



# Sustainable Event Guide

Events can take a heavy toll on resources, society, and the environment, and have the capacity to generate significant waste. To promote more responsible consumption, Wellington Shire Council has developed a Sustainable Event Guide to minimise the impact events can take on a local level.

Incorporating sustainability into an event is crucial from the initial planning stages, and each stakeholder must be invested from the outset. By using this guide, we hope the community can enjoy sustainable events that ensure energy and water use as well as waste are minimised, and vegetation and waterways in the Middle of Everywhere stay pristine.



## Event venue checklist

- **Consider whether your venue is energy efficient** - does it have LED lights? Will you be using renewable energy? Have you considered environmentally sustainable design principals? Are you carbon neutral?
- Have you considered hosting your event outdoors to reduce emissions that come from heating and cooling?
- Have you considered supplying tap water for people to fill up their own reusable bottles? Does your venue collect rainwater? Are dual flush toilets available? Are hand basins water efficient? Are urinals waterless?
- If there is catering - are there local, seasonal or vegetarian catering options?
- Are reusable cutlery, plates, bowls and cups available?
- Is recycling available at your venue?
- Does your venue use upcycled or recycled products and materials?
- Does the venue compost, donate left over food or recycle food waste?
- Is the venue easily accessible by public transport?
- Are the pathways adequate for foot traffic and has the impact on the surrounding vegetation been considered? Is vegetation vulnerable to trampling been fenced off?
- **Where possible, always source an online calculator to estimate the carbon emissions for your event and look for ways to offset.**

## Promotion

- Consider replacing traditional printed marketing with digital marketing. It may be possible to set up a website and social media channel to share information online, rather than relying on printed material.
- If you must print, recycled paper is a great option and is readily available.
- Investigate e-ticketing options such as Eventbrite, Trybooking etc for online ticket sales.
- Encourage BYO reusable coffee cups/water bottles ahead of your event date.
- Reward attendees for bringing reusable cups, bags and bottles with discounts or opportunities to enter exclusive competitions.
- Provide experience gifts or electronic vouchers rather than plastic giveaways.
- Promote walking and riding routes, encouraging people to avoid driving to your event. You may offer incentives to attendees who arrive sustainably. For example, a free coffee for those who walked, rode, or car-pooled.
- Consider including recycling as an engagement tool at your event.



## Food and drinks

Food and food waste is a major driver of climate change, so sustainable catering is important.

- Encourage reusable water bottles or provide or sell reusable bottles or cups to staff and attendees.
- Caterers should avoid single use waste products or products with excessive packaging (for example, swap single-serve sauce packets for a condiment station).
- Prioritise catering that uses local, seasonal or any other sustainable food options. Contact a local farm to purchase goods direct.
- Consider engaging a social enterprise to supply catering.
- Provide drinking fountains so people do not need to buy bottled water. You can book a [Drinking Station](#) from Gippsland Water or South Gippsland Water and encourage attendees and event staff to bring their own reusable bottles.
- Provide recycling and organic waste collection bins where possible.
- Consider adding an extra cost to single use items to encourage use of reusable items.

# Product purchasing

- Do not use single use plastic items - such as straws, balloons, bottled water, take away coffee cups and plastic bags. This extends to any merchandise or giveaways that you know will not be used beyond the event.
- Balloons are also extremely unsustainable—they cause litter and are harmful to wildlife. Similarly, cut flowers look great but do not last long—consider decorating tables with pot plants and a card under or on chairs at each table so the winner can take the plant home to plant in their garden.
- Consider investing in reusable banners/promotional materials.
- Try to purchase items that are made from recycled materials, are recyclable, reusable or are made to last. Consider what will happen to the item after the event.
- Consider sustainable suppliers at the procurement stage: purchasing local products will reduce carbon miles and some products come with an environmental or social certification, such as Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), fair trade or carbon neutral. Choose catering that uses fair trade, local, seasonal, carbon neutral and any other sustainable food options or engage a social enterprise to undertake catering.
- Sharing goods and services (hiring, leasing, or loaning from other community groups) is a great alternative to buying new.
- Ask for renewable energy options when hiring equipment from local hire venues. If they do not stock it—maybe your interest will make them consider adding this to their range of services.
- Consider adding extra cost to single use items to encourage the use of reusable items.





# Water management

When planning your event, think about where your water is sourced and what ends up in wastewater. How we use water can also affect the amount of energy we use.

- Provide drinking fountains so people do not need to buy bottled water. Book a [Drinking Station](#) from Gippsland Water or South Gippsland Water ([portable trailer](#)) and encourage participants and event staff to bring their own reusable bottles.
- Hiring toilets? Make sure any portable toilets are water efficient, waterless or use 'grey water' and dispose of wastewater appropriately.

Dispose of chemicals and oil responsibly - instead of pouring waste down drains or throwing onto the surrounding environment.

# Travel

- Consider providing a shuttle service from public transport stops to your event.
- Ensure there's adequate infrastructure to support extra bikes in the area. If your event is held at multiple venues, you could set up a bike share for attendees.

# Waste management

- Provide sufficient recycling and organic waste collection bin numbers, with clear signage for education purposes and to avoid contamination. Bins should be grouped in stations, to prevent a single, standalone landfill option.
- Consider organising a recycling/cardboard skip to assist with bulk packaging at set up or pack up time.
- Avoid single use waste as much as possible. "If you can't reuse it, refuse it" – there are alternatives to Styrofoam, condiment sachets, balloons, plastic bags, plastic utensils and straws, which should not be used at all.
- Consider partnering with an organisation that collects leftover food and redistributes it to people in need, or one that composts or sends food waste to a worm farm.
- Avoid buying items with excessive packaging. All litter must be removed from the site and separated into the most appropriate waste stream.



- Work with waste contractors on a ‘waste management’ plan that focuses on waste avoidance from the outset, to ensure everyone is on the same page. Consider assigning a waste management coordinator, who is responsible for monitoring waste management during your event.
- Contact Segue in Stratford—they have a portable trailer and washup facility.
- When the Victorian Government’s Container Deposit Scheme is introduced, consider collection of cans as a fundraising opportunity.

## **Planning tips**

- Determine what you want to achieve and set targets. Rather than tackle everything at once, pick deliverable actions and build them up year by year. Brainstorm actions that will get you there and create a plan that includes the basics: who, what, where, when and how.
- Put your plan into action and check on your progress. Adjust actions if needed.
- Take any lessons on board for future planning and celebrate even the small successes!



**Sale Service Centre**

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