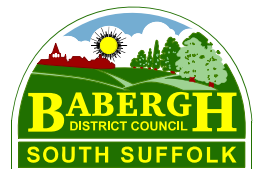
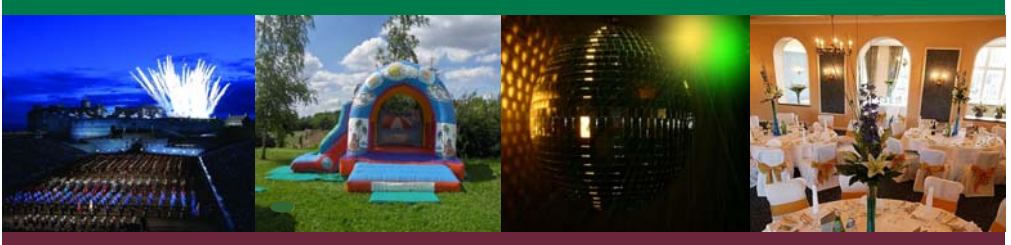


# A Guide to Organising Safe Events



# Organising safe events

## Introduction

As there are so many different types of event, the advice given is general.

Events covered include large outdoor fêtes, fairs, country and craft shows, car boot fairs, etc, which are often held at schools or on public or private parkland, in an open field or hardstanding with little or no facilities.

The responsibilities of the organisers, to ensure safety are just as relevant to smaller indoor events such as jumble sales, presentations or exhibitions, etc, held in church, school or village halls.

Typically, these events are put on by organisations such as school parent/teacher associations, church, community and voluntary groups and charitable societies, etc, for fund-raising.

Please remember that this is only a guide, and if you need further advice you will find a list of useful contact numbers at the end of this leaflet.

There is also a list of other publications giving advice and information. Please note that all events, even those in aid of charity, must comply with recognised safety standards.

## Responsibility

You and your fellow organisers will be responsible under the law for the safety of everyone at the event, including the public, your members and/or any employees.

(The most relevant safety law is likely to be the Health and Safety At Work etc. Act 1974 and its accompanying Regulations).

To meet the legal requirements you must carry out a 'risk assessment' to:-

- Identify all possible hazards (anything that could cause harm to anyone) and decide who might be harmed and how
- Check the risks (the likelihood and effects of a hazard happening) and decide on the action you will take to minimise the risks;
- Work out how you will put your planned action into practice and keep a written record of your plans (a safety manual).

# Organising safe events

## Planning the Event

### First Steps

Decide on the venue, the size and contents of the event and the dates and times it will be open; whether admission will be free, by pre-sold tickets or by payment at the gate; and estimate the approximate number and age ranges of the people expected to attend.

### Assessing the Risks

Make a short written assessment of each of the attractions and/or activities that make up the event. Identify all the possible hazards that could occur. Remember any materials, structures or machinery on or around the site that might add risk to the event, such as ladders, water features, gas or other fuel containers, etc

*The following is a list of attractions/activities which should have a written assessment::*

- Bouncy castles and children's amusement rides;
- Karting and fairground equipment;
- Bungee jumping, hot-air ballooning and helicopter rides;
- Stands or stalls (especially those involving weapons, guns, darts, etc);
- Displays and parades involving animals, vehicles, weapons, flames, special effects, parachuting.

Each attraction/activity will have its own special hazards which should be identified so that comprehensive safety precautions can be prepared.

Entertainment such as concerts/performances/dancing/laser and/or fireworks displays will present hazards that require specialised guidance.

*Further advice can be obtained from the appropriate local authority department .*

When you have listed the possible hazards of each activity, decide how you will reduce the risks in each case and the precautions you intend to take. Ask anyone supplying and/or operating attractions/activities and/or equipment to provide you with their own written assessments and include these with your assessments.

# Organising safe events

## Organisation

When listing possible hazards consider:

- Older people;
- People with disabilities;
- Children (who may be unsupervised);
- Excitement generated by the activity;
- Approximate number of people expected

The completed assessments will form the safety manual for the event. This is evidence that you and your fellow organisers have taken all reasonable precautions for a safe event. ► Start organising several months before the event. This will give you time to carry out your risk assessments and obtain specialist advice where necessary.

It will also allow time for the statutory authorities (i.e., police, fire and ambulance services and local authority) and the voluntary organisations (i.e., first aid societies, etc.) to make their arrangements, especially if they need to attend the event. This is important during the summer months when there may be several events taking place on the same day.

### Organising Committee

Form a Committee, no matter how informal, with responsibility for the smooth and safe operation of the event.

### Event Manager

One person should be in overall charge of the event.

