

# Rother District Council

## Event Guidance Notes



### Introduction

This guidance has been designed to provide information to organisations wishing to arrange an event at a Rother District Council managed venue. The forms contained within the pack can be used for all events regardless of size; however some parts may not be relevant for smaller events.

The guide gives general advice that should be used when arranging any type of event. However, it must be remembered that events can be very diverse, ranging from a simple car boot sale to a large outdoor carnival and therefore this guidance cannot be considered exhaustive. It is likely that additional guidance will be required for specialist events and larger scale activities. (In particular, Fun Fairs have specific Licence Conditions).

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.

### Risk assessment

Please remember that organisers of events have a legal responsibility to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of any employees, volunteer helpers or contractors involved in arranging the event and to the public and participants attending. This should be ensured by carrying out a detailed risk assessment. All hazards associated with the event should be identified, the level of risk assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce these risks to an acceptable level. All events must comply with recognised safety standards and you must take all reasonable precautions to ensure the event takes place safely.

A formal record should be kept of the risk assessments. A simple guidance note and an example form is provided with this pack. Completed forms should be retained for future reference.

Where the event consists of more than one attraction (e.g. a summer fete that includes stalls and children's entertainment activities) a written risk assessment may be necessary for each activity. In these circumstances, the enclosed risk assessment form can be photocopied.

Any contractors involved in the event should also carry out risk assessments. Where relevant, you should obtain copies of these.

More information regarding risk assessments can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publications at HSE information Centre, Broad Lane, Sheffield, S3 7HQ. Tel: 01787 881165.

## Planning an Event

When planning any event there should be a named organiser identified at the earliest opportunity. For larger events, a detailed management structure should be drawn up formally identifying who is responsible and for what.

Effective planning will identify, eliminate and control hazards and risks. The amount of time that needs to be set aside for planning will very much depend upon the size, type and duration of the event, but start early! Listed below are the recommended phases of planning the event.

- Your event will need a satisfactory Event Management Plan (this could also be condition on a premises licence). The plan will include the named management structure and areas of responsibility.  
The plan must follow the structure of 'The Purple Guide', you will need to subscribe to access it [www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/](http://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/)
- Licensable activities: if you want to serve or sell alcohol, provide late-night refreshment, or put on regulated entertainment, you'll need a licence:

<https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/alcohol-licensing-temporary-events-notices>

## Stage 1 - Pre-planning

Detailed pre-planning is essential to ensure an 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 any car parking requirements. 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 needed 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? Try to establish the size of the proposed event, the number of people likely to attend and whether or not an entrance fee will be charged.
- **Specialist equipment.** Will the activities require the use of any specialist equipment such as bungee jumps etc.? If so, does this equipment pose any specific hazards? Will a particular activity need barriers or similar? Some equipment may require certificates of erection by a competent person. There are specific requirements regarding the use of fireworks on council land and early advice should be sought by organisers.
- **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 HSE *Guide to Safety at Events* is also a very useful reference document.
- **Welfare arrangements.** The organiser must estimate the number of participants and visitors 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 also needs to be made for lost children, missing persons, baby changing and lost property.
- **Special permission and Licensing.** A licence may be needed if the event includes music, dancing, singing or similar, or if it includes a display or exhibition of boxing, wrestling, judo, karate or similar sport. The Hirer is responsible for ensuring that all the necessary licensing permissions are obtained.

- **Fireworks.** (details of firework/bonfire events must be notified to the Food & Safety Team [Foodhs@rother.gov.uk](mailto:Foodhs@rother.gov.uk))

Advice depending upon nature of the event:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/fireworks/using.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg124.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg123.htm>

- **Insurance.** All events will require public liability insurance. All contractors and performers will also need their own public liability cover with a £10 million Limit of Indemnity. Depending upon the nature of your organisation and the proposed event other insurances may also be required. 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. Some specialist advice may be required, and special permission could take time. Do not forget that the summer can be a busy time with hundreds of events taking place in this area.
- **Event plan.** This should include all your health and safety arrangements. Once you have resolved all the issues referred to above, keep records of the proposals as a formal plan for the event. This will help you when carrying out your risk assessments.
- **A Fire Safety Risk Assessment** may be required;  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business)  
Fire Safety risk assessments are enforced by East Sussex Fire & Safety Rescue Authority.
- General health & safety: H&S risk assessments etc. on [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- Managing Crowds Safely: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg154.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg154.htm)
- In order to demonstrate that you have taken the necessary steps to ensure the safety of temporary structures and electrical installations:
  - The safety of the erection of the marquee/staging and other temporary structures must be signed off by a competent person on the attached certificate.
  - The safety of the electrical supply and equipment must be signed off by a competent electrician (qualified for outdoor work) on the attached certificate.
- If you are allowing food traders at the event you should: ensure the business is registered with a local authority; check national food hygiene rating (minimum score 3) <http://ratings.food.gov.uk/>; obtain a copy of their last local authority inspection report; obtain their safety certification for portable gas/LPG; evidence of insurance cover you require. CIEH National Guidance for Outdoor and Mobile Catering [http://www.cieh.org/policy/guidance\\_outdoor\\_mobile\\_catering.html](http://www.cieh.org/policy/guidance_outdoor_mobile_catering.html)
- Other stalls; in your trader terms and conditions specify what goods are prohibited from sale or supply e.g. gas, electrical items, alcohol, 'illegal highs' etc.

