



NCH

NATIONAL  
CONCERT  
HALL \ AN  
CEOLÁRAS  
NÁISIÚNTA

National Concert Hall

# CLIMATE ACTION ROAD MAP

2025

nch.ie



# INTRODUCTION

## Climate action mandate

The Climate Action Plan 2021 released by the Government of Ireland sets out a number of ambitious objectives and envisages the public sector leading by examples on climate action to reach the target of reducing Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 51% by 2023 and becoming climate neutral no later than 2050.

Under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and the Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23), the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate 2023 requires public sector bodies to demonstrate leadership in climate action by both taking and reporting on actions set out in the Mandate based on four key pillars:

- **Our Targets;**
- **Our People;**
- **Our Way of Working;**
- **Our Buildings and Vehicles;**

National Concert Hall Climate Action Roadmap structure mirrors these four key pillars.





## About NCH

The National Concert Hall is Ireland's national cultural institution for music, proudly serving the Irish public since it opened in 1981 through live music performances and significant educational and cultural programmes. We host over 1,000 concerts and events annually and welcome over 300,000 visitors each year.

The National Concert Hall environment comprises of the buildings on the Earlsfort Terrace site, the staff of the NCH and National Symphony Orchestra, our three choirs and several resident organisations including Music Network, Crash Ensemble, Irish Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir Ireland. Bars and catering at the NCH are operated by With Taste, a third-party hospitality company which is governed by its own sustainability policy.



## NCH Sustainability Agenda

Following the United Nations definition, the National Concert Hall considers sustainability to be striving towards having a positive social, economic and environmental impact in everything we do. We are committed to excelling in environmental sustainability, and in supporting all artists, productions, events and personnel in running greener operations, avoiding unnecessary waste wherever possible.

Our commitments under The Climate Action Plan 2021 (CAP21) and subsequent (CAP 23) has enabled the NCH to create a Climate Action Roadmap. The NCH is aligning with public sector targets which are to improve energy efficiency by 50% over the 2009 baseline and to reduce CO2 emissions by 51% over their 2016-2018 average baseline.





By 2030, every public sector organisation is required to achieve:

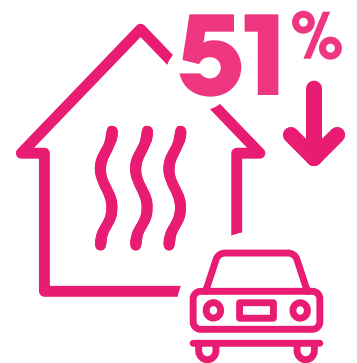
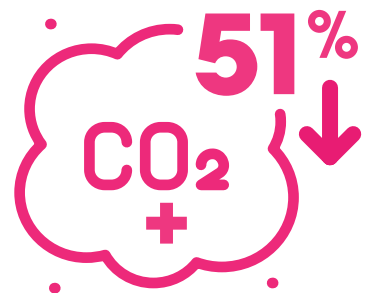
- 51% reduction in energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- 51% reduction in thermal (heating and transport) related greenhouse gas emissions
- 50% improvement in energy efficiency

NCH is currently planning for a major redevelopment of all facilities as part of the National Development Plan and Project Ireland 2040. We will continue to work with SEAI and EPA to achieve these ambitious targets, ensuring environmental sustainability is at the heart of our new campus.

## Our Targets

### Carbon emissions analysis

The National Concert Hall will establish a process for monitoring and reporting, to ensure there is an annual review of carbon emissions, as well as to track progress towards achieving carbon reduction goals. This process will adhere to the National Climate Action Plan and emission reduction target of 51% by 2030. This roadmap will be updated upon completion of our carbon footprint analysis. This will include calculating emissions from all organisational activities such as energy consumption, transportation and waste management. This operational shift, in conjunction with the forthcoming carbon footprint analysis recommendations and other planned improvements, will position the National Concert Hall on a promising trajectory towards achieving its 2030 emissions target.





## Our Progress in 2024

At the NCH we are committed to excelling in environmental sustainability, and in supporting all artists, productions, events and personnel in running greener operations, avoiding unnecessary waste wherever possible. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) monitoring and reporting report for 2023 shows energy savings of 9% for the NCH when compared to the 2016 baseline year while increasing the number of events and occupying greater floorspace during this time.

