

Sustainability Statements – Guidance

A sustainability statement for your venue / event shows your visitors that you care about the world in which we live and are taking active steps to be more sustainable. It is designed to inform your visitors about the policies and practices you have in place, and hope to implement, to safeguard the environment. It gives visitors confidence in your organisation, demonstrating that your beliefs align with their own.

Sustainability is a journey, and the journey looks different for everyone. Not everyone has the means to pursue certifications such as [BCorp](#) and some listed buildings have conditions which might prevent some capital retrofitting. However, you probably are thinking about sustainability, even in small ways, so it is best practice to share your story.

Be honest about where you are on your journey and what you would like to achieve in the future. It is also important to include measures and metrics and avoid 'buzzwords' within your statement to avoid [greenwashing](#).

Tell people about what you currently have in place and what you hope to have in place and by when. Giving deadlines will help keep you accountable. You can give examples based on the areas below (plus many more!).

Carbon emissions

- What is your current carbon footprint? What would you like it to be? (Find out here: [Quick carbon calculator](#))
- What steps are you taking to reduce carbon emissions?
 - Food choices can be a big contributor to carbon emissions – if you are offering food can you ensure menus are seasonal, locally sourced? Can you reduce the quantity of meat products, particularly beef? Do you use sustainable fisheries? Do you use local suppliers? – remember the method of farming and getting the food to you counts towards your carbon footprint too!
 - How do your staff get to your venue or event? Can you offer incentives to encourage staff to travel more sustainably? Can you facilitate a car-share scheme? Can you offer remote working to eliminate the commute?
 - Can you explore carbon offsetting? [3 Steps to Offset Your Carbon Footprint](#)
- If you'd like to learn more about carbon emissions why not attend a training course? [Carbon Literacy](#) [Climate Fresk](#) [Carbon Reduction Action Box \(CRAB\)](#).

Waste management

- How much waste do you produce and how can you minimise this? Can you order less? Can you refuse to use products which are not biodegradable? Could you go paperless?
- Can you gain more control over what happens to your waste? Can you compost food waste? Can you donate fabric or furniture items for use by others?
- Recycle, upcycle and reuse – what materials do you already recycle and reuse? Can you give example of how you have repurposed something to prevent more items ending up in a landfill? Do you offer recycling as well as regular bins at your venue / event?
- Could you take steps to embrace a [circular economy](#)?

Energy usage

- How much energy do you use on an average week / month? How can you reduce this? Could you use a smart meter to measure and keep track?
- Turn off – do you have motion sensors to turn on lights, to prevent lighting an empty room? If not, do you ensure lights are switched off after you leave a room. Do you check wired devices are switched off when not in use? Can you unplug chargers once wireless devices are fully charged?
- Turn down – consider reducing the temperature of your heating by one degree or increasing your air conditioning by one degree. If you do laundry or dishwashing, can you use a cooler cycle?
- Green energy – can you switch to a green energy supplier? Can you make use of solar panels or geothermal technologies at your venue or event? Can you switch to bio-diesel generators?
- If you have a venue, tools such as [Solar Wizard](#) could tell you your building's solar potential.

Supply chain management

- Ethical sourcing – do your suppliers meet social standards such as labour practices and safe working conditions? Do they pay a fair wage? If they are supplying food, do their growing or farming practices meet your standards for use of pesticides or animal welfare? Do you only use free-range?
- Environmental sourcing – do your suppliers have measures in place to reduce their environmental impacts such as pollution, deforestation and carbon emissions? Do they take specific measures to ensure they are not contaminating soil or water? What are their waste management processes? Can you use a green web host?
- Local sourcing – is there a local supplier you could switch to, to save carbon emissions from transportation? Can you support local farmers, producers and makers to benefit the local economy?

Digital Footprint

- Hardware – what steps can you take to make hardware last as long as possible? Do you repair rather than replace? Can new software increase the functionality of your hardware? Can you purchase refurbished or energy-efficient devices? Upgrading to new devices frequently adds to the volume of waste you create. Anything that is no longer suitable – can it be refurbished or recycled in any way?
- Document management – do you have shared storage which prevents the same document being saved in multiple places? Can you compress larger files, particularly if you are frequently uploading, downloading and sharing? Do you have a document retention policy and a system for electronic waste? Do you have thousands of emails in your inbox? Empty and delete regularly to reduce storage requirements.
- Reduce streaming – streaming videos and music takes a lot of data, involving data centres, servers and routers, all consuming energy. Can you download your content and re-use the same file rather than streaming? Can you play an audio file instead of a YouTube video?

This is also a good place to mention social responsibility - do you do any volunteering in the community or give charitable donations? Do you work in partnership with other organisations to tackle certain issues locally? List the partners to show accountability.

Top Tips:

- Be specific – for example what does ‘environmentally friendly’ mean? Could you say where or how something was sourced instead? Make sure you fact check claims and avoid jargon.
- Keep it simple – this is the place to outline your sustainability stance and the steps you are taking. It’s not a report detailing every step, just a snapshot.
- Be honest – if you haven’t got everything figured out yet, that’s fine! It’s better to be honest and build trust than make claims you are unable to substantiate.
- Offer updates – keep your statement up to date, showing the journey you are on and evidencing that you are always working on things.

If you are looking for support on your sustainability journey, there are many resources available.

Guidance for cultural venues:

[Theatre Green Book](#) - The Theatre Green Book is a collective initiative by theatre-makers the world. We believe theatre has an urgent role to play in our journey to living and working sustainably, and that theatre's own transition is best achieved through a common language, actions and standards that allow us to share and learn together.

[Julie's Bicycle](#) - Julie's Bicycle is a leading not-for-profit, mobilising the arts and culture to take action on the climate, nature and justice crisis.

[Creative Health Quality Framework](#) - The Creative Health Quality Framework is a ground-breaking tool that clearly articulates what "good" looks like for creative and cultural initiatives that aim to support people's health and wellbeing.

Event specific guidance:

[Green Events Guide](#) - This overview of green events introduces top tips and best practices to help organisations run events of all kinds in as environmentally sustainable a way as possible.

[10 Ways to Make Your Event More Sustainable](#) - Large scale events can have a big impact on the environment, and even lots of little events add up! Organisations have a corporate responsibility to limit their impact on the environment, society and the economy. Find out how to organise a sustainable event by making small, manageable changes.

[Calculate the CO2 footprint of your event](#) - Calculate the CO2 emissions of your event and make a corresponding contribution to climate protection

[Sustainable Travel Guide for events](#) - Measure and reduce travel emissions with free-to-access tools and resources, developed by industry experts. Invest in our future, with environmental partners who deliver proven wins for communities & nature. Communicate more confidently with audiences about low-carbon travel & positive impact of donations.

[The Powerful Thinking Guide](#) - provides event professionals with up-to-date knowledge and practical resources to help manage temporary energy smartly, reducing environmental impacts and fuel bills.