

Your checklist for sustainable events

This checklist will help ensure your event or activity is socially and environmentally responsible.

Planning

Have you read Council's [Events Policy](#), Guidelines and [Waste Management Guidelines & Requirements](#)?

How will you ensure your event is accessible to people of all ages and abilities?

Have you identified the key sustainability components of your event?

How will you minimise waste, pollution, energy, water, chemical and resource use where applicable?

When possible, choose suppliers that are local and socially responsible organisations/businesses.

Accessibility

Is your venue accessible to people of all ages and abilities?

Is your venue accessible by foot, cycling or public transport?

Reducing carbon emissions

Actively encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport to get to your event.

Think about ways to reduce energy use (ie. solar generators).

If serving food, organise a food composting collection for your food waste.



Promoting your event

Cater for different languages if needed.

Reduce printing or promote online where possible.

Avoid banners. If needed, design for reuse by using a classic style and leave dates off. Look for environmentally friendly options to turn your banners into something new such as reusable bags.

If printing, use Forest Stewardship Certified (FSC) and/or 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

Promote the initiatives that are making your event a sustainable one.

Say yes to responsible catering

Choose catering with minimal packaging.

Where possible, use local caterers.

Offer socially responsible tea, coffee and sugar. Look for the fair trade, rainforest alliance or similar certification.

Cater for everyone's dietary requirements.

Where possible use reusable cups, crockery and tableware.



Set the mood with sustainable decorations

Use reusable or recyclable decorations
(examples: fabric bunting, paper lanterns, honeycombs)

Don't use balloons, they are not allowed.

Waste avoidance and reduction

Choose products that can be reused or recycled
and with no or low packaging.

Avoid giveaways. If needed, choose items that can be reused or recycled such as reusable cups and water bottles, seeds, etc.

Products sold or distributed must be reusable or comprised of certified biodegradable and/or compostable materials.

Single-use plastics, disposable water bottles, balloons, polystyrene products and packaging are not to be used. Encourage people to bring reusable water bottles or offer environmentally friendly options. Check the **Waste Avoidance Solutions table** for alternatives.

Use reusable, paper or certified compostable/biodegradable food and beverage ware.

Are you organising a big event? Will there be any leftover food? Please organise a food rescue with a charity in advance so that excess food can be distributed to vulnerable people in Sydney.

Waste management

Have you checked the [Waste Management Guidelines & Requirements?](#)

Does your event need a **Waste Management Plan?**
If so, have you submitted it?

Paper or certified compostable/biodegradable food and beverage ware is to be used and managed onsite if reusable products are not an option.

A sufficient number of general waste and recycling bins must be organised for the event. Signage must be placed on each bin (please see appendix for signage).

Ensure guests are putting their rubbish in the correct bin.

Leave no trace! Make sure there's no litter or rubbish left behind from your event.

Any washing up liquid brought and used onsite must be environmentally friendly (eg. non-toxic, biodegradable, phosphate-free, hypoallergenic, septic and compost safe).

Cooking oils must be taken offsite and recycled accordingly.



Waste Avoidance Solutions

Prohibited	Approved Alternatives
Polystyrene and plastic plates, bowls, cutlery etc... Compostable biodegradable plastics and degradable plastics	Reusable table ware such as crockery, Biodegradable products including bamboo cutlery, wooden cutlery (FSC certified) and sugar cane/corn starch plates (note: compostable bio-plastics are single-use plastics and are prohibited)
Plastic straws	Paper, bamboo and metal straws
Plastic stirrers	Wooden and bamboo stirrers and paddle pop sticks
Plastic bags	Calico and paper bags, or ask attendees to bring their own bag
Individual sugar, salt and pepper and sauce sachets	Bulk shakers and dispensers
Sunscreen sachets	Bulk pump pack sunscreen
Water in disposable water bottles	Water refill stations (rentable) or water stations with 100% recyclable paper cups and encourage event attendees to bring their own reusable water bottles to reduce use of paper cups.
Balloons, plastic tablecloths or any item wrapped in individual single use plastic packaging	Paper, cardboard and fabric products including serviettes made of recycled paper, fabric tablecloths and bunting and honeycomb decorations.

