



The Brontë Society

---

Brontë Parsonage  
MUSEUM

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

**Governing body:** The Brontë Society Board of Trustees

**Date on which this policy was approved by the governing body:** 15 February  
2024

**Policy review procedure:** We will review this policy every three years to ensure it is line with national regulatory frameworks and current best practice.

**Date at which this policy is due for review:** January 2027

Overview

The world is facing a climate and ecological emergency. The Brontë Society recognises that cultural organisations have a role to play in creating a regenerative future that protects the planet and sustains communities everywhere.

The Brontë Society is committed to understanding, managing and monitoring the environmental impact of its activities. From the way we manage our building and the suppliers we choose, to the products we source and the way we deliver our creative programme; our environmental impact informs our decisions.

It is accepted that climate change has an adverse effect on social justice. People of colour, women and future generations are all most affected by climate change. There are opportunities for us to explore issues related to sustainability and the natural environment in our creative programme to engage our audiences: social justice, the landscape and issues affecting the lives of women were all important to the Brontës.

There is also a very strong business case for environmental sustainability: economic levers include high energy costs, rising commodity prices and the availability of funding for sustainable practices.

We share Arts Council England's and Julie's Bicycle's objectives to reposition sustainability so that it inspires ambition, optimism and creativity, and to provide clean energy for the arts and heritage community. We also acknowledge that sustainability is a valuable staff engagement tool.

## **1. Implementation**

The Brontë Society Environmental Responsibility Policy is a statement of our commitment to reduce the impact of our activities on the environment. It is supported by an action plan which is reviewed and updated annually.

We will adopt sound principles and best practice suited to a small charity, reducing, reusing, and recycling wherever possible.

We will work with our trustees, staff, partners, suppliers and audiences to ensure we consider and communicate the environmental implications of our activities.

We will assess and report our performance to stakeholders on an annual basis and we will use the performance data to update our action plan for the following year.

## **2 Scope of the Policy**

The Policy considers the following impacts on the environment:

### **Energy:**

- Responsible fossil-fuel energy management through reduced consumption and energy efficiency.
- The regular testing of all electrical equipment to ensure maximum safety and energy efficiency.
- Use of other natural and finite resources

#### **Transport:**

- Encouraging the use of public transport or car-sharing when travelling on business to reduce carbon footprint.
- Sustainable transport use in our curatorial activity

#### **Procurement and purchasing:**

- Choosing suppliers which have a responsible approach to the environment.
- Choosing products which minimise negative environmental impact eg using environmentally-friendly cleaning products, recycled paper and computer cartridges wherever possible.

#### **Waste management and recycling:**

- Encouraging double-sided photocopying / printing and the practice of producing the minimum number of copies required.
- Recycling paper and paper products wherever possible within budgetary constraints.
- Recycling of printer ink cartridges.
- Encouraging email, phone and online communication rather than face-to-face meetings, to reduce carbon footprint
- Avoiding the unnecessary use of hazardous materials and processes.

#### **Programme:**

- We will explore environmental and related issues via our public programme, mindful of the importance of these issues to the Brontës.
- Advocacy and influence: we will encourage our visitors and audiences to consider these issues through their engagement with us.

### **3 Key environmental impacts**

#### **a) Building and property**

The Brontë Society is responsible for the management of the Brontë Parsonage Museum in

Haworth, a Grade 1 Listed building which consists of historic rooms, offices, a shop, public admissions area and external grounds, including a garden, meadow and courtyard.

Our Grade 1 Listed building and museum function, including the requirements of authenticity and public safety, presents particular challenges in relation to energy consumption eg the installation of double glazing is not permitted. **Our primary environmental impacts are: fossil fuel consumption; water consumption; waste generation; goods and services.**

#### **b) Curatorial**

Caring for our unique historical collection also presents specific challenges in relation to energy consumption, eg we have to light the museum to specific curatorial and public safety standards and the use of noxious material eg the collection strong room is protected by halon gas, which is noxious if released.

We often need to transport valuable items from the collection, either for conservation or in the process of loaning them to other museums. To preserve sound curatorial practice, we need to use reputable industry-approved carriers, which can sometimes involve the use of a large vehicle to transport a small item. Often, a staff member will accompany the item as a courier which limits our choice of modes of transport as we need to ensure the safety of our staff member and collection. Public transport is therefore not always an option.

Therefore, **our primary environmental impacts are: fossil fuel consumption; waste generation; goods and services; noxious materials; transport**

#### **c) Learning**

Our learning activities are conducted in the leased section of the Old School Room, which presents significant challenges in relation to energy consumption (in particular heating, lighting and AV equipment). This programme encourages visitors in large groups, which both offers an opportunity to reduce our impact on the environment as people travel in groups, but presents a challenge if large groups of people travel to the museum in separate modes of transport. **Our primary environmental impacts are: fossil fuel consumption; transport**

#### **d) Events**

Each year we deliver a number of events, such eg talks and exhibition openings, in our building, grounds, or hired venues. This involves travel, transport, the use of specialist and hired equipment, printing and signage, and electronic display equipment and lighting. **Our primary environmental impacts are: fossil fuel consumption; transport; water consumption; waste generation; food and drink consumption; procurement and purchase of goods and services; the opportunity to share a positive environmental message via the event**

#### **e) Communications, marketing and office functions**

Interpreting our collection for visitors and making our collection accessible, promoting and reporting on our activities, producing marketing publications and ensuring our building is attractive and communicates relevant information to our visitors, requires printing and signage. Our office functions also require the use of stationery and consumables. **Our primary environmental impacts are: paper, wood and metal resource consumption; toxicity of inks and finishes**

#### **f) Suppliers**

For our building maintenance and cleaning, office stationery, specialist museum curatorial and conservation activities and event management, goods and services are required to run our operations, each with its own environmental impact. Our primary impacts are: resources used for electric equipment, furniture, stationery; toxicity of cleaning products, furniture and equipment; waste generation

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

We measure and monitor all these environmental impacts so that we can take informed decisions and control usage in the future. We use the tools and resources provided by Julie's Bicycle to measure:

- Water usage
- Percentage of recycling as distinct from waste
- Energy consumption
- Toxicity of consumables, printing materials, and curatorial and cleaning materials
- Business-related transport impacts

We will continue to evaluate our performance on an annual basis and seek ways to reduce our environmental impact.