

Guiding Principles for the Management of Sustainable Events

The BE Group is a media and business solutions group achieving great results by doing things differently. We combine inspiring business content with the relationships and practical tools to help businesses succeed beyond their expectations.

Our ambition is to have a positive impact on the world around us and be the best example of an employee owned business in our sector by; helping businesses to succeed beyond their expectations, being a workplace where talented people can thrive, and by behaving responsibly in all that we do.

We apply these values and principles to everything we do, including our events, which are delivered in line with ISO20121 Sustainable Event Management.

We have developed some guiding principles in relation to delivering more sustainable events, which aid our planning and decisions. These are set out below:

Sustainable economy

Most of our events are aimed at fostering and accelerating economic growth and prosperity, whether that be by encouraging entrepreneurship and start up businesses, improving supply chain and tendering opportunities, provision of grants and finance to support business growth, or developing skills. As a result our events have a very strong social and economic purpose, and we measure our success by following up with attendees to determine the impact of the event, for example by helping them to secure new business, or to safeguard or create jobs.

Our staff

Our business is owned by an Employee Ownership Trust, giving all our staff a real stake in the business and we are recognised by The Sunday Times 100 Best Small Companies to Work For. We have an equal, diversity and inclusion policy and pay all our staff above the Living Wage.

We believe passionately in growing and nurturing our own talent; we look for opportunities to employ apprentices and interns or graduates on placements.

We have a performance and development review framework to ensure that our staff are competent and receive the personal development and training that they need.

We believe in the health and wellbeing of our employees and offer a range of benefits, rewards and recognition.

All staff are given a day's leave for their birthday and 25 days annual leave (full time equivalent) in addition to statutory bank holidays.

The need to work outside of standard hours is sometimes required by staff managing our events. We offer TOIL where our events staff have been involved in a period of sustained activity, so that they can recover.

Improvement and Innovation

We encourage innovation and continual improvement in everything we do. Our services are aligned to ISO9001:2015 Quality Management, ISO14001:2015 Environmental Management and ISO20121 Sustainable Events Management certified by BSI under certificate numbers FS598779, EMS598780 and SEMS598782.

We are not content just to deliver on outputs; we aim to exceed our customers' expectations and gather feedback in a variety of ways so that we can learn for the future.

We deliver our events in the most innovative way possible; where we have repeat business we seek to improve on previous years.

Our Events Management System provides on-line booking and appointment making which reduces the need for paper based bookings and helps us manage our email campaigns more effectively.

Procurement and supply chain

We operate a fair and transparent procurement process and have a sustainable procurement policy against which we measure our progress.

We consider the environmental, sustainability and ethical credentials of potential suppliers through our tendering process and, where applicable, we will apportion some of the scoring criteria based on this.

We pay a fair price for the services we procure and we pay our suppliers on time.

Some of the printing companies we use have won environmental awards.

We work with our venues to encourage food to be sourced locally, if possible, or to provide fair trade products.

Environment

Our office in Seaham is accredited to ISO14001:2015.

We have set ourselves targets to reduce energy consumption, waste and paper usage and measure our progress against these targets.

We try to minimise our impact on the environment in everything we do, including our events.

We ensure that any equipment is reusable and we encourage delegates to hand in name badges so that they can be reused.

We select venues that are appropriate to the size of the event, to minimise unnecessary use of heat and light and aim to use venues which offer a good source of natural light, or use energy efficient lighting.

Our events staff are vigilant in ensuring that all equipment and lights are turned off following the event.

We provide tap water at most events.

Reduction of waste

We ensure that recycling facilities are available at events.

Where we are required to produce printed material, this is done double sided, on responsibly sourced or recycled paper and we encourage attendees to recycle when they are finished; we only print what is required based on the number of bookings.

We try to encourage our delegates to receive more information electronically and use new technologies where appropriate. We have developed an app which helps us to reduce the amount of brochures we need to print.

Where possible, we have replaced paper sign in sheets with a scanning system at registration.

We only cater for the number of expected delegates and try to build in an allowance for non-attendance.

We minimise the amount of hard copy marketing by maximising the use of email campaigns and by other means such as our website or social media.

We do as much of the confirmation and follow up process as possible by email.

Where we do use hard copy marketing, we plan and target the campaign carefully and use responsibly sourced or recycled paper.

Air emissions

We seek venues which are accessible by public transport and publicise these options to attendees.

Our event feedback forms ask whether public transport has been used.

If practical, our staff use public transport where possible.

Where our staff are required to travel outside the region for an event, we use hired vehicles which are shared. We will consider the use of more environmentally friendly hire vehicles where available.

Information is provided via websites, emails and telephone where practical. This increases accessibility to customers and reduces the need for travel to meetings. We also use teleconferencing and video conferencing where practical.

Community

We support various charities through our sports and social club; we raise money through a variety of in-office activities on a regular basis.

We have made a commitment to give all staff a half day community volunteering opportunity each year.

Our events are inclusive and accessible, whether this is location, facilities or time and we take the needs of our target audience into account when planning our events. We ask in advance about any specific requirements.

Where required, we measure statistics on equality and diversity.

Health and safety

We carry out risk assessments at our events and ensure that staff and participants are aware of emergency procedures.

We have appropriate levels of public and employer's liability insurance in place to cover our events.

Communication

We will communicate our sustainable events policy on our events websites and at events.

Events Management System

We have a proven track record in delivering events, but we always seek to improve. Our events vary in size, theme and audience so we do not have a "one size fits all" approach to our delivery; we tailor specifically to the needs of our client and the audience.

We have developed a sustainable events procedure to help us deliver events and then measure our success and identify improvement opportunities.

We use a "sustainable events reporting tool" to capture the sustainability considerations and impacts for each event. This helps the event managers to decide what is relevant for the event, what they may need to put in place and to record whether this was achieved. In turn this will help us to measure our achievement in line with the guiding principles above.

We also use a venue checklist as part of the process; this is not intended to be a one size fits all approach as all venues and events are different, and it is not intended as a pass / fail. Rather, it is to be used as a planning tool and aide-memoire to encourage the event managers to consider sustainability aspects of the venue. We do not necessarily require all of our venues to be accredited to an environmental standard, as that is not always appropriate, and inevitably certain venues will be more mature from a sustainability and environmental point of view than others. At the smallest end of the scale, if we use the village hall, there will still be factors that we can consider, and we can use the venue checklist to work alongside them to make the event more sustainable in easy and inexpensive ways.

