

# Event Safety Guidance

## Introduction

There is an old saying, “failing to plan is planning to fail”.

With this in mind the Rossendale Event Safety Advisory Group formed these Event Safety Guidelines, with the intention of providing help and guidance to all those who wish to plan events. This guide is intended to give you an idea of those safety issues which may need to be considered and where required, to direct you to sources of more specialist advice.

Rossendale Borough Council wish to see the local culture and economy thrive whilst striking a balance with public safety. Our (objective/aim) is to ensure that the public are protected at all events held in Rossendale and this information guidance is designed to help you create a successful but more importantly, a safe event.

The theory of health and safety assessment can be complex; however, there is one basic rule: **Assess the risk, and then if you are in doubt about the safety of the event either do not hold it or put procedures in place to make it safer.** If you do not recognise the risk in the first place, you cannot think about minimizing it.

## Event Safety Guide

### Rossendale Event Safety Advisory Group

Our group has been established to assist you with organising your events safely, and is made up of the following representatives:

- Rossendale Borough Council
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Lancashire Fire & Rescue Services
- North West Ambulance Service
- Lancashire County Council

Where appropriate, we will ask others to join the group. The Rossendale Event Safety Advisory Group will consider all event notifications and will offer advice and guidance to all parties concerned.

You can be assured that notifying us allows all of the responsible agencies to be aware of your event and allows these agencies to effectively plan and prioritize their duties and responsibilities. Your notification also allows you to notify all relevant parties through one central point. This will expedite licensing and agreements with minimal bureaucracy.

The advice we provide and the sources of specialist knowledge we may direct you to, complements any legal requirements and government guidance, which you must also refer to.

The group does not supersede any permissions, permits, licenses, or registrations that you may require.

## **Event Organisers**

Event organisers remain responsible for the safety of those persons involved in the event and those who attend the event.

The priority for event organisers is to minimize the risk to participants, the public, volunteers and staff. This is done by:

- Identifying the risk
- Assessing the likelihood of it happening
- Assessing the severity of the result if it did happen
- Introducing control measures to minimize it happening and/or the effect if it cannot be prevented.

For every event there must be a competent named person with whom the Rossendale Event Safety Advisory Group will liaise with. This will normally be the Acting Event Safety Officer. Organising committees should appoint such a person at an early stage.

For events, timescales must be allowed for Legal requirements, such as Road Closure Orders or Licences to be advertised and obtained.

## **Licensing**

Under the Licensing Act 2003, a premises license or Temporary Event Notice will be required for any event involving the sale by retail of alcohol and /or regulated entertainment. Under the Act, regulated entertainment is defined as:

- Live music
- Recorded music
- Plays
- Films
- Boxing or Wrestling
- Indoor sporting event

Please contact: [licensing@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

## **Public Liability Insurance**

You must have Public Liability Insurance to cover your event with a minimum level of £5 million pounds (5 million pounds).

## **Events on a Highway**

The police and Lancashire County Council do not generally support any event that takes place on a highway due to the inherent dangers to road users and the safety of the participants.

Closing a public highway can be a complex legal matter. If you are considering closing a road for an event, you will be required to make an application in writing to Lancashire County Council as the Highway Authority.

They will carefully assess the implications of each proposal. You should note that only closures of minor roads or streets can generally be considered and there is usually a cost incurred in obtaining the correct the requisite orders. The police do not have the powers to close roads for pre-planned events.

All temporary signage on the public highway has to meet the legal national standards and will require specific approval from the Highway Authority.

### **Outdoor sites**

You should ensure that:

- The site will be suitable in all weathers
- Any staging/structures will be safe in bad weather conditions
- There are no trip, slip or other similar hazards to the public
- Wet weather will not cause any other additional hazards, and
- There are no obvious hazards on both the site and surrounding areas, such as overhead power lines, stored chemicals or machinery, unfenced holes, steep drops between different ground levels, ponds/water and unsafe or other structures that the public should be kept away from by means of barriers or fencing.

