



Northumbria Healthcare Facilities Management

Year in review 2025-26



Contents

Message from our managing director and chair	3 - 4
Our key achievements for 2025-26	5
Our people	6-7
Strengthening our Corporate Social Responsibility	8-9
Capital projects	10-11
Strategic Estate and Property Management	12-13
Driving forward Net Zero Northumbria	14-15
Estates and facilities	16-17
Northumbria Healthcare Textile Manufacturing	18
Warehousing	19

Message from our *Managing Director*



“As managing director of Northumbria Healthcare Facilities Management, I am pleased to present our annual report, reflecting on a year of continued progress, resilience, and dedication across all areas of our organisation.

Over the past year, we have remained focused on delivering high-quality, reliable support services that underpin the safe and effective operation of healthcare across Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. From estates and maintenance to catering, cleaning, and patient support services, our teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that patients, staff, and visitors experience environments that are safe, efficient, and welcoming.

This year has not been without its challenges. Ongoing financial pressures, rising operational costs, and increasing demand for services have required us to adapt and innovate. I am proud of how our colleagues have responded - demonstrating flexibility, professionalism, and a shared commitment to excellence in everything they do.

We have also made important strides in supporting the wider ambitions of the NHS, particularly in relation to sustainability and our journey towards net zero. Through targeted investment in infrastructure, energy efficiency, and new technologies, we are playing a vital role in reducing our environmental impact while maintaining the highest standards of service delivery.

We also celebrated another year of fantastic PLACE (Patient Led Assessment in the Care Environment) scores. Scoring above the national average in all eight assessed areas. This is an achievement that would not be possible with the hard work and determination of our staff who go above and beyond to ensure that our patients, visitors and colleagues have the best experience possible in our hospitals.

At the heart of our success is our people. Their skill, compassion, and dedication are the foundation of everything we achieve. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to every member of our team for their continued hard work and commitment.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on building on our achievements, strengthening our services, and continuing to support Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in delivering outstanding care to our communities.”

Damon Kent FRICS, managing director



Message from our Chair

"It has been yet another year of hard work, determination and brilliant performance from all of our colleagues across NHFM.

NHFM is committed to providing exceptional estates and facilities services to support Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to deliver outstanding patient care. This is clearly evident through the latest PLACE scores which show that patients rated Northumbria hospitals among the best in the country.

Across all services - from engineering and maintenance to cleaning and catering - our teams have shown exceptional dedication, maintaining the highest standards across every site. This has been a demanding year, not least due to sustained pressure on services during a particularly challenging winter period. As patient numbers increased, our staff stepped up once again, making a vital contribution to the health, wellbeing and experience of patients, colleagues and visitors.

We have taken strides in getting feedback from our colleagues and ensuring that they have their say in how our organisation is shaped to support NHFM in years to come. We achieved a record response rate of 83% in the NHS National Staff Survey, this reflects the engagement, honesty and commitment of colleagues across our organisation.



Looking ahead, we are excited by the opportunities to continue to innovate and enhance our services. Whether through modernising our estate, embracing new technologies, or advancing our sustainability ambitions, we remain focused on creating environments that support the delivery of outstanding care.

There is still much to do, but I am confident that, with the strength and dedication of our teams, we will continue to deliver and succeed.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our colleagues, partners, and the leadership of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust for their continued support and commitment. Your contribution has been instrumental to our achievements this year. Together, we will build on this progress and continue to meet future challenges with determination and purpose."

Veronica Stonor, chair

Our key achievements 25-26

We achieved our **highest ever response rate** in the National Staff Survey, with

83%

of colleagues sharing their feedback.



We successfully delivered **22 capital projects**, investing more than

£90 million



into our estate to enhance environment for both patients and staff.

We were proud to receive the prestigious **RoSPA Gold Award** in recognition of our commitment to excellence in workplace health and safety.



Donated **£300k** to Bright Northumbria Healthcare charity.

Our hospitals ranked

1st place

in seven areas including **cleanliness, food and overall appearance** among large acute trusts nationally in the annual PLACE survey.



We strengthened our future workforce by developing a **new talent pathway** through apprenticeships, T-Level opportunities and work experience placements.



Our medical engineering apprentice, **Frankie Taylor-Smith**, was named **Apprentice of the Year** at the National Healthcare Estates Awards 2025.



Our people

Behind every milestone are the people who make it possible. Their dedication, compassion and commitment shape everything we do.

