



Sustainable Events Toolkit

Boating events

June 2019

**This toolkit is aimed at boating events such as races and regattas
at water-based venues**

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Section 1 - Introducing Environmental Sustainability

This guide has been produced by the Royal Yachting Association to support its affiliated clubs and training centres. The Toolkit aims to give event organisers a comprehensive overview of how to run a sustainable boating event. Each section explores how to reduce the footprint of your event, for example by reducing energy consumption, water use or by increasing recycling.

The guide is aimed at boaters and includes a number of inspiring case studies throughout the text. Each chapter concludes with a simple checklist to give you some useful pointers to keep the positive actions going. The advice in this guide can be used alone to support the sustainable development of your event, even if you are just taking the first steps.

Environmental Principles

There are many different ways to approach the issue of environmental sustainability. True sustainable development, in its broadest definition, connects three aspects, often referred to as the 'triple bottom line' these are...

- 1) Economic sustainability: where a business should be aware of their ability to continue trading, this means taking aspects such as legal compliance and customer satisfaction into account alongside profit margins.
- 2) Social sustainability: where a business, or event should consider all of its social interactions from employees, attendees and the wider community with issues such as employee welfare, fair trade and human rights.
- 3) Environmental sustainability, the main focus of this guide. This means individuals and businesses making responsible decisions that will reduce an organisation's negative impact on the environment.

Why make an event more sustainable?

At its most basic, the aim is to reduce the environmental impact of events so that future generations can enjoy the resources we might take for granted today.

The next most pressing reasons, and ones your Board or Council may be more motivated by, are the potential to:

- reduce operating costs,
- secure funding,
- support your environmental policy,
- meet stakeholders expectations and,
- lead by example,
- be legally compliant and,
- Meet industry standards.

Volvo Ocean Race in numbers

The way that the sustainability story is told can achieve great returns for the environment but also for your profile. The Volvo Ocean Race have kept a tally of some impressive statistics, for example:

- 275,000 visitors in the Race Villages viewed sustainability films and the Clean Seas exhibition.
- 64,500 students in 37 countries, are Champions for the Sea through the linked ocean health education programme.

Section 2: The Sustainable Event Toolkit

Environmental policy and action plan

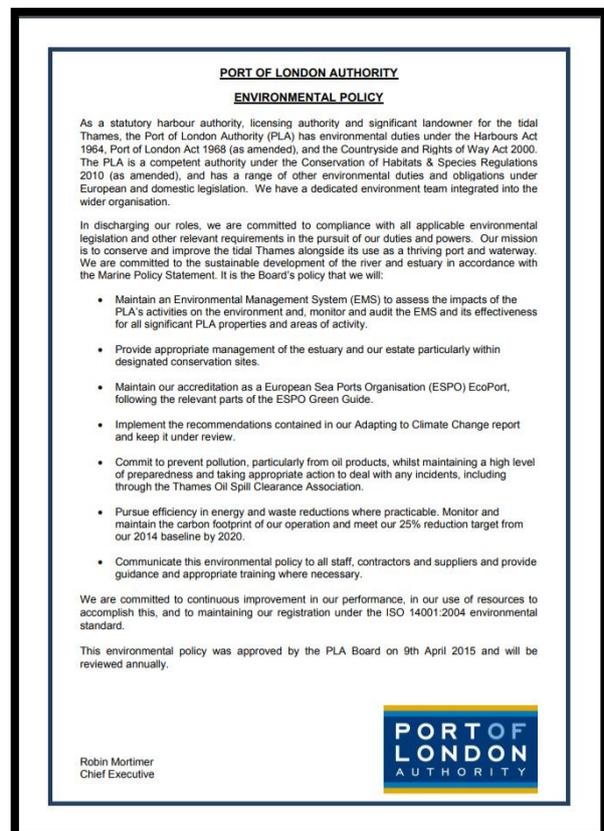
Setting an environmental policy for your event is an essential first step and an important communication tool for your stakeholders, members, staff and, of course, the event attendees.

It can be wide ranging and ambitious or short and simple, whatever works best for you and your event. Your policy should be around one page long, laying out your commitments to environmental improvement and, by setting specific targets, giving a structure to the day to day work you will undertake to achieve them.

You can use the example list below to help you build an environment policy suitable for your event.

The text

A strong environmental policy will include:



- A statement of compliance with existing legislation
- A commitment to continual improvement
- A list of aims you will work on
- An acknowledgment of site specific challenges such as any designations
- Targets for measuring and monitoring your aims
- Senior commitment to enacting the policy (signed by senior staff)
- A brief action plan

The targets

Targets should be based on the key aims outlined in your policy. If possible, targets should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time based (S.M.A.R.T). For targets to be successful you need to first record a baseline figure (a starting point) to work on improving.

- Reduce water use by X% by 20??
- Reduce energy consumption by x% by 20??
- Reduce waste by x% by 20??
- Increase by x% the amount of waste sent to recycling by 20??
- Increase the amount of recyclable materials used during the event by x% by 20??
- Increase the amount of renewable energy used on site by x% by 20??
- Increase the number of reused items at or from the event by x% by 20??
- Increase the amount of sustainable, seasonal food used at the event by x% by 20??
- Reduce the number of single occupancy cars used at the event by x% by 20??

Writing an action plan

An action plan is a detailed plan outlining actions needed to reach one or more goals. It is there as a guide and reminder of what needs to be completed to maintain and achieve your policy.

An action plan consists of:

- Main aims (what) – followed by smaller aims, objectives and tasks required to meet that aim.
- A time schedule (when)– a deadline for when the tasks should be completed
- Responsibility (who) – designated individuals who are responsible for that action.
- Inputs and resources (how) – this includes any cost, expertise, data and evidence, equipment or materials required.

Examples of environmental policies

There are many examples of environmental policies to draw from. Some of these are listed below:

- [The Green Blue](#)
- [Royal Cork Yacht Club](#)
- [Edinburgh University Sailing Club](#)
- [Marlow Ropes](#)
- [Ormiston Wires](#)
- [Kambe events](#)
- [Utility week live](#)

Next steps

Once your environmental policy is constructed it's important to communicate it to all your stakeholders. This would include other staff members, volunteers, event attendees, and members of the wider community such as relevant governing bodies like Natural England. You could email out a copy of the policy, add it to your event website, post about it on social media channels or print it out and display it at the event.

It is also important that your policy is maintained. This may involve creating a working group (discussed later) to review it before and after the event ensuring that aims are being acted on and targets are still strived towards.

Environmental Policy Checklist

- Construct an environment policy before your event that includes:
 - A statement of compliance with existing legislation
 - A commitment to continual improvement
 - A list of aims you will work on
 - Targets for measuring and monitoring your aims
 - Senior commitment to enacting the policy (signed by senior staff)
 - A brief action plan
- Share and communicate your policy
- Maintain your policy – work towards your targets for continual improvement

Teamwork and volunteering



RIGHTS TO IMAGE NOT SECURED <https://media.gettyimages.com/videos/dedicated-environmental-volunteers-video-id497234330?s=640x640>

Most events rely on volunteers to ensure they run smoothly and this is especially true of boating events which may have an entirely voluntary workforce. Bearing in mind the huge debt of gratitude we owe to them, it may seem like an imposition to ask them to also meet sustainability criteria but the reality is that this is more about a shift in mind set than added workload.

Getting staff and volunteers onside is important but making sure all attendees play their part is essential – and this is where eco-champions come into the picture.

The team

To instil sustainability within an event a core team should be created:

- An environmental champion: the key lead role (likely the reader of this guide). It is their responsibility to ensure the event has sustainability on the agenda. Their responsibilities may include: writing the environmental policy and action plan; recruiting, training and guiding the eco-champions; setting up a working group.
- Eco-champions (volunteers): this could be another individual or team on the ground at your event. They should be on-site throughout the event advising, monitoring and assisting. Their responsibilities may include: collecting data and evidence to help you reach your targets, monitoring the water use in the rinse down area, producing materials prior to the event (social media posts, guides), litter pickers etc.
- A working group: constructed of the environmental champion, eco-champions and other crucial staff members likely from a range of areas. The group will work

towards maintaining and updating the policy for this event and events in the future.

Volunteer Recruitment

Recruiting eco-champions is an excellent way to ensure that your carefully structured event achieves its sustainability ambitions, with the added advantage of giving a larger number of people a purposeful and enjoyable role in the event's success. If you are not part of the racing elite it can sometimes be hard to know how to fit into the pace and style of boating events but becoming an eco-champion may be the very thing which allows you access to this exciting world without expecting you to know your 470's from your 29ers!

Eco-Champions

At Glastonbury there are 1,300 recycling volunteers, 1,200 work for a ticket and the other volunteer for their nominated charity. The money that they earn gets donated to the charity they are working for.

Placing advertisements for eco-champions is an obvious place to start. Depending on the numbers of participants and the size of the site you will need 2 or more on each day to allow them to have company and enjoy some flexibility. They will also need a little training, which might involve introducing them to the waste contractors, getting them to read through this guidance, or involving [The Green Blue](#) staff and using their excellent educational materials.

Crucial roles

Two key roles for eco-champions are the 'Waste Champion' and the 'Water Champion'. This does not mean standing by the bin or hoses all day but it does mean doing 20-30 minute stints asking people if they understand which bin to use and checking to see if there is any cross contamination. Similarly, the Water Champion will regularly visit the wash down area, making sure hoses are turned off, saving gallons of water. Both roles can be performed with minimal training, by people of any age and almost any physical ability and many report that it is a fun way to meet people.

It's important that you recognise your eco-champions as honoured members of the team, welcomed at meetings with the other volunteers and briefed about the day to day running of the event. Tasks you can ask them to co-ordinate include the end of the day/event litter pick, the redistribution of spare food, clothes or other kit to the local community and a hose nozzle amnesty should some go walk about during the event!

You can also recruit volunteer 'Biosecurity Champions' to do hull checks at events, see our section on [biosecurity](#) for more information.

Saying 'Thank You'

Perks for volunteers are important. Like all of us, eco-champions respond well to a 'thank you' but you can also offer them a few additional perks such free or discounted tickets, a thank you letter or reference, a certificate of volunteering, a trip out on the

safety or committee boats, a trip on one of the racing boats or perhaps even a tree planted in their honour on the site or elsewhere as part of your [carbon offsetting](#).

Team work and Volunteering Checklist

- Identify eco-champion roles within your event
- Advertise the roles widely as a new way for all ages and abilities to get involved with events, use an incentive like free tickets, lunches or 'backstage passes' to boost numbers.
- Make sure you give eco-champions support and training appropriate to their roles and ensure you say 'thank you'.
- Maintain a working group to continue your sustainability progress.

