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Grounds and Gardens Maintenance costs in the NHS

New analysis of data from the Health and Social Care Information Centre – a Department of Health agency – shows significant disparities in how much NHS trusts spend to maintain grounds and gardens. There appear to be opportunities for many Trusts to save significant amounts of money by emulating those that secure the best value for money.

The key findings of this research are:

- In 2013-14, NHS sites in England which overpaid for their grounds and gardens maintenance could have saved at least **£6.8 million** by paying the median rate per m² of land.
- The amount that was overpaid was equivalent to the salaries of 224 nurses in 2013-14.¹
- NHS sites across England, including hospitals, spent more than **£26 million** on gardens and grounds maintenance in 2013-14.
- **43 trusts** in England could save **£50,000** or more if they paid the average rate for grounds and gardens maintenance. 4 trusts could save more than £200,000
- University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust could make the largest saving of **£501,850** if it paid for ground and garden maintenance at the average rate.
- Liverpool Heart and Chest NHS Foundation Trust paid the most per m² of grounds or gardens maintained - £4.30 – compared to a median cost of £0.52 per m².

[Click here to see the full research](#)

¹ According to HSCIC, Qualified nurses earned £30,619 in September 2013. <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/article/3453/Average-NHS-pay-up-one-per-cent-last-year-and-nearly-nine-per-cent-in-four-years>



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Sources and methodology

- All of the data was taken from Hospital Estates and Facilities Statistics NHS reports² on the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) website. The data is the Estate Returns Information Collection (ERIC) for 2013-14.
- To obtain the total area of the grounds or gardens for a site, the total footprint of the buildings was deducted from the total area of the land. A total was then found for each trust.
- Total cost of grounds and gardens maintenance costs were divided by the total area of the grounds and gardens to give a £/m² value.
- "Total grounds and gardens maintenance costs" is defined by HSCIC as: *"total pay and non-pay cost for the maintenance of the organisations grounds and gardens. It includes labour costs for directly employed and contract staff including contract support costs, fees, material and pay element for Directors, senior managers and all associated staff employed in the upkeep and maintenance of the grounds, gardens and external paths of the organisation site. Expenditure will also include costs relating to the employment of staff belonging to an external organisation (including PFI work). Cost of directly employed staff will be gross cost including all direct labour costs and on costs due to charge hands, supervisors, proportions of PTB/A&C staff time."*
- Potential saving in the subsequent tables represents the difference between actual spend per m² in a trust and the median value for all trusts multiplied by the total area of grounds and gardens maintained by the trust.

Guide to tables

Table 1: 5 largest total savings that could be made in grounds and gardens maintenance costs by NHS trusts in England

Table 2: 5 largest savings per m² of land that could be made in grounds and gardens maintenance costs by NHS trusts in England

[Click here to see the full research](#)

² <http://hefs.hscic.gov.uk/DataFiles.asp>



Table 1: 5 largest total savings that could be made in grounds and gardens maintenance costs by NHS trusts in England

Organisation Name	Total grounds and gardens maintenance costs (£)	Total area (m ²)	Total building footprint (m ²)	Total grounds (m ²)	Grounds and gardens maintenance costs per m ² (£/m ²)	Saving per m ² at median (£/m ²)	Saving at median (£)
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	637,021	377,800	116,857	260,943	2.44	1.92	501,850.37
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	456,937	397,100	104,018	293,082	1.56	1.04	305,118.10
The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust	387,789	237,237	51,187	186,050	2.08	1.57	291,413.56
County Durham And Darlington NHS Foundation Trust	379,333	420,286	82,001	338,285	1.12	0.60	204,098.57
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	338,727	362,500	88,301	274,199	1.24	0.72	196,689.65

Table 2: 5 largest savings per m² of land that could be made in grounds and gardens maintenance costs by NHS trusts in England

Organisation Name	Total grounds and gardens maintenance costs (£)	Total area (m ²)	Total building footprint (m ²)	Total grounds (m ²)	Grounds and gardens maintenance costs per m ² (£/m ²)	Saving per m ² at median (£/m ²)
Liverpool Heart And Chest NHS Foundation Trust	8,021	17,850	15,986	1,864	4.30	3.79
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	218,031	82,980	31,074	51,906	4.20	3.68
Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust	21,456	16,400	8,546	7,854	2.73	2.21
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust	14,278	97,500	92,114	5,386	2.65	2.13
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	637,021	377,800	116,857	260,943	2.44	1.92