



# SUSTAINABLE EVENTS GUIDE

PRODUCTION  
**SUPPLIERS**



MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL

Julie's Bicycle  
SUSTAINING CREATIVITY





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Manchester City Council's commitment to sustainable events

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## YOUR **CHECKLIST**

What you are doing or can do for this event.

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## USEFUL **RESOURCES**

Guides and websites to plan your next sustainable outdoor event.

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### *GUIDES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR:*

Events in indoor venues  
Major Outdoor Events  
Food and Drink Traders  
Small Outdoor Events  
Community Event Suppliers  
Waste & Cleansing



# 01

## INTRODUCTION

the events we organise, support and host contribute to making Manchester a thriving, progressive and attractive city and to the economic, social and environmental well-being of our city. Information on the council's sustainable events commitment and initiatives, as well as the range of sustainable event guides available for event organisers, suppliers, service providers and venues is available on our Sustainable Events webpage.

Of the three strands of impact, the environmental aspect deserves particular emphasis given that climate change is one of the most urgent issues facing us today and leaves no corner of the planet untouched. It is clear from the increasing floods, wildfires and other weather related disasters that the effects are taking place right now. In response to this

global issue, in 2018 Manchester set the ambitious target of becoming a zero carbon city by 2038.

As the booker or end user of one of our outdoor event locations for small scale events, you can make a difference in helping to have the best possible impact in particular by:

- providing and supporting measures to reduce the environmental impact of your events e.g. energy, waste, travel
- choosing food and drink providers, merchandise and give-aways which have been sustainably and/or locally sourced
- promoting fair pay and contracts



# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide aims to provide you with inspiration on the kind of actions you can take as regards:

- what you are already doing on sustainability for specific events and
- what you can commit to doing on sustainability for specific events

It is split into sections and it may be that you concentrate on one area to begin with (e.g. travel) then the following year you broaden your aims to other areas (e.g. energy and food & drink). It's your guide to use as best suits you and your event as you work towards leaving the most positive impact in your involvement in events.

Whilst this guide is intended as a checklist and inspiration for you, we'd love you to use this opportunity to tell us more about what you are doing or plan to do, please complete and return this form to [sustainable-events@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:sustainable-events@manchester.gov.uk). We're keen to know where good ideas can be shared or where more support is needed. Please use the 'How' column to record a few details (don't just tick the boxes). This is helpful for sharing knowledge within your organisation, to us and to other organisations who can learn from you.

## It's not easy but it'll be worth it

We know that managing an event in an environmentally sustainable way can be a challenge. The pop-up nature of events makes them vulnerable to the global culture of disposability and waste that happens in daily life, but which is having devastating impacts on our planet. The often short timescale of events can also present difficulties around finding ways to reduce negative environmental impacts.

Sometimes there might be an initially high cost to providing a lower impact solution (like reusable cups instead of disposable) but over time you will see reduced costs as you shouldn't have to buy as many (throwaway) items.

We don't have all the answers but we're working to find out more about how to reduce the negative impacts of events, including those we deliver ourselves, so please do keep in touch with us and we'll continue to learn and improve together.

**Note:** this guide goes beyond obligations which you may already have under law, license or contract, e.g. disposing of waste within the law, respecting noise limits, complying with health and safety standards.

There are free online tools to help you monitor the environmental impact – see resources section of this guide.



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## EVENT DETAILS



Name of event \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of event \_\_\_\_\_

Location of event \_\_\_\_\_

Your role (e.g. event/  
sustainability manager) \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation name \_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your email \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number \_\_\_\_\_



# WHAT YOU ARE DOING OR CAN DO FOR THIS EVENT

## ENERGY



Use mains power instead of diesel generators  
(benefits: lower emissions, no local transport, air  
pollution or noise issues)

If using temporary power (usually via generators),  
accurately assess power demand to avoid over-  
specifying generators – either ask power users for  
e.g. a list of equipment, power ratings and running  
times, or ask power provider to do this

If using temporary power, use low or zero carbon  
power sources e.g. hybrid or biodiesel generators,  
solar powered

Ask event power users to use energy efficient  
equipment and appliances e.g. LED lighting

Get readings on event power use from energy /  
power suppliers – mains and/or temporary power –  
monitor this to see if you can reduce it\*

Further comments

| N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
|     |               |    |                                |              |     |
|     |               |    |                                |              |     |
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|     |               |    |                                |              |     |

\* Free tools are available online for monitoring environmental impact – see Resources section of this document



|   | N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|---|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|   |     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
| Use low-impact materials e.g. non-PVC materials, zero or low Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) adhesives, water-based and low VOC paints  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Tell the event organiser what we do on reducing, reusing, recycling and responsibly disposing of our waste  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| If a bespoke design of an item (temporary structures, stands, stages etc) is required, ie not possible to hire – design for ease, reuse and recycling of, e.g. using standard size, easily dismantled constructions |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Further comments  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |

# WATER & WASTE



Make mains water, standpipes or bulk water dispensers\* (and refillable bottles) available to e.g. staff/contractors, participants, event goers to avoid single-use disposable bottles/cups.

