

Southwark Council

Events Environmental Sustainability Guide

April 2023-March 2024

Contents:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Understanding impacts**
- 3. Reducing your event's carbon footprint and negative impact on the environment**
 - People
 - Power
 - Water
 - Waste
 - Plastic
 - Transport
 - Biodiversity
 - Food and drink
 - Event management and administration
- 4. Resources and reference**
- 5. Next Steps**

1. Introduction

Southwark Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019.

The climate emergency has the potential to dramatically impact upon our lives now and the lives of future generations. Without bold action to stop rising greenhouse gas emissions, the future of humanity and the natural ecosystems of the planet are at risk. In this vein, the council has set out a plan to end Southwark's contribution to climate change by 2030. You can read more about the **Climate Strategy and Action Plan** on the council's Climate Emergency [webpages](#).

Southwark's Events Team is committed to supporting the action plan and will aim to protect the environment by ensuring that events (of any scale) are managed and delivered in a sustainable manner. All events taking place in public outdoor spaces in the borough will need to be carbon neutral, as a minimum, by 2030 to align with the council's Climate Strategy and Action Plan.

'Carbon neutral' means that there is no 'net' release of carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere.

2. Understanding impacts

The organisation and delivery of all events involves some form of negative environmental impact and event organisers need to understand the negative environmental impact of their event in order to try to minimise it.

You will need to consider all aspects of your event through the planning and delivery stages, including (but not limited to): transport, energy, water, catering, waste, biodiversity supplier and contractor chains, and even the way you go about advertising and promoting your event.

Some examples:

- **Emissions:** Most outdoor events taking place in our public open spaces, including street-based events, have to bring in what is required to set up and run the event. This is predominantly done by using motor (combustion engine) vehicles. Vehicles range from standard size cars and vans to much bigger articulated lorries. A majority of these vehicles still have petrol and diesel engines and these types of engines generate a significant amount of CO₂ emissions. Most events also require a source of power and diesel generators are still a common source of this power – diesel generators also produce CO₂ emissions.
- **Event infrastructure:** A range of items are used to create events - marquees, stages, fencing, barriers, banners, trakway, toilets, cabins, vendor stalls/units etc. – consider what the items you are using are made from, how they have been made and where they have come from.
- **Food and drink:** there are different levels of environmental impact depending on what food and drinks you are providing at your event, what method is being used to provide them and what serve ware your caterers are using.
- **Waste:** how you control, collect and dispose of the waste generated by your event will also have an impact on your overall carbon footprint. Think: “reduce, reuse and recycle”, and remember that, as well as rubbish, energy can be wasted too.

Carbon footprint

Your carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) generated by all of your event activity. The gases are referred to as ‘emissions’.

You can carry out a carbon audit on each area of your event and calculate your event’s carbon footprint using freely available online calculator tools, such as the ones you will find on the [‘Myclimate’](#) or [‘Julie’s Bicycle’](#) websites.

You will need to provide carbon calculations for the following areas:

- Power
- Transport
- Waste
- Water

We recognise that some events won't necessarily find all of this information easy to collect at first and we understand that carbon footprint calculations may have to rely on several assumptions and be flexible enough to allow for knowledge gaps.

If you find you are unable to reduce your carbon footprint by doing anything different with your event planning and delivery, then you may also want to consider the option of donating to 'Green' projects as a way of carbon offsetting. However, offsetting is never as good as reducing carbon emissions in the first place and any offsetting tools/projects should be researched thoroughly to ensure the projects are transparent and efficient in the carbon they save.

3. Reducing your carbon footprint and negative impact on the environment

Events of all types and sizes contribute to the problem of climate change. The tables below set out what you **'must'** and **'can'** do to reduce your carbon footprint, depending on the scale of event you are running.

The things set out in the **'Essential'** column are things that you **MUST** do for your event to get permission to go ahead in 2023-24. The things set out in the **'Desirable'** column are things which you **CAN** do to further reduce your carbon footprint.

Please note that items in the 'Desirable' column marked by an asterisk (*) are items which we know will be made 'Essential' in 2024-25, so please factor these requirements into your event planning if you intend to hold the event again in 2024-25. The council reserves the right to move any 'desirable' items to the 'essential' column at any point if it sees fit.

