



UK Health Alliance
on Climate Change

END OF YEAR REPORT 2023



<https://ukhealthalliance.org/>

Our members

At the end of December 2023, **46 UK-based health organisations** are members of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change. The total membership of our members is **1,046,988 health professionals**.



Our membership has grown by 150% since 2020, and increased by 31.4% in 2023.

Eleven organisations joined in 2023:

- Association of British Neurologists
- Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland
- British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition
- British Dental Association
- British Orthopaedic Association
- Florence Nightingale Foundation
- Greener Practice
- Infection Prevention Society
- Paediatric Critical Care Society
- Royal College of Anaesthetists
- UK Kidney Association

Governance, structure and partnerships

In April 2023, we ended our hosting arrangement with the BMJ and established as an independent charitable incorporated organisation, charity number 1200769



As Chair of UKHACC, I want to thank the BMJ, and the many BMJ staff who have supported us over more than 10 years.

– Richard Smith, Chair UKHACC

Our first AGM was held in September 2023.

Two founding trustees, Rhiannon Osborne and Dan Sumners retired. The remaining founding trustees were re-elected. Four individuals were elected as new trustees.

Ambassadors

Ambassadors act in a voluntary capacity to support the core aims of the alliance

Fiona Godlee
Professor Dame Parveen Kumar
Robin Stott

Trustees (Executive Committee)

Trustees are elected individuals who ensure we are carrying out our charitable purposes for the public good

Richard Smith (Chair)
Juliet Dobson, BMJ
Rose Gallagher, Royal College of Nursing
Terry Kemple, Royal College of GPs
Jacob Kranowski, Royal College of Psychiatrists
Elizabeth Marder, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Sandy Mather, Intensive Care Society
Emma Radcliffe, Greener Practice
Eleanor Roaf, Faculty of Public Health
Ranee Thakar, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Council of Members

The Council meets twice a year to steer the strategic direction of our work

Senior representatives from each of our membership organisations

Comms/policy group

The comms/policy group meets monthly to coordinate policy and campaigns, and to identify opportunities for joint working

Dedicated communications/policy leads from each of our membership organisations

Spokesperson network

The spokesperson network engages with MPs and media to communicate the health impacts of climate change and nature loss

Nominated individuals that act as climate and health spokespeople from our membership organisations

Staff

Elaine Mulcahy, Director
Shashank Kumar, Green Surgery Project Manager
Anandita Pattnaik, Policy Officer
Tom Clark (freelance), Climate and Health spokesperson coordinator

Partnerships



UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

Health organisations coordination group

We facilitate a monthly meeting of health organisations in order to forge and develop relationships, identify opportunities for collaboration, and to support each other's work. Members of this group are:



Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA)

Board members



Alliances and coalitions

We are a member of and get involved with the work of other coalitions and alliances by contributing to steering groups and supporting campaigns. Groups we are members of are:



Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA)

The Global Climate and Health Alliance is an alliance of more than 150 health NGOs, health professional organisations, and health and environment alliances from around the world. Sue Atkinson, Courtney Howard and Ren Dekenah were appointed as Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer in 2023. UKHACC sits on the board of GCHA with other appointed and elected member organisations. In 2023, key projects delivered include:

NDC Scorecards

The GCHA Healthy NDCs Scorecard is an annual assessment of the extent to which governments' national climate commitments recognise and respond to the abundant linkages with health. The [2023 Healthy NDC Scorecard](#), which analyses the 58 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted, finds low- and middle-income countries are leading the way when it comes to the inclusion of health goals in their climate commitments, while more wealthy, industrialised nations lack long term vision. This edition analyses NDCs submitted between 1 October 2021 and 23 September 2022.

Methane and health

In 2023, GCHA launched a series of comprehensive reports on the correlation between methane emissions and public health. With the recognition of methane as a potent greenhouse gas and its intricate relationship with climate change, these reports serve as a critical resource to illuminate the far-reaching health implications caused by methane emissions. Encompassing key emitting sectors including fossil fuels, agriculture, and waste, the reports unveil the multifaceted impact of methane on present and future well-being. The reports and other resources are available [here](#)

The Climate and Us BBC series

GCHA partnered with BBC StoryWorks Commercial Productions to produce a streaming series - [The Climate and Us](#) - which investigates how the climate crisis is affecting human health. The series tells the story of how people working at the nexus of climate change and health are working on solutions through 31 compelling stories spanning six continents.

