

Culture, Climate and Environmental Responsibility: Annual Report 2023-24

Arts Council England

Julie's Bicycle

Creative, Climate, Action

Large Print version

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CREATIVE • CLIMATE • ACTION

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Executive Summary

Climate change is here. It is already affecting our lives and those of our communities. Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) recognise this and are **taking bold steps towards environmental responsibility, finding creative ways to take action together.** In this report we'll share inspiring examples from across the sector alongside environmental reporting results from the first year of the new portfolio (2023-26). Analysis of the self-reported data, carbon impacts, and environmental measures submitted by 591 organisations provides **a clear snapshot of where the creative and cultural sector stands today.**

Environmental data gathered from **Julie's Bicycle's Creative Climate Tools (CC Tools)** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/>) indicates that waste (note 1) has surged to the forefront as a major contributor of indirect emissions (note 2).

In addition to taking action on their measured carbon impacts, the sector is using its influence to engage audiences and stakeholders with environmental action. Many organisations are exploring environmental themes through their exhibitions, shows, events and educational activities. Biodiversity is getting a boost too, with organisations planning programmes that focus on nature and using outside space to help bring environmental awareness into the spotlight.

Organisations are not just talking the talk – they're embedding sustainability into their very core, appointing environmental champions to their governance boards, integrating environmental considerations into policies, developing green riders, training staff, and sharing knowledge with their peers. Reporting shows that this has led to rewards such as boosts in team morale, financial benefits and funding opportunities.

The path ahead is challenging, but with active collaboration and resource sharing, the sector is building confidence and making tangible progress toward decarbonisation and sustainability. The push for a greener future is on, and the creative and cultural sector is leading the charge.

Note 1: For further information please see ‘Waste methodology and conversion factor update – FAQs’, on the **Resources Page** (<https://ig-tools.com/resources>) of the CC Tools.

Note 2: Indirect emissions, also known as scope 3 emissions, also include audience travel, staff travel, and emissions from suppliers

Introduction

Since its launch in 2012 in partnership with Julie's Bicycle, the Environmental Programme (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/>) has continued to evolve, driving action and embedding environmental leadership into the fabric of our cultural community.

The Programme is packed with resources, tools and training to support the diversity required across the sector. **In addition, cultural organisations are also invited to join free development programmes that focus on decarbonisation, resilience, justice and governance.**

For building-based organisations the **Transforming Energy** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/transforming-energy/programme>) is made up of two strands:

1. **Buildings Net Zero Energy** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/transforming-energy/transforming-energy-buildings-net-zero-energy/>). Supports organisations to reduce emissions with free self-service resources, expert support from Pilio (Julie's Bicycle's technical partners) and training in energy management.
2. **Capital Investment Ready** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/transforming-energy/transforming-energy-capital-investment/>) provides advanced support to organisations who are working towards electrification of a key cultural venue.

Supporting trustees and board members of NPOs and IPSOs, the **Board Environmental Champions** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/board-environmental-champions/programme>) provides training, resources and a valuable peer network, which enables knowledge sharing, skills and confidence building to embed environmental responsibility within organisations at board level. **Join this network of over 200 champions!** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/board-environmental-champions/>)

Leading Resilience supports the sector to understand how we can adapt to climate impacts and build resilience.

The programme has two strands:

1. **Adapting Culture** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/leading-resilience/>) offers webinars and workshops to build understanding of adaptation to climate change in the context of place-making, nature and biodiversity, and venues. It also focuses on incorporating adaptation thinking into governance and policy.
2. **Resilient Horizons** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/leading-resilience/>) programme is a collaboration with **Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creative-people-and-places-0>) which will focus on supporting community-led action.

The Creative Climate Accelerator

(<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/creative-climate-accelerator/>) programme is targeted at people from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. It allows an individual, nominated by a supporting NPO or IPSO, access to a free six-part online training programme designed to equip them with skills and understanding so that they can act as agents of change within the sector.

Through **Creating Now for the Future** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/creating-now-for-the-future/>) Julie's Bicycle are collaborating with individual practitioners to co-design a comprehensive new suite of environmental resources. They are designed specifically to support freelance artists, creatives and other freelancers.

Carbon Snapshot

Of 985 organisations, 591 NPOs (60%) reported on 2023-24, the 2023-26 portfolio's first year of reporting. (Note 3)

Organisations self-reported their data across several different environmental impact areas including Artist/Crew Travel, Audience Travel, Business Travel, Energy, Fleet Travel, Freight Travel, Materials, Show Power, Waste, Water and Sewerage.

Audience data is reported separately. If audience travel were included this year, this would account for 42% of the total carbon footprint of the portfolio, with total portfolio emissions reaching 144,584 tCO₂e.

- **10,666** - tonnes of waste (note 4)
- 1.6 billion - litres of water (note 6)
- Touring - 43.7 million km (note 5)
- Business travel - **29 million km**
- **Total emissions - 84,561 tCO₂e**

- **Onsite renewables** amounted to **8%** - of the total energy usage
- **Total electricity - 95 million kWh**
- **Total gas - 99 million kWh**

- Total energy (electricity + gas) - **194 million kWh**
- Enough to power - **13,681** UK households (note 7)
- Total energy spend - **£34.5 million** (note 8)

Note 3: There were a total of 610 organisations reporting, however 19 were excluded from the database due to inaccuracies in input data, double counting and anomalous figures

