

# How to produce a Sustainable Development Management Plan (SDMP)

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# Contents

Introduction.....	4
Why produce an SDMP? .....	4
What is an SDMP? .....	5
What should an SDMP include? .....	6
Examples of good practice.....	6
Sustainable development .....	7
Building blocks .....	9
Developing your SDMP .....	10
Engagement & communication .....	11
Our support to you .....	11

# Introduction

This practical document is to help sustainability and social value leads in health and care organisations, commissioners and providers, to compile their Sustainable Development Management Plans (SDMP) for their organisation.

The purpose of the health and care system is to continually improve health and wellbeing, and deliver quality health care. Health sector organisations can operate and deliver care whilst protecting human health by minimising negative impacts on the environment, economy and society and maximising the positive influences. An SDMP is a mechanism for organisations to take a coordinated, strategic and action-orientated approach to sustainability and social value.

## Why produce an SDMP?

SDMPs form a key part of sustainable healthcare delivery to ensure services remain fit for purpose today and for the future. SDMPs help identify waste reduction opportunities, financial savings and address national priorities such as carbon reduction. Health and care organisations can use their SDMP to describe their plans to improve prevention and the wider determinants of health in the communities they serve. An SDMP can for example, help target action for minimizing air pollution from health related transport, travel and logistics. This will help address local respiratory health issues and encourage healthy, active life styles. An SDMP can also help build partnerships between organisations and their local communities, for instance, implementing a volunteering scheme to reduce isolation and supporting people to feel valued.

An SDMP may be asked for by commissioners as evidence of an organisation's approach to Social Value.

The NHS standard contract mandates that all providers are required to have an SDMP in place.

NHS Improvement and NHS England expect all NHS providers to have a Board approved SDMP as these plans are considered a good measure of a well led organisation.

Public Health England also view these plans as evidence of an organisation's commitment to local public health outcomes.

The number of local organisations with SDMPs is an indicator in the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF).

The Department of Health and Social Care and all Arm's Length Bodies produce their own Board adopted SDMPs and lead by example.

# What is an SDMP?

An SDMP is a Board approved, current document outlining the organisation's aims, objectives, plans and priorities for improving their local and global environmental and socio-economic impacts and sets out how the organisation will use its influence to drive improvements in the best interests of the public's health. This could include reducing waste, unnecessary spend, contribution to improving local air quality and adapting services to accommodate climate change.

Developing an SDMP will help your organisation to:

1. Identify key actions to be taken forward
2. Achieve its financial goals
3. Improve the health of the local community
4. Meet its legislative requirements
5. Evidence how your organisation will provide additional Social Value

An SDMP may be valid for 3 to 5 years and should be reviewed at least once in the interim period. To ensure an SDMP has impact, progress against the commitments set out in an SDMP is expected to be reported to the Board or Governing Body on an annual basis. SDMPs should be submitted to relevant partners and communicated to staff and the public via intranet, newsletters and the organisation's website.

# What should an SDMP include?

To assist all health and care organisations produce their SDMP, we have published resource documents, as highlighted below, to guide and support the creation of your plans, ensuring that the scope of your SDMP is appropriate for your organisations scale and type.

1. Workbook A: Writing your SDMP - a practical guide on how to write your SDMP and what to include. This document is aligned with the National Sustainable Development Strategy<sup>1</sup> of NHS England and Public Health England.
  - a. Annexe A: supporting excel resources.
2. Workbook B: a guide to assessing your organisational priorities through assessing its materiality impact.
  - a. Annex B: supporting excel resources.

## Examples of good practice

You can find some examples of organisations best practice, outlining what they have done well and how they have used their plans to deliver their goals for positive outcomes in the following links:

1. The SDU [Health Check 2017](#) and [Health Check 2018](#)
2. NHS Improvement - Collaboration Hub. To enable access to the community area - email [nhsi.efmportalsubmissions@nhs.net](mailto:nhsi.efmportalsubmissions@nhs.net)

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development Strategy ; <https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/engagement-resources.aspx>

# Sustainable development

Sustainable development, in the context of these plans, is based upon three factors;

1. **Environmental impact**; the impact your organisations activities have on the environment including both the positive aspects that can be leveraged and to reduce or eliminate any negative impact.
2. **Social impact**; the impact your organisations activities has on its local communities, and society more broadly, positively utilising its levers to address health and social inequalities.
3. **Financial impact**; the impact your organisation has on how it controls and spends its money, i.e. the contribution sustainable development activities have on your short, medium and long term financial position; the impact your expenditure can have to actively improve the local socio-economics of your communities.



