

Environmental Policy

Last updated: January 2025

Introduction

The Philharmonia Orchestra is aware of the role it can play in managing its environmental footprint and through leading by example in its work and communications, help to highlight the pressures that Climate Change places on our planet and in our communities.

As a part of our mission *to create the orchestral experience of the future*, we have the ability to:

- ... engage in conversations around climate and use our voice in collaboration with others to contribute positively to the cultural conversation
- ...programme work including concert series, new compositions and ancillary Insights' events that facilitate behavioural change in the orchestra, and ongoing dialogue with our audiences and communities.

As an orchestral music organisation, domestic and international touring is fundamental to our business model and financial sustainability. We believe music is a universal language that can cross borders and unite us to make the world a healthier, more human, creative and vibrant place. The Philharmonia's greatest area of impact is for our audiences - in person and online - who see, hear and experience our work. Our residency-based model - established in the UK for nearly 30 years in Bedford and Leicester - forges local connectivity that enables greater depth and breadth both of performance and outreach activity. Establishing international residencies is central to this strategy, becoming more than just a visiting concert performance, and ensuring that we can offer additional value where we tour, including our Orchestra Unwrapped concerts for schoolchildren and our VR Showcase experience. For example, the Philharmonia's residency at the Mikkeli Music Festival in Finland, established for an annual week-long residency for 4 years: 2022-2026.

Short- and long-haul air travel is fundamental to the success of these goals, and this policy therefore establishes the environmental **commitments** that the Philharmonia undertakes, and the steps that we will take to **deliver** these commitments under this policy.

Commitments

The Philharmonia commits to the following six environmental principles:

1. How we act on tour

Our players and staff will take conscious environmentally friendly actions when touring internationally, adopting a 'live like the locals' approach, requesting tour partners to provide access to running drinking water for use in reusable bottles, and in hotels to decline daily washing of towels/linen during short stays.

2. How we travel

Where we do travel - domestically and internationally - we will:

- a. Use more fuel-efficient transportation and prioritising direct flights;
- b. Undertake train travel wherever tour schedule allows and is possible;
- c. Consider the environmental policies of partner airlines or bus companies;
- d. Always use public transport, plus walk between hotels and venues, where possible.

3. How we Truck

Where schedule allows, we will use our own truck across the UK and Europe which is designed to take HVO fuel reducing up to 90% of net CO₂ and significantly reducing nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM) and carbon monoxide (CO) emissions.

4. How we Programme

Philharmonia

Our artistic programming will give voice and platforms to artists and composers (living and dead) who have engaged with nature and latterly the climate crisis, e.g. the Human/Nature series in 2021 and Nordic Soundscapes in Autumn 2024. We will develop plans for minimising the use of resources like water and energy and for reducing waste. This could include digital programmes, increased use of the Bloomberg Connects app, reusable water bottles for musicians, and careful planning to avoid excess food and material waste. We will look to reuse and recycle technical equipment, donating them to schools and local community organisations.

5. How we Partner

Where creating commercial, sponsorship, in-kind and philanthropic partnerships with supporters, suppliers and promoters, we will seek to include measures to mitigate environmental impact. For example, using 100% recycled paper for our print and ensuring that suppliers use environmentally sustainable supply chains.

6. How we Track

Data capture is fundamental to measuring the outcomes and impacts of the breadth of the Philharmonia's output, including this policy. We will capture qualitative and quantitative data in line with our partnership with Julie's Bicycle, reporting into Arts Council England.

Delivery

To ensure we meet these principles we will:

1. Maintain a steering group made up of players and staff who will review work against these principles and make recommendations where and when needed.
2. Create and maintain an annual action plan to align the organisation with the principles above, reviewed annually by the Board.
3. Review this policy every two years.

Context & Background to this Policy

We have committed to these principles because we believe that they are intrinsic to the work that we are doing both on and off the stage.

In October 2018, the Philharmonia took part in the first round of the Accelerator Programme (managed by Arts Council England and Julie's Bicycle), designed to help organisations advance their sustainable practice and share insights with peers and across the wider sector (October 2018-March 2020). Following the global pandemic and associated lockdowns, we paused our environmental work as we reverted to emergency work, to ensure our survival.

Following the recovery from Covid, the Human/Nature concert series acted as a springboard to re-engage with the climate crisis. We were able to work in partnership with Reboot the Future, a leading climate action organisation, to review policy and practice to continually refine the Philharmonia's environmental engagement.
