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**Sustainability of Markets and Events**

**Council Approach**

**February 2025**

St Albans City and District Council are committed to minimising the environmental impacts of Council managed or approved events on both the local and global environment. Our priorities are to minimise the amount of waste produced and materials used, reduce any associated traffic congestion and pollution, and protect the natural world.

We will use our events to proactively educate and inspire visitors to make environmentally friendlier choices.

We will give preference to suppliers and contractors who embody these principles in the provision of their products and services and ensure that hosts running events on Council land also do all they can to protect the environment.

This document sets out our approach to delivering Council managed or approved events as sustainably as possible. We expect hosts running events on Council land, and vendors that supply goods and services to our events, to adhere to the guidance provided on this page: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/making-your-event-sustainable-possible>

# **Waste**

Events generate large amounts of waste not only in the provision of catering, but also from litter, packaging, promotional material and goods bought or given away. It is essential that all events have comprehensive and effective strategies for reducing waste produced. This should include provision of recycling facilities which can be easily accessed by visitors, as well as strategies to reduce litter, packaging and ensuring that items sold or used in promotion are long-lasting, sustainably produced, and durable.

**What we will do:**

* Provide recycling facilities at all street festivals for paper, cardboard, drinks cans, glass bottles and plastic bottles and containers.
* Use reusable bin ‘toppers’ at street festivals to make it clear to attendees what can be recycled where.
* Reuse promotional materials between events whenever possible.
* At our largest events, trial the use of volunteers to supervise the bins and direct people to put their waste in the right place.
* Strive to increase recycling provision at weekly markets with particular focus on pallets.
* Make sure that event hosts running events on Council land, are doing all they can to reduce waste. This includes recycling as much as possible, removing all litter, and making sure everyone involved in the event is engaged in waste minimisation and recycling.
* Require hosts of large event to provide a Waste Management Plan

# **Catering provision**

**What we do:**

* Prohibit street festival vendors and street traders from distributing single-use plastic or polystyrene in the form of food containers, cups, cutlery and stirrers, plates, bottles (except water bottles), bags, straws and takeaway packaging.
* For our street festivals, invite attendance of at least 5% vegan caterers. We strive to increase the proportion of non-ultra-processed whole food options available.
* Prohibit pizza boxes as they take up significant space in the recycling bins. Paper plates should be used instead.
* We strongly advise all caterers to:
  + Provide at least one complete meal which is vegan and gluten free.
  + Use paper bags and plates where possible instead of boxes as these are easily recycled in the paper bin without taking up too much space.
  + Use cardboard or aluminium food containers along with a paper liner, to catch the food as these can then be recycled in the provided bins.
  + Not use compostable plastic alternatives. These are indistinguishable from plastic and cause a problem when placed in plastic recycling bins.
  + Choose bamboo or cardboard cutlery rather than wood, plastic or compostable plastic.
  + Consider providing bulk dispensing of sauces to reduce the need for individual plastic packets.
  + Separate oils and fats and correctly store and dispose of them to avoid water pollution.
* Give preference to vendors who can provide local produce and suppliers, seasonal produce, meat and dairy which meet high animal welfare standards, certified organic produce, Fairtrade products or products using sustainably sourced palm oil, sustainable sourced seafood, and offer healthy options and portions (appropriate portion size also saves waste)
* We expect event hosts using Council land to adhere to the above guidance and we provide ideas on how hosts can further reduce impacts from catering.
* We will continue to explore:
  + Options to fund reusable cup schemes to reduce the amount of cup waste. It is our aim to stop using non-recyclable plastic lined coffee cups as soon as viable alternatives become available.
  + More sustainable cutlery options as they become available (e.g. card cutlery).
  + The possibility to provide coffee cup recycling bins paid for by a surcharge to catering providers.
  + Options to set up washing stations for patrons to return their items for washing and reuse.

# **Energy**

Events use power for lighting, sound and heat. Since we declared a Climate Emergency, we want to do all that we can to reduce our emissions. That means looking for clean power sources, using energy efficient equipment for lighting, power and hire equipment and encouraging stall holders and entertainers to reduce their power needs as much as possible.

