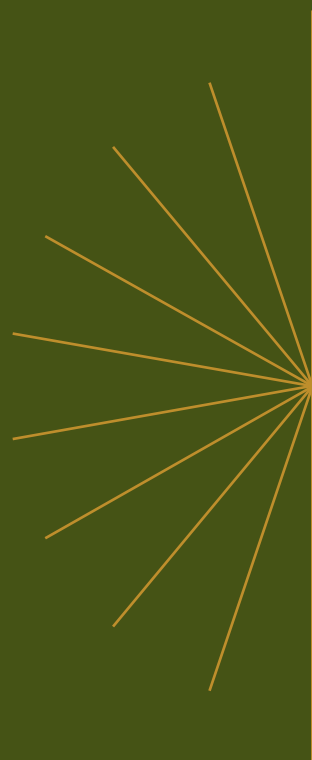


Theatre Green Book Impact Report



**Findings from the Big Theatre
Green Book survey 2025**



November 2025

Theatre Green Book
making theatre sustainable

tialt
THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE



Theatre Green Book is an industry-wide initiative to work more sustainably in response to the climate crisis. It is a free resource for everyone in the performing arts, working in any role and at all scales, providing a framework for planning, best practice guidance, a measurement system and shared standards.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the organisations and individuals contributing their time to this research via the online survey, and all those across the Theatre Green Book community who have been part of this work. Special thanks for their instrumental role in developing Version 2 of the Theatre Green Book goes to the National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal Ballet and Opera, The Lowry, National Theatre of Scotland, Chichester, the Young Vic, English National Ballet, Wales Millenium Centre, Headlong, Northern Stage, SHIFT and SAIL.

The UK's Theatre Green Book is an unincorporated association led by a Steering Committee of the Theatres Trust, Society of London Theatre (SOLT) and UK Theatre, the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT), National Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland, Buro Happold and Renew Culture. They are informed by committees of theatre practitioners, covering productions, operations and buildings, as well as focus groups for education, commercial, dance and touring. The Theatres Trust holds the Secretariat for the association.

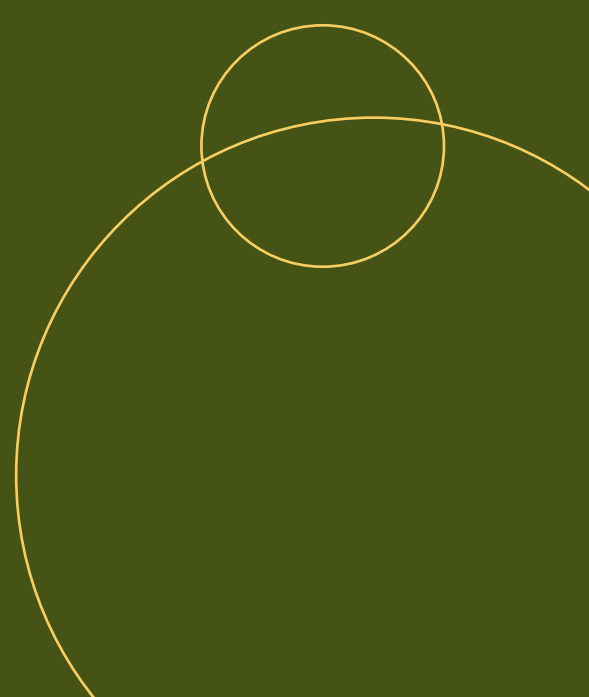
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Foreword

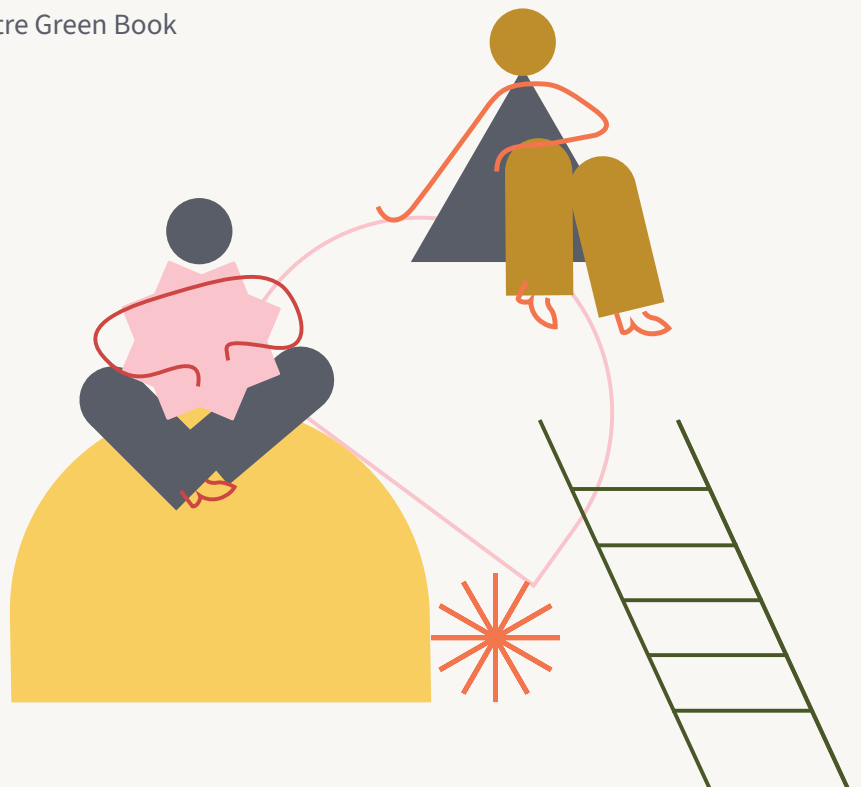
Since the first volume of the Theatre Green Book was released, early in 2021, it's grown into a global initiative, used throughout the UK theatre sector, with networks across Europe, Asia and beyond. Theatre Green Book has become a global common language for the transition to working sustainably.

That shared success comes from rooting Theatre Green Book in the practical experience and know-how of theatre-makers. Before a word of guidance was written, we brought together makers of all kinds. Rather than being framed only in the terminology of environmental sustainability, Theatre Green Book talks the language of theatre-making, and is based on a deep understanding of the challenges and complexities of the performing arts – an understanding which can only come from theatre-makers themselves.

That cycle of continual learning and feedback still lies at the heart of the Theatre Green Book. The Big Green Book Survey is the latest round of a long conversation, and – as always – it's full of essential lessons to keep this project developing. Through it we can map what's working and what isn't, where we're making progress and what theatre-makers are finding hard. Through it we keep listening to, and learning from, the people who are leading theatre on its journey towards net zero.

