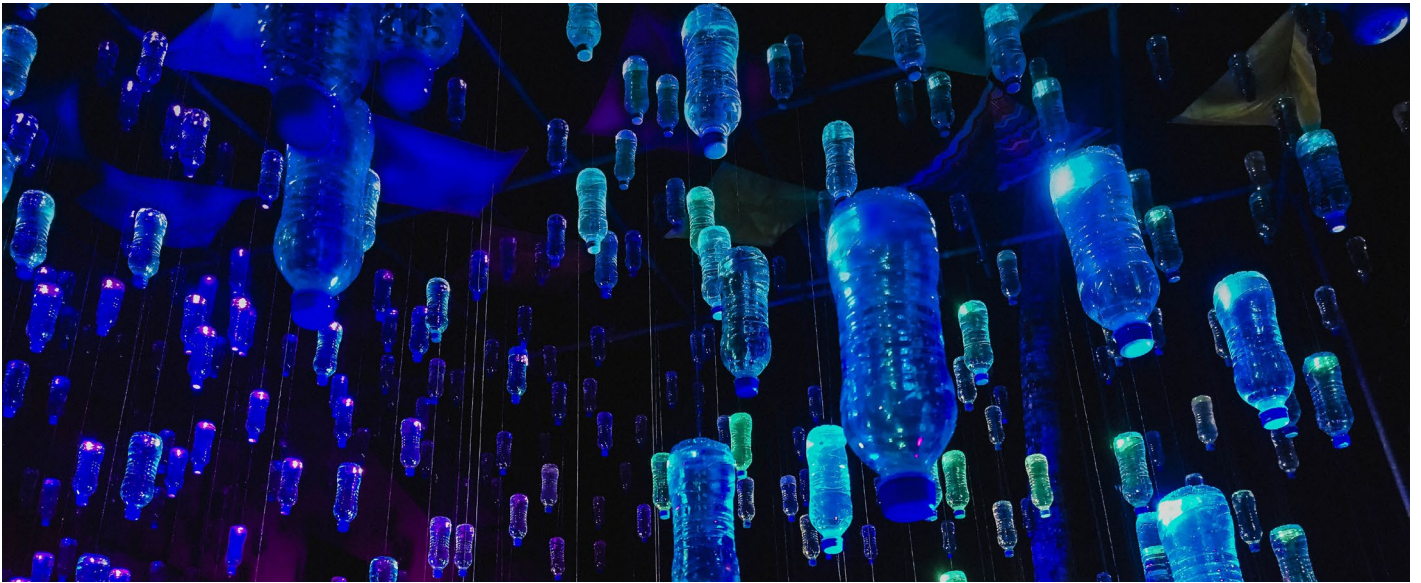


A SIMPLE GUIDE TO: MAKING YOUR CINEMA GREENER

Making your cinema more sustainable can feel overwhelming. There are so many things you can do to reduce negative environmental impacts and carbon emissions, it's hard to know where to start. But don't worry, everyone feels like this.



HERE IS SOME ADVICE ON BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY...

Grounding Work

When our approach to sustainability solely focuses on actions with tangible emissions reductions, it can eclipse the need for grounding work that addresses the emotional barriers to action: feeling overwhelmed, uninformed, apathetic, or stressed.

It is vital to invest in yourself, your colleagues and your cinema in activities that support shared understanding and make the task of 'sustainability' feel tangible rather than ominous! Often, when broken down, making your cinema more sustainable will align with stuff you're already doing or want to do.

Further, sustainability will look different for everyone. As a venue, you'll have to decide which activities to invest in and weigh up how it helps you navigate your environmental responsibilities and how it aligns with your values, staff, audiences, and broader community. Here's a couple of processes that can support this:

1. MAP YOUR IMPACTS

We can often feel 'prioritisation paralysis', an anxiety about knowing where and how to start when it comes to environmental sustainability.

Undertaking an **environmental assessment** helps identify where your biggest impact lies and provides a strong basis from which to choose priority areas to act on. An assessment can help track carbon and waste reduction which maps successes, and also provide evidence for funders.

Creative Carbon Scotland has an excellent resource called the [Quick Carbon Footprint Calculator](#), which allows you to calculate the emissions of specific actions to reduce your energy consumption, waste and water use. You can plug in data from metre readings or invoices to start capturing and understanding your workplace emissions. Further, regional councils often offer [free carbon surveys](#) attached to follow up funds,

which can help to understand your current energy use and pinpoint carbon hotspots in your activities.

Additionally, you can do a simpler brainstorm – ask yourself and your team which areas of your cinema feel like they have the highest environmental impact? And which areas do you feel like you have the most control over changing?