Communications

No matter your aims communication is a vital part of sustainability. It helps to demonstrate your commitment and progress and highlights key sustainability messages to the wider audience. Before communicating you need to know WHO; WHAT; and HOW!

Who is your audience?

Your sustainability messaging should reach a wide audience. Understanding which audience you intend to reach influences what messages you share and how you communicate them.

Your audiences may include:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Sponsors and suppliers
- Other organisations including external media and environmental authorities
- Competitors and supporting teams
- The local community (i.e.: schools, youth clubs)
- Attendees and spectators

What to communicate

When communicating sustainability at your event it's important that you recognise what are the key messages and points that you want to share.

This will likely include...

- **Actions:** What you are doing at your event and how can your audiences help. This will include sharing your environmental policy, your targets, commitments and ambitions. This could include preparing attendees on what they can do e.g. bringing their own reusable water bottle and the good practice they are encouraged to adopt, including any facilities that will enable them to achieve this e.g. recycling bins, wash-down station.
- **Awareness and Advice:** This includes potential risks (i.e. oil spill) as well as health and safety information. In addition to increasing attendee's awareness of broader environmental issues. This may be highlighting the impact of biosecurity, flagging sensitive habitats and wildlife in the area or informing people on the issues of marine litter and micro-plastics. This can be partnered with advice on how they can help or get involved.
- **Celebrations:** It is important to share your achievements and progress made related to your sustainability actions. This could include a public 'thank you'; certificates or awards to specific individuals supporting your sustainability goals (a volunteer / competitor / attendee / member of staff / supplier); social media posts or a report on your progress – how much waste was recycled at your event?

How to communicate:

There are many different forms of communications to use. The method you use will depend on what you are sharing and who you are communicating with. The methods of communication have been grouped based on impact. Lower impact methods are likely to be less effective as it requires the audience to choose to acknowledge the information; higher impact methods require audience participation and engagement therefore the messages are more likely to be retained. To communicate effectively use a range of communications methods before, during and after your event.

The 2019 European Championships achieved a media reach of approximately 2.4 million by using a diverse range of communications methods including Social media channels, national and local media and an informative talk.

Low – impact:

- Display information: on posters, leaflets and notice boards. This should be in high foot-fall areas or at specific locations for example water re-fill stations or boat wash-down areas.
- Have information available on your website. This should include the environmental policy, advice on best practice, links to external pages (i.e. the Green Blue)

Medium – impact:

- Share information directly to your audiences via email (i.e. within the joining instructions) or within procurement policies.
- Post on social media channels
- Use other media channels (newsletters, local paper/ press, radio, magazines)

High – impact:

- Face to face communication: this may including talking about sustainability within your introductions, hosting specific talks on sustainability, having your eco-champions on-site who can spread the messages in person, engaging participants to actively take part (a beach clean, sustainability awards, an environmental themed game).

Communication check-list:

- Before communicating know who to, the what and how.
- Use a range of communication methods before, during and after your event.
- Share your environmental policy far and wide.
- Engage and encourage participants to help you achieve your aims and objectives.
- Celebrate achievements.

Invasive species and Biosecurity



Ficopomatus enigmaticus on a boat hull © R Holland

The RYA is very concerned about the impact of Invasive non-native species (INNS), also known as alien species, which are increasing across the UK, both in the sea and on the land. More than 10 per cent of Great Britain's land area or coastline now has established populations of invasive species. As well as the devastating environmental impacts, non-native species can spread disease, restrict navigation, block waterways, clog up propellers and add significantly to the

management costs of our waterways. Recreational facilities can also suffer as a result of these invasive species.

Everyone, from small clubs to large events, coastal and inland, should be taking steps to reduce the risk of spreading or introducing INNS. The RYA is well aware that most racing boats will already have a clean hull and effective antifouling, and this puts them at the lowest risk of introducing or spreading INNS however keeping the hull clean and remembering to wash down kit, including trailers etc., before arrival and on leaving the site are essential to keep the risk low.

Why encourage biosecurity?

As an event manager, you know that events play a vital social and economic role and are crucial as platforms for competition, driving up standards and producing the next generation of champions. However, they also have the potential to import INNS from far afield and with new laws in place in many countries, you need to understand your responsibility to minimise the risks involved. In other words, you should practice good 'biosecurity'. This [short animation](#), developed for the [RAPIDlife project](#), gives a helpful overview of what we mean by biosecurity and the threats to boating.

The key thing to remember is that throughout the UK the principle of 'precautionary principle' and 'polluter pays' remains in force. Should the introduction of an INNS be attributed to your event there is the potential for you to be held accountable for the clean-up.

Avoiding this situation is not as difficult as you might think. Legislators have simply requested people to 'follow best practice', allowing users to define the most appropriate actions. By introducing practical measures to reduce biosecurity risks as you plan your event you will soon discover that it becomes second nature and saves you a lot of effort in the long run.



INNS Didemnum vexillum on unused tyre fenders. © Fiona Manson, SNH

Pre-event biosecurity

In organising your event you may be working with a wide range of people, from participants, including their helpers, friends and family, members of the public, through to professional contractors. With all groups it is key to raise the issue of biosecurity early and be clear about what you expect.

With professional contractors it is important to write your expectations into your agreement.

Some examples are:

- The contractor must submit a Biosecurity Risk Assessment for written approval at least 6 weeks prior to commencement of work.
- The contractor must ensure that all equipment, materials, machinery and PPE used are new or are thoroughly cleaned prior to their arrival on site.

The role of participants

For any scale of events the key for participants is early warning, giving them time to ensure their boats and kit are cleaned thoroughly and effectively before they leave home waters is very important.

Check, Clean, Dry

Ask everyone, at every event, to use the '[Check Clean Dry](#)' principle, making sure all wash-down and scraping material is disposed of appropriately. You could raise the issues through the relevant class association and you can also include guidance in the event paperwork – for example, from registration to inclusion in the rules of the day.

Send out links or copies of biosecurity information, such as [The Green Blue advice](#), prior to the event. Be clear that you expect nothing but clean boats and kit to arrive and clean boats and kit to leave the site and that fouled boats will be turned away. Remember that it is just as important to stop INNS leaving the site as it is to stop them arriving.

Getting volunteers involved

Providing a briefing for volunteers and staff is important. They don't need to be marine biologists to assist with identifying invasive species: they just need to be enthusiastic about boat and kit hygiene and feel comfortable about reporting any concerns. Recruiting a volunteer who is able to monitor the wash-down area is really useful – a 5-star event will have a sign IN/OUT process where a boat is signed in clean and, after post-event washing, is signed out clean.

Antifouling and INNS

A word of comfort – evidence suggests that a clean, well antifouled hull, is at low risk of spreading invasive species. So if a boat turns up clean, stays active while it is at your event and then sails away with intact antifouling (e.g. they haven't heavily grounded), and carrying no sediments - on their anchor for example - then they may be counted as low risk.

Boat wash-down

On the site it is important to have boat cleaning facilities set up. This may range from, a simple fresh water wash down area, well away from the water's edge, for a dinghy event, through to a full lift and scrub facility, or access to one, for larger vessels. On the day ask volunteers or staff who are checking in boats to inspect vessels and equipment for obvious fouling, as a quick look is often enough to gauge the cleanliness of a boat. Look to see if there is more than a low level of hull slime (1 or less on the table below) at the water line. Check for any obvious sediments left on anchors or on the foredeck. Inspect the trailer, dinghy and kit for any obvious seaweed or other detritus which might be, or provide a home for, invasive species.

| Rank | Description | Visual estimate of biofouling cover |
|------|--|--|
| 0 | No visible fouling. Hull entirely clean, no biofilm ^a on visible submerged parts of the hull. | Nil |
| 1 | Slime fouling only. Submerged hull areas partially or entirely covered in biofilm, but absence of any plants or animals. | Nil |
| 2 | Light fouling. Hull covered in biofilm and 1–2 very small patches of one type of plant or animal. | 1–5 % of visible submerged surfaces |
| 3 | Considerable fouling. Presence of biofilm, and fouling still patchy, but clearly visible and comprised of either one or more types of plant and/or animal. | 6–15 % of visible submerged surfaces |
| 4 | Extensive fouling. Presence of biofilm and abundant fouling assemblages consisting of more than one type of plant or animal. | 16–40 % of visible submerged surfaces |
| 5 | Very heavy fouling. Many different types of plant and/ or animal covering most of visible hull surfaces. | 41–100 % of visible submerged surfaces |

^aBiofilm: Thin layer of bacteria, microalgae, detritus and other particulates.

Comprehensive biosecurity planning

By undertaking the actions listed above you are demonstrating ‘best practice’. You can take this one step further and do a [full biosecurity plan](#) for your event. This involves a five-step process.

Step 1 – Scene Setting

Your opening section outlines your reasons for undertaking a biosecurity plan and the concerns relating to your event. For example, you may be concerned about effects on the environment and legal or reputational impacts.

Step 2 – Introduction

Here you identify the geographical area or activity which is to be covered by the plan, who will have responsibility for its implementation and when it will be reviewed and updated.

Step 3 - Environmental Information

In this section you should go into more detail about the physical characteristics of the area covered by the plan. Gather as much information as you can about the chemistry of the waters local to your event as this will give you a much better idea about the risk from invasive species. For example, if the salinity is very low at the event, and boats are coming from a fully marine environment, you have a built-in biosecurity benefit. Salinity and temperature information can often be found online, try a google search for a local port as they gather this data as part of their everyday operations. Also find out about any existing management arrangements - for example, is the area a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) or holding other protected status such as an MCZ (Marine Conservation Zone)? If so, contact local offices of Natural England or Scottish Natural Heritage to find out more about INNS and current management of marine protected areas locally.

Also have a look at the known, and the [anticipated](#) invasive species in the area. This will help with prioritising actions as well as identification.

Step 4 - Use of the Area

Here you will list the major types of activity you expect at the event. How many boats are expected, where are they coming from, what type of boats are they, and do they contain ballast water?

Step 5 - Biosecurity Actions / Control measures

This is perhaps the most important section. Here you outline the actions you plan to take to improve your biosecurity. What you choose to do will vary depending upon the activities and partners involved and the risks associated both with the activities and the site. Aim to stay practical – you can always include a ‘wish list’ of other actions should time and budget allow.