### **Circus/Fairground/Fairground Rides/Inflatables**

If you wish to include amusements activities at your event, it is important to obtain the required safety information about the activity from the operator. This is to ensure that the sitting and operation of the amusement does not:

- Compromise safety in relation to the overall risk assessment for the event
- Block the emergency access routes
- Cause audience congestion problems

If you are incorporating fun fair rides, inflatables, or a Circus then you must notify the Event Safety Group at least two months before the event and produce evidence of the following documents:

- Public Liability Insurance Cover of a minimum value of £5 million per ride
- Current Health & Safety Test Certificate
- Current Risk Assessment Forms

If you or the fun fair operator is unable to provide the relevant documents then the Event safety Group will have no option but to refuse your application to incorporate fun fair rides at your event.

### **Environmental issues**

- As the event organiser you must, at all times, have regard for environmental concerns. This will include taking account of whether the venue is suited to the type of event proposed.
- Additionally, attention must be given to the concerns of local residents in respect of noise and litter. Welfare and comfort facilities should be reviewed such as toilets, access to water, etc.
- Provide an adequate number and type of toilets for the number of people expected, including provisions for people with disabilities. It is best to use toilets that are connected to the mains services, but temporary units may have to be provided.
- Arrange for the toilets to be serviced regularly to keep them fully operational, clean and hygienic throughout the event. Provide direction signs to indicate the location of the toilets and provide adequate lighting where necessary, particularly if the event continues into the evening.
- One event can generate a lot of rubbish and you must provide an adequate number of rubbish bins around the site where they will be most required. Make arrangements to regularly empty the bins and to satisfactorily dispose of the rubbish at the end of the event.

Further information can be obtained from the Communities Team – Tel: 01706 217777

### **Disabled Access**

- You must ensure that the needs of disabled and disadvantaged spectators and participants are considered during the planning arrangements. You should consider not only normal access and egress but also emergency evacuation of such people.

### **Overcrowding**

Overcrowding can result in:

- Public disorder caused by frayed tempers
- Crush injuries
- Evacuation difficulties

This is particularly important at indoor venues where the maximum number of people will be dictated by the area of the floor space available or the size and number of fire exits to enable evacuation in 2 ½ minutes.

A normal pair of exit doors at 1.2m wide will allow up to 240 people to pass through in 2 ½ minutes. On calculating the number of exits, the largest exit should always be discounted.

Outdoor - provide at least 2 pedestrian exits from the site. The number and size of the exits should be large enough to permit an orderly evacuation from the site in less than 8 minutes.

Exits should be no less than 1.2m clear width (which allows up to 1,000 people to pass through in 8 minutes), spaced well apart around the site, clearly marked, kept free from obstructions and well lit, where the event is likely to last beyond dusk.

## **Crowd Dynamics**

There are simple crowd dynamics for events off the highway. The site should be big enough for all activities planned.

For all events, there must be plenty of space for the public to move around the stalls, rides, performance or stage, arena or exhibition areas etc, and to have unobstructed routes to exits. This is especially important at indoor events to prevent stalls or goods obstructing exit routes and doors. A guide is that a fire appliance should be able to drive within 50 meters of any attraction or stall via unsuitable hard standing with a weight loading of 12.5 tonnes.

You should:

- Prepare a final sketch plan of the site, preferably to scale, showing the position of all the activities/attractions, circulation routes and exits. This should be to a scale of 1:100 or 1:200. This drawing should be updated if your plans change and copies of the final version should be held with the safety officer at the event,
- Have enough exits for a mass orderly evacuation on site,
- Have the entrance and exits routes identified for emergency vehicles. These should be agreed with the emergency services bearing in mind the size and weight of their appliances,
- Ensure that vehicle and pedestrian queues should not obstruct movement on adjacent public highways.

You must ensure that you have adequate capacity within your site. Pay booths should be positioned well away from the access points into the site allowing safe queuing away from the public highway. This should also be taken into consideration when arranging stewarding of the site.

Arrange separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances and exits to the site to avoid opposing traffic and make sure that vehicles and pedestrians can enter and leave safely. Make sure that the road or footway that they are entering, is wide enough to accommodate them safely.