People	
Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)	
Essential	Desirable
Ensure your event management team takes a proactive and open approach to understanding the climate emergency, for example by committing to deliver your event in accordance with this guide	Ensure your event management team includes people who have relevant qualifications in, or an understanding of, event-specific sustainability practices
Ensure your event management team is serious about making positive change, for example by including environmental impact as a matter of consideration at	Appoint a dedicated Sustainability Coordinator to monitor and report on event environmental sustainability

each event planning / event liaison meeting	
	Ensure your event management team includes someone with the skills to provide carbon footprint data by using carbon footprint calculators*
	Ensure your event management team includes someone who can develop and report on a net-zero strategy (for annual events)
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Ensure your event management team takes a proactive and open approach to understanding the climate emergency, for example by committing to deliver your event in accordance with this guide	Ensure your event management team includes people who have relevant qualifications in, or an understanding of, event-specific sustainability practices
Ensure your event management team is serious about making positive change, for example by including a commitment to reducing environmental impact in recruitment decisions, and including environmental impact as a matter of consideration at each event planning / event liaison meeting	Appoint a dedicated Environmental Sustainability Coordinator to monitor and report on event environmental sustainability*
Ensure your event management team includes someone with the skills to provide carbon footprint data by using carbon footprint calculators	Ensure your event management team includes someone who can develop and report on a net-zero strategy (for annual events)*
Appoint someone within the event management team as Environmental	

Sustainability Coordinator to monitor and report on event environmental sustainability (events with 10,000+ people)



Power

Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)

Essential	Desirable
Always use mains power/renewable energy sources as a first choice (if available)	Monitor and report on energy use.
Always seek to minimise your use of power (reduce your demand and understand the power load requirements of your event)	Ensure energy monitoring is built into contracts with energy suppliers
Ensure that generators are only running when they are needed	Use alternative fuels and sources of power - LPG, biodiesel, renewable diesel, battery-operated generators
Use the most efficient and environmentally friendly generators available to you. We advocate the use of EU stage 5 generators (as a minimum)	Use hybrid/flexi power systems
Ensure that generators are the appropriate size and type (and no bigger than needed) for what they are being used for	Use EU stage 5 generators as a minimum (these generators are currently designed to meet rigorous emissions standards for mobile use and for clear air zones)


Brief your event staff and volunteers about the correct usage of generators and monitor staff usage of generators accordingly	Provide power supply for all event-related requirements (including traders and contractors) so you are able to calculate and report on your event's overall use of energy
Ensure that stationary motor vehicles (combustion engine) have their engines switched off – no drivers of event-related vehicles on site should have their engines idling	Use LED and solar power lighting
Use rechargeable batteries in any battery powered equipment	Produce a carbon footprint calculation for your power consumption
Ensure lights are switched off when not in use	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of power
Ensure all appliances, machinery and items of equipment are switched off when not in use	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to your use of power
Ensure that all non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) is compliant with London NRMM Low Emission Zone requirements if applicable	
Discourage the use of coal BBQs	
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Always use mains power/renewable energy sources as a first choice (if available)	Use hybrid/flexi power systems

Always seek to minimise your use of power (reduce your demand and understand the power load requirements of your event)	Use alternative fuels and sources of power: LPG, biodiesel, renewable diesel, battery systems, hybrid power generators
Monitor and report on energy use (events with 10,000+ people)	Monitor and report on energy use*
Ensure energy monitoring and reporting is built into contract with energy suppliers (events with 10,000+ people)	Ensure energy monitoring and reporting is built into contract with energy suppliers
Provide the power supply for all event-related requirements (including traders and contractors) so you are able to calculate and report on your event's overall use of energy (events with over 10,000+ people)	Provide power supply for all event-related requirements (including traders and contractors) so you are able to calculate and report on your event's overall use of energy*
Use EU stage 5 generators as a minimum (events with 10,000+ people)	Use EU stage 5 generators as a minimum*
Ensure that generators are only running when they are needed	Produce a carbon footprint calculation for your power consumption*
Ensure generators are the appropriate size and type (and no bigger than needed) for the job they are being used for	Use LED and solar power lighting
Brief your event staff and volunteers about the correct usage of generators and monitor staff usage of generators accordingly	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of power

