Julie's Bicycle

CREATIVE · CLIMATE · ACTION

Culture, Climate and Environmental Responsibility:
Annual Report 2020 – 21

Contents

Introductions

Darren Henley

This year marks the tenth anniversary of a world first. In 2012 Arts Council England formed a partnership with Julie's Bicycle to deliver our environmental programme. In doing so we became the first cultural organisation in the world to link our investment to environmental action. That initiative continues to grow and flourish. It offers real insight into the creative sector's ability to respond to the climate crisis and be a beacon of best practice.

The past few years have been challenging for many. It has been our job to do what we can to support the creative and culture sector. It is therefore reassuring that the environment remains high on our funded organisations' agendas. It demonstrates focus and dedication across the creative sector in contributing to tangible, positive change.

Environmental Responsibility is one of four core Investment Principles set out in Arts Council England's 10-year strategy, Let's Create. We want to encourage organisations to not only be data driven, but also to explore their creative outputs, engagement and leadership through an environmental lens. It shows that we can and will face the climate crisis with creativity, ambition, and collaboration.

We look forward to many more years of supporting cultural organisations and continuing our shared development towards a creative sector that is sustainable and fit for the future.

Darren Henley
Chief Executive Officer, Arts Council England

Forked Forest Path – Olafur Eliasson. Photo © Phoebe Wingrove

Alison Tickell

The last year has been dramatic in many ways, not least environmentally; it turns out that Covid-induced economic slowdown didn't make a significant difference to emissions: evidence continues to show more warming, natural devastation, dramatic weather, and terrible consequences on lives and livelihoods.

But the drama wasn't all bad: the digitally driven mobilisation – people and communities, sectors, cities, and so many artists and companies – showed just how adaptable the cultural community can be.

Arts Council England's strategic priority on Environmental Responsibility in Let's Create builds on their nourishing partnership with Julie's Bicycle and over 800 organisations across the country. Some of those have simply reported, providing invaluable data to understand the challenges over the coming years, and the choices we must make, helping to set priorities and advocate for culture to be at the heart of climate action. Others have done much more, confronting the difficult questions, collaborating with others and generously giving back. This year any response was a good response and there were hundreds of good responses. Reporting was one thing – heroic for so many with little to show – but the conversations, campaigns, commissions and sheer determination to keep going, particularly around COP26, was quite another. Numerous public pledges, prompted by the COP26 Summit, have prepared the ground for the work that needs to be done by 2030 – though net zero commitments will only be credible if the pendulum swings away from offsetting to absolute greenhouse gas reductions. It is worth noting that tightening carbon trading rules was an important result from COP26, though the summit ultimately did not raise ambitions enough to limit warming to 1.5°C.

A decade of data-gathering and collective cultural learning has generated credible and robust evidence, which makes a good case for scaling action. Insights into the connections between climate change and inclusion, community, fairness, and culture are invigorating narratives that align creative practice to ethics. This vital perspective on culture has stimulated debate, passion, and commitment to action. It needs to hold the burden and hope of so many artists, activists and young people looking into a difficult future, and stay clear and focused.

Alison Tickell
Founder and CEO, Julie's Bicycle

Humanity has a tiny window to act and I want to ensure we do absolutely everything possible to create the necessary change – without that there will be no more culture.

Wieke Eringa,
Artistic Director/CEO, Yorkshire Dance

Arts Council England Environmental Programme

In 2012, Arts Council England launched its Environmental Programme, becoming the first cultural body in the world to embed environmental reporting into its funding agreements. In partnership with Julie's Bicycle, this pioneering policy has helped develop the cultural sector's understanding, agency and leadership on climate and the environment.

The 828 National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) engage with the environmental programme, and are encouraged to report their environmental data and develop policies and action plans. They are supported to do this through training, events, resources and thought leadership opportunities. This report annually records progress and celebrates the achievements of the portfolio in driving positive change across their governance, operations and creative practice.

Arts Council England introduced its new 10-year strategy 'Let's Create' in 2020. It sets out achievements across 3 outcomes: Creative People, Cultural Communities and a Creative and Cultural Country. It also identifies four Investment Principles for its funding, comprising Environmental Responsibility, Ambition and Quality, Dynamism, and Inclusivity and Relevance.

The Environmental Programme has the following aims:

1. **Support NPOs in meeting their funding requirements on environmental reporting, policies and action plans.**

2. **Demonstrate the positive environmental change that the sector can achieve and the value this brings through planning, action and change.**

3. **Develop the Art Council's own capacity to influence, educate, advocate and drive positive environmental change.**

[1] See Appendix 2 for carbon footprint calculation
[2] For a list of Accelerator organisations, see Appendix 1.
[3] For a list of Spotlight organisations, see Appendix 1.
[4] See Appendix 2 for the Spotlight target-setting methodology

Key programme strands:

- **Environmental Reporting** – NPOs completing their environmental reporting requirements supported by Julie's Bicycle's Creative Green (CG) Tools (carbon calculators[1]) and helpdesk.

- **Core programme** – training (webinars, events etc.) and resources to share and promote good environmental practice and develop the skills for a low-carbon and resilient sector.

- **Accelerator** – a leadership support programme, recruiting two cohorts of 10 organisations/consortia to advance sustainable cultural practice and share insights with the wider sector, focused on extending and testing innovative ideas with arts organisations[2].

- **Spotlight** – this programme focuses on a group of Band 3 NPOs responsible for the highest carbon emissions within the portfolio[3]. It provides leadership support to reduce their environmental impacts and develop net zero carbon targets[4], and training opportunities and resources.

- **The Colour Green** – a podcast and Lab i.e. environmental training programme, exploring issues of environmental justice and empowering cultural leaders and artists of colour.

- **Arts Council England support** – supporting Arts Council staff to develop their understanding of, and ability to communicate on, environmental issues and the Environmental Programme and its successes.

Going Digital

Environmental reporting in a global pandemic

Historically, our environmental reporting has benefitted from a plethora of data from the NPOs, to inform a year-on-year comparison of the environmental progress made within the programme. This year's reporting content takes a different form due to the unique impact of the global pandemic.

The report refers to the period between April 2020 to March 2021, though Arts Council England extended the data reporting window until September 2021. England was subject to three National lockdowns during this period, of varying timescale and severity according to location and sector. These determined the rules and limitations within which the cultural sector and creative industries could operate through this period.[5]

Arts Council England and Julie's Bicycle took the decision to declassify reporting for the year from *mandatory* to *recommended*. Whilst this understandably resulted in a decline in the number of organisations reporting, over half the NPOs – 482 in total – submitted their environmental reports. This positive statistic clearly demonstrates environmental responsibility remained high in the priorities of the sector, despite the ongoing pandemic.

This year's data is sourced from:

- Environmental reporting on the Creative Green Tools – completed by 482 NPOs

- 'Beyond Carbon' responses as part of the Creative Green Tools – voluntary reporting on environmental action and engagement – completed by 288 NPOs

- A survey on organisations environmental perspectives and priorities during the pandemic – completed by 162 organisations from across the sector

- Case studies[6] from individual organisations selected to share best practice based on their Beyond Carbon responses (organisations were sampled based on two factors: artform and geographical location)

- Follow-up interviews with a small selection of NPOs representing each artform to gain insights into energy use changes during the year.

