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Safety Advice for Public Outdoor Events

If you are organising a public outdoor event you will need to ensure that health and safety requirements are met. The following information is general advice, if you need more specific information contact Mr Doug Read, Environmental Health Officer, on 01233 330323.



Organisation

- [Start organising several months before the event. This will allow time to carry out the risk assessments and obtain specialist advice where necessary.](#)
- [Hold an informal meeting of all interested parties \(Police, Fire Safety, Local Authority, First Aid\) to discuss issues relevant to the event.](#)
- [One person should be in overall charge of the event.](#)
- [In the case of larger events a suitably qualified person should act as Safety Officer.](#)
- [Safety arrangements should be checked prior to opening and throughout the event.](#)

Venue

- [Decide on the venue. The site should be large enough for all the activities planned with adequate circulation space for the public expected to attend.](#)
- [If it is to take place on Council owned land or in the Town Centre, permission is required. You will need to speak to the Council's Licensing Team on 01233 330578 if on Council land or the Ashford Town Centre Partnership on 01233 664410 for the Town Centre.](#)
- [Prepare a sketch plan of the site showing the position of the activities, the](#)

entrance/exit routes, car parking, etc.

Risk Assessment

- Make a short written assessment of the event.
- Identify possible hazards that could occur and say how the risk will be controlled.
In particular consider:
- Bouncy castles and children's amusement rides.
- Stands and stalls.
- Displays and parades, especially those involving animals, vehicles or special events.
- Marquees, stages and caterers stands/tents.
- Request risk assessments from third parties eg contractors and participants and, where appropriate, method statements for the activities they will carry out.

Emergency Plan

- In addition to risk assessing the event, also consider what could go wrong on the day and draw up a plan to deal with the emergency.
- The plan should include details of what to do in the event of a fire, accident, bomb alert, adverse weather or any need to evacuate the site.

Licensing

- A Premises Licence will be required for certain regulated entertainment (live and recorded music, dancing, plays, films and sporting events) and the sale of alcohol.
- Small events lasting no longer than 96 hours and having no more than 500 people attending may apply for a Temporary Event Notice to cover the event.
- Victoria Park and the North Park have Premises Licences for public entertainment but not for the sale of alcohol.
- Speak to the Council's Licensing Team on 01233 330578 for further advice.
Remember that a Premises Licence will take up to two months to obtain, so make the application well in advance.

Insurance

- Event organisers could be held legally liable for the costs or damages for injuries which may occur. Public liability insurance will cover this risk.
- If the event is being held on public open space or the highway, insurance with an indemnity of £5 million is required.
- When using specialist contractors, always check they have their own public liability insurance and obtain a copy.
- If something does go wrong, full details must be recorded and reported without delay.

Fire

- Carry out a fire risk assessment. Identify all possible fire hazards that could occur and say how the risk will be eliminated/controlled.
- Provide equipment for putting out small fires throughout the site.

- Make sure stewards know where the equipment is and how to use it.
- The Fire Service should be called at once to any fire, however small.

Traffic Management/Street Events

- If the event is to take place on the highway, road closure and traffic diversions may be necessary. However, it is recommended that wherever possible events are held off the highway in order to avoid disruption to traffic.
- The closure process is administered by the Council for small scale events and Kent Highway Services for all others. Contact telephone number for the Council is 01233 330309 and for Kent Highway Services is 0845 303 2500.
- The Police do not provide officers to control traffic or crowds and will not routinely attend events unless there is considered to be a risk of crime or disorder.
- Traffic direction on private land can be undertaken by anyone, but persons under 18 years of age should not be used.
- All traffic controllers on site should wear bright coloured, reflective clothing for their safety.

Temporary Structures

- These include marquees, stages, raised seating and sound towers.
- They must be erected by trained and competent persons and be capable of withstanding wind forces and bad weather conditions.
- Written certificates should always be obtained.
- Marquees should be sited at least 6 m apart and have adequate emergency lighting and escape routes. Fabrics used should be inherently flame retardant.
- Regular safety checks of all temporary structures should take place during the event.

Electrics

- The whole installation (temporary generated or connected to a permanent supply) must be installed in a safe manner by a competent person.
- Written certificates should always be obtained.
- Ensure electrical safety by:
 - Provision of residual current devices (RCDs).
 - Use cables of correct rating with no damage and appropriate connectors if used externally.
 - All cabling positioned so as not to create a trip hazard or be liable to physical damage.
- Generators, switchgear etc should be placed behind a barrier to prevent unauthorised access.

Lighting

- Where events are planned to take place after dark, artificial lighting should be provided to all public areas such as vehicle and pedestrian access, car parks, refreshment tents and toilets.
- Some sites have particular hazards which should be lit appropriately.
- Also consider the need for emergency lighting to escape routes.

Communication

- Consider providing a public address system for announcements to the public and staff.
- Smaller events a portable loudhailer may suffice.
- Personal radio contact between stewards.
- Set up a control/information point for enquiries, lost children, etc.

First Aid

- The first aid provision needs to be adequate for the number of people expected to attend the event.
- In all but the smallest events, a qualified first aider should be present with sufficient first aid materials.

Noise

- High sound levels are a risk to hearing and may cause a nuisance to people living nearby. In planning the event you should have this in mind and consider:
 - Siting the sound system so as to gain maximum effect inside the site while causing minimum disruption outside.
 - Monitoring and controlling sound levels during the event.
 - Notifying local residents prior to the event.
 - Finishing the event at a reasonable time.

Food/Drink/Water

- When using outside caterers, ask to see written evidence of food safety procedures and staff training.
- Guidance notes and advice on all aspects of food hygiene can be obtained from the Council's Environmental Services on 01233 330470.
- There are hazards associated with barbecues, naked flames, gas bottles and hot equipment. Safety barriers may be needed.
- Consider making free drinking water available on site.

Stewards

- Provide an appropriate number of stewards for control of the site and the public.
- Make sure they are fully briefed prior to the event and easily identifiable ie wearing high visibility clothing.
- Major events should have independent specialist security personnel to organise and maintain security of the site. All such personnel must be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

Special Attractions

- Including fireworks, laser displays, fairground rides, all-night music events and animal shows.

- These are usually 'one off' type events restricted to professional operators working to industry standards.
- Advice should always be sought from the public authorities.

Sanitary Accommodation

- Adequate provision should be made for the number of people, including the disabled, expected to attend the event. As a guide:

Events of up to 6 hours duration:

- Female - 1 wc per 120.
- Male - 1 wc per 600 + 1 urinal per 175.

Events more than 6 hours duration:

- Female - 1 wc per 100.
- Male - 1 wc per 500 + 1 urinal per 150.

- When using temporary units provide direction signs and lighting when the event continues after dark.
- It may be necessary to service the units to keep them clean and hygienic throughout the event.

Waste

Provide an adequate number of rubbish receptacles around the site. Make arrangements to empty regularly and store/dispose of the rubbish and all litter after the event.

Recycling should be carried out wherever possible.

Further Information

[Download a copy of the CIEH Outdoor Mobile Catering Guidance Final Consultation 860Kb PDF.](#)

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