

How to become  
carbon literate

# Carbon literacy in primary care

Dr Matt Sawyer



**SPEAK  
CARBON**

# Dr Matt Sawyer

Medical doctor – GP for 15 years

Environmental MSc

Working on how to help primary care reach Net Zero

Runs own sustainability consultancy [seesustainability.co.uk](https://seesustainability.co.uk)

Carbon Literacy training

Carbon footprinting of practices



Why should I become  
carbon literate?



# The prize...

If the UK met its current climate commitments...

**Lives saved**

98,000 diet

21,500 exercise

3,500 air pollution

If the UK focussed on health gains from addressing the climate...

**Lives saved**

100,000 diet

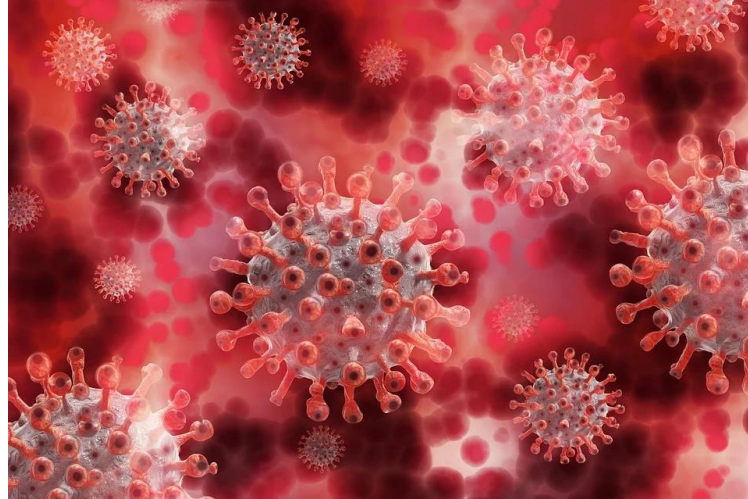
38,500 exercise

5,700 air pollution

# What does that mean locally?



1,350



225



49

**25% = 338**



# What is Carbon Literacy?

“An awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.”

Carbon Literacy  
Project



# Is anyone else talking about carbon?

[www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/a-net-zero-nhs](http://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/a-net-zero-nhs)