Chinese Mitten Crab, Eriocheir sinensis © FERA

Biosecurity Checklist

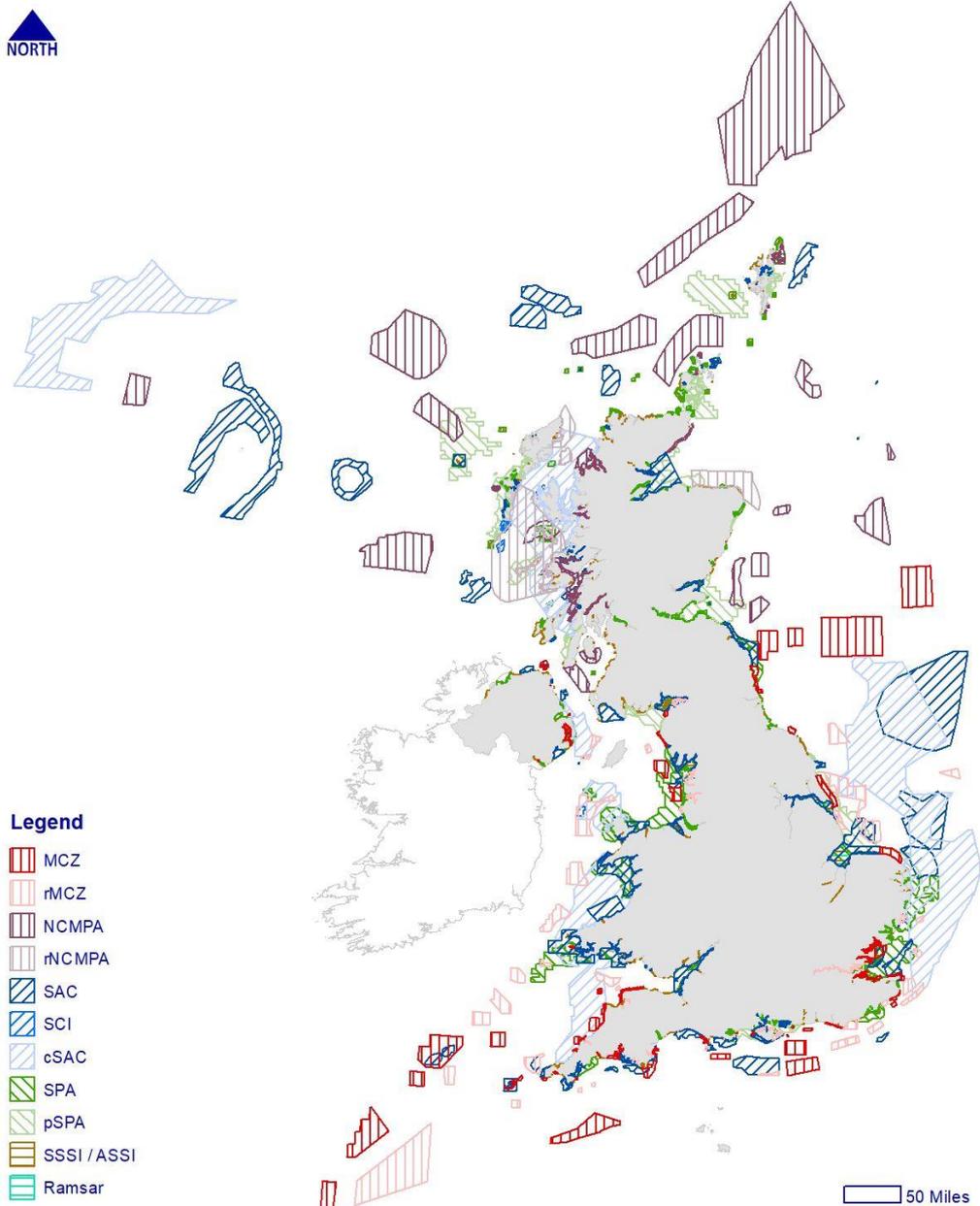
Preventing the introduction, or spread, of invasive non-native species (INNS) is an important part of terrestrial and waterborne events. Some simple steps can make a big difference, protecting the boating we all enjoy and love. Actions should begin as soon as you start advertising your event:

The Green Blue has a range of awareness raising resources available, on invasive species and promoting good practice, from posters and outdoor signs for the wash down area to information guides.

- Advertise your event as welcoming clean hulls, stipulate that boats, kit and trailers etc. should arrive and depart clean. Repeat this message clearly and often in all communication with participants.
- Circulate information to all participants about INNS and the threat they pose to boating.
- Ask all participants to make sure their antifoul is maintained
- Ask all participants to clean their boats and trailers before they arrive on site and before they leave to go home.
- Instruct all contractors, and write it into their contract, that they must arrive with clean equipment, including any pontoons or other in-water structures. Also write into the contract that any structures with bio-fouling on them will be refused entry and the cleaning, or replacement structures, will be at their cost.
- In the unlikely event of a fouled vessel arriving, have procedures in place to refuse entry or to clean the boat. This means including a clean hull as a condition of entry in your competition rules and making sure there is senior support for the removal of a fouled vessel from the event.
- If possible set up a basic wash down area (an accessible hose pipe) allowing attendees to clean their boats and equipment before leaving the site. Or identify your local wash-down facility and make sure participants are aware of its location. If no facility is available on site, ensure you are able to use the closest local facility.
- Give basic INNS information to volunteer's onsite and ask them to keep a look out. Many free resources are available and [The Green Blue](#) can advise you on the most relevant to your event.
- Read the '[Event Managers Guide to Marine Biosecurity](#)' and create a simple biosecurity plan for your event.

Wildlife and Habitats

Responding to developing public concern and the emerging legislative landscape, the RYA and [The Green Blue](#) have done a lot to raise awareness of the ways that those involved in recreational boating can minimise their impact on the natural environment. As an event manager it will be important for you to be aware of some key issues and how to mitigate them.



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The UK marine protected areas network (RYA, March 2019)

What are protected areas?

Protected areas include a range of statutory designations such as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ramsar Sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Nature Reserves and so on.

East Downs Yacht Club, at Strangford Lough covering a MCZ, worked with the Department of the Environment to pre-plan position marker buoys for an event to avoid protected mussel beds.

For more information on these sites and to stay updated on any changes see the [Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#) website.

Many of these sites will have management measures in place to help ensure that damage from activities is kept to an absolute minimum and that the area is maintained in a healthy or improving state.

In addition to protected areas, there is a range of legislation in place to protect individual species or populations of species from harm, including disturbance e.g. seabirds, cetaceans or common skate etc. Routing your race through recognised wildlife hot spots or continuing a race when wildlife is known to be present, can leave you open to a charge of 'reckless disturbance' and while you may not have intended to do harm you will still be held liable should it occur.

How to avoid impact on wildlife and habitats

1) Impacts on habitats

Habitats can be physically damaged at an event through boat wash, damage from vehicles and trampling. They can also suffer pollution from sewerage, oil and fuel spills, antifoul and other residues in boat wash-down.

- Find out what designations are in place locally by using the interactive map on the [JNCC website](#) .
- Talk to the relevant local office (Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs or Natural Resources Wales). Ask what management measures are in place and what they advise regarding your event.
- If necessary, cordon or buoy off any sensitive habitats to avoid trampling or damage from vehicles or from grounding or anchoring.
- Ensure the course is set out to avoid passing through or close to sensitive habitats where possible.
- Read our sections on discharges to [water, air and land](#) and take action to avoid damage from these sources.

2) Impacts on species

Many marine animals (breeding birds, and other cetaceans in particular) are protected by law from disturbance, injury or death. This means that if your race were to displace marine wildlife due to excessive noise or were to injure or kill a protected species through a boat strike, for example, you could be prosecuted.

Unfortunately, many boating events coincide with important breeding and feeding seasons for many species of birds and animals. It is best therefore to work on the precautionary principle that there is likely to be wildlife in your area and that you should avoid any impacts which could reduce their likelihood of breeding or feeding success.



Figure 1
<http://www.tampabay.com/storyimage/Hi/20120827/ARTICLE/308279986/AR/0/AR-308279986.jpg?MaxW=950&cachebuster=157017>

Scottish Natural Heritage's '[A Guide to Best Practice for Watching Marine Wildlife](#)' is a user friendly guide which aims to help boaters, and those observing from the land, avoid disturbance to marine wildlife. It is based on the JNCC advice and the laws in Scotland, which are stricter than in the rest of the UK, so by following this guidance you know you will be observing best practice in your area of the country.

Some practical options for race events:

- Talk to local and national experts and identify any key areas along a race route where disturbance, including collisions, are a risk. Amend your race route to avoid these sites.
- In areas with potential to impact on protected species include marine mammal observers on the safety boats and at strategic viewpoints (another alternative volunteering role for someone!?). These people must have the authority to halt or pause a race if the key species, cetaceans in particular, are sighted.
- In some areas where there are identified populations of species, for example the Moray Firth dolphins or the basking sharks off Cornish headlands, use a staggered start for races to avoid accumulations of boats in an area.
- Using waypoints along a race route can also help to avoid aggregations of wildlife. Again, advice from the local statutory agency offices will be very helpful.
- Imposing speed restrictions in the event area and surrounding waters is also a useful tool to reduce the risk of unintended disturbance and improve safety.
- Assess the timing of your races. It could be that the dolphins you are concerned about feed locally only on the incoming tide or the wading

birds forage on the exposed mudflats only at low tide. Avoiding these times of day can significantly reduce the risk of disturbance.

- Communication is key. Make sure you provide relevant information to race organisers, officials and participants.

If your event includes a licensable activity, such as installing a pontoon or other infrastructure then you should consider the impacts on [European Protected Species](#) (including all whales, dolphins and porpoises). If you have concerns you can apply for a licence from the [Marine Management Organisation](#) (England and Wales), [Marine Scotland](#) or [DAERA](#)

3) Invasive species

Bringing boats, competitors and their equipment from outside the local area can increase the risk of introducing or spreading an invasive, non-native species. These species can be highly destructive and, as with other environmental damage, if the outbreak is traced to your event you could be liable for prosecution.

The aim is to have only clean boats and kit arriving on site and only clean boats and kit leaving it. Installing an appropriate wash-down facility is essential and a drying room and/or a disinfection tank for kit is hugely helpful. For more information see our section on [marine biosecurity](#).

4) Marine litter

Litter in the marine environment is hugely damaging and has now become more recognised as socially unacceptable. Boaters are generally more aware of the need to not let anything go over the side so active littering is unusual at marine events. Nevertheless food wrappers and other refuse can still end up in the sea if not carefully managed.



Marine litter, image courtesy of Scrapbook.co.uk

Public opinion can be very strict on this topic so avoid any bad feeling by actively managing litter and undertaking pre and post event beach cleans in partnership with the local community if possible. See our [waste](#) section for more information about how to deal with this issue.

