

The Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Approved by the Board of Directors of
The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, 3 June 2023.

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Introduction

The Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig, situated among the drumlins of County Monaghan, has a long history of engagement with its local environment, initially through farming, and latterly, as a residential workspace for artists. We are surrounded by nature – trees, birds, and animal life – amid acres of coillte forest, indigenous forest, and Annaghmakerrig Lake.

We recognize that climate change is one of the world’s most significant challenges, which calls for urgent and radical transformation of the systems and processes that shape the relationship between humans and the planet on a larger scale, and for everyone at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre on a smaller but equally important scale.

Ireland's ambition is to transition to a low carbon and environmentally sustainable economy, and this can only happen through the preparedness of organisations like ours, supported by our workforce and stakeholders, in developing new practices that are more environmentally aware.

This Environmental and Sustainability Policy is designed to support our us all – our Board of Directors, our in-house team, and our resident artists, to understand how our sustainable actions will play a vital role in Ireland’s collective response to climate change.

We aim to develop sustainability awareness, knowledge, and best practice across the organization in our processes, how we manage our buildings and land, and by sharing our learning with others.

What We Do

The Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig is a cross-border, all island residential workspace for local, national, and international artists across all art forms. Funded by The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, and greatly assisted by the Office of Public Works, we are open twenty-four hours a day, fifty weeks of the year, and we are aware that our work has the potential to be damaging to our environment.

Our Environment

Situated in the quiet countryside of county Monaghan, Ireland, our environs comprise Annaghmakerrig House with eleven en-suite bedrooms, five self-catering cottages, seven visual art studios, a print studio, a dance studio, and composers’ room, and a stand-alone performance space, set alongside a large lake and ancient forest. It is a unique setting, with a biodiversity that is cherished within our community. Indeed, are part of the [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#) which sees our meadows left to grow wild to allow pollinating plants to grow.

Our work is to provide a quiet environment that esteems, supports, and develops our artists. One of our core values is ‘care of our environment’ – that is, the Guthrie family legacy and bequest, our archive, and collections, and of Annaghmakerrig House and its ecosystems, as well as our broader environments.

Our Sustainability Goals

The climate crisis has transformed the global arts and cultural landscape, presenting new challenges and shared opportunities. The arts community has been responding through creative work, public engagement, and programming initiatives, and we are delighted to support the development of some of that work here at The Tyrone Guthrie Centre.

We are ambitious, therefore, to reduce the carbon footprint, and environmental impact of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre by:

- Streamlining business processes
- Creating less waste
- Reducing our energy use
- Striving to be leaders in environmental management

This policy is underpinned by our commitment to continual improvement, compliance with relevant and evolving legislation, and our wish to honour the potential of the unique house, garden, and facilities available to us at Tyrone Guthrie Centre.

The Context for Our Goals

The ‘Safeguarding’ pillar in our Strategic Plan ‘[Rise Above!](#)’ includes five objectives relevant to this Policy, namely:

4.4 We will establish The Tyrone Guthrie Centre as a valuable resource by creating work experience and internship opportunities in arts administration and environmental management, for young people from our diverse local communities and our diverse communities on the island of Ireland.

4.5 We will take care of our house, cottages, studios, performance spaces, and our gardens, forests, fields, lands, and Annaghmakerrig lake, by establishing best practice in recycling, climate control, conservation, biodiversity, Land Management, and environmental sustainability.

4.6 We will we aim to establish strategic partnerships and sponsorship to assist us in our intent to run our business in the most environmentally friendly ways achievable.

4.7 We plan to establish strategic partnerships to assist us in creating educational opportunities in land, building, and collection management and conservation.

4.8 We will report annually on the work we are doing to reduce our impact on the environment by reference to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals outlined for Health and Well-being, Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Responsible Consumption and Production.

The Global Context

As above, this Environmental and Sustainability Policy is underpinned by the ambitions expressed in the [UN Sustainability Goals](#).

The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are an urgent call for action by all countries, developed and developing, in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand in hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth, all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

We believe the most relevant of the 17 to our work at Tyrone Guthrie Centre are:

- **Goal 6** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **Goal 7** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- **Goal 9** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
- **Goal 11** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- **Goal 12** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- **Goal 13** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **Goal 15** Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Greening The Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig

We want our environmental and sustainability work to be centered in justice, fairness, and inclusivity. We are working to make our processes more sustainable and inclusive, our people more diverse, and our places and spaces more accessible. We will lead by example on climate and environmental action through the following ambitions.

Streamlining Our Business Processes

We are developing specific objectives to continually strive for efficiency in business. We aim to build environmental performance, and to then set targets for continuous improvement, measuring and reviewing our performance regularly, and communicating our results.

1. We are moving towards a zero-paper working environment, and in the meantime, we are using recycled paper and sustainable inks.
2. We recycle office and kitchen equipment.
3. We purchase energy efficient equipment.
4. We promote good housekeeping practices that reduce energy wastage.
5. We encourage our residents to turn down heat, and to use less water.
6. We encourage our residents not to put toxic waste into our drains, and to use environmentally friendly paints, inks, paper, and canvas.

7. We plan menus in advance and source our requirements online where possible, deliveries are made to us, thereby reducing the need for multiple journeys to shop, and thereby reducing our carbon footprint.
8. We aim to ensure that good environmental practices are included in our assessment of potential suppliers and contractors.
9. We purchase products and services that have the least known environmental impact, where this is feasible.

