

# Freeman Hospital Biodiversity

## Case study written—August 2023

Within the Climate Emergency Strategy for 2020-2025 Newcastle Hospitals has committed to providing healthy, sustainable and biodiverse spaces for patients, staff and visitors.

With a growing body of evidence of the benefits green spaces have on recovery, staff well-being, mental health and more, we have recognised the important role we play in contributing towards national goals and targets set out on biodiversity. These include halting decline in species abundance, restoration of wildlife rich habitats and reducing the risk of extinction.

### What have we done in Newcastle?

Worked with environmental sustainability specialists Genee to measure the Biodiversity Metric Score for the Freeman and RVI sites, to establish a baseline and develop action plans to increase biodiversity across both sites where possible.

Both sites were surveyed in 2021 and a 30 year Biodiversity Management Plan was developed in conjunction with Durham Wildlife Services. The plan included an assessment of the existing habitats which include broad-leaved woodland, neutral grassland, native hedgerows, and habitats for birds and hedgehogs, and recommendations for development such as improving the condition and number of trees, creating species rich grassland, the removal of non-native shrubs, flowerbeds for bees and butterflies and the creation of a pond.

Work was undertaken during 2022/23 to start following the actions that had been identified in the management plan.

The majority of the works on site have taken place at the Freeman Hospital site, where we have carried out:

- Hedge Planting
- Tree Planting
- Bird Boxes
- Bat Boxes
- Wild flower and bulb planting

The sites have been surveyed again in 2023 to measure the impact of work undertaken and recommend further improvements which will take place in 2023/24.

