

## Section 4 Special Events



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**Section 4 Special Events****Fundraising and Special Events.**

**Every church or charity needs to arrange special events, which may be designed specifically to raise vital funds to enable them to successfully carry out their mission or with the purpose of projecting their message or both.**

**It is an area that does carry with it risks ranging from the amount of money raised not covering the costs to the possibility of the event being marred by an accident involving a person taking part.**

The first action for an event organiser is to weigh up the potential risks against the likely rewards. It simply is not worthwhile taking a chance with an event that might damage the organisation when, by care and proper preparation, most events can be good for the future of that organisation. Hopefully these notes can help.

Initially, it is advisable to carefully consider all the factors which can contribute to the success or otherwise of the event by asking questions such as:

- Are there any other events which may keep down the required number of people?
- Is enthusiasm of the fundraisers clouding judgement as to the real chance of success?
- Is the type of event appropriate?
- Can the right level of advance publicity be arranged?
- Are the costs of doing the job properly too expensive?
- Can all the necessary regulations be complied with
- Can the event be undertaken safely?

If the answer is “no” to any of these or other relevant questions the result could well be adverse publicity, loss of funds, valuable time, energy and impetus and, in the worst case, picking up a bill for legal costs and compensation.

Even when after full consideration we give the go ahead there is still the chance of a mishap. The smallest event arranged by a local committee such as a garden party has its dangers. A wide range of incidents such as an elderly visitor falling over and breaking a leg or hip can highlight the following difficulties:

- The majority of special events involve the public whether they be spectators or participators
- There is always the chance of bad publicity
- All elements of risk cannot be eliminated
- There is a need to spend time preparing properly
- The possibility of legal action is ever present these days
- Purchasing the appropriate type and level of insurance is important
- Contractual arrangements should not place unreasonable responsibilities on the organisation or individuals

**Health & Safety Planning**

Effective risk and health and safety management should start at the same time as other aspects of planning the event. An early risk assessment will allow time for any actions that need to be taken to make the event safe and viable.

The risk assessment is an examination of the event and surrounding factors with the object of making sure that any risks are reduced to an acceptable level. Please refer to *Section III* for guidance on *Risk Assessment* and to *Section III* in respect of *Health and Safety requirements*.

Additionally, keep in mind that the Health and Safety Executive consider it necessary to provide safe conditions for volunteers and members of the public. Also, organisers are required to apply even higher standards to the safety of the more vulnerable such as children and the elderly. In respect of the disabled it is required that not only are safe spectating areas with adequate emergency exits provided but also toilet facilities etc. The duty of care also includes the need to provide adequate signs, trained stewards and barriers etc., and even extends to considering people entering the events without permission.

It is, of course, most important to ensure that precautions against any source of potential major disaster such as fire are put in force.

### Managing Crowds Safety

An extremely important aspect affecting the success of just about every special event is crowd control or more correctly crowd management. The character of the crowd needs to be understood and such factors as the design of the venue and the type and age of the audience will have an influence. Arrangements in respect of such as opening time, ticket sales, method of and level of communication, sale of alcohol and entry and exit need to be taken into consideration. The HSE publish a document “*Managing crowds safety*” which explains.

HSE Book have replaces a previous document with “The event safety guide” ref. HSG195 which provides guidance to health, safety and welfare at music and similar events, and covers different types of venues, sight provisions and facilities needed together with details of the relevant legislation.

### Adventure and Dangerous Activities

The difficult decision for a church or a charity as to whether it is morally correct for it to become involved in these areas of fundraising or to accept donations from people taking part can be a dilemma. These challenging type of events obviously have an element of risk as a result of the hazards those taking part will encounter.

There is, however, a trend for people, particularly those in the younger age bracket, to seek excitement at the same time as fundraising. It is clear that if an organisation wants to raise funds from this younger element it must consider such activities as bungee jumping, parachuting, abseiling and trekking in the more exotic locations.

To some such activities are acceptable provided there is suitably tight management control.

However, it should be borne in mind that there are also hidden risks which can be encountered if the necessary arrangements are not put together correctly and which can involve the possibility of the organisation falling foul of complex areas of legislation and responsibilities.

For example, where volunteers, on

behalf of a non-profit organisation, are putting together some types of events that include travel they may fall under regulations as if they are a professional organisation. The package tour regulations may apply and, although the money raised is a donation, the regulations may deem that tax and VAT are payable. It is prudent to get specialist advice if in doubt.

### Bonfires and Firework Displays

The presence of incendiary devices and crowds of people can result in personal injury or property damage. The following notes, if followed, will help to ensure that your event will be conducted without anyone being injured:

#### Event planning:

- Before setting up your event, make sure you have informed your local Fire Brigade, Police and First Aid association.
- Insurance companies may ask for a ‘safety issues and declaration for firework displays’ form to be completed, which declares arrangements for the display.
- Preferably independent firework display organisers/operators/contractors should be used, if so written confirmation should be obtained that they have public liability insurance in place and that the contractor complies with all regulations and advice from the appropriate bodies.
- Make sure individuals are made fully aware of their duties reporting/referral lines.
- Keep spectators at a safe distance.
- A rope or strong barrier should be used to clearly mark off the display area.
- Keep well clear of buildings, trees and other hazards.
- The site chosen should have as many entrances and exits as possible, which should be well lit and clearly signposted.
- Adult stewards should be onsite for

crowd control, there must be one steward for every 250 spectators and a minimum of two. Stewards should be easily recognisable to spectators.

- Suitable fire fighting equipment must be available.
- To ensure proper crowd control, you should arrange for stewards to be present.
- Appropriate safety clothing, headgear, gloves and goggles are to be worn by persons responsible for lighting any bonfire or fireworks.

#### Fireworks:

- One person should be appointed, who is in overall control of the event, with final responsibility for all health and safety matters.
- Try to recruit at least one person with previous firework experience.
- All fireworks used should be compliant with British standards.
- Car parking areas should be sited well away from the display area and dropping zone.
- Do not allow spectators to enter the site with their own fireworks.
- Fireworks should be kept in a metal container and removed one at a time before replacing the lid.
- Fireworks which fail to ignite should never be returned to.
- Fireworks should only be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Fire fighting equipment should be stowed nearby.
- Spent or failed fireworks should be soaked in a container of water and manufacturer consulted about disposal. Fireworks must not be put on bonfires.



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### Bonfires:

- Bonfire must be sited downwind of and a safe distance from spectators, and well away from firing area.
- Keep bonfires well away from firework areas.
- Dangerous rubbish such as aerosols should never be burnt
- The bonfire should be stable.
- Paraffin, petrol or solvents should never be used to start a fire
- Bonfires should be a manageable size
- A responsible adult should be in charge.
- Qualified first aiders should attend
- Water should be poured on embers and the site should not be left until the fire is completely out.

Further information can be acquired by obtaining copies of 'Giving Your Own Firework Display' – HS(G)124 from the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) and 'Firework Safety Campaign' publication from DTI (Dept. of Trade and Industry).

### Visits and Outings

Visits and outings are no different to any other activity and the undertaking of risk assessment is the starting point to ensure that potential risks are identified and the proper control measures put in place. The following areas should be considered in the risk assessment:

- Staff/volunteer to client ratios
- The journey (mode of transport, length of journey, refreshments and toilet breaks etc.)
- Medication and First Aid facilities (do clients have enough medication if the return journey is delayed?)
- Location (is the destination suitable for all members of the trip, e.g. wheelchair users?)
- Contingency planning
- Documentation (plans and procedures, checklists)

### Bouncy Castles

Before hiring a bouncy castle for an event you should check that the hire company fully complies with the safe use and operation of play inflatables guidance provided by the inflatable play inspector scheme. Employees should be suitably experienced and well trained adult personnel, or if you are to operate the bouncy castle yourself you should be supplied with full instructions for setting-up, operation and supervision of the equipment. The hire company should provide evidence of a current public liability insurance policy.

Insurance companies may have specific safety requirements such as:

- Children should not be allowed to use bouncy castles if there is a high wind or in wet weather.
- The castle must be adequately secured to the ground and protected from any tripping hazard.
- Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides.
- There should be responsible adult supervision.
- The number of children using the bouncy castle must be limited.
- The supervising adults should ensure that users remove all hard, sharp or loose objects.
- No food or drink should be consumed on the equipment.
- Do not allow anyone to use the equipment during inflation or deflation.
- Inappropriate use of the equipment should not be permitted, e.g. pushing, somersaulting, climbing sides etc.
- A rota system for different age or size groups should be in place.
- Children under two years old must not be allowed to use the equipment.
- All children must remove footwear.

Further information can be acquired by obtaining 'Safe use and operation of play inflatables, including bouncy castles (ETIS7)', which is issued by the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) and can be obtained from the HSE website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk).

### Parades and Charity Walks

Large numbers of people walking along roads obviously creates a hazard and unless adequate precautions are taken to safeguard walkers, there is a high risk of death or injury. In hours of darkness, the danger is even greater, therefore The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) discourages walks at night.

Before the event:

- Contact the local police for guidance
- Ask the police if they are able to marshal the event
- Assess if any official road closures are needed for the event
- Carefully plan the route to avoid major junctions
- Recruit sufficient numbers of marshals
- Provide marshals with high visibility jackets

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**Collections**

Collecting money from the Public at large can be a useful and economical way to bolster an organisations fund raising and publicity efforts.

However, as this method is very much in the public eye and a comparatively simple way of collecting money it is easily open to abuse and mishandling. As a result, care and control are very important with regarding to keeping within the rules and gaining only good publicity.

There are 2 main sorts:

- House to house
- Street collections

General rules are:

- Permission must be obtained from the Local Authority
- Each collector must have and carry a signed and dated Authorised Collector's Card which must be signed and dated by the organiser
- Collectors Lists are required by Law
- You must not rattle a tin or bucket loudly or solicit donations
- Two people must be present when counting the money and the total etc. must be put on a Collectors' List
- The law is different for Scotland or N. Ireland

General Tips:

- Appoint one person to plan, organise and oversee the collection
- Decide your best collection areas or street and make sure your resources are focused on these first
- Start early
- Each collector should be given a telephone number to phone in an emergency
- Organise a central "depot" where the items needed to do the job can be collected and returned

- Don't be too ambitious if it is new to your organisation
- Make sure there is no clash with other events
- Appoint one person to plan, organise and oversee the collection
- Decide your best collection areas or streets and make sure your resources are focused on these first
- Generally a lot of people doing their bit is better than one or two struggling to make it a success
- Each collector will need a collecting tin/bucket (with labels or seals) or envelopes
- Use a method of keeping a tag on the items handed out to collectors e.g. by using a Collectors' List
- It is good to wear some clothing or item such as a sash identifying your cause
- Do not stick lapel stickers on suede or leather
- Remind collectors to hand in their authorisation, tins, buckets, envelopes unopened and other item as soon as possible
- Make sure you have a supply of money bags and put the proceeds in the bank or night safe as soon as possible

**House to house collections.**

These are legally defined as collecting on private property and relates to:

- Dropping off collection envelopes and returning a few days later to collect them
- Collecting with a tin

The Local Authority manage the situation and you must inform them in good time with sufficient details particularly the dates you want. Even those charities that hold Home Office exemption certificates must give plenty of notice and ensure that there is no clash with other charities. The main rules are:

- Each collector must have a badge/Certificate of Authority as required by the Law for houses-to-house collections. The collection organiser must fill in a certificate for each collector giving the name of the collector and details of the collection. The collector must carry these at all times for identification purposes.
- The official accounting document, the Fifth Schedule Form must be completed and the certificate of audit must be signed by a suitably qualified person (who has not been involved in the collection) after each collection and sent with the Collectors List(s) to the Local Authority
- Children under 16 years may deliver envelopes but cannot collect them

Tips:

- Collectors should work in pairs if possible. It's safer and more fun
- The best time to collect is early evening and the worst is after 8.30 pm which is less safe and rewarding
- Keep a record of, such houses visited by each collector (particularly those where there is a very good or bad response!) to take advantage of experience and to assist in future planning and efforts
- Use "Sorry you were out cards" to give you a chance of collecting later
- People are usually more generous if you use envelopes, but two visits are required
- Only accept sealed envelopes
- Be courteous at all times

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**Street Collections.**

In Law a street collection is one held in a public place or on public property. The regulations vary for various districts or areas and it is necessary to consult your Local Authority.

The main rules are:

- Collectors are not allowed to have animals with them other than a guide dog
- Children under 17 (in London 19) are not allowed to collect
- Collectors must remain stationary and should not block a carriageway or pavement

Tips:

- Research as to best sites
- Put your written application in as early as possible
- Check with the Local Authority as to what you can and cannot do
- Use a rota to cover your main site
- Use the Collectors' list to assist in keeping records

**Unauthorised Collections**

The police and the public are increasingly more aware of unauthorised collections. Also, the Charity Commission can act against those who collect under the guise of a charitable appeal as the Courts will now uphold their actions taken under Charity Acts. Previously these organisations had believed that as they were not charities that the Commission could not touch them.

As stated previously, a thorough risk assessment started early can open up these opportunities but must include:-

- Which specialists should be used (it is generally considered best to use a specialist contractor). Checking their:

Adequacy of experience, qualifications and quality of staff of specialist

Financial stability of specialist contractors used

- The facilities and locations to be used are suitable and safe e.g. building from which an abseil is to be done.
- Check of arrangements including insurances (in one case a specialist's insurance did not provide cover in respect of the USA where the trek was to take place!).
- Contractual agreements are reasonable.
- Is there membership of the relevant Association or governing body?
- Are licences in place where necessary? e.g. The 1996 Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations which came into force following the Lyme Bay canoeing accident in which 4 teenagers were killed

The Act referred to above applies to 26 activities away from the activity centre and applies to adventure activities in Great Britain such as:-

- Climbing
- Caving
- Trekking
- Water sport

These regulations require licensing for any organisation providing facilities for adventure activities in return for payment to young people under 18 or is part of an arrangement which includes some payment.

*The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority can also provide information and advice and are located at 17 Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5GG. Telephone No. 01222 755715.*

A type of event during which accidents causing very bad injuries have occurred are assault courses. The temptation to take full advantage of the generosity of the owner of an assault course is fully understandable but extreme caution is necessary.

With regard to the last point e.g. the Armed Forces are often very helpful in offering their facilities but the MOD is very severe in placing unreasonable

responsibility and liabilities onto the potential user by means of the contract wording. This has resulted in some organisations picking up liability for injuries caused despite their relying on the expertise of the facility provider.

A very thorough Risk Assessment is necessary (See Section IV Risk Management and Risk assessment) and should include:-

- How dangerous the obstacles are.
- Use of experienced contractors and personnel particularly supervisors.
- Training, supervision, and a preview of the course and being made aware of the dangers for each participant prior to taking part.
- Wearing appropriate footwear and clothing.
- The participant being fit enough and any doubt should be referred to their GP or an appropriate medical practitioner.
- Appropriate age limits should apply.
- Insurance arrangements are adequate.
- Contractual responsibilities should be reasonable.

Similar considerations will apply to all adventurous or dangerous types of events to some degree or another. In addition to specialist professional advice, various associations may be linked to specific activities such as:

- BMA British Mountain Association
- NCA National Caving Association
- UKMTB UK Mountain Training Board
- BASI British Association of Ski Instructors