

## Useful Publications

### HSE Books:

**Managing Crowds Safely** - ISBN 071761834X

**Event Safety Guide** - ISBN 0717624536

**Guide to Safety in Sportsgrounds** - ISBN 0113000952

**Five Steps to Risk Assessment** - ISBN 0717615804

**HSE Entertainment Sheet No. 7** - 'Safety in the Use and Operation of Play Inflatables, including Bouncy Castles'.

**Working Together on Firework Displays** - A Guide to Safety for Firework Display Organisers (ISBN 0-7176-0835-2, HS(G) 123)

**Giving Your Own Firework Display** - How to Run it Safely (ISBN 0-7176-0836-0, HS(G) 124)

### Published by the Independent Street Arts Network:

**Safety Guidance for Street Art, Carnival Processions and Large Scale Performances**

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**MID SUSSEX  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

*For a Better Mid Sussex*



**Out to  
enjoy**



This documentation gives outline guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of Mid Sussex District Council Policy or the Law.

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# Organising Outdoor Events in Mid Sussex



**Out to  
enjoy**

**Your FREE Guide**



**MID SUSSEX  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

*For a Better Mid Sussex*

# Introduction

Outdoor events bring communities together, whether it is for traditional celebrations, fundraising or cultural shows.

Organising an event can be a daunting prospect but with careful preparation, it can be very rewarding and extremely beneficial to your community.

We would like Mid Sussex to play host to a multitude of cultural and community events. This brochure has been designed to encourage and help you to organise safe and successful outdoor events across the District.

## Who Owns The Land?

Before organising any event, you must identify who owns the land and then obtain the owner's written permission. This includes all events on land owned or managed by Mid Sussex District Council. Providing it is deemed possible to accommodate your event on Council land, we will send you an application pack, including our Conditions of Hire. These should be read very carefully as you must agree to adhere to them as part of the application process.

## Event Venues in Mid Sussex

Mid Sussex is a great place to hold an outdoor event. We are fortunate to be in one of the warmest, driest and most picturesque parts of the country.

There are literally hundreds of public open spaces and parks in Mid Sussex, which are ideal for hosting outdoor events. Popular parks under Council ownership include Victoria Park (Haywards Heath), Lindfield Common (Lindfield), Whiteman's Green (Cuckfield), East Court (East Grinstead) and St Johns Park (Burgess Hill).

Other parks and recreation grounds in the more rural and outer lying areas of Mid Sussex have, for many years, played host to fetes, village days and country fairs.

If you are interested in holding an outdoor event in your area, we would be happy to advise as to which of our sites may be appropriate. It would be useful to hold an on-site meeting to discuss your plans, please contact us for further information.

## Event Hire Charges

In making a charge for hosting minor community events, the Council will seek only to recover its costs in providing exclusive use of the venue. Please see the Council's Outdoor Fees and Charges leaflet for our current event hire charges or contact us for further information.



## Safety First

As the Event Organiser, safety should be your primary responsibility, so put safety first. Good organisation is the key to a safe event. Plan ahead and agree the programme of all event activities well in advance. In the early stages, it is important to agree precise roles and responsibilities for all event personnel as well as specific tasks and their completion dates.

Upon booking a Council facility you will be required to inform us in writing of every activity to be undertaken from arrival on site to vacating the premises. We will be happy to give advice on what type of activities are appropriate for a specific site. We reserve the right to refuse permission to conduct certain activities in a given public open space, on certain days or at certain times.

It is recommended that organisers develop a detailed Event Management Plan covering the entire duration and also an Emergency Plan to be put into action should things go wrong. You may be required to discuss these plans with the local emergency services to ensure a co-ordinated response.

You will be required to provide the details of an on-site Event Manager who will act as the main point of contact at all times.

Please notify us of your intended event as early as possible; it may be necessary to consult with other Council departments, other agencies, emergency services and the general public. Your event programme should be finalised at least 28 days prior to the event date.



## Risk Assessment

Where an event is to be held on Council land, organisers are required to conduct a thorough risk assessment covering all event activities from arrival on-site to departure from the premises. Assessing the risk at your event is also a legal requirement.

