



GO GREENER: SUSTAINABLE CONFERENCE IDEAS



**GLASGOW
CONVENTION
BUREAU**

GO GREENER

Glasgow Convention Bureau aims to encourage sustainable business tourism in the city.

By providing information and resources for conference organisers and suppliers, we hope to inspire initiatives to go greener.

This guide pulls together a range of ideas and suggestions from the industry on existing good practice to encourage sustainable conference planning and delivery.



PLANNING

- Consider nominating a sub-team or person within your team to be your sustainability champion.
- Build sustainability as standard into your planning meetings.
- If you are looking for inspiration, ask us about our Sustainability Workshop using the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The workshop can help your team engage and focus on the sustainability aims which suit your conference or association, while being achievable.



TRAVEL

You may wish to encourage delegates to consider more sustainable travel options on their journey to the conference destination and also within the city during the event.



Some ways to encourage more sustainable travel include:

- Provide information on your conference website on different travel options for getting to the destination
- Provide information on getting around the city
- Add a journey planner widget to your website
- Consider delegate public transport passes
- Encourage taxi sharing for delegates
- Encourage walking and cycling around the city
- Share information with delegates on the city bike hire scheme
- If using multiple venues, consider venue options within walking distance to cut down on transfers and provide walking instructions / maps between venues
- Launch a pedometer challenge to encourage delegates to walk between hotels and venues

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

As we become more more aware of our own carbon footprint, we may wish to consider the carbon emissions associated with our conference.

While this can seem overwhelming, there are always steps to be taken to improve our future activities.

Some options to address environmental impact might be:

- Use an online carbon calculator to get a better idea of the impact of your journey on the environment
- Donate to a local environmental charity or cause
- Organise a social activity where delegates plant trees or volunteer with a local project
- Use local suppliers to cut down on shipping
- Work with a supplier to measure the impact of your event



CLYDE CLIMATE FOREST

The Clyde Climate Forest will see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade.

Trees, woodlands and forests are recognised as essential if we are to address the Climate Crisis by reducing damaging atmospheric emissions and are crucial to assist in a recovery for nature.

Learn more about this project [here](#).

Goals by 2030:

- **CANOPY**
increase the average tree canopy cover in urban glasgow to 20%
- **CONNECTIVITY**
increase the average broadleaved woodland network area to 142ha – an increase of 20%
- **CARBON**
increase forest and woodland cover in glasgow city region to 20%

CONFERENCE CARE - CARBON CONSULTANCY

Conference Care have been providing event services since 1995 and have now developed Carbon Consultancy by Conference Care.

The service:

- help clients measure, reduce, and offset event emissions using a specialised carbon calculator.
- guide event organisers through data collection, reporting to show progress, and tailored recommendations, aiming for carbon-neutral events.
- give clients the tools to make practical changes with tangible results in order to lower their event carbon emissions.

For an introduction to Conference Care, please do get in touch with us.

VENUES, SUPPLIERS AND HOTELS

One way to help to raise industry standards is by selecting venues with sustainable credentials.

ACCREDITATION

Ask your selected venues, suppliers, restaurants and hotels about their green accreditations and sustainability policy.

We encourage businesses in Glasgow to join an accreditation scheme, such as Green Tourism or Green Key.

Those businesses who don't yet have an accreditation may have their own initiatives and policies which they can share.

