
Risk assessment guidance for events held on council land



July 2021



Elmbridge
Borough Council
... bridging the communities ...

Contents

Risk assessment guidance for events held on council land	1
Introduction	3
What is a risk assessment?	3
What is the difference between hazard and risk?	3
Identify the hazards – what could cause harm?	4
Who is at risk and how might they be harmed?	5
Areas to consider	6
Evaluate the risk	7
Control the risk	7
Record the findings of the risk assessment	8
Review and revise	9
Provision of information	9
Emergency plan.....	9
Covid-19	10
Disclaimer	10
Appendix 1 – example of a risk assessment.....	11

Introduction

This guidance is aimed at small, low risk events that are planned on Elmbridge Borough Council land.

Elmbridge Borough Council has a duty to ensure the safety of people using their land under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974).

Please use the template below to provide details of all activities taking place at your event that might pose a hazard or risk and what you plan to do about them to minimise the risks.

The following notes and generic risk assessment example may help you to identify the hazards and risks. A common-sense approach is best. Further information can be found on the HSE website: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/>

The Purple Guide has been written by The Events Industry Forum in consultation with the events industry. Its aim is to help those event organisers who are dutyholders to manage health and safety, particularly at large-scale music and similar events. The Purple Guide is available for an annual subscription of £25 plus VAT. See <https://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/>

What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a logical process that involves identifying significant hazards arising out of the activities that are part of the event, including setting up the event, during the event and through to packing up after the event. An important part of the risk assessment process is to identify control measures – precautions that will prevent harm from occurring or minimising the consequences if harm does occur.

Risk assessment isn't about stopping people from having fun, it's about planning how you are going to do something so that it can be done safely.

Event organisers are required to carry out a risk assessment for all events.

What is the difference between hazard and risk?

A **hazard** is something with the potential to cause harm (this can include equipment, methods of work, the area or environment the event is taking place in, and other aspects of the organisation of the event).

A **risk** is the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard being realised.

The extent of the risk will depend on the **likelihood** of that harm occurring and the potential **severity** of that harm, i.e. of any resultant injury or illness and the number of people who might be affected by the hazard.

Identify the hazards – what could cause harm?

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. This can include equipment, methods of work, the area or environment the event is taking place in, and other aspects of the organisation of the event.

Think about the hazards relating to the individual attractions and activities that will be present e.g.:

- adverse weather
- animals
- catering and food safety
- chemicals or other substances hazardous to health e.g. dust or fumes
- crowd control, capacity, bottlenecks/pinch points, access and egress, stewarding
- displays and parades, especially those involving animals, vehicles or special events.
- fire
- fireworks and pyrotechnics
- lasers
- manual handling activities, e.g. in setting up for the event and taking down afterwards
- noise e.g. from speakers placed next to stalls
- security and cash collection
- parades, both pedestrian and vehicular
- performances, displays, exhibitions
- potential major incidents
- slipping, tripping or falling hazards, including falling off of a stage
- stands and stalls
- vehicles driving onto the site
 - traffic control
 - parking
 - catering vans
- violence
- waste management
- working at height

Think about any equipment, structures or physical features that will be present, e.g.

- bouncy castles and other inflatables
- children's amusement rides
- electrical equipment e.g. use of any portable electrical appliances and generators
- fun fairs, not just the safety of the rides but the suitability of the ground that large rides are placed on e.g. there might be underground services and/or pipes beneath the rides
- gantries
- heating
- lighting
- marquees
- moving parts of machinery
- stages, including people or equipment falling off of them
- stands and stalls, including caterers and catering vans
- toilets and welfare facilities
- underground services/pipes
- ventilation
- water such as a lake, pond, river, stream, fountain
- any materials, structures or machinery on or around the site that might add risk to the event, such as ladders, water features, gas or other fuel containers, etc

This list is by no means exhaustive so you should consider what hazards will be present at your event.

You only need to record hazards that could result in *significant* harm.

Who is at risk and how might they be harmed?

For each hazard identified, list all those who may be affected. Do not list individuals by name, just list groups of people. The following groups of people should be considered:

- your/your organisation's staff or volunteers
- stewards/marshals
- security staff
- caterers
- guests/attendees/visitors
- members of the public, passers by
- performers, dancers, exhibitors
- stall holders and vendors

- contractors you use to provide equipment or services
- local residents
- potential trespassers – the law says you have a duty of care to trespassers
- people who might be more at risk than others, e.g.
 - children (who may be unsupervised)
 - older people
 - people with disabilities
 - pregnant women

Areas to consider

Other things to consider when undertaking your risk assessment include:

Crowd control, capacity, access and egress. What is the maximum number of attendees your event can safely accommodate? How will you count how many people are present? How will you stop entry if maximum capacity has been reached? Will you need stewards? If so, how many? What training will you give them? Will they need radios or a way of communicating? Who is coordinating the stewards? Have you identified any bottlenecks or pinch points?

