



Climate Action Roadmap 2025

October 2025

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1. Introduction

This Climate Action Roadmap sets out how the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) will meet the requirements of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate 2025. This mandate was part of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2025, updated annually as required by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. All public bodies are required to halve their emissions by 2030 and to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050.

1.1 Organisational context

HIQA is an independent authority established to drive high-quality and safe care for people using health and social care services in Ireland. HIQA's mandate to date extends across a specified range of public, private and voluntary sector services. HIQA's role is to develop standards, inspect and review health and social care services and support informed decisions on how services are delivered.

During 2025, HIQA published its Corporate Plan 2025-2027. This plan outlines how, over the next three years, HIQA will work to enable improved outcomes for people using services through regulation, setting standards and providing evidence to inform decision-making, delivering value and impact for stakeholders. It is envisioned that HIQA's functions will continue to grow over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan through new legislation and other public policy initiatives to drive improvement in the delivery of health and social care. A core outcome within HIQA's Corporate Plan is its commitment to delivering its current and future functions while being a sustainable and inclusive organisation.

1.2 Progress to date

HIQA's Climate Action Roadmap outlines the work that it has already undertaken around sustainability. It details the organisation's plan for continuing to reduce energy use and switch to renewable and carbon-free energy sources in order to continue to reduce carbon emissions resulting from HIQA's activities, and to improve its energy efficiency.

HIQA has been working with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) since 2011 to reduce its energy consumption, improve its energy efficiency and reduce its emissions. Solid progress has been made in these areas. Initiatives that have led to these improvements are detailed in Appendix I.

2. Our Targets

The Government has set targets for public bodies to reduce their emissions and improve their energy efficiency. HIQA used the Monitoring and Reporting system, a

web-based software system, developed by the SEAI, to track and report on its energy use, emissions and related data. This enables progress to be tracked towards energy and climate policy targets. The graphs and tables in this report have been extracted from that system.

2.1 Energy efficiency

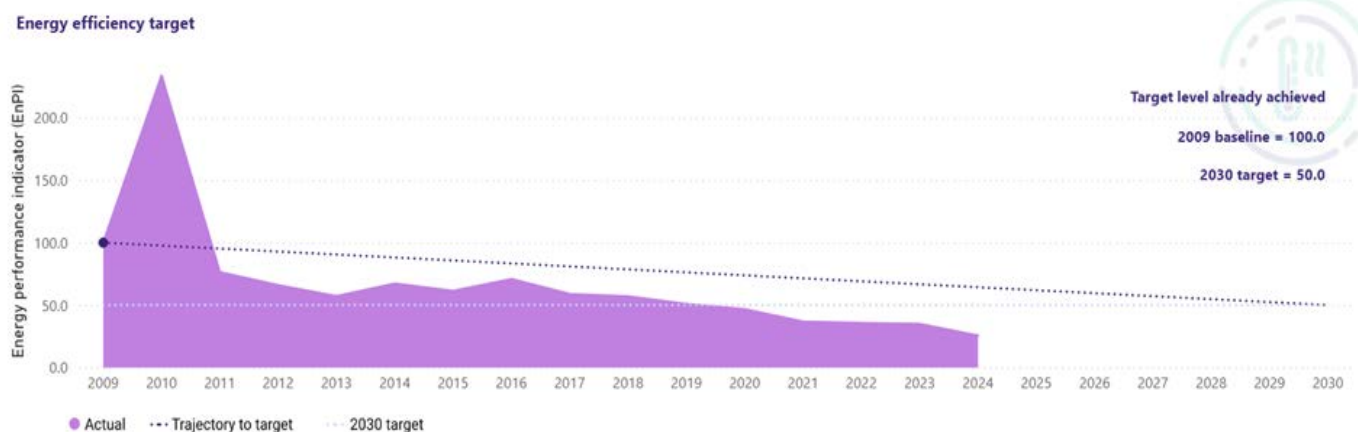
Energy efficiency means using less energy to perform the same task, without affecting quality. Using energy more efficiently is the most cost-effective and accessible way to tackle climate change. Action on energy efficiency also reduces the CO₂ emissions connected with our energy use.

The Government's energy efficiency targets include a 50% improvement in energy efficiency for the public sector by 2030.

HIQA has already achieved the 2030 energy efficiency target.

HIQA's energy performance has improved by 74.4% since 2009, the baseline year. HIQA will continue to maintain and improve its energy efficiency levels.