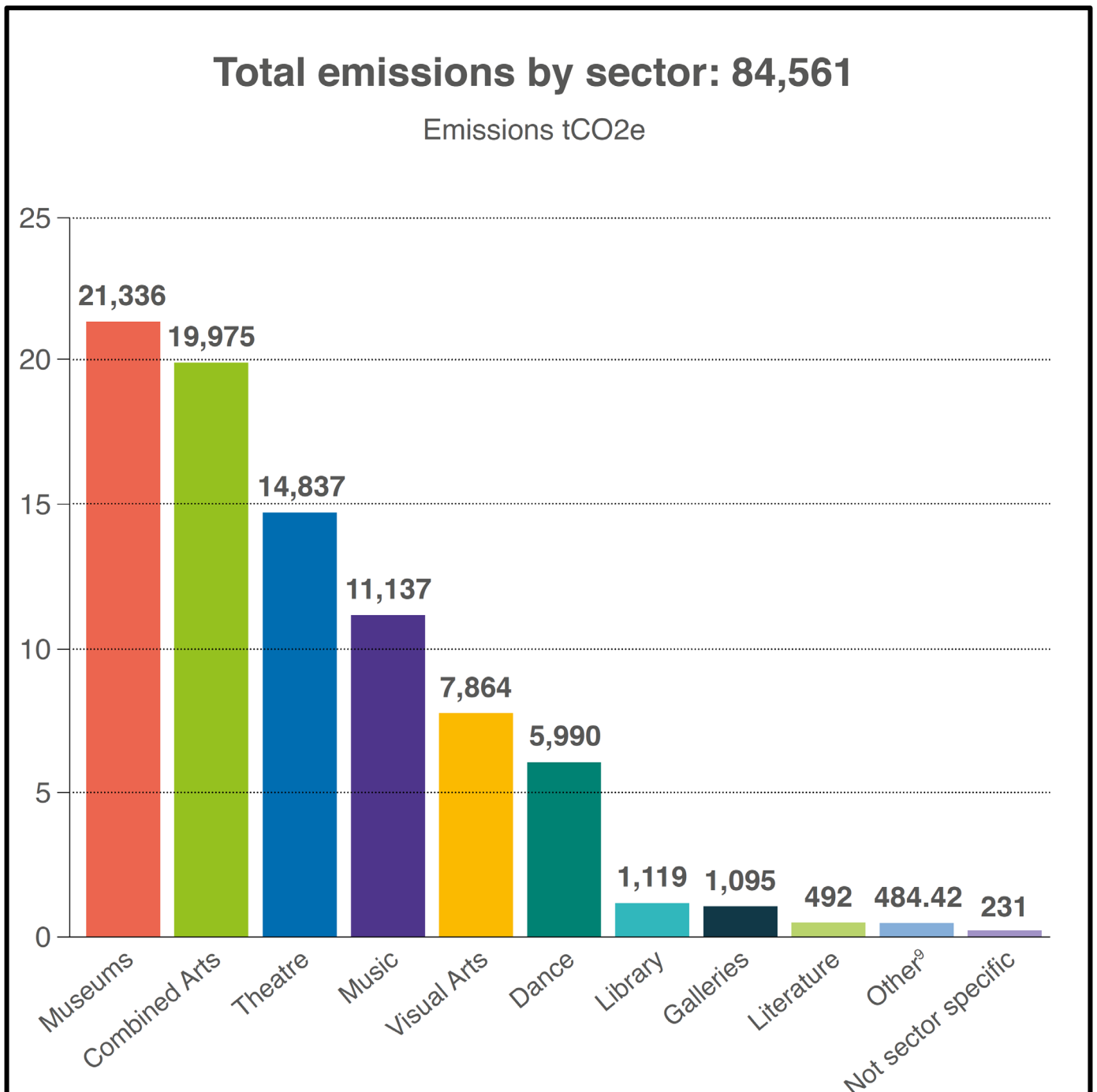
Note 4: A total of 377 NPOs reported waste data (38% of the total portfolio)

Note 5: Touring distance includes Artist/Crew travel and Freight Travel

Note 6: A total of 410 NPOs reported water use (42% of the total portfolio)

Note 7: Based on annual average household energy usage of 14,200 kWh, source here

Note 8: Figure DOES NOT include diesel, oil and district heating figures

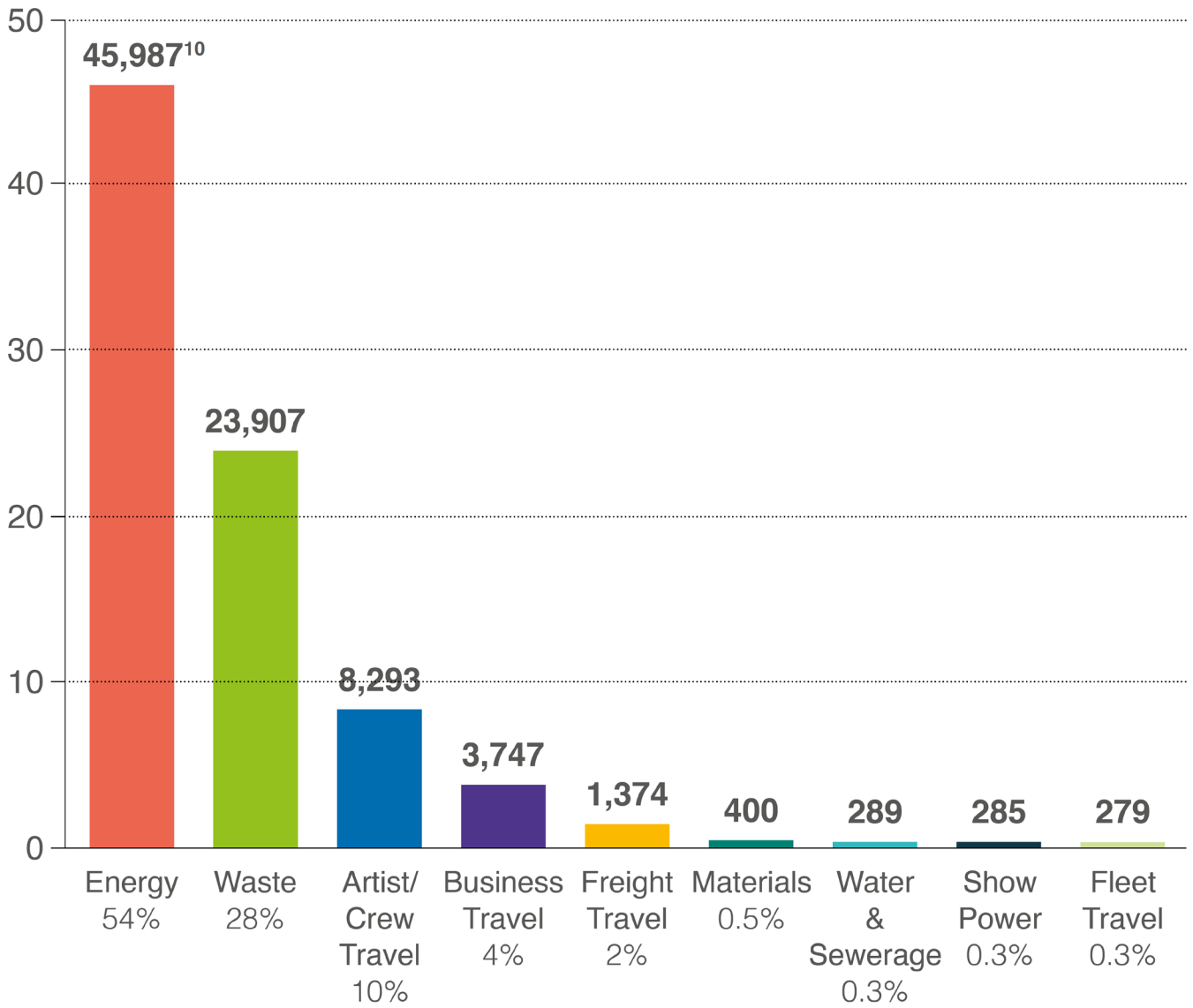


[The image on page 10 shows a bar graph. It is titled “Total emissions by sector: 84,561 Emissions tCO₂e”. The x-axis shows the sectors of the industry and the y-axis shows the total emissions in tCO₂e. The figures given for each sector are as follows:

- Museums: 21,336
- Combined Arts: 19,975
- Theatre: 14,837
- Music: 11,137
- Visual Arts: 7,864
- Dance: 5,990
- Library: 1,119
- Galleries: 1,095
- Literature: 492
- Other (see note 9): 484.42
- Not sector specific: 231]

Total emissions per impact area: 84,561

Emissions tCO2e



[The image on page 12 shows a bar graph. It is titled “Total emissions per impact area: 84,561, Emissions tCO₂e”. The x-axis shows the impact areas and the y-axis shows the total emissions in tCO₂e. The figures for each impact area are as follows:

- Energy 54%: 45,987 (see note 10)
- Waste 28%: 23,907
- Artist / Crew Travel 10%: 8,293
- Business Travel 4%: 3,747
- Freight Travel 2%: 1,374
- Materials 0.5%: 400
- Water and Sewerage 0.3%: 289
- Show Power 0.3%: 285
- Fleet Travel 0.3%: 279]

There were 339 organisations who reported data for home working in 2023-24, and their energy usage amounts to 1% of the total energy usage or 1.2% of the total emissions.

There were 56 organisations that submitted additional data within the new custom emission (note 11) tabs. This represents 10% of the total number of organisations reporting custom data and the emissions total 2,797 CO₂e emissions.

Note 9: Including – Archives, circus, cross sector support, cultural, outdoor arts, screen industries, and non-sector specific.

Note 10: This total figure includes the custom emission figures. For more information on the custom emissions functionality, see footnote 11.

Note 11: ‘Custom Emissions’ is where users can directly input already calculated carbon emissions (i.e. from other tools) into the Creative Climate Tools. This data is treated separately because other tools may use different conversion factors, which means that it is not directly comparable to direct entries on the Creative Climate Tools.

Audience Travel

Car travel - 30 million tCO₂

Train travel - 21.9 million tCO₂

Local buses - 2.2 million tCO₂

Audience travel is an impact area that often represents the majority of an organisation's emissions, and is within an organisation's influence, but not its control.

This year the reported emissions from audience travel totals 60,023 tCO₂e, with car travel being the highest emitting mode of transport.

This impact area poses significant challenges for environmental reporting due to its inherent complexity and diversity. The variety of transport modes and regional differences makes calculating accurate emissions difficult, and it is more challenging for data from unticketed events to be tracked. To address the complexity of data collection, organisations have focused on promoting sustainable travel options, offering virtual event alternatives, improving data collection methods, and regularly monitoring and reporting their emissions.

We are tracking Audience Travel separately from the rest of the data, as reporting on this is likely to change over time. This year **250** organisations added audience travel data, 16 of whom used the custom emissions functionality.

Total emissions per method of travel in Audience Travel

[In the following list we detail for each item:

- **Method of Travel: Emissions tCO₂e]**
- Car Travel: 30,009,796
- Train: 21,950,018
- Bus Local (note 13): 2,217,288
- Domestic Flights: 1,669,641
- Long Haul Flights: 1,052,227
- Public Transport Bus Urban (note 12): 1,049,877
- Tube: 741,148
- Short Haul Flights: 621,160
- Taxis Travel: 442,209
- Dedicated Coaches: 134,232
- Custom Emissions: 114,474
- Ferry: 21,169
- Total: 60,023,239**

Note 12: Non-chartered long distance bus travel (not incl shuttle bus travel to venue)

Note 13: Short distance bus travel to venue

Carbon – Key Insights

Energy is the most significant impact area reported on by the portfolio, accounting for **54%** total reported emissions. Of these energy-related emissions, 80% were generated by 16% of organisations in the portfolio. In addition to being a major contributor to emissions, rising energy costs in recent years have prompted organisations to review their energy contracts and bills more closely, leading to increased adoption of LED lighting and energy-saving measures, supported by increased awareness at senior management levels.

There is **growing interest in investing in renewable energy** despite logistical challenges, with organisations looking to install solar panels for roof spaces, though some early adopters now require re-installations as technology has improved. There is a **shift towards electrification** as organisations aim to meet their net zero targets, with a broader exploration of district heating (note 14) networks, including the Greater London Authority commissioning work to develop strategic approaches for closely clustered cultural buildings.

Overall, cultural organisations continue to face challenges due to the limited experience renewable energy installers have with cultural buildings. Limited control over energy efficiency due to leasing buildings or space poses a further challenge, particularly for smaller organisations.

Engagement with the **Buildings Net Zero Energy**

(<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/transforming-energy/transforming-energy-buildings-net-zero-energy/>) programme has shown sector-wide interest in sustainability, specifically energy efficiency and decarbonisation of buildings, but also highlighted challenges in implementation due to bandwidth, resources and ongoing issues regarding clarity of roles and responsibilities.

Across the whole programme **peer sharing and resources** have been beneficial for organisations in improving their energy efficiency, with many organisations making significant progress and becoming more confident in their sustainability efforts.

Associated with the upgrading of the **Creative Climate Tools** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/>) methodology, **waste has emerged as a significant source of emissions** in comparison to previous years, accounting for **28%** total reported emissions. This is because waste and materials now include upstream emissions

(i.e. associated with the creation and generation of materials), while in contrast, energy emissions reporting remains focused only on consumption, excluding upstream factors. Many organisations will have seen an increase in the contribution of waste to their carbon footprints, highlighting the need for closer scrutiny of scope 3 emissions.

Travel is the next largest impact area, with **artist and crew travel, business travel and freight totalling 16%** of overall emissions reported. For tours, most travel emissions (80%) are associated with artist and crew travel alone.

Water usage amounted to 1,557,867 m³, with two thirds of associated emissions attributed to consumption, and treatment processes contributing a third.

Large organisations contribute significantly to overall emissions, but it is worth noting that medium-sized organisations make up 3% of reporting organisations and disproportionately emit 36% of total emissions. (note 15) These findings highlight the potential benefits of targeting sustainability initiatives – and opportunities for capital investment upgrades – towards these organisations. Overall, the majority of emissions are generated within the most represented sectors: museums, combined arts, theatres, music and visual arts.

