



SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT REPORT 2023



About

Welcome to our sustainability report for 2023. We're excited to share with you all the good stuff we're doing to make the festival as sustainable as it can be.

The elephant in the room, of course, is that building an annual festival for 10,000 plus people out of a greenfield site will always be somewhat counter to treading lightly on this good earth. But we're persuaded that the energy and engagement, the inspiration and insight, the traction and transformation we build at the festival far outweighs our footprint in the field – and ripples out across the year.

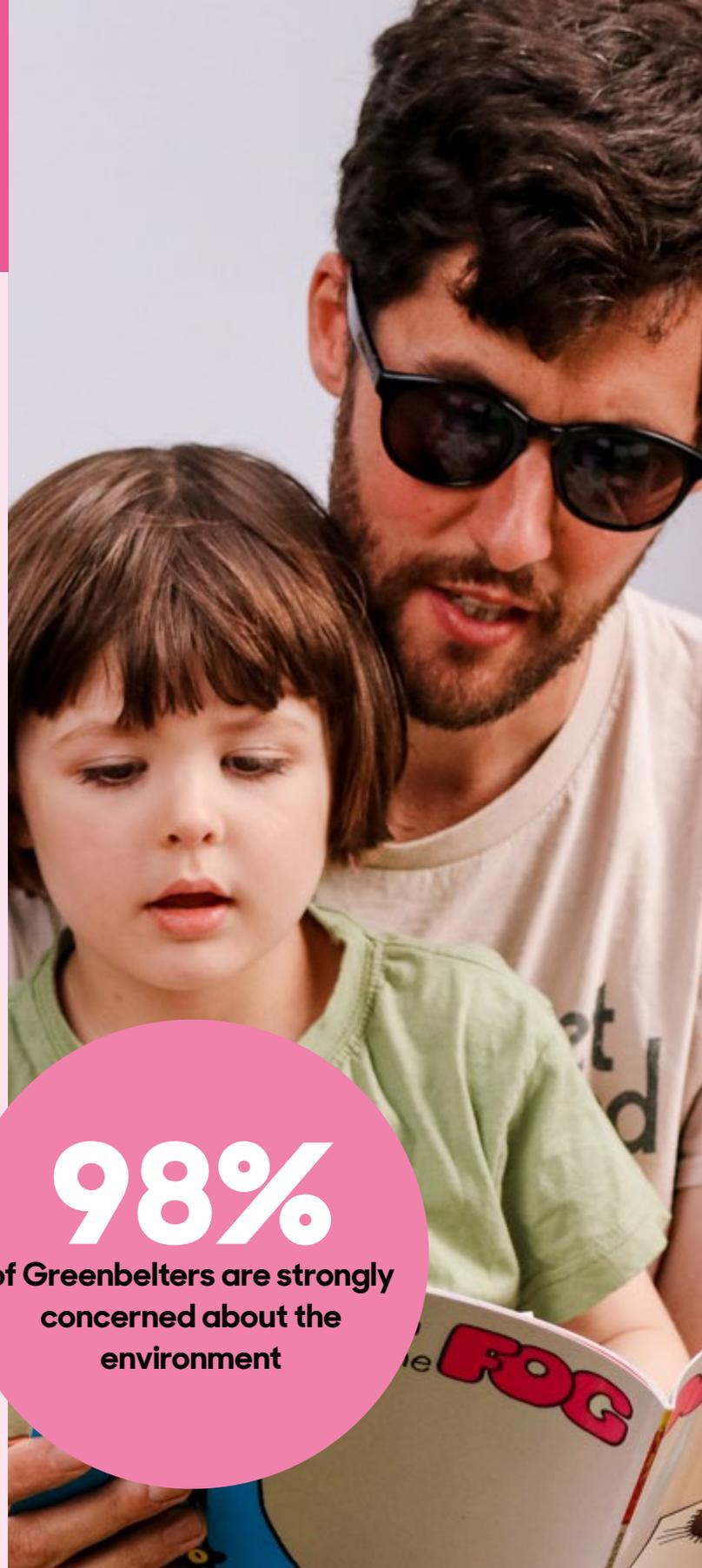
Which is not to say we're complacent. We take our responsibility to sustainability extremely seriously.

