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Media Release

Royal United Hospitals celebrates £21.6m grant for energy efficiency projects

A £21.6million decarbonisation grant will bring the Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) NHS Foundation Trust one step closer to achieving its net zero goals.

The multimillion pound cash boost, awarded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero as part of the Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme phase 3c, will fund improvements including more environmentally friendly lighting, insulation, and heating and cooling controls.

Most of the vital funds will be used to de-steam much of the RUH's 52-acre site, a process that will see the hospital's ageing heating systems replaced with more energy-efficient options such as heat pumps.

Together, these initiatives will make the hospital more sustainable, and a more pleasant environment for all those who use it.

RUH Chief Executive Cara Charles-Barks said: "We are beginning to make great strides to reduce our emissions, through initiatives such as decommissioning our entire nitrous oxide manifold and a sustainable travel plan. However, we knew we needed to make significant investments in our estate to fulfil our commitment of reaching net zero for scope one and two emissions by 2030, in line with BaNES Council's goals.

"This grant is therefore invaluable. It will enable us to make these essential changes in the coming years, and will have a positive impact on the environment and the experience of being in hospital. We know that getting this right will be better for the health and wellbeing of the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community."

When the proposed improvements are completed, by 2026, they will result in an estimated 24% annual reduction in carbon emissions over which the RUH has direct control. This equates to just over 3,400 tonnes of carbon dioxide – the equivalent of just under 1,000 return flights to Seoul, or more than 150,000 car journeys from Bath to London, every single year.

Improving indoor and outdoor air quality is not just better for the environment. There is a proven link between lower carbon emissions and better health for the community. The combustion of fossil fuels is the primary contributor to ill-health from air pollution, and best estimates suggest that over one-third of new asthma cases could be avoided by efforts to cut carbon emissions.

The RUH worked closely with the Carbon Energy Fund to develop the plans, and they will continue to support the RUH as the changes are implemented. Now, the team is working to secure contractors for the project, with work due to take place over the next two years.

Steven Heape, Project Manager of the Carbon Energy Fund said: “It’s been a pleasure to support the Trust in working towards its ‘net zero by 2030’ goal. We look forward to working with them with the project throughout its construction and the 15-year operational phase, ensuring delivery of the guarantee carbon savings.”

Laura Couldrey, Senior Programme Manager at Salix said: “We are delighted to work with RUH as it progresses its decarbonisation journey to meet its net zero target.

“Ultimately it will result in a better place environment for patients and visitors, as well as the staff working at the hospital. We look forward to supporting RUH in achieving its goals and cannot wait to see this work begin.”

Ends



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero



Notes to Editor:

The emissions over which the RUH has direct control are also sometimes referred to as 'Scope one' and 'scope two' emissions, or the NHS Carbon Footprint. NHS England's goal is to reach net zero for these by 2040. 'Scope three' is the emissions that we can influence (our NHS Carbon Footprint Plus): NHS England aims to reach net zero for these by 2045, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2036–9. More information can be found on the [Greener NHS website](#).

More information on the links between health and climate change can be found via the [Greener NHS](#).

At the RUH we're proud to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community.

We provide a wide range of services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

We also provide specialist services for rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME via the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases which we acquired in 2015.

In 2021, we acquired Sulis Hospital Bath, an independent hospital that provides care for both private and NHS patients. This has enabled us to provide more care for NHS patients, as well as continuing to provide private care to those who choose it. Any additional income earned through private care is reinvested in services for the benefit of the people we care for at both Sulis and the RUH.

We're currently building a new Cancer Centre at the RUH. The Dyson Cancer Centre, which is set to open in spring 2024, will help transform the care we provide for patients, families and carers.

We work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board. We strive to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in our community by working together build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

We are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk

About Salix:

Salix's role is to support the UK government in driving the transition to a low carbon future and meet challenging net zero targets. We deliver and administer grant and loan funding on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Department for Education and the Scottish and Welsh governments. This is delivered across the public sector as well as housing. The schemes we deliver provide funding for energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects for public sector buildings as well as the housing sector. Our schemes are dedicated to reducing carbon emissions and supporting the government's ambitious net zero targets. These programmes include the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Home Upgrade Grant, the Low Carbon Skills Fund and Scotland's Public Sector Heat Decarbonisation Fund.

We also play an important role in increasing awareness of energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation across the public sector throughout the UK. Our teams work closely with the public sector organisations throughout their decarbonisation journey, from the moment a grant is allocated to the moment the scheme is fully operational.

In January 2023 our role expanded and we were appointed delivery agent for Wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the Home Upgrade Grant schemes. These schemes provide funding for energy saving measures for social housing rented homes as well as owner occupied homes.