

Unlimited's Roadmap to Net Zero

Unlimited is a Leeds-based charitable touring company of UK artists and producers making and telling inspirational stories for live performance in public spaces. Their projects are born from the passions and obsessions of their six Core Artists who share a vision to tell stories that inspires audiences to join them in changing the world (for the better).

Developing their [roadmap](#) was a 12-month process led by Unlimited's Executive Director Sarah Webb, supported by the Chief Executive J Spooner and the company's Board of Trustees. After joining the Sustainable Arts in Leeds (SAIL) network in 2020 and following development of their roadmap to net zero for the activities of its members, Unlimited started work on their own. The structure is inspired by SAIL's roadmap, adapting the environmental themes to align with their unique operations as a touring theatre company. It focuses on actions to be taken under five key areas:

- Energy & Water
- Waste
- Travel
- Natural Capital
- Behavioural Change & Community Engagement

From adopting a zero single use plastic policy to monitoring touring partner energy sources, Unlimited created a map of milestones that would enable them to reduce their impact in the coming years and eventually balance emissions going into the atmosphere with those being removed. These milestones were informed by multiple years of data collection, research, and guidance from climate groups and peers. As a starting point, the company assessed their current position, which included an overview of actions already implemented and, where available, data on their current footprint. This work enabled them to identify high footprint areas, providing a focus for researching emission reduction strategies.

As a touring company with a small base of operations, they have very limited Scope 1 and Scope 2 activities within their direct control (see Unlimited's roadmap report for definitions). Therefore, they turned much of their attention to the indirect emissions from their supply chain (Scope 3 activities), researching the existing sustainable practices of their main suppliers and their planned progress to net zero. This guided them to a milestone timeframe e.g. the vast majority of their staff and crew travel by train so progress towards net zero travel will therefore be majorly reliant on the Network Rail decarbonisation programme. The research was extensive and time-consuming but highly valuable and they hope their plan has started to do some of the leg work for you.

Unlimited includes a list of their main sources of information and guidance at the end of their roadmap report. As well as, our very own Julie's Bicycle resources and toolkit, this includes [Carbon Literacy Project](#), [Theatre Green Book](#), [Wholegrain Digital](#), [Possible, Plan A](#) and more.

Net Zero Roadmap



	ENERGY & WATER	WASTE	TRAVEL	NATURAL CAPITAL	SUSTAINABLE CULTURE
2022	Office energy from 100% renewable sources	Implement company-wide procurement policy	Introduce company sustainable travel policy	Implement company-wide procurement policy	Recruit environmental specialist to the Board
2023	Office lighting switched to LED and access corridor operated by motion sensors	Office waste managed by zero to landfill waste management contractor	Accurately track all 'core' business travel	50% of materials from reused or recycled sources. All other materials sourced sustainably	Publish roadmap on website with annual progress updates
2024	Low water-use toilets and taps fitted in office building	Formalise office recycling systems	Cycle parking/storage installed at office	No toxic or environmentally harmful materials used	Establish company Green Team
2025	Reduce energy demand of productions, IT systems and company websites	After productions, 65% of materials are re-used or recycled	Accurately track all business and production travel	50% of main supply chain aiming for net zero by 2030	Agree advisory relationships with climate orgs/groups
2026	Energy used in 75% of indoor sites for business activity is renewably sourced	Establish zero single use plastic pledge	Check touring partners audience travel communication strategy	75% of materials from reused or recycled sources. All other materials sourced sustainably	All staff and board members trained in carbon literacy
2027	Energy used in 75% of outdoor sites for business activity is renewably sourced	Engage with collective purchasing system and database	85% reduction in business travel emissions	Support office building with green rooftop/wall install	Establish Green Rider in all partner contracts
2028	Office energy sources and infrastructure improved - solar panels, heating / cooling systems, insulation, double glazing & rainwater harvesting	Join local re-use or recycle facility	Switch to electric company vehicle	Take part in local Leeds tree planting	Implement comms strategy alongside artistic programme
2029	Energy used in all indoor and outdoor sites of business activity is renewably sourced or offset responsibly	After productions, 90% of materials are re-used or recycled	Net zero emissions from business travel	70% of main supply chain on track for net zero by 2030	Publish and promote roadmap half-way update report
2030	Net zero water supply provided in all operational environments	Scope 3 activities monitored for zero waste to landfill practices	100% of materials from reused, recycled or net zero sources	100% of materials from reused, recycled or net zero sources	Allocate % of training budget specifically to sustainability

Unlimited Roadmap to net zero

Unlimited pride themselves on being an environmentally conscious organisation both in the work they produce and behind the scenes. Their roadmap follows years of hard work to educate themselves, their audiences and peers on the climate emergency. Through their sister brand, for family audiences, [the Unlimited Space Agency](#) (UNSA), they toured a new show How to Save The Planet to thousands of audiences at festivals across the UK in 2019 in their award winning [Space Shed](#); created the free resource [howtosavethe.earth](#) for families to tackle the climate emergency together; hosted live Q&As with climate scientists and activists and later released these on their podcast [Live from The Space Shed](#). In 2020, Unlimited [changed all their domains to '.earth' and moved their website and emails to Green Hosting](#), a 100% wind powered web host. The company are signed up to the [Oil Sponsorship Free commitment](#) and have worked closely with [Culture Unstained](#) to break the links between cultural organisations and oil sponsorship. They've also been developing a [project with Core Artist Ali Pidsley](#), which will kick off in autumn 2023.

In response to news of a major cut in funding, Unlimited recently announced their closure at the end of 2023 following a final programme of work. The company vow to make this a happy ending with an exciting and empowering celebration of its achievements over the last 25 years. Continuing their support for the next generation of theatre makers, one of their parting gifts will be to increase the number of resources and templates free to access for emerging organisations and artists in the industry.

The company has long encouraged others to use and adapt their templates for their own organisation's needs and capacity. In September 2022, they shared [the first iteration of their roadmap to net zero](#). They aimed to achieve this by 2030, but sooner if they could. By making the roadmap public, they invited the industry and their audiences to hold them to account. Equally, they also looked to invite conversation and encourage other arts organisations to use the roadmap as a resource to develop their own. It worked. The document is spreading far and wide and the company has already enjoyed many conversations with organisations working on their own plans and sharing learning along the way.

Unlimited were very clear about the work not being finished, dubbing the roadmap and accompanying report as a work-in-progress – in their words, it's unfinished. The milestones and actions were intended to be updated and reshaped over time. These updates would factor the introduction of new technologies and reduction strategies as well as progress made by their main suppliers in their own net zero journeys. The data and research conducted within this first stage was predominantly an internal process. This was to be followed by input from external consultants to aid further development of the plan. Unlimited intended to take us all along for the ride too, publishing their progress and any new resources they find along the way. Now with the announcement of their closure, it's more important than ever that this work continues through the emerging organisations adapting Unlimited's roadmap for their own.

Their door remains open for conversations on the roadmap. For future updates on Unlimited's available resources and templates, head over to their [News](#) page.

Check out Julie's Bicycle's [Creative Climate Tools](#)



Images by Rowan Wigley