

# Sustainable Events



Wales  
Cymru



## Hay Festival Case Study

Events of all types and descriptions have an impact on the environment within which they operate.

By addressing the three keystones of sustainable development, environmental, financial and social, positive impacts can be maximised and negative ones minimised or mitigated for. Although events are often temporary and transient, their impacts can still be assessed and managed.

Festivals have many similarities to all other events although each one will have their own particular differences.

This fact-sheet aims to provide a summary of the areas in which Festivals can make a difference and detailing case studies of individual actions.



Festivals should provide an exciting and stimulating experience whilst aiming to meet the following statements:

**Environmental** – The Festival has low energy use, low waste production, high levels of recycling, all pollution is controlled.

**Financial** – The Festival manages its finances in a way that ensures its viability whether it is a one-off or a recurring event. Care is taken to support local businesses where possible and invest in the locality.

**Social** – The Festival is aware of the impacts on the local population living around the site and mitigates them where possible.

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### Environmental Management Systems for Festivals

An environmental management system can assist organisations by providing a standard structure and process through which the organisation plans, consults, assesses and actions change. There are a number of environmental management systems and standards that are available however two are particularly appropriate for Festivals in Wales.

#### ● British Standard 8901

BS 8901 provides requirements for planning and managing sustainable events of all sizes and types, supplemented by advice on how to meet, and surpass, these requirements. It encompasses the entire range of events ranging from large-scale conferences and unique events such as the 2012 Olympics to music festivals and air shows. The standard is applicable throughout the sector supply chain encompassing venues, organising companies and industry contracting firms and is aimed at the following groups:

- Event organizers
- Venues
- Organisations and/or individuals in the supply chain.

BS 8901 provides guidance designed to assist the user to implement the requirements and those in event management to manage their environmental, financial and social risks and impacts spanning all aspects of event management.

Go to: <http://www.bsi-global.com/en/Shop/Publication-Detail?pid=00000000030146791>

#### ● Green Dragon Environmental Standard

Green Dragon is a manageable way of achieving a recognised UKAS Accredited and Independently inspected Environmental Management System (EMS).

With 5 Levels, organisations can get to the level that suits their needs, step-by-step.

At every level, you achieve a fully recognised and UKAS accredited EMS, but each level takes you to a higher standard.

If you wish, you can use Green Dragon to take you to a level where you can also achieve ISO14001 and/or EMAS.

Go to: <http://www.greendragonwales.com>

### Sustainable Management in Action

The following areas will be common amongst Festivals and are some examples of what can be done and whilst not all the suggestions may be individually appropriate, there will hopefully be useful information for all.

For a full list of all of hints and tips from Hay Festival's experiences of making improvements to their overall sustainability, please take a look at Hay Festival's Greenprint Toolkit at [www.hayfestival.com/greenprint](http://www.hayfestival.com/greenprint)

### Planning and Stakeholders

All sustainability should start with a review of current practices and impacts where known. This will include whether those impacts are directly on the business, on the environment or on the local population.

Along side this planning and review should be stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders can be people from your supply chain, local residents, statutory bodies, government agencies etc. Organisers should meet with our key suppliers both before the Festival and afterwards to review performance and discuss improvements. Organisers should also have planning and review meetings with the local town council, chamber of commerce, emergency services, county council, highways agency etc, etc. These are all designed to ensure that people feel included in the process and information is received and dispensed that can improve the Festival's performance whether that is in its management, the experience of the visitors or the benefits to the local area.

### Supply Chain Management

The process by which you products or services purchase is the supply chain and you have control over who you deal with. In reality there are competing objectives that affect who you buy from for example, where the local businesses you want to support are unable to offer an environmentally sound product. Below are some case studies looking at different areas of the supply chain as experienced by Hay Festival.

### Communications

Having assessed the printing of our programme Hay Festival decided to switch to a fully recycled paper with vegetable inks.



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Having made the decision they were then faced with the news that doing this would increase costs by 25%. This would have affected their financial viability so in order to meet their environmental agenda and remain financially afloat, they decided to reduce our print runs in order to keep costs the same.

They then looked at ways of cutting back on programme distribution, secured a number of programmes within the box office for people who just needed to check on a venue and they also implemented a programme recycling scheme at the exits to the Festival so they could re-use programmes in good condition.

### Catering

Hay Festival have a large number of different catering outlets on site, both eat-in and take-away, and they are looking to implement a standard type of disposable crockery/utensils for those venues that cannot re-use crockery. There are two key reasons for this; firstly to ensure that the type of disposable utensil/crockery is of a high environmental standard and secondly in order to simplify the waste stream and make it easier both for the public and the site team to sort waste effectively and efficiently.