Paddy Dillon and Lisa Burger

Renew Culture, Co-Founders of Theatre Green Book

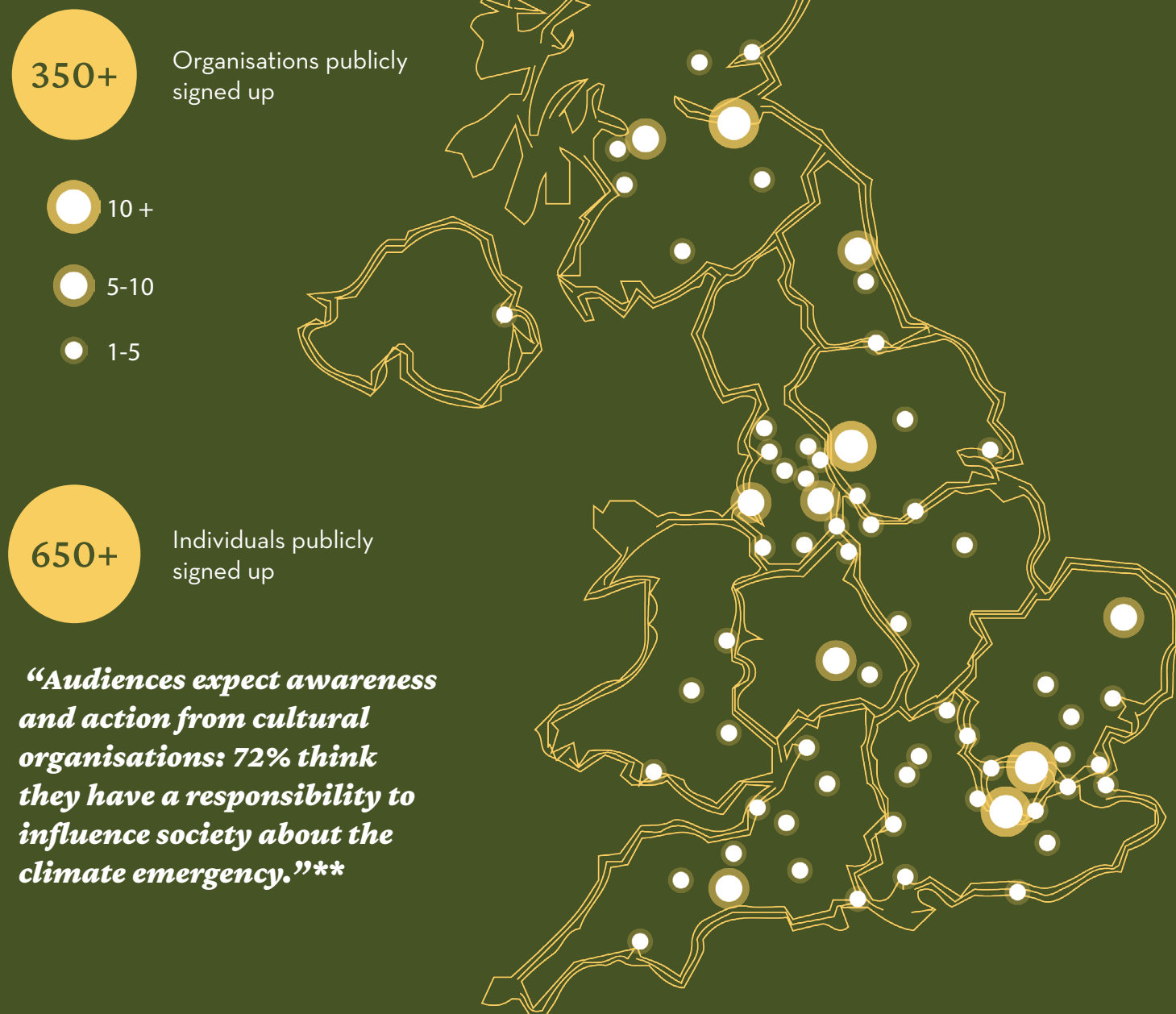


Theatre Green Book

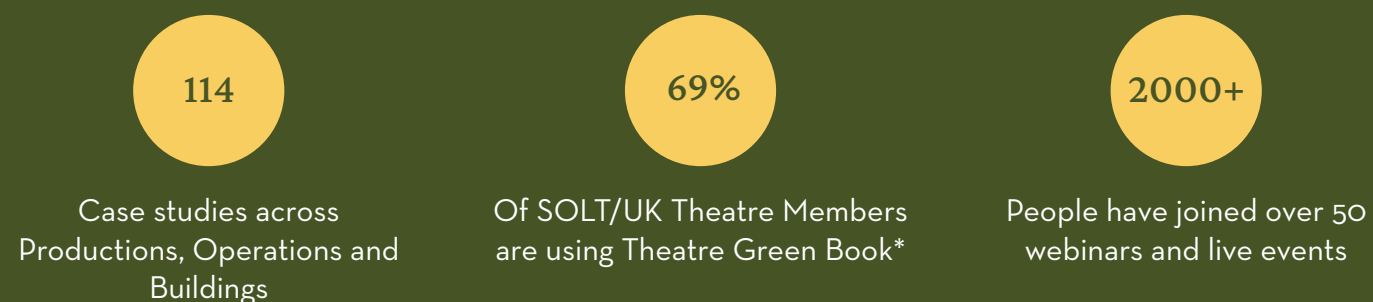
making theatre sustainable

Impact 2025

tiat - there is an alternative



“Audiences expect awareness and action from cultural organisations: 72% think they have a responsibility to influence society about the climate emergency.”**



Global Theatre Green Book Networks

Translations & Adaptations



In progress

- Catalan
- Lithuanian
- Estonian
- Norwegian
- Greece
- Latin American
- Welsh

Global Partnerships

- European Theatre Convention
- Opera Europa
- FEDORA - The European Circle of Philanthropists of Opera and Dance
- Broadway Green Alliance

Data taken from TGB website between June 2024 and Sept 2025, unless otherwise stated.

*2025 SOLT/UK Theatre Member Survey

** 2024 Act Green Survey by Indigo

+ Translations into language, represented on map on an area with large population of language speakers - not exclusive

Executive Summary



‘We all speak the same language now when it comes to sustainability—what we need next is the time and space to use it.’

The Big Theatre Green Book survey 2025 is the first comprehensive evaluation of how theatre professionals are engaging with Version 2 of Theatre Green Book since its release in June 2024. Since then, over 2,000 people have joined 50+ online and live Theatre Green Book events, and over 350 organisations and 650 theatre workers have signed up to achieving its standards. A recent SOLT/UK Theatre member survey showed 69% of respondents using Theatre Green Book guidance and resources¹.

In addition, Theatre Green Book has spread internationally, with fourteen translations and adaptations, and networks across the globe.