The 24 episode series is split into three chapters covering: Impact of Climate Change on Health, Greener Healthcare, The Change Makers

COP28 policy recommendations and leadership

GCHA has been instrumental in bringing the health community together with WHO and ClimatexHealth during COP28 when the first declaration on climate and health was signed by 140+ nations. Prior to the conference, GCHA worked with its members to produce an agreed set of policy recommendations that was signed by multiple health organisations.

Open letter to COP28 President

GCHA and Healthcare Without Harm (HCWH) coordinated an [open letter](#) to the COP28 President, which was signed by leaders of health organisations representing 46.3M health professionals



<https://climateandhealthalliance.org/>

from 135 countries. The letter demanded that "countries commit to an accelerated, just and equitable phase out of fossil fuels as the decisive path to health for all".

Towards a new resolution on Climate Change and Health

GCHA has been spearheading civil society advocacy to countries to put forward a new World Health Assembly resolution on climate and health for adoption in 2024. Netherlands, together with Barbados, Fiji, Peru, and the UK, have stepped up to lead the Resolution process. This work will be ongoing in 2024.

ATACH working group

We are a member of the [Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health \(ATACH\)](#), which was established by WHO to realise the ambition set at COP26 to build climate resilient and sustainable health systems. Participants in the alliance include NGOs, private sector, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions from across WHO member states.

<https://ukhealthalliance.org/>

Public affairs and policy

Overarching areas

Chief Medical Officer briefing on climate change

We wrote to MPs of all parties calling on them to attend a special online briefing on the health impacts of the climate crisis. The briefing was led by the UK's lead chief medical officer on climate, Professor Sir Gregor Smith, with presentations from Professor Sir Andy Haines from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Rosamund Kissi-Debrah, and climate scientist Professor Kevin Anderson from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Letter to the First Minister of Scotland

Following his appointment as First Minister of Scotland, we wrote to Humzah Yousaf, calling on him to take the lead in driving forward the critical changes needed to protect health and the health service in Scotland from the climate and nature crises. The joint letter was also signed by Presidents of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. The full text of the letter can be viewed [here](#).

Open letter to COP28 President on delivering a transformative agenda

We were cosignatories on an [open letter](#), coordinated by the Clean Air Fund, to the COP28 President urging him to deliver a transformative agenda, to take steps to reduce air pollution and deliver win-wins for climate, public health and economies.

Human Rights Bill (Scotland)

In October, we submitted a [response](#) to the Scottish government consultation on the right to a healthy environment within the proposed Human Rights Bill for Scotland. A joint letter to MSPs signed by many of our members was also issued. In November, we received a response from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition, acknowledging feedback regarding the inclusion of the right to healthy and sustainable food and further consideration of this.



Clean air

Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill – Ella’s Law

In February we sent a joint [letter](#), signed by 16 members of UKHACC, calling on MPs to support the Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill – Ella’s Law – to ensure everyone has clean air to breathe. In March, we received a [response](#) from the Minister Rebecca Pow, stating that while the government recognises the intention behind the Clean Air Bill, it does not support the Bill because the legal framework of the Environment Act allows them to make interventions to reduce air pollution.

Clean Air Wins

We supported [Clean Air Wins](#), a campaign aimed at reducing air pollution and ensuring everyone can breathe clean, safe air. The campaign is focused on building a network of individuals who share a commitment to social and environmental justice to spread awareness, get involved and advocate for policies that support clean air. Supporters were provided with training, become part of the network, and be motivated by the opportunity to make a difference in their community.

Letter to Secretary of Health and Social Care

In May we wrote [to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care](#) to call on him to support London’s Ultra Low Emission Zone expansion as an important intervention to improve health and to ensure his ministerial colleagues are fully aware of the serious impacts of air pollution on health. In August, we received a [response to our letter](#) which, although it fell short of supporting the ULEZ expansion, highlighted the serious harm to health from pollution and the need for interventions to reduce air pollution. We have highlighted why the ULEZ is important in [this blog](#).

Letter to PM to take action on air pollution

On Clean Air Day (15 June), we joined with more than 200 health professionals to call on the Prime Minister to take action on air pollution. The [letter](#) pointed to the evidence that interventions such as low emission zones work to clean the air and reduces hospitalisations and asked the PM to set an example by taking action.

