

Guidance for volunteers
in Wakefield's greenspaces

Organising a small event



Deciding on your event

When deciding to hold any event in a park, woodland or other greenspace, there are a number of things to consider. Events can be very diverse and the information given here is not exhaustive. Specialist or larger scale events may require additional guidance.

Permission from Wakefield Council will always be required before any event can take place so contact the Council to discuss your event proposal as early as possible.

The following questions are important when beginning the event planning process and deciding on your event.

Why?

There may be many reasons why your group might want to hold a community event. For example, you may want to increase the use of your greenspace, raise awareness of a project, bring the local community together, or attract new members to your group.

Considering why you want to hold an event will help to suggest ideas for activities, potential sources of funding, who else to link with, and when to hold your event.

Where?

You will probably want to hold your event on the greenspace your group is involved with. Is the site suitable for the kind of event you would like to hold?

When?

Allow plenty of time to plan an event as many things need to be discussed, decided upon and actioned. A large event may take up to 12 months to plan, especially if specialist advice and permissions may be required.

Contact Wakefield Council to discuss your event proposal as early as possible as the application process may take a minimum of two months, and you will also need time to plan and promote the event once permission is obtained.

Who?

Who is your event aimed at? Are particular groups of people to be targeted, such as young children or teenagers? This will link with your reasons for holding an event.

Who should you work with?

Your contact at the Council will be able to offer advice on event organisation and management, help you with information needed from other council officers, and any other services you may need to seek advice from such as the Police or Fire Service.

Consider whether there are any other local organisations you could involve or work in partnership with, as they may be able to offer an activity, volunteers or other support at your event for free.



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What?

- What kind of event will it be?
- What kind of activities will your event have?
- What resources will be required?
- What needs to be done?
- What are the risks involved?

To help decide, create a list of all the possible activities you might want to organise and the resources required. Consider how these will appeal to your target audience and/or the public generally, and how they fit within the overall aims and objectives of the group. The scale of the event should be kept to levels that are appropriate to your group's experience and available resources.

Summary of what to consider

- Why do we want to hold an event?
- Where do we want to hold it?
- When do we want to hold our event?
- Who is the event aimed at?
- Who else should we involve?
- What kind of event do we want?
- What resources will we need?

Essential requirements

Permission

Permission is always required before any event can take place in a park, woodland or greenspace, so contact the Council to discuss your proposal as early as possible.

Licences

Some activities require an event licence. For non-profit making events held on Council land, event licences incur a small administration fee. You can find guidance and an online application form by going to www.wakefield.gov.uk and searching for 'Organising an event'.

When applying for an event licence, you will need to submit a risk assessment that considers all hazards associated with the event, and a site plan that shows the location of your event, visitor entrance points, vehicle access, etc. For further information about event licences, please contact Wakefield Council.

Responsibilities

Event organisers (your group's committee) have a legal responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the public, participants and any bystanders, as well as any volunteers and contractors involved in the event, so must take all reasonable measures to ensure the event takes place safely.

Insurance

Your group, as event organisers, will require public liability insurance with a minimum £5 million indemnity to cover the overall event. If your group does not have its own insurance, you can obtain specific insurance for public liability as a one-off policy.

First aid

You will need at least one qualified First Aider at your event. Large or high-risk events may need more. If you don't have anyone appropriately qualified in your group who is competent and comfortable with this responsibility, these services can be hired in.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of your committee to ensure your event is managed safely. You are responsible for the actions of your group's members at all times during the event, and you should take reasonable steps to ensure your group, and members of the public, remain safe.

Consider the health and safety aspects of your event

- before the event (e.g. at the planning stage),
- during the event (e.g. adequate stewarding), and
- after the event (e.g. leaving the site safe for other users).

As a condition of giving permission for an event, we will require your group to demonstrate a good understanding of health and safety issues and the ability to manage the event and risk appropriately.

Risk assessment

You will need to carry out a risk assessment that considers the safety of the people attending the event, those working at the event, and passers-by. All hazards associated with the event should be identified, the level of risk assessed, and measures put in place to control and reduce these risks to an acceptable level. An example risk assessment form is given in the Appendix.

