

Abstract

Environmental Sustainability of UK Festivals & Events is currently a hot topic, with more criticism directed at Music Festivals for their impact due to their large attendance, general age group and nature. Waste and recycling is a big problem which this research focuses on. Changes are happening from both, organisers and attendees but there still remains a lot of waste left over at the end of a Music Festival in the UK. The use of incentives to attempt behaviour change amongst attendees are used by organisers and there is a big push to implement these green activities in order to be seen as “green”, but what do attendees really want?

This research discovers the waste prevention and recycling practices being used at UK Music Festivals to date and compares these with views from attendees. It also highlights un-discussed issues that could be simple solutions to the problem of waste at UK Music Festivals such as Colour Coded Bins and their inconsistency between UK Music Festivals.

This study gains primary data by seeking attendees’ views on what aids their recycling by comparing and contrasting with the current practise used with attendees’ preferences. The study also gains primary data from internal (Organisers) and external (Local Councils, Environmental Adviser, Waste Management Companies) stakeholders involved in the process of a Music Festival regarding colour coded bins to provide a richer overall picture and discussion to build upon.

Objectives:

1. *Review* the literature of Environmental Sustainability at UK Music Festivals to date with a focus on recycling.
2. *Identify* and discuss the current recycling practices used and the inconsistency of Colour Coded recycling bins at UK Music Festivals.
3. *Discover* issues resulting from the Literature Review and *explore* these by collecting views from Music Festival attendees (survey) & other sources (additional methods).
4. *Describe, analyse, synthesise* and *cross reference* the findings from the survey, as well as the views from the representatives (additional methods), with the Literature Review and research from BNU (2008 & 2013) and O’Neill (2008).
5. Conclude and provide recommendations.

Recycling at UK Music Festival Survey [Results]

{By Scott Andrew Pringle as part of Masters Dissertation in Marketing with
International Festival Events Management

“The Environmental Sustainability of UK Music Festivals regarding Waste & Recycling - How the current solutions compare with the attendees views, while also proposing a mandatory Colour Coded Recycling Bins standard”}

The response rate to the survey was slightly over the target of 100 and concluded at 111 total responses' with 106 of them being 'completed' responses (answering all questions). The survey was live online for one week and the majority of responses came from the UK (91 responses) with the rest coming from USA (8) Australia (7), Germany (2), Hungary (1), Bulgaria (1), Sri Lanka (1). The following data used will be from the responses of the 106 completed responses.

4.3.1 Theme: (Music Festival Environment)

Q1. Does YOUR recycling behaviour change in an environment such as a Music Festival?

Variable	Responses
In a positive way? - Why?	Show 67 responses to this question »
In a negative way? - Why?	Show 66 responses to this question »

Positive Way

“Because you are surrounded by such a large amount of people, they will be influential to your behaviour, especially if they are people you do not usually associate with, one may try to fit in more by following influence. However, this can have negative effects if the influence is wrong. Basically, it depends on the organisation and marketing of the festival”;

“I feel that people are watching, I'm probably more vigilant than normal.”; “Yes, but only if there's clearly marked facilities for recycling”;

“The festival is outside and being in that environment makes you appreciate it more. With that in mind I am more likely to recycle waste at a festival.”

Negative Way

“Too excited/drunk to care.”; “Yes, it is harder to find recycling points at festivals”;

“If you're wasted and there are no bins around it's easier to throw stuff on the ground. They've got volunteers fixing this, thank god it's not me”;

“Yes, not the most important thing on my mind when having fun”;

“People throw everything on the ground so it seems acceptable that I do the same. There are not many bins/recycling facilities”;

4.3.2 Theme: (Recycling Campaigns/Information)

Q2. Do you think recycling campaigns are effective in the awareness they raise - Did/Do they work on you?

