

Made By Katie Green – Sustainability Policy

Our organisation

[Made By Katie Green](#) is a contemporary dance company specialising in responding to museums and heritage sites through dance, movement, music and writing. Our performances, workshops and other community events also take place in other kinds of spaces where people might not expect to find dance, such as libraries, galleries, caves and heritage landscapes. It is important to us that we are sharing what we do with people who may not ordinarily have an opportunity to encounter a project like ours.

We work with other artists who share our ethos to create detailed, beautifully crafted projects that can surprise and delight audiences and participants alike, and which invite discussion and exchange. We make work about what it means to be human, with a particular emphasis on developing people's awareness of/attention to the world around them, drawing out hidden histories and multiple perspectives. Our work often focuses on enlivening permanent collections, reimagining familiar spaces or well-trodden paths and uncovering surprising stories.

Why is sustainability important to Made By Katie Green?

The climate crisis is of the utmost urgency – it is having a significant, devastating impact on the world in which we live, and it also has a direct, personal impact on all of us (some of us more than others). It will go on to affect all of us, and generations after us, and the situation will continue to worsen if no action is taken.

We are a small company and it is easy for us to feel powerless in the face of such a substantial global crisis. However the initial work we've done trying to understand what small steps we can take has shown that there are ways that we can contribute to a hopeful narrative of change and to empower people to understand the significance of their individual actions.

In particular, we would like to use the platform we have as a dance company working collaboratively with partners such as museums and libraries – equitable spaces which can invite curiosity, questioning and a broad audience, including children and young people - to give people an opportunity to reflect on their role in, and their relationship with the world around them.

We are also in a position where we can model positive change through how we work sustainably in our own production and touring practices. We will continue to educate ourselves about the environmental impact we have through work with experts and use of tools that enable us to establish the carbon footprint of our work for example. We can use this information to work continuously to achieving the environmental targets outlined below.

Key aims

- 1. Creative response** - Exploring ways in which our future projects can draw out themes to do with the environment and the relationship that people have had with the world around us through time and the possibilities for this relationship in the future. Promoting access to and awareness of the world around for even the youngest audiences, developing their awareness of their power to make change gently and positively through story-telling, movement, creative play and linked craft/planting activities for example.

2. Advocacy, communication, joined-up thinking

The contexts in which we work mean that we have a unique capacity to engage in a very personal way with audiences of all kinds, including new audiences who may not have encountered anything like our work before. By continuing to work in venues that are freely accessible to the general public and nurturing relationships with new environmental partners, we want to create opportunities for everyone to be part of a movement towards environmental action, including children and young people and those who may not usually have access to outdoor spaces/nature.

3. **Modelling sustainable practice in our production and touring** – Committing to ongoing learning around our environmental responsibility and ways that we can continue to improve the sustainability of our production and touring, and using data to understand our environmental position more fully e.g. using carbon calculators as a decision-making tool for future production/touring phases, enabling us to better understand relative scenarios and their environmental cost.

Putting this policy together

In 2023 we began working with environmental consultant Danielle Pipe (alongside touring of our [Story Detectives project](#) in libraries) to develop our understanding of the responsibility we all have to act collectively in trying to prevent further escalation of the climate crisis. We are at the beginning of our journey with this work and have much more to learn. However, Danielle has helped us to undertake a review of our current position and start identifying a clearer plan for the future.

Measures we have already taken to meet our aims

Here are the highlights:

1. **Attending training; learning from experts**
2. **Opening up discussions with partners and audiences**
3. **Working towards energy efficiency and working with renewable energy**
4. **Keeping our work as compact, low-tech and self-managed as possible, with a focus on using what we do to draw attention to or enhance the existing features of the spaces where we work.**
5. **Using less**
6. **Recycling and repurposing**
7. **Travelling only where necessary**
8. **Enabling hyper-local access to high quality arts activity**

In more detail:

Advocacy, communication, joined-up thinking

Our Story Detectives project from 2022/23 represented our first opportunity to try out what it could mean to use our practice as a forum for raising questions about the environment and encouraging people to think about the future in a positive, hopeful way.

What happened?

- We attended 3 training sessions with Danielle Pipe, providing an overview of Climate Awareness and Sustainable Production, and Policies and Action Plans; also linking us to Case Studies and models of best practice
- Sustainability became a part of our initial conversations with project partners. We let them know about our own work developing our Environmental Policy, and shared a link to the [Green Libraries Manifesto](#) that had inspired our project planning. We asked questions about the libraries' sustainability policies and local organisations with which they had collaborated on environmental activities in the past.
- We also started to introduce opportunities for discussion about the environment with our audiences as part of our planning for a new work for libraries responding to nature and the world around us, including asking questions in our post-show surveys about what audiences thought was most important/cared about most in terms of the environment at the moment, and facilitating drawing activities with the children after our performances which encouraged them to draw the world they imagined in the future for example.

