

Darlington Public Event Safety Advisory Group

Safety Guidance for Organisers of Public Events

Introduction

The Public Events Safety Advisory Group (PESAG) has been set up to provide advice and guidance to organisers of public events in the Darlington Borough Council Area. The core members of the group are senior officers from all the emergency services working in the Borough of Darlington (Police, Fire and Rescue Service and the North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust) and Council Services (Highways, Building Control, Environmental Health and Licensing).

PESAG's main objectives are:

- To promote high levels of safety and welfare at events by giving advice.
- To promote good practice in safety and welfare planning for events.
- To ensure events cause minimal adverse impact.

All comments and observation made by PESAG are always advisory. It has no statutory compulsion and organisers are under no obligation to submit information, attend PESAG meetings, or follow PESAG's advice. However, each of the constituent members have their own regulatory role and may exercise their powers independently.

What is an Event

Typical examples of events PESAG would look at include:

- Fetes, fairs etc
- Open air
- Trade shows
- Sporting events
- Horse shows, agricultural shows, dog shows, car/ caravan shows and similar
- Open air entertainment including concerts, music festivals, theatre, opera and historic re-enactments
- Firework displays
- Large scale company parties
- Processions, marches and carnivals
- Road races
- Street parties
- Charity stunts
- Religious events
- Events in buildings that are not licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.

Notifying PESAG

At the earliest opportunity the event organisers should advise PESAG of their proposal to organise an event. This should be done by sending a completed **Application Form (F1)** to the Environmental Health Support Officer, Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT. It should be accompanied by a site plan showing the detail of entrances/exits and the nearest access roads. Electronic messages and documents may be sent to environmentalhealth@darlington.gov.uk

Please note that if road closures are required then the Highways Authorities prefer that applications are made more than 12 weeks before to the event to allow sufficient time to carry out a proper risk assessment and to identify the effects on the highway network.

Entertainment events vary enormously in size, character and other factors such as hazards and risk. This guidance identifies the key issues that apply to most events and how they can to be addressed. Additional detailed advice notes listed below are also available free of charge.

A1	Writing an event plan
A2	Traffic Management and Road Closures
A3	Licensing requirements
A4	Risk Assessment
A5	Employment of children
A6	Employment of stewards
A7	First Aid and Medical Cover
A8	Fatalities at an event
A9	Missing and Found Children
A10	Food Safety
A10A	BBQ Safety for Community Groups
A11	Prevention of nuisance
A11A	Fireworks
A11B	Bonfire Parties
A12	Temporary and Inflatable structures <small>(revised Feb 2012)</small>
A13	Balloon releases
A13A	Sky Lantern releases
A14	Pony Rides
A15	Contingency Planning
A16	Terrorism and Preventative Security

Special Note: Organisers of very large or complex events may also need to seek more specialist advice elsewhere.

Part 1 Pre-Planning

Detailed pre-planning is essential to ensure your event is safe and successful. The following needs to be considered at this very early stage:

Where - Make sure the venue you have chosen is adequate for the proposed event. Do not forget to consider the impact on the local community, how easy it will be for people to get to the venue and any car parking requirements. Consider the suitability of the venue and any existing hazards, which may be on the site such as water hazards, overhead power lines etc. Consider whether or not emergency routes will be adequate.

When - Consider the time of year, including the consequences of extreme weather conditions at an outside event. Consider taking out an insurance policy against bad weather (Pluvius). This is available from specialist brokers and can pay out if bad weather forces cancellation before the event is declared open. Before you sign any policy, read the small print and check that all your liabilities are covered.

The day of the week and time will also need consideration regarding the nature of the event, noise and ease of travel etc. You will probably need to arrange lighting for an evening function. The event should not clash with any other major events in the area.

Who - Identify the aims of the event. Are particular groups or types of people to be targeted, such as young children, teenagers, the elderly or disabled? If so, specific facilities may be required to accommodate them or additional stewards to ensure adequate safety standards are maintained. Establish the size of the proposed event and

whether or not an entrance fee will be charged. Set a realistic maximum number who can attend. If it is appropriate, print numbered tickets to be sold or distributed through named contacts. Be prepared for gatecrashers.

What - Decide on the type of activities to be held.

