

# Sustaining Great Art

Environmental Report

Mid-term results and highlights

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# FOREWORD – **JANE TARR** DIRECTOR, ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

In 2014 we published **Sustaining Great Art**, which reported on the first year of the Arts Council's partnership with Julie's Bicycle, through which we aim to embed environmental sustainability in the work of our National portfolio organisations and Major partner museums.

In his foreword to **Sustaining Great Art**, Alan Davey, then Chief Executive, noted that; "change needs the momentum of organisational machinery. But that momentum is driven by individual voices and choices."

Since then the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has published its fifth assessment, finding that the influence of humans on the climate system is clear - and emphasising the importance of individual choices and actions. This feels like a relevant context for this midterm report from Julie's Bicycle, which shows how the arts and culture sector is increasingly choosing to take positive action.

In the first year, our focus was on engaging organisations with sustainability requirements and aggregating data to point out the potential for reducing our collective carbon footprint. This year has seen deeper engagement from many portfolio organisations; fresh leadership; a closer alignment of sustainability with core values and significant financial savings.

All of these make important contributions to organisational resilience.

However, it's clear that we have to work on the design of the reporting requirements, particularly for smaller organisations that are not building based or that are renting space. We believe there is commitment across all scales of organisation, and we

have begun to work with Julie's Bicycle to translate this goodwill into action.

We know that there is work to do with our own organisation. Last year, we agreed a new environmental policy. We will be building on that, and working more closely with our staff, so that environmental thinking becomes part of their own work. We also need to describe our work in a more coherent fashion, bringing together the ways we report on our re-shaped estate, our work with Julie's Bicycle and the arts and culture sector, and the opportunities we provide for artists to engage audiences with the issues of climate change.

Arts Council England believes that publically funded bodies should be leaders. We are pleased that as part of their new funding agreements, twenty-four organisations - from Seven Stories in Newcastle to the Tobacco Factory in the South West - have committed to go well beyond the minimum requirements in the ways they have embedded sustainability in their work.

It is exciting to think about the impact the arts and culture sector is already having - and what more it can achieve.

We are delighted to have recently agreed a new three-year partnership with Julie's Bicycle and look forward to working with them, to help make a difference.

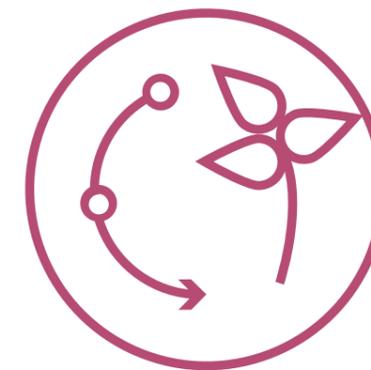
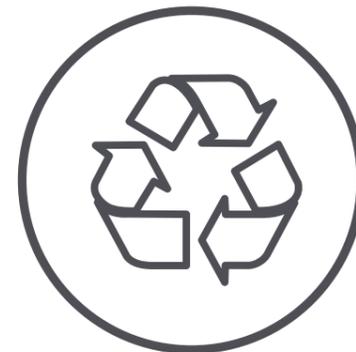
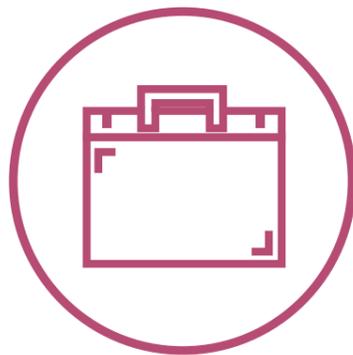
Increasingly we are seeing a connection between the work produced by the organisations we support and the sustainability agenda and that link is something we're happy to see continuing.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012, Arts Council England became the first arts funding body in the world to embed environmental sustainability into the funding agreements of its major programmes. For the three years from 2012/13, 704 National portfolio organisations, Major partner museums and Bridge organisations are required to report on energy and water and to have an environmental policy and action plan. The Arts Council partnered with Julie's Bicycle to provide tools, resources and support to the reporting organisations. Against a backdrop of increasing urgency to act on climate change, the second year of the Arts Council /Julie's Bicycle partnership showed a sector willing, confident and increasingly ambitious. The speed with which the arts and sustainability are coming together is creating a compelling template for the arts globally. In two years levels of literacy and commitment have steadily increased, producing multi-dimensional and diverse creative responses beyond carbon footprinting. This is a cultural movement that is confronting the existential issues of climate change and the environment and translating these into action. A new three-year partnership has just been announced between Julie's Bicycle and the Arts Council that will draw on the findings of this report.