We're incredibly grateful to our festivalgoers for walking with us on this journey – for being the change we need to see in the world way beyond August Bank Holiday.

#greenerbelt is a journey. And we still have a way to go. That's why we're asking what your environmental challenge for us would be?

Let us know.

We'd love to hear from you



98%

of Greenbelters are strongly concerned about the environment

We're excited to be part of the Vision: 2025 network, along with many other like-minded festivals in the Association of Independent Festivals family. The network includes over 500 outdoor events and businesses taking positive climate action.

Vision: 2025 provides the industry's roadmap for a shared journey toward net zero and the knowledge to help us get there – tools, resources, guides, news, case studies, green suppliers directory, and events that connect people. And Greenbelt's Event Manager, Jess Jones, represents the festival in this, championing and leading on all our sustainability work as an organisation.

Carbon footprint



348
tonnes of total CO₂ produced at
Greenbelt Festival 2023

21%
increase compared to 2022 -
because more people attended

32kg

**CARBON
FOOTPRINT**
per day, per person



7.91kg

0.11kg

UK Average*

Greenbelt '23
(incl. travel)

Greenbelt '23
(excl. travel)

-85%

reduction in CO₂ created
by our generators in
switching to HVO
(hydrotreated
vegetable oil)

*<https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/the-average-british-carbon-footprint-is-five-times-over-paris-agreement-recommendations>

Food

39

food stalls at Greenbelt 2023,
9 more than in 2022

92%

offered vegetarian options

33%

served no meat
at all

93%

offered nut- and
gluten-free options

97%

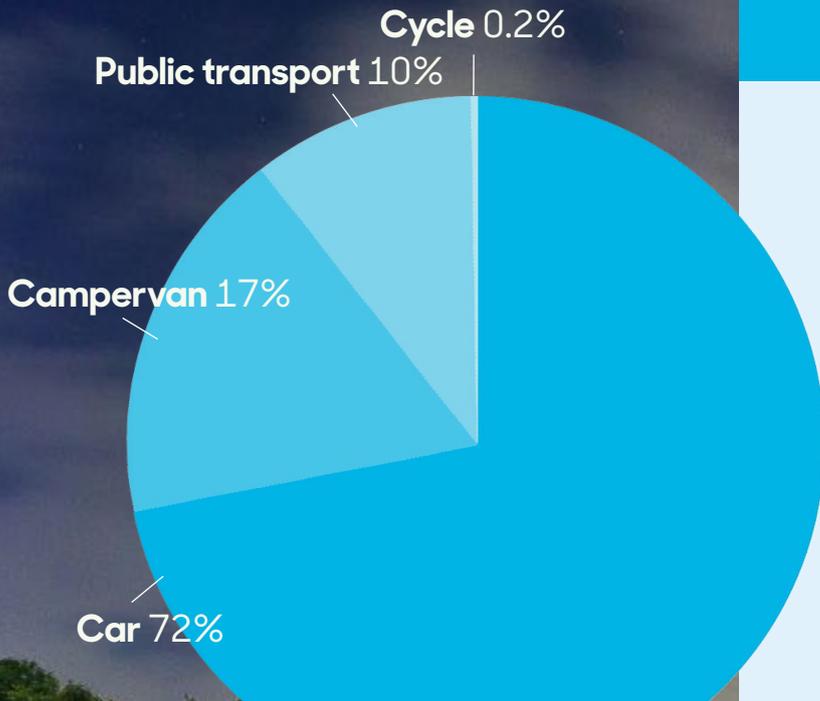
offered dairy-free options

3,943

reusable cups purchased in
2023. That's 27% less than in
2022, meaning people are
bringing theirs back!



