

# The Show Must Go On Edition 3

State of the Industry Report and  
Climate Transition Plan 2030 for the  
UK Live Outdoor Events Industry



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# Exec Summary

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## THIS THIRD EDITION OF THE SHOW MUST GO ON (SMGO) REPORT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIVE EFFORT ACROSS THE UK'S OUTDOOR LIVE EVENTS INDUSTRY TO UNDERSTAND CURRENT PRACTICES AND IMPACTS AND PRESENT A ROUTE MAP FOR LOWER EMISSIONS.

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The report establishes that UK music festivals are responsible for at least 170,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per year, and sets a benchmark of **15.9kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e created per person per day**.

To realise a **50% reduction in emissions**, the whole industry, audiences and regulators, all need to play our part, building on current sustainability practices and supporting change with policy levers.

Festivals are a force for good – economically, culturally and societally. The rise of social prescribing—where doctors refer patients to community arts and music for wellbeing— is a clear recognition of live music's beneficial impact on our mental health. At a time when the debate on climate policy can be all too polarising, festivals bring people together, deliver a wonderful, shared experience and tap into our audiences' increasing desire for green options.

Generating **£1.7 billion** in annual revenue, the UK Live Outdoor Events Industry makes up a significant part of the UK's **£6.7 billion** music industry. Despite profound financial challenges affecting grass roots culture, the industry is adopting better environmental practices year on year.

The modelling in this report outlines the potential for operators to reduce industry-wide emissions by up to **37%**. It highlights that individual events can reduce their footprint by focusing on areas within their direct control, such as procurement, materials management, reusable cup systems, food choices, energy efficiency, and influencing travel choices. It also reveals that 91% of live music events across the UK are classified as 'micro' or 'small' cultural events, underscoring the need for solutions to be actionable for all, and for a nationally consistent understanding of best practices and reporting to increase awareness and track progress.

Even greater reductions, aiming for **50%** and beyond, could be achieved if the government works with us to introduce larger, systemic changes such as accelerated access to sustainable energy solutions, improved grid connectivity, more coordinated transport and clearer, more consistent waste management infrastructure. Specific asks to the government include:

- Support the national adoption of the Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP).
- Convene a task force to accelerate installation of grid connections in public outdoor spaces
- Consult on a date for a national ban on the sale of water and drinks (hot and cold) in single-use plastic bottles/cups at festivals
- DCMS and DEFRA to work with the industry to adapt the Simpler Recycling for live outdoor event sector, increasing awareness and accountability.
- Establish a joint DfT–DCMS–Defra taskforce on sustainable cultural sector transport, and a strategic role(s) within GBR to improve access for live events audiences.

We hope the government will recognise outdoor events as essential testing grounds for climate-positive technologies and behaviours. Beyond mere recognition, however, the sector requires tangible support: accessible climate funding, a 'Festival Tax Relief' for grassroots organisations, and a regulatory framework built on partnerships.

This report provides a strategic pathway for the entire sector, defining the roles and actions required to reach our climate goals. Together, we can maintain a coordinated front in reducing emissions and serve as a catalyst for a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

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## THE SHOW MUST GO ON, FOR GENERATIONS AND GENERATIONS TO COME.

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“

Millions of young people around the world have grown up far too quickly, dedicating much of their childhood to campaigning for climate action. My message to the leaders in the live events is this: Please do not let this be in vain. Support their efforts and amplify their voices as the generation who is fighting for—and inheriting—the impacts of our decisions. This is a time to be bold and work together to ensure a safe future.

*Frances Fox, Founder & UK Director  
of Climate Live / Intersectional Youth  
Climate Justice Activist*

”

“

We are delighted to have chaired and supported the working group that produced this report. With ground-breaking insights and a clear sector route map, this report is testimony to the spirit of collaboration and co-operation that underpins our sector's sustainability work.

Building on its previous editions, this report highlights areas where significant progress has already been made. It also offers a clear, concise assessment of where we can achieve more progress and where we need external support and resources to create that change. This analysis clarifies a role for the Government to accelerate and stimulate positive change in matters such as power infrastructure, integrated transport, and reskilling and educating our workforce.

We are committed to doing our part alongside the government. As an industry, we are in a unique position to be the test bed for new technology and to create widespread societal change by harnessing the power of our collective endeavours.

We are indebted to all those who contributed to this report—the creativity, passion, and determination of the individuals, leaders, and organisations across the entire ecosystem of our industry who consistently and fearlessly seek to drive change.

”

*Jon Collins, CEO, LIVE  
(Live music Industry Venues  
& Entertainment) and  
Carol Scott, Chair, LIVE Green*

“

As event promoters and organisers, we are uniquely placed to influence positive change. Our industry brings millions of people together every year, and with that comes both a responsibility and an opportunity.

This is not just about compliance or reputation. It's about future-proofing our industry and ensuring that live events remain a force for good in a changing world. The momentum is real, and the appetite for change is growing—from fans, artists, suppliers, and our own teams.

But we must go further. We must embed sustainability into every decision, every contract, every show. This report shows that by focusing on what is within our

control; energy use, procurement, food, waste, and travel options, we can make meaningful reductions. If we work together across the sector, we can go even further.

We must embrace the energy transition, adopting new technologies and pushing for access to renewable power and infrastructure. We must work with our supply chains to innovate and bring forward practical, scalable solutions. We must encourage our audiences to choose low-carbon travel options wherever possible, but to make this truly viable, we need government action to improve public transport, invest in greener alternatives, and ensure these options are affordable and accessible for all.

Our events are more than entertainment, they are temporary cities, cultural touchpoints, and platforms for change. We can engage people in climate action and showcase the innovations that will help the UK reach net zero.

The road ahead won't be without challenges, but as promoters, we're no strangers to those.

This report is not just a snapshot of where we are—it's a call to action. The show must go on, but it must go on sustainably.

*Melvin Benn,  
Managing Director,  
Festival Republic*

”

“

*The Show Must Go On* has always captured the heartbeat of an industry in motion; one that thrives on creativity, connection, and collective experience. But as the world changes, so too does our understanding of what it means to put on a show. Sustainability is no longer an optional extra or a noble ambition, it's the measure of whether our industry truly has a future.

Independent festivals have often led the way in showing what that future can look like. Built on passion, purpose, and community, they have long been the testing ground for innovation, from renewable power and circular systems to new approaches to food, drink, travel, and creativity. They remind us that change doesn't come from scale alone, but from vision and values.

Festivals hold a rare kind of magic. They turn fields into cities, strangers into communities, and ideas into action. That same spirit of ingenuity is now being channelled to reduce our impact and reimagine what outdoor live events can be. Many of the solutions already exist, what's needed now is the continued collective commitment and courage to put them into practice.

”

*John Rostron, CEO, Association of Independent Festivals*

# The Report in Numbers

## BENCHMARKS PER PERSON PER DAY FOR AN AVERAGE UK MUSIC FESTIVAL:



**0.36 LITRES  
OF FUEL**

use per person  
per day



**0.68 kg  
OF WASTE**

is generated per  
person per day



**9 LITRES  
OF WATER**

per person  
per day



**1.64%  
OF WASTE**

is reused on average



**36%  
OF MEALS  
SERVED**

are vegetarian  
or vegan



**40.5%  
OF WASTE**

is recycled

**36 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**



Average  
carbon  
footprint of a  
UK citizen  
per day<sup>1</sup>

**35 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**



Typical  
European  
flight  
(return)<sup>2</sup>

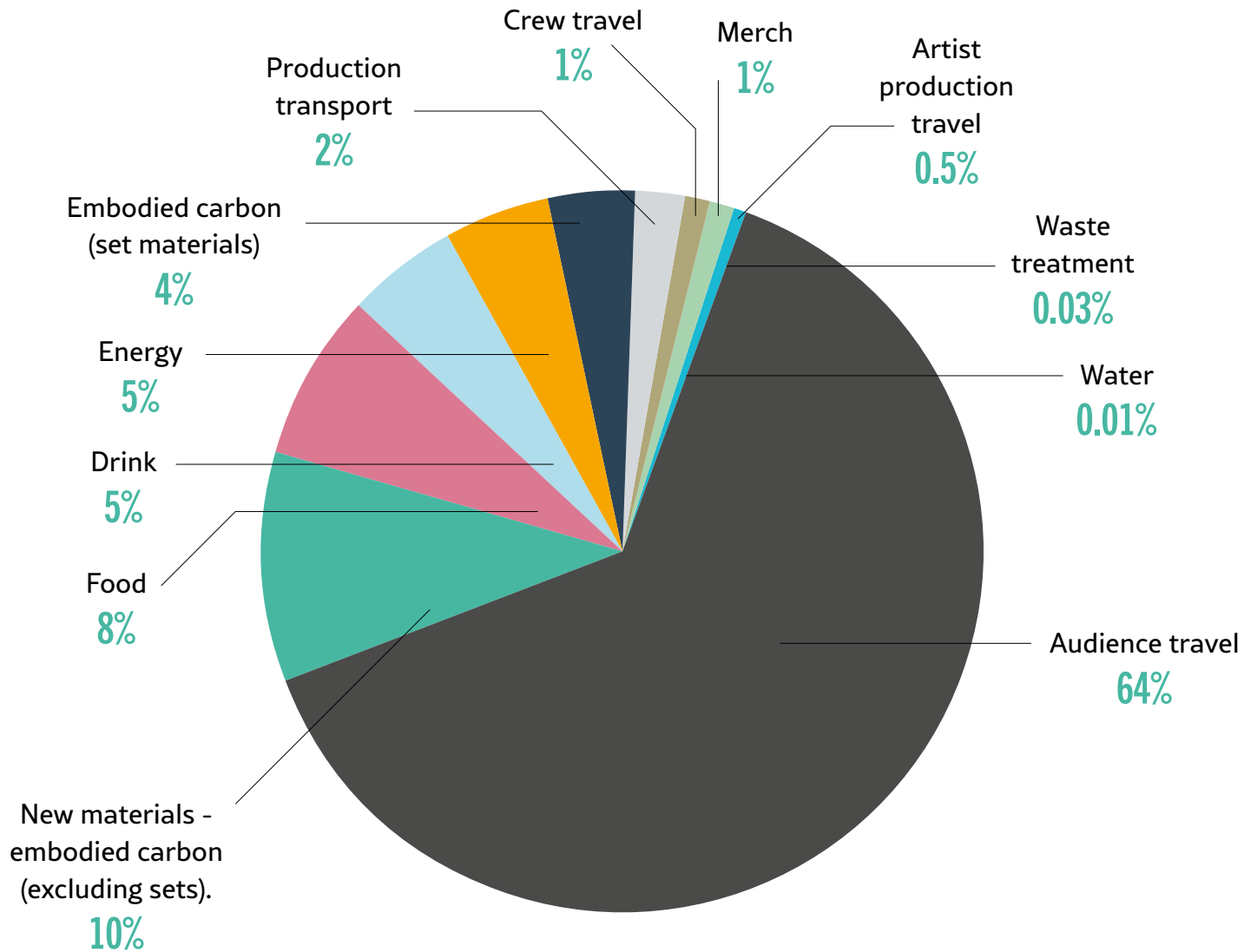
**15.9 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**



Average  
carbon  
footprint of a  
music festival  
attendee per  
day

# AVERAGE FOOTPRINT BREAKDOWN OF UK MUSIC FESTIVALS

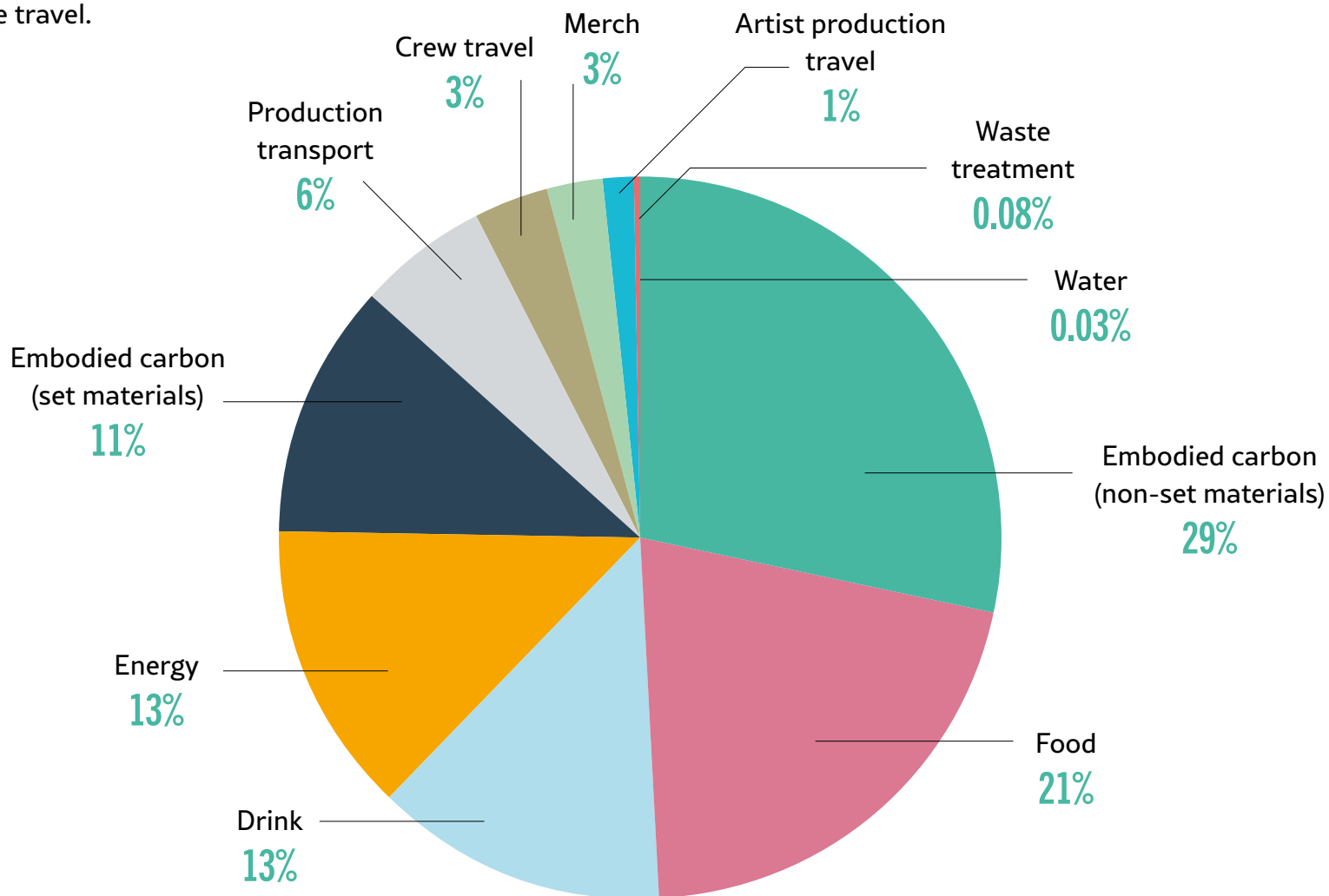
## 15.9 KG CO<sub>2</sub>E PER PERSON PER DAY



# AVERAGE FOOTPRINT BREAKDOWN OF UK MUSIC FESTIVALS

## OPERATIONAL IMPACTS ONLY

i.e. Emissions resulting from festival delivery excluding audience travel.

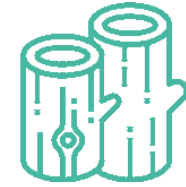


# SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS FROM KEY INITIATIVES



A 32% reduction in audience travel emissions, could reduce overall sector emissions

**BY NEARLY  
20%\***



Halving virgin material use within sets and elsewhere onsite could reduce overall sector emissions

**BY 8%**



Replacing all fossil fuels with renewable electricity sources could reduce overall sector emissions by

**OVER 5%**



Removing red meat from menus could reduce overall sector emissions

**BY 3.5%**

\*Shown to be possible by Massive Attack's Act 1.5 gig in Bristol in 2024.

# Acknowledgements

This report and climate transition plan has been led by Vision for Sustainable Events. It is the result of a collaborative and committed effort from across the UK live outdoor events industry.

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- **Core Working Group**, hosted by LIVE (Co-chaired by Jon Collins and Ross Patel), with participants: A Greener Future; Andrew Lansley, Arts Council England, Association of Independent Festivals, Attitude is Everything, Betternotstop, EarthPercent; Festival Republic, Hope Solutions, Julie's Bicycle and Norfolk & Norwich Festival (Mark Denbigh).
- **Data & Solutions Working Groups**, with leading experts: Richard Phillips (Julie's Bicycle) Alex Fintoni (A Greener Future), Luke Howell (Hope Solutions), Vikki Chapman (Live Nation / Festival Republic).
- **Event Promoters Working Group**, providing guidance and feedback: AEG Presents, Boomtown, DF Concerts & Events, Festival Republic, From the Fields, Hay Festival, Kilimanjaro Live, Team Love, Shambala and Superstruct.

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- Ross Patel (LIVE Green): Comparison of creative sector environmental targets and frameworks.

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## FESTIVAL SUPPORTERS



BOOMTOWN



## CHAPTER SUPPORTERS



## HEADLINE SUPPORTERS



# Introduction

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**VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS GREW FROM A SEED PLANTED FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN A GROUP OF FESTIVAL ORGANISERS AND INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS GATHERED TO ESTABLISH A PATH AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS IN THE UK OUTDOOR EVENTS SECTOR. NOW, IT SERVES AS A COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM, BRINGING THE INDUSTRY TOGETHER TO DRIVE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION.**

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In 2015, galvanised by the Paris Agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21), the Vision for Sustainable Events (then Powerful Thinking) project published the first edition Show Must Go On report, which mapped out how the UK music festival sector could achieve the UK's national emissions reduction targets as set out in the Climate Change Act. The report launched a roadmap and pledge to achieve 50% reductions by 2025, which was signed by over 100 festivals.

The second **Show Must Go On** report, five years later, was a check-in on this ambition. It presented changes to sustainability practices in the festival industry: what was working, the barriers to overcome, and where more action was needed. The sector showed positive progress during this period, with reductions in reported waste and total onsite emissions per person per day. Alongside these quantitative improvements, there was a demonstrable ambition and momentum toward sustainable practices, with a noticeable growth of environmental literacy within the outdoor events community.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this, significant challenges remained. While progress had been made, the report found that the sector was still a long way from reaching its goal of a 50% reduction in emissions.

A major barrier to future progress was the lack of a standardised system for tracking environmental data, making it difficult to accurately measure and report on the overall impact of the industry. This highlighted a critical need for better data collection and collaboration to truly drive the sector forward.

Five years after our last report, we're checking in again, this time within a context of unprecedented challenges: The outdoor events industry was effectively put on hold for two years by the COVID-19

pandemic. Since then, rising costs and a global cost-of-living crisis have placed new pressures on both event organisers and audiences. The numbers speak for themselves: 96 UK festivals were lost between 2019-2022, followed by 36 in 2023, 78 in 2024, and a further 42 (so far) in 2025.

Global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, demanding more urgent climate action with less time to achieve it. Achieving net zero - reducing emissions as much as possible before balancing any residual emissions through carbon removals - is the essential global target to limit warming to 1.5°C. In the UK, this means adhering to the government's plan to reach net zero by 2050, which includes critical interim targets such as achieving 'clean power' by 2030 and reducing total greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.<sup>4</sup>

In this report, we work backwards from what we need to achieve, asking these critical questions: How does the ambitious goal of net zero translate into the daily decisions of the outdoor events community? What supply chain shifts and new skills will be necessary to achieve it? What issues beyond net zero do we need to focus on?

New data reveals that the outdoor events sector is primarily composed of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with 91% of events being micro or small. This insight has led to a new emphasis in this report and our broader work, on unlocking the potential of smaller events to take meaningful climate action; building on the ongoing innovation demonstrated by larger events and companies to accelerate the entire sector's transition toward a sustainable future.

# The state of the UK Festival and Outdoor Event Industry in 2025

## Climate action is accelerating

Since 2020, the UK outdoor events sector has significantly ramped up its environmental efforts, with progress accelerating post-pandemic despite growing financial challenges. The 'More Than Music Report 2024' independently surveyed 100 UK music festival websites and found that:



**46%**

have published a formal sustainability policy.



**31%**

have publicly available carbon data.



**22%**

offset audience travel emissions.



**26%**

reduce or change fuel usage.



**25%**

incorporate renewable energy into their power supply.



**14%**

show no visible sustainability action on their websites.

A Greener Future's 2024 reporting reveals significant sustainability gains among their assessed events across the UK and Europe. The data shows a strong commitment to reducing waste, with **70% of festivals banning single-use plastics** and **67% implementing reusable cup systems**. However, while **26% of events used 100% mains or grid electricity**, the majority (**72%**) still relied on generators - and of these - only 20% used biofuel, with only **20% used HVO biofuel**, with very few events achieving fully renewable or battery-powered operations.



**70%**

of festivals have banned  
single-use plastics



**67%**

implement a reusable  
cup system



**26%**

of events use 100%  
mains or grid electricity



**72%**

still relied on generators

When it comes to **power**, high-profile examples are helping to set new standards. Massive Attack's 'Act 1.5' concert in 2024, was powered entirely by battery-charged renewables, achieving an impressive 98% reduction in power-related emissions compared with similar outdoor events.

An increasing number of events are investing in hybrid and solar-powered generators. There are also increased efforts to maximise power efficiency through better monitoring and planning.

One major area of progress has been in **materials management**. Many events (for example 75% of those participating in the A Greener Future certification in 2024, an increase from 54% in 2022)

have banned single-use plastic serveware, introduced reusable cup schemes, and improved recycling systems.<sup>5</sup> Composting toilets and refill stations, which reduce both waste and water use have also become more common at festivals.

**Audience travel** remains the largest source of emissions, but efforts to promote low-carbon transport options have grown. The charity onboard:earth highlights effective strategies festivals are using to reduce travel CO<sub>2</sub>e, from dedicated coaches direct to from key locations, to shuttle buses from nearby public transport hubs, discounted 'entry + public transport' tickets, and incentives for car sharing, many events are making headway and engaging their audiences with greener travel.

## Sector alignment is emerging:

With a lack of widespread data collection by events and no consistent methodology for reporting impacts, sector level analysis of environmental performance in the UK events industry has struggled.

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**THIS REPORT REPRESENTS THE MOST ROBUST EFFORT YET TO ESTABLISH THE SECTOR FOOTPRINT & MODEL THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF INITIATIVES AND PRACTICES TO REDUCE EMISSIONS USING A SHARED DATA SET FROM 84 EVENTS.**

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The report also includes new research on environmental reporting across the industry, revealing commonalities and opportunities for greater alignment. While the diversity of existing frameworks is a strength, as it enables adaptability, discrepancies in data often arise from different methods rather than contradictions. This presents a key opportunity to develop shared tools, language, and benchmarks without enforcing uniformity. A prime example of this is the effort already underway by a global working group for music from the Carbon Accounting Alliance (CAA) to establish aligned greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting practices within the live music sector.

**The Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP)** was first published as a working draft in 2022 and adopted in principle by LIVE, providing a nationally consistent guide for sustainability best practices and targets. A 2024 pilot with 10 local authorities and 60 events successfully demonstrated the code's ability to be integrated into local government processes, stimulating new commitments and actions. A second pilot is now underway with 25 local authorities to test its scalability and pave the way for national adoption. The code was also reviewed and republished in 2025 alongside this report, offering up-to-date baselines and setting new targets for 2030.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the first **Environmental Chapter of the Purple Guide** was published in 2022, creating a formal reference for best practices for both the events industry and local authorities.