Our recycling rate in 2023 was 82.4%, comprising 8 Tonnes of dry recyclables and 1.6 Tonnes of waste.

A number of sustainable initiatives commenced in 2023 including a programme to upgrade to LED light fittings in all public areas, performance spaces, including orchestral lights in the Main Auditorium, a switch to 100% renewable energy.

We have undertaken a replacement of our printers with energy-efficient models, reduction of our ticket printing by 53.9% between 2018 and 2023 and completed of energy/BMS audits.

In addition we have created a unique bio-diverse, award winning "Garden Shed" area at the rear of NCH which also serves as a recreational outdoor space for staff and artists.

We are also now taking part in the Re-turn scheme, an on-premise bottle deposit return scheme, in aid of Ireland's main children's charities.

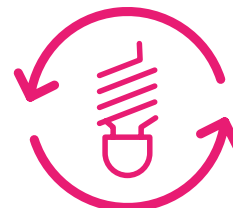
**8 Tonnes**



**1.6 Tonnes**



**100%**







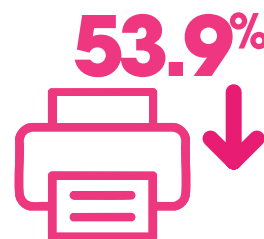
## Our actions going forward

We have identified key areas of priority in relation to:

### Printing, ticketing & communications

#### Completed /Ongoing Actions:

- We have replaced our printers with energy-efficient models.
- As of 2023, at the end of the financial year we inform each of our teams how much print they've generated and use this as a benchmark for reduction.
- We've pre-set all of our computers to print double sided and turned off colour printing.
- We've equipped our core administrative team with laptops, resulting in a reduction in printed materials
- We have reduced our ticket printing by 53.9% between 2018 and 2023.



#### Actions to be realized in 2025:

- We aim to recycle 100% of the paper we use in our buildings.
- NCH have rebranded our "Print at Home (Physical Attachment)" tickets as "eTickets", which will incentivise a reduction of Customers coming into the NCH with printed tickets.
- Children and Families programming to integrate sustainability themes and key messages as part of annual programming.
- Digital version of Fanfare to be made to NCH Friends to reduce printing and postage
- Paper Friends Memberships and Gift Cards to replace plastic version by December 2025





## Waste & Recycling

We recognise that processing waste, even by recycling, is highly carbon intensive. As such, we've taken the following measures to reduce waste.

### Completed /Ongoing Actions:

- We provide clear signage for everyone using our buildings to limit the waste they bring on site, including recyclable products. We will increase this in 2024 in key areas.
- We are committed to a core principle of reducing and re-using across all areas of our work.
- Each full-time staff member has received a reusable keep cup and our partner With Taste provide a discount when used. We will continue to promote this discount.

### Actions to be realised:

- We will ensure that we use the most sustainable materials when printing performance and seasonal programmes, maximising space and postage efficiency where possible, continuing to explore digital and more sustainable options.
- Working with our partners we will seek to ensure all cleaning products are ecofriendly where possible
- Food waste 5% increase
- Option to reduce single use cups for tea and coffee with tariff imposed
- 25% increase of staff using Keep Cup
- More Centralised Bin Option in Offices for 2025 in lieu of office bins/consolidation





## Procurement:

Green Public Procurement (GPP) is a process where public authorities seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact. The EPA has published GPP guidance and ten accompanying criteria sets that support the inclusion of sustainable and green practices into public sector procurement procedures.

- The ten criteria sets published are Road Transport Vehicles & Services; ICT Products & Services; Food & Catering Services; Indoor Cleaning Services; Office Buildings Design, Construction & Management; Indoor & Outdoor Lighting; Heating Equipment; Energy related Products and Paper Products & Printing Services.

### Actions to be realised:

- We will introduce green criteria in procurement to support climate action ambitions including improved energy efficiency.



## Sustainable Data Storage

Sustainable data storage is an increasing concern at NCH we are acutely aware of the environmental liabilities that come with storage, especially as the volumes of data continue to grow.

