



Colchester City Council Events Policy

Contents

Executive Summary	Page 3
Introduction and Context	Page 4
Aims and Objectives	Page 5
Event Programme	Page 6
Permitted Events	Page 7
Excluded Events	Page 8
Private Events	Page 8
Operation	Page 8
Event Costs	Page 9
Damage to Venues and Severe Weather	Page 9
Insurance	Page 10
Regulation of Events	Page 10
Licensing	Page 10
Environmental Protection	Page 11
Food Safety	Page 12
Advertisement Control	Page 12
Safety Advisory Group (SAG)	Page 13
Safeguarding Children and Adults	Page 13
Event Accessibility and Inclusivity	Page 14
Event Sustainability	Page 14
Waste and Recycling	Page 16
Traffic Management	Page 18
Monitoring of Standards and Customer Satisfaction	Page 18
Review of the Events Policy	Page 18

Executive Summary

The Colchester City Council Events Policy outlines the framework for organising and managing events across council-owned venues. Designed to align with the Council's Strategic Plan (2023–2026), the policy promotes sustainability, inclusivity, safety, and cultural enrichment while fostering economic growth and community engagement.

Key aims include, to:

1. Facilitate diverse cultural, educational, and leisure events that enhance community wellbeing and inclusivity.
2. Promote Colchester as a vibrant cultural destination, leveraging its heritage and modern infrastructure.
3. Encourage environmentally sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, conserving biodiversity, and promoting low-emission activities.
4. Generate revenue through commercial and private events, reinvesting in venue upkeep and public services.
5. Ensure all events are accessible, safe, and minimally disruptive to residents and businesses.

Event organisers are expected to minimise disruptions and engage proactively with local communities. Permitted events span from cultural performances to sporting activities and exhibitions, while certain exclusions (e.g. events with performing animals or balloon releases) uphold ethical and environmental standards.

All events must comply with comprehensive regulations covering licensing, health and safety, noise control, and safeguarding policies. Large-scale events (over 500 attendees) require advance planning and engagement with the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) to ensure public safety.

The Council is also committed to sustainability through the use of green energy solutions and waste management practices, whilst promoting public and active transport options for attendees.

Introduction and Context

Colchester City Council is committed to enabling events and operates a variety of venues across the city. All venues can host a wide range of events, from charitable to fully commercial. In 2019, there were 211,00 attendees at events held in Council venues. In 2024, the successful growth of events in Colchester had increased to nearly 500,000 visitors, more than doubling the attendee numbers from 5 years ago.

A diverse, well-managed programme of events provides many benefits to the wider city. Events help promote Colchester as a vibrant place for business, culture, and community, while ensuring the safe enjoyment of both residents and visitors. Events also bring significant economic benefits to the local economy, supporting businesses such as hotels, restaurants, retailers, and transport providers; and contributing to the city's overall prosperity.

Indeed, across the UK it is estimated that the events industry generates almost £62 billion per annum and supports over 775,000 jobs. Research from the Association of Independent Festivals shows that a 5,000-capacity event generates approximately £800,000 in net gain to the local economy. In addition, data collected from the Castle Park concerts evidenced ticket sales from across the UK, and overseas, helping to showcase Colchester's cultural and historic attractions to new visitors from a far-reaching audience. A well-managed and appropriate events policy is essential to bringing these positive benefits to Colchester, helping the local economy.

For the purposes of this Policy, an event is defined as:

“A planned activity in a specific Council-owned location, either indoors or outdoors, lasting for a limited period of time that will be attended by members of the public (whether paid or unpaid ‘admission’) where the activity can reasonably be expected to attract a gathering of people that would not otherwise be expected as part of the normal course of daily business in that location at that time.”

Many events in the Council's venues are managed by its commercial trading company, Colchester Amphora Trading Limited (CATL), specifically through their “Colchester Events Company” team. However, even when its company hires out a venue or manages an event, the Council retains an important role as a regulatory authority. This includes responsibilities such as licensing, food safety, environmental protection, and planning.

