

# Organising Public Events in Wirral

An Essential Guide



Produced by The Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group

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# Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group

The Borough of Wirral hosts a vast number of events ranging from small-scale fun days to major outdoor festivals and the council recognises that events can make an important contribution to the richness of life in the Borough.

The Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group (WESAG) has been set up to give professional advice providing a single point of contact to event organisers to assist them in delivering a safe event.

**Representatives on the group include:**

- **Wirral Council**
  - **Merseyside Police**
  - **Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service**
  - **North West Ambulance Service**
- Emergency Services and the Council can provide help, guidance and information to help you plan your event safely.
  - They may also insist on certain requirements being met by you to enable the event to take place safely.
  - You should contact this Group as soon as you decide you want to hold an event in Wirral so that you can be given advice and help at an early stage.

You may receive advice from individual members of the Group or it may be more appropriate to attend a meeting with all the representatives of the Group to discuss your plans and arrangements.

Use the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group and the information in these guidelines to help you plan your event.

**You can contact the Group on 0151 606 2290 or e-mail [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

# Responsibilities of the Event Organiser

As the Organiser of an event you are responsible for the safety of everyone involved. Seek help, advice and guidance at the first stage of planning your event.

**Advice and information is available from the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group.**

**e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

Careful planning and organisation will help you to ensure your event is safe. When starting to plan your event consider the following:

- Make sure you have sufficient people to help organise your event.
- Prepare a safety plan and risk assessment.
- Appoint someone to be responsible for Health and Safety at the event.
- Decide who is responsible for making a decision to cancel or abandon the event if necessary.
- Follow advice from the Event Safety Advisory Group.
- Have a clear chain of command and control at the event.
- Consider how as organisers you will communicate with those attending the event.
- Make sure that stewards are well briefed and have appropriate skills and competency for their appointed tasks.
- Ensure you have Public Liability Insurance.
- Arrange a full debrief after your event to learn from your experiences.

This list is not exhaustive and not everything will be required for every event.

**Use the following guidelines carefully and help us to help you run a safe and successful event.**

# Planning Your Event

As an Event Organiser you are responsible for the planning, organisation and delivery of your event.

This guide is intended to assist you in producing and delivering a safe event.

The Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group is a one-stop shop if you are planning an event in Wirral.

If your event (e.g. a street party, fun run, parade, show etc.) is being held on council land or the public highway, you must first ask the permission of the Council and then you must notify the Event Safety Advisory Group of your event.

If your event is on private land, you will need permission from the landowner and you should also contact the Group to gain advice and guidance on safe event organisation and your responsibilities as the Event Organiser.

Careful planning is vital to make the event you are organising safe and successful.

- Begin to plan your event at least 9-12 months ahead. Large events may take longer.
- You will need to tell the Council that you want to hold an event. Permission for an event may be required. See the table in Appendix 1 for details of the notice required by the different authorities.
- Clashes with dates of other events should be avoided. Planning ahead and contacting the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group can help avoid this.

- Find out if permissions, licences or consents are required - you can start by contacting the **Wirral Events Safety Advisory Group on 0151 606 2290 or e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**.
- Appoint an Event Manager and establish a working group, with each member having a defined role.
- Nominate a Safety Co-ordinator to liaise with local council officers and the emergency services. The Safety Co-ordinator will need to be on site during the event.
- Find out if your event will incur costs, for example licences, consents, road closures, cleaning up after the event or any special services that the Emergency Services provide.
- Ensure you have sufficient finances to run the event and to cover all necessary insurance requirements.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that all involved in your event have sufficient insurance.
- All events that take place on Council land, or Council premises, or the public highway must have written permission from Wirral Borough Council and receive a contract for the use of the location. You must also have Public Liability Insurance.
- When planning your event ensure all your plans consider the needs of all people who attend your event.

# Your Event

## Essential information

Information will be required by the Event Safety Advisory Group so they can provide you with appropriate advice and guidance to help you run a safe event. Please ensure that you complete an Event Notification Form in good time giving details of the following:

- Proposed date, time and location of the event.
- The name of the event and contact details of the organiser.
- A full description of your event.
- Maps and site plans where appropriate.
- Full details of any proposed entertainment, for example music/dancing, etc. A licence may be required.
- Details of any proposed fairground.
- Details of any fund raising planned at the event.
- Approximate number of people attending the event.
- Details of expected crowd profile.
- Whether you will be seeking to supply alcohol at the event. A licence is required to sell alcohol.
- Details of any special or unusual activities, for example, hot air balloons, fireworks etc.
- Whether food and drink will be available. A licence may be required.
- Details of all proposed stalls to be located on the public highway giving their location and details of goods to be sold. As an event organiser you must hold the relevant Public Liability Insurance.
- Details of Event Plan, including Risk Assessment as appropriate.
- Arrangements for the disposal of waste.
- Details of communication system to be used during the event, if appropriate.
- Details of training organised for stewards, if appropriate.
- If you are considering any traffic management.
- If you are considering the provision of first aid.

