

Climate emergency – what can music groups do?

Friday 8 October 2021

Links and comments shared in the chat during the event

The Let it Grow website - lots of resources for choirs, bands, schools and individuals....

www.letitgrow.scot

<https://howbadarebananas.com/> - Updated edition published September 2020

A new train service London-Edinburgh is launching soon and will only be £15 per ticket apparently

- <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/new-london-edinburgh-rail-service-tickets-lumo-b954051.html> - so no more excuses for flying London-Edinburgh 😊

This blog, though not at all focused on music-making, has some wonderful resources and ideas for flying less: <https://academicflyingblog.wordpress.com/>

Mathematically it sounds strange at first - surely the weight of fuel in a plane can't be a tonne per person? - but it isn't. The total amount of CO2 that comes to is more than triple the weight of the fuel, because the carbon in the fuel combines with (heavier) oxygen in the air.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tz8ex7Mnjb4> the song Alison is talking about

<https://musicdeclares.net/gb/sing>

<https://choirsforclimate.com/>

We were talking about going digital (using tablets etc instead of paper) - does anyone know how the environmental impact of manufacturing and powering tablets/laptops etc compares to printing paper? It seems like a simple switch, but is it actually better for the environment?

I think essentially if you're buying a tablet that wouldn't have been made otherwise, then it's probably worse, but if you buy a second-hand one and use it then it's definitely better. Paper has a much higher carbon and environmental impact than people often realise (though there are active efforts in place to make the industry greener).

I'm in the middle of reading Bill Gates' book and I find his comparison of things quite useful and easy to absorb - [https://www.abebooks.co.uk/Avoid-Climate-Disaster-Solutions-Breakthroughs-Need/30980469708/bd?cm_mmc=ggl-_-UK_Shopp_Tradestandard-_-](https://www.abebooks.co.uk/Avoid-Climate-Disaster-Solutions-Breakthroughs-Need/30980469708/bd?cm_mmc=ggl-_-UK_Shopp_Tradestandard-_-product_id=UK9780385546133USED-_-keyword=&gclid=EAlaIqobChMI86O13Pa68wIVMu7mCh2sNAXaEAQYBSABEgJhHfD_BwE)

[product_id=UK9780385546133USED-_-keyword=&gclid=EAlaIqobChMI86O13Pa68wIVMu7mCh2sNAXaEAQYBSABEgJhHfD_BwE](https://www.abebooks.co.uk/Avoid-Climate-Disaster-Solutions-Breakthroughs-Need/30980469708/bd?cm_mmc=ggl-_-UK_Shopp_Tradestandard-_-product_id=UK9780385546133USED-_-keyword=&gclid=EAlaIqobChMI86O13Pa68wIVMu7mCh2sNAXaEAQYBSABEgJhHfD_BwE)

and the 'how bad are bananas' book – updated edition published September 2020

Helpful list of what your music group can do here - <https://choirsforclimate.com/eco-choirs/>

There is no planet B is more up to date than how bad are bananas

https://www.abebooks.co.uk/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=30274756811&searchurl=kn%3Dmike%2Bbern timers%2Blee%26sortby%3D17&cm_sp=snippet-_-srp1-_-title2

Good point about barriers to access - e.g. disabled people often have no alternative to driving a car to rehearsal, people may feel guilty about flying to visit family - make sure that you're not excluding people

There are implications in the material of new uniform items - I wonder how easy it is to get either organic cotton or the non-oil alternatives such as viscose and Tencel

Great point! - they might be more expensive - an alternative might be having a slightly looser uniform policy eg all black with a dash of red - that way people can wear/personalise what they have/go to charity shops!

I agree - a guideline on uniforms which means that people don't have to buy new clothing will be more environmentally friendly than any custom clothing choice

Getting back to singing together post-lockdown is proving an environmental challenge. We need to find larger venues, which may no longer be as local, and we need to keep windows open for ventilation (as well as heating on for comfort).