## Sector-level collaboration is maturing significantly

In 2022, LIVE Green was formed to unite key stakeholders across the music industry. This collaboration resulted in the LIVE Beyond Zero Declaration and continues to serve as an active forum for shaping the sector's approach and policies. New organisations and initiatives have also bolstered this momentum:

- **EarthPercent**, co-founded by Brian Eno in 2021, mobilises the music industry—including artists, festivals, labels, and stakeholders—to fund climate solutions. In 2024, it awarded grants to 20 environmental organisations, supporting their work on decarbonisation, climate justice, nature restoration, and policy engagement. EarthPercent's grant-making supported this report and key partners such as A Greener Future, LIVE Green, Julie's Bicycle, ClientEarth, and Music Declares Emergency.
- **Music Declares Emergency (MDE)**, launched in 2019 in partnership with **Julie's Bicycle**, continues to mobilise the music community under the slogan 'No Music on a Dead Planet.' MDE has recruited thousands of artists and industry signatories, advocated for a government 2030 net-zero target, and co-founded EarthPercent. Its initiatives include creating climate-conscious communities at major festivals—such as the 'Fan Club for Climate' at Reading & Leeds and TRNSMT Festivals—to raise awareness and help drive operational change across the live events sector.
- The charity **onboard:earth** has helped over 160 live-event organisations use its travel carbon calculators, toolkit, and best-practice guidance to measure, reduce, and report on event-related travel emissions. Since 2015, its community has raised more than £760,000 for environmental restoration, funding projects that have planted over 77,000 trees, protected more than 30,000 acres of rainforest, and supported community-benefit and community-led renewable energy projects.

## LIVE MUSIC HAS A BASELINE: MEASURING THE INDUSTRY'S CARBON IMPACT IN THE US AND UK

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) recent white paper, *Assessment Report of the Media and Entertainment Industry and Climate Change Phase 1: Live Music, UK and US (2025)*, seeks to lay the foundation for a more unified and evidence-based approach to emissions reduction within the live music industry.

The findings highlight the prominence of fan travel in emissions, and an urgent need for sector-wide investment in robust data infrastructure.

Recommendations for the festival sector include: Rethinking how audiences move and gather, tailoring emissions reductions by region, and harnessing the opportunity for large events to pilot new technologies.

Explore the extensive report and findings here  
<https://climatemachine.mit.edu/#report>

- A new awareness of the sector being significantly made up of small festivals has provided **Vision for Sustainable Events** with a new understanding of how to drive change on a national scale. Data shows that 91% of events have a capacity of under 20,000.<sup>7</sup> GECOP aims to translate high-level sector strategy into practical, actionable steps for event organisations of all scales.
- In 2024, **Liverpool was awarded the world's first Accelerator City for Climate Action by the UNFCCC** in recognition of the city's commitment to exploring ways to rapidly decarbonise its film, TV and music sectors.

Initiatives included: Partnerships with BBC Radio One Big Weekend to decarbonise a major music festival (which ultimately won the Green Award at the UK Festival Awards 2025); a BBC drama implementing best practice for location filming in Liverpool; Liverpool M&S Bank Arena to trialling approaches around audience transport, power and waste to create super low emission arena shows; and with BAFTA, BFI and Screenskills on creating a National Occupational Standard for sustainability roles within TV and Film.

The city also brought together Film, TV and Music companies with cities and suppliers to sign a [collaborative statement of intent](#). This noted the Creative Industry Transition to Clean Site Power by 2030, and will be supported by a workshop comprising DESNZ, UK cities and the creative industries. This innovative forum recognises the mutual current opportunities and challenges faced by all those engaged in sustainable change, from cities, to suppliers, to event owners and, importantly, it acknowledges who owns the levers of control. It will focus on aligned and accelerated delivery of sustainability solutions, starting with city power.

Other strategic initiatives coming from Accelerator City include city-wide sustainability talent pipelines and a 'green' economic business case, as well as five new sets of 'city guidelines': from integrated transport and event ticketing, to grid connection blueprints (the 'how to' from a city point of view). Accelerator City also inspired multiple changes within Liverpool, catalysing increased resources, a Citizen's Assembly and inclusion with BAU procurement.

More details can be found [here](#).

**Overall, the industry is evolving from initial awareness to taking measurable action.**

**However, progress remains uneven and more carbon literacy is needed across the sector.**

**A key challenge is that data collection has not yet become a standard practice, which makes it difficult to accurately track progress.**

# Understanding 'net zero' for outdoor events

While carbon emissions are only one part of the wider conversation about the environmental impact of events, net zero serves as an important 'north star' for the industry to align with.

However, events may face several challenges on this journey: There is a widespread lack of carbon literacy and understanding of net zero within the sector. Furthermore, smaller events often lack the resources to measure and report their emissions, making it more practical for them to focus on taking direct actions that reduce emissions, rather than on the reporting process itself.

Due to these considerations, for many events net zero is best understood as a strategic, outwards looking, rippling target: a way of setting initial, achievable goals along the path of net zero to trigger subsequent, more ambitious goals, creating a ripple effect throughout the broader supply chain and industry.

## Achieving net zero at individual events

Net zero requires individual festivals and suppliers to take concrete action and be accountable. This can be achieved by:

- Integrating net zero as a strategic goal in job roles and budgets.
- Being brave enough to try new things and learn from what works, which helps build critical mass.
- Creating a clear roadmap to reduce their own carbon emissions.

A meaningful net zero target will look different for each event, depending on its size and type. Rather than a single target, it's best to think of it as a comprehensive plan that aligns with broader national and international goals.

All events should have quantitative targets for reducing emissions from power, such as setting a date to reach zero litres of diesel burned. However, especially for smaller events, it may be more practical to set different kinds of targets in other areas. For instance, aiming for a percentage increase in vegetarian or vegan food options might be a more manageable goal than trying to measure the exact carbon emissions from food offerings, which is often difficult. Crucially, a meaningful net zero target should not rely on offsets or carbon removals.

## Net zero as a unified outdoor events sector and community

Achieving net zero is supported by viewing the outdoor events and festival industry as an interconnected ecosystem. This ecosystem is primarily made up of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at one end and a few major companies at the other, with a supply chain and workforce that overlaps with other sectors like construction, film, TV, arts, and culture. We must now consider how this entire community can move forward together.

What does a cooperative approach that accelerates action and ambition across this entire ecosystem look like? How can we leverage the greater freedom for experimentation and risk-taking at one end of the scale while also harnessing the significant investment, regulatory pressure, and influence from the other? How can event organisers give suppliers the confidence to invest in new technologies and develop different skills?

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**WHILE THE NEEDS OF A SMALL GRASSROOTS EVENT WILL DIFFER FROM THOSE OF A MAJOR FESTIVAL, THE SECTOR AS A WHOLE WILL MOVE FURTHER AND FASTER BY WORKING TOWARDS A UNIFIED VISION.**

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## Net zero as part of wider transformations:

Finally, the path to net zero includes recognising the role of the events industry in driving wider societal transformations. This includes how we eat, how we travel, how we live together, and who we want to be. In turn, supporting these broader changes will help reduce the environmental impact of events in areas like audience travel.

From this viewpoint, we can ask: What is within our control, what do we influence, and where can we inspire, campaign, and push for change? Ambitious climate action requires us to test the answers to these questions. It is for this reason that throughout this report, we have tried to set out specific goals and requests for different scales of events, as well as for suppliers and local and national policymakers.

The UK festival industry has built an international reputation as a leader in climate action. Event crew and organisers, networks, and cultural policymakers from all over the world look to the lessons learned in the UK to see how they can be adapted and pushed to even greater ambition in different contexts. It is now up to us to continue embracing that ambition here as well.

# Climate Transition Plan 2030 for Outdoor Live Events

The aim of this 'Climate Transition Plan 2030' (CTP) is to provide direction for the outdoor events sector towards a 50% emissions reduction. It aims to galvanize and focus effective sector action by setting out what is currently achievable and what is needed from key stakeholders to unlock further change.

The CTP is based on data from 84 music festivals to understand current impact benchmarks and model potential emissions reductions that could be realised from actions that are practically achievable. The modelling suggests that 37.1% reductions are achievable by the sector, leaving a gap of 12.9% towards the goal of halving emissions by 2030.

This plan does not, however, include interim targets to 2030, or detailed timelines for specific actions. This is because pathways are unique to each event, depending on size, type, location, and available resources. We need more time to advocate for potential solutions and understand the feasibility of industry-scale changes, many of which will be determined by factors such as supply chain shifts, access to infrastructure, and government investment.



# Approach to benchmarking and modelling

We collected environmental data from 84 individual UK music festivals and events from three key industry partners: Hope Solutions (HS), A Greener Future (AGF) and Julie's Bicycle (JB), as well as from event suppliers and event promoters, including Festival Republic.

The sample size varied for each impact area due to the availability of complete information. Where an event's data was missing or incomplete for a specific impact area, it was excluded from that sample. The sample size therefore ranged from 13 events (e.g. for artist transport and merchandise) to 76 events (e.g. for waste). The average sample size was 30 events.

Data was normalised on a per person per day (PPPD) basis using the total audience days for each event (i.e. the number of event days multiplied by the licensed capacity per day) to make data comparable and to support the extrapolation needed to understand the overall footprint of the sector.

Data was split into small, medium and large events based on their licensed capacity per day. The categories followed the industry standard set by the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF), in which small = <20k; medium = 20-50k; large = 50k+.<sup>52</sup>

The emissions PPPD for each impact area were calculated using the most relevant and up-to-date conversion factors.

[See page 118 for the full list of conversion factors used.](#)

The total emissions PPPD were extrapolated against the total estimated audience days for small, medium and large festivals taking place across the UK in 2025, provided by the AIF, to understand the festival sector's overall impact. This was then used to support the modelling of the emissions reduction that certain initiatives could achieve if implemented.

A feasibility exercise of different environmental initiatives for festivals was conducted by the project's working group to identify the highest impact and most realistic near-term actions. Out of the prioritised actions, those with the best supporting data gathered for this report were modelled to see the possible emissions reduction that could be achieved at a sector level.

The modelling leveraged third party studies and expert-led estimates of potential emissions reductions that could be achieved by implementing each action at the individual festival level. This was then scaled-up to model emissions reductions that could be realised for the sector towards a target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030.

Further important initiatives exist that have not been modelled as part of this exercise owing to limitations in data and/or third party studies. There are also wider initiatives that reduce environmental impacts beyond emissions (e.g. minimising single-use plastic) that should be considered alongside this CTP.



## Definition of a music festival for this report:

### The Association of Independent Festival's definition of a music festival:

*A single event offering a series of music performances or music and other entertainments which is marketed as a festival. It may be held at a predominantly outdoor site using temporary infrastructure which is:*

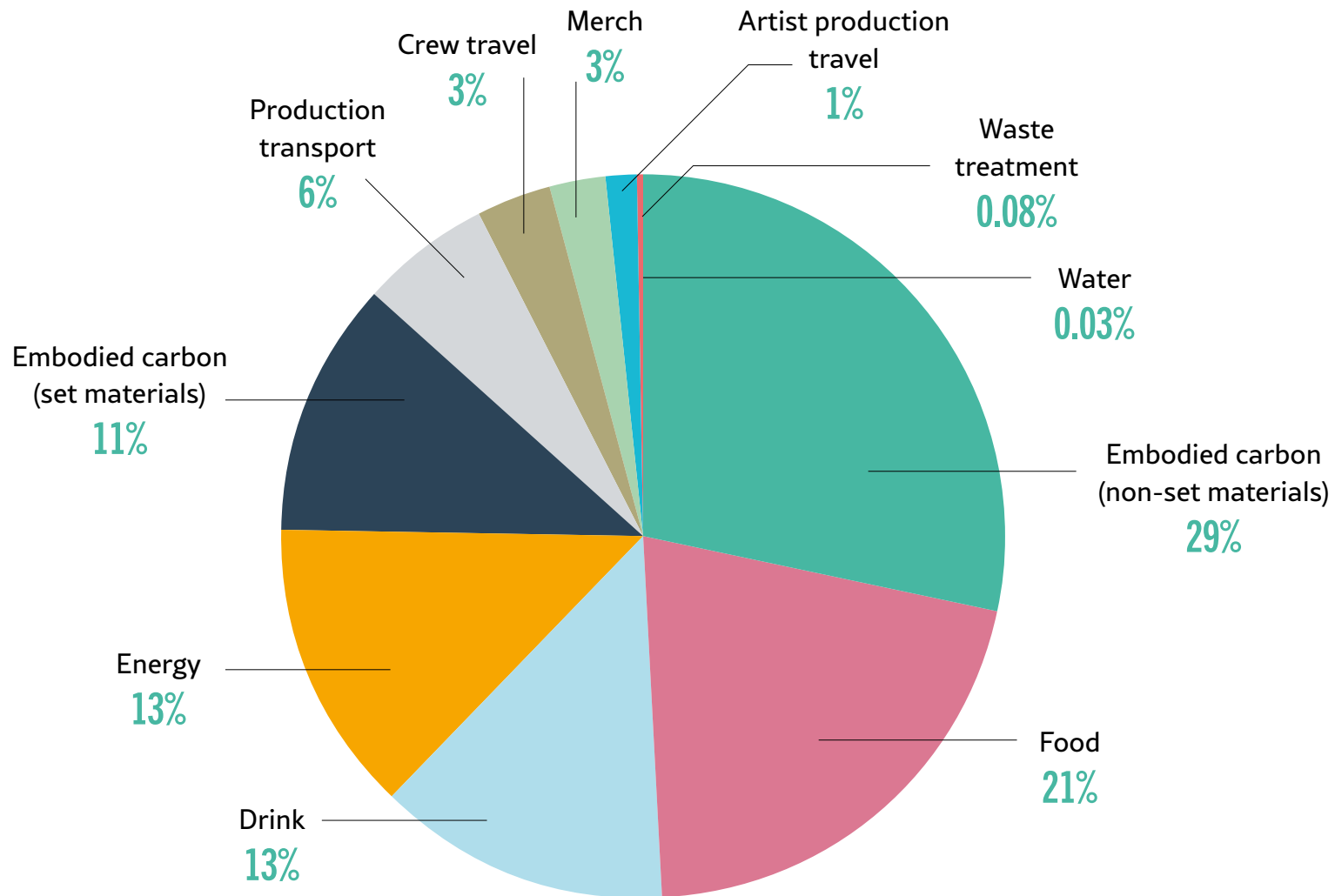
- (i) erected for the purposes of that festival (including as a minimum all of the following: the construction of infrastructure relating to performance areas, the presence of temporary perimeter fencing or controlled access by other temporary means and the provision of toilet facilities and a clean water supply).*
- (ii) used mainly for the purposes of that festival, and*
- (iii) substantially dismantled after the festival.*

*Or it may be held across more than one stage in a single, indoor, fixed venue or across more than one venue (i.e. a 'multi-venue' festival).*

*A qualifying festival may take place over a single day or over consecutive days (but no more than ten in any calendar year), with at least twenty unique music performances in the official line up (or at least ten if the event is held over no more one day).*

*A charge is usually, but not always, made for admission which allows entry to any performance areas holding performances of artists listed in the official line up. There may also be some elements of separated charging to access parts of the site.<sup>53</sup>*

## Average Footprint Breakdown of UK Music Festivals - Operational impacts only

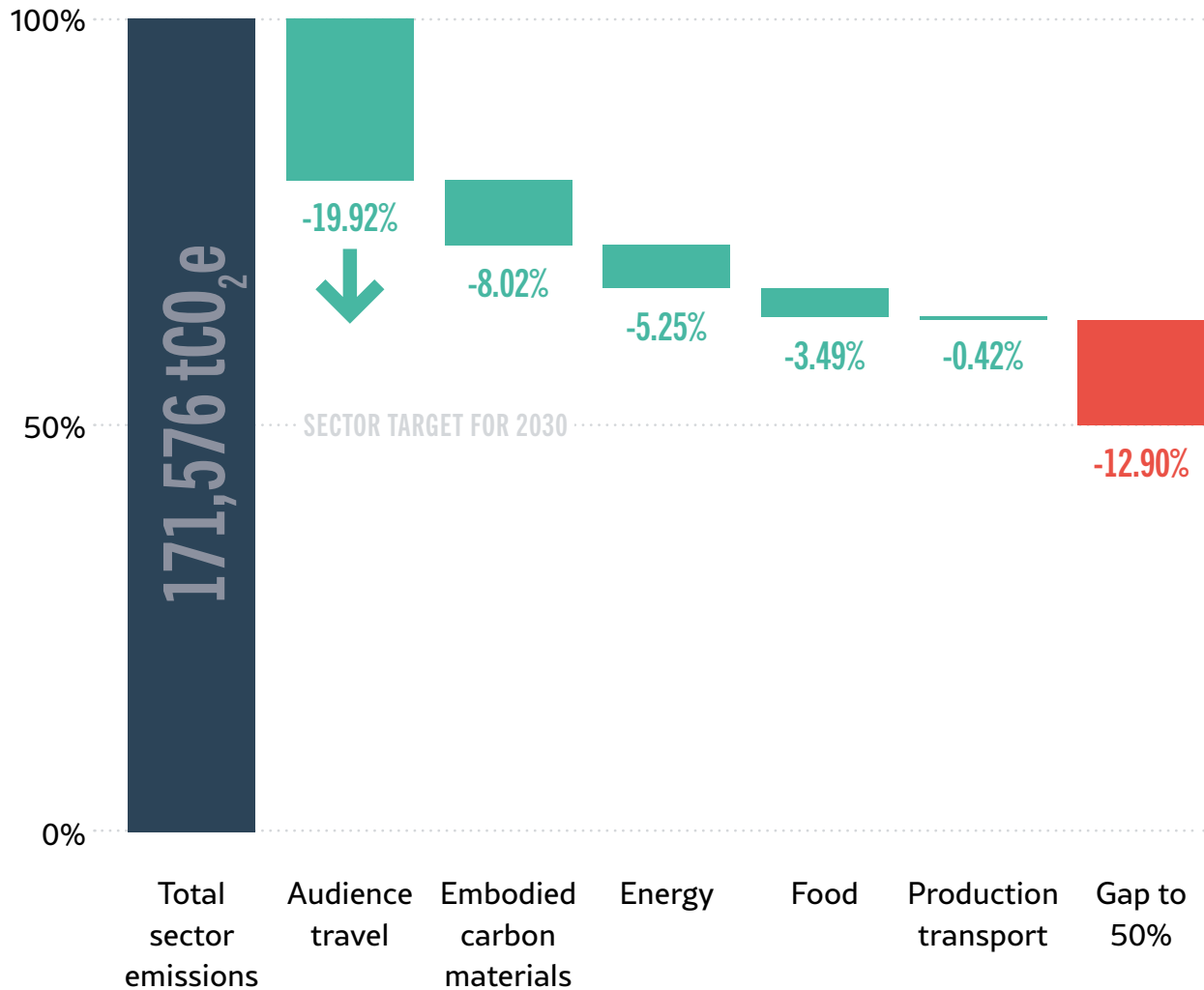


## Modelling the sector-level impact of currently achievable emissions reductions across key impact areas

The table outlines the realistic, albeit challenging, actions that could be taken by the festival sector before 2030 and the resulting emissions reductions that could be achieved at sector level.

Impact area	Modelled reduction	Total sector emissions savings (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Percentage reduction to sector emissions
<b>Audience travel</b>	32% emissions reduction, as shown to be possible by Massive Attack's Act 1.5 gig on Clifton Downs through a variety of initiatives	34,183	-19.92%
<b>Production transport</b>	20% emissions reduction, achieved through a variety of initiatives	717	-0.42%
<b>Food</b>	Removing all red meat from menus	5,993	-3.49%
<b>Energy</b>	Replacing all fossil fuels with renewable electricity sources	9,012	-5.25%
<b>Embodied carbon</b>	50% reduction in virgin material use (general materials onsite & set materials)	13,758	-8.02%
<b>Total % reduced</b>			<b>-37.1%</b>
<b>Gap to 50% by 2030</b>			<b>-12.9%</b>

## Pathway to the sector target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030



The chart on the left illustrates the relative contribution that realistic actions across each impact area could make towards the goal of halving sector emissions by 2030.

It shows that most emissions savings can be made with interventions on audience travel, given its significance as an impact area. A focus on reuse and minimising virgin material use can also achieve large emissions reduction from embodied carbon.

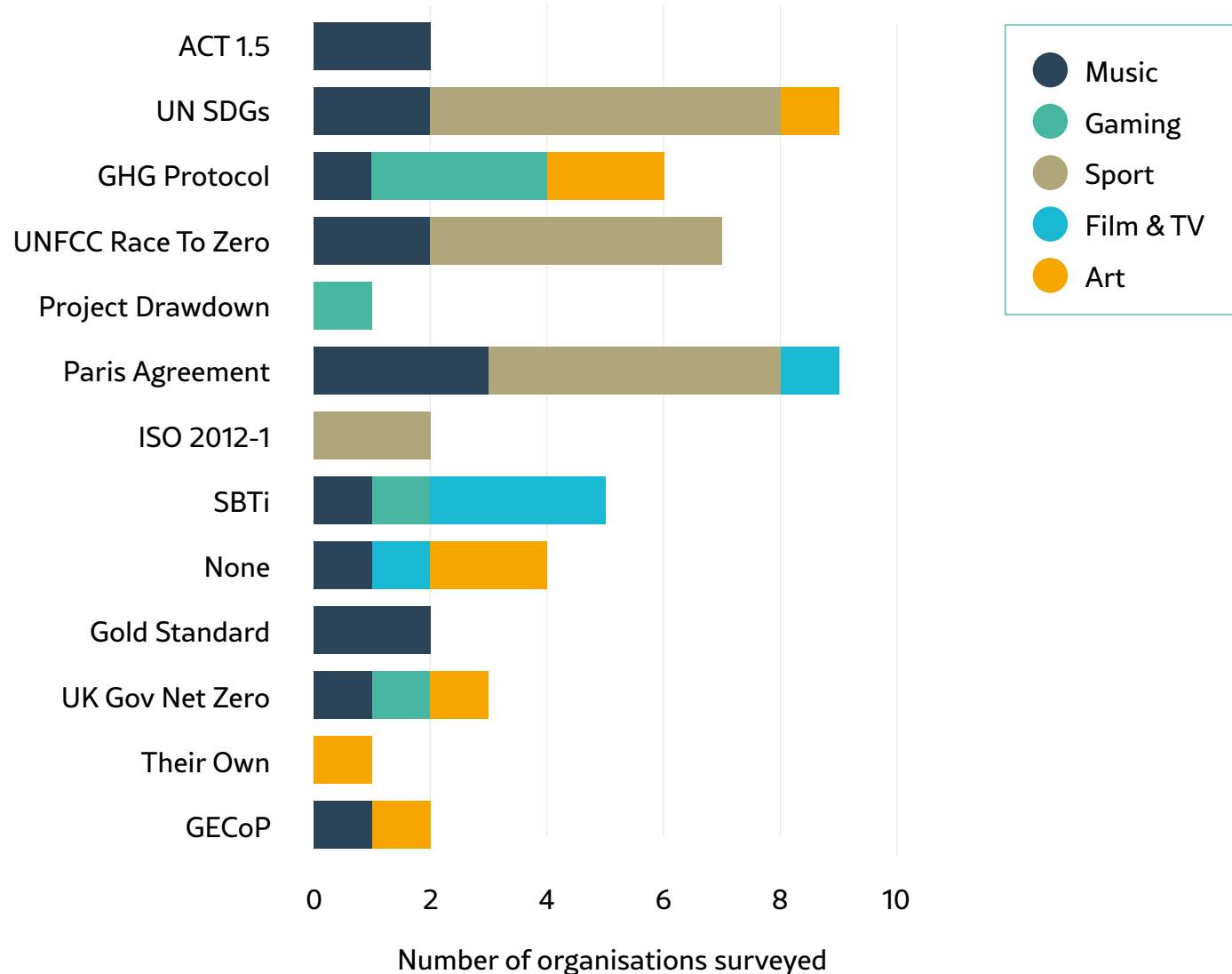
The chart also highlights the 12.90% gap we need to close to reach the target of halving our emissions. This must be achieved by working with key stakeholders to unlock further emissions reductions.

# Alignment with the wider creative sector

Ross Patel

For this report, we explored the strategies and frameworks in place across the creative industries. By analysing the frameworks and organisations driving these initiatives, we can better understand the shared pathways toward achieving a net-zero and environmentally responsible cultural landscape with the intention of helping us to share knowledge and learnings and provide a collegiate approach to decarbonisation as a united culture sector in the UK.

