

Community Guide



Introduction

This guide provides the key information needed to set up and develop local community groups. It also provides information on how to run a successful community event. The guide provides a clear and simple set of instructions and ideas which can be adapted to fit your group. By following these steps you're on your way to having a well working group and successful events.

The guide comes in two sections:

Setting Up A Community Group

This section aims to help members of the community to set up groups such as: Community Groups, Residents Associations and Neighbourhood Watch Groups. The guide gives step by step instructions or things you may wish to consider.

The guide details areas that should be considered, focusing on ensuring protocols are followed as well as providing templates which can be adapted to fit your organisation.

How To Run A Successful Community Event

This part of the guide will focus on how to run a community event. The guide looks at; how to start your event planning, why you want to run an event and protocols that should be followed. The guide will give you tips and ideas of things to consider as well as a time frame schedule to make sure that your event runs smoothly.

Part One – Setting Up A Community Group

- Community Groups
- Resident Associations
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Governing Documents
- Finances

Why Set Up A Group?

There are many reasons people will set up a community group, and it's important you know what your group wants to achieve before you start. Groups could be set up to:

- Work with local people
- Run specific projects
- Develop regeneration projects
- Share good ideas
- Access funding for the community

Initial Meeting

Now you've decided what you want to discuss you can now start. If you are looking to expand your membership you will want to make sure that the group is well advertised. You may wish to provide free refreshments or allow children to attend; this will ensure individuals aren't being tied down with other commitments.

You may want to prepare an **agenda**. This is a list of things you want to discuss and helps you keep the focus and timing of the meeting.

It is a good idea to take notes at the meeting (these are known as **minutes**) and record where and when the meeting took place, who was there and what was agreed at the meeting. These don't have to be in great detail but will help when you wish to refer back to things that were said, or who said them. These should then be made available to the people who were at the meeting and other people that may be interested.

Things To Consider

- Avoid duplicate working. Look at what else is out there in your area. It might be that a similar organisation or group of people are doing the same thing. Get in touch with the local council to see if they know of any projects going on. This may make your project cheaper and could get you better results.
- Make sure everyone is heard. Everyone has an opinion so make sure all the group feel valued. This will help stop any disagreements and make the group fair.
- Encourage participation by everyone in the group, not just a few. Ask around to see what people think.
- Everyone is likely to have a slight difference of opinion on issues. Even if you disagree it's important to listen. If there is a conflict of opinion, discuss it until you come to a consensus.
- Be clear about the roles and responsibilities of the group.
- Be realistic, this will help your organisation succeed.
- Be willing to take advice, the more advice you get the more likely you are to succeed.

Decide What Group You Want To Be

There are various types of community groups which you could become and it's important to know what you want to achieve from your group before you get started. There can be different types of community groups; having an understanding of what your group aims to be will help with the day to day running.

Community Groups

If your group is based within a village or neighbourhood then it's likely you'll want to be a community group. Community groups are traditionally made up of people from the same area that have similar thoughts on a project. Groups can vary in size and each group will work in different ways and follow their own set of rules (constitution). Anyone can become a community group. You will want to take into consideration this document to ensure your organisation has measures in place to be able to complete projects.

Neighbourhood Watch

These groups consist of volunteers who work in partnership with the police and the local council to ensure safety. They distribute advice on security and safety within a designated area and help to make sure that elderly or vulnerable members of the community aren't targets for criminals. They also gather information which can help police tackle local problems as well as alert local people when there is a particular crime problem in the area.

Schemes can vary in size depending on the neighbourhood and sometimes have a specific focus depending on local priorities.

To find out about Neighbourhood Watch schemes in your area, get in touch with your local police liaison officer by calling 101 and they will be able to advise you whether a scheme already exists or help if you would like to start a new one.

Resident Association

Similar to community groups, resident associations focus on a specific area, however they are usually smaller scale such as a road or street.

Setting Up

It's important to make sure you're clear on the following things before starting your group; these will help you in the next few stages.

- What is the purpose of your group?
- What do you want to achieve?
- Who are you representing?
- How will you promote your group? This is key when getting people involved in your group.

Support

Maidstone Borough Council's Community Development Team as well as Kent County Council's Community Wardens are available to help. If you have any questions while setting up your community group get in touch at any time.