Key documents

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Habitats Regulations 1994 (as amended in Scotland)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007
- Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

- Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010 in England & Wales
- Marine (Scotland) Act 2010
- Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013
- [Natural England : Managing marine recreational activities: a review of evidence](#)

Key organisations

- [Joint Nature Conservancy Council](#) (JNCC)
- [Natural England](#)
- [Scottish Natural Heritage](#)
- [Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Northern Ireland](#)
- [Natural Resources Wales](#)
- [The Green Blue](#)

Wildlife and habitats Checklist

- Check and identify sensitive habitats and species in your area
- Take advice about how to avoid injury, disturbance or collisions through external expertise.
- Amend race routes, start times or start/finish lines to avoid sensitive species and habitats.
- Communicate with participants and attendees, send out and display information and keep them informed.
- Consider using a marine mammal observer who can alert organisers to risks of collision.
- Follow [best practice](#) to avoid moving invasive species.
- Take steps to avoid and clean up marine litter.

Waste

Most waste experts advocate the waste hierarchy 'Prevent: Reduce: Reuse: Recycle'. It helps to instil an ethos within the team that every item you put in the bin is something you paid for at some stage, so a waste stream is, literally, throwing money away.

Aiming for a zero waste event is by no means an impossible target. In practical terms it means that you will have contributed nothing to the waste stream and instead your entire end product has been either used, reused or recycled. It is a tall order but, at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, 86% of waste during games time was diverted from landfill, well in excess of the target of 80%.

Avoiding Waste

The Volvo Ocean Race team report avoiding the use of an estimated 238,000 single use plastic bottles in the Race Villages and 180,000 single use cable ties avoided through re-usable bungee straps.

Dealing with Suppliers

When you are paying someone for a service you are in the driving seat and can request high levels of recycling or recycled content in the goods you are buying. By laying out your standards during procurement, you are making the contractor, including the venue managers, aware of your requirements and issuing a public statement about your environmental credentials. You may not always achieve the high standard you seek within the budget you have, but this approach gives you the best chance of doing so.

Preventing Waste

Stopping the waste needs to start early. Before buying anything, ask yourself, do we really need this item and/or is there a more [sustainable alternative](#)?

Examples of waste prevention:

- Before you buy anything, consider if you can hire or lease it instead. This could be anything from mugs, cups such as the '[Eco-Cup](#)', and crockery to tables, tents and display stands.
- Use refillable canisters for sauces, milk, sugar, salt and pepper, detergents, hand wash etc.
- Go paperless - use webpages or an app for event information, registration, daily news etc. Apps and password protection can provide a level of security if required.
- Give out memory sticks with large documents or data pre-loaded if you don't want to put it on a website.
- Use whiteboards instead of flip charts.

100% Recycling

The Volvo Ocean Race team have been working across the board to reduce waste at events and on the boats. At stop overs measures are put in place to avoid single use plastic and recycle as much as possible. At some stages it was possible to separate out 100% of recyclable materials for recovery.

- Tell people what you will print for them at the event to minimise duplicate print outs.

Reduce

- Print hand-outs only on request.
- Format hand-outs to take up the least amount paper and print double sided.
- Purchase bulk containers and concentrated products to limit packaging for things like detergents and diluting drinks – this can often save 50% on packaging, storage and transport.
- Avoid food waste by requesting that people book in for meals – and cater only for those numbers. It can be frustrating for people who are used to limitless, convenient food but they very quickly get the idea and follow the process to ensure they get fed.
- Consider reducing the portion sizes offered to reduce waste.

Reuse

- Before you buy any kit, see if you can source second hand or refurbished goods. Items such as fridges, freezers and furniture, carpets and curtains may all be available at lower cost but still at an acceptable standard.
- Make sure any gift items are actually useful – perhaps a branded roll of tape for binding rigging would be more welcome than a plastic pen at your events?
- Keep name badges, signs and display materials generic by not adding dates or event specific information so they can be reused.
- If possible reuse items, you could offer a buy-back scheme, e.g. for drinks bottles, mugs or branded kit etc.
- Check out our [list](#) of online platforms which help you reuse old kit and food

Avoiding Waste

The Volvo Ocean Race avoided the use of 180 000 single use cable ties through re-usable bungee straps.

Recycling

This can be difficult for event organisers as recycling facilities vary around the country. The crucial first step is to talk to the site manager and, if necessary, local waste contractors to work out what can be recycled locally and what restrictions there are on how waste is received. By law, local authorities are being obliged to recycle more and they must segregate some waste streams including paper and cardboard, plastic, metal and glass so these recycling options should be easily available to your event.

Find out what the restrictions are before making any further purchasing decisions. For example, if your contractor can only handle PET (Code '1' Polyethylene terephthalate) and not PS (code '6' Polystyrene) waste then ask the catering team to only use PET.

Another restriction will be on the quality of the waste stream. For example, most plastic bottles can be easily recycled but if they have significant dirt on them, like those

collected on a beach clean, they may need to be separated from the main waste streams to allow recycling. Projects like [Teracycle](#) can help with this.

Food is an important waste stream and you should do what you can to reduce the amount going to landfill by carefully matching supply to demand from participants at your event.

Do not underestimate the importance of having plenty of clearly labelled bins around the site. Additional posters nearby can also help with getting people to segregate waste properly. A volunteer 'waste champion' is also hugely helpful and, when given a proper briefing, can make a huge difference to the amount which gets recycled.

End of the day and post event litter picks are an important part of activity on site and again, you may be able to recruit a volunteer force to help with this. It can be a good team bonding activity and with the right leadership and rewards it can be a great part of the event. For example, you could ask for teams of volunteers to do the site clean-up and, as a reward, they could get first dibs on the showers or to be first in to the dinner hall. Small rewards such as a bottle of wine or unique merchandise also work wonders for motivation.

Litter

Cleaning up

The 2019 European Champions invited all of the participants to take part in a beach clean before the event at a local designated site, where several bags of litter were collected.

It is common knowledge that litter is a major problem especially near water bodies. This can mostly be avoided by adequate waste facilities, however it can still be an issue for the pesky smaller items. This includes rope and string cuttings, tape and glove tips, bow stickers etc. First action is to target the competitors. Enforce a no littering rule on-site and ask your eco-champions to keep an eye out for littering. Make all participants aware of the World

Sailing's Rule 55 which states that 'A competitor shall not intentionally put trash in the water'. Seek alternatives for bow stickers or provide guidance on preventing them peeling off and ending up in the water.

During and after the event arrange a litter clean of the site and record the amount of litter collected. This can involve participants and spectators. Ensure litter is recycled where possible and provide any necessary equipment and health and safety guidance. This may also highlight key problem areas that can be targeted in the future.

Setting targets

If you are going to make waste management part of your environmental policy and set a target for recycling and reduction, you need to know the baseline you are working from. This can be difficult to decide, as events will differ, so unless you have a similar event for comparison you may be better to set a target based on the waste that goes off site. For example, you could set a target of recycling 50% of general waste and 80% of food waste.

If you plan to run this type of event regularly, make a record of the amount of waste produced and next time you run the event you can try to reduce the amount of waste for example by 5 or 10%.

Waste Management Checklist

For more information see Volvo's [Turn the Tide on plastic at sporting events user guide](#).

- Talk to your site manager and/or waste contractor and find out what can and cannot be recycled.
- Reduce all you can by careful procurement, from catering to gift bags and detergents to paper. Ask for reduced packaging and choose items which are easy to reuse and recycle.
- Train staff and recruit volunteer waste champions to help ensure waste goes to the right places and everyone plays their part in recycling.
- Communicate – make sure bins are clearly marked and grab all opportunities to encourage best practice.
- Reuse, or allow others to reuse, anything which still has value, from food to carpets.
- Set waste reduction targets and measure your achievements.
- Provide suitable recycling facilities and consider:
 - Location - identify high foot fall areas and put bins close by.
 - Cluster bins so that as many recycling options as possible are available in each location.
 - Mark the bins clearly on the top and sides, with consistent signage across the event.
- Do all that's possible to prevent litter on-site.
- Provide adequate hazardous waste disposal facilities for items such as oil, oily rags and solvents.

Additional Waste Resources

Sometimes you will have left over food and other resources, no matter how good your procurement system is. Here are some useful links and tools to help you put them to good use.

Recycling food

- [Recycle Now website](#) listing municipal food other local waste recycling
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#) – Government supported information programme
- [Olio](#) food and non-food sharing platform
- [Neighbourly](#) food and non-food sharing platform
- [Fare Share](#) food redistribution platform
- [Food cycle](#) food redistribution network

Reuse of non-food products and kit

- [Freecycle](#) everything recycled, all over the country
- Facebook market place
- [Reuse](#) in Scotland national hotline
- Reuse platform – [I love Freegle](#)
- [Oxfam](#) shop finder, taking clothes as well as used electrical items such as computers and phones

Waste and recycling

- Recycle Now websites give useful information about recycling in [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [N. Irish](#)
- [Keep Britain Tidy](#) lots of useful information about litter prevention and clean up

Catering

Positively influencing how catering is delivered at your event has multiple benefits, from lowering your event footprint and waste generated to communicating your values to attendees. As it is likely to be a significant part of the overall impact of the event it is also an area where you can make considerable gains.

Choosing sustainable menus is an important part of reducing the overall impact of the event. This will require early engagement with suppliers to enable local, seasonal, sustainable and cost-effective choices to be identified. Make sure you have a menu review process in place to check what is on offer.

Transport makes one of the biggest impacts in relation to food so choosing local, or UK grown, produce makes a big difference.

Demand Sustainability

The Sailing World Championships Aarhus 2018 served locally produced organic food, worked to reduce and sort catering waste and plastics by introducing deposit schemes and collecting systems.

It is useful to break the issue of sustainable catering down into 5 categories:

- Menu planning
- Procurement
- Preparation efficiency
- Service ware and packaging
- Waste diversion

Menu planning

Portion Size - Providing the right type and amount of food, managing portion size and responding to demand are issues which can make those managing the kitchen very nervous. The last thing they want is to be criticised for running out of food, but the last thing you want is to be forced to dump an oversupply. Realistically estimating the

amount of food required and building in the capacity to quickly adjust to the needs of participants, are both crucial.

- 1) If possible, ask participants to sign up to menu choices in advance, either at the start of the day's event or even before they arrive.
- 2) Table service and service at a buffet bar are preferable to self-service in controlling portion sizes and reducing waste.
- 3) Use smaller plates to serve food but keep the buffet open longer so people can go back for second helpings.
- 4) For longer events ask participants which meals they require on each day.
- 5) Have menu choices which can be prepared in advance, frozen and produced quickly or which are simple and cost-effective to make and put out for self-service, such as sandwiches.

