

**Policy on environmentAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. **OUR MOTIVATION FOR TAKING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION**

Orchestras Live recognises that it has a part to play in meeting the global challenges of climate change and securing environmental sustainability and that rapid and urgent action is needed. We are therefore committed to understanding Orchestras Live’s environmental impact and to ensuring that future plans incorporate actions to mitigate that impact.

Our business model is built on the ethos of collaboration: we work with a network of partners to enhance local orchestral activity that supports shared priorities for social impact, including environmental sustainability.We seek to develop a national infrastructure in which high quality, innovative and engaging orchestral provision thrives, with an orchestral sector that is relevant to its communities and audiences, and environmentally responsible.

As well as these social motivations, we are committed to compliance with regulations as they apply to our organisation, and to ensure that we have the capacity to do so.

In recognition of the current climate crisis, we have formed an Environmental Responsibility Working Group. Following discussions with staff and the full Board we have strengthened our commitment to environmental responsibility across the organisation to take focused action and achieve greater impact.

Our aims are to:

* Turn aspirational objectives into operational action and ongoing best practice;
* Improve our understanding of our own environmental impact and that of the orchestral sector;
* Share knowledge and understanding with our partners, to incorporate learning into programme planning and shape artistic activities and productions that put into practice our environmental sustainability priorities;
* Use our sector leadership role proactively to advocate for action, in planning discussions with partners. To support this, we will incorporate Environmental Responsibility in our Partnership Principles, reinforcing the requirement for partners to align with our objectives in this area.

1. **OUR ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITION**

The Environmental Policy addresses two distinct areas of our work:

* **Operations:** 
  + OL’s governance, staffing, office and working practices;
* **Programme delivery:** 
  + productions, travel (OL delivery support as well as activity partners), working nationally through regional strategies, networks and partners; artistic decisions informed by environmental considerations.

We have factored environmental considerations into our operations and strategic planning for many years, in recognition of our responsibility to lead through example and set best practice; in 2012, in association with the Association of British Orchestras and Julie’s Bicycle, we established the Green Orchestra Charter, to which all our partners were encouraged to sign up.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITION: OUR PROGRESS SO FAR**

**Operations**

Office systems

* We have maximised efficiencies for remote and home working through cloud-based IT systems;
* We minimise the need for printing and use of paper through Cloud storage, including a Trustee intranet where all governance documentation is accessed online – no hard copies are provided;
* We reduce the environmental impact of servers hosting our data through a regular digital audit to minimize cloud storage;
* We reduce online storage requirements by archiving large files no longer requiring regular access (e.g. project videos and photos) to physical hard drives / DVDs;
* Servers hosted entirely in EU and compliant with EU/UK environmental regulations;
* We minimise waste and landfill disposal by extending the life of our IT hardware until obsolete or failed, repurposing where possible.
* We monitor page weight on the OL website with a view to understanding our digital carbon footprint and whether/how this can be reduced.

Premises

* We have reduced staff commuting and minimized rental of serviced office space by implementing home working/hot-desking working arrangements; in 2022/23, 93% of desk-based work was home-based and only 7% office-based.
* The serviced offices where we have hot-desking arrangements both operate environmentally responsible practices, providing non-plastic cups and water refill facilities.
* Our ethos of place-based, community focused work has been reinforced by the organisational focus on a dispersed team, regionally based;
* We comply with Arts Council England annual reporting requirement by gathering basic data for annual submission to Julie’s Bicycle.

Staff and trustee travel

* We encourage carbon neutral travel by making the CycleScheme available to employees
* We foster awareness of the carbon impact of personal travel choices by staff and trustees by supporting greener options in our expenses policies;
* We gather data to monitor the impact of such policies and the trend towards increasing train mileage regarding governance and project delivery;
* We assess whether meetings with partners require in person attendance or can be conducted virtually;
* We use our two office bases to host hybrid in-person/virtual meetings to reduce the need for long-distance travel;
* Our governance arrangements enable trustees to attend Board and other trustee meetings remotely to reduce long distance travel.