Specialist Equipment - Will the activities require the use of any specialist equipment such as bungee jumps etc.? If so, does this equipment pose any specific hazards? Will a particular activity need barriers etc? Some equipment may require certificates of erection by a competent person. Consider the available published guidance.

Codes of Practices - For larger events you will need to comply with guidance particularly the *Code of Practice for Outdoor Events* published by the National Outdoor Events Association Tel: 0208 669 8121, which gives advice on structures, marquees, tents and electrical matters. The HSE *The Event Safety Guide* is also a very useful reference document.

Welfare Arrangements - Estimate the numbers and the duration of the event. Toilet requirements should be based on these estimations. Permanent toilets will need to be checked for adequacy and maintained during the event. The provision of drinking water will be necessary. Depending upon the scale of the event, refreshments and other facilities may be required. Provision also needs to be made for lost and found children, missing persons, baby changing and lost property.

First Aid and Medical Provision - As the Event Organiser you will need to consider the activities, the numbers, types and age groups attending, accesses and egress, the site and structures, Health, Safety and Welfare issues. Deciding upon First Aiders, Ambulances, Paramedics etc. should be based upon published guidance, e.g. the Event Safety Guide ("Purple" Guide) and Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds ("Green Guide"). Many organisations provide medical services but you must ensure that the organisation you choose is competent, well trained and able to meet the demands of the Event. Medical provision for the event should not rely upon the normal provision made by the statutory NHS Ambulance Service for use by the General Public (ie "999" system).

Insurance - 'Public Liability Insurance'. to the value of £5 Million should be considered as a minimum. Consider contacting a specialist insurance broker to arrange the coverage and amount of insurance cover well in advance of the event. Different policies may come with conditions which may be difficult to meet in practice and you should take this into account. Ensure your contractors and performers have their own insurance cover. If you are part of a national charity or a voluntary group, contact your headquarters. You may already be insured or have access to discounted rates.

Permissions and Consents – PESAG is not responsible for giving permission to use Council land or granting licenses for events but it does expect evidence that you have the necessary permissions. You should also consider what consents and licences you need including possible road closures and planning permission in some exceptional cases. Get all the application forms together and work out a timetable and find out whom they need to go to.

Obtaining the written permission of the landowner is an important starting point for the event you are planning. [To obtain permission to use Council land (Parks and Open Spaces) make a request to the Ranger, Parks and Countryside Service, The Clock Tower Lodge, South Park DL1 5TG Phone - 01325 383099 email -

deborah.hall@darlington.gov.uk. For the pedestrianised areas of the Town Centre telephone the Events Team: 01325 388151.]

Activities that require a licence under the Licensing Act 2003 include: the sale of alcohol, the sale of hot food and drink between 11 pm and 5 am; and the provision of regulated entertainment (see [Advice A3 - Licensing requirements](#) for further details).

For road closures see [Advice A2 - Traffic Management and Road closures](#).

Contact details for the planning team are: planning.enquiries@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 388799.

If persons of compulsory school age are involved in the event you will have to establish that the relevant Education Authority has provided the necessary written permission(s). [Advice A5 Employment of Children](#) provides further detail.

If your event includes a market or car boot sale you are advised to contact the Markets Manager at Darlington BC to establish if you require and will be granted a licence on payment of a fee – telephone (01325) 388691 or e;mail markets@darlington.gov.uk .A minimum of one months notice is required to obtain a licence.

Part 2 Detailed Planning

Management

Identify specific responsibilities for key personnel who will be involved in the organisation or delivery of the event. One person should be identified as the event manager who will be in overall control. One person, with suitable experience, should be given overall responsibility for health and safety and another person co-ordination and supervision of stewards. This committee should be in operation before, during, and immediately after the event.

Once you have decided on the fundamental objectives, then you can start to organise the event in detail.

Writing the event plan

Draw up and maintain a comprehensive event plan ([additional PESAG advice A1 is available and template form F2](#)).

A detailed site plan (scale drawing) should form part of this event documentation, as an appendix, and may be the same as the drawing submitted with your application form.