The reporting data presented does not provide a comprehensive picture of the sector as in previous

> **We're fortunate that despite ten thousand years of industry in our region, we work in a remarkably beautiful county, rich in flora and fauna, and that our staff, volunteers, and communities share a passion for this place. We're excited about the prospect of finding new creative and collaborative ways to continue to reduce our environmental impact.**

Rowan Julie Brown,
CEO Museums Northumberland,
Woodhorn Charitable Trust

years. What's more, some of the data has been compromised by the challenging circumstances many organisations found themselves in (see **key statistics** section). Yet there have still been valuable lessons to learn. With this in mind, we have taken steps to strengthen the dataset through qualitative and quantitative insights and key stories from organisations within the sector.

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[5] Source: Institute for Government analysis: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/charts/uk-government-coronavirus-lockdowns
[6] For a full list of case studies, see Appendix 3.

Digital solutions for key programme strands

Spotlight programme

With the onset of the pandemic, organisational staff involved in Spotlight were working from home and/or were furloughed, with reduced staff numbers on-site to manage their building systems and operations. Despite these challenges progress was made, and the Spotlight Programme moved online. Two successful virtual events were held this year.

The first focused on energy management during the national lockdowns. **Lyric Hammersmith** shared how they powered down their venue during the closures to the public. The second event focused on how organisations communicated their environmental actions and how these relate to their creative programming. **Serpentine Gallery** shared how they had approached environmental communication and worked with artists including Vivienne Westwood, as part of their Back to Earth programme. **Tullie House** shared how they were engaging and reporting on their carbon reduction targets and progress to their Board of Trustees, and the influence this was having in supporting decision making on capital projects.

The programme delivered one-to-one support to 18 organisations, focusing on shutdowns, performance analysis, electrification of buildings with heat pump technologies, and improving building controls. The programme delivered briefings via webinars on topics of energy management for addressing energy-related emissions (scope 1 and 2), and Net Zero and Scope 3 emissions.
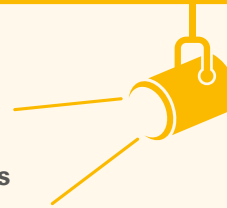
Opera North:
Music – environmental accreditation

Opera North has a set of well-run buildings with excellent switch-off programmes and energy use scheduled to building use. They use little mechanical cooling. Opera North completed the Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme in 2019. This scheme is for larger organisations, but it is available for anyone to complete. Opera North started work on the formal documentation of their energy management – such that good practice would not be lost in case of staff changes. This naturally led to the consideration of ISO50001 accreditation – which both confirms the well-run nature of the building and automatically passes the building through the next phase of ESOS. As a member of the Spotlight programme Opera North received energy management guidance and support with ISO50001.

Accelerator Programme

Accelerator is a sector-led programme that combines training, mentoring and mutual exchange to develop sustainability leadership. In 2020-21 the second Accelerator cohort of ten organisations or consortia focused on advancing their sustainable practice and sharing insights with the wider sector. In response to the pandemic, the programme was adapted to be held online. A range of cultural disciplines and sustainability challenges, such as artist and audience mobility, circular economy systems, renewable energy infrastructure, and audience engagement were brought forward for exploration.

Barbican, Artillery, London Borough of Waltham Forest – regenerative festival design and place making

The Barbican, **Artillery**, and **London Borough of Waltham Forest accelerator project** explored the role of neighbourhood festivals, celebrations and gatherings in bringing about more regenerative futures for local neighbourhoods. They **explored regenerative design** of their Walthamstow garden party concept – moving from doing things better, to doing better things. They investigated the potential of festivals to rekindle deeper regenerative relationships with place, and of using an event to test ideas for long-term strategies and initiate a ripple of local inspiration. They ran a workshop with ecological design expert Tanja Beer and their partners, using the **LENSES framework** to explore what a reimagined festival could look like in 2022 (following cancelled events in 2020 and 2021). Though recently cancelled again, they have learnt a huge amount in re-imagining the possibilities, and have powerful questions to guide them in the future. The framework has anchored thinking and stretched imagination, and the process has **opened-up reflections** about inclusion and fairness, the value of the local relationships built in the process, and new possibilities for the future.

Fast Familiar, Arts Catalyst, Abandon Normal Devices Ltd. – Digital carbon calculator

Fast Familiar, Arts Catalyst, and Abandon Normal Devices Ltd. collaborated on 'The Networked Condition', a research project to explore the often-hidden environmental impact of the creation and delivery of digital artworks (e.g. from mineral extraction, manufacturing, housing and running remote server farms), to inform digital artists, producers and commissioners. The project features case studies exploring different examples of digital arts production, as well as a free-to-use simple carbon calculator tool, launched in November 2021, which is designed for any digital artwork or digital event. The tool can be used for planning a project and exploring different design options based on the carbon footprint, as well as measuring the impact afterwards. Collaboration through Accelerator created an opportunity to frame questions collectively, test ideas and approaches, and pool resources and networks across organisations with a variety of perspectives and practices.

Can I Live: A collaboration between Complicité (Accelerator) and Fehinti Balogun (Colour Green Lab participant). Photo © David Hewitt

The Colour Green Lab

The structure of capitalist extraction is the root cause, and injustice is the living consequence of the climate and ecological crisis. Justice is also the solution. With this understanding, and as part of the programme of wider work on **Climate justice**, in early 2021, Julie's Bicycle launched **The Colour Green Lab**, a training programme for people of colour (POC) working in the arts to learn more about the climate crisis. The Lab builds on **The Colour Green podcast** launched in 2018, which explores the experiences of POC in Britain's creative climate movement, and works to rectify barriers to access.

The pilot lab, comprising four digital sessions, was attended by 38 participants from across the cultural sector. The sessions featured an inspiring set of guest speakers, exploring the roots of the climate crisis; climate science and policy frameworks; alternative material and regenerative economic models; and creative activism – how arts and cultural organisations can advocate for **climate justice**.

> **The conversations and community that has emerged from The Colour Green Lab make clear that it's through a plurality of voices that we can start to address and work more precisely on climate justice and that eventually, change is possible.**

The Colour Green Lab participant

Voice from the Movement

How the arts and culture sector can take bigger, bolder climate action

Diyora Shadijanova
Multimedia journalist and opinions editor at gal-dem magazine

Tell us about your work and your journey as an advocate for climate issues?

When I first learned about climate change in a geography class at the age of 14, I was horrified. I couldn't understand why none of the adults around me or the celebrities on TV and magazines seemed bothered that our planet was rapidly heating, the environment was being destroyed, and entire species were going extinct. I distinctly remember thinking about this on a stuffy bus taking me home, with my head bopping against the vibrating window as people on the other side of the glass carried on with their days nonchalantly.

Though it does seem that the climate crisis is a more mainstream conversation today, my own feelings of urgency around it have only gotten sharper in the past 12 years – especially as scientists tell us that all the climate efforts pledged at COP26 still put us **on track to 2.4 degrees warming** (a complete disaster scenario that,

frankly, is too horrifying to describe). This sense of urgency is also why I have pivoted a lot of my journalistic and creative work to covering issues related to the climate crisis, getting involved in local campaigns and going to every climate protest I can make. I believe there's still a huge communication gap between experts and the general public, and as an individual, I want to try and fill this intermediary space.