For a greener NHS

A Net Zero NHS

National ambition

What's already happening

Get involved

News and updates

How to produce a Green Plan

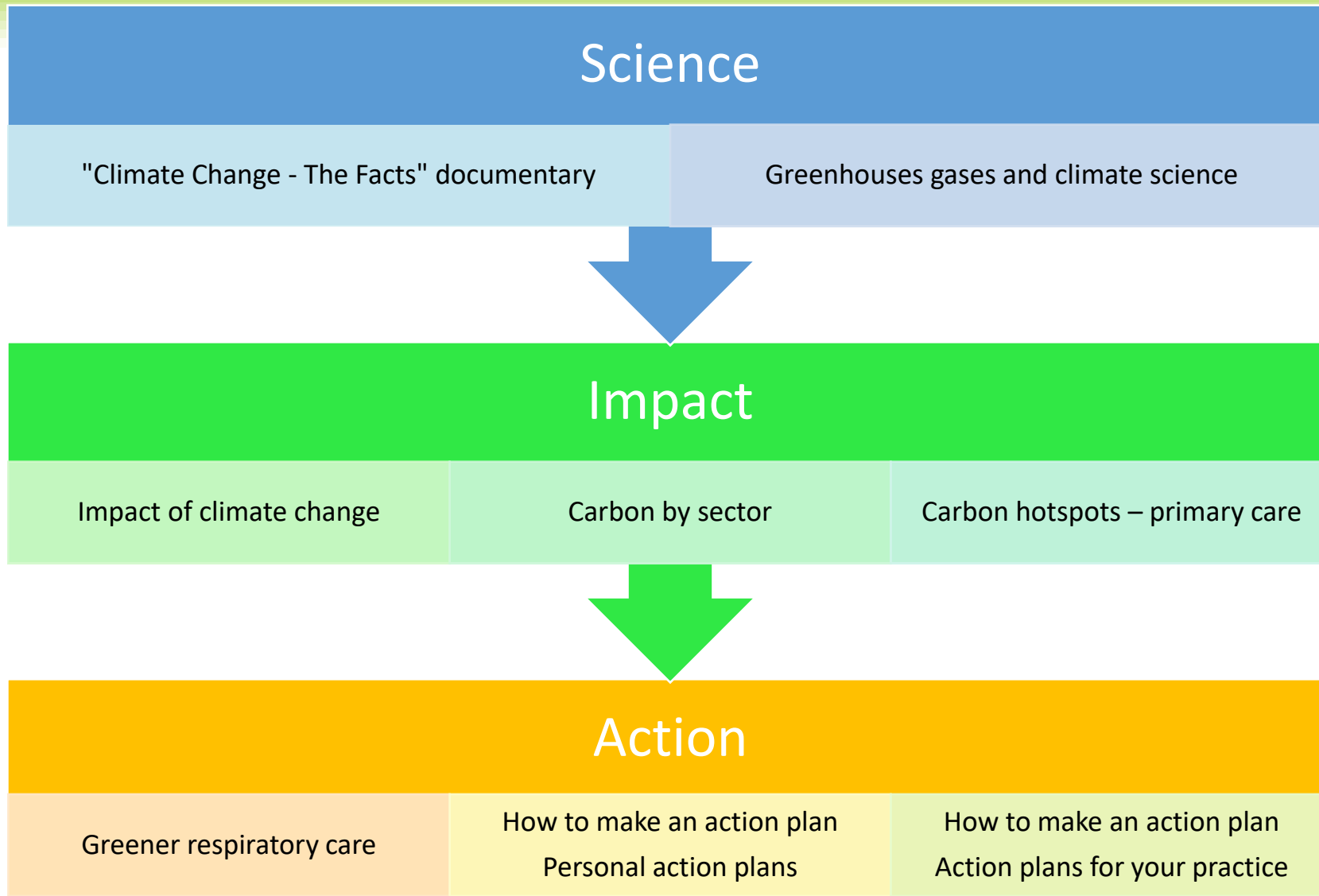
[Home](#) > [For a greener NHS](#) > [A Net Zero NHS](#)

## A Net Zero NHS

The UK government has committed to reaching net zero carbon by 2050. This means significantly reducing emissions as well as off-setting using carbon capture, such as planting trees.

The health and care system in England is responsible for an estimated 4-5% of the country's carbon footprint so has a major role to play in supporting this. The NHS has therefore committed to reaching net zero as soon as possible.

