



Organising a safe event



Events are a great opportunity to bring people together from across the community. They improve personal and collective wellbeing, and create a sense of pride and belonging. They are vital to the communities we are part of.

Organising events of any scale can be daunting and the thought of risk management can be a blow to initial enthusiasm. However, risk management doesn't need to be complicated.

With appropriate planning and communication, you can reduce the likelihood of problems occurring, and ensure your event is a success. This guide is designed to help event organisers run successful and safe events that are enjoyed by all.

It covers the steps needed to plan, run and close a successful event.

Good luck.

3 steps to running an event safely

In order to successfully run an event, you'll need to ensure that there's a considered plan in place for managing health and safety. This should be documented and communicated to other organisers, volunteers and vendors involved in your event. This is necessary for all events whatever the size. The level of detail should be proportionate to the size of the event and the activities taking place. You have a duty of care to people working at or visiting your site.

1) Before the event: What information do you need to gather to enable you to plan the event?

Carry out a Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is key to running a safe event. It doesn't have to be complicated, but it should be proportionate to the activities you are planning. Identify the types of activities you will have - selling home-baking, street parties, live animals, inflatables for children - and the risks associated with these.

Assessments should record details of any installations, use and de-rigging of temporary structures, barriers, stands, information signs, decorations, specialist equipment, inflatables and fun fair rides and security of cash. You may also want to consider hygiene factors, such as cleaning regimes and providing hand washing facilities

If you know that the event will attract lots of young children, older people or those with disabilities, then you may need to consider having adapted facilities or arrangements in place. For example:

- changing facilities
- lost children help-points
- suitable welfare facilities
- specific access routes

To make adequate provision you should estimate how many people in each group you think will attend. If you are providing or selling tickets for the event this will help.

It's also important to remember why you are having the event, so include the benefits of the event in your risk assessment.

Develop an Event Safety Plan

An event safety plan should contain a record of all health and safety arrangements including, but not limited to:

- first aid facilities
- licensing (e.g. noise, music, alcohol)
- staff and volunteer training
- arrangements for waste management
- crowd control
- lost person/child procedure
- vendors' safety
- insurance certificates for any 3rd parties or vendors you are using
- any requirements from government or public health guidance

A Traffic Management Plan should be considered if vehicles need access to the event site, or there will be a provision for vehicle parking. Try, as far as possible, to only have moving vehicles on the site when the number of attendees is at a minimum and plan the vehicle routes to minimise interaction with pedestrians.

It's also important to think about how communications will work during the event. For example:

- Do stewards have the means to call for assistance or receive updated instructions?
- Has an emergency plan been communicated and tested?
- Do you have a Plan B if an activity has to be changed, e.g. due to poor weather?
- How will the crowd receive communications - PA systems?
- The plan needs to be documented and communicated to staff well before the event.

The Health & Safety Executive has [further guidance](#) on organising an event safely.



2) During the event: What needs to be considered and maintained during the event?

Monitoring and inspections

It's important to monitor the implementation of controls identified by your risk assessment, for example crowd management and hygiene facilities. A method of achieving this is site inspections.

Inspect the event site before, during and after the event, to ensure that no significant hazards have been missed or changed. It may be that the site layout has changed or that poor weather has meant that an area has now become unusable.

- Inspection **before** gives an opportunity to make changes in advance
- Inspection **during** picks up any immediate changes needed
- Inspection **after** ensures the site has returned to a safe condition

3) After the event: What needs to be done after the event?

Debriefs

An event debrief should be conducted to address concerns raised and possible improvements needed for future events. An 'event log' should be kept in order to record complaints, incidents and accidents. You may be required to show this, should a formal claim be made by someone attending the event.

Record retention

By keeping records such as risk assessments, an event safety plan, inspection reports, contracts, accident investigations and relevant insurance certificates you can effectively demonstrate that significant risks were identified and adequate controls had been put in place.

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