It was another brilliant year for our people being recognised through prestigious awards:



Our trustwide domestic team won the Non-Clinical Team of the Year at the Northumbria Healthcare Staff Awards 2025



We were awarded the ROSPA Gold Accreditation for our commitment to health and safety in the workplace

Phase 2 of the Hexham Redevelopment Programme won the Integration and Collaborative Working Retrofit of the Year

Our sustainability team won two awards at the Excellence in Waste Management Awards – Best Reduction of Clinical Waste and Best Reduction in Single Use Items



Frankie Taylor-Smith

Winner of the Apprentice of the Year Award at IHEEM and Second Year Apprentice of the Year at the Northern and Yorkshire NHS Assessment Centre Awards

Staff story – Steve Riley

Steve Riley's remarkable 50-year career was recognised with a nomination for the Dennis Southern Lifetime Achievement Award at the MyPorter Awards in March 2026.

Joining the trust just days after leaving school, Steve has worked across a range of roles including catering, domestic services, portering and transportation, consistently demonstrating dedication and adaptability.

A standout moment in his career came in 2010 when, as waste manager, he helped introduce new approaches that improved both environmental sustainability and cost efficiency.

Now working as a porter, Steve continues to play a vital role, travelling thousands of miles each year to support services across the trust. His commitment, pride and willingness to go the extra mile have made a lasting impact on colleagues and patients alike.



NHS National Staff Survey 2025

Our people are at the heart of everything we do, and this year's NHS National Staff Survey results gave us plenty to celebrate.

We recorded our highest ever engagement rate with the survey with 83% of colleagues taking part (860 responses).

We also saw encouraging improvement across a number of areas, showing that our colleagues feel more supported, listened to and valued. These results are testament to the collective effort across our organisation to create a positive and inclusive working environment.

Some results that stood out:

- **91% of our staff said they feel trusted to do their job**
- **90% of our staff said they always know what their work responsibilities are**
- **70% of our staff would recommend our organisation as a place to work**



Strengthening our Corporate Social Responsibility

We continued to support the Northumbria Healthcare Community Promise, focusing on all of the ways we can have an even larger impact for everyone who lives and works in our area and wider region.

The promise is aligned to 5 key pillars and NHFM have made a significant contribution to these with both our directly employed and contracted workforce.

Action on Employment

We are supporting people to complete apprenticeships in a number of roles including multi-skilled engineering, medical engineering, joinery, upholstery, business administration and senior leadership. We have had a number of successful completions and people moving into permanent employment with us.

For the first time, we supported placement for students undertaking T-Level qualifications in engineering.

Year 12 students from Bede Academy spent four weeks with our estates team gaining valuable and hands-on experience assisting



with maintenance at the Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care and Wansbeck General Hospital.

We hosted 10 work experience placements in various departments and attended 16 careers events across Northumberland and North Tyneside.

Action on Inequalities

Our community estates team have made significant progress on developing our community premises to facilitate access to healthcare services for more people and reduce health inequalities.

We have also attended recruitment events targeting under-represented groups such as care leavers.



Action on Education

We continued to strengthen our relationships with schools and colleges, helping to raise aspirations and showcase the wide range of careers available within NHFM.

In February, we welcomed 150 students from John Spence Community High School in North Shields for an interactive careers day, where they took part in a series of engaging activities and a workplace challenge designed to help shape our future recruitment campaigns to help shape our future recruitment campaigns.



Action on Economy

We are committed to ensuring we purchase as many locally sourced products and services as possible. We have a dedicated CSR procurement officer, have set up an action group looking at improving social value in procurement and have set up myth-busting sessions to support sole traders and small businesses to get on to supplier frameworks.

Action on the Environment

Improving the environment remains a key priority. Alongside the sustainability initiatives highlighted in this report, a dedicated group has been established to enhance the condition and biodiversity of our green spaces.



Capital projects

Throughout the year, we've successfully delivered a substantial capital programme, completing 22 projects with investment of over £90m into the estate enhancing our infrastructure,

environments for patients and spaces for staff. This has enabled an improved quality of care within our region.

Some key highlights are included below.

Hexham Redevelopment Programme – Phase 3

In January 2026, the Hexham Phase 3 project reached practical completion, marking a significant milestone for the hospital. This one-off opportunity delivered four brand-new operating theatres, each equipped with modern laminar flow systems that meet the latest healthcare standards.

The upgraded facilities provide a safer, more efficient environment for staff and an improved experience for patients undergoing procedures.



Alongside the theatres, we enhanced key equipment, including beds and trolleys, ensuring they are both practical and built to last.

The project also added a new backup generator, securing the hospital's ability to remain fully operational during any power outage. With these improvements, our staff now have the tools and space to deliver

their best work, while patients benefit from greater access to safe, timely, and convenient planned surgery close to home.