Diagram 1 – links between economic, environmental and social factors

NHS and social care organisations serve as anchors<sup>2</sup> in their local communities. They are embedded within their communities and have a significant economic contribution both as an employer and as a purchaser.

A significant proportion of health and social care carbon emissions come from the estimated £52bn of health-based non-pay spend<sup>3</sup>. Improving the impact of health and care delivery on the environment, society and the economy can generate direct financial benefits to organisations as well as impact wider economic improvements,

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<sup>2</sup> Anchor Organisations or Institutions;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/414390/Anchor\\_institutions\\_and\\_small\\_firms.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414390/Anchor_institutions_and_small_firms.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> SDU carbon footprint <https://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/reporting/hcs-carbon-footprint.aspx>

all of which contribute to the wider determinants of health. [Take a look at the reality these aspects can bring about.](#)

Evidence has shown that patients, staff and the general public expect their health and care services to address issues relating to the environment, social value and socio-economic growth. This supports evidence found in an opinion poll in 2017 which found that young people (25-40 year olds) viewed Health and Climate Change as the two of the most important issues for our country and for those under 25<sup>4</sup>, it rose to the number one issue. A 2017 NHS England led survey of over 6,000 NHS staff also revealed that 98% think it is important for the health and social care system to work in a way that supports the environment<sup>5</sup>. This makes tackling climate change a priority for the NHS and care system.

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<sup>4</sup> Bright Blue; <http://brightblue.org.uk/tories-must-be-greener-to-win-younger-voters-says-bright-blue/>

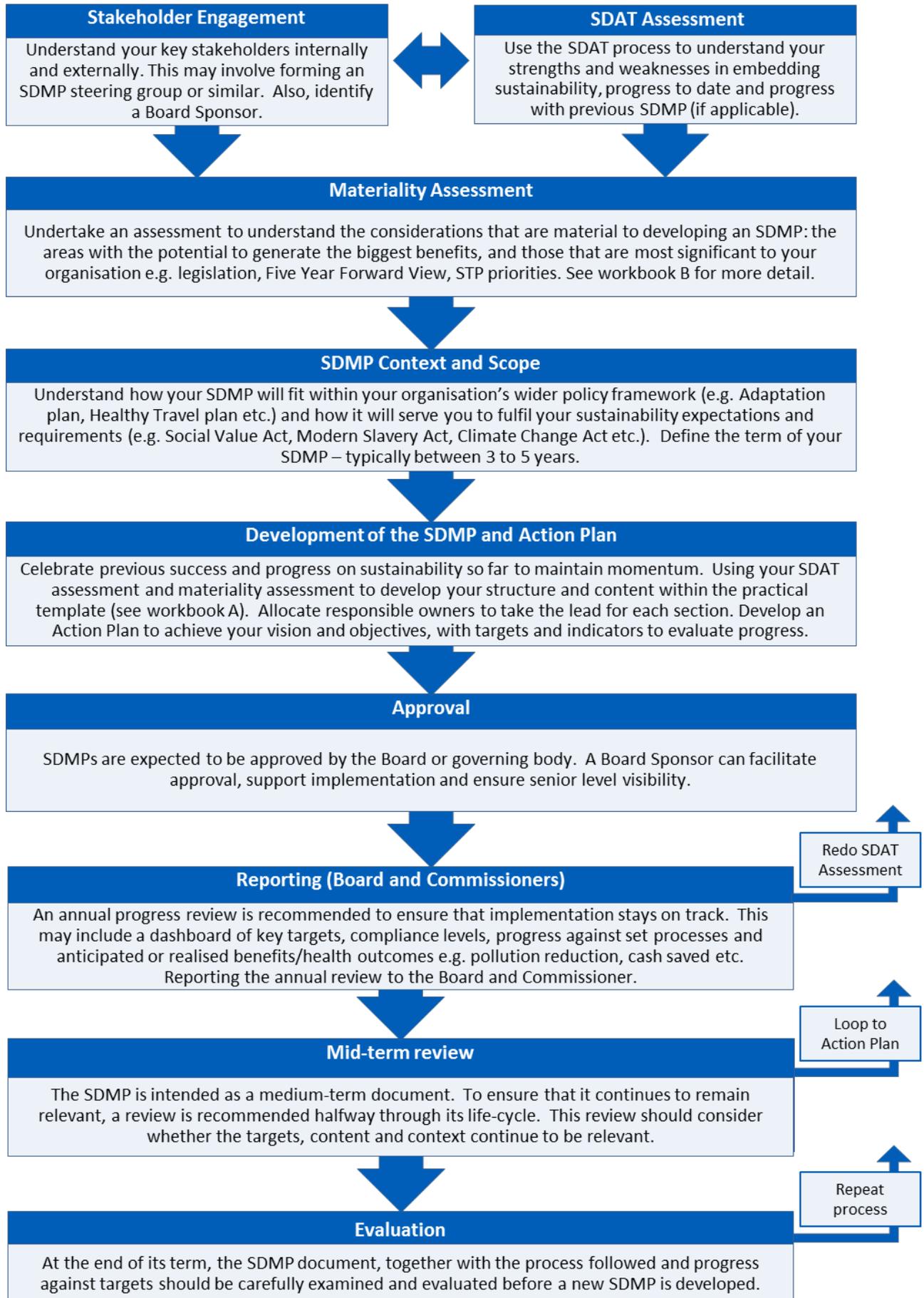
<sup>5</sup> SDU workforce insights study; [www.sduhealth.org.uk/staffsurvey](http://www.sduhealth.org.uk/staffsurvey)

