

Purple Guide Chapter 37: Environmental Sustainability

Understanding environmental sustainability has become essential to all sectors of society and the economy to meet the challenges of the global ecological and climate crisis. All sectors need to adapt business models to manage changing supply chains, extreme weather, public opinion and new guidance and legislation.

This Chapter of the Purple Guide provides guidance for event organisers on best practice for environmental sustainability at live outdoor events and is also a reference to local authorities and other stakeholders.

Disclaimer

Please note: The information contained in this chapter sets out good practice and provides pointers to legislation that should be considered by event organisers. However, it is industry guidance and does not necessarily cover everything that organisers need to consider for a particular event.

Key Points

Highlights from this chapter include:

- Why to implement sustainable practices at outdoor events
- How to create an environmental strategy
- Practical actions event organisers can take to reduce environmental impacts in areas such as materials, transport, food, and energy.
- Avoiding greenwashing in communications
- Working with partners and sponsors
- Links to relevant guidance, legislation, and resources.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Key Terms
3. Governance and Strategy
4. Impact Areas
 - Energy
 - Materials & waste
 - Travel & transport
 - Food & drink
 - Water
5. Communications
6. Partners & Sponsors

1. Introduction

The Paris Agreement in 2015 (COP 21) committed governments globally to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, to ensure a livable future.

UK Government legislation commits the UK to achieving net zero emissions by 2050, and cutting emissions by 78% by 2035. There are new laws and guidance every year relating to practices such as plastics, other materials, and many other areas of business that affect live events.

In the UK music industry, all 14 association members of LIVE have ratified the Beyond Zero Declaration to deliver measurable and targeted action on climate change, with the ultimate aim of reaching net zero emissions by 2030.

The Green Events Code of Practice (England) is being developed to provide consistent national standards for the assessment of outdoor events' environmental practice by local authorities.

Why consider environmental sustainability at live events?

- The global climate and ecological crisis require every sector and business to commit to changes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts, to safeguard a live-able future for future generations.
- Current and future changes to UK legislation, and the expectations of local authorities to demonstrate environmental practices or report emissions, mean that event organisers need to adapt to changing requirements that relate to funding, tendering, site permissions and licensing.
- Audience expectations are changing: Industry surveys have shown that festival audiences increasingly expect events to take action on the environment.
- Risk mitigation: Climate change related extreme weather events are already affecting live events - we need to manage this risk, and in future, financing and insurance decisions are likely to involve more environmental considerations.
- Event organisers can take advantage of the additional benefits of new technologies developed to reduce environmental impacts; such as cost savings, improved logistics, and better audience experiences.

2. Key Terms

- **Net Zero:** A net zero commitment is not the same as zero carbon, or zero emissions, which means that no greenhouse gas emissions are emitted. A net zero commitment requires that after reductions, all remaining greenhouse gas

emissions are 'balanced' – removed - with an equivalent amount via offsets that remove or capture carbon from the atmosphere.

- **CO2e:** A standard unit for measuring emissions. CO2e stands for 'Carbon Dioxide equivalent'. It is a way to express the impacts of different greenhouse gases (GHG's) in a common unit.
- **Renewable energy:** A natural resource or source of energy that is not depleted when used, for example solar or wind energy.
- **Energy efficiency:** the process of doing more with less energy.
- **Certification:** Certifications mean that a company has been vetted by a third party and meets certain criteria and standards, typically as a voluntary exercise.

For a comprehensive glossary of sustainability terms please visit <[LINK TBC](#)>

3. Governance and Strategy

Introduction

Any organisation seeking to reduce their environmental impacts needs a strategy in place to achieve the changes. The processes by which decisions are made and how they are implemented (or not implemented) will determine whether changes lead to results.

What you need to consider

The overall process(es) you have in place for managing environmental impacts at your event(s).

Best Practice(s)

- Publish a publicly available environmental policy online.
- Put in place an annual action plan.
- Identify a person responsible to lead on sustainability.
- Measure and report impacts (including CO2e emissions) annually or on a project basis.
- Include sustainability as a key criterion in purchasing

Taking Action

The most meaningful and successful environmental strategies are those which are specific to the nature of an organisation, its activities and impacts, and those that are genuinely supported by management and stakeholders and based on engagement

with staff. However, there are established approaches that are widely considered to be effective and 'best practice'.