Conducted by Tialt, this study explores how individuals and organisations are embedding sustainable practice, what impacts have emerged, and where barriers to progress remain. Eighty-eight valid responses were received, representing a cross-section of theatres, producers, freelancers and educators across the UK and beyond. Together, they paint a picture of a sector that is deeply committed to sustainability, yet constrained by time, funding and infrastructure.

These findings evidence the role Theatre Green Book is playing in placing sustainability at the heart of the UK theatre sector - providing a shared language for tangible change, shifting mindsets and offering spaces for people working across the sector to come together and share their learning.

Key Findings

- 1. Theatre Green Book has helped normalise sustainability as a shared language.** Across the theatre sector, conversations about environmental impact are increasingly part of the day-to-day ways of working for many, with 84% of respondents feeling confident using Theatre Green Book resources and 85% finding them accessible. Climate considerations are increasingly being embedded into decision making, and Theatre Green Book use has driven tangible environmental improvements, as well as enhancing creativity and innovation on and off stage.
- 2. Motivation is driving change against the odds.** Motivation is exceptionally high among users, with over 90% expressing personal commitment and a sense of responsibility to the aims of Theatre Green Book. Respondent’s capability and skills are also high. The limiting factors are overwhelmingly opportunity and capacity, with just 16% of organisations saying they had the time and financial resources to implement change effectively.
- 3. Freelancers are key agents of change, yet often the least resourced to act.** Freelancers are highly motivated advocates but under-resourced; they need dedicated training, funding and visibility as innovators and leaders. Just 5% of freelance individuals said they had adequate levels of support to implement Theatre Green Book.

¹ <https://uktheatre.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/05/SOLTUKT-State-Of-British-Theatre.pdf>

4. **Organisations are embedding practice, especially at the Basic level, but need stronger structural and financial enablers to progress further.** They are consolidating Basic-level progress but hindered by financial constraints, leadership buy-in and alignment, short time schedules and planning horizons, and limited circular economy and supply chain infrastructure.

5. **There is strong appetite for clearer communications, more visible peer networks and accessible training.** Production Guidance and Toolkits are the most used Theatre Green Book resources; around half of users are aware of Case Studies. Peer-to-Peer Networks and Carbon Literacy Training are identified as key potential support areas.

Recommendations

These findings suggest a landscape of opportunity for accelerating continued change and improvement across the performing arts through the work of Theatre Green Book. The implications arising will require change and development across three core stakeholder constituencies: Theatre Green Book, Funders and Policymakers and Theatre Green Book users.

Recommendations for Theatre Green Book

1. Strengthen **communications and community-building**, increasing celebratory, outward-facing visibility of Theatre Green Book
2. Build structured training, and **expand peer and mentoring networks**
3. Develop more practical, accessible, and discipline-specific **resources**
4. Clarify and simplify the **self-certification** process

Recommendations for Funders and Policymakers

1. **Resource** the transition to sustainable practice
2. **Incentivise** measurable environmental progress
3. Invest in **training** and cross-sector **collaboration**
4. Embed **sustainability** in policy dialogue and invest in sustainability research and data

Recommendations for Theatres and Sector Users

1. Embed sustainability across **leadership** and decision-making
2. Invest in staff and freelancer **time**, planning and coordination
3. Cultivate artistic and cultural **buy-in** from Directors, Designers and creative teams
4. **Connect** locally and make time to share learning and peer-to-peer networks

1. Background and Methodology

The UK's theatre and performing arts sector is a vibrant and vital part of British culture. It operates as an interconnected ecosystem, encompassing everything from blockbuster musicals to grassroots, community-led performances. Together, these activities generate £4.44 billion in turnover and contribute £2.39 billion in annual Gross Value Added (GVA)²

Over the past two decades, environmental responsibility has shifted from the margins to the heart of how performing arts organisations operate. The sector's focus has expanded from measuring carbon footprints to embedding sustainability across leadership, programming, and business models.

Work by pioneering organisations such as Julie's Bicycle, Culture for Climate Scotland and many others, shows how far this transformation has come: environmental sustainability is no longer seen as an obligation or campaign, but as a creative catalyst - inspiring new ideas, collaborations, and ways of making and sharing culture. Theatre Green Book has built on this shift in sector and public attitudes, founded on the recognition that the performing arts needs its own dedicated resources to fulfil its potential at the heart of the transition.

Version 2 of the Theatre Green Book was launched in June 2024, and by September 2025, more than 350 theatres and 650 individuals had officially signed up to use Theatre Green Book resources via the website. During this first year, over 2,000 people have joined 50+ online and live

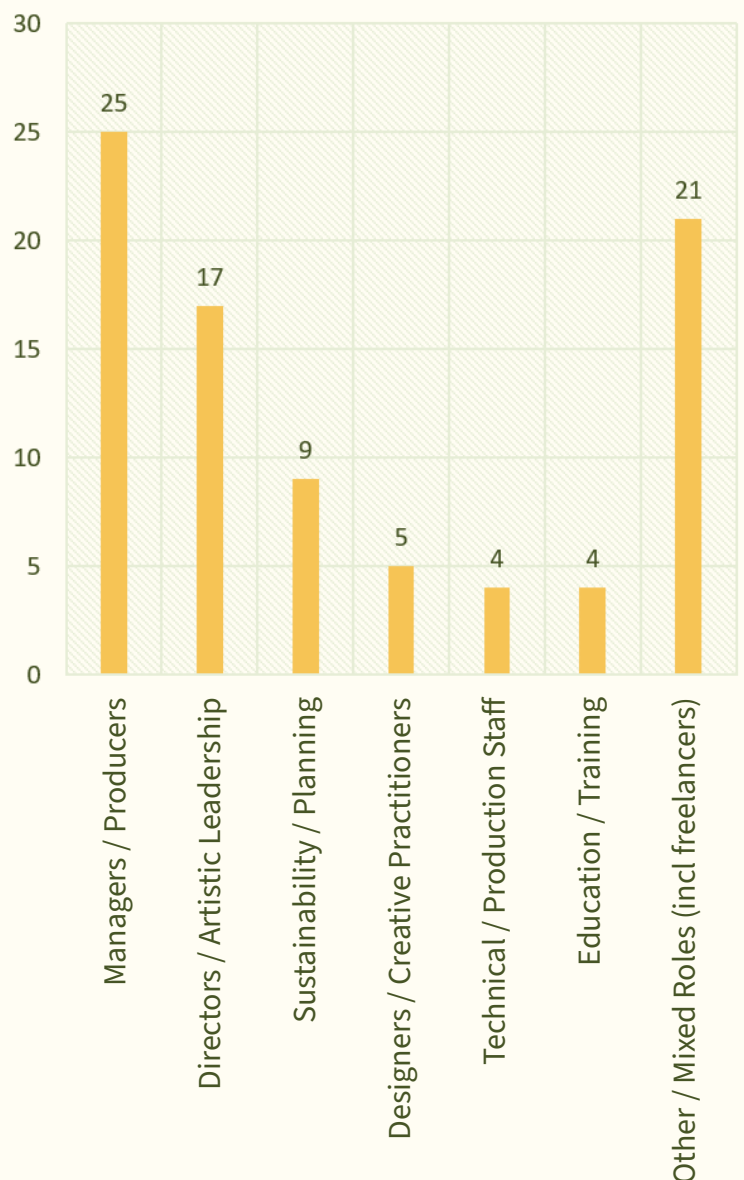


Figure 1 - Job roles of survey respondents (coded from open text) (n = [number of responses])