Since then, I spearheaded gal-dem magazine's climate section called **'It's Happening Now'**, working with writers all over the world from the Global South or from marginalised communities to push for solution-oriented climate journalism. In November 2021, I also travelled to Glasgow to report on COP26, meeting with organisations like the Gastivists Network and Migrants Organising for Rights and
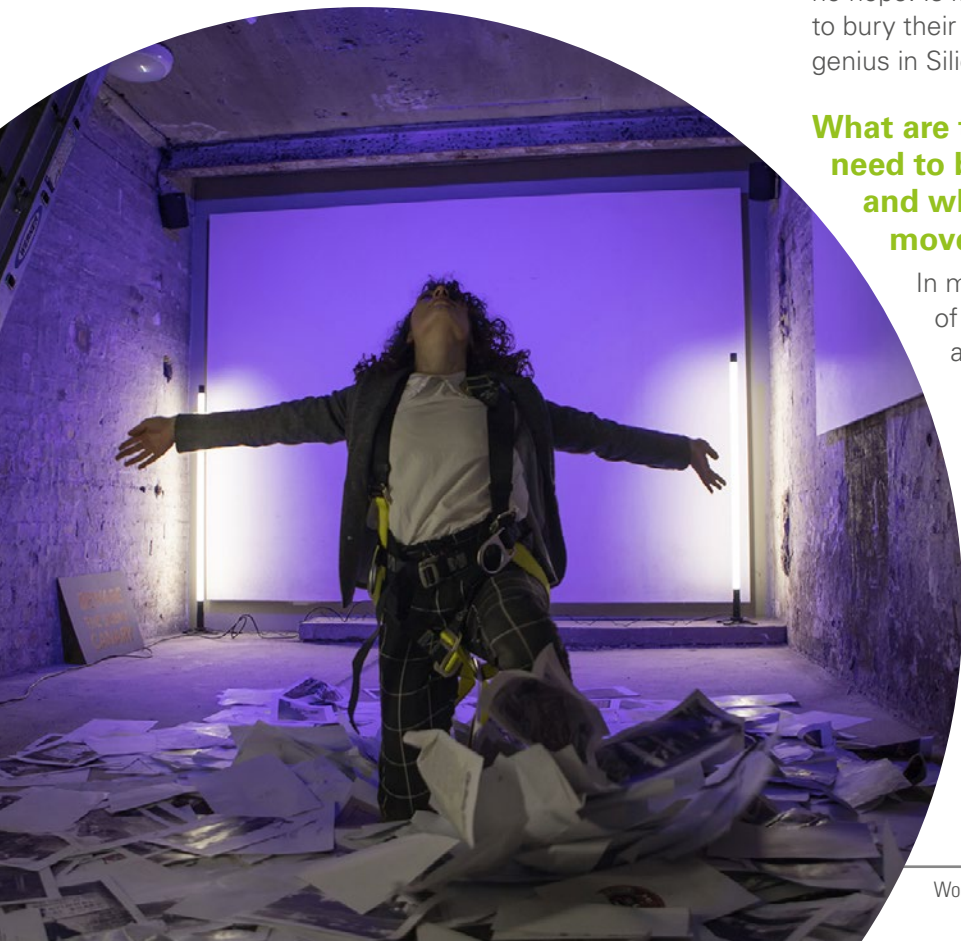
> **Creativity means pushing boundaries and rejecting binary narratives and looking for better and more hopeful solutions to the climate crisis.**

Diyora Shadijanova

Empowerment, to think about stories that aren't being told. In 2022, I'm looking to get more involved in direct action and organising.

There's a great myth that people don't care about the climate crisis, but this is not true. In the UK, **three-quarters of all adults worry about climate change**. So why is there no action? I think it's because many of us struggle to imagine how we can collectively deal with the climate crisis when most climate stories offer doom, no solutions and no hope. Is it then surprising that people feel forced to bury their heads in the sand, expecting some genius in Silicon Valley to fix the problem?

What are the important stories that we need to be championing as a sector, and why is art important in this movement?

In my own experience, I've felt like parts of the art sector approach the climate in an often abstract and broad way, which is devoid of urgency or geographical focus. I want to see stories on environmental racism, especially in places like Palestine where the Israeli government uses the climate crisis to further social segregation. I also would love to see what on earth is happening in large swathes of the world where environmental crises loom? What about the state of the Aral Sea in Central Asia, one of the biggest man-made disasters in the world? How are neighbouring communities coping? Where is all the art around the fact that climate activists, especially Indigenous activists, are being murdered at record levels all over the world? Perhaps I'm not looking hard enough, but this is what I would like to see more of.

Art is crucial in the climate movement because it allows us to not only connect emotionally and visually with one another, but it also urges us to think outside the box. Creativity means pushing boundaries and rejecting binary narratives and looking for better and more hopeful solutions to the climate crisis.

What do you want to see more of from arts and culture?

This is where the arts and culture sector can come in. There are already fantastic visual artists like Allison Janae Hamilton, Olafur Eliasson and Tan Zi Xi. They centre the environment in their work, challenging our relationships with nature and our unsustainable consumption habits. What I would love to see more of, however, is storytelling of climate hope. This is, after all, an emergency. So we need stories of community, resilience and empowerment urgently. I want artists to be able to offer solutions. How can we use our imagination to picture a brighter, alternative future?

In Experiments of Imagining Otherwise, Lola Olufemi writes: "the future is not in front of us, it is everywhere simultaneously: multidirectional, variant, spontaneous". Now is the time.

diyorashadijanova.com

Woodhorn Charitable Trust. Colin Davidson

Key statistics

TOTAL ENERGY USE
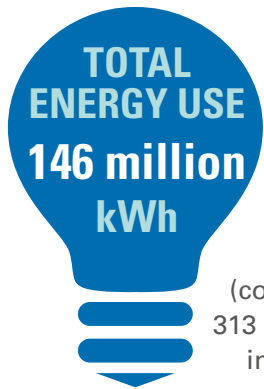
146 million kWh

(compared to 313 million kWh in 2019-20)

£12.7 million
TOTAL ENERGY SPEND

(compared to £21.9 million in 2019-20)
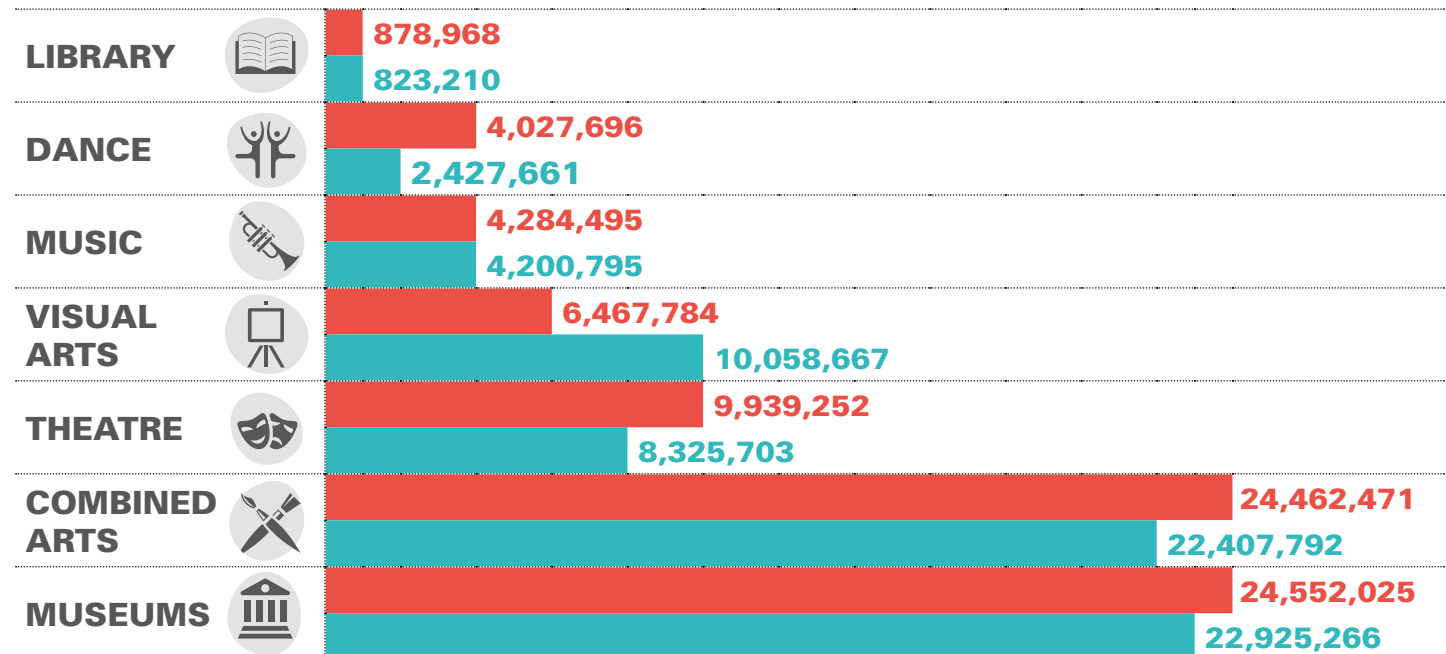
30.5 million kgCO2e