Two key documents are commonly used to help develop the foundation of a successful approach:

- An Environmental Policy: This is your statement of commitment to sustainability, setting overarching ambitions over several years.
- An action plan: This is a detailed annual plan that sets out what you're aiming to achieve, with targets i.e., what, who, how and when. It can be event-specific or companywide.

An important first step is to collect data to help understand what the starting point for impacts are i.e., establish your baseline for impacts to inform strategy, and help track progress.

Note to local authority representatives: You may be able to refer to existing local authority strategy - such as net zero or green events plans - to use as the basis for event-specific actions plans.

Measuring and reporting

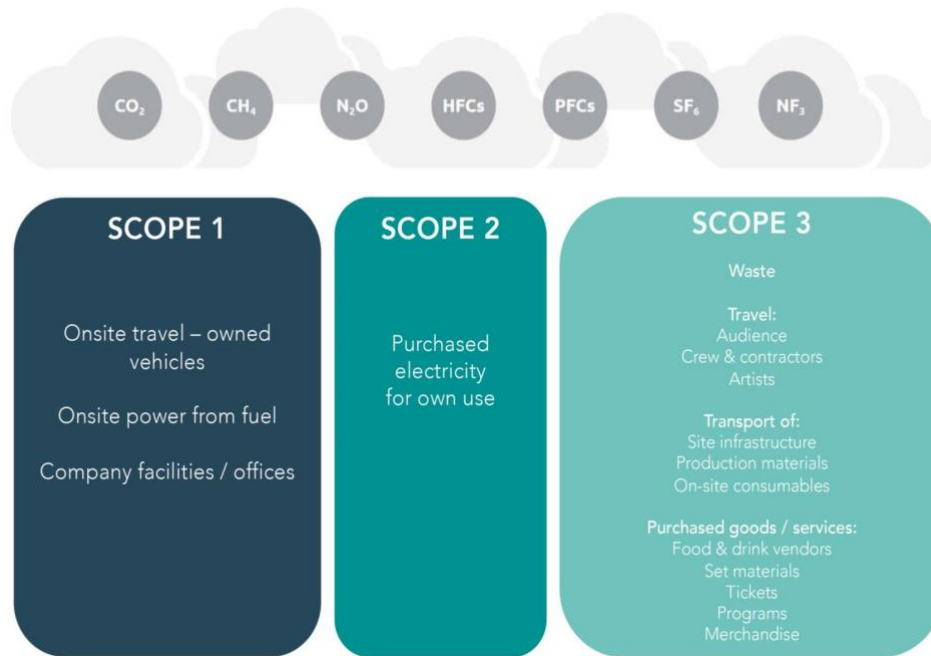
Measurement is vital to understanding and reducing environmental impacts, and to assess the success of the changes which are made.

Organisations should measure their overall carbon footprint, which includes energy use, travel, materials and waste, food and drinks. It is only necessary to collect basic data on these areas, which can be used with established tools to work out an events carbon footprint (see links at the end of this section). Things to consider beyond carbon footprint are; impact on the ecology and biodiversity at festival sites, and direct pollution.

There are some emissions that are directly under festival organisers' control – for example, emissions that result from onsite energy and company-owned vehicle travel – while others, such as audience travel or supply chain impacts, are outside organisers' direct control but can be strongly influenced through incentives, contracts, and procurement choices.

Carbon accounting is approached in terms of an internationally established system of scopes and nationally published carbon factors. A business is generally responsible for scope 1 and 2 emissions and can 'influence' scope 3.

Greenhouse Gas Reporting Scopes (GHG Protocol) and how they apply to the live events sector.



Understanding net zero

In November 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a landmark report stating that urgent and unprecedented changes are needed well before 2030 to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid catastrophe due to climate change. To do this, we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) as much as possible and offset unavoidable emissions. Organisations across the world are setting science-based and net-zero carbon emissions targets.

The definition of Net zero provided by the internationally recognised Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), is 'reducing emissions as much as possible, before compensating for any unavoidable emissions (up to 10% of your footprint) by financing projects that remove or capture carbon from the atmosphere'.

For a net zero commitment to be meaningful, it cannot rely on offsetting as a main strategy.

Legislation and guidance

The UK has set legally binding targets to reach net zero by 2050, and an ambitious target to reduce national emissions by 78% by 2035 (compared to 1990 levels). Currently no legislation applies directly to live events, except reporting requirements

for larger companies under the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting regulations (SECR), including greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting.

