Groundswell ARTS

Growing creative communities

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND IMPACT ACTION PLAN

## 2026

# Groundswell Arts – Environmental Policy 2026

## 1. Introduction

Groundswell Arts is committed to nurturing creativity, connection and care across the communities we work with. This Environmental Policy sets out how we reduce our environmental impact while continuing to deliver meaningful arts experiences for children, families and educators. Our approach is rooted in the belief that creative practice can inspire more sustainable ways of living and working together.

## 2. Our 2026 Vision

In 2026, our environmental work is guided by four key principles:

- **People-centred** — We support staff, artists and families to take achievable, low-carbon actions that feel positive and empowering.
- **Community-led** — Environmental awareness is woven into our programmes, conversations and partnerships.
- **Creatively sustainable** — We use recycled, reclaimed and responsibly sourced materials, treating sustainability as an artistic opportunity rather than a constraint.
- **Open and evolving** — We share our learning, track our progress and review our policy annually, adapting as our knowledge and capacity grow.

## 3. Scope of the Policy

This policy covers our office operations, the creative projects we deliver, and our engagement with partners, schools and communities. While we do not own the building our office is located in, we take active steps to minimise the impacts we can control — particularly around materials, travel choices and operational behaviours.

Primary environmental impacts include:

- Energy and water use
- Materials and waste
- Travel (business, staff, audiences)
- Office supplies and digital infrastructure

# 4. Our Action Plan

Groundswell Arts will:

## 4.1 Materials and Production

- Prioritise recycled, reclaimed and low-impact materials across all projects.
- Partner with suppliers who demonstrate strong environmental responsibility.
- Reduce reliance on single-use items (e.g., glitter, lamination) and continue sourcing from organisations such as Wot-Ever Scrap Store.

## 4.2 Office Practices

- Minimise energy and water use within the limits of our shared building.
- Use recycled paper and digital tools where possible to reduce printing.
- Encourage consistent recycling habits and responsible resource use.

## 4.3 Travel

- Encourage staff and freelancers to walk, cycle or use public transport whenever possible.
- Promote sustainable travel options for families and partners attending our events.
- Reduce unnecessary travel through online meetings and remote collaboration.

## 4.4 Community Engagement

- Embed environmental themes into creative programmes, encouraging participants to explore climate and sustainability through art.
- Share our environmental values through workshops, events and communication platforms.
- Host at least one annual creative event focused on environmental themes, such as recycled-instrument Family Jams or Story Lab environmental storytelling.

# 5. Monitoring and Review

We will continue to build our capacity to measure our environmental impact. Each year we will:

- Collect data on energy, waste, travel and materials where feasible.
- Review progress with staff and practitioners.
- Update targets and publish our Environmental Policy and annual report on our website.
- Share progress with our community, partners and funders to maintain transparency and collective learning.

# 6. Working Together

Groundswell Arts recognises that meaningful environmental change happens through collaboration. We will:

- Support staff and artists with guidance and training.
- Encourage cross-sector knowledge sharing with peer organisations.
- Participate in wider climate and cultural movements where relevant.

# Groundswell Arts – Environmental Action Plan

The Environmental Action Plan outlines how Groundswell Arts will put its 2026 Environmental Policy into practice. It focuses on achievable steps that reflect our values: creativity, community leadership and responsible use of resources. The plan builds on existing commitments around materials, travel, office practices and community engagement.

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## 1. Materials & Production

Groundswell Arts has long prioritised recycled and reclaimed materials and reduced single-use items.
In 2026, we will strengthen this work by:

### Actions

- Continue sourcing reclaimed and recycled materials, including through suppliers such as scrap stores
- Review and update our procurement policy to prioritise environmentally responsible suppliers
- Eliminate all remaining single-use art materials where feasible.
- Increase staff and practitioner training on eco-friendly creative methods.

### How we will deliver this

- Request environmental credentials from all suppliers.
- Maintain our membership with organisations providing sustainable resources
- Promote creative reuse and low-impact making across all projects

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## 2. Office Operations

Even within a shared building where we have limited control over core utilities, we continue to minimise energy and water use. Environmental Policy

### Actions

- Reduce printing and continue using recycled paper.
- Maintain current low-energy practices, including switching off equipment and using long-life bulbs.
- Improve recycling through clearly labelled bins and staff reminders.

### How we will deliver this

- Encourage digital-first processes (evaluation forms on iPads).
- Run an annual review of energy and resource use based on available building data.

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## 3. Business Travel & Staff Commuting

Groundswell Arts encourages staff to reduce fossil-fuel travel and use public transport, cycling or walking.

### Actions

- Conduct an annual audit of business travel and associated emissions.
- Increase support for active travel through cycle/walker-friendly facilities.
- Reduce unnecessary travel through remote meetings where possible.

