# A Guide to Organising Sustainable Events in Manchester





### Introduction

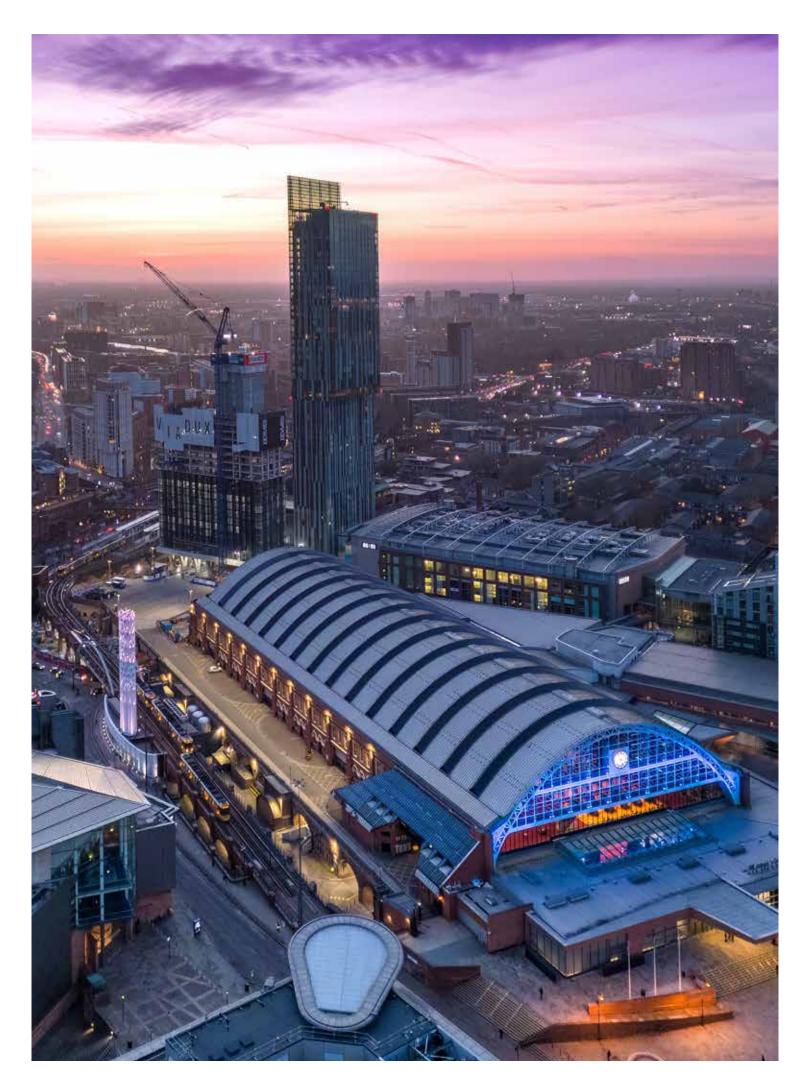
Welcome to the Guide to Organising Sustainable Events in Manchester. This guide will help you think about the sustainable choices you can make when organising an event, conference, or meeting (referred to holistically as 'events' from herein), enabling you to deliver a more climate-friendly event which minimises the effect on the environment in Greater Manchester, whilst increasing the social and financial impact it has on the local community and economy.

Events have the ability to create a positive impact on a destination's communities and economy, both of which can be maximised through considered choices when an event comes to a city – this guide can help you leave a positive impact on Greater Manchester. However, events by their very nature have a negative impact on the climate and environment, using resources, increasing waste, and contributing to carbon emissions, particularly through travel. You can help minimise this impact by following some easy-toimplement strategies to help mitigate these effects.

The guidance in this document is not meant to be a checklist of everything you must do when organising an event; rather, it is a guide to help you consider as

many sustainable decisions as possible. You might not have control over every aspect covered here, and not every event will be able to enact everything in this document, but it's important to remember to not let perfection get in the way of progress – every sustainable action you can implement helps, and you can benchmark those that you can implement and improve on them for your next event.

It takes collaboration between many parties to make an event more sustainable, and we must all do our part. Greater Manchester has ambitious, sciencebased targets to be a Net Zero region by 2038, 12 years before the UK target of 2050, so the sustainable choices you can make when organising your event will help us to achieve this target. Integrating sustainability into your event planning is part of this collaboration. Together, we can help improve the way we think about the impact of events here in Greater Manchester for the better.







## Planning

First, you need to have a robust plan in place. Use resources such as the <u>VisitBritain & isla event planning guide</u> and set your aim with SMART objectives to achieve it. Try to align them with the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals SDGs. Then, you can start to consider which areas of your event you can target to help you achieve your objectives. Work out what is in your power to change and where you need to collaborate with others to achieve change.