All 14 association members of LIVE have ratified the Beyond Zero Declaration to deliver measurable and targeted action on climate change, with the ultimate aim of reaching net zero emissions by 2030. Read more [HERE](#)

Further Resources

- Future Festival Tools e-learner module on creating an environmental strategy and guidelines on how to measure emissions from each key impact area [HERE](#).
- Julies Bicycle guide to writing environmental statements and policy [HERE](#)
- Vision: 2025's Net Zero Briefing [HERE](#).
- Guidance from Julie's Bicycle about Carbon Literacy [HERE](#).
- Guidance on what to measure and how to get started please watch the Vision: 2025 webinar [HERE](#).
- Read the Future Festival Tools Green Stories with case studies of best practice in creating environmental strategy [HERE](#).
- Find tools and resources to measure emissions and examples of impact reports in the Vision: 2025 Resource Hub [HERE](#).
- Read The Show Must Go On: Environmental Impact Report for the UK Festival and Outdoor Events Industry (ed. 2, Vision: 2025, 2020) [HERE](#)
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#).
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

4. Impact Areas

ENERGY

Introduction

Our reliance on burning fossil fuels to generate energy is a key cause of climate change due to the emissions of greenhouse gases they cause. Most outdoor temporary events currently use diesel generators as their main source of energy. As well as climate impacts, there is growing concern and awareness about the contribution made by burning diesel towards localised air pollution issues, which are being widely linked to heart and respiratory diseases, strokes, learning disabilities, dementia and cancer.

What you need to consider

Minimising energy usage and increasing efficiencies, measuring and understanding energy use, and using more sustainable or low carbon energy sources.

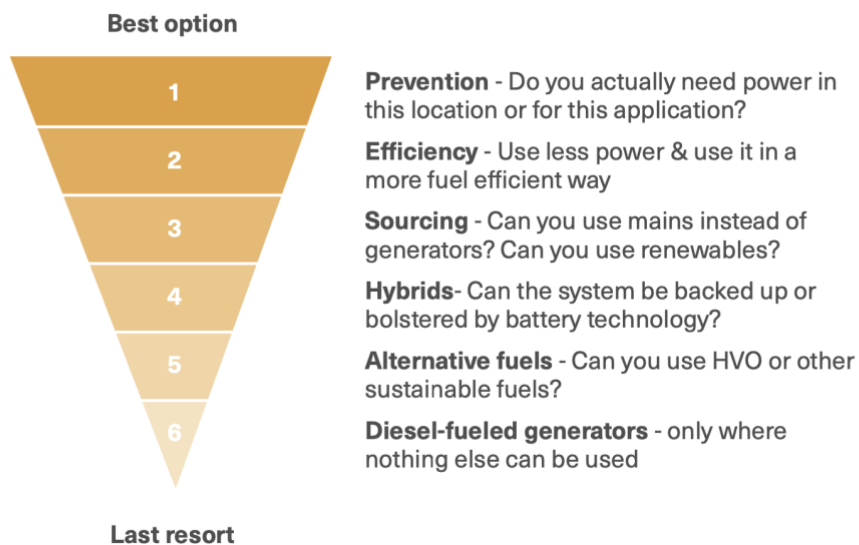
Best Practice(s)

- Follow the Power Hierarchy (see below) when planning power at events.
- Set targets to reduce fuel use and emissions (if there is no current data, make it your first action to measure fuel consumption in the next year).
- Work with key stakeholders to identify opportunities, e.g., lighting providers or catering providers.
- Agree targets and action in the contract with the energy provider, including providing a report.
- Work / communicate with power users to reduce demand.
- Work with all power users to accurately specify requirements in advance and match demand to generation onsite to avoid waste.
- Measure your energy and fuel usage (ask your power contractor to provide this).

Taking Action

The number one priority for any event looking to reduce their energy emissions is to reduce diesel consumption. A good starting point is to apply the principles of the Power Management Hierarchy to an event's power planning and procurement processes.

THE POWER MANAGEMENT HEIRARCHY



Energy sources at events: best to worst for emissions.