Each different element and activity should be included in the risk assessment. If any contractors or service providers are involved in the event, they must have their own risk assessments for the service or activity they are providing at the event, e.g. caterers, bouncy castle operators, marquee supplier. As event organisers you must ask to see and retain copies of these in your event plan.

Site plan

A site map can be obtained from Wakefield Council. Think about the best location on the site for the different elements of your event, then draw a site plan identifying the position of all the intended visitor attractions and facilities. Plan out where visitors will enter the event, how they will move around it, vehicle access for setting up and taking down, and emergency vehicle routes during the event. Consideration should be given to disabled visitors. Talk to your contact at the Council for more guidance.

Summary of what to consider

- Who will contact Wakefield Council to discuss holding the event on Council owned land?
- Who will complete the event licence application form, if one is needed?
- Who will check whether your public liability insurance covers the event?
- If you do not have public liability insurance, who will look into obtaining it?
- Who will be your first aiders?
- Who will complete your risk assessment?
- Who will create your site plan?

Further information

For more information and an online application form for an event licence, go to www.wakefield.gov.uk and search for 'Organising an event'.

For further help, call Wakefield Council on **0345 8 506 506**. Ask to speak to the officer responsible for the site where you want to hold the event.



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Planning your event

Careful planning and organisation will help to ensure that your event is successful, safely run and enjoyable for everybody involved. All events, regardless of scale, are more manageable if the tasks are shared between a group of people. It is a good idea to form an event team that will form and remain in operation before, during and immediately after the event.

Establishing group roles and responsibilities

Specific responsibilities should be shared out between team members, using the strengths and interests of the individuals. For example, a person with suitable experience could have overall responsibility for health and safety, another could be responsible for the co-ordination and supervision of stewards and/or volunteers. Another team member could have responsibility for booking stalls and all that entails, such as receiving payments and issuing receipts.

Event manager

An event manager should be identified as early as possible and be responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the team or committee. An event plan will make things easier for the event manager to see what needs to be done.

Event plan

The key to a successful event is thorough preparation. Once you have decided on the basics, you can start to plan the event in detail, and produce an event plan. The plan can include details such as contact details, quotes, orders placed, correspondence, insurance, licences, risk assessments, site plans, etc. It could be maintained by the event manager, but everyone should have access to it, so that all can see what is outstanding. Ask for written confirmation of all bookings from service and activity providers, and send written confirmation outlining what is expected of them (when to arrive, unloading arrangements, contact details, etc.). Follow this up with a telephone call before the event to confirm any individual requirements and to avoid last minute problems on the day.

Planning meetings

The meetings should have an agenda that lists points to be discussed, with the event manager acting as chairperson. Action points should be recorded along with the name of the person who is dealing with each action point. This will ensure progress is made and problems identified early. If you have a large number of people at planning meetings, try holding smaller sub-committee meetings with someone appointed to lead each meeting then feeding back to the whole group at regular meetings.

Volunteers

Recruit volunteers to help out on the day as there will be many tasks to do. Extra help is always needed if your event has tents and gazebos to put up. It is also useful to have stewards to assist with the smooth running of the event, monitoring any potentially hazardous areas, such as entrances/exits.

Be aware of any potential health and safety risks that may be associated with volunteer activities and take steps to minimise them through your risk assessment.

Briefing volunteers

Hold a briefing meeting about a week before the event as there may not be time on the day of the event. Ensure that all the volunteers

- know what their role is
- are given key information such as contact details for key people
- know what to do in case of an emergency, e.g. emergency vehicle access points
- feel their contribution is valued

Promoting the event

Publicising your event is very important, especially as you want to get the maximum benefit for all your hard work in the preparation and presentation of the event. You should not begin to publicise it until after you have obtained permission to run the event from Wakefield Council, and obtained an events licence if required.

Publicity is best co-ordinated by one person but all committee members will need to be involved to ensure adequate publicity for your event using a variety of media.