² <https://www.sounddiplomacy.com/reports/economic-assessment-of-the-uk-theatre-sector>

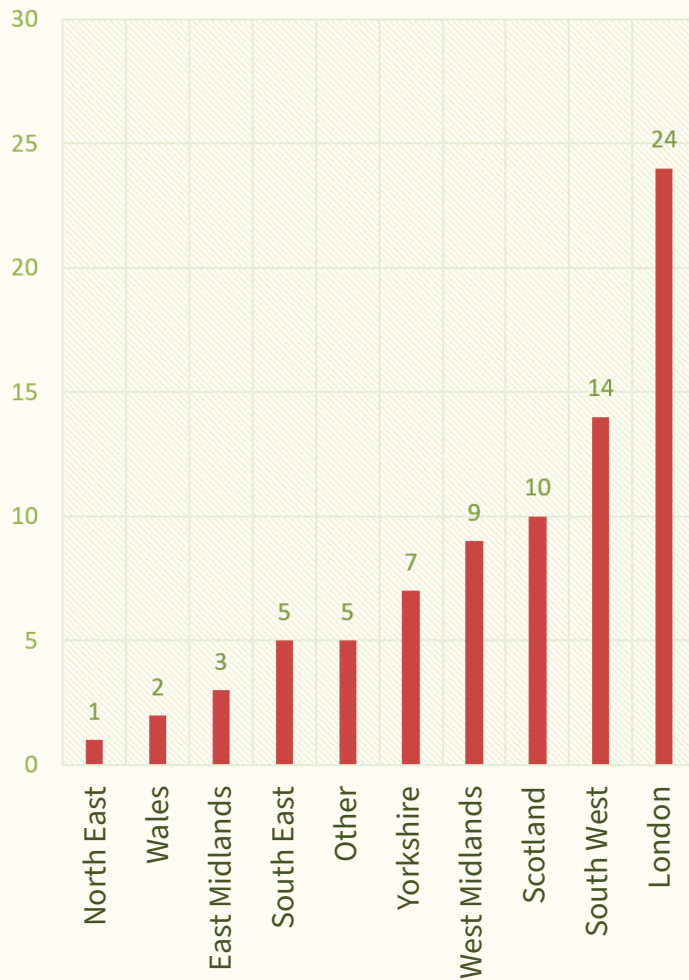


Figure 2 - Location of survey respondents (n = [number of responses])

Theatre Green Book events, and users have contributed 114 Case Studies to Theatre Green Book's resources. Globally, there are now fourteen translations and adaptations, and networks across Europe, through Asia and beyond.

The 2025 Big Theatre Green Book Survey sought to understand how users engage with Version 2 resources, identify barriers to adoption, and map the wider impact on theatre practice. Between August and September 2025, all those receiving the Theatre Green Book newsletter were invited to submit responses. 88 valid responses were received, comprising 58 from organisations, 22 from freelancers (and 8 mixed or uncertain roles). Respondents represented a broad range of roles (managers, producers, artistic directors, designers, technicians) and regions across the UK, with a concentration in London, the South West and the West Midlands (broadly aligned with the geography of registered users).

2. Biggest Impacts of Theatre Green Book Use

Respondents identified four recurring areas of impact from using Theatre Green Book resources:

Normalising the conversation

Sustainability is now routinely discussed within production planning and creative meetings. Several participants noted that environmental practice has become embedded in everyday decision-making.

“

“Bringing everybody together to follow one set, industry recognised standard has been the most impactful - we all speak the same language now when it comes to discussions, achievements etc.”

“

“The shift in mentality from the director, designer and production manager. It's mentioned a lot throughout the pre-production period with everyone thinking about it.”

Culture and mindset shift

Organisations describe a notable shift in behaviour, with staff at all levels more thoughtful about materials, waste, and procurement decisions. Theatre Green Book has provided a framework for shared accountability.

“*All staff being much more thoughtful and considerate about purchases - planning further ahead, reusing, recycling, not buying new as a default. People have enjoyed coming up with creative responses to the challenge of using less raw material*”

Tangible environmental improvements

Many users reported increased reuse, recycling, and energy efficiency measures, contributing to reduced waste and carbon footprint.

“*Less waste, more recycling, better local networking for reuse and sharing. More sustainable transport and deliveries*”

Creative enrichment

Far from limiting artistic freedom, sustainable practice was often seen as a creative catalyst. Designers and directors described Theatre Green Book as an invitation to experiment and innovate.

“*Creative response - seeing artists engage actively with the creative challenges the Green Book offers and evolving practice and process as a result*”

“*Being more creative from the concept stage, finding inspiration from the resources that are available to you before going out and buying things.*”

“*Shifting our approach to always offer modular scenic resources first, and to shift the design at an early stage where this is possible.*”

3. Capability, Opportunity, Motivation to adopt Theatre Green Book Use

“It is now part of the daily conversation”

Using the COM-B model of behavioural change³, the survey explored how users experience their capability, motivation, and opportunity to embed Theatre Green Book practices.

Capability was high overall, with 84% of respondents feeling confident using Theatre Green Book resources and 85% finding them accessible.

Motivation was scored very highly, with over 90% expressing personal commitment and a sense of responsibility to the aims of Theatre Green Book.

Opportunity was reported as much lower, with only 16% of organisations reporting that they have the time and resources to implement the guidance effectively and just 5% of individuals saying they had the adequate levels of support.

This highlights that while users are committed and capable, structural barriers such as workload, staffing, and budget constraints significantly affect uptake of Theatre Green Book.



³ 'COM-B' is a research framework for assessing behaviour change widely used in public health and social policy, popularised by Susan Mitchie, amongst others <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1748-5908-6-42>

4. Theatre Green Book Resource Use

Theatre Green Book resources include the Theatre Green Book itself, Detailed Guidance volumes for Productions, Buildings and Operations, the Production Calculator, Building Survey Tool and Operations Tracker, as well as Case Studies and Toolkits for each area.

Survey responses indicate that Theatre Green Book resources are widely valued but unevenly used. The findings here reflect the user patterns across the Theatre Green Book website, and reflections from Theatre Green Book's core Committees (Productions, Operations and Buildings) on varying levels of engagement.