Ensure that stationary motor vehicles (combustion engine) have their engines switched off – no drivers of event-related vehicles on site should have their engines idling	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to your use of power
Use rechargeable batteries in any battery powered equipment	
Ensure lights are switched off when not in use	
Ensure all appliances, machinery and items of equipment are switched off when not in use	
Ensure that all non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) is compliant with London NRMM Low Emission Zone requirements if applicable	
Discourage the use of coal BBQs	

Water	
Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)	
Essential	Desirable
Always seek to minimise your use of water	Produce a water management plan and monitor your use of water
Always seek to source your water from a mains supply	Report on the volume of water you use and what the relevant carbon footprint calculations are
Ensure no production service taps or hoses are left running, or dripping when not in use	Investigate ways to reuse Grey water if applicable (Grey water is ‘used’ water from washing operations and can be ‘reused’ for things like toilet flushing,

	irrigation and other non-contact activities)
Ensure all water provision and storage equipment is in good working order, works as efficiently as possible (pressurised correctly) and does not leak	Use water-efficient, waterless or compostable portable toilets and urinals*
Brief your contractors, staff and volunteers about the need to minimise water wastage	Use water marshals (stewards) to monitor and maintain water points
Monitor free drinking water stations (if applicable) to ensure that equipment is in good order and there is no water wastage	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness about the importance of minimising the use of water
Provide environmentally friendly (biodegradable and organic) hand sanitiser dispensers rather than use taps if more appropriate to do so	Promote what your event is doing to support water conservation
Ensure that taps in toilets and at handwashing stations are ones that shut off automatically – do not use taps which can be left running	
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Always seek to minimise your use of water	Produce a water management plan*
Always seek to source your water from a mains supply	Report on the volume of water you use and what the relevant carbon footprint calculations are*

<p>Ensure no production service taps or hoses are left running, or dripping when not in use</p>	<p>Investigate ways to reuse Grey water if applicable (Grey water is 'used' water from washing operations and can be 'reused' for things like toilet flushing, irrigation and other non-contact activities)</p>
<p>Ensure all water provision and storage equipment is in good working order, works as efficiently as possible (pressurised correctly) and does not leak</p>	<p>Use water marshals (stewards) to monitor and maintain water points</p>
<p>Use water-efficient, waterless or compostable toilets</p>	<p>Communicate with your audience to raise awareness about the importance of minimising the use of water</p>
<p>Brief your contractors, staff and volunteers about the need to minimise water wastage</p>	<p>Promote what your event is doing to support water conservation</p>
<p>Provide environmentally friendly (biodegradable and organic) hand sanitiser dispensers rather than use taps if more appropriate to do so</p>	
<p>Ensure that taps in toilets and at handwashing stations are ones that shut off automatically – do not use taps which can be left running</p>	
<p>Monitor free drinking water stations (if applicable) to ensure that equipment is in good order and taps are not left running, or dripping</p>	

Produce a water management plan and monitor your use of water (events with 10,000+ people)	
Report on the volume of water you use and what the relevant carbon footprint calculations are (events with 10,000+ people)	

Waste	
Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)	
Essential	Desirable
Think REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE	Only use compostable serve ware and product packaging
Adopt a Zero Waste to Landfill approach	Do not allow the use of single-sachets for food items such as sauces, milk, salt and sugar
Produce a waste management plan	Ban bottled water from being sold or given away – encourage everyone to use their own cups or bottles at free drinking water stations
Minimise and prevent waste – take active steps to use fewer materials through your event planning and delivery stages	Limit any promotional item giveaways
Dispose of all different types of waste items in the correct way	Donate any unwanted event items that won't be reused by you to local or national charities or other event organisers