TOTAL CARBON FOOTPRINT
(energy only)

Key statistics 2020-21 in the context of Covid-19

In 2020-21: 482 NPOs reported environmental impacts across a variety of areas including waste, water, energy, business travel, touring and travel. The most common reporting centred on energy consumption data, which is sufficiently detailed to allow comparison with data for previous years and this is the focus of this section.

TOTAL GAS (KWH)

TOTAL ELECTRICITY (KWH)

Category	Gas (kWh)	Electricity (kWh)
LIBRARY	878,968	823,210
DANCE	4,027,696	2,427,661
MUSIC	4,284,495	4,200,795
VISUAL ARTS	6,467,784	10,058,667
THEATRE	9,939,252	8,325,703
COMBINED ARTS	24,462,471	22,407,792
MUSEUMS	24,552,025	22,925,266

Sector reporting and explanatory insights

Of the 482 organisations that were able to submit data, 415 of those had reported in the previous year, 2019-20. To unearth some of the effects the national lockdowns had on the cultural sector, reports of these 415 organisations were compared with their previous reports from 2020-21.

The overall picture of energy consumption data revealed some surprising findings, as discussed below. To help explain some of the variations within the data, we completed a series of follow-up interviews with organisations within each discipline, to gain some insights into why some sectors may have reduced, and in some cases increased energy use during the pandemic.

Overall consumption

Across the **415** collocated organisations,

Electricity
decreased overall by *45%*

Gas
decreased overall by *37.7%*

in comparison to 2019-20 data.

Yet while 354 organisations reduced their electricity consumption, a notable 46 saw an increase in energy use. Overall 219 organisations reduced their gas use, while a significant 78 increased their gas consumption. These patterns reveal a mixed picture that varies sector-by-sector.

Sector-specific

The greatest reduction in **electricity** was in **theatres** with a

66.1% reduction

from 2019-20. As **theatres**, for the most part, were closed, this decrease is easily identifiable – without the need to heat and light venues for audiences, staff and performers, electricity was scarcely required.

The greatest reduction in **gas** use was across **libraries**, with a

66.5% reduction

from 2019-20. In general, **libraries** are smaller venues than many of the other cultural buildings, therefore when closed, their dependency on heating is wholly eliminated.

Data reporting across the **visual arts** sector revealed one of the most surprising results, a

7.7% increase

in **gas** consumption. Insight from organisations within the visual arts sector largely attributed the increase to maintaining temperature and humidity-controlled environments to **protect artwork**, ensuring that these could remain on loan and within insurance limitations. Buildings needed to be heated for skeleton staff who were tasked with maintaining these controls, and without the physical presence of visitors, who contribute to maintaining temperature, they relied heavily on gas heating.
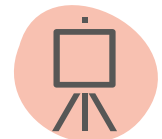
Key Influences

Homeworking

Most organisations employed some form of remote and/or flexible working. For those that retained a skeleton staff and operated from open-plan offices (unable to segment spaces), energy consumption could not be reduced, as an office would be heated 'normally' even if only one person were present. The **increase in home working**, however, is likely to have led to significant increases in home energy use. This may be partially offset by the reduction in commuting.

Closures

The national lockdown restrictions did not affect all sectors or organisations equally across the closure periods. **Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM)** museum in Exeter, for example, closed completely between 17th March and mid-October 2020, whereas Tullie House in Cumbria phased their reopening aligned with government guidance.

There were several examples of building spaces being used for **alternative purposes** such as rehearsals for groups in Covid bubbles, supporting local initiatives.

In the case of **English National Opera**, they were able to rent out their spaces to film productions and photo shoots generating revenue. This alternative use of spaces, while mutually beneficial, also limited the reduction in energy use during this period as the production teams still needed heating and lighting.

Many other organisations had to continue lighting and heating their buildings for skeleton staff, to protect the fabric of the building from dampness and in the case of **museums** and **visual arts**, to preserve the artefacts and artwork. Government regulations also demanded a greater amount of fresh air be used to restrict the spread of the virus. This meant that in these sparsely populated buildings, windows were opened and the heating turned up to provide comfortable temperatures, resulting in gas consumption increases.

By contrast, other organisational closures saw decreases in energy consumption, likely attributed to the absence of staff and visitors, reduced energy loss from opening doors and reduced catering.

SPOTLIGHT
managing new fresh air requirements

During the pandemic, government guidance around the use of fresh air to reduce transmission has led to increases in energy use. Within the Spotlight programme **Unicorn Theatre** is investigating methods of air cleaning which are lower energy than the use of fresh air – focusing on plant room equipment and control, to reduce energy use. Similarly, **Tullie House** were concerned about high energy use through the pandemic. A building energy saving audit, conducted as part of the Spotlight programme and Creative Green services, showed an issue common to many museums – government guidance combined with a tight environmental envelope required for their artefacts resulted in continuous air conditioning of incoming air. They are working with the Building Management System contractors to optimise the settings for a new regime – making fresh air contingent on occupancy.

Environmental Perspectives and Priorities

Julie's Bicycle developed a survey to understand the impacts the pandemic had on environmental ambition for organisations across the creative and cultural sector. This was shared in Autumn 2021 and completed by 162 organisations.

Prior to March 2020, when the UK was subject to its first lockdown, over 90% of survey respondents reported that they were making at least some progress on their environmental journey, and half of those organisations reported making substantial progress. A year on, and a reassuring 53% claimed their environmental commitment was the same as prior to March 2020, and despite a handful of organisations reporting decreased environmental commitment, an additional 32% said levels of commitment to environmental action had actually increased. Overall 96% of survey respondents reported that environmental commitments made during the year of lockdowns were either underway, albeit making slower progress than anticipated, or underway and being actioned as planned.

For organisations whose environmental commitments decreased throughout the year of intermittent lockdowns, they reported that the main reason for this was that they had to make strategic decisions and focus on the immediate priorities brought on by the pandemic. Although the difficulties varied hugely between organisations, some of the recurring themes for those who had been forced to put environmental action on hold included building closures, breakdowns in supply chains, furloughed staff and redundancies resulting in reduced capacity and loss of funding streams.

The most significant long-lasting effect we are seeing is that two-thirds of survey respondents are either still working solely from home or have **hybrid working** arrangements in place.

