

## Community event toolkit

There are many different types of public events that take place in Telford and Wrekin every year. These can range from sporting events to musical concerts; some taking place indoors; some outdoors; some are large and some are small.

If you are thinking about organising an event it is important to remember you will have a legal responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the people attending your event, as well as that of the employees, volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors working there. This includes any licenses that may be required and the essential requirements to hold an event such as public liability insurance, first aid provision and risk assessment.

The following is some guidance to follow when organising and holding a community event.

### **What do I need to think about when holding an event?**

Have a clear idea about what you want the event to be, what you want to achieve and the size and scale of the event. Make sure you also have some other people involved so that the responsibility for the event organisation can be shared around and different skills and experienced can be utilised. This [event risk assessment form](#) will help you determine the level of risk involved in holding your event.

Think about who will be interested in the event and who might attend. The type of event you are trying to organise will determine the sorts of people likely to come.

When thinking about when your event will take place consider whether any other events are taking place in the local area. This [event planning template](#) will help you to record all the information you need to hold your event.

In choosing a location for the event you should make sure that the site should be big enough for all the planned activities. For all events there must be plenty of space for the public to move around stalls, rides, performance/stage, arena/exhibition areas etc. There must be unobstructed routes to exits. This is particularly important at indoor events to prevent stalls/goods obstructing exit routes and doors. If you are thinking about holding your event on Council owned land, such as Telford Town park you can [find out more and apply online](#).

Another important consideration at the planning stage is the access to the site. How easy is it to get to, if the public will use cars to get there is there sufficient on site/off-site parking available? Consider whether the emergency routes will be adequate.

Consider if there are any on site hazards that need to be taken into account such as water hazards, overhead power lines, land used for grazing animals. The land owners' permission should be obtained.

Obtain a copy of the terms and conditions of hire to see what is required by you as the hirer and what is provided by the venue.

You may need to find funding for the event. Essential items you will need to budget for are:

- venue hire costs
- licences
- first aid provision
- insurances
- event equipment
- marketing

## Preparation and planning

Once you have decided to go ahead with your event and have decided on the format you can then begin to plan in more detail. Create a [planning document](#) which allows you to record, update and keep track of all aspects of your event. Keep all relevant information for the event together such as contract details, insurance, licenses etc. Ask for written confirmation of all bookings that you make and send written confirmation to all suppliers and contractors stating what is expected of them, when to arrive, set up and set down arrangements, contact details etc. Follow up with phone calls as the event gets closer.

Specific arrangements should be made to make sure disabled visitors have adequate facilities such as parking, toilets and specific viewing areas and can safely enjoy the event.

## Licences

Temporary Event Notices or Time-limited Premises Licence may be required to authorise small scale occasional events. Depending on the activities being provided at the event, a licence may be required under the Licensing Act, 2003.

Activities that need a licence:

- the sale of alcohol
- the supply of alcohol by or on behalf of a club to, or to the order of, a member of a club
- the supply of regulated entertainment i.e. entertainment which takes place in front of an audience for example a performance of a play amateur dramatic production, including a rehearsal or an indoor sporting event
- any performance of music including live and recorded music
- anyone over the age of 18 who will be responsible for all aspects of the event can apply for this licence

[You can apply for a licence online.](#)

If a commercial trader is attending your event they may need to apply for a Street Trading Consent. You can [find out more information and apply online.](#)

## Road closures

Some events may require a road to be closed temporarily such as for street parties, parades and carnivals. These closures will require a Traffic Regulation Order issued by the highway authority. All administrative costs will need to be met by the event organisers, charges will depend on the type of event, expected audience and complexity of the closure. You can [apply for the closure online](#).

## Insurance

If you are organising an event it is advisable to have insurance. The extent to which you will need it will depend upon its size and nature. If you are organising a public event you will need to have public liability insurance. You will need to ensure that the policy is sufficient to cover the type of event being planned. For large events a minimum of £5 million is recommended. It is also advisable to insure against eventualities such as bad weather and cancellation.

If you are employing outside contractors always check their insurance cover. It is also advisable to check the health and safety policy statements of any contractor you employ (businesses with 5 or more employees are required to have one by law), their risk assessments for the tasks to be carried out and the systems of work or method statements that have been put in place as a result of these assessments to ensure they will be working safely.

## First aid

An agreed level of first aid, paramedic and medical facilities should be provided at the organiser's expense. [This form](#) will help you to consider what first aid provision is needed at your event. When filled in the [West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust](#) can advise if any further medical support is needed.

