Green Arts Initiative 2019

Annual Report

How the creative community is responding to Scotland’s Climate Emergency
Introduction

What is the Green Arts Initiative?

The Green Arts Initiative is a community of Scottish cultural organisations working to create a sustainable future for Scotland. Members work in diverse and innovative ways, finding ways to improve the environmental impact of arts and culture as well as addressing environmental issues through artistic programming, social engagement, and advocacy.

The Green Arts Initiative is facilitated by Creative Carbon Scotland, a charity working on the role of arts and culture in addressing our state of climate emergency. We organise events, provide resources, help connect members, and provide up to date information and support.

With the Scottish Government’s declaration of climate emergency and the largest environmental protests Scotland had ever seen, 2019 was a huge year for the green movement in Scotland. But with COP26 coming to Glasgow and crucial new strategies being set by the Scottish Government, 2020 looks to be even bigger. This report discusses what Green Arts Initiative members achieved in 2019 and our plans for 2020.

The Green Arts Initiative is an open-access community, free to join and participate in, open to professional, amateur, and community cultural organisations across all art forms.

As of March 2020, the Green Arts Initiative has 227 members, 38% of these are Creative Scotland Regularly Funded Organisations, and many are artist-led or community-led organisations.

Anyone can apply to join by visiting: www.greenartsinitiative.co.uk
Members work in a wide variety of art forms:

- **Literature**: 4.1%
- **Film**: 6.8%
- **Festival**: 12.4%
- **Multi-form**: 10.5%
- **Music**: 9.4%
- **Dance and Physical Theatre**: 6%
- **Theatre**: 20.3%
- **Community Arts**: 8.3%
- **Agency**: 6%
- **Visual Art**: 12%
- **Heritage**: 2.3%
- **Storytelling**: 1.9%
- **Film**: 6.8%
- **Festival**: 12.4%
- **Multi-form**: 10.5%
- **Music**: 9.4%
- **Dance and Physical Theatre**: 6%
- **Theatre**: 20.3%
- **Community Arts**: 8.3%
- **Agency**: 6%
- **Visual Art**: 12%
- **Heritage**: 2.3%
- **Storytelling**: 1.9%

Members are spread across Scotland and can be found in 26 of Scotland’s 32 Local Council Areas:

Where are there most members?

- **North East Scotland**: 16
- **North and West Scotland**: 24
- **Central Scotland**: 15
- **Edinburgh locality**: 100
- **Glasgow locality**: 61
- **Southern Scotland**: 11

Member locations:
- Numerous GAI Members
- GAI Members
- No GAI members yet
What are our members working on?

Members of the Green Arts Initiative are addressing environmental issues in a range of ways:

**Engagement**  
Outreach to audiences, artists, or other organisations

**Practical**  
Reduce the environmental impact of running the organisation

**Artistic**  
Programming work that deals with environmental issues

**Advocacy**  
Taking a stance on issues or lobbying for systematic change

---

Members most significant piece of environmental work:

**ACHIEVED IN 2019**

1. Programming work that engages with environmental issues  
2. Reducing travel emissions  
3. Improving recycling facilities and strategies  
4. Avoiding single-use items  
5. Improving energy efficiency

**PLANNED FOR 2020**

1. Reducing travel emissions  
2. Developing or improving environmental policies, plans, and strategies  
3. Improving energy efficiency  
4. Programming that engages with environmental issues  
5. Engaging audiences on environmental issues
**Engagement**

Examples of outreach to audiences, artists, or other organisations by GAI members

**ACHIEVED IN 2019**

‘We’re really proud of the Glasgow Seed Library which we launched last year.’

Centre for Contemporary Arts

‘We have held workshops in high schools, using music to explain the importance of Scottish wild plants.’

High Heels and Horse Hair

‘We delivered a large creative project looking at the hydroelectric scheme in the Galloway Glens area and also the larger elements of climate change and renewables.’

Upland Arts Development

‘Recycle Upcycle 3D, where we delivered a number of different creative workshops using waste materials and saved over 10 tonnes of carbon as a result.’