This Policy sets out the Council's requirements for events across all of its venues, regardless of who the event organiser is. It also supports the aims of the Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan ([Click here](#)) including:

1. Respond to the Climate Emergency

- Reduce our carbon footprint – The Council aims to reduce emissions from its own operations such as use of energy and vehicles. Similar principles apply to events in terms of using energy efficient technologies and practices for event operations.
- Conserve and enhance our biodiversity – The Council wants to protect its valuable green spaces from damage and pollution. Events have the potential to impact on this, so we expect event organisers to employ

practices that do not negatively impact habitats (such as limiting and capturing any pollutants, using machinery and vehicles considerably).

- Continue to be a leader in our waste and recycling collections – The Council wants to maximise the reduction of waste and promote the use of reusable products, alongside supporting recycling. We expect event organisers to explore the use of reusable materials (e.g. reusable cups) and products and promote recycling options to event attendees.

2. Deliver modern services for a modern city

- Colchester Council and supporting organisations work together to a shared and ambitious vision for the future of our city – The Council wants to work with CATL to promote opportunities and activities suitable for a city. Events form a big part of this, and the Council aims to support a variety of events from weddings and parties to commercial events of national or international importance.

3. Improve health, wellbeing and happiness

- Work with residents and partners to address quality of life and issues of happiness – The Council wants to improve resident wellbeing and help tackle the “cost of living crisis”. Events can provide an opportunity for residents to engage in activities they enjoy and frequently enable residents to hear about support they can access that may contribute to improving their quality of life.

4. Grow our economy so everyone benefits

- Work with partners to create a vibrant city which people want to live in and visit, whilst attracting investment – The Council wants to transform the city with new developments that improve resident experience and create opportunities for businesses. Events provide a source of income for businesses and entertainment for residents, and the Council wants to ensure the range of events provided attract a wide demographic.

5. Celebrate our city, heritage and culture

- Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year – Since becoming a city, the Council wants to promote Colchester as a destination and place to visit. Having events of renowned importance taking place in Colchester will contribute to this.
- To make our city a better place to live, work and visit – The Council wants to deliver on its City Centre Masterplan that improves the ways resident access and use open spaces within the city centre, alongside promoting Colchester's heritage. Events should take a considerate approach to ensuring residents with a variety of needs can attend events, alongside relevant events showcasing Colchester's history.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this Policy is to provide a clear framework for considering the programming of a variety of commercial and community events across Council venues. The Policy aims to enable a wide range of sporting, recreational, cultural, social, and educational activities in line with the Council's strategic aims.

The Council's objectives are to:

- Support and enable cultural, educational and leisure activities which widen access and increase participation from all sectors of the community.
- Encourage activities that enhance the quality of life for visitors, encourage healthy living and promote diversity.
- Ensure activities that take place consider their environmental impact and take action to minimise these where possible.
- Enable the Council to offer its venues for suitable commercial purposes to generate revenue from events which can be reinvested into venue maintenance and other service provision. Use local products, services, and people where possible to encourage active citizenship and promote a positive image of Colchester regionally, nationally and, where appropriate, internationally.
- Attract visitors and events to Colchester to bring investment, jobs, and prosperity to the local economy.
- Promote Colchester as a destination with a strong heritage complemented by a vibrant contemporary culture.
- Maximise the safety of event attendees and workforce to ensure that safety is placed as a priority in decision making.
- Minimise disruption to residents and businesses.
- Manage events to protect, preserve and enhance the historic nature of the Council's venues by ensuring that the requisite statutory consents are obtained.

To meet these aims and objectives, events will fall into five categories:

1. Major Commercial Events: Commercial events of local, national or international importance or significance that support the aims and objectives of the Events Policy and promote the borough to a wider audience and encourage visitors to the city and bring revenue to the Council and the local economy.
2. Local Commercial Events: Smaller scale events that generate revenue for the Council, including weddings, parties, meetings, receptions, and other suitable private bookings.
3. Charity and Community Events: Events organised by registered charities and/or voluntary groups for the purpose of raising money for local and national charities and/or community groups.
4. Environmental and Educational Activities: Events and activities that aim to enhance the environment of the parks, open space or borough venues that educate users, encourage participation, and promote the leisure activities or opportunities available.
5. Civic Events: Official ceremonies or activities organised by the Council.

Events Programme

The Council and Colchester Amphora Trading Limited (CATL) will seek to ensure a balanced programme of commercial, community and civic events as part of any approved programme. A majority of the planned programme will usually be confirmed at the start of each year but will evolve and change as and when necessary.

