

Sustainable Event Guide

July 2018

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ABOUT THE GUIDE

What is this guide for?

This guide offers intends to help SEAS event organisers plan successful sustainable events.

Who is this guide for?

Primarily for SEAS staff, but can be applied more widely across different university departments and even extended to students.

How do I use this guide?

Well, how much time do you have?



Quite a lot! I want to integrate sustainability right from the planning phase.

Great! Use the whole guide to build sustainability into your event, including getting creative with your initiatives! Scan through 'The Basics', 'Think Deeper', and 'Get Creative'.



A little bit, I'd like to focus on sustainability for this event but am pretty busy!

Sure! After making sure you've checked everything from 'The Basics' checklist, head to the 'Think Deeper' checklist and see if you can achieve 10 things on the list.



Barely any, I'm really busy!

That's ok, even small changes make a big difference! Skip to 'The Basics' checklist to make sure you have everything covered. Then skip to the 'Think Deeper' checklist and see if you can achieve 3 things on the list!

SUSTAINABILITY AT EXETER

The University of Exeter is committed to taking a progressive approach and implementing solutions to ensure that the sustainability is always at the core of what we do. Through our sustainability policy we aim to integrate environmental principles into our operations at every opportunity. This guide offers help to event organisers to plan successful sustainable events, and help to contribute to the University’s overall policy by:

- ✓ Using environmental research expertise to inform campus operations
- ✓ Developing collaborative relationships for knowledge share and influence
- ✓ Support managers and employees to make local changes
- ✓ Reduce environmental impact by conserving and making the most of resources
- ✓ Promote sustainable waste management in line with the waste hierarchy

Using positive action initiatives from this sustainable event guide will help contribute to the 2016-2020 environmental targets for the University and aligns with goals 11 and 12 in the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

WASTE / RECYCLING
TO REDUCE waste arising tonnes/m² by 1% per annum (2014/15 baseline)
TO RECYCLE 45% of waste by the end of 2020
TO DIVERT 90% of commercial food waste to anaerobic digestion (including self-served halls)

WATER CONSUMPTION
TO REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION PER/M² BY 3% PER ANNUM

TRAVEL
TO CALCULATE CO₂ emissions arising from all forms of business travel on a two-yearly basis
CONVERT 25% of vehicle fleet from diesel to electric by 2020
TO REDUCE single car occupancy staff commuting from 35% to 32%

STUDENT COMMUTING
TO REDUCE SINGLE CAR OCCUPANCY FROM 5% to 3%

CARBON EMISSIONS
TO REDUCE electricity consumption per/m² BY 3% YEAR ON YEAR (2014/15 baseline)
TO REDUCE CO₂ emissions BY 43% BY 2020 (2005/06 baseline)

RETAIL AND CATERING
TO MAINTAIN FAIRTRADE ACCREDITATION
 To achieve and maintain a **MINIMUM OF LEVEL 2** Sustainable Restaurant Rating across University owned catering facilities by 2020

BIODIVERSITY
TO BECOME A COUNTRYSIDE WILDLIFE SITE BY JULY 17

CONSTRUCTION AND REFURBISHMENT
ACHIEVE BREEAM RATING OF AT LEAST "EXCELLENT" for all new buildings

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GREEN EXETER
 Shaping a greener University

PLANNING A SUSTAINABLE EVENT

Who is responsible?

Nominate a sustainability coordinator who will take responsibility for all things green!

Identify priority areas

During a kick-off planning session, identify main areas for focus for this event.

Set specific objectives

Agree on targets you'd like to achieve in the priority areas previously agreed.

Communicate and collate feedback

Communicate success to teams and partners, and get ideas on how to improve!

Measure your success

Be sure to measure how successful your initiatives are at achieving your targets.

Select your initiatives

Use this guide as an aid to decide how you will achieve your aims with select initiatives.

Tips for success:

- Get commitment from **senior managers**
- Set **realistic** objectives and targets
- Focus efforts on the **success** of a **few attainable initiatives**
- Encourage all event **staff to get involved** with the aims
- **Use relationships with partners** to help achieve your objectives
- **Analyse feedback** gathered and build into your next event
- **Tailor your plan** to each event, every one is different!

AWARENESS & EVALUATION

**A
B C THE BASICS**



Raising awareness for events is crucial to ensure smooth running, but this can mean more than using lots of posters and handouts.

- **Utilise digital marketing** tools within SEAS and across the university's i.e. televisions in the guild
- **Target attendees online**, think websites and email distribution lists
- **Target attendees during face-to-face meetings**, the power of word of mouth shouldn't be underestimated
- **Re-skin and reuse** banners & posters rather than producing new ones
- **Collect feedback online**, using [google forms](#) or [typeform](#), rather than on paper. They're easier to set up and analyse, and more likely to be responded to.

💡 THINK DEEPER

Much of the pre-event stages are heavy on paperwork, think about how you can reduce this as well as improving reach of marketing.

- **Remove paper registration**, move it online
- **Use Facebook** to promote events, with 1.7bn users its an ideal place to inform
- **Gather feedback on sustainability perception**, this can inform the next event
- **Communicate the effectiveness** of your sustainability initiatives to the wider team and attendees.

🚀 GET CREATIVE

Marketing tools are always developing, and there are many ways you can improve the awareness of events whilst remaining sustainable. Use the [get creative toolkit](#) to help with ideas, some starting points:

- **Raise awareness through societies** and courses, send out student volunteers to market the event in return for space at a fair.

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

A
B C **THE BASICS**

SUCCESS STORY! After switching information distribution from brochures to A1 posters, the casual jobs fair reduced its paper use by **91%**! *Can your event be the next success story?*

Make sure you consider the impact of the materials you intend to use at the event. There are some very simple things you can do to reduce the environmental impact in this area.

- **Manage waste** properly with the [A-Z waste guide](#) / [information](#) on additional waste and recycling collections. Remember there's no extra charge for additional paper recycling!
- **Assess the necessity** for brochures / handouts, **over 60% of handouts are thrown away!** If they are necessary, order only for the number of attendees. Handout material on arrival to avoid duplication
- **Utilise space on handouts**, think about getting your message across with less paper
- **Design reusable posters**. Don't print event specific information i.e. dates
- **Don't laminate!** Instead use re-usable pouches
- **Print economically**, double-sided in duplex.

 **THINK DEEPER**

Materials at events are a huge resource drain, think a bit deeper to see how your event could help towards reducing the amount of waste Exeter produces.

- **Use sustainable freebies**, look at the [freebie guide](#) for more info
- **Design sustainable posters**, ensure they're reusable and easily transportable too!
- **Digitise forms**, or at the very least minimise the length and space taken up
- **Take email sign-ups directly to a laptop**, engage in conversation as well as reducing workload.

 **GET CREATIVE**

Go back to basics and think about redesigning the way you provide attendees with materials at events. Facilitate this with the [get creative toolkit](#). Some starting points specific to preparation and materials:

- **Design** brochures / handouts that are **compatible with phones** so no print out versions are needed
- **Assign a waste coordinator** within the event team to ensure sustainable collection of waste for the event
- Consider your own **sustainability brand being shown in your materials** i.e. using recycled stationary.

PARTNERS & COMMUNITY

A
B **C** **THE BASICS**

Partner relationships can be used and improved to further the University’s green agenda, think about offering guidance to help partners reduce their environmental impact.

- **Collect partners material** ahead of the event to provide to attendees online
- **Distribute Exeter’s [partner green event guide](#)** to improve partners ability to contribute to our sustainability initiatives
- **Invite partners to sign a green commitment statement**
- **Look for ways to support local sustainable businesses** i.e. through purchase of freebies from these businesses.

 **THINK DEEPER**

Think deeper about opportunities to use partnerships to promote sustainability.

- **Incentivise partners to go green**, i.e. go paperless and reduce their energy bills or offering prime fair positioning
- **Introduce joint promotion** campaigns with partners
- **Hire a sustainability volunteer or intern**, tapping into large student pool seeking work experience
- **Explore local sustainability partnerships** within the community, who may be able to provide sponsorship and improve sustainability image.

 **GET CREATIVE**

Companies are always looking to get there names on sustainable initiatives, think creatively using the [get creative toolkit](#) on how to tap into that. Ideas include:

- **Develop a ‘Green Standard’** sponsorship for partners, a tier above current partnerships
- **Introduce a sustainability stand at every event**, this could even be sponsored by a partner.

VENUE & TRAVEL

A
B **C** **THE BASICS**

Whilst most of the SEAS events are held internally, there are still factors to consider to ensure the venue and travel arrangements are set up in the most sustainable way possible.

- Ensure all recycling and non-recycling **bins are accurately and clearly labelled**
- **Consider whether the event is suitable to be run as a virtual event**, reducing carbon footprint and also opening the option of posting online for reuse
- Try to ensure any **purchased decorations can be reused** for other events
- If running the event externally, **check if the venue has a sustainability policy** and choose a venue that is **easily accessed by public transport**
- Use the event literature to **promote cycling, car sharing and public transport.**

 **THINK DEEPER**

Take further steps to reduce the impact of venue and travel on the environment.

- **Ensure there is a paper recycling point signposted at the exit of the event** to encourage recycling of waste
- **Provide public transport options on event invite details** to encourage sustainable visitor transport
- **Recommend visitor accommodation that is within walking distance** of the venue / town centre
- **Establish a central storage point** for your department to encourage sharing of resources and decorations.

 **GET CREATIVE**

Get creative using the [toolkit](#) to come up with ways the venue and travel environmental impact can be reduced. Some starting point ideas include:

- **Host the event outside!** Try not to be confined by booking out costly spaces
- **Run a sustainable travel competition**, partners / individuals with lowest carbon footprint can be entered into a prize draw.

FOOD & DRINK

A
B **C** **THE BASICS**

Click [here](#) to find the University's list of preferred suppliers, remember all in house catering outlets should be following these guidelines, making them a great choice!

Food and drink contribute largely to waste and there are simple ways to reduce the way events contribute to that, and consider the holistic sustainability of food and drink provided.

- **Meet two of the food purchasing standards:**
 - *Produce is local and/or seasonal*
 - *Produce is organic certified*
 - *All fish is MSC certified*
 - *All eggs are free-range or freedom food*
 - *Majority of meat is free-range or freedom food*
 - *Majority of food provided is vegetarian*
- **Assess whether it's necessary to provide food**
- **Always provide drinking water**
- **Use tap water** in jugs rather than bottled water
- **Avoid single-use plastics**
- **Use reusable crockery, glassware and cutlery** where possible.

 **THINK DEEPER**

Further steps can be taken to reduce the negative impact of food and drink. Be prepared for a little more organisation.

- **Ask attendees to bring their own cups**
- **Provide reusable cups / glasses** to attendees, try hiring if limited storage
- **Donate any leftover food to foodbanks / soup kitchens** like [this](#)
- At least **give away leftover food** to staff / attendees
- **Get pre-orders for food** where appropriate.

 **GET CREATIVE**

Utilise the [get creative toolkit](#) to come up with some new ways to reduce the impact of food and drink at your event. Some initial ideas are:

- **Organising a compost campaign** with leftover food, explore what's going on locally and see how you can contribute.



THE BASICS

Use this checklist to ensure you are considering your events basic sustainability needs. Don't worry if you can't tick them all off yet, aim for 3 initiatives from each section to make a difference! You're already working your way towards offsetting the CO₂ and *supporting Exeter's Strategy 2016-2021...making the most of our resources.*

AWARENESS & EVALUATION

- Utilise digital marketing tools i.e. televisions in the guild
- Target attendees online, think websites and email distribution lists and in face-to-face meetings
- Re-skin and reuse banners / poster rather than producing new ones
- Collect feedback online, using [google forms](#) or [typeform](#), rather than on paper.
- Highlight your sustainable initiatives at the event to inform visitors and colleagues.

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Manage waste properly, use the [A-Z waste guide](#) if in doubt
- Assess the necessity for brochures / handouts
- Handout material on arrival to avoid duplication
- Utilise space on handouts, think about getting your message across with less paper
- Design reusable posters. Don't print event specific information i.e. dates
- Don't laminate! Instead use re-usable pouches
- Print economically, double-sided in duplex.