Medicines Manufacturing Centre

The Medicines Manufacturing Centre (MMC) faced a challenging year after the insolvency of its main contractor, Merit, prompting swift action to stabilise the programme and protect progress. Following a dynamic procurement process, Opus Building Services was appointed and has continued work on site, including the installation of two isolators. Once complete, the MMC will deliver advanced regional manufacturing capability to support medicines production.



Progress on the new Berwick Hospital

This year brought significant challenges for Berwick Hospital after our main contractor, Merit, entered administration. Swift action secured the site, safeguarded assets, and maintained project stability.

Following a procurement process, Robertson Construction - experienced in healthcare projects - was appointed to continue works. They are now progressing surveys and revising the construction programme.

NSECH Remediation

At Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (NSECH), the new helipad, completed in October, has improved emergency transfers, giving patients faster access to specialist care. Major drainage and safety upgrades have strengthened the site's resilience, supporting everyday clinical operations.

Recladding of the building façade continues, while design progresses on a new 30-bed modular decant ward, providing temporary capacity to keep services running smoothly during future refurbishment and redevelopment.



North Tyneside General Hospital

At North Tyneside General Hospital, two key improvement projects were completed during the year. The lecture theatre reopened in August 2025 following refurbishment, offering a modern, flexible learning environment with upgraded technology and enhanced acoustics to support education and training.

The Central Change refurbishment, shaped by staff feedback, included refreshed interiors, structural enhancements, and improved cycle facilities. These upgrades create more practical and supportive spaces for staff, contributing to wellbeing. Together, the projects demonstrate our ongoing commitment to maintaining and enhancing the working environment across the site.



Strategic Estate and Property Management

Since being established in 2024, our community estates team has made brilliant progress including developing

our community estates strategy that aligns with the NHS 10-Year Plan.

Working with Northumbria Primary Care

Our community estates team have been working closely with Northumbria Primary Care, the primary care subsidiary of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, to create their estates strategy. This long-term plan outlines how they will manage, develop, and invest in their buildings and infrastructure to create better environments for patients, staff and visitors.



Over the last year, we have been working with NPC on a number of projects including:

NPC Felton

In May 2025, we received approval to refurbish the NPC Felton practice. This project will create a modern, more fit for purpose practice for patients, staff and visitors.

NPC Lintonville

To provide improved care and facilities, it has been proposed that NPC Lintonville, some community health services, and the pharmacy relocate to the Ashington Workspace site on Lintonville Parkway. The current building is over 100 years old and no longer meets the needs of patients or staff. The move will allow the practice to offer better access, enhanced facilities, and an improved experience for all.



NPC Ponteland

Reception and back-office areas at NPC Ponteland have been upgraded to improve staff experience and streamline operations. The redesigned reception offers a more welcoming environment for patients, with clearer signage and improved privacy. Behind

the scenes, the new back-office layout supports smoother administrative workflows, enabling staff to spend more time focused on patient care. These improvements contribute to a more positive experience for everyone using the practice.

Forest Hall Health Centre -

Improvement to the district nursing treatment room, matron's office and creation of dirty utility and storage facilities.

Nelson Health Centre -

Refurbishment and development of the former pharmacy area to support the podiatry service workshop and clinical services on the same site for the first time.

Alnwick Medical Group

Refurbishment and conversion of former podiatry and HV rooms alongside the refurbishment and consolidation of the district nurses office to create a large clinical triage area and district nursing support area.

Trust wayfinding project

We kicked off a new project to revamp signage across our whole trust to develop a clear, consistent and accessible signage system for all sites. Previously, signage across our sites has been installed on an ad-hoc basis as buildings have expanded and services have evolved. This has resulted in inconsistent styles, duplicated information and signage that can be confusing for patients, visitors and staff.

Key developments include:

- A standardised list of department names, developed with input from Health Literacy specialists.
- Colour-coded site entrances and car parks to support easier navigation.
- Updates to patient letters, location information and site maps to ensure consistency across all of our channels.



Alnwick Infirmary was used a pilot to test the new signage style and colour scheme. Following positive feedback, the new approach is now being rolled out across all sites, with Hexham recently completed and a programme in place for the remaining locations.

Space utilisation

A new Space Request online form was introduced this year, creating a single, streamlined process for all space changes across Northumbria Healthcare sites.

Requests are reviewed and approved in principle before being assessed by the Space Team and logged centrally, ensuring changes are prioritised and managed effectively. Proposals are then shared with key

stakeholders — including Health & Safety, Fire, and Infection Prevention and Control — with final sign-off from the relevant site lead.

