

National Green Endoscopy Programme

Green Champion Opportunity for Change January 2026

Carbon & Cost savings are based on the individual ‘green’ projects that are undertaken within the Endoscopy units via the Green Champion

1. Description of action

- 1.1 This action aims to work in collaboration with health boards to identify a ‘Green Champion’ within each Endoscopy unit within NHS Scotland. It is intended that the Green Champions will support colleagues across NHS Scotland to build sustainable and resilient services fit for the future.

2. Background

- 2.1 Endoscopy is a widely performed diagnostic and therapeutic procedure in healthcare services.
- 2.2 There are 38 Endoscopy units across NHS Scotland with around 146,841 procedures performed in 2024.¹
- 2.3 Endoscopy is said to be the third highest producer of waste in the hospital². Each procedure uses equipment, single use accessories, water, energy and miscellaneous consumables. There are also patient and staff travel related emissions.
- 2.4 In order to help reach the Scottish Government Net Zero targets, the specialty of Endoscopy is required to make changes and improvements to its current practice.
- 2.5 The British Society of Gastroenterology³ (BSG) and Joint Advisory Group (JAG)⁴ in the published position statements on sustainable Endoscopy state the importance of having a named ‘Green Champion’ in the unit.
- 2.6 Many Endoscopy units across NHS Scotland participate in the JAG accreditation programme. The aim of the JAG accreditation standards is “*to define a high-quality, safe and appropriate Endoscopy service, delivered by a highly-trained, highly-supported and highly-motivated workforce*”.⁵
- 2.7 Joint Advisory Group (JAG) accreditation Global Rating Scale (GRS) standards for UK services published in 2021, updated in 2023 and newly revised in October 2025, highlights, through the area of Leadership and Organisation, what the service must do to deliver high-quality care.
- 2.8 From 1 January 2026, all new assessments requested by services, for JAG accreditation, will need to adhere to these new GRS standards, and therefore ‘developing green Endoscopy service’ is mandatory.
- 2.9 The GRS guidance states that “*The service has a ‘green Endoscopy’ working group to reduce the environmental impact and initiates at least one environmental initiative*”.⁶

3. Who needs to be involved in this change locally?

- 3.1 In order to implement this action, it is recommended that the following groups should be consulted and involved:
- Endoscopy Staff (Inc. Clinical, Managers & Administrative)
 - Waste Management Officers
 - Infection protection control

- Procurement Staff

- 3.2 Each individual should be prepared to provide their expert input into actions and be responsible for engaging with relevant stakeholders in their own board and cascading information as appropriate.
- 3.3 Each stakeholder group should work collaboratively to support the Green Champion with the implementation of actions.

4. Boundaries

- 4.1 The table below identifies the boundaries for this action:

In scope	Out of scope
All Endoscopy units across NHS Scotland.	

5. What is the change and how will it be implemented?

- 5.1 Green Champion roles will be created within all Endoscopy units across NHS Scotland.
- 5.2 The Green Champion for Endoscopy, is an empowering role aiming to embed sustainability initiatives into individual Endoscopy units.
- 5.3 Individual Endoscopy units will convene discussions around the implementation of a named green champion.

6. What are the potential co-benefits of this change?

Outcome	Potential Benefits
Carbon Savings	Savings based on individual 'green' projects undertaken within the Endoscopy units.
Cost Savings	
Staff experience	Increased knowledge and awareness of impact of current practice and opportunity to contribute to the Scottish Government Net Zero target.

- 6.1 This action is about empowering staff and providing the opportunity to become involved in leading and championing changes that could provide significant carbon and cost savings in Endoscopy units across NHS Scotland.
- 6.3 Contained within [Section 11. Supporting Evidence](#) are suggestions and resources that will enable Endoscopy units to adopt a Green Champion.

7. Risks and Issues

7.1 As part of the development of this action risks identified, to date, are outlined below:

Description of risk or issue	Mitigation / Action Plan
There is a risk that there may be insufficient resource within the Endoscopy unit to allow staff to participate in the opportunity to become a Green Champion.	Engagement and ongoing communication within Endoscopy units in Health Boards throughout the development of this action to ensure that staff and management are in agreement of the roles and responsibilities, resources and training that this entails.

8. Implementation Guidance

8.1 The opportunity for change document highlights the importance of implementing this action. This change, along with other initiatives and new ideas, will help your site and NHS Scotland to work towards achieving net-zero emissions by 2040 as stated in NHS Scotland's Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy 2022-2026.