1. 87% of respondents use the Theatre Green Book regularly or occasionally
2. The Productions Detailed Guidance is the most popular with 33% using it regularly and 36% using it occasionally
3. Nearly half the respondents (46%) report using the Case Studies occasionally
4. 59% use the Production Toolkits regularly or occasionally, with lower proportions reporting use of the Operations and Buildings Toolkits, although 28% indicate that they intend to use the Operations Toolkit, indicating a positive 'direction of travel'.

“The Production Calculator is the most useful as it allows me to track everything each time I do a show.”

“The main Theatre Green Book... gives a very clear overview of what is possible. This helps me a lot to convince other people in the organisation of the value it has.”

Respondents broadly identify a need for more practical, accessible, and discipline-specific resources. Many users want more detailed toolkits, databases, and supplier directories. There is also repeated emphasis on materials guidance, with requests for accessible registers or databases of recognised and approved sustainable materials.

“Lists of props and furniture stores, help accessing borrowing schemes etc.”

“A recommended suppliers list, such as tried and tested common products used in theatre.”

The value of peer-to-peer connection also recurs strongly. Respondents call for more forums, networks, and localised events to share knowledge. This reflects both the fast-changing nature of sustainable practice and a desire not to 'reinvent the wheel.'

“A chat forum for people to post their new ideas, quick wins, questions etc.”

“Informal peer groups are most useful as they reflect real-time experiences and help to identify ways to overcome obstacles.”

“As many networks and local groups as possible so folk can always find someone similar to them or close to them that they can get support from.”

5. Freelancers' Specific Opportunities and Barriers

“*“Having the conversation in the room is fabulous - believing it means a compromise in quality is so wrong!”*

Freelancers make up 70% of the UK theatre workforce⁴ and can act as key advocates for sustainable practice.

95% of freelance respondents are committed to implementing Theatre Green Book in their work, but just over a quarter (27%) report having the necessary time and resources to do so.

Freelancers view Theatre Green Book as a powerful framework for dialogue and influence, yet some report encountering limited buy-in from senior staff.

Common barriers include lack of paid time, financial constraints, and limited authority to enforce sustainable practices. Nevertheless, many freelancers see themselves as catalysts for change across organisations.

Freelancers consistently request more accessible training, peer connection, and visibility for freelance-led innovation.

“*“If we insist on sustainable practice we could instigate change.”*

“*“Need to speak up more - we should but it can be hard.”*

“*“When the industry recognises that freelancers ARE the content-makers, and a real partnership of equality can emerge... THEN the real opportunity for change will come.”*

4 - <https://freelancersmaketheatrework.com/>

6. Organisations' Specific Opportunities and Barriers

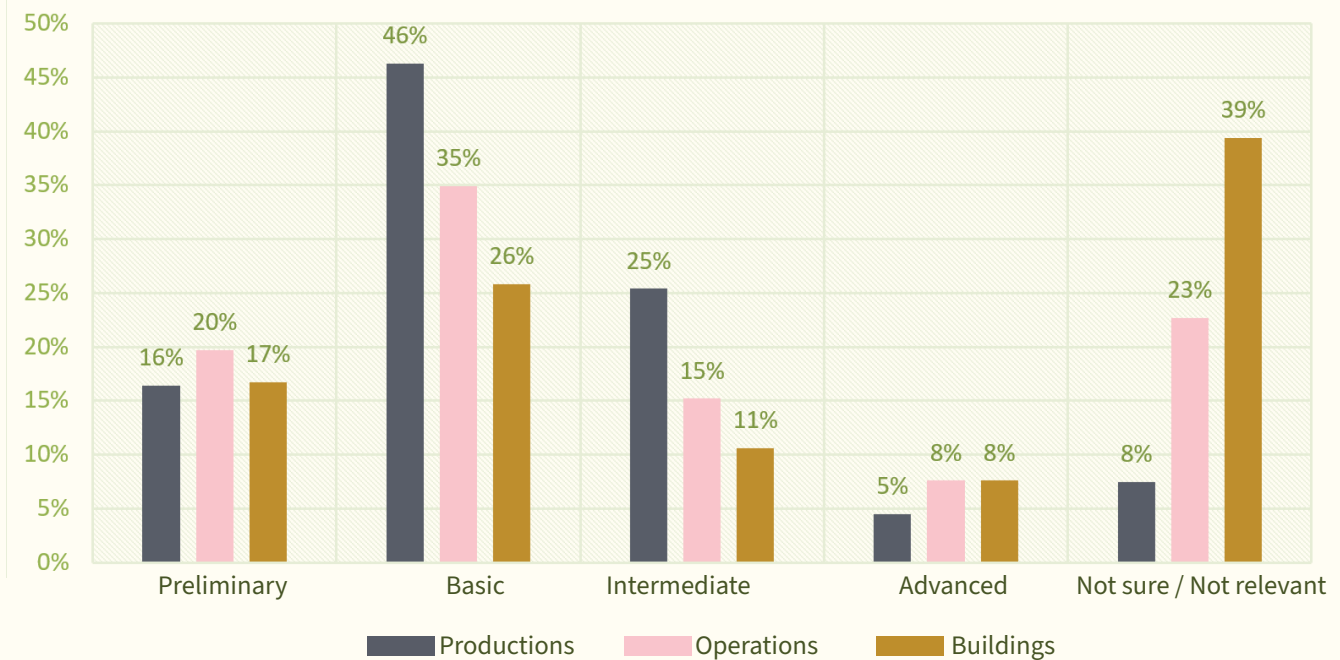


Figure 4 - Organisational progression across Theatre Green Book Standards

The survey asked organisations to report what Theatre Green Book Standard (Preliminary, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced) they felt they had achieved in each area (Productions, Operations, Buildings) to provide an alternative insight to data collected by self-certification process introduced with Version 2. The findings were instructive, showing clear progress at the Basic level of Theatre Green Book adoption, particularly within Productions⁵. However, advancement to Intermediate or Advanced levels is constrained by time, leadership commitment, and resources.

⁵ These proportions reflect a similar set of observations around which resources people are downloading and the information shared at sign-up stage. These data sources show a greater proportion of users intending to use Productions guidance, often *alongside* guidance focused on Operations and Buildings.

While Theatre Green Book requires Standards to be met across all three areas (i.e., Productions, Operations, Buildings) holistically, these findings suggest there are greater barriers to progression across Standards in Operations and Buildings beyond the Preliminary stage. This gives pause for thought on how best to support Self-Certification process going forward.