Knowle West Media Centre
Gamification of sustainability toolkits

Within the Accelerator programme the **Knowle West Media Centre** focused on developing and prototyping a sustainability toolkit for sharing best practice within their Factory community and to co-designed this to engage the workforce in an inclusive way. In developing the toolkit, they've considered purpose and audiences, with the central aim of demystifying sustainability, and improving awareness of carbon emissions and material impacts. They developed four briefs for different toolkit formats to trial gamification, including **sustainability ping pong**, which they now plan to further develop. They found that with limited time and no funding, access to advice and support via their expert mentor Space Ape Games helped them to carve out time and set realistic goals for progressing project ideas.
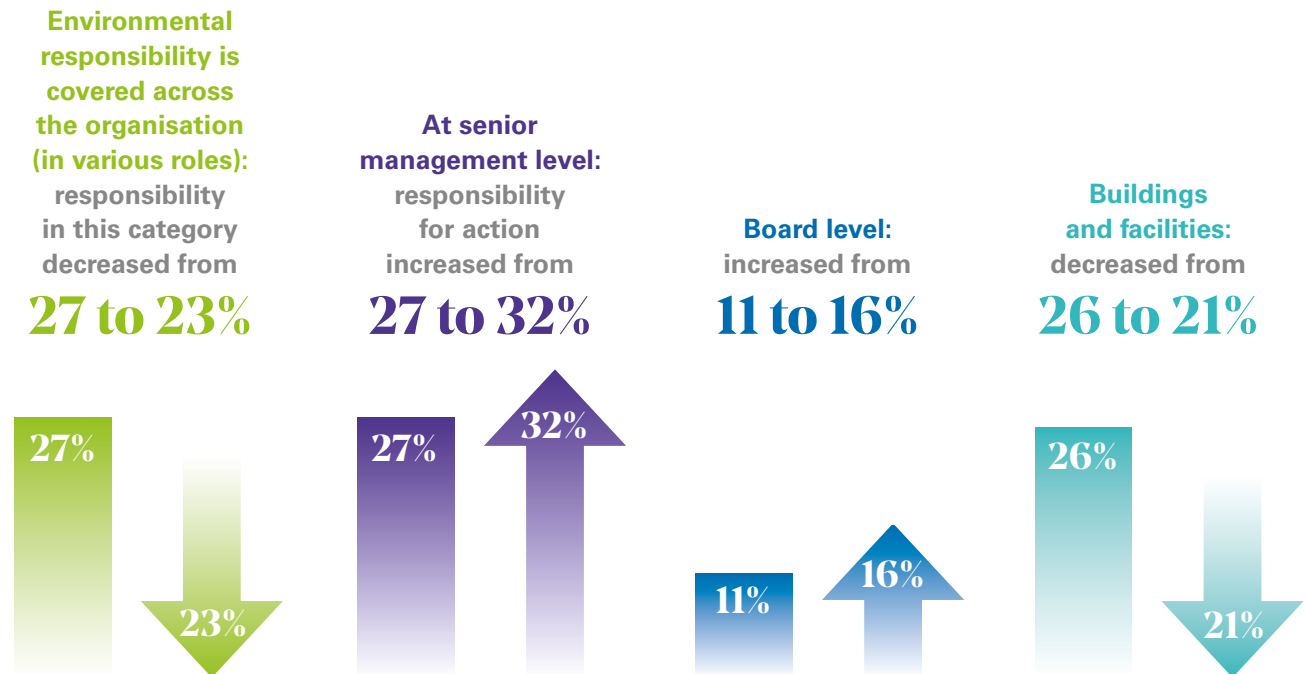

Photo credit: Knowle West Media Centre

The top three environmental priorities that organisations focused on during this reporting period were:

1. **Understanding the environmental impacts of digital working**

2. **Environmental strategy, planning and policies**

3. **Environmentally themed work**

Organisations stated that prior to this reporting period, responsibility for environmental action was either embedded across organisations within different roles at all levels, or driven by Senior Management. Fast forward to 12 months later and this senior management engagement has continued to thrive. It is likely that redundancies and furloughed employees may well contribute to these figures, but it remains that **environmental engagement is increasingly being driven at Senior Management level**.

From pre pandemic to post lockdown there were some slight shifts in the distribution of responsibility for environmental action across organisations:

Environmental responsibility is covered across the organisation (in various roles): responsibility in this category decreased from
27 to 23%

At senior management level: responsibility for action increased from
27 to 32%

Board level: increased from
11 to 16%

Buildings and facilities: decreased from
26 to 21%

27%
23%

27%
32%

11%
16%

26%
21%

Liverpool Arab Arts Festival:

A combined arts case study – climate justice

Liverpool Arab Arts Festival's (LAAF) dedicated team has been working to achieve an equal balance between improving their internal operations and increasing artistic work that raises awareness of the climate crisis, especially within the Arab region.

Their 2020 digital festival (July 2020) introduced their first event on the climate crisis: ARTISTS/IDEAS/NOW – Conflict, Colonialism and the Climate Crisis. The festival provided a platform to express the lived experiences of those often excluded from climate conversations and put them at the forefront, while addressing interconnected issues related to climate justice. Following the festival, LAAF launched '22', which asked Arab artists and activists to creatively respond to COP26 and the climate crisis.

Their 2021 festival (July-Nov 2021) invited artists from the UK and internationally to highlight the complexities and disproportionate impacts that the climate crisis is having on the countries and communities in the Middle East and North African region.

Art Gene: A visual arts case study – community partnerships and local adaptation

Art Gene has partnered with Barrow Borough Council on their latest programme 'Low Carbon Barrow', which aims to deliver measurable carbon reductions to achieve net zero emissions by 2037. They have developed a range of activities to support local people to take their first practical steps towards adaptation, supported by a Grants Lead, who works directly with local businesses and charities to support the delivery of grants to retrofit properties. Art Gene's artists have designed an outdoor activity programme, which delivered a climate focused Food, Futures and Biodiversity event in November 2021 to stimulate learning and debate. The event included climate speakers, composting workshops, climate therapy sessions, plant based cooking demonstrations and eating and artworks in the landscape commenting on climate issues.

Art Gene Roker Pods (off grid touring spaces), Roker promenade, Sunderland. Photo credit: Maddi Nicholson.

FABRICA: A visual arts case study – circular economy

Motivated by achieving net zero emissions in many areas of their operations, and through embedding environmental sustainability within their operations, **Fabrica's** ethos is to use creative thinking to find new homes for things that are usually thrown away. In 2020-21, Fabrica increased the capacity of the Production Assistant allowing them to dedicate more time to address purchasing, repurposing and recycling materials from exhibitions.

Reviewing their activities to improve sustainability, Fabrica has begun to design the layout of the exhibitions a year or more in advance to plan for reusing materials for building walls. They work with a local company to create additional storage on site for materials, and to find other organisations that can use the wood afterwards. For example, after one exhibition the flats for the walls were used as a set for a pantomime.

Getting There by Jo Lathwood 1. Photo © Edward Bishop

Curve Theatre: Theatre – resourcing new staff role in climate and environmental management

Curve Theatre has been developing their environmental strategy and policy to meet their commitment to climate action. As part of this process, they ran some consultations with external stakeholders to gather feedback, thoughts, and ideas of how to best connect and amplify their sustainability work with local partners. To ensure effective implementation of their strategy and policy, Curve has recognized they need dedicated staff resources and are creating a new role for a Climate and Environment Manager. The manager will sit in the Estates team, but will be working across all departments to oversee Curve's efforts to minimise, reduce and report its environmental impact. As a member of the Spotlight programme Curve received support in writing the job description of responsibilities and competencies.
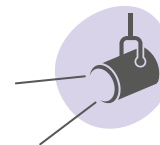
64%
of respondents reported making new environmental commitments during this year.

