

# SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

From FoSH  
HEENE's Faculty of Sustainable Healthcare

Keep up to date with Sustainable Healthcare news from the North East and beyond



Dr Elaine Winkley  
Anaesthetic Consultant  
FoSH Chair

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### The Climate Emergency Is A Healthcare Emergency - We Need to Act Now!

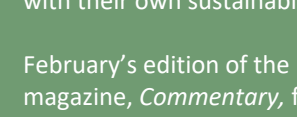
Global warming is happening now – the NHS creates 6.3% of England's carbon emissions! Increased global temperatures and extreme weather all lead to more disease and impact on the more vulnerable communities around us.

All healthcare professionals are guided by the principle of medical ethics to 'Do No Harm' – we all need to understand the impact of healthcare decisions on the global environment- decisions we make today impact the health of future generations with respect to air quality, carbon emissions and global warming.

The Faculty Of Sustainable Healthcare has been set up to help educate everyone working in healthcare irrespective of their role as we all have a part to play. Without education and understanding the impact of our clinical decisions on the planet we can't have the knowledge to make a difference. We are leading the way in the North East, with the first Faculty of Sustainable Healthcare and the first NHS Trust to declare a climate emergency. We hope everyone will get involved in making the North East the greenest region in the United Kingdom and making a positive change in the area you work to reduce environmental harm from our day to day work. We need to act now to protect our planet for future generations! We can make a difference!

## SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

Membership magazine of the  
Royal College of Physicians



Yes, you guessed it, the faculty is in the media again. Just another double page spread this time. No big deal, we are getting used to all the national attention.

February's edition of the Royal College of Physician's magazine, *Commentary*, featured HEENE's PG Dean, Professor Kumar and faculty chair, Elaine Winkley. The article explores the inspiration for the faculty and the logistics involved in its creation, as well as promoting the faculties achievements to date. Great insight, as always, from Prof Kumar and well worth a read.

<https://70b706f2.flowpaper.com/CommFebruary2022/#page=22>



Prof Kumar  
PG Dean

## Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme 2022/23

A very exciting opportunity for any trainee passionate about sustainable healthcare. Dr Nick Watts is the first Chief Sustainability Officer for the NHS, and this fellowship will offer a unique opportunity to positively impact the healthcare system's green agenda, as well as developing your own leadership skills. Dr Nick Watts is extremely passionate and committed to delivering the NHS's net zero plans by 2045. Find out more by following the link below:

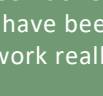
<https://www.fmlm.ac.uk/clinical-fellow-schemes/chief-sustainability-officer's-clinical-fellow-scheme>

## GREEN SURGERY CHALLENGE

It is an exciting time in the world of sustainable surgery. Momentum is definitely building, and surgical specialties are waking up to their disproportionately large contribution to healthcare's carbon footprint. The Green Surgery Challenge 2021 was an opportunity to promote ways of practising surgery that are less harmful to the environment. Five teams received mentoring from sustainable healthcare specialists at the CSH to design a sustainability quality improvement project. The fascinating projects were presented at the virtual Green Surgery Conference 2021. The conference is available to view by clicking the link below:

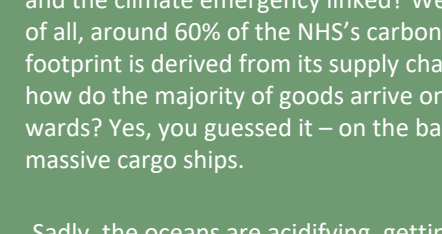
<https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/what-we-do/green-surgery-challenge>

## Anaesthesia News



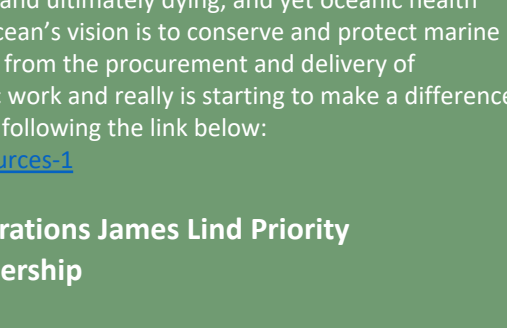
Association of Anaesthetists

Another fantastic article featuring the faculty, this time in the Association of Anaesthetist's (AoA) monthly magazine – Anaesthesia News. In the article FoSH chair, Elaine Winkley, and faculty member, Cathy Lawson explain the rationale behind creating the first faculty of sustainable healthcare and the great work that has been done to date. The AoA have been prominent champions for sustainable healthcare and have been pivotal in coordinating a number of national SusQI projects. Their pioneering work really has created a fantastic blueprint that other specialties should follow.