Use our handy checklist to track what you need to monitor and who is responsible. Always bear in mind that it doesn't have to be exhaustive – pick areas where you can make the biggest difference, and work towards reducing the impact there. It is better to have four achievable objectives that really make a difference rather than twenty that you struggle to deliver. You can build on a solid start for your next event.

There are three main areas that need to be considered when starting to address the sustainability of your event: environmental, social, and economic.

#### 1. Environmental

Environmental considerations are all about reducing the impact of your event on the environment and climate as much as possible. It's important to measure travel carbon emissions, energy and water usage, material usage, and waste from all aspects of the event. Measuring your carbon footprint is an easy way to do this. There are many online

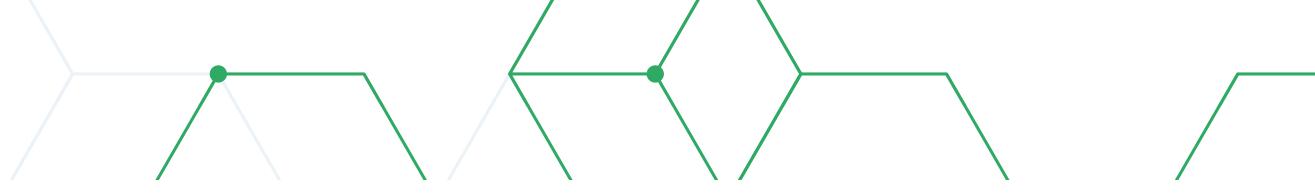
tools that can help (such as this one from My Climate). Once you have your event footprint, you can then work on benchmarking and reduction.

#### 2. Social

Social considerations mainly fall into two areas: the people working at your event and the local community of the destination you are holding it in. For the people side, ensuring all work is done for the real living wage, hours are fair, working conditions are excellent, and support is in place for staff are all essentials. A diverse range of speakers, including ones from the local area, is also essential, as is a diverse and inclusive delegate cohort. For the local community, consider how you can make a lasting positive impact on the destination – can you be involved in a secondary education programme, fund a local community project, or work with the university on a research programme? Giving back to the destination community ensures your event is helping sustain the local area.

#### **3. Economic**

There are two facets to the economic side of sustainability: the local destination economy and the return on investment for your organisation. For the local economy, consider how you spend your money for your event. Can local suppliers in the destination be employed, putting money into the local economy and supporting jobs, as well as reducing transport mileage? For your ROI, consider how



implementing a sustainable event can be used to produce positive comms and marketing messages both internally and externally, and how helping the local community will increase brand perception in the area.

Over the following pages, we'll look at the main areas of an event where these three sustainability pillars can be employed to help make your event more sustainable. These include travel, accommodation, the venue, food and drink, event materials, communication and measurement. Once again, this is not a list of absolute must-dos; it is more a list of considerations to help you craft a list of areas where you can employ sustainable actions tailored to your capabilities.

#### Key

Environmental consideration

Social consideration



**Economic consideration** 

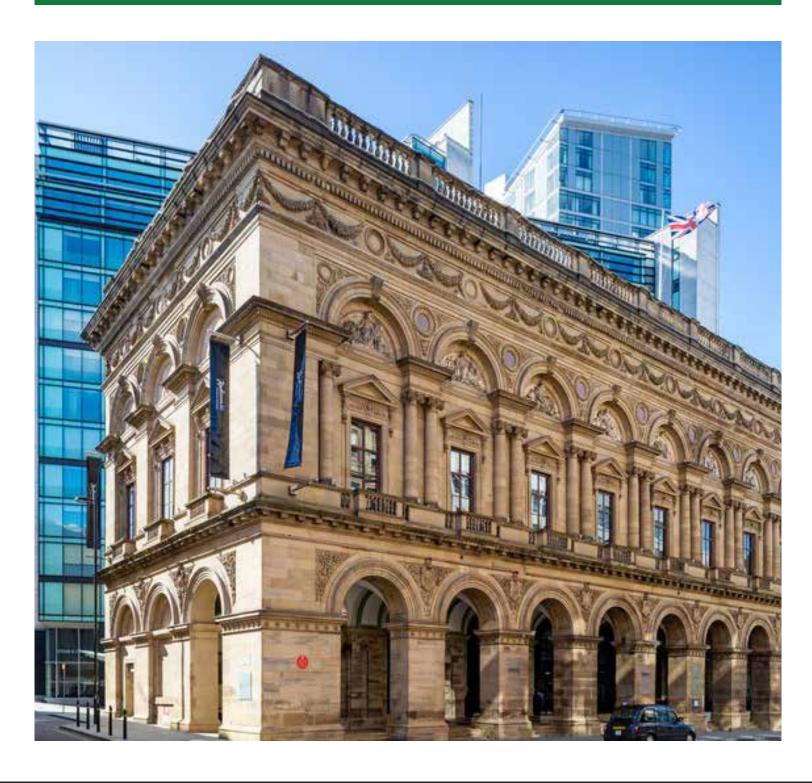




### Venue

The venue where you host your event is a key consideration when implementing sustainable practices. It will be responsible for the majority of your non-travel impact, so making the right decision on where to have your event is vital.

