

OUTDOOR EVENTS IN SANDWELL

A Guide to Organising Outdoor Events

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Introduction

Welcome to Sandwell – a thriving cultural hub and an events friendly Borough, Sandwell is nestled in the heart of the West Midlands with excellent transport links. We welcome a variety of events from small community celebrations to large commercial festivals

Events attract high levels of engagement from diverse groups and create positive perceptions of our geographical area. This is something we embrace as a Council. Events are the bridge that can work across heritage, museums, parks, sport, community teams, youth services, volunteering, and public health to bring people together. Events drive investment and opportunity and help us develop into a place that is great to live, work, and invest.

This guide will help you through the process of applying to hold an event on Council-owned land in Sandwell and will be a helpful resource for new and seasoned event organisers.



1- An Event Organiser's Responsibility

It is important to consider your responsibilities as an event organiser before planning your event.

To the public/ event attendees

You are responsible for making sure the public are in a safe environment and that you have appropriately considered their welfare both in your planning and your delivery. You are responsible for ensuring the event is as described in any publicity and that any fees and charges are appropriately managed.

To you and your staff/committee

You also have a responsibility to both yourself and your staff or organising group. This is in terms of both your own personal safety and also whether you are able to cope with responsibilities around event planning and dealing with issues on the event day(s).

To the Council

You have a responsibility to thoroughly inform the Council as the landowner of your event plans and apply for all relevant permissions and licences relating to your event. It is likely you will be invited to the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group (SAG) who will assess the safety of your event. It is expected that any advice from SAG is thoroughly considered and all contractors, performers and outside agencies who appear at your event have the

relevant safety paperwork. Where payment is applicable, this should be done in a timely manner and at no time should the Council's name be brought into disrepute.

To the law

As event organiser you need to comply with common law and assume legal responsibility under what is termed "duty of care" under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. You are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all people at your event including the public, staff, contractors, and performers.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 specifies that you must not cause a nuisance to residents nearby. You have a legal responsibility to comply with this.

Should you ignore or neglect something that you consider to be harmful or unsafe you will be liable for prosecution or a civil claim. This also applies if you are at the event because of employment or association.

2- Event classifications

When Sandwell receives your application, your event will be classified and assessed to determine:

- The type of application required
- Whether the application is accepted in principle or not
- The level of hire fees charged
- The length of time needed for the application to be considered
- The nature and duration of any consultation to be undertaken.



Community Events

We classify community events as activities, festivals or parades organised by charities, not for profit community and/or voluntary groups that directly benefit the communities of Sandwell. These do not provide commercial gain or significant marketing to a profit-making organisation.

Examples of a community event might be:

- A park fun day organised by a local town community organisation
- A fun run organised by a local charity
- A town centre fete organised by a local branch of organisations such as a Lions Club or a scout group

Commercial Events

Commercial activities generally operate at a profit, may be ticketed, and include ticket fees or may be events that raise the marketing profile of an organisation significantly.

Examples of these include:

- Ticketed festival, theatre, music concerts, craft fairs
- Fairs and circuses
- Sporting events such as triathlons, marathons, and cycles races
- National charity fundraising events
- Corporate events and product launches

Other types of events

Some events may not fit into these classifications and may be handled elsewhere within the Council. Examples of these include small parks activities such as a weekly outdoor keep fit club, market activities and street trading, sports activities such as football pitch bookings or venue room hire. The Events team will be happy to point you in the right direction.



Street Parties

The Events team also look after street party applications and have a simple application process for organisers wishing to host a street party to fill in. Please note these need to be planned a minimum of eight weeks in advance in order to obtain sufficient road closure notices. To find out more follow this link: www.discover sandwell.co.uk/streetparties

Marches, protests, and rallies

You are required to notify both Sandwell Council and West Midlands Police if you plan activities such as marches, protests, or rallies. If your activity is moving, you will need to apply for a road closure notice a minimum of eight weeks in advance.

3- How to apply

You can make an application to apply for an event in Sandwell online via [Eventapp](#) –The system is simple to use and asks some key questions about your event. You can also upload your paperwork to the system such as public liability insurance documents.

4- Governance

We have a clear governance and decision-making process relating to how we accept events.

Once your application is received by the Events Team, we will look over your initial paperwork and check your date is free and that your event is in line with acceptable events on Council land.

This is then referred for “approval in principle subject to SAG advice”. How your event is “approved in principle” depends on the size of the activity of your event – so the smaller events will be approved by the Sandwell Event Manager, the largest by the Service Director and elected Cabinet.