**Important -**  
**Check the table in Appendix 1 giving details of the minimum notification times required.**

# Health and Safety

## Safety is your responsibility.

- As an Event Organiser you have a duty to ensure the Health and Safety of all the people who work at and attend your event.
- You must ensure that you have a named person who is responsible for Health and Safety at your event.
- You must think about the aspects of your event that may involve a level of risk, for example, machinery, fireworks, electricity, fuel generators, etc. and develop a safety plan.
- Consider accidents that could happen and how you will prevent them.
- Failure to apply specific safety requirements can result in the cancellation of your event.
- You must carry out a Risk Assessment. The exercise of identifying threats, hazards or problems before they happen and taking action to deal with them is called Risk Assessment. This is essential in organising a successful event and is a requirement under The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1992.
- Where there are five or more employees the assessment must be recorded. The record should include the significant findings of your assessment, details of any activities identified as being a risk and what measures are in place to control them. It is a way of ensuring the safety of everyone involved with the event.
- Risk Assessment and your knowledge of similar events can be used to develop a Safety Plan for your event.
- The Safety Plan should explain what you want to achieve at the event and how you intend to do it.
- The Safety Plan should enable the reader to understand exactly what steps you have taken or intend to take to ensure that everybody arrives at, enjoys and leaves your event safely.
- Further information and guidance is available from the HSE <http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/running.htm> and from the Purple Guide <http://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk>

Remember don't compromise on safety. You can always re-arrange your programme or plans but you can't always re-arrange or correct the effects of accidents.

## Bouncy castles and other play inflatables: safety advice

Health and safety law applies to the supply, hire and use of inflatables for commercial purposes. Serious incidents have occurred where inflatables have collapsed or blown away in windy conditions. Guidance on the safe use of inflatables and your responsibilities as an event organiser is available here [http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm#utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=inflatables&utm\\_term=fairgrounds-section&utm\\_content=updated-webpage](http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm#utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inflatables&utm_term=fairgrounds-section&utm_content=updated-webpage)

A number of different agencies are likely to be concerned about Health and Safety matters at your event, contact the **Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group for assistance, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

# Fire Safety

The Fire and Rescue Service can provide advice on fire safety requirements for your event. Check the minimum notice required by the Fire and Rescue Service in Appendix 1. Make sure you contact The Event Safety Advisory Group in good time.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is intended to create a fire safe environment in and around all premises being used for, or as part of an event covered by this guide, including temporary structures such as tents and marquees.

The responsible person for each event must:

- Undertake a fire risk assessment, guidance available here <https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities/fire-risk-assessments> and <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Guidance/publications>
- Reduce the fire risk to a minimum and implement appropriate fire precautions.
- Ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety from fire of relevant persons, including employees and all others.
- Prepare a fire safety strategy designed to deal with any fire emergency.
- Ensure that provision is made for emergency vehicle entry and exit when planning your site layout.
- Review the fire risk assessment and fire safety strategy when necessary.

Matters that must be considered to comply with the above and to help with your Risk Assessment are:

- How and where is a fire most likely to start?
- How will the fire be detected?
- How will the alarm be raised?
- What is the evacuation procedure? (This will include Fire Exit signs and stewarding)
- What first aid fire-fighting equipment is required? For example, fire extinguishers.
- Do the stewards/staff know what to do in the event of a fire? (Training)
- What procedures are in place for calling the Fire Service?

**Further guidance is available from Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Merseyside Police

- Details of your event should be provided to the police through the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group (WESAG).
- Check the list of information required on page 4 under the heading Essential Information.
- Check the minimum notice required by the Police in Appendix 1. Make sure you do this in good time.
- Merseyside Police are not event organisers. They will be consulted through the ESAG process and will provide feedback to organisers through that process.
- Most events take place without any attendance from the Police. Some event organisers request the police to assist at their event. However, if assistance is provided there is usually a cost for these services.

**For advice contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Medical Provision

- Appropriate first aid and medical facilities should be provided for your event. You must provide the Ambulance Service with details of your event. You should do this through the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group.
- Areas to be considered when deciding appropriate medical provision, include: venue, type of event, weather, planned activities and expected audience attendance.
- You must ensure that you make provision for emergency vehicle access and exit when planning your event layout.
- Check the list of information required under the heading ' Essential Information' on page 4.
- Check the minimum notice required by the Ambulance Service in Appendix 1.
- You must provide details of medical facilities that will be available at your event including details of your medical provider and a copy of your medical plan to North West Ambulance Service.

**For advice contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

# Stewarding

## Crowd Management

The role of stewards is to manage crowds safely, it is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to ensure there are enough stewards to cover the size of the event. Staffing levels may differ, depending on some of the following factors:

- Whether the event is staged indoors or outdoors
- Weather conditions
- Sale of alcohol
- Timing of your event
- Types of entertainment
- Site characteristics
- Audience profile (e.g. children, vulnerable people etc.)

The role of stewards at any event is to manage the crowd to ensure the safety of those attending the event. This is a specific role. They will need to be easily identified, e.g. florescent tabard. The role of the stewards must be kept separate and distinct from other people you may have at the event, such as those who are there to direct traffic, provide security or meet and greet people as they attend.

## Number of Stewards

Your risk assessment and event plan will help you establish the number of stewards necessary to manage the crowd safely.

## Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure that any steward employed has received appropriate training and has been briefed in respect of their role. The organisation of stewards must include a chain of command, the arrangement of this will depend on the size of the event, however the following model should assist:

- A Chief Steward
- A number of senior supervisors responsible for specific tasks who report directly to the Chief Steward
- A number of supervisors who report directly to a senior supervisor and who are normally in charge of six to ten stewards

All stewards should have a written statement of their duties, a checklist and plan of the event. Your Safety Co-ordinator should brief all stewards before the event.

## Conduct

All stewards must:

- Be aged 18 years or over
- Concentrate on their duties and not the activities of the event
- Not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

## Training

All stewards must be trained so they can carry out their duties of crowd control effectively. This training should include:

- Fire safety awareness
- Emergency and evacuation procedures
- Dealing with incidents such as bomb threats

The level of training will depend on the type of event. Keep a record of the training and instructions provided to stewards.

## Security Stewards

Some events may require SIA licensed stewards.

# Communication

It is essential that stewards, security staff and the organisers are able to communicate effectively. At larger events the facility for at least one jointly staffed office (Event Control) should be made available when necessary. This provides a means of joint communication between participating organisations.

Communication with the public is as important as communication between event staff. In the event of an evacuation, an effective means of communication must be available, this can form part of your evacuation plan.

- You must have a reliable method of communication in place appropriate for the type, size and nature of your event
- It is essential for stewards and organisers to be able to communicate during the event
- It may be necessary to have a central point of communication on site
- You must have an appropriate and robust method of calling the emergency services in the case of an incident
- You must have an appropriate method of communicating with the public. This is particularly important if the site has to be evacuated
- Ensure all those using the communication system are trained in its' use and know how it works
- Ensure all staff are aware of and know how to implement the Emergency Evacuation Plan

# Guidance for keeping children safe

You should make sure all staff, volunteers and organisers know where to take children who have lost their parent or the person looking after them.

You may want to add this to your programme or put up notices for members of the public.

The lost child should have at least two adults looking after them at all times and at least one of the adults responsible for looking after lost children should have been checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## Reuniting the lost child with the responsible adult

- Find out the child's name and age if possible.
- Make a public announcement stating only that a lost child has been found and where they can be collected.
- Do not give out the child's name or a description of them.
- When an adult comes to collect the child, make sure you are satisfied that they are who they say they are. You may ask for identification.
- You must ask for identification if you are not sure that the person is who they say they are, or if the child's behaviour or attitude gives you any reason to doubt this.
- If you are not sure, you should contact the police for advice.
- If the child is obviously upset, you should contact the police immediately.

## What to do if you can't find the adult who is responsible for the child

If the responsible adult fails to appear within 15 minutes of the first announcement (or a similar set time based on the size of the venue), you should contact the police immediately.

## What to do if you cannot find a lost child

If a parent tells you their child is lost, and the child is not found quickly, or you have any concerns, for example, the child is very young, the parent or carer has been drinking alcohol and is not fit to look after the child, you should tell the police and make a note of:

- The child's name and a description of what they look like.
- The name of the responsible adult and a description of what they look like.
- A brief description of any concerns you have.
- Both adults should sign the note and you should pass it to the police if necessary.

