

**Book Title** – Green Events and Green Tourism: An International Guide to Good Practice (eds. Hugues Séraphin and Emma Nolan)

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### **Abstract**

In the UK, the event industry is fairly prominent and is currently worth £42.3 billion set to increase to £48 billion by 2020. As a destination, London is the main UK city in terms of meetings and events activities. As this chapter is going to focus on an outdoor event, it is important to indicate that over 7000 major outdoor events are organised each year in the UK. The topic of sustainability is a current issue not only in the event industry, but also in the tourism industry. Love Saves The Day is not the only festival (or even event) aiming to be sustainable from an environmental point of view. Being ‘green’, is now buzzwords in the event industry and other industry. A study was carried out at Love Saves The Day (based on 396 respondents who attended the festival in 2016), aiming to examine attendee’s attitudes and knowledge towards sustainability and environmental impacts at UK music festivals. The main findings reveal that attendees’ attitudes towards environmental impacts and sustainability measures was positive. Statistics also showed that attendees at Love Saves The Day had little knowledge of the environmental impacts of festivals.

### **Author Biographies**

#### **Eryn White**

Eryn White has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Events Management from the University of Winchester, from which she Graduated in October 2017. Here, she was included on the Winchester University Scholars Scheme for 1<sup>st</sup> Class Students, partook in the Winchester University Research Apprenticeship Programme, and won an Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement. Prior to her career in Events Management, she worked as a Chef from 2009, before moving on to Teaching in 2013. During this time, she witnessed the mass-wastage that generally accompanies the catering industry, as well as seeing first-hand a lack of education in wastage, recycling and sustainability. It wasn’t until 2014 that she started her career as an Events Manager, working for a Manor House in Dorset; this led to her seeking further education and an interest in all areas surrounding events. In particular, Eryn has a passion for investigating areas lacking standardisation, or those frequently looked over, especially sustainability and environmental impacts surrounding organised events. It is her hope that she may actively contribute to a more sustainable future and enlighten those that may be less aware of the issues.

#### **Hugues Séraphin**

Hugues Séraphin is a Senior Lecturer in Event and Tourism Management Studies. He holds a PhD from the *Université de Perpignan Via Domitia* (France) and joined *The University of*

*Winchester Business School* in 2012. He is the Programme Leader of the Event Management programme. This programme is one of the leading programmes in the country with 100% students' satisfaction (NSS 2016). Hugues started his career in 2003 as a French teacher in a secondary school in Birmingham. He then started to teach Travel, Tourism, and Events in 2006 when he joined a Further Education college in London. Hugues possesses a broad range of international experiences. This includes teaching in top Business Schools and Universities in France (EM Normandie; ESC Laroche; ESC Pau; Université de Perpignan Via Domitia, etc.). Prior to his career in academic, Hugues worked in the tourism and hospitality sector within various organisations and roles (in the Caribbean and in Europe).

## National Context

The topic of sustainability is a current issue not only in the event industry, but also in the tourism industry. Indeed, both sectors are closely related and sometimes referred as ‘event tourism’ (Getz, 2007). Over the summer 2017, anti-tourism movements arose in many leading tourism destinations in Europe, among these are Spain, Italy, the UK, etc. Amid the main reasons for the ‘grapes of wrath’ are the number of visitors (considered way too high by locals); the lack of respect for local culture and environment; and the disruption of the locals’ habits (Coldwell, 2017; Tapper, 2017). This wave of anti-tourism movements in Europe clearly show that sustainability is something that the tourism industry (and to some extent the event sector) has not yet achieved. On the basis that events are important pull factors in terms of tourists’ motivations to visit a destination (Getz, 2007), it is legitimate to wonder if events are next on the list for anti-tourism activists. In this line of thought, it is important to investigate what the event sector is doing in order to limit its negative impacts on the environment and local population. In other words, how sustainable or green is the event industry? In order to address this research question, this book chapter is going to investigate the event sector in the UK with a particular emphasis on a specific festival, namely, ‘*Love Saves The Day*’.

In the UK, the event industry is fairly prominent and is currently worth £42.3 billion (Booker, 2016 [online]), set to increase to £48 billion by 2020 (Fletcher, 2012 [online]). As a destination, London is the main UK city in terms of meetings and events activities. As this chapter is going to focus on an outdoor event, it is important to indicate that over 7000 major outdoor events are organised each year in the UK. This number of events held each year is continually increasing (Jones, 2012), with Glastonbury being the largest festival, admitting over 100,000 attendees. That said, among the many festivals running in the UK, *Love Saves The Day* stands out, due to the many initiatives in action, aimed at minimising its impacts on the environment and more particularly in reducing the greenhouse-gas emissions. Among the initiatives of this event, to continually push toward sustainability and protection of the environment, could be mentioned: reusable cups; ethical procurement policies; recycling; alternative transport methods; etc. This event being the key focus of this book chapter, it is also worth indicating that as a music festival, *Love Saves The Day* is a rather new festival which started in 2011 (May) in the city of Bristol, to celebrate all that makes this city a great city.