Nonetheless, a deep dive into specific actions shows meaningful progress being made across a range of areas, from digital decluttering to increasing biodiversity of outside spaces. Survey findings highlighted the following measures gaining significant traction:

- 49% of organisations are in the process of eliminating single use plastic
- 51% report designers are in the process of embedding Theatre Green Book from first concept (13% report this as 'completed')

- 46% report that directors are in the process of embedding Theatre Green Book from first concept (11% report this as 'completed')
- 37% of organisations are in the process of 'digital decluttering', with a further 36% intending to do so
- 35% are in the process of implementing road maps or strategic plans to net zero (9% have completed this, and 27% are intending to do so)
- 26% report either completing or being in the process of enhancing green spaces and supporting bees

A key challenge to implement some of the core changes required for operations and buildings is the existing infrastructure. Other research has highlighted⁶ the considerable investment required to retrofit and enhance venues, including improving building fabric and energy efficiency. With so many theatres and concert halls having been in operation for decades, structural improvement is costly, with Theatres Trust estimating that £1.1bn is needed to make 100 of the UK's theatre buildings more sustainable and suitable for modern audiences in 2021⁷. SOLT/UK Theatre members recent survey indicated 100% of theatres would make sustainable upgrades if funding were available⁸. Access to capital investment to support implementation of retrofitting and sustainability upgrades therefore remains the biggest obstacle to decarbonising the sector.

Other key barriers reported by respondents include:

- Limited senior leadership buy-in and inconsistent cross-departmental engagement
- Short production schedules that limit planning for sustainable choices
- Difficulty sourcing certified suppliers or sustainable materials.

Impressively, many organisations are developing roadmaps to net zero, demonstrating that long-term planning is taking place. There is also a clear shift towards embedding sustainability in staff goals and contracts, in a similar way to making all workers responsible for health and safety and equity and inclusion, though small and volunteer-led venues often note capacity limits.

Perhaps most significantly, respondents highlight that artistic and cultural buy-in, from Directors, Designers and Creative Teams, is as essential as technical adaptation to achieving more sustainable work on stage.

“***We are striving toward Intermediate. We need to create a road map and put more dedicated time to this.***”

“***Despite sometimes achieving 'Advanced' targets... we can never claim 'Advanced' status as we are unable to source materials/goods from accredited net zero suppliers.***”

“***Creating a sense of engagement across the organisation, and giving each department a set of goals... so that we can then progress as one to working to the next level.***”

⁶ Creative Industries and the Climate Emergency: The path to Net Zero, 2022 by Creative Policy and Evidence Centre <https://pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/PEC-Creative-Industries-and-the-Climate-Emergency-The-Path-to-Net-Zero-PEC-Research-Report.pdf>;

⁷ <https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/ps-11bn-needed-make-uk-theatres-sustainable>

⁸ <https://uktheatre.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/05/SOLUUKT-State-Of-British-Theatre.pdf>

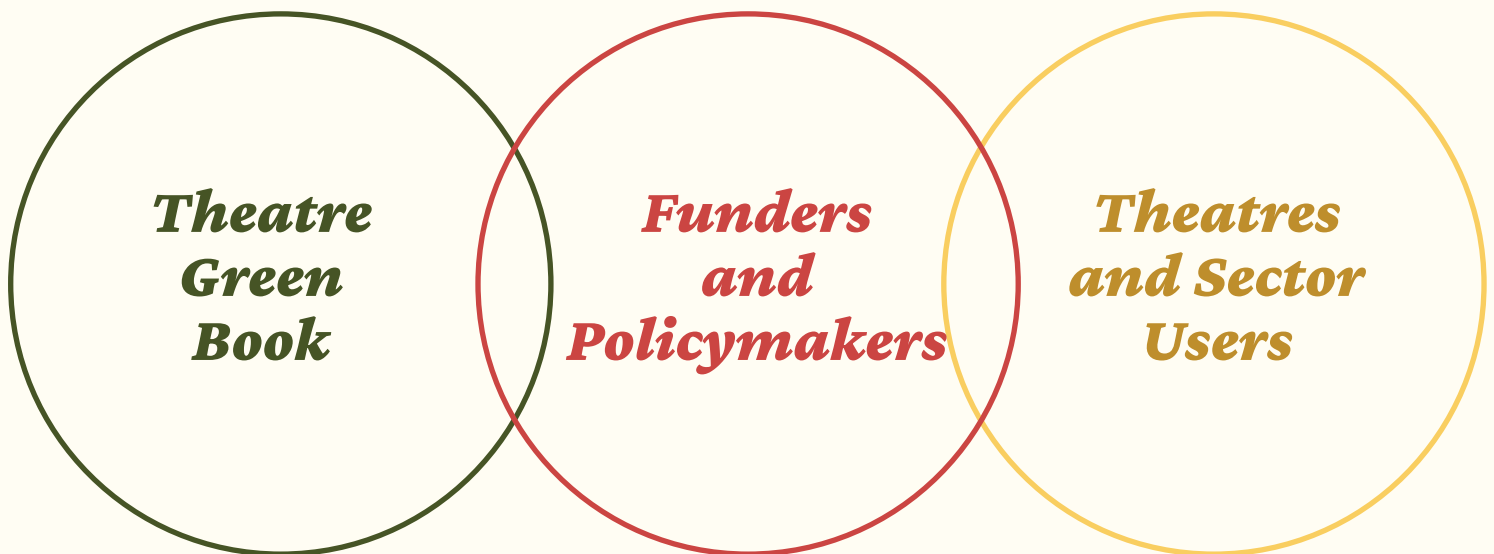
7. Conclusion and Recommendations

“...I can bring the TGB philosophy and practice with me wherever I am working.”

The first Big Theatre Green Book Survey clearly demonstrates that Theatre Green Book Version 2 has helped put sustainability at the forefront of considerations for the UK performing arts sector. The challenge now is to turn conviction into capacity, equipping every theatre, company and freelancer with the time, funding and collective infrastructure to achieve deeper, systemic change on the route to a low-carbon future.

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations have been arranged by stakeholder group. First, it highlights areas Theatre Green Book should focus on to deepen its impact and effectiveness, then suggestions for how funders and policymakers can best support change across the performing arts and finally, recommendations for how the sector can catalyse progress.

Recommendations for



Recommendations for Theatre Green Book

These survey findings give granular information for the first time about which resources are enabling change, and what users of Theatre Green Book value most. The recommendations below seek to draw out starting points for the Theatre Green Book team, committees and focus groups to prioritise 'what works', and develop strategic plans for 2026 and beyond.

