

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre Environment / Climate Policy



Birr Theatre & Arts Centre is committed to 'greening' our organisation and will follow the guidelines as set out by Green Arts - <https://www.performingartsforum.ie/green-arts/>

As environmental sustainability concerns become more prominent, the motivations and requirements for arts organisations to affect their environmental impact continues to grow. As well as meeting funding, reporting and legal requirements, improving our environmental sustainability can also save money and help staff to work more efficiently.

We at Birr Theatre & Arts Centre are committed to the principle of reduce, reuse and recycle, proactively working to minimise our environmental impact and promote more sustainable ways of working to our staff, partners and stakeholders.

We aspire to address, through our artistic programme, the ideas and questions about environmental sustainability and to help raise the profile of these ideas through productions, related events and through our actions.

The following is a list of projects to reduce our carbon footprint and encourage a greener business:

Energy	A building energy audit was completed in 2010 highlighting key issues impacting the efficiency of our then 120 year-old building. Since then the following improvements have been made: • Replacement of two oil fired boilers to one vortex boiler • Exit doors (drafty) have been replaced to be more efficient, draft proof doors • LED stage lighting has been purchased to replace older lighting stock with plans for additional investment for all stage lighting stock to be moved to LED by end of 2026.
Health & Safety	Fire Extinguishers We engage an Offaly based company, <i>Ascom Fire Protection</i>, to provide fire extinguisher annual services. They refill, rather than replace extinguishers three times before taking them out of circulation, in line with H&S protocol (other companies replace every three years – for convenience i.e. do not refill). Foam extinguishers are being phasing out to be refill with water – in line with H&S best practice.

Travel	Acknowledging the importance of in-person meetings, meetings through online forums (Zoom, Teams) are first consideration before travelling. This saves travel expense, time and reduces car use.
Programming	Running community projects with environment themes promotes environmental consciousness e.g.; <i>Futures Lab, Birr Skies, Plant-tastic</i> , St Brendan's Community School environment exhibition, targeted community projects along with hosting theatre performance which highlight environmental issues.
Training & supports	We will work with, Green Offaly, Offaly Local Development Company and others who provide a green resource and training opportunities.
General	• Aim for no single use plastic bottles to be used – at bar or backstage • Recycling bins in place for paper waste • Re-Turn bin in greenroom • General house lighting changed to low-energy bulbs • General maintenance – environment friendly weed control (e.g. white vinegar & salt) • Biodiversity - we welcome two planters at front of building supplied by Birr Tidy Towns • Biodiversity - No Mow May – grass at front of building is let grow • Sensor lights in toilets – rather than being left on all day • We have moved to e-tickets and scanners rather than paper tickets with c.95% of customers using the e-ticket for entry. • Actively encourage recycling • Office printing – use back and front of paper where possible; we have moved away from toner cartridge printers in favour of refill liquid ink printers

Planned Projects 2026 - 2027

2026 – Refurbishment of Seating Rig

To avoid disposing of seats, old seats to be offered to a community group / non-profit

2027 – Lighting Stock

Older Stage Lighting stock continues to be replaced with the expectation that by 2027 all stage lighting will be low energy LED lighting

Useful References / Resources

<https://theatreforum.ie/green-arts-initiative-in-ireland/news-events/>

<https://greenoffaly.ie/>