

Event Guidance Notes

Introduction

This guidance pack has been designed to provide information to organisations wishing to arrange an event at a British Waterways' 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 extremely diverse, ranging from a simple guided walk, 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).

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, some of which are detailed within this pack. We recommend that at the very least you read through stages 1-4 of the Event Guidance Notes before planning your 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 of the public and participants attending. Carrying out a detailed risk assessment should help to achieve this. 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 are provided with this pack and can be adapted to suit your needs. The risks associated with each event are dependent upon the particular facts and circumstances specific to that event. Therefore, each risk assessment must be tailored to address the event-specific issues. Completed forms should be retained for future reference.

Where the event consists of more than one attraction e.g. stallholders, a funfair plus street entertainers, a written risk assessment may be required 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). HSE Info Line: 08701 545500, website: www.hse.gov.uk.

You may be required to write an Event Safety Plan and Emergency Plan, depending on the size and nature of your event. For guidance on this, refer to the HSE document 'The Event Safety Guide' (HSG195), available from HSE Books, tel: 01787 881165.

Stage 1 - Pre-planning

Detailed preplanning is essential to ensure the event is successful. You may wish to consider the following:

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. You should try to avoid a 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 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? If possible also try to establish the size of the proposed event 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 etc? Some equipment may require certificates of erection by a competent person.

Code of practice - For larger events you should refer to appropriate guidance, particularly the *Code of Practice for Outdoor Events* published by the National Outdoor Events Association Tel: 020 8669 8121, which gives advice on structures, marquees, tents and electrical matters. The HSE *Event Safety Guide* is also a very useful reference document.

Welfare arrangements - The organiser must estimate the number of attendees at 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. You should ensure that the number of permanent toilets is adequate for the number expected to attend the event and these toilets should be kept clean and well 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 should also be made for lost children, missing persons, baby changing and lost property.

Special permission - A Public Entertainment Licence may be needed if the event consists of music, dancing, singing or similar, or if it includes a display or exhibition

of boxing, wrestling, judo, karate or similar sport. Public entertainment licenses are managed by the local authority, and the procedure for licensing varies between each council. Your local licensing officer should be contacted for further details. A fee may be charged for a licence. If your event requires a Public Entertainment License, please provide a copy to British Waterways no later than 6 weeks prior to the event. The procedure for licensing varies between each council.

Insurance - All events will require public liability insurance. All contractors and performers will also need their own public liability cover of a minimum of £5 million. Depending upon the nature of your organisation and the proposed event other insurances may also be required.

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 the summer can be a busy time with hundreds of events taking place within your area.

First Aid - It is advisable that advice with regard to first aid requirements at events is sought from professional specialist organisations, for example St John's Ambulance.

Disabled Access - The Countryside Agency should be contacted with regard to information on how access to outdoor events can be arranged for disabled people, tel: 01242 533311.

Event plan - You should prepare a formal plan for the event which includes a record of all proposals to address the types of issues referred to above (including all health and safety arrangements). This will help you when carrying out your risk assessments.

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 who has overall responsibility for the event, including liaison with other organisations. One person, with suitable experience, should be appointed as the Event Safety Co-ordinator with overall responsibility for health and safety of all those involved in the event (to include the development of event risk assessments, event safety plan and emergency plan). Other responsibilities that should be allocated to committee members include a chief steward and first aid co-ordinator.

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 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.

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 and other structures 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 - The number of stewards will be determined by your risk assessment. 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 (provision of a contact listing will assist here).

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, water rescue 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.

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 need to be reduced depending 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, ease of access 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 collections should be planned to ensure that there are a minimum number of collection points, that regular collections are made and that takings are held in a secure area. 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 belonging to contractors and/or performers 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. Separate entrances should be provided for vehicles and pedestrians, with specific arrangements for emergency vehicle access. 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 serious accidents. 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. The police should be contacted about on-road marshalling.

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, eg marquee providers, entertainment partners etc 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 £5 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 insurance and carry out their own risk assessments. Similar 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.

Working with children - All those working with children should undergo a Criminal Records Bureau. Contact the CRB Information Line for more details, tel: 0870 90 90 811.

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 of the tests should be 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 and in designated areas away from the general public. The same should apply to any fuel supply items such as portable generators etc. Generators should be suitably fenced or barriered to prevent public access. 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 will be required for waste disposal and rubbish clearance, both during and after the event. Named individuals should be given specific responsibilities for emptying rubbish bins and clearing the site. At some events there could be discarded hypodermic needles, which need to be disposed of safely. This will require specialist training and equipment.

