



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

A Guide to Organising Safe Events in Orkney

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Introduction

This guide is not designed to tell you how to run your event but to provide general advice and pointers to help you when arranging any type of event. Its main aim is to enable event organisers to improve event safety.

An event could include outdoor fairs, fetes, concerts, festivals, car boot fairs, small indoor community dances, craft shows, street parties and County fairs. Some of these events may require a Public Entertainment Licence or a Temporary Licence, others will not. This guide is intended to be of use to anyone organising any type of event.

The responsibility of the organisers to ensure safety is just as relevant for smaller indoor events such as jumble sales, presentations or exhibitions, etc, held in a church, school or community hall.

This guide has been designed with you, the organiser, in mind. It aims to cover many of the areas that will need to be addressed when organising any event where members of public are to attend.

Please remember this is only a guide and will not cover every area you might need to consider. If you require further advice please refer to the list of useful contact numbers at the end of this document.

First Steps

Before any planning takes place ensure that you and your organisation or company are prepared to take on the legal responsibility for the overall management of your event including all the health and safety, licensing and insurance aspects. All events must comply with these standards, even if it is a free event or in aid of charity. You and your co-organisers will be responsible under the law for the safety and welfare of everyone at your event. This includes your members, employees, volunteers, contractors and the public.

If you intend to hold your event at one of the County's open spaces you will first need to check availability and legal restrictions of the area, apply for permission to use the land and check if you require a licence to hold the event under the Licensing Act.

Organising Team

Decide on who is organising the event and what their responsibilities will be.

- Form a group or committee that will direct and manage the smooth and safe running of the event.
- Appoint an Event Manager – this person will be in overall charge of the event.
- Appoint an Event Safety Officer – this should be a suitably competent person for the scale of the event, bearing in mind the possible level of risk. Although the overall responsibility for the safe running of the event lies with the group /

committee this person will be responsible for organising and managing safety matters.

- Everyone having a specific responsibility before, during and after the event should be named, have their roles identified and be appropriately qualified.
- Everyone assisting during the event should be properly instructed of their role including what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- Create an event document with everyone's responsibilities and contact numbers. Also include an event timetable, site plan, emergency procedures and any other relevant documentation to fully brief everyone involved in the event.

Venue

Carefully decide where the event should be held.

- Decide which venue would be most suitable; think about the type of event you are organising in relation to the potential numbers of people attending and your target audience.
- The venue must be adequate for your event and any existing hazards must be identified i.e. water hazards, uneven ground, loud music, tripping hazards.
- Consider the impact on the local community, how easy it will be for people to get to the venue, is it easily accessed by public transport, any car parking facilities, is it on a bus route, is it in a residential area.
- Check the conditions of the venue associated to probable weather conditions and the time of year.
- Identify who owns the venue and seek their permission to use it in writing.
- Check if there are any terms and conditions or restrictions that you need to abide by or charges / fees to use the venue.
- Include the dates and times you require the land for the setting up and breakdown of the event.

Date, Times, Entrance Fee

The date and timing of the event is very important.

- Check other event dates so that you do not clash with local or national events e.g. football, tennis, and other annual major events.
- Will the event take place during the day, evening, over a weekend?
- Will the event be free or ticketed? How will tickets be sold?

Consultation

Consider contacting all or the majority of the list below depending on the nature and size of your event.

- Contact the owner of the venue and obtain permission in writing to use the venue. If this venue is hired on a regular basis there will be a standard application form and conditions of use.
- If the venue is part of Orkney Islands Council's property , you must contact the Estates Department on 873535.
- Even if the venue is privately owned, you should contact Environmental Health at Orkney Islands Council (OIC) to inform them of the proposed event.
- Contact the Council's Licensing Staff. They will advise you of which licences you may require for your event e.g. for live music, theatre or sale of alcohol. The licensing process can vary therefore you must ensure you enquire and apply in good time for your event. Please note that the amount charged for licences depends on the type of event and the anticipated size of audience.

Noise

Neighbours are more likely to be understanding if they are warned in advance. You may wish to invite them and/or consider the following:

- Do they work shifts or get up early for work?
- Check the volume at the neighbours' boundary. If it's loud, turn it down.
- If the event is planned to go on after 11pm try to reduce the level of music by containing the noise, for example closing doors and windows. Where possible, put as much distance as possible between the noise source and any neighbouring properties as well as directing the speakers away from the properties.

For advice on minimising disturbance contact Environmental Health at OIC on 01856 873535.

Emergency Services

It is essential that you liaise with the Emergency Services so that they are aware of your event as this may affect emergency routes.

- Contact the local Police who will advise you of crowd and traffic control.
- The local Fire Officer can advise you on safety precautions including which type and amount of fire extinguishers you will need at your event.
- Local First Aid organisations e.g. Red Cross and St John Ambulance will give you advice on first aid facilities.

- All the emergency services will advise you on developing an emergency plan and health and safety guide for your event.
- If you wish any of the emergency services to attend your event, check to see if they require a donation or charge for their attendance.

Specialists and Contractors

- Depending on your event it could be an entertainment agency, a sound and lighting expert, a fireworks company or an equipment contractor. They are the experts in their field and should submit to you their specifications, risk assessments and health and safety information.

Insurance

Insurance ranging from Public Liability to equipment insurance must be taken out for all events

- All events require Public Liability Insurance.
- All contractors and performers will also need their own insurance.
- Where Orkney Islands Council's land is being used, evidence will be required of suitable insurance and such cover is strongly advised where the event is held on other locations.
- If you do not have this cover any claim could be made against all the organisers and their private finances. Other insurances may also be required.
- Check all your equipment hire agreements, insurance is sometimes included as part of the hire or added as an extra cost or all risk cover against damage to the venue or against bad weather conditions causing financial loss.
- If using specialist contractors, check they have their own public liability insurance and that the contractor complies with any policy terms and conditions. Ask to see a copy of their policy.
- Have an accident reporting system. In the event of any injury or damage to property, full details of the incident must be written down and the matter reported to the insurers.

Preparation and Event Management

- Consider the areas outlined below when planning your site layout and event content.
- Draw out a site plan identifying the position of all intended attractions and facilities. Identify an area for the main control point – area used to manage the event, monitor and direct resources when required.
- Plan out designated entrances and exits, circulation routes, vehicle access and emergency evacuation paths.

- Devise a build-up and dismantling programme.
- For all events there must be plenty of space for the public to move around stalls, performance stages, rides, arena and exhibition areas etc, and to have unobstructed routes to exits.
- There should be suitable lighting throughout the site especially if the event continues after dark.
- Provide enough event stewards to assist with the smooth running of the event. Ensure they are identified and fully briefed about their responsibilities and communications are established on site with the organizers i.e. 'walkie talkies'.
- Depending on the event, specific security arrangements may be necessary e.g. to secure property, temporary structures or equipment over night or to handle any cash collection, deal with crowd control or supervise a temporary bar area.
- All security personnel must have the appropriate training and qualifications.
- Provide facilities to enable persons with disabilities to gain access and participate in the attractions and activities.
- Check the ground conditions in public areas and access pathways are suitable for persons with disabilities.
- Provide an adequate number and type of toilets with hand-washing facilities for the number of people expected, including provision for persons with disabilities. Use temporary recirculating or self-contained units if a mains service connection is not available. Toilets should be serviced at regular intervals to keep them fully operational, stocked and clean. Provide directional signs to indicate location and adequate lighting if event continues into the evening. The Health & Safety Executive make the following recommendations within "The Event Safety Guide: A Guide to Health and Safety and Welfare at Music and Similar Events (1999)".

For events with a gate opening time of less than 6 hours duration:

- Female: 1 toilet per 120 females,
- Male: 1 toilet per 600 males,
- 1 urinal per 175 males.

For events with gate opening times of 6 hours or more:

- Female: 1 toilet per 100 females.
- Male: 1 toilet per 500 males, plus 1 urinal per 150 males

These are only guidelines to the number of facilities required and actual number of toilets provided should be determined by the nature of your event, event duration, weather conditions etc.

- Provide an information point on site – an area where all enquiries can be made including lost children, property and event information. At larger events provide site maps for visitors.
- Check to see if there is an electric mains power supply to the venue, if not you will have to provide a power supply via generators. Always use qualified companies and contractors to provide these services.
- Be aware of the smoke free legislation and create signs on site showing the no smoking areas e.g. in marquees etc.
- Be aware of noise levels generated at your event, particularly from live music or fair rides.
- Depending on the direction of wind, residents may be affected. Always provide a telephone number for the public to call during the event.
- Organise adequate number of rubbish bins or even skips around the site. Make arrangements to litter pick and empty bins at regular intervals. Recycle as much waste as you can.

Risk Assessment of the Site

The site (whether an indoor purpose built venue or an outside area such as a field) must be risk assessed. All possible risks and hazards on the site should be identified, risk assessed and then appropriate action taken to reduce or remove the risk. The risks and hazards you are looking for could be water, power cables, wire fences, slopes, uneven ground, stones and machinery.

Below is a sample of a Risk Assessment:

Description of Hazards	Type of Injury that may occur and likelihood of occurrence	Action Taken to Control or Reduce the Risk
Water (Stream) Number 5 on site plan.	Risk of injury or drowning – medium risk	Secure fencing to be erected along stream boundary, stewards to patrol boundary as a deterrent and to repair any damage to the fence. First aid staff to be informed of water hazard and to have resuscitation experience.

Written Risk Assessment

Make a short written assessment of each of the attractions and activities that make up the event. Identify all the possible hazards that could occur. Include all structures, machinery, equipment, lighting, electric cabling and dangerous substances for example, gas bottles and other fuels.

Some activity providers for example, bouncy castles, should be able to provide their own written risk assessments. Ask them for a copy!

For guidance on carrying out Risk Assessments and for any additional information on any Health and Safety related matters contact Environmental Health on 01856 873535.

Fire Risk

In addition to the main risk assessment you should also complete a specific fire risk assessment in order to comply with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

As the event organiser you are responsible to ensure the safety of everyone attending your event but if a fire does break out, ensure people's safety.

Give consideration to

- When planning the overall event, effective fire safety should start at the same time as planning for all other aspects of the event. E.g. site layout, selection of contractors, scheduled set up and breakdown of equipment and infrastructure as well as during the event.
- Identify the fire hazards – sources of ignition (catering appliances, cigarettes, pyrotechnics), sources of fuel (flammable liquids, tents and display stands, litter), and sources of oxygen (high winds). Identify any persons on the event site who may be at risk, staff, contractors, performers, the general public especially disabled persons and children.
- Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk; Evaluate the risk of a fire occurring, evaluate the risk to people from fire. (Detection and warning, fire fighting, escape routes, lighting, signs and notices, maintenance). Record, plan, inform, instruct and train –
- Prepare an emergency plan, inform and instruct relevant people and provide training where necessary.
- Review – keep the assessment under review and revise where necessary.

Site Plan

- This can be a sketched plan, preferably to scale, showing the entire site, routes in and out for cars, people and emergency services. This plan can then be added to showing all the stalls, rides, attractions, arenas, and stages.

- You need to remember that you, being the organiser, have a legal responsibility to ensure the health and safety of everyone that comes to your event including volunteers, helpers and contractors.

Where to Hold the Event

- Is the venue you have chosen adequate for the proposed event?
- Is it large enough for all the activities you have planned?
- Are there any hazards on the site? Water hazards, overhead cables, wire fences, machinery, contact with animal faecal matter from farm stock.
- Is it large enough for the numbers of expected people? Will there be sufficient room for stallholders, caterers, stage and bar? Is there enough room for car parking? (Allow 2.2 people for every car).
- Is the site suitable for the amount of vehicles attending the event?
- Consider Disabled access, facilities and car parking.
- Will regulated entertainment be provided or the sale of alcohol take place? If so, the event is likely to require a Public Entertainment Licence or Temporary Licence from Orkney Islands Council. You may wish to consider approaching venues that already have the requisite licences. Contact the Licensing Team for further advice on 01856 873535.
- Bear in mind that outdoor events can be costly to organise because you may need to provide site services such as toilets, catering, changing facilities and emergency lighting. If the event is ticketed you may also need to fence and steward the area.

Could the Event Affect the Community and Local Area?

Influx of people and car parking

- Suitability of the local roads.
- Access routes for the emergency services.
- Nuisance to local residences (noise complaints).

Food Safety

If using mobile catering, ensure that all caterers have been licensed by a local authority and have food hygiene certificates. You can check these details with the Council's Environmental Health. Ensure that they are sensibly positioned and adequate space should be left between each unit to prevent the risk of a fire spread.

- If you are not employing professional caterers, you must ensure any food you provide is safe to eat. There are high risks with providing large quantities of

food without sufficient facilities. Poor food handling can lead to illness or in some cases death.

- Ask yourself:

How can I do it safely?

- If I can't do it safely, should I be doing it?

What are my responsibilities?

- For information leaflets and general advice contact the Food Safety Team on 01856 873535

Car Parking

Your visitors will usually need somewhere to park, which needs to have a safe access from the road.

- Beware fields that may get boggy if it rains - you may need a tractor.
- Adequate lighting will be needed in the dark and you will need stewards in the car park.
- Do not forget only the Police can direct traffic on the highway.

Electrical Safety

- Make sure that all electrical appliances are in good working order.
- Any cabling work (other than simply using extension leads) will need to be carried out by a competent electrician who will provide you with a certificate to say that the installation is safe and complies with the legal standards.
- Keep cables away from the public.
- Make sure that the system has some sort of electrical trip such as a residual current device (RCD) that will switch off the supply if there is a fault.

These devices save lives.

- Use a mains electrical supply if possible. If you have to use a generator diesel versions are safer than petrol. Keep the generator and fuel away from structures and combustible materials.

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

How do I apply for a Road Closure?

- If it is decided that you will need to apply to close the road for the purpose of holding an event you will then need to speak to someone in Road Services at OIC.

How long does it take to apply?

- Apply as soon as possible but at least 28 days before the event, providing full details of traffic management proposals.

How much does it cost?

- Contact Road Services for further information.

How will I find out if I need a Public Entertainment Licence or Temporary Licence?

- Contact the Licensing Team on 01856 873535.

How much will it cost?

- Contact the Licensing Team on 01856 873535.

What first aid provision should be provided?

The First Aid provision needs to be suitable for the number of people expected to attend and for the type of event. Plan the provision of medical ambulance and first aid services in consultation with the statutory services and appoint a competent organisation to provide medical management. St John's Ambulance and the Red Cross have set guidelines for provision based on your estimated attendance and will charge for attending.

The following gives a guide to the minimum provisions:

Number of people attending	Number of first aiders	Number of first aid posts	Number of ambulances
Up to 500	2	1	-
Up to 3,000	6	1	1
Up to 5,000	8	1	1
Up to 10,000	13	2	2

The first aid post should be clearly signposted and provided with easy access for spectators and an ambulance at all times. Where an ambulance is required, a parking area should be provided close to the first aid post with a clear exit from the site.

Make sure that all persons assisting at the event know where the first aid post is and, where appropriate, the identity of the first-aider.

Provide access to a telephone or provide mobile phones and consider the following points when planning for this aspect of the event:

- Specific and exclusive routes for emergency vehicles.
- Maintaining Cover.
- Helicopters.
- Communications.
- Documentation.
- Medical, ambulance and first aid provision.
- First aid points.
- Clinical Waste.
- Liaison with Welfare Services.

First Aiders, ambulance and medical workers should:

- Be at least 16.
- Have no other duties or responsibilities.
- Have identification.
- Have protective clothing.
- Have relevant experience or knowledge.
- Be physically and psychologically equipped to carry out their assigned role.

Who do I need to speak to about using Council land for the event?

In the first instance contact Graeme Christie, Estates Manager, OIC.

Event Safety Checklist (tick box as required).

Has the following key personnel been identified: Event organisers, safety manager, chief steward, stewards?

Do you need any special permissions?

Is the site suitable for your event.

Have you carried out a risk assessment to make sure you have all the necessary health & safety measures in place: for example Fire Safety ,

Working at Height and Noise Regulations?

Have you decided who should be responsible for health and safety at your event?

Have you provided necessary information for example, maps and site plans, details of gas / electricity installations and an outline programme of events?

Do you know how many people you are expecting?

Do you know where the entrances and exits are on your site?

Are the entrances and exits controlled, stewarded, and suitable for prams and pushchairs and appropriately signed? Will your event cause any traffic congestion?

Do you have trained, briefed and clearly identifiable stewards?

Have you met the needs of disabled people?

Have you set up a reliable system of communication between key people?

Have you set up a reliable system of communication with the audience/ crowd?

Has a control point been identified, call signs predetermined and announcements prepared?

Are crowd control barriers necessary?

Are emergency procedures in place and have these been agreed with the emergency services?

Can emergency vehicles get on and off the site easily?

Do you have effective fire control measures in place?

Do you have adequate first aid facilities?

Do you need any other special arrangements for example, for lost children, lost property, drinking water, toilets, noise control or parking?

If things go wrong, do you have a plan? Does it cover everything? Has it been agreed with the Public Events Group? Who will make the decisions during an emergency? Will you stop the event during an emergency? Have you asked for advice from the emergency services about emergency routes?

Is a licence or road closure order required from the council?

Contacts and Useful Numbers

Orkney Islands Council, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY

Tel: 01856 873535