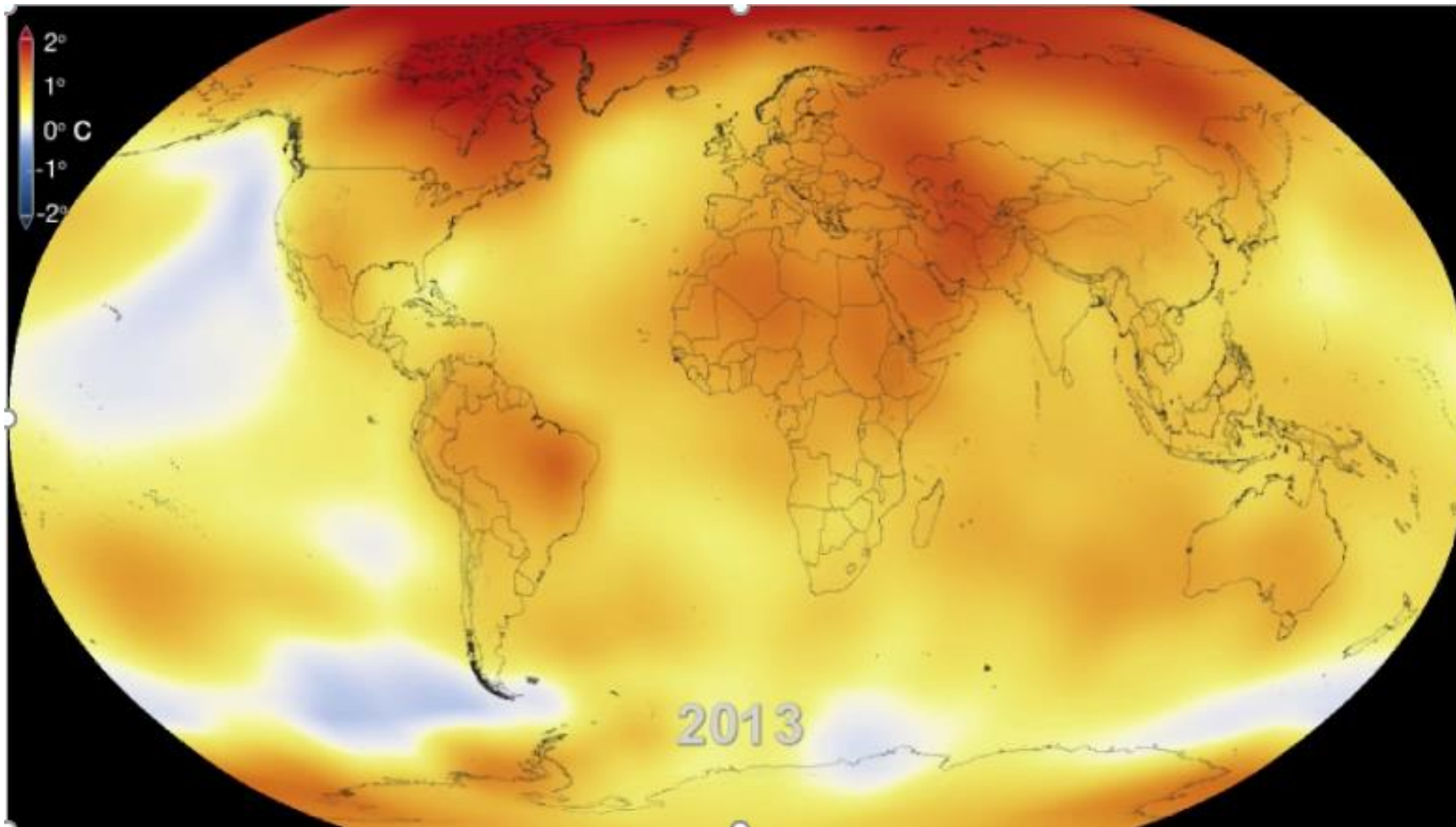
To reach overall net zero,  
all parts need to reach zero