1. Onsite renewable energy
2. Grid connection - green tariff*
3. Grid connection – standard tariff
4. Generator using lower carbon fuel such as HVO hybridised with batteries
5. Generator using lower carbon fuel such as HVO
6. Gas (LPG)
7. Generator using standard diesel

*Green electricity tariffs vary in type and CO2e per kW hour - see guidance from the Centre for Sustainable Energy [HERE](#)

Measuring and reporting

All events need to have information to support good decision-making year to year. A post event report from an energy provider should include as a minimum:

- Total fuel consumption (litres)
- KiloWatt hours (kW hours) – grid connection (i.e., amount of energy per hour in kW)
- Power consumed versus total generation capacity of power source (%)
- Recommendation for future efficiency savings

The comparable measure of an events' fuel efficiency is 'litres per person per day' because it can be used to compare events with different capacities. This can be worked out simply by dividing the total number of litres of fuel consumed by the event by the number of people attending and then number of days.

Usually, the energy provider will collect data for an event organiser. They may use a software management system to collect information in real-time, or check generators at time intervals manually. For smaller events, the organiser may need to be responsible for this.

Legislation and guidance

There is no nationwide policy on energy sustainability that relates to events, so organisers generally must respond to specific guidance (if applicable) from each Local authority, such as Low Emissions Zones (LEZ's).

Further Resources

- See the Energy chapter of Vision: 2025's [Show Must Go On report ed. 2](#).
- Powerful Thinking's Smart Power Guide for Events [HERE](#).
- Take the free Future Festival Tools eLearner module on on Energy [HERE](#)
- Future Festival Tools Green Stories: Case studies focused on best practice in Energy [HERE](#)
- Fact sheets on the Powerful Thinking website [HERE](#).
- Resources on Energy in Vision: 2025's Hub [HERE](#).
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#).
- Sustainable Events Guides (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

MATERIALS & WASTE

Introduction

At events resources are brought in by different stakeholders: the organisation, suppliers, caterers, partners, and audiences. The main categories are:

- Production & decoration materials
- Audience & campsite materials
- Food & drinks serving materials

What you need to consider

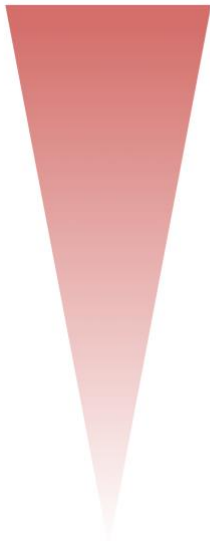
The choices you make about materials purchased and used on-site, and how waste is managed.

Best Practice(s)

- Follow the waste hierarchy when managing materials and waste
- Put in place a sustainable purchasing policy
- Get accurate information about what happens to your waste and require reports from contractors

Taking Action

Under the UK Waste Regulations (2011) all businesses are required to apply the Waste Hierarchy when managing and disposing of resources.



MINIMISATION AND PREVENTION

- Use less materials in design and manufacture.
- Keep products for longer and re-use.
- Re-use or re-purpose materials instead of sourcing new.
- Use less hazardous materials / materials with lower environmental impacts.

(PREPARING FOR) REUSE

- Check, clean, repair, refurbish – whole items or spare parts.
- Design for disassembly and re-use.

RECYCLING

- Includes composting.
- Not everything that is labelled as 'recyclable' can automatically be recycled at the majority of facilities or if it is in waste streams that are too contaminated - for example if something consists of two or more materials glued together.

OTHER RECOVERY

- Including anaerobic digestion for organic materials, and incineration with energy recovery / 'Energy from Waste' i.e. where materials are burned and the energy generated is captured.^w

'DISPOSAL'

- Landfill and incineration without energy recovery.

Measuring and reporting

In order to manage, understand and reduce materials and waste (and their impacts), collecting data is vital. You need to know which materials are collected separately, measured in tonnes or kilograms, i.e.:

- Glass
- Paper/cardboard
- Plastic
- Aluminium
- Metals
- Organic/food waste
- Cooking oil
- Wood
- Building/demolition waste
- Other materials

Also record the processing method for each material or mixed waste stream, i.e.:

- Recycling
- Composting/fermenting
- Refined to biofuel

- Incineration
- Landfill
- Other processing method

Ask your waste contractor for proof of collection, waste material weights, and end of life process in order to make a reliable overview of the results. For more guidance on what to ask your contractor read the Vision:2025 Festival Industry Materials and Waste Briefing [HERE](#).

Legislation and guidance

In October 2020, [earbuds, stirrers and plastic straws were banned in the UK](#). From October 2023 there is a ban on the supply of single-use plastic:

- Plates
- Cutlery
- Balloon sticks
- Expanded and extruded polystyrene food and drinks containers.

These products will not be available to buy from any business; this includes retailers, takeaways, food vendors and the hospitality industry.