Letter to all political parties

We signed an [open letter](#) calling on all political parties to recognise the importance of clean air and take meaningful action to address air pollution. The letter, signed by 40 organisations, was sent to party leaders, parliamentarians, and manifesto writers in a united bid to encourage a stronger commitment to clean air policies in the run-up to the general election. The letter asks political parties to commit to four core clean air policies:

- A Clean Air Act with enhanced air quality targets and the legal right to breathe clean air
- A public engagement campaign on air quality and health
- Investment in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure and facilities
- The establishment of Clean Air Frameworks to bring together local authorities and health and social care teams to work together on clean air



Biodiversity and Nature

Climate and Ecology Bill

On World Health Day (7 April), we joined with Doctors Association UK and other health organisations calling attention to an [open letter](#) addressed to the Health Secretary, calling on him to lock climate science into law and support the Climate and Ecology Bill.

Nature 2030

We joined with Wildlife and Countryside LINK and a number of other partners to launch the [Nature 2030 campaign](#), which seeks to ensure the government fulfils its pledge to manage 30% of the UK's land and sea for nature, and hits its legally-binding target to halt wildlife decline by 2030. We are supporting a call for members of the public to sign an open letter indicating support

Inquiry on urban green space

We submitted a [response to the call for evidence](#) by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's inquiry on the ecological, environmental and human benefits of green space, and effective solutions to making cities greener and nature rich. We were subsequently invited to give oral evidence at the Urban Green Spaces Oral Evidence session.

See Projects section for our Biodiversity, Climate Change and Health policy report

Fossil fuels and energy transition



Cumbria Coal Mine

We [endorsed a legal challenge](#) by Friends of the Earth and the South Lakes Action on Climate Change regarding the government's granting of planning permission for the Cumbria coal mine. We also endorsed a [statement](#) by the International Society of Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE), European Respiratory Society. Policy Officer, Anandita Pattnaik wrote this blog on why we support the Cumbria [coal mine legal challenge](#).

Letter to Prince William Foundation

In February, we [wrote](#) to Prince William Foundation calling for action to shift the Royal Foundation and Earthshot Prize bank accounts and investments away from JP Morgan to a different, greener bank.

Statement and letter on oil and gas licences

Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on 31 July of new licences for oil and gas in the North Sea, in August, we issued a [statement calling for the licences to be withdrawn](#). We also coordinated a [letter](#) from UKHACC members to the Prime Minister to call on him to withdraw

the decision to issue new licences for oil and gas projects in the North Sea. 29 individuals from across our membership signed the letter

'No new oil' letter and lobbying event

In November, a [letter](#) signed by health leaders across UKHACC membership organisations asking MPs to oppose new oil and gas was shared at a green carding event in London. Richard Smith has [blogged](#) about his experience of the day. The call from health professionals for an end to new oil and gas received [media coverage](#).

WONCA letter to international leaders

On 30 October, UKHACC joined with the world's leading GP and health bodies representing three million health professionals to urge international leaders to safeguard the health of global populations from the climate crisis in an [open letter](#) calling for an end to oil and gas expansion and a just transition away from fossil fuels.

Health leaders call for fossil fuel phase out at COP28

UKHACC is among a group of health organisations representing 46.3M health professionals that have signed an [open letter](#) to the COP28 President Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber and all national leaders demanding that "countries commit to an accelerated, just and equitable phase-out of fossil fuels as the decisive path to health for all".

Inequalities

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

In February, we published a [policy brief](#) outlining how the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill provides an opportunity to maximise benefits to health, the climate crisis, nature, social justice and the economy. We [wrote](#) to peers calling for their support on specific amendments linked to green space, nature and housing.



There is no doubt that unlocking economic growth through planning reform, as was highlighted in the net zero review, could achieve real health benefits by fully aligning our planning system with climate change and nature targets. The point has been made by the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, which says that a healthy neighbourhood can also be a powerful levelling-up tool, leading to better mental and physical health and well-being outcomes through active travel, social connectivity and access to green spaces. Statistics published by the UN only a few days ago show that life expectancy in this country has deteriorated dramatically in comparison with many other countries since the 1950s. We were then one of the top countries for life expectancy; now we are in danger of dropping out of the top 30. There is such a persuasive argument for tying in strong public preventive health with what must be done on climate change and net zero. Surely the planning system is one of the most powerful levers that we can use to make it happen. I hope we will come back to this very important matter on Report

– Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, House of Lords debate

In July, we [wrote to peers](#) again, calling on them to support an amendment to the bill that would reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing by placing a duty on planners. This [article](#) also explains the importance of this amendment.

Food systems

Plant Based Treaty

We endorsed the [Plant Based Treaty](#) – a global treaty to put the food system at the heart of combating the climate crisis which aims to halt the widespread degradation of critical ecosystems caused by animal agriculture, promote the shift to healthy, sustainable plant-based diets, and actively reverse damage done to planetary functions.