Procurement

Always ask the suppliers for their sustainable food sourcing policy, and for ideas about what is possible and practical as well as cost effective. Make them aware that you want a more sustainable event and ask what they recommend to achieve that aim. Some items to discuss include:

- Requesting local, seasonal and traceable produce
- Vegetarian and vegan options
- Avoiding meats which have been produced using antibiotics
- Avoiding carbon intensive meat such as beef and pork
- Use of Fair Trade and other sustainability certified products such as MSC seafood
- Ask if packaging be avoided and transport minimised
- Can single portion packaging be eliminated?

Preparation efficiency

There is a lot which can be done in the kitchen itself to minimise waste, such as good practice in preparing vegetables, scrubbing rather than peeling, and using off cuts as the basis of a soup, curry or stew. Make the most of any local and seasonal produce by planning a number of dishes around these ingredients.

WRAP research shows that the UK manufacturing and retail sector wastes 1.9 million tonnes of food and drink a year, 1.1 million tonnes of that is avoidable. If that is applied to your event imagine what the cost savings would be!

Another important part of creating a sustainable event is to get all staff, including temporary workers, trained and engaged in the process of reducing waste. Everyone working within the catering team should be aware of the need to segregate waste and to use the composting bins correctly to avoid contamination.

Service ware and packaging

Alternatives to plastic, as disposable service ware, are becoming much more widely available. Make sure you check before purchasing that the products you have chosen are compatible with the waste contractor. Some products, such as [Vegware](#), can simply be placed into the compost (if available), but other items may need to be dealt with separately.

Use of reusable service ware is an excellent choice for a sustainable event. Be aware that you can choose to hire, rather than buy, glasses, crockery and cutlery for a fraction of the price.

Ban all non-recyclable packaging such as single use plastic and polystyrene and avoid all single serving items such as salt/pepper, milk cartons or sauces by using dispensers, jugs and bowls etc. instead.

Waste diversion

It is possible to have zero food waste events - it just takes a bit more effort and planning. Some suggestions include:

- At the end of the day, or the serving session, offer the unused food for discount or free if people take it away in their own reusable containers.
- Seek out any local businesses with an anaerobic digester who may be able to make use of your food waste
- See our [reuse](#) section for links to food sharing platforms for other options.

Catering Checklist

- Ask your suppliers for their sustainable food sourcing policy.
- Serve local, seasonal and traceable produce including:
 - Vegetarian and vegan options
 - Meats which have been produced avoiding antibiotics
 - Avoiding carbon intensive meat such as beef and pork
 - Certified sustainable food e.g. Fair Trade or MSC seafood.
- Work to reduce food waste by:
 - Ask participants to sign up to menu choices in advance.
 - Limit portion size. Table service or a buffet bar will do this naturally, so will using smaller plates.
 - Prepare menu choices in advance so they can be frozen and waste is reduced.
- Avoid or minimise packaging and try to ban all non-recyclable packaging.
- Eliminate single portion packaging.
- Hire reusable service ware or use fully compostable products such as Vegware.
- Supply compost facilities for food scraps
- Offer any unused food for discount or free to local good causes. Local bio-digesters may also be able to make use of food waste.

Food Reallocation

If you think you will have left over food after an event, check with local clubs, humanist society groups and organisations such as the Rotary to see if someone else can make use of them.

SUSTAINABLE CATERING for a BETTER TOMORROW

· HOW TO PLAN A SUSTAINABLE EVENT ·

1 CHOOSE
REUSABLE
ITEMS WHEN
POSSIBLE

· china · linen · silk floral

2 USE
COMPOSTABLE
CUPS, NAPKINS
AND CUTLERY
WHEN NECESSARY



3 order items in
BULK
to reduce waste

4 PROVIDE BINS FOR
COMPOST
&
RECYCLING



5 COMPOST
all food
SCRAPS



6 Donate leftover
foods to charity

7 · USE ·
FAIR TRADE
COFFEE



· USE ·
FAIR TRADE
TEA

8 Choose locally
grown, seasonal,
regional & sustainably
grown and raised
products

9 CHOOSE
ORGANIC/FREE-RANGE
MEATS



10 CHOOSE
BEST SUSTAINABLE
SEAFOOD CHOICES
(SEAFOODWATCH.ORG)

11 Choose local &
sustainably produced
beer & wine



12 PROVIDE
..... menu
signage/menu
cards indicating
sustainably sourced
..... foods

13 use sustainable or
reusable event decor



14 Select healthy menu
items that are low in

SUGAR
FAT
SALT

15 PROVIDE
VEGAN
VEGETARIAN
MENU OPTIONS

Water



As a maritime event's organiser you, above all people, know the value of water, but have you ever considered the energy required just to deliver clean water to our taps? In 2015-16, in England and Wales, cleaning and pumping water around the network put 4 million tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere.

To achieve this, you need good communications. Putting up posters at the event and telling people beforehand that you will be employing water saving techniques will get them onside, help to answer any questions they may have and avoid frustrations on the

day.

Setting targets

In order to measure the outstanding savings you have made you need to your starting point. Ask the facilities team for a benchmark of water used at previous or similar events and see if it is possible to improve that score. If a benchmark is not available, or measuring use would be impractical, you can estimate how much you will save by looking at each water reduction technique and approximating the impact on water use.

Water Refill

The Volvo Ocean Race avoided an estimated 238 000 single use plastic bottles in the Race Villages through water refill stations.

Drinking water

Water from a tap costs about 1/3 of a penny per 2 litres. Compare this to shop bought bottled water often at more than £1 per litre and you can quickly see that there are considerable financial benefits to using refillable bottles. When you consider that 1L of plastic bottled water will have taken around 5L of water to make it, the case becomes water tight for refillable and reusable bottles and cups!



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Each litre of water is precious and should be treated as a valuable resource whether it is for drinking, cooking or washing people and boats. The ultimate aim is to **reduce** the amount of water used throughout your event and to minimise or eliminate contamination of nearby water courses or groundwater by, for example, cleaning materials.

Refillable bottles are now regularly given out at events and regular attendees are likely to have something of a stockpile growing at home. Create a webpage for your event specifically for environmental information and repeatedly ask people to remember to bring a refillable bottle with them.

If you do decide to give out refillable bottles don't put the date or the event title on them - just brand them with logos, so that they will carry your message and if you have any leftover you can use them for other events.

REMEMBER – if you are encouraging refilling water bottles you will also need to provide places for people to refill. Water coolers can be [rented and installed easily](#) and mean that kitchen staff are not constantly bombarded with requests for refills.

Of course, water is for more than drinking. The following options should help you to identify ways of reducing water used by participants and attendees throughout.

Boat washing and hose use

A perennial question for event and marina managers is who left that hose running!? It is not simple to restrict the use of hoses and often taps or spray heads designed to do just that are removed by participants in an effort to hurry up their cleaning or adapt the hose for their own needs.

This is another vital task for an eco-champion. These wonderful [volunteers](#) should keep an eye on whatever kit you have decided to install on your hoses and remind people to turn off taps when they are done. It doesn't take long for people to get the idea that their actions are being monitored and often a quick sweep of the wash down area a couple of times a day is enough to see people beginning to self-police.

[Inline shut off valves](#) are helpful as they provide a half-way point between the tap and the boats, they can also [split the flow](#) meaning one water stream can do two jobs. A [ball valve](#) used closer to the tap can allow you to control the flow. A simple adjustable [hose nozzle](#) on the end of the hose is also a useful addition. Quality nozzles are more robust and will last longer but they do have a habit of walking off site – a nozzle amnesty at the end of the event is often useful!

Cleaning materials

If a rinse with fresh water won't do the job then low impact or environmentally sensitive cleaning materials are essential. There are [many ranges available](#) such as Ecover (who do a boat wash) and BioD. However all should be used with caution, as even environmentally friendly cleaners can be damaging if they go to a storm water drain, emptying straight into the sea, rather than to a sewage treatment works. If you are in any doubt then use only water and a scrubbing brush and check with the facilities management to see what cleaners they recommend.

Toilets and showers

You will need to work with the facility manager to make the most of [possible efficiencies](#) in the toilets and showers as adaptations to the installed units can be disruptive.

Dual flush toilets are ideal, usually using 4-6L compared to 13L for a single flush unit, and they are widely installed throughout the UK. However you can also retro-fit water

saving devices to a loo. Using a cistern displacement device, or 'hippo', will reduce water use and often these are free from the local water company. [Water efficient urinals](#) are also a great way to save water.

Composting toilets may be another option. [Natural Event](#) have partnered Glastonbury Festival successfully for several years. Please note - check with the landowner and the local authority before using this system as urine can also be a pollutant if it gets into ground water or local streams.

Showers and sinks can have [low flow or aerated heads](#) fitted which have the double bonus of reducing the amount of water used but also lowering the water heating bills which account for 10-30% of facilities costs. Putting a timer on the showers and sinks is also helpful and if push button timers are not already installed a clock with minutes clearly marked can be a helpful reminder when coupled with a clear sign asking people to limit their shower to 5 minutes or less.

Sink use can also be limited even further by providing water free options such as hand sanitiser gel instead of traditional washing.

Chemical Toilets

You may have motorhomes at your event and these usually have a chemical toilet on-board which will need to be emptied at some point. Make sure you discuss this with the facilities managers and identify suitable drains or toilets for the waste. Not all sewerage systems can handle the formaldehyde formulations and it is wise to recommend to your attendees that they use the formaldehyde free cassette toilet treatments. Both [Thetford](#) and [Elsan](#) do these more environmentally friendly cleaners.

Water Checklist

- Avoid bottled water and encourage use of refillable bottles instead
- Provide and promote refill stations.
- Recruit a water eco-champion for the event who can be on-site, keeping an eye on things, and answer participants' questions
- Fit taps on hoses, and timers and flow controllers in the showers and toilets.
- Make a map of the event and work out where, how much and why water will be used then decide on possible actions to reduce consumption in partnership with the facilities managers.
- Take a reading of the water metre before and after the event to use as a baseline measure to support any targets to improve usage on future events.
- Find out where the water from the wash-down area goes and limit the amount of cleaner which goes into the sewerage systems.
- Investigate alternatives such as composting toilets and use of rain water to wash boats.

