

Primary

Environmental Policy 2022-2023

Updated – January 2023

Review date – January 2024

Who We Are

Primary is an artist-led contemporary visual arts charity housed in a characterful Grade II listed former school. Our mission is to commission, produce and present art exploring ideas that affect change. We are a dynamic space for creative research, new work, and collaboration, expanding who is involved in making art and connecting the local to the global.

Our site and mission promote a symbiotic ecology, a unique environment for creative research where the value that we collectively produce is much more than the sum of its parts. We provide studios, strategic development for artists and a free public programme of commissions and events. We are home to 50 artists from a broad range of critically engaged visual arts practice, workshops including clay, weave, and design, our outdoor and gardens spaces, 3 independent galleries, a bookshop, and the award-winning Small Food Bakery. Together we are an integral part of our locality and ensure that the communities around us feel involved in our work.

In 2020 we reached a significant milestone, securing the freehold of our site to ensure the long-term sustainability of our vision. We continue to transform this Victorian building into a valuable cultural resource through first-stage capital refurbishment, ensuring that we are increasingly sustainable, accessible, welcoming and able to meet the needs of our different communities of interest.

Our work over the last 10 years has enabled us to gain a detailed understanding of local needs and respond thoughtfully to the daily lived experiences of communities. Our approach is to invest in artistic research through participation and engagement, delivering a regular programme of commissions, learning and community events, and platforms for conversation and knowledge exchange. By employing a cycle of theory, practice, and reflection across all this activity, we create genuinely collaborative relationships between artists, audiences, and the wider community that surrounds us to further shape our work.

Our Ambition

Our long-term aim is for Primary to become a model for environmental responsibility – through our approach to strategy, site development, studios and programme. Developing exemplary practice around resource use, materials, travel, and energy; improving and greening our site; educating and inspiring through creative projects. Over the coming years, we are committed to reducing negative environmental impact of our activities and implementing cultural change in our organisation and beyond. This policy is an integral part of our business strategy and operating methods, with regular review points built in through our governance structure.

Overview of key areas for change

Building and Site

- Reduce our carbon footprint and negative environmental impact
- Green our site to increase biodiversity and water saving initiatives
- Create a better working environment and Improve visitor experience

Culture, programme and education

- Work with existing residents and public spaces at Primary to increase awareness on environmental actions, to reflect a commitment to change across the whole organisation
- Monitor the environmental impacts of our cultural production, from international travel, to exhibition installation, materials and wastage to benchmark for improvements
- Work with audiences and communities through programme, events and exhibitions, to provide education and resources to increase awareness, collectively reduce our negative environmental impact and develop understanding and advocacy around environmental responsibility and climate justice.

Our Goals for change

Acknowledging that some of the changes we need to make will take more time and resource than

others, we are planning for short, medium and long term changes.

Short Term

- Build on positive changes to our building (LED lighting, more efficient boilers) to further cut carbon emissions through reduction of energy use.
- Improving waste management and recycling.
- Improving and maintaining food composting facilities.
- Develop materials re-use store and workshop, connecting to other organisations in the city to reduce waste.
- Encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking to travel to Primary, for residents, staff and audiences
- Develop a sustainable production scheme for exhibitions, reducing material waste and increasing energy efficiency (e.g. lighting/projector usage)
- Install rain-water collection system as part of new garden development.
- Develop guidelines for sustainable suppliers – from materials to cleaning products to catering.
- Artistic and educational work around environment and ecology; developing hybrid and online programme.
- Environmental Sub Committee meeting quarterly incorporating residents, staff and Board. Group to look at further strategies to monitor and reduce our environmental impact, with a representative from the Board to be an advocate for environmental sustainability.

Medium Term

- Improve the insulation of existing building through roof insulation and windows improvements
- Improve biodiversity on site through increased growing spaces and planting for wildlife
- Expand networks to support work on Environmental Responsibility and increase positive impact in the wider sector - eg sign up to Gallery Climate Coalition.

Long Term

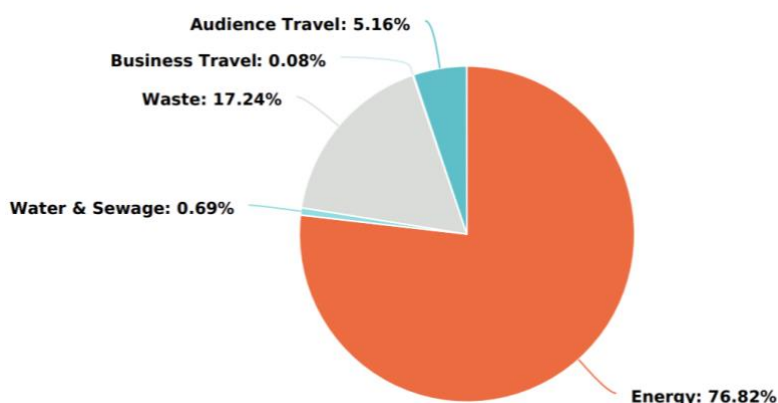
- Replace heating distribution system to increase efficiency of the gas boilers
- Explore the viability of wind power and solar panels
- Ensure environmental considerations are central to Capital Development Plan