Community Development Team

Call: 01622 602222

Email: CommunityDevelopment@Maidstone.gov.uk

Community Wardens

Call: 01580 715457

Email: Janet.Greenroyd@Kent.gov.uk

Decide What Roles People Will Play

It's important to have assigned specific roles within your group; this will make delegating easier as each member will have a set of individual responsibilities.

This includes having a committee; these people will be in charge of decisions within the group. A committee should have at least four people, with the following roles covered. It's recommended that your committee has more positions in case individuals can no longer fulfil a role.

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Other roles are optional and may come up depending on the need of your group, for example vice chair, fundraising officer, events organiser, publicity officer etc.

Governing Documents

What Is A Constitution or Terms of Reference?

A constitution is the group's agreement to follow a set of rules and guidelines. Once written up and signed the group will agree to abide by the rules. It will also detail the aims of the group and how decisions will be made.

It will really help your community group to have a clear path on what you want to achieve. Your group will need to create a document that informs people about the purpose of the group. A good constitution will help the group work well. Constitutions will also help to ensure any conflicts or misunderstandings can be easily resolved.

The key points to include:

- Name of your group
- Aims of your group (why has the group come together)
- Powers (what the group is allowed to do to carry out it's activities)
- Membership (how people join or leave)
- Management committee (how will the chair be elected)
- Officers (the roles of the group)
- Meetings (where and how often will you meet, and how you will make decisions)
- Finance (listing members who have access to any funds)
- Changes to the constitution (how will this get decided)
- Ending the group (If the group decides to finish due to lack of interest, you'll need to decide how you will end, decide any equipment or money you have left.)



Once the group has signed the constitution, it will then become a legal document, which should always be followed.

Open A Bank Account

This will allow your group to access funding opportunities; it will also act as a key record for showing what financial transactions have been made. The elected treasurer will be in charge of the bank account, however it's important and to have 2 signatories on the account as this will help with the signing of cheques and payments in the treasurer's absence.

Community based organisation are often able to apply for various funding opportunities, these could be from local, national or regional funding sources. See more at www.gov.uk



Part Two – How To Run A Successful Community Event

- Planning Your Event
- Finance – Budgets, Funding, Sponsorship
- Venues
- Health and Safety
- Staff and Volunteers
- Licensing
- Event Notification
- Publicity

What Is The Purpose of The Event?

Have a clear idea about what you want to do.

- Raise money
- Raise awareness
- Consultation with local people



Who Is The Event For?

To make an event easy to plan you've got to think about who will be attending. It's important to think who your event is aimed at; do you want it to be inclusive or open up to everyone? You'll want to make sure there are sufficient activities to suit everyone.

- What do you want to do? (output)
 - Activities
 - Food / Drink
 - Information
 - Entertainment
- What do you want to achieve (outcome)?
 - Exchange of ideas
 - Educate
 - Consultation

Get Planning!!!

When proposing events it's important to work out an action plan. These don't have to be complicated and will help ensure your project runs smoothly. You may wish to list things that need to be worked on, or alternatively put them in a table as seen in Appendix 1.

- What you wish to work on: ***e.g. community day***
- Where you wish to work: ***e.g. local park***
- What you want from the event: ***e.g. the community coming together***
- What help is available: ***e.g. local business sponsorship / donations***
- Advertising: ***e.g. distributing flyers and posters***
- Who do we need to work with or inform: ***e.g. local council, police***

Are You Insured?

Just like when you purchase a car you will need to check you have insurance, known as public liability insurance. Public liability insurance covers your organisations if a member of the public suffers a loss or injury as a result of activities at the event.

Make sure you're getting value for money; you could use a market comparison website. If your organisation has insurance check the level of cover you have - most organisations and events will request that you have at least £5 million cover.

Budgets

All events cost money and it's important to look at what you're planning to spend (expenditure) and also what money your event might bring in (revenue).

- **Venue Hire** – How much will this cost, are there any additional fees such as deposits? (This could be a building or a green space)
- **Insurance** – you will need to attain public liability insurance if you've not already got it. This is essential when holding an event.
- **Publicity** – cost of producing flyers, posters, leaflets. You may also want to consider costs of a photographer or camera to document your event.
- **Catering** – Who will be providing this? Will it be free or will there be a charge to the public? Remember vendors are often happy to pay a pitch fee for these events, or alternatively a percentage of their takings.
- **Equipment** – From stationary to notice boards. Anything you'll need to buy for the event.
- **Staff** – will you be hiring any staff for the event, how many will you need, will they need a uniform, name badges etc.
- **Outside Suppliers** – what suppliers will you use? How much do they charge? Will you need to pay for performers or presenters? (including expenses) Remember: some organisations will want to be paid upfront.
- **Entry Cost** – consider if will you charge entry for the event or for certain activities. Will there be concession, child or family rates?