8.2 Below the National Green Endoscopy Programme has provided guidance on how you can implement this change within your area. If you require any further information or guidance, please contact NHS Green Healthcare Scotland programme team on: cfsdghs@nhs.scot.

Local Sustainability or Green Endoscopy Group:	
1.	Review opportunity for change and validate what this means locally.
2.	Provides National Green Endoscopy Programme Team with validated information/local targets.
3.	Convene a discussion with the staff who need to implement it and those who are impacted by the action.
4.	Understand what the opportunity is for implementing the action locally: work already undertaken and challenges.
5.	Agree a local implementation plan.
6.	Implement local plan.
7.	Provide data as per measurement plan.
8.	Monitor implementation of action.

9. Measurement

- 9.1 To enable measurement of this action, Health Boards should provide named contact details for their Endoscopy Green Champion. If and when this named person changes, Health Boards should inform GHS via cfsdghs@nhs.scot

10. Supporting Evidence

- 10.1 [The Role of the Green Champion](#) document provides supporting information on what the roles and responsibilities could entail. There may be variations in the role across Health Boards, however the main aim of Endoscopy services working towards reducing their impact on the environment remains.
- 10.2 [Resources](#) for training and courses available to encourage and provide knowledge on sustainability are provided and recommended for all staff within Endoscopy services.
- 10.3 A suggested ‘Making your Endoscopy Unit Greener’ [poster](#) that could be used within Endoscopy units (provided by NHS Grampian).
- 10.4 A [diagram](#) that shows practical tips that could contribute to making Endoscopy units greener.⁷

The Role of the Green Champion

Background

[Scottish Government’s Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2026](#)⁸ was published in 2022 and set out the plans for NHS Scotland to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and impact on the environment. Additionally addressing adaptive measures required to address climate change challenges.

As part of this strategy, it notes that clinicians and staff must be at the heart of the NHS Scotland climate emergency response and the efforts to become an environmentally and socially sustainable health service.

Health Boards are required to publish an annual report, approved by the Chief Executive, summarising its progress against the aims and targets set out in [“A Policy for NHS Scotland on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development” \(DL \(2021\) 38\)](#)⁹ and the actions set out in the 2022 – 2026 strategy.

Having a ‘Green Champion’, specifically for Endoscopy for each Health Board could support the specialty in ensuring the commitment to moving towards NHS Scotland’s Net Zero Target.

What is a Green Champion?

The Green Champion for Endoscopy is a voluntary role focused on supporting initiatives that help reduce the environmental impact of Endoscopy services. The level of involvement may vary depending on the individual’s availability and the number and type of sustainability projects underway within the unit at any given time.

In some Endoscopy units, the role could be shared amongst staff in areas where there might be insufficient resource. This would also encourage staff to take responsibility and adopt new or innovative ways of working.

To produce and deliver green and sustainable healthcare a Green Champion is someone who can:

- be motivated and be the agent for change
- collect and highlight areas of change and sustainability within their unit
- encourage and promote sustainability to colleagues
- share learning with colleagues and senior management
- be a green contact for members of staff and patients
- link with their Board Climate Emergency Response and Sustainability Team
- contribute, when required, to their Board Annual Report to promote areas of Endoscopy best practice and progress in relation to the aims and targets set out in their Board Annual Report
- provide representation at the National Green Endoscopy Programme Specialty Delivery Group (NGEP SDG), [Centre for Sustainable Delivery](#) (CfSD)
- attend NGEP measurement meetings as required
- support members of the NGEP to implement carbon saving actions

Resources

NHS Scotland TURAS e-Learning modules

You can learn more about environmental sustainability topics through the following eLearning modules:

- environmental sustainability
- safe disposal of waste

Both modules are available to all staff.

Environmental sustainability module

Interested in environmental sustainability but don't know where to start? Want to learn more about what action NHS Scotland is taking to tackle climate change – and what you can do to help?

This course introduces sustainability concepts, topics and issues, and will develop your understanding of:

- the effect the environment has on human health
- the environmental impacts of delivering healthcare services
- action that NHS Scotland is taking to become more sustainable
- how we as individuals can contribute and make a difference

[Log into your TURAS Learn account to access the environmental sustainability course.](#) If your board uses LearnPro, you can still access the course by opening a TURAS account – TURAS Learn is available to all NHS Scotland staff.

Safe disposal of waste module

Making sure we sort our waste safely and correctly is one of the biggest contributions we can all make, to make our NHS more sustainable.

It can also help us meet our legal responsibilities, save money, keep everyone safe (by following the right infection prevention and control procedures).