Carbon Footprint

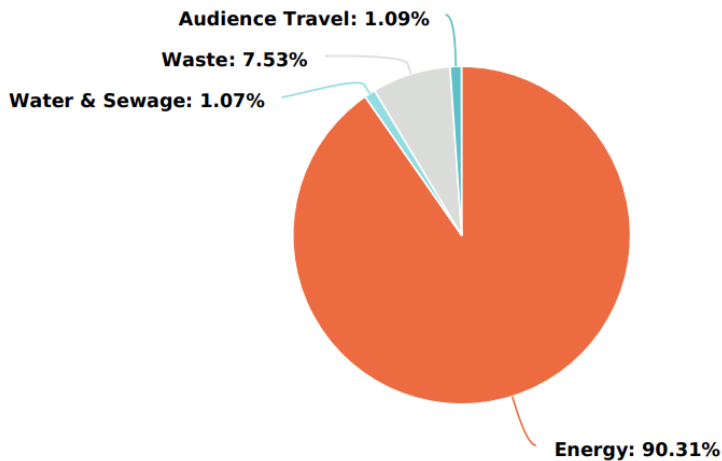
Primary monitors its carbon footprint year on year to examine ways in which it can save energy and reduce our environmental impact. We are showing a reduction in our carbon footprint over the past four years. In 2018-2019 our carbon footprint was 103 tonnes CO₂e, in 2019-2020 our carbon footprint was 76 tonnes CO₂e, in 2020-21 our carbon footprint was 53 tonnes CO₂e and we have further reduced to 45 tonnes CO₂e in 2021- 2022. Our audience figures for 2021-2022 have increased but the impact of Covid has still meant that numbers of exhibitions and audience visits have not reached pre pandemic numbers of visitors and business travel.

Primary Carbon Footprint for 2021-22		
Impact	Consumption	Carbon
Energy		34 tonnes CO ₂ e
Water & Sewage	1474m ³	310 kg CO ₂ e
Waste	32 tonnes	8 tonnes CO ₂ e
Business Travel	(reduction due to Covid 19 restrictions) 1071 km	38 kg CO ₂ e
Audience Travel		2 tonnes CO ₂ e
	Emissions Total	45 tonnes CO₂e

Primary's Carbon Impact 2021- 22



2020-21: 53 tonnes CO₂e



Main Impacts, specific to the nature and size of our activities

Landfill waste

With over 50 users of the building waste production can be high. We have our non-recyclable waste collection once a week, recycling remains at one collection per week. This remains the same as the previous year and indicates that improvements need to be made on recycling materials and reducing waste.

Electricity usage

Primary uses between 7300 kWh and 8000 kWh per month. To monitor and reduce electricity usage across the site we have installed timers on electric heaters and have discouraged the use of high consumption portable heaters.

In March/April 2021 the light fittings throughout the site have been upgraded to low energy LEDs, partly funded through Energy Innovation and Collaboration at Nottingham University, this also included the use of movement sensors throughout communal spaces. We are now seeing the impact of the change in lighting on our energy consumption, with a further reduction in our energy consumption.

Primary also changed electricity suppliers in 2021-22 to 100% renewable energy and has changed to a smart meter.

Loss of energy (heat) through lack of insulation

The nature of the architecture of the building and lack of modern insulation results in the inefficient use of gas boilers to heat the building. Heat is rapidly lost through the roof spaces and single glazed windows.

Gas Consumption

We use gas only for the central heating system in the main building during the coldest 4 months of the year. The gas boilers have been replaced in Nov 2020 and potentially will reduce our consumption of gas. The distribution system has not been upgraded and is still very inefficient, resulting in the boilers running for longer than necessary. We are considering the long-term viability of the heating distribution system and have included in the capital development plans a project to replace the system to be more ecological and efficient.

Audience Travel

The percentage of the impact of audience travel, during 2019/2020, to Primary's carbon footprint is high at 37.12%. Comparative data could not be collected during 2020/2021 due to Covid 19 restrictions. The effect of Covid 19 has still had an impact on audience numbers in 2021- 22 but numbers of visitors have steadily increased, with audience travel making up 5.16% of Primary's carbon footprint. Further information is needed on audiences, staff and residents on the impact of travel, and alternative transport options should be utilised, including public transport, cycling and walking. Improvements are to be made for the storage of bikes on site for visitors in 2023 with prospective funding from the Nottingham City Travel Grant.

