

Policy & Procedures

Climate and environment

1) About CHWA

The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance is the sole [free-to-join](#) membership organisation for creative health across England. We provide networked, collaborative advocacy, support and resources, supporting health and wellbeing for all through creative and cultural practice. We are based in [Barnsley, South Yorkshire](#).

We focus on advocacy, resources and networking for the creative health sector, the vast majority of which currently takes place online.

As of August 2025, we have a total of 6 staff (4.2 full-time equivalent), and work with a number of freelance contractors each year on projects varying from single-meeting consultations to longer contracts for specialist work. CHWA has no physical office space and most work is conducted remotely, with the exception of occasional events:

We run events on a regular basis, with the largest being a conference run every two years with 200-300 people attending. Most other events are online, with between 20 and 100 attending each session. We hold occasional in-person meetings for our volunteer champions, Board and other stakeholder or working groups.

Theory of Change



2) Why are we taking environmental action?

We declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and sustainability has been a strategic priority since 2019. You can read our [Climate Emergency Declaration here](#).

We work on the basis of this position statement:

Climate justice and health equity are urgent, intersecting issues. Climate change impacts everything from mental health to respiratory health, and affects people unequally.

Many creative freelancers and organisations already take a holistic approach to health in relation to community and environment. We believe that as more and more people do this, we will be able to imagine new futures; empower changemakers; demonstrate sustainable organisational practices; and reduce demand on polluting and energy-hungry health services

We want to help creative and cultural practitioners directly address the connected issues of climate change, environmental degradation and public health. We are particularly interested in accelerating work that creates concrete change at a local level.

Relationship to policy commitments

We connect our work to a number of national and international commitments listed on our online [Climate resource \(Creativity, climate and health: Accelerating impact\)](#). In relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals our emphasis, based on our strengths as an organisation and our own theory of change (see [About the Alliance](#)) is primarily on Goals 3: Good Health & Wellbeing; 10: Reduced Inequalities; and 13: Climate Action. Our position in relation to Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth is that persistent economic growth is not an appropriate response to the climate emergency in developed nations.

3) Our environmental ambition

We will continue to ensure CHWA is a low-carbon organisation using the steps outlined below in our Environmental Action Plan. We also believe that our membership offers us the opportunity to influence change across the cultural and health sectors, as well as via our partnerships with local authorities and other community sector organisations.

4) Our environmental impact

As an organisation CHWA has a limited environmental impact. We have already taken the steps outlined below and commit to maintaining this situation. As part of our commitment to our funders Arts Council England we submit environmental data annually to Julie's Bicycle Carbon Calculator.

5) Our environmental commitments

See also our [Fundraising and Procurement policies](#) which cover guidance on ethical processes including in relation to climate and environment.

5.a) Bank and pensions

CHWA banks with the Co-operative Bank, chosen on the basis of their ethical investment including in relation to environmental degradation and climate change. [The Co-operative Bank 2021 Climate Plan is available here](#). Our pensions are provided by NEST, who were also chosen on the basis of their commitments to ethical investment. [NEST's climate commitments can be found here](#).

5.b) Office arrangements

CHWA employees work from their own homes. The bulk of the business of the organisation is conducted via phone, online meetings, email and other digital services. The whole staff team meets annually in person with occasional other one-to-one meetings.

CHWA employees and non-Executive Directors all commit to using as little energy as possible for heating, lighting and using work equipment. [removed commitment to paperless office]

5.c) Meetings and events

CHWA is responsible for convening meetings of stakeholders on a regular basis. Each stakeholder group meets a maximum of once annually in person to minimise travel. The remaining meetings are conducted online.

Stakeholders are encouraged to travel by public transport to group meetings and events where possible. Where appropriate CHWA staff book on attendees' behalf. Face-to-face meetings are held in locations with nearby train and/or bus stations. We recognise however that public transport is not readily available in all parts of the country and may not be accessible for all stakeholders for reasons of geography or access. [removed lift-shares – we don't do this]

5.d) Travel

Staff members travel by public transport unless it is not readily available.

Staff and non-Executive Directors are committed to no more than 1 long-haul return-flight per annum or 2 short-haul return-flights each in their work for CHWA. Where it is possible to travel by train and/or bus rather than fly, staff and Directors will take this option even if it requires longer travel time – within reason.

Staff travel reduced to 10% of its former levels during the pandemic. CHWA is committed to keeping staff travel well below pre-pandemic levels and reduced its staff travel budget by 58% from £6,000 in 2019/20 to £2,500 p.a. in 2022/3. Giving rising costs this is likely to translate to an approximately 70% drop in travel.

5.e) Paper

The use of printing and paper is avoided unless absolutely necessary, including minimising the use of paper at meetings and events (including conferences) unless it is required to ensure access for people who may not have a digital alternative.

CHWA information is otherwise held and distributed online. CHWA does not produce leaflets, with the exception of a limited run of the Creative Health Quality Framework. We are aware, however, that people without regular access to computers/smartphones cannot access the digital information we provide. This may lead to a form of discrimination (see CHWA's [Equality, Representation & Diversity Policy](#)). We assess the balance between on and offline provision annually when this policy is reviewed.

5.f) Online / Technology

- i) **Servers:** CHWA works with Pixelfridge to maintain our website. The site is currently held on the London Google Cloud server. Google is focusing on being Net Zero by 2030, making

- effective power purchase agreements and developing renewable infrastructure across the globe. The London server and is labelled low carbon - it fluctuates but usually runs on around 90% renewable energy.
- ii) **Website:** CHWA uses an online widget to monitor the energy use of its website.
 - iii) **Hardware:** where new hardware is required for the organisation, CHWA buys refurbished electronic goods (e.g. computers, phones) where possible, and prioritises according to battery efficiency.

5.g) Food and drink at events and meetings

Staff and Directors use re-usable coffee flasks/cups where possible. CHWA caters with vegetarian food *only* at all events, with vegan options available.

Catering in most venues is generous and there is often wastage which can be compounded if delegates are unable to attend and fail to let us know in time. We ask caterers to provide options for cutlery, containers and crockery that has the least environmental impact. For example this may mean crockery that can be washed rather than recyclable coffee cups. The type of food provided is not always within our control but where it is, we choose smaller, artisan caterers over larger corporate caterers. CHWA supports local food providers where possible.

5.h) Waste and Recycling

CHWA has reduced its waste to near zero and recycles any waste generated at events where possible. We choose recyclable or biodegradable materials where possible.

6) Review and maintenance of this policy

CHWA shall review this policy, its implementation and effectiveness every **two years**. The views of all employees and volunteers may be sought and reflected in the review process.

Any new or updated legislation will be considered and reflected in future versions.

This policy was approved and agreed by the Board of Directors on the date shown below.

Signed: 

Name (please print): Matt Walsh

Position: Co-Chair of Board of Directors

Date: 29 September 2025

Review dates: Every two years from the date above

Organisation name: Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance CIC

Company Number: 12359172