Once completed, all changes are reflected in updated floor plans and the space database, supporting accurate Estates Return Information Collection (ERIC) data and statutory reporting.



Driving forward Net Zero Northumbria

We continued to make great progress with our Net Zero Northumbria agenda in 2025/26. We remain fully committed to our ambitions to reduce carbon emissions and make our trust as green as it can be.

We achieved many sustainability milestones over the last year including:



Our Corporate Approach to Net Zero



In August 2025, we achieved the Investors in the **Environment 'Green' accreditation**, the highest standard awarded, for evidenced continuous improvements to sustainability throughout the organisation.

Our Waste & Reuse



Last year, we increased non-healthcare waste recycling by over 7%, with almost **40% now being recycled**.

Greening & Adapting Our Sites



In Spring, we participated in the No Mow May initiative at three sites which were identified as suitable locations in our **Rewilding Action Plans**, and lead on collaborative regional communications to promote the benefits of taking part.



Our Journeys & Clean Air



More than 900 staff are now accessing **sustainable travel** initiatives, including Personal Travel Plans, the Liftshare car sharing platform, cycle to work schemes and discounted public transport passes.

Our Supply Chain



We have commenced work on the Five Step Supplier Framework to improve supplier engagement to ensure they can align to NHS net zero targets, with over **5,000 suppliers** already contacted.

Our Buildings & Estate



Several net zero projects were commissioned in 2025, including solar panels at NSECH and HGH and LED lighting installation at NSECH, which are projected to save 500 tCO₂e annually.

Our People



We have delivered more than 40 sustainability overview sessions, work experience opportunities and event stalls including Board Development, Apprentice Team Leader training and Preceptorship Quality Improvement sessions.

Our Sustainable Healthcare



Our Emergency Department (ED) became the **first in the country** to achieve the Gold accreditation for the Royal College of Emergency Medicine Green ED initiative.



Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

In June, we secured more than **£20 million** to cut carbon emissions across **three of our hospital sites**.

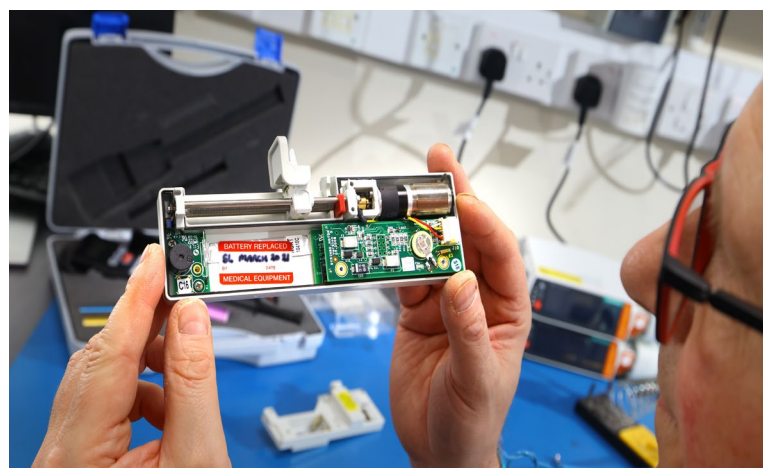
This significant investment will fund major heat decarbonisation projects at The Northumbria Hospital in Cramlington, Hexham General Hospital and Wansbeck General Hospital. Central to the project is the replacement of fossil fuel heating

systems with state-of-the-art, energy-efficient heat pumps. The trust is one of nine public sector organisations and only one of three NHS trusts in the North East to receive this funding. The new savings are expected to deliver annual carbon savings of 4,465 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e), which is the equivalent of 15,546 return journeys from Lands End to John O'Groats

Estates and facilities

The 2025/2026 financial year has seen some tangible improvements within estates and facilities. Significant progress has been made on developing our patient and non-patient food offer in line with the National Standards for Healthcare Food and Drink, and processes within domestic services have been reinforced in line with the National Healthcare Cleaning standards.

Our contracted services have met 95%+ compliance in line with our Master Services Agreement, and we have seen the continued reduction in our high and significant-risk backlog maintenance. The progress made in these areas can be seen in yet another year of fantastic PLACE results.



provider following a procurement exercise. Mobilisation will take place during 2026/2027 and this digital transformation will allow NHFM to improve reporting and facilitate better informed decisions to improve our services. Work has also started on the enabling work to upgrade our security systems including door access and CCTV. All these projects will contribute to the continued positive experience of patients and other site users, and ensure that the sites remain pleasant, safe and compliant.