Response	Chart	Frequency	Count
Yes, I think they are effective and they did/do work on me.		68%	72
No, I think they are ineffective and they did/do not work on me.		15%	16
Yes, I think they are effective but they did not/do not work on me.		17%	18
Total responses:			106

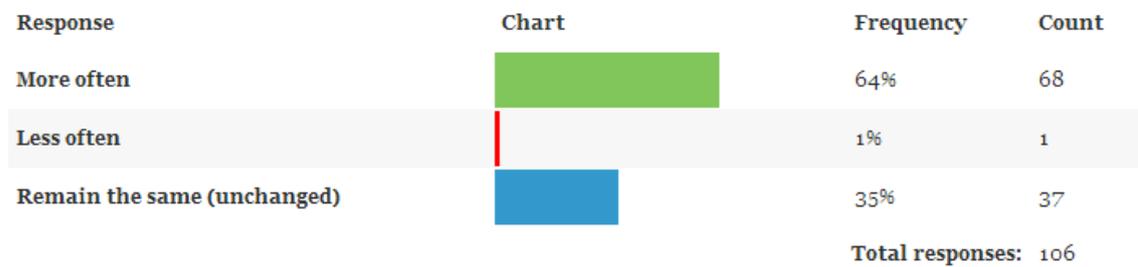
Q3. Have you noticed any recycling campaigns at UK Music Festivals over the last 10 years?

Variable	Responses
Yes - Type "Yes" (list UK Music Festival(s) if you can)	Show 54 responses to this question »
No - Type "No"	Show 52 responses to this question »

Yes:

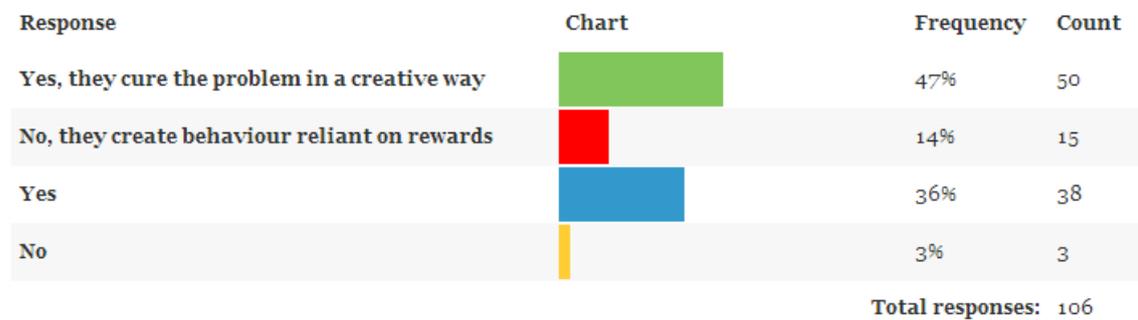
- Yes, TITP, Rockness, connect, are the ones that spring to mind.
- Yes, T in the Park, there were places to put empty plastic cups and bottles but they could have done a lot more.
- I've only been to one music festival so couldn't say much about it. Even if there were any campaigns I didn't noticed it cause recycling is a natural thing for me anyway.
- No
- I've only been at one music festival (TITP). They had Citizen T but I didnt see how it affected me.
- Yes T in the park Belladrum Rockness
- Greenpeace
- No
- No been to lots of festivals, not really noticed much info on recycling apart from the plastic cups. Perhaps ignorance / again alcohol probably affects this.
- T in the park
- Bestival: - Toilets with Sawdust. Cycling for mobile phone charge. Reading: - Collect beer cups (10p back per cup) inside the arena. In the campsite - Each full rubbish bag gets you beer tokens.
- Yes. T in the Park have a plastic cup exchange. For every TITP plastic cup you give back to the bar, we give 10pence to that person.
- No
- Yes, Green Gathering 2012, Croissant Neuf Summer Party, Download, Glastonbury, Shambala Festival, The Big Tent Festival

Q4. Does providing information on recycling make you recycle more often, less often or remain the same (unchanged)?

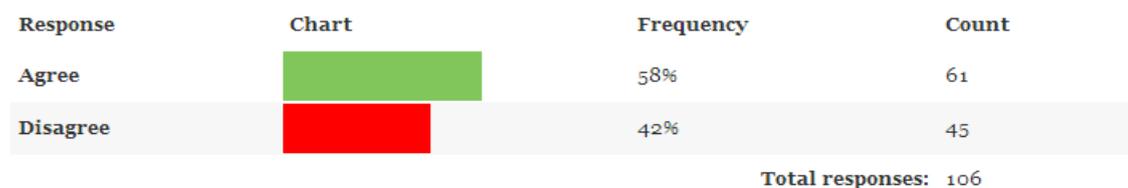


4.3.3 Theme: (Recycling Incentives)

Q5. Are recycling incentives a good idea?