The Environment Act 2021 states that food must also be collected separately and not co-mingled: “Food waste must be collected separately from other recyclable streams” and “Recyclable relevant waste must be collected for recycling or composting”.

The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs released statutory guidance in 2018, with a specific waste hierarchy for food and drink: *Food and drink waste hierarchy: Dealing with surplus and waste food and drink*. In a nutshell it means businesses should seek to manage food waste in an order or priority - see the full (detailed guidance) [here](#).

Since 2015 UK Waste Regulations have required businesses to separate recyclable materials from other waste. This means bins onsite (front and back of house) should reflect the waste and recycling streams on site. Work with waste contractors to ensure you can recycle and compost (or anaerobically digest) these waste streams in onward appropriate facilities:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Timber
- Plastic
- Glass
- Metal

- Food

Waste Duty of Care & code of practice (under Environmental Protection Act 1990) Sets out who is responsible for waste management by law. Read more [HERE](#).

With discarded vapes becoming a challenge for many event organisers, an awareness of Waste Electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) Regulations is useful - Read more [here](#).

National Recycling Symbols

The UK has a variety of recycling symbols that are used to help consumers identify which items can be recycled. These symbols are (usually) found on the packaging of products and can be helpful in determining the correct way to dispose of the products and packaging. We are very likely to start seeing more labelling as a result of mandatory recycling labelling on all packaging coming into law by 2026 as a result of the Environment Act 2021.

Check them out [here](#) on the Recycle Now website.

Further Resources

- Read the Festival Industry Waste and Materials Briefing (Vision: 2025, April 2023) [HERE](#)
- WRAP waste stream icons for signage (RecycleNow symbols) [HERE](#)
- Read the Towards Zero Waste Festivals Report (Vision: 2025, Feb 2023) [HERE](#)
- Reuse systems unpacked – challenges and opportunities for food and drink packaging (Hubbub) [HERE](#)
- See the Waste & Resources chapter of the [Show Must Go On report ed. 2](#).
- Search the Vision: 2025 Hub for resources on Waste & Materials [HERE](#).
- Take the free Future Festival Tools eLearner module on Waste & Materials [HERE](#).
- Future Festival Tools Green Stories: Case studies focused on best practice in Waste & Materials [HERE](#)
- Solutions on Tap: guide to reducing waste & introducing reusable cup schemes at events (City to Sea) [HERE](#)
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#)
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

Introduction

Travel is *the* most significant source of emissions for a typical outdoor live event. However, it is important to acknowledge that audience travel and event-related transport does vary considerably between events due to demographic and location – for example, city-based events tend to receive a much higher percentage of their audience by public transport, so their audience travel carbon footprint is comparatively smaller.

What you need to consider

Reducing all types of travel and transport emissions where possible, including audience travel, supplier transport, and artists.

Best Practice(s)

- Measure travel emissions and set targets for reductions
- Provide clear information about lower carbon travel options to audiences
- Use incentives and disincentives for higher/lower impact audience travel options
- Work with suppliers to find ways to reduce transport journeys
- Responsibly offset unavoidable emissions

Taking Action

A first step is to put in place a plan to reduce direct and stakeholder travel & transport emissions. Work with stakeholders including audiences, contractors, artists, traders and partners to provide and find lower carbon ways to travel.

Some key indicators for reducing travel emissions for events are:

- Increasing the percentage of audience travelling by shared transport – such as public transport and coaches – or walking and cycling (where possible)
- Increasing car occupancy (e.g. by promoting car sharing or restricting passes)
- Reducing flights taken in favour of land-based travel
- Fewer and shorter journeys for supplier deliveries e.g. using local suppliers and combining loads. design and procurement
- Increasing the proportion of journeys taken by electric/hybrid vehicles. E.g. trucking, guest shuttles, providing electric vehicle charging points.

Measuring and reporting

In order to assess your event's travel impacts and reductions, it is essential to measure and record emissions year-on-year. This can be achieved simply by recording journey miles and vehicle types and/or fuel consumption, and then using freely available tools to work out the emissions.

What you should aim to measure:

- Audience travel
- Company travel staff & crew
- Contractor travel: caterers, suppliers & traders
- Artists / talent
- Onsite vehicles - fuel use

Collecting data on all types of travel can be straightforward, for example:

- Suppliers can provide their information directly as part of contracts
- Artists can be asked their travel plans as part of advancing / contracts
- Staff can report their travel as part of company processes, e.g. logging mileage or fuel receipts
- Audience travel can be worked out from data collected as part of the ticketing process or on arrival in car parks.