The Town Hall, Charter Hall, Colchester Castle and Castle Park will be promoted for events of Civic importance and events which promote Colchester regionally, nationally or internationally, or are of wide-ranging interest.

Other venues, such as Old Heath Recreation Ground and St Botolph's Priory have been used this year and will continue to be used if considered appropriate to the diversity, scale and type of events. The Council will also consider using other new sites that haven't been used, should they be considered suitable for different events.

As Colchester's principal venue for large outdoor concerts, Castle Park will host a programme of events each year. These events may use amplified music and produce sound levels up to 65dB(A) measured at the nearest noise sensitive properties. Other recognised venues would usually only hold up to 3 outdoor events at 65dB(A) per year (subject to licences).

The Council and CATL will give priority to those events that have a record of being well-promoted and well-managed with a safe and high-quality visitor experience.

The Council and CATL will not guarantee the provision of any site to any event or organising body based on previous use alone; and can refuse events based on income, payment and performance history.

Organisers of "niche" or "political" events that may be aimed at a narrower or specific audience, and activities with minority or local interest, will be encouraged to utilise Colchester's other venues with more appropriate considerations such as size, location, purpose, activities; for example, being closer to their community/audience.

The Council reserves the right to priority use of its own venues and facilities above all others. For example, civic events including the King's Birthday Gun Salute and Remembrance Sunday will take precedence over all other events. Whilst these events are usually known far in advance, in exceptional circumstances this may include short notice changes that are beyond the Council's control, such as an unexpected General Election. The Council accepts no liability in such circumstances.

Permitted Events

Examples of these would generally include:

Civic Events	Religious events
Arts and cultural events	Political activities
Musical concerts	Exhibitions
Fireworks displays	Cinema
Fairs	Live TV broadcasts
Drama events	Sporting and Recreational

Historic re-enactment	Children's activities
Military festivals	Environmental and horticultural demonstrations
Entertainment events	Private events (weddings, parties etc)
Shows, exhibitions and crafts	Business and corporate events
Bonafide animal breed exhibitions/shows	Guided and Sponsored walking tours
Circuses (see exclusions)	
Other events not included here as approved by the Council	

Excluded Events

These would generally include:

- Any event likely to provoke public disorder
- Any event that includes the use of performing animals, except those which are normally regarded as domesticated in the United Kingdom (e.g. horses, dogs, cats, birds used in falconry demonstrations, caged birds and rabbits) which may be used as an ancillary part of a performance
- Any event that includes animals as prizes, including goldfish at a funfair
- Any event that would cast doubt on the integrity of the Council or that the council believes may be of questionable public morality.
- Any event that includes balloon releases and Chinese lanterns

The relevant Council Portfolio Holder will have the discretion and ultimate decision on determining whether a proposed event falls within the programme exclusions.

Private Events

These will include weddings, parties, meetings and similar. These will all be available on a full commercial basis in competition with other local providers.

Council (or CATL) officers will use their experience to programme a full calendar of private events each year which will bring in revenue to the Council. All private events will meet all the necessary requirements for licences, insurance, health and safety and where relevant, consultation with the Safety Advisory Group, as with all Council (or CATL) events.

Operation

Event organisers must comply with completion of relevant documentation. All events at Council locations are subject to specific terms and conditions which need to be agreed and signed prior to the event.

Operating hours for outdoor events will generally be between 9am to 11pm. Noise generating set-up and set-down works will not be permitted between the hours of 11.30pm - 6.30am. In exceptional circumstances an extension of these hours may be

sought from the licensing authority for celebrations on festival days such as New Year's Eve and Bonfire Night, civic occasions, or where celebration of a significant local, regional or national event is required.

Although not always practical, whenever possible operation of existing facilities such as the boating lake, café, and putting green should be accommodated throughout events and disruption be minimised (in consultation with the operators).

Firework displays and other pyrotechnics will only be permitted where they are an integral part of an event such as New Year's Eve and Bonfire Night celebrations, civic events, military festivals, historical re-enactments, certain musical concerts and private functions (by prior agreement).

Organisers of larger events must liaise directly with local residents to the venue to minimise any disruption or disturbance and limit the impact that their event might have on local communities. This could include leaflet drop with out of hours contact.

Event Costs

All events, regardless of size, have a cost to the Council (and its companies). The Council is unable to subsidise costs, for example, staff time, hiring of equipment and services, organisation, set-up and clear-down. These costs will be passed on to all event organisers where incurred.

