



# ENVIRONMENTAL

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## **Introduction**

The world's attention has never been as focused on taking responsibility for the environment as in recent years. Every part of society, whether government, business or individuals, is being encouraged to operate in more environmentally friendly ways, to help sustain not only the quality of life we expect today but for generations to come.

The Charity Commission has statutory objectives both to promote the effective use of charity resources and to increase public trust and confidence in charities. As part of its work to deliver against these objectives, the Commission encourages charities to take environmental responsibility and to carry out environmental activity, consistent with their purposes. The increased focus on this issue is underpinned by legal requirements.

Charities are required to act within their objects. This means that all of their assets must be used to further those objects, either directly or indirectly. Charity trustees also have a general duty to preserve and manage the charity's property in a way that furthers their charitable purposes.

Companies Act 2006 - Section 172(1)(d) of the Companies Act 2006 introduced a new environmental duty for directors. Since October 2007, directors of charitable companies are required to act in a way that they consider to be the most likely to achieve their organisation's charitable purposes. In doing so, they must have regard to various matters, including the impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment. All charities need to comply with this duty.

## **The Arts Society and sustainability**

As a membership organisation The Arts Society approaches its responsibilities for the environment in two ways; firstly by examining the practices of its central operations and seeking to ensure they are environmentally responsible and secondly by encouraging and

supporting its member societies to take practical and sustainable actions to help the environment.

### **The Arts Society House**

In relation to our office practices, we will:

Accept that we are all called to be environmentally responsible, but we will appoint one member of staff to take the lead on our environmental concerns.

Reduce, reuse and recycle wherever practicable

Investigate and increase the use of sustainable materials especially in relation to the production of the magazine and publicity items.

Ensure that sustainability is regularly discussed at staff meetings and that all decisions regarding workplace practices and purchases take relevant environmental considerations into account

Train and encourage all employees to work in an environmentally responsible manner and ensure our communications raise awareness and keep all employees and interested parties informed

Consider always how technology might obviate the need for face-to-face meetings and travel. Consider the use of carbon offsetting to minimise the impact of necessary travel.

Share good practice with our member societies and encourage them to adopt sustainable practices

Ensure that the suppliers and contractors with whom we have dealings are likewise environmentally minded in their approach to business

Monitor our energy use

### **Individual Arts Societies and the environment**

All Arts Societies are encouraged to examine their own behaviours and consider how they might be amended to become more sustainable. The Arts Society will regularly publish environmental hints and tips in its E-bulletin but member societies might like to consider the following practices and incorporate them into the way that they manage their own society.

Make sustainability within the society an agenda item at committee meetings. Share ideas, ask members. Consider the environmental impact of face-to-face meetings and use technology wherever possible.

Minimise printing by the use of email to communicate with members and inform members of the reasons they are doing so. Societies may wish to charge a supplement for those members who insist on receiving paper documents by post.

Use local suppliers for materials and services

Institute a car sharing scheme for attendance at society meetings and events

Ensure that venues used are reachable by public transport (including Area Meetings) and encourage members to use public transport where available

Minimise the use of single use plastics such as wine glasses and straws etc

Run Young Arts activities with a sustainability theme or with sustainable materials

Talk to Heritage Volunteering partners about their environment politics and how they might be supported. Undertake Heritage volunteering projects with sustainability at their heart. Many projects which involve repair already do this - make a thing of it!

Talk to printers about using vegetable inks and recycled paper for membership cards and other materials

Publicise environmental credentials and celebrate environmental achievements.

Share good practice with other societies at Area Meetings and with the Arts Society centrally.

*Last updated September 2019*