Creating Less Waste

We will actively promote reduction, reuse, and recycling of resources among our team, our resident artists, our partners, and our suppliers. Delivering on this ambition will include:

1. Minimizing waste generation by applying reuse and recycle options where possible.
2. We operate a separate food recycling system at The Tyrone Guthrie Centre. Most of our food waste is packaged and taken to a local farm to feed the bulls.
3. We separate all waste.
4. We aim to reduce our consumption of single use plastic products.
5. Briefing artists on arrival about key practices, such as how to recycle on site, conservation of water resources, a focus on reduction of food waste in the kitchens etc.
6. We aim to recycle water through the installation of water butts.
7. We encourage our residents to use fewer towels during their stay with us.
8. We ask our residents to let us know if they are going to miss a meal, so that food is not wasted.
9. We menu plan in advance in as much as possible.

Reducing Our Energy Use

We will reduce our carbon footprint year on year and optimize energy efficiency and conservation where possible. For example,

1. We have replaced our internal and external lighting systems to more energy efficient options. We will aim to reduce our cumulative use of energy year on year.
2. We aim to research and identify sponsorship to assist us to replace the heating system at The Tyrone Guthrie Centre with solar energy.
3. We encourage our team, our residents, and our visitors, not to waste water, heat, or electricity.
4. We provide detailed information on travelling to us by public transport.
5. We use energy efficient machinery in our kitchens, and our housekeeping, and our maintenance work.
6. We encourage artists to keep energy usage low, such as ensuring that all lights and electrical items are switched off when not in use and turn off sockets when not in use to avoid phantom load/vampire energy, such as not leaving chargers plugged in.

Minding Our Wildlife and Plant life

We are surrounded by acres of trees, farmland, gardens, fields, and a lake – Annaghmakerrig Lake - at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. Our environment is home to many rare species of plants, and to all sorts of animals including a herd of deer, barn owls, long eared owls, woodpeckers, otters, bats, and hares, alongside a variety of insects, and fish. We, that is our team, and our resident artists, treasure our immediate environment, and we do our utmost to take care of our wildlife and plant life. The Tyrone Guthrie Centre is a no hunting zone, with or without dogs, and with or without rifles. We encourage walkers to use our public pathways, and to keep dogs on their leash. Several areas of our grass are left to grow wild, to encourage bees, butterflies, and other insects. We do not use chemical weedkiller. We discourage the use of toxic substances in our visual arts studios.

Minding Our Collections

Set as we are in the ancestral home of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the Centre is, in fact, a ‘living museum.’ We have collections that date back to the original builder of the Big House, John Moorhead, as well as to John’s daughter, Martha Power, and to Martha’s daughter, Norah Guthrie, and to Norah’s son, Sir Tyrone Guthrie, as well as a collection of art works that post-date 1981, donated by previous residents of the Centre. It is incumbent on us to look after these various collections, so that future generations will have the benefit of them. We have, for example, reduced the heat level in Annaghmakerrig House, to create in as much as possible an internationally recommended environment for paintings and books. With the assistance of OPW we have begun a project to conserve the windows in Annaghmakerrig House, and two ceilings in the house have recently been conserved. We are training our team about best practices in terms of housekeeping in such an environment. We are seeking advice on whether The Tyrone Guthrie Centre is eligible to join the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI).

Becoming Leaders in Environmental Management

We have identified a dedicated environmental coordinator who works specifically to embed sustainability in everything we do, and champion the importance of climate awareness across the organization. We will do this by:

1. Ongoing training and upskilling as required for staff, such as through identifying experts to do talks, or requesting presentations by visiting experts.
2. Working with the Office of Public Works, our gardening team are managing the site with a focus on ecological best practices.
3. We aim to work with strategic partners to identify funding paths to create bursaries for Climate Justice relevant creative work to be developed at Tyrone Guthrie Centre.
4. We are seeking strategic partnerships with academic institutions to assist us in creating educational opportunities in land, building, and collection management and conservation.
5. We will use our our social media channels to continue to showcase the biodiversity and ecological assets around us at The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, and to champion the small and large ways we are addressing climate action.
6. When ordering deliveries, we try to plan for bulk ordering where possible, to reduce the packaging requirements, and the number of delivery vans required to make the journey to The Tyrone Guthrie Centre.

7. With the assistance of the OPW, we are working to upgrade some of our facilities to ensure that they are accessible, and environmentally friendly.
8. We aim, where possible, to ensure that our supply chain adheres to responsible social and environmental practices.
9. We are reducing our use of hazardous chemicals and solvents, by, for example, identifying effective cleaning products made from non-toxic materials.

How Do We Know That We Care?

We aim to ensure our care of our environment by, for example,

- Complying with relevant legal requirements, codes of practice, and regulations
- Assessing the environmental impact of our operations, seeking to reduce these impacts, and improving our resource efficiency through reduction of energy, water use and waste.
- Promoting environmental and energy awareness among our team through participation and training.
- Monitoring our progress to ensure ongoing improvements in our environmental performance.
- Making visiting artists, suppliers, and partner organisations aware of our sustainability policy, and encouraging them to adopt sound sustainable management practices.

Our commitment

We are ambitious to move to as close to best practice environmental sustainability as possible in our work, in our processes and in our spaces; and we commit to being vigilant against regression in that work.

Review

Our Board will review progress of the implementation of this Policy annually.

Our Environmental Coordinator can be contacted, by email at director@tyroneguthrie.ie.