Strategy and planning were high on the list as well as short and long-term action plans, creating internal environmental action groups, researching responsible investment opportunities i.e. pensions and incorporating environmental responsibility into business plans. There were reports of Board level recruitment of individuals with strong environmental credentials and environmental sustainability specialists.

Organisations also used this time to research **capital development opportunities** such as renewable energy suppliers, upgrading lighting to LEDS, replacing boilers with energy-efficient models, **reducing energy consumption**, installing Photovoltaic panels and even harvesting rainwater. Various examples of online events, webinars and environmental training programmes took place within organisations for staff members and teams, to improve environmental knowledge and enable leadership on environmental action.

Yorkshire Dance: A dance case study – engaging with tenants on sustainable practice

Yorkshire Dance have used several strategies to embed sustainability within their work. They have reduced energy consumption by updating to LED lighting, trained staff in carbon literacy, shared their environmental objectives and action plan on their website in pursuit of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Through their own work on sustainability, Yorkshire Dance realised that they would need support from business users to make further reductions make further reductions to carbon emissions. They have encouraged their tenants to commit to their own actions around sustainability, which has raised awareness, generated support for sustainable actions through quarterly meetings to share best practices as well as ideas for how to work together to reduce emissions.

Woodhorn Charitable Trust: A museums case study – STEM education

Woodhorn Charitable Trust focuses on reducing environmental impact through understanding the legacy of the industrial past, and equipping communities for a safer, greener future. Connecting with the region's energy heritage and future, the museum has developed educational programmes focused on environmental topics to nurture the diverse skills needed for STEM careers, through working with a breadth of partners from academia to contemporary dance. This is coupled with activities to adapt and preserve collections, protect declining populations of birds and animals, and operate with reduced reliance on fossil fuels.

Photo © Colin Davidson

Several organisations reported making **pledges and commitments** to local and national campaigns such as Culture Declares Emergency. Environmental commitments within procurement were given high priority, including building circular models to eliminate waste, sustainable materials and packaging, designing meat-free menus, changing internet providers, upcycling furniture and implementing digital accounting systems.

Travel was restricted for everyone during this period, but some organisations took advantage of the situation by **moving the delivery process into the digital sphere** and **reducing travel needs** from beneficiaries and clients by releasing offices altogether. Museums used works from their own collections to reduce the need for transportation and pledges are set to continue after the pandemic, for example the move to eliminate flying with the 'no-fly festival'.

Organisations are **collaborating with others** within the sector, ranging from local to national level, but collaborations are also reaching far beyond the sector. There are examples of work being carried out with external environmental experts, local and national environmental projects, engagement with corporate partners and pledges made to wider environmental campaigns.

The survey results also offered numerous examples of new work with environmental themes at their core. These included performances, online events and knowledge sharing, festivals, films, music, literature and exhibitions.

Creative Kernow Aerial shot post Phase 1. Photo © Luke Holland

Creative Kernow: A combined arts case study – sustainable business and climate action hub

Creative Kernow has progressively developed a former school in Krowji, Cornwall, to integrate sustainability into creative business practice and develop studios for a community of artists and makers equipped with solar panels, air source heat pumps, and electric vehicle (EV) charging points to the site. In 2020, Cultivator (part of the Creative Kernow group) formed the Climate and Sustainability Hive for Cornwall (CLASH), where creative businesses can engage in events, skills development workshops, campaigns and discussions, which aim to put sustainable business at the heart of Cornwall's creative sector. CLASH provides a space and inspiration for debate and aims to amplify voices seeking change.

Kinetika People:
A Combined Arts case study – digital transition

The Beach of Dreams was a 500-mile journey along the east coast of England, which brought together filmmakers, artists, writers, environmental scientists, and local residents to explore how to take care of the environment. Guided by strong environmental themes they considered the question "How can we creatively reimagine our future?". Participants were invited to sign up to a mile and submit images and writing about their attachment to it, and their hopes for the future. These were transformed into 500 naturally dyed hand-woven silk pennants by a team of artists in the **Kinetika** Studios in April 2021, using natural dyes at scale for the first time to reduce environmental impact and move away from chemical dyes. The 35 day walk was accompanied by a shift to digital engagement – participants engaged online before the live event, and the walk was accompanied by an online conversation, allowing more people to engage and in their own time.

Beach of Dreams – Kinetika People. Photo © Mike Johnston

Key Findings

What has this meant for the sector?

The overall picture is of **a sector that remains engaged** and committed to its environmental responsibility, through specific actions such as energy management of their own buildings, and broader behaviours such as connecting with wider expertise and networks to collaborate and improve knowledge on environment and climate.

The feedback suggests the pandemic provided an opportunity for many organisations to review and update commitments to their environmental plans. **Strategy and planning** have seen a great deal of focus with senior level engagement being the driving force. There are many examples of investment in long term capital development that will bring benefits in coming years.

The digital landscape has flourished in this new environment and the arts and cultural sector has risen to the challenges that this new journey has offered. Commitments to environmentally sound new ways of remote working, such as implementing digital accounting systems, demonstrates how the creative sector has acted to engage with the climate crisis, while meeting the challenges of the pandemic. The pandemic has also created some interesting opportunities to do things differently. For example, visual arts organisations who have engaged with local artists and artworks to overcome travel restrictions have simultaneously reduced travel consumption, decreasing the environmental impacts of business travel.

SS Great Britain – Innovative technology and building technical literacy

Brunel's SS Great Britain is the world's first iron-hulled, screw-propelled ship. Keeping the dock which houses it dry so the hull doesn't rust is essential to protecting this engineering heritage, but requires custom-built dehumidifiers which are their biggest source of carbon emissions. **The SS Great Britain Trust** has committed to become Carbon Neutral by 2030, and has made it a priority to pioneer a new approach to heritage conservation, energy efficiency and emissions reduction, which is delivered through their conservation engineer. They have replaced old fans with a new type of fan grid technology, which uses 30% less electricity, and added a new heat recovery system to reduce gas consumption by a further 25%, as well as investing in new sensors and software to more efficiently control the drying system. The data is used to make informed decisions about future improvements. The Trust is now using Accelerator support to identify pathways to net zero carbon, and to highlight the need to bridge the gap between engineers and museum and heritage sector workers. The aim is to improve understanding of the technical aspects of climate control, and thereby energy efficiency. **Watch their short film here.**

Environmental Action Snapshot

In 2020-21, 288 NPO's used the 'Beyond Carbon' field on the Creative Green Tools, which provides space to report on environmental action and engagements, and the benefits this brings (compared to 445 in 2019/20).

While the number of organisations reporting in Beyond Carbon fields this year is understandably lower, these trends show year on year improvements on governance, operations and engagement across the portfolio. The benefits reported are also increasing, demonstrating the indirect advantages of improved environmental practices within the arts and culture sector.