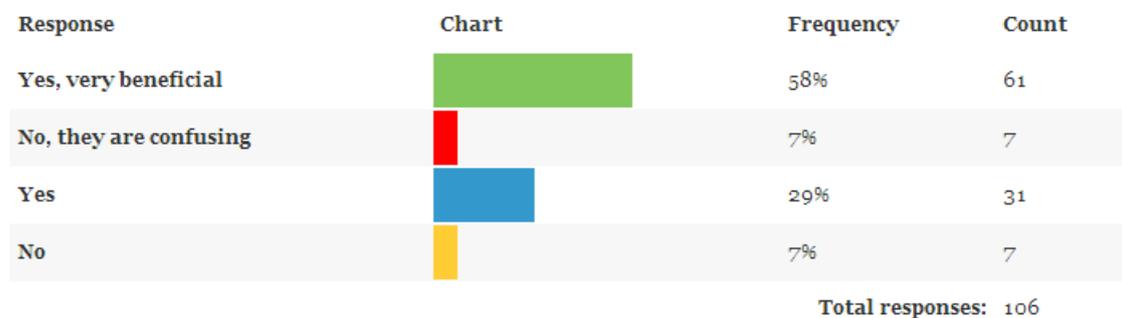


Q6. Recycling incentives are short term and once the reward has been removed the behaviour reverts back to its original state (Shrum et al, 1994, and, Kelly et al, 2006). Do you agree or disagree with this?

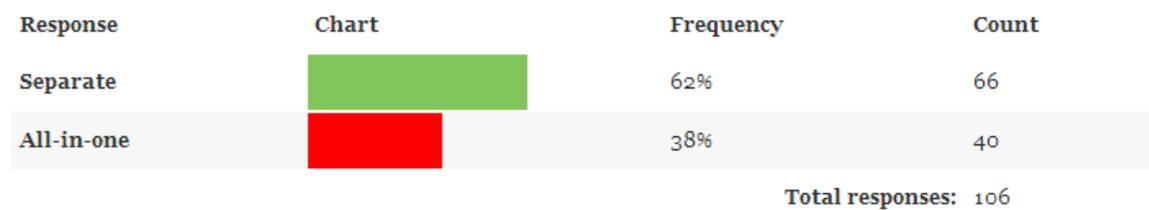


4.3.4 Theme: (Colour Coded Bins)

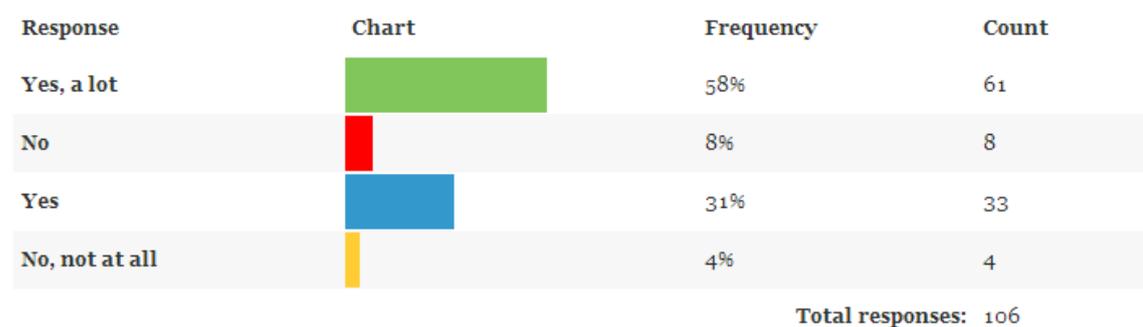
Q7. Are Colour Coded Bins at Music Festivals beneficial to your recycling?



Q8. Would you prefer separate Colour Coded Bins or All-in-One Colour Coded Bins at UK Music Festivals?



Q9. At different Music Festivals different Colour Coded schemes are used, making Colour Coded Bin schemes inconsistent. Would a consistent Colour Coding scheme in the UK Music Festival Industry benefit your recycling? (All music Festivals in the UK had the same Colour Coded recycling schemes)



4.3.5 Theme: (Responsibility)

Q10. Whose responsibility is it for recycling at Music Festivals?