Rig Arts

‘This year we communicated with artists to take the train if possible to get here and walk or use public transport when in Aberdeen, while for longer distances we mostly used electric cars to transport artists locally.’

Sound Festival

**PLANNED FOR 2020**

‘Host a young person’s environmental summit in autumn 2020.’

Impact Arts

‘Raise awareness of the impact of rising sea levels. Encourage more local produce to be grown and eaten. Get over 1000 pledges for positive action. All to be done through creative engagement events as part of the EU-funded Start the Change project.’

Highland One World

‘To spend more time encouraging audiences to travel in greener ways, and publicly declare our green agendas via our website and marketing.’

Arika

‘To create a walking app that encourages more active travel.’

Art Walk Projects

‘We want to inspire, encourage and equip Scotland’s youth theatre sector to act sustainably. Ideally we’d like to host a basic climate awareness/literacy training workshop for the sector.’

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland
Example of how GAI members are reducing the environmental impact of running their organisation

ACHIEVED IN 2019

‘We changed to non-meat catering for all training events.’
Arts and Business Scotland

‘Simply changing to a genuine 100% green energy supplier’
Moniack Mhor

‘Hiring electric cars for a year instead of petrol’
NEoN Festival

‘We pledged to no longer fly within the UK, as well as purchasing a large number of trees to be planted in the UK to offset last year’s carbon emissions.’
Curious Seed

‘We have created a new show for which the structure will be transportable on public transport for the first time’
Mischief La-Bas

‘By purchasing in bulk, we’ve cut down on packaging used. Prior to this year we tended to purchase more frequently in smaller quantities, leading to more waste.’
Dundee Ceramics Workshop

‘Unlike previous years, which saw us travel to China several times across the year, in 2019 we provided our partners with one block of time in which we would be available for touring. This resulted in the company performing not one but four productions in one visit. Going forward, we are looking to build as much ‘regional connectivity’ into our touring plans as possible.’
Barrowland Ballet

‘Designing and building our ‘eco studio’, that has aimed to minimise its environmental impact and be an inspiring place to create our work.’
Rowanbank Environmental Arts Education

PLANNED FOR 2020

‘We are currently writing a new environmental policy and will be publishing specific pledges which directly commit us to goals in reducing our environmental impacts’
Pleasance Theatre

‘We would like to further phase out flights and move as close to eliminating all air travel as possible.’
Theatre Gu Leor

‘We want to take most of our events to local communities, reducing audience travel and enabling remote communities to enjoy top quality performing arts on their doorstep.’
SEALL

‘Our main goal is to be Scotland’s first Spektrix venue to fully implement e-ticketing.’
Traverse Theatre

‘Piloting adaptation measures including live video-calls with workshop participants who cannot attend Paragon events due to adverse weather conditions’
Paragon Ensemble

‘Completely replace all lighting within the museum to LED’
The Pier Arts Centre
Artistic
Examples of programming work that deals with environmental issues by GAI members

**ACHIEVED IN 2019**

‘In 2019 we commissioned two new works themed around the environment. Shiori Usui’s ‘Colour of Drifters’ looks at the effect of plastics on our oceans, while Emily Doolittle ‘Bowheads’ is based on the Bowhead whale song.’
**Chamber Music Scotland**

‘Our ‘Elemental’ tour with fiddler Aidan O’Rourke and pianist Kit Downes featured a programme inspired by humanity’s changing relationship with the climate. This was our first creative response to sustainability issues and felt like a significant step forward.’
**Scottish Ensemble**

‘Our ‘Shared Planet’ strand interrogated current environmental challenges in the face of growing climate chaos and explicitly encouraged audiences to explore how we move beyond awareness to meaningful action.’
**Take One Action Film Festival**

‘Continuing to support the long-term project CLIMAVORE: On Tidal Zones with Cooking Sections offers ways to imagine futures, and proactively respond to the ecological challenges we face together.’
**ATLAS Arts**

**PLANNED FOR 2020**

‘Programming of ‘Whoosh’ - new dance and music piece connected with Hydro power (including live streaming)’
**Paragon**