**What we do:**

* We longer permit the use of generators powered by petrol, or open framed generators whether Diesel, LPG powered. We permit the use of fully enclosed and silenced generators powered by LPG Gas or Diesel. Each generator, along with associated cabling and distribution, should have a certificate of performance and safety test prior to use and delivery to site. Traders should also include the operation of a generator(s) and associated risks in their traders risk assessment. Please see Generator Guidance for full details.
* Recommend considering a biodiesel generator. The most sustainable fuels are sourced from [Waste Vegetable Oil or Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil](https://www.powerful-thinking.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Biofuels_Guidance_30052018.pdf).
* Will explore the use of solar powered lighting as an option for summer events where viable.
* We expect event hosts using Council land to adhere to the above guidance as a minimum and we provide ideas on how hosts can further reduce their energy consumption.

# **Transport**

With thousands of people coming to the area for an event, there are obvious impacts from travel. Vehicles release greenhouse gas emissions as well as air pollution and create traffic and congestion which affect local people. Our focus is to do all that we can to encourage visitors to use public transport, walk and cycle.

We will give preference to vendors who use low emissions or electric vehicles, as well as vehicle-based traders (e.g. ice cream vans), that do not create on-site exhaust fumes.

**What we do:**

* Promote environmentally friendly modes of transport for commuting to and from all our events including public transport, bike and walking routes.
* Ensure our waste collection companies optimise delivery and collection times and routes to minimise transport impacts, congestion and noise nuisance.
* Ask our larger entertainment providers to deliver their services using low carbon vehicles from 2026.
* If vehicles are needed during the event preparation, we will strive to employ the use of all electric car-club vehicles where possible.
* We expect event hosts running events on Council land to do all they can to reduce transport impacts from their events and we provide advice on how this can be done.
* All mobile street traders must have an electric vehicle if they are required to keep an engine running when stationary as part of their business.

# **Promotion**

Event promotion uses natural resources like paper and plastics for brochures, flyers and banners, but also can include single-use giveaway items. Thousands of promotional items can be manufactured for one event adding to waste as well as transport impacts of moving them around. It is important to think about the longer-term impacts of this. We hope to set a good example by limiting the amount of ‘stuff’ produced and if give-away items are chosen, ensuring they serve an on-going practical purpose to the end user, are environmentally friendly and are likely to be used for a long time.

**What we do:**

* Ensure all event information is available online, reducing the need for printed brochures and flyers.
* When essential, we will only use 100% recycled paper products and inks to produce paper-based materials.
* Reuse any promotional products such as banners and signage, between events by keeping out specific dates and locations.
* Minimise the usage of non-reusable items (for example promotional flyers) and maximise those that are reusable (for example reusable banners and signs).
* Utilise promotional methods that do not involve printed products (e.g. online, radio, television, social media).
* Use e-ticketing options where possible.
* We expect event hosts running events on Council land to do all that they can to reduce the impact of promotional materials, including committing to the above actions as a minimum. We provide advice on how they can do this.

# **Products and Supplies**

Goods sold or given away at public events are often made of plastic and have often travelled long distances before being put to use. Often these items are used for a short period of time before being thrown away.

**What we do:**

* Prohibit any of the following for sale or distribution at any Council-approved events and Markets:
* Plastic or foil balloons (biodegradable balloons are okay). Deliberate balloon release, even of biodegradable balloons, is not permitted.
* Products using animal fur unless it is a by-product of the food industry.
* Any live or dead animals, insects, reptiles including taxidermy (e.g. Insect key chains, stuffed animals). This does not include fossils.
* Glitter that is not biodegradable.
* Encourage traders to provide products that serve an on-going practical purpose to the end user, are environmentally friendly and are likely to be used for a long time. Environmentally preferable items have minimal packaging; are recyclable or biodegradable; Are durable and likely to be used for a long time; or are directly beneficial to wildlife/nature. A great example is a seed bomb.
* Expect event hosts using Council land to do all they can to reduce the impact of products and supplies on the environment including adhering to the above commitments as a minimum.

# **Water**

Events use water for drinking, cleaning and sanitary purposes. We need to make sure that our events do not waste water or impact natural water bodies or supplies.

**What we do:**

* Require street cleaning contractors to employ water efficient equipment.
* Include in hire agreement, requirement for water wise toilets which could include, water efficient hand basins, or waterless urinals.
* Expect event hosts using Council land to do all they can to reduce water wastage including committing to the above as a minimum.

# **Fireworks and Pyrotechnics**

**What we will do:**

* The use of fireworks are prohibited with the exception of events approved by the Council (e.g. Fireworks night) and pyrotechnic displays used on stages as a theatrical accessory
* Expect event hosts using Council land to adopt the above commitment as a minimum.