Liaison with relevant bodies

By submitting a completed PESAG Application form F1 all of the relevant agencies (members of PESAG) will be informed of your proposal

Emergency Plan

A formal plan should be established to deal with any emergency situations, which may arise during the event. The complexity of this will depend upon the size and nature of the event itself. A simple easy to follow plan will be acceptable for a small event. You may have to liaise with the emergency services, local hospitals and the Local Authority Emergency Planning Officer and create a planning team to consider all potential major incidents and how you would deal with them. You will also need to consider who will manage the emergency and liaise with the Emergency Services should an emergency occur. Where an immediate threat to life has arisen which requires urgent intervention to protect persons attending or others working at an event, an agreed procedure to stop an

event (Showstop) must be considered. Stopping an event, particularly when it affects the main attraction, is not a decision to be taken lightly. Some situations are clearly life threatening, while others will require subjective opinions of those monitoring safety at the event hence the need for competent team members. You will also need to ensure that all those involved in the event are aware of the Emergency Plan and what to do. The Safety Advisory Group may organise a tabletop exercise to test your Emergency Plan prior to the Event.

Traffic Management (additional PESAG advice A2 is available)

On-Site Traffic

Contractors and/or performers vehicles and other traffic should be carefully managed to ensure segregation from pedestrians. It may be necessary to only permit vehicular access at specific times and not during the event itself. Separate entrances should be provided for vehicles and pedestrians with specific arrangements for emergency vehicle access. Car parking facilities will be required at most events and these will have to be stewarded. Consider where such facilities should be situated.

Off-Site Traffic

Unplanned and uncontrolled access and egress to a site can result in a serious accident. Traffic control both inside and outside the site should be discussed with the Council's Highway Engineers and the Police. Adequate signs and directions should be provided in prominent positions on the approaches to the entrances. If road closures, signs on the highway, traffic diversions and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulation order and/or approval from the local authority. Only the Police or a properly authorised/qualified person have the authority to regulate traffic on the public highway.

Road Closures/Diversions

Any functions that require a road closure or diversion may need a Road Closure Order obtainable from the council (allow 12 weeks for approval of road closure).

Public Transport

Consult with the Councils Traffic Manager to establish where existing services will be adequate to deal with expected numbers. Also consider encouraging the use of walking and cycling routes to the event and providing a secure cycle storage compound.

Risk Assessments (additional PESAG advice A4 & A5 is available)

Your risk assessment will be the key document to ensuring the safe planning of your event. It involves a careful examination of each attraction within an event and recording the significant findings (a PESAG template form F3 is available to record your findings). Follow these basic steps and try not to over-complicate the assessment:

- Look for the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether any existing precautions are adequate or whether more could be done
- Record your findings
- Review your assessment and revise as necessary.

A separate Fire Risk Assessment has to be undertaken to comply with fire safety legislation identifying the fire hazards and persons at risk, and the measures adopted to remove or reduce these risks and protect people from fire. (For traders and market stall holders operating at outdoor events a template **form F5** is available for Food Concessions and **Form F4** for Market Stalls (non catering) to complete a risk assessment. These are based on forms published by the Chief Fire Officers Association in February 2010.)

Numbers Attending

The maximum number of people the event can safely hold must be established. This may be reduced dependant upon the activities being planned. The numbers of people attending the event may have to be counted on entry to prevent overcrowding. Remember that one particular attraction eg pop star or band, may draw large numbers of visitors. It will also be necessary to establish a crowd profile to assist in stewarding and crowd control.

Crowd Control

The type of event and the numbers attending will determine the measures needed. Consider the number and positioning of barriers, stewarding and the provision of a public address system(s). For some events a drug and alcohol policy agreed with the police may be necessary.

Some events will require a control room to act as the base for the organiser and accommodate key personnel from all relevant agencies who will be monitoring activities that impact upon safety or public order. It will be the base for any communications systems and should have a landline telephone. Its location should be identified on the site plan.

Stewards (additional PESAG advice A6 is available)

There is a distinction between security staff and stewards. The event risk assessment should be available for inspection and should identify the minimum number of stewards required, and how this number has been derived. Stewards must be fully briefed on all aspects of the event and be able to effectively communicate with each other, their supervisor, and the event manager. A steward should be trained to NVQ Level 2 in Spectator Safety.