Pollution to Soil, Water and Air

Whatever the size of your event you should be thinking about any pollution to air, for example CO₂, or more obvious pollution from fires and paints, to [water](#), and to the soil. At a boating event the main emissions to soil and water are likely to come in 4 forms:

- 1) Antifoul scrapings, paint and oil from boat maintenance.
- 2) Detergent from hull cleaning.
- 3) Oil spills
- 4) Sewage pollution from sea toilets.

Paint

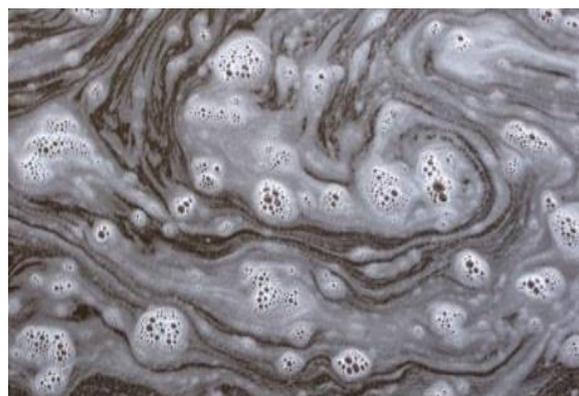
[The Green Blue](#) gives great advice about dealing with antifouling paints so take a good look at their website and make sure you take opportunities to promote their advice to participants at your events.



Any paints used during the event should be carefully controlled and no scrapings or splashes should be allowed. Ask participants to put a tarpaulin down to protect the ground and capture debris. Used brushes, rollers and paint scrapings should be disposed of appropriately and may need to be treated as hazardous waste. Talk to the site manager about this if you think it is a likely issue for you.

Detergents

The first step is to minimise the use of detergents wherever possible. It is also possible to use only environmentally sensitive detergents. Finally, talk to the site managers about how the waste water from wash down areas is dealt with. For example, does it go straight to the sea or via a sewage treatment works? Have they clearly marked drains which should not be used for disposal e.g. storm water drains. If the water will go into a storm drain and straight to the sea there should be no use of detergents in the area as the degreasers can badly impact wildlife.



Oil spills

Any boating event that has engines has some risk of an oil spill which can be disastrous to the local environment. Before the event it is vital to ensure there is an

emergency plan in place in case of an oil spill. It is also important to have spill kits on hand, perhaps located in the re-fuel areas. The location of the spill kits and awareness of the emergency plan should be shared and communicated prior and throughout the event to all relevant attendees.

Sea Toilets

When significant numbers of boats gather in an area for an event there is always the opportunity for pollution from sea toilets also known as black water. Urine is high in phosphates and in breaking down uses up oxygen potentially leading to problems for wildlife. Faecal matter is a serious pollutant and untreated it can introduce dangerous bacteria into the water and/or lead to enrichment and algal blooms. Pollution from sea toilets is also unpleasant for other participants and for the local community.

If you have a relatively small event you can simply encourage use of any shore-based facilities available. Larger events should install porta-loos and insist on the use of holding tanks and pump out facilities. You can encourage the use of pump-out services by promoting their locations and ensuring they are free for attendees.

Emissions to Air

These are largely connected to your [transport](#) and [energy](#) options.

Emissions Checklist

- Identify potential sources of pollution for example from boat cleaning, painting, engine maintenance or from people using 'sea toilets'.
- Raise awareness of best practice by putting up signs and notices encouraging no spills and the use of tarpaulins to catch scrapings etc.
- Coordinate to make sure that affordable or free-pump out services are available for all boats.
- Ensure all re-fuel areas have spill kits and that an emergency plan is in place.
- Check that drains going straight to the sea are well marked and that no pollutants can go down them.
- Choose environmentally friendly paints and detergents and make sure to dispose of them responsibly.
- Even at small scale events, make sure people are aware that using sea toilets is not without problems and that the shore side facilities should be used where possible.

Energy

Energy is one of the areas where we can often make significant wins just by taking some simple and low-cost steps.

Whatever the size of your event, it is advisable to work closely with the site manager in order to lower energy consumption. Some questions to help your discussion include:

- What policies does the site already have in place to help reduce energy consumption?
- Do they use any technology to help reduce consumption?
- Can they record the amount of energy used by your event by energy meter readings and can they benchmark it against other similar events?
- Do they produce low carbon energy themselves? For example, do they have solar panels or a wind turbine on site?
- Do they use a 'green tariff' with their energy supplier?

Solar Power

Glastonbury Festival has introduced solar power and green technology throughout the site to the point where there are only hybrid generators, no diesel. Even the showers are solar powered.

All energy management is underpinned by training so it is important that staff and volunteers are fully aware of what you want to do and how you plan to do it. Remember that power at a boating event will be consumed in a number of ways.

Heating and Thermal Comfort

A room that is too warm or cold can make participants uncomfortable. Ideally, the thermostat should be set at 19-21°C and if the meeting is likely to be energetic with people moving about, you can safely move the thermostat even lower down the scale.

Generators

Generators may be used to provide power to areas of the site which do not have a mains supply or are likely to need extra power. Most generators consume fuel as soon as they are turned on, even if they are not actually supplying power and the general rule is that they will provide more efficient power if they are under a heavier load. Experience shows that peak efficiency is achieved around a 70-80% load with a dramatic reduction as you go down from 50% to 25%. Anything below 25% load is very inefficient.

Ryder Cup 2014

Surplus energy demand was met using modern, efficient temporary generators which ran on pure biofuel. The generators replaced and reduced the need for non-renewable fuel by 10% with 29,394 litres used.

It would therefore be prudent to assess your power needs ahead of time, physically group together any items which need power, and use a generator which is best suited to those requirements.

Remember that most large items such as fridges or heating systems have a start-up power demand which is higher than their running demand. Stagger the start-up of these machines and you will be able to run a much smaller generator at a higher efficiency.

| Appliance | Starting Wattage | Running Wattage |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Refrigerator | 1600 | 200 |
| Furnace (1/4 hp fan) | 1600 | 600 |
| 5 Lights | 300 | 300 |
| TV | 300 | 300 |
| Microwave | 1500 | 1500 |
| Total | 5300 | 2900 |

Table from Honda.com

Lighting

An obvious way to save energy is to use natural light as much as possible, supplementing it with artificial light only when necessary. Remember too that daylight varies in intensity, so be ready to switch off the artificial boost when it is not needed. Ask your audience if the light levels are ok for them if you have any concerns.

Another way to make good use of natural light is simply to go outdoors. If there is an element of your event which is generally held indoors but, in suitable weather, could be transferred to an outdoor environment, why not give it a try? Most people respond very well to such a change of scene to break up a potentially long day and moving generally doesn't take long, especially if you have gained permission to use the fire escape exits.

If you have control over the building design it is worthwhile investing in low energy lights.

Try the Resource Efficient Scotland [lighting cost calculator](#) or their equally good [lighting improvements calculator](#) to identify cost savings and pay back periods.

Energy Use Checklist

The following is an overview of the types of actions you can take to reduce your energy consumption at an event.

- Make an energy map of your event which will allow you to plan for efficient use of power. This should include usage peaks and troughs (start of the day, beginning of any special section of the show etc.) and areas of the site which may use extra power such as stages, catering areas or lighting rigs etc.
- Take metre readings before and after the event for a baseline measure to improve future usage.
- Encourage good practice of any boat engines i.e. from safety boats.
- Make maximum use of natural lighting including going outside for workshops etc.
- Keep used rooms at a comfortable temperature range from 19-21°C.
- Turn down the thermostat in rooms not in use.
- Turn off lights completely when not needed.
- Ask your site manager:

- What they do to reduce energy use.
- If they use a green tariff with their energy supplier.
- If they use timers or sensors on the lights to regulate use.
- Invest in low energy technology such as low energy lighting systems
- Work out what power you need and run generators in sequence to manage the load efficiently.
- Use renewable energy to power sections/all of the event.
- [Carbon offsetting](#) should be considered only after you have taken the steps necessary to reduce your total energy use.

Travel

Any event often has a considerable transport footprint. Widely dispersed participants not only have to get to the venue, but often bring a boat with them, usually on trailers which are suitable for only one craft, all of which makes car sharing somewhat problematic. However, don't let this put you off encouraging both car and trailer sharing where possible as this can have significant benefits to the footprint of your event.



For large events it's important to consider the impact of your event on the local travel networks, especially if it is being hosted in smaller towns or villages. Contact the local authority in advance to help you prepare the travel arrangements, to avoid network capacities being breached.

Reducing travel

A simple way to reduce transport related emissions is to reduce the need to travel. This may include providing attendees with public transport information, providing secure bicycle storage facilities on-site and using video and teleconferences where possible in the run up to the event.

Carrying Extra Kit

Remember that organisers and competitors may have more kit to carry, including quantities of bulky items such as the boats themselves, sails or lifesaving kit etc. Look for opportunities to share transport and make use of spare capacity in vehicles and on trailers. For example, if your bag could travel in some else's trailer then you could take the train. Providing a safe storage area for gear on site also allows people to more easily use public transport.

Efficient travel and Towing

Towing a trailer will have a significant impact on the efficiency of any car, increasing fuel consumption by 20-50% depending on the size and weight of the tow. Aim to improve fuel economy by fitting a snug cover which smooth's the airflow over the boat and trailer. Keep the tow light if you can, by balancing the load across all tyres and moving heavier objects to the front of the trailer, aiming for a 60/40 split in weight front to back.

Encourage people to think about the impact of their travel, to plan ahead and avoid wasting fuel by getting lost or being stuck in avoidable traffic jams. The AA have some more useful general tips for more [efficient driving](#) and the [Department for Transport](#) tips can save you up to 24% on your fuel costs through good driving practices.

Attendees travelling to your event by air have the least control over their carbon emissions. You can encourage air passengers to use newer, more efficient planes, such as those flown by [Norwegian Airways](#), or pay a little extra for carbon offsetting.



The transport of all your goods and services should also be taken into account. Include a requirement in your procurement process which encourages suppliers to outline how they minimise the impact of their transport, for example by planning fuel efficient routes, maximising loads and load sharing or using sustainable or renewable fuels.

Travel Checklist

- Avoid transport in the run up to the event by using teleconference facilities when you can saving both time and an energy as you do business.
- Promote the use of public transport by providing links to relevant time tables and choosing a venue close to transport hubs. You can also work with the local authority to organise better access to a park and ride facility.
- Facilitate car and trailer sharing using online car sharing platforms or you may like to set up your own simple ride share platform by asking people to list any spare seats they have on a notice board on site.
- Organise shuttle buses to cut down on short single occupant journeys to and from the site to accommodation or car parking facilities.
- Hire or lease vehicles which are fuel efficient/low emission.
- Facilitate the use of electric vehicles by signposting local charging points or even installing your own.
- Encourage healthy, low carbon options such as walking and cycling. Provide plenty of places to park bikes and partner with a local cycle hire business. Show a map of walking routes on your website and on the notice boards around site.