Emergency procedures and evacuation. How will people escape from your event? If your event venue is indoors, or if it is outdoors but surrounded by fencing, are the exits clearly marked? Is the lighting good enough for people to see their way out?

Emergency services. Do you need to notify them in advance? What is the procedure for contacting the emergency services on the day? Who will contact the emergency services? Is there a nominated person? Is there access for the emergency services vehicles, e.g. a fire appliance?

Event security. Do you need to hire SIA qualified security guards?

Fire safety. Has a fire risk assessment been carried out for the event? Have any caterers who are cooking or heating food undertaken a fire risk assessment of their own? Are there adequate means of escape should a fire occur? Is firefighting equipment required?

First aid provision. How far is the event from emergency medical aid? Have first aid needs been assessed? Will there be a sufficient number of first aiders available? Will defibrillators be required? Will you need to hire an external first aid provider? Where will first aid treatment be administered? Is there a tent where this can be carried out in private? Will an external first aid provider need to bring an ambulance in which to carry out treatment?

Toilet facilities and welfare. Are adequate welfare facilities available for both staff and the public? Are there sufficient numbers of toilets for the number of attendees expected? Are there accessible toilet facilities? Are there baby change facilities?

Waste management. How will this be managed and disposed of? Could there be a build-up of waste which could cause slip and trips, or catch fire? You will need to do a final litter pick at the end of the event.

Evaluate the risk

The extent of the risk will depend on the **likelihood** of that harm occurring and the potential **severity** of that harm, i.e. of any resultant injury or illness and the number of people who might be affected by the hazard.

The extent of the risk arising from the hazards identified must be evaluated and existing control measures taken into account.

What is the likelihood of the harm occurring, and what is the severity of the consequences?

Bear in mind:

- approximate number of people expected
- excitement generated by the event or specific activity
- consumption of alcohol
- weather
- light levels

When evaluating the likelihood and severity of the harm, score as high, medium or low.

Control the risk

You should consider what control measures or precautions you can put in place to prevent the harm from occurring.

Examples of control measures include:

- remove the hazard if it cannot be controlled
- prevent access to the hazard e.g. by guarding dangerous machinery parts
- implement procedures to reduce exposure to the hazard
- use a different, safer, piece of equipment
- have a dedicated person monitoring the hazard
- put written procedures in place
- train, inform and instruct staff and volunteers

- understand and comply with legislative standards, codes of good practice and British Standards
- get advice from the Health and Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk
- put up warning signage if appropriate
- use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
 - The very last measure to consider if everything else has been considered and there is still a risk, is Personal Protective Equipment or PPE. PPE is to be used as a control measure as a **last resort**.
 - PPE does not eliminate the hazard and will still expose the wearer to danger if the equipment fails – if the PPE fails, there is no protection at all.
 - PPE only protects the person wearing it, not other people in the vicinity. If the PPE is not worn, not worn properly or is damaged, then harm may occur.
 - Successful use of personal protective equipment relies on good user training, the availability of the correct equipment at all times and good supervision and enforcement.

Decide how you will reduce the risks of the harm occurring and the precautions you intend to take.

Record the findings of the risk assessment

Work out how you will put your planned action into practice and keep a written record of your plans.

Use the risk assessment template below to record all significant hazards, the nature and extent of the risks, and the action required to control them. Keep this for future reference.

Risk assessments must be suitable and sufficient. You need to be able to show that:

- a proper check was made
- you asked who might be affected
- you dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low

The completed risk assessment will form the safety manual for the event. This is evidence that you and your fellow organisers have taken all reasonable precautions for a safe event.

Give a copy of the completed template to the landowner and to everyone working at the event. You could also refer to other documents you may have, such as manuals, codes of practice etc.

Ask all participants who are not part of your organisation to provide you with their own written assessments and include these with your assessments. This includes:

- performers
- musicians
- stall holders
- caterers
- anyone supplying and/or operating:
 - attractions
 - activities
 - equipment

Review and revise

Use the risk assessment template below to record all significant hazards, the nature and extent of the risks, and the action required to control them. Keep this for future reference.

Give a copy of the completed document to the landowner and to everyone working at the event. You could also refer to other documents you may have, such as manuals, codes of practice etc.

Provision of information

Where the risk assessment has identified significant risks, you must provide information to all those affected, regarding the nature of the risk and the control measures to be implemented.

Emergency plan

In addition to risk assessing the event, also consider what could go wrong on the day and draw up a plan to deal with the emergency.

The plan should include details of what to do in the event of a fire, accident, bomb alert, adverse weather or any need to evacuate the site.

