

# Planning Suggestions for All Event Organisers

## Stage 1 - Pre-planning

Detailed pre-planning 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 any impact on the local community. How easy it will be for people to get to the venue and any car parking requirements. Consider the suitability of the venue, ground conditions 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 (this can be checked by contacting the Council, looking in local newspapers, etc.)
- **Who?** Identify the aims of the event. Are particular groups or types of people to be targeted, such as young children, teenagers, elderly or disabled people, etc? 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? If possible also try to establish the size of the proposed event and whether or not an entrance fee will be charged.
- **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/roping off? Some equipment including staging may require certificates of erection by a competent person.
- **Code of practice.** For larger events, there will be a need to comply with guidance particularly the Code of Practice for Outdoor Events published by the National Outdoor Events Association Tel: 0208 6998121, which gives advice on structures,

marquees, tents and electrical matters. The Health and Safety Executive will have information on their website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

- **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. Advice is given in the Code of Practice for Outdoor Events referred to above.

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 may need to be made for lost children, baby changing and lost property.

- **Special permission and licences.** A licence may be needed if the event consists of music, dancing, singing or similar, or if it includes a display or exhibition of some sports. The procedure for licensing varies between each council. Therefore the local licensing officer should be contacted. A fee may be charged for a licence. Please contact telephone number 533533. You must build in timescales for the application and processing of the licence.
- **Insurance.** All events will require Public Liability Insurance. All contractors and performers will also need their own public liability cover with a £5 million Limit of Indemnity. Depending upon the nature of your organisation, legislation and the risks involved in the proposed event other insurances may also be required, e.g. Products Liability. Quotations should be obtained from your insurance provider.
- **Timescale.** Set out the proposed timescale and give yourself as much time as possible to organise the event. You may need as much as 9 to 12 months planning for large events. Some specialist advice may be required and special permission could be needed. Do not forget the summer can be a busy time with other events taking place within your area so dates and locations need to be confirmed in advance.
- **Event plans.** This should include all your health and safety arrangements. Keep records of the proposals as a formal plan for the event. This will help you when carrying out your risk assessments.

## Stage 2 - Organising the event

Once you have decided on the fundamental objectives behind 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 plan up to date.

- **You may wish to 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 if required. One person, with suitable experience and training, should be given overall responsibility for health and safety and another person co-ordination and supervision of stewards.
- **Liaison.** Contact the local police, fire brigade, ambulance and first aid providers if necessary. 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.
- **Site and route plans.** A site plan can be extremely important particularly for the larger events. Draw out a site plan identifying the position of all the intended attractions and facilities. Plan out and designate the entrance and exit points, roped off areas and distance, circulation routes including via any public roads, 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. You may have to liaise with the emergency services 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, what safety checks will be required and any regulations you have to adhere to. 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, roads, vehicles and any other dangerous displays. In some cases, barriers, raised areas and staging will need to have specified safety loadings dependant upon the number of people likely to attend. Temporary structures should only be obtained from experienced suppliers.
- **Catering.** Ensure the providers or caterers of food and/or drinks have been licensed or registered, if required, by their local authority and that they will be sensibly positioned such as away from children's activity areas and near to water supplies etc. Adequate space and a barrier should be left between catering facilities to prevent any risk of harm to the general public and also the risk of fire spreading. Ask to see caterers' food hygiene certification. You must produce this to the Council. You may wish to use only caterers who are members of a recognised mobile outside caterers association. Remember to ensure the food and the price charged is suitable for your event.

- **Stewards.** Stewards at larger 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 to the public and are wearing appropriate clothing. They must be able to effectively communicate with each other, their supervisor, the person responsible for health and safety and the event manager.
- **Training of Stewards.** 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.
- **Numbers attending.** The maximum number of people the event can safely hold must be established. This may be reduced dependant 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. You may have to consider a pre-paid ticket system.
- **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.
- **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 and you may need to take advice from the Council.

- **Off-site traffic.** Unplanned and uncontrolled access 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 insurances 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.
- **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. Designated areas must be given to any portable equipment and again assessed for the risk to the general public.
- **Electrical Equipment.** Where events are taking place outside, residual current circuit breakers should be used and if possible the power supply stepped down to 110volts. 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 have suitable fencing or barriers to prevent public access from public areas. All these arrangements should be clearly shown on the site plan.
- **Contingency plans.** Consider the implications on the event of extreme weather conditions. Will the event be cancelled? Could specialist matting be hired in at short notice? Or 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 may be required for waste disposal and rubbish clearance both during and after the event. Individuals should be designated specific responsibilities for emptying rubbish bins and clearing the site. At some events there could be discarded hypodermic needles, which need to be disposed of safely. This will require specialist training and equipment.

### **Risk assessments.**

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. 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 emergency routes.
- **Inspections.** A walk through inspection with a checklist 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 as soon as possible. These checklists should be retained for future reference.
- **Position of Attractions and Facilities.** 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 and arrange for any extra bins required. Quotations for extra waste bins can be provided by the Council.
- **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 vehicles used in setting up the event have been removed from the site or parked in a 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. PA systems must be erected taking into consideration local residents and also the noise levels used
- **Briefing.** Check that all staff involved have been fully briefed and understand their responsibilities.

## Stage 4 – During the event

- **Monitor Numbers.** Number of people attending your event must be monitored during the event to ensure there is no overcrowding. The numbers of people attending may have to be counted. Remember that one particular attraction may draw a large number of visitors.
- **Monitor potential hazards.** Ensure you monitor the site to highlight any potential hazards and be proactive during the event. Be mindful of the previous sections in this document.
- **Monitor Attractions.** Ensure that you regularly check on all your attractions to ensure they continue to be safe for the general public and follow all Health and Safety guidelines and that the risk assessments that you put in place are followed.
- **Accidents.** If an accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report made by the organisers including dates and times. An accident form should be completed and a copy sent to the landowner. 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.
- **Awareness.** In addition, at all times during your event please be aware of the points made and subjects covered above in Stage 1-3.



## Stage 5 - After the event

- **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 the future users including the general public. 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 and times of removal given to the Council.
- **Clearing up.** Ensure the plan you have made for waste disposal and rubbish clearance is in place and that individuals know their own responsibilities.
- **Keys.** Return any keys you may have for the site to the Council and your deposit will be refunded.
- **Claims.** Should any person declare an intention to make a claim following an alleged incident associated with the event, you should contact your insurers immediately. They may also require a completed accident form.