GOOD GOVERNANCE
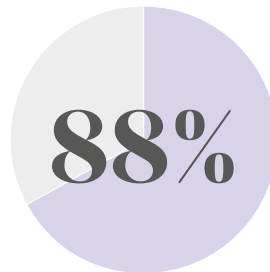
88% include Environmental Sustainability in core business strategies and plans (compared to 66% 2019/20 and 78% in 2018/19)
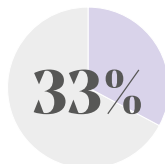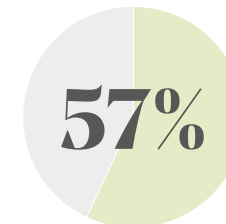
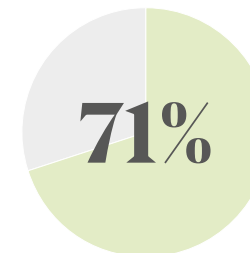**33%** have an ethical sponsorship or partnership policy (compared to 27% 2019/20)
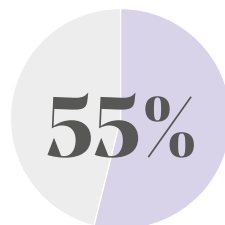
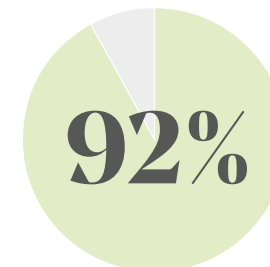**55%** formally recognise environmental responsibilities in job roles (compared to 42% 2019/20)

OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

57% have installed energy efficient lighting and/ or light sensors/timers (compared to 54% 2019/20)
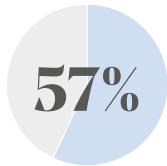
71% have taken steps to eliminate single use plastic (compared to 70% 2019/20)

92% have actively promoted teleconferencing, desktop or video conferencing (compared to 78% 2019/20)*
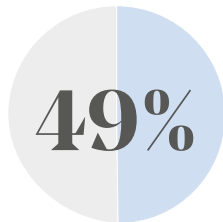
Fire Garden 2 — Walk The Plank. Photo © stumayhew

ENGAGEMENT + COLLABORATION

57% have produced, programmed or curated work exploring environmental themes (compared to 51% 2019/20)
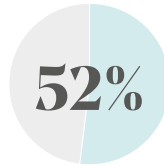
20% have a 'Green Rider' or 'green clauses for our visiting or touring productions and exhibitions (compared to 13% 2019/20)
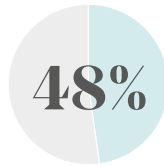
49% collaborated with other cultural organisations on finding and sharing solutions to environmental issues (compared to 40% 2019/20)
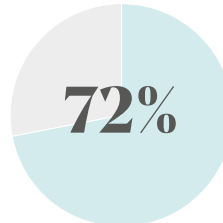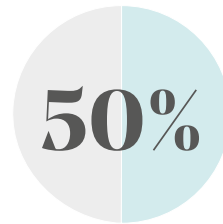
BENEFITS AND VALUE

52% reported financial benefits (compared to 48% in 2019/20)

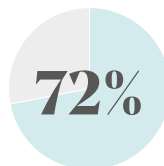**48%** reported profile or reputational benefits (compared to 43% in 2019/20)

72% reported team morale or well-being benefits (compared to 67% in 2019/20)

50% have experienced creative or artistic opportunities (compared to 42% in 2019/20)

72% have found their environmental policy useful for supporting funding applications (compared to 66% in 2019/20)

Beach of Dreams – Kinetika People, Photo © Mike Johnston

Looking ahead

Culture – the arts, heritage and creative industries – has an exponential influence on our lives, making the myths, telling the stories and designing the things we value. This is why culture should be at the heart of climate solutions and the vital contribution culture makes to the climate struggle is now widely recognised – and not before time. Rapid decarbonisation whilst simultaneously adapting to the realities of climate impacts is as urgent as ever. But it is one imperative of several, including halting biodiversity loss, transforming the global food system, and designing out toxic outflows (domestic and industrial waste, chemical spillage, and so on). The scale of change is staggering, so large that it creates opportunities to tackle other systems failures as well such as equity, fairness and historic injustice.

The cultural community is preparing for change. In spring of 2020, Julie's Bicycle ran, with Arts Council support, a series of three roundtables to hear from 75 cultural colleagues about big environmentally focused agendas: decarbonisation, nature and regenerative economics. We asked people about their environmental priorities, the challenges, and the policies that would support them. Even then the sector was feeling ambitious:

1. Call for policy to support local economies and place-making with decarbonisation incentives on the ground;
2. Policy to tighten up on greenhouse gas emissions reductions and require absolute reduction targets for medium and large organisations, with strong leadership and accountability from cultural funders, matched by leadership from boards and executive teams with commitments across strategic, operational and creative planning.
3. Better dialogue and partnerships dedicated to environmental actions between cultural organisations and artists, local authorities and national government to support investment in infrastructure, transport, green spaces and circular resource use.
4. A huge appetite for skills to support a 'green' cultural economy, bringing together digital skills with impact data.
5. Inclusion and justice as watchwords for climate action, to rapidly increase training and support for the cultural workforce, including new entrants, to ensure that employment opportunities are fair. There were calls to champion creative and cultural leaders from excluded communities, and to explicitly link justice and climate.

Since then the policy landscape has changed significantly – the pandemic, two devastating IPCC Reports of the 6th Assessment, COP 26 and now, the first shoots of recovery where 'levelling up', in arts no less than anywhere else, is a priority, has moved the sector on. Yet these compelling ideas remain fresh and demand action – they set the priorities for the sector, and for us all.

> **It's our priority as artists to push for change and climate action through art commissions and projects and within communities around growing and the natural environment. It's imperative we make that difference.**
>
> **We are doing all we can as an arts company to use our creative skills to demonstrate change, and to promote a different way of living. It's all that any of us can do.**

Maddi Nicholson,
Artist Founder Director, Art Gene

Appendices

Appendix 1: Spotlight and Accelerator organisations

Spotlight organisations	
Baltic Contemporary Arts Centre	Royal Liverpool Philharmonic
Birmingham Museums Trust	Royal Opera House
Bristol Museums	Royal Shakespeare Company
Curve Theatre	Sadler's Wells
Glyndebourne Productions Ltd	Sage Gateshead
HOME Manchester	Sheffield Theatres Trust Ltd
Leeds Museums and Galleries	Southbank Centre
Manchester Partnership	The Lyric Theatre Hammersmith Limited
National Theatre	Theatre Royal Plymouth
Northern Stage	Theatre Royal Stratford East
Nottingham Playhouse	Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery
Opera North Limited	Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
Serpentine Galleries	Unicorn Theatre
Whitechapel Gallery	University of Oxford
Royal Exchange Theatre Company Ltd	Young Vic Company

Accelerator cohort II
Fast Familiar / Abandon Normal Devices / Arts Catalyst
Courtyard Trust + Watts Gallery
D6 + Baltic
LADA + Gasworks
Barbican, Artillery, London Borough of Waltham Forest
SS Great Britain
Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance (consortium of consortia)
Knowle West Media Centre
Norfolk and Norwich Festival
Horniman Museum and Gardens

Appendix 2: Conversions and target-setting

Carbon footprint calculation, energy use and energy spend

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) is used to express the climate impacts of an activity in a single measure. CO2e emissions are calculated by applying carbon conversion factors published annually by the government. The **conversion factors** for UK grid energy reflect its carbon intensity, or the amount of CO2e emissions generated depending on the mix of fossil fuels, renewables and nuclear energy used.

The 2020-21 **carbon footprint** was calculated by applying the conversion factors published in 2020 to data on the energy use data (gas and electricity).