Events Below 500			
Events Below 100 People	Only if triggers SAG	No	· Event Manager Approval
Events Above 100 People	Yes	Notification of event if temporary impact	· Event Manager Approval · Service Manager Approval
Events Above 500 People			
Events Above 500 people – limited community impact	Yes	Notification of event if temporary impact	· Service Manager Approval · Director Approval
Events Above 500 People – Community Impact	Yes	Resident impact assessment	· Service Manager Approval · Director Approval · Cabinet Member Consultation
Events Above 5,000 People			
Events Above 5,000 People (one day)	Yes	Resident impact assessment	· Director Approval · Cabinet Member Approval
Events Above 5,000 People (multiple days)	Yes	Resident impact assessment	· Director Approval · Cabinet Approval

5- Approval in principle subject to SAG

Once you have received approval in principle subject to SAG this means you can go ahead and market your event (see – Informing people about your event) and start the process of more detailed planning.

It does not mean that your event has final approval however and your event will need to be assessed by the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

SAG

SAG is a multi-agency group that advise on events. The Sandwell SAG includes all three emergency services and local transport operators along with several Council representatives including people from highways, parking, environmental health, licensing, health and safety and public health.

The role of SAG is to assess your plans and advise on safety both to you and the Council. The group may make recommendations and/or advise you to amend paperwork or make alterations to your event or event planning processes.

SAG meets monthly and it is likely you will be asked to attend to present your plans.

SAG is in place both to help you and to challenge your plans to ensure your event is as safe as possible for both you and your attendees. We are very proud that we have a wide range of event expertise around the Sandwell SAG table who are able to offer our organisers invaluable advice and suggestions.

Final approval

Once SAG is happy with your plans and paperwork, they will make a recommendation to Sandwell Council for approval. At this point you will be issued with an event permit.



6- Fees and charges

There is a fee for all events in Sandwell Council other than those organised by Parks and nature reserve friends' groups and civic events such as Remembrance parades.

The fee is calculated relative to the size of the event and which classification it falls into. The fees are based on a one-day event.

Event Type	Non-Commercial Fee	Commercial Fee
Small Event or Sports Activity	Venue Hire Only	Venue Hire Only
Up to 249 people	£56	£346
250 – 499 people	£115	£578
500 – 999 people	£230	£1,157
1,000 – 1,999 people	£463	£2,317
2,000 – 4,999 people	£694	£5,968
5,000+ people	Spec Price	Spec Price

Event Fee Includes	Event Fee Does Not Include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration costs of processing the event paperwork Cost of representatives to assess safety measures in place Cost of checks of paperwork and verification documents Cost of Safety Advisory Group (SAG) administration Cost of land use for one day (subject to premium surcharge) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment or event infrastructure (hire from Council available if required) Road closure / traffic management costs Parking restrictions or parking provision Event management support or on-site safety management Reparation of damage

Fee Type	Fee non/commercial	Fee commercial
Event Infrastructure & Equipment	Various charges based on option: gazebo, stage, PA system, barriers, etc..	
Event Management Support (per hour)	£54.15	£84.15
Event Fast Track Application Fee	£50	£150
Premium Land Hire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Centre High Streets Green Flag Parks Sandwell Valley Showground 	10% surcharge	20% surcharge
Indoor Venue Hire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council room hire Sandwell Valley Venue Hire Lightwoods Venue Hire Museums Venue Hire Libraries Venue Hire Sports Venue Hire 	Various: Charged in addition to event fee, based on hourly/daily rate for indoor venue.	
Other Fees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Management Orders Parking Suspensions Level of indemnity/reinstatement Refuse services Electricity Water Licencing 	Various charges based on option.	



7- Payment

An initial quotation will be sent to you once your application is received and agreed in principle. Advance quotations may be subject to change.

An invoice will be issued to you eight weeks prior to the event with full payment required within 30 days of the invoice date. A subsequent invoice may be sent should additional charges arise following issue of the initial invoice.

All fees and charges must be paid promptly. Failure to do so will result in the event permit being revoked, the event being refused in subsequent years, and legal action.

Other fees

Additional fees other than site hire may be charged such as for use of water, electricity, equipment or staffing.

There may also be fees from other Council departments depending on the nature of your event such as road closures, parking waivers, licences.

Costs to the Council

If unforeseen circumstances arise that require action by the Council such as damage reparation works, the event organiser is liable, and fees will be charged without negotiation. See terms and conditions on Eventapp.