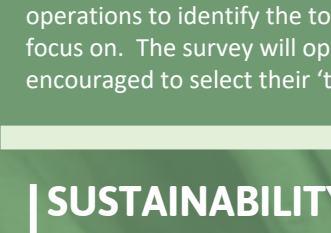
If you haven't checked out the Healthcare Ocean website, it needs to be the next thing you do today (after you finish reading this newsletter). Healthcare Ocean was launched in November 2021 by our very own Richard Hixson (Critical Care Consultant at DMH)

You may ponder, how are healthcare, oceans and the climate emergency linked? Well, first of all, around 60% of the NHS's carbon footprint is derived from its supply chain and how do the majority of goods arrive on our wards? Yes, you guessed it – on the back of massive cargo ships.



Sadly, the oceans are acidifying, getting hotter and ultimately dying, and yet oceanic health rarely makes it into green policy. Healthcare Ocean's vision is to conserve and protect marine ecosystems through minimizing harm resulting from the procurement and delivery of healthcare. Healthcare Ocean is doing fantastic work and really is starting to make a difference, take some time to watch their launch event by following the link below:

<https://www.healthcareocean.org/ocean-resources-1>



## Greener Operations James Lind Priority Setting Partnership

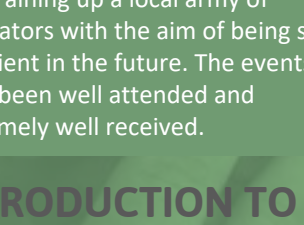
Who is James Lind? I hear you cry! Well, the James Lind Alliance is an NIHR funded, non-profit making initiative that identifies important unanswered research questions.

Operation are amongst the most resource intensive healthcare interventions; each operating theatre creates around two tonnes of waste per year and a single operation can generate a carbon footprint equivalent to driving more than 2000 miles. If the NHS is to meet its 'net zero' carbon emissions pledge by 2040 it is imperative that we make operations 'greener'

The James Lind Alliance is running a research priority setting partnership for greener operations to identify the top 10 areas that future sustainability research in this area should focus on. The survey will open in the coming weeks and as many people as possible are encouraged to select their 'top 10'. The survey, can be found [here](#).

## SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS

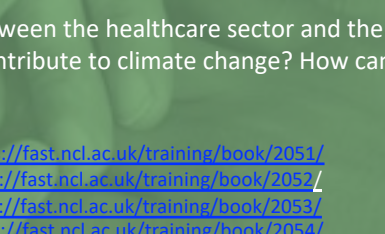
## LAUNCH



The faculty was proudly launched in November at a star studied event. The enthusiasm was palpable, and it was truly inspiring to be surrounded (virtually) with like-minded individuals passionate about making a difference in their clinical environment.

## WORKSHOPS

The faculty has also been working in partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare delivering high quality workshops throughout the year and training up a local army of facilitators with the aim of being self-sufficient in the future. The events have been well attended and extremely well received.



## INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE

This course is an overview of the relationship between the healthcare sector and the climate and ecological crises. How does the health system contribute to climate change? How can clinical practice become sustainable?

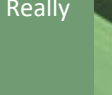
- 17th Mar 2022 1pm – 5pm - <https://fast.ncl.ac.uk/training/book/2051/>
- 7th Jun 2022 9am – 1pm - <https://fast.ncl.ac.uk/training/book/2052/>
- 21st Sept 2022 1pm – 5pm - <https://fast.ncl.ac.uk/training/book/2053/>
- 6th Dec 2022 9am – 1pm - <https://fast.ncl.ac.uk/training/book/2054/>

## SUSTAINABLE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (SUSQI)

This intensive course introduces health professionals and educators to the concept of sustainable value and the 'SusQI framework', integrating sustainability into quality improvement:

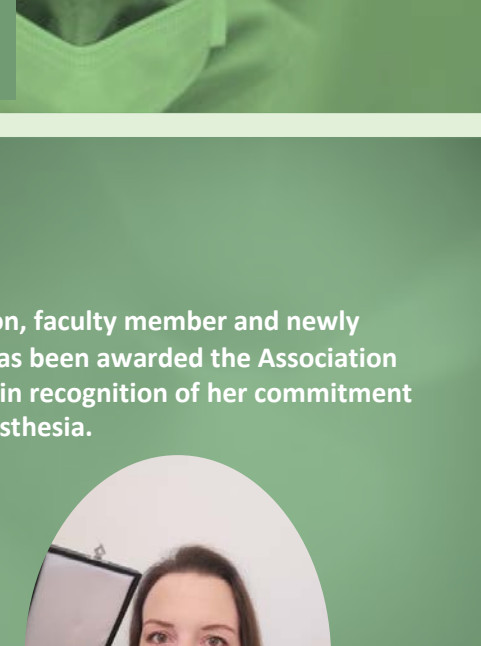
- 30th Mar 2022 - 1pm - 5pm - <https://fast.ncl.ac.uk/training/book/2043/>

## North East Sustainability in Surgery Forum



Momentum in Sustainable surgery is really starting to ramp up and real progress seems to be on the horizon.

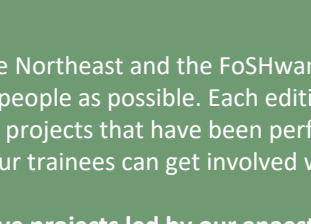
The J&J hosted event had great representation from across surgery and anaesthesia and included many fantastic presentations. David Jones outlined his exciting priority setting project: Greener Operations, and Cathy Lawson described the impact that the healthcare system has the on the environment. Really great discussion throughout and endless opportunities for collaboration.



## SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

We are so excited to report that Dr Cathy Lawson, faculty member and newly appointed North East Anaesthetic consultant, has been awarded the Association of Anaesthetists prestigious Anniversary medal in recognition of her commitment to promoting environmentally sustainable anaesthesia.

Throughout her training, Cathy has led the way for sustainable healthcare in the Northeast and has held several local and national roles including a fellowship with the AoA and the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare (CSH). Cathy also sat on the AoA's sustainability committee and was pivotal in the creation of the UK's first Anaesthetic green champion's network as well as coordinating a number of projects including reducing the use of harmful anaesthetic gases.



Dr Cathy Lawson  
Anaesthetic Consultant  
FoSH Member

In summary, Cathy is a sustainability legend and the FOSH and the North East are lucky to have such an inspiring green role model. Well done Cathy!!!

## GET INVOLVED

There is so much great sustainability work going on in the Northeast and the FoSHwants to make sure that it is shared and celebrated with as many people as possible. Each edition of Sustainability Matters will showcase fantastic trainee led projects that have been performed in the region as well as highlighting ongoing projects that our trainees can get involved with.

This edition is shining the light on a number of innovative projects led by our anaesthetic and GP trainees:

## THE NITROUS OXIDE PROJECT: MITIGATION

Nitrous Oxide can be a fantastic and useful medicine, but did you know it is a greenhouse gas and is >250x more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>. This innovative project is not only reviewing Nitrous Oxide use in clinical settings but also investigating sources of clinical waste and system leak.

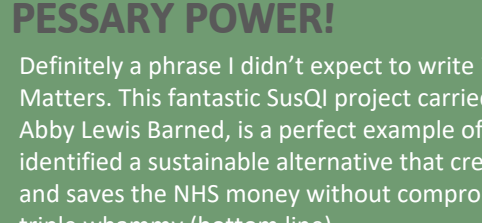
It is a fantastic national project and is being led regionally by William Udall. He would love to hear from you if you like to get involved. Please contact William at: [wudall@nhs.net](mailto:wudall@nhs.net)

For more information on this amazing project, why don't you watch the launch video to see what it is all about. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OreKYff0d8s>

## REGIONAL AUDIT

### INHALATION ANAESTHETIC USE

More great work from NEASH (Northeast Anaesthetist's for Sustainable Healthcare). When it comes to environmental impact, not all anaesthetic gases are made equal. Desflurane and nitrous oxide are significantly more damaging to the environment and are referred to as blue gases (Fig1)



The region wide audit looked at the use of the gases around the area and found considerable interdepartmental variation. The results of this project have been presented at every centre in the region and was coupled with an education message regarding more sustainable alternatives such as TIVA (total intravenous anaesthesia) and sevoflurane. Fig 2 shows significant regional variation (trust names removed).