# Turning intention into action



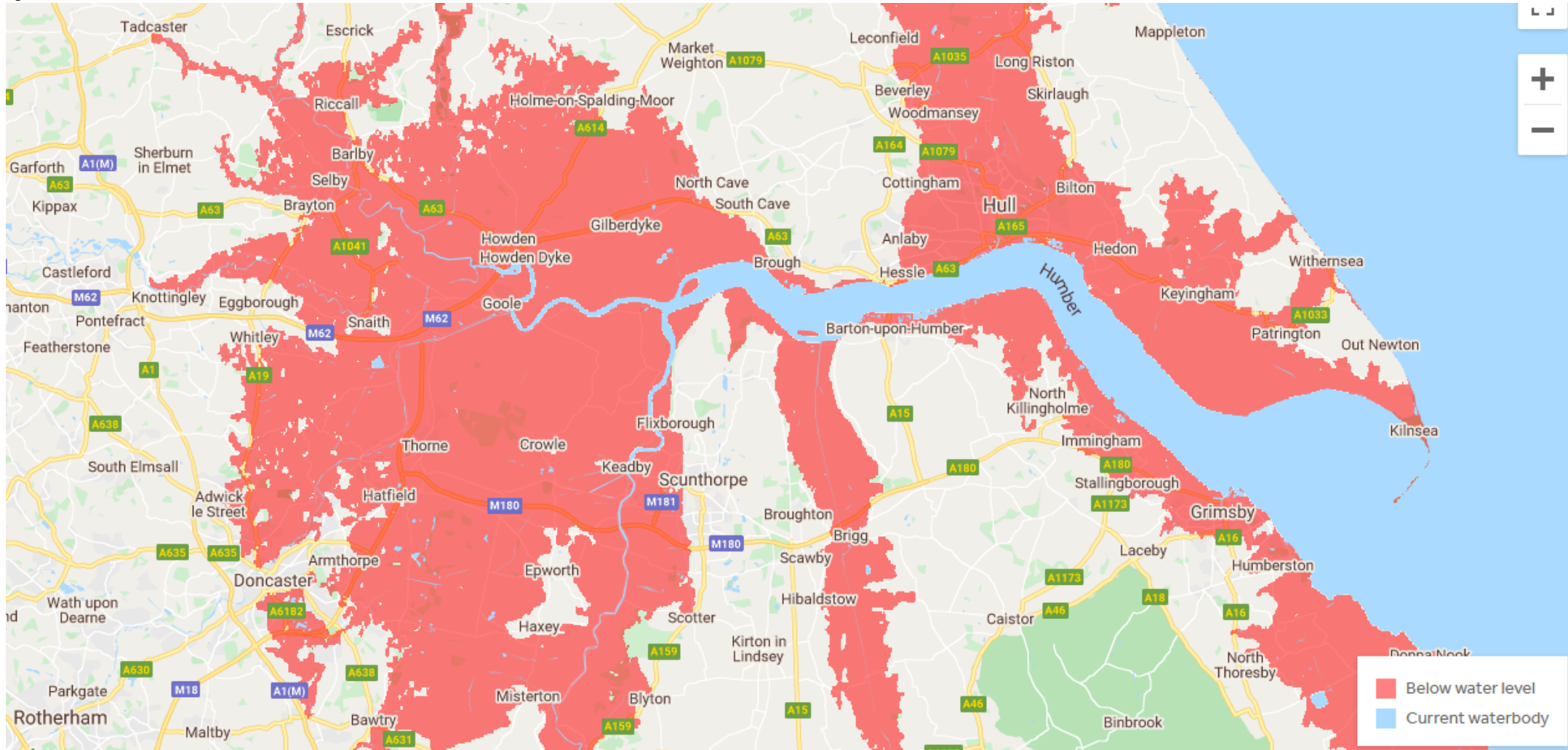
## Changing global temperatures



Average global temperatures 1950-2013 (NASA)