Where possible, we will assist by sending template risk assessments (for reference purposes only) as guidance to event organisers. Your Risk Assessment should be considered as the most important document to be prepared. We can advise as to its structure and layout in accordance with best practice.

A detailed plan of the event site must accompany the Risk Assessment to indicate the precise location of all activities. For events on Council land, we will provide a blank plan of the premises for this purpose.

The purpose of your risk assessment is to:

- a) Determine the hazards and identify the associated risks for all event activities
- b) Establish who is likely to be at risk
- c) Identify what will be done to manage any hazards and minimise the associated risks
- d) Grade each risk as low, medium or high based on how likely it is to happen and how severe it would be if it did

## Insurance

Public Liability Insurance is now a key concern (and expense) to consider when organising an event. For events on Council land, we will advise as to the minimum level of cover required depending on the activities or equipment involved and the numbers of people in attendance.

The Council will require a copy of a valid Public Liability Insurance Certificate prior to the commencement of an event. In addition we would strongly advise the organisers to take out insurance covering damage to equipment, property, employers' liability and possibly event cancellation.

If your organisation is a member of a larger governing body then you may be able to obtain preferential insurance cover through them. Check first - it may be cheaper than buying a one-off policy.



## Crowd Management

Your main consideration should be for the safety of people on site throughout the duration of your event, whether they are visitors, staff, contractors, volunteers or even passers-by.

You will need to thoroughly assess the event site and determine whether you will need to divert people away from certain areas. This could involve the adequate provision of professional Stewards (Licensed by the Security Industry Authority), marshals, signage and security fencing. Please contact us for further advice. You can obtain further information from the HSE at HSE Information Centre, Broad Lane, Sheffield S3 7IIQ Telephone: 0742 892345. or visit their website at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

## Emergency Services

Consultation with the emergency services is essential before all events; it is the organiser's responsibility to notify the Police, Ambulance and Fire Services accordingly. Give as much notice as possible - you may be required to organise additional resources at your own expense. In the majority of cases the emergency services will not need to be heavily involved, but they should always be informed.

## Emergency Planning

The Council works closely with the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services in Emergency Planning for larger, high profile events. If you are hoping to attract a large number of people (e.g. more than 499) to your event, it may be necessary to hold an Emergency Planning Meeting well in advance. We will typically discuss the nature of your event and the impact it is likely to have on the local community on the day. The group will then decide what would be done in an emergency – should a major incident occur.



### First Aid & Accident Reporting

You will need to provide adequate First Aid provision in line with the size and scope of your event. This could range from a few qualified volunteers with First Aid kits, to ambulances on standby. Event organisers must record all accidents or incidents in writing and provide a copy of each report to the Council.



### Weather & Ground Conditions

One thing we can't help you with is the weather! This will play a big part in the success of your outdoor event. The vast majority of outdoor events on MSDC land take place in May, June and July. Even though these are supposed to be the summer months, we cannot guarantee that the weather will be fine and dry. Therefore, you should plan for all kinds of weather, keep an eye on the forecasts and be prepared for change. On the day of the event, it is recommended that you use a PA system to keep people informed.

If it's likely to be hot and sunny, there should be a good supply of water available to visitors and plenty of shade from the sun. If wind and rain are forecast, the ground could become slippery or inaccessible and certain temporary structures may need to be secured or removed.

Ground conditions can vary a great deal from day-to-day and site-to-site. Event organisers will need to be aware of any steep slopes or undulations in the ground as well as wet or slippery surfaces. It may be necessary to divert the public around certain hazards in the ground. The best way to assess this is to hold a site meeting and 'walk-the-course'.

MSDC reserves the right to cancel events as a result of unsuitable weather or ground conditions. If the weather has been particularly bad in the week(s) leading up to your event, we will arrange to meet you on-site to discuss the matter. We will work with you to devise a Wet Weather Contingency Plan should your event be at risk.



### Ground Reinstatement & Waste Management

Please leave the site in the condition that you found it in. Event organisers will be responsible for the removal of all waste produced in connection with their event. In addition you will be responsible for the costs of repairing any damage to the ground as a result of your event.

