

Environmental Policy

Glasgow Women's Library recognises that increased globalisation continues to have serious consequences and detrimental effects on global climate change and believes that individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions must have a clear focus on environmental issues to redress negative impacts.

Our organisation and collection is built on donations, and an ethos of sharing and lending is at the heart of GWL. GWL has always worked with an awareness of its environmental responsibilities and instils these values and working practices throughout its Board, staff and volunteer team. GWL is committed to minimising waste, working towards maximum energy efficiency, re-using and recycling resources.

GWL has moved into a new permanent home in Bridgeton, and we are working hard to adapt the building to suit our needs while also going green. Our new premises are in a Grade B listed building, so a balance must be found between protecting the library's heritage and reducing its environmental impact.

Our Green Creative Cluster, a team of staff, board members and volunteers, meet regularly to ensure that GWL is fulfilling its environmental responsibilities and find innovative, creative ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

Travel

Staff and volunteers (and learners) should always be encouraged to consider travel options which minimise carbon emissions i.e. public transport, cycling, or car-pooling if the use of a car is inevitable.

If possible and appropriate, video conferencing should be considered as an alternative to travelling to a meeting.

We will encourage green travel (by public transport, walking and cycling) by:

- Providing clear information about green travel in our Learning Programme, and on our website.
- Working towards providing a bike shelter on Landressy Street
- Maintaining our Cycle Friendly Employer requirements:
 - offering Next Bike hire to employees
 - refunding staff and volunteers cycle mileage and reviewing this rate annually
 - promoting cycling events such as Cycle to Work Day and our Women's Heritage Bike Ride
 - monitoring staff and volunteer cycling rates through the annual Big Count
- Offer at least one free Women's Heritage Bike Ride or Walks in each programme and continue to develop the learning activities promoting walking and cycling.
- Monitor staff travel for a quarter each year (in line with Creative Scotland requirements).



Suppliers and Equipment

As a public building with a busy programme of events, space hires and increasing library use, we require various supplies and equipment in order for the library to function efficiently. To find a balance between the standards our staff and visitors expect and the environmental impact we will:

- Engage in dialogue with our regular suppliers to look at possible ways of minimising waste and emissions.
- Group orders and order in bulk in order to reduce the number of deliveries.
- Use Fair Trade suppliers.
- Consider local suppliers first and try to balance price, quality and sustainability.
- Purchase equipment and materials that are second hand or recycled (including paper and furniture).
- Where possible and practical, borrow equipment or furniture required for events from other organisations.
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products where possible in the library.
- At catered internal events, provide vegan and vegetarian food only.

Printing and office equipment

- All electronic equipment should be switched off when not in use.
- At the end of the working day, the last staff member to leave the office should check equipment to ensure that all computers are shut down and all printers are switched off, unless otherwise labelled.
- Double-sided printing and multiple pages per sheet are to be used whenever possible to minimise paper and ink usage, and documents and correspondence should only be printed when strictly necessary.
- Avoid printing in colour.
- Use paper free systems such as Dropbox and electronic documents where possible.

Utilities and Energy Efficiency

- Utilise E-billing services where they are offered by utility suppliers to save paper wastage.
- Only heat and light spaces when they are in use. This policy is enforced by all library staff.
- Investigate the use of motion sensor lighting for areas such as corridors, toilets and cupboards.
- Continue to use a Building Management System in order to schedule the heating system to run only during the times it is required, and adapt the set points as required throughout the year.
- Monitor our use of electricity, gas and water usage and undertake an energy audit of the building to help identify and prioritise ways of lowering emissions and waste.



- Use energy efficient lighting and energy saving devices where possible.
- Investigate costs associated with servicing and potential replacement of temperature sensors.
- Investigate the use and benefits of sub-meters in different zones of the building.

Working with other Organisations, Artists or Creatives

We will highlight our Environmental Statement to all partners (whether individuals or organisations) and work with them to minimise the carbon emissions linked to their work with us by:

- encouraging them to travel to GWL according to our guidelines on travel
- video conferencing where possible
- using recycled or environmentally friendly products and materials, and minimising waste as much as possible

Organisations (whether partners or not) displaying leaflets or brochures at GWL will be asked to leave no more than required.

We will always aim to work with sponsors and organisations that align with our environmental ethos.

Hires

When hiring out our space for use by other organisations, we will highlight our environmental policy and ask that all visitors follow our guidelines while using our venue. We will also:

- Use a local caterer.
- Provide mugs and cups for events over disposable take-away cups.
- Aim to provide food that does not require disposable cutlery, and use recyclable paper plates.
- Provide information on green ways to travel to our building.
- Minimise food waste by under-ordering for free events, and providing take away containers for left overs.
- Encourage orders of vegetarian and vegan food.

Waste

Waste is unavoidable in this type of working environment, but we are taking as many steps as possible to minimise our waste or ensure it finds another home. We will:

- Monitor the waste (recycling and landfill) that goes out on a weekly basis.
- Recycle as many waste materials as possible, including paper, cardboard, ink cartridges, glass and plastics.



- Keep scrap paper to be re used or upcycled.
- Ensure that biodegradable sandwich boxes are made available at catered events so that visitors can take any leftover food away.
- Where possible, find other homes for furniture/equipment that is no longer required.
- Reduce landfill waste by encouraging the use of materials which can be recycled, eg. paper plates.
- Ensure that we provide recycling facilities in the public zones of the building, particularly at events.

Publicity

While we recognise that printing publicity materials is inevitable we will:

- Keep this to a minimum.
- Use FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) paper where affordable.
- Work with our designer to minimise the length of our programme and use of inks.
- Encourage subscribers to opt into email, e-newsletter and social media communication in preference to paper mail outs.

All printed publicity materials will include a recycling encouragement and highlight our commitment to reducing waste and carbon emissions by the inclusion of the Green Arts Initiative logo.

We will promote our green ambitions by making this policy available on our website, and making visible our membership of the Green Arts Initiative (stickers in the building and logo online).

Other

In order to foster a culture within the organisation which considers our impact on the environment we will:

- Make this policy available on our website, and include it in the induction of staff and volunteers
- Identify and promote training and other learning opportunities for staff and volunteers to develop their understanding of environmental issues e.g. Meat Free Mondays, Cycle to Work Day etc
- Highlight our membership of the Green Arts Initiative on the website and by including the logo in publicity
- Programme events which highlight environmental issues (in line with our Learning Policy and GWL's mission statement) and empower women to play a role in reducing carbon emissions and their impact on the environment
- Consider the incorporation of our commitment to minimising our impact on the environment to GWL's Values



Concluding Statement

Glasgow Women's Library is committed to a regular review of the environmental impact of our activities, and will engage all members of staff, the Board and volunteers in this review.

This policy will be reviewed annually, in light of any changes to our activities, how we use the spaces, and building improvements or renovations.

Date of next review: August 2017