### Completed /Ongoing Actions:

NCH is committed to **data minimisation** to ensure the sustainable and ethical protection of data under our care. This transparent framework not only reduces our carbon footprint but also brings awareness to our data footprint under the following principles: -

- **Data Minimisation** – We only hold information that we actively use. While it is a natural instinct to hold onto information ‘just in case we need it’, we now flip that concept on its head to ‘use it or lose it’. DPO working with ITC to introduce ‘file clean up’ programme.
- **Data Mapping** – We actively track what information we collect, the purpose and person responsible for the information under a ROPA (Record of Processing). This process also focuses on the footprint of the data. Where it is stored, country of transfer and length of time for storage.
- **Data Retention** – From the mapping process, we identify realistic but fair retention and deletion timeframes and act upon them. Ongoing assessment by everyone to consciously process – do we need it, why do we need it, is it held somewhere else, store it with intention or securely delete it.



- **Data Transfer** – Information has the clever ability to ‘creep’ even under our watchful eye such as sharing information with partners & suppliers, email attachments, photocopying, printing, post-it notes and signing up to apps that promise to make our lives easier. This continuous transferring of information, both personal and business related, without due care to retrieve or delete simply feeds the hungry servers, data centres\* and artificial intelligence algorithms.

The proactive deletion and restriction of data management provides proof that we **respect** people’s privacy, it will reduce the potential for a data breach and have a direct positive effect on our energy use and carbon emissions.

#### **Action for 2025:**

- Develop a company wide data retention policy to encourage a more efficient means of storage and retention. As part of that policy, we would agree on timeline of email deletion.
- Encourage Staff to use Microsoft reactions as a response to emails communications to reduce email use and Teams messaging etc.





## Our People

The National Concert Hall's senior management team recognises the urgency of addressing climate change and the critical role that the public sector plays in achieving Ireland's climate goals in order to protect the environment and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

### **Communications/training/staff engagement:**

#### **Completed /Ongoing Actions:**

We commit to engaging, empowering, and training our staff to participate, stay informed and engage with our sustainability initiatives including:

- Regular quarterly meetings of our established NCH Sustainability Taskforce team (Green Team) to ensure actions are implemented.
- Regular reminders for staff to encourage engagement with our sustainability initiatives.
- NCH run monthly/bi-monthly staff volunteer environmental clean-up sessions for the NCH outside environment – partnering with Dublin City Council arranging waste collection.
- Promote sustainable actions and options to visitors in programmes/ What's On Guide e.g., give details of public transport routes to encourage people not to drive, promoting the NOW bike stations and our bicycle racks



### Actions to be realized 2025:

- Staff workshops will be delivered in partnership with SEAI and other climate and sustainability organisations so that all staff are aware of Green Team Actions 2025 for in person, online and self-directed learning.
- Senior management (PO level and above) will undertake climate action leadership training with Change by Degrees
- Green Team will participate in Online sustainability awareness training

To achieve this, senior management commit the National Concert Hall to the following actions:

- **Climate Action Roadmap:** The National Concert Hall embraces the Climate Action Roadmap as a vital tool to guide us on our climate action journey. Through this roadmap, we will continually improve our infrastructure, services and resource management, while also fostering behavioural changes among our staff and stakeholders.
- **Supporting Government Initiatives and Ambitious Goals:** The National Concert Hall fully endorses the Climate Action Plan outlined by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. We acknowledge the importance of its comprehensive approach to reducing carbon emissions across the nation. The National Concert Hall commits to working towards achieving the ambitious goal of reducing our carbon emissions by 51% by 2030 and aspires to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.



- **Leadership Role:** Senior management are dedicated to setting a strong example for our colleagues, partners, and the communities we serve, and understand that effective climate action requires both vision and accountability. The Climate Action Mandate requires that leadership and governance structures for climate action are set up, and that staff are engaged with climate action and have appropriate training
- NCH Sustainability Taskforce team (Green Team) will report to Senior Leadership Team and drive further integrated sustainability into the organization. The Green Team has two main objectives. These are to influence decision making in NCH so that climate and environmental criteria are to the fore and to influence colleagues to commit to working and living sustainably. The Green Team is composed of staff members from a range of internal departments to ensure a well-rounded and far-reaching approach throughout the organisation. The role of the Green Team is to:
  - Raise awareness about NCH climate action and environmental goals.
  - Advocate for eco-friendly and sustainable practises among staff and management. 1
  - Serve as a platform that encourages employees to suggest, evaluate, prioritise and implement green initiatives.



