



WITHOUT WALLS ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY 2025 - 2027

WHO WE ARE

Without Walls is a pioneer and trailblazer of exceptional outdoor art. By forging and spearheading a network of cultural organisations and festivals, we work in partnership to commission, co-create, and share outdoor work with communities across the country, and ensure onward touring nationally and internationally.

We exist to innovate artistic approach, collaborative working, financial sustainability, and inclusive practice. Working with artists, producers, and presenting partners, we collectively enable the outdoor arts scene to realise its full potential and operate as a global leader in the industry.

Without Walls nurtures established and emerging talent through professional and creative development opportunities and training. Through our Artistic Directorate, we provide R&D funding and commissions for a broad range of artists including those who identify as being deaf, disabled, neurodivergent and from the Global Majority, all of whom are underrepresented in our sector. We are driving positive change and committed to improving the representation of diverse cultural leaders in outdoor arts.

Through our Touring Network Partnership and Creative Development Network, we provide advice,

guidance, and strategic support to festivals of all scales, from grassroots to mid- and large-scale presenting partners, together strengthening the national infrastructure and creating a platform for ongoing touring work.

Our approach to inclusive practice, commissioning of diverse artists, and our network of festival partners in areas of low cultural provision, enables us to bring free-to-access relevant, high-quality creative experiences to some of the most under-served communities in the country. In doing so, Without Walls seeks to democratise access to culture, and enable great art to build a strong sense of connection, identity and belonging. We are funded by [Arts Council England](#) as a National Portfolio Organisation.



ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Environmental Responsibility is a core value at Without Walls, and we are committed to embedding sustainable practices across our activities and initiatives.

As a network of 35+ festivals, we work actively with partners, artists, arts organisations and sustainability specialists to explore innovative ways of creating and touring outdoor arts that are low carbon and low waste, contributing to a more sustainable society.

We recognise that we are in a state of global climate crisis, and believe that we have a duty to act as a socially and environmentally responsible organisation. Innovation is embedded in everything we do, and

ambition towards continuous learning and improvement drives our work around environmental responsibility.

We also recognise that the impact of climate change is already being felt by partner festivals, artists and audiences, and we are committed to supporting our network to adapt to a changing climate with resilience and creativity.

The scale and diversity of our activities, and of our networks, provide us with the opportunity to inspire and encourage positive action on environmental sustainability among our partners, artists and the wider outdoor arts sector.

We place a strong emphasis on supporting artists to create work that is ambitious and groundbreaking, and that addresses environmental sustainability and social justice issues - inspiring audiences across the country and harnessing the power of art to encourage positive transformation.

OUR IMPACTS

Identifying and understanding the impact of Without Walls' business activity is the first step in planning action to reduce any negative environmental outcomes as far as practicable. We monitor and measure our impact in various different areas.

Our Office

We work in a 19th century cotton mill in Ancoats, Manchester, called Waulk Mill. The building was restored in 2003, refurbished in 2024 and is now a co-working space. We occupy six of the 161 desks across the workspace. We share meeting rooms, phone booths and the kitchen areas with other members that occupy the workspace. Despite the age of the building, the landlord Urban Splash and organisation Beehive Lofts have made efforts to be more sustainable with the following measures:

Energy

- Energy-efficient systems, including sensor-activated lighting and smart switches, automatically turn off lights overnight.
- All lighting throughout the space utilises energy-efficient bulbs.
- Members are encouraged to practice energy conservation by turning off desk lights and devices when not in use.

Waste & Recycling

- Combined waste recycling is managed by the landlord, Urban Splash, who provides periodic waste handling analysis for the building.
- Printer cartridges are returned to suppliers for recycling where possible.

Procurement & Consumables

- Sustainable kitchen products are prioritised, which includes the use of bamboo cleaning products, refillable hand soap, and the avoidance of single-use plastics.
- Beehive Lofts prioritises local suppliers where possible.

We apply best practice in energy-saving procedures, reduce printing to a minimum, recycle and monitor our waste production, and include all of this in the induction of new team members.

Our Suppliers

Our sustainable and ethical procurement policy provides a framework that guides our actions in embedding sustainable purchasing within our processes and culture. It is underpinned by four core principles: social value, ethical procurement, supporting the local economy, and climate action.

When purchasing products and using services, we always consider:

- The supplier's location, favouring local businesses;
- Their environmental policies, including the materials used in their working practices and for packaging;
- The option of reusing or seeking alternatives to purchasing new materials.

When providing catering for our meetings and events, we always require our suppliers to be able to offer a meat-free menu (50% vegan and 50% vegetarian).

Our Travel

As a national network with over 35 partners, business travel is our major consideration, and the biggest contributor to our carbon impact.

To reduce our environmental impact, we:

- Aim at organising a minimum of 50% of our meetings and activities online;
- Apply and regularly review a travel policy for our team and our partners, which strongly favours the use of public transport over car, and which does not cover domestic flights, unless absolutely necessary;
- Closely monitor our travel and the travel of our staff and partners.

Our Partner Festivals

As a network of outdoor festivals, our partners and the artists they present are on the front line of climate change impacts, from heatwaves and flooding to unpredictable weather. We are beginning to monitor and understand how changing climate conditions affect the planning, delivery and resilience of outdoor events across our network.

OUR COMMITMENTS

The main areas of focus are:

Governance

In 2021 Without Walls formed the Environmental Responsibility Action Group (ERAG) which takes the lead on defining and monitoring our commitment to environmental responsibility.