Our <u>Venue Location Service</u> can help find the right venue for your event.



Does the venue use renew efficient appliances shoul

Does the venue conserve water, have water-efficient appliances, and implement water-saving initiatives?

Has the venue signed up to the Greater Manchester <u>single use plastic pact</u>?

How does the venue collect waste? Do they have sufficient recycling schemes in place? Are there clearly signposted recycling bins for delegates to use? Do they compost food waste?

Can electronic signage be utilised to update delegates and direct them around the event?

Is the AV equipment plug-and-play, reducing the need to import your own equipment? Is it energy efficient?

Does the venue have a sustainability policy, and a third-party sustainability accreditation (i.e ISO 14001, Earthcheck, Green Tourism or Green Key?)

Is the venue within easy reach of your accommodation options and near an active or public transport route?

Does the venue employ staff on the <u>real living wage</u>? Does it adhere to the <u>Modern Slavery Act</u>?

Are diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies in place?

Is the venue fully accessible to all disabilities, and are there adequate provisions in place for physical, deaf, blind, and neurological disability delegates?

Manchester's convention centre, Manchester Central, adheres to the ISO 14001 standard, has a full sustainability policy in place, and is <u>fully accessible</u> to all

able energy sources? Heat	ing, lighting and air condi	itioning use a lot of ener	gy, so energy-
d be installed, too			









## Accommodation

Where your staff and delegates stay is an important consideration when it comes to sustainable choices. Choosing hotels with sustainability policies and initiatives, and ones that adhere to social inclusion policies, will all improve the sustainability of your event.

You can use the <u>Meet Manchester accommodation</u> <u>booking service</u> to identify hotels with sustainable practices.



Look for accommodation an energy-efficient buildin

Book hotels that are within venue

Encourage delegates to sta for beds

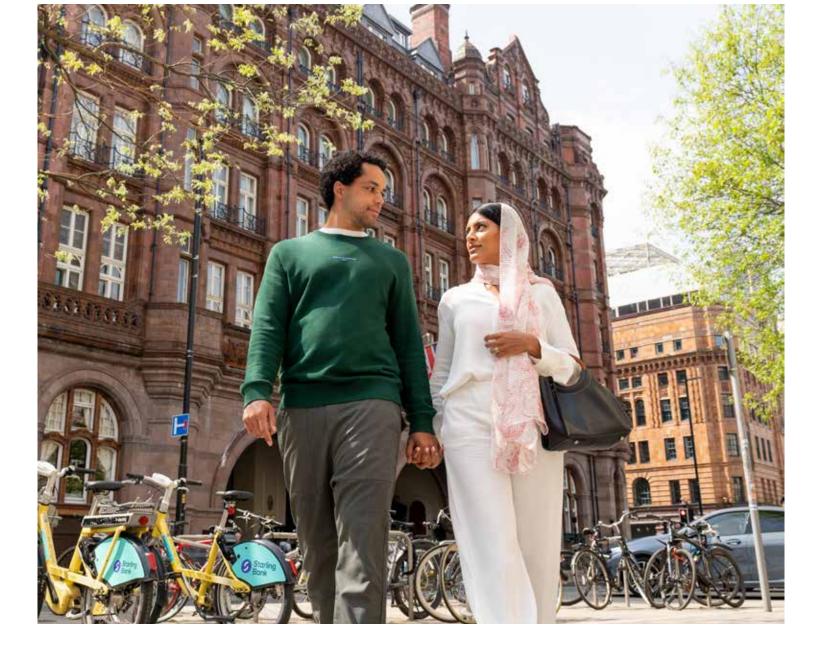
Use hotels that serve local

Ensure there are plenty of hoists are available to bool

Communicate your prefere

Use accommodation that

Consider booking hotels the



Introduction Planning Venue Accommodation Travel Catering Legacy & Impact Event Materials Communication Measurement & Reporting

ook hotels with third-party sustainability accreditation such as Green Key and Green	
that talks about their sustainability credentials in their communications – do they have ng, do they implement a towel reusage scheme, do they avoid single-use plastics?	
n walking distance of the event venue, or are on an active or public transport route to the	
ay for longer than one night to contribute to the local economy and reduce turn arounds	f
ly sourced food and drinks	
fully accessible rooms on offer at your hotel choices, and that accessible rooms with k. <u>AccessAble</u> is a great resource for accessible accommodation options and more	
ence for delegates to stay in hotels with sustainable practices	
pays staff the real living wage, and that adheres to the Modern Slavery Act	$\bigcirc$
hat are independent and run by local businesses	$\bigcirc$