HIQA has reduced its energy use by 118,576 kWh from 2009, its baseline year. This has been achieved while the organisation's remit has expanded significantly. In this time period, staffing levels have increased by 301% and occupied floor area has increased by almost 35% since the baseline year. This has resulted in energy used per employee being reduced from 5,475 kWh/employee in 2009 to 1,541 kWh/employee in 2024.



(Figure 1: Energy efficiency target)

2.2 Emissions reductions

HIQA is mandated to achieve a 51% reduction in the organisation's energy-related carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 2030.

The total target is derived as follows:

- 51% reduction of direct fossil fuel-related CO₂ emissions; and
- Projected supply-side reductions in indirect fossil fuel-related CO₂ emissions from electricity.

Public bodies are required to meet both the 51% reduction in direct fossil fuel-related emissions target and the overall total emissions reduction target.

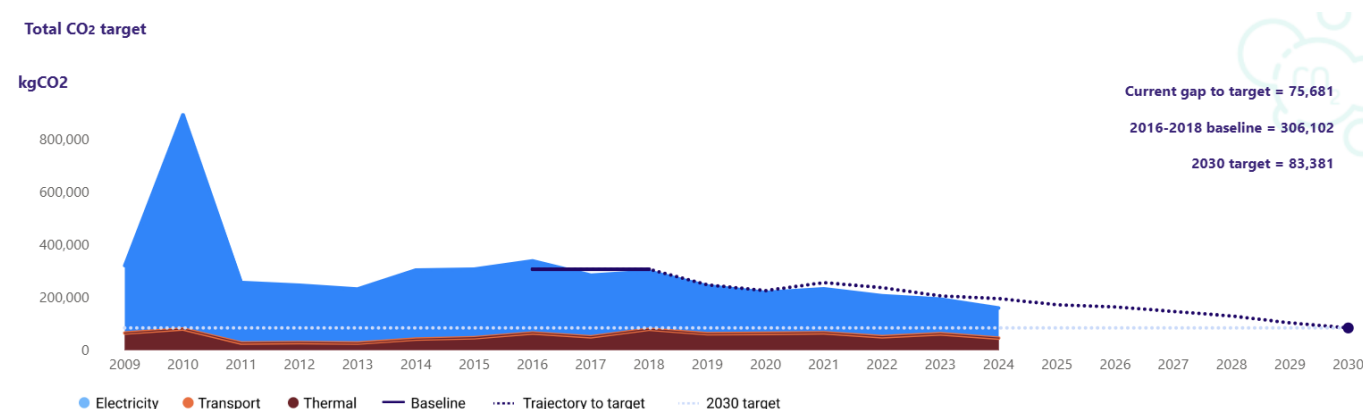
HIQA's only direct fossil fuel emissions result from the use of natural gas in its Dublin office. HIQA has reduced direct fossil fuel-related CO₂ emissions by 30.2% compared to its baseline (2016-2018 average usage). This is also on a trajectory towards meeting the organisation's 2030 fossil fuel-related CO₂ target.

HIQA has reduced total CO₂ emissions by 48% compared to the 2016-2018 baseline. This is also on a trajectory towards meeting the 2030 total CO₂ target.



(Figure 2: Fossil CO₂ emissions.)

(Figure 3: Total CO₂ emissions.)



(Figure 4: Total CO₂ target)

3. Our People – leadership and governance

3.1 Senior management commitment

HIQA's Corporate Plan 2025-2027 has identified that one of its desired strategic outcomes is for HIQA to be a sustainable and inclusive organisation. As part of its sustainability ambition, HIQA's Executive Management Team recognises the importance of tackling climate change and the importance of achieving Ireland's climate goals to ensure a sustainable future.

HIQA has developed this Climate Action Roadmap as a vital tool to marshal us on our climate action pathway. Through this roadmap, we will continually improve our facilities, services and resource management operations, in respect of our climate-related and energy-saving goals, while also engaging with behavioural changes among our staff and other stakeholders.

HIQA is fully committed to the Government's Climate Action Plan and acknowledges the importance of the plan's comprehensive approach to the reduction of carbon emissions across the State. HIQA has already reached its energy efficiency targets, as set out in the plan, and will continue to work towards achieving the goal of reducing our carbon emissions by 51% by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions by the year 2050.

HIQA's Executive Management Team will work to ensure that HIQA uses its powers and functions to encourage its stakeholders, including those in the wider health and social care sectors, to take action to address the climate crisis. We are committed to positioning HIQA as an effective agent for climate action in line with national climate objectives, targets and plans.