The total **energy use** is based on absolute electricity and gas consumption in kilowatt hours (kWh) reported for 2020-21 on the Creative Green Tools. This predominantly covers purchased energy and, in some cases, on-site renewable energy (generally solar photovoltaic or solar thermal panels). The 2020-21 energy use figures excludes usage of bottled gas and diesel (for generators) in litres, due to very low levels of reporting on this source of impact. The resulting carbon footprint is based on all electricity and gas kWh reported.

The 2020-21 **energy spend** is based on kWh of electricity and gas consumption, applying average tariffs of 15 pence per kWh of electricity and 4 pence per kWh gas, referencing the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's '**Prices of fuels purchased by non-domestic consumers in the UK**' (actual prices may differ significantly). The cost of onsite renewable energy and district heating is not covered.

Reported on-site renewable energy consumption currently represents about 3.2% of overall electricity. This is most likely under-reported due to the difficulty experienced by some organisations in getting accurate data on on-site kWh generation as well as on how much is actually used on-site and how much is exported to the grid. On-site renewable energy is considered to be zero carbon, so it does not contribute to the carbon footprint.

Spotlight target setting methodology

The Spotlight group – 30 organisations across 80 sites – is working closely with Julie's Bicycle to achieve measurable reductions in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement – limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. The energy and carbon reduction targets proposed for each Spotlight organisation were calculated based on their 2018-19 energy baseline using the **Science Based Targets** (SBT) methodology. The SBT approach used for Spotlight target-setting is the sector-based approach i.e.: the global carbon budget is divided by sector – in this case commercial buildings – and emission reductions are allocated to individual companies and organisations based on its sector's budget. Targets set are relative – kilowatt (kWh) hours of energy used and kilogrammes (kg) of CO2e from energy use, both per square metre of floor area.

Appendix 3: List of case studies

Organisation	Theme / topic	Art Form	Region
BEYOND CARBON			
Fabrica	Circular economy / zero waste	Visual Arts	South East
Walk the Plank	Switching to BioLPG	Visual Arts	West Midlands
Liverpool Arab Arts	Climate Justice	Combined Arts	North West
Art Gene	Partnerships and local adaptation	Visual Arts	North West
Z-Arts	Moderating energy use and environmental impact in Covid-19	Combined Arts	North West
Woodhorn Charitable Trust	STEM education	Museums	North East
Creative Kernow	Sustainable business and climate action hub	Combined Arts	South West
Kinetika People	Digital transition	Combined Arts	East
Yorkshire Dance	Engaging with tenants on sustainable practice	Dance	Yorkshire
ACCELERATOR			
SS Great Britain	Innovative technology and building technical literacy	Museums	South West
Barbican, Artillery, London Borough of Waltham Forest	Regenerative festival design and place making	Combined Arts	South East
Knowle West Media Centre	Gamification of sustainability toolkits	Combined Arts	South West
Fast Familiar, Abandon Normal Devices Ltd and Arts Catalyst	Digital Carbon Calculator	Combined Arts / Visual Arts	North West (Abandon Normal Devices Ltd) / London (the Arts Catalyst)
SPOTLIGHT			
Unicorn theatre	Low energy technologies	Theatre	South East
Tullie House	Energy reduction	Museums	North West
Opera North	Environmental accreditation	Music	Yorkshire
Curve Theatre	New staff role in climate & environment	Theatre	East Midlands
Royal Shakespeare Company	Capital investment	Theatre	West Midlands
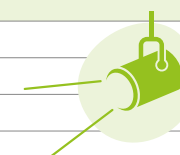
Appendix 4: Glossary

- **Beyond Carbon** – a new field on the Creative Green Tools for organisations to feedback on environmental ideas and actions beyond just carbon footprinting.

- **Carbon footprint** – a measure of greenhouse gas emissions based on energy, travel, waste etc. most commonly given in tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2e).

- **Net carbon zero** – a net-zero target is not the same as zero carbon, which means that no carbon will be emitted at all. A net zero commitment allows for remaining greenhouse gas emissions when all reductions have been made to be 'balanced' — removed — with an equivalent amount via offsets such as peatland preservation, carbon credits or carbon capture technologies.

- **Circular economy** – designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials circulating within the economy at their highest value for as long as possible, and allowing natural systems to regenerate. This is in direct contrast to the current linear economy based on a 'take, make, dispose' model.

- **The Colour Green** – part of the Arts Council's environment programme, a podcast and Lab exploring issues of environmental justice and training cultural leaders and artists of colour.

- **Creative Green Tools** – a set of free online tools developed by Julie's Bicycle for cultural venues, events, offices and tours to report on their environmental impacts, calculate their carbon footprint and track progress over time.

- **Climate justice** – the political and ethical dimensions of climate/environmental change, the root causes, effects and mitigation efforts.

- **Divestment** – generally associated with fossil fuel investment, and moving money out of fossil fuels by, for example, choosing banks, pension providers, insurance providers, funders who do not invest in or make money from fossil fuel extraction.

- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** – the United Nations body which convenes thousands of scientists from all over the globe to regularly assess and report climate change science and resulting implications for policymakers.

- **Paris Agreement** – a global commitment, negotiated within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and signed in Paris in 2016, to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius, a target subsequently revised by the UNFCCC to 1.5.

- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** – in October 2015 more than 150 countries adopted the 17 SDGs to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030. For the Goals to be reached, everyone must play their part: governments, organisations, businesses and civil society. It is generally acknowledged that in order for meaningful progress to be made towards the SDGs, all parts of society must work together to meet the targets.

- **COP26** is the 26th meeting of the **Conference of Parties (COP)**, which took place in Glasgow, Scotland from 1-12 November 2021 (a year later than planned due to the pandemic). The COP is the decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which aims to drive countries to act on climate change. Representatives of the 197 Parties to the Convention have met every year since 1995 to review the work of the UNFCCC, and review the progress made in achieving the objectives of the convention. **COP27** will take place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 7-18 November 2022.

Appendix 5: Resources and further reading

Julie's Bicycle resources developed under Arts Council England's Environmental Programme

- Colour Green **Podcast** and **Lab**

- The Creative Climate Justice Resource Hub

- **Taking the Temperature** series

- **Culture: The Missing Link - an online event at COP26**

- **Policy portal** including our COP26 Call To Action and **Arts Council England animation**

- **Summaries of COP26**

- Briefing report: **Putting a price on Carbon**

- Webinar: **Putting a price on carbon**

- Briefing Report: **Environmental Sustainability in the Digital Age of Culture**

- Webinar: **Sustainable digital creativity**

- Webinar: **Sustainable cultural mobility**

- Webinar series: **Creative Climate Literacy 101**

- Creative Climate Chats

ACE and Other Resources

- Arts Council England **"Our Environmental Responsibility: from understanding to action"**

- Top Tips Guides for **Museums** and **Music** sector

- Arts Council England new Strategy 2020-2030 **Let's Create**

- Arts Council England **Investment Principles Resource Hub**

Art Gene Food Futures and Biodiversity event: Allotment Soup, Walney Island Community Growing Space, Barrow-in-Furness. Photo Maddi Nicholson. Boat – 'Wake Up', Stuart Bastik

Arts Council England

FRONT & BACK COVER – Bournemouth Arts by the Sea Festival.
Photo © HotShot Creative (Scott Salt & James Bridle)
Permission expires January 2027

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.

Designed and developed by Julie's Bicycle, the Creative Green Tools – a suite of carbon calculators and a certification scheme – are the recognised benchmark for sustainability achievements within the creative industries.

Since 2012, Julie's Bicycle has been the Arts Council's contracted delivery partner for supporting its funded organisations in reporting their carbon footprint, and developing environmental policy and action plans.

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND