

Glasgow Life
Environmental and Sustainability Policy
January 2023

Introduction

This document outlines Glasgow Life's Environmental and Sustainability Policy.

Background

The impact of climate change and environmental degradation is evident locally, nationally, internationally and globally. Catastrophic damage to eco-systems by human action presents a global existential threat. The recent Climate Change Conferences, COP26 in Glasgow and COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh highlighted the need for global political action and the challenges around achieving this. There is a duty for organisations to recognise and adopt ambitious environmental and sustainability policies. There are also legislative and policy requirements. In addition, consumers, funders and partners demand commitments from businesses of all kinds to limit their environmental impact and improve sustainability.

Policy Context

There are a wide range of policy and legislative drivers operating at global, international, regional, national and local levels. These are complex but feature a number of key themes. Broadly these are framed around:

- Net zero, namely recognising the primary role of human activated carbon emission in climate change and the move towards minimising harmful levels of carbon in the atmosphere via a programme based on capture, trading and reduction at all levels. The 2015 Paris Agreement limited global temperature rises to 1.5 Celsius.
- Adaptation, namely mitigation of the impact of climate change and including hard infrastructure such as flood prevention and building design but also adapting economic systems to reduce consumption and operate sustainably via re-use and re-cycling programmes.

- Bio-diversity, namely protecting habitat including wildernesses, enabling the maintenance of complexity within eco-systems and clean and healthy air, water, soil and seas.
- Energy, namely shifting towards renewable energy systems and infrastructure and improving energy conservation and reduction.

There is also increasing pressure around climate justice, namely restitution and compensation for countries in the developing world which are experiencing the worst impacts of climate change based on the activities of the historical and contemporary activities of the developed world in terms of pollution and resource extraction. Glasgow Life will ensure that our response to meeting climate challenges will not negatively impact our poorest or more vulnerable communities.

At a national level the Scottish Government has committed to achieving net zero by 2045. The ongoing Programmes for Government and National Performance Frameworks feature a range of environmental and sustainability objectives across the board. There are also a number of specific national action plans underpinning the Environment Strategy for Scotland. These include the Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme, the Food Waste Reduction Action Plan and the Circular Economy Strategy.

At a local level Glasgow City Council (GCC) has committed to achieve net zero by 2030, fifteen years earlier than the Scottish Government's target. The GCC City Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027 specifies "fight[ing] the climate emergency is a just transition to a net zero Glasgow" as one of the city's four Grand Challenges.

Glasgow Life provides a huge range of services for people living, working, studying or visiting Glasgow. We manage every kind of venue across the city from international sporting, cultural and heritage destinations to facilities in the heart of local communities. We employ a large number of staff and procure significant levels of goods and services. Our approach to environmental sustainability is a key part of helping fight the climate emergency locally.

Environmental and Sustainability Policy

1. Context

As a charity set up to benefit the people of Glasgow, we deliver cultural and sporting programmes, experiences and events that improve the mental, physical and economic wellbeing of the city. Our strategic priorities are to:

- Advance culture and sport in the city
- Improve mental and physical wellbeing of local communities
- Support the vibrant city economy
- Re-invest income to achieve our vision

Our vision, mission and purpose are only meaningful if they are delivered sustainably.

Although we have been working to identify and reduce the negative environmental impacts of our business, we recognise that we need to significantly increase our efforts and further mainstream and embed sustainability across all our functions. This document provides an overarching framework coordinating and integrating the environmental and sustainability components of all our operational and strategic policies.

2. Scope

We recognise that there are three inter-related environmental crises driven by human action. These are:

- Climate change primarily caused by emission of carbon
- Habitat loss and bio-diversity degradation
- Pollution

We will increase our efforts to address Glasgow Life's contribution to each of these factors, but also to mitigate against their emerging consequences.

3. Approach

We will increase our efforts to coordinate and integrate environmental and sustainability factors across all operational and strategic policies and ensure these are deeply embedded in our organisational culture. We will focus on factors within our control, work in partnership with environmental and sustainability organisations and specialists and seek to influence others.

We will continue to align our efforts with the city's Climate Action Plan, working in collaboration with Glasgow City Council.

4. Focus

Our policy has two main areas of focus. These are:

- Environmental – we will limit the negative environmental impacts of our business with a particular focus on reduction carbon emissions, reducing pollution and protecting and enhancing the environment.
- Sustainability – we will mainstream sustainable practice across all of our business functions.

5. Policy Commitments

Our specific policy commitments are to:

- Reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency across our venues, programmes and activities with a view to contributing towards the achievement of Glasgow's net zero 2030 target date.
- Raise awareness and encourage and enable environmental sustainability and incorporate this into our core activities and service planning for staff via internal communication and training.
- Promote sustainable and active travel and reduce car use.
- Reduce waste and dispose of waste responsibly.
- Focus on sustainable procurement, namely working with suppliers and partners to address climate impact and promote the circular economy.

Specifically, we will:

- Apply whole life costing throughout the procurement process and include this in contract evaluation criteria where appropriate.
 - Promote and adopt circular economy approach to re-use, repair and re-cycling of goods and materials.
 - Continue to work with Zero Waste Scotland to obtain expert advice and training for relevant staff.
 - Take into consideration the natural environment when planning programmes and events to minimise loss of local biodiversity.
 - Use and promote Scottish Government Sustainable Procurement Tools.
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- Apply land maintenance protocols to protect the greenspaces we manage and explore the potential to enhance biodiversity and greenspace within the footprint of our venues
 - Raise awareness and encourage and enable environmental sustainability via public and community learning and activity programmes.
 - Support Glasgow's sustainable and responsible visitor economy, namely via contributing to building a sustainable tourism sector and showcasing the city as a sustainable visitor destination and event host.
 - Use our core purpose to highlight climate change, environmental and sustainability issues and to enable constructive action and change in our activities.
 - Maintain local biological records to the highest possible standards and share information to enable species protection, change monitoring. planning and research and the promotion of wildlife and habitat recording amongst local communities.
 - Ensure sustainability is considered when entering into partnership agreements.

6. Action Plan

These policy commitments necessitate the development of an action plan with the following key features – this will be a priority for Glasgow Life during 2023/24:

- specific, measurable, achievable and realistic approaches to meeting commitments;

- clear outcome and impact measurements based on a robust baseline and targets; and
- reviewing and reporting progress annually.

It is recommended that the Action Plan will use the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and measurement of direct and indirect emissions using the Greenhouse Gas Protocol or other appropriate measures.

7. Related Policies

Glasgow Life is responsible for the policy development and delivery of a number of key city strategies, listed below. These and other Glasgow Life policies will consider environmental and sustainability impacts.

City Strategies

- Glasgow's Tourism and Visitor Plan
- UNESCO City of Music
- Glasgow's Events Strategy
- Vision for Glasgow Libraries
- Glasgow's Community Learning and Development Plan

Glasgow Life Strategies, Policies and Plans

- Glasgow Life Procurement Strategy 2022-2025
- Glasgow Life Energy Plan
- Glasgow Life Ethical Fundraising Policy
- Glasgow Life Travel Policy

Future strategies which will incorporate these commitments include:

- Glasgow's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Glasgow's Cultural Strategy