

Planning checklist

For fêtes, fundays, parties and other events

However big or small your event is going to be, planning it will follow the same general pattern – and include some common pitfalls!

1. Make sure your objectives are clear

- Discuss what you want your event to achieve – will it raise the profile of your group? Will it bring people together? Are you aiming to raise money or just to have fun?
- Who are you hoping to attract to the event? Will there be activities for a range of different people?

2. Plan out the work – and delegate!

Working together on a timetable with all the main dates and deadlines on it can help clarify how much work there is to do, and when.

Most events are too much work for two or three people. Try to get more people involved by:

- advertising planning meetings widely
- thinking about the timing and location of your planning meetings, and asking potential volunteers what suits them best
- producing early publicity for the event which also serves as an appeal for volunteers
- putting together a list of jobs that can easily be handed over to new volunteers, even if they don't want to come to meetings.
- pinning a list or rota up on a noticeboard and asking people to pledge a small amount of time on the day or contributions of food, raffle prizes, etc

Think about asking other local organisations to get involved. They may have the expertise to take a major aspect of the event off your hands.

Make sure everyone knows what is going on. Reporting regularly to the other people organising the event and to the whole group is not just politeness – it can stop an individual or an organising committee from making costly mistakes.

*St. John Ambulance,
Crowhurst Corner,
Crowhurst Road
Brighton
BN1 8AP
Tel. 01273 371500
[http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/about-us/
st-john-ambulance-in-your-area/
counties/sussex.aspx](http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/about-us/st-john-ambulance-in-your-area/counties/sussex.aspx)*

*Muir Walker Medics
Tel. 0845 2235439
Email: eventcover@muir-walker.coop
<http://www.muir-walker.coop>*

*Beachcomber, our database of
useful local resources, lists lots
of sources of equipment,
information and other help for
groups organising events. Run
your own search on
www.resourcecentre.org.uk, or
call us and we'll search for you.*

*The Resource Centre hires out a wide
range of equipment for fetes, fayres,
meetings, presentations, children's
activities, etc.*

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3. Think about safety and access

- Bear in mind health and safety for volunteers and visitors when you are deciding on a venue and planning the layout of the event. It is useful to fill in a Risk Assessment form. You can download one from the Brighton and Hove City Council website at: http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/events/Risk_Ass_Guidelines_and_form.doc
- Decide who will be responsible for first aid on the day. For large events, you could ask the local St. John Ambulance or Muir Walker Medics Co-op to attend. Even if you are just using your own volunteers, you need to have a visible first aid point at the event.
- How will people get to the event? Make sure your publicity gives details of public transport and parking. Will you need to put up signs in the surrounding streets to make the event easier to find?
- Is the venue accessible for wheelchair users? Many people who don't use a wheelchair nevertheless have great difficulty with steps. Will there be a sign language interpreter for performances and speeches? Make sure your publicity is clear about the level of access visitors can expect.

4. Make a budget for the event

Take into account all your costs:

- venue
- publicity
- hire of equipment
- decorations
- entertainers
- prizes, refreshments, face paints, art materials
- transport
- phone bills, postage and other admin
- insurance
- first aid equipment and volunteers
- fees for licences and permissions

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Then plan how you are going to cover them:

- entrance fees?
- grants or sponsorship?
- raffle?
- sale of refreshments?
- money-making sideshows and stalls?
- charging stallholders or catering suppliers?

You may find it useful to look at our information sheets on Raising Money and our list of Favourite Funders.

4. Think about publicity

- Who do you want your publicity to reach? Think about where those people are most likely to see a poster or flyer, and what will attract them to the event.
- How much money do you have to spend on it?
- Have you considered using the local media?

Make sure you get your publicity out early enough for it to be distributed and read – don't wait until every last detail of the event is finalised.

5. Bookings, permissions and licences

Find out about the regulations early on – it can take months for some licences to be granted. You may need to consider:

- temporary event notice
- street collection licence
- road closure permit
- permission to use public land

Make sure the venue is booked and confirmed. Think about what equipment you will need to hire. Check with entertainers what they expect you to provide.

The Resource Centre has equipment that groups can use to produce cheap publicity flyers and posters. See also our information sheets on writing a News release and local Media Contacts.

See our information sheet on Licensing and Regulations for more details and useful local contacts

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6. Plan in detail

Shortly before the event, you need to run through the day in detail:

- Where will everybody be on the day?
- Is the rota full, or do you need to do a last-minute ring round to fill some gaps?
- How will equipment and volunteers get to the venue – and away again?
- Will you be able to take hired equipment directly to and from the event, or will it need to be stored?
- Who is responsible for money on the day?
- Will you need a lot of change? If so, contact your bank at least a week in advance and ask them to put some aside for you.
- What will happen if it rains?
- Do you have enough time, materials and people for setting up and clearing up?

7. Afterwards

If possible, it's a good idea to count takings from the different stalls separately, so that you know which activities made money and which didn't do so well. This will help you make a more accurate budget for your next event.

It's always worth having a brief discussion after an event is over, to talk through what went well and badly on the day, and draw lessons for future events.