Funding

Depending on what your events aims and outcomes are you could be eligible to apply for funding. Various funding streams and opportunities exist which you could apply for.

If you do require funding it's always recommended to research to see what opportunities exist. This could be as simple as using an internet search engine.

Visit the "Open 4 Community" website to search for funding opportunities. There is a page specifically dedicated to Maidstone as well as one dedicated to Kent.

Maidstone - www.open4community.info/maidstone

Kent - www.open4community.info/kent

Remember: Applying for funding doesn't guarantee you'll be successful. It's important to make sure you've applied with plenty of time to allow you to find alternative funds if necessary

Sponsorship

Depending on the event you're looking to hold, some organisations may choose to sponsor the event. Sponsorship could be in the form of money or by providing equipment. Sponsors usually expect some form of recognition; this can vary and should be discussed before agreeing any sponsorship. Common recognition would be an advert in a programme, logos on publicity, banners on display, VIP attendees or having a stand free of charge.

Appendix 2 is an example of a very brief budget breakdown which will help you when planning your spending. Once you've completed the chart have a look to see ways you can cut costs.

- Can some equipment be donated or sponsored?
- Could you negotiate a lower price?

Venue Hire

Whether your event is inside or outside you should always check you have permission to use the venue. Most halls will charge a fee for its use; it's best to discuss fees and charges direct with the venue to make sure you're getting the best value for money. If your event is to be held outside you will need to contact the land owner to get permission and book the hire of the park or open space.

For more details on park hire contact the Maidstone Borough Council's Parks and Leisure Team on 01622 602718 or email ParksAndLeisure@maidstone.gov.uk

Remember all events will need a form of public liability insurance. Make sure you've got your insurance before booking your venue hire.

Policies and Procedures

Your organisation will want to adopt certain policies and procedures to help deal with specific incidents.

Policies and procedures are there to ensure staff and volunteers deal with a situation in the same way. Depending on your event you may need to consider the following policies:

- Child Protection Policies
- Lost Children Code / Practice

- Health and Safety
- Recruitment Process

When writing policies or procedures you should ensure the policy is detailed and clear.

An example of things to include when writing a child protection policy would be:

- Recruitment and Training (relevant safety checks and guidelines,)
- The needs of vulnerable people and children (in particular in your working environment)
- Physical play environment (how your environment effects behaviour)
- How to report concerns (direct reporting, keep things confidential and keeping a log of behaviour)
- How concerns and expressions are perceived and responded to (How to deal with accusations or concerns from a parent, worker or child themselves)

The Community Development Team is able to offer help and guidance when writing policies. Call 01622 602222 or email CommunityDevelopment@Maidstone.gov.uk

Health & Safety

When organising an event its important to think about health and safety.

Before each event you should conduct a **risk assessment**. Risk assessments are key documents specific to your event focusing around possible risk factors. Risk assessments involve careful examination of activities, equipment and situations relating to your event to anticipate possible risks. Risks or potential risks should be noted on your assessment as well as a description as to what action will be taken to reduce the risk.

E.G. It could be there are wires in a community hall which could cause trips or falls, therefore you've decided to strap these down to reduce risk of tripping.

Appendix 3 is a risk assessment template

Welfare Provisions

It's important to ensure you have sufficient welfare provisions in place. This includes:

Information: It's important to have a site plan so people know where things are. You could use a map or have signs directing people to different facilities. Having clear signage will make sure your events run smoothly.

Access to refreshments: It's important you've got access to refreshments at your event. This could be in the form of a catering van, or offering free water. Remember not all tap water is drinkable, so it's advisable to check.

Litter and Waste: Make sure you've got rubbish sacks for litter from your event; you will want to situate these around the venue to save time clearing up at the end.

Toilets: You will need to make sure you have adequate toileting facilities at your event. This includes male, female as well as disabled access. Details overleaf:

Events with a gate opening time of 6 hours or more		Events with a gate opening time of less than 6 hours	
Female	Male	Female	Male
1 toilet per 100 females	1 toilet per 500 males, plus 1 urinal per 150 males	1 toilet per 120 females	1 toilet per 600 males, plus 1 urinal per 175 males

Lost person point: Consider having a place where people can meet if they get lost, you may want to combine this with an information point. Ensure you have a lost person procedure which staff and volunteers can follow.

