

GREEN GATE POLICY & ACTION PLAN

Introduction

At the Gate, we recognise that we have a vital part to play in changing attitudes and approaches to environmental sustainability and climate change. We are passionate about ensuring that our programming is underpinned by a recognition of this responsibility.

The Gate was founded in 1979 to present ground-breaking international work, and so the narrative around climate change is intrinsic to the work we make and how we run our organisation: global equality, conflict and the natural world are inextricably linked, and an essential component of a theatre company with an international outlook.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability has been a key element of our Business Plan since 2015, and the Green Gate Policy & Action Plan outlines our continued aspiration to keep our work aligned with local, national and international developments surrounding climate change.

In 2019, our 40th anniversary year we joined a growing global community of arts and culture champions and organisation in declaring a climate emergency and ecological emergency. The crisis compels us to imagine new possibilities and to propose systematic change.

Now, we are making a commitment to plan, engage, evaluate and measure our organisation's actions using the Theatre Green Book model – both looking at how we make our productions, and how we run our company operationally. At this stage, we are making a **preliminary commitment**, as defined by the Theatre Green Book, to move towards the **Basic** level.

- **Committing** to reducing our environmental impact, and starting the transition to net zero
- **Establishing** a Green Committee including a sustainability lead, a member of the senior leadership team, and a lead for each area – Productions, Operations & Buildings – and key staff members.
- **Agreeing** an Action Plan (below) setting out the steps you need to reach the next Green Book stage, and a timescale to achieve it.
- **Making** a Data Plan to set out what we are going to measure and who is responsible.

- **Setting** a Communications Plan to explain how we will share our targets and achievements, involving staff, partners and audiences.

Key Environmental Impacts

Our ambition is that the Gate must have an impact larger than its scale as a small company. Whilst we recognise that we have limited financial means and limited control of our buildings, we are committed to ensuring **our work contributes to collectively imagining, and building a more positive future, and a more sustainable present.**

We will continually reassess our environmental impacts across, energy, water, waste, travel and materials and we are committed to reducing the negative impact of our activities in these key areas:

- **Buildings:** fossil-fuel energy consumption, waste in our office, office and storage facility, supplies and services
- **Production:** fossil fuel energy consumption, waste generation and use of materials.
- **Office activities:** printing, IT, supplies and services, and office waste
- **Travel:** staff business travel and commuting, audience travel in terms of fossil fuel energy consumption
- **Artistically** - The role of telling stories that can either promote or ignore the context of climate change in all social, political, and economic debate

We acknowledge that sustainability is integrated into every aspect of our lives and that changing cultures, belief systems, and habits is hard and takes time. We also acknowledge that by focusing and addressing smaller problems, over time will instigate radical changes to the implementation of sustainable practices across all our work.

We calculate our environmental impacts in terms of carbon emissions. In 2018/19 the Gate's activities generated 12 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. Our energy use decreased by 18% between 2017/18 and 2018. Our water uses per visitor also decreased by 18% between 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Since 2023, the Gate has become a producing theatre company rather than a venue-based operation. As this means we cannot directly compare our impact to that of previous years, we are instead committing to measuring and agreeing a baseline for our carbon emissions using the Theatre Green Book. The team has taken part in Carbon Literacy Training (2024) and will be implementing these learnings across our office base and producing practice.

Our Commitments

Below are our core aims for our Green Gate Policy & Action Plan, which strive to promote and engage with the important reality of climate change.

- a. **Continually assess our ongoing position and to reduce our environmental impacts and carbon footprint as much as is practical, ensuring compliance with environmental legislation as an absolute minimum**

Over the last 4 years, we have invested time and resource in to reducing our carbon footprint and energy use. Often, the changes we make are small, but we recognise that over time, these incremental steps make fundamental changes to our way of working and on our impact.

To continue this journey, we will –

- Strive to move towards the Basic stage of The Theatre Green Book – committing to reducing our environmental impact, establishing a green committee, creating an action plan, data plan and communications plan.
- Calculate figures for end of year energy use, water use and waste of shared office space with Tamasha, New Earth Theatre and Paines Plough, using guidance from the Theatre Green Book.
- Explore and review opportunities to reduce and offset our carbon footprint, particularly when considering operational sustainability (overheads suppliers) and using resources sustainably in our Productions.
- Update our Green Gate Policy and Action Plan each year, including target figures for reduced energy use, water use and waste.
- Keep up to date with current initiatives and legislation.

- b. **Reduce waste from our activities and productions by increasing reuse and recycling across our activities**

As standard practice, we will -

- Encourage all freelance Directors & Designers to engage with the Green Gate and encourage directors to consider sustainable choices, and to promote this to the creative teams that they work with.
- Seek to recycle or re-use our sets and costumes through Set Exchange or other networks.
- Monitor our weekly waste and recycling, with the view to reducing our overall waste

- Use the Gate's Procurement Policy to ensure that all providers align with our Green Gate objectives to reduce their carbon footprint and endorse sustainable activity

c. Engage and train staff and our Board on environmental issues and sustainable practices

To succeed in our goals to become a more environmentally sustainable organisation and make climate change part of our daily conversation, our staff and creative teams must share a sense of investment and engagement with the issue. The General Manager spearheads our Green Gate action plan, but we ask the whole staff team to actively contribute to the success of Green Gate. We hope that when our teams move on from working with us they take with them a commitment to environmental sustainability and continue to implement the changes and steps that they began or shared with us, in the wider field and their daily lives.

We will -

- Make Green Gate an organisational priority that is spearheaded by Executive Director, endorsed by the Board and invested in by all team members
- Include commitment to Green Gate practice in all staff and creative contracts and inductions, with specific duties listed for key staff members, such as General Manager
- Include the Green Gate policy and action plan in staff inductions – encouraging staff to improve their Green practice across their working practice
- Include Green Gate in appraisals, so opportunities for training and development are explored
- Explore professional development opportunities – such as training or guest speakers – to motivate and inspire the team around Green issues
- Include Green Gate as a standing agenda item at the weekly staff meeting
- Include Green Gate as part of FOH briefings

d. Communicate with and engage the Gate's audiences on environmental issues

We ask ourselves and our audiences to think more about our place in, and responsibilities towards, our world and environment. Sharing our commitment and encouraging others to do the same will form a key part of our overall communications strategy.

We will -

- Involve Green Gate as part of our wider communications strategy – promoting our work and values around environmental sustainability
- Feature Green Gate on the website through regular features and articles on our blog, in our emails and on social media
- Display signage throughout the office and shared space, encouraging positive action.
- Each department to have a conversation about sustainability and lay out our principles across all audiences, supporters, and suppliers we work with, helping to broaden the conversation

e. Programme work that is underpinned a belief in the importance of equality, community and an optimistic imagining of the future.

We believe that theatre has the power to question and nurture a changing world, and to change the people who watch it. Our productions and our work will share a common theme: they will imagine a different, better future and consider our responsibilities towards our world, our environment and each other.