PARTNERS & COMMUNITY

- Collect partners material ahead of the event to provide to attendees online
- Distribute Exeter's [partner green event guide](#) to partners
- Invite partners to sign a green commitment statement
- Look to support local sustainable businesses i.e. purchasing freebies from these businesses.

VENUE & TRAVEL

- Ensure all recycling and non-recycling bins are accurately and clearly labelled
- Consider whether the event is suitable to be run as a virtual event
- Check external events sustainability policy & choose one easily to access by public transport
- Use the event literature to promote cycling, car sharing and public transport.

FOOD & DRINK

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meet two of the food purchasing standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Produce is local and/or seasonal</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Produce is organic certified</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>All fish is MSC certified</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>All eggs are free-range or freedom food</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Majority of meat is free-range or freedom food</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Majority of food provided is vegetarian</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess whether it's necessary to provide food <input type="checkbox"/> Always provide drinking water <input type="checkbox"/> Use tap water in jugs rather than bottled water <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid single-use plastics <input type="checkbox"/> Use reusable crockery, glassware and cutlery where possible. |
|--|---|



THINK DEEPER

Use this checklist to try to think more deeply about how your event can be sustainable. It's not designed to tick every box, instead get you thinking about different ways to improve your

events. Thank you for working hard to offsetting your events CO₂ emissions and [supporting Exeter's Strategy 2016-2021](#)...making the most of our resources.

AWARENESS & EVALUATION

- Remove paper registration, move it online
- Use Facebook to promote events
- Gather feedback on sustainability perception to can inform your initiatives at the next event
- Communicate the effectiveness of your sustainability initiatives to the wider team and attendees.

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Use sustainable freebies, look at the [freebie guide](#) for more info
- Design sustainable posters, ensure they're reusable and easily transportable too!
- Digitise forms
- Try to minimise the lengths of forms if paper copies are necessary
- Take email sign-ups directly to a laptop, engage in conversation as well as reducing workload.

PARTNERS & COMMUNITY

- Incentivise partners to go green, i.e. go paperless and reduce their energy bills or offering prime fair positioning
- Introduce joint promotion campaigns with partners
- Hire a sustainability volunteer or intern, tapping into large student pool seeking work experience
- Explore local sustainability partnerships within the community.

VENUE & TRAVEL

- Ensure there is a paper recycling point signposted at the exit of the event
- Provide public transport options on event invite details to encourage sustainable visitor transport
- Recommend visitor accommodation that is within walking distance of the venue / town centre.

FOOD & DRINK

- Ask attendees to bring their own cups
- Provide reusable cups / glasses to attendees
- Donate any leftover food to foodbanks / soup kitchens
- At least give away leftover food to staff / attendees
- Get pre-orders for food where appropriate.



GET CREATIVE TOOLKIT

your sustainability aims in your priority areas.

Use this guide for ideas on how to creatively solve your sustainability issues. The tools here may help direct your thinking to tailored solutions to achieve

Creative Problem Solving Techniques

When faced with large sustainability problems it is easy to get overwhelmed with finding the solution. Use these below techniques to help generate lots of ideas!

Ideation session with divergent thinking

- What's this good for?
When you're stuck for a solution and need to start from scratch to generate new and creative ideas.
- How do I do it?
Concisely write the problem you're facing. Set a 1 minute timer. Everyone in the team spends the entire minute writing solutions on post-it notes. You should come up with the ideas as though there are no restrictions – the wackier the better! Stick your ideas up and let the facilitator read a few out. Then repeat the idea generation a few more times, this technique is all about volume of ideas! At the end, review your ideas in groups and think how any of these ideas could be adapted and implemented.

Or try:

Crazy 8's

- How do I do it?
Give everyone a piece of paper to fold up so there are 8 rectangles. Set a 4 minute timer and sketch out a solution to the problem every 30 seconds. This really helps to get creativity flowing!