Risk assessments - Taking all the above into consideration, you should prepare a detailed risk assessment(s) for the event. In addition, you should establish which specific hazards require individual risk assessments. Initial assessments should be undertaken and any remedial action specified in the updated event plan. A timescale should be specified where necessary. Please refer to Risk Assessment Guidance Notes for further detail.

Event Safety Plan

The Event Safety Plan is a mirror image of the Event Plan while taking into account the health, safety, environmental and heritage aspects as detailed in the risk assessment. The Event Safety Plan will consider all the hazards identified in the risk assessment and ensure that adequate risk controls are in place. For every activity

and type of risk, planned operations and foreseeable emergencies will be taken into account and procedures to be followed in the event of an accident or emergency.

The Event Safety Plan will include: -

- Event safety policy statement
- Risk assessments
- Site safety rules
- The event safety team and their responsibilities
- Setting up arrangements
- Event running arrangements
- Details of marquees, stalls, structures, barriers etc
- Emergency services provision
- First aid arrangements
- Welfare arrangements
- Disabled arrangements
- Security & stewarding
- Communication systems
- List of contacts (in other agencies & organisations)
- Details of any specialist displays etc.
- Transport management
- Clearance of site at end of event
- Future safety meetings and venues
- The emergency plan including accident and emergency procedures

Communication of the event safety plan is an essential part of planning and organising the event. The Event Safety Co-ordinator will ensure that all persons with responsibilities at the event are provided with the required knowledge and information on the contents of the event safety plan.

Once the event safety plan is agreed and communicated, its effectiveness must be monitored and reviewed at appropriate intervals to ensure compliance with its contents. Any changes that are made to the event safety plan must be further communicated. Non-compliance with the event safety plan must be recorded and details of actions taken also recorded.

Emergency Plan

If an emergency occurs at an event the consequences can be very serious. It is therefore necessary to anticipate such emergencies and plan for them in conjunction with the emergency services. The event risk assessment should include emergency planning and identify all the hazards and possible situations in the event of an emergency.

This should be incorporated into a formal emergency plan, the complexity of which will depend upon the size and nature of the event. Details of the emergency plan should be contained in the overall Event Safety Plan.

If an emergency occurs, co-ordination and communications are vital. A clear understanding of duties and responsibilities by all parties is extremely important and must be defined at the planning stage, in consultation with event organisers, stewarding providers and the emergency services.

All staff involved must be briefed on the plan and be aware of their responsibilities should an emergency occur. They should be issued with sufficient detail of the plan to enable them to fulfil their role.

Stage 3 – Final preparations

Just prior to the event, a detailed safety check will have to be carried out. This should include the following:

Inspections - Checklists are 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 communications are working. You may want to carry out more than one inspection during the event. All defects, potential problems and hazards should be noted and remedial action taken. These checklists should be retained for future reference.

Routes - Ensure clear access and exit routes and adequate circulation within the site. Pay particular attention to emergency routes

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 vehicles belonging to contractors, performers and exhibitors have been removed from the site or are parked in any designated area before the public is 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.

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.

Briefing - Check that all stewards and staff have been fully briefed and understand their responsibilities.

Stage 4 – After the event

Site condition - After the event, another inspection should be carried out to make sure that nothing has been left on the site which could be hazardous to future users, again a sample checklist is provided. This inspection should also identify any damage which may have been caused during the event. If any structures are left overnight, they must be left in a safe condition and secure from vandalism etc. If numerous structures are left, specific security arrangements may be required.

- The event organiser should ensure that the site is regularly litter-picked during the event and at the end of each day to ensure that British Waterways' obligations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 - Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse is discharged. If the event organiser fails to do this then British Waterways reserves the right to carry out the works in default and charge the event organiser the cost incurred.
- It is the event organiser's responsibility to arrange removal of all rubbish from the site. You will not be permitted to use any British Waterways skip/litter bins etc. for disposal without prior arrangement.

Incidents/Accidents - If an incident/accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report prepared. A copy of the report, photographs and all other details should be given to British Waterways. An incident form should also be completed and a copy sent to the landowner. A sample incident reporting form is included in the pack. You will also need to advise your own insurance company. If any accident or dangerous occurrence does occur, you should consider if any immediate steps should be taken to prevent a recurrence.

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.