## Creative sector frameworks and standards:

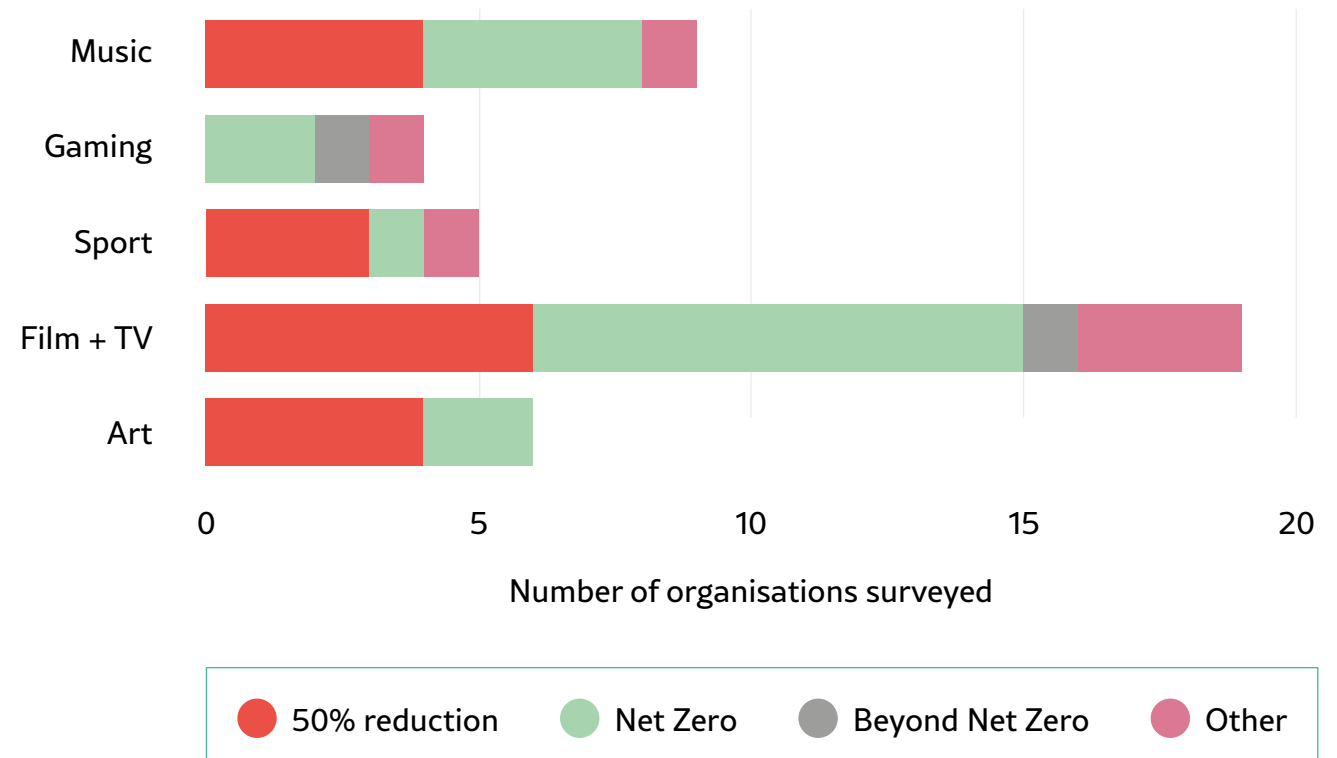


The research shows that a wide spread of frameworks and standards have been adopted within the UK live and recorded music industry to develop roadmaps for decarbonisation. The most common being the Paris Agreement (1.5 degrees), UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) Race To Zero.

Across all cultural sectors combined, a total of 36 sustainability targets were identified. 2030 emerges as the year with the highest concentration of targets, accounting for 50% of the total, indicating a strong emphasis on near-term sustainability goals. 2035 exhibits the lowest target count, with only two targets set for this time, representing 5.6% of the total.

The music sector targets are significantly focused on 2030, with 85.7% of its climate targets set for that year. Consequently, this report and Vision for Sustainable Events is focused on 2030 as the primary target year, with subsequent milestone years used for continued action marker dates.

## Creative Sector Reduction Goals



# Making it Happen: an Industry Blueprint for Action

## Event Organisers

Events are unique in their type, size, location, audience profile etc. and so there is no one-size-fits-all approach. However, this research has **identified 30 practices that most events can typically implement**, which can be used as a menu for meaningful action.

These solutions have been assessed as:

- (a) The most impactful in terms of carbon reduction, and other environmental benefits.
- (b) Realistic for a typical UK event to implement in terms of factors such as availability and affordability.

A full version of this list which includes comments of feasibility, additional benefits and challenges is available on the Vision for Sustainable Events website as the Climate Action Checklist 2030 for Live Outdoor Events.

[Find out more](#)

## Industry Bodies

Industry bodies include Live Green, Vision for Sustainable Events, the Association of Independent Festivals and others. Actions they can take are to:

- Continue to prioritise the environment and facilitate collaboration.
- Formally adopt and support the Climate Transition Plan and Green Events Code of Practice 2025.
- Collaborate on funding the Climate Transition Plan.

## Supply Chain

- Industry trade bodies: Engage with environmental solutions at strategic sector level, and support members to adopt them.
- Suppliers: Put plans in place to align with the Climate Transition Plan.

## Environmental Organisations

Environmental organisations include A Greener Future, EarthPercent, Music Declares Emergency and Julie's Bicycle.

- Work toward alignment on minimum best practices and greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting.
- Contribute data annually to enable sector progress tracking.
- Align with and support the Climate Transition Plan.

## A Greener Future Certification Scheme

The certification is based on the AGF Framework for Sustainable Events, with criteria developed and continuously reviewed over two decades by sustainability professionals, industry experts, and academia. AGF has assessed and certified hundreds of festivals worldwide, helping them improve their resource efficiency, reduce their environmental impact, and ultimately become more sustainable. Trends, best practice, and aggregate data resulting from the certification provide vital insight to sustainability for the live sector.

[Find out more](#)

## Local Authorities

- Work across departments to bring live events into net zero planning, and develop strategy to decarbonise live events.
- Align with and implement the National Green Events Code of Practice

## Liverpool UN Accelerator City: five 'city blueprints'

- Grid Connections: Cities and the Creative Industries
- Integrated event and transport ticketing
- Sustainability Best Practice: Major Outdoor Festivals
- Sustainability Best Practice: TV & Film Drama
- Minimum Better and Best Sustainability Framework for Liverpool's Land Use Agreements.

[Find out more](#)

## Government

**Recognise and celebrate the role of outdoor events as incubators for behaviour change, new technologies, and research and innovation related to the climate transition.**

- **Decarbonising creative industries: a cross-government effort:** Foster a closer collaboration between key government departments, including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), to decarbonise the creative industries. As one of the UK's recognised growth sectors, this requires a coordinated approach with relevant bodies such as the Department for Transport and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on all climate initiatives.
- **Improving access to climate funding for outdoor events:** Our current funding models often overlook the unique needs of the outdoor events and suppliers sector, most of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). To address this, we need to create a new way to help these businesses access funding for climate transition research and innovation from organisations like Innovate UK and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). This approach could be based on successful models from other European countries that have already found ways to integrate these types of businesses into their national and regional climate funding schemes.

## Summary of policy asks for Climate Transition Plan 2030:

The modelling in this report outlines the potential for operators to reduce industry-wide emissions by up to **37%**.

Even greater reductions, aiming for **50%** and beyond, could be achieved if the Government works with us to introduce larger, systemic changes such as accelerated access to sustainable energy solutions, improved grid connectivity, more coordinated transport and clearer, more consistent waste management infrastructure.

Each impact chapter of this report details policy suggestions and ways Government and Local Authorities can support the goals of the sector. We worked with LIVE, event promoters, industry bodies, and consultancy Blakeney, to develop a shortlist of Policy asks:

- Support the national adoption of the Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP).
- Convene a task force to accelerate installation of grid connections in public outdoor spaces
- Consult on a date for a national ban on the sale of water and drinks (hot and cold) in single-use plastic bottles/cups at festivals
- DCMS and DEFRA to work with the industry to adapt the Simpler Recycling for live outdoor event sector, increasing awareness and accountability.
- Establish a joint DfT–DCMS–Defra taskforce on sustainable cultural sector transport, and a strategic role(s) within GBR to improve access for live events audiences.

## Examples of government sector support from Europe

- **Funding Circular Festivals:** Set up in 2019, the Green Deal Circular Festivals (GDCF) is a collaborative network of 42 festivals working in 14 countries (including 3 UK-based festivals). GDCF aims to create a model for fully circular festivals, it is centrally supported and funded through the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management to develop research and trial circular economy approaches to food, energy, mobility, water, plastic, and other materials.

The model explicitly recognises that festivals can be ‘testing grounds’ for decarbonisation and circular economy innovation in wider society. Supported projects include a life-cycle analysis of different cup systems (including live trials at different events), a ‘material flow analysis’ of events to identify circular economy opportunities, and a free-to-use monitoring tool for participating events.

- **A proven approach: the Innofest model:** Innofest is a successful Dutch initiative that helps start-ups test new green technologies at live events. It treats music festivals as 'living laboratories,' where entrepreneurs can pilot their innovations in a real-world environment. Innofest is funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO) and ClickNL, the government’s knowledge and innovation consortium for the creative industries, with other partners including universities and start-up incubators. The programme, founded by the Eurosonic music festival, is now being expanded across Europe with support from the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, who recognise the creative industries are one of the Netherlands' nine key growth sectors.
- **EU funding for the creative industries:** Policymakers in the EU have increasingly recognised the creative industries' role in achieving the goals of the European Green Deal. This is evident in major EU funding programmes like Horizon and Erasmus, which invest in this sector. The EU's commitment is also reflected in the European Skills Agenda, which includes green skills for creative professionals, and in the work of the Climate KIC and the newer Culture and Creativity KIC, both of which acknowledge the link between culture and climate.

The Creative Europe programme is a key example of this focus. With a budget of almost €340 million in 2025, the programme will specifically prioritise the twin pillars of green and digital transitions (including audiovisual). This is a significant development, especially as UK-based arts and creative organisations have no longer been eligible for its funding since leaving the EU.

## The role of Vision for Sustainable Events in leading the Climate Transition Plan 2030:

The following points outline how the Vision for Sustainable Events will lead the delivery of the Climate Transition Plan:

- **Lead the plan's delivery:** Coordinate the delivery of the Climate Transition Plan 2030, through the Vision for Sustainable Events Industry Forum, and task forces on key solutions.
- **Establish Task Forces:** Create working groups or 'task forces' for key impact areas, bringing stakeholders together to take ownership of the issue, and progress solutions.
- **Track sector progress:** Set up a framework to conduct an annual data-driven 'temperature check' of sector progress.
- **Share best practice:** Continue to build the existing 'knowledge hub' of resources, and engage with events through partnerships.
- **Ensure data consistency:** Work toward sector consistency for baselines:
  - Implementing the national Green Events Code of Practice.
  - Aligning with the Environmental Purple Guide's sustainability practices.
  - Contributing to and adopting the Carbon Accounting Alliance (CAA) review of best practices for GHG reporting in the music industry.
- **Pursue Policy and Investment:** Work with LIVE to engage with government and local authorities to advocate for and shape policy and investment.



# Insights on Industry Reporting

by Anna Johnson

For this report we reviewed previous four major industry reports to assess current best practices, understand industry alignment, and identify areas of divergence and convergence in environmental reporting. The reports are:

- More Than Music report, 2024 (MTM)
- A Greener Future report, 2024 (AGF)
- Green Events Code of Practice: National Pilot Key Findings, 2025 (GECOP)
- Show Must Go On report (SMGO - 2020)

These reports explore sustainability practices across the events sector, focusing on environmental, operational, and to a lesser extent, social impacts. This comparative exercise was not about reconciling carbon footprint reporting, but rather understanding and learning from different approaches to best practice, identifying commonality to strengthen the state of the industry context for this report, and supporting recommendations for the industry as part of developing the Climate Transition Plan 2030.

## Key takeaways:

- **Existing aligned practices:** There are currently **18+ aligned best practices** that can be used to inform the basis of shared expectations across industry and help bridge gaps in reporting for greater comparability.<sup>54</sup>
- **Differences in methodology:** Discrepancies in data stem from different purposes and methods—not necessarily contradictions.
- **Embracing framework diversity for greater alignment:** The diversity of frameworks is a strength, enabling adaptability while moving toward greater alignment.
- **Unity without uniformity:** There's an opportunity to develop shared tools, language, and benchmarks without enforcing uniformity.

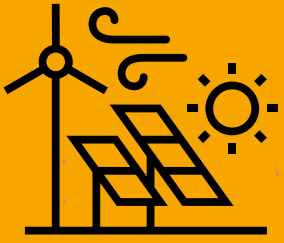
Increased collaboration across the events and festival industry creates a strong opportunity to align on core sustainability practices. This comparison shows clear common ground in how organisations address environmental impacts—despite varied approaches.

By bringing together data from different sources, we have a real opportunity to build a clearer picture of how the industry is doing. **Sector-level reporting can offer powerful insights**—helping us track progress, spot gaps, and shape smarter sustainability strategies. It also gives us a stronger, united voice when talking to government and funders about what support and policies are needed.

Looking ahead, **the goal is to lay the groundwork for an industry-wide climate transition plan.** This would set out clear, realistic targets that align with broader climate goals, while recognising the unique challenges of live events. A shared plan like this would bring people together, define who's responsible for what, and help the industry stay ahead of change—while protecting the cultural, social, and economic value we all care about.

## Priority areas for alignment and collaboration:

	Next steps:	Who could lead:
<p><b>1 Establish aligned GHG reporting practices</b> in live music as the foundation for industry-wide communication and expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop a shared set of core definitions</b> that all events can reference, with alignment on carbon factors and reporting impact categories, regardless of their framework or size.</li> <li>• <b>Create a lightweight 'baseline practices' guide</b> for different event types (e.g. festivals, venues, tours).</li> </ul>	<p>Industry alliances (e.g. working groups on Events &amp; Culture, and the Carbon Accounting Alliance) with input from qualified carbon accountants and major event organisers.</p>
<p><b>2 Promote shared language and definitions</b> to reduce confusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create a cross-industry glossary of key sustainability terms</b> (e.g. zero waste, net zero, reuse) with plain-language definitions.</li> </ul>	<p>A collaborative working group of sustainability consultants and production associations.</p>
<p><b>3 Continue to embrace diversity in approaches,</b> while seeking increased data reporting transparency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop a common set of data points</b> that events can [easily] voluntarily report on, regardless of their methodology.</li> </ul>	<p>Larger event producers working with research institutions.</p>
<p><b>4 Strengthen collaboration</b> to enhance the accuracy of the industry baseline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create regional or thematic peer learning groups</b> (e.g. energy use, circular economy) to share practices and problem-solve.</li> </ul>	<p>National sustainability initiatives (e.g. Vision for Sustainable Events), trade associations, and sustainability leads from major events.</p>
<p><b>5 Integrate social impact practices more deeply,</b> especially where they overlap with environmental goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Map where social and environmental outcomes intersect</b> (e.g. local sourcing, accessible transport).</li> <li>• <b>Encourage wider reporting,</b> on wellbeing, equity, and community engagement alongside environmental metrics.</li> </ul>	<p>Diversity and inclusion advocates, funders with social impact goals, and organisations like Attitude is Everything.</p>



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# ENERGY

Chapter supported by **Power Logistics**



## Where are we now?

### Benchmarks for 2025:

Fuel	Unit	Average per person per day
Diesel	Litres	<b>0.1837</b>
HVO biodiesel	Litres	<b>0.1772</b>
Total	Litres	<b>0.3608</b>

## TRENDS

**THE 2025 BENCHMARK OF 0.36 LITRES OF FUEL PER PERSON PER FESTIVAL DAY REPRESENTS A 28% REDUCTION FROM THE 0.5 LITRES PER PERSON PER FESTIVAL DAY FIGURE CITED IN THE 2020 SHOW MUST GO ON REPORT.**

This decrease is likely driven by a combination of cost pressures and the adoption of new practices and technology. It represents a concerted effort, particularly among large festivals and promoters, like Live Nation and AEG Presents, which are showing a higher average use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel compared to smaller events, and pioneering new practices such as grid connection and battery use.

Further supporting this trend, the 2024 More Than Music report found that 26% of music festivals have reduced their fuel usage and 25% now incorporate renewable energy into their power supply.

## Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Phase out fossil fuels in generators:** The Tyndall Centre’s Super-Low Carbon Music Roadmap (2021) proposed an ambitious target for outdoor events: to “set a deadline to phase out the use of diesel generators by 2025, and seek to at least match the carbon intensity of the UK electricity grid going forward.”<sup>8</sup> While this target has not yet been met, shifting away from fossil fuels (i.e. red or white diesel) in the immediate term is a priority. In the medium term, the goal is to move away from HVO and other biofuels, which aligns with the broader targets of the creative industries.
- **Align with national emissions reduction scenarios:** The Climate Change Committee’s ‘Balanced Pathway’ for industry projects a 39% reduction in carbon emissions between 2023 and 2030. In line with this Pathway, the percentage of non-road mobile machinery (like generators) not powered by fossil fuels is expected to grow from just 3% in 2025, to 33% by 2030, and 56% by 2035. By 2050, virtually all such machinery powered by fossil fuels will be phased out. The UK Climate Change Committee also suggests that the use of HVO and biofuels in generators should be phased out by 2040 at the latest.<sup>9</sup>
- **Use less and electrify:** According to the Climate Change Committee, electrification and energy efficiency are key routes for reducing carbon emissions from non-road mobile machinery (i.e. generators), in line with the UK’s Carbon Budget under the Climate Change Act.<sup>10</sup> While hydrogen may play a limited role, it should only be used where electrification is not an option, as it is projected to remain more expensive.<sup>11</sup>

## Challenges:

- **High upfront capital investment** will be needed to replace generators and build up the UK’s mobile battery power fleet to a level where it can meet the power needs of the events sector in the next few years.
- **Mains grid connections are often slow and expensive to install or upgrade**, causing long delays and high costs for events and their venues. Many event organisers lack the confidence to invest in grid connections due to the risk of changing site permissions, and it’s unlikely they would see a return on investment since they only use a site for a short period each year. Simultaneously, local authorities and site owners are concerned about the financial risk of high standing charges for connections that may only be in use for brief periods.
- **We need to think beyond HVO:** Moving to HVO is widely seen as a good short-term solution for cutting emissions because it’s an easy replacement for traditional diesel. However, the events industry needs to understand that HVO is an interim measure that comes with its own risks of worsening climate change. Tailpipe emissions from HVO are nearly identical to conventional diesel, its climate benefits are assumed, based on the carbon absorbed as the vegetable oil feedstocks grow.<sup>12</sup> A major challenge is that truly waste-derived HVO has a limited global supply, making it difficult to guarantee a supply chain free from deforestation and

land-use change, which contribute to climate change. A recent investigation has found a discrepancy between the amount of HVO fuel being sold as a sustainable product and the actual global supply of the waste materials needed to make it.<sup>13</sup> Any sustainable supply of HVO should be reserved for sectors with fewer decarbonisation options.

- **Different technologies mean different skills:** Moving away from a power infrastructure built around generators to one that uses batteries, mains grid connections, and other low-carbon technologies will require reskilling suppliers and production professionals. The focus must now shift to energy management and the technical skills needed to operate these new systems.
- **Providing charging for onsite HGVs and larger plants:** While electric alternatives are increasingly viable for smaller onsite vehicles that can be charged at an event, the same is not true for onsite HGVs or large plant machinery. For these, onsite charging is often not a viable option, especially at remote, greenfield sites. This makes them a priority for using HVO as an interim solution while the industry develops more sustainable alternatives.
- **Concerns about battery supply chains:** There's a growing body of research documenting the social, environmental and governance harms linked to supply chains for battery-materials (cobalt, lithium, nickel, graphite, etc.)<sup>14</sup>. Issues include water pollution and habitat destruction, corruption, dangerous working conditions, child labour, land dispossession, and displacement of indigenous communities. These issues are concentrated in the Global South, reinforcing climate justice concerns.

## Opportunities:

- **Cleaner, quieter, and more efficient power:** Shifting away from diesel generators offers significant benefits beyond just reducing emissions. These include a reduction in toxic air pollution, a quieter onsite experience for both audiences and performers, and less wasted energy: As engines are inefficient at converting fuel into power, a lot of energy is lost as heat and noise.
- **Cross-sector collaboration:** Across Europe, universities are partnering with festivals and start-ups on research pilots; for instance, Arcola Energy has trialled technologies to power stages at events throughout the UK. There are also co-investment opportunities with other sectors and a potential for collaborations with universities for research pilots, testing and innovation. For example, company Zenobe refurbishes end-of-life batteries from their electric buses (leased to public transport companies across the UK) into large-scale battery banks for outdoor events.

## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

To transition to a more sustainable power infrastructure, events should focus on these key actions:

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short Term</b>	
<p><b>Implement Smart Energy Management:</b> Follow the power hierarchy for events by first reducing demand.<sup>15</sup> This means using energy-efficient equipment and getting better specifications—for instance, using historical data to match generator capacity to the actual power load. Earlier contracting with power providers will support efficient power planning.</p> <p><b>Prioritise measurement and monitoring:</b> Ensure that energy monitoring is a mandatory part of all contracts with power suppliers. As a minimum, this should include retrospective reporting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total fuel used</li> <li>• Fuel used per generator per day</li> <li>• Generator run time hours</li> <li>• Kilowatt-hours (kWh) exported</li> <li>• Load data.</li> </ul> <p>For medium and large events, this should also include real-time monitoring and post-event advice on how the data can be used to improve future planning and energy management.</p>	<p><b>Commit to fossil-fuel-free events,</b> with power coming primarily from the grid or onsite renewables, supported by batteries.</p> <p><b>Accelerate technology turnover by securing multi-year contracts with suppliers</b> (especially for larger events) to encourage investment in mobile batteries, energy-efficient technology like LED lighting, and electric onsite vehicles.</p> <p><b>Work with local authorities</b> to identify and co-invest in installing more mains grid connections at publicly owned event sites.</p> <p><b>Shift from LPG use onsite</b> to non-fossil-fuel alternatives such as biogas or by switching to electric appliances.</p>

**Use grid connections:** Where possible, use existing mains grid connections, and combine them with batteries to boost capacity. New events should prioritise sites that already have mains grid connections in place (or where they could be installed).

**Introduce hybrid systems:** All events should begin integrating batteries into their power specifications, moving toward a hybrid system.

**Pilot electric vehicles:** Start trailing the use of electric vehicles on site.

## Long Term

**Phasing out generators:** By 2035, over half of the generators used in the UK live events sector should be replaced by non-fossil-fuel alternatives, including mobile batteries.

**Electrifying onsite vehicles:** Over half of onsite vehicles should be replaced with non-fossil-fuel alternatives, primarily electric, by 2035. The goal is a full phase-out of fossil fuels for vehicles by 2040.

**Eliminating biofuels:** All use of HVO and other biofuels must be phased out by 2040 at the latest.<sup>16</sup>

**Install onsite renewables:** Install permanent renewable energy sources on any event sites that you own or control.

**Secure grid connections:** Aim for all publicly owned event sites, hosting multiple events per year, to have mains grid connections by 2040.

## How should we measure progress?

### Small Events

- Reduction in fuel use (L) per audience day.
- Overall reduction in fuel use (L).

### Large Events

- Reduction in fuel use (L) per audience day.
- Overall reduction in fuel use (L).
- Improvement of generator efficiency (kWh / L).
- Reduction in carbon intensity of onsite energy use per audience day: aiming for (at least) grid parity.
- This should include all main energy sources: e.g. Diesel, HVO, electricity and LPG - including the well-to-tank impacts of fuels.
- 'Out of Scope' impacts, such as the tailpipe emissions of burning HVO, should be reported as part of carbon inventories.

