



Sustainable Events Best Practice Guide for Event Organisers (2016)

Related Standard:
BS EN ISO 14001 : 2015

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Introduction

Sustainability sits at the heart of everything The Royal Parks does. **The Royal Parks’ Sustainability Strategy for 2015-2025** sets out what sustainability means and how The Royal Parks will look to improve its current level of embedded sustainability. The purpose of the Sustainability Strategy is to look at the key economic, environmental and social topics and to plan a roadmap for the future, ensuring The Royal Parks is a leader in sustainability for green open spaces.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to translate the **Sustainability Strategy** (The Royal Parks sustainability pillars and themes) into practical measures for event organisers. This has been presented in a sustainability events checklist in **Annex A** and a list of questions in **Annex B**.

Why

There are a number of reasons and drivers why event organisers should align to this guidance and become more sustainable. Foremost is that partners of The Royal Parks should reflect what The Royal Parks value, and sustainability sits at the heart of that. A number of external drivers also exist, from Government political commitments (i.e. Paris Climate Change agreement 2015) to reputation enhancement. Embedding sustainability into the planning and delivery of events can improve the efficiency of events, as well as minimise the impact of events on the parks. Events also have a key role to play in the community, have a major cultural significance and support health and well-being. The Royal Parks wants to ensure that these events continue to the highest standards and that the parks remain as excellent venues while minimising the impact on environmental assets and the people who live in and around the parks. For further information please see the **Sustainability Strategy**.

https://www.royalparks.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/64227/Sustainability-Strategy-2016.pdf

Scope

The scope of this document is limited to major events as defined by **Hosting Major Events in the Royal Parks**: https://www.royalparks.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/41779/Hosting-Major-Events-in-the-Royal-Parks.pdf. Small and medium events can use this guide as a reference document to align with The Royal Parks best practice.

What sustainability means to The Royal Parks?

Sustainability is a vast subject that reflects a number of different economic, environmental and social challenges with which society, business and government are faced. In order to be sustainable, The Royal Parks needs to ensure event organisers, staff, contractors, volunteers; partners and stakeholders are working together. The four key sustainability pillars as identified by the **Sustainability Strategy** are:

- **Conserve and enhance the unique landscapes, built heritage & biodiversity**
- **Sustainable growth - providing a environmentally excellent and financially viable green open space to the public;**
- **Mitigation and adapting to climate change; and**
- **Education, people, fairness and improving wellbeing.**

Table 1 – Summary of sustainability language used through the document

Phrase	Explanation
Classic Sustainability Pillars	These are the three pillars defined by the Brundtland report of 1987 and the World Summit in 2005. They consist of environmental protection, social well-being and economic stability.
The Royal Parks Sustainability Pillars	Building on the classic definition, and applying it to The Royal Parks, we have developed our own four pillars for sustainability
The Royal Parks Sustainability Themes	Each of The Royal Parks Sustainability Pillars is broken down into themes which explain the pillar, and act as criteria against which to evaluate park operations and the performance of suppliers and partners.
Sustainability Framework	Provides the structure for development and delivery of The Royal Parks priorities for Sustainability.

These pillars and their themes are further explained in the **Sustainability Strategy**.

What are sustainable events?

Sustainable events are events that consider the impacts of planning and delivery against the four sustainability pillars and themes. The Royal Parks has created sustainability evaluation criteria (**Annex A**) which measure actions to mitigate any negative impacts of an event and achieve a good level of sustainability in each area. The Royal Parks major events will be considered against their alignment to the sustainability pillars; this is summarised in the sustainability checklist in **Annex A** and a list of monitoring questions in **Annex B**.

Approach

The Royal Parks understands that the practicality and economics of event management and environmental protection, along with social development, can be a challenging balance to achieve. The Royal Parks has reflected this by breaking down actions into two distinct categories: ‘must do’ and ‘should consider’. ‘Must do’ refers to an action or approach that the event organiser must take, whereas ‘should consider’ applies to either an aspiration or an area that needs further research and understanding into its practicability for a particular event.