Promoting your group

It's a good idea for your group to have a stall at the event, in a prominent position, promoting your group. It should be staffed all day with members who are willing to answer questions about the group's activities, especially if the group want to involve more local people in looking after the greenspace. Visitors should leave the event knowing more about your group, that your group organised the event, and how they can get involved in future activities.

Summary of what to consider

- Who will be on the event team?
- What specific roles are needed and who will do them?
- Who will be the event manager?
- How will the team plan be made accessible?
- Where will you recruit volunteers from, and who will do this?
- Who will coordinate publicity?
- Who will staff the group's stall and produce information about the group and its activities?

If you need help or any further information, please talk to your contact at the Council. If you don't know who the relevant person is, call Wakefield Council on 0345 8 506 506.

Considerations on the day

Every event is different, and you will have specific things to think about on the day of your event. You will need to develop your own checklist but below are some of the things that most groups will need to consider.

Managing vehicles on and off site

Access for bringing vehicles on site must be agreed, especially as keys may be required. Vehicles should be kept to a minimum and only have access for setting up and taking down at specific times before and after the event. All vehicle movement must stop during the event opening times. Is your event likely to cause disruption to normal traffic in the area? If so, you must consult with your local Police and the Highways Department at Wakefield Council to discuss traffic management plans. Only the Police or licenced traffic management contractors have powers to stop traffic on the highway.

Emergency plan

A plan should be established on how emergency services will gain access to the event in the event of an emergency.

Contingency plans

Weather conditions can play a major factor in the safety of an outdoor event. If the weather conditions are extreme on the day, will the event need to be cancelled? Will poor ground conditions be a hazard to pedestrians and vehicles? If the ground conditions are soft before the event it is unlikely you will be allowed to take vehicles on the grass. Damage to the park environment could incur reinstatement costs to your group.

Lost and found children

Your group must have a child protection policy. If a lost and found children's point is required, ask the Council for advice on the correct procedure.

Clearing up and waste disposal

You should make arrangements for waste disposal and rubbish clearance both during and after the event, preferably with facilities for recycling. Individuals should be designated responsibilities for clearing the site and collecting litter, and be provided with the appropriate equipment to do this. If you find any discarded hypodermic needles, call Wakefield Council on 0345 8 506 506 for them to be disposed of correctly. At the close of the event, the site should be left in a clean and tidy condition, and all gates secured.

Appendix Example risk assessment

Group name	Event and location		Risk assessor's name	Date of assessment
Friends of Wakefield Park	NATURE TRAIL QUIZ AROUND WAKEFIELD PARK		E. Bygum	25/02/2018
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk?	How might they be harmed?	What can be done to reduce the risk?	Is the risk as low as reasonably practical?
Environment Inappropriate footwear, uneven ground	Group members + public	Slips, trips and falls, leading to minor injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess ground conditions and choose safest route Ensure everyone is wearing appropriate footwear Make people aware of ground conditions 	Yes
Sharp objects Cans, glass, needles	Group members + public	Contact with hidden sharp objects leading to minor injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter pick the trail prior to event, and remove danger, using litter pickers and wearing suitable gloves 	Yes
Dealing with aggression Members of public Dogs	Group members + public	Mental and physical abuse leading to health effects and minor injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to diffuse situation Call police on 999 if required 	Yes
Weather Sunburn, heat exhaustion, hypothermia, exposure, dehydration	Group members + public	Being outdoors leading to health effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate clothing for weather conditions. Advise participants if clothing is not suitable. In extreme conditions, cancel event and ensure all participants are informed 	Yes
Losing people People getting lost while doing the trail	Public	People new to the park become disorientated and lost, leading to health effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure everyone knows where they are going. Provide maps if route is not obvious. Organisers to keep a check of people setting off and ensure they all return. May require signage and/or stewards 	Yes
Harmful substances Plants, fungi	Group members + public	Contact or ingestion of harmful substances leading to health effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid routing trail where problems occur. Make people aware of any poisonous plants/fungi known to be on the route before they set off 	Yes
Unforeseen hazards	<i>If, on the day, you encounter any risks not covered in your risk assessment, add into the space below or ring 0345 8 506 506 for advice</i>			