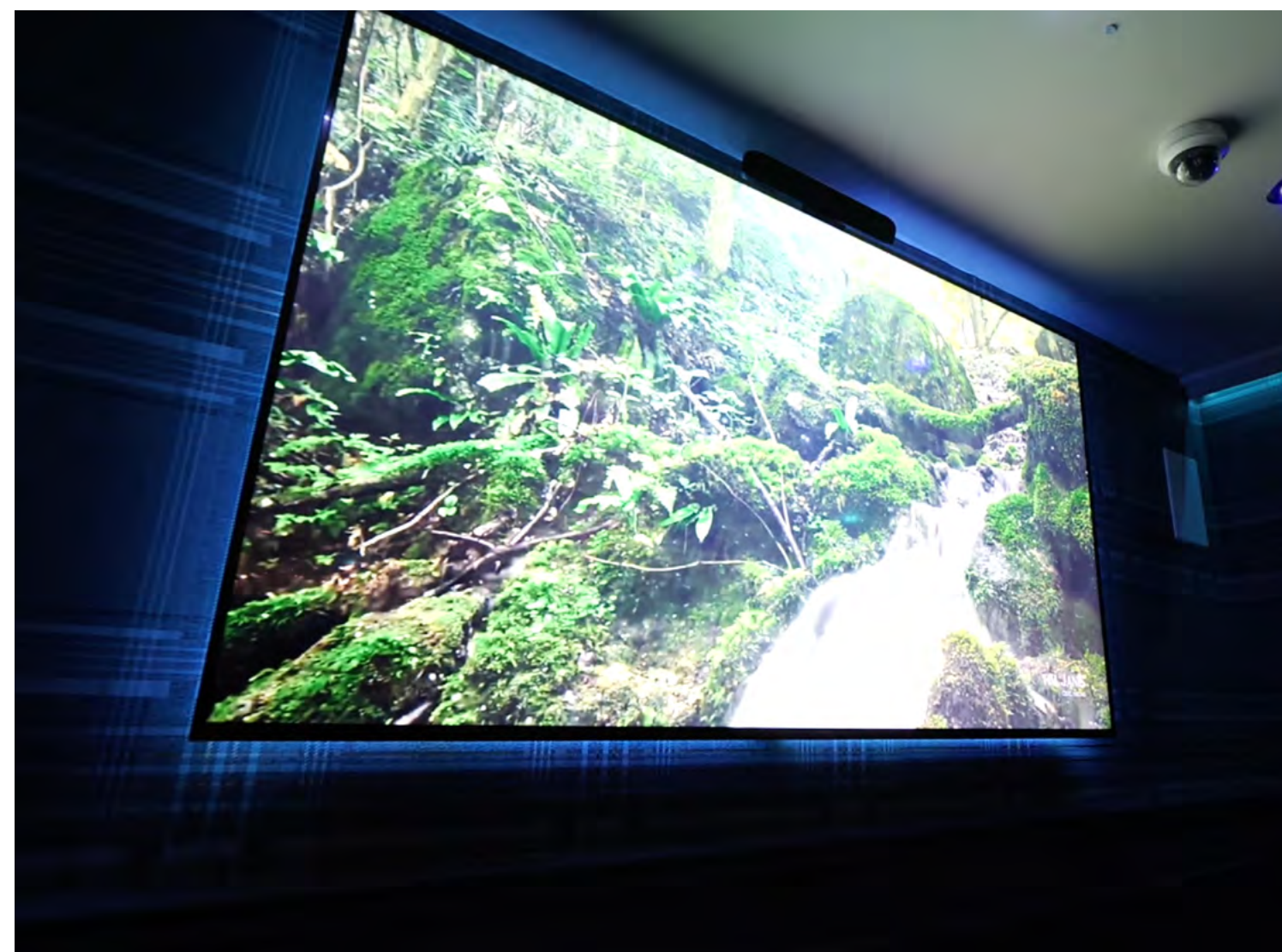
SUPPLIER SEARCH

You can search for venues and suppliers on the Glasgow Convention Bureau website, with the option to filter sustainable businesses.

HOTEL INFO

If you are using Glasgow Convention Bureau's Accommodation Booking Service, delegates can also note green hotels while browsing the available options.





MARKETING

When pulling together your promotional plan for the conference, the following suggestions may be useful:

- Consider reducing paper promotional materials and flyers in favour of digital newsletters
- Promote the event via social media channels
- Where promoting at other events, consider digital signs, competitions, eye-catching videos and PowerPoint presentations instead of give-aways and flyers
- If using roller banners, consider whether the hardware can be reused after the event or donated
- Build information on your green measures into your delegate communications and conference website
- Remove dates / event specific information in order to reuse materials for multiple events

FOOD & DRINK

Some ideas for reducing the environmental impact of your conference from food and drink services include:

- Where possible, choose local seasonal produce with fewer food miles for your conference catering
- Invite delegates to bring a food container for any food they can't finish on-site
- Consider reusable coffee cups and water bottles
- Ask your venue about water points to refill bottles and point these out to delegates
- Ask your venue about waste procedures, options for recycling food packaging and food waste bins
- Consider crockery for coffee breaks instead of single use items
- Only use straws where necessary
- Consider increasing the percentage of plant-based food on offer
- Find out more about meat sources and look for ethical and low impact farming
- Consider whether excess items can be donated to local food banks or charities (packets of biscuits etc.)
- Communicate your green practices to your delegates in advance to manage expectations on site



ACTIVITIES

As you organise activities outwith the conference sessions, such as tours and social programme events, the following suggestions may help you to go greener:

- Consider organising walking, running or cycling tours, instead of traditional tours - Glasgow has great options
- If your delegates would enjoy a green activity, consider volunteer gardening or seed planting in a community garden or local park
- If you are arranging transport for your social programme, consider suppliers with sustainable credentials
- If you have time to do some charity work, we can put you in touch with a local organisation to volunteer time or donations



GET INVOLVED WITH THE GREEN TEAM



The Green Team are an environmental charity that use conservation tasks, outdoor learning and nature connection to make a positive difference to children and young people while also caring for the planet.