### Car Parking

Organisers must consider the impact their event will have on car parking in the area. Provision must be made for visitors to the event to park safely and legally without causing disturbance and annoyance to local residents. Where applicable the Council will permit vehicles onto a designated area of park or open space under the control of the event organiser. This will require adequate planning, including risk assessment, marshalling, signage and a maximum speed limit of 5mph on grassed areas.





### Noise – Generators & Public Address Systems

Parks and open spaces are situated in all areas of Mid Sussex, from Town Centres to small rural villages. When there is an event in any public open space, the organiser must minimise disturbance to local residents. Generators should be 'silent running' and any other noise making equipment must be located as far away from neighbouring properties as possible. The location of noise making equipment should be clearly indicated on the event site plan.

As a courtesy to neighbouring residents, you should inform them in writing of the time, date and nature of your event at least 14 days prior to your arrival on site. This notification must stipulate the operating time of the event and the contact details of an On-Site representative who will be present on the day.

If you are unsure about your legal responsibilities regarding noise pollution, MSDC's Environmental Health Team will be able to provide you with further technical information. Telephone 01444 458166 or email: [envhealth@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:envhealth@midsussex.gov.uk)



### Inflatable Structures

Although popular, inflatable units (such as bouncy castles) can be extremely dangerous if operated incorrectly.



Therefore, all inflatable units must be operated in accordance with the HSE Entertainment Sheet No. 7 'Safety in the Use and Operation of Play Inflatables, including Bouncy Castles'. MSDC requires any inflatable used on Council land to be tested under the PIPA or ADIPS schemes. For more information contact the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

Should you wish to include an inflatable structure as part of your event, your risk assessment must indicate adequate control methods to facilitate the safe operation of the equipment. It is recommended that event organisers employ a professional supplier to install inflatable equipment. The organiser will be responsible for the operation and risk assessment of inflatables in connection with their event.





### Marquees & Other Temporary Structures

Should your event involve the use of a marquee or other temporary structure (e.g. staging unit), you will be required to obtain a plan and technical specification of the structure and provide a copy to the Council. It is recommended that event organisers employ the services of professional contractors in the set-up and de-rig of any temporary structures. All temporary structures are subject to a fire risk assessment by law and must also be tested to ensure they are securely anchored and safe for use.



### Funfairs and Circuses

Travelling entertainments such as funfairs and circuses have been popular visitors to Mid Sussex for many years. During this time, we have built strong working relationships with the most reputable operators in the area.

Given the nature of the activities and equipment involved and the limited number of available sites, funfair and circus operators are required to notify the Council at least two months before the event as specific

documentation must be completed. This additional documentation includes: Application Forms Public Liability Insurance Certificate for each ride Ride Worthiness Certificates for each ride as inspected by ADIPS in partnership with the HSE. The above documentation must be received no later than 28 days prior to the arrival on site.

### Bonfire and Firework Displays

For safety reasons, the Council only allows Certified professional pyrotechnic operators or recognised and experienced Bonfire Societies to conduct bonfire and firework displays on its land.

If you are planning a firework display at your event, you should ensure the operator is a member of the British Pyrotechnists Association (The BPA) or The CBI EIG.

For more information, visit the Health & Safety Executive website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

All displays must be organised in accordance with the Council's Conditions of Hire and the guidance notes issued by the Health & Safety Executive.

### Power and Water

At certain sites we may be able to provide access to an electricity or water supply, there may be an additional charge for this. Should you require access to the mains electricity or water supply you should contact the appropriate utility provider.

### Provision of Toilets

Many of our sites have adequate toilet provision, which can be made available, but in some cases (particularly for large attendance events) you may need to hire toilets from a contractor. The recommended ratio of toilets to people for public events is as follows:



#### Events Lasting More than 6 Hours

Female	Male
1:100	1:500 (1 Urinal per 150)

#### Events Lasting Fewer Than 6 Hours

Female	Male
1:120	1:600 (1 Urinal per 175)





## Licensing

Certain activities common to many events are licensable by law. The main licensable activities are listed below:

### Supply of Alcohol - for consumption on or off the premises

This could include a beer tent or other bar area

### Regulated Entertainment - in the presence of an audience

This includes:

- The performance of a play
- Exhibition of a film
- Performance of live music
- Playing of recorded music to entertain an audience (non-incident)
- Performance of dance
- Any similar entertainment to the above
- Providing facilities which enable the above

If your event is likely to contain any licensable activities it must be licensed using one of the following methods in order to comply with the law.

