



Sustainability Action Plan

Summary

Creative Arts East is an arts and community development charity, committed to bringing the very best arts and cultural activities to people living in rural and/or underserved communities across Norfolk, Suffolk and the wider Eastern region, improving quality of life, fighting rural and social isolation and strengthening health and education outcomes.

From **April 2024 to March 2025**, our programme of work enabled:

600+

creative and cultural activities

65+

communities

30,000+

audience interactions

**Figures from our 2024-2034 10-Year Business Plan.*

Our Commitment to Sustainability

Creative Arts East is committed to promoting environmental sustainability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the stability of resources for the future. We carry that ethos through in the creative experiences we provide, and the communities, artists, and spaces we work with. Rural touring by its essence is sustainability friendly, opening doors to culture in communities and bringing people together to strengthen local connections through shared creative experiences.







We pledge to:

- Promote ‘green’ habits and best practice throughout our team and working environment.
- Adhere to our Environmental Policy, reviewed annually.
- Align what we do to our Environmental Action Plan, updated quarterly against ACE’s PIs.
- Report annually to Julie’s Bicycle on energy consumption, waste and workforce travel.
- Maintain and uphold the progress we have achieved.
- Seek continued reductions in our collective impact year on year, where possible.
- Include and promote environmentally themed content in our artistic programme.
- Engage in and contribute to sustainability/environmental groups in our sector.
- Share tools and information on accessible approaches with external stakeholders.
- Encourage our partners (artists & promoters) to develop e.g. ‘Green Riders’ and policies.
- Share ‘Green Tips and Triumphs’ on our website and social media presence.
- Promote access to relevant training to our team and stakeholders.
- Respond actively to our environmental and sustainability responsibilities.

↘ Our Sustainability Journey

Creative Arts East submits data annually on our carbon footprint and environmental approaches to Julie’s Bicycle Creative Climate Tools.

‘Julie’s Bicycle’ is a not-for-profit organisation supporting the Arts & Culture sector to address their practices in the face of the impact of climate change.

Since 2016/17 - 2023/24		CAE team’s overall carbon footprint reduced from 22 tonnes of CO2 to 9 tonnes – an overall drop of 59%
		Business travel has fallen by over 85%
In 2021		CAE moved from premises in Wymondham to a shared location in Norwich. This enabled a saving of 100 miles per commuting day , with savings between 6 and 24 miles per day to individuals across the team. Plus, three team members can now walk to work.
In 2023/24		18% of our teams travel footprint was made by train, and not car
		72% of the waste we generated was able to be recycled , the remaining 28% going to incineration rather than landfill.
		The hybrid working pattern across the team represented a typical saving of 244 miles of commute per week.

Other changes to everyday practices, each supporting carbon savings, and ‘Greener Best Practice’ are:

- Switching meetings to ‘online’ unless there is a pressing business, wellbeing or creative collaboration advantage to meeting in person
- Issuing ‘paperwork’ in electronic form, e.g. invoices, contracts, brochures and ticketing.
- Sorting and reducing waste – Separate Paper/card, Mixed recycling & general waste bins, plus ‘food waste’ bin (teabags, coffee grinds etc.)
- Toner recycling through specialised company who collect – shared service with National Centre for Writing at Dragon Hall
- Car sharing for staff and artists/volunteers to externally delivered wellbeing project activities used as best practice wherever possible
- More ethically produced consumables, e.g. paper, coffee, cleaning materials, stationary

↳ Looking to the Future

Having progressed considerably in our own environmental sustainability over the last decade and having previously been recognised by Arts Council England and Julie’s Bicycle as ‘exemplary’ we are now prioritising our goal to inform and influence others e.g. artists, promoters and partners in progress their own Green Best Practice.

Our Principles for Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility (SPs) are:

Responsibility	Recognising the duty of care that we have both as individuals and collectively to safeguard resources for future generations.
Partnership	To work collaboratively with our associates, the communities we serve and external stakeholders to identify and implement the positive impact we can achieve together towards a more sustainable future, whilst delivering our core work.
Improvement	To make continuous effort to assess our aims, set realistic targets, measure outcomes, maintain and build on progress achieved.
Transparency	To be open about what our aims and restrictions are, the actions they involve and the results we achieve.