Adaptation

Heat resilience strategy

We participated in a steering group coordinated by The Physiological Society to develop a [Heat Resilience Strategy](#) with recommendations for research, built environment, business and public health in order to improve UK preparedness for rising temperatures and heatwaves. UKHACC was pleased to participate in the steering group to develop this important report.

Travel and transport

Letter to PM on cuts to active travel budget

In March, we joined with several organisations in a [letter](#) to Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak regarding cuts to the active travel budget, following a statement by the Transport Secretary of a reduction in the overall active travel fund from £3.8 billion to £3 million. This includes a two-thirds cut to capital investment in infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling from £308 million to just £100 million for the next two years.



Health systems

Prevention in Health and Social Care Inquiry

We submitted a [proposal](#) to the prevention in health and social care inquiry calling for action to protect health and positive action deliver climate mitigation and adaptation. The proposal outlined the co-benefits from action that seeks to achieve a cleaner environment that promotes good health and wellbeing.

Insights report: Educating primary care health professionals for action on air pollution

The final report of the insight project we completed in partnership with Global Action Plan has been published along with the primary care air pollution protocol. The project successfully demonstrated that GPs are effective emissaries for information on air pollution, including patient groups vulnerable to the health harms of air pollution.

HCPC Standards of Care, Performance and Ethics consultation

In [response to a consultation on the Standard of Conduct, Performance and Ethics](#), we have called on the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) to include a new standard of sustainability in health and care. The Standards are integral to ensuring high quality professional practice and sets out how the HCPC expects the 15 professions that it regulates to act.

NHS England call for evidence on six major conditions

In [response to a consultation on how to prevent, diagnose, treat and manage the six major groups of health conditions](#) that most affect the population in England, we have called on the UK Government to include air pollution, climate change and lack of access to nature as risk factors. The response highlights why Interventions that seek to reduce air pollution, improve access to nature, and promote healthy, plant-based diets would prevent ill health, reduce the burden on health systems, and contribute to achieving the aims of the government's Levelling Up Bill, Net Zero strategy and Health and Care Act 2022.

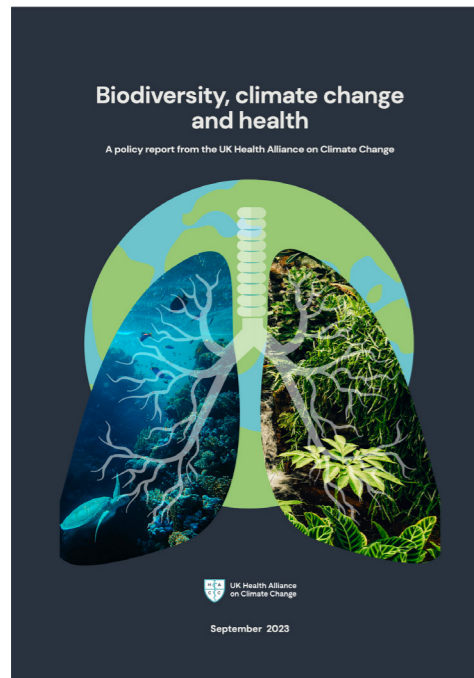
Good Medical Practice

We were disappointed with the weak inclusion of sustainability in the recently published updated Good Medical Practice. During the consultation process, we engaged with the GMC and a number of other interested stakeholders, including our members, in the submission of our response and participation in a specialist sustainability workshop, during which the need for greater emphasis on the need for sustainability in healthcare was highlighted by a number of individuals and organisations. We have [written to the GMC](#) to express our concern, and also published this [opinion piece in BMJ](#).

Projects

Biodiversity, Climate Change and Health policy report

In September, we published our Biodiversity, Climate Change and Health Policy report, which sets out seven recommendations to protect our land and seas to promote health, the environment and the planet.



Our health depends on thriving nature and oceans. And yet the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Acting on the climate, pollution, and nature emergencies together – by addressing our impacts and dependencies, prioritising nature and ocean recovery, and reducing the unequal access to the benefits of nature in our communities is key to our health and the health of future generations.

Dr Georgie Sowman, a GP in Northeast England, Greener Practice, and Co-founder of Healthcare Ocean

The recommendations are

-  Protect, restore and regenerate nature and biodiversity in urban landscapes.
-  Prioritise and promote plant-based and sustainably sourced food, limit waste and build resilience against food insecurity.
-  Ensure delivery of the International Financial Commitments to support nature and biodiversity with regular monitoring and evaluation to demonstrate effectiveness.
-  End all subsidies, investments and new exploration for fossil fuels, while ensuring a just transition to renewable energy.
-  Reduce plastic waste by banning the production and sale of unnecessary plastic items with simultaneous efforts to incentivise reusing, recycling, and the production and utilisation of alternate compostable materials.
-  Increase knowledge and understanding of human and ecological risks caused by the presence of pharmaceutical products in water bodies.
-  Strengthen international financial flows and capacity-building with inclusive decision making to support and implement innovative multidisciplinary solutions to save marine ecosystems.

The [pdf report](#) is supported by a dedicated [website](#) and infographics to highlight the key messages.

ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY

UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RCVS SETTING VETERINARY STANDARDS

Greener Practice

PLANT-BASED Health Professionals UK

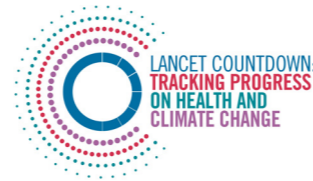
The report was endorsed by multiple organisations.

A [joint letter](#) signed by multiple organisations was sent to MPs and peers calling on them to read the report and do all they can to support the recommendations.

Lancet Countdown UK policy brief

The UK policy brief for the 2023 Lancet Countdown was launched in November.

The policy brief was produced by a working group of UKHACC members including the:



The policy brief calls on the UK Government to urgently implement mitigative and adaptive measures to achieve the following recommendations:

1. Reduce reliance and use of fossil fuels in favour of cheaper, locally available, and reliable renewable energies, including by (1) eliminating all forms of government subsidies, investments, new licences and consent for fossil fuel exploration, extraction, and sales; and (2) redirecting funds towards subsidies to rapidly upscale production and utilisation of renewable energies, which would benefit health through alleviating energy poverty and reducing air pollution.
2. Ensure equitable access to high-quality green and blue spaces in urban environments with an adequate system for monitoring progress that aims to promote health and well-being.
3. Develop and implement policies that (1) promote healthy diets, high in plant-based foods, with an emphasis on significantly reduced consumption of red and processed meat and dairy products; (2) support farmers' transition to sustainable practices through regulation of the local food sector; and (3) promote and support the consumption of local and sustainable agricultural produce.

The full text of the policy brief and associated data sheet infographic can be accessed [here](#).



UNITED KINGDOM
LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DATA SHEET 2023

Health and climate change in the UK

The *Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change* is an academic collaboration of over 200 researchers from around the world, which annually takes stock of the evolving links between health and climate change through 40+ peer-reviewed indicators. Since 2016, these indicators have provided regular, reliable global and regional stocktakes on climate change and health. This document summarises key findings from the 2023 Report of the *Lancet Countdown** for the UK, which reveal that:

- Trends in heat and health** are particularly concerning, with populations experiencing increases in exposure to high temperatures, undermining livelihoods and threatening people's health and wellbeing.
- Unhealthy diets** are contributing to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and undermining health and wellbeing. Deaths attributable to dietary risks could be reduced through balanced, low-emission diets.
- Air pollution** is affecting the health of local populations, with a high burden of disease and deaths that could be avoided by transitioning to zero emission, clean energy sources.

These findings underline the urgency of strengthening local health systems, adapting to climate change, and pursuing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through interventions that simultaneously deliver health co-benefits. These actions will help build healthier, more resilient populations, and forge the way to a thriving future for the UK.

Heat and health

Exposure to high temperatures threatens people's lives, health, and wellbeing, leading to death and heat-related disease, and increasing healthcare demand during heatwave episodes. Older people, socio-economically deprived communities, very young children, pregnant women, and those with underlying health problems are particularly at risk.

- From 2018 to 2022, the average summer temperatures that people were exposed to were 1.1°C higher than the 1986–2005 baseline average (indicator 1.1.1).
- From 2013–2022, children under the age of one were exposed to 100% more heatwave days annually than the equivalent demographic were on average from 1986–2005. Adults over age 65 saw a 92% increase across the same timeframe (indicator 1.1.2).
- In 2022, out of 10 urban centres evaluated, 6 had moderate levels of green space, and 4 have low levels. (indicator 2.2.3).

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HEAT

Heat exposure limits labour productivity, which undermines livelihoods and the social determinants of health.

11 million potential labour hours lost due to heat exposure in 2022, an increase of 277% from 1991–2000 (indicator 1.1.4).

Construction workers were hit the hardest, seeing 69.4% of the potential hours lost and 73.9% of the potential income losses in 2022 (indicators 1.1.4 & 4.1.3).

FUTURE PROJECTIONS

In a scenario in which temperatures are kept to under 2°C of heating, heatwave exposure for people over age 65 is projected to increase 6-fold by mid-century (2041–2060 average) (indicator 1.1.2).