Work with your waste management provider to monitor your waste and implement best methods to reduce, reuse and dispose	Implement a food waste system - provide bins and appropriate disposal for food waste and compostable items
Encourage the use of reusable bottles and cups	Donate excess food stock to local charities, for example Southwark Food Bank, Love North Southwark, Southwark Food Action Alliance or Spring Community Hub
Recycle your waste – create a clear recycling system and provide clearly identifiable recycling bins	Consider a waste disposal to energy option IF this is more appropriate. This would divert waste away from going to landfill
Clearly sign and separate 'general' and 'recycling' waste bins to avoid contamination	Provide a waste analysis report post-event as part of your overall event evaluation that identifies the quantity and types of waste generated by your event and details of how it has been disposed of
Separate recyclable plastic from non-recyclable plastic so that items can be successfully reclaimed	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to waste and waste disposal
Ensure that (relevant) event staff and volunteers know about the waste systems you have in place and can monitor and manage them appropriately	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to your waste management plan
Reuse and repurpose appropriate items where possible	
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable

Think REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE	Only use compostable serve ware and product packaging
Adopt a Zero Waste to Landfill approach	Do not allow the use of single-sachets for food items such as sauces, milk, salt and sugar
Produce a waste management plan	Ban bottled water from being sold or given away – encourage everyone to use their own cups or bottles at free drinking water stations
Minimise and prevent waste – take active steps to use fewer materials through your event planning and delivery stages	Limit any promotional item giveaways
Dispose of all different types of waste items in the correct way	Donate any unwanted event items that won't be reused by you to local or national charities or other event organisers
Work with your waste management provider to monitor your waste and implement best methods to reduce recycle, reuse and dispose	Implement a food waste system - provide bins and appropriate disposal for food waste and compostable items
Encourage the use of reusable bottles and cups	Donate excess food stock to local charities, for example Southwark Food Bank, Love North Southwark, Southwark Food Action Alliance or Spring Community Hub
Recycle your waste – create a clear recycling system and provide clearly identifiable recycling bins	Consider a waste disposal to energy option IF this is more appropriate. This will divert waste away from going to landfill

Provide a waste analysis report post-event as part of your overall event evaluation that identifies the quantity and type of waste generated by your event and details of how it has been disposed of (events with 10,000+ people)	Provide a waste analysis report post-event as part of your overall event evaluation that identifies the quantity and type of waste generated by your event and details of how it has been disposed of*
Clearly sign and separate 'general' and 'recycling' waste bins to avoid contamination	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to waste and waste disposal
Separate recyclable plastic from non-recyclable plastic so that items can be successfully reclaimed	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to your waste management plan
Ensure that (relevant) event staff and volunteers know about the waste systems you have in place and can monitor and manage them appropriately	
Reuse and repurpose items where possible	

Plastic	
Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)	
Essential	Desirable
Aspire to be PLASTIC FREE	Do not permit the use of single-use plastic (items such as wristbands, cable ties, drinking straws, plastic serve ware)
Minimise the need to use plastic – take active steps to use fewer plastic	Prohibit the sale of bottled water (single-use plastic)

materials through your event planning and delivery stages	
Minimise the use of single-use plastics	Encourage the operators of bars, caterers and other vendors at the event to use sustainable rPET/vegware/biodegradable/alternative to plastic products for packaging and serve ware
Provide free drinking water stations for your audience if possible and encourage them to bring their own reusable cups and bottles	Communicate with your audience to let them know that free water drinking stations (via mains, tanks, bowsers) are available and encourage them to bring their own refillable cups and bottles
Provide staff with reusable water bottles or instruct them to bring their own	Do not use plastic sheets to laminate signs. Use wax paper to print outdoor signs*
Use alternatives to single use 'plastic' cable ties	Ask the operators of bars and caterers to sell reusable drinking receptacles and/or to offer a deposit scheme for the return of the items
	Don't use plastic packaging (cling film, bubble wrap, plastic bags etc) in your supply chains through all phases of event planning and delivery: purchase of goods, distribution of goods, sale of goods etc.
	Use PVC alternatives for any outdoor event advertising requirements
	Use lanyards and wristbands that are made from recycled or sustainable materials