1. Strengthen communications and community-building, increasing celebratory, outward-facing visibility of Theatre Green Book

- Develop and deliver a clearer communications plan to raise awareness of underused resources (e.g. Toolkits, Case Studies, Training Videos) and explore new formats and media to improve access and inclusivity of resources (e.g., alternative formats, 1-pagers, additional social media platforms).
- Continue to improve accessibility and user experience across the website, integrating clearer signposting and more powerful search functions across the website, newsletters and social media.
- Develop more freelancer-led and freelancer specific Case Studies and stories of creative innovation and opportunity.
- Increase the voice of Theatre Green Book in community-building, increasing the celebratory, outward-facing visibility of Theatre Green Book and its networks' achievements.

2. Build structured training, and expand peer and mentoring networks

- Develop Theatre Green Book Webinars and bespoke training sessions into a structured training offer; explore partnership, collaboration and business model opportunities to support this.

- Continue to support and expand Theatre Green Book Focus Groups and set up new peer-to-peer networks and communities of practice with supportive facilitators.
- Building on the pilot mentoring scheme, develop and scale up Theatre Green Book mentoring, providing accessible and inclusive support to mentors and mentees.
- Develop ways to identify and support, including financially, experienced users as mentors or facilitators.
- Explore options for further support to growing peer support networks in real life and online forums (e.g. a WhatsApp Community, Circle etc).

3. Develop more practical, accessible, and discipline-specific resources

- Produce concise, modular guidance tailored to specific roles (Designers, Producers, Technicians, Building Managers), particularly for roles predominately delivered by freelancers.
- Continue to expand toolkits and supplier databases to make sustainable choices easier for users.
- Continue to co-design new resources with users to ensure credibility and practicality.

4. Clarify and simplify the self-certification process

- Review Self-Certification of Theatre Green Book Standards to clarify purpose and refresh approach and resources, building on findings and focus group feedback.
- Suggested opportunities include linking certification to visible recognition (badges, listings, or features), decoupling progress recognition between Productions, Buildings and Operations to increase motivation, and using follow-up prompts to encourage completion.

Recommendations for Funders and Policymakers

Funders and policymakers have a key role to play in encouraging and enabling change across adaptation, decarbonisation and circular economy development. The following recommendations seek to show specific opportunities for interventions and support, drawing on the gaps and opportunities identified in the findings.

1. Resource the transition to sustainable practice

- Embed sustainability into all funding criteria, to normalise a sustainable approach.
- Provide multi-year or flexible grants for staffing and infrastructure to enable longer-term planning and continuity.
- Work with partners such as Theatre Green Book to develop sector-specific initiatives designed to target particular challenges, for example by offering micro-grants for freelancers to develop and mentor sustainable practice.
- Invest in dedicated capital funding for culture and heritage sectors to decarbonise through building upgrades and improvements, embedding sustainability criteria in decision making.

2. Incentivise measurable environmental progress

- Recognise and support Theatre Green Book as a national framework for cultural transition to a low carbon, circular economy across the performing arts.
- Introduce recognition or bonus weighting for demonstrable environmental reductions. This might take the form of grants or tax credits, such as Theatre Tax Relief, to support positive environmental changes.
- Provide dedicated funding to encourage collaboration to enable and speed up innovation and change e.g., in the development and use of eco-friendly materials and technology for the sector.

3. Invest in training and cross-sector collaboration

- Embed sustainability understanding and skills into education and skills policy, ensuring critical investment in future generations' capability to support adaptation to changing climate
- Support Theatre Green Book, carbon literacy and environmental leadership training programmes for freelancers and organisations.
- Fund cross-sector partnerships linking performing arts with material innovation sectors, including in higher education.
- Fund cross-sector partnerships and networks for reuse and circular economies across performing arts, screen industries, music and live events. 'e.g. storage and reuse networks such as ReStage).

4. Embed sustainability in policy dialogue and invest in sustainability research and data

- Incorporate Theatre Green Book Standards into performing arts data monitoring and reporting frameworks.
- Support cross-sector collaboration to develop aggregated, standardised data aligned with Theatre Green Book data from across culture and creative industries. This would improve monitoring and publishing of industry-wide progress towards decarbonisation, promoting circular economies, and sharing learnings.
- Invest in further research into sustainability in theatre and the carbon footprint of the performing arts to create clearer benchmarks for monitoring progress across creative industries subsectors.
- Research environmental opportunities and benefits of creative clusters and co-location to support development of a circular economy across culture and creative industries.

Recommendations for Theatres and Sector Users

The balance of agency between organisations and individuals to bring about change and increase environmental sustainability across the performing arts is finely tuned, as the findings from this first impact and user experience survey highlight. On the one hand, organisations with buildings in particular carry the highest carbon footprints and have the greatest sway in setting business norms. On the other hand, freelancers are the creative engines of the sector and demonstrate repeatedly how a small amount of support can enable them to catalyse groundbreaking change, both creative and practical.

These recommendations seek to draw out where both sets of Theatre Green Book users need to recognise each other's strengths and suggest where they might focus their limited resources to be most effective in achieving shared change. It is only by working together as an ecosystem that the sector will break through internal and external barriers and foster the future-proof ways of working that will see it thrive for the long-term.

1. Embed sustainability across leadership and decision-making

- Ensure shared responsibility for environmental goals across leadership, creative and operational teams. While achieving more sustainable outcomes requires all levels of an organisation to adapt their ways of working, permission to change and support to do so must come from the top.
- Integrate sustainability plans and milestones into organisational strategy and annual and multi-year planning cycles. Progress stalls when environmental actions plans become siloed and are not linked through to long-term visions, particularly for capital improvements.
- Include Theatre Green Book Standards in project briefs and role descriptions. Because Theatre Green Book provides a shared language, referencing it in formal paperwork across an organisation from HR to tenders makes it easy for everyone to know what's expected of them.

2. Invest in staff and freelancer time, planning and coordination

- Allocate paid time for sustainability planning and data entry wherever possible. It takes time to embed tracking sustainability using Theatre Green Book and/or other tools. Financial support to those on the frontline of change-making will ensure a more equitable transition.
- Build sustainability into the production schedules and budgets from the outset. Findings suggest this one action leads to the most significant change across the creative and production process.
- Encourage and make time for departments to set and review measurable sustainability goals, aligned with Theatre Green Book Standards.

3. Cultivate artistic and cultural buy-in from Directors, Designers and creative teams

- Reframe sustainability as a creative opportunity, not a constraint.
- Celebrate innovative sustainable productions and achievements in operational and buildings sustainability in public communications; case studies and good news stories have significant potential to influence and inspire.
- Use internal show-and-tell sessions to share learning across teams. Celebrating small wins is particularly valuable in maintaining motivation.

4. Connect locally and make time to share learning and peer-to-peer networks

- Join or establish local sustainability networks. Peer learning is a significant motivator and catalyst for change.
- Coordinate storage, reuse and transport schemes with neighbouring venues and growing local and national initiatives, such as ReStage, including with cross-over sectors such as screen industries, live events and music.
- Join and invest in existing local networks to support a low carbon and low waste transition with wider civic society, the charity sector and higher education, for example by sharing procurement and energy purchasing, collective fundraising initiatives aligned with government funding opportunities, knowledge exchange and community building.