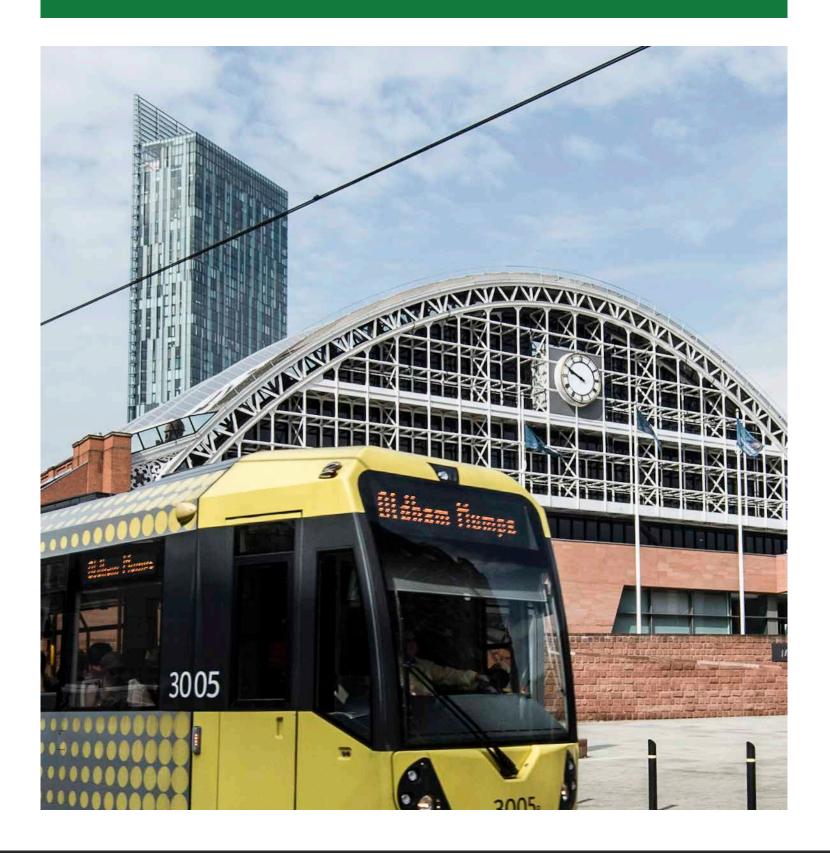






### Travel

Travel to an event can account for up to 80% of an event's total carbon footprint, so it's incredibly important to consider how to reduce this impact where possible. There are two main areas to consider: getting to Manchester and travelling around the city when delegates arrive.



### **Getting to Manchester**

the impact:

Fly direct – take-off and lan footprint – flying direct red

Use airlines that offset son

Can delegates take trains Manchester rather than an International Travel Carbo

Manchester Airport has be 14001 international enviro options

#### **Getting aro**

Encourage delegates to us Manchester has the larges electricity. The Metrolink and <u>local trains</u> run from the airport to the city centre in under 20 minutes

Encourage delegates to use active or public transport to get around the city. Manchester is a very walkable city, with the majority of hotels, restaurants, and attractions within a 20-30 min walk of the main convention centre, Manchester Central. Ensure delegates know that walking and public transport are the easiest and most sustainable options to use when navigating the city in your event comms. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) has a useful journey planner which shows the carbon impact of a journey



It is sometimes unavoidable for delegates to use air travel. That said, there are some things to consider to reduce

anding, and routes that take longer through detours account for an increase in a flight's educes both of these	4
ome of a flight's carbon emissions responsibly	4
s all or some of the way? If a delegate lands in London and uses the train to get to another flight, it would save 88% of the carbon emitted - The Sustainable Travel oon Calculator: <u>Carbon Footprint Calculator for Travel</u> can help you calculate the savings	4
peen certified carbon neutral since 2016, has a strong <u>sustainability policy</u> , and has an ISO conmental standard, making flying into Manchester one of the more sustainable air travel	4
ound Manchester	
ise public transport from the airport or train station to the venue/accommodation. est light railway system in the UK in the <u>Metrolink</u> , which is entirely powered by renewable	4