	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of plastic/single-use plastic
	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to the use of plastic
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Aspire to be PLASTIC FREE	Do not permit the use of single-use plastics (items such as cable ties, drinking straws, plastic cutlery etc)*
Minimise the need to use plastic – take active steps to use fewer plastic materials through your event planning and delivery stages	Don't use plastic packaging (cling film, bubble wrap, plastic bags etc) in your supply chain through all phases of event planning and delivery: procurement of goods, distribution of goods, sale of goods etc.
Do not permit the use of any single-use plastics (events with 10,000+ people)	Do not permit the use of any single-use plastics*
Ensure the operators of bars and caterers sell reusable drinking receptacles and offer a deposit scheme for the return of the items (events with 10,000+ people)	Ensure the operators of bars and caterers sell reusable drinking receptacles and offer a deposit scheme for the return of the items*
Use PVC alternatives for any outdoor event advertising requirements (events with 10,000+ people)	Use PVC alternatives for any outdoor event advertising requirements*

Use lanyards and wristbands that are made from recycled or sustainable materials (events with 10,000+ people)	Use lanyards and wristbands that are made from recycled or sustainable materials*
Provide free drinking water stations for your audience if possible and encourage them to bring their own reusable cups and bottles	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of plastic/single-use plastic
Provide staff with reusable water bottles or instruct them to bring their own	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to the use of plastic
Use alternatives to single use 'plastic' cable ties	

Transport	
Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)	
Essential	Desirable
Produce a transport management plan	Monitor your transport use
All vehicles, including plant vehicles, must meet Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) standards (all event locations in Southwark are inside the ULEZ)	Provide a transport management report as part of your overall event evaluation, which identifies the volume of transport associated with your event and an estimation of your carbon footprint relevant to your transport use.
Promote sustainable travel options as ways of getting to your event for staff and attendees (walking, cycling, skating, public transport, car club etc.)	Provide secure and adequately sized cycle facilities at your event site

Actively discourage staff and audience use of motor vehicles (combustion engines) to get to the event	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of transport
Promote transport routes that minimise impact on the local environment	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to the use of transport
Provide details about local transport hubs and services in your event comms	
Ensure that stationary motor vehicles within your event footprint have their engines switched off – no drivers of vehicles should be sat with (combustion) engines idling	
Procure services and supplies from contractors who use electric vehicles where possible	
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Produce a transport management plan	Monitor your transport use*
All vehicles, including plant vehicles, must meet Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) standards	Provide a transport and traffic management report as part of your overall event evaluation which identifies the volume of transport associated with your event and an estimation of that transport's carbon footprint*
Promote sustainable travel options to get to your event for staff and attendees (walking, cycling, skating, public transport, car club, electric vehicles etc.)	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the use of transport

Actively discourage staff and audience use of motor vehicles (combustion engines) to get to the event	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to the use of transport
Provide secure and adequately sized cycle facilities at your event site	
Promote transport routes that minimise environmental impact	
Provide details of local transport hubs and services	
Ensure that stationary motor vehicles within your event footprint have their engines switched off – no drivers of vehicles should be sat with (combustion) engines idling	
Monitor your transport use (events with 10,000+ people)	
Provide a transport and traffic management report post-event as part of your overall event evaluation which identifies the volume of transport associated with your event and an estimation of that transport's carbon footprint (events with 10,000+ people)	
Procure services and supplies from contractors who use electric vehicles where possible	

Biodiversity

Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)

Essential	Desirable
Commission an ecology survey if deemed necessary by the council's Ecology Officer	Produce a wildlife/habitat impact survey pre-event and report findings to the council post-event
Provide and put in place appropriate site and ground protection measures as instructed by the Parks Management team	Ensure that any cleaning and hygiene products are non-toxic and biodegradable
Do not place generators directly on grass, or near lakes or ponds, or near other sensitive areas (tree bases etc.)	Do not allow the sale or distribution of latex/foil Helium balloons
Do not direct generator exhausts towards tree bases, tree canopies, or any other form of vegetation or sensitive areas	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to biodiversity
Ensure event vehicles or items of event infrastructure are not positioned so that they are interfering with or having a detrimental impact on tree bases or tree canopies or any other form of vegetation or sensitive areas	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to biodiversity
Do not cut or prune a tree or any other form of vegetation without first obtaining permission from the council	
You must align your event planning with 'BS5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction' if you are required to do so by the council's Arboriculture Management team	