*Love Saves The Day* is not the only festival (or even event) aiming to be sustainable from an environmental point of view. Being ‘green’, is now buzzwords in the event industry and other industry. Other sectors related to tourism and events are following this path. The hospitality sector is one of them. For instance, *Cavendish Venues* are leading the way in conference, meeting and event sustainability. As part of their procedure, they are the first one in London to have introduced a bespoke carbon calculator for events they hold; subsidies offered to organisers who commit to recycling all their promotional material; committed to compost all food waste; their menus are redesigned to offer more choice and less food waste; reductions in all inputs (energy, water, etc.) in the centres; they choose their supplier on their localisation to minimize carbon footprint. *Cavendish Venues* are also accredited landfill neutral.

In the hospitality, tourism and event sectors for instance, it has been evidenced that customers are quite sensitive to effort put in place by companies to reduce their negative impacts on the

environment. That said, all the strategies currently in place (briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter) are more reactionary and exploitation actions. In this chapter we are claiming that exploratory actions would be more sustainable. We are also going to suggest a strategy to put in place. A variety of examples will be used, knowing that *Love Saves The Day* is going to be the main one.

## Priority Issues

When talking about green tourism or green events, it is first very important to have a clear understanding of what it means and second, how to implement green strategies. At the moment there are a variety of definitions and strategies available regarding what can cause confusion and difficulties in assessing the performance of strategies in place. More importantly, the following data clearly show that events and more specifically festivals have a major impact on the environment. Indeed, annually, 23,500 tonnes of waste are generated from the UK music festival industry; 5 million litres of fuel are consumed; 19,778 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> are produced (excluding travel); and recycling rates are lower than 32% (Powerful Thinking, 2015 [online]). Also, the unintended and unplanned effects of festivals on the environment often include (but not limited to): traffic congestion; increase in litter; disruption of local flora and fauna. A reactionary approach would be to collect the litters or finding alternatives to limit congestions and related side effects, etc. An exploratory approach would consist in a more radical and in-depth approach. On that basis, it becomes important to educate people attending events, Destination Marketing Organisations and event organisers, on how to mitigate the negative impacts of their behaviour and activity on the environment. Taking the example of tourists travelling to post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destinations (basically destinations with a negative image), Séraphin, Butcher and Korstanje (2016) explained that the education of these tourists at pre-visit stage contribute to improve their perception of these destinations. Taking the example of food festivals, Pilato, Seraphin and Bellia (2017) explained that these events have the potential to improve the perception of people about a destination. Education is basically a proactive approach that can mitigate and sometimes prevent negative outcomes. Similarly, it appears that the more eco-conscious an individual is, the more likely this person is to perceive the negative impacts of his actions on the environment, and the opposite if the individual is not eco-conscious. Education is therefore key to greening an event / a destination. That said, the confusion regarding what is a green event or tourism and the strategy to put in place to green events and destinations have lead some festivals to promote themselves as 'green', even if they are not (Edwards, 2010 [online]).

## Trends

Seraphin et al (2016) and Gartner (1993) explain that the image that we have of a destination is based upon information acquired, either by induced agents (generally controlled by sources external to the individual such as advertisements); organic agents (that are acquired through personal experience and are normally the most trusted source of information); or autonomous agents (media sources or popular culture such as films or documentaries). We are arguing

that the image that people have of a festival follow the same pattern. On that basis, it is very important for an event to advertise itself as ‘green’ (induced agent). It is also very important for the event organisers to have a strategy in place to mitigate the negative impacts of their event and more importantly, this strategy needs to be communicated to festival goers and needs to contribute positively to their experience of the festival (organic agent). And finally, it is important for this strategy to stand out so that it gets commanded and shared as good practice (autonomous agent).

From the above, it is quite obvious that events need to have a communication strategy in place and more importantly, a sustainable strategy that can help them to stand out and gain competitive advantage. *Cavendish Venues* built part of their image and competitive based on this strategy. The benefits that can be reaped from a green strategy have led to the development of green marketing. This form of marketing, or cause-related marketing, which is ‘binding the sale of a product to a particular cause’ (Sloan, Legrand & Chen, 2013: 191), has been influenced by the 4 Ps of sustainable development, namely: People, Planet, Profit and Progress (Sloan et al, 2013). This form of marketing is also supposed to market products that are supposed to be environmentally safe and that can improve the quality of the environment (Sloan et al, 2013). That said, it is important to say that green marketing ‘is not to incite consumers to consume less, but to consume better’ (Sloan et al, 2013: 192). What are events, and more specifically festivals like *Love Saves The Day* doing, in terms of green marketing? Section 5 and 6 are going to investigate this question. That said, if we consider the fact that the branding (logo and slogan) of an organisation is supposed to tell the narrative of this organisation, *Love Saves The Day* is branding itself as being respectful and loving of the world.

In the event industry, environment sustainability is regarded quite highly in the agenda when planning and delivering events. Pretty much all events have a strategy in place regarding sustainability. Some events also have a social agenda (as sustainability can also be viewed from a political, economic, social and technological angle). Boomtown for instance has made in 2017 a substantial contribution to the local community. Indeed, the event raised £32, 000 for charities and projects in the local area (Boomtown, 2017 [Online]).

## **Government Policies**

As discussed in the previous section, it is important for destinations, events, venues, etc. to be known as sustainable because of the many benefits related to this branding. That said, having a sustainable strategy is not an obligation. There is no government policy, regional or national legislation. That said, there are many voluntary codes, standards and frameworks. At international level, ISO is the most common one. As an example, we can refer to ISO 20121.

*It ‘is a management system standard that has been designed to help organisations in the events industry improve the sustainability of their event related activities, products and services’ (ISO 20121, 2017 [Online]).*

The UK has developed its own, namely the British Standard (BS). Among these are BS 8901:

*'BS 8901 is the British Standard which has been developed specifically for the events industry. The standard provides a framework of good practice and defines the requirements for a sustainable event management system to ensure an enduring and balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress'* (Action sustainability, 2017 [Online]).

Experts in the field of event management have also developed their own framework. Among these are Megan Jones, a consultant in sustainable events. She has developed a 9 steps framework to help event organisers to reach their objectives in terms of sustainability (Jones [Online]).

This section clearly shows that the event industry is quite keen to limit its negative impacts on the environment and to positively contribute to the society. That said, this variety of frameworks to some extent might defeat their initial objectives by causing confusion. Also, the different certifications available (ISO or BS) might be used for marketing purposes and might on the long term lose sight of their original purpose and might end up not being for purpose. Taking the example of the certification *Investors In People*, Smith (2011) explained that this certification does not always match the expectation of HR practitioners in terms of the benefits that could be gained.

## **Main Case Study**

The *Love Saves the Day* festival has a strong focus on sustainability. As mentioned earlier, the organisers have developed a range of strategies to reach their objectives, among these are sourcing the products from local suppliers; finding innovative ways to reduce waste and energy consumption; the 'love bus' (shuttle-bus); recycling; reusable cups; efficient energy management; ethical procurement policies and alternative transport methods, all whilst trying to educate people attending the event by rising awareness of the impacts that events can have on the environment and more importantly by informing the audience of what is done at *Love Saves The Day* to minimise the impacts of the festival on the environment (A Greener Festival, 2015 [online]).

A study was carried out at *Love Saves The Day* (based on 396 respondents who attended the festival in 2016), aiming to examine attendee's attitudes and knowledge towards sustainability and environmental impacts at UK music festivals. Questionnaires were the primary method of data collection, not only due to their favourability among similar research, or because questions can be utilised from previous studies, but because of their low cost, quick response time and lack of interviewer bias. Questions pertaining to attendees' attitudes were constructed on a 5-point Likert scale, and all questions were coded so that responses could easily be analysed using SPSS. The questionnaires were made as short as possible, as if longer than 4-6 pages, individuals are unlikely to want to respond. When administering the questionnaires, a random sample was picked from the attendees. The sampling procedure is closest to probabilistic sampling which is entirely based on the principle of randomness. Through the use of this sampling method, results are able to be generalised and projected upon the entire population (Franklin & Blyton, 2011). Post questionnaire data analysis, one short interview was used in order to validate the quantitative results. This also serves as a

form of methodological triangulation, limiting the research vulnerability and reducing any possible bias according to Wilson (2014). In order to validate the findings an interview was conducted with an industry professional (IP).

The main findings reveal that attendees' attitudes towards environmental impacts and sustainability measures was positive. When presented with this information, IP commented they felt 'reassured'; it shows that attendees are engaging with the information given to them on how to reduce environmental impacts, even if this engagement is much less than the attention other festival aspects receive. Giving consideration to the efforts of *Love Saves The Day*, IP believes that the fact attitudes are positive would suggest that the measures in place are working and that the audience understands their purpose. That said, it is only 56.7% of attendees who are engaging with the information given to them. The IP argued that more should be done to reach those attendees that are still displaying a negative attitude. The IP felt these findings may be due to attendees' obliviousness of the considerable footprint most festivals incur, resulting in a lack of consideration and concern relating to the environmental impacts at festivals, and sustainability measures that have to be put in place. Statistics also showed that attendees at *Love Saves The Day* had little knowledge of the environmental impacts of festivals. Given there is such a clear lack of knowledge, changes should be made to better educate festival attendees. The IP felt that by adopting a strategic approach through integrated marketing communications, the information on festival impacts and sustainability measures could be fed to attendees over an extended period of time. Additionally, there has been recent research into future trends and how to reach attendees, which confirm IPs' opinion; Robertson et al (2015) believe technology will become increasingly important at festivals and used as a way to reduce environmental impacts and educate attendees, through online platforms containing official festival materials. Velt et al (2015) also found that attendees would like festivals to be themed or crafted around their mobile devices.