Objectives for events

The Royal Parks Sustainability Strategy sets a number of objectives:

1. To create a circular waste economy – by maximising the prevention of waste and promoting the re-use and recycling of waste and resources;
2. To reduce green house gas emissions and energy consumption and to generate renewable energies on site (fuel, gas, electricity);
3. To improve our management of water within the parks and reduce our reliance on mains water;
4. To monitor, maintain and improve the bio-diversity and bio-security within the parks;
5. To promote sustainable transport;
6. To embed sustainability into all suppliers and contracts;
7. To improve air quality in the parks;
8. To minimise the reliance on imported products into the park and their effect on habitats; and
9. To improve physical and mental health and wellbeing of both staff and visitors through positives initiatives.

Ensuring sustainability is embedded

To ensure that sustainability is embedded into event planning, the following will be introduced:

- Event applications. Where applications are received, including through a tender or other competitive process, consideration will be given to how event organisers will manage the event sustainably;
- Pre-event. Conduct a planning meeting with the Sustainability Manager, which considers the checklist in **Annex A** and questions in **Annex B**;
- Conduct at least one sustainability audit during the event based upon the checklist in **Annex A** and questions in **Annex B**;
- Have one follow up meeting to discuss this document and findings of the audit with the Sustainability Manager;

Reporting

Must Do

Before

During event planning event organisers should report on how they plan to manage and achieve the actions summarised in checklist **Annex A**.

During

While the event is taking place The Royal Parks will monitor the operation according to **Annex B**. The organiser must report to The Royal Parks:

- Any incidents;
- Any damage caused to environmental assets that needs to be remediated; and
- Complaints received.

Post event

After the event, event organisers will on:

- The amount of waste created and where it went;
- The amount of energy and water used; and
- The number of people attending the event and their travel options (if appropriate);

Annex A –Sustainable Events Checklist for Major Events

The questions below are labelled as **must do** or **should consider** in accordance with The Royal Parks approach to sustainability

Table 2 – Checklist for major events

Sustainability Pillar	Theme	Must Do or Consider	Checklist	Action Taken
Conserve and enhance the unique landscapes, built heritage and biodiversity	Eco-systems	Do	Have you consulted The Royal Parks ecology team?	
	Eco-systems	Do	Have you consulted The Royal Parks arboriculture team, especially when positioning infrastructure near to trees / canopies? Have you ensured the areas around trees are kept clear to avoid soil compaction, for example, avoid installing marquees which require large steel pins to hold them up near trees?	
	Eco-systems	Do	Have you ensured that lighting is pointing down and not into trees? Lighting should be downward facing with UV filters as some areas are bat sensitive, therefore permission from park management is required on lighting locations	
	Eco-systems	Do	Generator locations must be discussed and should not be directed into the tree canopy.	
	Eco-systems	Do	Tree root zone protection should be discussed to avoid driving over, building on or storing materials on tree roots.	
	Eco-systems	Do	Have you informed/trained all drivers about the relevant park regulations?	
	Wildlife and species	Do	Are you ensuring no using glass at events? (unless agreed with park management)	
	Wildlife and species	Do	How are you reducing the impact of consumables? For example, are you ensuring catering units do not give away sugar packets? Are napkins and plates given out bio-degradable? Could they be composted? Is cutlery recyclable?	
	Asset maintenance	Do	Have you taken measures to avoid damage to paths, buildings, monuments etc?	
	Asset maintenance	Do	No digging into ground (unless explicit permission from park management).	
	Heritage	Consider	Does your event fit with the history and heritage of the park?	
People, education, fairness and improving wellbeing	Healthy workforce	Do	Do you know the incident reporting procedure?	
	Community Engagement	Do	Have you made provision for sound management and monitoring?	
	Community engagement	Do	Is there a stakeholder engagement plan, including local community engagement?	
	Community engagement	Consider	Is there a communication strategy proposed?	
	Education	Consider	Have you held at least one sustainability training session?	