### Safety Officer

A suitably competent person should be appointed to act as the Safety Officer for the event with overall responsibility for safety matters (though overall responsibility for the event remains with the organising committee).

This person should be suitably trained and/or have experience or knowledge of safety matters appropriate for the event having regard to the size and nature of the event and the possible level of risks.

Personal experience and knowledge may be adequate for a small indoor event. For large and/or complex events you may need professional help and advice. Some assistance may be available from the local authority (see P16).

## How to Contact

During the event the Safety Officer or a nominated deputy should:-

- Be on site, easily identifiable as the Safety Officer and in a known location (i.e., the Control Room);

# Organising safe events

- Not be engaged in any other duties or activities which would prevent this responsibility being carried out;
- Have the means to communicate with the people responsible for activating any part of the contingency arrangements;
- Have the authority, if necessary, to close the event or part of it at any time, and
- Arrange for a check of the safety arrangements to be made before the event is opened and for monitoring the continuing safety of the site throughout the event, including structures, barriers, electrical supplies and installations or other equipment provided. A specimen checklist can be found in Appendix '1' ;
- Everyone having a specific responsibility before, during and after the event should be named, have their responsibilities clearly identified and be appropriately trained;
- Everyone assisting during the course of the event should be properly instructed in their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency;
- The above should be confirmed in writing and minutes of all meetings should be recorded.

You should contact the following people at an early stage of the planning your event, and, if necessary keep in touch with them as your plans proceed. Their experience and advice/help may be invaluable:

## Police

Contact the Police Station local to the site, and confirm the details of the event in writing, including layout, with entrances/exits, and the number of people expected. They will give advice and may assist with crowd control; public order; emergency access; and local traffic management and parking. (The responsible local authority department (see P16) may also provide advice and assistance with local traffic management for the event)

## Fire Brigade

Contact the Fire Safety Office local to the site. They will give advice on fire safety matters, including how the emergency services will be called; marshalling of spectators and traffic in emergency conditions; local access for emergency vehicles and provision of on-site fire-precautionary and fire-fighting arrangements.

## First Aid

Contact St John Ambulance, British Red Cross or other voluntary First Aid society to arrange attendance and provide first aid cover. You may have to pay for this service.

The statutory Ambulance Service for the area should be informed of large events. They will be responsible for establishing a triage (casualty assessment) centre in the event of a major incident and deciding the hospital to which any casualties will be taken.

# Organising safe events

## Local Authority

Contact the Council Departments listed on the last page for advice about:-

- Your duties under health and safety legislation, including carrying out risk assessments and emergency planning;
- Food hygiene, if food is going to be sold or prepared;
- Trade descriptions/trade marks/counterfeiting/food quality/product safety, where goods are going to be sold ;
- Temporary event notices or licences;
- Assistance from Local Authority CCTV (where installed) for event security and monitoring;
- Assistance with local traffic management arrangements for the event.

## Public Liability Insurance

The organisers could be held legally liable for the costs or damages for any injuries, etc, which may occur during the event.

You can insure this risk via a public liability insurance policy. It is recommended that this insurance be arranged with a minimum limit of indemnity of £5 million. In many instances a greater level of cover may be needed. If you do not have this cover any claim could be made against all the organisers and their private finances.

Council establishments can contact the Council's Insurance Section to check that they are adequately insured. PTA's and other voluntary groups will require their own separate insurance cover.

## Contractors Insurance

Where organisers are using specialist contractors, they should check that the contractor has their own public liability insurance and that the contractor complies with any policy terms and conditions.

## Insurance Claims

In the event of any injury or damage to property, full details of the incident must be written down, and the matter must be reported to your insurers without delay.

Never admit liability as it may invalidate your cover.

In addition to carrying out risk assessments on the attractions and activities to be provided at the event, you must also consider what could go wrong on the day and draw up a *Contingency Plan* to deal with each emergency or contingency.

# Organising safe events

## Organisation

This written plan should include details of what you intend to do in the event of an emergency such as a fire, accident, crowd disturbance, bomb scare, adverse and inclement weather, the need to evacuate the site, etc.

*The Plan should include:*

- The action to be taken in the case of any of these emergencies occurring;
- Who will take that action;
- How you will let the right people know about the emergency. (This may include the use of coded messages), and
- A clear statement of the stage during an incident when control is transferred from the Safety Officer to the emergency services.

It is important that your Contingency Plan is discussed and agreed with the emergency services, and that they are given a copy of the finalised document.

The following examples identify some of the hazards likely to require consideration in the choice and preparation of the site and the activities to take place and gives guidance on how to eliminate them:

## The Site

The site should be big enough for all the activities planned.