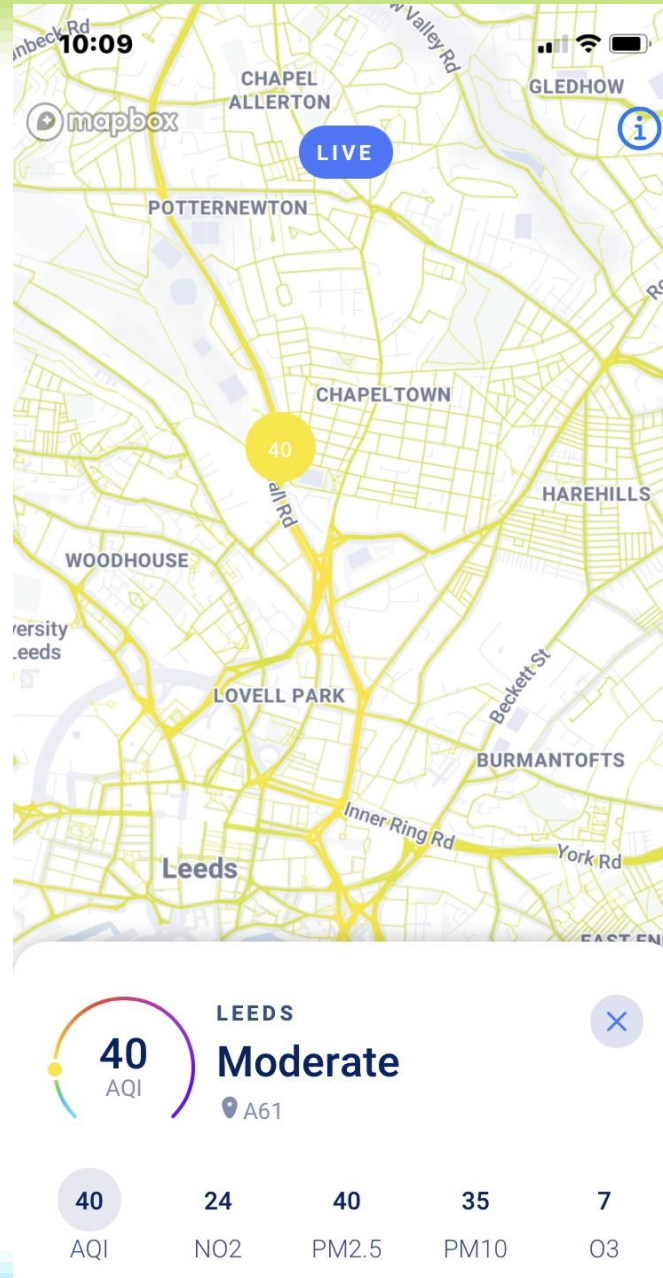
# Locally – Flood risk in Hull

# Impact

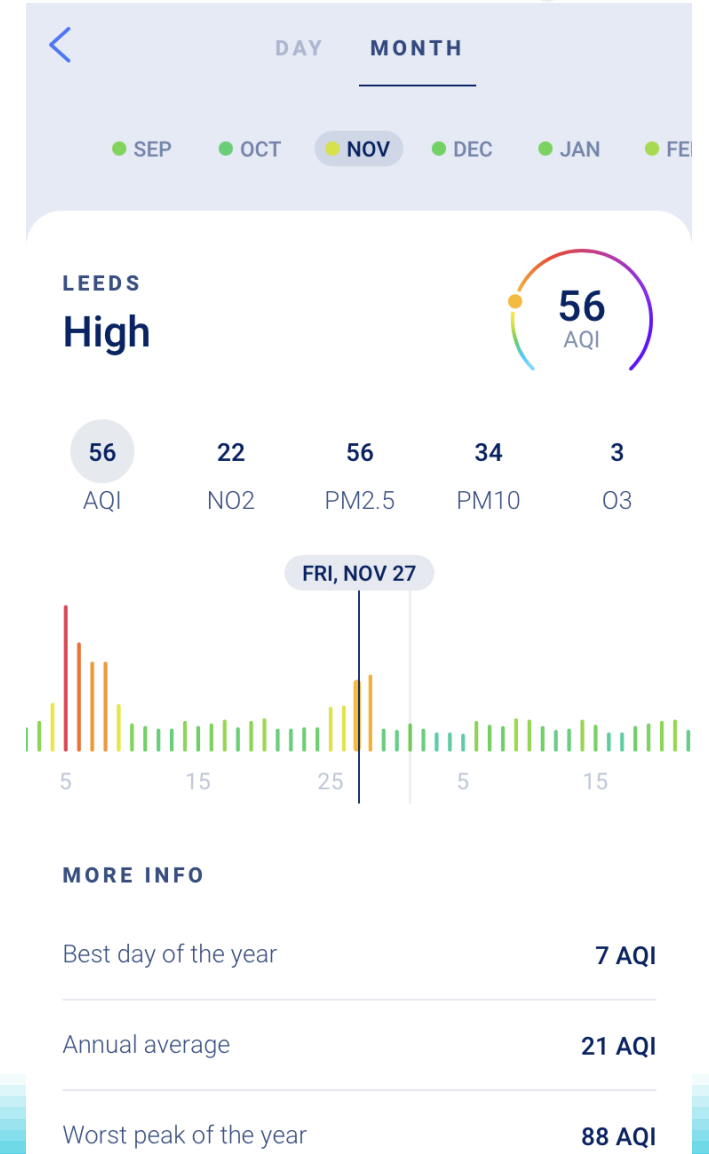


# Locally – Air quality in Leeds

Street level data for  
Leeds – today 10am  
A61



# Impact





# Impact of Climate Change on Human Health

Impact

Heat stress,  
cardiovascular  
failure

Injuries, fatalities

Severe  
Weather

Asthma,  
cardiovascular disease

Air  
Pollution

Malaria, dengue,  
encephalitis, hantavirus,  
Rift Valley fever

Healthcare will be the front line  
(again)