**Programme delivery**

* We are a national organisation delivering work through regional networks to deliver impact for communities at a local level;
* Our activities bring orchestral musicians to people where they live and work, rather than requiring people to travel individually to the orchestra, rationalising travel and logistics;
* We encourage efficient use of musicians’ time to minimise environmental impact relating to travel.
* We aim to balance environmental, artistic and social impact considerations in choosing orchestras and musicians to deliver activity;
* We work creatively in the digital space, as well as through live in-person activities, to adopt sustainable approaches to touring and promotion.
* Where artistically appropriate and in consultation with partners, we explore environmental issues through our creative activities.
* Where appropriate and in consultation with partners, we explore the potential to reduce printed material such as promotional brochures and programmes.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITION: WORK IN PROGRESS**

**Operations**

* Establish staff and trustees’ understanding of our carbon footprint to inform a strategic approach to actions within our control;
* Establish baseline data to gain a complete picture of our organisational carbon footprint –governance, operations and programme delivery – to inform targets for action and support transparency of decision making.

**Programme delivery**

* Develop a strategy for the role of digital production and distribution in supporting environmentally sustainable touring and promotion;
* Implement a collaborative approach to developing new ways of working that address environmental issues through partnership working, e.g. Virtual Touring Network
* Develop regional pools of diverse, highly skilled music leaders by extending our music leader trainee programme and integrating mentoring for locally/regionally based musicians with specific orchestral projects to support sustainability.
* Develop a sense of shared momentum for change by gathering and sharing information about what works and best practice with partners across the sector;
* Reflect environmental considerations in our regional strategies.
* Demonstrating sector leadership in communications with our partners and through organisations such as ABO by adopting a transparent approach to knowledge sharing.

1. **OUR MAIN IMPACTS**

Our main impacts, in relation to the nature and scope of our activities:

**Operations**

* Buildings – energy use and carbon emissions in relation to single hot-desk space in each location and use of shared spaces.
* Office activities – use of materials and waste.
* Home working – energy use and carbon emissions
* Carbon footprint relating to current useage of online platforms
* Business travel – trustee and team meetings, fuel use and carbon emissions.

**Programme delivery**

* Buildings – promoter and workshop venues’ energy use and carbon emissions (not controlled by OL)
* Orchestral productions – orchestra travel, production materials use and waste;
* Business travel – OL Producers’, CEO and other occasional staff travel to partner meetings and events, fuel use and carbon emissions;
* Audience and participant travel – fuel use and carbon emissions plus carbon footprint relating to current usage of online platforms for virtual and hybrid meetings

1. **OUR KEY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS**

Given the nature and level of our impacts, we have identified the following key environmental commitments going forward:

**Operations**

* Devise and implement a data collection plan to provide operational carbon footprint and set metrics for improvement.
* Provide carbon literacy training for all staff and trustees.

**Programme delivery**

* Communicate with delivery partners to convey our environmental policy ambitions and assess their alignment.
* Hold conversations with partners to embed considerations about environmental responsibility in programme and project planning.
* Survey orchestra partners – formally or in conversation - to find out the steps they are taking and any data collection.

1. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Environmental Responsibility Working Group, with recommendations to be considered by the Board.

Trustees and staff are collectively responsible for implementing the spirit and commitments covered in the policy throughout Orchestras Live’s activities and operations.

The Board lead is: Tony Stoller

The Staff lead is: Nancy Buchanan

1. **ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN**

The Environmental Responsibility Working Group has developed an Action Plan, which has been approved by the Board.

The Environmental Responsibility Working Group monitors progress against objectives, 6 monthly, reporting end of year data to the Board

The Policy and Action Plan are reviewed and updated annually by the CEO, General Manager and Environmental Responsibility Working group and brought to the full Board for approval.

*Reviewed November 2023*