Emergency point: Clear access to your event is key; this includes having a dedicated place for emergency vehicles to park (if necessary). You will also need to consider a fire meeting point if your event is inside (this will be part of your risk assessment).

First Aid: You should always ensure you have adequate first aid cover and in date equipment. First aid should only be administered by a qualified individual as breaking this could put the individual in more harm. Most first aid certificates last 1-3 years, so make sure staff and volunteers are in date.

Always log any accidents or incidents that happen at your event. This will give you a clear record of the day encase questions arise. Appendix 5 is an example of a form you can use to log any incidents.

Consent Form

Could your event cause harm to participants? If so it's important to get consent forms. You may need to contact a next of kin in an emergency. These forms will also stand as evidence to say that the person agreed to participate. Consent forms could be used for; physical competitions (skate, cycling etc), children play scheme, photographic consent.

Appendix 4 contains an example of a consent form which you could use and adapt.

Food Hygiene

When planning events you need to make sure there are adequate food facilities, specifically access to water. It is a legal requirement that every food business must have a documented food safety management system with them when they are trading, including at outside events. You should also check they can demonstrate training in Food Hygiene.

For more details on food hygiene contact the Food Safety Team on 01622 602202 or email FoodSafety@Maidstone.gov.uk

Staff / Volunteers

Staffing is important to ensure your event runs smoothly. It's usual for organisers to hire staff or volunteers to act as stewards or help with the running of the event. You may want to think about having security personnel to help with any incidents that may occur. Your security staff must be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA). It's recommended to have 1 steward per 100 persons attending.

Remember if your organisation doesn't have people on a payroll system you will need to clearly display that employees are responsible for paying their own national insurance and tax.

Your event should ensure there is enough staff to cater for your attendees. This is particularly key if working with young people, it's vital that you keep to your organisations staff to child ratio, this would usually be stated in your organisations regulations (child protection policies)

Child's age	Amount of adults	Amount of children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
13-18	1	10

Using volunteers is a great way to ensure your event runs smoothly as well as saving you some pennies. Advertise that you're looking for volunteers and pass the information on to local voluntary organisations.

Voluntary Action Maidstone (VAM) www.vam-online.org.uk or call 01622 677337

Voluntary Action Within Kent (VAWK) www.vawk.org.uk or call 01892 530330

V-Inspired www.vinspired.com or call 0800 089 9000

Employment Checks - Disclosure and Baring Service

You may have heard of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks or the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) from December 2012 the two merged to form the Disclosure and Baring Services (DBS). The DBS acts in a similar way by searching police records and in relevant cases barred list information to be able to issue a 'DBS certificate' which employees and employers receive. This will help in making informed recruitment decisions for individuals having direct responsibility for children, young people or participating in lone working.

If employee doesn't hold their own DBS check they should not be left alone with any vulnerable or young person, in doing so could put your organisation in risk.

For more information visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/

Licensing

Depending on the event you are hosting you may require a licence.

Licensable activities are:

- The sale of alcohol
- The sale of hot food and/or drink between 11pm and 5am
- The provision of regulated entertainment (music, films etc)



You may also need to think about the location and if the premises licence is needed. These licences can be granted on an open ended basis (subject to annual licence fee) or may be granted for a shorter period for occasional events.

For more details on licensing contact the Maidstone Borough Council Licensing Department on 01622 602202 or email Licensing@Maidstone.gov.uk

Noise Levels

Are you planning on playing music at your event? If so make sure your advertising says so. Letting neighbours know timings and duration of your event will reduce the chances of any complaints getting made.

Is your event taking place inside? Think before opening windows and doors - could neighbours be sleeping while your event is taking place? Remind people when leaving to keep noise levels to a minimum.

Events that over run or are particularly noisy will not be tolerated by local communities and neighbours. You need to communicate your plans well and ensure events run to planned times.

Event Notification Form

Maidstone Borough Council asks that all event organisers complete the 'Event Notification Form' to inform the council about events. Forms should be completed no later than 8 weeks prior to the event, in some instance 12 weeks.

The scale of the event will dictate which form you're asked to complete.

- Small events (less than 1000 people)

Contact: Maidstone Borough Council Facilities Management on 01622 602750 or visit www.maidstone.gov.uk to access the form.