## Similar Case Studies and Relevant Projects

Glastonbury Festival was founded in 1970, long before people began to become concerned about climate change. Glastonbury Festival has always been the first to host “alternative” solutions to environmental concerns. The motto/slogan of the festival is now: ‘Love Worthy Farm... Leave No Trace’, the objective being to achieve the best possible balance of nature and resources. The Festival also commits to maintaining the rich and diverse environment that has evolved through alternative land usage. The festival has developed its own green policies (Glastonbury festival, [Online]). The strategy in place could be split into three stages: Before, during and after. Information from the website have been split into three categories:

### Before:

- We want people to think about their journey to the Festival: to use public transport or, if coming by car, to share transport with others and maximise the carload.
- Limit what you bring, and clean up behind you.” The Festival commits to continuing its policy of reducing the percentage of waste that goes to landfill, by placing controls on what is bought on site by staff, contractors, sponsors and traders and by emphasis on their responsibility not to bring items that will end in landfill.
- ‘A tent is for life not just for a festival’, we want people to not just buy the cheapest tent, spend a little extra and buy yourself a tent that is going to last you a lifetime of camping experiences rather than just a festival or summer.
- All the wood used by the Festival is locally sourced and wherever possible, FSC-assured

### During:

- The festival is committed to minimising the amount of waste, and managing the onsite collection of that waste efficiently, “reduce, reuse and recycle”. We want all Festival goers to think ‘zero waste’ and to take home what they bring onto the Festival site.
- There are teams of volunteers that contribute hugely to the sustainability of the Festival. There are 1,300 recycling volunteers
- We’re taking energy directly from the sun to the stage. We’ve introduced solar power and green technology to the Theatre & Circus and Shangri-La areas. All of the cafes stalls and stages above the old railway line in the Green Fields are powered by the sun or wind; there are no diesel generators. Even the showers are solar powered.
- Hybrid Generators. This year we have hybrid generator sets that that can integrate solar, wind, diesel gen set, mains grid and battery storage.
- No plastic bags! All our Festival programmes come in 100% organic unbleached cotton bags, printed with vegetable dyes. Our official Glastonbury Festival T-shirts are printed using water-based (non-pvc) inks and dying is also carried out using vegetable dyes.
- Compost loos. We have the largest number of compost toilets anywhere in the world. This year we will have over 1200 compost toilets which after a year produce wonderful compost that is brought back onto the festival site and used within the permaculture field and different areas of the site.
- We only allow compostable or re-usable plates and cutlery.



- Don't pee in the river.
- Glastonbury Stainless steel water bottles. We are encouraging everyone to bring a reusable water bottle or to purchase a 100% food grade stainless steel water bottle
- We're recycling like mad. In 2014, half of all waste generated by the Festival was recycled.
- What we need to do now is start seriously reducing the volumes of waste that are created by the Festival and the only way to do this is to "Reduce, Reuse, recycle"
- We're reducing road delivery. We've built two reservoirs and have an onsite wholesale market so food and water delivery will be hugely reduced.

After:

- WE LOVE TREES. Since 2000, we've planted over 10,000 native trees and hedge plants in the local environment. We've just planted an orchard of special variety apple and pear trees near the farmhouse. Glastonbury works hard to protect vulnerable habitats like badger sets, ponds, streams, hedges and ditches, by creating nature reserves and non-public zones.

To summarise, we could say that the strategy developed by this festival covers:

- Transport
- Waste management
- Involvement of the local community
- The use of alternative (and clean) source of energy
- And a contribution to the environment

### **Further Resources**

*The UK Green Film Festival* - is the UK's annual environmental film festival taking place each year over a single week, up and down the country, the festival screens some of the very best films from around the world, exploring some of the big environmental issues of the day. *The UK Green Film Festival* has a nationwide network of film lovers and green thinkers. *The UK Green Film Festival* only takes place each year thanks to its generous support and partners. Not only do they play a key part in bringing green films to the UK but they're all also contributing to raise awareness regarding environmental issues. Among the partners of the festival we can name *BWB Consulting Limited*. This company ranks amongst the UK's leading development consultants providing environmentally responsible engineering and environmental solutions for complex and challenging projects.

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