Do not position event-related vehicles or items of event infrastructure close to observed bird boxes or visible nests	
Avoid the disturbance of habitat and vegetation during bird nesting season (March to July)	
Ensure spillages of fuel, fats, ashes and grey water onto grass are cleaned up immediately and appropriately	
Store waste water and other contaminants away from sensitive areas	
Do not allow the release of sky lanterns or balloons as these can kill or injure wildlife	
Large and major events (2,001 + people)	
Essential	Desirable
Commission an ecology survey if deemed necessary by the council's Ecology Officer	Ensure that any cleaning and hygiene products are non-toxic and biodegradable
Publicly report on the findings of the ecology survey if asked to do so	Do not allow the sale or distribution of latex/foil Helium balloons
Provide and put in place appropriate site and ground protection measures as instructed by the Parks Management team	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to biodiversity
Do not place generators directly on grass, or near lakes or ponds, or near other sensitive areas (tree bases etc.)	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to biodiversity
Do not direct generator exhausts towards tree bases, tree canopies or	

any other form of vegetation or sensitive areas	
Ensure event vehicles or items of event infrastructure are not positioned so that they are interfering with or having a detrimental impact on tree bases or tree canopies or any other form of vegetation or sensitive areas	
Do not cut or prune a tree or any other form of vegetation without first obtaining permission from the council	
You must align your event planning with ‘BS5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction’ if you are required to do so by the council’s Arboriculture Management team	
Do not position event-related vehicles or items of event infrastructure close to observed bird/bat boxes or visible nests	
Avoid the disturbance of habitat and vegetation during bird nesting season (March to July)	
Ensure spillages of fuel, fats, ashes and grey water onto grass are cleaned up immediately and appropriately	
Store waste water and other contaminants away from sensitive areas	
Do not allow the release sky lanterns or balloons as these can kill or injure wildlife	

Food and drink

Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)

Essential	Desirable
Think Climate Friendly food and drink	Use caterers who have achieved bronze level (as minimum) in the Soil Association Food for Life initiative
Always use local caterers if appropriate and available	Stipulate that caterers must source their products from the local area
Ask caterers to source their products from the local area	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are from certified sustainable sources
Include plant-based options in your food provision (meat/dairy products often have the highest carbon footprint of any food items due to the way they are produced)	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are certified organic
Ask caterers to use products that are from sustainable sources	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are certified FAIRTRADE (at least tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate etc)
Ask caterers to use products that are organic	Ensure that plant-based menu options are competitively priced, so they are attractive and affordable to your audience
Ask caterers to use products that are certified FAIRTRADE (the FAIRTRADE Foundation supports members in tackling climate change by providing technical advice and setting environmentally friendly standards to abide by)	Make plant-based menu options cheaper so that your audience are encouraged to buy them
Ask caterers to use seasonal foods	Aim to make 50% of your menu plant-based
	All meat must be British sourced and reared in higher welfare/sustainable environments

	All eggs and egg products must be free range
	All fish must be from sustainable sources
	Advertise relevant sustainability credentials on your menus
	Support Southwark's Good Food policy principles
	Provide a food and drink analysis report as part of your overall event evaluation which includes the types and volume of food/drink sold and relevant carbon footprint data
	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the food and drink they consume
	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to food and drink

Large and major events (2,001 + people)

Essential	Desirable
Think Climate Friendly food and drink	Use caterers who have achieved bronze level (as minimum) in the Soil Association Food for Life initiative
Always use local caterers if appropriate and available	Stipulate that caterers must source their products from the local area
Ask caterers to source their products from the local area	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are from certified sustainable sources
Include plant-based options in your food provision (meat/dairy products often have the highest carbon footprint of any food items due to the way they are produced)	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are certified organic
Ask caterers to use products that are from certified sustainable sources	Stipulate that caterers must use products that are certified FAIRTRADE