### Transport

Hay Festival is fully aware that by putting on a large Festival they attract large numbers of people and by being located where they are, with no train station and low levels of alternative public transport, most of them travel by car. If they can reduce the number of people coming by car then they can have a major impact on carbon emissions.

They have run a shuttle bus around the town for a number of years and this has been very popular (10,000+ people in 2008) however they decided to trial an integrated public bus service that included regular buses from Hereford station to the Festival site, the town shuttle and a minibus service around the nearest local villages around. These Hereford buses were timetabled to meet the all the trains from London as well as a number of the other connections and they proved very popular with over 800 people using it in the first year.



The village minibus service only had limited success with 150 users however it was found to be very useful for those without a car. They will be running the service again next year and will be making the following improvements.

- A second bus will be put on from Hereford meaning that they will cut some of the waiting times and also ensure they can timetable the bus to meet services from Cardiff, Birmingham and Manchester as well as London.
- They will extend the through-ticketing service so people will automatically be offered a follow-on bus ticket when they book a train ticket.
- The village minibus service will be extended to run continuously throughout the day.
- The marketing of all the services will be integrated, improved and extended.

### Waste Management



Hay Festival work with Brecon based recycling company, Powells, who supply us with skips for all of their waste. As well as the environmental benefits, it benefits them financially if they can recycle as much as possible as they are charged around half the amount for a skip full of say paper for recycling as opposed to a skip of general waste going to landfill.

They have a system of labelled bins around site for the public to sort their waste into and also ones for the trade behind their venues. It is very easy for the different bins to be contaminated either through a lack of thought or genuine confusion. It has therefore been essential for them to have a recycling superno who oversees the collection and then re-sorts the waste before it goes into the main skips. Without this person they would have many more tonnes of waste going to landfill either directly or due to being rejected by the recycling company.

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### Site/Venue Management

There are many areas that can be looked at within site management however one of the main ones will be energy use. Hay Festival have a fairly easy option for their electricity as they are on the mains and therefore they have swapped providers to Good Energy who source all of their electricity from renewable sources. They do still have to have back-up generators in case of power failure and they are trialling different options at present. They have a small amount of bio-diesel (from recycled chip fat, no palm oil), stored on site that they have tried mixing into the generators with limited success, they have had more success by running our on-site fork-lifts on it. Hay Festival are also investigating use of solar generators, a fuel cell and wind power both as back up and for some of the remoter parts of the site/carparks that have no mains connections.



They have also trialled very successfully this year use of a electric, flat-bed buggy which being almost silent, was ideal for moving goods and waste around the site at all times, even during performances.

### Foot printing

Whilst there are always easy ways in which Festivals can cut energy use, waste production etc, it is useful to have some idea of a baseline against which to measure any reductions. This is not only for your own targets but it also often a requirement of environmental management systems or standards. There is a wide-range of footprinting tools available however they all tend to measure the same areas although the depth into which they go varies. Hay Festival have worked with a number of different partners to measure our footprint that enables us to gain from their knowledge and for them to benefit from accessing their event. This year they have been working with the Centre for Alternative Technology in Maccynthleth and BRASS, based in Cardiff University.



### Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

As with footprinting it is not essential to have objectives and KPIs however they always help to focus an organisation and also enables a more thorough assessment and review process. Some examples of objectives and KPIs that Hay Festival have set are as follows:

#### Objectives

- To reduce the use of all raw materials, energy and supplies.
- To reduce pollution, emissions and waste.
- To educate and assist festival visitors in reducing their carbon impact and improving their own sustainability.

#### KPIs

- Total Resources consumed per annum/event (KWH of electricity, tonnes of paper, litres of water, litres of gas etc).
- Total waste produced (percentage recycled to percentage sent to landfill).
- Emissions produced (total tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> produced etc).
- Changes in visitor behaviour (percentage of people travelling by car or public transport per annum/event etc).

### Assessing Performance and Review

One of the advantages of using an Environmental Management System is that it gives you the structure and tools through which to assess your performance, undertake reviews and modify management. Both systems detailed earlier have monitoring and review firmly embedded into the process and work well with the proviso being that you only get out of these what you put in. It is therefore important to be clear about the type and accuracy of the data you have available and are able to measure before committing to objectives and KPIs that become immeasurable and therefore reasonably meaningless.

For suggestions hints and tips on how you can make changes and improve your Festival's sustainability, have a look at our Toolkit at [www.hayfestival.com/greenprint](http://www.hayfestival.com/greenprint)