

Zero Waste Celebrations

As we enter the warmer months, we will begin to think about picnics, BBQs and other alfresco dining, especially with the Jubilee celebrations at the beginning of June. But rather than heading for the usual, could you make it a more sustainable experience? Could you make it zero waste?

There are a growing number of Eco Party Pack hires, where you can hire cups, plates and cutlery, as well as tablecloths and bunting, which can be used again and again, reducing the waste caused by disposables. Simply do an online search, many have local Facebook groups.

If you are asking everyone to bring a dish to contribute, ask them to bring it in a reusable container. You could even ask them to think about the waste they may create in making dishes and to try to minimise, by using many of the refill shops we are lucky enough to have in our district, or even contribute some home grown produce. If buying packaged, think about the recyclability of the packaging, and try to follow the waste hierarchy. Could you hold an award for the most sustainable / zero waste options? Also keep a note of what everyone is bringing to ensure you have a variety of dishes, and do not end up creating any food waste.

Don't only think about the waste that might be created, and plan to minimise it, but use it as an opportunity to use up ingredients that would otherwise be wasted:

- Use up leftovers - mix meats and veg with pasta or cous cous or into a salad.

- Make some croutons with bread passed its best

- Use up those bits at the back of the cupboard you're not so keen on, and make them for others to try

Remember to take any waste home with you, keeping any food waste, such as peels and cores, separate to add to your green bin or home compost. Empty Tupperware is great for this. Recycling can be rinsed or washed and added to your recycling bins. You may want to take excess bags with you to make sure you can keep clean recycling, recycling that needs cleaning and any waste that is created all separate. It is better to over prepare and not need it, than need it and not have it.

Share your Zero Waste successes with friends and family and inspire them to try it too.

For some further inspiration, check out <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/litter-free-picnic-inspiration-guide>.

Happy zero waste celebrating!