Covid-19

A separate Covid Risk assessment will need to be submitted to reflect the activities that are proposed. [Details can be found at HSE.](#)

[Surrey County Council link to Covid-19 checklist.](#)

You must ensure that you review the Covid-19 risk assessment on a regular basis to reflect the Regulations and guidance relevant and timely to your event.

Disclaimer

This information is for guidance only. There may be activities/risks at your event not mentioned here. Your risk assessment must reflect your event. If the Event Organiser/Hirer is not competent to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, they should seek the guidance and support of a competent Health and Safety advisor. See the [HSE's website](#).

Appendix 1 – example of a risk assessment

Below is an example of a risk assessment for a small music festival held on a park for up to a maximum of 4000 attendees. Many of the hazards covered in this example assessment will not affect smaller community events but the information can be used as a useful guide. Your risk assessment needs to be relevant and specific to your event.

Example of a Generic Event Risk Assessment

This is an example of a risk assessment for a small music festival held on a park for up to a maximum of 4000 attendees. Many of the hazards covered in this assessment will not affect smaller community events but the information can be used as a useful guide. Your risk assessment needs to be relevant and specific to your event.

Event:	
Venue:	
Assessment date:	
Completed by:	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Pedestrian/Vehicle conflict	Workers and others risk serious, possibly fatal, injuries if struck by a vehicle in a car park or on the highway.	Car parking stewarded and car park well lit. Taxi/Bus drop off point provided, and pedestrians discouraged from walking on the Highway. Signage and lighting provided to warn other road users of event.	Consider temporary speed limits on Highway. Investigate the possibility of providing a shuttle bus. Consult on transport plans with Local Police Force and County/Council Highways authority.			
Slips, Trips and Falls	Workers and visitors risk serious injury if they slip or trip, even on the level.	Floors in marquees and other structures laid by a competent person. Steps, changes in level and other tripping hazards fenced if not in use. Temporary lighting provided to walkways, toilets and general areas in use by the public after dark. Marquee pegs protected by foam and guy ropes etc highlighted in public areas Good housekeeping – staff 'see it and sort it'.	Provide a temporary fence to the hazard(drop in height) and the lake.			
Collapse of Structures	Workers and others risk serious, possibly fatal injury if fixed structures collapse.	Stages and marquees to be erected by a competent person/contractor. Contractor(s) to provide sign off certificates for all structures. Daily checks made on all structures by a competent person.	There is a need to check weather forecast daily. Check with provider(s) maximum wind speeds that structure can withstand safely. Make contingency plans to enable closure of structure in adverse weather conditions.			
Hearing Damage	Staff might suffer permanent or temporary hearing damage from long term exposure to loud music. All staff assumed to be at risk, particularly performers, stewards and bar staff.	Areas of the stage/event identified as being within the action level and signage provided. Staff rotation between quiet and noisy areas. Staff trained in noise risks and the protective measures needed. Staff known to be particularly at risk identified and provided with ear plugs.				

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
		Performers and contractors entering noisy areas to be warned of risks of hearing damage and offered ear plugs.				
Hearing Damage	The public might suffer permanent or temporary hearing damage from exposure to loud music.	Ensure the event equivalent continuous sound level (Event Leq) in any part of the audience area does not exceed 107 dB (A), and the peak sound pressure level does not exceed 140 dB(A). Members of the public are prevented from getting closer than 1m (or 3m for more powerful systems) from speakers. Warnings provided to the public in advance with tickets and by signage at the entrance.				
Medical Emergency	Workers and others could become seriously ill if no emergency first aid available.	First aid for staff to be provided in accordance with Regulations. First Aid point provided for the public with a minimum of two first aiders for events of up to 500 attendees (The Purple Guide). See link on page 1.	Consult on plans for medical emergency cover with Local NHS Ambulance Trust.			
Lost Children	Children and parents can become separated	All staff and stewards made aware of the Lost Child policy.	Check DBS status of person to take responsibility for lost children at the event.			
Electrical Danger	Staff and public may suffer serious and possibly fatal electric shock/burns injuries from faulty electrical equipment or installation.	All electrical systems should be constructed and maintained in a condition suitable for use in the open air and will be protected as necessary by 30mA residual current circuit breakers. All generators, distribution boxes etc to be fenced and away from public. A competent person should certify all electrical installation as to their safety on completion. Certificate to be kept at the event. All electrical equipment to be PAT tested.	Contractors and performers reminded to ensure any electrical equipment they bring to the event is PAT tested.			
Fire Safety	If trapped, staff and others risk serious, possibly fatal injuries from smoke inhalation or burns	Fire risk assessment done, following Fire Risk assessments and Fire Management Plan guidance – available on the Communities website and necessary action taken	Fire stewards to check fire exits and keep exits clear during performances			
Gas Safety	Staff and others risk injury from fire and explosion if gas appliances not properly maintained and used.	Food Vendors using LPG to be required to ensure their gas installation and equipment has been installed and checked within the last twelve months by a “Gas Safety Register” approved contractor. Compliance certificates to be kept on food stall. Food vendors to be reminded of the need to ensure staff changing LPG cylinders are trained to do so. Food vendors only allowed to have one day’s supply of LPG at their stall.	Make arrangements to check food vendors are complying with gas safety requirements.			