## What is needed from the supply chain?

A plan to phase out fossil fuel generators and build this into their capital investment and equipment turnover strategies. Given the typical lifespan of generators, and the urgent need to stop using fossil fuel diesel within the next five years (and HVO and other biofuels by 2040), suppliers must start implementing fleet replacement programmes and investing in mobile batteries now. To meet climate targets, a clear deadline should be set, after which no new fossil fuel generators will be added to fleets.

## What does supportive government policy look like?

To help the industry transition to clean energy provision, government policy should focus on removing barriers and accelerating change:

### Accelerating Infrastructure

- **Grid connections:** Government should work with Ofgem and the National Energy System Operator to reduce the time and cost required to install or upgrade electricity connections.
- **Decarbonising machinery:** Regulations and subsidies are needed to accelerate the decarbonisation of non-road mobile machinery. As no such policy exists to support key sectors like live events. This would have co-benefits for other parts of the creative industries such as film and television.
- **Funding onsite power:** Use devolved funds, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Levelling Up Fund, or a specific new funding mechanism, to speed up public space electrification and encourage local authorities to install mains grid connections at public event sites (which would have co-benefits for other parts of the creative industries such as film and television).

## Supporting Industry Investment

- **Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECAs):** Widen the eligibility of Enhanced Capital Allowances to support suppliers of hire equipment, accelerating their investment in fossil-fuel-free non-road-mobile machinery (like generators), and energy-efficient lighting and audio equipment.
- **Introduce subsidies:** The government could introduce a funding scheme, similar to the discontinued Plug-In Car Grant, to help companies upgrade their fleets. Local authorities with low emission zones could also offer scrappage schemes for companies with event contracts in those areas.

## Strengthening Local Policy

- **Procurement:** Local authorities should use their procurement systems to accelerate change. They can do this by building ambitious clean energy targets into their own event tenders and by negotiating collective procurement deals for mobile battery systems that all local event organisers can benefit from.
- **Low Emission Zones:** Build on existing low emission zones in urban areas and expand them to explicitly cover the use of Non-Road Mobile Machinery, i.e. generators for events. Currently, temporary event infrastructure often falls into a regulatory grey zone.

## Stories of good practice

**Bristol Harbour Festival** uses main power supplies throughout the city's park wherever possible. [Full case study](#)

**Green Gathering** runs on solar panels, wind turbines, pedal power and innovative, low impact alternatives.

[Full case study](#)

**Norfolk & Norwich Festival** worked with Norfolk City Council to develop main grid power in their city centre site.

[Full case study](#)

**British Summer Time Hyde Park and LIDO Festival:** In 2025, AEG Presents worked with LS Events to trial green hydrogen power at BST Hyde Park and LIDO Festival, successfully powering main-stage performances with zero emissions green hydrogen technology.

[Full case study](#)

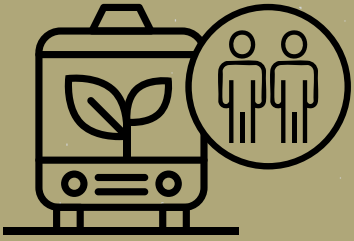
**Act 1.5:** In 2024, Act 1.5 and Massive Attack trialled a groundbreaking decarbonisation show, 100% battery powered, in Bristol. They ran the successful formula again at LIDO Festival in London in 2025. [Full case study](#)

**TRNSMT Festival** relocated their site offices to a nearby building in 2024, removing ten cabins and two marquees from the site. This saved approximately 10,500 litres of fuel through cuts to travel and generator use, and reduced air and noise pollution. [Full case study](#)

**Festival Republic** is advancing its decarbonisation strategy by installing grid connections at festival sites. In 2024, they powered Electric Picnic's main stage with a new grid connection and 100% renewable electricity from Flogas. They are also actively working with landowners on UK sites to reduce future reliance on generators and HVO fuel. [Full case study](#)

**DF Concerts and Events** collaborated with the University of Strathclyde to conduct high-resolution monitoring of stage, bar and catering power at TRNSMT and Summer Sessions. Data showed opportunities to reduce generator use by 15–20%. These insights are informing a new Energy Efficiency Toolkit for 2026 events, supporting Glasgow's Net Zero 2030 ambition. [Full case study](#)

**Latitude and the Isle of Wight Festival** partnered with GeoPura in 2024 to provide Hydrogen Power Units (HPUs) that replaced HVO biofuel generators. At Latitude, this powered part of the festival's village area including medical/welfare, merchandise stands, VIP camping, and the festival's recycling and waste sorting hub. At the Isle of Wight Festival, it powered crew catering and the Artist & Press area. [Full case studies](#)



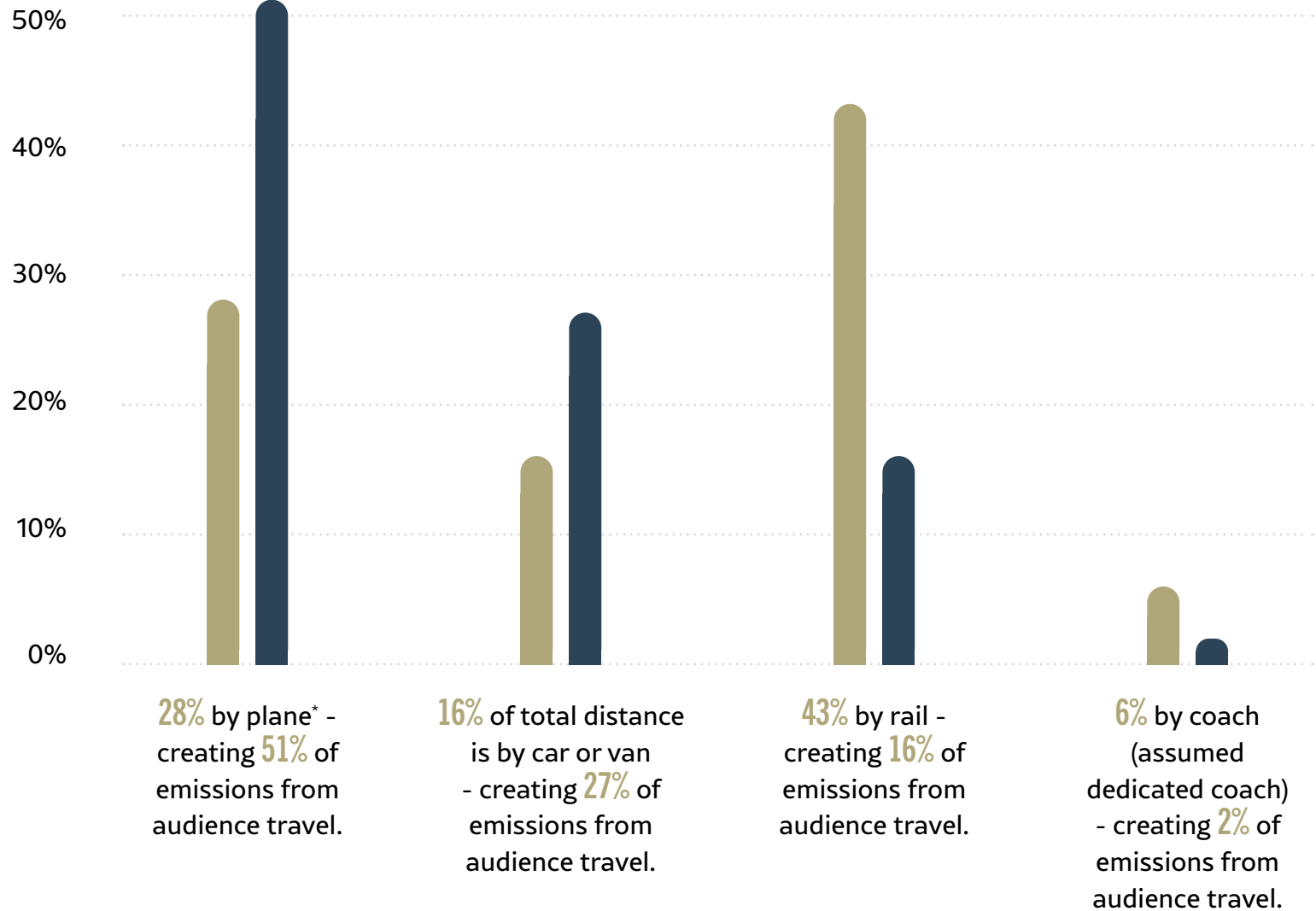
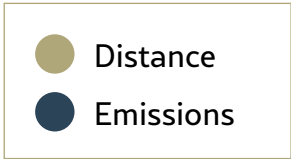
Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# TRAVEL & TRANSPORT - AUDIENCES

Chapter supported by **Big Green Coach**



PROPORTION OF AUDIENCE TRAVEL BY TRANSPORT TYPE AND RESULTING CARBON EMISSIONS



\*Note: Small events tend to have fewer audience or artists flights, significantly lowering total emissions per event. This points toward smaller events having a lower average overall and smaller travel footprint. Further modelling is required to establish national benchmarks for small, medium and large events.

## TRENDS

**BY 2022, AROUND HALF OF 119 MUSIC FESTIVALS AND EVENTS REPORTED HAVING COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL SERVICES IN PLACE, INCLUDING SHUTTLE BUSES, DEDICATED COACHES, AND SECURE CYCLE PARKING.**

From the same data, four out of five events were communicating travel choices to audiences, while only 50% were doing so with crew and less than 40% with artists or suppliers.<sup>17</sup>

Recent travel survey projects show that festivals and live events of all types and sizes find it challenging to collect good quality travel and transport data, even those who have teams that are experienced and well-resourced in sustainability.<sup>18</sup>

The Massive Attack ACT 1.5 event in Bristol (2025), provided a blueprint of best practices and innovation in travel management for city-based events, including coordination with transport providers, ticket and travel bundles, and low carbon vehicles.<sup>19</sup>



Photo credit: Coach arrivals at Shambala Festival

## Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Support behaviour change:** Shifting people away from cars to using public transport or active travel (cycling and walking), is crucial to reducing emissions and other impacts like air pollution and congestion, and is a key part of the UK's emission reduction roadmap. The UK's Climate Change Committee estimates that we require at least a 7% reduction in car travel by 2035, with more ambitious changes being even more beneficial.<sup>20</sup>
- **Recognise the influence event organisers have over travel choices:** The Tyndall Centre's Super-Low Carbon Music Roadmap highlights that quantifying and measuring targets on audience travel is challenging for the sector, so the focus should be to, 'adopt measures that promote significant uptake of low carbon travel options by 2025! This aligns with the direction set by previous Show Must Go On reports in 2015 and 2020.
- **Prepare for electrification:** As the UK transitions to electric vehicles, events need to prepare for a significant shift in audience travel. By 2040, the Climate Change Committee projects that 80% of cars on the road will be electric (29% by 2030, and 57% by 2035). While it's unlikely that most events can provide widespread onsite charging for everyone, organisers should prepare to:
  - **Provide limited onsite charging:** Offer a limited number of charging points at the event.
  - **Map local infrastructure:** Identify and share information about nearby public charging stations in all pre-event communications.

## Challenges:

- **Electric car charging:** Providing infrastructure to allow audiences to charge their electric cars on site at scale will be increasingly difficult for greenfield festivals as the share of electric vehicles in the UK grows. A focus on shifting audiences away from private car travel will help reduce the need for charging points.
- **Engaging public transport providers:** Event organisers face significant challenges when trying to engage with public transport providers. Navigating the UK's fragmented and privatised system can make it difficult to arrange services like extra trains or shuttle buses, negotiate discounts, or discuss potential partnerships. Train timetables are also only released 3 months in advance, so the release of tickets is not aligned with typical timelines for audiences purchasing event tickets, which creates a further barrier for audience travel planning.

- **Public transport is expensive and trust in public transport is low:** A major barrier to using public transport is that it can be expensive and unreliable. Train tickets can sometimes cost more than driving or even more than the event ticket itself. Trust in train services is low due to frequent strikes, badly timed engineering works, and a lack of reliable services. Audiences often have little recourse for refunds if they miss a time-sensitive event. Event organisers have limited influence here. Their main option is to increase the relative cost of driving by raising car park charges, which simply shifts the financial burden onto the public since affordable train alternatives are often not available.
- **Lack of car sharing services:** Surprisingly, there isn't currently a viable online car sharing platform that facilitates car sharing for audiences travelling to events.
- **Marketing and audience communications skills:** marketing teams may need additional training and skills to be able to support messaging on low-carbon public transport and to encourage behaviour effectively.
- **Audiences' existing travel behaviours and habits** can make it harder for event organisers to create change, for example, those who already own a car are less likely to leave it behind for a festival weekend. Some audience groups (e.g. families with children) are harder to shift away from private transport due to added logistics.
- **Audiences will travel to see their favourite acts:** larger events and more well-known artists will attract audiences from further away.
- **Business incentives are not always aligned to tackling audience travel impacts:**
  - Larger or niche events are often dependent on attracting people from a wider geographic radius, as local audiences alone may not provide sufficient ticket sales.
  - Public funding and support is also often linked to the economic benefit that festivals bring by attracting tourism.
  - Higher car parking charges are often associated with negative audience feedback.

## Opportunities

- **Events as an influence for positive change:** Festivals and events can use their cultural influence to start conversations about lower carbon travel which resonate beyond the event itself to create wider societal changes in travel habits.
- **Improving local relationships:** Reducing event car traffic can reduce tension with local communities and Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs). Because festivals can sometimes hit capacity based on external road use traffic volume reductions may help support event license capacity increases.
- **Benefiting local communities:** Introducing additional public transport links, even temporary ones, may co-benefit local councils, towns and local businesses, as audiences have to pass through the town centre rather than by-passing in cars.

## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

To support the move to low-carbon travel events should focus on these key actions:

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short Term</b>	
<p><b>Communicate with audiences:</b> Ensure marketing teams include travel messaging on all public channels. Investing in clear communication about low carbon travel options, has been shown to make a measurable difference.<sup>21</sup></p> <p><b>Measure travel data:</b> Refine audience travel data collection year-on-year to understand and tackle impacts better and track the progress of your initiatives. Use surveys, interviews, car parking occupation, coach ticket sales data, etc.</p> <p><b>Address public transport logistics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align event timings to allow for use of public transport connections.</li> <li>• Organise free or low cost regular shuttles (ideally electric) to nearby train stations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus on increasing public transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with public transport providers to increase the availability of services (especially larger events).</li> <li>• Align event timings to make it easier for audiences to use existing public transport services, particularly post events.</li> <li>• Partner with public transport providers to provide discounts, other incentives, and for marketing support.</li> <li>• Partner with taxi and private hire companies that offer electric vehicles (or highlight local EV options through marketing).</li> <li>• Select event sites based on proximity to, and availability of, public transport connections and the flexibility of local transport providers to collaborate on extending services.</li> <li>• Work with partners who can provide electric coaches for festival shuttle and coach transport.</li> </ul>

## Short Term

**Think local:**

- Focus marketing on regional audiences first, potentially offering resident or local pre-sales to cut travel carbon.
- Don't market flying as a way to attend the festival, and don't offer any flight-and-festival packages.

**Use incentives:** Offer bundled festival and coach tickets, ideally as a set proportion of available event tickets to ensure take up.

**Promote active travel:** Provide secure cycle storage on site. For urban events, share clear maps of available cycle storage/lock-up facilities near the event site.

**Reduce car use:**

- Disincentivise travel by car with parking charges. These can be re-invested to cover the cost of environmental initiatives elsewhere on site (include exclusions for those with accessibility needs).
- Incentivise car sharing through reductions in car parking charges, permits to park closer to the event gates, access to priority campsites, or other rewards for car-sharers.

**Increase car-sharing:**

- Support audiences to make car sharing arrangements via a festival app or website.
- Collaborate with partners to create an industry-wide audience car sharing tool that is fit for purpose.

## Long Term

**Create an overarching strategy for reductions:** All events should have a comprehensive strategy for reducing audience travel emissions. This needs to reflect event location and demographics, and be integrated into operations as well as in marketing schedules.

**Changing to a local model:** Reduce events' economic dependence on long-distance tourism.

## How should we measure progress?

**Small Events**

- **The share of audiences arriving by different travel modes:** This can be measured through qualitative audience travel surveys.
- **Qualitative data on behaviour:** For smaller-scale events, a quantitative approach to understanding travel habits could be more appropriate than a detailed carbon footprint. This information could be gathered through focus groups or interviews.

**Key questions to include:**

- How did people travel to the site?
- Why did they choose to travel this way?
- What would help them shift behaviour to low carbon alternatives?

**Large Events**

- Emissions (kg CO<sub>2</sub>e) per person per day from audience travel.
- Share of audiences arriving by different travel modes, and average distances by vehicle type.
- Reduction in car parking area over time (for greenfield sites).

## What is needed from the supply chain?

### Public transport partnerships:

- **Appointing an 'Event Lead' for transport partnerships:** Major train and bus companies in the UK should have a designated role in their Partnerships Team to recognise and develop the commercial opportunity of festival travel. Currently, not all do, which makes it difficult for event organisers to identify the right people to speak to about event-related passenger increases and to negotiate with for potential schedule changes or additional services.
- **Discounted travel packages for events:** Public transport companies should consider offering discounted travel packages for key events, which would also directly support local and regional tourism. There are limited examples of event organisers successfully negotiating discounts or free travel on public transport in the UK. In other European countries, it is more common: Italy's trainline, Trenitalia, regularly offers discounted train tickets for music events, while local and regional public transport is frequently included as a 'Kombiticket' for events in Germany and Austria.<sup>22</sup>

### Plan for EV:

- Suppliers should plan for the phase-out dates for internal combustion engines (i.e. fleets of vans and trucks), and build this into capital investment and vehicle turnover strategies.
- Providers of coach and shuttle bus services to events and festivals should have their own roadmaps for shifting to electric vehicles.

## What does supportive government policy look like?

### To support the increase of low-carbon travel to UK events the government should:

- **Invest in public transport** to increase availability, reliability, and affordability across the UK.
- **Support partnerships between public transport providers and events:** For public transport providers already in public control, ensure there are clear contacts in place for event organisers (for events above a certain capacity). Make this a future requirement for public transport franchises.

## Stories of good practice:

**2000 Trees Festival** donates £3 from the purchase of a vehicle pass to the charity onboard:earth, helping to mitigate carbon emissions from audience cars by funding environmental restoration projects. [Full case study](#)

**Boardmasters** has been partnering with coach provider, Big Green Coach, to offer weekend return coaches from 87 pick-up locations. This helps festival-goers to take low-carbon, shared transport easily. Big Green Coach offset the carbon emissions of all coaches through environmental restoration projects with the charity onboard:earth. [Full case study](#)

**Greenbelt Festival** invites its international audience to the 'No Fly Zone', an online platform with daily shows recorded directly at the festival. [Full study here](#)

**Glasgow and Edinburgh Summer Sessions** used a bespoke travel planning assistant that reached 25%

of attendees through a partnership between DF Concerts and Events and You.Smart.Thing. As a result, public transport use rose by 18% year-on-year at the Edinburgh events. The number of people cycling to the events also rose significantly. [Full case study](#)

**Nozstock Festival** provides secure bicycle parking for those wishing to cycle to the event. They recommend using a 'Cycle Streets' journey planner to make it easier and safer for festival-goers to arrive by bicycle. [Full case study](#)

**Act 1.5 x Massive Attack** worked on reducing audience transport by offering localised ticket sales, additional train services, free shuttles to Bristol train station. They also partnered with Train Hugger, a platform that plants trees when train tickets are purchased. [Full case study](#)

**Latitude Festival** launched its cinch and park EV charging scheme to encourage their audience to travel with EV vehicles. [Full case study](#)

**Run4Wales** collaborated with Transport for Wales (TfW) to request additional train services on the morning of the Cardiff Half Marathon, making it easier for participants to travel sustainably. [Full case study](#)

**Boomtown** encourages their audience to travel sustainability by allowing them entrance to the festival a day early if they use public transport. [Full case study](#)

**Hay Festival** partners with First Travel Solutions to provide extra and subsidised bus services from key cities like Hereford and Worcester on the days of the event. [Full case study](#)

**Team Love** took part in research on Engaging Live Music Audiences and Transport, led by Adam Corner & Briony Latter in 2023, with the goal to increase their public shuttle usage each year. In 2024, they saw a 40% increase in bookings for Love Saves The Day Festival and 57% for FORWARDS compared to 2023.



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# TRAVEL & TRANSPORT - PRODUCTION

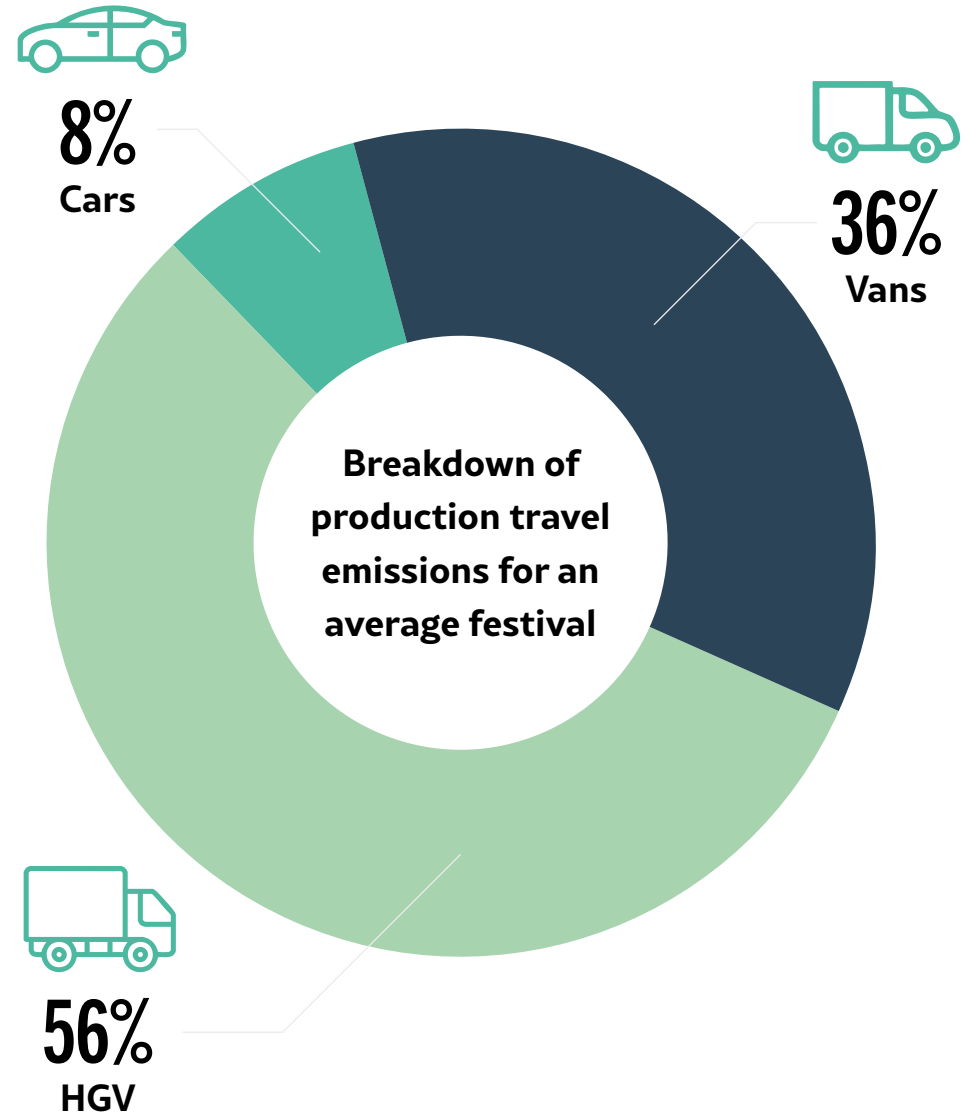
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## Where are we now?