Energy (total reported emissions) **54%**

Waste (total reported emissions) **28%**

Travel (total reported emissions) **16%**

Note 14: District heating is a system generating heat in a central location and distributing it to nearby residents, businesses and industry in the local area.

Note 15: For the purposes of this report, and in the Creative Climate Tools, small organisations have fewer than 50 FTE employees, medium fewer than 250, and large over 250. The data, sourced from the Creative Climate Tools, is self-reported, so it may contain inaccuracies due to human error or outdated information.

Voice from the Movement

Justine Themen

Photo of Justine Themen by Joe Bailey

I am a theatre director and change-maker and have been involved in executive and trustee leadership in the cultural sector across a range of organisations including the **Belgrade Theatre, Coventry City of Culture, the Royal Shakespeare Company and Birmingham Opera Company.**

Thanks to my Surinamese heritage, I also worked in the Caribbean for six years, which was formative in centring **equity and sustainability** in my cultural practice. In working with cultural groups across Suriname's diverse communities, I built an understanding of the community, spiritual and pedagogical origins of performance, often rooted in a **close relationship with the natural world.**

In working across theatre making and economic development with communities in the rainforest, government departments and international organisations, I learnt the essential nature of **embedding grass roots voices** at the heart of national and global dialogue for strategic progress. Whilst working in the most forested country in the world, with an economy dependent on mining, I saw how extraction economies follow the patterns of colonial plantation economies, continuing to service the material demands of the West, whilst erasing Indigenous relations with the natural environment.

To put it simply, Capitalist systems foreground financial value, and so **define the natural world as commodity rather than partner.** Financial pressures in the UK are similarly pushing the cultural sector to commodify artistic outputs, taking us further away from our communities, our community purpose and from

connection with our environment. Centring climate justice means centring **social responsibility** and **dialogue** with communities to create a working model that is environmentally and financially sustainable, and socially equitable.

Boards must lead our response to the climate crisis with a **radical change in values**, not simply by reducing carbon footprints. Governance tools can centre community, equity and climate by:

- Creating a **clear strategy for board recruitment/induction/development** so that all feel empowered to bring their best selves, and discussions combine experience with fresh insight
- Ensuring there are **a range of voices around the board table**, including from community contexts, with a chair who is a facilitator of those voices, supporting trustees to sit with difficulty, disagree well and be open to new ideas
- Giving a seat to **Nature at the board table** (suggested by Kate Raworth*), with all trustees considering Her contributions
- Ensuring **clear structures for community co - creation** across the business plan, with clear goal setting, milestones and monitoring systems – and holding leadership to account at meetings.

Boards also need to recruit artistic and executive directors to a **new model of leadership** – not the individual hero leader of old, but leaders who are **collaborators, facilitators and connectors**. They need to be able to think long term, with the **flexibility** and **responsiveness** to change direction; be comfortable not knowing all the answers; centre models of **co-creation** in artistic programming and organisational structure; understand the interplay of excellence and resonance; **make brave choices** in a difficult climate; and hold the complexities of a **global perspective**. This would allow the arts to do what

they do best – **build community, learning and connection with each other and our environment** – as well as modelling the new ways of leading and collaborating that our world so sorely needs.

Beyond Carbon Snapshot

The Beyond Carbon survey, part of the Creative Climate Tools, is a space for organisations to tell the wider story of their work, bringing their initiatives to life in their own words – from installing new facilities, to community projects and creative programming.

This year, **226** organisations completed the survey, representing **38%** of those submitting environmental data.

90% - Have an environmental policy

84% - Have an environmental action plan

Good Governance

79% - Make environmental principles and values central to core business strategies

28% - Have a dedicated **budget** for environmental initiatives

59% - Have appointed a member of their **governance** group or Board, to oversee environmental progress

77% - Regularly discuss environmental data and progress on environmental responsibility at **senior management** level

44% - Are changing activities and programmes to **adapt** to a changing climate

Operational practice

63% - Use environmental data to review and update action plans and target setting

32% - Procure renewable energy through a **green energy tariff**

72% - Have taken steps to **save energy** and be more energy efficient

Programming

63% - Include environmental sustainability in **artistic/production briefs** and open calls

71% - Have produced/ programmed/ curated work exploring environmental themes within the last year

Benefits and value

47% - Have experienced direct **financial benefits**

29% - Have attracted new or **increased audiences and visitors** through environmental activities or programming

35% - Have experienced **profile/reputational** benefits

57% - Have experienced **team morale/well-being** benefits

63% - Have used environmental policies when **making applications for funding**

Engagement, collaboration and communication

48% - Gather feedback about environmental actions and initiatives to **understand** their **influence** and impact

68% - **Actively collaborate with other cultural organisations to find and share solutions to environmental issues**

Other practical steps that organisations are taking include:

75% - Communicate and promote public transport options for travel to/from their organisation

53% - Have a staff travel policy that promotes low or zero-carbon travel

66% - Choose materials and methods which are environmentally more sustainable

74% - Recycle their production/ exhibition materials and re-use or re-purpose materials onsite

34% - Are greening their spaces to promote nature and wellbeing benefits

Beyond Carbon – Key Insights

Arts Council England’s Environmental Responsibility Investment Principle challenges organisations to take active responsibility for the environment in every aspect of their work. This goes beyond merely collecting data and reducing CO2e emissions; it’s about integrating environmental considerations into every facet of practice.

Practical examples from the Beyond Carbon Survey demonstrate the three core elements underpinning the **Environmental Responsibility Investment Principle**. (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/blog/essential-read-environmental-responsibility>)

Understanding the data

Many organisations demonstrated strong examples of building roadmaps, targets and establishing baselines for long-term improvement. **The Museum of London** (<https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/>) undertook a detailed consultation to measure and establish a baseline assessment of their footprint. By separating their environmental reporting into two footprints, **SPILL Festival** (<https://www.spillfestival.com/>) reported that they were able to use their data to better track their progress and identify areas for improvement.

Waste and Materials

This year's reporting highlights waste as a major impact area, with organisations implementing various strategies to address it. **Open Sky Theatre** (<https://openskyahead.co.uk/>) focused on reusing, recycling, and borrowing materials, **while New Adventures'** (<https://www.new-adventures.net/>) Environmental Manager ensured 100% of costumes were recycled or reused. **IOU Theatre** (<https://ioutheatre.org/>) has cut costs and emissions by repurposing materials, **Lyrici Arts** (<https://lyriciarts.com/>) minimised transport emissions with compact sets, and **Charnwood Arts** (<https://www.charnwoodarts.com/>) upcycled surplus materials, often sourcing second-hand items from charity shops.