2. TRAINING

Ensuring you or your staff feel informed and empowered to act is vital for an inclusive and effective ethos around sustainability. Many creative organisations have identified [Julie's Bicycle Accelerator Programme](#) and [Carbon Literacy Training](#) as 'game-changers' in supporting sustainable action. Training helps disseminate responsibility across people with different roles and expertise, integrating sustainability throughout decision-making. It can help overcome capacity issues by supporting staff to understand how sustainability fits within their job roles. The process of having your training accredited and training your entire staff can be time-consuming. Luckily, Global University Climate Forum has made their training resources [public](#).

3. IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

You can't do everything at once – and that's okay! Take time to hash out what is possible - and don't be afraid to acknowledge some stuff just can't be done right now. From mapping your emissions and undergoing training, you can identify and prioritise actions based on achievability within the funding and capacity you have available. For those larger tasks – you can begin to think longer-term about what extra resources, capacity, and knowledge you might need to achieve them. From here, you can think about how the mass of potential actions can translate into short, medium and long-term priorities: and that's the basis of a climate plan.

For many of us, financing sustainability can feel like a massive barrier action – and taking the time for an in-depth reflection into what you can do, and what you would like to do, can start to break down that scary financial barrier into actions and direct costs.

4. ACTION AREAS

Buildings

Buildings are a key area for reducing emissions and energy use. For cinemas, energy use is dominated by heating, cooling, lighting, catering, and projection equipment. Good energy management can reduce

energy waste and save money. Reading and reviewing energy bills will help identify strategies to manage energy consumption.

However, changes to buildings are often the most expensive and require the most capacity to plan – especially if you are in a historic or listed venue. A great way to start is to consider what already needs replacing and ensure you are making the most sustainable choice. A practical example is replacing all lighting with LED lights which use 75% less energy and last up to 25 times longer than incandescent lighting, as the bulbs need replacing.

More substantial changes to a building can be super daunting, with the main question being: how the hell do we finance this? Whether you want to double glaze windows, insulate your building, install heat pumps or solar panels - [regional councils offer 'green grants'](#) to support small businesses. And remember - these activities will bring down your energy costs, saving you money long-term. With energy prices on the rise, now is a great time to think about your building's efficiency.

There are also more affordable short-term actions that support energy and heat efficiency. For example, installation of [reflective barriers](#) can reduce cooling costs up to 10% in summer or [DIY secondary glazing](#) for windows can substantially reduce heat loss.

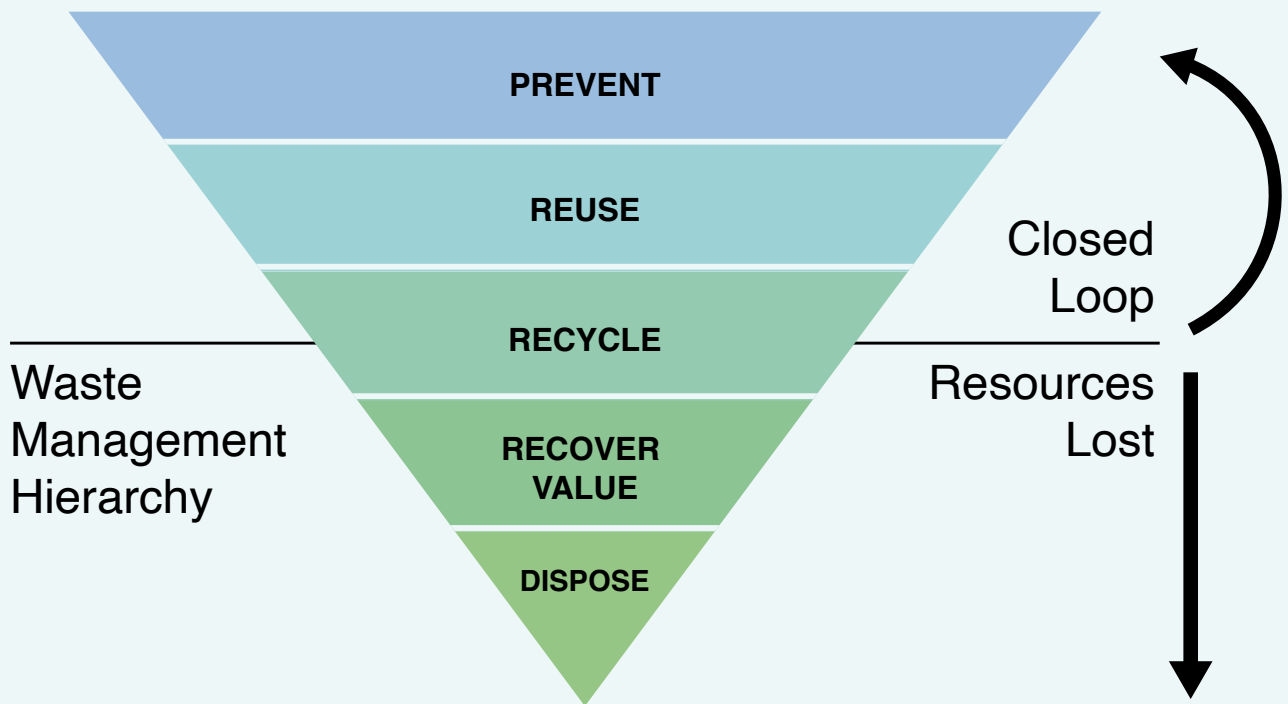
Digital emissions

Our digital carbon footprints are increasing, and there are loads of easy, no-cost ways to reduce your digital emissions which also support efficiency. According to World Wide Waste, up to 90% of digital data is not used – so implementing regular reviews of your data storage and archives can massively reduce your digital impact. For example, book out an hour where all staff must go through and reduce any unnecessary digital files and email archives.

