Summer fair sustainability checklist

Here’s how you can raise funds at your summer fair while being more mindful of the environment. You may not be able to implement everything, but remember it’s about doing what you can within your means and this is just a list of ideas to help you get started.

Appoint a sustainability officer or eco-committee to put this into place. This could be an individual or group of parents who are passionate about the environment.

Stalls

* Make use of what’s already available: for example, run a craft stall with recycled items collected from parents and leftover art materials from the school.
* Use borrowed items: for example, three buckets and a ball are all you need for a bucket throw.
* Use supplies that last – activities such as a ‘punch-a-pot’ board or splat-the-rat pipe can be used every year.
* Avoid stalls that use items that will become landfill, such as balloon pops and crockery smashes.
* Use eco-friendly alternatives such as bioglitter, which is proven to biodegrade into harmless substances in the environment.
* Get eco-friendly prizes – avoid plastic altogether where possible, or ensure the item is good quality so that it will be reused and won't break within hours. Think seeds, wooden toys, books and art supplies.

Raffles and tombolas

* Source green raffle prizes. This could be days out at an attraction, plastic-free items or wildlife-friendly items. Make sure items are useful and long-lasting.
* Run a plastic-free tombola. If you send home plastic cups or bags to be filled, substitute them for a donated jam jar.

Refreshments

* Use local suppliers to reduce food miles: for example, using fruit grown in the UK, buying meat from your local butcher and bread from your local baker.
* Sell drinks in cans and glass bottles rather than plastic.
* Cater to all: with more and more people going vegan or generally eating less meat, make sure you offer vegan and vegetarian options as well as meat.
* Source reusable plates and cutlery. Consider investing in your own crockery and cutlery, seeking donations from local businesses or holding a crockery amnesty.
* Source biodegradable plates and cutlery. Companies such as Vegware offer completely compostable catering disposables made from renewable or recycled materials that can be recycled with food waste.
* Offer a BYO discount. Ask people to bring their own cups, offering them a discount if they do.
* Avoid plastic sweet packaging by buying in bulk and selling in paper bags, or research packaging that's recyclable and provide a point where people can dispose of the packaging.

Recycling and clean-up

* Offer recycling bins at fairs with clear signage. Work with the school to see how they're encouraging recycling and raising awareness. Make it fun and unmissable by creating bins with bright colours or funny faces.
* Make sure reusable crockery is washed and packed away.
* Ensure waste is properly disposed of during clear-up.
* Ensure reusable items such as games are packed away safely to avoid damage.