Legislation and guidance

In the UK, The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) supplies information on CO2 per vehicle and passenger-mile/km, which can be used to work out the average emissions created per passenger- or vehicle-mile. Find them [HERE](#).

Further Resources

- ecolibrium's Green Travel & Transport Guide for Live Events (May 2023) [HERE](#)
- Use ecolibrium's Free Travel Carbon App can be used to record crew and staff travel; it's free on the [App Store](#) / [GooglePlay](#).
- Take the free Future Festival Tools eLearner module on Travel and Transport [HERE](#).
- Future Festival Tools Green Stories: Case studies focused on best practice in Travel & Transport [HERE](#)
- Free offline tools for recording and understanding audience and company travel emissions. Find out more at ecolibrium [HERE](#)

- ecolibrium have a one-pager action plan checklist to help cut travel emissions [HERE](#)
- From carbon footprints to cultural influence: engaging live music audiences on travel choices (The Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#).
- Read the Show Must Go On report chapter on Travel & Transport (Vision: 2025, 2020) [HERE](#)
- Search the Vision: 2025 Hub for resources on Travel & Transport [HERE](#)
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#).
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

FOOD & BEVERAGES

Introduction

The way we are producing and consuming food and drink is causing irreversible damage to Earth's ecosystems. Modern agriculture is a significant cause of deforestation, air and water pollution, soil degradation and climate change, and threatens wildlife, plants, and biodiversity.

- Between 21% and 37% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions are estimated to be from food production!¹
- Around one third of all food in the world is lost or wasted ²
- 85% of global fisheries are now 'fully fished' or overexploited. ³

As an events community we can focus on minimising the environmental impact of the selection of food on offer to audiences and staff at our events by improving the standards we set for the ingredients procured in our supply chains and working closely with food providers to build trust and meet our aspirations.

What you need to consider

The sustainability of the food and drink offering available at your event, focusing on impacts of the supply chain.

¹ IPCC Special Report: Climate Change and Land, Technical Summary (2019) <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/technical-summary/>


² WRAP Food and Drink <http://www.wrap.org.uk/food-drink>

³ IPCC Special Report: Climate Change and Land, Technical Summary (2019) <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/technical-summary/>

Best Practice(s)

- Put in place a food and drinks policy with stated standards
- Reduce high impact food and drinks - see table for guidance below
- Reduce the environmental impact of packaging and serve ware associated with food (also see this action in the materials and waste section)
 - Reduce single use packaging / increase reuse
 - Increase recycling of unavoidable packaging
 - Use certified compostable (not biodegradable) packaging (BS EN 13432) for food serveware.

Guidance on sourcing best practice:

Food or Drink	Best practice for sourcing
Tea / coffee	Choose Fairtrade
Milk	Choose plant-based 
Carbonated drinks	Bulk dispense rather than import in cans/bottles
Meat/fish	Make sure that the welfare of the animals is guaranteed
Vegetables	Choose local and seasonal

Taking Action

The most effective steps that can be taken to reduce food impacts are:

- Reducing high impact foods on the menu or event offering, such as animal-based products*
- Increasing in-season produce, decreasing out-of-season produce
- Purchasing products that are certified as sustainably grown, caught, reared, manufactured, brewed, and harvested etc.
- Reducing food waste through considering:
 - Menu design / choice of ingredients
 - Service format i.e. buffet vs. plated
 - Ordering more accurate volumes of ingredients
 - Repurposing edible leftover food
- Using pricing as a lever for influencing audience food purchase choices

**Plant-based products are as much as 10-50 times lower in emissions than most animal-based products. <https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local>*

A sustainable drink is a drink that has lower or low environmental impacts compared to most other drinks. This could be any or all of the following, for example:

- A beer manufacturer with energy and water efficient processes
- Drinks made from sustainable ingredients
- A local provider - reducing travel miles
- Choosing a sustainable milk type e.g. plant-based in place of cow's milk.

For your drinks menu, think about the following:

- Choose sustainable beer and soda partners
- As a minimum, offer more sustainable drinks options in addition to regular high volume drinks, e.g. provide an organic beer or Fairtrade cola option
- Serve sodas bulk dispensed instead of individual cans/bottles to reduce waste
- Choose Fairtrade-certified tea and coffee
- Choose plant-based milk as standard or at least offer it as an option.