### Benchmarks for 2025:

Vehicle type	Average Distance travelled (km) per person per day
Car	0.1440
Van	0.3895
Average Rigid HGV (assume average laden - unless specified)	0.0906
Average Articulated HGV (assume average laden - unless specified)	0.0874
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.7115</b>



## TRENDS

**FUEL PRICE INCREASES HAVE FOCUSED SUPPLIERS AND EVENT ORGANISERS ON REDUCING TRANSPORT OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. COMPANIES ARE BEGINNING TO INVEST IN EV FOR SMALLER FLEET VEHICLES.**



## Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Get ready for electrification:** The Committee on Climate Change suggests that new internal combustion engine vans should be phased out by 2030, and new diesel Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) by 2040 (with a 2035 phase-out date for smaller HGVs).<sup>23</sup> While this does not mean all older vans and trucks will need to be scrapped overnight, it does mean that no new fossil-fuel-powered vehicles will be available for sale after these dates.
- **Reduce miles and journeys, and improve fuel efficiency:** Putting less freight on the road and travelling shorter distances will reduce impacts immediately.

### Timeline for the transition to EVs:

**By 2030**

23% of vans and 6% of HGVs on UK roads should be electric.

**By 2035**

This should rise to 52% of vans and 31% of HGVs.

**By 2050**

95% of the UK's van fleet and 93% of HGVs should be electric.<sup>24</sup>

There will be no hydrogen vans, and only a little role, if any, for hydrogen in heavier vehicles.<sup>25</sup>

### Challenges:

- **We need to think beyond HVO:** Moving to HVO is widely seen as a good short-term solution for cutting emissions because it's an easy replacement for traditional diesel. However, it should only be seen as an interim measure that comes with its own risks of worsening climate change: HVO tailpipe emissions are nearly identical to conventional diesel, its climate benefits are assumed based on the carbon absorbed as the vegetable oil feedstocks grow. A major challenge is that truly waste-derived HVO has a limited global supply, making it difficult to guarantee a supply chain that is free from deforestation and land-use change, which contribute to climate change. A recent investigation has found a discrepancy between the amount of HVO fuel being sold as a sustainable product and the actual global supply of the waste materials needed to make it.<sup>26</sup> Any sustainable supply of HVO should be reserved for sectors with fewer decarbonisation options.

- **High upfront investment:** The high upfront cost of zero-emission HGVs is a barrier to adoption. While they offer lower running costs, these savings are not enough to offset the initial investment without government support or subsidies.
- **Lack of charging infrastructure:** Unlike freight companies that use predictable routes, with many events require one-off, point-to-point routes with large volumes of production vehicles traveling on specific dates, often to remote, rural locations where onsite charging is limited. This makes the widespread shift to electric HGVs highly dependent on a national rollout of public charging infrastructure. Without a reliable network across the country, particularly in rural areas, the events industry risks falling behind national decarbonisation targets.

- **Supplier choice is based on relationships and availability:** Due to the transient nature of events, there is little incentive to choose suppliers based on ideal transport routing solutions. Event infrastructure suppliers are not evenly distributed across the UK, and particularly on busier weekends, limited availability of stock can mean sourcing from further away.

### Opportunities:

- **Cleaner air:** A shift to electric production transport will reduce air pollution from event and festival production traffic, making events and festivals better community neighbours, and supporting better health for crew and staff.

## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short term</b>	
<p><b>Identify fuel-efficient suppliers:</b> Ask suppliers if they have invested in fuel efficiency retrofits for their trucks with a focus on suppliers responsible for high volumes of production traffic. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved aerodynamics</li> <li>• Low rolling resistance tyres</li> <li>• Tyre inflation monitors and systems</li> <li>• Fuel efficient driver training</li> <li>• Standard protocols for maintaining fuel efficiency.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cut production travel miles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose suppliers offering infrastructure that requires less trucking space and fewer trips.</li> <li>• Work with local suppliers to reduce production transport miles.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Add fuel-efficiency to contracts:</b> Larger events should consider making fuel-efficiency retrofits and driver training a contractual obligation, especially for suppliers with high production trucking volume and with contracts over a certain size.</p> <p><b>Ask suppliers to invest in EVs:</b> To promote the use of electric vehicles, larger events can ask their larger suppliers to invest in EVs for shorter deliveries if they have many depots and warehouses across the UK.</p> <p><b>Invest in local storage:</b> Recurring events taking place in the same region or city could explore co-investing in pooled local storage to reduce transport and freight and to drive down costs.</p>

## Long term

**Match national fleet electrification:** Event industry suppliers should aim to match national fleet electrification targets: half of vans and a third of HGVs switched by 2035. This could mean that larger suppliers will operate a mix of vehicle types for different routes.

**Make EV charging accessible:** Map out HGV charging stations in proximity to the event site and establish partnerships where possible to enable the use of more electrified freight.

## How should we measure progress?

## Small events

- **Focus on qualitative indicators and high traffic suppliers:** Collecting production transport data is often challenging, requiring engagement with many stakeholders. Smaller events should instead focus on qualitative indicators. For example, engaging suppliers with high production transport needs (e.g. infrastructure) on whether they are currently investing in fuel efficiency retrofits or driver training.

## Large events

- **Measure the kg CO<sub>2</sub>e from production transport:** Ideally split by HGVs and vans, and by supplier, to help identify the levers for reductions.

## What is needed from the supply chain?

- **Prepare for the transition to electric fleets:** Plan for the phase-out dates for internal combustion engine vans and trucks, and build this into capital investment and vehicle turnover strategies. Starting to introduce electric vans and trucks into fleets now for more local, shorter, and lighter deliveries will make sure everyone learns together and is ready for larger shifts.

## What does supportive government policy look like?

To support the shift away from fossil-fuel fleets, the government should:

- **Maintain subsidies for SMEs to install electric vehicle charging:** Commit to maintaining the 'Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant for Staff and Fleets of SMEs' and the 'Workplace Charging Scheme' beyond 2026, which will support smaller suppliers to install EV charging at their depots and warehouses.
- **Continue investing in the national roll-out of electric charging stations for heavy goods vehicles:** A national network of publicly accessible and affordable charging stations for event suppliers' trucks and vans is crucial because temporary event sites lack the infrastructure for onsite charging.
- **Subsidise commercial EVs:** Introduce purchase subsidies for electric HGVs.

## Stories of good practice:

**Tramlines** enforce a ride-share policy encouraging all their staff to share vehicles when travelling to and from site, helping reduce crew emissions.

[Full case study](#)

**Lost Village** partnered with Defender to use their plug-in-hybrid vehicles to operate during the build and the show. These were charged onsite using a battery unit developed by Jaguar Land Rover.

[Full case study](#)

**Cambridge Folk Festival** reduced travel impacts by 30% over 2 years by choosing local suppliers, traders and caterers.

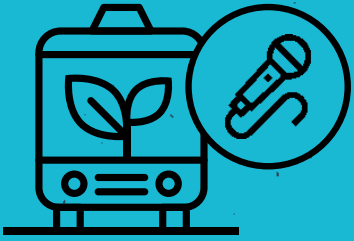
[Full case study](#)

**Shambala** ran almost all site vehicles, including buggies and telehandlers, on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel in 2022, reducing emissions by 90%.

[Full case study](#)

**Festival Republic and Download Festival** work with suppliers to reduce transport between shows. By using temporary storage and cleaning cabins onsite, one supplier cut HGV miles by 54% by reducing the number of journeys to their central depot.

[Full case study](#)



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# TRAVEL & TRANSPORT - ARTISTS

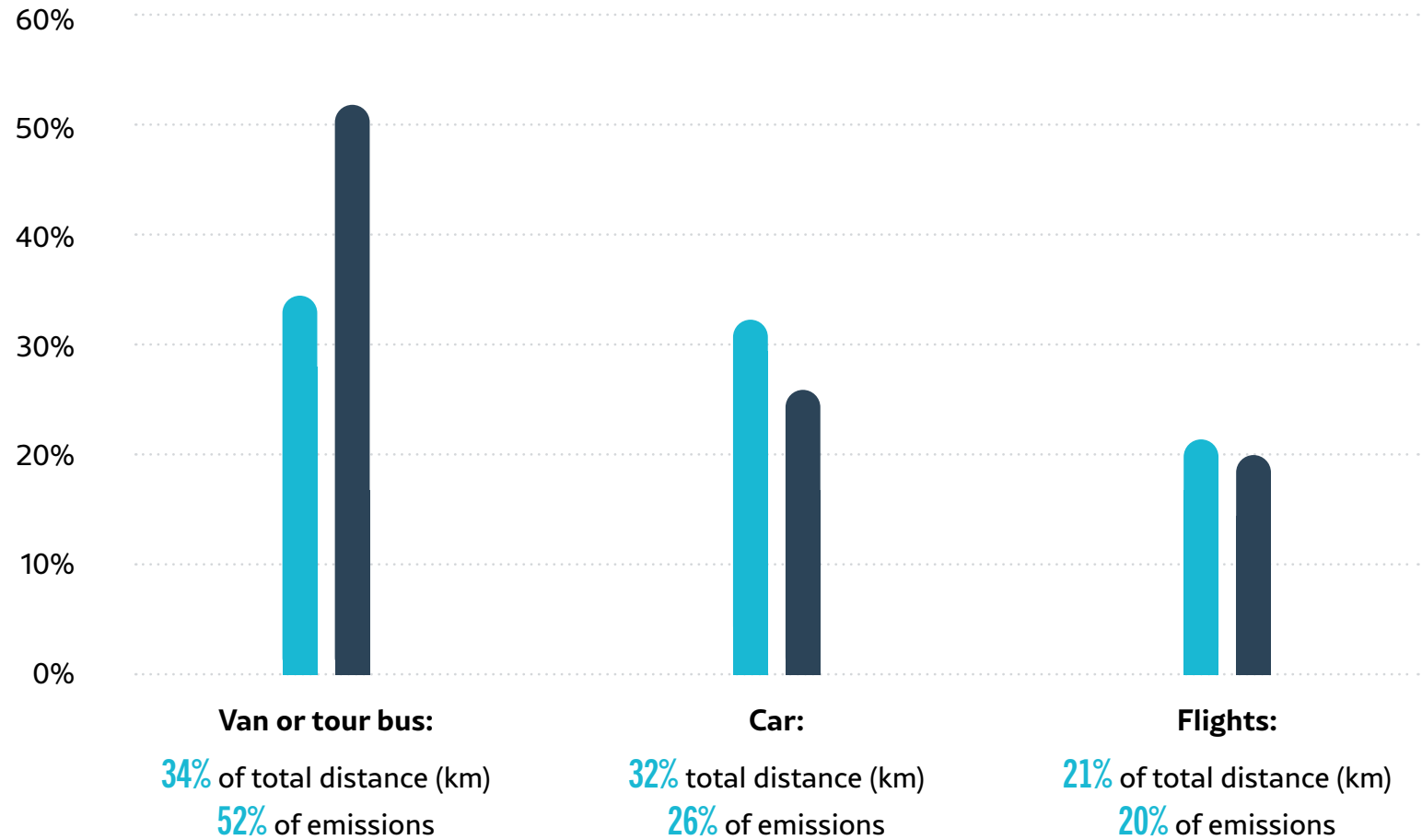
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# Where are we now?

Benchmarks for 2025

## BREAKDOWN OF ARTIST TRAVEL FOR AN AVERAGE FESTIVAL



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## TRENDS

**ACTS SUCH AS MASSIVE ATTACK AND COLDPLAY HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS TO FIND MORE SUSTAINABLE TOURING MODELS. EXCLUSIVITY CONTRACTS REMAIN A CHALLENGING CONVERSATION FOR THE INDUSTRY. SOME EVENTS HAVE STARTED TO PUT IN PLACE NO-FLY ARTISTS BOOKING POLICIES.**

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### Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Facing the facts about flying:** Aviation is a sector where there are no clear pathways to zero carbon on the timescales we need. While planes have become more fuel efficient, those savings have been undone by growth in demand.<sup>27</sup> By 2040, assuming other areas of the economy achieve the emissions reductions required, aviation will be the UK's highest emitting sector.<sup>28</sup> It's also one of the most unequally distributed areas of carbon emissions: only between 1 in 25 and 1 in 50 people flew internationally in 2018.<sup>29</sup> While the Climate Change Committee foresees a role for sustainable aviation fuels and electric aircraft, the primary way to reduce emissions from flying is to manage demand. Put simply, we need to fly no more than we do now, and ideally less. This raises an important question for event organisers: What role do bookers play in influencing artists (and audiences) to reduce their air travel?
- **Working with artists to reduce travel impacts:** Events can use their influence to help reduce emissions from artist tours. They can do this by working with artists to cut down on travel and freight, and by creating booking policies that take international travel into account.

### Challenges:

- **Audience expectation:** A major challenge is balancing audience demand for high-profile artists—which often requires international travel—with the need to reduce travel emissions. Many events rely on big-name line-ups to attract ticket sales.
- **Audience choices:** Audiences will travel long distances to see popular artists. This can quickly cancel out any emissions savings from the artists themselves reducing their travel.
- **Lack of alternatives:** It's hard to reduce air travel emissions because there are no affordable and efficient alternatives, and the technology to eliminate them doesn't exist yet.

### Opportunities:

- **Supporting UK talent:** An increased focus on regional and national programming will help develop a vibrant UK music, while reducing air travel.
- **Collaborating to share artists:** UK festivals and events can form partnerships with similar European events to reduce the environmental impact of artist travel. By working together, they could share artists who are touring at the same time of year.
- **A shift in festival business models:** Develop a festival business model that relies less on headline artists and more on creating unique, shared atmospheres. This approach would focus on events that are sized to work with regional UK talent and that appeal to UK and local audiences.



## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short Term</b>	
<p><b>Improve production planning:</b> Invest in earlier and more detailed production planning to work with artists on their equipment needs. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiating equipment requests to avoid extra rentals and transport.</li> <li>• Encouraging artists to use the festival’s existing equipment to reduce the need for their own freight.</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide electric vehicles:</b> When the festival organises artists’ road travel, use electric vehicles. This can be achieved by partnering with taxi and private hire companies that have an all-electric fleet.</p>	<p><b>Experiment with a new approach to your line-up:</b> Consider reducing the number of international artists and increasing regional talent. When you do this, prioritise diversity by focusing cuts on artists from other Global North regions (like North America) who have more opportunities, rather than artists from the Global South.</p> <p><b>Play longer sets:</b> Consider extending artist set times. This allows you to reduce the total number of acts on the bill, which can significantly cut down on the travel required, especially for events with many international artists.</p> <p><b>Rethink exclusivity deals:</b> End exclusivity zones to let artists route their tours more efficiently. When headline artists are restricted from performing in a large region, it can force fans to travel long distances to see them, increasing overall emissions.</p> <p><b>Deals that support sustainable travel:</b> Experiment with different deal structures to support train, ferry, and ground transport instead of flights (especially for smaller acts).</p>

## Long Term

**EV charging for artists:** Offer onsite charging for artist tour vehicles. If that's not possible, provide a map of nearby public charging stations in advance.

**Greener booking policies:** Factor the climate impact of artist travel into booking and curation decisions.

**Support Sustainable Aviation Fuel:** Larger events can look to introduce partnerships that allow artists to purchase or invest in Sustainable Aviation Fuel to acknowledge flight emissions.

## How should we measure progress?

## Small Events

**Location of artists:** the proportion of local, regional, international artists on the line-up.

## Large Events

- **Location of artists:** the proportion of local, regional, international artists on the line-up.
- **Increase inclusivity:** reduce the number of exclusivity deals and/or exclusion zones.

## What is needed from the supply chain?

**Prepare for the transition to electric fleets:** Plan for fossil fuel van and truck phase-out dates and build this into capital investment and vehicle turnover strategies. Tour bus, tour trucking, and tour van hire companies should be planning to shift their fleets to electric alternatives (see Production Transport section).

## What does supportive government policy look like?

**Increased investment in the UK talent pipeline and regional arts:** building more thriving local creative scenes will help create a vibrant ecosystem of talent and audiences within the UK.

## Stories of good practice:

**Greenbelt Festival** has a policy of inviting artists who have tour dates around the time of the festival to prevent artists flying directly for the Greenbelt festival where possible.

[Full case study](#)

**Greenwich Docklands International Festival** has been offering all European-based artists & crew train travel to the festival, instead of flights, significantly reducing the emissions from artist travel.

**Live Nation** became a member of the Sustainable Aviation Buyers Alliance (SABA) in 2024. Since then they have facilitated artists' purchase of 2,600+ MT CO<sub>2</sub>e in Sustainable Aviation Fuel Certificates (SAFc), representing avoided emissions, equivalent to approximately 200 private flights from Los Angeles to New York City.

[Full case study](#)

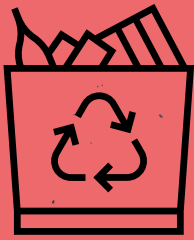
**Love Saves The Day:** Artists travelling to Love Saves the Day can take the public transport shuttles free of charge from the train station and City Centre to get to the site.

**Live Green** has created easy to adopt clauses for artists, reinforcing a commitment to reducing the environmental impact associated with live music events and artists activities.

[Full case study](#)

**Glastonbury Festival** partnered with Great Western Railway and Trainline to co-promote train travel with a creative campaign led by artists playing at the festival.

[Full case study](#)



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# MATERIALS & WASTE

Chapter supported by **The Dixon Foundation**



## Where are we now?

### Benchmarks for 2025

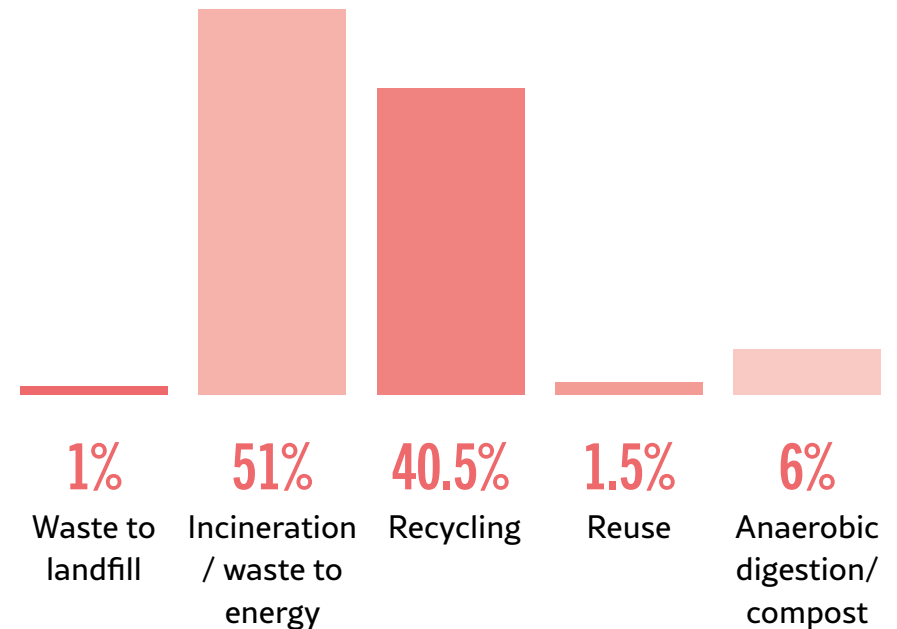
Waste route	Average kg per person per day
Landfill	0.0071kg
Incineration (energy from waste facilities)	0.3420kg
Incineration (no energy recovery)	0.0019kg
Recycling	0.2750kg
Anaerobic digestion	0.0270kg
Compost	0.0142kg
Reuse	0.0111kg
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.6783kg</b>



# 0.678kg

of waste is generated per person per festival day, for an average festival

### Breakdown of waste processing at festivals:



## TRENDS

- **AN INCREASING NUMBER OF EVENTS HAVE BANNED SINGLE-USE PLASTICS.**
- **MANY MEDIUM AND LARGE EVENTS HAVE IMPLEMENTED REUSABLE BAR CUP SCHEMES AND REFILL STATIONS.**

## Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Think 'circular' and reduce waste generation:** The biggest opportunity to cut emissions from materials and waste is to simply use less. Following the waste hierarchy for events is crucial to successful waste management: this hierarchy advises events to avoid, reduce, recycle, and recover waste.<sup>30</sup> This approach not only saves emissions from waste processing but also cuts the significant embodied emissions that are created when materials are grown, extracted, manufactured and transported.
- **Keep biodegradable waste out of landfill:** Biodegradable waste, like food, green waste, timber, paper and cardboard, release methane emissions when decomposing in landfill. The Climate Change Committee's 'Balanced Pathway' suggests that no 'biodegradable' waste goes to landfill from 2028.<sup>31</sup> It's important to note that not everything sold as 'biodegradable' can go into recycling waste streams such as compost and anaerobic digestion. Event organisers must work closely with their waste contractors to know exactly which materials belong in each waste stream.
- **Recycle, recycle, recycle:** The Climate Change Committee advises that recycling rates for non-household waste will need to increase to 74% by 2035.<sup>32</sup>
- **Turn food into energy:** The Climate Change Committee advises that the proportion of food waste collected for anaerobic digestion should increase to 90% by 2030.
- **Reduce the amount of plastics burned (they are fossil fuels, too):** Over the last decade, the UK's recycling rates have stalled, and so have emissions reductions in the waste sector. While landfill emissions have decreased, this has been offset by a rise in emissions from energy-from-waste and incineration as more general waste is sent to these facilities.<sup>33</sup> While many events are now zero-waste-to-landfill, a lot of that waste—including plastics from cups, tents, and signage—is being sent to incineration instead. While events should still choose incineration over landfill, they should first follow the waste hierarchy of avoid, reduce, and recycle.

## Recycling and waste management challenges:

- **Limited choice of waste contractor:** Many events often can't choose their own waste contractor. Instead, they must use the waste services provided through local authority contracts, which may not offer the best options for onsite sorting and waste recycling.
- **Campsite waste:** the quantity of abandoned tents and left camping equipment relies on audience behaviour, and is driven by the sale of poor-quality gear marketed as 'festival tents' by retailers.
- **Compostable food packaging:** Anaerobic digesters, the most common type of composting plant in the UK, are unable to break down compostable packaging, because this material requires air to degrade. The limited number of aerobic digester plants that can process this packaging will only accept it if it is certified to specific industrial composting standards, such as EN13432, to ensure it decomposes within a 90-day cycle. This means that, even when events make the right purchasing decisions, the compostable materials are often removed from the waste stream and sent to incineration instead.
- **Hard to recycle materials:** Contractors can find it hard to access waste transfer stations that will accept Tetra Pak and plastics for recycling.
- **Capacity and consistency across the country:** There's a significant lack of consistency in recycling facilities across the UK. Because waste processing plants—including those run by local authorities—don't all accept the same materials, waste contractors spend a lot of time searching for suitable recycling centers, often needing to transport materials over long distances. This, in turn, increases the overall carbon footprint. Furthermore, local authority facilities are primarily set up to handle the steady, weekly volumes of household waste. They often struggle to process the massive, sudden influx of materials that arrives all at once from a festival or large event.
- **Confusing terminology:** There is widespread confusion between terms like 'biodegradable' and 'compostable', in particular when it comes to bioplastic cups, which are sold as a solution but can make waste management more complex.
- **Brand requirements:** Many brand partnerships come with own-branded cups and signage, etc. that are not aligned to the events' waste streams. Throwaway, plastic give-aways can undo waste reduction efforts if they are not thought out properly.
- **The race against time:** Onsite waste management is a significant challenge due to the fast-paced, temporary nature of events. The large number of suppliers, freelancers, and volunteers involved means that it requires substantial effort to ensure rapid understanding of, and compliance with, waste management policies.

- **Collecting data:** Difficulty in tracking what enters the site and where waste goes when it leaves makes it hard to identify problematic materials, recognise failing onsite processes, and monitor progress.
- **Inconsistent bin signage:** Across the country, local authorities and waste contractors use different colours and symbols for the same waste streams.
- **Lack of unified approach to single-use plastic:** The absence of a national standard for single-use plastics or reuse scheme adoption means that the events' waste policy is currently left to the festival organiser's discretion.
- **Consistent adoption of 'Simpler Recycling':** In June 2025, the UK Government introduced Simpler Recycling in England. This is a statutory requirement for all waste creators and contractors to have six waste streams plus residual waste (plastic, metal (cans), glass, food waste, paper and card, and residual waste). The legislation lacked clarity or prior warning, meaning that many organisations, including festivals, were not aware of it.