## OUR WAY OF WORKING

### Our People

1. Agree priorities at the outset between key stakeholders
2. Embed processes to measure our carbon footprint across areas such as energy usage, wastage, recycling, transport etc.
3. Communicate our aims with all stakeholders and discuss methods of measurements and reductions
4. Identify initiatives and target reductions
5. Develop partnerships with organisations that can assist with monitoring and reducing environmental impact
6. Measure and monitor impacts
7. Commit to consistent annual review

### Our Buildings and Vehicles

**NCH will continue to promote bicycle friendly facilities for employees and visitors, by maintaining covered bicycle storage and secure parking areas which are accessible and provides ease of use for cyclists. These are available for both staff and the public. Staff are encouraged to take advantage of the 'Bike to Work' scheme.**





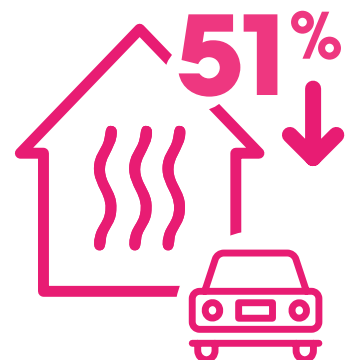
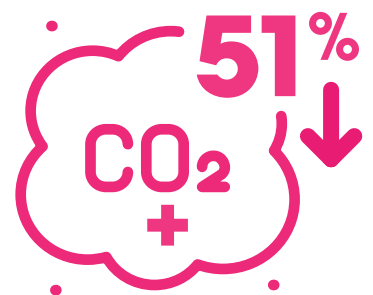
## Energy Consumption

The National Concert Hall are aligning with the public sector targets which are to improve energy efficiency by 50% over the 2009 baseline and to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 51% over their 2016-2018 average baseline. By 2030, every public sector organisation is required to achieve:

- 51% reduction in energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- 51% reduction in thermal (heating and transport) related greenhouse gas emissions
- 50% improvement in energy efficiency

### Completed /Ongoing Actions:

- 100% of the energy we use is renewable, provided by Energia.
- Due to the age of our buildings we're unable to generate our own power; instead, we will state and implement energy reduction targets and continue to invest in more efficient hardware including heat pumps and solar photovoltaics in line with our commitments under our Climate Action Plan.
- Our power usage has continued to decrease, mostly due to investing in more energy-efficient and robust hardware across our operations.
- We continue to upgrade all house, orchestral and stage lighting in Main Auditorium to LED (2023/2024)





#### **Actions to be realised:**

- The SEAI energy audit will be completed by end of Quarter One
- Continuation of LED upgrades in public/performance areas to LED.
- All Internal and external digital screens will be energy efficient upgraded by end of Quarter One

### **Artist, staff & audience transport**

We aim to lower emissions by encouraging our staff, artists and audiences to travel in the most sustainable way possible and providing them with incentives and support to achieve this. The NCH encourages and promotes the most efficient routing, shared or renewably powered transport and fewer air miles.

#### **Completed /Ongoing Actions:**

- Encouraging staff to walk to work where possible or to use public transport. We will further promote our bike to work scheme and its incentives.
- Providing clear travel information in advance on the NCH website, e.g. a map of the site and the locality with the nearest bus stops, EV charging points, bike parks and other local transport links clearly marked encouraging audiences to calculate their carbon footprint for the journey





#### **Actions to be realised:**

- Installing 10 additional bike stands to accommodate the increased demand for bike parking spaces. There are currently 46 number of stands on site
- We will monitor transport impacts such as artist travel, transfers, production equipment, deliveries, suppliers and contractors
- NCH will strive to plan further in advance in order to secure local talent to reduce carbon footprint to reduce air travel

## **Biodiversity**

#### **Completed /Ongoing Actions:**

We commit to a minimum 'greening' and maintenance of 2 areas outside NCH building, agreed as:

- Garden Shed to the exterior of NCH, growing creepers/climbers to create a vertical green wall including troughs and planters
- Planting native tree and plant species on site to encourage birds, insects and mammals
- Produce own compost to become self-sustaining
- Provide diverse green spaces for staff to enjoy

#### **Actions to be realised:**

- Introduce use of water butts to collect rainwater to nourish planting
- Investigate provision of free bulbs through Dublin City Council