Mental  
Health

Anxiety, despair,  
depression,  
post-traumatic stress

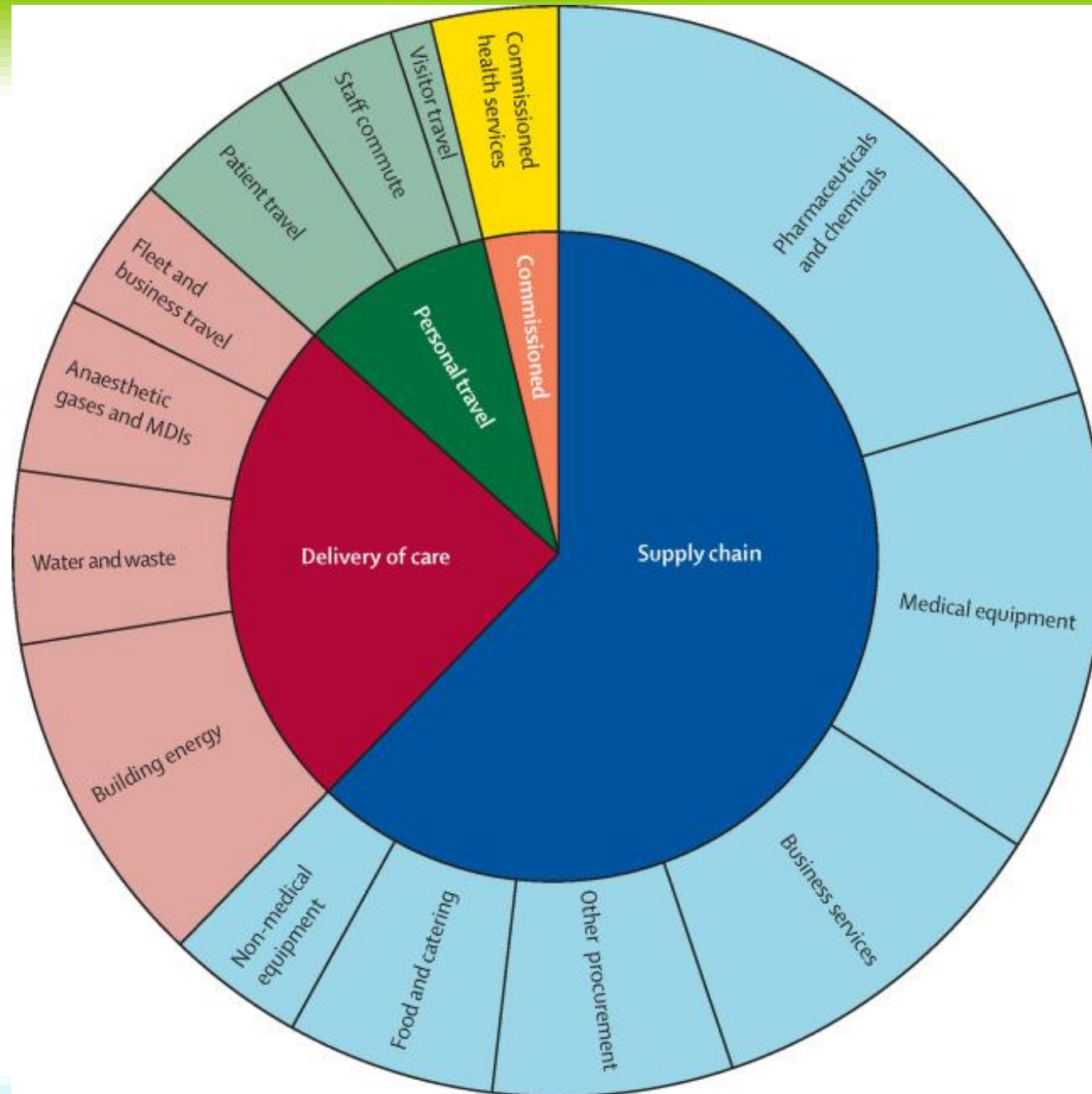
Environmental  
Refugees

Forced migration,  
civil conflict

Water-borne  
Diseases

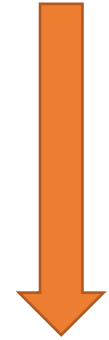
Cholera,  
cryptosporidiosis,  
campylobacter,  
leptospirosis

