

**Section 16**  
**Event Planning and Risk Assessment**

## 16.1 Event Planning and Fun Days

This section sets out some necessary and early steps that will your fun day or whatever type of event well organised and successful.<sup>1</sup>

### Overview:

- Nine deadly sins of project planning
- Planning your fun day or event
- Safety matters
- Step by step guide to risk assessment

### Nine deadly sins of project planning

1. Not planning at all
2. Failing to account for all project activities
3. Failure to plan for risk
4. Using the same plan for every project
5. Applying pre-packaged plans at random
6. Allowing a plan to move away from project reality
7. Planning in too much detail too soon
8. Planning to catch up later
9. Not learning from past planning sins

### Planning your fun day or event

Organising an event means advance planning and not leaving all your arrangements and bookings to the last minute. Planning is essential preparation for the good delivery of any event. It permits you to work in an organised and hopefully unrushed manner and you can arrange a timetable and list of task, relevant to each project/event.

The council and others involved may need to be informed well in advance. Early planning will give you plenty of time to carry out the important actions:

- Notify statutory authorities (i.e. Council entertainment department, police, fire and ambulance services) of your proposed event
- Book or hire the venue for the event and/or seek permission from the owner(s) of the land where the event is to be held.
- Carry out a risk assessment of your event and event venue
- Arrange public liability insurance cover
- Book caterers, amusements, entertainers, attraction, activities, services etc
- Advertise and promote your event to the public
- Allow time for voluntary organisation like St Johns Ambulance to make their arrangements, especially if they are needed at the event.

### Event Type:

Decided a theme for you event may give it more life and avoid being predictable and the same as last year. Ideas include incorporating a local or historical event or place,

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<sup>1</sup> Coleraine Rural And Urban Network – A guide to good practice and sustainability for community and voluntary groups

special date or linked to something that was produced in the area like linen, pottery etc.

### **Financial Planning:**

If your event is to succeed financially, you should calculate the costs before hand. Estimate how much you are likely to raise and match against your costs. This will show if you will be out of pocket and enable you to make changes that will avoid a loss, by possibly increasing charges or having a raffle etc.

### **Licences:**

If you plan to provide dancing, singing or music or any other entertainment, you will need an entertainments license. An entertainment license application must be submitted to your local council at least four months prior to the event. However, this is only needed if the premise does not hold an entertainments license.

Anyone wishing to serve alcohol at their event which is not on liquor licenses premises must get a licensee to apply to the Magistrates Court for an occasional liquor license.

Remember the council is there to help you and if consulted early, it will save you a lot of confusion and disappointments later with your event planning.

### **Safety Matters**

Whatever type of event you are running SAFETY is the responsibility of the organiser. This includes the safety of those from the general public attending and all those involved in its organisation. All events whether large, small, indoors or outdoors need to be risk assessed and will need to comply with current safety standards. To this end, a step-by-step guide to carrying out a general risk assessment is included later in this section.

When running a fun day, carnival or similar event it is worth bearing in mind the following risks:

**Access to your event:** Possible risk could include narrow country roads making it difficult for pedestrians, vehicles and emergency services to access the event, resulting in a high possibility that a pedestrian may be hit by a vehicle.

**Your event site:** The risks and hazards you are looking for range from possible risk of bacterial infection particularly for young children from animal faeces, nearby water risks from ponds, rivers and streams.

Uneven ground and very steep slopes are a possible risk for elderly folk. Power cables overhead and on the ground from mains are a possible risk of electrocution (balloons on string etc).

**Equipment:** Poor positioning of any hired equipment, preventing easy access for emergency services, exposed wires and cabling leading to possible risk of tripping, not enough restricted area notices, in areas such as catering facilities, gas and generators.

A **HAZARD** is anything that has the potential to cause harm or injury

**Entertainment and amusements:** Displays and parades involving animals, vehicles, weapons, flames, special effects, parachuting will need to be risk assessed for potential hazards. Amusements and stall operators should provide you with a safety certificate, a written risk assessment and insurance cover certification.

#### **Disclaimer Notices**

It is advisable to provide a disclaimer notice (prominently displayed) in cloakrooms or car parks, disclaiming responsibility for loss or damage to articles left there. It is not possible to disclaim liability for death or personal injury in this way.