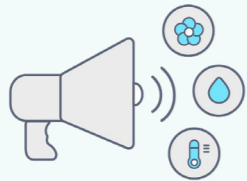
2°C SCENARIO

@lancetcountdown | www.lancetcountdown.org | info@lancetcountdown.org

Our Commitments

In 2023, we worked with our members to produce a list of ten actions that organisations can take to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Our Commitments were launched in March with the endorsement of many of our members. A dedicated website was produced to highlight the actions and to provide guidance and shared learning of why and how to implement them.

Our Commitments are



Declare that the climate emergency is a health emergency



Publish a plan for your organisation to get to net zero



Campaign on mitigating and adapting to the planetary crisis



Embed sustainability in governance, structure and culture



Develop a plan for sustainability in your specialist area



Educate members on the links between climate and health



Disinvest in fossil fuels and sign the fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty



Acknowledge the link between climate change and inequalities



Develop and implement a travel policy for members and staff



Prioritise plant-based and sustainably sourced food

<https://ukhealthalliance.org/about/our-commitments/>

Green Surgery Report

The Green Surgery report was launched at the Future of Surgery conference on 14 November. The landmark report was produced by UKHACC, Brighton and Sussex Medical School and the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, working with multiple stakeholders working across surgical care.

The report is believed to be the world's first detailed account of how to reduce the environmental impact of surgical care while maintaining high quality patient care and potentially saving the NHS money. The report includes a clear set of recommendations for everyone involved in surgical care, including colleges, associations and societies, NHS, policy makers, clinicians and patients.



Areas covered in the report are:

1. Executive summary
2. Recommendations
3. Case studies
4. Reducing the need for surgery
5. Surgical care pathways
6. Operating theatres
7. Anaesthesia
8. Surgical care products
9. Barriers and facilitators
10. Future research

A [dedicated website](#) was produced to share the report findings and recommendations. A YouTube video playlist featuring key messages and importance of the report can be accessed [here](#).

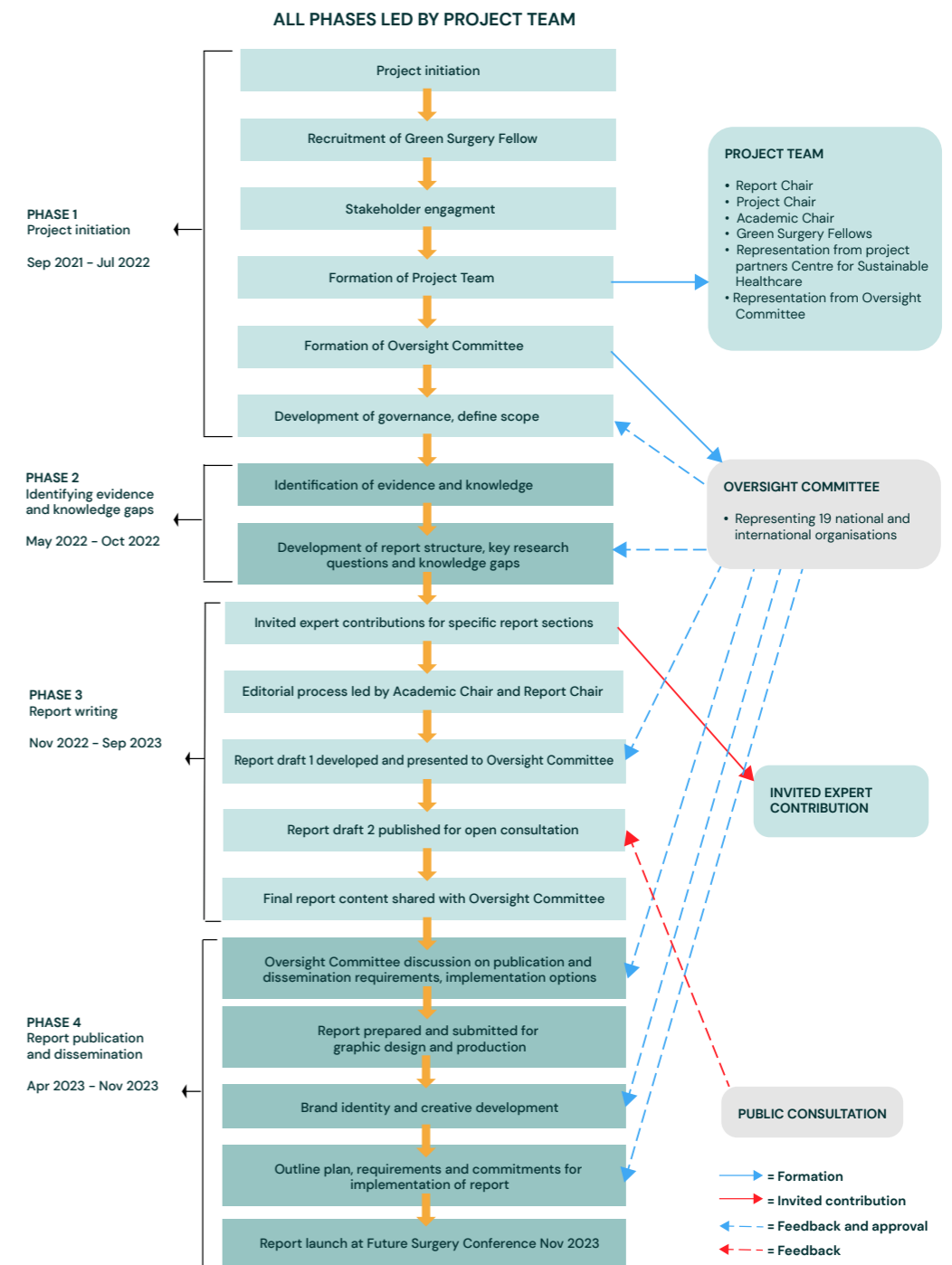
Delivery of the report was led by a project team involving