Venue and accommodation

Whether your venue is your local club, a new venue to you, or perhaps you are even constructing a venue from scratch there here are a few tips to get you started.



Choosing a more sustainable venue and accommodation

As a maritime event organiser, your choice of venue and accommodation may be limited to some extent by the type of event you are running. However, if you have a choice of venues you should consider your choices early on in your event preparations. As the London 2012 organising committee stated in their Lessons Learned document, “Choosing the right venue is probably the most important part of the process to hosting a more sustainable event, as this can determine transport and travel arrangements, purchasing, catering decisions and so on.”

The European Champions 2019 were hosted by Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy, a venue that maintains the ISO 20121 standard for sustainable events.

If you are choosing a new venue markers of sustainability to look out for when you visit for the first time are:

- A green accreditation mark on the building,
- Lights which are on timers or sensors throughout the venue,
- Water reduction fittings on all taps
- Recycling bins evident throughout the building
- A menu offering local, seasonal produce.



The key priorities when assessing a new venue or accommodation facility are:

- Does the venue have a sustainability or environmental policy in place? Can the managers give you evidence that they are following it? For example, it should be easy for them to supply energy consumption reduction figures or waste management data across the venue.
- Have they taken into account the broader impacts on the local community and environment? This could be evidenced by the active reduction and management of litter or traffic from the site, particularly heavy haulage.
- Is there good access to the site for public and sustainable transport? Is it near a bus stop or train station or perhaps run a shuttle bus service to a park and

ride? Are there plenty of bike racks and electric car charging stations? Are there good walking routes to and around the site?

- If the chosen venue is within or close to an environmentally sensitive area has this been effectively managed? For example, have the environmental requirements for the area been recognised and implemented, where possible, by the staff on site? Have obvious impacts from noise, water, soil or air pollution been reduced or mitigated in some way?
- Is the venue or accommodation part of any relevant green accreditation scheme such as those run by [Visit England](#).

All of these aspects should be considered before you book and, even if you don't find everything you are looking for, you can ask the venue to make improvements prior to your event. Remember – you are paying them for a service and you are in control to a large extent.

We have provided a short checklist to assist you with choosing the right venue for your sustainable event.

Venue and Accommodation Checklist

- Check to see if the venue has an environment policy. Does it address the full range of environmental impacts including food, water, energy, waste, travel and transport, purchasing and procurement? Is there a member of staff responsible for its implementation?
- Look out for and encourage, energy and resource saving management practices such as proper use of thermostats, turning off unneeded lights, taps etc.
- Ask the venue to be involved with making your event more sustainable.
- Make sure the venue is accessible by public transport and provide information to participants about local public transport links.
- Check to see if the venue has any green accreditation. Examples include ISO 14001, ISO 20121 or [EMAS](#) accreditation.
- Check the venues tele and video conferencing facilities are in working order.
- Choose accommodation close to the main venue

Construction

For any scale of event you may need to construct a building, slipway or other structure. Even a temporary building can have significant impacts on the local environment and community and you should take opportunities at the planning stages to ensure that you have minimised the use of resources and maximised the energy and water efficiency of the building. The [Government's Strategy](#) aims for a 50% reduction in GHG emissions from the construction sector.

Sustainable building standards

[BREEAM](#) is the most widely used green standard in the UK. The standard works around ten central criteria including materials, land use, energy, waste, water and transport. The standard can be used as a guide or a construction can go through the full third party certification scheme to gain accreditation. Other well recognised sustainable building standards in the UK include [CEEQUAL](#), [SKA](#) and [LEED](#).



Sustainability in Design

The development of a sustainable building or construction project begins with its design and you should talk to your architect and the local planning department about innovations which can be incorporated into your building to allow for more sustainability both during the building phase and when the building is in use. For example you may wish to choose locally sourced timber, green roof options or the use of renewable heating systems such as solar panels or ground source heat pumps.

Choice of materials

Choice of materials can be a challenging part of the construction process and a useful guide to the different options available to you can be found on the Scottish [Architecture and Design](#) website.

Sustainable Olympics

The main 2012 Olympic Stadium boasts many environmental credentials. It is the lightest ever built (for its size), the 80,000 seat stadium also has rainwater harvesting, a fabric roof and uses a range of recycled materials.

Working with suppliers

The construction industry estimates that 80% of waste from construction could be prevented by better design and procurement. Take time to work into your procurement process requirements which challenge organisations wishing to tender to find ways reduce waste as much as possible. Construction is a complex task so it is better to ask the companies to come up with appropriate solutions to the problems as they see them, rather than you making stipulations.

Almost a third of GHG emissions from construction are from transport of materials. You can reduce this by deciding to purchase locally sourced materials such as wood, or by asking your suppliers to streamline deliveries to ensure they are as efficient as possible.

Some inspiring case studies and further resources can be found [here](#).

Construction Checklist

- Consider building to BREEAM, CEEQUAL, SKA or LEED standards.
- Discuss sustainable construction ideas with your architect and the planning authority. Use naturally light, sustainable and highly energy efficient

materials, include renewable energy to add value and save costs longer term.

- Build sustainability requirements into your procurement process. Request waste (including water) minimisation solutions from your contractors.
- Request local sourcing and sustainable transport options from your contractors.

Training and Development

Expanding knowledge and awareness of environmental issues, especially those specific to the boating sector, is an important aspect of your role when arranging a sustainable event. This theme links closely to communications.

The first and most simple step would be to include a talk or training opportunity on sustainability within your event to a wider audience. Check out [The Green Blue](#) for advice and materials on this. You may decide to run a fun and educational activity for the younger attendees such as the marine CSI activity created by the Green Blue.

It is important to ensure that your staff and volunteers are updated and aware of your sustainability aims. You may want to organise a training session that specifically looks at communicating your environmental policy, encouraging your staff and volunteers to adopt new practices and share your aims throughout the event.

Another step is to recognise and reward those involved in making your event more sustainable this could be the eco-champions, the venue or the attendees themselves. Furthermore this could be extended to award those actively working on improving their own environmental footprint within your stakeholders. This could be contractors, sponsors, stall holders, or a certain team.

Training and Development Checklist:

- Include a talk or training opportunity on sustainability within your event
- Develop a recognition or awards programme for those assisting with implementing your environmental policy
- Extend the recognition or awards programme to those improving their environmental footprint within your key audiences (contractors, stall holders etc.)

Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable procurement gives you the control to make decisions that can have a wide positive impact.

Examples of positive **social** impacts through good procurement:

- Improvements to human rights
- Better equality and diversity in the work place
- Improved community benefits

Examples of **economic** benefits through positive procurement:

- Fair trade and living wages
- Local businesses benefitting
- Job creation

Examples of **environmental** benefits through good procurement:

- Reduced energy, water and chemical use
- Reduced waste including packaging
- Reduced CO2 production

When making any purchasing decision your motivations will likely include the quality desired, the end use and the budget as well as any legal obligations. People often assume that environmentally friendly or sustainable options will be more expensive, or the quality will be lower than the high carbon alternatives we are used to. This isn't the case, there are many high quality, reasonably priced, more environmentally conscious products out there which are just right for you.

Taking time to research purchases can be challenging but finding the right products and companies to meet your needs can reward you with a long term, sustainable solution.

Before you buy, think hard about the environmental, social and economic impacts and ensure that you have a traceable supply chain.

To confirm you are making the best decisions from a social perspective, try to ensure that a range of small to large businesses are able to tender for your contracts and take into account their employment and equality policies, including fair wages.

When judging the environmental or sustainability claims of any products or services there are some key things to look out for:

Is it built to last?

A product which is built to last may be more expensive at the point of purchase but it is much less likely to break down and will serve you for much longer. The [Buy Me Once](#) website has some great examples of this sort of long term purchasing approach.

Limit packaging

Nobody wants a huge amount of packaging. Before you place your order, ask how things are packaged and be prepared to stand your ground and request excess packaging to be removed. You can also put this sort of requirement into your standard terms for procurement so that your whole supply chain knows that you do not want unnecessary packaging.



Recyclable/renewable packaging

If packaging is unavoidable request recyclable packaging such as paper or renewable items such as corn starch chips.

Reduced use of chemicals during manufacturing

Many industries are either choosing, or being led by legislation, to reduce the chemical input to their manufacturing processes. Look out for these reassurances when you are purchasing, particularly if you are buying something which you know has no suitable eco-alternative. If you cannot do without the item, a lowering of the chemical input may be the only eco-saving to be made.

Amount of recycled material used in manufacturing

The amount of recycled content in new items is another sign that a manufacturer is taking steps to lower the footprint of its goods and be more sustainable.

Lean manufacturing

The concept of lean manufacturing has really taken hold in the industrial world. Saving resources, and therefore money, it is a great way to do business. Look out for those businesses who state they have a lean manufacturing policy or who have won awards for their approach to minimising waste. [Ormiston Wire](#), a leading supplier of rigging components to the sailing sector is a great example of this sort of approach.

Food

When sourcing food look for high welfare, low input credentials such as low use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers and water and low mileage from locally grown goods. Aim to include seasonally appropriate produce and healthy options in your menus. Challenge your suppliers to come up with solutions. They know the food chain better than anyone.

The most sustainable food is often that which is grown locally, regardless of its organic status. This is partly because of the lower emissions from transport but also because the laws in the UK often encourage more

Musto Reduce Plastic Use

In December 2016, Musto were challenged by Vestas 11th Hour Racing and the Volvo Ocean Race to reduce their environmental impact.

This resulted in a saving of more than 4,000 kg of plastic packaging.

sustainable methods of production. Some useful schemes which are widely used in the UK including [Soil Association](#), [Red Tractor](#), [MSC Certification](#), [Fair Trade](#), [LEAF](#), [RSPCA Assured](#) (previously Freedom Food) and [Food For Life](#).

Reusable

A product which is no longer useful to you may be exactly what someone else is looking for. The market for second hand/refurbished pieces of equipment has grown in recent years and an investment in a good quality piece of kit can often be rewarded by a higher resale value when you are finished with it. The market for donated goods has also become more accessible and charities will often come and pick up used items that still have life left in them.

Reuse of Kit

Following the Glasgow 2014 games, the local community benefited from over 60,000 items of furniture (including beds, wardrobes, sofas, beanbags and lamps) donated to families in need via the Glasgow Housing Association.