Common sense measures, such as charging people for entry after they have parked, rather than at the entrance gate, will reduce queues. Wherever possible, try to provide sufficient queuing capacity inside the site.

At all events it is important to make sure that vehicle and pedestrian entrances are well stewarded. Remember, only the police officers and community support officers have the legal right to direct or control traffic on a public highway.

Design car-parking areas to eliminate hazards to pedestrians such as reversing vehicles. Consider deploying stewards to car parking areas. Except for emergency purposes, vehicle movements in the public areas of the site during the event or as the public are leaving should not be permitted.

Safety barriers have dangers as well as benefits. Decide if you need to provide barriers around attractions, displays and equipment to protect the public and/or to prevent unauthorized interference, taking account of the presence of excited people, especially children.

Examples where barriers may be required include a front stage, barbeque or spit roasting, moving machinery, displays or demonstrations involving steam engines, welding etc.

Any barrier or fencing used must be capable of withstanding any reasonably foreseeable loading. The design must be suitable to contain and protect people, including small children. Single rope barriers may not be sufficient.

Be aware that even mesh barriers may prevent small children from seeing or being seen. On pedestrian routes, the absolute minimum width of the barrier should be 1 meter and up to 3 meters is desirable on heavily used routes. No part of the barrier should be closer than 450mm to the edge of any route carrying vehicular traffic.

## **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what is likely to happen. The identified risks and the control measures that you will put in place to reduce or eliminate such risks. Do not be fooled into thinking that just because an event has taken place safely for a number of years that the risks and control measures in place are still valid. Times change and as such, it is vital that an event is risk assessed objectively every time it takes place.

Events normally have 5 phases:

### **Build up**

- Planning the venue design
- Venue capacity
- Entrance and Exit requirements
- Emergency Access (Blue Route)
- Sight lines
- Video screens
- Seating
- Slopes
- Observation Points

- Production infrastructure
- Storage
- Fire Safety
- Ambulance and First Aid Points
- Sanitation
- Perimeter fencing
- Barriers
- Signage
- Welfare
- Selection of Stewards and Staffs
- Sub-contractors and concessions
- Planning of Stages, amusements and marquees
- Event schedule
- Site Security
- Safety infrastructure
- Heating, lighting, utilities

#### **Load in**

- Delivery and installation of equipment and services, such as stages, marquees and public address systems etc.

#### **Show**

- Assess and Egress arrangements
- Crowd management strategies
- Park and Ride/Parks and walk Zones
- Transport strategies
- Access control
- Welfare arrangements and facilities
- Contingency plans
- Excess numbers

#### **Load out**

- Removal of all equipment and other infrastructure referred to at load in above

#### **Breakdown**

- Planning to control risks to return the venue to normality, collection of rubbish, disconnection of power etc.

### **Site Plan**

The site plan should be clear and accurate. Maps can be printed from- [www.maps.google.co.uk](http://www.maps.google.co.uk) Think about the types of maps you will need for your event. You will probably need three versions of the full site map. These should all be based on the same basic document but with different levels of detail added.

- Public copy - for programs and entrances etc. this does not need a huge amount of details but should include major areas, entrance and exits, first aid, toilets, information point, lost children etc
- Participants/staff copy- this is more detailed than the public copy of the site map. It should include details of all entrances and exits, emergency entrances and Blue route, control room location, location of stage, generator, all major areas of the event etc
- Control room and Event Safety Group copy - same as the above but also contains additional useful control information. This may include Emergency Evacuation location, high risk areas, procession routes etc.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

An Emergency Evacuation plan should be drawn up by you in liaison with the Emergency services and the Event Safety Group. The plan should describe arrangements for matters such as:

- Who makes key decisions
- Roles of various personnel e.g. management, stewards
- Stopping the event
- Emergency route for the public
- Message codes to stewards & the public address announcements
- Rendezvous point for emergency services
- First aid treatment areas
- Route to emergency hospitals

### **Bomb Threat**

If a bomb threat is received, details of the call must be recorded as accurately as possible (The Police and Event Safety Group are able to provide guidance on this). It is essential that the information is immediately passed to the Police for evaluation and response.