	(at least tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate etc)
Ask caterers to use products that are certified organic	Ensure that plant-based menu options are competitively priced, so they are attractive and affordable to your audience
Ask caterers to use products that are certified Fairtrade (Fairtrade supports its members in tackling climate change by providing technical advice and setting environmentally friendly standards to abide by)	Make plant-based menu options cheaper so that your audience are encouraged to buy them
Ask caterers to use seasonal foods	Aim to make 50% of your menu plant-based
Provide a food and drink analysis report as part of your overall event evaluation which includes the types and volume of food/drink sold and relevant carbon footprint data (events with 10,000+ people)	All meat must be British sourced and reared in higher welfare/sustainable environments
	All eggs and egg products must be free range
	All fish must be from sustainable sources
	Advertise relevant sustainability credentials on your menus
	Support Southwark's Good Food policy principles
	Provide a food and drink analysis report as part of your overall event evaluation which includes the types and volume of food/drink sold and relevant carbon footprint data*
	Communicate with your audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency in relation to the food and drink they consume
	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action with regards to food and drink

Event management and administration

Small and Medium events (0 – 2,000 people)

Essential	Desirable
Produce an Environmental Sustainability Plan	Provide an event evaluation report which includes data on your carbon footprint
Use local suppliers and contractors where possible	Develop targets to reduce your event's carbon footprint (annual events)
Employ local people for event roles where possible	Offset your carbon footprint if you cannot reduce it (although reducing is always the best option)
Donate unwanted or unused items to local charities and/or other event organisers	Use suppliers and contractors who have an environmental sustainability policy in place and/or can demonstrate a commitment to reducing their carbon footprint
Hold meetings online if appropriate – cut out all non-essential travel	Incorporate the use of E-tickets to discourage the printing of tickets
Only print when absolutely necessary	Use social media channels to advertise instead of using printed material
Promote a paperless culture	Promote greener commutes
Print double-sided	Use energy efficient buildings/offices (lighting, heating, air con etc)
Use recycled paper	Use eco-friendly printer ink and cartridges
	For events that repeat monthly or annually, avoid date-marking on banners and site signage so that you can reuse items

	Purchase items in bulk (but don't buy more than you need)
	Choose energy-saving and rechargeable appliances
	Communicate with your staff and audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency
	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action

Large and major events (2,001 + people)

Essential	Desirable
Produce an Environmental Sustainability Plan	Produce an event evaluation report which includes a section on sustainability and your carbon footprint data*
Use local suppliers and contractors where possible	Develop targets to reduce your event's carbon footprint (annual events)
Employ local people for event roles where possible	Offset your carbon footprint if you cannot reduce it (although reducing is always the best option)
Donate unwanted or unused items to local charities and/or other event organisers	Use suppliers and contractors who have an environmental sustainability policy in place and/or can demonstrate a commitment to reducing their carbon footprint
Hold meetings online if appropriate – cut out all non-essential travel	Incorporate the use of E-tickets to discourage the printing of tickets
Only print when absolutely necessary	Use social media channels to advertise instead of using printed material

Promote a paperless culture	Promote greener commutes
Print double-sided	Use energy efficient buildings/offices (lighting, heating, air con etc.)
Use recycled paper	Use eco-friendly printer ink and cartridges
Produce an event evaluation report which includes a section on sustainability and your carbon footprint data (events with 10,000+ people)	For events that repeat monthly or annually, avoid date-marking on banners and site signage so that you can reuse items
	Purchase items in bulk (but don't buy more than you need)
	Choose energy-saving and rechargeable appliances
	Communicate with your staff and audience to raise awareness of the climate emergency
	Promote what your event is doing to support climate action

4. Resources and references

Southwark's Climate Emergency Action Plan
Vision2025
Julie's Bicycle
https://www.agreenerfestival.com/
Carbon Trust

[The Generator project](#)

Southwark's Event team will deliver workshops with Q&A sessions and can arrange 1-2-1 sessions to support you implementing the actions required of you. Please contact events@southwark.gov.uk for more information.

Southwark's Event team can also supply a list of infrastructure at council sites which event organisers have access to, such as power and water points. Please contact events@southwark.gov.uk to request this information.

5. Next Steps

This guide will be reviewed and updated annually in order to make changes to the 'essential' and 'desirable' criteria as we move closer to 2030 and as we are informed by carbon emissions data gathered each year. We anticipate that annual targets for reducing events emissions will be introduced from 2024/25 onwards.