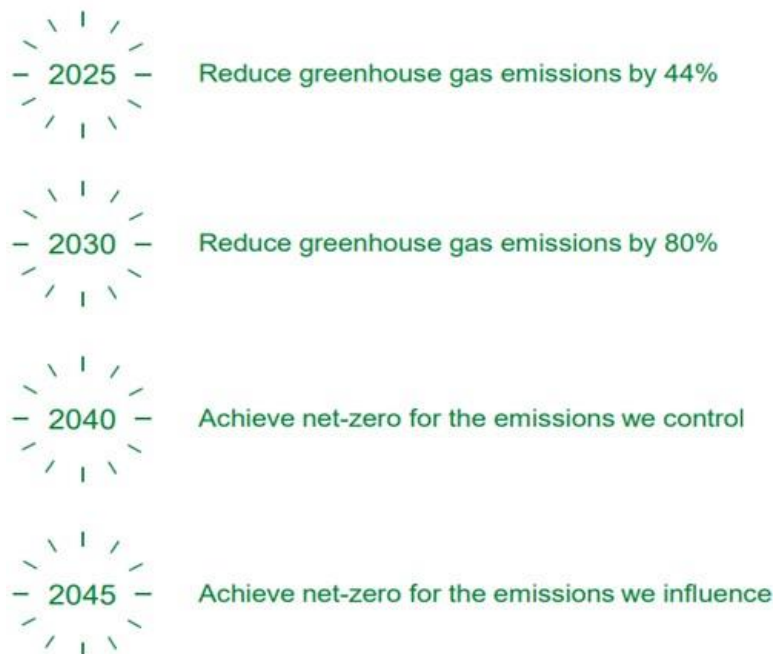


Figure 2: NHSE Green Plan Vision

NECS is working towards NHSE's vision and is a member of a CSU sustainability network, established by NHSE to share sustainability and carbon reduction best practice and learning.

3. SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

NECS continues to work with our existing and new customers and supply chains on the areas we can influence or directly deliver a sustainable and positive impact, and we will be accountable for the difference we make.

Business sustainability is often defined as managing the triple bottom line - a process by which organisations manage their financial, social and environmental risks, obligations and opportunities. These three impacts are often referred to as the triple bottom line - '**People, Planet & Place**'.

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 8

NECS is committed to being a sustainable business, making best use of resources and maximising our positive impact, now and for future generations across our business footprint.

NECS 2025 informs how we continue to deliver and expand our quality products and services, drive improvement and cost efficiencies, and address the challenges facing our customers and local communities.

4. NECS2025 GOVERNANCE

We have an established CSR steering group comprised of NECS representatives from Estates, IT, Governance, Workforce/People, Communications, Procurement, , NECS Council and the Health and Safety Business Continuity Committee.

The CSR Group is chaired by Claire Gooday, NECS Organisational Development & Corporate Services Director. The CSR Group meet at least four times a year and is accountable for the effective delivery of the NECS2025 CSR strategy , areas of focus and the Carbon Reduction Plan. Assurance of the delivery of NECS 2025 CSR Strategy will be overseen by the NECS Health & Safety and Business Continuity Committee.

