



North East Museums Environmental Responsibility Policy

Name of governing body: North East Museums Strategic Board

Date of approval: 23 June 2023

Date for review: June 2026

Introduction

North East Museums' mission is to welcome and connect people to the past, present, and future of the North East through stories, shared spaces, and experiences. We will help people understand and act on local and global challenges:

- Equality
- Wellbeing
- Social mobility
- Climate
- Place

North East Museums recognises that the Climate Crisis poses a critical threat to the future of our planet and therefore we have selected it as one of the five key challenges we will seek to address as part of our mission. To overcome this challenge, all elements of society will need to work together, including governments, businesses, communities and individuals. Achieving this will have a positive effect not only on the environment itself but also on each of the other key areas of North East Museums' mission.

The cultural sector can play a significant role in helping to raise awareness of the Climate Crisis, with the aim of ensuring that the global temperature increases do not exceed 1.5°C, in line with the goals of the United Nations' 2016 [Paris Agreement](#)

Strategic Aims

Our strategic aims to help tackle the Climate Crisis are:

- To embed environmentally responsible practices and processes throughout our operations
- To ensure environmentally responsible behaviour from our workforce
- To encourage environmentally responsible behaviour from our visitors, partners and stakeholders

Key Commitments

In order to achieve these aims, we have adopted the following key principles:

Energy Management:

- Measure and report on our carbon emissions, ensuring that we meet our organisational targets

- Use best operational practices to minimise North East Museums' use of gas, electricity and water, whilst identifying new opportunities to operate in a more efficient manner.

Materials and Waste:

- Operate sustainably by considering a lifecycle perspective of materials and minimising unnecessary waste
- Encourage our workforce and visitors to reduce, reuse and recycle as much as possible through positive messaging and by simplifying processes

Procurement:

- Ensure environmental considerations are taken into account in the procurement of goods and services, by seeking sustainably sourced products wherever possible and avoiding single-use plastics
- Encourage suppliers and contractors to reduce the environmental impact of their goods and services, for example by reducing packaging or using recyclable products wherever possible

Transport:

- Minimise the environmental impact of emissions by using zero or low-carbon options for operational transport and business travel wherever possible
- Actively promote more sustainable alternatives for staff commuting and visitor travel

Food and Drink:

- Work with suppliers to ensure visitors have a range of sustainable food and drink options to choose from, including plant-based
- Enable our employees and visitors to reduce waste and maximise recycling by ensuring our processes are as efficient and simple as possible

Biodiversity:

- Support biodiversity at all of our outdoor spaces by conserving and improving the natural environments we manage
- Help our visitors embrace and understand the value of nature by incorporating biodiversity into our programming, for example through learning activities or interpretative displays

Inspiring Change:

- Encourage our employees, volunteers, partners and stakeholders to conduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner, through communication and training.
- Promote environmental awareness among our visitors by embedding positive messaging throughout our programming, including exhibitions and displays, learning activities and events.

Pathway to Net Zero

As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, North East Museums works closely with Julie's Bicycle on a Science-based targets pathway to Net Zero.

North East Museums has adopted Environmental Impact Reduction Objectives (EIROs) for its electricity and gas emissions (known as Scope 1 and 2 emissions), which set out the reductions needed, year on year, in order to reach Net Zero by 2050.

Meeting these targets will ensure that North East Museums contributes to the de-carbonisation process necessary to prevent global temperature increases exceeding 1.5°C.

Challenges

All electricity that we currently buy is from renewable sources, and we intend to maintain this policy. However, in order to reach Net Zero, we will need to transition away from gas usage to greener technologies such as heat-pumps or hydrogen boilers. This will require significant investment.

North East Museums will also need to be able to measure and reduce its Scope 3 emissions – emissions which an organisation is not directly responsible for but which are produced up and down its value chain (for example by suppliers). Organisations have more limited control over Scope 3 emissions and the calculations can be complex, however we are committed to increasing our understanding of these emissions and working to reduce them in the coming years.