Energy

The new portfolio includes organisations at various stages of their environmental journey – some making crucial changes like switching to LEDs, while others are upgrading their Building Management Systems (BMS) and advancing their carbon reduction efforts. **Battersea Arts Centre (BAC)** (<https://bac.org.uk/>) has a 5-year plan which includes zoning the building to optimise activities and implementing a funded BMS to reduce energy use and track carbon data. This will enable BAC to improve efficiency, cost savings and a more comfortable experience for audiences.

Many organisations struggle with data collection in shared spaces due to accessibility and transparency issues. However, **Creative Arts East** (<https://www.creativeartseast.co.uk/>) improved their environmental goals and staff wellbeing by securing space in another cultural building. Reporting

highlighted numerous examples of organisations transitioning to renewables, either by installing new technology or switching tariffs. While there were reports of some organisations not yet able to address energy issues due to lack of resources, others had been successful in funding bids enabling significant progress. These transitions not only reduced their carbon footprints but also demonstrated the benefits of sustainable energy practices, including organisations such as Disability Arts Online who focused on minimising their digital footprint when redeveloping their website.

Transport

Transport is a key contributor to an organisation's carbon footprint, so implementing schemes to monitor and improve staff travel impacts is an effective way to reduce emissions. **New Earth Theatre** (<https://www.newearththeatre.org.uk/>) has reduced travel impacts by employing staff to work remotely, minimising travel between London and Manchester. **The Children's Bookshow** (<https://thechildrensbookshow.com/>) operates with a small team, working remotely without an office, and relies on public transport and existing venue resources. They limit long-haul flights and have shifted to online meetings, significantly reducing their carbon footprint. The **National Centre for Writing** (<https://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/>) lobbied for a local bike station, participate in the Bike to Work Scheme, encourage public transport for artists, and promote car-sharing among staff when possible.

Audience travel and touring are among the largest contributors to emissions within the creative and cultural sector, and organisations are actively working on various strategies to address and reduce this impact. By acknowledging and addressing touring travel impacts, including considerations around sets and costume freight, **Open Clasp Theatre**

(<https://www.openclasp.org.uk/>) Company minimised travel by performing at a single venue and rehearsed within the same city, with 45% of the team based locally in Newcastle upon Tyne. **Outlands Network** (<https://outlands.network/>) similarly kept their touring footprint low by having artists travel together with portable equipment, avoiding the need for vans. Many organisations face the challenge of working internationally. **Greenwich and Docklands Festival** (<https://festival.org/gdif/>) reduced carbon emissions by encouraging train travel for international artists where possible, despite higher costs. During their 2023-24 tour, **New Earth Theatre** (<https://www.newearththeatre.org.uk/>) focused on reducing their footprint by choosing hotels with environmental credits, selecting flights with fewer emissions than average and using the **Theatre Green Book** (<https://theatregreenbook.com/>) to guide their efforts.

Biodiversity

Suffolk Libraries (<https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/>) is launching nature-inspired programmes, **Wild Reads** (<https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/news/wild-reads-2023-collection-launches>) And Go Wild, for Autumn - Winter 2024. They've recruited two Environmentalist in Residence roles to promote environmental awareness through their creative activities. **Midlands Arts Centre** (<https://macbirmingham.co.uk/>) has featured programming like the **Art, Nature and Wellbeing** (<https://macbirmingham.co.uk/exhibition-archive/worlds-away-art-nature-and-wellbeing>) season, including Michael Pinsky's Pollution Pods and the Big Green Weekender. **London Arts and Health** (<https://londonartsandhealth.org.uk/>) moved to St. Margaret's House, benefiting from its environmental focus, and organised a series of events exploring climate, health and creative practice. Highlights included panels with experts like Chantelle Lindsay

from London Wildlife Trust and Kwesia, known as City Girl in Nature, who shared her transformative experiences with nature. Watch here.

Several organisations reported on using site space to promote biodiversity. **Talking Birds Theatre Company** (<https://talkingbirds.co.uk/>) created planters and a wildflower meadow, while **Hastings Museum and Art Gallery** (<https://www.hmag.org.uk/>) improved their landscape by delaying mowing and launching engagement activities, aligning with local environmental policies. **Wysing Arts Centre** (<https://www.wysingartscentre.org/>) appointed a Site and Environmental Futures Manager to lead their transition to renewable energy, manage biodiversity initiatives, and reduce environmental impact, with ongoing biodiversity monitoring and development, rainwater harvesting, and the prohibition of herbicides and pesticides on their 11-acre site.

Influence, educate and advocate

Engagement

Metal Culture's (<https://metalculture.com/>) Shift network, a collective of 60 Liverpool arts organisations, recently hosted an event at the **Everyman Theatre** (<https://www.everymantheatre.org.uk/>), sponsored by Ecotricity. The event, which focused on the **Arts Green Book** (<https://artsgreenbook.com/>) and potential energy cost reductions, fostered increased engagement and membership while promoting collaboration with Northern networks like Sustainable Arts in Leeds and Greater Manchester Arts Sustainability Team, and Project Constellation. Similarly, **Future Arts Centre** (<https://futureartscentres.org.uk/>) facilitated a practical discussion on green agendas and the Theatre Green

Book, involving over 40 arts centres in a knowledge-sharing exchange that encouraged new sustainability initiatives and strengthened sector connections.

DanceSyndrome (<https://dancesyndrome.co.uk/>) is leveraging its community outreach to raise environmental awareness, engaging both staff and participants in sustainability practices through dance, while collaborating with venues to enhance joint environmental responsibility. **Northern Broadsides'** (<https://www.northern-broadsides.co.uk/>) Iron People project engaged over 500 participants in creativity days inspired by Ted Hughes' books, focusing on recycling, pollution, and nature, and gathering feedback on local environmental concerns. **Somerset Art Works** (<https://somerstartworks.org.uk/>) are integrating environmental practices into artists' work, encouraging artists to share their sustainability strategies and incorporate them into projects. At the **John Hansard Gallery**, (<https://jhg.art/>) the JHG Sustainability Group has led a waste audit, hosted presentations, and organised Green Awareness Month, Green Away Day, and a solar farm visit for staff, advancing internal sustainability initiatives.

