

SUSTAINABLE EVENT GUIDE

Simple changes to help make your events more sustainable

We can all take action to reduce our impact on the environment!

Litter Free Dorset promotes the waste hierarchy, which prioritises reusing over recycling in order to reduce waste and prevent litter.

TIPS FOR VENUES, PARTIES & WEDDINGS

1



Sign Up to the Sustainable Business Network

- Join a network of likeminded organisations.
- Reduce single use plastics in your business.
- Find resources to help improve your sustainability.
- Attend sustainable business network events.
- Discover simple changes you can make in your business.

2



Catering

- Ask your caterer about their ethos and sustainability credentials, and discuss what you want before booking.
- Consider the number of courses to avoid food waste, and talk to your caterer about using up leftovers.
- Food waste should be put into a compost bin.
- Select dishes that promote seasonal & local ingredients.

3



Decorations

- Use reusable decorations e.g. bunting, blankets, dried flowers
- Avoid single-use plastic decorations.
- Potted plants are a great alternative to floral arrangements - and you could give them away to guests afterwards!
- Create reusable signage with chalk boards and pallets.
- Save money! Hire/borrow decorations instead of buying new.

4



Don't inflate to celebrate

- Dorset and BCP Councils have a ban on the release of balloons and sky lanterns.
- Balloons are not biodegradable. They stay in the environment, gradually breaking down into microplastics.
- Balloons can be ingested by wildlife and contain chemicals which are harmful to our environment.
- Sky lanterns are a fire hazard and are dangerous for livestock.
- Try bunting or reusable backdrops instead of a balloon arch!

5



Refill

- Make sure your venue has tap water available and signposted – your guests will appreciate it!
- Provide glassware and jugs instead of bottled water.
- Glassware, crockery and cutlery can all be hired if your venue doesn't provide them.

6

Bar



- Plastic straws & stirrers are banned in the UK. Avoid single use by providing stainless steel straws as a gift for your guests!
- Paper napkins are extremely wasteful. Only provide them on request, or use fabric ones that can be washed & reused.
- Serve drinks from local providers to reduce mileage and support local businesses.
- If you're serving cocktails, avoid single-use decorations like umbrellas and sparklers.
- Fruit garnishes can be very wasteful. If you do use them, make sure the fruit goes into a food waste bin.

7

What Not to Flush



- Toilets are under pressure at big events!
- Flushing sanitary products, wipes, nappies, etc. down the loo leads to drain blockages which can cause flooding and end up polluting rivers and the sea.
- Download Litter Free Dorset's 'What Not to Flush' signage, which provides clear guidance for your guests.

8

Bins and recycling



- Reduce waste as much as you can, and recycle as much as possible after an event.
- Have separate bins and make it clear what goes where by displaying a list on each bin.
- Make it as easy as possible for guests to dispose of rubbish.
- Compostable/biodegradable packaging should go into general waste as it can't be recycled.
- Remember – many disposable coffee cups are not recyclable. Download our Ultimate Packaging Guide to find out more about different types of packaging.