The project was funded by the Health Foundation.



An overview of the process involved in producing the report is outlined below. It is hoped this project will provide a framework for other areas of work.



Editorial, petition and consortium of journals

On 25 October, an editorial we coordinated: [Time to treat the climate and nature crisis as one indivisible global health emergency](#) was published by 300 health journals around the world.

A [petition calling on the World Health Association to declare a global health emergency](#) was launched to coincide with the editorial. All of the journal editors that published the editorial are also backing the petition.



We are facing a global public health emergency which must be recognised for what it is and call on the WHO to make this declaration before or at the seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2024.

300 journal editors

Following publication of the editorial, a question was raised in the House of Lords to ask the government what plans they have to address this. The debate that followed highlighted many of the areas of concern associated with climate health impacts including food insecurity, extreme weather, heat, and infectious diseases. The text can be viewed [here](#).

We completed [research](#) into health journal publishing of articles on climate change and found that, despite climate change being the major threat to global health, many had published little or nothing on the subject. The finding supports a proposal to establish a consortium of journals that would both lead in the

publishing of joint editorial on the subject and commission and share articles with the many journals that lack the capacity to commission articles themselves.

We have reached out to hundreds of journals to explore the idea of establishing a consortium of journals to coordinate publishing of articles on climate and health. The response to this initiative has been positive and first steps have been put in place to establish a steering group to take this forward in 2024.

Climate and Health spokesperson network

In May 2023, we delivered a pilot project to create, train and brief a diverse spokesperson network of health communicators to meet the demand from climate strategic communications organisations and amplify the voice of climate and health communicators. 31 individuals have joined the network.

The group covers a range of healthcare professions, including clinical, allied healthcare and public health from across UKHACC member organisations. There is also a broad cross-section of experience, from leaders with a track record stretching back decades and including multiple national media appearances, to rising stars who have benefited from our training days. They have all taken on roles and responsibilities above and beyond their day jobs to help solve the climate and nature crisis, from sitting on committees to establishing new national networks.

The network includes:

Former President of the Faculty of Public Health and current President of the RSM Epidemiology and Public Health Section, **Royal Society of Medicine**; Chair of the Climate Action Network of the **Association of Clinical Psychologists**, Association of Clinical Psychologists; Chair Environmental Specialist Interest Group, **Royal College of Emergency Medicine**; Chair of the Representative Body, **British Medical Association**; Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow, Royal College of General Practitioners; 2 x Co-Chairs of our Sustainable Development Special Interest Group, Faculty of Public Health; Head of Clinical Products Management at Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust, **Royal College of Nursing**; co-chair of the national Greener Practice Group, **Royal College of General Practitioners**; Climate lead for Wales, **Royal College of General Practitioners**; Clinical Lead – National Green Theatres Programme, Royal College of Anaesthetists; Professional Lead Infection Prevention and Control and a MBE, Royal College of Nursing; UK Professional Lead – Nursing Support Workers, **Royal College of Nursing**; Environment and Sustainability Working Group Lead, **Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons**; Leadership Fellow in Climate Change and Anaesthesia, **Royal College of Anaesthetists**; Joint Vice Chair, Barts Green Health, **Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health**; Medical Director of Plant Based Health Online, Plant-based Health Professionals; Associate Registrar for Climate and Sustainability, **Royal College of Psychiatrists**.



