

GREENING UP YOUR PATCH - Guidance for Comedy Festival Venues

Greetings, all Leicester Comedy Festival Venues! We are ReFiesta, a new local initiative to Green Leicester's Festivals and Events, and we have been invited by Leicester Comedy Festival to work with them on our mission.

What help can we offer you?

Our mission is to encourage greener behaviour through Leicester's festivals and events by supporting busy folk like yourselves in making adaptations that you want to. We'll be challenging you to make some changes, but we will also be on hand to help you to find out the info and do some of the troubleshooting that needs doing. Our online directory at www.refiesta.org.uk has lots of useful resources and we can be your first port of call for info and help.

What's in it for you?

As well as the warm glow of knowing you're making some positive changes, there's also some additional kudos on offer! If you make even very small changes on at least 5 of the areas that we suggest, your venue may be eligible for a Green Tick in next year's Leicester Comedy Festival brochure. You will also be in the running for ReFiesta's Greening Up Your Patch award. There will be Gold, Silver and Bronze awards and Commendations and we are making it really simple to enter. More importantly, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you and your venue are part of a global movement and helping the environment at a time our planet is facing several critical threats.

What can you do?

We've come up with some things that you can do to address the impact that your venue will have on the environment during Leicester Comedy Festival. Have a look at the suggestions below, which give some simple tips on the following things:

1. Plastic straws
2. Glasses, mugs and washing up
3. Customer transport
4. Drinking water
5. Food and drink that you offer
6. Promotional materials
7. Recycling and waste
8. Energy

But your venue's different...

We recognise that all venues are different and that some things will be easier or more difficult depending on your practical set up and customer base. We have suggested areas that all venues could make changes in, and have given some examples to help. We don't expect anyone to achieve all of the things we've suggested, but we'd like to hear about any changes you could make and we can support you to make them. Some venues will be doing some of these things already. If so, please do let us know so we can learn from your experience.

We look forward to seeing more of you in the run-up to the festival! Get in touch to let us know what you're doing or ask for more support. The ReFiesta website also had a lot of useful contacts and resources.

The ReFIESTA team and Leicester Comedy Festival**1. Change your approach to plastic straws**

- Provide biodegradable straws - there are some really funky ones about!
- Ask customers if they want a straw before giving one out
- Don't give straws unless requested
- Stop using straws altogether

2. Change your approach to glasses, mugs and washing up

- Refill used glasses rather than giving new ones if requested
- Promote glass / mug reuse by asking if customers want to reuse
- Offer e.g. A 10p discount when customers re-use their glasses
- Avoid polystyrene and disposable plastics
- Source compostable crockery or use real plates, glasses and cutlery where possible
- Use an eco-friendly washing up / dishwashing detergent brand e.g. Bio D / Ecover

3. Change your approach to customer travel

- Provide (and advertise) safe bicycle parking
- Offer discounts or a free drink for customers that can show they've travelled sustainably
- Add public transport info to your website, social media and in your venue
- Put public transport and bike parking info BEFORE car and parking info
- Advertise cab companies that offer electric cars

4. Change your approach to drinking water

- Provide an urn with drinking water and glasses so customers can help themselves
- Sell reusable water bottles;
- Encourage customers or general public to fill their water bottles at your bar (and display a poster in your window promoting this facility)

5. Change your approach to food and drink

- Increase the number of lower-carbon food options (vegan, veggie, locally grown or reared, organic, Fair Trade) on your menu
- Provide more ethically certified products (Soil Association organic, FSC, Marine Stewardship Council, Fairtrade, Harborough Taste Mark)
- Offer tap water as an alternative to bottled water
- Increase your offering of local and or organic drinks and vegan beers
- Advertise which are the more sustainable and ethical options on offer to customers.
- Host a vegan or veggie night periodically
- Go completely veggie or vegan

6. Change your approach to promotional materials

- If you print flyers or programmes, print fewer and use other ways to advertise e.g. social media
- Ask your printer to use recycled paper and veg-based inks or change to a printer that can offer this
- Instead of employing people to give out flyers which end up on the floor, try an alternative like a human billboard offering people to selfie with them so that they have a photo of the poster – that way they can share it on social media!

7. Change your approach to recycling and waste

- Compare your current waste retrieval contracts against others that can recycle more
- Get your food waste collected for compost or donated to community food projects
- Reduce the amount of waste you produce e.g. rewarding customers who bring a mug / ditching disposables / juice by the glass instead of bottled juices / promoting draft over bottled drinks
- Promote to customers what you are doing with reducing, reusing and recycling
- Install low water use devices for sinks and toilets

8. Change your approach to energy

- Work with staff to consider where energy is currently being lost e.g. lights on in unused rooms; external doors or windows open while heating is on
- Change lighting to LEDs or use sensitive lighting in less-used areas e.g. toilets
- Change your energy supplier so that your energy is from renewables (it's not necessarily more expensive). Ethical consumer 'Best Buys' are listed as Green Energy and Ecotricity