Key Environmental Commitments

Reduce Landfill Waste

Work with users of the building to further reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill through more efficient sorting of waste on site and the increased use of composting of vegetable waste by working with Primary Gardens. Work with local people to recycle and pass on materials that are useful to others rather than send to landfill. Introduce guidance for the production of exhibitions / events to reduce material waste.

Increase Efficiency of heating

Commitment to improving heating distribution system to increase efficiency of heating and reduce usage of gas boilers. Improvements to roof insulation and repairs made to windows to reduce heat loss.

Reduce water wastage and improve recycling of water

Work with Primary Gardens to capture and store rainwater for use for cleaning and garden projects. Incorporation of rainwater capturing to any development projects in the garden. Any improvements made to kitchens and toilets to include water saving devices on taps and refiling toilets.

Reducing use of personal motor transport for staff and studio holders

A small car park is available for users of the building however we encourage studio holders', staff and visitors to use public transport, cycle or walk to Primary wherever possible. The car park is generally for private use by studio holders and the surrounding streets are permit or loading only.

Staff use public transport wherever possible to travel to and from work. Primary staff also have a flexible work from home policy and can attend meetings virtually to reduce travel. Staff are active in choosing to travel by train to participate in national research trips outside of the city rather than driving. Air travel is only used when train travel is not possible for long haul journeys.

Improvements to be made to bike storage area to encourage the use of bicycles. January 2023 Primary have applied for the Nottingham Travel Grant to invest in better bike storage for staff, residents and visitors. This application includes pool bikes for artist residents and staff to use. Investigation into bike sharing/purchasing schemes for residents and staff.

Further Environmental Commitments

Reducing the impact of audience travel

Using data collated from audiences to determine a travel reduction scheme for audiences – encouraging the use of public transport, walking to site. Improvements to the storage of bikes onsite. Investigation into the use of online productions versus onsite.

Working with local community groups / other Cultural organisations

Continuing working with community groups to increase education on environmental issues through programme, facilitating environmentally themed activities and campaigns. Develop connections with other Cultural organisations to share best practice.

Programme

Programming considers projects/events/exhibitions that explore environmental themes. This will also increase our public engagement with environmental issues/discussions and promote environmental policy. Events part of the public programme are also made digital or shared online for accessibility and reduces audience members traveling to Primary for an event.

Labour and materials

We will wherever possible use local labour and materials where available to reduce CO₂ and help the local community. We work with local roofers and builders.

Paper & Printing

We use one drive, online and digital storage, and sharing of files between staff and board. Communication with users of the building is through email to reduce printing costs wherever possible. We use risograph printing with vegetable-based ink for our newsletters and predominantly use social media and an email mailing list to promote our programme and news to audiences. Since October 2018, our Artists' studio contracts are digital, cutting paper printing significantly. Paper purchased for the office printer is from recycled sources.

Catering

We work closely with Small Food Bakery who use local and sustainable suppliers for all their ingredients and resources. For Primary events we use Small Food Bakery for catering and encourage outside hires seeking catering to do the same. This benefits local suppliers whilst ensuring minimum carbon footprint on produce. We use only biodegradable cutlery and vessels for serving food.

Maintenance & Cleaning

Where possible we use ecological alternatives to chemical cleaning products and choose brands that are biodegradable and non-hazardous to the environment. E.g., Ecover or Method.

Materials used as sourced as much as possible locally as budget will allow. From November 2019 we have subscribed to Who Gives A Crap to purchase toilet roll with a lower carbon footprint.

Choosing who we work with

Where possible Primary will work with local suppliers and contractors to reduce travel time/ energy spent. Helping to foster sustainable communities. Primary will also be mindful of future partnerships, choosing to work with people who with robust environmental policies and can be transparent about their carbon consumption.

Responsibility

The Operations Manager is responsible for updating and maintaining the Environmental policy. The staff team as a whole are responsible for reviewing the policy and the action plan as part of our team meeting agendas to ensure that the action plan is a live document and that we are working collectively to meet our aims and targets as set in the action plan below.

The Environmental Sub-committee lead on reviewing environmental policy. This should be reviewed annually or when the opportunity arrives to adjust the site through capital projects, which can contribute to reducing environmental impact wherever possible.

A new Environmental Group was established in 2022. This is made up of Primary residents, staff and board. This working group will look at further strategies to reduce our collective negative environmental impact, with a representative from the Board as an advocate for environmental sustainability.

On a day-to-day scale the Operations Manager is responsible for communicating with users of the building to reduce impact collectively through adopting better systems for recycling materials and reducing energy consumption. This policy will be communicated to all our Board and Employees and included in the Board Pack and Employee Handbook. Induction programmes will incorporate specific attention to the policy.

This document is accompanied by an action plan.