Modelling sustainable practice in our production and touring

Energy use

- We do not have a permanent base or designated studio we hire for our business activities. The majority of the administrative work linked to running the company takes place from home, where we have put in place measures to ensure energy efficiency e.g.
 - Installing energy efficient lighting
 - Installing half-hourly electricity meters
 - Using a Green energy provider producing 100% of their electricity from renewable sources.
 - We have some rainwater harvesting systems in place
 - We recycle and collect organic waste
 - We have taken steps to eliminate single use plastic
- Rehearsal and touring takes place in spaces that we hire or where we are commissioned to work, including village halls, dance studios, libraries, museums, galleries, heritage sites. We want to work towards collaborating with venues also committed to energy efficiency and using renewable energy, but do not have direct control over this. At this time our priority is to open up conversations with our partners about these concerns and find out more about their position and what they are doing to increase sustainability.
- Performances generally take place within the normal opening hours of these venues meaning there is no additional requirement for venues to stay open/keep lights or heating on beyond usual opening times.
- We aim to rehearse locally to the company base where possible, primarily working with dancers who are also based locally to the company base, except where there are specific reasons for working with someone who lives further afield. See below for our policy on travel to rehearsal and performance.
- We are also working towards doing more work in open, outside spaces such as gardens and heritage landscapes.
- As articulated through many of the points below, our approach to touring our work to community/general public spaces is to keep it as compact, low-tech and self-managed as possible, with a focus on using what we do to draw attention to or enhance the existing

features of the space. This means our show power is negligible, and we aim to not add to the energy consumption of the venues within which we do our performances by keeping everything within general opening hours where possible.

- We bank with the Cooperative Bank, a fossil-free certified bank (see https://bank.green/banks/the_co_operative_bank for more information).

Materials and use

We try to employ sustainable production and performance methods e.g.

Using less

- Working in sites like museums and libraries which already bring extensive visual interest means we can use less in the design of our productions, focusing instead on drawing attention to the unique features of each site.
- We deliberately try to limit materials – keeping tech equipment minimal, and trying to ensure all set/kit can fit into one energy efficient car, so we don't need to use a second vehicle on tour.
- We take care of our costumes and design elements and invest in good quality materials – we then mend, re-dye, patch and repaint for example to make them last as long as possible. We rarely have to dispose of items (except for shoes, see below), and where we do so they are recycled wherever possible.
- We try to spend money on performance shoes so they last longer, as they need to hold up against extensive repetitive use, sometimes on challenging surfaces.

Using recycled materials

- Any costumes, props or set elements are made from recycled materials where possible.
- Flyers/posters, and any wrap-around items like Activity Packs are printed on recycled paper where possible – and wherever feasible we aim to prioritise online marketing materials, adding our events to existing listings and 'What's On' guides and other ways of generating interest in the project such as through trailers or pilots/taster events.

Re-using and re-purposing

- Where possible, we re-use/re-purpose items as part of the design of our production e.g. sourcing books to use in The Story Detectives (school version) from a local library, because they had gone out of circulation in the library itself.

Disposal/storage/reuse

- As noted above, we recycle and collect organic waste and have taken steps to eliminate single use plastic.

Travel and transport

- In 2023, we began to use carbon footprint calculation tools to familiarise ourselves with how they work and to collect benchmarking data for our production and touring against which we can track changes in the future. We discovered that approximate carbon footprint of our Story Detectives touring from 2022-23 (with 19 libraries across the South East and South West) was 1 tonne, with accommodation and personnel travel (particularly travel by car) being the key contributing factors.

- The main purpose of bringing our work into unusual spaces is so it can be encountered in-person by a broad audience, including those who might not usually access something like this. We believe that the feedback we get about people’s perception of the value of what we do and the positive impacts we have seen (e.g. in terms of bringing in new audiences, as well as participants’ personal and social outcomes) evidence its importance. In order to work in this way, we have to undertake some travel e.g. because our performances need to take place in person, and in order to build trust, prepare fully with our partners and minimise rehearsal time we sometimes need to undertake site visits in advance. This also means we need to use some accommodation. We focus our production time and the majority of our performances primarily in the South West and South East of the UK in order to minimise need for accommodation, but on occasion perform in other locations around the country in order to share our work more broadly.