Programming

A prime example of climate-themed programming is **Oxford Contemporary Music** (<https://www.ocmevents.org/>) (OCM)'s co-commissioning **Warning Notes**, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUnwfQUlcDs&t=2s>) an outdoor immersive show by Mark Anderson, utilising repurposed materials to address social and ecological issues. Funded by **Without Walls** (<https://withoutwalls.uk.com/>) for a 2024 tour, the production exemplifies sustainable practices. OCM also collaborated with **Tŷ Cerdd Music Centre Wales**, (<https://www.tyocerdd.org/>) supporting four artists in developing environmental and climate-themed projects through mentoring and financial aid.

Liverpool Arab Arts Festival

(<https://www.arabartsfestival.com/2024-festival/>) presented works on climate justice by artists Arwa Aburawa and Turab Shah, and the multidisciplinary performance What the Dog Said to the Harvest. **Lancaster Arts** (<https://www.lancasterarts.org/>) focused on integrating social and environmental justice into its vision, driven by artistic practice. This involved staff and board training, a creative event with artists and environmentalists, and a public statement on environmental justice. Key outcomes included incorporating environmental justice into upcoming commissions, and contributing to the launch of **Lancashire Arts Network for Developing Sustainability (LANDS)**. (<https://artslancashire.org.uk/lands/>)

Policy

The Poetry Translation Centre

(<https://www.poetrytranslation.org/>) has implemented a **Green Rider** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/green-rider/>) to promote sustainability, introduced six pro-rata days per year for employees to engage in climate action, and explored green team-building experiences. They also focus on opting for digital solutions over physical ones, such as using QR codes instead of printed programmes and preferring online meetings over in-person ones. **Clod Ensemble** (<https://www.clodensemble.com/>) has advanced internal sustainability by providing carbon literacy training for all staff, adopting 'digital first' marketing strategies, and advocating for better waste management with their landlords. Their sustainability policy is now part of staff induction, and they have committed to the Culture Declares Emergency pledge. **Humanhood Dance Company** (<https://wearehumanhood.com/>) has overhauled their environmental policies by implementing a comprehensive Environmental Policy, Action Plan, and Green Rider, focusing on the 5Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle.

Their new policy integrates sustainability into all operations, including zero-plastic policies for workshops and eco-friendly travel practices.

Investment/Procurement

Milap Festival Trust (<https://milap.co.uk/>) recently relocated to a new office in Liverpool where they are collaborating with their landlord to enhance environmental policies. This includes new recycling initiatives and reducing single-use plastics. Their new office setup, which includes meeting rooms for board and staff meetings, also helps minimise travel and its associated impacts.

Governance and roles and responsibilities

Actors Touring Company (<https://atctheatre.com/>) has appointed a Climate Board Champion who has engaged with the **Board Environmental Champions Programme** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/board-environmental-champions/>) and presented their touring practices at climate conferences, including at the National Theatre. Similarly, **North Music Trust** (<https://www.artsmark.org.uk/>) introduced an Environment and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Lead role to integrate sustainability into all departments, advancing their environmental goals and raising internal awareness. **Open Eye Gallery** (<https://www.openeyegallery.co.uk/>) formed an Environmental Working Group, added board members with environmental expertise, and collaborated with Liverpool's SHIFT network and the Arts Green Book to achieve sustainability targets. **Kiln Theatre** (<https://kilntheatre.com/>) trained seven Green Team members in carbon literacy this year, with plans to train all staff next year, and their Artistic Directors attended the Making Theatre in a Time of Climate Crisis conference, leading to the production of their first Green Book show in 2024-25.

Stories of Action

Creative Folkestone

Capital investment for reducing energy use

To reduce their environmental impact, Creative Folkestone focused on finding ways to reduce energy consumption at their performing arts venue, Quarterhouse. In the face of rising electricity bills they needed to bring costs down and finding more efficient and environmentally friendly ways of generating power became a priority. By procuring grant funding Creative Folkestone were able to install 87 solar panels on their venue, reducing electricity costs by 40% in the first month. The panels have produced over 32,000kWh of clean energy in a year, saving around £17,000. They have estimated that these energy savings are equivalent to driving a car around the world six times and the investment will have been paid off in just one and a half years.

Global Grooves

Creative community skills building for sustainability

Global Grooves is working on incorporating a small hydro turbine into its venue, The Vale, and engaging audiences with this project through programming, training, and direct participation. They aim to reduce the organisation's environmental footprint whilst paying homage to the industrial past of their venue, involving the community and reflecting the project through art. They encouraged the community to take a central role in designing and co-creating the turbine. Global Grooves are not only invested in skills development for the

participants but they also encourage the participants to bring their own knowledge, and to lead events around the project from nature walks to workshops on bike generators. They co - devised a digital skills week to engage young people that led to the group coding their own website for the neighbouring large scale hydro power station where people can learn about the station and check its hydro generation in real time. They included an artist commission as part of The Vale hydro project, with the aim to engage different audiences as well as explore the intersection between art, sustainability and nature.

Jelly

Sustainable approaches in temporary spaces

Jelly is a nomadic organisation with years of experience of making use of odd and empty spaces with few options when it comes to sustainability. Despite having limited control, they have found ways to manage their current space through switching to 100% green energy, opting for a smart meter and using low impact infrared heaters. To make the space more welcoming, they created self-built artist studio pods which can be readily disassembled and reconstructed, with the help of U-Build. Their resourcefulness is also reflected in their approach to supplying water to the space. The empty shopping unit had no running water and instead of opting for adding plumbing, they decided to buy a mobile sink that could travel with them to future venues. Jelly chose for the sink to have clear water carriers to help the artists visualise and reduce the water consumption. Alongside their day-to-day work, Jelly has set up a sustainability forum for arts and heritage organisations in the area to share knowledge, support each other and develop ideas.

LEVEL Centre

Creatively engaging audiences with creating a healthy world

In collaboration with artist Henry Driver, LEVEL Centre commissioned *Water Portals* – an interactive digital journey exploring the microscopic world of water and raising awareness about the pollution in our waterways. They invited audiences to discover the beautiful microbes that live in our rivers, lakes and seas, and to understand the crucial roles the audience could play in creating a healthy world. This piece also included community participation encouraging audience members to take a pledge on actions they could take to protect our waters. The installation provided an opportunity to highlight how these important microbes are at risk from climate change, and what simple things we can do to make a difference.