Recyclable

As a product comes to the end of its primary use, it is important that it can be turned into something else so look for products with a high amount of recyclable material. More importantly avoid all products which cannot be recycled at all and make it your aim to send as little as possible to landfill. There is an excellent guide to the somewhat bewildering array of recycling symbols [here](#).

Procurement Policy

You may decide to create a separate procurement policy. In general, this policy should ensure that purchasing decisions have been taken with the aim of reducing your footprint on both people and planet. This includes a traceable supply chain. You may decide to select certain approved contractors that you have checked meet your sustainability criteria or outline a set of responsible sourcing guidelines. One detailed example is the [Olympic Committees responsible sourcing guidelines](#).

Procurement Checklist

Within your budget you may think your choices are limited but if you balance the books by reusing or reselling items you may be able to make some more sustainable options work for you.

- Include sustainability criteria into your procurement specifications.
- Ask contractors to give you their suggestions on more sustainable options rather than being specific about your solutions.
- Look for items which are built to last, so you can reuse or resell them.
- Request reduced packaging and ask the supplier before you commit to buy.
- Use paper that is made from recyclable materials or FSC-certified
- Create your own procurement policy or responsible sourcing guidelines.

Alternative Products

Listed below are common products used at boating events and their more sustainable alternatives. Please note that the RYA does not endorse any of the products listed and this list is not exhaustive as new products are coming to market all the time.

Tape

Seek for higher recycled or plant based content including [Green Scotch Tape](#), [Tesa Tape](#), and [paper based packing tape](#).

Water bottles

Buy UK made, recycled/recyclable, material and plant based inks – [Eco-Bottles](#)

[Water to go](#) provide self-filtering water bottles for use with dirty water. They are more expensive but asking for people to purchase a branded version prior to the event may mean that they continue to use them afterwards. You can also purchase to support a charity - for example, [Sea-Changers](#).

Stickers and decals

The vinyl stickers, often used for temporary marking of racing boats, are going through a transformation as PVC free decals are possible and bow logos are have been used at [Lendy Cowes Week in partnership with Grapefruit Graphics](#). If you are sticking with vinyl, try gathering the stickers so they can be recycled after the event.

Sandwich containers

Choose greaseproof and fully compostable [sandwich bags](#) or reusable food containers.

Cling film

There are many biodegradable versions of cling film available. However, the specific conditions they require to breakdown adequately are unlikely to occur in landfill so you should avoid all cling film if possible. Use greaseproof paper instead or beeswax wraps where appropriate.

Lanyards

[Lanyards](#) made from recycled or [lower impact materials](#) such as [bamboo](#) are widely available.

Lamination sleeves

Biodegradable lamination sleeves are available but the degradable plastic actually fragments into micro plastic, thereby creating more pollution which is harder to see and impossible to clean up. Alternatives include using a reusable and adaptable [waterproof clipboard](#) to protect your notice – firmly fixed to a wall.

You can also use waterproof paper, which cuts out the need to laminate, for results pages. If you use a heavy grade of paper this can also be used for name badges/passes etc.

Pop up banners, leaflet holders and exhibition stands

Pop up banners are an essential part of displays at events and they come in all shapes and sizes including a new breed made out of wood and [bamboo](#), some of which use fabric rather than a PVC plastic sheet for the display.

You can also find leaflet [holders](#) made from sustainable materials such as bamboo, which are they are attractive, lightweight and robust.

Exhibition [stands](#) are often dismantled and dumped at the end of the show – so why not choose a fully [recyclable stand](#), [display system](#), or even an armchair, which can be put into the cardboard recycling?

Supporting Innovation

The pressure for environmentally conscious products is rapidly growing. By supporting and presenting these products at an event you create additional demand for positive changes.

As a consumer you can provide vital feedback to the developers and manufactures of more sustainable products from boats to kit to rope, to help encourage the on-going improvement in environmental performance.

It may be possible to collaborate on scientific research with marine industry associations or local universities. This partnership could be beneficial to both parties and means your event/club can partake in citizen science.

Alternative Products Checklist

Whatever you are considering purchasing there may be a more sustainable alternative. Run through the checklist prior to purchase.

- Purchase, support and present new innovative products which are designed to be more sustainable
- Check for a more sustainable alternative. For example, can you hire, rather than buy chairs or crockery for catering? Instead of buying a plastic and metal pop up banner can you buy one made of wood or bamboo? Instead of using recyclable plastic water bottles could you purchase bottles made of recycled material to begin with.
- Check that the item will last. Is the build quality such that you 'hope it will make it to the end of the event' or do you think you could use it again or sell it on? A better built item may be a bit more expensive but if it has a reuse or resale value then it is a more sustainable choice.

- ❑ Check that you can easily recycle or compost the item. From paper-based packing tape to bamboo lanyards there are often more sustainable choices for everyday items.
- ❑ Provide feedback to manufactures and developers as a consumer
- ❑ Collaborate and partake in research and citizenship science.

Carbon Footprint

Key to making your event more sustainable is to think about and aim to reduce the carbon footprint. Carbon footprint is defined as the total emissions caused by an individual, event, organisation, or product, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent. Reducing the events carbon footprint is the overarching objective when making an event more sustainable and should be a core aim within your environmental policy.

An events carbon footprint includes any impact from waste, energy, catering, transport, procurement etc. Thus there are many ways to act on it.

Estimating Carbon Offset

One engaging way of tying in your CO2 offset is to link it to your event. For example, if your top 3 winners rack up 150 points, you could choose to plant 150 trees. This is an unscientific approach, but it helps people to connect with what you are doing.

Reducing the carbon footprint when boating

Reducing the carbon footprint of an event can be challenging. Methods that are specific to a boating event can involve:

- Reducing the use of fossil fuels for safety craft and other official boats by improving boat handling, servicing engines regularly and proper use of boat trim.
- Require that boats/concession etc. must have the ability to produce renewable energy (e.g. solar panels, wind generator etc.) in some way in order to participate in your event.

Carbon Offsetting

Carbon offsetting is a last resort and should only be considered after all possible actions have been carried out to reduce the overall carbon footprint. When you 'offset' your carbon emissions you are usually paying someone else to remove carbon from the atmosphere, for example by planting trees, or by investing in carbon reduction projects such as low carbon cooking stoves in developing countries.

Carbon offsetting is not universally welcomed by environmental experts, many of whom see it as paying our way out of a problem rather than taking positive steps to make actual reductions in consumption. However, while this is true, there are likely to be aspects of your event which you cannot practically change and which have an

environmental impact, with the result that using an offset may be the last option for lowering the footprint of your event.

Steps to Carbon Offsetting

1) Work out your carbon footprint

Start by working out the carbon footprint of your event. There are some useful calculators listed below and they will show you where your highest carbon emissions are coming from and therefore help you prioritise your CO2 reduction strategy.

2) Set a carbon budget

You can then choose to set a carbon budget for the event to give you a target to achieve before deciding what actions you can take to get there. Reviewing your footprint after the event will let you know if you have achieved your aims and allow you to celebrate successes.

3) Identify an offset provider and pay

Once you have reduced all you can by taking practical steps, such as minimising the amount of [power consumed](#) or cutting back on the use of private transport then you can select a carbon offset provider. We have listed some high quality, accredited suppliers below. You agree the amount you want to pay, based on the amount of CO2 you want to offset, and they will invest it in a CO2 reduction scheme.

Resources for carbon offsetting:

Calculators for carbon footprint

- [Individual and business calculators](#)
- [Specific events calculator](#)
- [Paid for calculator](#) which benchmarks you against others and helps towards ISO20121

Suppliers to offset

There are a wide range of suppliers available, we have listed some below to help you get started.

Plant trees to offset your carbon emissions in a certified project for example: through [carbon footprint](#) or [world land trust](#).

For more business targeted offsetting try [clear offset](#).

Another option is to support a good cause such as [WWF Gold Standard projects](#) by making a donation.

Carbon Offsetting Consultancy Services

For larger, more complex events, you can pay consulting services to help you analyse and offset your carbon emissions.

Carbon Footprint Checklist

Carbon offsetting should be seen as a last resort, when all other options to lower the amount of CO₂ produced by an event have been explored. However, for events such as power boat races where fuel will be consumed as a matter of course, it may be your only real option of becoming a more sustainable event.

- Do all that is practical to reduce the amount of energy and other resources used in order to lower your carbon footprint.
- Measure your carbon footprint and develop a strategy to further reduce it. In general you should aim to be as comprehensive as possible and cover transport to and from the event for staff, presenters, exhibitors and contractors. You should also include the power used by the event for heating, lighting, catering and hot water. Finally, you can add energy used by the boats themselves which may be particularly significant for a powerboat event.
- Consider carbon offsetting. Choose a supplier with good credentials (see our guide) to make sure that your money is well spent. You may want to choose a programme where you can see the results such as one of the tree planting schemes in the UK.

Optimist World Championship 2017

Held in Thailand the event has been officially acclaimed 'Carbon Neutral' by Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation (TGO). The event attracted nearly 600 competitors and supporters from 62 countries. In total, 1,381 tons of CO₂ (carbon dioxide) was consumed. To offset the CO₂, the organisers purchased 'carbon credits' to support a biomass facility in Danchang.

Other aspects of sustainable events

Sustainability is not exclusive to the impacts on the environment but should also consider economic and social values.

Social sustainability is realised by equitably meeting the needs of all people affected by the planning or activation of an event. Economic sustainability involves the use of available resources in a way that is both efficient and responsible, and ensures all financial obligations over time can be met.

Here are just a few points to ensure your event considers these areas to:

Social:

- All your delegates should be able to attend your event. The venue must be accessible to all, and all delegates should be treated equally and as fairly as possible.
- Consider timings and event dates so they do not clash with religious holidays.
- Think about the communities. First this is your delegates, ensuring they have a positive experience in a safe and sustainable place. Second is the community around the venue – a sustainable venue will have more ties to the local area.

Third is the larger community ensuring any events respect the environment for future generations.

- Consider social sustainability in procurement – choose local suppliers; products that are certified such as Fairtrade and suppliers that consider their social impacts including diversity, labour standards and human rights.
- Be transparent. Maintaining transparent relationships with suppliers and stakeholders encourages a more ethical approach to your event.
- Don't forget to say thank you and celebrate achievements made.

Economic:

- Ensure that any expenses are to a reliable and sustainable vendor. This includes there being insurance, health and safety policies in place, anti-corruption and bribery policies, labour standards, human rights etc.
- Spend on local sources where possible.
- Consider smaller independent venues or suppliers.

For more information contact The Green Blue on info@thegreenblue.org.uk

Or contact the RYA Environmental Team on environment@rya.org.uk