

Event Guidance Notes



This guide gives general advice that should be used when arranging any type of event. However, it must be remembered that events can be extremely diverse, ranging from a simple car boot sale, to a large outdoor event and therefore this guidance cannot be considered exhaustive.

Additional guidance will be required for specialist events and larger scale activities. Should you consider that more information is required there are many national associations and clubs who may be able to offer advice on specific types of event. The local Environmental Health Department can also provide advice.



The HSE (Health and Safety Executive) website and publications “The Event Safety Guide”, “Managing Crowds Safely” provide further guidance. Fire Safety Risk Assessment guidance on Open Air Events and venues can be found on the Communities and Local Government website.

Risk Assessment

You will need to produce a risk assessment for the event, highlighting the potential hazards and the arrangements you will have in place to mitigate the risks identified. (See risk assessment guidance and template).

Stage 1 - Pre-planning

Detailed preplanning is essential to ensure the event is successful. The following need to be considered at this stage:

Where: Make sure the venue you have chosen, is adequate for the proposed event. Do not forget to consider the impact on the local community, how easy it will be for people to get to the venue and are car parking arrangements adequate. Consider the suitability of the venue and any existing hazards, which may be on the site such as water hazards, overhead power lines etc. Consider whether or not emergency routes will be adequate.

When: Consider the time of year, including the consequences of extreme weather conditions at an outside event. The day of the week and time will also need consideration regarding the nature of the event, noise and ease of travel etc. You will probably need to arrange lighting for an evening function. The event should not clash with any other major events in the area.

Who: Identify the aims of the event. Are particular groups or types of people to be targeted, such as young children, teenagers, the elderly or disabled? If so, specific facilities may be required to accommodate them or additional stewards to ensure adequate safety standards are maintained.

What: Decide on the type of activities to be held. Will there be any specific hazards such as animals or water sports?

Specialist Equipment: Will the activities require the use of any specialist equipment? If so, does this equipment pose any specific hazards? Will a particular activity need barriers etc?

Some equipment may require certificates of erection by a competent person. There may be specific guidance available from the Health and Safety Executive on certain activities.

The Council does not permit the use of 'bouncy castles' on its land.

Welfare Arrangements: The organiser must estimate the number of attendees to the event and consider its duration. Toilet and first aid requirements should be based on these estimations. The Environmental Health Department can provide advice on numbers, Telephone: 01768 212352. Permanent toilets should be checked for adequacy and maintained during the event. The provision of drinking water will be necessary. Depending upon the scale of the event, refreshments and other facilities may be required. Provision also needs to be made for lost children, missing persons, baby changing and lost property.

Premises Licence: A premises licence or Temporary Event Notice may be required for the event. This is required when there is regulated entertainment, sale or supply of alcohol or late night refreshment provided. Further information can be obtained from the Licensing Section at Eden District Council, 01768 212273.

Insurance: The event will require public liability insurance. All contractors and performers will also need their own public liability cover with a minimum Limit of Indemnity of £5 million. In some instances a higher level may be required. Depending upon the nature of your organisation and the proposed event other insurance may also be required. **Copies of the insurance will need to be submitted to Eden District Council prior to the event.** The insurance policy documentation should be retained for 21 years as claims may be made some time in the future.

Timescale: Set out the proposed timescale and give yourself as much time as possible to organise the event. You may need as much as nine to twelve months planning. Some specialist advice may be required, and special permissions could take time. Do not forget the summer can be a busy time with many events taking place within your area.

Application to Eden District Council: Submit the application form and relevant paperwork as detailed in the Eden District Council Protocol one month prior to the event.

Stage 2 - Organising the event

Once you have decided on the activities, you can then start to organise the event in detail. Remember to write things down as you go and to keep the event safety plan up to date.

Establish a Committee: Identify specific responsibilities for all Committee Members. One person should be identified as the Event Manager and be responsible for liaison with other organisations such as the Council, the local Police Force and other Emergency Services. One person, with suitable experience, should be given overall responsibility for health and safety and another person co-ordination and supervision of Stewards.

Numbers Attending: The maximum number of people the event can safely hold must be established. This may be reduced dependent upon the activities being planned. The numbers of people attending the event may have to be counted to prevent overcrowding. Remember that one particular attraction may draw large numbers of visitors.

Provision for the Disabled: Specific arrangements should be made to ensure disabled visitors have adequate facilities, parking and specific viewing areas and can safely enjoy the event. NB This should consider more than just wheelchair users ie Deaf, Blind etc.

Security: Depending upon the nature of the event, specific security arrangements may be necessary, including arrangements for securing property overnight. Cash collection should be planned to ensure this is kept to a minimum at collection points and that regular collections are made to a secure area. Following your risk assessment, stewards or helpers collecting cash may require money belts or other carrying facilities. Counting and banking arrangements should be given careful consideration.

On-site Traffic: Contractors and/or performers vehicles and other traffic should be carefully managed to ensure segregation from pedestrians. It may be necessary to only permit vehicular access at specific times and not during the event itself. Separate entrances should be provided for vehicles and pedestrians with specific arrangements for emergency vehicle access. Car parking facilities will be required at most events and these will have to be stewarded. Consider where such facilities should be situated.

Off-site Traffic: Unplanned and uncontrolled access and egress to a site can result in a serious accident. Traffic control both inside and outside the site should be discussed with the Police. Adequate signs and directions should be provided in prominent positions on the approaches to the entrances. If road closures, signs on the highway, traffic diversions

and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulation order and/or approval from the Highway Authority.

Transportation: The local rail and bus companies should be advised of larger events to establish if existing services will be adequate. You will also need to liaise with them if road closures or diversions are intended.

Contractors: All contractors should be vetted to ensure they are competent to undertake the tasks required of them. Wherever possible personal references should be obtained and followed up. Ask contractors for a copy of their safety policy and risk assessments, and satisfy yourself that they will perform the task safely. Always ask to see their public liability insurance certificate, which should provide a limit of indemnity of at least £5 million. Provide contractors with a copy of the event plan and arrange liaison meetings to ensure they will work within your specified parameters.

Performers: All performers should have their own insurance and risk assessments and the same considerations will apply as for contractors. Where amateur performers are being used, discuss your detailed requirements with them and ensure they will comply with your health and safety rules and event plan.

Liaison: Contact the local Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance and First Aid providers. Tell them about the event and ask them for advice. Decide what additional information is required regarding specific activities and make contact with the Council and/or the relevant organisations. Other emergency services may need to be contacted such as HM Coastguard or National Park Wardens for waterborne events. It is important to consult with neighbouring businesses, Parish Councils and landowners who may be affected by your activity. A management plan between all partners will be required to control activities and ensure safety.

Site Plan: Draw out a site plan identifying the position of all the intended attractions and facilities. Plan out and designate the entrance and exit points, circulation routes, vehicle access and emergency evacuation paths.

Emergency Plan: A formal plan should be established to deal with any emergency situations, which may arise during the event. The complexity of this will depend upon the size and nature of the event itself. A simple easy to follow plan will be acceptable for a small event. For a major event you may have to liaise with the emergency services, local hospitals and the Council's emergency planning officer and create a planning team to consider all potential major incidents and how you would deal with them. Organisers of larger events may wish to contact the Council for further information.

Temporary Structures: Many events will require temporary structures such as staging, tents, marquees, stalls etc. Decide where this equipment is to be obtained, who will erect it and what safety checks will be required. The location of any such structures should be identified on the site plan. Consider whether barriers will be required to protect the public against specific hazards such as moving machinery, barbecues, vehicles and any other dangerous displays etc. In some cases, barriers will need to have specified safety loadings dependent upon the number of people likely to attend. Temporary structures should only be obtained from experienced suppliers.

In relation to the testing and certification of structural elements such as stages, barriers and dynamic loading of stands, a 'competent' person shall be one of the following, with the appropriate skills and experience:

- A Chartered Structural Engineer
- A Chartered Surveyor (Building Surveying Division)
- A Chartered Civil Engineer
- Or another similarly qualified person

Catering: Ensure any caterers have been registered by their Local Authority and that they will be sensibly positioned such as away from children's activity areas or near to water supplies etc. Adequate space should be left between catering facilities to prevent any risk of fire spread. Ask to see caterers' food hygiene certification. **Details of all caterers will be required by Eden District Council.**

Water: Check whether the water is from a mains supply or private water distribution as testing may be required. For further information contact the Environmental Protection team at Eden District Council.

Stewards: Stewards at events must be fully briefed on all aspects of the event including crowd control and emergency arrangements. Written instructions, site plans and checklists should be provided to them. It is important that stewards can be easily identified by the public and that they can effectively communicate with each other, their supervisor, the person responsible for health and safety, and the event manager. All stewards should be properly trained and competent as they will need to be constantly on the lookout for hazards, which could develop during the event. They may also be required to guide vehicles, clear emergency exits, and sort out any behavioural problems. Specific training should be provided for basic first aid assistance and fire fighting. Stewards may require personal protective clothing such as hats, boots, gloves or coats. For evening events, they may need to be issued with torches. At all day events, duty rotas will be required.

Crowd Control: The type of event and the numbers attending will determine the measures needed. Consideration will need to be given to the number and positioning of barriers, and the provision of a public address system.

Facilities and Utilities: Where electricity, gas or water is to be used, detailed arrangements must be made to ensure the facilities are safe. All portable electrical appliances including extension leads etc should be tested for electrical safety and a record kept. Any hired equipment should come with a certificate of electrical safety. Where events are taking place outside, residual current circuit breakers should be used and if possible the power supply stepped down to 110 volts. All cables will have to be safely channelled to eliminate any electrical and tripping hazards. Potential hazards due to extreme weather should not be overlooked at outside events.

Portable gas supplies for cooking should be kept to a minimum in designated areas away from the general public. The same should apply to any fuel supplies items such as portable generators etc. Generators should be suitably fenced or barriers placed to prevent public access from public areas and earthed. All these arrangements should be clearly shown on the site plan.

In relation to the testing and certification of electrical systems and installations, a 'competent' person shall be one of the following, with the appropriate skills and experience:

- a Chartered Electrical Engineer;
- a Member of the Electrical Contractors' Association;
- a Member of the Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland; or
- an approved Contractor of the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting.

Noise: If the event is likely to cause noise particularly to the local community you should consider documenting a Noise Management Plan for the event. For further information contact the Environmental Protection team at Eden District Council.

Contingency Plans: Plan for the 'what if' scenarios for example, what if there are extreme weather conditions. Will the event be cancelled? Could specialist matting be hired in at short notice? Could the event be moved to an alternative inside venue? This will involve a lot of planning and may be too complex for anything other than the smallest of events. There could also be other scenarios, which should be planned for, such as dealing with a disappointed crowd if the main attraction has not turned up.

Clearing Up: Arrangements must be made for the disposal of waste and rubbish both during and after the event. Individuals should be designated specific responsibilities for emptying rubbish bins and clearing the site. Consideration should be given to recycling particularly at large scale events. At some events there could be discarded hypodermic needles which need to be disposed of safely. This will require specialist training and equipment.

Reinstatement of Land: Arrangements are needed to repair/reinstate any damage to flora and fauna or damage to property, fixtures and fittings.

Waste Water: Have arrangements been put in place to deal with waste water from the event ie from catering traders, showers etc. For further advice contact the Environment Agency on 0870 8506506.

Risk Assessment: Taking all the above into consideration, you should establish which specific hazards require individual risk assessment. Initial assessments should be undertaken and any remedial action specified in the updated event plan. Risk Assessments should be site specific and workable documents identifying all hazards and should assess the level of risk involved and provide control measures to reduce the level of risk. A timescale should be specified where necessary.

Stage 3 - Final preparations

Just prior to the event a detailed safety check will have to be carried out. This should include the following:

Routes: Ensure clear access and exit routes and adequate circulation within the site. Pay particular attention to ensuring emergency routes are clear and well-marked.

Inspections: A checklist is provided as an example. A walk through inspection of the site should be carried out immediately prior to, during and after the event to identify any potential hazards and to check out communications are working. You may want to carry out more than one inspection during the event. All defects should be noted and also the remedial action taken. These checklists should be retained for future reference.

Siting: Make sure that all facilities and attractions are correctly sited as per your site plan. Be certain that the first aid facilities, fire extinguishers and any cash collection boxes are in place. Check waste bins are in their correct locations.

Signage: Ensure adequate signage is displayed where necessary. This should include emergency exits, first aid points, information and lost children points and other welfare facilities such as toilets and drinking water.

Vehicles: Check that all contractors, performers and exhibitors vehicles have been removed from the site or parked in the designated area before the public are permitted to enter.

Structures: Ensure all staging, seating, marquees and lighting structures have been erected safely and that certification has been obtained from the relevant contractors as a record of this.

Barriers: Check that all barriers and other protection against hazards are securely in place and there is no risk of falling from staging or other facilities.

Stewards: Make sure that all staff have arrived and are in their correct location. Ensure all stewards are wearing the correct clothing for easy identification.

Lighting: Check all lighting is working, including any emergency lighting.

Public Information: Make sure the public address system is working and can be heard in all areas.

Briefing: Check that all stewards and staff have been fully briefed and understand their responsibilities.

Stage 4 - After the Event

After the event the following should be considered:

Site condition: After the event, another inspection should be carried out to make sure nothing has been left on the site which could be hazardous to future users. This inspection should also identify any damage which may have been caused during the event. If any structures are left overnight, it must be ensured they are left in a safe condition and are safe from vandalism etc. If numerous structures are left, specific security arrangements may be required.

Accidents and Incidents: If an accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report made by the organisers. An accident form should be completed and a copy sent to the Council. A sample accident reporting form will be forwarded with your approval. You will also need to advise your own insurance company. If any accident or dangerous occurrence is reported, action must be taken to prevent any further incidents taking place. There is a legal duty to report certain accidents to the Incident Contact Centre, Telephone: 0845 300 9923 as detailed in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

Debriefing: Where possible after the event, meetings will be held with the organisers to see if any lessons can be learnt for any future events. These meetings are valuable in learning for future events.