

# A Guide to Organising an Outdoor Event



Events and Bookings Officer  
Parks and Leisure Services  
Guildford Borough Council  
Stoke Park Nursery, Stoke Park  
Nightingale Road, Guildford, GU1 1ER  
[www.guildford.gov.uk](http://www.guildford.gov.uk)  
01483 444718  
[parks@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:parks@guildford.gov.uk)

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## 1.0 Introduction

Good planning and organisation is essential to putting on an event that is both safe and enjoyable.

If you are interested in holding an event in a park, open space or countryside site owned by Guildford Borough Council then this guide will take you through the process and provide you with useful information.

It is important to plan ahead and agree the programme of activities well in advance of the event date. You will need a team of people to help with organising the various aspects of the event such as administration, finance, and health and safety.

Further information about running an event safely can be found on the [Health and safety Executive website](#). If you are organising a voluntary event then [the 'Can do' guide on the gov.uk website](#) will help you to plan and run a successful event. Also, [My Community Starter](#) is a free online resource for people who want to get involved in organising smaller, more straightforward community activities. It is a useful tool that is simple to use. It has links to all the relevant best practice and guidance on running events.

## 2.0 Choose Your Site

Guildford has more than 50 parks and countryside sites. These sites can be hired as a venue for your commercial or community events.

Public open space is not available for private hire such as wedding receptions or private parties. However, certain venues such as Burchatts Farm Barn can be hired for private events.

Our most popular parks include:

- Allen House Grounds (Green Flag)
- Avondale Open Space
- Bannisters Open Space
- Castle Grounds (Green Flag)
- Castle Cliff Gardens
- Chantry Woods
- Chilworth Gunpowder Mills
- Effingham Common
- Fir Tree Open Space
- Kingston Meadows
- Lakeside, Ash
- Onslow Arboretum & Recreational Ground
- Pewley Down
- Riverside (Green Flag)
- Shalford Park
- Stoke Park (Green Flag)
- Stoke Park Northside
- Stoke Recreational Ground
- Sutherland Memorial Park (Green Flag)
- Woodbridge Road Open Space

[Surrey County Council](#) are responsible for most of the highways, roads, pathways and pedestrian areas in the borough. If you wish to stage an event on the Highway, you should contact Surrey County Council Highways Team on 0300 200 1003.

If you wish to stage an event in the Town, you should contact the Town Centre Management Team on 01483 444133 or email [Diana.parker@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:Diana.parker@guildford.gov.uk)

### 3.0 Decide on the Type of Event, Theme and Activities

What type of event would you like to have?

- A music concert
- Fun fair
- Cultural event
- Dog Shows
- Cinema
- Carnival / Procession
- Local community fete
- Sponsored walk or run
- Sports Day
- Duck Race
- Theatre Production
- Treasure Hunt

Will it be a commercial or community event?

Will you be fundraising or is the event for profit?

How many people would you like to attend?

Will you have an entry charge?

Who will work at the event?

What activities will you have?

- Dancing
- Performance of Plays
- Film Shows
- Fireworks / Pyrotechnics
- Donkey Rides
- Talks
- Food Stalls
- Music
- Fairground Rides
- Bouncy Castles
- Market Stalls
- Camping
- Obstacle Course
- Face Painting

**Filming** - If you are interested in filming or carrying out a photo shoot on a park or in an open space, you will need to complete a [Filming Application Form](#). There is a minimum £50.00 filming charge. The charge may be more depending upon the event details.

**Regular School Physical Education and Fitness Sessions** – Regular PE & fitness sessions take place in many of our parks and open spaces. To get permission to run fitness sessions, please complete a [Fitness Session Application Form](#).

**Balloon Launches** - Shalford Park is the only site suitable for balloon launches. [Fees & Charges](#) are based on a maximum of 25 launches per year. To get permission to launch balloons, please complete a [Balloon Launch Application Form](#).