And to ensure that our actions and goals are:

Appropriate

Achievable

Accountable



Headlines

From our Environmental Action Plan since 2024 and planning for 2025-2026 onwards

Objective 1	Reduce staff & associate travel where appropriate and effective.
ACE IP	Environmental Responsibility
What we've done/are doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Online meetings embedded as standard● Hybrid working reduces commute● Flexible hours to avoid peak-time travel● Car-sharing for staff/volunteers/ artists to activities & events● Public transport use helped by flexi hours● Access to cycle scheme available● Consecutive dates for visiting artists● Recordings of set-up of cinema kit, booking system use and digital marketing made in lieu of in-person training for promoters
Next steps/ Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Maintain progress and commitment in our every-day practice, and planning● Develop resources to support promoters to share info on local bus / train routes for their audience and encourage car-sharing● Schedule info on our communications channels to national travel initiatives such as 'World Car Free Day' and 'Bike Week'
How we can measure/assess impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cost savings across: Mileage, parking, bus/train fares and room hire & catering● Time savings on staff time/TOIL● Increased engagement by team and associates in carbon saving mindset● Improved work-life balance and staff wellbeing

Objective 2	Invest in Environmental Awareness and Carbon Saving training for staff, Board, promoters and commissioned artists.
ACE IP	Environmental Responsibility, Ambition & Quality
What we've done/are doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental lead appointed for team ● Environmental Awareness training taken by staff ● Training offer shared with Board, promoters, commissioned artists and associates ● Environmental Lead attended Theatre Green Book workshops ● Theatre Green Book training offer shared with commissioned artists
Next steps/ Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing Environmental and sustainability training for Environmental Lead, rolled out to team and stakeholders as appropriate ● Appoint 'Green Champion' at Board level ● Share Julie's Bicycle & NRTF Tools e.g. Sustainable Events Guide, Theatre Green Book with promoters and artists ● Add Green Rider templates/ links to contracts with promoters and artists
How we can measure/assess impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness on impact of climate change informs and strengthens our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ workplace best practice ○ programming choices ○ fundraising approaches ○ choice of resources and tools to support promoters and artists development

Objective 3	Review Environmental Action Plan in line with ACE's key objectives.
ACE IP	Environmental Responsibility, Ambition & Quality
What we've done/are doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Action Plan reviewed quarterly progress recorded, targets updated for presentation to Board and submission to ACE
Next steps/ Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Action Plan as part of Sustainability & Environmental Responsibility document
How we can measure/assess impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustainability document /Action Plan supports funding applications and Risk Management in all CAE activity

Objective 4	Source and engage with other sectoral or local environmental initiatives and groups.
ACE IP	Environmental Responsibility, Dynamism Inclusivity & Relevance
What we've done/are doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental Lead is part of NCW's Green Office Group (GOG), NRTF EAG and King Street Community Group ● Connection established with local CIC Re-Do for obsolete kit/office items ● Free Toner Recycling initiative joined and shared with NCW for both organisations ● Resources from orgs. inc. Julie's Bicycle and Theatre Green Book, accessed and shared with relevant stakeholders. e.g. Creative Freelancers Almanac
Next steps/ Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GOG application for Bronze or Silver Carbon Charter accreditation for NCW/ CAE premises ● Findings, resources and tools accessed and developed through NRTF EAG to be incorporated in daily practice and planning ● Plan a 'team social' with a positive Green impact: tree-plant or beach clean activity
How we can measure/assess impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Success of Carbon Charter accreditation ● Reduction in obsolete items to waste ● Successful team 'Green outing' to set precedent for similar teambuilding

Objective 5	Share info on our environmental data, commitment and Green themed programming content publicly via our website/social media and communications, and direct to promoters & Board.
ACE IP	Environmental Responsibility, Ambition & Quality
What we've done/are doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New website launched in summer 2025 where headlines demonstrating CAE's reduced carbon footprint compiled from our Julie's Bicycle reporting record and other data for the period 2018-2025 can be shared
Next steps/ Future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share our Environmental Policy and Sustainability pledges on our website ● Share results from JB reporting cycle on website and social media ● Share a 'Green Tip' of the month, relevant to the season or programmed event in social media post and newsletter/s ● Highlight events in our programme with a strong or specific environmental theme ● Share info on major initiatives e.g. Earth Day, Zero Waste Week, Recycle Week ● Develop and share CAE's own internal Green Rider
How we can measure/assess impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor response & engagement to content by members & 'traffic' ● Take-up of environmentally themed programme offers