To make changes, organisations need to establish a food and drinks policy with stated recognised standards, and also eliminate food waste and repurpose left-over edible food. It is also important to consider the serveware and packaging associated with providing food.

Measuring and reporting

Organisations can collect information that provide key indicators of food sustainability such as:

- Percentage of meat, fish, vegetarian and vegan food stalls / meals served
- Total amount and type of ingredients
- Total amount of food waste

An average meal in the UK currently has a footprint of 1.7 kg of CO₂e. To achieve the goals set in the Paris Agreement, an average meal must be 0.5 kg of CO₂e per dish globally.

Ideally all organisations should measure the emissions that relate to food and drink consumption. Paid for services also exist to measure and report food impacts.

Legislation and guidance

The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs released statutory guidance in 2018, with a specific waste hierarchy for food and drink: *Food and drink waste hierarchy: Dealing with surplus and waste food and drink*. In a nutshell it means businesses should seek to manage food waste in an order or priority - see the full (detailed guidance) [here](#)

Compostable packaging (BS EN 13432)

Further Resources

- Information on different food labels and their meaning as well as best practice in sourcing various foods (Compassion in World Farming) [HERE](#)
- Take the free Future Festival Tools eLearner module on Food and Drink [HERE](#).
- Future Festival Tools Green Stories: Case studies focused on best practice in food and drink at events [HERE](#)
- Read the Show Must Go On report chapter on Food & Drink (Vision: 2025, 2020) [HERE](#)
- Check the Vision: 2025 Hub for resources on Food & Drink [HERE](#)
- Eighth Plate is a pioneering environmental initiative, set up by [NCASS](#) and [A Greener Future](#) that sets out to help UK festivals salvage surplus food and redistribute it to local food charities [HERE](#).
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#).
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

WATER

Introduction

While the direct carbon emissions from water use are negligible in comparison to energy use and travel, for example, increasing water scarcity and other environmental impacts associated with how we provide water to audiences, means it still deserves consideration.

What you need to consider

Reducing water usage through efficiency measures, and minimising the risk of negative impacts on local ecosystems

Best Practice(s)

- Minimise water wastage
- Prevent on-site pollution
- Minimise the impacts of packaging used to provide water

Taking Action

The aim is not to reduce water use at all costs – we want to provide good access to water for event audiences for comfort and safety. Some measures, such as bottle refill initiatives to eliminate single use plastic bottles may lead to an overall increase in water consumption recorded by events by encouraging good access – but there are the huge benefits of reducing plastic waste and CO2e emissions from the transport of bottled water.

Treating water like the precious resource it is means reducing water wastage and being aware and efficient in how we use it, for example in relation to taps, toilets and showers – and in keeping leaks to a minimum.

Water pollution is another important element to consider. The kinds of products we choose to use, like those for cleaning and personal care, will affect the chemical load of wastewater sent for treatment – and increase the risk of chemicals ending up in our waterways and soil when leaked onto event sites.

Measuring and reporting

A post event report from a water provider/manager should include:

- Total water usage onsite (litres or m3)
- Amount of grey water tankered offsite
- Amount of black water tankered offsite (toilet waste)
- Recommendations for future efficiency savings

The best measure of an event's water efficiency is 'litres per person per day', because it can be used to compare events with different capacities and between years.

Usually the water contractor/provider will collect data for an event organiser. They may use water metres to collect information in real-time or keep a record of how much water is brought on and off site. For smaller events, the organiser may need to be responsible for this.

Legislation and guidance

TBC - Need input here

Further Resources

- Take the free Future Festival Tools eLearner module on water [HERE](#).
- Future Festival Tools Green Stories: Case studies focused on best practice in food and drink at events [HERE](#)
- Julie's Bicycle: Water Management at Events (2015) [HERE](#).
- Read the Show Must Go On report chapter on Water (Vision: 2025, 2020) [HERE](#)
- Search the Vision: 2025 hub for resources on Water [HERE](#).
- Use the Julie's Bicycle CC tools to record emissions [HERE](#).
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)

5. Communications

Introduction

Communication is essential to making changes happen within an organisation and with stakeholders, to reputation, and in promoting positive change - events have a powerful role as influencers.

Having some knowledge and skills for communicating about the environment successfully is a good idea, even if you already have a brilliant marketing person or team.

What you need to consider

How to communicate about sustainability effectively to different stakeholder groups - such as sponsors, suppliers, venues, attendees, and staff - and avoid greenwashing.