When a child is successfully reunited with the responsible adult, don't forget to tell all the people originally involved in the search, including the police if appropriate.

# Traffic and the Highway

## Public Liability Insurance and Form of Indemnity

For all events taking place on the Highway, a Highway Indemnity Form must be completed and signed. This requires varying levels of Public Liability Insurance to be in place prior to the event and evidence of such should be attached to the form.

Public Liability Insurance cover is required as follows:

- Events involving a road closure for up to 250 people - £5 million
- Events involving a road closure for over 250 people - £10 million
- Very large events involving significant road closures e.g. full marathon - £50 million

The person signing the form on behalf of the event is agreeing to be liable for, and to indemnify the Council, against any action, expense, liability, loss, claim, damage, costs or proceedings that may arise because of the event.

We recommend that, at the very least, you obtain evidence of Public Liability Insurance together with a comprehensive risk assessment from any person/organisation/company etc contributing to the event.

## Traffic Management

Events held on the Public Highway may require traffic management which could involve road closures or certain restrictions. All traffic management proposals must be approved by Wirral Council's Traffic and Transportation section, who will liaise with Merseyside Police as and when appropriate. Therefore, it is important that you seek advice at the earliest possible planning stage to ensure provisions can be made.

Planning your event must include consideration of the effect it will have on traffic and the number of people in a particular area. It is important you consider the impact of the event on the area surrounding its location and consider the number of vehicles expected to attend the event.

Dependent on the size of the event, you may need to produce a Traffic Management Plan. A Traffic Management Plan is needed to ensure safe and convenient site access and to minimise off-site traffic disruption. A Traffic Management Plan should include:

- Temporary road closures
- Diversion Plan
- Signage and barriers
- Traffic marshalling
- Vehicle parking and management
- Pedestrians
- On-site vehicle management and temporary roadways

Merseyrail and Merseytravel should also be advised of larger events to establish if existing bus and rail services will be adequate.

You will have already thought about peak times and effects on local traffic when putting together the essential information above. You will need to give extra thought to and write down how you expect to address potential problems to produce a traffic management plan and supply the relevant infrastructure. In particular you will need to consider:

- Location of event for accessibility by pedestrians, vehicles, public transport and emergency services. Particular consideration should be given to the needs of people with disabilities
- Timing of event
- Effect on local roads
- Any proposed road closures will require a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). You will need to submit your TTRO application a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the event and a charge will apply

- Provision of traffic management infrastructure including temporary traffic signs, coning, barriers etc. Confirm details of the Traffic Management Company that are designing and implementing your signing in accordance with the Department for Transport's Traffic Signs Manual. Charges may apply for authorisation of your traffic management plan and supply of equipment if required
- Promotion of event
- Promotion of public transport and directions to the event
- Advice to local residents and businesses about the event and traffic arrangements
- Highway directional signing

Highway directional signing are signs identifying the route to the events and are usually black text on a yellow background. NOTE: We will not allow signs on the highway advertising event.

If advanced directional signing is proposed for the event you will need to:

- Attach a schedule showing the design, size and mounting arrangements of the signs and a plan showing their location
- The date when the signs are to be erected
- The date when the signs are to be removed

## Parking provision

For event safety reasons you may consider that parking needs to be restricted at certain locations in the vicinity of the event. This may be parking identified by parking bays and subject to a traffic regulation order, or it could be general adhoc parking that needs preventing.

Any requirements to limit on street parking require identifying. A plan will be required highlighting the location(s) where parking needs to be restricted. Also an explanation of why the parking needs limiting.

## Public car parks

Some events may require the closing of a public car park to facilitate the event. If such a closure is required then the organisers need to discuss such arrangements with the Parking Services section on 0151 606 2004.

Once you have the approval of Parking Services to close a public car park please include details of those car parks to be closed and any alternative arrangements for parking that are being made.

**For initial advice and guidance on traffic matters contact Wirral Council's Traffic and Transportation section, Tel. 0151 606 2004 or e-mail: [ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk)**

# The Environment

## Waste Management

You must look after the environment when planning your event. You must make sure that the site is suitable for the type of event you are planning, and take account of local concerns such as noise and litter.

It is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to ensure that the event site is left in the same condition as before the event. If the ground is damaged you may be charged for reinstatement by the landowner.

