

Large Events

Guidance

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Youth work organisations should pay particular attention to the safety management of large scale events such as: large fundraising, sponsorship or sporting events; jamboree style events; recruitment or promotional fairs; religious festivals; other events involving large groups of people.

Such events are often infrequent and usually fall outside of normal day to day delivery and the risk management systems that are routinely used. They may be unfamiliar in nature to workers, necessitate the use of an unfamiliar venue, require the recruitment of volunteers or seasonal workers, and/or require the involvement of external partners or services. All of which can add elements of risk that need to be considered and effectively managed.

Risk Assessment

Such events are likely to involve greater logistical and other considerations than day-to-day programme delivery so detailed planning is important. Part of this planning will be producing a specific and bespoke event risk assessment which considers all risks associated with the venue, activities, services provided and the participants. Caution is advised when using, amending and adapting an existing risk assessment written for day to day activities to fit a bespoke event. Doing so does not encourage the person(s) undertaking the assessment to consider the specific risks associated with the specific characteristics and factors affecting the event, and may result in significant risks being missed.

Key factors to consider with large events may include:

- Participants: who are they; what are their collective and individual needs; how much is known about them in advance; what prior experience do they have?
- Is the number of attendees expected to be 200 or above? If so you need to ensure you are compliant with Martyns Law and any required actions are included in your risk assessment and safety briefing.
- Temporary structures such as tents or marquees: These should be erected safely by competent persons
- Fire safety: a dedicated fire risk assessment conducted by a competent person may be necessary
- Interaction with members of the public
- Worker competency to carry out roles and tasks which may be unfamiliar to them
- Recruitment of additional workers or volunteers
- Provision of services by external partners or agencies (e.g. first aid, security, stewarding, toilets and welfare facilities)
- Vehicle management: car park, traffic routes & pedestrian walkways
- Food safety & hygiene
- Slip and trips: identification of hazards and consideration of poor light conditions, particularly for residential events or those taking place in the darker months will be required
- First aid: use of dedicated first aid points, appropriate equipment and first aid tents
- Other site-specific hazards: including overhanging or dangerous trees, bodies of water, biting insects, roads and steep/uneven ground
- Manual handling: lifting and moving loads involved with setting up and taking down structures and moving equipment
- Use of chemicals, fuels and cleaning materials in association with COSHH Regulations
- Provision of welfare facilities including access to sufficient toilets and washing facilities
- Accessibility, including inclusivity for disabled participants and emergency evacuation requirements
- Electrical safety: a particular risk for temporary venues such as large tented sites/settings where electrical safety should be managed and signed off by competent contractor
- Weather conditions: the effect of adverse conditions and access to shelter should be considered in contingency planning. Consideration should be given to the potential weather conditions and length of day at the time of the event, especially when planning and a pre-visit is undertaken at a different time of year.

Participants

Key factors relating to the participants attending the event will need to be considered and will have a significant impact on the risk assessment and any required control measures and/or associated protocols, depending on who they are and their relationship to the host organisation.

Key considerations will include:

- Are young people / participants already known to the host organisation? If not, is the host organisation able to understand their individual needs in advance?
- A safeguarding assessment should be carried out in consultation with a Designated Safeguarding Lead to agreed, in advance:
 - Suitable supervision arrangements
 - Security requirements
 - First aid provision
 - Safer recruitment procedures for all workers including those from third parties
 - Consideration for any other adults who may be in attendance, i.e parents/carers or members of the public
- Will young people / participants arrive accompanied and supervised by workers from other youth work organisations? If so, effective communication with said organisations in advance will be important to understand requirements.
- Will parents/carers be in attendance? If so, what information is required from them, i.e. medical, dietary information? Supervision and safeguarding arrangements should take this into account.
- Will members of the public be permitted? If so, a risk assessment should consider the associated risks and affect the supervision and safeguarding arrangements in place.
 - Does the venue have a limited capacity? If so, how will numbers be managed and monitored?
- A clear code of conduct should be in place to include a policy on drinking alcohol and/or smoking applicable both to young people and workers.
- Do the young people / participants have prior experience of the type of activity / event (i.e. for sporting activities or physical challenges)? A lack of prior experience may increase the associated health and safety risk and should be considered.