3.2 Nominated climate and sustainability champion

In line with our climate action obligations, HIQA's Chief Operating Officer has been appointed as the organisation's Climate and Sustainability Champion. In this capacity, he holds responsibility for driving the implementation of sustainability mandates across the organisation. The Climate and Sustainability Champion provides strategic leadership and direction for climate action-related initiatives. He is responsible for ensuring that climate action, as well as sustainability, remains integrated and central to the work of the whole organisation.

3.3 Governance structure

HIQA's Board and Executive Management Team have put structures in place to drive HIQA's actions in relation to climate action. These include:

- The Chief Executive provides leadership, commitment and support for HIQA's climate action and sustainability initiatives. She has made a public commitment to support decarbonisation of the public sector through HIQA's membership of the SEAI Energy Decarbonisation Partnership Programme.
- The Executive Management Team plays a lead role in supporting the integration of climate action and sustainability into daily activities and at all levels of the organisation. It ensures leadership and drives the implementation of climate and sustainability goals as set out in this roadmap.
- The Chief Operating Officer has responsibility for HIQA's sustainability function and oversees compliance with all relevant requirements. He is the member of the Executive Management Team with responsibility for improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions.

The Resource Oversight Committee of the Board provides strategic oversight of climate action, ensuring progress against mandated targets and setting HIQA's wider ambition for sustainability.

3.4 Green Team

To support implementation of its climate action and sustainability goals, HIQA has established a Green Team with representatives from across the organisation. The team includes key roles required to deliver on climate action and includes the Chief Operating Officer, the Facilities Manager, representatives from the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Team and other functions from across the organisation.

4. Our People - engaging our staff

Maintaining energy efficiency improvements and meeting decarbonisation targets requires buy-in and commitment from those who work in HIQA.

In developing its wider approach to sustainability, HIQA has consulted with staff across the organisation. Meetings have been held with members of the Executive Management Team and other identified members of staff. HIQA has carried out an online survey of all staff in the organisation and used their input in the development of its approach to sustainability and climate change.

This engagement identified that there is a strong commitment from staff to playing their part in HIQA's climate action journey. It also identified that staff need more support from, and engagement with, the organisation to do this.

During the year, the Board, senior management and staff members participated in climate action leadership training. This training was designed to build leadership capacity in addressing climate challenges and embedding sustainability into strategic

decision-making. The course focused on the policy and legislative context of climate action, the role of public sector leaders in driving change, and the practical steps required to meet Ireland's climate targets.

Work will be carried out with HIQA's Human Resources Team to incorporate appropriate climate action and sustainability training into learning and development strategies for staff in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate.

During 2026, HIQA plans to organise staff workshops to engage on climate issues, including a focus on decreasing the organisation's carbon footprint. Working with the Green Team, HIQA will develop a communications plan to keep staff informed, engaged and motivated about climate action in HIQA.

5. Our Way of Working

5.1 Energy and environmental management systems

In HIQA, energy usage in the Cork and Dublin offices is managed with the use of a comprehensive and efficient building management system (BMS).

In HIQA's Dublin office, all gas boilers, pumps, valves, and fan coil units are controlled by way of timed schedules from the BMS. The use of gas is further controlled using outside air temperature compensatory calculations. This means that the higher the outside temperature, the lower the temperature of the hot water supplied by the boilers.

In HIQA's office in Cork all heating and cooling are supplied by an air conditioning system, which is also controlled through the BMS. The time schedules ensure that controlled start and finish times are maintained. Internal thermostats ensure that a controlled temperature at the office is maintained, preventing energy wastage.

Energy in HIQA's second Cork office, Building 2000, along with the Galway office, is controlled through localised wall-mounted control pods.

5.2 Green Public Procurement

HIQA recognises the necessity and importance of Green Public Procurement (GPP) to source goods and services with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle.

HIQA uses green award criteria in its tenders through including specific, verifiable GPP criteria in tenders based on the product or service being procured. These

criteria are sourced from national guidance developed by the Environmental Protection Agency and Office of Government Procurement. During 2024, just over 40% of tenders issued by HIQA had requirements for green criteria or environmental considerations. These were mainly in the areas of Facilities and ICT. HIQA will work to extend the use of such criteria across its procurement activities.

5.3 Food waste

Food waste in HIQA results primarily from food brought into offices by staff members. All offices have food waste and or compost bins and our cleaning contractors are required to ensure compost waste is kept segregated from all other waste streams.

A new waste collection tender process was completed in 2025 and the waste collection company that was awarded the contract has supplied dedicated food waste bins which are weighed during collections. This will enable us to manage and compare results year-on-year.