While registered charities and non-profit making community groups may be offered a "charitable hire rate", costs will still be passed to the event organiser to ensure no additional burden on the Council (or CATL), although these costs will be kept as low as possible.

Flexibility to alter standard hire fees is delegated to the Council's events operator (CATL) or the Council's relevant Head of Service or Strategic Director, as per the needs of the business.

For certain events, usually by exception, the Council (or CATL) may enter into a commercial agreement whereby some or all of the advance payments may be waived (in instances such as profit share). This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Council's events operator (CATL).

Damage to Venues and Severe Weather

For all events, the Council (or CATL) will secure a bond from the organiser in advance for repairs and re-instatements of venues following events.

The cost of any repair and reinstatement works by the Council's approved contractors will be charged to the event organisers.

For outdoor events, the protection of the environment, wildlife and features will need to be considered when planning events and, in the event of wet ground conditions, the Council will require the event organiser to introduce additional ground protection measures to avoid excessive damage; which may include the use of protective matting and running boards, close supervision of vehicle movements or changes to event layouts.

In such circumstances, the Council (or CATL) may also require the event organiser to increase the value of the reinstatement bond prior to the event.

The Council will require evidence that the organiser has considered sufficient measures to protect the public in the event of dangerous weather conditions. In the case of severe winds creating dangerous conditions associated with trees on site or temporary structures – including but not limited to Inflatables and Marquees – the Council reserves the right to cancel the event if it is considered that public may be at risk. Such requirements will be at the event organiser's expense.

In the case of severe weather creating dangerous (or potentially damaging) wet ground conditions the Council reserves the right to cancel the event. If severe weather makes it necessary to cancel an event, the Council will not be liable for any costs. The decision to cancel an event due to severe weather is taken by the organiser in collaboration with the Council (or CATL), whose decision is final. Severe weather can also be categorised in extreme heat and the legal requirement in relation to the supply of water etc.

Insurance

Organisers must obtain and provide evidence to the CATL of Public and Employers' Liability Insurance. For smaller or lower-risk events, the minimum cover required is £5 million, while for larger or higher-risk events, £10 million is usually expected, in line with national guidance (unless an alternative agreement has been made).

This minimum requirement is subject to review and may be updated at any time based on advice from the Council's insurers. The Council may also request a higher level of cover if needed.

Event promoters and organisers are responsible for ensuring that all third-party suppliers and contractors have adequate insurance.

Regulation of Events

The Council (and CATL) look to provide a range of great events and activities in our venues and spaces, as per the aims set out in this Policy. We recognise the need to balance these aims with the environmental impact (both within and around the event venues); as such the Council will require all event organisers to adhere to relevant guidance and procedures when holding events, including Licensing requirements, Purple/Green book guidance, Environmental Protection guidance, planning laws, as well as having event management plans and prioritisation of public safety, including Martyn's Law.

Organisers of events are encouraged to work with residents and relevant authorities to minimise the impact of events on the community. Where considered appropriate by the Council/CATL, organisers will be required to inform local residents in advance of major events that may cause local disruption.

Licensing

Organisers, during all licensable activities, shall be required to detail how they will meet the four licensing objectives:

1. The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
2. Public Safety
3. The Prevention of Public Nuisance
4. The Protection of Children from Harm

Organisers are required to understand and put into practice Policies relating to Noise Control, the Sale of Alcohol, Proof of Age, Safeguarding Child and Adults, Registered Security and Drugs. Hire agreements will stipulate requirements and the Council and Safety Advisory Group will advise where relevant.

In accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, event organisers will be required to obtain all appropriate licenses and permissions from the relevant authorities, e.g. Temporary Events Notices, where these are not already provided for under the terms of a Premises Licence.

The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that all required licences are obtained in sufficient time and all conditions specified in these licences are adhered to. The costs for any licence shall be incurred by the event organiser.

The event organisers will be responsible for ensuring that their event complies with the relevant Temporary Events Notice or Premises Licence. Compliance will be strictly monitored by the Council's authorised officer, Designated Premises Supervisor or appointed deputy.