**Outdoor Theatre** - Guildford Castle Grounds and Bandstand have a full concert diary during the summer months. This includes band concerts and outdoor theatre performances. If you would like to apply for concert dates, please complete an [Outdoor Theatre Application Form](#).

**Bandstand Concerts** - Guildford Castle Grounds and Bandstand have a full concert diary during the summer months. This includes band concerts and outdoor theatre performances. If you would like to apply for concert dates, please complete a [Bandstand Concert Application Form](#).

Please see the end of this guide for further information and guidelines on certain activities including:

- Bouncy Castles and other inflatable apparatus
- Fireworks
- Fun Fairs and Circuses
- Animals

## 4.0 Application Process

You will need permission from the Council to hold an event on Council owned Parks & Countryside sites.

4.1 Please complete the appropriate application form from the list below:

[Outdoor Event Application Form](#)

[Fitness Session & Regular School Sport Activities Application Form](#)

[Balloon Launch Application Form](#)

[Filming Application Form](#)

[Outdoor Theatre Application Form](#)

[Bandstand Concert Application Form](#)

Read the [Terms and Conditions](#). Sign the form and return it to us.

4.2 Event Acknowledgement

Once we have received your proposed event application we will check it for date availability, event suitability and [licence requirements](#). We will write to you and acknowledge your application and we will confirm the [fees & charges](#). We will also let you know about any additional requirements and let you know what you should do to confirm your event.

4.3 Event Confirmation

You will need to provide us with a [Risk Assessment](#), a copy of your Public Liability Insurance, a [Site Plan](#), a Traffic Plan and any other details that we have asked for at least four weeks in advance of your event. When we have received all of the necessary documents, we will write to you and confirm that the event can go ahead. We will also invoice you for the hire of the park. Events will not be able to go ahead without a written Event Confirmation from us.

It is recommended that you apply at least six months in advance. This should allow sufficient time for you to properly plan your event, obtain licenses (if necessary) and to advertise your event. If necessary, you will need to make sure you have licenses in place and you may also need to notify the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services of your event.

## 5.0 Health and Safety

Safety is your responsibility and as an event organiser you have a duty of care for the people who will work at and attend your event. If you are holding an event on Council owned land, a site specific Risk Assessment will have to be completed.

## 6.0 Risk Assessment

Completing a site specific Risk Assessment is an essential part of organising a successful event. It will ensure the safety of everyone involved with your event.

Risk Assessments are a legal requirement for employers under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Sometimes specific safety requirements will have to be applied and failure to apply them could result in the cancellation of your event or, in the most extreme cases, prosecution.

It is important for you to think about the aspects of your event which may involve a level of risk e.g. machinery, fireworks, first aid, electricity, lost children, fuel etc. what accidents could happen and what will you do to prevent them?

To help you complete a Risk Assessment, we have produced a [guidance leaflet](#), [assessment template](#) and a [generic Event Safety Risk Assessment](#). You can use these to guide you through the process with your own event.

### 6.1 Safety Advisory Group

Larger events, events of an unusual nature or events that are new to Guildford will benefit from meeting with the [Safety Advisory Group](#) (SAG). SAGs provide a multi-agency forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event. They aim to help event organisers with the planning, and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies. The SAG may contact you to discuss your event proposals further.

Also, for larger events the [Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare](#) provides comprehensive guidance on all aspects of event planning and management.

For Fire safety risk assessments, see the [link for advice](#).

**Please remember not to compromise on safety. You can always rearrange your plans and programme but you cannot correct the effects of an accident.**

## 7.0 Licences

Some events will require a licence. There are several types of licence:

1. [Premises Licence](#)
2. [Personal Alcohol Licence](#)
3. [Temporary Event Notice \(TEN\)](#)
4. [Charity Collection License](#)
5. [Street Trading Licences](#)

For advice on [licensing your event](#) – Alcohol, Music, Temporary Events Notice, Food or Street Trading – please see the links to our website or contact [licensing@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@guildford.gov.uk). You will need to allow 10 weeks for a premises licence and 4 weeks for a temporary events notice.