- Large events (more than 1000 people)

Contact: The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) on 01622 602000 or visit the www.maidstone.gov.uk website to access the forms.

Road Safety

If your event is on or near a highway such as a street party, parade, carnival, march etc you may need to consider a road closure as part of the event.

Depending on the circumstances the council may or may not grant a closure order. It's advised that you complete your application as early as possible to achieve success and increase the chances of the order being granted. A minimum of 8 weeks notice is needed for small events and 12 weeks for larger scale events.

Parking

You will need to make sure there are adequate parking facilities for your event. It may be that parking for your event is off site, use signs or stewards to direct people. If parking is limited or not available tell people in your adverts, people will need to know so they can make alternative arrangements!

Wherever your event is taking place you will need to make sure there is an accessible path for emergency services to get to you as quickly as possible, having a blocked car park or no emergency space reserved could be fatal!

For more information on road closures contact Maidstone Borough Councils Facilities Management on 01622 602000 FacilitiesManagement@Maidstone.gov.uk

Publicity

Advertising your event is key to ensure a good uptake.

Posters and Leaflets should:

- Describe the event
- Display time and dates
- Display the costs of the event
- Detail the location
- Highlight sponsors contribution (logos)



You will also want to make sure that your advertisement is in the most practical location to be seen by your target audience. Think about how and who will see your advertising. Always remember to ask permission of where you put your posters! You could incur a fine if you fail to seek permission.

You may wish to consider using:

- Social networking
- Radio adverts
- Write a press release for local newspapers or magazines.
- Invite VIP's (e.g. sponsors, mayor, local celebrity)
- Inviting local press or photographers for publicity at the event

Remember: Advertise your event in good time! If people know early enough they can put it on their calendar and make sure they can attend.

Appendix 2: Example of Budget Breakdown

Expenditure	Planned spend	spend to date
Cost of hall / park hire	£150.00	
Publicity Costs	£50.00	
Sound Equipment	£200.00	
Staff T-Shirts (10 x £6.50)	£65.00	
Bouncy Castle Hire	£250.00	
Public Liability Insurance	£45.00	
First Aid Equipment	£100.00	
Face Painter	£80.00	
Entertainer / DJ	£200.00	
Total Spent	£1140.00	
Income		
Funding Bid	£750	
Fundraised Money	£300	
Catering – Ice Cream Van Pitch Fee	£80	
Public donations	£50	
Total Income	£1180	
Remaining Balance (Income – Spent)	£40	

Remember your expenditure should never be greater than your income.

Appendix 3: Example of Risk Assessment Form

Event Risk Assessment Form					
Event _____ Date _____ Organiser _____					
Venue _____ Sheet Number _____ of _____					
Hazard Identified	Persons at Risk	Risk – High, Medium, Low	Measure to control Risk	Measures to be taken by	When will measures be taken
Risks of trips and falls	Public, Staff, Vendors	Medium	Any loose cables to be strapped down and wet surfaces cleared	Employee to bring masking tape and clothes	Before vendors and public arrive
Name of Assessor _____					
Signature _____ Date _____					

Appendix 4: Consent Form

Event Description:	
Participants Details	
Full Name:	Age:
Contact Number:	Date of Birth:
Detail of any allergies / medical conditions:	
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Emergency Contact Details – must complete to take part	
Full Name:	Relationship to you:
Home Number:	Mobile Number:
Address:	
Consents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervised photographs and filming may be taken of you/your child during the activities. Please tick if you do not wish to be photographed. Please ensure you get a no photo sticker.	
I accept that _____ shall not be responsible for any loss, damage or injury which may be incurred to a person(s) who takes part in any of the activities. The foregoing does not affect my usual legal rights.	
Young Person Signature (12 and over): _____	
Parental Signature: _____	
Print Name: _____ Date: _____	

Appendix 5: Accident / Incident Report Form

DATE AND TIME			
NATURE OF INJURY/INCIDENT			
DESCRIBE FULLY HOW AND WHERE THE ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT HAPPENED, INCLUDING DETAILS OF ANY OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED			
Action Taken (including were parents/guardians contacted?)			
ADULT WITNESSES			
Other children involved (witnesses, direct involvement etc) – use child register reference numbers. Please also complete an accident/incident form for these children too if appropriate.			
Site Manager (signature and printed name)		Staff member reporting (signature and printed name)	
PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN			
Office use: Form completed (including all signatures in place)			