Cancellation

In the unfortunate circumstances where an event organiser needs to cancel an approved event, the Events Team must be notified at the earliest opportunity. Late notice of cancellation will incur the following fees:

- 3 months before - 10 per cent
- Six weeks before - 25 per cent
- Less than six weeks before - 75 per cent
- Less than two weeks before - full amount



8- Event application deadlines

In order to review your application thoroughly we require specific timescales for event application submission. This helps us to determine measures that may be required to be undertaken in order that you are able to host a successful event. These will include the timescale for your event to traverse the Safety Advisory Group process, whether road closures or additional licences are required or whether a resident impact assessment needs to be undertaken. Apply Online: <https://app.apply4.com/eventapp/uk/sandwel>

Size	Audience capacity	Requirements	Minimum deadline for initial application submission	Decision in principle response
Small events	Up to 999	Without a road closure/premise license	3 months	25 working days
Small events	Up to 999	With a road closure/premise license requirement	5 months	25 working days
Medium events	Between 1,000 and 4,999	An event likely to require a road closure/ premise licence	6 months	25 working days
Large Events	5,000 people and above, one day	An event likely to require a road closure/ premise licence	6 months	Two months
Major Events	5,000 people and above, multiple days	An event likely to require a road closure/ premise licence	8 months	Two months
Urgent events (an additional fee is required and these events will only be considered if there is no community impact)	Up to 999	Without a road closure/premise license	20 working days	10 working days

9- The Purple Guide

[The Purple Guide](#) has been written by Events Organisers and is the national guidance to health, safety and welfare at music and other events. It is a really useful document and will give you much more advice than we are able to provide here. You can find more information about events safety at <https://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/> and also at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/> For our largest static location events we may use Green Guide guidance to assess the event.



10- Roles and Responsibilities

If you are organising an event, you have a duty of care to your staff, attendees and members of the public. We recommend you consider who will take on the following positions and note them in your EMP. (Depending on size, some individuals may hold more than one role).

- Event Manager (person who knows the event best, takes final responsibility and will take charge in an emergency)
- Site Manager (person who positions activities as they arrive on site and ensures the build and break are safe)
- Operations Manager (person who looks after the running of the event including security, stewarding, medical, catering and bars)
- Production Manager (person who liaises with artists, sound, lights, stage, screens, special effects etc.)

11- Venue and Site Layout

Decide the suitability of the venue and whether it can accommodate safely the event you are planning. Your site plan should include:

- Infrastructure (stage, marquees, toilets etc.)
- Power/water sources
- Emergency routes for evacuation and blue lights vehicles
- Event Control, medical and lost child points
- Ground works/pipes. Check www.lineearchbeforeudig.co.uk

If you (or a provider) is considering using drones within Sandwell as part of your event, this must be discussed in the first instance with our colleagues in Risk & Insurance. Information can be found here or in [the Purple Guide](#).



12- COVID-19 mitigation

We understand that planning events safely and in line with the Government guidance has many additional complexities, therefore this document aims to highlight:

- What we expect and require from you as an organiser.
- Areas of your event that will require additional planning.
- Examples of how these requirements may be applied to your event.
- Risks to consider when deciding to hold an event during COVID-19.

[Download our full Events Planning Guidance re. COVID-19 for event organisers here.](#)

13- Health and Safety

You will need to complete a risk assessment for all activity taking place on the site. This should include:

- [Welfare](#)
- [Working at height](#)
- [Temporary structures](#)
- Weather conditions
- Ground conditions
- Trip hazards
- Antisocial behaviour
- Security
- [Risk of fire](#)
- Vehicle movement
- [Crowd Management](#)
- [Electrical equipment](#)
- Cash handling
- Manual handling
- [Fun fair](#)
- [Inflatables](#)
- Entertainment
- [Noise Management](#)
- [More information and templates can be found here.](#)

14- Lost Children/Vulnerable Adults/Carers & Safeguarding

Inevitably at large events, it is likely that a child or vulnerable adult will become separated from their carers. It is really important to act swiftly and calmly in this situation. [There is some useful information here.](#) You should have a clear plan of what to do in this situation and this should also cover how you safeguard a lost child or vulnerable adult while under your care.

It is your duty to ensure any staff, contractors or entertainers who may have access to children or vulnerable people have the appropriate DBS checks in place and you should ensure your event management plan details what efforts you will make to ensure vulnerable groups are not exposed to risk of abuse or mistreatment at your event.

You should also ensure that any children who are performing or involved in your event are appropriately chaperoned.