We have black uniform - people can wear anything and just add a splash of colour with jewellery

Please can I promote a national charitable organisation that offers free training for anyone who is interested in engaging with their local MP or Council about climate change. Hope for the Future www.hftf.org.uk

There's a difference between "offsetting" and tree-planting for its own sake - often, e.g. airlines offer "carbon offsetting" for your flight which is barely worth the paper it's written on, as it consists of planting trees in other countries without much oversight (and potentially increasing the risk of forest fires or soil erosion!)

Ah yes that's a very good point... one rehearsal online, one in person? sectional rehearsals? blankets? asking if the venue runs on renewable energy? getting up and moving around more? Eco Church scheme for churches is great

Raising awareness about how climate change affects people disproportionately around the world is something that we can all do as part of our programmes - UNICEF have some really useful reports on the millions of people displaced every year due to climate change:

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/futures-risk-protecting-rights-children-move-changing-climate>

This is helpful <https://www.climatestewards.org> For carbon offsetting

Are people using the resources developed by Julie's Bicycle? <https://juliesbicycle.com/>

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> Eco church!!

Ecosia search engine plants trees to offset power used: <https://www.ecosia.org/>

We now have "blended" rehearsals so people can use zoom to join an in-person rehearsal - so members could choose to avoid a journey now & then

Julie's Bicycle's Creative Green Tools provide some measurement tools:

<https://juliesbicycle.com/reporting/>

Any good initiatives from instrument manufacturers and those that use natural raw materials rather than plastics. I know of p bone <https://pbone.co.uk/>

If anyone's from an orchestra, here's an idea I had earlier - play Haydn's Farewell Symphony and have each orchestra member dressed as an endangered species

Encouraging members to car share has been challenging - even when they live around the corner from one another! Something for us to work on

If you'd like to follow the Let it Grow project on our social media channels, here they are:

https://twitter.com/LetItGrow_music https://www.instagram.com/letitgrow_music/

<https://www.facebook.com/letitgrow.music> And the original music video....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tz8ex7Mnjb4>

there are instrument manufacturers making sustainable instruments, there will be an event about this from Music Declares Emergency next month

Car sharing at the same time as encouraging social distancing provides a challenge in itself!

I suggest doing climate theme charity concerts for fundraising for local community causes such as insulating community buildings... like a church hall we rehearse...

<https://musicdeclares.net/gb/classical-declares> - Our next panel discussion will be on Sustainability in orchestras and instrument making and will be at 2pm on November 10th, 2021

We take a poll to see how many people will be attending - if it's below a certain number we change the rehearsal to Zoom

Buffet Crampon makes a line of clarinets called Greenline, that is grenadilla wood scraps mixed with glue, to make best use of this rare wood.

I'm interested in collating a list of relevant, existing repertoire for choirs and opera groups in addition to Chris's page on contemporary compositions. Chris has agreed to host such a list. I would suggest eg Noyes Fludde / Mendelssohn's Elijah. Any other ideas?! :)

Bulletin board on the website for sharing ideas?

Some things seem illogical: plastic trombones having lower impact than metal, the high number of times you have to use a reusable cup before its impact is lower than a throw away cup. Any tips on these conversations with people/organisations who think they're being 'climate virtuous' ie by buying a metal trombone instead of plastic. We're musicians, not scientists so I think it can be tricky for groups/individuals to know whether we're actually doing the right thing.

Buying secondhand instruments will avoid so many environmental issues, of course.

what might be useful is getting Carbon Literacy training. I got mine through Opera North - not sure if they're still offering it. <https://carbonliteracy.com/>

Wrapping up warm in ventilated meetings has lower CO2 footprint than fan heaters!

Are there any Gaia-themed music pieces?

Some good Gaia themed songs on NVN site too

Yes Joanna Foster has written a piece about Gaia - she's an NVN choir leader

<https://choirsforclimate.com/music-priced/>

And <https://musicdeclares.net/gb/classical-declares> is having an orchestras and climate event on 10th November - booking open soon