Recognising that travel and accommodation are our key contributors to our carbon footprint at this time, our key policy is to travel **only where necessary**:

- Grouping reasons for travel (e.g. when meeting a new community group, undertaking a site-visit or transporting something to a partner venue for example) to minimise repeated journeys
- Aiming for public transport and car-sharing where possible
- Aiming for low tech production where possible to support public transport being a valid touring alternative and ensuring we do not require any transport hire to tour our work. Where necessary for transporting props/set/kit/costumes, we use one car travelling to rehearsals and on tour. It is an energy efficient car but not electric – this is something we will look to change in the future when it becomes more feasible financially.
- Working with local partners to create opportunities for audience members to access high quality performance a short distance from where they live. We provide information about public transport options to get to our performance venues in the form of online access guides linked to each performance. In the future, we would like to find ways to be more proactive in encouraging active transport to our events such as walking and bike riding.

What would we like to do in the future?

Drawing on everything we have learned over the past year, we would like to focus our environmental work in the future on:

1. Our creative response

Our company projects often focus on the ways in which people through history have responded to the world in which we live. Our work is very often aimed at children and families, and often includes some element of interactivity where we pose questions to the audience and encourage people to think about the future and their place within it.

We would like to explore ways in which our future projects can draw out themes to do with the environment and the relationship that people have had with the world around us through time and the possibilities for this relationship in the future.

We are planning to do this through 2 projects in the first instance, subject to funding.

The first – which has the working title ‘**Seed**’ – will be designed for libraries and community centres. We want to make and tour a new dance work called ‘Seed’ aimed at children aged 18 months to 4

years old and their families. We will also explore possibilities to offer weekly dance/story-telling sessions at libraries, beginning with reading a book together which relates to nature or the world around us, and then moving into creative dance activities based on the story, followed by time for families to socialise, meeting others in their local community.

The second, '**A Gathering Place**', will bring to life the story of heritage landscapes through dance, story-telling and music, focusing particularly on any visible or invisible archaeology and highlighting the relationship between humans and the world around them through history. As part of this we'll consider the story of the land, the way it has been shaped by human activity, and what nature has done/is doing to reclaim the land. We want to work with communities to create trails through local landscapes that culminate in live performances, archaeologist talks and creation of audio-guides that people can access independently.

Additionally we would like to develop a new Environmental Policy and Action Plan for [The Imagination Museum dance/heritage network](#) if we're able to secure funding to start developing the network in 2023.

2. Advocacy, communication, joined-up thinking

Having started to educate ourselves about our environmental responsibility, we have been struck by how challenging it is to find out key information about the climate picture without specialist guidance and we want to create spaces and opportunities for people to have conversations about the environment, and make it easier for people to be informed about important ideas, their impact on the world in which we live, and what we can all do to create change. This will include:

Work with audiences and participants

The contexts in which we work mean that we have a unique capacity to engage in a very personal way with audiences of all kinds, including new audiences who may not have encountered anything like our work before. By continuing to work in venues that are freely accessible to the general public, finding ways to make our activities as inclusive as possible, and starting to integrate small but positive actions such as reading stories together about the environment, or offering planting sessions and other activities alongside our performances, we want to create opportunities for everyone to be part of a movement towards environmental action, including children and young people, and those living in more urban environments who may have least access to nature.

We have seen at first hand that just asking a question about the environment, within our performance work, in a post-show survey or as part of a drawing activity with children for example, will get people thinking - perhaps encourage a parent to have a conversation with their child, creating more awareness of some of the terms and ideas related to climate change or lead to someone articulating how they feel about the environment for the first time for example.

We want to find out more about what is important to our audiences; what they really care about in relation to this work.

Work with creative collaborators and partners

As well as audiences, we would also like to open up conversations about the environment with our creative collaborators and partners e.g. at the discussion stage of new projects, in planning how they will be designed and managed.

Environmental considerations will increasingly become part of our core planning and decision making, embedded across all company practice and processes e.g. and as part of our contracts and partnership agreements.

3. Modelling sustainable practice

We want to continue to learn about our environmental responsibility and the ways in which we can continue to improve the sustainability of our production and touring.

This policy outlines some of the key things we already consider when making and touring a new piece, but over time we would also like to:

- Understand more about the audience impact on our carbon footprint and ways we could work to minimise this by actively promoting greener ways of getting to our performances e.g. publicising local walking routes, travel information for public transport and any local travel ticket deals, or making the journey to get the performance part of the creative experience itself through creative maps and audio-guides for example.
- Look more to other industry standards/guidance (as they become available) as a guideline for ways that we can improve our creative production and touring practice e.g. [the Theatre Green Book](#) and [Ecostage Pledge](#).
- Work towards developing a ‘Green Rider’ for our productions, which could provide a more formal starting point for discussions with new partners e.g. about their commitment to energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.
- Find out more about other things we can do to make our work more environmentally friendly, e.g. offering vegetarian/vegan food at events; upgrading to an electric car when it becomes possible to do so.