## 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.

- **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.
- **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 also need to be contacted such as HM Coastguard for waterborne events at sea.
- **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 / Event Safety 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, 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 dependant upon the number of people likely to attend. Temporary structures should only be obtained from experienced suppliers.
- **Catering.** Ensure any caterers have been licensed 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 should be left between catering facilities to prevent any risk of fire spread. Ask to see caterers' food hygiene certification. You may wish to use only caterers who are members of the Mobile Outside Caterers Association. You should obtain a list of their menu and charges to ensure their prices are reasonable.
- **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 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.

- **Nominated Event Contact and Mobile Telephone Number.** It is important that any problems can be brought to your attention and resolved during the Event. A nominated person and a mobile telephone number will be displayed on notices at the Venue access points during the event. This allows Council officers, the Police and local residents to make contact with you if there is problem during the Event that you might not be aware of.
- **Noise Control.** Make one person responsible for dealing with noise issues at your event, and they should talk with the Council's Pollution Control Team ([pollution@rother.gov.uk](mailto:pollution@rother.gov.uk)) as early as possible before the event for advice and agreement on any necessary monitoring. Be respectful of noise sensitive properties in the locality and the impact the nature and duration of the event may have.

Quite often people are more willing to tolerate noise from an event when they are well informed of what is happening, how long the event will last for etc. Consider contacting neighbours before the event, informing them of your plans and providing a contact number in case of problems. Be prepared to act responsibly on any complaints that are received. Ensure that music noise levels are adequately monitored and controlled during the event to prevent nuisance, particularly the bass component and PA systems.

An agreed noise management plan is likely to be a required for music festivals (this could also be condition on a premises licence) (see attached guidance and code of practice).

- **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.
- **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 / vehicles.** 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. Weight restrictions to a maximum of 3.5 tonnes per vehicle are in place at all venues, unless agreed in advance with the Council. Parking, in other than specified bays, is only permitted for loading and unloading and is restricted to a maximum of 1 hour, unless agreed in advance with the Council. Separate entrances should be provided for vehicles and pedestrians with specific arrangements for emergency vehicle access. Any vehicular access onto grassed areas must have protection in place. 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 road traffic incident. 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.
- **Camping.** If event staff or the public will be camping at your event, you will need to set up a designated campsite.
  - The site should be level, adequately drained and have a water supply, toilets, lighting, medical services, stewarding and waste disposal facilities.
  - You will need to make sure tents are far enough apart to prevent a fire hazard, and vehicles will need to be parked away from the camping area. Live-in vehicles such as camper vans and caravans should have their own separate area.
  - You will need to have an evacuation plan should an emergency arise. The site should be provided with adequate firefighting equipment and trained fire stewards at all times, and open campfires should be discouraged.
  - Portable sound systems, radios etc. should be prohibited to prevent noise nuisance from the camping area.
  - Limit the amount of alcohol that can be brought into the camping area.
  - Sites with animals normally on will have animal droppings and may expose campers to health risks such as E.coli 0157 infection. Exclude animals from all areas (other than car parks) for as long as possible before public access (a minimum of 3 weeks). (See [www.hse.gov.uk/press/2004/e04046.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2004/e04046.htm))
- **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 £10 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.

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 be suitably fenced or barriered 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 are 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. Unfortunately at some events there could be hazardous waste (e.g. discarded hypodermic needles) which would 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 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. It is a requirement that a photographic record is taken of the event area no more than 72 hours prior to the event to document the condition of the event space. These photographs need to be submitted to the Council and may be used in the event of any damage claim.
- **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.
- **Site specific conditions.** Check that any specific conditions of hire are being met. For example there may be boundary noise limits at some locations that will need sound systems or public tannoy systems to be checked.
- **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. Consideration should be given to a 'back up' system in the event of an electrical failure preventing the use of any mains electrical operated public address system.
- **Briefing.** Check that all stewards and staff have been fully briefed and understand their responsibilities.
- **Other.** SSSI designated land – contact Natural England.

## Stage 4 – 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 future users. This inspection should also identify any damage which may have been caused during the event. A photographic record of the event space should be taken and submitted to the council within 48 hours of the event close, these photographs may be used in the event of any damage claims. 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.** 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 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.
- **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.