

The last thing many companies want to worry about when planning their marketing strategy at an exhibition is how sustainable their presence will be. But corporate social responsibility (CSR) looks like it's here to stay, particularly now that the Government is considering 'green' taxation. It's also of growing concern to consumers.

Nick Adams, managing director of live marketing agency Sense, says: "In a recent sampling exercise for a major consumer brand, where we were collecting anecdotal feedback, green concerns came through strongly, even though they weren't actually part of the official questions that were being discussed."

This is bad news for exhibitors, as exhibitions have a reputation for being wasteful. Julian Pullen, joint managing director of live marketing agency Jack Morton Worldwide, says: "The first step is to ask organisers for their environmental policy, and for that of the venue."

EC&O Venues, which runs Earl's Court, Olympia and the Brewery in London, has a social, environmental and ethical report (SEER) on its website and intranet. Director of communications Jeremy Probert says: "Our pledge is to issue the SEER every year and display clear, visible progress."

PRACTICAL STEPS

However, there is no use in companies making their exhibition presence as green as possible if their efforts are undermined by the event itself. Simon Burton, managing director of Exposure Event Creations – which organises the Exhibitor Show, aimed at helping companies exhibit more effectively – suggests exhibitors demand practical steps.

"There's recyclable carpet and