## **7.1 Food and Beverages**

Food hygiene legislation applies to any activity that involves the provision of food including beverages. To obtain further details contact Guildford Borough Council Environmental Health & licensing Team on 01483 444371.

## **7.2 Alcohol**

*Events of less than 500 people:*

You will need to obtain a Temporary Event Notice (TENS) from Guildford Borough Council Environmental Health & licensing Team on 01483 444371. Applications need to be made at least 10 days before the event.

*Events of more than 500 people:*

You will need to obtain a Temporary Premises Licence from Guildford Borough Council Environmental Health & licensing Team on 01483 444371. Applications need to be made at least two months before the event.

## **7.3 Selling of goods and Street Trading Licenses**

Anyone wishing to trade in the Guildford Borough will need the permission of the Council. This includes areas where the public have access without payment, such as trading in the parks and trading at events in parks where there is no admission charge.

More information for applicants is available at:

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/17580/Street-trading-licences>

The Council prohibits the sale of illegal goods, animals, birds and fish, replica or real guns, knives and other weapons on its land.

A Street Trading License should be applied for at least two months before your event. The Council's policy on street trading is strict and submission of an application does not guarantee that consent will be granted.

## **7.4 Raffle**

If you are planning to sell raffle tickets and complete the draw on the same day then permission is not normally needed.

If you are planning to sell tickets in advance of the draw then you may need a Lotteries Registration License. Please contact Guildford Borough Council Environmental Health & Licensing Team on 01483 444371 for further information.

If you are planning to sell £20,000 or more in raffle or lottery tickets then you will need to register with the [Gambling Commission](#).

Individuals cannot raise money for private gain.

## 7.5 Charitable Collections

The permission of the landowner is required or a street collection permit is required before collections can take place. The Council is able to issue a street collection permit so that you can collect money from the general public on behalf of charities. Applications for a permit must be made to the Council's Environmental Health & Licensing Team at least one month in advance.

## 8.0 Insurance

You will need to arrange public liability insurance for your event. The policy cover must be for a minimum indemnity sum of £5 million per incident. Please ensure your insurers are fully aware of all the activities taking place and that all your exhibitors, sub-contractors and caterers etc all have their own insurance. Evidence of this may be requested before, at or after the event.

[My Community Starter](#) is a free online resource for people who want to get involved in organising smaller, more straightforward community activities. It is a useful tool that is simple to use. It has links to all the relevant best practice and guidance on running events. There is a section on [Insurance considerations](#) and you have the option to purchase insurance direct from them.

Alternatively, insurance cover can be obtained through most local insurance brokers.

## 9.0 Site Plan

You will need to produce a site plan showing the layout of your event, positions of stalls, marquees, exhibition units, car parking, stages, structures, seating, toilets, emergency access points, marshal points, first aid etc.

For races, a detailed route plan will need to include the location of route marshals, refreshment points, first aid etc.

## 10.0 Traffic Management Plan

Some events will need a traffic management plan covering parking management and the segregation of people and vehicles once in the park. This information can be included on the site plan. This will need to detail marshalling points, signage, speed restrictions, walk ways/protected routes, one way traffic movement, detail about how the traffic will be managed into and out of the park (traffic and safety issues due to queuing to pull off the road). Also consider these issues for set-up and dismantle days as well as operational days.

## 11.0 Fees and Charges

A scale of fees & charges is set yearly. The fees are dependent on the type of event, the numbers of people attending and the duration of the event.

There is a minimum booking charge for the hire of our Parks and Countryside Sites. Using an event charge calculator, we work out other charges that are payable according to the type of event being planned. A security deposit or reinstatement fees may also be payable. For more information about fees and charges, please see the separate 'Fees & Charges' sheet.