Responsibility for monitoring this Environmental Policy and accompanying Action Plan lies ultimately with the Without Walls Board of Directors, to which the ERAG regularly reports.

Implementing the Action Plan, setting and monitoring of targets, and reporting on progress is led by the Without Walls management team.

Artistic Programme

Without Walls encourages artists and companies to develop ambitious and innovative work addressing issues relating to environmental sustainability, climate adaptation and wider social justice issues - in thematic content and/or in the process of production or touring. This includes considerations on how outdoor performances can respond to, and build resilience against, the changing conditions of the environments in which they create and present.

Skills Development

Without Walls is committed to improving the network's overall understanding of environmental sustainability in relation to touring and presenting outdoor work. We provide regular training and peer-learning sharing opportunities to network partners, artists, staff and Board throughout the year.

Supporting artists to explore potential models for reducing the carbon impact of their practice is a key priority for the network. Each year, supported artists receive specialist advice and guidance, to further embed environmental responsibility into the creation and touring of their work, raising their level of ambition.

Beyond reducing the carbon impact of practice, we are developing our support offer to include climate adaptation, helping artists and festival partners to plan for increasingly extreme and unpredictable weather, protect audiences and artists, and build resilient production and touring models suited to a changing climate.

Communications, Advocacy and Sector Leadership

Without Walls collaborates with leading sector organisations, groups, campaigns and initiatives to support and inform its strategic activity.

- We are an active member of the [Vision for Sustainable Events Forum](#), a growing network of outdoor events and businesses taking positive climate action.

- We regularly collaborate with [Julie's Bicycle, A Greener Future, Theatre Green Book](#) and the [Carbon Literacy Project](#) on industry events and training sessions.
- With our team being based in Manchester, we regularly take part in Greater Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (GMAST) meetings and activities. [GMAST](#) is a network of arts and cultural organisations across Greater Manchester working together to address the climate and ecological crisis.
- In 2021 Without Walls joined the Culture Declares Emergency initiative in [declaring a climate emergency](#).

Management and Operations

Every new member of our team and of the Board are required to be familiar with this Policy, adhere to it, and implement the actions outlined in the Action Plan, as it is relevant to their role.

Staff, Board members, partners and artists are regularly offered formal and informal opportunities of training and activities that focus on environmental responsibilities, latest research, best practice, guidance and resources. All new staff receive Carbon Literacy training.

As a small team, we share the responsibility of many of our environmental targets, and encourage conversation on the topic, and shared input.

Monitoring and Review

In order to better understand and reduce our carbon impact year-on-year, we monitor and report annually through Julie's Bicycle's Creative Climate Tools (CCT) in two key areas:

- The administrative function: reporting specifically on energy and water consumption, waste and recycling, business travel and accommodation;
- Beyond Carbon survey: capturing our environmental actions beyond data reporting.

This Policy is reviewed every two years by our Board of Directors. It is supported by an Environmental Responsibility Action Plan which outlines our key objectives and targets, and defines how and when we will deliver on our commitments. The Action Plan is reviewed annually by our Board of Directors.

For further information on our environmental activity and to see our action plan, please visit the [Without Walls website](#).

Next review: May 2027

APPENDIX 1: OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNEY

2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW becomes an NPO • First Draft of WW Environmental Policy and Action Plan • Dedicated budget line to support environmental activity • WW starts reporting yearly on its carbon emissions using Julie's Bicycle tools
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Green Champions introduced • Environmental Production Manager for the network appointed to support commissioned artists in reducing their environmental impacts and to produce a report on Mapping sustainability challenges in Outdoor Arts
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Literacy Training Session delivered by Julie's Bicycle • Delivery of the Without Walls and Wild Rumpus Creative Lab and Virtual Symposium • WW is invited to join the Steering Group of Vision:2025
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the WW Environmental Responsibility Action Group (replacing the previous Board Champion role) • Green Production Lab events delivered with Walk The Plank and 101 Outdoor Arts • Bespoke online workshops hosted by A Greener Festival and Theatre Green Book • Piloting the sharing of resources between festivals with the coordination of hand sanitiser stations across the WW network • WW joins Culture Declares Emergency initiative in declaring a climate emergency
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW successful in securing NPO status from ACE from 2023-26 • WW appoints a Green Production Manager to provide advice and guidance to artists in the programme to embed sustainable practices into their projects • WW and NNF create a collection of environmental sustainability video resources to support outdoor artists
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW continues to support artists through consultancy and training support • Delivery of the first WW Green Forum event at 101 Outdoor Arts • WW Team complete Carbon Literacy Training • Continued membership of GMAST and Vision 2025 Steering Committee
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW Sustainability Advisor delivers training and offers 1-to-1s to 2024 Programme and Blueprint artists • Behaviour Change and Sustainability training delivered to partners, staff and Board by Livvy Drake (Sustainable Sidekicks)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW Team plants 242 trees in Greater Manchester with City of Trees • WW completes a website server switch, bringing the carbon rating for it to B (higher than 70% webpages globally) • WW supports Lorna Rees to create a template Green Rider for Outdoor Artists
<p>2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW Sustainability Advisor delivers training and offers 1-to-1s to 2026 Programme, 2025 Blueprint artists, and selected festival partners • WW Festival Partnership Manager receives Carbon Literacy Training Facilitator certification • Carbon Literacy Training for new staff introduced in induction plan