Committing to ongoing learning

We will continue to educate ourselves about our climate position e.g. by

- **collecting data** that will help us understand the impact of how the company operates
- using **resources** such as the Julie’s Bicycle Creative Green Tools, and the carbon calculator
- **working with experts** and developing partnerships with environmental organisations locally and linked to our partners across the country
- and **attending training** for example to keep up to date with best practice and learn about new initiatives.

Our Action Plan 2023 - 2025

Aim	Activity	Outcome	Timeframe
Year 1 – 2023:			
Review current position	Training with Danielle Pipe	Updated Environmental Policy in place; to	Policy in place by end of October 2023

		use when communicating our aims with new collaborators and partners and when planning future projects	
Collect data	<p>Use information from 2022/23 Story Detectives tour to undertake an initial carbon footprint calculation</p> <p>Collect information from Story Detectives audiences about the distance they're travelling and how, their past experience of project like ours; likelihood of reattendance and some of their thoughts about important themes to include in a piece about the environment</p> <p>Planning discussions with partners about potential future works 'Seed' and 'A Gathering Place'</p>	<p>We will have a bank of data in place that we can use to benchmark our current position and start to plan the Creative Responses outlined above</p> <p>Data about our current position will be useful when identifying/communicating with new partners with whom we can work on finding and sharing solutions to environmental issues going forward</p>	February – July 2023
Clearer communication about what we're doing – beginning to report on our environmental work	<p>Add a blog post about our work with Danielle to the MBKG website, describing the work we've done so far</p> <p>Also link to the new Environmental Policy online</p> <p>Schedule online Advocacy Event about our work in libraries, including reporting back on some of the work that went into this policy</p>	<p>People will be able to get some insight into our environmental position by looking on the website</p> <p>We will begin talking with a broader network about this through an online advocacy event, contributing to us building our network of library partners for the future</p>	By end of October 2023

Year 2 – 2024:			
Nurturing new partnerships	Collaborate with other partners who will advise on environmental content and on ways to continue drawing a wide range of people into our work	New working relationships in place with at least 1 environmental organisation	By end of 2024
Development of creative work informed by the environment	Fundraising for a pilot of our Seed project for libraries, testing the work initially in Surrey and Hillingdon – including development of a performance piece but also a model for a dance/storytelling weekly session in libraries	Seed project pilot completed; gather audience feedback, images and film as well as future partners to enable further rollout	Jan- April 2024
	Deliver Seed project pilot Jan – April 2024, including testing ways of integrating activities such as reading stories about the environment and holding planting sessions Planning/fundraising for next phase of making A Gathering Place; discussions with partners	A Gathering Place creation phase, developing new ways of working with communities to co-create work	Sept 24 onwards?
Ongoing data collection	Undertake carbon calculations as part of the planning for Seed and A Gathering Place Continue to gather audience data about distance travelled and mode of travel	Building on data collected in year 1 to continue to track the impact of our work Using this information to shape current projects and inform planning for the future – are there ways in which we can be encouraging use of more active and public transport?	All year
Year 3 – 2025:			
Using documentation from creative responses in Year 2 to help us represent our commitment to	Look into examples from other organisations	Raising the profile of our environmental work	By end of 2025

<p>ongoing learning around sustainable practice on the company website in a more dynamic way</p>	<p>MBKG website upgrade? And add a designated sustainability page on the website</p> <p>Blog posts about the making of Seed and A Gathering Place</p>	<p>sharing our learning</p>	
<p>Further rollout of Seed and A Gathering Place</p>	<p>Securing partners for further touring of Seed in libraries and further rollout of the dance/storytelling sessions for Early Years children</p> <p>Training up local young artists to support the story-telling sessions in libraries</p> <p>First performances/installation of audio guides for A Gathering Place in up to 4 heritage landscapes across the country?</p>	<p>Increasing the reach of our creative work exploring the environment and world around us</p> <p>Building capacity within the team/offering training opportunities</p>	<p>From Spring 2025?</p>
<p>Bringing the environment into our core business planning</p>	<p>Talk about the environment in our artistic callouts and production information</p> <p>Including environmental requirements and objectives in key contracts for products and serviced</p> <p>Developing a 'Green Rider'</p> <p>Dedicated environmental budget and environmental lead</p> <p>Adding in further staff training where needed</p>	<p>Introducing more opportunities to have conversations an sustainability</p> <p>More open discussions with partners and collaborators about our ambitions and how we can help them achieve their own environmental aims</p>	<p>All year</p>

Updating this policy

We will aim to update this policy every 3 years or more regularly as we develop our knowledge and experience and are able to add more information.

Last updated, September 2023