*\*Water source preference is mains water, but bowser or tanker deliveries are an option if mains is unavailable*

If portable toilets provided, choose water efficient or waterless toilets (using biocide free flushing liquids)

Monitor and report event water use\*

Provide recycling facilities - at least plastic bottles and cans and glass – and appropriate signage

If having anything built bespoke for your event e.g. temporary structures, displays etc. ask company to use reclaimed, reused or sustainably sourced materials and design it for reuse or recycling

Monitor and report event waste – types, volumes, disposal\*

Further comments

| N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
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|     |               |    |                                |              |     |

\* Free tools are available online for monitoring environmental impact – see Resources section of this document



# TRAVEL & TRANSPORT



Provide event-goers with information on low and zero carbon travel options to get to the event e.g. public transport, bike

Ask people where they travelled from and how and report on event travel and use a carbon calculator to estimate travel impacts\*

Choose traders which can demonstrate sustainable practices: Fair Trade, locally sourced, seasonal, vegetarian, vegan, organic, animal welfare standards or sustainable fish (as many as possible) Ideally traders should have NCASS certification

Cut the plastic! Ban the use of damaging single-use material and serveware e.g. plastic bags and cups, plastic straws, polystyrene boxes

Ask traders to reduce, reuse and recycle packaging and food waste e.g. bulk dispensing instead of single sachets, recycle oils, compost or recycle food waste, redistribute surplus food

If food prep done on-site ensure correct separation, storage and disposal of used oils and fats to avoid pollution

Further comments

| N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
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|     |               |    |                                |              |     |

\* Free tools are available online for monitoring environmental impact – see Resources section of this document

# MARKETING

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For printed materials e.g. flyers, posters, ask for recycled, sustainably sourced, un-chlorinated and uncoated paper, using water or vegetable based inks

For t-shirts / other branded clothing, ask for Fairtrade and organic textiles printed with water based inks or vegetable dyes

For event signage, design for reuse or recycling (e.g. Avoid hard-to-recycle materials like plastics, polystyrene and PVC)

Work with sponsors to ensure merchandise and give-aways sustainably and responsibly sourced

Further comments

| N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
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|     |               |    |                                |              |     |



# LOCAL COMMUNITIES & ECONOMY



|   | N/A | Already doing |    |                                | Commit to do | How |
|---|-----|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|   |     | Yes           | No | If yes, do we need to improve? |              |     |
| Choose local businesses for event services, supplies, etc.  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Provide volunteering or learning development opportunities for local people   |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Undertake specific actions to strengthen links within the community through the event                                       |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Undertake specific actions to strengthen cultural awareness through the event   |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Undertake specific actions to increase local pride through the event  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Attract audiences to the event from different communities, interest groups, etc.  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Provide attendance and audience profile data to the Council event manager to help estimate the economic impact of the event |     |               |    |                                |              |     |
| Further comments  |     |               |    |                                |              |     |

# FOR WORKERS



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Provide for the welfare of event staff and volunteers working during the event e.g. providing training and inductions, rest and break facilities, catering, safe travel after hours, etc.

Require payment of at least Manchester Living Wage for e.g. event staff, traders and contractor

Avoid zero-hour contracts for event staff and contractors

Other comments

| Yes | No | N/A | How |
|-----|----|-----|-----|
|     |    |     |     |
|     |    |     |     |
|     |    |     |     |
|     |    |     |     |



# USEFUL GUIDES & WEBSITES

## Energy

Powerful Thinking [Guide to Smart Energy for Festivals and Events](#)

Powerful Thinking [What to Ask Your Energy Supplier Factsheet](#)

## Food & Drink

Raw Foundation and Kambe Events [Plastic Free Festivals Guide](#)

Feeding Manchester's [guidance on sustainable food](#)  
[FareShare Greater Manchester](#) food waste charity

Manchester City Council Sustainable Events [Guide for Food and Drink Traders](#)

## Travel & Transport

Julie's Bicycle [Audience Travel Guide](#)

[Sustrans](#) Sustainable Transport Campaign

## Suppliers

Julie's Bicycle [Sustainable Procurement Guide](#)

[Sustainability 101: The Guide to a Greener Festival](#)



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## CARBON FOOTPRINT TOOLS

Powerful Thinking **festive fuel tool**

**Julie's Bicycle's CG Tool** to understand the environmental impacts of cultural buildings, offices, outdoor events, tours, and productions



## Julie's Bicycle

SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

Special thanks to Julie's Bicycle for the extensive work carried out in producing this guide.

Julie's Bicycle is a charity with 11 years' experience supporting the creative community across the UK to take direct action on climate change and the environment.

Julie's Bicycle is an internationally recognised expert in the field of creative industries and climate action and has trail-blazed the methodologies, resources and research, narratives, and values to ensure a rapid and just transition for a new green creative economy.



[manchester.gov.uk](https://manchester.gov.uk)

