


Event Organiser Toolkit





CONTENTS

GUIDANCE FOR ORGANISING YOUR LOCAL EVENTS	3
WHAT IS AN EVENT?	4
UNDERSTANDING THE REQUIREMENTS	5
ESSENTIAL EVENT PLANNING DOCUMENTS	6
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	7
APPLICATIONS	8
SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG)	9
COST RECOVERY FOR SBC & PARTNER SERVICES	10
EVENT FUNDING & GRANTS	11
ADVERTISING YOUR EVENT	12
IMPACT ASSESSMENT	13
KEY CONTACTS	14



GUIDANCE FOR ORGANISING YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

We are delighted that you are thinking of hosting an event in The Scottish Borders. Planning an event can be a daunting process – particularly if it's your first time. This toolkit aims to make it as easy as possible for you by setting out the key principles for organising your event. Inside you will find guidance on the initial development of your ideas, potential sources of funding, and the marketing, licensing, delivery, clean-up and evaluation of your event, as well as key contacts to help you along the way.

The Scottish Borders offers a diverse range of events, throughout the year and across the region. This event toolkit, developed by Scottish Borders Council (SBC) offers a comprehensive guide, aiming to make the event planning process easier and more accessible for organisers looking to deliver events in the region.

This guide offers information and templates across all event planning processes. However, it should be noted that not all events will require every process. It is important to make contact as early as you can to ensure you're submitting the correct applications and documents.





WHAT IS AN EVENT?

An event is an organised activity that invites members of the public to attend, either for free or for a charge. There are various types of events and many places and venues that events can take place, on either public or private land. Events can range from a small gathering within a local community right up to mega-events like the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and the 2023 UCI World Championships.

Some examples of events include:

- Community gala event
- Farmers markets, beer and food festivals
- Sporting events such as 5km races, park runs
- Road-based activity like a march or parade
- Large scale cycling event that requires road closures
- Music festival event over multiple days

Before entering the planning stages, it's important to understand the requirements of your event. No matter what scale your event is, it's essential to establish **WHO** the key stakeholders involved are and the ways you will be able to work with them in a positive and effective manner. **HOW** you are going to be able to deliver the event – whether that's from a funding perspective or simply having the time to go through the planning processes and recruit volunteers and advertise your event. **WHERE** you are going to host the event, in a location that provides the optimal setting for your event needs with the least amount of disruption to members of the public. **WHEN** you are going to host the event, are you looking to schedule during high season to capitalise on the warmer weather or look to find a gap in the event calendar during shoulder season in the winter months. These are all key considerations you must take before committing to your event planning process and gaining an understanding of the requirements involved.

UNDERSTANDING THE REQUIREMENTS

INITIAL CONTACT WITH SBC

Minimum of **21 weeks** for large scale events that have high attendee numbers and require complex planning, various licence applications and permissions.

12 – 8 weeks for smaller scale, community-based events.

Initial contact should be made through events@scotborders.gov.uk

PURPLE GUIDE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Before submitting any licences or applications, you should have developed an understanding of the requirements of planning a successful and safe event.

If you are new to events, a comprehensive event planning guide is the www.thepurpleguide.co.uk and [Events health and safety \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/events/)

The events industry in the Scottish Borders should be recognised as a leader in sustainability. Caring for the natural environment should be a priority for organisers and will remain a priority with the UK drive to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

These Green guides on [How to Plan and Deliver Environmentally Sustainable Events particularly helpful for events.](#)

The SBC events team will also be happy to assist you with any questions you might have around your planning journey on events@scotborders.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL EVENT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

EVENT PLAN

The event plan is the core planning document in your event planning process. This detailed document contains all the information about the delivery and management of your event.

Key details include:

Event overview, venue plans, staffing/volunteering arrangement, event communications, crowd management, welfare, event budget.

[*Template here/example of complete form](#)

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment is an important document assessing the areas and level of risk associated with an event.

The Risk Assessment identifies potential areas of risk and the measures in place to help mitigate risk.

[*Template here/example](#)

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Not all events require a traffic management plan. However, those larger scale events, involving traffic movements and more complex car parking management may require a traffic management plan.

[*Template here/example](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It's important to make contact with SBC as early as possible in the planning stage. This allows time to determine any potential calendar clashes and allow submission of relevant documents. However, effective and clear engagement within the community you're hosting your event is also a key consideration when going through the organisation process.

This will allow organisers to minimise negative impacts, potential clashes and also see how you can engage positively with the host community.

There are various considerations organisers should take when planning an event. You can find more detailed guidance on this in our [Community engagement Guide](#)

APPLICATIONS

LAND USE

If your event requires the use of land or parks you will need to contact placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk, for Common Good land.

Please note there may be costs associated with the use of land which will be clarified in section 5. Cost Recovery.

For all private landowners it is essential to gain permission well in advance. This can often be a time-consuming process if there are multiple landowners involved with the process, so please ensure you allow adequate time for this.

LICENCES

Not all events will require a licence application, however often events will require 1 or more applications which should be submitted well in advance of your event.

Some common event licences are:

Public Entertainment, Market Operators, Occasional Licence, Marches and Parades.

You can find further information on licence requirements [via SBC Website](#)

You can contact liquorandlicensing@scotborders.gov.uk if you are unsure of your licencing requirements or application deadlines.

ROADS

Certain events or parades require the use and sometimes closure of roads.

Scottish Borders Council have published a roads framework document which provides a comprehensive guide for event organisers requiring the use of roads.