Multistory

Collaborating with nature in an urban setting

Over the last three years, Multistory has been delivering Green Roots, an urban greening arts and cultural programme of artist and community-led activities across three of Sandwell's towns. The programme responds to the needs and challenges of each town as identified by local communities, aligns to Sandwell Council's Urban Greening scheme and encourages dialogue and skills development on topics of nature and biodiversity. As part of the programme, Multistory has delivered projects including a community-grown wildflower meadow and a nature conservation training and skills development programme in the use of tools with Sandwell College SEN students. For another one of the projects, Multistory partnered with Bostin' Arts and

local independent shops in Wednesbury to create bespoke planters filled with a variety of plants outside each shop, enhancing the high street with greenery. Community groups attended drawing, growing and mindfulness workshops and made woven obelisks for the climbing plants in the planters. Multistory also delivered workshops themed around greening, nature and memory, with activities like observational drawing of plants and seeds, creating natural dyes from vegetables, printing and small - scale planting. The project not only enhances the visual appeal of the town but has also fostered a sense of community, environmental consciousness and empowerment to voice concerns among residents and businesses, paving the way for future collaborative projects aimed at transforming Wednesbury into a more vibrant and sustainable town.

Oily Cart

Sustainable touring and partnerships

Oily Cart's international collaboration with Australian theatre company Polyglot explored working on sister productions of *When The World Turns*. This involved creating the show first in Australia and then remaking it in the UK with a new cast, based on the Australian blueprint of the show, with 50/50 creative input from both organisations. Sustainability was at the centre of their planning with the focus being on limiting personnel travel to the minimum required and consideration for design by working with leading eco-scenographers in both Australia and the UK. With the set containing approximately 400 living plants, Oily Cart established and communicated a Manifesto of Care to set out their plans for ensuring that all living beings in their show are cared for. Each version of the show used distinct materials and plants to reflect the local environment and needs

of the audience. This show both prioritised sustainable touring practices as well as helped foster a deeper understanding and connection with the planet through its message and sensory experiences.

Royal Ballet and Opera

Addressing procurement and influencing others

The Royal Ballet and Opera (RBO) have identified their suppliers and contractors as their main source of emissions, accounting for around 80% of their total emissions. In preparation for setting **Scope 3 emissions targets** (), RBO conducted a spend analysis to estimate emissions based on their purchases and started to survey the suppliers that they spend the most money with, gathering data on environmental policies, accreditations, targets, energy sources, transportation and training. The results showed that a large number of companies that had not started to look at any of these areas or did not consider this a priority. To address this, RBO set up a workshop for their suppliers aimed at promoting collaboration, sharing of best practices and common challenges and understanding how RBO can help them become more sustainable. As a result of the workshops, RBO has developed a standard set of questions for suppliers to address sustainability issues. Additionally, the workshop has established networks among suppliers, with many committing to calculate their carbon footprints annually. Internally, RBO has already started to implement some of the recommendations made by the suppliers and plan to hold these workshops twice yearly to foster an ongoing dialogue.

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Adapting to future climate changes with nature

For the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT), adaptability and resilience has been required on multiple fronts as it works to both conserve the centuries-old properties whilst also making them accessible for the public to explore. In 2022, record temperatures across the UK had a catastrophic effect on the existing planting in the Golden Garden, with many of the plants unable to recover. This sparked the Gardens' team to research what plants could be more resilient to extreme temperature fluctuations and prolonged periods of wet weather. Their research took them horticulturally to the Mediterranean, looking at bronze fennel and Turkish sage, alongside those that would have been familiar to the Shakespeare family and mentioned in his work, including rosemary and an olive tree. SBT addressed challenges such as free-draining soil to avoid excessive moisture and drip irrigation during drought. Despite dry periods, the irrigation system was only used four times in 2024, showcasing sustainable practices in action.

The Poetry Society

Creative programming for young people

An area of focus for The Poetry Society is engaging young people in poetry to increase understanding around biodiversity loss and climate breakdown. Across 2023-24, their online community for young writers, the Young Poets Network, ran three environmentally themed writing challenges, in which 634 young people aged 7-25 wrote 1,183 new poems on subjects including perceptions of animal cuteness, and finding peace and improved mental health through nature. There were

opportunities for young poets to perform their work live, and some of the most inspiring poems were published online and in print by The Poetry Society, where they reached a range of audiences, from global communities to thought leaders. The Poetry Society also works in formal education and skill development, where they have created resources mapped against the curriculum designed to encourage pupils to use poetry as a tool to explore biodiversity. Each resource features a recent poem about nature, written by a young poet from their youth programmes. By putting writing by young people at the forefront of projects for young people, they aim to demonstrate to school-age audiences that the issues explored in the poems are relevant to the pupils' own lives and their voices are valued.

Zoo Co Creative

Community access equipment library for resource sharing

As part of Croydon's year as London Borough of Culture, Zoo Co Creative established a library of access equipment that could be loaned out free of charge to make events more accessible without having to purchase whole sets of new equipment. The Access Library was a great success, with sets of items being loaned out 35 times, benefiting a large number of event attendees as well as providing a unifying moment between disability rights and the climate emergency. Partnerships with Croydon cultural organisations were strengthened through this project, and Zoo Co Creative provided free consultancy services to further accessibility initiatives. The Access Library also led to further sustainable practices within Zoo Co Creative by using the storage space to process their items more sustainably and sharing unused production items with the community.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Results normalisation

The energy usage results were normalised using the average UK household electricity and gas usage (note 17):

- Electricity = 2,700 kWh
- Gas = 11,500 kWh
- Total = 14,200 kWh

Cost analysis

For the cost analysis, costs were based on an approximate unit price of:

- 0.07 £/kWh for gas (See note 2)
- 0.29 £/kWh for electricity (note 18)
- 0.08 £/kWh for district heating (note 19)

Custom emissions

The current database structure does not provide information on whether an emissions value is custom or not. To make up for this, the following rule was applied:

- When “consumption” = 0 **and** “emissions kg co2e” =/ **nil**, then “custom emissions (y/n)” = y

Note 17: Ofgem (source **here**)

(<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/average-gas-and-electricity-usage>).

Note 18: Calculated averages for 2023 Q2-3-4 and 2024 Q1 of gas and electricity prices in the non-domestic sector, including Climate Change Levy, not including standing charge (source **here**) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/gas-and-electricity-prices-in-the-non-domestic-sector>).

Note 19: Heat Trust district heating average price (source **here**) (<https://www.heattrust.org/news-events/186-as-energy-price-cap-lowered-for-most-government-scrap-price-protection-for-households-with-communal-heating>).