First Aid and Medical Provision (additional PESAG advice A7 is available)

Medical Services are extremely busy and should be booked well in advance of the Event. Ensure that the Medical Services provider has a "Duty Order" detailing the operation of services for the event and a Contingency Plan for Major Incidents. These Plans may require validation and approval by the NHS Ambulance Service.

Lost and Found Children (additional PESAG advice A9 is available)

Make arrangements for dealing with lost children with appropriately trained, CRB checked, people. Keep records of actions taken on the day

Manual Handling (Lifting and Carrying)

Assess the venue and the tasks involved in creating the event. What will need to be moved and how will you do it? Will there be awkward, heavy items such as beer barrels or marquees? Think about... is it heavy, slippery, and uneven in weight or shape? The task- where is it going? Will it be up or downstairs or into a tight space? Who is doing the work? Are there enough people? Their age, sex, strength, fitness should all be considered. Whenever possible use equipment such as sack barrows to help the job.

Temporary Structures

Many events will require temporary structures such as staging, tents, marquees, stalls etc. The erection and dismantling of temporary structures is considered as Construction work subject to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 enforced by the Health and Safety Executive. Decide as early as possible where this equipment is to be obtained and who will erect and dismantle it. The location of any such structures should be identified on the site plan. Consider whether barriers will be required to protect the public against specific hazards such as moving machinery, barbecues, vehicles, lifting equipment etc. In some cases, fencing or barriers will need to have specified safety loadings dependant upon the number of people likely to attend. The standards for lighting, emergency lighting, ingress/egress remain the same for temporary and permanent structures. (Additional PESAG advice A12 is available for Temporary and Inflatable structures). If a domestic type gazebo is to be used at a Public Events the manufacturers literature must show that it will be suitable for use at such events with the method of fixing the structure and the recommended maximum wind speed.

Provision for those with Special Needs

Specific arrangements should be made to ensure disabled visitors have adequate facilities, parking and specific viewing areas to enjoy the event safely.

Security

Depending upon the nature of the event, specific security arrangements may be necessary, including arrangements for securing property overnight. Cash collection should be planned to ensure this is kept to a minimum at collection points and that regular collections are made to a secure area. Following your risk assessment, stewards or helpers collecting cash may require money belts or other carrying facilities. Counting and banking arrangements should be given careful consideration.

Contractors

All contractors should be vetted to ensure they are competent to undertake the tasks required of them. Wherever possible personal references should be obtained and followed up. Ask contractors for a copy of their safety policy and risk assessments, and satisfy yourself that they will perform the task safely. Always ask to see their public liability insurance certificate, which should provide a limit of indemnity of at least £5 million. Provide contractors with a copy of the event plan and arrange liaison meetings to ensure they will work within your specified parameters.

Performers

Ensure all performers have their own insurance and risk assessments and the same considerations will apply as for contractors. Where amateur performers are being used, discuss your detailed requirements with them well in advance and ensure they will comply with your health and safety rules and event plan.

If any performer is of compulsory school age, you should confirm that a licence has been issued by the relevant Education Authority or that a relevant exemption applies.

(additional PESAG advice A5 – Employment of children is available)

If animals are to be included as part of the event then welfare and safety issues need to be addressed. (additional PESAG advice A14 Pony Rides is available) The person in control of the animals should have a Certificate of Registration to comply with Performing Animals (Regulations) Act 1925 and an Animal Transporter Authorisation. Some species e.g. Humbolt Penguins are also subject to EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (Article 10) and a certificate is required from Defra

Facilities and Utilities

Where electricity, gas or water is to be used, detailed arrangements must be made to ensure the facilities are safe. Portable gas supplies for cooking should be kept to a minimum in designated areas away from the general public. The same should apply to any fuel supplies items such as portable generators etc. Generators should be suitably fenced to prevent public access from public areas. All these arrangements should be clearly shown on the site plan.

Electrical Safety

Consider the entire installation and seek expert advice. If the event is outside, consider whether it could be run off a lower voltage via a transformer? Use a residual current device (RCD) especially. This is particularly important for musical instruments, microphones, etc (you cannot use an RCD where a sudden loss of power could be dangerous, for example, on lighting systems or moving machinery). Use proper electrical connectors and avoid insulation tape or other temporary measures. Locate electrical leads safely to prevent tripping hazards. All portable electrical appliances including extension leads etc. should be tested for electrical safety and a record kept. Connections for electrical equipment must be undertaken by a competent person and all equipment, including extensions etc, must be adequately and fully tested and maintained. Any hired equipment should come with a certificate of electrical safety.