Q: Why do we charge schools, charities, community groups and other non-commercial groups to use our land?



A: As landowners, Guildford Borough Council has a duty of care to ensure events & activities are planned, well run, safe to attend and that health & safety risks are fully considered and adequate control measures are in place. We need to know who is using our land, when they are using it, for what purpose and how it will affect others. We also need to consider environmental protection and the protection of the Borough's assets with minimal disruption to the environment and wildlife. Having this information will also help to ensure that events & activities don't clash with one another and with our regular maintenance. Anyone wanting to use our parks, countryside sites or maintained pitches for events or organised activities must go through the application process. The same considerations and approach is used for all event and activity applications and substantial financial discounts can be applied if the event or activity is for the benefit of the local community such as charity events and school sports sessions. Our principle aim is to cover our administration costs. When we receive specific information that facilities are being used without permission or payment, we will act on that information and this may result in your event being stopped.

## 12.0 First Aid & Emergency Services

You will need to supply details of the first aid cover to be provided at your event and you will be held responsible for adequate fire precautions and maintenance of clear exits for emergency vehicles and for seeing that none of the footpaths are blocked.

It is good practice to notify the appropriate emergency services of your proposed event:

- [Surrey Police](#) - 101
- [Ambulance Services](#) – 0300 1230999
- [St Johns Ambulance](#)/Red Cross – 01483 450000
- [Surrey Fire & Rescue](#) – 01737 242444

Even for small events, it is good practice to notify the local police. The Police Liaison Officer will then distribute details and information about your event to the relevant PC's or PCSO's.

## 13.0 Public Conveniences

Some of our Parks and Countryside sites do not have public toilet facilities or existing facilities may not be available or may not be adequate for the number of people coming to your event. Depending upon the size of your event, you may need to provide temporary toilet facilities.

## 14.0 Noise

The control of [noise](#) including music from public address systems is covered by Environmental Protection legislation.

When planning your event, always consider local residents living close by. Nominate a noise monitor who regularly checks the noise levels at the perimeter of your event and adjusts them as necessary. Advise local residents of your planned activities, giving start and finish times. This is not compulsory but highly recommended and good practice.

Any event on Council land using amplification for music or speech must comply with the maximum noise levels set by the Council and end by 11pm, unless a licence has been granted.

## 15.0 Damage to the Land and Buildings

Event organisers will be responsible for any damage to the land and/or buildings close by. You will need to consider this when setting up your event. Repairs to any damage will be carried out by the Council and their contractors and recharge you with the cost. Larger events may be required to pay a security deposit before the event.

## 16.0 Events on the Roads

Parades, processions and other events that require the road to be closed off to general traffic will require a [temporary road closure licence](#). Please contact Surrey County Council for further details.

## 17.0 Promoting Your Event

[Visit Guildford](#) (Guildford Tourist Information Centre) offers an online box office for ticketing and various marketing opportunities – for details email [tic@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:tic@guildford.gov.uk).

If your event is free to attend, you may be able to promote your event for free on the [Visit Guildford website](#). For more information, please contact the Event Officer on 01483 444715.

Council notice boards can be hired for advertising your event. Please contact the Economic Development Team on 01483 444133.

If you intend to use banners, posters or flyers around the Borough then you will need to get written approval from the Planning Enforcement Team. Telephone 01483 444627 for details.

If you intend to use banners, posters or flyers at the event site then please add details to your event application form. You must not advertise your event until the relevant permissions have been granted for your event to go ahead. Posters & banners must be hung with string (not cable ties) and removed immediately after your event. For more information, please contact the Event Officer on 01483 444715.

The Parks and Leisure Team cannot give permission for advertising outside of its property. “Fly posting” is an offence under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. The council reserves the right to remove and cancel any unauthorised advertising and to recover the cost incurred from the event organisers.

The Surrey Advertiser and Eagle Radio may be able to help you advertise your event.

## 18.0 Litter

To ensure that the Council's obligations under the *Environmental Protection Act 1990 - Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse* are met, the event organiser is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the event site is regularly litter-picked during the event
2. Ensuring that the event site is cleared of all refuse & recycling and disposed of legally

If the event organiser fails to do this, then the Council reserves the right to carry out the works and charge the event organiser for any costs incurred.

The Council are able to offer a one off commercial collection to collect your event waste. For more information contact customer services on 01483 505050 or [customer.services@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@guildford.gov.uk)

## 19.0 Managing the Event

See the Event Management Plan Checklist and Guide on page 14 below. You will need to manage setting up and breaking down of the event. Manage staff working at the event and ensure your communication methods are adopted. Check your Health and Safety controls are working. Make sure your plans for money handling are ok and continuously monitor and review the event.

## 20.0 After the Event

Debrief after the event and include other agencies if they were at the event. Understand problems and successes and make improvements for future events.

### 20.1 Is it Worth It?

Yes, of course it is! This may all sound complicated but in most cases not all of the requirements detailed in this booklet will apply to your event. And, once you have had a successful first year, your event planning for future years is much, much easier.

### 20.2 More Information

If you would like to discuss your event ideas, please contact our Events and Bookings Officer on 01483 444715 or email [parks@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:parks@guildford.gov.uk)

For further advice on organising a safe and successful event, see the HSE website '[Guidance on running events safely](#)'.

If you are organising a voluntary event then the '[Can do](#)' Guide will help you to plan and run a successful event.

We look forward to hearing from you and wish you every success with planning your next event.

## 21.0 Activity Guidelines:

### 21.1 Bouncy Castles and Other Inflatable's

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm>

Ensure that the hire company:

- Fully complies with the Health and Safety Executive Guidance on 'Inflatable Play Equipment' such as castles, slides and domes.  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm>  
This is important information and deals with all aspects of safety.
- Employs suitably experienced and trained adult personnel, where the company are responsible for setting up, inspection, operation and supervision of the bouncy castle. If you are to operate the bouncy castle ensure that you are provided with written instructions about the safe setting up, inspection, operation and supervision of the equipment, and that the name and address of the manufacturer or supplier is clearly marked upon it, along with the 'manufactured date'. You must also ensure that the Annual Inspection Certificate is available.

- Provides written evidence of a current Public Liability Insurance Policy with a limit of indemnity of at least £2 million. This insurance is to cover the liability of the hire company. It is unlikely to extend to cover the hirer of the equipment.

#### Safety Procedures:

- Children should not be allowed to use the bouncy castle if there is a high wind or in wet weather (inflatables can flip over and slippery surfaces may cause injury).
- The castle must be adequately secured to the ground.
- Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides, and underneath the inflatable to prevent wear to base material.
- There should be responsible adult supervision, paying close attention to the children at play at all times during its use.
- The number of children using the bouncy castle must be limited to the number recommended in the hire company's safety instructions. There must be no overcrowding.
- A rota system for different age or size of groups should be operated together with the observance of any age limit of users (it is suggested that children over 10 years of age should not use the equipment).
- All children must be made to remove footwear, hard or sharp objects such as jewellery, buckles, pens and other similar pocket contents. Eating while bouncing or performing acrobatics must not be allowed.
- Crowd control measures and barriers to be in place.

### 21.2 Fireworks

On the grounds of public safety, bonfire and firework displays on public land are restricted to professional operators and recognised bonfire and firework societies. Your attention is drawn to the HSE publication "Working Together on firework displays" which can be purchased or a copy downloaded from the HSE website - Firework Displays HSG123 at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg123.htm>

### 21.3 Fun Fairs and Circuses

Where an event involves fun fair rides or a circus then the event organiser must notify the Council at least two months before the event as specific documentation must be completed and returned.