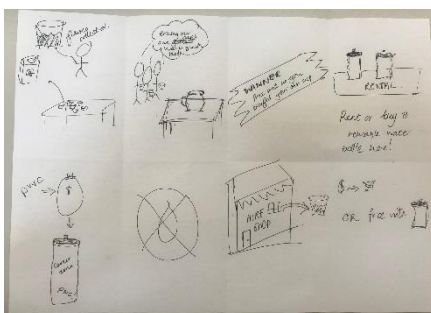
Questioning assumptions

- What's this good for?
When solutions seem impossible because there are too many obstacles in the way.
- How do I do it?
Assign an individual to question assumptions, whenever there is an assumption brought up during an idea generation session, the individual will question it and make sure it is a true obstacle and try to overcome it. When a list of legitimate assumptions exits, use them as idea triggers to produce fresh ideas.



Brainwriting

- How do I do it?
Instead of shouting ideas, as in brainstorming, write ideas on a piece of paper for 2 minutes. Swap ideas with other individuals in the group and develop on those ideas in front of you or find inspiration for new ideas! After 10 minutes or so, collect the sheets and discuss findings.



Use the internet and people around your for inspiration on cutting edge sustainability ideas. Browse the [eauc](#) and the [sustainability exchange](#) directory for more literature and ideas.

USEFUL CONTACTS / LINKS

Contact	Name	Details
University Sustainability Coordinator	Karen Gallagher	K.M.Gallagher@exeter.ac.uk
Waste Management Team		https://www.exeter.ac.uk/campuservices/facilitiesmanagement/wasteandrecycling/
Green Exeter		https://www.exeter.ac.uk/sustainability/greenexeter/
Green Exeter Environmental toolkit		https://www.exeter.ac.uk/sustainability/environmentaltoolkit/
Department Green Exeter Senior Sponsor	Dawn Lees	D.Lees@exeter.ac.uk
Department Green Exeter Team Lead	Jen Hardwick	J.C.Hardwick@exeter.ac.uk

If you have any comments on the sustainability guide or have any further ideas on how it can be improved please get in touch with J.C.Hardwick@exeter.ac.uk

Freebie Purchasing Guide

Our research has shown that most students have limited interest in the carbon footprint associated with their freebies. This places the responsibility of sustainable sourcing of freebies on staff. Use this guide to think about how to ensure freebies aren't negatively impacting our sustainability policies.

1. THINK SUSTAINABLE!

Have a think on the following points to decide whether or not freebies are necessary!

- Do you really need to hand out freebies?
- Are they essential to your aim?
- How much of an impact are the freebies having towards your aim?
- Are there alternatives that could work just as well?

2. BUY SUSTAINABLE!

If you're set on freebies, think about the following:

- Are your freebies **useful**? *We found students prefer useful freebies with pens scoring more highly than lanyards*
- Can you source **re-usable** freebies?
- Can you find freebies made from **recycled material**?
- Try to ensure the freebies are made from **sustainable material**! *Avoid plastics*

SUCCESS STORY

Green Exeter and our commitment to sustainability influenced the Student Employee of the Year Awards, which now uses recycled glass awards or Pret vouchers as prizes.

Think outside the box! How can your next event contribute to the University's sustainability policy through the freebies and prizes it gives out.



Partner Green Event Guide

At the University of Exeter we are committed to a progressive approach to improve the sustainability of our estate. Within employment services we have our own guidelines and policies to ensure the events we run are pushed to being the most sustainable they can be..

This guide offers some of our current green initiatives we apply to our events, your contribution towards these initiatives would be greatly appreciated.



THE BASICS

- Re-skin and reuse banners & posters rather than producing new ones
- Manage waste at our events properly, following the [A-Z waste guide](#) if unsure
- Assess the necessity for handouts, over 60% of them are thrown away!
- Utilise space on handouts, can you get your message across using less paper?
- Design reusable posters, don't print date specific info
- Send us your material ahead of time so it can be circulated to attendees online.



GOING A LITTLE FURTHER

- Use sustainable freebies, look at the [freebie guide](#) for more info
- Design sustainable posters, ensure they're reusable and easily transportable too!
- Take email sign-ups directly to a laptop, engage in conversation as well as reducing workload
- Consider your carbon footprint when travelling, could you opt for public transport to attend?
- Bring your own reusable coffee and water cups to help minimise waste.

Get in touch with your University of Exeter contact to find out more about our sustainability policies and enquire about the possibility of becoming a green standard sponsor.