Emergency Lighting

At small events torches may be sufficient, but large events will need standby or continuously operating generators. Ensure earthing rods are used where applicable.

Catering (additional PESAG advice A10 is available)

If you are using catering contractors you should obtain a copy of their menu and list of prices to ensure that it suits your event. The caterer, including volunteers, should be able to demonstrate their competence. This could be through membership of a recognised trade body or you could ask them to complete and return to you form F10

Contingency Plans (additional PESAG advice A15 is available)

Consider the implications on the event of extreme weather conditions. Will the event be cancelled? Could specialist matting be hired in at short notice? Or could the event be moved to an alternative inside venue. This will involve a lot of planning and may be too complex for anything other than the smallest of events. There could also be other scenarios, which should be planned for, such as dealing with a disappointed crowd if the main attraction has not turned up.

Prolonged rainfall may result in poor ground conditions creating a danger to vehicle and pedestrian traffic. A four-wheel drive vehicle, or tractor, to assist participants whose vehicles are affected and a wheel wash to prevent transfer of mud from the site to the Highway may be required.

Public Nuisance (additional PESAG advice A11 is available)

There are four specific issues that cause public nuisance and may need to be managed:

- a. Noise
- b. Odour
- c. Litter and waste
- d. Light pollution

Clearing Up

Arrangements may be required for waste disposal and rubbish clearance both during and after the event. Individuals should be designated specific responsibilities for emptying rubbish bins and clearing the site.

Timescale

Set out the proposed timescale and give yourself as much time as possible to organise the event. You may need as much as 9 to 12 months planning. Some specialist advice may be required and special permission could take time. You may need to allow time for any licenses needed to be granted. The earlier planning commences the better, as a minimum you should allow 12 weeks. Do not forget the summer can be a busy time with hundreds of events taking place within your area.

Part 3 Final Preparations

A walk through inspection of the site should be carried out immediately prior to the start to identify any potential hazards and to check out communications are working. You may also want to carry out more than one inspection during the event. All defects should be noted and also the remedial action taken. **Form F6** is available as template checklist you may wish to use and retain as a record. Brief all staff so that they fully understand their duties and responsibilities. Just prior to the event carry out a detailed safety check including:

Routes

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

Siting

Make sure that all facilities and attractions are correctly sited in accordance with your site plan. Be certain that the first aid facilities, fire extinguishers and any cash collection boxes are in place. Check waste bins are in their correct locations.

Signage

Ensure adequate signage is displayed where necessary. This should include emergency exits, first aid points, fire points, information and lost/found children points and other welfare facilities such as toilets and drinking water. Remember that only previously approved signage may be used on the highway.

Vehicles

Check that all contractors, performers and exhibitors vehicles have been removed from the site or parked in the designated area before the public are permitted to enter.

Structures

Ensure all staging, seating, marquees and lighting structures have been erected safely and that certification has been obtained from the relevant contractors as a record of this.

Barriers

Check that all barriers and other protection against hazards are securely in place and there is no risk of falling from staging or other facilities.

Stewards

Make sure that all staff have arrived and are in their correct location. Ensure all stewards are wearing the correct clothing for easy identification. Make sure the communication systems work.

Lighting

Check all lighting is working, including any emergency lighting.

Public information

Make sure the public address system is working and can be heard in all areas.

Part 4 After the Event

Site Condition

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

Accidents

If an accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report made by the organisers. An accident form should be completed and a copy sent to the landowner. A sample accident reporting form is included as **form F9**. You will also need to advise your own insurance company. If any accident or dangerous occurrence is reported, action must be taken to prevent any further incidents taking place. Keep a copy of all completed accident forms available for Council Officers.

Claims

Should any person declare an intention to make a claim following an alleged incident associated with the event, you should contact your insurers immediately. They may also require a completed accident form.

Debrief

After the event organise a meeting with key people involved in the event so that any lessons learnt can be noted.

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