The Police will advise on the validity of a threat. Generally any decision to evacuate or move people will rest with you. The exception is where a device is found or where police have received specific information. In these circumstances the Police may initiate action and the directions of the senior Police Officer present must be complied with. If a bomb is a real threat,

care must be taken to be alert for secondary devices. These might be aimed at the emergency services or the moved/evacuated audience.

## **Emergency services**

The emergency services need to ensure that your event does not pose operational problems, either at the scene or the surrounding areas. Notifying the Rossendale Event Safety Advisory Group of your event enables the relevant agencies to be aware of your event and assists them in their operational strategies.

## **Fire Fighting**

Provide equipment throughout the site for putting out small fires. These may be fire extinguishers and fire blankets. Make sure that the stewards know where the equipment is and how to use it. They should be told not to attempt to fight major fires. Their priority should be evacuation of people, not saving marquees.

The fire Brigade should be called at once to any fire, suspected or real, however slight.

When parking vehicles, ensure that there is sufficient gap between rows of parked vehicles to minimize the risk of vehicle fires spreading.

In respect of an 'Open Air Event', a Fire Risk Assessment will be required in accordance with the Fire Safety Order 2005.

(Guidance for this can be found at [www.firesafetyguides.communities.gov.uk](http://www.firesafetyguides.communities.gov.uk) Guide for 'Open Air Events')

If you intend to use pyrotechnics please provide details with the fire risk assessment.

Access and egress for emergency vehicles must be indicated on a detailed site plan enclosed with your notification form.

## **First Aid**

The First Aid provisions needs to be suitable for the number of people expected to attend and the type of event.

Make sure that the basic services for first aid are always available. At smaller events, i.e. indoor markets, jumble sales etc, a qualified first aider should be present and an area suitable for first aid treatment, including a water supply, should be available. A voluntary first aid society can be asked to provide a first aid post.

A first aid post and organisers control centre should be located near the outside of the site, not in the centre of it. They will be of no use if they are in the centre of the incident itself.

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 with a clear exit from the site. Make sure that all persons assisting at the event know where the first aid post is.

## **Stewards**

You will need to provide enough identifiable stewards to cater for the size and nature of your event. It is imperative that stewards are adequately briefed as to their roles and responsibilities.

If stewards are controlling access to premises licensed for alcohol, they must be licensed by the Security Industry Authority. It is not the role of the police to provide stewarding at events, nor to provide training to steward personnel.

It is essential that stewards and organizers are able to communicate effectively. Just as important is communication with the public. In the event of evacuation for example, an effective means of communication must be available.

If the event is to last several hours, extra stewards should be available to allow others to take meal breaks etc.

## **Communications**

Provide mobile phones or radios so contact can be established between the safety officer and the stewards and any other people who are responsible for activating the contingency arrangements. Compile a list of contact names/telephone numbers/E-mail addresses within your organisation and those you may need to contact during the event, eg, local authority, emergency services etc, and circulate these to all the senior staff who will be on duty at the event

## **Control Room**

A control room may be needed at larger events, and where one is needed, it should be on the outside of the main event area and not in the centre of it. Should there be an emergency, the control room will not be able to perform its functions if it has been located in the centre of the emergency situation.

At larger events provide site maps at the entrance and around the site and signs to indicate the other activities, attractions and facilities

## **Information Point, Lost Children and Lost Property**

Provide a location where enquiries can be made about lost children, lost property and for information about the event. This could be in the control room itself but should be on the outside of the main event area and not in the centre of it.

## **Public Address Systems**

Consider providing a public address system for announcements and instructions to staff and the public. For smaller events, a portable loudhailer may be sufficient. Larger events may require a system with an emergency power backup.

### **Staff Safety**

Think about the routines and security arrangements for staff who are handling cash, many of whom may be unfamiliar with this role.

If the event is to finish late, make sure that all the staff can get home safely and that they do not have to wait alone at bus stops, stations and/or travel alone. Consider arranging taxis for staff where public transport will be a problem.

### **Food Hygiene**

You must also ensure that food preparation is undertaken in hygienic conditions and complies with the relevant legislation.