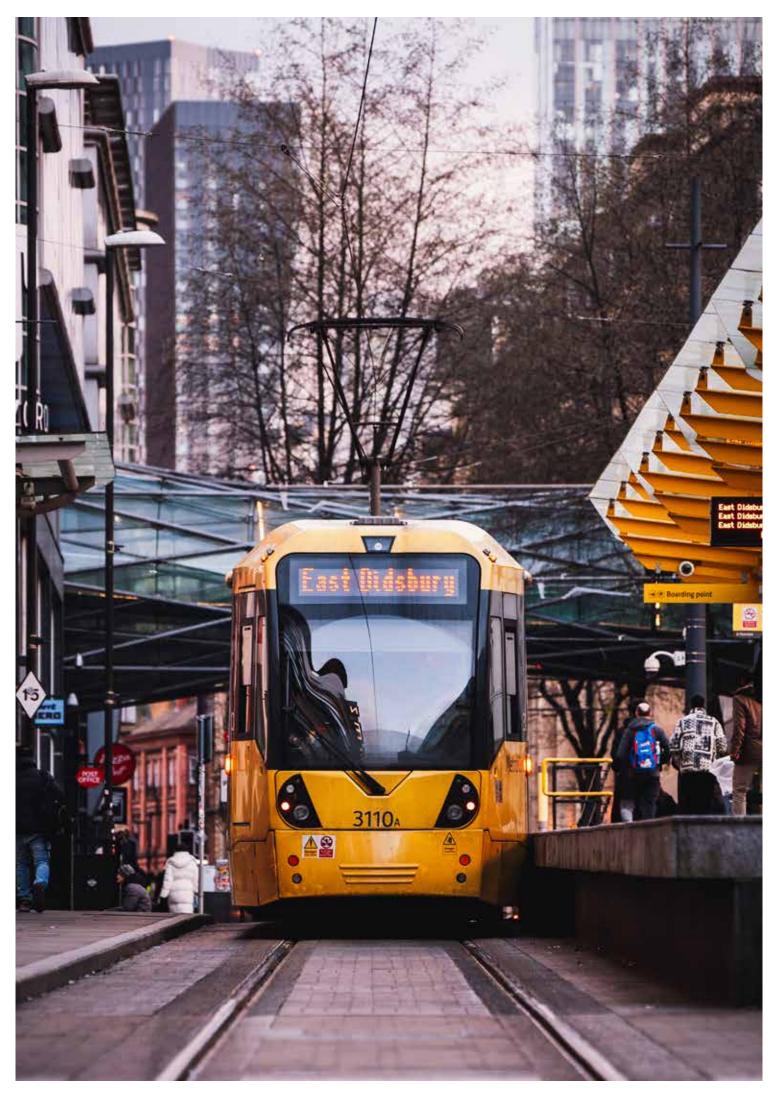








### Trave



A free bus route runs acros other regions across Greate

The <u>Starling bike scheme</u> e centre. Why not combine t

If there is more than one lo walking distance or on a pr venues

Consider negotiating a dea for delegates to get around

Display public transport til

Consider the start and end Coast shows the Manchest

Organise a walking tour of affected by homelessness t

If private cars do need to be

ss the city, and there are many local bus and train routes that can connect delegates with ter Manchester	Ø
enables delegates to rent a bike to explore the city, with more than 1200 bikes across the this with a tour of the city?	(
ocation for the event and, for instance, evening hospitality, ensure both venues are within oublic transport route. Organise a group walk or group public transport between the	
al with the local transport operator, TfGM, to reduce the cost of public transport passes d the city	Ø
imes and information at the event on digital screens	(
l time of your event so that it matches up with key public transport options. <u>Avanti West</u> ter to London train service, with first and last trains between the cities	
f the city to familiarise delegates with city's districts – <u>Invisible Cities</u> employ people to give unique city tours	Ø
be used, then consider car sharing schemes, and use electric or hybrid vehicles only	(











## Catering

The food and drink you serve at your event and the food and drink consumed by delegates around the destination can have a large impact on your carbon footprint.

With some smart choices, this impact can be minimised and can have a positive impact on local communities and the local economy. Educating your attendees about the sustainability of your food and drink offering can also have an impact on delegates beyond the event.