Travel



**AUDIENCE TRAVEL
GREENBELT FESTIVAL 2023**

72%
travelled by car

17%
travelled by campervan

10%
travelled by public transport

0.2%
travelled by bicycle

2,574*
audience cars

622
campervans

18
bicycles

***2.3**
people in each car
(on average). We'll be asking
festivalgoers if they could
bring someone else
in their car.



Energy

HVO

fuel now used to power our generators

0.89

litres of fuel used per person per day

Did you know?

we switched from diesel to HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) to fuel our generators this year, meaning an 85% CO2 saving

Waste

23

tonnes of total waste

0.53

kg of waste per person per day

1.7

tonnes of food waste sent to compost

2

tents left - and donated to Camplite



Community impact

65%

of Greenbelters said they'd taken personal action to tackle climate change as a result of being at the festival

Pay-what-you-can tickets

Our new ticketing model was a success. It worked so well that other events like the Just So and Big Church Festival have adopted our model.

50 for 50

62 people pledged to explore hosting a Ukrainian refugee in their home as part of our recruitment drive with Citizens UK.

Listening to those with live experience

Working with Trussell Trust and other anti-poverty agencies, we made space to listen to and learn from those with lived experience of poverty, also launching a brand new 'Let's End Poverty' coalition designed to focus political will on the moral failure of increasing levels of poverty here in the UK.

£32,500

of our Sunday communion collection was shared between Citizens UK, Let's End Poverty, Amos Trust's Gaza exhibition and Christian Aid's climate relief work.



How can we as a Christian Community address the Climate Crisis and what recommendations can we put forward to see fair + effective ways for the Government to address the issue?



Did you know?
We ran a participatory Climate Assembly at this year's festival.

Here are the most popular outcomes from the assembly's deliberations. Our hope is that they find their way to being acted upon by our community.

Energy and church resources

Churches as power stations. All churches to have solar panels on their roofs to provide energy for their community. Use the 3 million acres of church land to establish community-run food production cooperatives. Create emergency support groups for the thousands of climate refugees expected.

Assembly (Ekklesia)

Churches to run People's Assemblies – to listen to each other and the wider community, find our common voice and decide on common action. Invite everyone, all communities and all faiths. Also use these to address our polarised society and focus on divisive issues like ULEZ. Church congregations should be doorstepping their communities to find out what their most important issues are. Not to dictate what their issues

should be, but to start with listening. Then use Assemblies to act on these issues with the community. Start with easy wins, like sewage in our waterways. Use Climate Assemblies to make sure the brave climate activists are not being marginalised. Use well facilitated Assemblies for those voices who are not confident to speak, elevate the voice of the vulnerable or powerless. Hold these well facilitated Assemblies so that all people are safe to share their feelings and be vulnerable.

Voice

There are 2 billion Christian voices in the world. Church leaders need to galvanise a collective, global response to climate. Church communities to put forward youth voices on climate. Church communities need to be outrageous and no longer quiet about climate. They need to use these styles of Assembly to make sure they are not quiet. This has to be a bottom up movement, acting on the reality that we are all inter-relational beings.

Money

Tax the fossil fuel industry heavily and end all subsidising of the industry. Money saved goes into transition to renewables. Change legislation so that fossil fuel companies

and their shareholders 'take the hit', not ordinary people. All churches divest out of fossil fuels. Congregations are encouraged to switch to banks that don't invest in fossil fuels.

Political power

Churches hold climate-focused hustings for electoral campaigns. Bishops in the House of Lords use their position to fight for climate justice and against government inaction on climate change. Push through new regulations on housing and development so that all are not environmentally damaging. Make public transport affordable and efficient. It should be acceptable for politicians to make mistakes and admit they are fallible rather than keep up false pretences. Make all lifestyle choices towards being carbon-free an affordable choice. Create a Minister for Future Generations.

Theology

Change theology that ignores climate change, saying that 'God will save us'.