Environmental Protection

Air

The Council is committed to improving air quality in Colchester. Parts of the city experience high levels of air pollution from vehicle exhausts and industrial operations, but improvements have been seen in recent years. This in part has been down to the support of sustainable and active travel in Colchester such as cycling, and the promotion of vehicle no idling campaigns to encourage drivers not to idle their engines whilst stationary, with all of this reported in the Council's air quality annual status reports and air quality action plan that are published on the Council's website ([**click here**](#)). Event organisers are strongly encouraged to not idle whilst travelling and on Council property.

Water

Holding events do pose the potential for pollution events to occur, either from fuel spills, sewage leaks etc which can in turn harm local water quality. Event organisers are asked to outline within their Event Management Plan how they will be taking steps to reduce the potential for pollution events to occur, outlining how waste will be treated or collected on site.

Regulation 8 of The Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016 now covers private water supplies where a water company provides water, but a different person or organisation distributes it further e.g. at festivals etc.

Noise

Noise levels generated from an event need to be agreed in advance and kept at a reasonable level. Noise should not create an unreasonable impact on any business or residential premises in the vicinity of the event site. Events must also comply with The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 for staff and contractors on site and the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Consideration should be given to the suitability of events to meet our requirements at each venue. Each event is different and the Hire Agreement with the organiser will specify what is required. However, when entering into a Hire Agreement with an event organiser where loud amplified music (or another significant impact to residents or the environment) is expected then such Agreements will be discussed between CATL and the Council's regulatory service areas prior to confirmation.

For such events as may then be agreed, a plan for managing and monitoring sound levels (within permitted levels) for events will be required from the event organiser a minimum of 12 weeks in advance of each event. The event organiser will then be responsible for monitoring and recording levels during the event and for making adjustments (as required) to ensure compliance with the premises licence or noise regulations.

The organiser is expected to reduce sound levels on the day if conditions require it. Where appropriate a noise record shall be kept, for example, in the event of complaints. Following the event, if requested by the Council, the monitoring data collected by event organisers must be provided to the Environmental Protection Team.

Local residents in direct proximity to "large-scale events" (see definition below) including those with outdoors amplified music shall be notified of those events not less than 4 weeks before the event. The residents to be notified shall be indicated on a plan, which is to be agreed by the Council, before they are notified. Residents will receive an out of hours (OOH) phone number for the event dates.

Food Safety

All food businesses (however big or small) at an event must provide evidence of food registration with the relevant local authority and food hygiene ratings for all temporary catering outlets. Food catering outlets must have a food hygiene rating of 3 or above to operate at events. Food businesses are encouraged to source food responsibly, looking at local, ethical options with high standards of animal welfare adopted where relevant.

Advertisement Control

Event promoters and organisers are required to comply with any legislation, including advertisement controls as it is a criminal offence to display certain advertisements without the correct consents from the local planning authority. Illegal flyposting or other failures to comply with advertising restrictions could result in a 'Fixed Penalty Notice' or other legal/enforcement action by the Council, including court actions.

All materials displayed at the venue must be approved by the Council in advance and meet the required specification with regard to size, materials used and content. Approved advertising may then only be placed at the venue, at the locations and time period approved by the Council or other authorised persons.

Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

The first priority of any event should be human safety. Responsibility for safety rests with the organiser, but the Council and its partners have a duty to ensure all relevant health and safety guidance is followed. This is undertaken through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

The role of the SAG is to consider “large-scale” public events regardless of who owns the venue or land and advise organisers on the requirements, SAG is a multi-agency group including Police, Council, Fire and Highways. In general, “large-scale” public events will be considered as those where more than 500 people are expected to attend, although smaller events may require the involvement of the SAG depending on the event. The SAG remit also includes outdoor events which require a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003, firework displays, carnivals, parades, music festivals and other large-scale events of a similar nature.

As the remit of the SAG is to advise on how to ensure public safety is maintained by event organisers, members of the SAG will expect to review a safety plan before any events. For the SAG’s consideration, the premises license holder or event organiser must risk assess each event and produce a plan proportionate to the size and nature of the event being held. For “large-scale events” a written Event Management Plan (EMP) must be submitted (by the premises licence holder or event organiser) to the SAG.

Event organisers will be expected to actively participate in the SAG process as relevant. This includes adhering to event plans and/or details agreed with the SAG. Similarly, event organisers should comply with any instructions given by the Council’s Environmental Protection Team or other designated Council Officer. Failure to do so may result in the event being stopped or cancelled.