Response	Chart	Frequency	Count
Organiser		88%	93
Attendees		85%	90
Local Authorities		34%	36
Waste Management Companies		41%	43
Total responses: 106			

Q11. Do you recycle at Music Festivals?

Response	Chart	Frequency	Count
Yes		29%	31
No		20%	21
Sometimes		51%	54
Total responses: 106			

4.3.6 Theme: (Solutions)

Q12. What would make you recycle more at Music Festivals?

Response	Chart	Frequency	Count
More incentives (Rewards)		49%	51
More Information - Awareness Campaigns (consequences of not recycling)		54%	56
Signing a written commitment to recycle		15%	16
Other		29%	30 Details »
Total responses: 104			

The qualitative responses included:

"More bins"; "Better Facilities"; "Separated Bins"; "More bins everywhere"; "Ease – Obvious and well located places to recycle"; "Hard hitting campaign displaying the effect of pollution (and no recycling) in a similar way to stop smoking adds"; "Provide more bins"; "More recycling facilities available"; "Better provisions (clearly marked bins, several recycling areas)"; "Convenience and number of facilities"; "Colour coded bins"; "Easily identifiable recycling points and easily understood colour coding"

Q13. Is there anything that would benefit recycling at Music Festivals?

Variable

Responses

[Show 41 responses to this question »](#)

"A Mascot"; "Having a campaign ambassador"; "Awareness!"; "Serious commitment by the sponsors of the festival";

"Broad education to the UK citizens. It is not the responsibility of the event organisers to 'train' a population, that is the government and society's role";

"Shout outs from the stage"; "Bigger Bins"; "Fines"; "Acts and celebrities mentioning the importance and endorsing the incentives";

"Make it as much fun as possible, use every possible method, including street theatre"; "Making is easy, cool and attractive";

"Colour coded bin bags given out on arrival or handed out in the camp site as people generally use and dispose of their rubbish near their tent and won't go looking for bins".

Additional Methods:

Although objective three mainly focuses on the views of festival attendees, primary research was also sought from individuals from three further sources other than Music Festival attendees in order to gain critical information from these different perspectives. These were, **Environmental Advisor Ben Twist of Creative Carbon Scotland; Festival Organiser/Sustainability Representative Laura Pando of Festival Republic; Bestival Representative; and a Waste Management representative from DCSS.** There was also primary research gained from two local councils (**Isle of Wight, and Mendip District Council**) who were asked for basic information of what colour coded bins were provided to the local area.

All the information gained from the additional methods was in aid of information regarding colour coded bins and therefore will be brought to light during the analysis of the "Colour Coded Bins" theme in the survey created and used to compare against the Literature Review and results from the survey. These sources were all contacted via email communications with the exception of information gained from Ben Twist which was gained through a face-to-face interview.

Additional Methods Results

Bestival Representative (Email)

Referring back to what was said when comparing the three mainstream Music Festivals in section 2.6 (*Images of inconsistent colour coded bins at Latitude, Glastonbury, and Bestival*). The issue is made more confusing/interesting/complex after being in contact with a representative from Bestival. It was discovered that they have changed their colour coded bins from four separate bins, as seen in figures 2 & 3 (*Images & Summary Table of inconsistent colour coded bins between Latitude, Glastonbury, and Bestival*), to three and that the colours had also changed. The colours that are now used are **Green (Recyclables)**, **Brown (Composts)** and **Red (General Waste)** changing what was shown in figure 2 & 3 (Private Email, 2013). Furthermore after reading an official policy, issued in 2013, from the Bestival website titled “*Keep Bestival Tidy*”, it states how attendees could be more green around the campsite. It notes under point 2 “*In The Music Arena*” that plastic bottles can go in one bin, cans in another and all other waste in the **black topped bin** (Sunday Best, 2013). This contradicts what information the representative from the festival issued. The representative did also mention that the colour coding bins would change again this year due to the festival changing the waste system! This adds to the issue of inconsistency, with this issue of inconsistency being at one festival!

Comparing the WRAP standard, in figure 5 (*Image of WRAPs current colour coded signage*), with Bestivals previous and current colour coded scheme, the information discovered on the website and given by the representative identified that none actually match the WRAP standard as the information discovered for the 2013 season did not specifying what materials relate to what colour (with the exception of general waste which was described as **black** and therefore does not match WRAP either).

Due to the limited academic research on colour coded bins and their origin, conducting further primary research was necessary to gain insight into the issue. Speaking with an Environmental Adviser, Festival Organiser and a Festival Waste Management Company contributed to getting closer to the root of the problem.

Environmental Adviser (EA) View: (Interview - Twist, 2013)

The EA Ben Twist noted, in his point of view, that there is a theory that the inconsistency is due to the different Waste Management companies using different colour coded schemes for their operations (i.e. They only require so much segregation) as well as distinguishing itself from its competition. Relating this twofold theory back to what was shown in the chapter discussing Festival Waste Management companies, it has been identified that there is fierce competition which could be a viable reason for different colours of bins. It can be seen from the bins at Bestival, in figure 2, that they are from Biffa (in 2009). Major Waste Management companies, like Biffa, are also contracted by local authorities to collect domestic waste (Municipal) while also having contracts with businesses in a range of different sectors. They may for example, use three colour coded bins for their waste and recyclables, passing this onto the businesses that contract their services. Biffa might not require four recyclable streams therefore why would they provide more than what meets their operational requirements? This could also be a valid reason especially as possible financial restriction might restrict current operations due to the economic climate.

The spokesman for DEFRA, who noted to the contrary against Coca-Cola's urge for mandatory and centralised colour coded standard backed up what Ben Twist said regarding that waste management companies have different operations and needs.

Festival Organiser (FO) – Sustainability Representative View: (Private Email, 2013a)

A factual answer to the inconsistency, from a FO point of view at Festival Republic, in their company, is that due to the lack of awareness of a nationwide standard for colour coded bins when segregating waste and recyclables, the organisers create their own attention grabbing signs and place them on their bins. Figure 12 is an example from one of the organisers' festivals. This approach is again adding to the inconsistency currently at Music Festivals around the UK as was seen with Bestival's contradicting communications in section 2.6 (*Images of inconsistent colour coded bins at Latitude, Glastonbury, and Bestival*).

Figure 12 Latitude Music Festivals own recycling signage



Source: Private Email (2013a)

Festival Waste Management (FWM) view: (Private Email, 2013b)

DCSS FWM mentioned that when they set up their colour coded bins at the Music Festivals, they can either use their own colour coded scheme (**Green, Yellow, and Red**) or they often adopt the local colour coded scheme implemented by the Local Authority for households. Alternatively the FO's might want to use their own scheme (as seen above). Comparing this with the previous two points of view, there is more of a consistency here. At least with this approach DCSS are open to being consistent whether that is with the local area, festival organiser or their own scheme.

Overall looking at the three points of views, there seems a sense of freedom of what to provide at Music Festivals for segregating waste and recyclables as long as there is some kind of bins. A compulsory standardised approach implemented into the whole of the UK Music Festival Industry would be a key solution to this inconsistency. It was deduced from the views of the environmental adviser, festival organiser, and waste management company that the approaches made by Waste Management Companies and Festival Organisers fall into one of the following:

- **a)** Use a promoters own colour coded signage and bins (e.g. Festival Organiser - Festival Republic),
- **b)** Adopt what the local area colour coding scheme (Local Authority Recycle Scheme – DCSS Waste Management), or
- **c)** Let Waste Management companies contracted to the festival use their own colour coded scheme (Biffa)

Going a step further by identifying what the local authorities provide households in the areas that the Music Festival is being held will help to discover if the use of local colour coded schemes are used as was noted in **b) (of a, b, c)** above. The author spoke with the two Councils, being that of the Isle of Wight Council and Mendip District Council, where Bestival and Glastonbury are held (as it was already discovered that Latitude create their own signage).

Information received from Mendip District Council & Isle of Wight Council (Private Email, 2013c)

As a result of this communication it was discovered that a **green bin (recycling)** and a **green food caddy (food waste)** is issued to households on the Isle of Wight and no bin being issued for general waste.

A **green bin (landfill waste)**, **brown bin (compost)**, **black** and **green crates** (tins, glass, plastics and paper) are issued to the households of Glastonbury.

Therefore, as can be seen from the Bestival and Glastonbury colour coded bins scheme they do not adopt the Local Authorities recycling scheme either. This issue of inconsistent colour coding recycling schemes could be fixed in the future by ZWS plans.

Summary

This section ***[full Dissertation Document – Finding section]*** has described, analysed synthesised and cross referenced the empirical research (survey and additional methods) with the Literature Review and the previous research of O'Neill (2006) and BNU (2008 & 2013) when it was necessary to do so. The most occurring issues raised in this section were the fact that there needed to be more recycling bins and better facilities available.

It was also discovered the reason why people don't recycle and how a Music Festival Environment affects this, which was due to intruding on fun, and that it is classed as socially acceptable to throw litter on the ground at these festivals. Information on recycling is present at Music Festivals and is effective amongst the majority of the sample, contributing to increasing positive recycling behaviours which was found to be different comparing previous research from BNU (2013) and O'Neill (2006). The majority said that recycling incentives cured the problem in a creative way (40% more than previous research) but contradiction

rose as the majority also agreed that they are short term and create behaviour reliant on rewards. The majority said that colour coded bins were very beneficial to their recycling while at a Music Festival and that a colour coded scheme for the whole of the UK Music Festival Industry would benefit their recycling rate a lot. The opposite direction was seen to be taken by Festival Organisers who created their own colour coded signage not attempting to have any consistency with other festivals or external environments (local authorities etc) which contributed to the overall inconsistency and that this was very inconsistent within Bestival, who were planning to change their colours in 2013 again. The Literature Review showed that convenience does improve recycling rates giving examples from Cheshire East Council with the All-in-one bins, but with this concept having pros and cons in the Grundon Waste Management example. The majority of the sample said that separate bins were preferred anyway. The majority think that the 'organisers' should be responsible for recycling with 'attendees' being a close second. The Literature Review identified the measures organisers go to in order to prevent waste (Waste Management Companies) and to encourage recycling (Incentives, Campaigns) with the results from previous research being more on the opinion that it's the organisers responsibility. The majority said that more information on, and the consequences of, recycling would make them recycle more. The Literature Review identified some of the extensive efforts from the IOWF in providing information on recycling, which was identified as one of the major contributors to effective recycling from this survey at the start of the questionnaire, and this summary. Also the majority of suggestions of solutions revolved around having more recycling bins placed around the site and better facilities, which was discovered to be a problem implementing due to health & safety and crowd regulations.

Conclusion

This research has focused on recycling at UK Music Festivals by reviewing the current literature on ES, identifying and discussing the current practices used, and the un-discussed issues such as colour coded recycling bins (Objectives 1 & 2). It has also conducted empirical research into finding real life views from the targeted sample in order to improve the current state, while also gaining views, internally and externally, to the festival environment and cross referenced these with the Literature Review and previous research findings (Objectives 3 & 4). This section relates to the conclusions of the research (Objective 5).

Colour coded bins need to be more consistent between festivals. There needs to be an effort made by organisers and/or waste management companies who make these decisions. This will result in a clearer message being communicated to the information hungry attendees. It

is also concluded that colour coded bins are important to attendees who recycle (87% saying that they were beneficial to their recycling). This goes hand-in-hand with recycling campaigns that the majority of attendees think are effective according to the survey results (85% find recycling campaigns beneficial).

Recycling incentives are too focussed on rewards and ultimately are short term. Individual incentives will not be as effective over time as they become the norm therefore having a short life span. Incentives in this authors view cover up the real reason attendees should recycle. It distracts them with rewards and perks rather than providing clear information on the issue which could result in the behaviour being genuine and longer term. The results from the survey show that 64% said information makes them recycle more often compared to a total of 83% that think recycling incentives are a good idea. This higher response rate for incentives might be because of the reward element that is connected to these incentives discussed above. Especially in an environment where the mixture of alcohol and a sense of “freedom” are consumed, the incentive of a free drink or unique reward (festival attire, merchandise) is bound to be popular.

Music Festivals are doing environmentally friendly things but they are not being fully adopted by attendees. Therefore organisers need to do more, whether that be collaborating with external organisations, limiting their capacity, or, pushing for a legislative approach which might very well jeopardise the essence of a Music Festival. It could be assumed that the behaviour of organisers is one of diverting blame. Creating and implementing recycling incentives shows a behaviour from organisers that they are attempting to cure a problem (waste), and some might say, diverting the responsibility onto the attendee (*“we’ve done our part, now you do yours”*).