## Reuse challenges

- **Lack of storage for reusable items:** Decor, sets and other reusables are often designed as single-use, because many events don't have access to storage facilities to save and reuse them.
- **Damage and handing onsite:** Bad weather during an event, high footfall, and items being torn down for speed will can leave items such as signs, netting, decor and carpet unusable for future events.
- **Short-term planning:** A culture and expectation of new and different set designs each year, or single-year budgets focusing on short-term spend rather than savings over the long-term, will lead to sets being disposed of annually.
- **Infrastructure shortfall:** Smaller events using low volumes of reusable cups lack local washing facilities, and delivery/collection by national suppliers is not viable. A significant industry gap remains in the absence of a large-scale solution for reusable coffee cups and food containers.
- **Card fees undermine cup return incentives:** High card processing fees complicate the refund process for reusable cup deposits. As a result, schemes often rely on a non-refundable levy, which removes the incentive for cup return—a major problem for open-access events.

## Opportunities:

- **Nationwide schemes for consistency:** Government support could help establish standardised national schemes for single-use plastic bans and reusable cup programs at events. This unified approach would provide the consistency needed to rapidly improve reduction, reuse, and recycling across all events.
- **Simpler Recycling:** The adoption of this new standard approach creates significant opportunities to normalise waste segregation among both users and waste contractors. This standardisation will directly improve waste infrastructure, increase the demand for waste processing of key streams, and enhance the capture of high-carbon impact materials, such as food waste.
- **Redistributing materials:** Schemes exist for the industry to share and redistribute materials to others within the industry and or charities. These can be amplified at a local level.
- **Financial savings:** Event organisers can save money by buying fewer goods and reducing the amount of materials that need to be recycled.
- **Onsite waste processing:** To reduce the transport impacts, onsite waste baling machinery is being used by festival waste contractors who are compressing drink cans into blocks that take up significantly less space on a transport vehicle.



Photo credit: Waste Baling Machines processing cans for recycling at Green Man Festival in 2025.

## What can festivals and outdoor events do?

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short Term</b>	
<p><b>No biodegradables in landfill:</b> Ensure no biodegradable waste (such as timber, paper/card, food) goes to landfill, by 2028 at the latest.</p> <p><b>Ban single-use plastics:</b> At a minimum, ban single-use water bottles and provide water refill points.</p> <p><b>Reusable cups:</b> Introduce reusable cup systems to reduce materials used and waste sent to incineration. This includes coffee cups as well as bar cups.</p> <p><b>Implement Simpler Recycling:</b> Work with waste contractors to implement Simpler Recycling with front-of-house or back-of-house sorting waste into the correct streams. Food waste should be a separate front-of-house stream to minimise the contamination of recyclables.</p> <p><b>Work with waste contractors:</b> To boost recycling rates, work closely with waste contractors to understand what materials they can actually recycle and make purchasing decisions based on their capabilities.</p>	<p><b>Tackle food waste:</b> Set up separate collections for food waste to be sent to anaerobic digestion.</p> <p><b>Target compostable food packaging:</b> Collaborate closely with waste management and processing partners to co-ordinate the routing of compostable food packaging to aerobic digesters. Critically, event organisers must verify and guarantee that all packaging is certified to fully break down within the necessary 90-day composting cycle.</p> <p><b>Reusable boxes:</b> Work with traders to identify ways to offer a viable reusable box scheme for staff catering and food traders.</p> <p><b>Partnerships trialling new technology:</b> Trial implementing deposit-return schemes within cashless systems, e.g. using RFID tags on reusable cups to enable tracking.</p>

## Short Term

**Share resources:** Partner with other organisations to maximise reuse. Scenic art elements, community gardens and performing arts networks can be reused and shared.

**Influence audiences:** Run audience awareness campaigns, e.g. on buying tents that are made to last and taking camping equipment home.

## Long Term

**Food waste targets:** 90% of food waste should be collected separately and sent to composting facilities by 2030.

**Recycling targets:** Achieve a 75% recycling rate. Note: This can present a challenge for events focused on waste prevention, because when overall event-waste is reduced there is simply less to recycle.

## How should we measure progress?

### Small Events

- Reduction in kg waste per person per festival day, and total tonnes of waste.
- Adoption of the Simpler Recycling approach.

### Large Events

- Reduction in kg waste per person per festival day and total tonnes of waste.
- Increase in % recycled.
- Increase in % sent for anaerobic digestion.
- Elimination of waste sent to landfill.
- Reduction in kg of key material inputs per person per festival day (e.g. site materials, food and drink, packaging, scenic art).

## What is needed from the supply chain?

**Site contractors:** Request that contractors engage with a circular economy approach to minimise the volume of single-use materials brought onsite. Ensure that contractor teams are briefed on segregating waste.

**Designers and set builders:** Request that sets are built with a multi-year specification to keep materials (such as wood) in use for longer.

**Traders:** If event organisers can send waste to anaerobic digestion, request that only certified compostable food packaging is used onsite. Use 'trader-bonds' to ensure that traders separate waste streams correctly.

**Sponsors:** From the decor to the giveaways, require that all sponsor activations are reusable. Rather than cheap unvalued giveaways, consider asking audiences to engage with the brand and win an item as a way to ensure it is valued more.

**Bars:** Ask bar providers to operate reusable cup schemes.

**Waste contractors:** Deliver Simpler Recycling either by operating separate front-of-house bins or via back-of-house sorting of materials, or a combination of both.



Photo credit: Reusable cup system

## What does supportive government policy look like?

### Legislation

**Single-use plastic bans:** A national mandate for single-use plastic bans on government land or at all events. In the interim, local councils can implement single-use plastic bans in their area.

**Enforce Simpler Recycling:** National and local government to work with the Environmental Services industry to make Simpler Recycling legislation viable for festivals. Local authorities to include Simpler Recycling compliance as part of event application processes.

**Ensure that only certified compostables are sold:** Waste treatment plants are often concerned that uncertified materials will contaminate the compost waste streams. By legislating that only certified compostable packaging is sold, it is likely that materials will be more widely accepted and composted by processing plants.

### Engagement

**Deploy recycling educators:** When implementing Simpler Recycling onsite, provide funding for bin education at the point of disposal. Place staff at bins in high footfall areas who help people to understand how to separate waste streams correctly.

### Infrastructure

**Reuse schemes:** Support from the national government to increase the availability of reusable bar cups, coffee cups and food boxes, with solutions for making the process run smoothly (washing cups etc.) at a local level so festivals of all sizes can implement them. Support from the local government to facilitate local reuse schemes by managing the reusable vessels. Ideally, there would be a nationwide reusable box scheme for consistency, this would require investment in a nationwide trial to work with traders and festivals and resolve the issues of different foods requiring different boxes.

**National recycling consistency mandate:** Legislation from the national government is necessary to ensure a standardised collection provision across the UK, allowing all key recyclable materials to be processed within close proximity of events. This mandate must establish consistent single-stream recycling for financially viable materials in every region, including cardboard, food waste, PET, and HDPE plastics.

**Support onsite waste processing:** Local governments should provide support or space for onsite sorting as part of Simpler Recycling, where multi-bins are not possible.

**Equipment:** Have baling equipment available in every county for festivals to use to compress waste streams and reduce the carbon footprint of transportation.

**Storing festival waste for processing:** Local governments should have the capacity to store large volumes of festival waste to be processed later by local material recovery facilities.

## Stories of good practice:

**Greenbelt Festival** introduced compostable wristbands for a number of years and are now starting to explore the use of hemp. [Full case study](#)

**End of the Road Festival** partnered with Nordic Wristbands to produce environmentally friendly wristbands for the festival. [Full case study](#)

**Hay Festival** worked with a coffee traders to swap plastic milk containers for reusable milk churns. [Full case study](#)

**Knockengoroch Festival** promotes sustainable building practices in their Longhouse venue by hosting workshops onsite and showcasing new and old techniques. [Full case study](#)

**Kelburn Garden Party** promotes 'The Environmental Bond', a returnable deposit scheme to encourage its audience to recycle and keep the site clean. [Full case study](#)



Photo credit: Waste Baling Machines at Latitude Festival

**Manchester Marathon** runs a 'Green Runner' initiative that gives runners the option to opt-out of receiving a t-shirt or medal and instead donate the money to City of Trees. [Full case study](#)

**Waterworks Festival** achieved a 65% recycling rate in 2024, by working closely with their waste contractors and eliminating non-recyclable items.

**Green Man Festival, Latitude and Leeds Festivals** all worked with supplier, Waste Baling Machines, to compact and bale recycling materials directly at event sites. Latitude and Leeds reported a resulting 22% increase in recycling. [Green Man case study](#). [Latitude case study](#)

**Wild Wood Festival's** main stage is made out of materials sourced directly from the forest floor. [Full case study](#)

**Love Trails Festival** has been working toward becoming a Trash Free Trails Gold standard event. [Full case study](#)

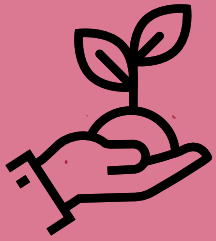
**DF Concerts** trialled a reusable cup system at six outdoor shows throughout the Glasgow and Edinburgh Summer Sessions, each with a capacity of 30-36k fans. This eliminated single-use paper cups from service and reduced waste per person by

23% in Glasgow and 41% in Edinburgh versus 2024. In Glasgow 89.3% of cups were returned and in Edinburgh it was 85.7% [Full case study.](#)



**Material Focus** worked with Reading and Leeds, Download, Creamfields, Boomtown, Truck and Love Saves the Day Festivals in 2025 to tackle the impact of vape-waste at events. They provided 81 vape disposal tubes at events, alongside an awareness campaign that reached over 630,000 event goers to dispose of vapes safely and correctly. [Full case study](#)

**LIDO Festival** reduced public waste streams to just two; cans and compostables. A back-of-house waste sorting team ensured that all waste was checked before being baled and segregated into the cleanest possible waste streams. Alongside waste reduction initiatives such as reusable crockery in crew catering, this resulted in a 89% recycling and composting rate across the festival. [Full case study](#)



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# FOOD & DRINK

Chapter supported by **Nationwide Caterers Association**

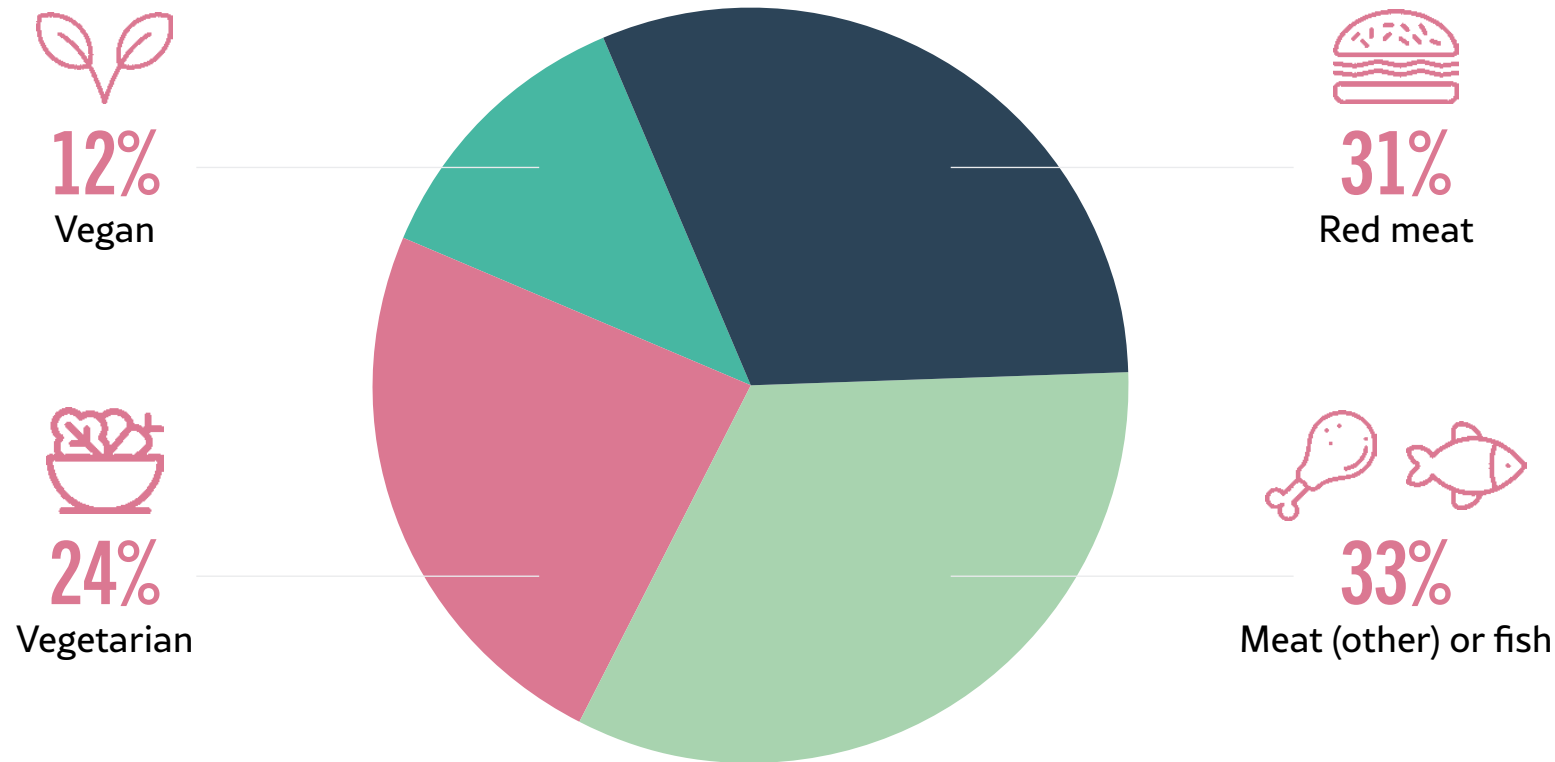


# PLANT-BASED GREAT TASTE

## Where are we now?

### Benchmarks for 2025

Food types for an average festival as percentage of meals served



**TRENDS**

**RESEARCH BASED ON 100 UK MUSIC FESTIVALS, PRESENTED IN THE 'MORE THAN MUSIC' REPORT (2024), SHOWED THAT BETWEEN 2022 AND 2024, THE NUMBER OF FESTIVALS REFERENCING VEGETARIAN FOOD OPTIONS ON THEIR WEBSITES DOUBLED, INCREASING FROM 10% TO 20%.**

There are also more festivals using third party services, such as Klimato, to measure and report food-related carbon emissions, alongside public-facing communications campaigns about food impacts. The Massive Attack 1.5 event in Bristol, 2025, championed the idea of a vegan festival.



Reading Festival 2023 by Ben Awin

## Where do we need to get to? Targets and Pathways:

- **Less meat on the menu:** Focus on reducing the amount of beef, lamb, mutton and dairy on our plates. To help the UK's agriculture sector reach net-zero emissions, we must raise fewer cows and sheep. Their digestive process is responsible for nearly half of the country's agricultural emissions.<sup>34</sup> Reducing livestock also frees up land that can be used to plant more trees, restore peatlands, or grow energy crops. By cutting down on meat and dairy consumption, we can also avoid simply importing these emissions from other countries.
- **Serve more plant-based food:** Festivals and events have a chance to move faster than current policy on plant-based food. To meet the UK's climate goals, the Climate Change Committee's 'Balanced Pathway' calls for:
  - A 20% reduction in average meat and dairy consumption by 2035.
  - A 35% reduction in overall meat consumption by 2050, with a 40% reduction in red meat alone.
  - More ambitious scenarios suggest cutting meat and dairy by up to 50% by 2050, which would free up more land for planting trees and restoring peatlands.

Because the festival community is less dependent on outside technology and investment, it's uniquely positioned to lead a cultural shift and go further and faster than these goals.
- **Cut food waste:** Food waste has a double impact: it not only creates emissions from its disposal but also wastes all the land, energy, and fertiliser used to produce it. The UK's net zero plan aims to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030 and 60-70% by 2050.<sup>35</sup>
- **Source ethical food:** Sourcing food ethically is a vital part of environmental and social action, even if it doesn't always show up in carbon reports. Events can work with traders and suppliers on higher standards for procurement, including:
  - **Serving seasonal and local:** Sourcing seasonal food can reduce climate impacts. While local sourcing doesn't always guarantee a lower carbon footprint, it strengthens the local economy and can make the supply chain shorter and more transparent.
  - **Supporting Fairtrade, organic and higher animal welfare standard produce:** Sourcing Fairtrade-certified products helps ensure fair pay for everyone in the supply chain. Choosing organic food reduces the reliance on harmful fertilisers and pesticides. Choosing higher animal welfare produce ensures farmed animals have a better quality of life.
- **Work with regional food policies and culture:** Festivals can play a key role in aligning with and supporting local food policies, such as Scotland's 'Good Food Nation Act', and Wales' 'Community Food Strategy'.<sup>36, 37</sup>

- **Collaborate with beer suppliers to reduce carbon footprints:** Beer can be a significant part of a festival's carbon footprint due to the large volume served. It's a key area for collaboration with suppliers: understanding carbon emissions from their brewing and growing operations and how they are addressing them, can help event organisers make purchasing decisions based on which products have the lowest environmental impact.

### Challenges:

- **Food is linked to culture and identity:** Event organisers often hesitate to shift toward more plant-based menus because they fear backlash from audiences. However, many events that have made this change have shown that these fears are often unfounded. With clear, creative and positive communication, any initial resistance is usually limited and temporary, especially when audiences see that it's possible to maintain a wide selection of high-quality, delicious food, while reducing food waste, and without increasing costs.
- **Maintaining affordability and accessibility:** When shifting to greener, more ethical food and drink, it's crucial not to sacrifice affordability and accessibility. At a minimum, ensure plant-based options should cost the same as meat dishes (or less) and be included in any affordable meal deals. Be mindful of people with food allergies or specific dietary needs. Provide clear information about the menu before the event, work with accessibility teams to answer questions, and allow people to bring their own food if necessary.<sup>38</sup>
- **Skills training for new menus:** Many food traders are micro or small businesses with long-standing relationships with festivals and events. Rather than leaving them behind, the event industry can work with them to diversify their menus away from meat-based options (especially beef and lamb) and trial new menu designs and offerings.
- **More checks and balances:** Stricter sourcing and procurement standards for traders means more pre-event briefings, onsite spot checks, and clear consequences for those who don't comply. Festivals can help by providing suggested or approved supplier lists.

## Opportunities:

- **Using your cultural influence:** Festival organisers have the power to make food a central part of the event experience, aligning it with their overarching climate and environmental values. This is a powerful way to engage everyone who attends. Events that have gone vegetarian or increased their plant-based options suggest that it can inspire lasting behavior change in attendees.<sup>39</sup>
- **Food for thought:** Festivals are spaces for audiences to play and have experiences beyond their everyday lives. This makes them ideal places to explore the future of food: Events have served bugs, lab-grown meat, and hosted hands-on experiences and talks to expand audiences thinking about food.
- **Inspire healthier lives:** Festivals have an opportunity to contribute to healthier food futures: for example, reducing meat consumption can reduce the risk of colon and rectum cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.
- **New ethical partnerships:** More focus on local supply chains can improve local economies and create new and stronger relationships with regional growers and food producers. It also opens opportunities for partnerships with food redistribution networks and foodbanks.



Photo credit: Regine Vilhelmsborg, Northside Festival

## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
Short Term	
<p><b>Reduce meat &amp; dairy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to increase the number of vegan and vegetarian options on offer to at least 75% of meals. Research has shown that this is the threshold at which people start making different choices.<sup>40</sup></li> <li>• Work with traders and caterers to reduce the amount of meat they use, e.g. smaller servings of meat or blending with vegetables and vegetable protein.</li> <li>• Introduce ‘meat-free’ days in crew catering.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ditch high-carbon meats:</b> Take beef and lamb off the menu entirely.</p> <p><b>Support traders to change:</b> Offer existing suppliers the opportunity to redesign their menus before switching to new relationships.</p> <p><b>Maintain affordability:</b> Ensure that vegan and vegetarian options cost the same as, or less than, meat dishes. Offer a variety of nutritious choices, not just side dishes like chips.</p>	<p><b>Go entirely plant-based or vegetarian</b> for all onsite catering (public and crew).</p> <p><b>Introduce approved supplier lists</b> to help traders quickly source food (especially key products) that meet the food policy. Events might negotiate cheaper rates with key suppliers in exchange for guaranteed custom from multiple traders.</p> <p><b>Climate labelling:</b> Medium and large events can introduce climate labelling on food menus onsite using a 'traffic light' system. This helps audiences make greener choices and provides a clear insight into the climate impact of their food.</p> <p><b>Establish a food distribution network:</b> Work with traders and charities to set up a centralised food redistribution service at the end of the event to reduce food waste.</p> <p><b>Collaborate with drinks suppliers:</b> Work with the drinks brands and breweries supplying your event to identify those taking action to reduce climate impacts. Gather accurate data on their products’ carbon emissions to inform your purchasing decisions in the future.</p>

**Enforce sustainable sourcing policies:** To ensure traders follow your sustainable sourcing rules, consider using a 'sustainability bond!' This is a fee that is only returned to a trader if they comply with all specific conditions.

**Support food waste collection:** Make sure that all catering areas are set up with a separate food waste collection.

## Long Term

**Target 100% vegan and vegetarian menus:** The majority of festivals' food offerings in the UK should be primarily vegan and vegetarian from 2030.

## How should we measure progress?

### Small Events

- % of vegan and vegetarian menu choices on offer onsite.
- Number of vegan and vegetarian meals that are the same price or less than the cheapest meat option.
- % breakdown of meals served to crew, split into:
  - Vegan/Vegetarian
  - Chicken or Pork
  - Beef or Lamb.

### Large Events

- % of vegan and vegetarian menu choices on offer onsite.
- Number of vegan and vegetarian meals that are the same price or less than the cheapest meat option.
- Average kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per meal served and overall T CO<sub>2</sub>e from food served on site. This can be identified by working with specialist food carbon accounting services.
- % of major bar suppliers that have their own climate targets in place.

## What is needed from the supply chain?

- **Education and creativity:** A sustained shift to more plant-based food offerings at events will mean more traders will have to:
  - Commitment to taking beef and lamb off the menu.
  - Design nutritious vegan and vegetarian menu options (which may mean developing new skills and knowledge).
- **Collaboration:** Suppliers will need to be open to working with festivals on sustainable sourcing and fair pricing of ethical menu options.

## What does supportive government policy look like?

- **Recognise the role of the creative community in shaping culture:** Festivals and events have a unique role in shaping culture. Since the government has been hesitant to regulate personal food choices, festivals can step in and use their creative influence to fill this policy gap.
- **Focus on just transitions in agriculture:** Festival efforts to serve less meat and dairy will only be effective if they are supported by government policy. The government must help farmers transition away from cattle and sheep farming by investing in clean energy equipment, improving soil management, and supporting biodiversity and tree planting. This ensures that festivals' climate commitments don't come at the expense of farmers' livelihoods.
- **Lead with plant-based procurement:** The government should lead the way by making plant-based food the default option for all public procurement, including at events run by local authorities.
- **Recognise live events as partners for food innovation:** Festivals and events can be powerful laboratories for climate solutions, especially for food innovation. Some European governments are already including festivals in their food innovation funding, using events to host food stands that offer alternative proteins and other sustainable options. This allows them to get public feedback and engagement on new ideas.

## ENSURE YOUR FOOD POLICIES CONSIDER SPECIFIC NEEDS

It's important that changing policies don't discriminate against those who have severe allergies, intolerances, neurodiversities (e.g. AFRID - Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder), or specific diets due to medical conditions or disease treatment. Ensure that customers, crew and volunteers are able to bring their own food and that there is an ample supply of basic food (i.e. pasta, bread, and jacket potatoes).

