

GUIDE TO HOLDING A LOW CARBON EVENT





LOW CARBON EVENT CONTENTS

PAGE TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?	2
CHECKLIST	3
ZERO CARBON INVITES	5
CHOOSING THE VENUE	6
SUSTAINABLE VENDORS	7
WASTE-FREE, TRAVEL SMART	8



LOW CARBON EVENT

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Sustainable events/hui are designed, organised and run in a way that minimises negative environmental and social impacts, leaving a positive legacy for the host community, and an all-round feel good factor.

THE OBJECTIVE?

- Minimise CO2 (and other Greenhouse Gas), emissions and compensate for unavoidable emissions.
- Minimise natural resource consumption (i.e. water and energy)
- Avoid waste generation where possible, reusing, composting and/or recycling residual waste.
- Cause minimal environmental damage while preparing and implementing the event.
- Foster economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities e.g. through choice of catering, including social inclusion, health issues and the living wage.
- Support sustainable goods and services, venues, transport options and catering choices.
- Increase awareness of participants, staff, service providers, sponsors, local communities.

THE DRIVERS



Please note that this is intended to be a guide only - and if you have any other great ideas on how to run a sustainable event, please let us know at hello@livelightly.nz or post it on our [Live Lightly Facebook page](#)!



LOW CARBON EVENT CHECKLIST

Check!	Yes	No	Notes
Venue			
Is meeting virtually (skype or teleconferencing) an option to minimise the need for travel?			
Is the venue close to transport hubs?			
Can the venue supply carafes/glass containers and crockery for catering purposes?			
Does the venue provide an onsite system of separated waste collection/recycling?			
Does the venue have social procurement policies and planet -friendly cleaning practices? If not, make a point of letting the venue manager know that is a factor in your decision-making process, as this will compel them to consider this in future.			
Invitation & resources			
Are all documents (invitation, agenda, venue details) available online?			
Do you really need to use printed material for your invites and/or event registration?			
Can you use a PDF? or tablets for registration? If you do use printed materials have you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed on both sides? Reduced font size? Used recycled paper? Used water-based inks? 			
Does the e-invite have a function to RSVP direct to the organiser and a save-to-calendar function to help with food and give away planning?			
Are the gadgets/gifts/sponsor merchandise sustainable, Fair Trade, practical and reusable?			



LOW CARBON EVENT CHECKLIST

	Yes	No	Notes
Food			
Are food options local, seasonal, plant-based and/or organic?			
Does the amount of food ordered correspond to the RSVPs received? Ensure that you are catering on a per head/PAX basis.			
Can the food order be amended closer to the time to accommodate more/less attendees?			
Can you avoid using single-use items? If not, are all single-use disposable items either recyclable or compostable? If so, is a system in place to ensure that these items are separated and sent to compost, not landfill?			
Does the menu contain non-meat options?			
Have you clearly articulated your preference for the above options to the supplier and explained why? (Remember, supply is demand-responsive)			
Waste			
Is packaging minimised and the use of plastic reduced wherever possible?			
Is there a separate system for each waste type e.g. food scraps, landfill, paper, plastic?			
If the above options are not available, have you stipulated that the caterers take back their waste or provide reusable containers?			
Have you identified and engaged local organisations i.e. KiwiHarvest, for redistribution of leftover food?			
Have you clearly articulated your preference for the above options to the supplier and explained why? (Remember, supply is demand-responsive)			
Transport and Mobility			
Is the venue well-connected to public transport?			
Have you suggested low-emission transport and travel options to attendees?			
Have you included links to cycle path routes, walking routes, public transport journey planners?			
Have you suggested <u>Smart Travel</u> for carpooling, Onzo bikes and City Hop car sharing as alternatives to individual car use?			
Have you included the option to carpool on the invitation?			
Can participants arrive at the venue swiftly and easily as result of the information provided?			



LOW CARBON EVENT

ZERO CARBON INVITES

THE INVITATION

No need to print! Email invitations are low carbon, resource-light and easy on the wallet. They also support a range of interactive functions, making them infinitely more practical.

Create and track your invitations using Green Envelope, make an interactive flyer with Paperless Post or manage the event virtually using Eventbrite.

Don't forget to include the following interactive information:

- Sustainable travel options to the venue.
- A map.
- Links to a Journey planner.
- Contacts for carpooling/link to a carpooling website or app like Smart Travel.
- Include a save-to-calendar option.
- RSVP function with clear cut-off dates and automated RSVP reminders, to ensure numbers can be reliably received for the purposes of catering planning.

Here is some sample text:

Venue:

Aotea Centre
50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland, 1010
[Click here for a map.](#)

How are you getting to XXX this year?

Plan your journey to the venue using the Journey Planner.

What are your walking or cycling options? [Click here to see the available paths.](#)

Don't own bike? Check out ONZO bikes, you can rent these for \$1/hr from all around.

Thanks for helping us to make XXX a carbon neutral event – every action counts.

Can't avoid using paper?

- Use recycled paper.
- Print on both sides, with text font size reduced.
- Consider alternative presentation formats – a fabulous design on a postcard including your event information, that can be stuck to the fridge.



LOW CARBON EVENT

CHOOSING THE VENUE

FIRST...

Do you really need to host this event; or is Skype or teleconferencing an option?

Remember: no physical meeting is the most sustainable kind of meeting!