This year's strong performance is testament to the dedication of the estates and facilities team, whose commitment and enthusiasm has resulted in the delivery of high-quality, efficient and cost-effective services that really make a difference to the patient and staff experience at our sites.

Improvements have also been seen in other key performance metrics, for example, in the continued downward trajectory of our sickness absence levels.

An important project to improve and upgrade our CAFM system has begun, with Concerto being identified as the



PLACE survey success

In the 2025 Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) survey, patients once again rated Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust among the best in the country for their hospital experience. The trust scored above the national average across all eight assessment areas and ranked top nationally among large acute trusts for cleanliness, food, and condition, appearance and maintenance.

Northumbria Healthcare Facilities Management played a key role in this achievement, with its catering, domestic and estates teams helping to create safe, welcoming and well-maintained environments for patients, visitors and staff every day. This marks the second consecutive year of achieving the Gold standard.

PLACE measure	2025 result	2025 National Average
Cleanliness	99.64%	98.55%
Combined Food	98.85%	92.13%
Organisation Food	98.97%	92.79%
Ward Food	98.73%	92.3%
Privacy, Dignity and Wellbeing	97.15%	89.37%
Condition, Appearance and Maintenance	99.04%	97%
Dementia	97.74%	85.68%
Disability	96.5%	87.12%

Our commitment to health and safety

Health and safety remains a top priority within NHFM. This commitment has been recognised with a prestigious Gold Award from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), highlighting our continued excellence in workplace safety.

The RoSPA Health and Safety Awards are among the most respected international accolades in the field, attracting entries from organisations across a wide range of industries.

Achieving Gold reflects our sustained commitment to embedding robust safety systems and practices that protect our people from harm.

A key strength of our submission was the implementation of a comprehensive training programme for senior leaders, line managers and supervisors - ensuring they lead by example and uphold the highest safety standards across all areas of our organisation.

Other health and safety highlights include:

- The recruitment of a new Health and Safety Assistant in January, who is leading on the development of a risk assessment register and introducing a digital system for contractor inductions and sign-in processes.
- Reporting our lowest number of health and safety reportable accidents in 2025, with just seven incidents - a **70% reduction since 2021**.



Northumbria Healthcare Textile Manufacturing

Our team at Northumbria Healthcare Textile Manufacturing in Seaton Delaval continues to play a vital role in supporting staff across Northumbria

Healthcare and beyond by providing high-quality personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniforms.

Key highlights from the past year include:

Producing 1,500 festive scrub tops and staff lunch bags as part of the Northumbria Healthcare Christmas gifts initiative.



Working collaboratively with our sustainability team and the trust's design team to develop a new reusable curtain design, which is currently being trialled at Hexham General Hospital. The project aims to improve patient experience while supporting sustainability efforts by reducing waste associated with disposable curtains and helping to lower our carbon footprint.



Warehousing

During 2025/26, the NHFM Warehouse continued to expand its role as a key strategic storage and distribution

hub for both internal and external customers.

It provides bulk storage solutions for a wide range of Northumbria Healthcare departments, including Digital Services, Medical Electronics and Manufacturing etc, managing around 2,500 pallets.

This service delivers significant cost avoidance to the Trust by removing the need for external third-party storage, representing an estimated internal saving of £500K per year.

The warehouse has also strengthened partnerships with external organisations, generating additional income and maximising use of warehouse capacity.

As a predominantly bulk-storage facility, the warehouse has become an essential part of the wider healthcare supply chain, supporting operational efficiency, resilience, and value for money across the region.



Finance performance

The 2025-26 business year was another one of continuing growth and consolidation of NHFM's financial strength and spending efficiency. We saw year-on-year turnover grow by 3.5% to £247m as we delivered more services and building projects than ever before.

Our profits are up again compared to last year reaching £0.6m with an underlying contribution measured in millions. With growth in income being higher than growth in cost, we are improving efficiency and we are delivering better value. A significant element of that value was delivering on our cost improvement target for the year.

Not only reaching the target but our collective effort across NHFM saw us exceed our target by 17%.

All of the money we make stays at Northumbria and that includes NHFM once again being able to make a £300,000 donation to the Bright Charity.

This donation is used to improve patient care and the welfare of staff. We move into the 2026-27 financial year with more, and bigger, challenges around delivery of our services and doing so even more efficiently. NHFM continues to strengthen, our finances are robust and we are well placed to maintain our momentum in growing our value and contribution.



Northumbria Healthcare
Facilities Management

Find out more
www.nhfm.co.uk

Follow us on social media:

