

# Permaculture Magazine Festival Guide 2010



Last year *PM* visited several events, from the headlining Glastonbury Festival to local street parties. Whilst this is not a definitive guide, the following pages will give you a flavour of the diverse range of festivals we have in the UK. We found that there is a very healthy green undercurrent that runs through nearly all of them, from the most corporate to volunteer events.

The diversity of events available range from purely musical entertainment to the mainly educational. Several incorporate permaculture display areas, and even more offer interesting workshops and great networking opportunities. One thing is certain, there is a festival for everyone and we hope our personal observations on the following pages will help you find one that's right for you.



Thanks to the Greener Festival Awards ([www.agreenerfestival.com](http://www.agreenerfestival.com)) and eFestivals who kindly helped with the compilation of this guide. If you would like to know more about any of the festivals listed, what's on in your area, or festivals worldwide see: [www.efestivals.co.uk](http://www.efestivals.co.uk)



## Glastonbury

Glastonbury is the most iconic festival in Britain. Most people think it is all about the Pyramid Stage and famous artists but there is more to it than that. There are crazy areas with bars that host cabaret artists, a big circus area, and a wonderful kids' play zone. My favourite is the Green Fields with large areas devoted to healing, meditation, peace, renewable technology, campaigns against climate change... Tucked in a corner is the Permaculture Area, a quiet oasis from the main drag, with edible gardens, a cob and roundpole building and some great organic food cooked in a variety of wood-fired devices. Talking of permaculture, the biennial **Permaculture Convergence**, a gathering of members of the Permaculture Association (Britain) is my favourite mini festival. A few hundred people get together, socialise and network, hold workshops and have a great party on the Saturday night. It is well worth the membership fee and a modest sum for the three day event.

*Maddy Harland*

23rd - 27th June – Somerset  
[www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk](http://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk)

## Sunrise

The proof was in the pudding last year that small really is beautiful at Sunrise Celebration. Set on a idyllic green hill in Somerset on an organic farm, the festival downsized from previous years and went back to its aims of being as sustainable as possible. All powered by the sun, wind and some biodiesel generators, with excellent compost toilets and a team of eco-rangers, they are doing a very good job. There is something for everyone, from live bands to DJs, practical workshops, dance workshops, talks, healing area, children's workshops, permaculture garden, sauna and even a planetarium. An excellent event to discover a range of musical talent from around the world and some new up and coming artists. Highlights from last year include the outside hot tub, a mass pillow fight, and the high level of talks from permaculture design, Transition Towns, and climate change to astrology. I'm looking forward to this year's Sunrise... see you there!

*Penny Rose*

3rd - 6th June – Somerset  
[www.sunrisecelebration.com](http://www.sunrisecelebration.com)

## Glade

Glade started as the dance stage at Glastonbury. It has all the vibrancy and friendly atmosphere of its mother festival with big stages, little stages, a healing area, outdoor dance floors, cabaret, circus, markets, cocktail bars, boutique camping, pyrotechnics and much more. 2009 saw it move to Matteredly Bowl in Hampshire which is a natural amphitheatre. Here you are surrounded by hillsides decorated with giant lasers that move to the beat of the shuddering earth. One of the highlights for me, apart from seeing the biggest names in dance music, had to be the fire show; 'mad people' swallowing swords attached to swinging balls of fire and spinning burning umbrellas. Truly spectacular. Exhausted from dancing, you can chill-out under artistic fabric structures lit like giant lava lamps. Step into the Rabbit Hole Bar and buy delicious 'drink me' cocktails from the Cheshire Cat and White Rabbit. In a nutshell, it is one big fantasy party.

*Hayley Harland*

15th - 18th July – Hampshire  
[www.gladefestival.com](http://www.gladefestival.com)





## Off Grid

Off Grid is a spin off from Sunrise Celebration and has all the same green credentials but is on a smaller scale. It is the most relaxing festival

I have ever attended, largely due to the fact that there is plenty of space. During the day you can learn to make rocket stoves, sew your own clothes or learn to juggle. There are talks on a wide range of subjects from Transition Towns to Living Without Money, and when you need a break there are plenty of places to chill-out, from the real ale bar and organic cafes to the wonderful woodfired sauna area. There are plenty of permaculture people about, plus home schoolers, massage therapists, yoga teachers, artists etc., so it's a great place to learn, experience and network. Kids are well catered for with their own area and activities. In the evenings the party really starts with live bands on the solar powered stage.

My other favourite festival is Fairport Conventions **Cropredy**, it has a really friendly atmosphere which has kept people coming back for the last 30 years.

*John Adams*

Late August – Somerset  
[www.sunrise-offgrid.co.uk](http://www.sunrise-offgrid.co.uk)

## Latitude

Nestled amongst the leafy grounds of the Henham Estate, Latitude Festival is a family friendly celebration of gentle acoustic songwriters, comedians and theatre. Easily boasting the most wildly-ranging age groups of all the key festivals, you wouldn't be hard pressed to find kids enjoying contemporary ballet while adults recapture their youth raving to Grace Jones on the main stage; likewise teenagers laugh at Bill Bailey in the comedy tent while their dads catch a premiere of a new orchestral work by the river. Latitude boasts some impressive green initiatives too: reusable beer cups and compost toilets are simply the tip of the proverbial iceberg; Green Messengers patrol the site and assist with composting and rubbish separation, waste kits are handed out to campers and Latitude offers a strict "take your tent home" policy. Take your children along for some civilized picnic fun and entertainment in a beautiful wooded setting. Simply magical.

*Katie Wood*

15th - 18th July – Suffolk  
[www.latitudefestival.co.uk](http://www.latitudefestival.co.uk)

## Shambala

A pack of human crayons arranging themselves into formation, a baby bumble bee flying past or a 'bun in the oven' walking by; these are a few of the things you may come across at Shambala.

Fancy dress is at the heart of this festival, everyone dons their most outlandish costumes and contributes to the participatory atmosphere all festival long. It is a great opportunity to dig out that flamboyant item you haven't dared to wear and strut your stuff! There are loads of small stages and plenty of nooks and crannies to explore including a tiny 'dining room' stage and 'The Cakehole', who play funky tunes into the night and host the should-be-famous sport of sock wrestling! Should you tire of all the ad-hoc spontaneity there are plenty of planned talks from the likes of SchNEWS and Bristol Permaculture, and workshops from world singing sessions to the Sunday afternoon 'cock drawing' workshop, where two bewigged and bespectacled 'grannies' encourage you to doodle danglies all over the weekend supplements –outrageous!

*Raina Jones*

26th - 29th August – Location tbc  
[www.shambalafestival.org](http://www.shambalafestival.org)

CULTURE

## Big Chill

You'd be forgiven for thinking you had stumbled onto Summerisle instead of the site of The Big Chill festival in the Malvern Hills each summer. Faintly resembling something out of The Wicker Man, Eastnor Deer Park is taken over by revellers rejoicing in music, performance, technology and specifically their relationship with nature. On the final night of the event, Big Chillers celebrate by burning a huge willow effigy, which crackles almost as much as the electric atmosphere at this unique happening. For the past 2 years, The Big Chill has played host to The Big Green Gathering, a festival dedicated to spreading the message of climate change and on a mission to inform the uninitiated. The two events sit cosily together, the technological multimedia aspect of one fully complemented by the natural hippy vibe of the other. Original, eclectic, wild and intelligent, this is one festival that requires at least one month's recovery... Book the time off work now.

*Katie Wood*

5th - 8th August – Herefordshire  
[www.bigchill.net](http://www.bigchill.net)

## Bestival

My favourite major local festival is Bestival on the Isle of Wight. Getting there is fun (by water and bus, so very green), the setting in Robin Hill Country Park is stunning, the music wide ranging and the sense of 'everyone in it together' fun and infectious. Bestival encourages everyone to dress up one day each year. So, you have had the fabulous sight of tens of thousands of people all dressed as Freaks Under The Sea, Space Creatures or Cowboys and Indians. Exotic.

**Local festivals** are a great way to see what people and groups in your area are up to. In my home city we have the Portsmouth Green Fair, Love Albert Road Day and the Portsmouth Film Festival. A green fair seemed unimaginable in a city like Portsmouth two years ago, but the amount of people attending these events makes you realise that people are very capable indeed of making their own choices and changes as to how they wish to live their lives. Check what's on in your area, you may be surprised.

*Tony Rollinson*

9th - 12th September – IoW  
[www.bestival.net](http://www.bestival.net)

## Larmer Tree

The Larmer Tree pleasure gardens are discreetly tucked away on the Dorset/Wiltshire border. This idyllic venue comes alive for a five day festival, featuring a delectable array of world music, therapies, crafts and food. With its peacocks, tree lanterns and enchanting Victorian setting, this festival is truly magical. It began as a party for 150 people, and although that number has now increased to 4,000, it retains an exclusive, intimate atmosphere. You can relax and experience the same sense of security you would enjoy at a party in your own back garden. Larmer Tree is fantastic for families (it won Best UK Family Festival 2008), with a choice of 150 different free workshops and wonderful woodland footpaths to explore. The variety of music is immense; you can be bouncing to a vivacious Cuban band one moment, and gawping at the awesome Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain the next. This is a Neon Tiger of a festival: beautiful, rare, vibrant and exotic.

*Imogen Oxley*

14th - 18th July – Wiltshire  
[www.larmertreefestival.co.uk](http://www.larmertreefestival.co.uk)



# A - Z of Selected UK Festivals 2010

- BESTIVAL** - [www.bestival.net](http://www.bestival.net) **M GFA**
- BIG CHILL** - [www.bigchill.net](http://www.bigchill.net) **M F**
- BIG SESSION** (Leicestershire) *18th - 20th June*  
Music, open mic space, ceilidh, market place, children's area and more.  
[www.bigsessionfestival.com](http://www.bigsessionfestival.com) **M W F GFA**
- BIG TENT** (Fife) *23rd - 25th July*  
Scotland's biggest eco-festival. Climate Challenge Ceilidh, Earth Action Talks, family zone... and Big Tent Brew!  
[www.bigtentfestival.co.uk](http://www.bigtentfestival.co.uk) **M W F GFA**
- BLISSFIELDS** (Hampshire) *2nd-4th July*  
An intimate festival for all the family in the heart of the Hampshire countryside; open mic, campfires.  
[www.blissfields.co.uk](http://www.blissfields.co.uk) **M W F**
- BUDDHAFIELD** (Devon) *14th-18th July*  
Music, dance, meditation, cafes, Buddhism and ritual, yoga, Tai Chi, kids area, healers, workshops. No drugs/alcohol.  
[www.buddhafield.com](http://www.buddhafield.com) **M W F**
- CROISSANT NEUF** (Monmouthshire) *13th - 15th August*  
Great music, internationally renowned street theatre, workshops, open mic sessions, sports activities, etc.  
[www.partyneuf.co.uk](http://www.partyneuf.co.uk) **M W GFA**
- CAMP BESTIVAL** (Dorset) *30th July - 1st August*  
Where Hi-de-Hi camping capers meet the spirit of early festivals, entertainment, comedy, literature & surprises.  
[www.campbestival.co.uk](http://www.campbestival.co.uk) **M F GFA**
- CROPREDY** - [www.fairportconvention.com](http://www.fairportconvention.com) **M F**
- FIREGATHERING** (Sussex) *15th - 18th May*  
A celebration of performing arts with live Music, DJs and cabaret, with workshops and healing space.  
[www.firegathering.co.uk](http://www.firegathering.co.uk) **M W GFA**
- GLADE** - [www.gladefestival.com](http://www.gladefestival.com) **M**
- GLASTONBURY** - [www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk](http://www.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk) **M P W F GFA**
- LARMER TREE** - [www.larmertreefestival.co.uk](http://www.larmertreefestival.co.uk) **M W F**
- LATITUDE** - [www.latitudefestival.co.uk](http://www.latitudefestival.co.uk) **M F**
- OFF GRID** - [www.sunrise-offgrid.co.uk](http://www.sunrise-offgrid.co.uk) **M P W F**
- OUT OF THE ORDINARY** (E.Sussex) *18th - 20th August*  
Solar powered stages, wind generators, talks, workshops, children's activities & a green market place.  
[www.outoftheordinaryfestival.com](http://www.outoftheordinaryfestival.com) **M W F**
- PERMACULTURE CONVERGENCE** *3rd - 5th September*  
[www.permaculture.org.uk](http://www.permaculture.org.uk) **M P W F**
- SHAMBALA** - [www.shambalafestival.org](http://www.shambalafestival.org) **M W F GFA**
- SIDMOUTH FOLK WEEK** (Devon) *30th July - 6th August*  
Pub sessions, storytelling, fireworks, concerts, workshops & ceilidhs. Folk day and night at multiple venues.  
[www.sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk](http://www.sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk) **M W F**
- SUMMER SUNDAY** (Leicestershire) *13th - 15th August*  
Fantastic music, eFestivals comedy tent, workshops, Kidzone, spoken word, silent disco.  
[www.summersunday.com](http://www.summersunday.com) **M W F GFA**
- SUNRISE** - [www.sunrisecelebration.com](http://www.sunrisecelebration.com) **M P W F GFA**
- THE SMALL FESTIVAL** (Dorset) *23rd - 25th July*  
Music, workshops, campfire, drama, open mic. Try out a new skill, and express hidden talents!  
[www.themallfestival.co.uk](http://www.themallfestival.co.uk) **M W F**
- THE WOOD FESTIVAL** (Oxfordshire) *21st - 23rd May*  
A celebration of music and nature. Solar powered stage, people powered fairground and discotheque!  
[www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com) **M W F**
- T-IN-THE-PARK** (Perth & Kinross) *9th - 11th July*  
A huge variety of music, a large funfair, comedy tent, silent disco, stalls, and food markets.  
[www.tinthepark.com](http://www.tinthepark.com) **M GFA**
- WAVEFORM** (tbc) *10th - 12th September*  
Eco-friendly, Psy-dance music, talks, workshops, saunas, showers, healing, therapies and organic food.  
[www.waveformfestival.com](http://www.waveformfestival.com) **M W GFA**
- WORKHOUSE** (Powys) *9th - 11th July*  
A celebration of all things alternative and creative. Family friendly, kids area, eclectic and up-beat music.  
[www.workhousefestival.co.uk](http://www.workhousefestival.co.uk) **M F GFA**

## KEY TO FESTIVAL CODES

**M** = Music, **P** = Permaculture, **W** = Workshops,  
**F** = Family, **GFA** = Greener Festival Award

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**www.sunrisecelebration.com**

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