Following the training and establishment of the spokesperson network, the following has been achieved:

- Flooding incidents on NHS sites reported in 170 news sites including The Independent, Yahoo, MSN, AOL, Evening Standard, Health Service Journal, plus 120 regional online titles
- Heatwave impacts on hospital overheating reported in Evening Standard, Yahoo, MSN
- Doctors calling for support for ULEZ expansion in London covered on BBC London News, BBC national news online, Evening Standard, and London Live
- Meetings between individual network members and local MPs supported for several network members
- Quarterly group meetings of network members to share learning

A video outlining how the network was set up and why it is important can be viewed [here](#).

Net Zero Clinical Care Conference

The BMJ and UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (UKHACC) joined forces on 10 October 2023 to host the inaugural conference on Net Zero Clinical Care, in partnership with the Greener NHS programme at NHS England. Health professionals, policy makers and others from across the health and care system came together to share examples of good practice, inspire others and build momentum to deliver change.

The conference was attended in person by 216 people plus more than 1,700 online. Speakers were invited following an abstract submission process, which attracted 134 high quality submissions.

1700
online attendees

216
in person attendees

134
submissions



Clinical care will be fundamental to reaching those targets and patient care must be at the heart of everything we do.”

Chris Gormely, Acting Chief Sustainability Officer
for Greener NHS



The banner features the Net Zero Clinical Care logo on the left, which consists of a stylized sunburst of green dots surrounding a blue circle. To the right of the logo, the text reads "NET ZERO CLINICAL CARE" in blue and green. Further right, it says "10 October 2023 | Hybrid BMA House, London". A green circular button with a white arrow and the text "Book your seat" is positioned on the right side. Below the text, there is a photograph of the BMA House building at night, illuminated with warm lights. A green bar at the bottom of the banner contains the text "Delivering greener care for a healthier future" in white, and the website "netzeroclinicalcare.bmj.com" below it.

Event sessions covered the key principles needed to decarbonise clinical care in a way that ensures health and wellbeing and delivers high quality care. These core principles are keeping people healthy, delivering efficient and appropriate care, reducing carbon associated with treatments and care settings, and system change. Richard Smith, summarised the conference in 12 C's – clinical change, capacity, collaboration, community, connectivity, compassion, complexity, cost, contagion, courage, creativity and Cornwall.

Closing the meeting, he captured the energy in the room saying, "We are about action, about making connections. You now need to go home and do something! Without clinical change the NHS is never going to get to net zero; and you are the people to make it happen." There has been an enormous amount of interest in the conference and the hope is that it will become an annual event.

Communications and engagement

In Conversation lunchtime sessions

During 2023 we ran a series of lunchtime webinars covering a range of themes with excellent guest speakers.

January	Progress towards a net zero health service across the UK
February	Education for sustainable healthcare
March	Levelling up for better health, biodiversity and climate outcomes
April	Let's Active Travel: Benefits to health and planetary health
May	Clean air: At all times
June	Protecting our ocean for all our health
September	In Conversation with Baroness Brown, Chair of the Adaptation Committee
October	Schwartz Round: Health in the climate and ecological emergency



My first Schwartz Round.. was interested to be part of this and I am also interested in (and deeply saddened by) the climate emergency too. I found it emotionally useful (validating, encouraging action) and energising to hear the 3 storytellers. And also how they resonated with other participants. I was also impressed with seeing a Schwartz Round in action with excellent chairing

Schwartz round participant feedback

News bulletin and Social Media



Subscribers to our monthly news bulletin have **increased by 62% to 3,159 subscribers**



6,371 people follow us on X/ Twitter *@UKHealthClimate*
An increase of 9% since last year



I just wanted to say what an amazing resource this newsletter is! It must take a huge amount of time to collate, but is so rich in most excellent stuff. I've just registered for about 4 of the conferences, signed all the petitions and downloaded a load of fabulous resources. I'll be distributing it to our membership too

Newsletter subscriber feedback

Website

We launched a new website in December 2022. At the end of the first year of the website, we can report:

9,600
unique users

36,500
page views

Our most popular pages:



Homepage
(4,829 visitors)



Green Surgery report
(2,009 visitors)



Our Commitments
(1,098 visitors)



Our members
(1,004 visitors)

*Website and social media data collected on 11 December 2023

<https://ukhealthalliance.org/>