Prioritise locally sourced, caterers that can work wit Good Food

Prioritise organic, fair trad producers who have been

Offer more vegan and vege long as you explain your ch

Minimise food waste as m no-shows equals food was welcome breakfast

If possible, avoid serving b a lot of breakfast items ten food charity, such as Eat V have done this

Join the Menu for Change minimising food waste

Ensure there is a scheme i such as Fare Share and The

Ensure reusable cutlery an 'recyclable' items if possibl

Work with your caterer to appropriate

seasonal food to cut down on food transportation. Manchester has some brilliant local th your team to provide a menu with a local flavour, including <u>Open Kitchen</u> and <u>Cracking</u>	() E
le food options to ensure that pesticide use is eliminated and that the food has come from paid a fair price	C E
etarian options than meat options. If possible, offer only vegan and vegetarian food – as hoice, delegates should understand	
uch as possible. Ensure that all attendees fill out a meal requirements form and state that ste. Provide meal requirements forms for all meals served across the event, including any	
preakfast. Many of your attendees will have eaten either on the way or at their hotel, so nd to go to waste. Consider donating the money you would spend on breakfast to a local <u>Vell Manchester</u> or <u>Manchester Central Food Bank</u> , and explain to your delegates why you	
scheme and support long term food security through local growing projects whilst	
n place to redistribute food that is not eaten/over ordered if safe to do so. Local schemes <u>e Bread and Butter Thing</u> can help make sure your food goes to people who need it most	E
nd crockery are used throughout the event – don't use single-use plastic or even le – reuse is better than recycle!	
reduce packaging and recycle anything that can be; ensure recycling is separated as	





### Catering



Make sure that water is pro there are plenty of water re the event and do not provi where you can get free wat

Encourage delegates to tak around Manchester

Serve culturally sensitive m

If you must serve a fish cou

Use local caterers, supplier

Ask the venue if their staff adhere to the Modern Slav

Explain your choices to del will inform and educate yo

ovided in jugs or glass bottles (or other refillable containers) for all delegates and that efill stations in the venue. Tell your delegates to bring a refillable bottle with them for ide plastic bottled water. Share <u>Refill Greater Manchester</u> with your attendees – it shows ter refills across the city for when they are out and about	
ke part in the <u>Borro</u> reusable coffee cup scheme if they are getting coffee out and about	
nenus that cater for religious and dietary needs	
urse, ensure that the fish is sustainably caught	
rs, kitchen and serving staff	$\bigcirc$
fare employed from the local area, that they are paid the real living wage and if they very Act	$\bigcirc$
elegates – showing you've thought about the sustainability of the food and drink offering our attendees and could help generate a positive PR story for your organisation	





## Legacy & Impact

The economic value to Greater Manchester of bringing your event to our region is incredibly valuable for us and incredibly appreciated. The hotels, restaurants, attractions visited, and transport used, all benefit from you being here. However, there is also the longer-term impact of your event on the local community and/or environment to consider too.

Your event can leave a lasting legacy in our region if you partner with us to provide expertise, finance, or resources to local community projects and schemes, helping improve the lives of our residents.



Partner with local commu we can partner you with so many projects around Grea <u>Guide</u> for inspiration, which

Let us know what expertis

If you don't have the time a donation to one of the pr

Involve the community – i online

Work with local projects an Manchester, and make roo

Consider offering activities people affected by homeles

If you invite students to we experience, but they are al

unity projects that align with your organisation's core values. If you prioritise education, chools, colleges, and universities. If you are interested in protecting the environment, eater Manchester would be delighted to work with you. Download our <u>Legacy &amp; Impact</u> ch contains many organisations you can work with	
se or resources you can offer – we can put you in contact with the right people	
or resources to dedicate to providing bespoke sessions or partnerships, consider making rojects in our guide	
invite them to sessions at your event, or provide the event materials to them for free	
and charities to organise volunteering opportunities for your delegates whilst they are in om in your programme for them	E C
s for your delegates like a walking tour organised by <u>Invisible Cities</u> , who work with essness in Manchester to offer bespoke guided tours of the city	E C
ork at the event in any capacity, pay them for their time. Yes, they get some great lso providing their labour and should be paid fairly for it	£



## **Event Materials**

Event materials such as display stands, programmes, handouts, and gifts often go to waste and are not recycled (even if the item is recyclable). Organisers must carefully consider the materials used during their event and how they will be reused/recycled post-event.

If in doubt, stick to the Reduce – Reuse – Recycle ethos: reduce the use of materials where possible, reuse existing materials where possible, and recycle anything that cannot be reused.