Every event should have a designated safety officer and event organisers will be required to provide evidence (where required by the Council) that they are complying with:

- All relevant Health and Safety Legislation
- The Council's own Health and Safety Policy and procedures.
- If deemed necessary using predefined criteria, presentation of Event Safety Documentation may be required at a Safety Advisory Meeting.

When planning an event involving more than 10,000 people a minimum of 6 months’ notice should be sought. For an event involving between 500-10,000 people a minimum of 12 weeks’ notice should be sought. The final draft of the EMP should then be agreed no later than 6 weeks prior to the first day of the event.

The SAG may also co-ordinate safety debrief meetings post events so that future events may be improved. All issues will be discussed with the event organisers so that the safety risk can be resolved, as cancellation of an event is the last resort.

Safeguarding Children and Adults

Event organisers, their employees and contractors will be required to comply with the Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy.

All organisers and promoters will be required to provide evidence of procedures for dealing with lost children.

The content of each event shall be considered by the Council and an age limit agreed with the Organiser. These limits will be monitored by the Council and failure to comply with them may result in the closure of the event.

To support the safety and well-being of our event attendees, our venue implements the "Ask for Angela" initiative, a discreet code phrase aimed at helping individuals who may feel unsafe, threatened, or uncomfortable.

When any guest "Asks for Angela" at our bar or with a member of staff, they will be provided with discreet assistance. Staff members trained on this initiative will respond calmly and follow safety protocols to ensure the individual's comfort and security, which may include:

- Offering a safe, private space to speak with a staff member
- Arranging transport or notifying a friend or family member, as requested
- Contacting event security or emergency services, if necessary

This initiative reinforces our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for everyone attending our events. Staff and security teams are regularly trained on recognising and appropriately responding to safety concerns as part of our commitment to attendee welfare.

Event Accessibility and inclusivity

Event organisers must ensure that both outdoor and indoor events align with equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) principles, fostering an environment that is welcoming and accessible to all individuals. For outdoor events, this includes considering accessibility needs such as companion tickets, level pathways, wheelchair-accessible rest and viewing areas, and designated quiet zones for sensory sensitivities. For indoor events, ensure venues have clear signage, accessible seating for both wheelchair and ambulant disabled person and their companions, and accommodations like ramps, elevators, and inclusive restrooms. Regardless of location, materials should be available in alternative formats, such as large print, braille, or digital formats, upon request. Provision should also be considered for sign language interpreters or captioning services and ensuring event staff are suitably trained to assist with accessibility needs.

Events should also reflect cultural diversity, and efforts should be made to engage and represent marginalised groups and provide materials in multiple languages and

formats with a clear process for attendees to request accommodations. By prioritising EDI at every planning stage, event holders can create inclusive experiences for all.

Event Sustainability

The Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019, aiming to become a carbon-neutral organisation. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impact is a key focus for Colchester and is part of our Strategic Plan. Our Action Plan ([**Click here**](#)) sets out how we aim to reduce environmental impact, raise awareness, and work with others to lower their carbon footprint.

These environmental principles apply to events held in Colchester. We encourage organisers to minimise environmental impact and help attendees adopt eco-friendly behaviours during events. While visible impacts like litter and waste are important, less obvious impacts, such as energy use and travel, are equally critical.

We expect event organisers to take steps to reduce their event's environmental impact. Key areas for action include:

- **Governance:** Providing a co-ordinated and agreed approach to limit environmental impacts on site could be tackled by developing an environmental policy and/or action plan, alongside monitoring impacts and calculating carbon footprints for your organisation or event.
- **Energy:** Use of diesel generators and lighting produce greenhouse gas emissions from the fuels used to generate power. Considering ways to connect to mains electricity, use generators with alternative, greener fuels (e.g. hydrotreated vegetable oil, hybrid generators, solar generators) and promoting energy saving on site (e.g. using LED lighting and switching off equipment when not in use) will help minimise emissions.
- **Travel and Transportation:** The use of diesel and petrol vehicles produce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants impacting climate change and local air quality. Consider options for event transport to promote sustainable and active travel options such as walking, cycling, using public transport and car sharing in the first instance (for example adding this information into event attendee information communications), before supporting the use of greener private vehicles like electric vehicles.
- **Food and Drink:** The meat and dairy industry is a big contributor to greenhouse gas emissions from animal rearing, as is the production of food waste. Where possible, caterers should aim to provide a variety of vegetarian and vegan food and drink options at events and ensure that food waste can be collected for composting. Food and drink should also aim to be sourced as locally as possible.
- **Materials and waste:** Greenhouse gas emissions are produced throughout the lifetime of a product, from the production of materials to the treatment of any waste. Event organisers and caterers should aim to reduce the amount of waste the event produces, and promote the use of reusable products, as well

as provide options for recycling to be separated for collection from general waste (see waste management section).