# Building blocks

An SDMP is comprised of 3 key elements: Organisational Vision and Objectives, Action Plan, and Measurement & Reporting. They are underpinned by effective governance and accountability arrangements – please see below for a suggested template.



# Developing your SDMP



# Engagement & communication

During development of the SDMP, it is advisable to engage closely with colleagues across the organisation. Senior leadership support is essential. To ensure that the plan and actions are owned across the organisation it is advisable to allocate modules or subsets of SDAT questions to other departments, such as procurement, communications or HR.

Engaging with local networks and forums to receive feedback and learn from others will help ensure that the plan is outward facing. Once the plan is signed off by the board, it should be well publicised to staff, local CCGs/providers, patients and the public. An SDMP should be made accessible online and via the intranet, shared during service commissioning. It should be considered as evidence of:

- Commitment to Innovation, sustainability and efficiency
- An institutional approach to public health and prevention
- Patient safety- e.g. adaptation to heatwaves or reduction of on-site air pollution

Sharing SDMPs helps spread good practice. SDMPs should be engaging and attractive in both content and design. Using branding / colours and visuals to support the narrative and aims of the plan will make it more engaging and aesthetically pleasing.

## Our support to you

The Sustainable Development Unit (which is funded by, and accountable to, NHS England and Public Health England) and NHS Improvement have jointly written this practical guide.

Together we will support health and care organisations to use the guide to develop effective and practical SDMPs. We will share best practice examples from across the system and use webinars to help improve the quality of SDMPs. At a system level we will monitor the uptake and quality of SDMPs through the Estate Return Information Collection and other channels.

Contact us:

**Sustainable Development Unit**

2-4 Victoria House  
Capital Park  
Fulbourn, Cambridge  
CB21 5XB

**011382 53220**

**[england.sdu@nhs.net](mailto:england.sdu@nhs.net)**  
**[www.sduhealth.org.uk](http://www.sduhealth.org.uk)**

 **[@sduhealth](https://twitter.com/sduhealth)**

**NHS Improvement**

Wellington House  
133-155 Waterloo Road  
London  
SE1 8UG

**0300 123 2257**

**[enquiries@improvement.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@improvement.nhs.uk)**  
**[improvement.nhs.uk](http://improvement.nhs.uk)**

 **[@NHSImprovement](https://twitter.com/NHSImprovement)**