The updated waste module offers helpful guidance on:

- what good waste segregation looks like – what can be recycled and what should be disposed of as clinical waste
- your responsibilities as a waste producer
- the ‘journey of waste’

[Log in to your TURAS Learn account to access the waste module](#) – and you can also visit [our dedicated environmental sustainability page on TURAS Learn](#) to access further training on sustainability and how you can help.

If your board uses LearnPro, you can access the module on LearnPro by searching for “NES: Safe disposal of waste (including sharps)”

Working with healthcare waste training packages

A range of training packages have been developed by a short-life working group of Waste Management Officers (WMO) and NHS Scotland Assure, with support from Albion Training and Scottish Government.

The training covers correct waste segregation and the legislative duties of producers of waste and has been split into three areas:

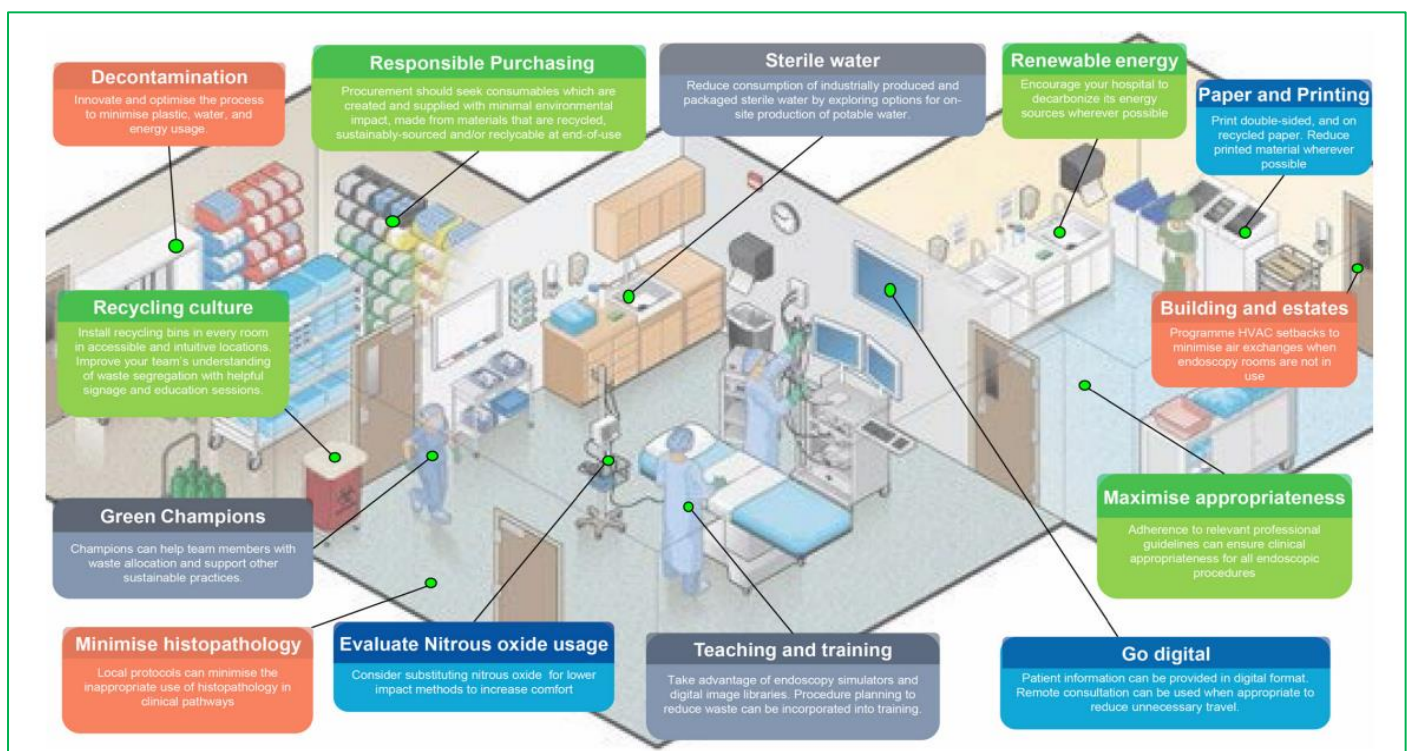
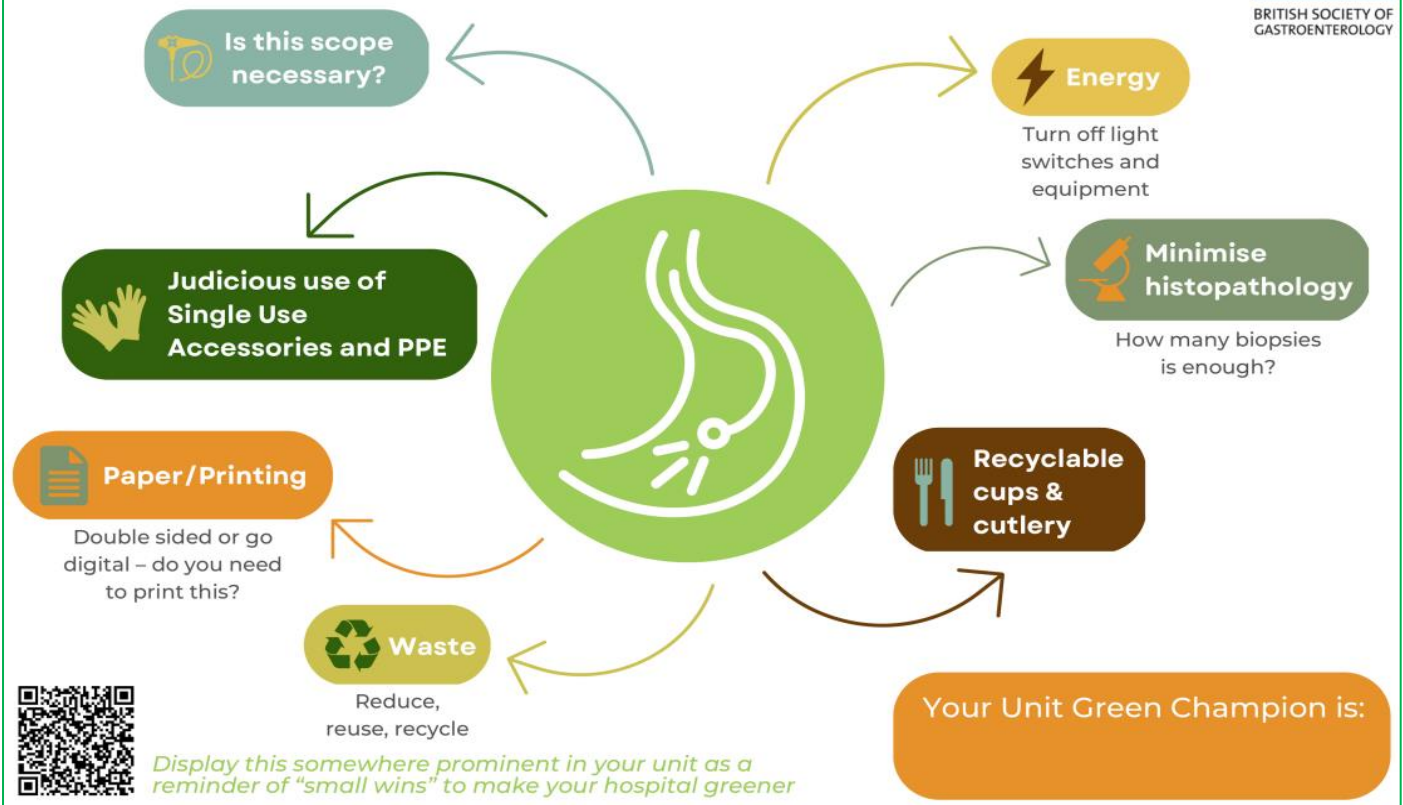
- [Basic training](#)
- [Training for clinical staff](#)
- [Detailed training for WMOs who are new to post and/or Waste Assistants](#)

Please note this training is only accessible to NHS Scotland staff.

Diagrams / Posters

MAKING OUR ENDOSCOPY UNIT GREENER

Endoscopy is the 3rd highest waste producing department in the NHS...



11. References

¹ CfSD – Endoscopy project

^{2 & 3} Sebastian S, et al. (2022), *British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG), Joint Accreditation Group (JAG) and Centre for Sustainable Health (CSH) Joint Consensus on Practical Measures for Environmental Sustainability in Endoscopy*, Volume 72, Issue 1. Available at <https://gut.bmj.com/content/72/1/12> (Accessed Dec 2025).

^{4,5,6,7} The UK adult GRS standards. Page 9, Item 1.8. Available at www.thejag.org.uk (Accessed Dec 2025)

⁸ NHS Scotland climate emergency and sustainability strategy: 2022-2026. Available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications> (Accessed Dec 2025)

⁹ A Policy for NHS Scotland on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development – DL (2021) 38. Available at <https://www.publications.scot.nhs.uk> (Accessed Dec 2025)

12. Version Control

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