Best Practice(s)

Measure your impacts and report / communicate at least annually with stakeholders sharing transparent figures, and highlighting success and 'work in progress'.

Here are some examples of best practice for communicating about green claims and sustainability in general that have been summarised from the Green Claims Code published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)

1. The claim is accurate and clear for all to understand
2. There's up-to-date, credible evidence to show that the green claim is true.
3. The claim clearly tells the whole story;
4. Where general claims (eco-friendly, green or sustainable for example) are being made, the claim reflects the whole life cycle of the brand, product, business or service and is justified by the evidence.
5. The claim won't mislead customers or other suppliers

Taking Action

In campaigns; provide the reasons for the actions, the change it will make, and focus language on the positive behaviours you aim to promote rather than highlighting the behaviours you wish to prevent.

To check your communications for greenwash, use the full Green Claims guide and checklist [HERE](#)

Music Declares Emergency provide advice to organisations working in the events industry about how to communicate about climate change - read more [here](#)

Legislation and guidance

The Green Claims Code came into effect in January 2022 to avoid organisations greenwashing and misinforming or misleading customers by implying something has environmental credentials or is less harmful to the environment without being specific e.g. words like eco-friendly, sustainable, green, ethical, low-impact, compostable. Anyone can report an organisation for making a green claim on their product or in advertising, which can lead to court proceedings.

Avoid vague claims using these words; eco-friendly, sustainable, green, ethical, low-impact, compostable and instead be specific. The core area where festivals will fall foul is any claims made about compostable serveware and coffee cups if these are not going to a separate compost plant for processing.

See the Green Code Checklist see the Government website [here](#), and see a Youtube video from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [here](#)

Further Resources

- Take the Free Future Festival Tools eLearner course. Every module has a section on successful communication [HERE](#).
- Sell the Sizzle: climate messages that actually change attitudes and behaviours. - seminal report on climate communication [HERE](#)

- Find tips on how to talk about climate action in Music Declares Emergency's Climate Action Packs [HERE](#)
- Green Claims Code - Avoid Greenwashing with this guide from ASA [HERE](#)
- Julie's Bicycle Communicating Sustainability Guide [HERE](#)
- Search the Vision: 2025 website for resources on communication [HERE](#)
- Read the Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations(CAST) report on how events can catalyse engagement with Climate Change [HERE](#)
- Julie's Bicycle Webinar: Speaking Green: How To Share Your Environmental Story [HERE](#)

6. Partnerships

Introduction

Factoring sustainability into partnerships and sponsorship agreements is increasingly important as it become commonplace for organisations and brands to seek to promote environmental credentials:

What you need to consider

Is the partner aligned to your ethics and purpose? Do they represent a reputational risk due to their activity or stance on certain issues?

Also, events should consider what materials are used for activations/give-aways to ensure they are sustainable and meet with the event policy.

Best Practice(s)

- Ensure that sponsors and partners are aligned in their stance and practices to the event
- Ensure that partners adhere to an event's policies
- Minimise give-aways made with disposable or unsustainable materials

Taking Action

There are various ways that sustainability can factor into partnerships; one way is to talk to potential or existing partners about what you are aiming to achieve and what is needed to do that. Many organisations will be able to offer solutions or help fund the solution if it aligns with their own sustainability goals.

Another way is to invite partners to put forward their own suggestions for solutions -

these could be products or services they offer that could help enhance the delivery of your event sustainability strategy.

Many of the suppliers and companies that can offer sustainability solutions are not traditional commercial partners but many are willing to create partnerships and supply equipment and services as part of their deals. This can benefit the event both by introducing new cleantech but also by being potentially budget relieving.

Developing successful partnerships:

The best way to do this is to be clear at the outset about your environmental aspirations and standards: Create a summary of your sustainability strategy or policy that can be shared with partners to show them what is being done and share expectations.

This can take time, and that is ok, as long as there is a shared vision and goal within a reasonable timeframe of improving the sustainability of partner activations.

Further Resources

- Find sustainable supplier for your event at the Vision: 2025 Green Supplier Directory [HERE](#)
- Read the Show Must Go On report for case studies of how suppliers have supported a reduction of impacts in key areas [HERE](#)
- Read case studies of how suppliers are supporting events to cut impacts on the Vision: 2025 website [HERE](#)
- Sustainable Events Guide (Manchester City Council & Julie's Bicycle) [HERE](#)