### **Barbecues and Hot Food Outlets**

Barbecue hazards include the use and storage of fuel (e.g., gas bottles), naked flames and hot components. Safety barriers may be required.

- Guidance, queries and advice on Food Hygiene or Barbeques and Hot Food Outlets at events can be obtained from the Environmental Health Department on 01706 217 777 – [environmentalhealth@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

### **Stalls**

All stallholders will be required to complete a risk assessment form for their own stall.

### **Staging and Structures**

If seating, staging, lighting, sound towers etc, are to be erected, this must be done by a qualified professional. Written certification should be obtained from them to say that the structures are safe.

The open edges at the side and rear of any performance platform should be guarded to prevent people from falling off. Secure and safe flights of steps should be provided to access the platform.

All staging structures should be free from trip hazards, i.e. sharp edges and points.

### **Electrical Supplies, Installations and Equipment**

The whole installation, including wiring, switchgear and any generator, should be installed in a safe manner by a qualified electrician who should provide a written certificate to prove this. The safety standard of the installation should be at least that of the current I.E.E. wiring regulations.

A safe temporary electrical supply should:

- Protect the supply by suitable earth leakage device(s), normally a R.C.D, having a maximum tripping current rating of 30 MA
- Use cables of the correct rating for the possible load with no damage to the insulation and using the correct type of connectors for external use,
- Position supply cables so they are not liable to physical damage, e.g., not through door openings, across the surface of the walkways/roadways/public rights of way/ public highways,
- Position cables including those to sound equipment, so as not to cause trip/other hazard,
- Have generators and/or electrical, including switchgear, barriers to prevent unauthorized access and/or interference.

### **Emergency Lighting**

There should be suitable lighting throughout the site, including emergency lighting if the event will go after dark.

### **Water**

Consider making free drinking water available on site

### **Toilets**

Provide an adequate number and type of toilets for the number of people expected, including provision for people with disabilities. It is best to use toilets that are connected to mains services, but temporary units may have to be provided.

Arrange for all the toilets to be serviced regularly to keep them fully operational, clean and hygienic throughout the event. Provide direction signs to indicate the location of the toilets and provide adequate lighting where necessary and if the event continues into the evening.

Where possible locate the toilets at different points around the venue rather than concentrating in one small area, to minimize crowding and queuing problems.

### **Welfare Facilities**

Provide facilities for people with disabilities wherever possible to enable them to gain access, see and take part in the attractions and activities. Do not forget to make adequate provision for them in car parks and/or drop off zones.

Make sure that the ground conditions in public areas and access pathways are suitable for people with disabilities, as well as families with toddlers and pushchairs.

## **Community Safety**

In promotional literature/event programmes, suggesting directions and travel routes with advice on planning journeys, travelling in groups and avoiding short-cuts, can be helpful, particularly if the event is to finish late.

**Finally**, the information contained within this booklet is intended to highlight the importance of making safety your number one priority in planning your event.

These considerations are by no means exhaustive and can be supplemented by visiting <http://www.hse.gov.uk> where further reading material is available. Careful planning and organisation will help to ensure that your event is both safe and enjoyable for everyone involved.

**The Agencies of the Event Safety Advisory Group will not be held responsible for any death, personal injury or loss or damage to property (including property owned by more than one of the agencies) caused by or arising from the holding of your event and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have taken all necessary steps (including insurance) to protect yourself from liability of this nature.**

**If your event is to be held on council owned land, you will be required to sign a form indemnifying the council against any action, claim, loss, costs or expenses resulting from a consequential upon any liability of the above nature. You will also be required to agree to insure and provide evidence of such insurance with an insurance company to cover liability of this nature up to the value of £5,000,000 in respect of each and every claim.**

The Event Safety Advisory Group wants to help you and we want your event to take place in Rossendale. The advice given in this document may appear onerous, but everyone has to strike a balance between safety and pleasure.

Please complete the event notification form and return it to the address provided. Do make the effort to talk to the group and remember that you are welcome to attend a meeting of the Event Safety Advisory Group if you wish to discuss any safety matters. There is a great deal of professional advice to assist you and remember - its free!