Key points to consider (or to ask the venue coordinator):

Location and accessibility	Is the venue located close to public transport? Is there anywhere to store bicycles safely?
	Is it easy to access the venue by walking?
Energy	Is the venue energy efficient, or has the venue adopted an energy efficiency policy?
Waste	If the venue has no crockery/cutlery available for use, consider hiring re-usable crockery/cutlery and check that there are dish washing facilities. For ideas on reducing waste and arranging for separate, easy to transport bins and bags contact wastewise@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz See waste section below. For a larger event or hui refer to the Zero Waste Events Guide to access guidelines and the zero-waste loan kit .
Virtual meeting	Check to see whether the venue offers skype facilities. Many venues have Wi-Fi – suggest that attendees skype in to the event to reduce travel impacts and costs.
Live Stream	Consider live streaming your event to increase your reach and provide attendees the option of attending from their office or home.
Other	Further consideration could be made of the management of the venue, the choice of cleaning products (e.g. Ecover), procurement and management systems.



LOW CARBON EVENT SUSTAINABLE VENDORS

Think hard about providing single-use merchandise. In lieu of promotional material or event tote bags, have you considered making donations on behalf of event attendees to a local social enterprise or environmental group? Or organising a tree-planting day to offset some of the event's emissions?

If you feel compelled to give something to attendees:

- Use branded keep cups, or crockery cups on your coffee cart.
- Ensure that all merchandise has a post-event life, has practical value and is likely to be used again.
- Ensure that merchandise is from a sustainable, Fair Trade source.
- Have a clearly marked repository for badges, lanyards, event bags etc. to be placed in for reuse at future events.

Event Kits: Hardware

If your organisation runs many events, produce an event kit that contains crockery and cutlery that can be made available for other teams to use.

If using banners and pull-up banners, consider sending them for upcycling into new products, or re-skinning them for future events.

Vendor Selection: create a sustainable supply chain

Coffee cart - make mine Fair Trade organic!	Request the supplier/sponsor to provide reusable cups or branded keep cups, and supply organic, fair trade products.
Food trucks - sustainable credentials?	State that all vendors must boast sustainability credentials (demand influences supplier behaviour - if you ask, they will deliver).
Minimise the transport miles	State your preference for local, seasonal and / or organic produce – have a lower impact on the environment due to shorter transport distances.
Low carbon beverages	Offer tap water and bulk dispensers with glasses rather than individual bottles. Avoid or minimize the use of plastic containers and if using compostable materials ensure that they are collected for composting (i.e. return them to the bins at the offices.) See the Zero Waste Events Guide for zero waste collection guidance and options.
Meat-free menu	Offering predominantly vegetarian menus is often more culturally sensitive, healthier, cheaper and less impactful on the environment.
Avoid food waste	Select items that can easily be redistributed – sandwiches, rather than salads, for example. Communicating to the caterer the final number of participants a few days prior to the event can help to avoid waste. When sending out a last reminder add, for example: “To help us avoid food waste, please let us know if you have registered but are unable to attend”.



LOW CARBON EVENT

Low carbon – it's all in the delivery!

Don't forget to request that all food is delivered in reusable, recyclable or compostable containers (and ensure the appropriate, clearly marked bins are made available to ensure waste streams are kept separate for processing!)
Local sustainable suppliers include Claire Inwood catering, Eat My Lunch, Revive, Green Time, Kokako and more.



LOW CARBON EVENT

WASTE FREE, TRAVEL SMART

Zero Waste

Reducing waste must be carefully planned from the outset and followed through. In other words, from the paperless invitation, through to vendor selection, waste-free catering, zero or mindful merchandise and excellent waste separation facilities.

Key points to consider

Avoid	Using printed materials, packaging and single-use items.
Reduce	If you absolutely need to print, then print double-sided, reduce font size.
Reuse	Banners and any physical event marketing materials.
Recycle & compost	Select products that can easily be recycled or composted and set up separate collection points.
Pass it forward	Any excess edible, wrapped food can be taken to the community fridge or untouched, planted food can be taken to City Mission.

Transport and Mobility

Transport has the highest CO2 reduction potential when organizing an event or meeting in Auckland.

Minimise your event's transport footprint

Avoid	Where possible, keep ease of access foremost in mind, for example, ensure your venue is located close to trains stations and other transport hubs, to reduce both congestion in the city and avoid parking costs.
Suggest	Remind attendees to consider how they will travel and check whether their organization has fleet electric vehicles (carpool) or e-bikes available for use.
Share	Provide links to carpooling apps and sites in your invitation and event marketing.
Enable	Provide clear, visible information about maps, public transport options, walking routes, bike routes and bike storage at the venue.
Inspire	Promote alternatives to individual car use, such as Smart Travel carpooling, Onzo Bikes and City Hop carsharing.
Offset	As a last resort, offset emissions by sponsoring tree planting. The EnviroMark travel emissions calculator helps you quantify your journey emissions in order to offset them correctly.



Case Study

November 2017

Auckland Council's Environmental Services Department Showcase

- Approximately 90 people invited and 60 attended.
- **Venue:** Ellen Melville Pioneer Womens Hall, 10 minutes walk from City Centre offices and Britomart Transport Centre, encouraged attendees to walk and cycle (limited storage provided) to venue or carpool/train, ferry or bus to the city.
- **Invitations:** issued with reminder to use car-free options and BYO (bring your own) reusable drinking containers like cups, water bottles etc.
- **Food:** council catering service supplied morning tea using china crockery and lunch pre-ordered from Eat My Lunch, a social enterprise that provides equivalent numbers of meals to school children. They are provided in individual packages so uneaten packs were redistributed to the CBD community fridge.
- **Waste:** Less than 1 per cent landfilled. The remainder (cardboard packs and soft plastic) was sent for recycling or compost (leftover food and teabags).

Total event emissions totaled 0.17 tCO₂e (with a saving of 3.6kg due to the actions taken).



Any other questions, contact the Live Lightly team:

hello@livelightly.nz

Have a great **LOW CARBON EVENT!**