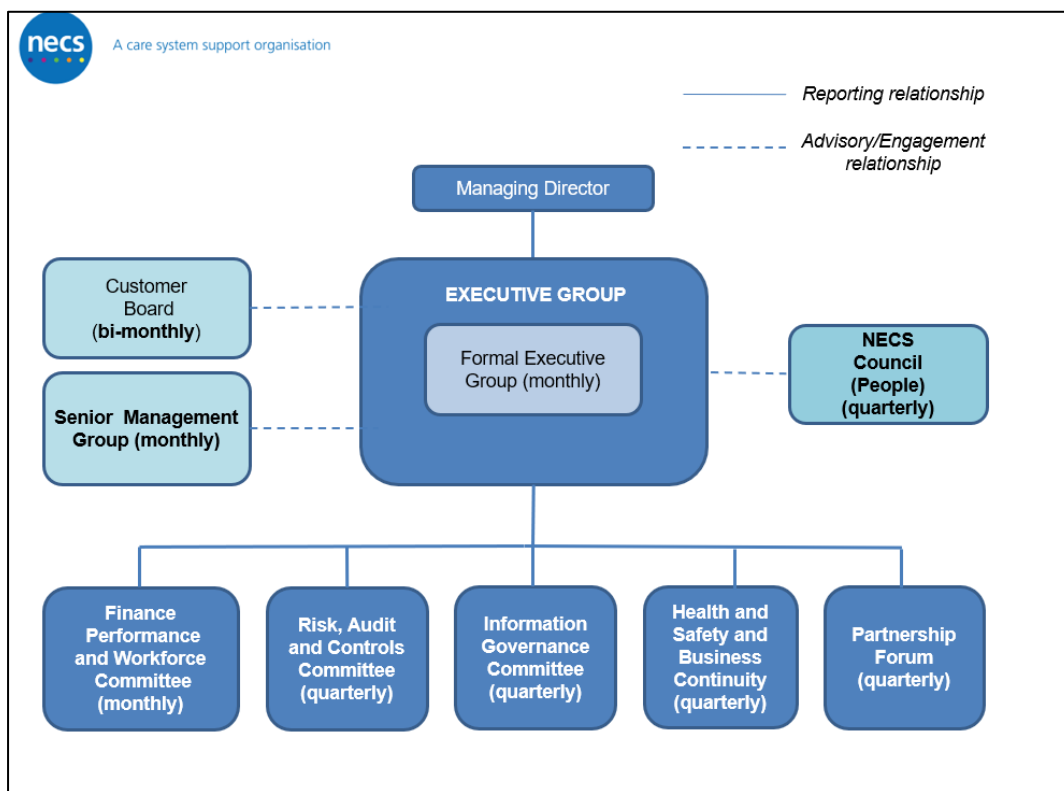


Figure 3: NECS Governance Arrangements

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 9

5. MEASURE AND REPORTING

NECS has a good record of delivering continuous improvements and is committed to improving how we measure our carbon emissions and key areas of focus. NECS2025 will build upon our existing reporting methodologies and tools, including robust Terms of Reference (TOR) for CSR steering group, reporting mechanisms into HSBC Committee and also escalation to NECS Executive Team. NECS will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and peers to broaden the scope of current reporting.

The delivery and outcomes of this strategy will be reported to the CSR steering group and the HSBC Committee, in line with their annual work programmes.

Document Owner: Debra Elliott	Prepared by: Aimee Tunney	First Published: 24/08/2018
Document number: NECS2025	Issue/approval date: 22/05/2024	Version number: 2
Status: Approved by Executive Group	Next review date: 21/05/2025	Page 10

NECS2025 Areas of Focus

CARBON REDUCTION**Drivers for change/Areas of focus:**

NECS is committed to achieving 'Net Zero' for carbon emissions we can control (the NHS Carbon Footprint) by 2040 and is committed to achieving Net Zero for carbon emissions we can influence (NET Zero Footprint Plus) by 2045.

Priorities:**Estates & Facilities**

- Replace lighting to LED as and when bulbs stop working to achieve 50 % LED lighting bulb usage by 2025 and 100% usage by 2040.
- Ensure surplus office furniture is redistributed and reused or recycled.
- Use a re-use platform to offer all other furniture, fixings, and stationery to other organisations for reuse.
- Increase the use of on-site dry mix recycling bins.
- Improve signage and ensure staff have access to information about recycling.
- Improve on-site facilities including kitchens to reduce water use, improve efficiency and reduce the need for disposable kitchen items.
- Reduce reliance on office paper through increased digitalisation.
- Increase awareness and communication of electricity usage.
- Increase awareness and communication of water consumption.

Travel & Transport

- Increase the use of virtual meetings to reduce the need to travel.
- Regularly report on emissions from business travel
- Estimate emissions from commuter travel using either the Office for National Statistics annual travel survey.
- Carry out a project to understand emissions associated with homeworking by end of 24/25
- Offer salary sacrifice schemes as an incentive to help staff choose sustainable modes of commuter travel.
- Have a Flexible Working policy in place to help staff choose sustainable modes of commuter travel.
- 100% of the NECS car and van fleet to be fully zero emission at the tailpipe by 31st December 2027 (Greening Government Commitment).

CARBON REDUCTION Continued

Workforce

- Incorporate responsibility for environmental sustainability into all job descriptions by December 2024
- Incorporate information on individual responsibilities for environmental sustainability into all, new starter induction programmes by the end of 24/25.
- All organisations will have a board- level lead, responsible for leading on net zero and the broader greener NHS agenda.

Digital

- Use procurement frameworks to ensure suppliers are committed to sustainability targets.
- Look towards publishing a baseline with the aim to reduce the ICT carbon and ecological footprint.
- Build into contract specifications or equivalent the requirement for low emission equipment wherever possible.
- Map and monitor the supply chain data for the utilization of key ICT systems and services.
- Include CSR objectives/training requirements into appropriate ICT staff appraisals/PDPs.
- Build into ICT Strategy and link with Continued Improvement (CI) initiatives.
- Publish an accurate ICT footprint based on the services consumed, on estates and with suppliers, encompassing embodied /
- Reduce the carbon emissions.
 - of the ICT van fleet
 - of the logistics transportation and delivery of new ICT equipment
- Reuse any approved ICT equipment that is suitable.
- Review the approach to disposal of IT equipment both from commercial and organisational perspectives relating to sustainability.