### Powered by the sun Arcola Theatre

Arcola's office is the first in the world to have their phones and laptops directly connected with on-site solar generation, via USB sockets. This project was case studied in the government's Solar PV strategy. Funding came from the Technology Strategy Board's Building Better Connected scheme.



## Headline findings

The speed and scale of engagement across the Arts Council portfolio has rapidly created a critical mass of informed organisations addressing environmental impacts

- **98%** of reporting Arts Council funded organisations are now engaged with the programme compared to **89%** in 2012, and **14%** at the start of the programme.
- **85%** of reporting Arts Council funded organisations (608) now have an environmental policy and action plan in place, an increase of a third in 12 months.<sup>1</sup>

Confidence and depth of engagement has increased rapidly and significantly with many organisations going beyond the minimum requirements

- **34%** of all Arts Council reporting funded organisations are stretching their efforts beyond requirements, reporting on a range of impacts and implementing a range of measures beyond Arts Council requirements.
- **77%** of survey respondents (219) are now 'engaged' or 'very engaged'. This is a **61%** increase on last year with double the number of organisations reporting as 'very engaged'.

Benefits of high levels of engagement include financial and reputational, and for the first time a clear correlation between staff and audience well-being has emerged

- Of the 219 organisations that consider themselves engaged or very engaged:

 **56%** reported financial benefits of which **16%** are substantial

 **52%** reported reputational benefits

 **73%** reported benefits to team-morale

Potential collective savings from 'business as usual' are equivalent to **3%** of investment in the Arts Council's portfolio

- **£1.25m** and 7,063 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e was saved by 490 organisations in 2013/14 alone. This volume of CO<sub>2</sub>e gas would fill the Royal Albert Hall over 47 times. This represents a decrease in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions of 6.2% on 2012/13 despite a 16% increase in arts activities<sup>2</sup>. This is equivalent to a 19% saving on a pro rata basis.
- Two thirds of all organisations reduced electricity, gas, and water usage.
- Scaling these results up across the entire sector would see savings of **£11m**.

- Those who do most to engage with and reduce their impacts, visual arts and theatre, also seem to increasingly reflect this in their artistic content.<sup>3</sup>

The potential for future leadership across the Arts Council portfolio is high, with key organisations and individuals taking on an enhanced role

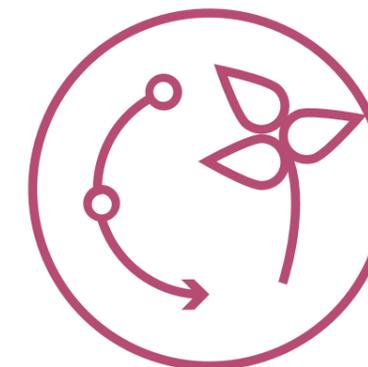
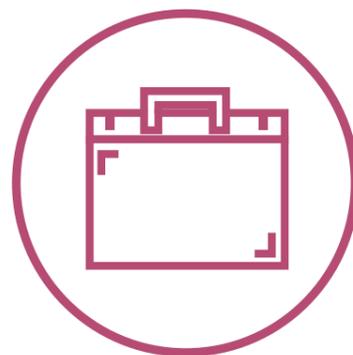
- 16 organisations produce **50%** of the carbon footprint.
- Of this 16 many are taking on leadership roles as innovators and champions, such as the Royal National Theatre, Barbican, Manchester Partnership (comprising Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester Museum, Whitworth Art Gallery), Sage Gateshead and The Ironbridge Gorge Museum. This level of leadership is happening at executive level, with outstanding examples of individual leadership.
- Despite examples of outstanding senior leadership, in the main leadership is coming from the middle of organisations, not the executive level, from those people tasked with measuring and managing impacts.