- **Water:** Water is a valuable resource, especially in Essex as a severely water stressed area. Pollution from fuel or sewage spills also threatens local water quality and biodiversity. Event organisers should explore options to save water such as through providing temporary portable toilets with recirculation units for outdoor events and ensuring safety practices are taken to mitigate the potential for sewage or fuel spills.
- **Positive Influence:** We want to ensure residents enjoy their time at events and are enabled to behave in an environmentally responsible manner; ultimately most event audiences expect events to take action to reduce their environmental impact. Implementing some of the steps above where possible can demonstrate to residents that events are taking their impact on the environment seriously. Events could also consider investing in social and environmental initiatives to offset their environmental impacts.

These themes are covered in the 'Environmental Sustainability' chapter of the Purple Guide ([click here](#)) and we advise this is reviewed when planning your event. Outdoor event organisers could upskill on their knowledge of sustainability using the free eLearning courses developed on the [Future Festival Tools website \(click here\)](#) and resources provided on the [Vision 2025 website \(click here\)](#), the UK outdoor events industry's sustainability steering group and resources hub.

Waste and Recycling

The event organiser must provide a waste management plan which is approved by the Council. The waste management plan should show how the organiser will manage, recover and recycle or dispose of waste and street litter safely, and meet all statutory requirements and environmental regulations such as 'The Environmental Protection (Plastic Plates and Polystyrene Containers etc.) (England) Regulations 2023 and other updates or amendments to regulations.

The Council is committed to minimising the amount of waste that goes to landfill. Event organisers are advised to follow the 'waste hierarchy' (figure 1) when minimising waste from events, including aiming to reduce single-use plastics and promote the use of reusable products (e.g. reusable cups and serve ware). Event organisers should also operate in compliance with the Environment Act 2021, and Simpler Recycling. The Simpler Recycling scheme, introduced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in October 2023, has set important dates:

31 March 2025 - Businesses with 10 or more full-time employees must separate food waste and dry recyclables for collection.

31 March 2027 - Micro-firms (businesses with fewer than 10 full-time employees) must separate food waste and dry recyclables for collection. All businesses will also need to separate plastic film packaging and plastic bags in the plastic waste stream.

The legislation requires businesses, schools, hospitals and other non-household municipal premises to separate dry recycling from general waste collection. Materials for separate collection include:

- Paper and cardboard
- Cartons (i.e. Tetrapak)
- Metals (i.e. cans, tins, foils)
- Plastic (i.e. pots, tubs and trays)
- Glass (i.e. bottles and jars)
- Food waste

In order to meet these requirements, event organisers should provide suitable facilities to enable the materials to be collected correctly.

The Council operates a comprehensive commercial recycling and waste service ([Click Here](#)) that can help event organisers provide the right facilities at their event along with post event disposal, but alternative waste and recycling companies can be used as long as they are registered as a licenced waste carrier with the Environment Agency.

To help with waste management, event organisers can review the '[Sustainable Materials and Waste Management toolkit](#)' ([click here](#))' produced by Vision 2025, a leading outdoor events sustainability steering group, which gives useful resources and tips to help with more sustainable waste management at outdoor event.