15- Medical Support

You should always consider what first aid cover you have at your event. The Purple Guide gives an algorithm to work out what you require. One medical provider has designed a convenient calculator for you to use. [Try it here.](#)

You are strongly advised to complete a comprehensive **Medical Risk Assessment** or to build this robustly into your main risk assessment for your event. The level of medical provision your event requires will come from this assessment. You (or your medical provider) should also produce a **Medical Plan** detailing where, when, and how you are going to mitigate those risks identified in your risk assessment and provide appropriate medical cover for your event. Further advice on completing the risk assessment and medical plan should be sought from publications such as The Purple Guide, HSE Guidance or professional Health & Safety/Medical advisors (www.thepurpleguide.co.uk) (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>) **Failure to complete a Risk Assessment or Medical Plan may leave you open to prosecution and/or litigation should an incident occur.**

The SAG (or the NHS Ambulance Service) cannot risk assess your event for you. You as the Event Organiser must do this, as it is you that are held legally responsible for your event. If you do not supply a Medical Risk Assessment and Medical Plan, then the SAG cannot assess your event fully and any advice given to you by the SAG may be incomplete.

The level of medical cover you supply should be sufficient to minimise the impact on the local NHS. This includes local A&E Departments, GP's and the Ambulance Service. The aim should be to manage casualties on site as far as it is safe and appropriate to do so and to arrange off-site transfer within a satisfactory timeframe when it is not.

Transporting patients from an event to definitive care (hospital) is a regulated activity by law and as such, can only be provided by a company registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). (www.cqc.org.uk). If your event requires an Ambulance to transport offsite, then this must be supplied by a company registered by the CQC.

If your event is being held under the authority of a governing body (UK Athletics, Motorsport, Equestrian etc) then please refer to that organisation for the level of medical cover that they stipulate. Failure to adhere to their requirements could invalidate your event insurance.

Medical cover should be provided for the entire duration of your event, from build up to breakdown. The level of this cover will be determined by your Medical Risk Assessment, taking into account guidance and legislation. If

you are providing accommodation and/or camping for your event, then you have a duty of care to those staying and you should provide overnight medical cover.

It is now expected that most events (and ALL public events) should have immediate access to an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and trained personnel.

Medical providers can vary in quality and capability and event organisers should exercise due diligence in selecting a competent and reliable service. It is good practice to take up references from other customers who have used the provider for similar events and personal recommendation from peers within the event industry may also be useful. Check that they hold appropriate medical defence and public liability insurances and have rigorous clinical governance procedures in place.

16- Emergency Planning

You should develop emergency procedures and ensure that staff and volunteers know what to do should an emergency occur. This plan should cover several different headings and address many topics that relate to running an event.

- Upon sighting an incident which requires an emergency response
- Summoning other agencies including emergency services
- Informing staff and activating procedures
- Dispersing crowds
- Ongoing liaison with the emergency services and other authorities
- Management of public information and media/press

[For more information and guidance on emergency planning click here.](#)

17- Crowd Management

It is really important to understand your audience ahead of your event. Think about what sort of people you are expecting? What activities do they like to do? What behavioural issues may they bring? What sort of equipment is required to control their movement? How will they get to the event? Will they be drinking alcohol? Will they be sitting or standing? Have you got a celebrity attending who will influence crowd activity? Are there any places where crowd surges are likely to take place? Answers to these questions should influence your plans.

18- Traffic Management

Roads are not necessarily closed for the main event site but sometimes roads need to be closed for the safety of attendees as they arrive or leave. You will need to apply for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). You should engage with a traffic management company who will be able to provide plans for you and then put it into place. [You can find the document here.](#)

19- Communication

Event staff should have a means of effective communication between each other e.g. short-wave radio or mobile phones (WhatsApp is a really useful tool!). Clear procedures for using communication equipment should be

outlined in the EMP. You should keep a log of key communications for your debrief and in case any information is required following any incidents.

Staff briefings play an important part in sharing information and should be written as well as given verbally to staff. You should ensure staff are fully briefed on emergency procedures and are informed well enough to comply with your risk assessment and emergency plan.

20- Waste Management/Toilets

All waste must be taken away at the end of your event and the site left clean and tidy. For this you may engage with litter pickers for keeping the site clear and/or hire in bins or skips for the collection of rubbish.

Some of Sandwell's sites do have toilet facilities available however there may not be enough, or they may not be open during your event so you will need to bring your own on to the site. You can calculate how many toilets you will need on site using this table.

