

HOW TO ORGANISE A PUBLIC OPEN SPACE EVENT

GUIDANCE NOTES

1. INTRODUCTION

Events that are well organised are great fun and encourage audiences and visitors to come back for more. Badly organised events will be remembered by many but for all the wrong reasons. The more we can all do to ensure the highest quality events the more we will all benefit.

Organising an event can be a daunting prospect. However, with adequate preparation the task may not be as frightening or difficult as you might expect. It is important to plan ahead and agree the programme of activities well in advance of the event date. An event co-ordinator whose responsibility is to oversee the event should be nominated together with other members of the organisation to lead individual working groups with responsibility for administration, finance, health and safety etc.

If you are considering staging an event on Council owned land, the information detailed in this leaflet, whilst not exhaustive, highlights some of the opportunities, risks and areas you need to think about.

If you wish to stage an event on the town's highway, including pedestrian areas, you should contact Cambridgeshire County Council and the Highways Department.

2. WHO OWNS THE LAND?

A few examples of land owned or controlled by Soham Town Council is the recreation ground, Walter Gidney Pavilion, Soham Town Rangers Football club (tenanted).

3. DO I NEED PERMISSION TO HOLD MY EVENT?

All events and activities held on Council-owned land require an application form to be completed. It is recommended that you apply at least three months in advance, as a decision cannot always be given immediately. If you do leave it to the last minute, it may not be possible for you to be granted some of the necessary licences and may therefore restrict the type of event you can hold.

It is also the responsibility of the organiser/hirer to notify the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services for all events.

4. FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Food hygiene legislation applies to any activity that involves the provision of food including beverages. To obtain further details contact ECDC Food Hygiene Dept.

5. ALCOHOL

For an event catering for less than 500 persons at any one time an application for a Temporary Event Notice has to be made in writing to the Licensing Unit of East Cambridgeshire District Council a minimum of 15 days prior to the event.

For events where over 500 persons are present at any one time a temporary premises licence will be required and written application will need to be made at least 2 months before the event.

6. SELLING OF GOODS

The Council prohibits the sale of illegal goods, animals, birds and fish, replica or real guns, knives and other weapons on its land. Events held on recreation grounds do not need a licence to sell goods (except alcohol licence). A Street Trading Consent will be needed if you propose selling articles in the street. Trading is permitted in certain areas only and you should apply at least two months before your event. East Cambridgeshire District Council's policy on street trading is strict and submission of an application does not guarantee that consent will be granted.

7. INFLATABLE UNITS

Although popular, inflatable units, including bouncy castles, can be extremely dangerous if operated incorrectly. All inflatable units must be operated in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive Guidance Note PM76 "Safe Operation of Passenger Carrying Amusement Devices – Inflatable Bouncing

Devices” (ISBN 0 11 885604 9 – available from HSE Books Tel 01787 881165). A copy is available for inspection at the District Councils Environmental Health Section.

8. RAFFLE

When raffle tickets are only sold at the event and the draw and result is completed at the same event permission is not normally needed. If however, tickets are being sold in advance, then a Lotteries Registration may be required. The licence runs from 1st January to 31st December each year and covers any lotteries your organisation holds during this time. An initial registration fee is payable, and the registration can then be renewed annually with the fee being paid in December/January. Individuals cannot raise money for private gain.

If you are planning to organise a raffle or lottery where £20,000 or more worth of tickets are being made available for sale you may need to register with the Gaming Board.

9. CHARITABLE COLLECTIONS

The permission of the landowner is required or a street collection permit is required before collections can take place. The District Council is able to issue a street collection permit so that you can collect money from the general public on behalf of charities. Applications for a permit must be made to the District Councils Licensing Unit at least one month in advance.

10. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The provision of temporary conveniences needs to be considered. On events on Council land where either the parish, town or District Councils (Depending on location) considers the size of the event requires the provision of additional temporary conveniences, the organiser shall provide these. The cleaning of the public conveniences during and after the event needs to be organised.

11. NOISE

The control of noise including music from public address systems is covered by Environmental Protection legislation and is the area that seems to cause most complaints from the public about events. A lot of problems that arise in this area can be avoided with some thought beforehand. Consideration must always be given to residents living close to where an event is taking place. Nominating a noise monitor who regularly checks the noise levels at the perimeter of your event and adjusts them as necessary is always good practice. Advising local residents of your planned activities can also be helpful, giving start and finish times for any noise. This is not compulsory but highly recommended.

Any event on town council land using amplification for music or speech must end by 2300 hours or earlier depending on whether a Premises Licence is in place and states an earlier time. Events relaying amplified music must comply with any maximum noise level set by the District Council to protect noise sensitive premises, including hotels and dwellings and also with the Noise Council’s Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts. A copy is available for inspection at the Council’s Environmental Health Section.

12. ENTERTAINMENTS

If you propose to have any of the following activities as part of your event programme then you will need to clarify with either the town council or District Council depending on location prior to the event that your activities are licensed:

Performance of Dance Plays
Recorded Music Films
Live Music Boxing, Wrestling or Martial Arts Demonstrations

13. FIREWORKS

On the grounds of public safety, bonfire and firework displays on public land are restricted to professional operators and recognised bonfire and firework societies. Your attention is drawn to the HSE publication “Working Together on firework displays” which can be purchased or a copy downloaded from the HSE website - Firework Displays HSG123 at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg123.htm>. All displays must be organised in accordance with the “Guidance on Event Planning” document. A copy is available from the

Emergency Planning Officer at District Council

14. FUN FAIR RIDES AND CIRCUSES

Where an event involves fun fair rides or a circus then the event organiser must notify the Council at least two months before the event as specific documentation must be completed and returned.

The additional documentation for a Fun Fair includes:-

- Agreement for Fair
- Third Party Public Liability Insurance Cover of a minimum value of £10 million per ride;
- ADIPS (Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme) forms for all rides;
- Risk Assessment;

The Council does not allow circuses using animals. Circuses are required to be a Member of the Association of Circus Proprietors in Great Britain.

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety is your responsibility and as an event organiser you have a duty of care for the people who will work at and attend your event. It is important that you think about the aspects of your event which may involve a level of risk e.g. machinery, fireworks, electricity, fuel etc. what accidents could happen and how you will help prevent them. In some cases specific safety requirements have to be applied and a failure to apply them can result in the cancellation of your event or – in the most extreme cases – prosecution.

This exercise is called a Risk Assessment and is essential in organising a successful event. Risk Assessment is a legal requirement for employers under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. It is also a way of ensuring the safety of everyone involved with your event.

If you are holding an event on Council owned land, a Risk Assessment will have to be completed.

For your assistance in this area, the Council has produced some generic risk assessments, which you may use as guidance for assessing your own events.

For larger events the Health and Safety Executive Purple Guide, Event Safety Guide (HSG 195 – ISBN 07176 24536 – available from HSE Books Tel 01787 881165) provides comprehensive guidance on all aspects of event planning and management. A copy is available for inspection at the Council's Environmental Health Section.

REMEMBER DO NOT COMPROMISE ON SAFETY – YOU CAN ALWAYS REARRANGE YOUR PROGRAMME OR PLANS BUT YOU CANNOT CORRECT THE EFFECTS OF AN ACCIDENT.

16. INSURANCE

Where an event is taking place on Council owned land, you will be asked to provide evidence of your insurance cover, before the event can take place. Policy cover must be for a minimum indemnity sum of £5 million per claim. Insurance cover can be obtained through most local insurance brokers. Alternatively it is possible (with some exceptions) that temporary cover can be provided via the Council (applies to events held with the town council as an organiser) for a reasonable fee. The application form will need to be filled out in the section on services for you to be given a quotation (if appropriate). The town Council may be able in certain instances arrange insurance cover on your behalf for certain events on its own land. The cost for insurance will be decided by the Council's Risk & Insurance officer when the application is processed-please contact us.

This is not available for certain Events e.g. live music performances, firework displays bouncy castles or funfairs. The Hirer is required to tick the appropriate box on the Events Booking Form.

17. DAMAGE TO THE LAND AND BUILDINGS

When setting up an event the possible damage to land and buildings needs to be considered. Where events are held on Council land organisers will be required to repair any damage to the satisfaction of the Council. In specific instances the Council, through its Contractors, will carry out the repair work and recharge you with the total cost. You will be advised at the time of booking whether a security deposit is required.

18. USE OF ROADS

Events, for example fairs, processions etc., which may stop the flow of traffic on the public highway, may require a Road Closure Order. It is important to ensure that a Road Closure Order has been made before an event is advertised. Depending on the nature of the event, Orders are made either by the District or County Council.

Applications should be made initially in writing giving three months notice for large events and an absolute minimum of thirty days notice for smaller ones.

The application must include the following:-

1. The name of the organisation and the purpose for which the closure is being organised.
2. The date of the event.
3. The times of the proposed closure.
4. The roads involved (enclose a marked street map).
5. A daytime telephone number or e-mail address for contact.

Road Closure Orders are made after consultation with the Emergency Services. In the event of any objection being raised it may be necessary for the organiser to amend the application or the matter may be referred to the next meeting of the relevant Committee for a decision. It is therefore recommended that you apply as early as possible. You may be required to provide suitable barriers and signing for which a charge will be made.

19. PROMOTING THE EVENT

If your event is open to the public please contact the Council as soon as you receive approval. They can include details on their 'Events' database for inclusion on event-listings, and display information or publicity for you free of charge. Your event should only be advertised when relevant permissions have been granted for the event to go ahead. You should not publicise your event before these firm agreements have been made. The local news media publish articles on events, where possible give them sufficient notice plus a newsworthy and interesting angle on your event. Finally, it is very important that you obtain authorisation before you display any advertising material as fly posting is illegal. You should only consider using authorised sites and you must obtain the permission of the owner. Fly posting on the highway and on Council property and boundaries is illegal. Certain types of event official direction signing via the RAC/AA may be accepted.

Any posters or placards that are not authorised will be removed without notice and offenders can be prosecuted.

20. BANNERS

For permission to erect lamp post shields and banners across the Highway please contact Cambridgeshire County Council

21. LITTER

You will need to arrange at your own cost for the site to be cleared of litter and disposed of legally. For larger events which the Council deems subject to the Environmental Protection Act, special arrangements must be made for litter. If you require commercial disposal contact ECDC Contract Services.

22. HIRE OF EQUIPMENT

ECDC Contract Services may be able to hire crash barriers, traffic cones, road pins, high visibility vests, rope, bins, tape and A-boards. Other items not listed may be purchased for hire.

23 WHO YOU MIGHT NEED TO CONTACT-examples

Ambulance Service

ECDC-Street Trading

Environmental Health & Licensing Alcohol Licence

Waste services

Risk assessment

Cambridgeshire Fire Service

Cambridgeshire County Council

And finally

24 IS IT WORTH IT

Yes, of course it is! This may all sound complicated but in most cases not all of the requirements detailed in this booklet will apply to your event. We look forward to hearing from you and wish you every success with your event.