

13. Information & Welfare

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No matter what the size of the event, there will be a need to give attention to the welfare of both those working on the site and the public.

At some events this may be relatively straightforward, such as what to do if children become separated from their parents, while at others it may be more complex covering a wide range of needs, including facilities for those suffering drug problems.

The most important thing is to have a structured plan in place for dealing with such problems so that all those involved in the event know what to do.

Of equal importance is the need to provide information in a structured way.

Welfare

The first priority for organisers should be to assess the potential welfare risks at the event and what is needed to address those risks. This will depend very much on factors such as the type of event as well as the age and profile of those attending.

In smaller events the welfare role is generally handled directly by the organisers or first aid facilities on the site but the important thing is that everyone involved in the event knows what to do if an issue arises.

Whoever is responsible for welfare should have direct access to the services on and off site.

It can be helpful to combine welfare and information points on the site and to use signage to so that they can be found easily.

Information

Information is an essential element in managing audiences safely as research has shown that when people have difficulty in obtaining information, they may feel unsatisfied, discontented and can even become aggressive. In turn, this may result in people becoming less likely to comply with safety instructions or, in the extreme, lead to public-order problems.

People like the comfort of knowing what is going on, so it is important to make sure that information is accessible to everyone. There are a number of ways this can be done:

- Advance information about the event and facilities can be provided via a programme, the event website, on tickets, social media or a leaflet. Typically this might include parking arrangements, public transport information and a timetable for the event
- And at the point-of-sale of tickets, such as in the form of a leaflet. This might include parking arrangements, public transport information, a site map and a timetable for the event.

- Those working on the site, particularly at key points such as entrance gates, can help provide information if they are properly briefed and given reference guidance containing key information.

It is helpful to have site maps to help people find their way round, particularly at events with lots of traders and displays where services may be less obvious. Consider displaying these, along with the event programme, at key points around the site.

Ensure that plans are large, clear, preferably in large print, waterproof, and are marked with the type of information typically needed, such as toilets, exits and entrances, car parks, first aid facilities and performance areas.

And, don't forget those who may have special needs.

Pass Outs

At some events, the issue of pass outs may be needed. If so it is important to let the public know about the procedure, particularly if pass outs to the car parks or the local area are restricted.

Before entering the site, the audience should also be told of any facilities or services that are not available inside (e.g. no catering or banking facilities).