## PRIMARY CARE PROJECTS

There is also some fantastic work being carried out in Primary Care. We have a number of passionate trainees and clinicians involved with sustainability projects and we have highlighted a couple of different examples that will hopefully inspire you to get started in your clinical area.

## PESSARY POWER!

Definitely a phrase I didn't expect to write in Sustainability Matters. This fantastic SusQI project carried out by GP Registrar, Abby Lewis Barned, is a perfect example of a project that identified a sustainable alternative that creates less plastic waste and saves the NHS money without compromising patient care - triple whammy (bottom line).

Oestrogen pessaries are very commonly prescribed for the management of post-menopausal urogenital symptoms. The most commonly prescribed pessary is Vagifem, with each tablet coming with its own plastic applicator. A simple switch to Vagirux, that comes with a single, reusable applicator could save 15.6million plastic applicators from landfill each year. Mind Blow!!! Such a simple and effective solution with an incredible outcome. For more information on this project and how you can make the switch please contact Abby at: [abbylewisbarned@gmail.com](mailto:abbylewisbarned@gmail.com)



# GREEN IMPACT: HEALTH TOOLKIT

nus

green impact



Dr. Jake Shepherd  
GPST3

Jake Shepherd is one of the GPST3's working at The Village Surgery in Silksworth. As part of his training Jake is completing an integrated care post at Sunderland Medical School with a focus on Sustainable Healthcare.

Throughout his training Jake has been interested in climate change and its impact on health and has integrated the Green Impact for Health Toolkit at multiple practices. Jake has completed 35 sustainable actions, including:

- Switching to recycled paper
- Reducing single use plastic by introducing wipeable aprons
- Reducing water use by using washing up bowls
- Working with pharmacy to reduce inappropriate polypharmacy

Jake and the team at the Village Surgery have recently been awarded the Green Impact bronze award and are already working towards the silver.

Jake's fantastic work highlights the importance of making small changes that, collectively, can make a big difference and how when you have a cohesive team with a common goal, progress is possible. I think we can all learn important lessons from this.

The Green Impact for Health toolkit is definitely worth checking out for practices that want to get on the Sustainability Express!

<https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/gifh-audit>



## SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES

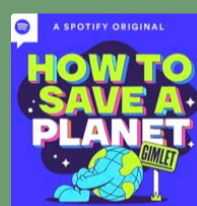


The faculty has been working with the CSH and eLFH to create this unique module that comprises of three sessions that are presented through key concepts and cases studies. It will open your eyes to the impact of the climate crisis on human health and will hopefully inspire you to get started on a SusQI project.

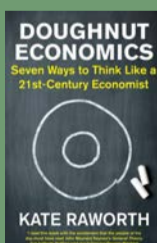
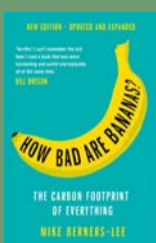
### ONLINE:

- [Centre for Sustainable Healthcare Website](#)
- [Delivering a 'Net Zero' NHS PFD](#)
- [Sustainability in Quality Improvement \(SusQI\)](#)
- [Newcastle Sustainable Medic - Twitter](#)
- [BMJ Blog – Sustainable Medicine](#)
- [SEE Sustainability – Carbon Literacy](#)
- [Carbon Literacy Toolkit](#)
- [UKHACC Carbon Literacy Guide](#)
- [Royal Society of Medicine Webinars](#)
- [Greener Practice](#)

### PODCASTS:



### BOOKS:



## CONTACT US:

For more information about the faculty and upcoming events visit the website:

<https://madeinheene.hee.nhs.uk/PG-Dean/Faculty-of-Sustainable-Healthcare>

We would also love to hear about your SusQI projects or proposals. Please contact us via: [alan.hilley@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:alan.hilley@hee.nhs.uk)