Appendix 2

Creative Climate Tools (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/>) updates to **Waste and Materials**

In 2023, Julie's Bicycle consulted with the sector and implemented a variety of updates to the Creative Climate Tools. These included improved business travel and touring functionality, carbon budget setting, net zero carbon pathways, return on investment modelling, forecasting, custom emissions and bespoke project footprints. Waste and material emission factors were also closely analysed using the expertise of external consultants. It was agreed that in order to create as full a picture of waste and materials use across the sector as possible, that upstream and downstream emissions should be included. Therefore, when organisations submit data into the waste or materials footprints on the tools, the generation of that material is included as well as the treatment of it after use, i.e. recycled, incinerated, landfill, and avoided burdens²⁰. As a result, the new method of recording CO₂e for waste and materials has produced significantly higher emissions than in

previous programmes. However, this is part of the goal/aim to improve calculations to offer a more comprehensive picture of the sector's consumption.

Note 20: For a definition of Avoided Burdens, see pages 3 and 4 of this **source** (https://earthshiftglobal.com/client_media/files/pdf/Handling_Recycling_in_Life_Cycle_Assessment_2019-11-15.pdf).

Appendix 3

Voice from the Movement – Justine Themen

Most recent positions:

Leadership Associate, Royal Shakespeare Company; Co-Artistic Director 2021, Belgrade Theatre

Current and recent work:

Like There's no Tomorrow, commissioned by NT
Connections/selected for Connections India '24

<https://www.ncpamumbai.com/event/like-theres-no-tomorrow/>

Nothello by Mojisola Adebayo, Belgrade Theatre/ City of
Culture 2021 <https://www.belgrade.co.uk/events/nothello/>

Coventry Moves, the opening event for Coventry UK City of
Culture 2021 <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/uk-england-coventry-warwickshire-57363936>

This Little Relic by Karla Marie Sweet, BBC Radio 3, Contains Strong Language <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0010157>

Pauline Black as the 'Spirit of the River' with community choir in Coventry Moves, multi-platform opening event for Coventry City of Culture 2021, directed Justine Themen. Photo Joe Bailey

Appendix 4

List of case studies

[In the following list we detail for each item:
Organisation Location Artform Topic]

Creative Folkestone

South East

Visual Arts

Capital Investment for reducing energy use

Global Grooves

North

Combined Arts

Creative community skills building for sustainability

Jelly

South East

Visual Arts

Sustainable approaches in temporary spaces

Level Centre Ltd

Midlands

Combined Arts

Creatively engaging audiences with creating a healthy world

Multistory

Midlands

Combined Arts

Collaborating with nature in an urban setting

Oily Cart

London

Theatre

Sustainable touring and partnerships

Royal Ballet and Opera

London

Combined Arts

Addressing procurement and influencing others

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Midlands

Museums

Adapting to future climate changes with nature

The Poetry Society

London

Literature

Creative programming for young people

Zoo Co Creative Ltd

London

Theatre

Community access equipment library for resource sharing

Appendix 5

Transforming Energy – Capital Investment Cohort 1

Organisations

- Courtyard Farnham Maltings
- London Transport Museum
- Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham
- Queen’s Theatre
- Royal Opera House
- Royal Shakespeare Company
- Sage Gateshead
- Sadlers Wells
- Unicorn Theatre
- Watershed

Appendix 6: Resources and further reading

Julie’s Bicycle recent resources developed under Arts Council England’s Environmental Programme

- Briefing: **Counting on Culture: How to stop financing the environmental crises**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/counting-on-culture-how-to-stop-financing-the-environmental-crises/>)
- Blog: **How can cultural organisations adapt to climate change?** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/news-opinion/reflections-how-can-cultural-organisations-adapt-to-climate-change/>)
- Programme: **ACE Environmental Programme 2023-26**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/news-opinion/ace-environmental-programme2023-26/>)

- Webinar: **An introduction to climate adaptation**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/rewatch-adapting-to-climate/>)
- Report – **Energy Impacts: Taking meaningful action in the midst of a crisis** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/energy-impacts-taking-meaningful-action-in-the-midst-of-a-crisis/>)
- Guidelines – **Environmental Policy and Action plans: An overview** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/environmental-policy-and-action-plans-an-overview/>)
- The Creative Climate Justice **Resource Hub**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/creative-climate-justice/>)
- Creative climate justice **guide** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/creative-climate-justice-guide/>)
- Briefing – **Food culture: The impacts of what we consume**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/food-culture-the-impacts-of-what-we-consume/>)
- **Taking the Temperature** series
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/taking-the-temperature-3/>)
- **Culture: The Missing Link - an online event at COP26**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/watch-again-culture-the-missing-link-cop26/>)
- Briefing report: **Putting a price on Carbon**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/briefing-report-putting-a-price-on-carbon/>)
- **Putting a price on carbon: webinar**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/briefing-report-putting-a-price-on-carbon/>)
- Briefing Report: **Environmental Sustainability in the Digital Age of Culture** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/briefing-report-environmental-sustainability-in-the-digital-age-of-culture/>)
- Webinar: **Sustainable digital creativity**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/webinar-sustainable-digital-creativity/>)

- Webinar: **Sustainable cultural mobility**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/webinar-sustainable-cultural-mobility/>)
- Webinar series: **Creative Climate Literacy 101**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/creative-climate-literacy-101/>)
- **Creative Climate Chats**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/watch-again-creative-climate-chats/>)

Other Julie's Bicycle resources

- Top Tips Guides for **Museums**
(<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/museums-top-tips-guide/>)
and **Music** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/music-top-tips-guide/>) sector

Other resources

- Arts Council England Strategy 2020-2030 **Let's Create**
(<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create>)

Arts Council England

Arts Council England (ACE) is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in our strategy, **Let's Create**, (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create>) that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.

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Julie's Bicycle

Founded in 2007 to respond to the climate crisis, Julie's Bicycle is working globally across the creative sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and catalyse the green creative economy.

Working with over 2,000 organisations, NGOs and governments worldwide, Julie's Bicycle has developed an approach which harnesses the power of the creative sector to communicate the reality of the climate crisis, advocate for science-based solutions, take bold practical action, and offer support and advice to those who share their vision. The team blends environmental expertise with arts and cultural sector experience, and the freely available resources constitute the most comprehensive library of good environmental practice developed specifically for the arts and culture sectors anywhere in the world.

Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations and Investment Principle Support Organisations can record, measure and track their environmental action on **Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools** (CC Tools) (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/>), a free carbon calculator designed specifically for the cultural sector. **Find out more** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/npo-reporting/>) about reporting your data and the support on offer.

We have also launched a **Creative Climate Tools badge** (<https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/arts-council-programme/npo-reporting/creative-climate-tools-cc-tools/>) to celebrate organisations taking environmental action and encourage you to use it when you share your environmental commitments on your website, social media and email signatures.

X Facebook LinkedIn @JuliesBicycle
Instagram @julies_bicycle
Charity registration number: 1153441