For all events there must be plenty of space for the public to move around stalls; rides performance/stage, arena/exhibition areas, etc, and to have unobstructed routes to exits. This is especially important at indoor events to prevent stalls/goods obstructing exit routes and doors

*You should:*

Prepare a sketch plan of the site, preferably to scale, showing the position of all the activities/attractions, circulation routes and exits. This drawing should be updated if your plans change and copies of the final version be available at the event;

Have enough exits for a mass orderly evacuation of the site;

Have entrances and exits identified for emergency vehicles. These should be agreed with the emergency services bearing in mind the size and weight of their appliances.

## Conditions of an outdoor site

*Check that:*

The site will be suitable in all weathers and that any staging/structures will be safe in bad weather conditions;

# Organising safe events

- Wet weather will not cause any other additional hazards;
- There are no obvious hazards on both the site and surrounding areas, such as overhead power lines; stored chemicals or machinery; unfenced holes; steep drops between different ground levels; ponds/water and unsafe or other structures that the public should be kept away from by means of barriers/fencing;
- There will be suitable lighting throughout the site, including emergency lighting, if the event will go on after dark.

## Preparing the site

Make sure that construction work and vehicle movements that may take place during site preparation are supervised and/or protected by suitable barriers.

## Public Entry & Exit (including Vehicles & Car Parking)

- Arrange separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances/exits to the site and arrange entrance queues that do not obstruct vehicle access or nearby road junctions;
- When there is a limit on the number of people that can be accommodated at the event, make sure the entrance is well stewarded and that an accurate form of head counting is operated to prevent overcrowding on site and at exits;
- This is important at indoor venues where the maximum number of people will be set either by the area of floor space available or the size and number of fire exits to enable evacuation in 2½ minutes. (A normal pair of exit doors 1.2m wide will allow 300 people to pass through in 2½ minutes);
- Outdoors, provide at least two pedestrian exits from the site. The number and size of the exits should be large enough to permit an orderly evacuation from the site in under 8 minutes. Exits should be not less than 1.2m in clear width [which will allow up to 1000 people to pass through in 8 minutes], spaced well apart around the site, clearly marked, kept free from obstructions and well lit where the event is likely to last beyond dusk;
- Site any car parking well away from the pedestrian areas of the site. Clearly signpost the parking area and do not allow cars to be parked anywhere else;
- Design and steward car parking areas to eliminate hazards to pedestrians such as reversing vehicles;
- Except for emergency purposes, vehicle movements in the public areas of the site during the event or as the public are leaving should not be permitted.

## Emergency Access

Keep the emergency service entrances, exits and routes within the site clear of obstruction at all times.

# Organising safe events

## Safety Barriers

Decide if you need to provide barriers around attractions, displays and equipment to protect the public and/or to prevent unauthorised interference, taking account of the presence of excited people, especially children.

*Examples where barriers may be required include barbecues/spit roasting; moving machinery, including displays/demonstrations involving steam engines, welding, woodturning, etc; electrical equipment/ switchgear.*

Any barrier/fencing used must be capable of withstanding any reasonably foreseeable loading. The design must be suitable to contain and protect people, including small children. Single rope barriers may not be sufficient.

## Staging or Structures

- If seating staging, lighting/sound towers, etc, are to be erected this must be done by a competent person. Written certification should be obtained from them to the say that the structures are safe.
- The Fire Safety Officer will advise you on the safety aspects of marquees and tents, including their siting, construction, and the provision of exits, normal and emergency lighting, etc.
- Arrangements should be made to stop unauthorised persons gaining access to interfering with equipment, etc, when the event is open to the public.
- All staging and/or structures should be positioned so as not to obstruct any entrances or exits from the site.
- The open edges at the side and rear of any performance platform to prevent people falling off. Secure, safe flights of steps should be provided to access the platform.
- All staging and structures should be free from trip hazards and other physical hazards(i.e., sharp edges/points/ protruding support members).

## Electrical supplies, installations & equipment

The whole installation, including wiring, switchgear and any generator, should be installed in a safe manner by a suitably competent electrician who should provide a written certificate to prove this.

*The safety standard of the installation should be at least that of the current I.E.E Wiring Regulations.*

*A safe temporary electrical supply should at least include:*

The supply being protected by suitable earth leakage device(s), R.C.D, having a maximum tripping current rating of 30 mA;

The use of cables of the correct rating for the possible load with no damage to the insulation and using the correct type of connectors for external use;

# Organising safe events

All supply cables being positioned so they are NOT liable to physical damage, eg, not through door openings, across the surface of walkways/roadways;

All cables, including to sound equipment, being positioned so as not to cause trip other hazards;

Any generator and/or electrical equipment, including switchgear, being satisfactorily barriered to prevent unauthorised access and/or interference;

Any generator being supplied to have a certificate to show it is electrically safe;

All electrical equipment used at the event must be in a safe condition and suitable for that type of use, i.e., in the open air where it may get wet.