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Barrier Failure	Workers and others risk serious, possibly fatal injury if barriers collapse.	Barriers suitable for foreseeable loading to be erected by a competent person/contractor. Contractor to provide sign off certificates for all structures. Daily checks made on all structures by a competent person.				
Fairground Rides	Workers and others risk serious, possibly fatal injury if fairground rides collapse or have defects.	Only reputable fairground ride suppliers to be used at the event. Copies of all inspection certification (ADIPS) and public liability insurance to be obtained in advance of the event.				
Bouncy Castles and other inflatables	The public risk serious injury if bouncy castles are defective or there is inadequate supervision.	Only reputable bouncy castle suppliers to be used at the event. Copies of all inspection certification (ADIPS and/or PIPA) and public liability insurance to be obtained in advance of the event.	Check to ensure there will be adequate levels of supervision when the bouncy castle is in use.			
Fireworks and pyrotechnics	Danger from fire, explosion, direct impact and panic	NOT TO BE USED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF LICENSING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY OF VENUE BY COMPETENT PERSON, FULL RISK ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE WITH HSE FIREWORKS GUIDANCE .				
Lasers and other special effects	Staff and public may suffer eye damage if used improperly.	NOT TO BE USED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF LICENSING AUTHORITY. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY OF VENUE BY COMPETENT PERSON, FULL RISK ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE WITH HSE GUIDANCE .				
Food poisoning	Workers and the public risk ill health if they eat food prepared in unhygienic conditions.	Only reputable caterers to be used at the event whose business is registered with their Local Authority. Food traders required to bring copies of their employees' food hygiene training certificates and their food safety management system with them to event.	Check with Environmental Health Department whether they would like a list of food traders to be submitted before the event.			
Public Disorder	Staff and the public risk serious injury, if assaulted or if caught up in incidents of disorder.	Staff trained to spot potential troublemakers, defuse tension/situations etc throughout. Adequate number of trained, SIA badged security staff. Staff trained in procedures re-entry, queuing, searches, etc and signs displayed for public. Control of numbers at event particularly in performance areas and marquees. Pit security staff employed to observe crowd behaviours.	Consider providing advance information of prohibited items (glass and alcohol) the public can bring to the event. Consult with the local Police on security plans.			

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
		Drinks not served to people obviously under the influence. No glass to be used/provided at the event. Drinks to be served in plastic containers.				
Smoke and fogs	Staff may suffer skin damage from handling dry ice. Fumes and mists can cause irritation to eyes, nose and breathing for staff and the public.	Only trained workers have access to the products, which are kept in a locked container. Only workers trained in the risk of the product, use the products following safe systems of work – including wearing appropriate gloves, as recommended by the manufacturer.	Signage on use of smoke and fogs put up at entrance to venue to warn the public.			
Work at height	Workers and others risk serious, possibly fatal, injuries if they fall from height.	Stages and marquees to be erected by a competent person/contractor. Risk assessments/method statements of contractors checked for safe systems of work before the event. All work at height assessed on an individual task basis. Suitable ladders, in good condition and suitable for heavy work, provided and workers are trained know how to use them.				
Manual Handling	Workers may get musculoskeletal problems, e.g. back pain from handling heavy and/or awkward objects.	All work involving manual handling assessed on an individual task basis. Risk assessments/method statements of contractors checked for safe systems of work before the event. Only trained staff involved in manual handling. Aids to manual handling including forklift truck and a range of heavy duty sack truck and trollies available for staff.	Ensure new staff are shown how to use the manual handling aids.			
Ground Conditions	Risk of persons slipping and vehicle manoeuvres	Provide ground matting to areas where slips can occur or provide barriers/cones to prevent people entering the area. Assess areas of vehicle use. Provide barriers to prevent access to poor ground locations.	Assess the ground conditions during the event and cordon off areas that become worse during the event.			
Trees (Oak Processionary Moth)	These moths cause rashes to the skin and breathing difficulties.	Identify oak trees on the site and do not use areas under these trees.				
Water Hazards	Risk of drowning	Provide barriers to water's edge	Artificial lighting to be provided during dark hours so that water/barriers can be seen.			
SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES – this must be updated regularly and consider the prevailing weather conditions						