Staffing

Staffing will be of particular importance to manage risks associated with large events, but may also present additional risks which need to be considered. Tasks and roles to be undertaken may be wide-ranging and unfamiliar to an organisation's existing workforce.

Factors to consider with staffing:

- Workers undertaking safety related tasks or roles unfamiliar to them e.g. car parking, stewarding or overnight supervision.
 - Is additional training required? What briefing and information do workers require to undertake the role? What support will be available to workers during the event?
- Recruitment of volunteers or workers to undertake specific roles i.e. security or stewarding
 - What training, briefing and instruction is required?
 - Consideration should be given to safeguarding issues, including supervision arrangements to ensure volunteers/external workers are not left unsupervised with young people.
 - Who provides supervision & support for volunteers/external workers?

External Partners

Large events may require external services such as first aid or medical provision, portaloos or temporary structures such as tents or marquees. Before booking any external services, youth work organisations should undertake a process of due diligence of the service providers to gain assurances that services will be suitable for the aims of the event and needs of young people and that necessary safety standards are upheld.

A first aid needs assessment should be carried out by a competent person to ascertain the appropriate level of provision required in terms of the level of qualifications of first aiders/medical professionals and available equipment.

Temporary structures such as large tents, tipis, or marquees must be erected in accordance with specific standards and by competent and appropriately skilled persons. The risk and potential impacts of fire on a tented site are so catastrophic that a dedicated fire risk assessment should be carried out before occupancy by a competent person with specific expertise of conducting such assessments. Government guidance on conducting a fire risk assessment for outdoor events can be found here.

Youth work organisations should consider whether any work at height or use of stepladders will be required when erecting or fitting/rigging larger structures such as marquees, and whether the Work at Height Regulations 2005 apply. It would normally be advisable to outsource this work to an external partner/contractor.

Using competent external contractors is a good way of managing many of the health and safety hazards but youth work organisations still have a duty to select providers appropriate to the task. Contractor management will equally be important to ensure that their timings are coordinated to minimise safety risks to participants. For example, it would be advisable for portaloos to be emptied whilst young people are not on the site.

When considering the use of external partners it is important to ensure that those partners have the appropriate and necessary insurances in place, including adequate public liability insurance as minimum.

Event Security

Reasonable measures should be taken to ensure the site and event is kept secure, both from members of the public entering, where applicable, and young people departing without permission. This could be reviewed as part of safeguarding with input from the youth work organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Unknown individuals should be challenged by workers and the police called if concerns arise
- Consider the use of a sign-in/sign-out system
- Signage at the perimeter, identifiable staff in uniform and even temporary CCTV will help to promote security and deter potential intruders
- Where applicable, provide lighting so users can safely access facilities at night and help detect unauthorised access

Emergency planning

Youth work organisations should ensure an emergency plan is in place to include information about what will be done in the event of a fire, major accident or some other disruption that may involve having to evacuate the site at short notice. This should include how this will be enacted at night if applicable for residential events.

Considerations may include:

- Ensuring evacuation routes are known to all persons and kept free of obstacles
- Emergency access points and locations of fire points
- Maintaining access for emergency services
- Access to a fixed telephone or reliable mobile telephone reception is essential
- Emergency plans should be communicated to all workers and be rehearsed as part of induction before young people arrive and include key emergency situations such as fire, intruders/security breach, missing young people etc.

Environmental considerations

Youth work organisations should consider means of minimising the event's environmental impact, and should look to promote environmental awareness with young people.

Factors to consider may include the following, where applicable:

- Protection of grass around heavy use areas of vehicle or foot traffic e.g. central areas, bathrooms, entrances, gates etc.
- Rubbish & refuse disposal - all rubbish should be removed and disposed of in an appropriate manner. Rubbish should not be burned, buried or left on the site. Consideration should be given to recycling and/or reuse where possible.
- Wastewater should not be left to drain on the land or into watercourses.
- Noise pollution for neighbouring residents from music or shouting, loud games etc.
- Ground disruption: moving tents periodically to avoid killing patches of grass.