**Fire Fighting-** The duty to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment is now on the organiser

Provide equipment for putting out small fires (eg, fire extinguishers, fire blankets) throughout the site;

Make sure that stewards know where the equipment is and how to use it. They should be told not to attempt to fight major fires;

The Fire Brigade should be called at once to any fire, suspected or real, however slight.

## First Aid

The first aid provision needs to be suitable for the number of people expected to attend and for the type of event.

Make sure that the basic services for first aid are always available. At smaller events, i.e., indoor markets/jumble sales, etc, a qualified first aider should be present and an area suitable for first aid treatment, including a supply of water, be available.

A voluntary first aid society can be asked to provide a First Aid Post, staffed by qualified first-aiders.

The following gives a guide to the minimum provisions :

No. of People Attending	No. of First Aiders	No. of First Aid Posts	No. of Ambulances
500	2	1	-
3,000	6	1	1
5,000	8	1	1
10,000	13	2	2

# Organising safe events

Pop Concerts & Similar Events' [see Recommended Reading on **the penultimate page**>

The first aid post should be clearly signposted and provided with easy access for spectators and an ambulance at all times. Where an ambulance is required, a parking area should be provided close to the first aid post with a clear exit from the site.

Make sure that all persons assisting at the display know where the first aid post is, and, where appropriate, the identity of the first-aider.

Locate the nearest telephone box, provide access to a telephone or provide mobile phones.

## Stewardship

- ▶ Provide an appropriate number of stewards for the security and control of the site and the attending public.
- ▶ The number of stewards needed may be calculated by considering each of the separate tasks to be covered (i.e., staffing entrances and exits; controlling access to attractions/activities; general crowd control; patrolling public areas; securing unauthorised areas; general crowd control; securing hazards; car parking duties; etc).
- ▶ If the event is to last several hours, extra stewards should be available to allow others to take meal breaks, etc.
- ▶ The duties of the stewards are covered in detail later.

## Control Room

Consider setting up a Control Room on the site to:

- ▶ Monitor the event, giving an early indication of any problems;
- ▶ Control any incidents;
- ▶ Direct resources to deal with any problems, and
- ▶ Act as a base for any communications systems.

The control room should be constantly staffed during the event and provided with a telephone.

## Communications

- ▶ Consider providing personal radio contact between the safety officer and senior stewards and any other people responsible for activating the contingency arrangements.

# Organising safe events

## Public Address

Consider providing a public address system for announcements and instructions to staff and the public.

For smaller events a portable loud-hailer may be sufficient. Larger events may require a system with an emergency power backup.

## Welfare Facilities

### Staff Safety

Cash handling - Think about the routines and security arrangements for staff who are handling cash, many of whom may be unfamiliar with this role.

Late finish - If the event is to finish late, make sure that all staff can get home safely and that they do not have to wait alone at bus stops, stations and/or travel alone. Consider arranging taxis for staff where public transport will be a problem.

### People with Disabilities

Provide facilities wherever possible to enable people with disabilities to gain access, see and take part in the attractions and activities.

Make sure that the ground conditions in public areas and access pathways are suitable for people with disabilities, as well as families with toddlers and pushchairs.

### Toilets

Provide an adequate number and type of toilets for the number of people expected including provision for people with disabilities.

It is best to use toilets which are connected to mains services, but temporary units may have to be provided.

Arrange for all the toilets to be serviced regularly to keep them fully operational, clean and hygienic throughout the event.

Provide direction signs to indicate the location of the toilets and provide adequate lighting where necessary and if the event continues into the evening.

### Information point, lost children & lost property etc

Provide a location where enquiries can be made about lost children, lost property and for information about the event. This could be in the Control Room.

At larger events provide site maps at the entrance and around the site and signs indicate the other activities, attractions and facilities.