You can check if your health professionals are registered on the [Health and Safety Executive](#) website (this does not include first aiders).

## Health and safety risk assessments

A risk assessment is a careful examination of anything at your event that could cause harm to people. There is a legal requirement to assess all work related risks to workers and others who may be affected by their work. Public safety must be included in this. Carrying out risk assessments helps you decide whether you have taken sufficient precautions or should do more to prevent harm or injury to people.

There are 5 stages in the process:

- identify the hazard
- decide who might be harmed and how
- evaluate the risks and decide what precautions you can take to minimise the risk
- record your findings and implement them
- review your assessment and update if necessary

This [risk assessment template](#) will help you to consider possible hazards and the measures you will need to take to minimise the risk of harm to people attending or working at your event.

Special considerations you might need to consider for your risk assessment are around:

- [the use of barriers or stands](#)
- [the use of fireworks](#)
- [special effects e.g. use of lasers](#)

Any temporary structure that is load bearing should be erected in strict compliance with Health and Safety legislation. Some examples of these are:

- [inflatable structures e.g. bouncy castles](#)
- [marquees and stages](#)
- [fairground rides](#)

The Public Protection team can provide further advice on these issues

Public Protection team  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
Addenbrooke House  
Telford  
TF3 4NT

Telephone: 01952 381818  
Email: [licensing@telford.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@telford.gov.uk)

## Fire risk assessments

All events must be covered by a fire risk assessment by law. Under fire safety legislation as an event organiser you have a duty to provide general fire precautions to protect persons in case of fire in and around the premises you are using.

For larger events, in larger buildings or temporary structures or where high risk activities such as fireworks are planned, it may be necessary to employ a 'competent person' who has relevant training and experience in fire safety risk assessment and management, such a person may be needed to assist the organisers in undertaking the following:

- fire risk assessments
- general fire precautions
- fire safety management, including testing and maintenance of fire safety provisions
- assessing the adequacy and requirements for escape routes and exits
- maximum safe occupancy levels for places of assembly
- evacuation planning
- provision of suitable fire alarms and emergency lighting
- provision and location of suitable firefighting equipment
- provision of trained stewards or other staff for firefighting and evacuation
- consider the safe evacuation procedures for people with disabilities or who are sensory impaired

If there is a market and/or stalls at your event they will need to fill out separate fire risk assessments:

- [Traders fire risk assessment template](#)
- [Food concession fire risk assessment template](#)
- [Temporary structure fire risk assessment template](#)

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are able to advise on the steps necessary to achieve compliance with fire safety regulations and to provide the ‘responsible person’ with relevant guidance on how to prepare and manage events safely.

At all times it remains the duty of the ‘responsible person’ to ensure the necessary measures are identified, taken and maintained to ensure the safety of people from fire. A failure to do so, where persons are placed at risk of injury, is a serious criminal offence for which responsible persons may be prosecuted.

## **Emergency planning**

For all events it is good practice to have plans in place should emergency situations arise. An emergency plan covers the following:

- highlights the most likely scenarios
- sets out a communication plan
- details the evacuation points
- details medical facilities and locations
- details locations of nearest hospitals

You should also give detailed consideration to the needs of the fire and rescue service and in particular the following:

- liaison with fire and rescue service before the event
- summoning the fire and rescue service in event of emergency
- liaison with the fire and rescue service on arrival at and during an emergency
- access for fire and rescue service vehicles and equipment (the measurements required for emergency vehicle access can be found on page 44 of the [ESAG document](#))
- water supplies for fire fighting.

Facilities for fire fighting also include the access routes for fire and rescue service and other emergency service vehicles. At all outdoor venues you must ensure that you have provided adequate and appropriate vehicle access to all parts of the venue. You should also consider how these routes would be affected by the people at your site or event.

For specialist advice please contact [West Mercia Police](#) and/or [Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service](#)

## **Site planning**

Create a plan of your event showing the layout, entrances and exits, car parks, toilets, first aid points, refreshments, activity locations and other key features. This can be done by hand, or by downloading a map or photo image of the site/venue you will be using. The venue may be able to provide you with a map/site plan that you can use.

Ensure there is adequate and accessible toilet provision and also decide how they will be maintained in a hygienic state throughout the event. Portable toilets should be sited on a level, open space with easy access for delivery and collection by lorry and away from any catering stalls. Allow provision for lost children, first aid, baby changing and lost property identifying suitable facilities.

It would also be useful to produce a summary of the event, describing:

- the event format and what will be taking place
- key timings for set up, who will be arriving when
- a task list describing what will happen and when and who is carrying it out
- briefing times, communication arrangements, welfare arrangements, such as breaks, refreshments and storage of personal items
- a summary of the emergency plan and actions to be taken in certain situations

Other considerations for your site planning should be:

- security – specific security arrangements may be necessary including overnight site security and cash handing.
- rubbish disposal – arrangements need to be made for waste disposal and rubbish clearance. Ensure the site is cleared before leaving and that rubbish will be collected
- onsite traffic – contractors and performers vehicles should be carefully managed to ensure pedestrian safety. Only allow vehicular access for setting up and taking down at specific times and not during the event. Access for emergency vehicles should be maintained at all times
- offsite traffic – if your event is likely to cause disruption to normal traffic you must consult with the local Police and Telford & Wrekin Council's Highway and Transport service.
- route for emergency vehicles (see page 44 of [ESAG document](#) for more details on this)

## Event security

As an event organiser you are responsible for the safety and security of everyone involved prior to, during, and after the event. The police can offer advice on these matters and will advise on the current security threat level for international terrorism. If needed the police will attend and carry out their core responsibilities of:

- Prevent and detect crime
- Prevent and stop breaches of the peace
- Traffic regulations within legal powers
- Activation and coordination of contingency plans

If your event is going to be a large public event consideration should also be given to special security measures necessary for the attendance of VIP's or celebrities. Special measures should also be implemented should large amounts of cash be accumulated at the event. You can contact [West Mercia Police](#) who will be able to advise you.

During the event yourself and other stewards need to be on the lookout for any suspicious behaviour. Some examples of this are:

- vehicles parked in restricted areas
- anyone taking notes or photos of security arrangements
- anyone leaving personal items such as rucksacks or bags near to key locations

Report any suspicious behaviour or activity to the local police on 101 or confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. In an emergency always dial 999.

## **Staff and/or stewards**

You will need people to assist you at your event during the site set up, the delivery of the event and the take down. Consider all the tasks which need to be done and how many people are required to carry out the tasks or to supervise others. Allocate tasks and brief your helpers on what is required and ensure they keep you informed of progress.

During the event the main responsibility of stewards is crowd management and the safety of everyone at the event. They need to be well trained and [briefed](#). A crowd management risk assessment should help you establish how many stewards/volunteers you will need to allow the attendees to be safely managed. This assessment should include a comprehensive survey to assess the various parts of the site and consider the size and profile of the audience. For large scale events it is advisable to liaise with the Police for advice on stewarding and to consider the use of professional events stewards. For private security organisations check they are registered/licensed with the Security Industry Association (SIA) and they regularly liaise with the Police.

Ensure stewards are easily identifiable by wearing hi viz jackets or tabards or coloured t-shirts. Plan to send out as much information in advance to all stewards and helpers. Organise a steward's brief in advance of the event if possible.

## **Volunteers**

If you are considering getting volunteers to help at your event then you will need to allow enough time to recruit and train them for the different roles available. There is [guidance available](#) to help you do this.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

It is important to make sure all the correct processes and procedures are followed when recruiting staff and volunteers to work at your event especially regarding the safety of any children or vulnerable adults that may come into contact with.

For events where there are likely to be children or vulnerable adults it is recommended that the following procedures are adhered to:

- ideally all people working at the event be enhanced DBS checked
- anyone working in a supervisory role will be enhanced DBS checked and will be clearly identifiable
- non DBS checked staff are placed in pairs in all positions
- non DBS checked staff are never in a position where they may be alone with a child or vulnerable adult

To [arrange a DBS your group or organisation will have to register](#). There is a charge payable for a DBS check but for volunteers it is free of charge.

For all people providing services at your event which could come into contact with children and young people and vulnerable adults you are advised to request details of their current DBS check. It is sufficient for them to provide you with the disclosure number and date of the DBS check.

### **Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy**

You should develop a [child protection policy](#) which details how you will ensure the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults such as dealing with lost/found children. All event staff should be briefed on the procedure for reporting concerns and how to deal with such situations.

Designate a person who will be responsible for dealing with any child protection issues should they arise and also a location within the event for reporting lost children and taking found children.

If children are performing at the event you should also ensure suitable child protection are in place including chaperones.

There is a [lost and found child procedure template](#) to help you.

### **Communications**

You will need to be able to stay in touch with people helping you at the event not only to help you organise the event but also to deal with emergency situations. Depending on the venue and size of your event and particularly for large events you may wish to use two way radios. These are quicker and easier to use than mobile phones and there is no cost attached to making calls. They do not rely on mobile network coverage and others using the same channel can hear and understand messages at the same time rather than relaying messages. Different channels can also be allocated to different groups of people such as stewards, emergency services etc. Radios can be hired for about £5/£6 per unit from local companies. Allocate radios and ensure everyone knows how to work them. If using mobile phone ensure numbers are shared with the necessary people.

### Noise control

If you are only having a very small event with no amplification it is unlikely to cause disturbance to the surrounding area. However for larger events we recommend that you:

- Nominate a Noise Control Person who regularly checks the noise levels during the event at the perimeter and adjusts them as necessary
- Advise local residents of your planned activities well in advance
- Give anticipated start and finish times and provide a contact telephone number for the Noise Control Person at the event.
- Advise The Council's Environmental Protection team of the event, including any contact telephone numbers. In some circumstances the Council may request that you appoint an Acoustic Consultant to assist in drawing up a Noise Management Plan. If you are not sure, contact the [Environmental Protection team](#) for further advice

## **Equipment/suppliers**

You may wish to hire in equipment or contract in services to your event. You will want to ensure the best possible deal from your contractor(s) considering price and terms as well as experience, health and safety policy, quality and standard of equipment and references. When requesting quotes, provide the company with an overview of the event, dates and times, location, delivery and collection details and your equipment requirements. Also check that contractors will supply a risk assessment and method statement - a document which describes in detail the step by step installation and operation process. Supporting documentation such as maintenance certificates, electrical testing certificates and staff training certificates should also be supplied where appropriate and also copies of insurance certificates.

If you plan to erect any temporary structures such as gazebos or a marquee you need to liaise with the contractor to make sure this is done safely and correctly. [The Health and Safety Executive provides more information about this.](#)

## **Food safety at community events**

Food often plays an integral part in the success of events such as street parties, school fairs or community fun days. However [Food Safety](#) is important. You must make sure that the food is safe – this means that it is not harmful to human health or unfit for human consumption.

Studies have shown that factors contributing to food poisoning are:

- preparing large quantities of food too far in advance
- incorrect food storage (not under refrigeration)
- poor personal hygiene of food handlers (hand washing).

If you're planning on having a barbecue at your event the [Food Safety Advisory](#) provide information on how to do so safely.

If you are holding a community event or are a charity then there [is guidance on what procedures you need to follow when providing food.](#)

Please contact the Public Protection team if you need any further advice

Public Protection team

Telford & Wrekin Council  
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Telford  
TF3 4NT

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## **Animals**

If you are thinking about having animals at your event e.g. a donkey at a Christmas fair. You will need to consider the safety measures you put in place for this. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) provide advice on what you will need to consider. If pets are allowed to be present at an event you should think about their waste clearing, their behaviour and whether other people might have allergies, phobias or dislikes.

## **Think green**

Being green is often thought of as just recycling. This is one aspect to be considered when organising events but there are other things too:

- support local businesses when hiring/purchasing equipment/services
- ensure your event is inclusive to all groups, are there things you need to offer to ensure everyone can take part
- hold the event somewhere easy to access by public transport or by walking or cycling
- if using parks and open spaces consider the wildlife living in that space
- consider how much power you require and how to minimise usage

Fly posting on the highway and on property within Telford & Wrekin Council boundaries is illegal and is strictly forbidden in relation to the event. For certain types of event official direction signing via the RAC/AA may be accepted.

The Council will look to either issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 43 or prosecute at court hirers who fly-post. Should fly posting take place, the signage will be removed and disposed of as part of the enforcement process and zero tolerance approach by Telford & Wrekin Council.

All promotional signage must be approved with Telford & Wrekin Council, failure to do so will result in fixed penalty fines.

On site signage must be removed within 24 hours of the event ending.

## **Promoting your event**

Depending on your budget and the size and scale there are lots of ways to promote your event. First of all think about who your target audience is and how best to communicate with them. Consider where they go and how they like to receive information e.g. teenagers or senior citizens. Develop a marketing plan to help you organise and plan your activity.