<sup>1</sup> The Arts Council England cohort is made up of National portfolio organisations, Mprms and Bridge organisations

<sup>2</sup> National portfolio organisation – Annual survey statistics 2012/13 and 2013/14, Arts Council England. Activities include any cultural activities including exhibitions, performances, productions, workshops or educational events.

<sup>3</sup> Sustaining Creativity: National survey of attitudes and actions on environmental sustainability in the creative industries, Burns Owens Partnership, Julie's Bicycle December 2014

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Attitudes are affected by the level and type of actions<sup>4</sup>

- The majority of organisations taking action on climate change in the cultural sector are from the Arts Council portfolio.
- Sectors that do the most – visual arts and theatre - consider themselves to be doing the least and vice versa revealing an evolving maturity about the scale and complexity of the issues.
- The organisations that are leading the cultural sector are almost exclusively Arts Council reporting organisations.

### Closing the loop

#### Baltic Centre For Contemporary Arts

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Arts recycles its old external banners into bags and pencil cases which are then sold in its shop; any remaining wastage is given to a local company to make traffic cones.

### Floating cinema leads the way

#### UP Projects

UP Projects launched a Floating Cinema powered by an innovative bio fuel and electric hybrid engine that recycles fuel that would be otherwise deemed waste. Their on board LED system also means that they use very low power lighting.

## Other key findings

- Smaller organisations which are unable to report are as committed as others.
- **23%** (165) are unable to report. These comprise organisations who typically: don't own or rent a building; are unable to access energy and water invoices; or have impacts which are too sporadic or small to measure meaningfully. These organisations are not disinterested but are hampered by the nature of the Arts Council reporting requirements. Only **9%** of the cohort this year didn't report on energy or water at all.
- The theatre and visual arts communities are the most proactive in all areas of environmental sustainability.<sup>5</sup>
- Art galleries, theatres and museums together constitute over two thirds of the total reported footprint, whilst libraries, productions and small music venues combined make up less than **1%**.<sup>6</sup>
- The internal culture within the Arts Council is gradually shifting, with greater literacy and engagement across the organisation.
- Almost all (**93%**) of the 35 Relationship Managers who contributed to the Arts Council evaluation believe that the programme has made, or can make, a positive difference to their portfolios.
- There is a core of Relationship Managers who have become carbon literate and well informed about environmental issues. This group have the potential to embed a sustainability culture across their regions.

<sup>5</sup> Sustaining Creativity, 2014

<sup>6</sup> The Arts Council cohort does not include many major music venues which are largely commercial (the arenas and large venues (>1000) such as those wholly or part-owned by Live Nation including the Academy Music Group, MAMA & Company, major concert halls including the Royal Albert Hall, and the large number of university owned music venues). Concert halls within the Arts Council cohort represent 13% of the total impact.

## Key conclusions and recommendations

Overall there has been a huge advance in carbon literacy across the sector in the last two years; the quality and quantity of the responses illustrates a cultural community that is confident and engaged.



We conclude that:

- The conditions are now ripe for future leadership and a framework to support this should be developed.
- Boards, governing bodies and executives should be encouraged to do more.
- Arts Council England itself should build on the sector's leadership culture and lead at a senior level.
- Acting on environmental impacts has quick and tangible benefits beyond carbon emissions reductions including wellbeing so all Arts Council funded organisations should be reporting.
- More needs to be done to understand the relationship between environmental literacy and 'doing' and how that stimulates cultural shifts.
- More needs to be done to identify how artistic content is being shaped by environmental challenges.
- Reporting requirements could be more diverse to account for different organisational conditions.