SOCIAL VALUE (People and Place) & SUPPLY CHAIN (Planet & Place)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

At NECS our social purpose is: ***To make life changing improvements - creating jobs and generating wealth for our communities***

Our business strategy is founded on maintaining existing and developing new healthy and effective partnerships (ICS, CSUs, NHS England, Streamliners in NZ and all of our Customers) which is the basis for NECS building stronger communities and broadening the reach of our impact through the work we do.

We are proud of what we have achieved, and we are confident that future success will be grounded on the same core themes that have been fundamental to our success to date: Our core values, vision and social purpose. They define who we are, how we will behave and the commitment we have to making life-changing improvements to the communities we serve.

Social and cultural value

Social Value gives a framework for all partners to design a health and care system that actively and systematically adds social value to the local communities they serve, the care they commission and the products they procure. This means going beyond the simple provision and commissioning of services by ensuring core activities have a positive effect on peoples' lives and maximise investments.

<https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/areas-of-focus/social-value.aspx>

NECS contract with Shared Business Services (SBS) to procure goods. Our direct impact on supply chain is tied in with the contracts that are in place currently, and to the opportunities we have to engage with local suppliers within the communities in which we operate for best value contracts.

SBS are committed to working with us to ensure that the requirements of the 2012 Social Value Act are integrated into all appropriate procurements conducted on our behalf and that we promote ethical purchasing.

We will work with SBS to build suitable evaluation methodologies to allow assessment of all appropriate tenders on how the delivery of the required services, good or works will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area in which they are performed.

We will continue to invest in our relationships with our supply chain providers and our strategic partners

Priorities

- Embed the Social Value Model throughout our procurement documents by 2024
- All Procurement evaluations to include a minimum 10% weighting on social value this links with net zero.
- All procurements will ensure 100% compliance with the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) 2015 for all relevant organisations under section 54 (MSA) and their compliance with the annual report requirement on Modern slavery.
- Embed the requirement for providers to publish a carbon reduction plan (CRP) in all procurements for healthcare services with an anticipated contract value of £5 million and over per annum.
- "Ensure that any providers that our customers contract with are compliant and have not been excluded or excludable under the Public Contract Regulation 57 for things such as Corruption, Bribery, Terrorism, Money laundering etc.
- Increase our transformation fund that can be reinvested into patient care by £1m every year.
- To establish a NECS charity group and empower the group to deliver on its objectives by end of 2023
- All third-party supplier contracts ≥ £5m p/a have a Carbon Reduction Plan in place for scope 1 and 2 emissions and a subset of scope 3 emissions
- Improve NECS average CSR bid scores

ADAPTATION (CLIMATE CHANGE & BUSINESS CONTINUITY)

Areas of focus:

NECS is committed to:

- Developing business continuity plans to ensure contingencies are in place to respond to the effects of climate change, including extreme weather by end of 24/25 and embed and monitor developments.
- Ensuring all staff have the resources and knowledge to be able to continue to deliver their work should it be affected by the effects of climate change and extreme weather events by 2024.
- Ensuring the organisation maintains its ISO22301 Business Continuity accreditation

ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION (Underpinning enabler)

Drivers for change/Areas of focus:

The objectives of NECS 2025 CSR strategy will be realised primarily with and through our people.

The purpose of an engagement and communication work stream is to provide a framework to connect our people to CSR, to drive involvement through engagement and achieve our business goals.

We will utilise multiple channels to drive:

Awareness - Understanding - Support - Involvement - Commitment

- **Awareness**
Do people know this strategy exists?
- **Understanding**
Do our people have a detailed insight, know what it means and why we have committed to these priorities and understand their role in delivering them?
- **Support**
Have our people got the right tools, training and leadership?
- **Involvement**
Can we tell our CSR story with tangible examples of delivery through our people?
- **Commitment**
Are our people happy and fulfilled working in NECS? Is CSR their daily business?

Priorities

- Launch the Sustainability Champions Network by 2023/24
- Deliver a programme of opportunities for all NECS staff to engage with CSR through campaigns and raising awareness. It is our ambition to ensure that all employees have a basic awareness of Sustainability by 2025.
- Measure and report impact against all areas of focus achieved by NECS people's contribution to our CSR goals.
- Demonstrate NECS commitment to ensure NECS staff are aware and fully informed of the NECS25 deliverables.