Lifestyle choices

Switch banks to green banks. Switch diets to plant-based, vegan diets.



**Did you
know?**

**We've given
Barclays
the boot**

Goodbye Barclays. Hello Co-op.

We have done the work to extricate ourselves from our decades-long relationship with Barclays. Like our main partner Christian Aid, we spent time exploring more ethical options and, like them, we're switching to the Co-op.

We are leaving Barclays in protest at their continuing investment in fossil fuels and their lack of action in response to the climate emergency. We know that money talks, and so we hope that our move – along with many others who are doing likewise – will make a difference.

Banks certainly don't make it easy to switch. It feels like it's taken forever to jump through all the hoops and sort the admin. But we're really pleased that the work is finally done, and that we've finally given Barclays the boot. We're also pleased to say that it's not all about leaving. It's about joining, too.

And joining is about moving to bank with the Co-op, a movement whose mission, vision and values we deeply respect. In recent years we've been pleased to platform Co-operative movement speakers at the festival. So it feels very fitting that we're now able to have our money in the care of an organisation committed to the common good, rather than purely to bottom-line profit and maximising shareholder dividends.



The good news

Switching to HVO fuel meant our generator CO2 emissions reduced by 85% (from 28 tonnes to 4).

We reduced our waste from 32 tonnes to 23 tonnes, despite having a larger audience.

Our new 'Sustainability Fairies' listened to your environmental concerns & ideas. That data will inform future decisions.

Our audience and crew grew in size this year - more people coming to the table is great!

Additional composting loos were a success and are much more sustainable.

All our production buggies and taxis were electric - bar one.

Over 1.5 tonnes of non-perishable food donated to the local food-bank.

Awards

- Shortlisted for A Greener Future's 'Greener Festival' and 'Travel Impact Innovator' Awards
- Access Team Leader Louise Shortlisted for a Blue Badge Access award

What we need to do better

Travel to the festival now accounts for over 95% of our CO2. We must act on this in order to bring down our contributions.

Better audience comms around lift sharing, public transport, walking and cycling.

Better systems onsite for those travelling by these alternative methods.

Improve our recycling rates. We still have a long way to go, despite great improvements.

Have your say

#Greenerbelt is a journey and we still have a way to go. What's your environmental challenge for us?

Let us know.





Equality, diversity & inclusion

16 & 83

years old. The youngest and oldest
Greenbelt volunteers in 2023.

ALL

of our headline acts were fronted by
women.

+ We're committed to
BAME programming

We introduced a radical new ticketing
model to ensure that those who can't
pay the full amount can still attend.

Our Open Festival scheme gave free
festival tickets to those who can't afford
to buy their own.

We worked with partners, churches and
hosts to make sure that those affected
by the war in Ukraine could attend.

Affordable food options like yoURCafe
and the 24hr Cafe meant no one was
priced out by premium festival prices.

Volunteer support

We're also looking at how we
can improve the support we
provide to our more-than
1,000 festival volunteers.

Access

893

people registered with our Access Team to get support on site

Access Training

All our onsite volunteers are trained to be aware that not all disabilities are visible.

Signs of God

Our volunteer BSL service offered 68 hours of interpreted content across the weekend.

New access vehicles

This year we had new, dedicated vehicles to help support those with access needs get onto the festival site.

Did you know?

We have a space at the festival for anyone with sensory needs who may need a break, or a moment to rest. It's called The Haven.



Looking to the future

more

- renewable energy
- meat-free stalls
- charitable projects
- working with local people
- listening to what you want
- improvement in our food sourcing policy

less

- coffee cups & food sachets: we're starting a two-year journey to get rid of them altogether
- waste to landfill: keeping our zero waste to landfill status by improving our recycling rates and reducing the materials we use
- car journeys: incentivising and supporting travel to site by public transport (and we're not just thinking of extortionate and broken train travel)

The journey

We're in this for the long haul. We've been improving our sustainability for years and we know there's much more to do.

#greenerbelt