You could incorporate a session of environmental conservation for your delegates, led by the Green Team, into your conference:

- Get involved in activities such as tree planting (to absorb carbon) or the removal of invasive species (to enhance biodiversity)
- Enjoy making personal connections while experiencing the wellbeing benefits of being out in nature
- Support the Green Team in their work to engage with the next generation – helping young people to overcome challenges, fulfil their potential and to understand and care for their planet.
- To find out more please contact info@greenteam.org.uk, call on 0300 102 4843 or check out www.greenteam.org.uk

The Green Team are a registered charity: SC029319

REDUCE PAPER WASTE

Some good practice examples include:

- Reduce printed materials by considering digital alternatives, such as a conference app and e-posters
- Printed programmes provided as needed, rather than issued one per delegate
- Abstracts & programme available online or via USB drive
- Online digital voting options instead of voting by paper
- Condensed programme to use less paper
- Use white boards instead of flipchart paper where possible
- Eco-friendly and vegetable based inks for print
- Printing on recycled paper - ask your printing supplier about sustainable options
- Look for paper and wood products with the FSC logo - this label ensures that the trees that are harvested are replaced or allowed to regenerate naturally



REUSE & RECYCLE

Opportunities for reusing and recycling in the planning stages and during the conference include:

- Order lanyards made from recycled plastic bottles or biodegradable material such as bamboo
- Have a visible return point at registration for conference badges and lanyards
- Discuss recycling provision at the venue and encourage exhibitors and delegates to use the facilities available
- Use stationery (pens, pencils, paper etc.) from recycled / sustainable sources
- Consider conference bags (if needed) made from sustainable materials which can be reused by delegates, or bags that are manufactured more locally
- Assess or measure the plastics used in your event and aim to reduce this with each event

EVENT CYCLE



Event Cycle take unwanted event waste and give it a second life. They repurpose and redistribute items you no longer need to charities and community groups, as well as back into the events industry.

From graphics to giveaways, planks of wood to plants, there's a new home waiting for them all. Event Cycle aims to lead the events industry into a circular economy where landfill waste is reduced and by doing so a social impact is made.

As well as finding a home (as local as possible) for your unwanted items, Event Cycle offer a consultancy service for organisers looking to plan early and cut down on event waste. You can include their details in your exhibitor manual to cut down on exhibition waste and even have an on-site presence if required.

Find out more [here](#).



EXHIBITORS

- Provide a green checklist for your exhibitors in the exhibitor manual or conference website.
- Make sure your exhibitors are aware of venue and conference recycling facilities and have a plan for any leftover materials.
- Ask your exhibitors to consider QR codes instead of printed flyers and to follow your own policies on sustainable giveaways.
- Provide a list of local suppliers to cut down shipping of materials



GIFTS

If you provide a giveaway for your delegates or offer conference souvenirs for sale, consider environmentally-friendly options, material and packaging.

Practical items which are useful for daily life are more likely to be reused, rather than discarded.

Some ideas for greener gifts / souvenirs include:

- Give-aways made from recycled and biodegradable materials
- Gift to charity on behalf of delegates e.g. sponsor a local beehive or fundraise for a green cause
- Greener seed planters for delegates to plant wild flowers
- Locally produced/crafted gift
- Social enterprise or charity gift



FURTHER INSPIRATION

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership.

They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

As a business or event, you might be inspired by these goals and select several to focus on while planning your event. Ask us for handy flashcards, which can be used as a workshop tool to incorporate sustainability actions in your project.



RESOURCES AND FEEDBACK



Browse a full range of marketing tools and sustainability resources on our [Meeting Planners' Toolkit](#).



Search for local venues and suppliers in Glasgow in our [online database](#).



We are always happy to hear from conference organisers about ways to go greener!



If you have feedback from your delegates, exhibitors or conference team, please [get in touch](#).