## Stories of good practice

**Knockengorroch Festival** introduced a new polytunnel venue. During the festival it was used to grow organic food, and host talks and workshops. [Full case study](#)

**Wild Paths Festival** have been working with ‘Too Good To Go’ to encourage their traders to provide ‘magic bags’ of surplus food that festival-goers can buy at reduced prices at the end of each day, helping fight food wastage. [Full case study](#)

**Wychwood Festival** shares a full list of their traders with their audience ahead of the event on their website to help them plan. The list shows what options are available if you’re vegan, vegetarian or gluten-free. [Full case study](#)

**DF Concerts and Events (DF)** conducted a full analysis of food sales and their associated carbon impacts across TRNSMT and the Glasgow and Edinburgh Summer Sessions. In response to findings, beef was removed from the artist and crew catering menus, leading to an estimated 32% reduction in emissions from food. By featuring plant-based options at the top of crew and artist menus these options were chosen more frequently. [Full case study](#)

**Shambala Festival** has been working with Klimato to calculate the CO<sub>2</sub>e of each meal served by their traders. They add labels to menu boards, showcasing lower and higher carbon meals. [Full case study](#)

**Festival Republic** worked with universities to display food carbon ratings to guide customer choices. Crew catering excludes beef and includes at least one meat-free day per week, while traders must offer at least one vegan and vegetarian option. [Full case study](#)



Leeds Festival 2025, Matt Eachus



Climate Transition and Environmental  
Action by Impact Area:

# WATER



## Where are we now?

### Benchmarks for 2025

Water	Unit	Average usage per person per day
Water consumed	Litres	8.9
Water treatment	Litres	3.6
Total	Litres	12.5

## TRENDS



THE EQUIVALENT OF NEARLY  
**9 LITRES OF WATER**  
IS CONSUMED PER PERSON PER DAY,  
AT AN AVERAGE FESTIVAL

## Where do we need to get to?

### Targets and Pathways:

- **Reduce water use and leaks:** Reducing water use and preventing leaks is critical. The UK faces a growing risk of drought due to climate change.<sup>41</sup> Many parts of England could face significant water shortages as early as the 2040s without action.<sup>42,43</sup>
- **Reduce pollution and contamination:** Water sources are threatened by pollution from agriculture, industry, and runoff from roads. The types and volume of chemicals we use in society directly impact our waterways; they can end up in wastewater and, ultimately, our rivers and lakes.
- **Take action:** There is plenty of opportunity for action to reduce the environmental impacts of water at events, but no specific targets that can be easily translated for the festival and outdoor events sector.<sup>44</sup>

### Challenges:

- **Lack of data on wastewater:** We currently lack good information on festival wastewater and sanitation waste. There isn't enough data on the total volume of waste, what kinds of toilets are being used, or the environmental impact of waste treatment across the festival sector.
- **Meeting audience expectations:** Audience expectations for toilets and showers have grown, especially in 'glamping' areas. While providing these facilities is essential, trying to replicate a home bathroom experience in the middle of a field can create unsustainable costs and resource use. For example, larger shower stalls with higher water pressure, not only use more water but also increase the transportation impact of the equipment.
- **Climate change and water demand:** The environmental impact and costs of water for events will most likely increase as the climate changes. During droughts, organisers may have to transport water from farther away. Drier, hotter weather means audiences need more water to drink and shower, and additional water is needed to manage dust onsite.

### Opportunities:

- **Circular water treatment:** There are many opportunities for festivals to collaborate on innovative water treatment. For example, events have successfully experimented with capturing nutrients from urine, and collecting sanitation waste to convert into energy or fertiliser. In some cases, food grown with this fertiliser has even been served back to festival-goers in subsequent years.

## What should festivals and outdoor events be doing?

Baseline actions	Ambitious actions
<b>Short Term</b>	
<p><b>Reduce waste water:</b> Work with your suppliers to introduce water-saving measures, such as push taps and water-efficient infrastructure, e.g. toilets. Include a contractual clause that requires regular leak checks across the site.</p> <p><b>Reduce chemical loads in wastewater:</b> Engage suppliers on the environmental impact of cleaning products used and the choice of chemicals for sanitation.</p> <p><b>Reduce the amount of meat served onsite:</b> Agricultural runoff from manure is a key driver of water pollution (see the Food &amp; Drink section).</p> <p><b>Reduce pollution risks:</b> Locate toilets, 'boneyards' (waste storage areas), cooking oils, and other potential sources of runoff away from any watercourses or water bodies onsite.</p>	<p><b>Anaerobic Digestion and Composting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise the use of compost toilets.</li> <li>• Explore options to send human waste from festival sites to an anaerobic digestion plant, where it can be converted into energy. Alternatively, consider composting the waste onsite to create fertiliser for the land.</li> </ul> <p><b>Innovate through collaboration:</b> Work with external partners on circular economy projects that support the recapture of nutrients from human urine and waste.</p> <p><b>Reuse wastewater:</b> Explore grey water reuse options.</p>

## Long Term

**Investment in sustainable sanitation:** More certainty is needed in this space, but will likely involve:

- Maximising the use of compost toilets and anaerobic digestion for managing waste.
- Investing in water-efficient toilets and showers.
- Shifting away from the most polluting forms of sanitation.

**Choose sites with water connections:** Prioritise event sites with existing water mains connections to reduce the impacts of transporting water, wastewater, and sanitation waste by road.

## How should we measure progress?

### Small Events:

- Litres of fresh water used per audience day (though this may fluctuate due to weather and initiatives like shifting away from plastic bottled water to refill stations, and washing reusable bar cups).

### Large Events:

- Litres of fresh water used per audience day (though this may fluctuate due to weather and initiatives like shifting away from plastic bottled water to refill stations, and washing reusable bar cups).
- Volume of wastewater and sanitation waste transported off site per audience day.

## What is needed from the supply chain?

- **Plan the phase-out dates of fossil-fuel trucks:** Transporting water and sanitation waste to and from a festival is one of the largest sources of emissions from water use. Work with suppliers to create a plan for when they will replace their fossil-fuel trucks with electric vehicles.
- **Use less-polluting chemicals:** Offer less polluting alternatives to common sanitation and cleaning chemicals.
- **Invest in water efficiency:**
  - Make water efficiency and preservation a central feature of products: for example, in new showers, toilets, and other service equipment.
  - Suppliers who use large volumes of water to clean trackways or other infrastructure and equipment should investigate using graywater or rainwater harvesting systems.
- **Advice for event organisers and land owners about onsite composting:** Increased awareness within the supply chain on the environmental regulations that permit composting onsite (for permanent sites) and a willingness to guide event organisers in implementing these systems, could help reduce waste-related travel miles and resulting emissions.

## What does supportive government policy look like?

- **Recognise the potential of festivals and events as laboratories for climate transformations:** Festivals are unique environments where human waste is temporarily generated on a large-scale, creating a perfect opportunity to test new technologies for application in society. By supporting these efforts, the government can not only find better ways to manage sanitation, but also engage the public on the future of sustainable systems.

## Stories of good practice:

**Boomtown Festival** worked with supplier MTD Water to deliver onsite wastewater treatment with their Silver Label Unit. The recycled water was used for the fire lagoon and dust suppression across the site. [Full case study](#)

**End of the Road Festival** works with the charity Frank Water; their water refill stations allow festival audiences to buy a reusable bottle and get access to water refills at the festival while raising funds for their work which provides safe water in water-stressed countries. [Full case study](#)

**Truck Festival's** management team switched from using temporary offices, to the permanent farm buildings next to their event site. This reduces transport emissions, power and water use. [Full case study](#)

**Medicine Festival** partnered with Peequal, the women's urinal on a mission to pioneer pee-equality. These units save water by reducing flushing. [Full case study](#)





# BEYOND CARBON



# Beyond Carbon: Justice and Fairness

*Adassa Dixon*

The climate and ecological crisis is inseparable from considerations of justice and fairness, both locally and globally. Countries in the Global South—which are already facing droughts, floods, food insecurity, and displacement—have contributed least to historic global emissions. Conversely, the Global North remains most responsible through the Industrial Revolution, colonial extraction, and ongoing high consumption. These unequal contributions, and capacities to respond, mean that the increasing impacts of the climate crisis reinforce and deepen long-standing global injustices.

Environmental harm and polluting industries are also disproportionately located in marginalised communities: low-income neighbourhoods, Indigenous peoples, racialised groups, and those living near extractive industries. The result is poorer health, reduced life expectancy, and limited access to clean air, water, and safe housing. Even within societies, climate impacts are not evenly distributed: women, children, disabled people, and poorer households often face the greatest risks, and have fewer resources to adapt or recover.

Climate and environmental justice movements seek to address these systemic inequalities and to create a fairer world for everyone. Central to these movements is the principle of a ‘just transition’ — ensuring that the rights, livelihoods, and dignity of workers and communities are safeguarded, as economies move away from fossil fuels.

For the outdoor events sector, this means recognising its place within these broader dynamics. By asking how festivals and events can align with principles of justice — from supply chains to employment practices, accessibility and cultural representation — we can ensure that events are not just reducing their environmental impact, but actively contributing to a more equitable and inclusive future.

# Beyond Carbon: Accessibility and Sustainability

From 2023 to 2024, Attitude is Everything, Julie's Bicycle, and A Greener Future collaborated with disabled people and the live events industry to create the [No Climate Action Without Us Toolkit](#). The toolkit helps the industry implement climate solutions that are also accessible to disabled people.<sup>45</sup>

The toolkit was created for two reasons: Firstly, because the more than one billion disabled people around the world are disproportionately affected by climate change, yet they are often left out of climate conversations. Secondly, to ensure that climate solutions did not accidentally create new barriers for disabled festival-goers.

Alongside the Attitude is Everything Charter, this toolkit helps event organisers implement sustainable solutions that consider the needs of disabled people.<sup>46</sup> It does this by outlining key challenges and providing recommendations and case studies across a range of different impact areas.



## Key actions and opportunities:

**Bring together sustainability and accessibility, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Design sustainability initiatives that do not exclude disabled people. This is discussed in depth in the [‘No Climate Action Without Us’](#) toolkit by Attitude is Everything, Julie’s Bicycle and A Greener Future.

**Find places where social and climate justice meet:** Ensure that climate action is inclusive across race, class, gender, and migration. Climate justice isn’t only about reducing carbon but about avoiding the reproduction of existing inequalities. Events have the power to educate and increase awareness, whether through creating volunteer, work, or performance opportunities, or by standing in solidarity with, and supporting climate justice organisations publicly. At a time when migration is highly politicised, events can provide cultural spaces to hold conversations with empathy and imagination.

By embedding justice at the centre of climate strategies, the outdoor events sector can model approaches that not only cut emissions but also challenge exclusion and inequity.

**Fundraise for international fairness and justice:** In global terms, many UK events’ audiences are relatively affluent, so there is ample opportunity to fundraise for frontline communities affected by climate change. Event organisers can work in partnership with charities and organisations or even ‘twin’ with outdoor events in the Global South to raise funds.

**Provide a platform:** Events can provide a platform for both international and local frontline communities through programming, commissions, artist bookings, talks, and partnerships with various organisations and climate activists.

**Reduce local environmental harm:** Minimise the environmental impact of outdoor events on local communities, especially in less privileged neighbourhoods. Focus on reducing air pollution from generators and traffic to protect residents’ health and well-being.

**Plan a ‘just transition’:** Reducing our environmental impact will create a more resilient sector with long-term employment opportunities in a net-zero economy. Future progress might involve investment in reskilling in the supply chain, particularly retraining power contractors who currently offer primarily fossil-fuel based services and technologies.

## CLIMATE LIVE

Climate Live is a global youth-led organisation, which highlights intersectional climate and social justice topics through programming at events. Their line-up of mainly grassroots youth activist speakers, deliver talks and workshops at festivals. These include; 'Nature Access and Race', 'The Power of Youth Activism', 'Breaking Barriers: Women & LGBTQIA+ in Music', 'Clean Air For All', 'Do It Fair with Fairtrade' and 'Saving Grassroots Venues'. See more on their [Instagram page](#) & [Drowned In Sound podcast](#).

### Stories of good practice:

**DF Concerts** have developed the Attitude Is Everything Toolkit checklist into an internal company tool that ensures all sustainability initiatives consider the intersection between accessibility, inclusion and environmental impact when planning festivals and shows. The checklist supports consistency between sustainability and accessibility teams, helping staff apply environmental principles in areas such as travel, energy, catering and audience experience. [Full case study](#)

**Glastonbury Festival** launched a fully funded volunteer scheme in 2024, to provide opportunities to volunteer at the Festival for people who would not typically have access to it otherwise due to social, cultural, financial and accessibility barriers. The scheme covered all costs and ensured a structured programme with welfare and wellbeing provision, role-based training and dedicated support staff for 100 volunteers. [Full case study](#)

**Shambala Festival** has been running a 'Pay It Forward: Share The Love' campaign since 2022, to help them open the events to those who would love to attend, but are priced out. [Full case study](#)

**Bristol Harbour Festival** offers ground-level viewing areas at main stages, dedicated accessible toilets and changing facilities, and trained stewards who offer onsite support from their Access Hub. They provide an Access Pack with easy read programmes, menus, maps and guides. In 2025, they offered BSL-programmed performances, a 'Deaf Rave' and a well-being hub. [Full case study](#)



# Beyond Carbon: Nature and Biodiversity

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth, facing a significant loss of species and habitats due to climate change, unsustainable development, and over-consumption.<sup>47</sup> As a result, outdoor events must now navigate a more complex relationship with the natural world around them.

- **Managing relationships with event spaces:** In cities, events are often held in parks that are vital green spaces for local communities. This can create tension, especially when extreme weather causes damage to the park from heavy foot traffic and vehicles. As UK summers get hotter, this tension may increase. In hotter European countries, events often shift to evenings to avoid the daytime heat, which requires later licensing and a significant cultural shift.
- **Navigating land use:** In rural areas, landowners are managing different needs, shifting between agriculture, nature restoration and habitat protection, and other commercial income. Outdoor events can support income diversification, helping landowners shift to more sustainable land management practices, but they can also put more pressure on non-agricultural land and disrupt local habitats.
- **Impact on local habitats:** Outdoor events take place in green spaces that are urban or rural habitats for plants and wildlife. They can create disruption through noise and light, vehicle movement, infrastructure builds, and footfall; and create local pollution to both soil and water through litter and leaks, etc.

- **Connecting audiences with nature:** Outdoor events offer people an opportunity to connect with the outdoors and attract new visitors to natural spaces. Greenfield events are many young peoples' first experience of camping and they incentivise people of all ages to take UK-based breaks in the countryside. Many events also offer programming, education and activities linked to nature and science.



- **The impact of event supply chains on the environment:** Procurement decisions made by outdoor events can have significant biodiversity impacts elsewhere in the supply chain. For example:
  - Biofuels such as HVO are linked to international deforestation risks.
  - By shifting to plant-based food offerings, UK events can contribute to the UK's climate targets, helping reduce the number of cattle and sheep to free up land for tree planting and nature restoration.

## Key actions and opportunities:

**Minimise environmental disruption:** Reduce impacts on local nature through careful event planning and management. This might include undertaking biodiversity surveys (working with local authorities and landowners where relevant) and designing site plans to minimise disruption on more fragile habitats or species. In some cases, this may mean redesigning site plans around protected species.

Event organisers and production staff should be aware of their legal obligations under different nature and species protection legislation and ensure all event staff understand their own responsibilities and opportunities for action – for example:

- Avoiding heavy infrastructure, vehicle movements or footfall over sensitive tree roots.
- Creating exclusion zones around waterways to reduce the risk of audiences littering into them or using them as toilets, etc.

**Support local nature:** Collaborate with landowners and local authorities to identify opportunities for the event to contribute to local nature restoration and improvement of the event site or surrounding area. This might include improving green spaces for local communities as a longer-term positive legacy.

**Unify audiences in environmental restoration:** Involve event audiences in nature restoration projects. This might include engaging audiences with organised volunteer opportunities like beach clean-ups or tree planting, fundraising for nature charities and schemes, and connecting with citizen science projects run by conservation charities.

**Promote nature connection through programming and partnerships:** Use creative commissions, public art, and workshops to help people connect with nature. Partner with organisations like community gardens and youth outdoor clubs to develop new audiences and encourage more people, including those from underrepresented communities, to get outdoors.

**Factor nature into operational decisions:** Consider environmental impacts in procurement policy, for example:

- Shifting to plant-based food will contribute to the UK's targets to free up land for nature restoration and tree planting.
- Traders should be asked to meet minimum standards that reduce overexploitation of species, like Marine Stewardship Council certified seafood.
- Timber should be reused or as a minimum FSC certified.
- Use certified waste-sourced HVO fuel and focus on reducing your overall energy demand to move away from diesel.

## Stories of good practice:

**We Out Here Festival** works with the estate on which the event runs, and its in-house ecologist to develop an ecology management policy. A key element of this has been controlling the light emitted from the site to reduce disruption to local wildlife and protect the starry nights - the festival officially achieved 'Dark Sky Friendly' accreditation for these efforts.

[Full case study](#)

**Download, Reading, the Isle of Wight Festival, and Wilderness Festivals** donate £1 from parking passes to local environmental causes. So far their donations to Trees for Cities have funded 4,000 trees near the festivals, and donations to Natural Enterprise have established a Festival Orchard at Pan Country Park on the Isle of Wight. [Full case study](#)

**Timber Festival** designs its program to encourage audiences to re-examine and develop their relationship with the natural world, they feature debates from prominent campaigners, and a range of hands-on workshops, talks and performances, to build connections with trees and wildlife. [Full case study](#)

**Boardmasters** has a detailed Habitat and Ecology Management plan to protect the rare wildlife and sensitive coastal habitats at its site on the Cornish Coastline. Their 'Leave Only Footprints Crew' encourage festival-goers to leave the site tidy and use litter bond points and water refill stations to cut waste.

[Full case study](#)

**DF Concerts and Events** collaborated with ecologists and Glasgow City Council to conduct detailed ecological assessments of two key festival greenspaces - Bellahouston Park and Glasgow Green. As a result, new protective measures were introduced, including biodiversity registers, tree root protection zones and enhanced light and noise sensitivity practices to protect the range of bird and bat species and habitats onsite. [Full case study](#)



# Beyond Carbon: Behaviour Change, Creativity and Programming

*Chiara Badiali*

The Arts have a massive reach in England, with 90% of adults having engaged with them in the year ending March 2024.<sup>48</sup> Considering that UK festivals and concerts had 37.1 million attendees in 2022, the creative community's visible climate action has a powerful opportunity to inspire a significant number of people.

The UK's climate goals heavily depend on public engagement. By 2035, a third of our required emissions reductions will rely on individual choices to adopt lower-carbon products and technologies, and over 60% will require public involvement in some form.<sup>49</sup> This is where outdoor events can play a vital role.

As cultural 'playgrounds,' festivals offer a space for people to explore new ideas, build communities around shared values, and learn in a joyful, engaging way. By visibly demonstrating their own climate action, events can directly model sustainable behavior and activate their audiences to get involved in environmental efforts.

## Key actions and opportunities:

**End fossil fuel sponsorship:** Put ethical sponsorship policies in place, which work towards removing fossil fuel sponsorship and 'high carbon advertising' from outdoor events. Some local authorities are already putting restrictions in place. For example, Edinburgh Council has banned advertising for fossil fuel companies, airlines, airports, fossil-powered cars, SUVs, cruise ships and arms manufacturers on council-owned advertising spaces, including event sponsorship.

**Engage audiences in sustainability:** Harness marketing and communications teams' creativity to engage audiences with sustainability initiatives, i.e. low-carbon travel, waste management and plant-based food. Case studies show that campaigns run by outdoor events can have measurable impacts on audience behaviour in these areas.

**Showcase climate action:** Partner with companies and universities to demonstrate new technology and behaviours that reduce environmental impacts. From wind turbines, to toilets that capture nutrients for use as fertiliser, to venues made from mycelium: outdoor events are excellent places for people to encounter the technologies that can shape a better future.

**Partner with climate campaigns and charities:** Share outdoor events' considerable platform with organisations that get people involved in climate action - from voting to upcycling fashion.

**Get creative:** Integrate public art installations and commissions on climate themes into your event programming. You can also offer hands-on workshops that teach attendees practical sustainability skills.

## Stories of good practice:

**Glastonbury Festival** hosted an investigation into the potential of mycelium as an alternative material for the creative industries. It was produced by re:right design and Team Love in the Silver Hayes area of the Festival. [Full case study](#)

**Reading and Leeds:** In 2025, 'The Meadow' was one of four themed-campsites focused on community building and connection, with campers taking a Planet Pledge and joining eco activities hosted by Climate Live. The site-wide 'Look Out for Our Planet' campaign, incentivised campers to take their tents home with partner vouchers as rewards. The campaign contributed towards 65% of tents taken home at Reading. [Full case study](#)

**Shambala** has removed meat and fish from their onsite food offering, for the last 9 years, for both the public and festival staff. Surveys show that this action has impacted attendees' diet towards consuming less meat beyond the festival weekend. [Full case study](#)

**Creamfields** launched its 'Cleanfields – Our Party Our Planet' campaign, to reduce its environmental impact and inspire more sustainable behaviours. In 2025, the campaign saw 1,200 pledge sign-ups, a popular hub with games and prizes, 60 volunteers engaging with attendees, and a 45% decrease in tents left behind in the Cleanfields campsite compared to 2024. [Full case study](#)

**Team Love** aimed to increase public shuttle bus usage following best practice advice highlighted by research into influencing audience travel choices, conducted by the Centre for Accelerating Social Transformation. In 2024, they saw a 40% increase in bookings for Love Saves the Day & 57% for FORWARDS compared to 2023. [Full case study](#)

**Camp Bestival's** Earth-Bot made its debut in 2023, with the aim of engaging the new generation through play, and connecting audiences around sustainability with workshops, activities and talks. Standing at over 8 metres tall, housing two slides, a fun 'treehouse' den and a huge sandpit, Earth-Bot has fast become a huge attraction at the family festival each year. [Full case study](#)

**Massive Attack's Act 1.5 event** aimed to influence audiences by demonstrating that large-scale concerts can be environmentally sustainable and to challenge the music industry to adopt low-carbon practices. The event served as a 'proof-of-concept' for fans and industry leaders, proving that sustainable large-scale events are achievable without sacrificing the quality of the live experience. [Full case study](#)

**Music Declares Emergency** challenged event-goers to shop second-hand for their next festival or gig—and say NO to fast fashion. Their presence at four festivals in August connected them to over 218,000 festival goers. [Full case study](#)

# Beyond Carbon: Climate Adaptation

*Andrew Lansley*

As climate change reshapes weather patterns, the live events and outdoor sectors are facing increasing challenges. New research shows an increase in extreme weather, with heatwaves, storms, and floods impacting events across the UK in 2024. This trend is putting immense pressure on organisers to adapt their operations and better protect both their infrastructure and attendees.

In 2024, 166 UK outdoor events were reported as cancelled, partially closed, or postponed due to severe weather, a significant increase from the 41 events affected in 2023.<sup>50</sup> Of these events, ten were classed as 'live music events', nine of which were festivals that were cancelled due to a number of adverse weather-related factors.

Further research by the Association of Independent Festivals in 2024, revealed that seven of 72 festivals reported as 'cancelled' were due to the direct or indirect effects of severe weather.<sup>51</sup> This means that almost 10% of all music festivals cancelled or postponed in 2024 were a direct result of environmental impacts.

Preparing for climate change is now essential for protecting both the attendee experience and the long-term sustainability of events. As severe weather continues to intensify, event organisers must integrate climate resilience directly into their operational strategies.