### How we will deliver this

- Collect staff travel data through monthly trackers or expenses.
- Update guidance for staff and freelancers on low-carbon travel expectations.
- Keep the office car for rare exceptions only.

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## 4. Audience & Visitor Travel

We recognise that families, teachers and stakeholders travelling to our programmes contribute to emissions.

### Actions

- Promote public transport options for all events and project venues.
- Provide clear, accessible travel information on event listings and communications.

### How we will deliver this

- Include sustainable travel prompts in booking information and newsletters.
- Work with partners (schools, venues, community hubs) to highlight local sustainable routes.

## 5. Community Engagement & Creative Programming

Groundswell Arts embeds environmental learning into its creative programmes.

### Actions

- Deliver at least one annual creative event focused on environmental themes (e.g., recycled-instrument Family Jams, Story Lab projects).
- Integrate climate and sustainability themes into family sessions, school projects and public events.
- Participate in sector-wide climate culture movements.

### How we will deliver this

- Use our monthly family forums to raise climate awareness.
- Align environmental messaging with key social media days or create annual campaigns.
- Share learning and best practice with partners and peer organisations.

## 6. Monitoring, Reporting & Transparency

We are committed to continually building our capacity to measure our environmental impact.

### Actions

- Collect data on energy, water, materials, waste and travel each year.
- Hold a mid-year internal meeting to review progress and identify improvements.
- Publish an annual Environmental Report on our website.

### How we will deliver this

- Use the data gathered in 2026 as a baseline for future target-setting.
- Include environmental impacts as a standing agenda item in internal meetings.
- Ensure all updates are accessible to staff, clients, partners and the wider community.

# Groundswell Arts – Environmental Action Plan (2026) with Measurable Targets

## 1. Materials & Production

### 2026 Targets

- **90% of all project materials** to be recycled, reclaimed or responsibly sourced (via Wot-Ever Scrap Store and similar suppliers).
- **100% removal of single-use decorative plastics** (e.g., glitter, lamination).
- Staff briefing to include recommendations for sustainable practices
- Use of the theatre green book for any theatrical productions

### How we will deliver this

- Request environmental information from all suppliers.
- Maintain membership with Wot-Ever Scrap Store.
- Expand recycled-instrument and STEAM-reuse project methods.

## 2. Office Operations

The organisation continues to minimise energy and water use within a shared building.

### 2026 Targets

- **Reduce office printing by 40%**
- **100% recycled paper** is used for all necessary printing.
- **Equipment switched off nightly and weekends** (maintain existing compliance)
- **Quarterly waste audits** to track recycling contamination and improve sorting.

### How we will deliver this

- Continue digital-first evaluation (iPad-based forms).
- Annual review of energy and waste data, where available.

## 3. Business Travel & Staff Commuting

Staff are encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport.

### 2026 Targets

- **25% reduction in car-based business travel** compared with 2025/26 levels
- **Annual travel audit completed by March each year**
- **At least 75% of staff commuting trips** are to be made via walking, cycling or public transport.

### How we will deliver this

- Monthly travel trackers or expense-based data collection.
- Maintain cycle/walking storage or facilities.
- The office car is used only in rare exceptions.

## 4. Audience & Visitor Travel

Audience travel has a high carbon impact and is difficult for Groundswell Arts to control, though public transport is promoted.

### 2026 Targets

- **Public transport route information is included in 100% of event communications.**
- **At least 50% of families attending large events** access sustainable travel information in advance (tracked via surveys).

### How we will deliver this

- Promote public transport routes for all projects.
- Include travel prompts in booking emails and newsletters.

## 5. Community Engagement & Creative Programming

Environmental themes are already embedded in Story Lab, Family Jams and other programmes.

### 2026 Targets

- Deliver **one major environmental-themed creative event or session per year**
- Integrate climate/sustainability themes into **at least 25 percent of all education and family programmes**.
- Publish **four environmental awareness posts per year** tied to relevant social media days. Policy
- Participate in **at least two cross-sector learning exchanges** per year.

### How we will deliver this

- Use monthly forums to share climate awareness.
- Link programmes with wider cultural climate movements.

## 6. Monitoring, Reporting & Transparency

The organisation annually reviews its environmental impact and publishes results.

### 2026 Targets

- **The Annual Environmental Report** is produced each December
- **Mid-year environmental progress meeting each July.**
- Collect and track data on energy, water, waste, materials, business travel and audience travel.
- Use 2026 data to create a **new baseline for 2027–2030 carbon-reduction targets.**
- **Work and report to Julie's Bicycle**

### How we will deliver this

- Make environmental impacts a standing item in internal meetings.
- Nominated environmental impact trustee (Sarah Crompton)
- Share updates with staff, partners and communities through digital channels.