‘To create an outdoor show about climate change for a family audience that is inspiring, truthful and brilliant!’
**Rowanbank Environmental Arts Education**

‘Step change in our practice driven and motivated by a major arts project on climate change by young people from across Scotland.’
**Scottish Youth Theatre**
Advocacy

How GAI members are taking a stance on issues or lobbying for systematic change

**ACHIEVED IN 2019**

‘Organising a Climate Emergency day for artists in October 2019.’
Fife Contemporary

‘Work with national and international artists during 2019 continued our successful engagement with environmental agencies, farming, fishing, forestry, government, academia, local communities, and the creative sector.’
The Barn

**PLANNED FOR 2020**

‘Helping to sustain a legacy from the momentum gathering around COP26’
Take One Action Film Festival

‘Develop our work towards ending reliance on oil and its sponsorship of the arts in Scotland.’
Scottish Sculpture Workshop

‘To contribute as a strong voice to classical-music sector discussions around sustainability with both national and international peers.’
Scottish Ensemble

**The Green Arts Initiative and COP26**

COP 26 taking place in Glasgow in 2020 is a unique opportunity for arts organisations to advocate for wider systematic change as well as to engage with the general public. COP26 was the issue most frequently nominated by Green Arts Initiative members as top priority for 2020 and several members are already developing plans.

Being part of the Green Arts Initiative gives arts and culture organisations the opportunity to work together and provides a platform for collaboration with organisations beyond the cultural sector for greater impact.
What have members found to be the biggest challenges for their environmental work this year:

**Renting spaces and not having control of venues**

- Setting up a shared green team with other tenants to advocate for improvements
- Discussing sustainability with venues when making bookings

**Local travel and using public transport rather than cars**

- Sharing transport with other Green Arts Initiative members
- Designing shows to be resource-light

**International travel and avoiding flying**

- Working with local partners to reduce the need to transport materials
- Programming tours to maximise travel efficiency
- Using video-conferencing or live-streaming software

**Funding environmental work**

- Demonstrating financial benefits of green measures to board members
- Advocating for arts policy to offer greater support for sustainability work

**Finding staff capacity**

- Working with external experts
- Researching how to build green work into existing staff roles
- Focusing on one area at a time

Solutions suggested by members:

1. Working with local partners to reduce the need to transport materials
2. Programming tours to maximise travel efficiency
3. Using video-conferencing or live-streaming software
1. Sharing transport with other Green Arts Initiative members
2. Designing shows to be resource-light
1. Demonstrating financial benefits of green measures to board members
2. Advocating for arts policy to offer greater support for sustainability work
1. Setting up a shared green team with other tenants to advocate for improvements
2. Discussing sustainability with venues when making bookings
Join the Green Arts Initiative!

What does membership offer?

Resources: Guides on specialist sustainability knowledge tailored for the cultural sector and real-life examples in Case Studies written by Green Arts members.

Events: Sector and public-facing activities providing opportunities to connect with other cultural organisations and demonstrate your own Green Arts work, including the annual Green Arts Conference, Green Arts Day, and one-off workshops or webinars.

Networked Community: Opportunities to connect with and learn from other Green Arts Initiative members, publicise your plans, share examples of good practice, or participate in the Steering Group.

Support and Ideas: The monthly Round-Up compiles news, events, opportunities, resources and relevant knowledge articles, sharing these with the community’s Green Champions. We also offer 1-1 contact time and provide print and digital Green Arts Initiative branding.

How to join and participate in the community

Any arts and cultural organisation in Scotland can join the Green Arts Initiative, free of charge. In becoming a member, you commit to undertaking actions to reducing your environmental impact, nominating a Green Champion from your organisation, and completing an annual member survey.

Online registration is available at www.greenartsinitiative.co.uk

‘What’s the one most significant piece of environmental work we’ve done in 2019? Signing up to the Green Arts Initiative!’

Aye Write! Glasgow’s Book Festival
The Green Arts Initiative is an open-access community, free to join and participate in, open to professional, amateur, and community cultural organisations across all art forms.

Anyone can apply to join by visiting:

www.greenartsinitiative.co.uk