The additional documentation for a Fun Fair includes:-

- Agreement
- Third Party Public Liability Insurance Cover of a minimum value of £10 million per ride
- ADIPS forms for all rides
- Risk Assessment

Circuses are required to be a Member of the [Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain](#).

## Event Management Plan Checklist and Guide

Planning and management	Roles and responsibilities, Health & safety management plan and policy, Risk assessment, Event phases (build-up, load-in, the event, breakdown, load-out), Financial planning
Venue and site design	Site suitability, site design, ingress, egress, capacity, emergencies, layout, noise, welfare, catering, signage, fencing
Fire safety	Means of escape from the site and any structures, firefighting equipment, means of giving warning
Major incident planning (emergency planning)	Training, exercising and testing, emergency services, cordons, management structure, control room, communications, media management, preservation, cancelling the event
Communications	Communication procedures, key support documentation, off site links, radio communications, equipment, PA system, emergency communications
Crowd Management	Audience profile and crowd dynamics, entry & exit, opening/closing times, ticketing, admission policy, searching, crowd surges, stewarding
Transport Management	Road closures, traffic signs, traffic marshalling, public transport, parking management, vehicular access, emergency access, pedestrians, on-site vehicular movements
Security plan	
Structures and barriers	Safety requirement and applying the law, location, type, supplier, design, erection, dismantling, risk assessment, safety method, control of work, inspections, completion certificate, managing the structures/barriers
Site build and breakdown plan	
Electrical installations and lighting	Plan, installation, cabling, access, generators, lighting including emergency
Food, drink and water	Catering plan, positioning, access, LPG, electrical installations, fire-fighting equipment, alcohol and bar areas, drinking water
Merchandising and special licensing	Plan, location, structures, space, setting up, dismantling and operation, items of merchandising, risk assessment, insurances, licensing requirements
Amusements, attractions and promotional displays	Safety information for each, supplier, risk assessment, licences, location, space, emergencies
Sanitary facilities	Location, type, maintenance, number, washing facilities, duration, special needs, baby changing, disposal of towels/nappies, sewage disposal, employee/event worker facilities
Waste management	Types of waste, hazards, waste areas, waste contractor, collection method and times, receptacles, legislation, duty of care
Sound: noise and vibration	Noise at work regulations, workers, audience, neighbours, noise assessments, controlling and monitoring sound & vibration levels
Special effects, fireworks and pyrotechnics	Type of effect, regulation & control, COSHH risk assessment, safety considerations, location, setting up, firing, control systems, product safety, licences
Camping	Site design, site densities, segregation of vehicles, campervans, information, organisation & supervision, contingency planning, public health, refuse, access, lighting, noise
Facilities for people with special needs	Access, ramps, viewing areas, facilities, support, impaired vision, evacuation, publicity
Medical, ambulance and first aid management	Planning, named manager, specific considerations, maintaining cover, communications, documentation, medical provision, first aiders & medical staff, on-site medical provision, maps/plans, main medical facility, mobile response teams, clinical waste, competencies for medical workers, emergency procedure
Information and welfare	Information point, meeting point, welfare point, lost property point, signage
Children	The children act, dedicated areas, activities, special needs, age, lost children plan, care & protection of children, facilities, number of children
Performances	Briefing documents for site – access, map, stage plan, accommodation, facilities, itinerary, sound checks, performance times, security arrangements
TV and media	Pre-event plan, during the event, media site location, photographers/journalists/broadcaster, welfare requirements
Stadium music events	
Arena events	
Event size	Large/medium/small, multi/single day, planning & management, staffing, levels of provision of site services & facilities, liaison with local authority, H&S
Unfenced or unticketed events	Risk assessment, site design, build-up/break down, crowd control
All night events	
Licensed events	
Unlicensed events	
Insurances	
Promoting your event	
Event day	
Health & Safety responsibilities	Duties of the venue or site owner, occupiers liability Health & safety at work act, duty of the Event Organiser, duties of contractors, subcontractors & self employed people, legislation