You can contact for further information roads@scotborders.gov.uk

[*link to roads document](#)

SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG)

SAG

Once we've received your relevant event plans, risk assessments and applications, our **emergency planning department** may invite you to attend a SAG meeting.

These aim to help organisers with the planning, and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies.

The guiding principle is that events presenting a significant public safety risk (whether in terms of numbers and profile of people attending, or the nature of the event activity and/or the challenge of the environment) should be considered. However, **lower risk events** like community village fetes and funfairs are unlikely to require a SAG.

WHEN & WHO IS INVOLVED IN A SAG

The SAG is generally done approximately 12 weeks prior to event and involves all relevant agencies. In some cases, there are multiple SAG meetings in the build up to the event but in many cases just a single SAG will be held.

Generally, a SAG will include the event organiser(s) members from emergency planning, licencing, roads and economic development from the council. External partners include Police Scotland, Scottish Fire Service, Scottish Ambulance Service and Transport Scotland.

Contact eps@scotborders.gov.uk for any queries regarding the SAG process.

COST RECOVERY FOR SBC & PARTNER SERVICES

COST RECOVERY FOR SBC SERVICES

There are a range of services provided by SBC staff and booking systems associated with events. Many of these are offered for free, however there are certain services which require a cost recovery process associated to the organiser.

Some examples of chargeable services include:

- Charge for TTRO
- SBC owned parks and land
- licencing arrangements

[*You can find further information on cost recovery in this](#)

EXTERNAL COST RECOVERY

In addition to the costs we charge through SBC, there are some external fees that should also be considered.

Some examples of chargeable services include:

- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Private land use

EVENT FUNDING & GRANTS

EXTERNAL FUNDING

There are various external event funding opportunities available out with SBC funding.

Additional or alternative streams are available through:

[Event Scotland](#)

[Creative Scotland](#)

SBC STRATEGIC FUND

The Scottish Borders Events Strategic Fund can award funds to events that have the potential to grow, generate significant economic benefits for the area, attract new visitors to the Scottish Borders and increase the Scottish Borders profile on the national or international stage.

Awards ranging from £5 – 25, 000.

[*link to guidance, EOI, application form](#)

LOCAL FESTIVAL FUND

We provide some annual funding to local Festival Committees to assist with the running costs of traditional festivals in towns and villages across the Scottish Borders (total fund available per year £85,110).

Funding is provided to the main traditional festival in each town or village.

[*link to guidance and application form](#)

COMMUNITY FESTIVAL & EVENT SMALL FUND

The fund will provide a new one-off scheme to:

Support and develop small festivals and events in local communities and encourage and inspires new and existing organisations to strengthen and develop events.

Awards ranging from £3 – 5, 000.

[Link to guidance, application form](#)

COMMUNITY CYCLING FUND

The Fund has been created to help organisations:

Deliver cycling activity and events to encourage and inspire new and existing cyclists to participate in a fun and safe environment.

Reach and engage new audiences to participate in organised and inclusive cycling activity and events.

Awards ranging from £5 – 15, 000.

ADVERTISING YOUR EVENT

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT

Now your event is up and running and you're ready to promote it to the world. There are various effective, free marketing platforms available to use.

We suggest as a minimum, submitting your events to be listed on SSDA and VisitScotland – however, there are various other free listing platforms:

[Undiscovered Scotland: What's On? Events Around Scotland](#)

[Hello Scotland \(scotlandwelcomesyou.com\)](#)

[whatsonscotland.com](#)

[What's On & Things to Do in the UK | Tickets, Show Times & Events \(chooseyourevent.co.uk\)](#)

[Events in Scotland - YES \(youreventscotland.com\)](#)

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND DESTINATION ALLIANCE (SSDA)

SSDA provides a platform for free event listing on their website and social media channels.

You can read their guidance and submit your event [here](#)

VISIT SCOTLAND

Visit Scotland provides another free event listing through their 'The List' service.

You can read their guidance and submit your event [here](#)

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEASURING EVENTS

Following your event, it is important to measure the impacts of your event.

Effective post-event assessment helps us clearly measure and quantify the events success and gain an understanding if attendee expectations were met.

Through measuring the impacts, it allows you to effectively plan and improve how you deliver the event the following year.

Further, it can be a useful process for leveraging future funding with clear, reportable data to help with applications.

EVENTIMPACTS

[EventIMPACTS](#) provides an effective platform to help you evaluate your Social, Economic and Environmental impacts.

Within their comprehensive website you can find tools to support your post-event assessment.

KEY CONTACTS

EVENTS TEAM Advice on event logistics and programming Email: events@scotborders.gov.uk	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT Advice on traffic management and any event which uses sections of the road for Email: trafficmgtroadsafety@scotborders.gov.uk	COMMUNITY TEAM Advice on community engagement and planning Email: communitygrants@scotborders.gov.uk
PARKS & SPACES Permission to use public spaces and parks Email: placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk	EMERGENCY PLANNING Emergency planning arrangement and advice around event safety. Email: eps@scotborders.gov.uk	NHS If you have any questions or queries for the NHS Scotland Events team please fill in the following form nhsscotlandevents@gov.scot
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Enquiries relating to food hygiene, food safety and food standards if handling, preparing or selling food and/or drink Email: placehealth@scotborders.gov.uk	POLICE SCOTLAND OPERATIONAL PLANNING www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/organising-an-event/	

Alternative format/language

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