Wholegrain digital has many brilliant resources which can help you understand and tackle your digital footprint including a toolkit for ['digital decluttering'](#) and a [website carbon calculator](#).

Finance

UK pension funds have an estimated £128 billion invested in fossil fuels, equivalent to nearly £2,000 for every person in the UK. Switching your pension to an ethical fund is one of the most impactful things you can do as an individual to fight climate change – and it only takes 10 minutes.



Most pension providers offer an ethical fund, which ensures you are not investing in companies that invest in fossil fuels, breach human rights conventions and labour standards, use or trade threatened species or engage in bribery and corruption. [Make My Money Matter](#) have plenty of information on their website to support you to make more sustainable choices with your money and illustrate how switching your pension is a small action with a massive impact.

Waste

There are many simple actions you can employ which reduce your emissions from waste. It's all about taking a circular approach, using the Waste Management Hierarchy: what waste are you producing and how can it be reused?

A great place to start is with food: you can donate surplus food and drinks by becoming a partner with [2 Good 2 Go](#) to help fight food waste and hunger in your communities which also invites people into the space. Offer free water refills to customers to avoid plastic bottles and free tea or coffee on their purchase of a reusable cup, and a discount on each subsequent purchase using the cup. For snacks like popcorn, offer reusable popcorn containers that can be returned after the film.

Many cinemas find themselves laden with old film promotional posters from distributors, taking up space and going to waste. Consider donating these to local film clubs, youth clubs or art colleges, supporting building relationships with younger audiences.

Suppliers

Supply chain emissions typically make up a massive share of a business' total footprint – but can be tricky to address. The best way to reduce emissions from your supply chain is to think through your purchases: don't buy anything if you don't need it, and borrow, hire and buy local where you can!

It's essential to consider the life-cycle of a product: where is it coming from, and can it be reused, recycled or biodegraded? This can be written up into a procurement policy to help with buying decisions.

[Big Barn](#) is dedicated to promoting local food producers and independent retailers, and access to fresh, seasonable, accountable food, reducing food miles and boosting rural economies. Their local food map can help you find local, sustainable suppliers that meet your needs.

Biodiversity

Beyond just reducing our carbon emissions, we must think about our cinemas as part of local ecosystems. You can do small things to increase biodiversity and green your local area – for example, identify areas that do not have much tree canopy cover that could otherwise be necessary to provide shade in summer and a habitat for birds. Creating spaces for wildlife such as trees, planters, gardens, living walls and green roofs positively impacts biodiversity and staff mental health. Connect with local conservationists, environmentalists, urban gardeners, and farmers to explore the best activities for your local area.

Cultural impact

One of the best ways cultural and creative organisations can influence public attitudes and value systems is through curation of exciting events and programmes which platform a diversity of experience, thoughts, and voices on the climate crisis. Through programming we can explode our impact beyond internal changes to opening up conversations and learning opportunities with our audiences and communities.

What works for you?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to sustainability, and these are just a few areas with some suggestions that might work for your cinema - you can find longer form guides on each of these areas at [Julie's Bicycle](#) and [ICO Green Cinema Toolkit](#). The most important thing is to make a bit of time to work out what makes sense for you now, with some longer-term more ambitious goals and how to get there. Being transparent, sharing your story and asking for advice is super important - more often than not, the barriers you are facing have been experienced by others. Guides and toolkits are helpful, but chatting with likeminded people who understand the nuts and bolts of your business is also an incredible tool for problem solving. The climate crisis requires collectivism over competition - let's work together to make change.

AUTHOR BIO

As part of Bristol+Bath Creative R+D, Zoe is working with institutions, SMEs, businesses and freelancers to explore pathways and processes which embed sustainability across the dazzlingly diverse creative sector. You can reach her at zoe.r@watershed.co.uk - she's always up for a chat!

With a background in climate justice youth organising and policy advocacy, Zoe has campaigned at the local, national and international level for just responses to the climate crisis with UK Youth Climate Coalition, Amnesty International and Climate Strategies. With a focus on climate reparations and support for climate migrants, she previously sat as youth representative on the UN Task Force for Climate Displacement. Motivated by the exciting opportunity at the intersection of the arts and environmental justice, Zoe is a guest climate editor for Shado-mag and co-founder of Lilith Archive.