### Temporary Event Notices (TEN's)

Under the Licensing Act 2003 organisers of smaller events can now apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN). Each site can hold a maximum of 12 events covered by a TEN in any year and each separate event must be a minimum of 24 hours apart. A TEN application must be made to the Licensing Authority at least 10 days in advance of the event.

The Event Organiser must apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) to cover the entire duration of the event (no longer than 96 hours). MSDC requires that any bar at an event on Council land must be operated by a Personal Licence Holder. A TEN can also cover the provision of regulated entertainment as described earlier, but this must be stipulated by the organiser when applying.

The capacity of the licensed event area covered by a TEN must be closely monitored by SIA qualified stewards and is strictly limited to 499 people (including staff and performers).

If your event requires the provision of regulated entertainment to an audience of more than 500 people it cannot be covered by a TEN. Please contact us well in advance of your event (minimum 90 days notice required), if this is the case.

### Premises Licences

Where appropriate, MSDC may apply for a Premises Licence for a given park or open space to permit Regulated Entertainment to larger audiences (e.g. 500-4999 people).

In general, the District Council's approach to Premises Licensing will be to facilitate a programme of cultural and community events at sites where larger audiences can be safely accommodated.

Please note, Mid Sussex District Council does not currently licence any of its Parks or Open Spaces to permit the Sale of Alcohol. Any event organisers who require the supply of alcohol to form part of their event must apply for and be subject to the conditions of a Temporary Event Notice.

For more information on The Licensing Act 2003 please contact the Council's Licensing Team: [licensing@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@midsussex.gov.uk) or 01444 477219 (Specific Licensing Enquiries) [www.midsussex.gov.uk](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk)

For further information please go to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's Website: [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

### Food & Catering

Food and drink can often form an important part of an event and be profitable for organisers. We recommend that you employ a professional caterer if you are aiming to supply food or drink to a large number of people. For events on Council land we ask that anyone providing food or drink to the public is in possession of a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

For more information, please contact the Council's Food Safety Team.  
Email: [foodsafety@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:foodsafety@midsussex.gov.uk) or telephone: 01444 477419



## Posters and Advertising

Local advertising is a great way to let people know about your event. If you wish to put up posters advertising your event, please remember 'Fly Posting' is illegal so make sure you have the permission of the landowner.

In general, MSDC will allow poster advertising on the site of the event no more than two weeks in advance but you may also require planning consent if your advertising is over a certain size. You will be responsible for removing posters after the event. Contact us for more information.



## Road Closures and Traffic Regulations

The Road Traffic (Special Events) Act came into effect in 1994. Events, for example carnival processions (which stop the flow of traffic) are likely to require a Road Closure

Order. If your event is likely to cause congestion and therefore require traffic regulation, you must notify the Police and other Local Authorities. Advanced warning signage in the affected areas will be essential.



## Top tips for a successful event

Where possible, plan your event at least a year in advance. This will give you time to develop your contacts and complete all the paperwork!

Keep your first event relatively small and simple. If successful it can grow in future years.

The more activities within your event, the more planning and paperwork required. Try and attract sponsors to help with funding or advertising.

Notify all relevant authorities well in advance (3-6 months).

Never cut costs at the expense of safety.

If you have any further questions please contact us!

## Organisers Must Consider:

- Site Layout
- Marshalling of Vehicles & pedestrians
- Electrical Equipment & Cabling
- Safety of Temporary Structures
- Noise and Courtesy to Neighbours
- Weather & Ground Conditions
- Emergency Planning
- Toilet Provision
- First Aid
- Catering

## You Will Need:

- A Detailed Site Plan
- A Written Itinerary & Operating Procedure
- Keys for Access
- Water & Electricity Supply
- Portaloos
- Shelter (e.g. Gazebo)
- Hazard Tape
- Safety Fencing or Barriers
- Emergency Plan
- First Aid Provision
- Signage
- A PA System
- Fully Briefed Marshals and Stewards
- High Visibility Jackets