	Education	Consider	Is there a space to promote the work of The Royal Parks? (going forward this may be a must do)	
	Health and Wellbeing	Consider	Will you promote healthy eating and an active lifestyle?	
Sustainable growth	Transparency	Do	Is your event consistent with the Hosting Major Events in the Royal Parks strategy?	
	Sustainable events	Do and Consider	Have you seen and made provision for reporting against The Royal Parks events sustainability objectives?	
	Sustainable procurement	Consider	Have you procured goods and services sustainably?	
	Accountability	Consider	Are your suppliers EMS (ISO 14001, EMAS, and BS 8555) certified?	
	Innovation	Consider	Have you considered new and innovative solutions?	
Mitigating and adapting to climate change	Water	Do	Do you know which drains you can use in the parks for discharge? Have you gained prior approval from park management on which services you can use?	
	Water	Do	Have you taken measures to protect the water courses? How have you ensured no spillages? Do you have spill kits on-site? You must inform The Royal Parks of any spillage in the park.	
	Water	Do	Are there drinking taps available for water bottle re-fills?	
	Waste	Do	Do you have your own waste strategy in place?	
	Waste	Do	Have you made provisions for waste management?	
	Waste	Do	Are you giving no handouts/ give-aways (unless otherwise agreed)?	
	Waste	Do	Have you limited the number of consumables on-site? Are all your consumables 100% recyclable?	
	Resources	Do	Have you ensured that you are not using any chemicals that adversely affect human health and the environment?	
	Resources (Air Quality)	Consider	Are you using the most efficient (low emissions to fuel use) generators, toilets and energy using equipment?	
	Resources	Do	Are you aware of the issue surrounding the use of palm oil?	
	Resources	Do	Are you using only Forest Stewardship Council or similar certified wood with chain of custody documentation?	
	Resources	Consider	Is food locally, ethically and seasonally sourced?	
	Transport	Consider	Do you have a transport plan for visitors? Have you encouraged sustainable forms of transport? Have you engaged with TfL for service updates on any planned works	
	Transport	Consider	Have you managed to take measures to reduce vehicle movements?	
	Transport	Consider	Are you using bikes or walking to get around site where possible?	
	GHG Emissions	Consider	Are you using the most energy efficient electronic equipment?	
	GHG Emissions	Consider	Have you looked at the possibility of renewable energies on-site?	

Annex B – Sustainability Events Monitoring Questions

Table 3 – The Royal Parks monitoring questions for use during events

Sustainability Pillar	Sustainability Themes	Key Questions	Comments (consider or do – evidence)
Conserve and enhance the unique landscapes, built heritage and biodiversity	Eco-systems, wildlife and species	Do you require/have you conducted an ecological impact assessment during the contract? Do you require/have a tree constraints plan in place? Have you consulted a Royal Parks specialist for assistance?	
	Eco-systems (reinstatement)	Is all site damage being recorded and reported to The Royal Parks?	
	Other programmes, innovations communications or schemes	Do you run or promote any additional schemes or campaigns around the event e.g. healthy living, sustainable transport etc? Have you limited vehicle movements on-site? Have you used sustainable modes of transport where appropriate?	
Sustainable growth	Sustainable Procurement	Who do you employ at events? Any programmes to promote certain groups of people? What environmental service level agreements do you use during the procurement of goods and services? What environmental and social criteria do you question your suppliers on? What do you do with construction materials after the event?	
	Sustainable Construction	Are materials kept for next year's event or thrown away? What are stands, signs etc made from, what happens to them after the event? Do suppliers have appropriate H&S processes in place that are monitored?	
	Sustainable Procurement (food)	Where is food sourced from? Do you promote a healthy diet, active lifestyle etc?	
People, education, fairness and improving wellbeing	Community engagement	Have you agreed a stakeholder engagement plan with The Royal Parks? Any opportunities for volunteers? What educational messages are being promoted? How many complaints have been received and what were the mitigation measures?	
	Healthy workforce	What emergency plans are in place for spills and accidents e.g. spill kits? - This should be part of a standard risk assessment and method statement	
Mitigating and adapting to climate change	Efficient use of raw materials and waste	Is there a plan in place to limit or reduce the use of paper, give-aways, cups, lanyards, programmes etc? Are you using digital media communications rather than paper?	
	Waste	Have you considered what waste will be produced before the event and planned for its management? How are wastes managed during the event – bins / signage etc?	

		Have you provided the correct documentation (waste transfer notes, licenses etc) so that The Royal Parks can understand the recycling rate?	
	Efficient use of raw materials and waste (chemicals, fuels, oils)	What types of cleaning chemicals are used on-site? Any other chemicals on-site? What about fuels and their storage?	
	Water	Do you try to limit water use where possible? Are you using borehole water where available?	
	GHG Emissions	Do you try to reduce gas and electricity use where possible? Do you use any renewable energy? How is the use of fuel minimised? Are there any alternatives? Are fuels controlled and adequately stored? What generators are you using? Are you new and low emissions generators?	