Appendix: Timeline of the Theatre Green Book



May 2020

A small group including Paddy Dillon, Lisa Burger, Andrew Wylie and Paul Handley convene conversations during Covid lockdown about why the sector's commitment to environmental sustainability is not producing more real progress.

July-December 2020

The co-founders build a coalition of support that brings into partnership the leading voices in the sector, including Theatres Trust, Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT), and Society of London Theatre (SOLT) / UK Theatre, the National Theatres of England, Scotland and Wales, and other leading theatres, opera companies and sector support organisations.

December 2020 - January 2021

Focus groups bring together practitioners of all disciplines from across the sector, working at all scales and in all nations of the UK, to understand the systems changes needed to make progress. Buro Happold, Theatre Green Book's sustainability experts, join every meeting and develop the methodologies that can best underpin change.

February - November 2021

The three volumes of Theatre Green Book – Productions, Operations and Buildings – are brought out progressively. Each is based on extensive feedback from working theatre-makers, and each is brought out as a 'Beta' version, open to continuous improvement and development. Theatre-makers generously give their time for free, while Buro Happold donate most of their time pro bono.

The lead support bodies offer financial support, along with leading theatres, alongside contributions from companies including Aecom, AHMM, Bristow Consulting, Charcoalblue, Gardiner and Theobald, Haworth Tompkins Architects, Ingleton Wood, Unusual Rigging, Laing O'Rourke, Plann, Stage Electrics and Theatre Plan.

Leading theatres quickly get on board to endorse and adopt Theatre Green Book, which wins a Stage Innovation Award 2021.

2022

Arts Council England and Greater London Authority support the creation of the Arts Green Book, a version of Theatre Green Book adapted for use in any cultural building, with partners from across music, festivals, live events, and museums and galleries.

International Development

2021-2023

The Deutsches Theatertechnisches Gesellschaft (DTHG), along with Danish and other theatre organisations get in touch, asking to translate and adapt the Theatre Green Book. A 'network of networks' takes shape, where local groups manage Theatre Green Book networks, adapting them to local conditions, but staying close enough to enable sharing of information and expertise across global theatre. By 2025, those networks will cover most of Europe, parts of Asia, Australia, and the Arabic-speaking world, along with partnerships in the Americas.

2022

Theatre Green Book initiates a partnership with the European Theatre Convention, Europe's largest theatre network, to work with a focus group who will go on to mentor other members. A similar partnership with Opera Europa and Fedora will begin in 2025.

2023

The European Theatre Forum, meeting in Poland, agree the 'Opole Recommendations' which endorse Theatre Green Book as a pathway to net zero for European theatre. The recommendations are approved by the European Commission, who support the Theatre Green Book at the Avignon Festival in June 2024.

Development of Theatre Green Book Version 2

2023

Sector-wide focus groups contribute feedback and proposed amendments for Version 2 of the Theatre Green Book, alongside the creation of new trackers and planning tools, and additional case studies and toolkits.

Funding from the Foyle Foundation, Steel Charitable Trust, Frederick Mulder Foundation and Arts Council England enable these developments.

A part-time Coordinator is appointed to support the growing network, followed later in the year by a part-time Producer to assist with Version 2 development.

New governance structures are put in place: Theatre Green Book becomes an Unincorporated Association, led by Theatres Trust, Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT), SOLT/UK Theatre, National Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland, Renew Culture and Buro Happold. Secretariat support is provided by the Theatres Trust.

2024

January 2024

A dedicated group commit to achieving Theatre Green Book Basic Standard by trialling Version 2 by the end of 2024, including: Chichester Festival Theatre, English National Ballet, Headlong, The Lowry, National Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland, Northern Stage, Opera North, Royal Opera House, Royal Shakespeare Company, SAIL, SHIFT, Wales Millennium Centre, and the Young Vic.

June 2024

Theatre Green Book Version 2 is launched at the SOLT/UK Theatre Conference, receiving significant press coverage.

An updated website is launched with improved accessibility, offering new trackers and survey tools, Case Studies, Toolkits, Sign-up function and Self-Certification.

July 2024 to March 2025

Version 2 is launched and shared across the sector at online and in person conferences, events and workshops, including in Scotland with the Federation of Scottish Theatre and Wales with Creu Cymru.

2025

September 2024

A part-time Director is appointed to lead dissemination of Version 2, extend its reach and deepen engagement. Free 'How To' webinars and demonstration videos are launched, alongside free one-to-one support calls for new organisations as they sign up and a LinkedIn page, Theatre Green Book's first social media use.

December 2024

Creu Cymru appoint a Theatre Green Book Champion to support dissemination and engagement across Wales.

The group of organisations trailing Version 2 all achieve Theatre Green Book Basic Standard by the end of 2024.



January – June 2025

A six-part International Webinar Series features speakers from across Europe, including:

Royal Danish Theatre, DTHG, Dutch National Opera & Ballet, Het Zuidelijk Toneel,

Chichester Festival Theatre, Oxford Playhouse, Buro Happold, ATG, The Bush

Theatre, Theatres Trust, European Theatre Convention, National Theatre Prague,

Plann, Royal Ballet & Opera, 17h25, and Charcoalblue.

March 2025

Theatre Green Book is showcased at the Unicorn Theatre in London following an invitation from Kerry McCarthy MP, then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

April 2025

Launch of two focus groups for the commercial sector, a Commercial Producers Focus Group, supporting Producers and General Managers, and a Commercial Operations and Buildings Focus Group.

● ***June 2025***

Introduction of a Pilot Mentoring Scheme.

Launch of the first Big Theatre Green Book Survey, designed to evaluate the impact of Version 2 and improve our understanding of how people and individuals are using Theatre Green Book's resources.

Launch of the Theatre Green Book newsletter.

● ***September - November 2025***

A seven-part Operations Webinar Series features speakers from across the subsidised and commercial sectors including Birmingham Hippodrome, Headlong, Manifesto, Midlands Arts Centre, National Theatre, Newcastle Theatre Royal, Recorra, Royal Ballet and Opera, Sustainable Restaurants Association, Hope Solutions, The Lowry, Trafalgar Theatres, Wales Millennium Centre and the Young Vic, on topics covering Waste Management, Food, Drink and Retail, Contracts and Procurement, Organisational Change, Travel and Transport, Building Management, and Digital and Paper.

● ***November 2025***

Sustainable Theatre: Global Challenge takes place at the National Theatre, bringing together international networks of Theatre Green Book for the first time.

The first Theatre Green Book Impact Report: Findings from the Big Theatre Green Survey 2025 is published.