Event	Female Toilets	Male Toilets
Less than 6 hours duration	1 per 100	1 per 500, plus 1 urinal per 150
6 hours or more duration, with little or no alcohol or food served	1 per 85	1 per 425, plus 1 urinal per 125
6 hours or more duration, with alcohol and food served in quantity	1 per 75	1 per 400, plus 1 urinal per 100

21- Catering

Catering at events is important to keep your audience happy and energised. Think about the type of event you are holding, expected numbers and food that will be expected. When booking in caterers we recommend you ask for the following:

- Public Liability Insurance
- Documentary confirmation that the caterer is registered as a food business with a Local Authority
- A food hygiene rating score of '4' (Good) as a minimum
- Food hygiene training certificates
- A documented food safety management system
- Allergen policies and procedures
- Risk assessments
- Information on what sort of power they will be bringing/require
- Suitable and sufficient hand washing facilities

[Download more information here.](#)



22- Insurance and Licences

All events taking place within Sandwell must be covered by a minimum of £5 million per claim Public Liability Insurance. For some dangerous activities, we may request higher cover. We recommend you also ask each of your providers to have the same amount of cover.

Some activities are licensable. This includes:

- Sale of alcohol
- Regulated entertainment
- Street trading
- Street collections
- Car boot sales

[You can find out information here](#) or contact the Council's Licensing team on licensing_team@sandwell.gov.uk.

23- Informing people about your event

It is important to let people know about your event, whether that is advertising and promoting to people you wish to attend or speaking to stakeholders and residents who may be impacted by your activity.

Attendees

Advertising and promotion of events in Sandwell is a great thing and not only raises awareness of your event but showcases the great things going on in Sandwell Council's area.

We ask that you do not promote your event until you have received approval in principle. We also ask in order to protect the Council's reputation that we have sight of your marketing materials to ensure they are in line with our policies and are appropriate.

We do not support flyposting.

We do however have an active website and active social media and we are more than happy to discuss cross promotion.

Stakeholders and residents

For some events we may ask you to produce a stakeholder and resident impact assessment.

The purpose of a resident impact assessment is to:

- Consider the potential impacts of the event on local residents.
- Put in place mitigations to reduce these impacts.
- Engage residents in the mitigations to reduce these impacts (this may be in writing, online, through residents' groups, or a meeting).

The types of mitigations will vary, but can include:

- Additional security requirements, to deter anti-social behaviour that may arise from an event.
- Additional parking restrictions and traffic management measures to ensure residents can easily access and exit the area they live in.
- Free tickets to a ticketed event, as a thank you for additional noise – for example, a music event that runs until 9pm.

A resident impact assessment does not mean that the event approval is dependent on all residents agreeing to the event. However, Sandwell Council will take account of the resident impact assessment and may ask you to:

- Increase the mitigations planned.
- Make changes to the nature / programme / logistics of the event if the mitigations necessary are not possible with the current plan.



24- Event monitoring and evaluation

To ensure compliance with your plans, documentation, and Safety Advisory Group advice, the Sandwell Events Team will monitor your events once they are in place.

Monitoring

The Sandwell Events Team and any other authorised officers have a right of entry to your event at all times.

All businesses, entertainers, and contractors are expected to be competent and to be adhering to relevant legislation and codes of practice.

Should Sandwell Council decide your event has failed to meet our terms and conditions and/or licence, the Council is entitled to suspend the operation of your event until such a period considered necessary to ensure failures or breaches are rectified.

Mystery shoppers

To help Sandwell showcase and improve the cultural offer within the Borough, the Council has a small team of voluntary mystery shoppers. These volunteers provide useful feedback to both us, SAG, and event organisers. Whilst they are unable to attend every event, we do request that two tickets are made available.

Debrief, event log and post-event evaluation

We recommend all events in Sandwell undertake a de-brief after the event. We will send you a post event evaluation form which we will fill in as well as you, so we are able to identify any successes and issues together and improve your event over years to come.

All events over 2,000 people are expected to keep an event log of decision making and key incidents. This should be available to share with Sandwell Council and Sandwell SAG immediately on request.

After larger events we may invite you back for a meeting with Council officers and/or SAG for a fuller debrief.

25- Other useful links

- [Bonfire](#)
- [Fireworks](#) – Please note we require all public fireworks displays to advertise these widely ahead of any use and do not permit use of fireworks generating noise levels above 90db on any public land. We also encourage this approach on private land.
- [Animal Welfare](#)
- [Special Effects](#)

26- Contact Details and Advice

The Events team

Event_enquiries@sandwell.gov.uk

Events Team, Sandwell Park Farm, Salter's Lane, West Bromwich, B71 4BG

You can find template and example documents here. Where significant support is required from the Events team, you may be charged. Please ask for a quote.