- Events generate large amounts of rubbish. Adequate numbers of litter bins, collection facilities and skips or eurocarts for traders and exhibitors will be required around the site, there is usually a charge for these
- Arrangements will need to be made for emptying bins, disposing of rubbish and site clean up during and after the event
- Large events can have an impact on a much wider area than just the event site, you must consider the effect your event is likely to have on the surrounding locality
- Consideration should also be given to recycling of waste materials where possible

## Noise

- You will need to make an assessment of the noise levels that are likely to be generated by your event
- You must avoid causing noise nuisance to nearby residents or wildlife
- You must determine the health and safety risks to staff and members of the public who may be in close proximity to any loudspeakers
- Competent advice should be sought in relation to the siting of stages and marquees in order to minimise the noise impact of the event on neighbouring properties
- For events likely to generate high noise levels, for example a music event, a responsible person or noise consultant who can be easily contacted should be on site throughout the duration of the event

**Environmental Health can give practical advice on reducing the impact of noise from events. For advice and guidance contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [environmentalhealth@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Single Use Plastic

The Single Use Plastic (SUP) Free Wirral policy has been developed to raise public awareness of the threat and environmental impact of SUP and to work with communities to address the impact of SUP on the environment. Event organisers should ensure that single use plastic is eliminated or reduced as far as reasonably practicable from their event.

# Food Safety

All food businesses must comply with the Food Safety Act 1990 and associated regulations.

The caterer must hold Public Liability Insurance.

You as the organiser, will need to provide Wirral Environmental Health Division with details of any food businesses at least 28 days before your event. Please contact the Event Safety Advisory Group in good time.

Food businesses within Wirral must be registered with Wirral's Environmental Health Division. Food businesses from elsewhere must be registered with their own local council.

In order to comply with the above legislation people preparing food will need to take into account statutory and good practice guidance relating to:

- The siting of food to prevent risk of cross contamination
- The design, construction, cleanliness and repair of facilities and equipment
- Washing facilities for food, food equipment and food handlers
- Waste storage and disposal
- Temperature control of food
- Competence and training of staff
- Food safety practices and supervision

The food safety advice sheets and checklists beginning on page 43 of the CIEH National Guidance for Outdoor and Mobile Catering <https://www.cieh.org/media/1254/cieh-national-guidance-for-outdoor-and-mobile-catering.pdf> may prove useful.

Freely available clean, preferably mains drinking water should be provided throughout the site and in easy reach of audiences and catering operations.

In addition to food safety, caterers should give consideration to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, particularly with regard to the safety of fuel such as Liquefied Petroleum Gas, propane and butane cylinders.

**For advice and guidance contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Sanitary Facilities

You must assess if you require sanitary facilities for your event and consider the following:

- An adequate number of toilets and washing facilities ensuring access for people with disabilities must be provided. The toilets should be maintained in a clean and safe condition throughout the event
- Separate and accessible sanitary accommodation away from the catering area must be provided for caterers and catering staff
- Direction signs and lighting should be provided to all facilities at entrances and exits where necessary

**For advice and guidance contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Temporary Structures

Some events will require temporary structures, such as stages and lighting gantries, grandstands and large marquees, where such structures are to be used, consideration must be given to the following points:

- The weather
- Correct siting and position of structures
- Ground levels and conditions
- Appropriate design and material
- All marquees must comply with the relevant flammability standards, to the satisfaction of the Fire Safety Officer. The marquee provider should hold safety certificates for their structures.

Appropriate safety documentation should be sought from the company providing the structure. They should be skilled and experienced in this type of work and have appropriate insurance cover. Documentation should include:

- Risk assessment
- Method statement
- Current Public Liability Insurance
- Company health and safety policy
- Certificate of work completion

**For advice and guidance on Building Control contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## HM Coastguard

- For events on the beach and along the coastlines please ensure you inform the Coastguard.

**You can contact the Coastguard through the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

## Civil Aviation Authority

- You will be advised if you need to contact this organisation if you plan Air Displays, Fireworks, Hot Air Balloons etc

**You can contact the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group for advice, e-mail: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

# Appendix 1 - Event Safety Advisory Group Event Notification Timetable

Authority	Minimum notice required	Preferred notice for large events
Police	3 months	9 months
Police Licensing Office (Alcohol)	3 months	9 months
Licensing	3 months	9 months
Ambulance	3 months	9 months
Fire Service	3 months	9 months
Building Control	3 months	9 months
Highways	3 months	9 months
Environmental Health (Health & Safety, Food & Noise)	3 months	9 months
Parks and Countryside (for land use agreement)	3 months	9 months

**Advice and information on all these matters is available from the Wirral Event Safety Advisory Group. Tel. 0151 606 2290 or email: [events@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:events@wirral.gov.uk)**