Don't print anything. Try to Explain to delegates that the

Ensure online materials ar example

Showcase programmes an company. Not only are they but they are easier to upda

Only use reusable exhibition

If you have exhibitors, ban provide gifts, encourage th

Distribute any programme

If something must be print Do not print dates on anyt materials

Do not provide pens and p and state that all event ma them by a single link that e

Use existing venue furnitur on repurposing existing ite

Use the venue's plug and pl

Collect and reuse name ba

Donate any leftover event with you to make sure they

	/
o make the whole event digital, from signage to programmes to menus to brochures. his is a paper-free event and all material will be accessible only digitally	E E
e accessible to all, providing speak-text for blind or partially sighted delegates for	
d signage on digital screens – if the venue does not have these, hire them in from a local y kinder on the environment (if the electricity is from renewable sources at the venue), ate with last-minute changes	
on stands, and require it from your exhibitors	E
single-use plastic handouts, or anything that cannot be reused or recycled. If they must nem to go for more sustainable ones like seed packs or reusable water bottles/coffee mugs	
es or brochures digitally, and include a page on the sustainability credentials of the event	E C
ted use recycled paper and sustainable ink from a local Greater Manchester supplier. Thing so they can be reused if required. Ensure there are recycling points for any paper	
oaper for each delegate. Again, tell your delegates to bring their own before they arrive aterials will be available online post-event. Do not email these big files individually; send everyone can access	E C
re and fixtures or hire them in – do not buy new or custom-made. Work with your venue ems to suit you	
lay AV system rather than transporting something bespoke	E C
adges/passes, and ensure that they are made with recycled materials from a local supplier	E .
materials to a local charity for redistribution. <u>A Good Thing</u> or <u>Invisible Cities</u> can work y go where they are needed	





## Communication

When you have implemented some of the sustainable options from across the previous areas, it's important to make sure you communicate your decisions to your delegates, staff, business community, and the local community, so that people understand why you have made those choices. So they can participate in them (i.e. bring their own refillable water bottle).

You can also showcase your sustainable event as a case study via your own comms, the venue's comms, and the Convention Bureau's comms too – spread the success of your sustainability credentials as far as possible.



Use every opportunity pos letting delegates know the change attitudes and may

Send a digital information and what they can do to he etc

Include information about carbon-intensive options f can there be a prize for the

Include information about Well hub, where they can g to our region

Ensure that all delegates t non-meat, no breakfast et

If you have a buffet-style as include information like th local, non-meat dishes for

Clearly label recycling point toilets, etc, where there will

Consider getting your chef to explain their choices to

Work with our Convention Distribute this to delegates

ssible to shout about your sustainability initiatives. Even if it is something as simple as e furniture, name badges, and signage have been reused, make sure they know! This can help delegates take such initiatives onto other meetings they organise and attend	$\bigcirc$	
pack to all delegates explaining how the event is trying to be as sustainable as possible, elp. Make sure to mention initiatives like bringing your own water bottle, pen and paper,		
t transport options for arriving in Manchester and getting around, stating the least first in the information pack. Consider gamifying the use of active and public transport – e delegate with the most steps or cycle kilometres?		
t hotels and restaurants with sustainable credentials. Point them to the <u>Visit Manchester</u> get all the information they need on how to be an environmentally conscientious visitor		
ell you which meals they will require and explain how your menu works – seasonal, local, c. They will then know beforehand what to expect		
rrangement, make sure to label all your food with its sustainable credentials – even he amount of carbon emissions it has cost to produce the food and the reduced carbon of example		
nts and encourage all delegates to use them. Put them in handy places – near exits, ill be heavy footfall		
f/caterer/serving staff to announce the positive implications of the menu before the meal diners		
<u>n Bureau team</u> to put together a case study about the sustainability of your event. es, clients, local press, industry press, and your business networks		







# Measurement & Reporting

The key to a successful sustainable event is measurement and reporting. Whether it's your first attempt at reducing the impact of your event or the tenth, measurement and reporting will help you take stock, benchmark and continue to improve going forward. It will also give you an asset to distribute to stakeholders showcasing your work on event sustainability.



#### Use our sustainable event

Survey delegates on their the city, the restaurants th information from them as

Work with the venue, cate

Set benchmarks for each a event

Produce a full report show something, include the rea the way of progress, and de

Distribute the report to sta indicate where you are loo

<u>checklist</u> to assess which areas you want to measure and report on	
experience, the travel they used when they arrived in Manchester and when they were in ney ate at, the hotels they stayed at, if they used a refillable water bottle, etc. Get as much be possible that will help you assess the sustainable initiative you put in place	
erers, and supplier to assess the carbon footprint of your entire event	
area and devise objectives to reduce the impact in these areas next time you organise an	
vcasing the work done and be honest and transparent – if you struggled to achieve asons why and come up with a solution to try again next time – don't let perfection get in on't hide results that weren't what you expected	
akeholders and delegates and make it publicly available. Shout about your successes and oking to improve in the future	