# Organising safe events

## APPENDIX 1

<b>PRE &amp; DURING EVENT CHECKLIST</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
CROWD SAFETY— Are premises free from hazards? (i.e.: even ground/floor surfaces; no trip hazards; hazards fenced, etc.)	
Are all attractions/activities/structures complete and staffed?	
Are structures/seating sound and secure; stairways/platforms and equipment guarded; protective barriers/fencing secure?	
ENTRANCES/EXITS— Are adequate entrances and exits open, clearly marked and staffed to control admission where necessary?	
CROWD CONTROL— Is the Control Room operational, with communications and PA systems working?	
Are the required number of stewards in their allotted positions; fully briefed on their duties and wearing jackets/tabards?	
ELECTRICS— Is installation complete/certified; cabling/equipment secure/protected; clear of public circulation areas?	
LIGHTING— Is normal and emergency lighting provided, in working order and lit where necessary?	
MEDICAL FACILITIES— Are there adequate trained first aiders on site; is a suitable, clearly marked room (provided with water) available as a first aid post?	
FIRE PRECAUTIONS— Is fire fighting equipment in place; rubbish/combustible materials stored away from tents/structures?	
TOILET ACCOMMODATION— Is clearly marked toilet accommodation available (including for disabled people); have arrangements made to service them during the event?	
RUBBISH— Are sufficient bins provided around the site and arrangements made to empty them during the event?	

# Organising safe events

## Barbecues & hot food

Barbecue hazards include the use and storage of fuel, (eg, gas bottles), naked flames and hot components. Safety barriers may be required. In the event of dry spells consider banning BBQ's altogether.

Guidance notes and advice on all aspects of food hygiene at the event can be obtained from Babergh District Council (see P.16).

## Water

Consider making free drinking water available on site.

## Rubbish

One event can generate a lot of rubbish - provide an adequate number of rubbish bins around the site where they will be most required.

Make arrangements to regularly empty the bins, and to satisfactorily dispose of the rubbish at the end of the event.

## Community safety

In promotional literature/event programmes, suggest directions and travel routes with advice on planning journeys, travelling in groups and avoiding short-cuts, can be helpful, particularly if the event is to finish late.

## Stewards should:

- Be fit, active and not less than 18 years old;
- Be suitably trained and competent to carry out their duties effectively;
- Receive a written statement of their duties, and where appropriate a checklist and a layout plan showing the key features of the site;
- Receive a final briefing of their duties on the day of the event, particularly about communicating with supervisors and others in the event of an emergency;
- Be easily identifiable, i.e., wear jackets or tabards;
- Know the layout of the site and be able to assist the public by giving information about the available facilities, remembering especially people with disabilities;
- Be aware of the location of the entrances and exits in use on the day, first aid posts and fire-fighting equipment;
- Know the ticketing arrangements and be aware of the routes in/out for any celebrities;

# Organising safe events

- Patrol their allotted areas, being on constant watch for emergencies and on what actions to take, paying particular attention to:

Any potential hazards (i.e., squeeze points) near their location;  
Ensuring that overcrowding does not occur in any part of the site;  
Preventing the public climbing fences, barriers, lighting/sound towers, equipment, etc;

- Ensuring that circulation areas and exits (including entrances and exits for emergency services) are kept clear at all times. This can be particularly important at indoor events where visitors may well park their cars outside halls across exit doors/routes from the building;
- Know, understand and have practised their specific duties in an emergency and the arrangements for evacuating the public from the site, including the use of coded messages.

The following publications provide additional information and advice on safety at events:-

An introduction to Health and Safety (HSE) - includes Risk Assessment.

'Guide to Fire Precautions in Existing Places of Public Entertainment and Premises' - HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office)

'Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Pop Concerts and Similar Events' - HMSO known as the "Purple Guide"

'Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks - Guidance on Safe Practice' - HSE

'Safe operation of passenger carrying amusement devices: Inflatable Bouncing Devices' - HSE

'The Radiation Safety of Lasers Used for Display Purposes' - HSE

'Code of Practice for Outdoor Events' - The National Outdoor Events Association

Advice on these publications may be available from the Council Departments listed on the back cover.

# Organising safe events

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY Martlesham Heath Ipswich Area Sudbury Area	01473 613500 01284 774100
SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL Fire Service Headquarters Colchester Road Ipswich IP4 4SS	01473 588888
ST JOHN AMBULANCE Ipswich Western Area	01473 253352 01284 700430
RED CROSS Hadleigh Ipswich Sudbury	01473 827414 01473 219260 01787 882013
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Babergh District Council	01473 825764
LICENSING Babergh District Council	01473 825719
TRADING STANDARDS Suffolk County Council Consumer Advice	01473 584358
<b>HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT</b> Suffolk County Council	01473 583000

Natural and Built Environment  
Babergh District Council  
Corks Lane, Hadleigh  
Ipswich IP7 6SJ  
Minicom: 01473 825878   
Telephone: 01473 825764

This document can be made available on audio  
tape, in Braille, large print or another language  
upon request by telephoning  
01473 826622