# Sources of carbon in primary care



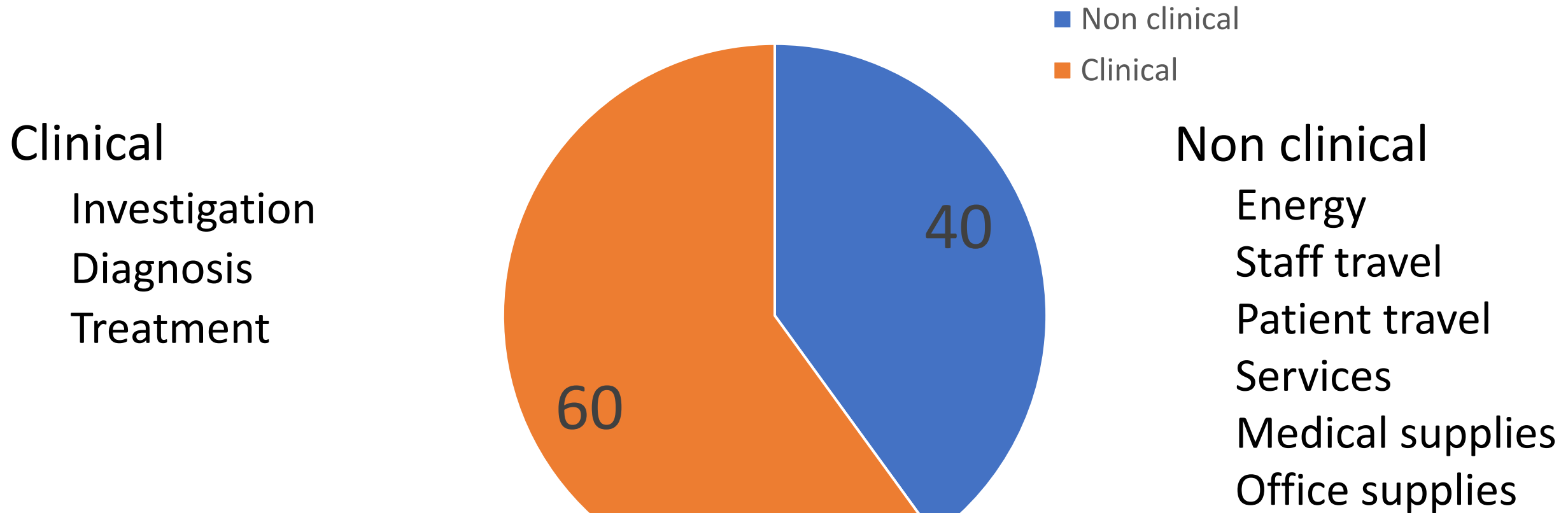
Action

25 Mt



5.75 Mt

# Sources of carbon in primary care



To reach overall net zero,  
all parts need to reach zero



# Actions

# Action

Save energy?

Save money?

Save carbon?

**1MWh =**

**£143 =**

**253 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**

Improve patient health?

Save money?

Save carbon?

**>3 SABA Double exacerbation risk**

## First steps

# Action

1. Carbon literate
2. Practice carbon footprint calculated
3. Practice carbon reduction plan



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# Resources



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Speak Carbon [www.speakcarbon.earth](http://www.speakcarbon.earth)



SEE Sustainability [seesustainability.co.uk](http://seesustainability.co.uk)



UK HEALTH  
ALLIANCE ON  
CLIMATE CHANGE

UKHACC [www.ukhealthalliance.org/carbon-literacy-guide](http://www.ukhealthalliance.org/carbon-literacy-guide)



CENTRE *for*  
SUSTAINABLE  
HEALTHCARE  
inspire • empower • transform

Centre for Sustainable Healthcare  
[sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/courses/introduction-sustainable-healthcare](http://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/courses/introduction-sustainable-healthcare)

Carbon Literacy  
Project

The Carbon Literacy Project [carbonliteracy.com](http://carbonliteracy.com)

# How it works

- Time - 'a days' worth of Carbon Literacy learning'
  - Hybrid – self directed online videos and live 'Action planning' workshop with peers
- Cost - £99 per participant
- When - start today! [www.speakcarbon.earth](http://www.speakcarbon.earth)
- Register your interest
  - [health@speackarbon.earth](mailto:health@speackarbon.earth)
  - [matt@seesustainability.co.uk](mailto:matt@seesustainability.co.uk)

Thank you



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Any Questions?

[www.speakcarbon.earth](http://www.speakcarbon.earth)

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[seesustainability.co.uk](http://seesustainability.co.uk)