

Street parties and fetes

This guide will help you organise your party so it meets basic legal requirements – and leave you free to enjoy the day!

Introduction

Street parties have a long history and are a great British tradition. There is no better way for people to get to know their neighbours and meet members of their community than by holding an event on their doorstep.

These guidelines have been written to assist those residents who wish to organise a small street party and/or fete for their neighbours. It is not intended for large public events or events where traffic other than the local neighbourhood, will be affected.

If you are unsure whether the event you are planning falls within the scope of a small local event, this table will help:

Small scale event – e.g. street parties and fetes:	Larger public events:
Usually for residents/neighbours only (less than 500 people)	Anyone can attend. (But could also be a larger, residents only, gathering).
Only residents' traffic will be effected	Through traffic affected (for example bus routes)
Diversionary routes will not be necessary for any road closures	Road closures are likely to require diversionary routes
Publicity only to residents	External publicity (such as in newspapers)
No licences normally necessary if music incidental and no selling is involved	Licence usually needed – especially if you are planning a fireworks display, entertainment is provided or alcohol is sold, or where food is provided late at night – (check with local District Council).
No liability insurance required for road closures by County Council as Highways Authority (but check with local District Council)	Liability insurance needed for road closures.
No formal risk assessment needed	Risk assessment common
Self-organised	Usually arranged by professional/skilled organisers

First things first!

Check that the date of your street party doesn't clash with any other events in your area. Let your local District Council know early on about your plans and they will be able to advise you. Safety is their prime concern and they will do their very best to advise you so that your party can go ahead.

Remember, if two or more events are held at the same time in a local area they can cause traffic problems so it's a good idea to plan ahead and check in advance.

Temporary road closures

If you are planning a street party or any other event on the public highway you will need a road closure order to cover its duration. This is absolutely essential, even if the road will be closed for just a few minutes. A temporary closure means that all vehicles are kept out – but the road is open to pedestrians.

Before applying for a closure you should;

- Check that the residents in the street are happy with the proposed event.
- Plan the event to avoid times when your bins are due to be emptied.
- Plan the event to avoid damage to the road or footway.
- Consider what you would need to do to allow easy access for emergency vehicles in the case of an accident or fire.
- Plan how you will clean the street after the party.

Applying for a road closure for your street party

Please contact your appropriate District Council for a closure form and details of any special requirements they may have. They may apply a nominal charge to cover administration and legal costs.

Road closure applications take time to be approved and you should check with your District Council how long they need to process your application. It may be up to six weeks, especially if there are a number of applications for the same day.

Once the relevant District Council have received your application, they will usually:

- Check that you have consulted with all the residents and provided proof that the majority support the proposal.
- Provide advice regarding traffic impact or additional precautions that might be needed.

- Advise the police, emergency services and the Highway Authority of the application. This will help ensure that your event will not be disturbed by planned road works and that emergency services are aware in case of an incident.
- They may also wish to see what plans you have made for emergency access.

Insurance

The County Council as Highways Authority for the area does not require organisers to hold public liability insurance for small scale events that do not affect through traffic. But your local District Council may require this as part of their application process.

Safety

This is a matter of common sense. As organisers you will want those involved to take common sense precautions so that they don't injure themselves or others, for example when hanging bunting, during the set up and clearing away, serving hot food around young children etc.

The County Council does not require a formal risk assessment for small scale events, but again you will need to check with your District Council.

You may want to consider listing the things that could well go wrong and what you could do about them, as part of your planning process.

Helpful websites:

"Your guide to organising a street party or fete" – a free guide from the Department for Communities and Local Government:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/streetpartyguide>

Advice and guidance on organising street events from the national group, Streets Alive:

<http://www.streetsalive.org.uk/>

District Council Licensing web pages:

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/regeneration/rad/Applying+for+a+Road+Closure+or+Temporary+Traffic+Order.htm>

East Hampshire District Council

<http://62.254.234.164/home.nsf/AtoZListing/Road+closures?OpenDocument&name=Road+closures>

Eastleigh Borough Council

<http://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/licensing.aspx>

Fareham Borough Council

<http://www.fareham.gov.uk/council/departments/healthcommunity/licensingindex.aspx>

Gosport Borough Council

<http://www.gosport.gov.uk/sections/environment/environmental-health/commercial-team/licensing/>

Hart District Council

http://www.hart.gov.uk/index/community_living/highways/road-closures.htm

Havant Borough Council

<http://www.havant.gov.uk/havant-3598>

New Forest District Council

<http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2086>

Rushmoor Borough Council

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3929>

Test Valley Borough Council

<http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=4327>

Winchester City Council

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/licensing/>

Large scale public events or events that will affect through traffic

Such events need to be carefully planned as there is a greater risk of traffic congestion and the safety of those attending the event and those passing by, whether a road closure is required or not.

Your local District Council can provide further advice on licences and will usually administrate any road closure applications that are necessary.

Where road closures are required for such events an indemnity and evidence of public liability insurance of £10 million will be required. This may be reduced to £5 million if the applicant can prove that they have taken all reasonable steps to minimise risks to traffic. Road closure applications for such events may take several weeks or months to process and you should contact your local District Council to find out how much time is required.

Road closures and diversions will also need to be signed correctly for the safety of the event participants and those passing by.

For further advice on managing traffic and minimising traffic risks at such events please see our web site at:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/trafficmanagement/events-guidance.htm>