Marketing tools to consider:

- posters and flyers - determine a distribution plan to help calculate quantities required and how materials will be sent out
- enquire about promotional opportunities at the venue eg poster sites, venue brochure, leaflet racks, information on their website, details to their contacts/users
- research specialist groups or organisations who may be interested and send information for forwarding to members/ employees etc

- depending on the type of event some local companies will include information on their intranets
- advertise/place editorial articles in local publications - newspapers, magazines, community newsletters
- set up a webpage where full details about the event can be added as things progress
- create a Facebook page and invite friends to join
- create a Twitter account so that you can tweet about the event as it develops
- add an event banner to your email signature directing people to your web page or Facebook page
- send an email about the event to all of your contacts
- compile a media list of local newspapers, magazines, community publications and websites (particularly those with What's on sections), radio and TV stations, and find out how to send information to them. Look on their websites for contact details but also try ringing them to find out who is the best person to send event information to for a press article or editorial feature. Make sure they have contact details for follow up information. Look for a good story associated with your event which they can use.
- Invite the local media to get involved in your event by sending a reporter/photographer for either pre event or on the day coverage
- gather professional quality photographs to send to the media providing details of the people in the photograph. When taking photographs of people to send to the media ensure you have their signed permission first and if taking photographs of children make sure you obtain signed permission from a parent/guardian
- consider producing an event programme which lists the event's activities, locations and times. This could include a site map indicating first aid provision, lost children point, toilets etc. A programme can also be a useful way to promote your group and potentially increase membership.

By making sure you have contacted all local stakeholders such as Police, Fire Service and everyone in the local vicinity you can make sure they are all aware the event is taking place and they are able to be involved if they want to be.

### **Day of the event**

- Arrange to be on site early and to have the site set up approx. 90 minutes before the event starts.
- Carry out an inspection of the venue/site and make a detailed safety check
- Ensure you have a clearly signed information point for the public and event control point for helpers
- Create and appropriately display signage for the toilets, lost and found children, lost and found property and first aid points and any other facilities which need signposting
- Make sure all facilities and attractions are sited as per your event plan. Ensure first aid facilities, fire extinguishers and any cash collection boxes are in place
- Check waste bins are in their correct locations
- Ensure all structures have been erected safely and that certification has been obtained from contractors to record this
- Display signage where necessary such as emergency exits, first aid points, information and lost children points and other facilities such as toilets and drinking water
- Check all contractors, performers and exhibitors' vehicles have been removed from the site or parked in a designated area before the public arrive

- Ensure clear access and exit routes and adequate circulation within the site. Pay particular attention to emergency routes
- Check all barriers and other protection against hazards are securely in place and there is no risk of falling from staging or other facilities
- Make sure all helpers and stewards have arrived, are wearing the correct clothing and are issued with instructions, radios etc
- Check all lighting is working, including any emergency lighting
- Make sure the public address system is working and can be heard in all areas. Have a megaphone as a back-up in case of power failure
- Ensure all accidents and incidents are recorded with as much detail as possible for future use
- Create a folder which includes all of your event information. Several copies of some items may be required:
  - site plan
  - event overview/site set up arrangements
  - vehicles on site schedule
  - list of key contacts - suppliers, activity providers, staff, volunteers, local police etc
  - stewards/volunteers briefing document
  - emergency plan
  - risk assessment
  - fire risk assessment
  - copies of forms such as photo consent forms, accident and incident report forms, lost/found property, lost/found persons
  - additional useful items such as clip boards, pens, paper, hazard tape, scissors, cable ties, bottled water for staff etc
  - after the event another inspection should be carried out to ensure nothing has been left on site that can be hazardous to future users. This inspection should also identify any damage

## **Evaluating your event**

It is always good to look back and learn from your experience for next time. Think about how to gather feedback from your event visitors and all of the people who contributed to the event. Other people's views and opinions are essential.

How you do this will depend on the nature and size of your event for example you could consider:

- an exit questionnaire to be completed at the event
- a comments wall with post it notes for people to attach comments
- a chart of smiley or sad faces for the different event elements
- designated event staff could walk around the event and invite comments from event visitors
- record any good or bad comments received during the event
- a web link that people can access and fill in on an online survey, you will have to promote the web address in advance e.g. in your event programme to raise awareness. It may also be worth offering an incentive such as free entry into a prize draw for everyone who takes part
- contact the key people who helped with your event and ask them for feedback
- record all of the feedback you receive as well as your own thoughts and opinions for future reference
- after all of the feedback has been collected arrange a de-brief meeting with everyone involved including volunteers. Discuss the successes of the event, what worked and what could be improved and celebrate the group's achievements. Hopefully everyone involved will have

enjoyed the experience and want to do it all again.

It is not an exhaustive list and further guidance can be given by the [Event Safety Advisory Group](#) (ESAG). This group is formed with representatives from Telford & Wrekin Council, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue, West Midlands Ambulance Service and Health and Safety Executive. They produce [guidance for event organisers](#) and will meet to discuss any public events that are considered to pose a significant risk to public safety.