## Key Actions and Opportunities

The community of climate resilience researchers is growing. At the same time, the cultural sector has already started exploring new ways to mitigate climate impacts and adapt their event formats. **Here are some key actions and opportunities for climate resilience:**

**Implement adaptable infrastructure:** Event organisers should work with suppliers to implement flexible infrastructure, such as tents and stages that can withstand extreme heat and storms. This includes pathways and structures that are resilient to weather changes, ensuring accessibility during adverse conditions. Smaller structures onsite that may have lower ratings than main venues and spaces should be identified.

**Prepare for temperature extremes:** Given the rise in temperatures, it's crucial to develop internal standards for heat stress protocols. This includes setting guidelines for maximum working temperatures, providing hydration stations, and ensuring regular breaks for staff and performers. Current regulations could be developed further to provide crew and audience protections.

**Review and expand existing severe-weather plans:** Events should look to develop comprehensive weather response plans that go beyond wet weather protocols. These should include heatwave and storm response strategies, as well as clear training for staff on how to handle these conditions.

**Strengthen engagement with local authorities:** Collaborate with local authorities and landowners and with local contexts to assess and improve the infrastructure around drainage and flood management in particular. Understanding how venue designs impact local green spaces and stormwater management can mitigate future risks.

These are just a few steps that organisers can take to develop their existing plans to help mitigate environmental impacts at their events. With limited resources in the supply chain and increased financial obligations in securing these materials through deposits, the live events industry can take proactive steps to integrate climate resilience into all phases of event planning, from design to execution. Embedding climate resilience into organisational structures at a strategic level is critical if our industry wants to continue to thrive despite increasing climate risks.

# Closing Remarks

We hope the government will take note of this report, recognising and celebrating the role of outdoor events and festivals as incubators for behaviour change, new technologies, research, and innovation. We urge them to support the climate transition by: improving access to climate funding; supporting grassroots operators through a 'Festival Tax Relief' to navigate challenging times; and enabling approaches to event licensing that include sustainability and a partnership approach to regulation.

For everyone in the sector, this report provides a pathway, roles, and actions, ensuring we remain focused, coordinated, and effective in our journey toward lower emissions. Together, we can continue to inspire changes for a better future for all.

The show must go on—for generations to come.  
Let us be the leaders we have been waiting for.

# Annex I: Methodology

The carbon footprint for the festival sector, created for the purposes of this report, was calculated in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard where applicable. This calculation formed the basis of the per person per day emissions estimates and the sector-level modelling of potential emissions reductions.

All new data presented in this report has been compiled as accurately and completely as possible.

## Data sources

Data was compiled for 84 music festivals (as defined by the AIF) that took place between 2022-2024. Data was sourced from the Show Must Go On working group, individual festival organisers and suppliers.

Where data for an event was available for multiple years, the most recent year's data was used, except where data varied significantly between years - in which instance an average for the particular festival was used. This was particularly useful in creating an average for waste data between wet and dry years.

A data usage agreement was in place to protect the anonymity of individual festivals and to ensure information was only used for the purposes of a sector footprint and modelling exercise.

## Approach

Data was normalised on a per person per day (PPPD) basis using the total audience days for each event (i.e. number of event days multiplied by the licensed capacity per day for each festival). This supported impact area benchmarks and the sector-level footprint calculation.

If an event had no data for a specific impact area, or if reported figures were anomalous, it was removed from that sample. If data was incomplete for an impact area, an average specific to the festival size was applied for the missing data so as to still include the event in the sample without creating a bias in the figures.

The total emissions PPPD were extrapolated against the total estimated audience days for UK festivals (based on the licensed capacity of all known festivals taking place in 2025, provided by the AIF) to calculate a carbon footprint for the UK festival sector.

## Conversion factors

The best available emissions conversion factors were used to understand festival industry climate impacts.

- Most conversion factors are from the UK Government Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy: and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's, 'UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting 2024', unless another conversion factor source is stated below. The 2024 update were the latest figures at the time of calculation.
- Food: WRAP/HESTIA (2024) 'Scope 3 GHG Measurement and Reporting Protocols for Food and Drink' Emission Factor Database v2.0
- Drink: My Emissions Food Carbon Calculator
- Embodied carbon: ICE Database Version 4 (2025), Zero Waste Scotland (2022), 'Carbon Metric Factors 2011-2020, (2018 factors for non-household waste)'; and 'Carbon Waste and Resources Metric,' Harris and James (2021).

## Further notes

Note on diesel: For small and medium events, the total reported diesel was split into a ratio of traditional diesel to HVO of 2.2:1, based on the 2019 fuel study by ZAP Concepts, Hope Solutions and Julie's Bicycle, and corroborated by the Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP) pilot study and the Low Emissions Festival Study (A Greener Future). This was to more accurately reflect the likely take-up of biodiesel in the festival sector among small and medium events. For large festivals, the reported diesel figures for traditional

diesel and HVO were used directly, as it more accurately reflected the uptake of HVO and reduction in fuel usage overall that has been achieved since 2019.

Note on materials and waste: Emissions were calculated using Julie's Bicycle's methodology of accounting for embodied carbon in material generation. Therefore, it was not based on the BEIS factors which are likely to underrepresent the full impact of material use and waste disposal. The methodology used for this study better takes into account lifecycle emissions.

## Policy and transition milestones:

As this report is primarily aimed at the UK festival and outdoor events sector, we have leant heavily on UK policy and climate frameworks. In particular, we have focused on how Climate Change Committee scenarios for reaching UK carbon budgets under the Climate Change Act 2008 might translate into the festivals and outdoor events sector and supply chain.

We acknowledge that in terms of global equity, UK policy does not always go far enough, and that where we can, we should be moving faster. We have tried to reflect this in the areas where festival and outdoor events organisers hold more agency to act with ambition and imagination.

# Annex II: Project Principles and Approach

The core working group agreed on the following project principles and approach:

- **Vision and Core Target:** North Star for industry = 50% greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by 2030 (all Scopes).
- **Strategic Planning and Roadmapping:** Establish sector transition plan (roadmap) built from current benchmarks,\* macro assessment of current impacts, and modelling of key changes that will be effective and required to meet target(s).
- **Action and Policy Advocacy:** Assess and build evidence base for the actions that industry can take and where government intervention is required: policy, licensing, funding, supply chain.
- **Measurement & Reporting Alignment:** Explore alignment on measurement and reporting with aim of common conversion factors, through a subgroup comprising of A Greener Future, Isla and Julie's Bicycle.
- **Communication and Publication:**
  - (a) Publish and Industry report which aims to galvanize the industry around vision and action.
  - (b) Provide a policy focused summary for the government.\*\*

*\*Up-to-date benchmarks for impact areas where possible based on data availability.*

*\*\*There is still work to be done to identify priorities for different government departments and tailor information accordingly, as part of building an engagement strategy [currently a next step rather than part of this project phase].*

## Definition of a 'music festival'

*'An event held in an outdoor space that is primarily music-based and requires temporary infrastructure, including one day events and concerts.'*

Association of Independent Festivals

## Size categories

Align with categories adopted by the Association of Independent Festivals:

- Micro < 1000 capacity
- Small < 20,000 capacity
- Medium < 50,000 capacity
- Large < 80,000 capacity
- Major > 80,000 capacity
- Multi-venue festival (acknowledged, but out of scope of this report).<sup>55</sup>

## Benchmarking

- There is limited value in benchmarking against/between events because scale, circumstance, resourcing factors are so different.
- There is limited quality data available for UK events to establish meaningful benchmarks for different types or scales of events.
- Benchmarking against existing climate goals and pathways is more important than comparing events. The priority should be to align with Climate Change Committee (CCC) goals, current policy, sector pathways, e.g. EU Green Festival Roadmap, the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change.
- To measure sector progress against these existing targets we need to know our starting point. This is why an initial CO<sub>2</sub>e average per person per day and for the industry is needed. Note: Carbon reporting is considered suitable for companies and not the majority of individual events (although it can be useful for larger events). The majority of events:
  - Don't understand emissions and scopes
  - Don't have the resources to measure carbon footprint in detail. For these events, time and effort can better be used to take action, so this project should focus on easy wins and best practices in significant impact areas.

## Building on existing industry work

- Build on and reference previous reports and showcase existing work, e.g.
  - Super Low Carbon Music report (Tyndall, 2022).
  - Show Must Go On report (Vision for Sustainable Events 2020).
  - More Than Music reports (Betternotstop, 2023, 2024).
  - Green Events Code of Practice National Pilot report (Vision for Sustainable Events, 2024).
  - ACT 1.5 report (Tyndall Centre, 2025).
- Ensure an event organiser survey [if undertaken] is 'more representative' i.e. not skewed toward pioneering and more environmentally active events.
- The Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP, 2025), which forms clear guidelines to sustainable event management.

# Annex III: Climate Actions Checklist 2030 for Live Outdoor Events

## 30 Climate actions for Events of all Types and Sizes

As part of the 'Show Must Go On #3 Industry report and Climate Transition Plan 2030 for the UK Live Outdoor Events Industry,' the **Vision for Sustainable Events Pledge for Festivals and Events** has been updated with a practical list of actions aimed to be realistic for events of all types sizes to implement. This work is rooted in the acknowledgement that micro and small events make up 91% of the festival industry, as shown by the research published by the Association of Independent Festivals (2025).

Events are unique in their type, size, location, audience profile etc. and so there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Over 70 practical climate actions have been reviewed using a 'feasibility filter methodology,' which considers affordability, availability in the supply chain, and how easy the actions are to implement without specialist knowledge or resources.

This process has produced this list of 30 practical sustainability measures that most events can put in place to take climate action. Note that this list is being released as a beta version; i.e. we will be actively seeking feedback throughout 2026 to relaunch in early 2027.

Alongside this list, the recently reviewed and published national Green Events Code of Practice, provides a framework for action for events and the sector, including targets for 2030.

### The Vision 2030 Pledge asks events to:

- Use the climate action checklist to adopt as many new practices as possible, as soon as achievable, and by 2030 at the latest.
- Use the Climate Actions Checklist and the Green Events Code of Practice to inform a 5-year strategy and action plan to 2030 (for larger events and organisations).
- Be part of our community of events taking action, sharing knowledge, and being the change.

[DOWNLOAD THE CHECKLIST PDF HERE](#)

[DOWNLOAD THE GREEN EVENTS CODE OF PRACTICE HERE](#)

[SIGN UP TO THE 2030 PLEDGE HERE](#)

# Climate Actions Checklist 2030 for Live Outdoor Events

Impact Area	Action / Measure / Practice or policy	Potential % emissions reduction (within impact category)	Current feasibility - comments	Additional benefits	Challenges
Energy Generation	Reduce fuel use through efficiency savings	20-40%	Available to all events, but requires working with contractors	Reduced fuel costs	Reskilling suppliers and production professionals
	Grid connection	90%+	Limited availability, but easy if the event has access to connections	Reduced costs, and deliveries. Quieter and less polluting onsite	Lack of connections available at UK greenfield and many urban events sites
	Replace diesel with HVO fuel (as an interim measure toward renewables)	15%	UK-wide access		Issues around certification and provenance

<b>Materials</b>	Reduce new materials purchased for creative builds.	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Helps create a new culture.	Additional work for the production team
	Increase rate of recycling from drinks packaging	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Highly recyclable material	Using disposable packaging increases risk of litter onsite.
	Provide water points to encourage use of reusable bottles	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Supports the adoption of reusables	Clear signage and water points marked on site maps is required
	Reduce waste related emissions using alternative materials (paper cups, rPET, plastic, etc.)	75%	Available and easy for all	Highly recyclable materials	The site is less clean and disposable usage is encouraged
	Reuse merchandise items or find sustainable alternatives	Not yet estimated		Supports audience participation. Can enhance an event's reputation.	Finding sustainable, reusable and/or reused alternatives. Potential loss of income if no suitable merch can be sourced.
	Reduce single-use plastic with reusable bar cups	50%	Cost factor for smaller events	Cleaner site	Cost and limited infrastructure for smaller events. Limit breakage and achieve. High collection rate

<b>Waste Disposal</b>	Reduce waste by maximising recycling	Not yet estimated	Available, but requires audience, crew and production participation	Cleaner site and nicer environment. Can enhance an event's reputation. Creates a positive culture and encourages desired behaviours.	Reducing non recyclable items. Understanding materials (Life Cycle Analysis). Lack of control. Greenwashing, i.e. products deemed recyclable/compostable.
	Reduce single-use plastics and waste with 'Green Riders' and dressing room policies for artists	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Supports transition to greener practices for artists	Pre-show communication with artistic teams
	Implement a Deposit Return Scheme for cans or bottles	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Supports audience participation. Can enhance an event's reputation.	Additional staff and resources needed

<b>Waste Disposal</b>	Engage audiences with clear initiatives and incentives	Not yet estimated	Available and easy for all	Supports audience participation. Enhances the events' reputation	Additional staff and resources needed
<b>Audience Travel</b>	Promote car sharing to increase occupancy and reduce number of cars	Up to 32% emissions reduction from audience travel from a variety of initiatives	Available and easy for all	Supports audience participation and community building	Finding the correct platform to organise it
	Reduce audience travel distances by prioritising early access to local ticket sales	Up to 32% emissions reduction from audience travel from a variety of initiatives	Successfully trialled by events.  Requires working with ticketing contractors.	Supports the local economy and local access to culture	Finding the correct ticketing platform to manage the operation

<b>Production Travel</b>	Hire local crew to reduce travelling distances	Not yet estimated	Available	Supports the local economy. Supports employment for parents, carers or workers who have difficulties travelling.	Creating new networks, and the outreach process
	Work with local suppliers and traders to reduce travel distances	30%	Available	Supports the local economy. Brings businesses into the journey. Supports local resilience and growth.	Establishes connections with local businesses. The economic landscape is difficult for traders.
	Introduce low emissions onsite transport, e.g. electric vans, or cargo cycles	60-100%	Available	Reduces onsite noise pollution	

<b>Production Travel</b>	Implement an efficient production delivery schedule to reduce build and derig travel	Not yet estimated	Available	Creates a positive culture within the organisation. Reduces unnecessary trips and vehicle movements.	Contractors' timelines during the summer going from festival to festival might be a challenge
	Consolidate food deliveries with a centralised ordering system for traders	Not yet estimated	Limited availability.  Requires audience, crew and production participation.	Supports local businesses	Additional facilities and staffing to manage the operation
	Implement a strict no idling policy to reduce unnecessary onsite emissions	100%	Available	Reduces onsite noise pollution	Challenging people onsite, especially for one-off deliveries
	Use local storage facilities for equipment, build and design materials	Unknown	Available	Supports local businesses	Involves redesigning creative/build schedules Avoid re-ordering

<b>Artists Travel</b>	Eliminate exclusivity clauses from artist contracts to maximise touring schedules	Unknown	Requires shift in industry practices	Supports the grassroots scene. Potential to support overall reduction in audience travels for the sector.	Change in booking culture required from agents, artists & programmers
	Increase programming of local or regional artists to reduce artists travel emissions.	Not yet estimated	Available	Supports the grassroots scene. Nurtures talent growth. New networks and partnerships.	Specialist music events may struggle to source locally or regionally which may affect their brand or audience experience

<b>Food</b>	Move to a 100% plant based menu	80%	Any event could do this in principle, but a phased or partial approach may be best	Nutrition, health and mental health benefits	Respecting cultural practices and providing for all dietary needs and preferences
	Remove red meat from menus	46%	All events can achieve this	Nutrition, health and mental health benefits. New menus create new skills.	Audience expectations and profit margins. Availability of non-meat concessions.
	Reduce the proportion of meat in (e.g. 50/50 meals) and /or increase the % of vegetarian food onsite.	Not yet estimated	All events can achieve this	Nutrition, health and mental health benefits. New menus create new skills.	Coordinating all traders and finding adequate replacements for their recipes

<b>Beverages</b>	Work with local drink suppliers to reduce travel distances	Not yet estimated	Available	Supports local businesses	May be limited by the local suppliers able to provide the scale/amount required. The number of suppliers will be higher. More admin is required.
	Work with sustainable drinks suppliers such as B Corps to reduce impacts of brewing	Not yet estimated	Available	Supports ethical businesses. Creating new networks and partnerships.	
<b>Water</b>	Implement water efficiency measures to reduce water usage	Not yet estimated	Available		

## Annex IV: Key Terms (Glossary)

Term	Definition
<b>1.5 degrees pathway</b>	A roadmap for global emissions reduction designed to limit the rise in average global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels to prevent the most severe climate disasters. It aims to halve carbon emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050.
<b>Biodegradable</b>	An item or material that can be decomposed by bacteria or other living microorganisms, including fungi, to produce organic matter.
<b>Bioplastics</b>	A plastic derived from biological substances or renewable biomass sources such as vegetable fats and oils, corn starch, straw, woodchips or recycled food waste, rather than from petroleum. NB: this does not mean the products are biodegradable.
<b>Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e)</b>	A carbon dioxide equivalent or CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent, abbreviated as CO <sub>2</sub> e is a metric measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their Global Warming Potential (GWP).
<b>Carbon footprint</b>	The total CO <sub>2</sub> e emissions generated by a person, organisation, or community over a set period.
<b>Carbon neutral</b>	Carbon neutrality means having a balance between carbon emissions emitted and those absorbed from the atmosphere and stored (carbon sequestration). An organisation can achieve carbon neutrality by offsetting their emissions. The term 'carbon neutral' does not mean a company has mitigated or reduced carbon emissions.
<b>Carbon negative / Climate positive</b>	Carbon negative means removing more CO <sub>2</sub> e from the atmosphere than is emitted, going beyond carbon neutrality. Overall, the project removes carbon emissions rather than adding to them, becoming climate positive.

<b>Compostable</b>	An item made from an organic material that can decay or decompose, through the action of bacteria and fungi, transforming into a fertiliser.
<b>Conversion factors</b>	A multiplier for converting a quantity expressed in one set of units, e.g. kWh, into a greenhouse gas equivalent.
<b>Emissions</b>	When we use the term emissions, we are referring to the greenhouse gases (GHGs) that are released into the atmosphere by human activities. The primary source is the burning of fossil fuels, but other activities like deforestation, agriculture, and industrial processes also contribute significantly.
<b>Embodied carbon</b>	Embodied carbon includes all the GHGs emitted in producing material throughout the entire lifecycle of a product or service. This includes any GHGs created during the manufacturing, transport and construction practices of materials.
<b>Electric Vehicle EV</b>	<p>An Electric Vehicle (EV) is a car that uses one or more electric motors for propulsion. The term is a broad category with three main types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV): Runs purely on a battery and an electric motor. Must be plugged in to recharge.</li> <li>• Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV): Combines a gasoline engine with an electric motor and a small, self-charging battery to improve fuel efficiency.</li> <li>• Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV): Similar to an HEV but with a larger battery that can be charged externally.</li> </ul>
<b>Greenhouse gases (GHGs)</b>	Gases in Earth's atmosphere that trap heat, preventing it from escaping into space. Human activities have increased the concentration of these gases, leading to an 'enhanced' greenhouse effect and causing the planet's temperature to rise (global warming). The main GHGs are: Carbon Dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ), Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ), Nitrous Oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O), and Fluorinated Gases (HFCs, PFCs, SF <sub>6</sub> ).

<b>GHG Protocol</b>	The GHG Protocol is a globally recognised framework for measuring, managing, and reporting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from companies, cities, and countries. It provides a standardised way for organisations to account for their carbon footprint, by categorising emissions into Scope 1, 2, and 3.
<b>HVO (fuel)</b>	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, a renewable fuel (biofuel) made from waste products.
<b>Hydrogen power</b>	Hydrogen power refers to a fuel that produces energy and water as the only byproduct. Positive and negative environmental impacts can vary depending on the production method.
<b>IPCC</b>	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: The United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.
<b>Low Emission Zone (LEZ)</b>	A defined area where access for certain vehicles is restricted or charged based on their emissions. The goal is to discourage the use of older, more polluting vehicles to improve air quality and protect public health.
<b>Net zero emissions</b>	Net zero emissions means reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Any remaining, unavoidable emissions must then be absorbed from the atmosphere, often by natural systems like preserving or replanting forests or through technology, to achieve an overall balance of zero.
<b>Non Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM)</b>	Non Road Mobile Machinery are engines and equipment not used on public roads that produce emissions, e.g. Plant, generators, telehandlers and buggies.
<b>Offsetting</b>	Carbon offsetting is the process of compensating for your own greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by funding projects that reduce or remove an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere elsewhere. These projects are often tree planting initiatives, renewable energy developments, or energy efficiency schemes. Offsetting does not count as a direct reduction of your own carbon footprint; it is a separate action reported as a counterbalance.

<b>Scope 1 emissions</b>	Scope 1 emissions are direct GHG emissions from sources that are owned and controlled by an organisation, such as natural gas combusted in boilers and diesel/petrol combusted in vehicles.
<b>Scope 2 emissions</b>	Scope 2 emissions are indirect GHG emissions from the generation of electricity, steam, heat or cooling that the organisation buys and consumes.
<b>Scope 3 emissions</b>	Scope 3 emissions are all the indirect emissions that happen both up and down a company's value chain. These are emissions the company doesn't directly create or control but is indirectly responsible for. Examples include emissions from business travel, employee and audience travel, purchased goods and services, and the disposal of waste.
<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	A collection of 17 interconnected global goals set by the United Nations in 2015. They serve as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
<b>Tailpipe emissions</b>	Tailpipe emissions are pollutants and greenhouse gases released from a vehicle's exhaust system.
<b>tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	Unit of metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (see definition for CO <sub>2</sub> e).
<b>Waste hierarchy</b>	A framework and regulation focused on waste prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery, and disposal – in that order.

# Endnotes

- 1 Based on annual total domestic UK emissions 2022 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uks-carbon-footprint/carbon-footprint-for-the-uk-and-england-to-2022>
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- 3 The Show Must Go On Update 2020: Environmental Impact Report for the UK Festivals and Outdoor Events Sector, Vision for Sustainable Events (2020)
- 4 The UK's plans and progress to reach net zero by 2050', Commons Library Research Briefing (2025) <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9888/>
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- 6 Green Events Code of Practice 2025 - <https://visionsustainableevents.org/green-events-code/>
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- 9 6th Carbon Budget 2033-2037 - The UK's Path to Net Zero. Climate Change Committee (2020) <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/sixth-carbon-budget/> p.128
- 10 The Seventh Carbon Budget - Advice for the UK Government. Climate Change Committee (2025) p.181 <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/The-Seventh-Carbon-Budget.pdf>
- 11 Industrial Non-Road Mobile Machinery Decarbonisation Options: Techno-Economic Feasibility Study. ERM for DESNZ (2023). <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/658443f3ed3c3400133bfd4d/nrmm-decarbonisation-options-feasibility-report.pdf>
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- 21 See From Carbon Footprints to Cultural Influence: Engaging Live Music Audiences on Travel Choices, Corner, A, Latter, B, and Julie's Bicycle (2022) <https://juliesbicycle.com/news-opinion/music-audiences-travel-choices-report/> and Case Studies: Engaging Live Music Audiences On Climate Change Through Travel Campaigns, Corner, A. and Latter, B. (2023) <https://gulbenkian.pt/uk-branch/publications/engaging-live-music-audiences-on-climate-change-through-travel-campaigns/>
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- 33 The Seventh Carbon Budget - Advice for the UK Government. Climate Change Committee (2025) p.245 <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/The-Seventh-Carbon-Budget.pdf>
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- 38 No Climate Action Without Us Toolkit. Attitude is Everything, Julie's Bicycle and A Greener Future (2025) <https://attitudeiseverything.org.uk/no-climate-action-without-us-toolkit/>
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- 46 The Live Events Access Charter is a framework created by Attitude is Everything to support and encourage live event organisations to progress their inclusive practices for diverse disabled people across all areas of their business: <https://attitudeiseverything.org.uk/industry/live-events-access-charter/>
- 47 State of Nature Partnership, 2023 <https://stateofnature.org.uk/>
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- 55 The Festival Forecast 2025, The Association of Independent Festival Organisers <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/65f1906237072c2f174055e7/t/685ac8c428cd774314ec5264/1750780103575/AIF+FESTIVAL+FORECAST+2025.pdf>