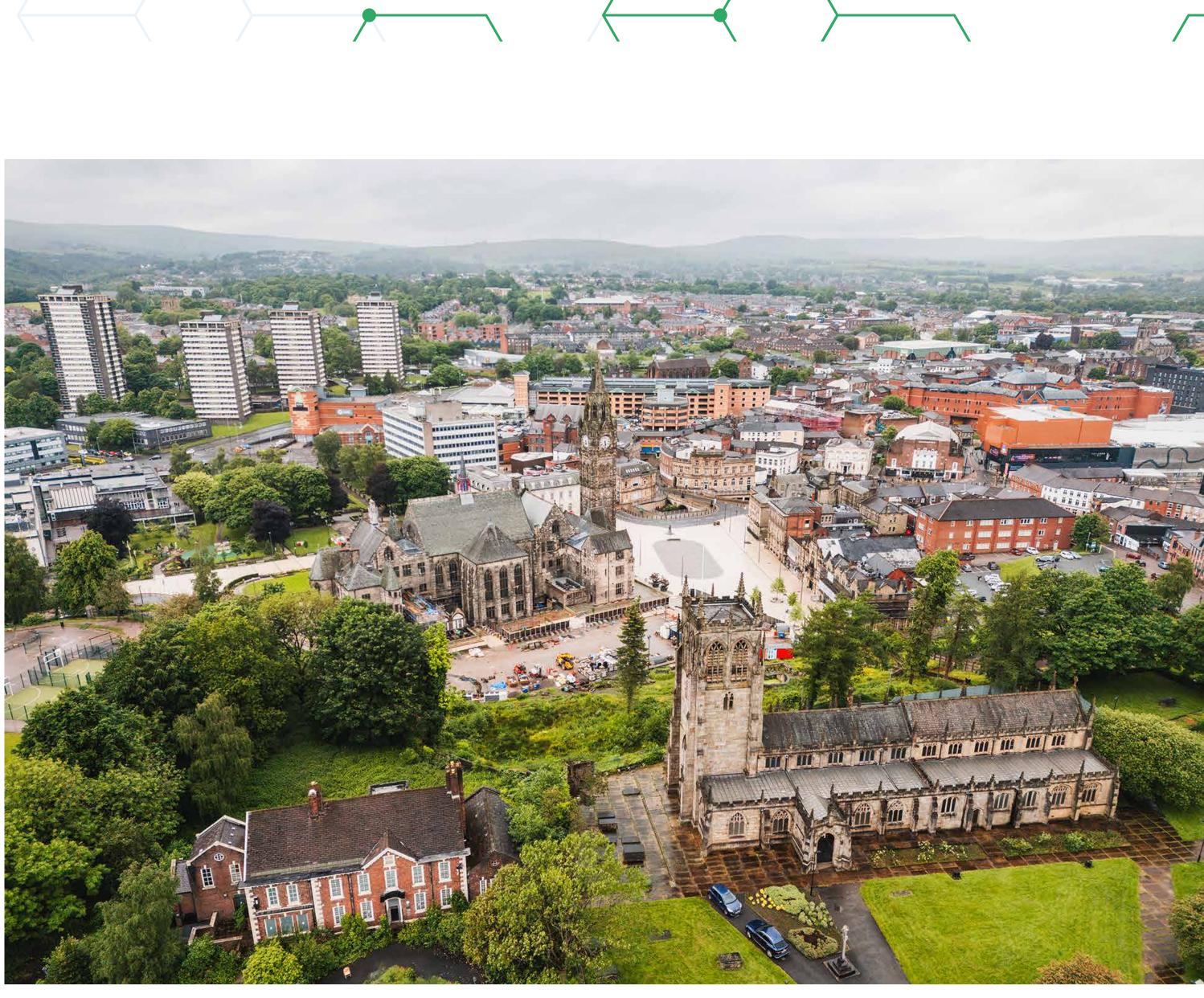
## Need more help?

We hope this guide has given you some ideas of how to start assessing the environmental, social and economic of your event in Manchester.

If you require any help or have any queries, please contact Richard Walker, our Tourism Sustainability Manager, <u>here</u>.

#### **Useful links**

- Visit Manchester Well hub
- Manchester's Legacy and Social Impact Guide
- Sustainable Events in Manchester Checklist •
- <u>VisitBritain x isla sustainable events guide</u> •
- VisitBritain event sustainability checklist •
- My Climate event carbon calculator
- **Carbon Footprint Calculator for Travel**
- Greater Manchester Carbon Market
- Trace x IMEX Carbon Reduction Starter Pack
- UN Sustainable Development Goals



Introduction Planning Venue Accommodation Travel Catering Legacy & Impact Event Materials Communication Measurement & Reporting Need more help?