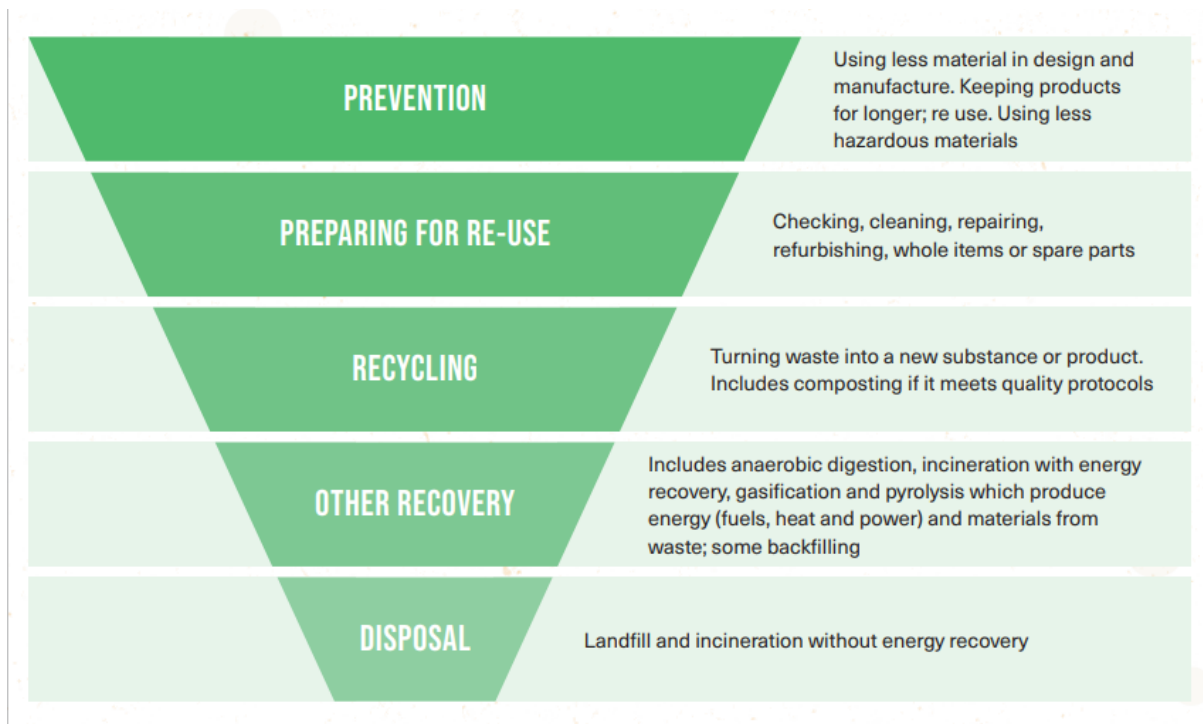


Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy, outlining the need to focus on prevention of waste and reuse, before recycling, energy recovery and other waste disposal is considered. Source: Vision 2025 Sustainable Materials and Waste Management toolkit.

Traffic Management

Events can involve increased levels of traffic. The Safety Advisory Group includes Essex County Council Highways representatives who can advise event organisers of traffic requirements that may need to be put into place. Organisers have a responsibility to notify and discuss traffic considerations with ECC highways for any large event.

Organisers can aim to reduce traffic by promoting sustainable travel options available for attending events including by walking, cycling or using public transport. Colchester Events have produced walking and cycling distance maps alongside information on public transport for accessing key Council owned events venues which could be sent out to attendees as part of information packs. Information on promoting cycling and cycling storage can also be found on the [Cycle Colchester website](#) (**Click here**).

Monitoring of Standards and Customer Satisfaction

The Council (or CATL) will also monitor standards and customer satisfaction and will liaise with organisers to instigate improvements where appropriate.

Organisers and promoters of recurring events are required to carry out reviews of their events to learn from their experiences, to improve on the product being provided and the impact on local residents. The Council may require a clear Action Plan setting out the lessons learnt and the improvements to be incorporated in future years before approving subsequent events.

Review of the Events Policy

All the partner agencies recognise the importance of events to Colchester and will work together to provide a programme of safe and well-managed events for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Events are unique, therefore the challenges posed by each event are different. As events evolve and develop it may be necessary for the Events Policy to evolve and develop accordingly.

It is anticipated that this Events Policy will cover the years to 2030, but this will depend on various factors. An Events Policy was created in 2016, but was significantly changed in 2020, with this updated Policy being agreed in January 2025.

Moving forwards, the Events Policy will be reviewed by the Council as a regular process every 3 – 5 years, working with all stakeholders in agreeing updates via a Portfolio Holder decision. In intervening years, minor changes may be considered by the relevant Head of Service. However, any major changes that are considered necessary will mean that the Policy will be referred to a formal decision-making process sooner than the scheduled update.