5.4 Single-use items

HIQA has ceased the purchase of single-use items such as disposable cups, plates and cutlery. All offices carry a stock of reusable items thereby eliminating this waste stream.

5.5 Paper and paper-based processes

Paper use within HIQA is measured and monitored to ensure that usage is minimised. The use of paper has been consistently reduced since 2020. A number of ICT programmes currently underway will facilitate further significant reductions in the use of paper.

Since 2024 only 100% recycled paper is purchased by HIQA and all wastepaper is sent for recycling.

6. Our Buildings and Vehicles

6.1 Vehicles

HIQA does not own or operate any official fleet vehicles. As such, HIQA is not subject to procurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements related to fleet emissions. Despite the absence of a fleet, the Authority actively promotes

sustainable travel practices among its staff through a comprehensive travel and subsistence policy aimed at reducing the environmental impact of work-related travel.

6.2 Promoting cycling

HIQA encourages staff to cycle to work in its offices. All offices have bicycle parking, showers and facilities for storing change of clothing. HIQA operates the Bike to Work Scheme that enables employees get a new bike and safety gear tax-free through salary sacrifice, paying via deductions from gross pay.

6.3 Phasing out parking

Parking is limited in all of HIQA's offices. The number of parking spaces available in all offices is significantly less than the number of staff employed.

6.4 Buildings

HIQA has developed and submitted its Building Stock Plan to the SEAI, as required under public sector climate obligations. This plan outlines the status of HIQA's buildings and identifies opportunities for improved energy performance where applicable.

6.5 Fossil fuel heating systems

HIQA's only use of fossil fuel is natural gas in its Dublin office. The office is shared with other public sector bodies and total gas usage is split on a percentage of floor area occupied by each public sector body. This poses a challenge in that HIQA is attributed a percentage of all the gas energy used rather than the gas that it actually used itself. HIQA continues to work with other tenants and the Office of Public Works to ensure that the use of gas is minimised in the building.

7. Our wider climate action plans

As a regulator and driver of improvement across the health and social care sector HIQA recognises that it has levers that it can use to drive improvement in sustainability in general, and climate action in particular. HIQA has begun work in integrating sustainability into its core functions including standard setting and health technology assessment.

7.1. Development of standards

In the development of standards, HIQA has now begun to integrate environmental sustainability into its approach for all new and updated national standards. This will support health and social care services to deliver safe, high-quality care, while reducing environmental impacts. Environmental sustainability is now being explicitly referred to as a component of the “governance and accountability” principle by which HIQA’s national standards are developed.¹ There are three sets of national standards currently in development, which refer to environmental sustainability. These are:

- Draft *National Standards for Home Support Services*
- Draft *Overarching Standards for the Care and Support of Children using Health and Social Care Services*
- Draft *National Standards for Children’s Social Services*.

7.2. Health technology assessment

HIQA’s Health Technology Assessment Directorate recognises the need for considering sustainability in its work. It continues to engage with partner agencies through its international networks to identify good practice and potential frameworks. In 2026 the Directorate plans to review the work of other similar agencies internationally to inform its work and incorporate emerging good practices into how it operates.

¹ HIQA’s national standards are developed based on four core principles: a Human Rights-Based Approach, Safety and Wellbeing, Responsiveness, and Governance and Accountability, which work together to put the person receiving care at the centre.

Appendix I

Initiatives already undertaken

- Conducting an in-depth study of the significant energy users across all of our offices.
- Engaging external consultants to conduct independent energy audits of all sites as set out in the Statutory Instrument (SI) 131 of 2014.
- Reduction of temperatures across all offices to 19°C as required by the Government. This poses challenges in open plan offices and members of the Facilities Team work to ensure the comfort of all colleagues within these parameters.
- Re-lamping of all lights in the organisation's Dublin office to LED lights, resulting in an energy saving of approximately 45% in light-related energy.
- Recalibration of the LED light sensors which identify when staff are in a particular area, ensuring only those lights that are required are activated.
- The implementation of stringent controls on HIQA's building management systems (BMS) which are used to regulate the organisation's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.
- Revising procurement practices and ensuring energy-efficient equipment has been purchased wherever possible.
- The implementation of auto shutdown systems for onsite computer equipment.
- The upgrade of passive infrared sensors on the lighting systems to ensure that only the lights needed were being used.
- Working with the landlord and the OPW in the Dublin office to replace the gas boilers to ensure that maximum efficiency was achieved.
- Liaising with other tenants in our Dublin office to ensure energy savings are maximised.
- The implementation of energy awareness campaigns for all HIQA staff.

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