

A Guide for Sports Clubs, Community Groups, Schools and
Individuals organising sports, community
or charity events

How Safe is Your Sports, Community or Charity event?



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Rationale:

Community, school and charity sporting events have become increasingly popular throughout the County. Often these events take place in public spaces including roads, open water and hills and can have health and safety implications for the participants. This booklet is presented as a set of good practice guidelines and is structured to include a workbook section within each chapter. This is designed as a practical aid for groups, so that when populated during the accompanying training sessions, the user will have the outline of a Health & Safety Plan for their event.

We hope you find this workbook a practical tool for planning your event.

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared as an aid to groups and individuals organising sports and community events as a support towards improving public health and safety. It is designed as a guide and to assist groups in practical and safe planning for sports events which take place on public roads and in public spaces including waterways, however it must be highlighted that the safety of the public at any event remains the responsibility of the organisers.

The information contained within is designed to improve planning of such events; however, it is by no means conclusive and should only be considered a guide.

This booklet was prepared specifically with sports events in mind, however, other organisations and communities wishing to use this guide for the delivery of their event may do so, but at their own risk.

Before you plan your event you need to answer these 7 questions:

1. Has your organisation formed a dedicated **Planning Group** to organise the event?
2. Has your Planning Group had a **Pre-Event Planning Meeting** to consider the scale, commitment and controls required to ensure a successful event?
3. Has your Planning Group prepared a dedicated **Health & Safety Plan**?
4. Has your Planning Group considered all relevant Legal **Issues** such as **Permits**, appropriate **Insurance** etc?
5. Has your Planning Group outlined all **Communications** needed within the Group, with relevant Agencies, the general public, the media and the participants?
6. Does your event require **Volunteers or Marshalls**? Have you clarified number, roles & responsibilities and training needs?
7. Have you planned to **Review your Event**, in order to improve future events?

1. Has your organisation formed a Planning Group?

- 1.1 Your organisation is **responsible** for the event you are organising.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the planning group have a min of 6-8 **members** to arrange, plan and review the event
- 1.3 Assign a number of important, specific roles from this group. These should include:
 - Event Leader / Coordinator
 - Safety Officer
 - PRO / Media Officer
 - Communications Officer (Internal)
 - Admin/Finance Officer (Records, Registration, Permits, Results)
 - Volunteer Manager
 - Child Protection officer (Designated Liaison Officer)
 - Public Amenities Officer – (First Aid Centres, Public Toilets, Parking, Signage)
- 1.4 Group **Agenda** should include:
 - 1.4.1. Clear agreement on the event details – Date, Time, Route/Venue, Timing (if required), Finance, Insurance, Permits etc
 - 1.4.2 Consider the numbers attending the event – would pre-registration be helpful?
 - 1.4.3 Complete a dedicated Health & Safety Plan 1.3.4 Consider Route Planning – maps, markings, signage, dangerous junctions
 - 1.4.5 Clear agreement on participants – who, how many, recruitment, registration process & area, t-shirts, prizes and post event giveaways
 - 1.4.6 Consider the need for a Child Protection policy – is you event child friendly and inclusive?
 - 1.4.7 Consider the need for Volunteers – Recruitment, Training & management
 - 1.4.8 Devise a Communications Plan – within your group, with participants, with agencies, with the media and the public pre event
 - 1.4.9 Consider administration requirements – registration, financial management, results

2. Has your Planning Group had a Pre-Event Planning Meeting(s)?

- 2.1 Each event should have a dedicated **planning group or planning sub committee** of your parent group, charity, school, community group etc to plan and organise the event.
- 2.2 The group should firstly consider the **checklist on Page 3** - How Safe is Your Event?
- 2.3 The group should seek approval for the event with the relevant **governing organisation** such as County Boards, Lead Charity, School Board of Management etc.
- 2.4 If your event will be raising funds for **charity**, your planning group should seek approval from the charitable organisation which will benefit.
- 2.5 Go through this **resource pack** in detail and research additional information where necessary (See back cover for agency support list)
- 2.6 Consider if event management or volunteer **training** is required and if so contact Donegal Sports Partnership or Donegal Volunteer Agency who may be in a position to assist
- 2.7 Begin to consider possible **dates** – do a local audit to avoid clashing with other events, check out national resource websites such as Get Ireland Active, Get Ireland Walking or Active Donegal to assist in the audit process.
- 2.8 Begin to plan **PR schedule** – specifically consider how to recruit participants and engage volunteers.
- 2.9 Have a **Plan B** – should unforeseen circumstances occur (weather etc) how will the event be changed and how will this be communicated to all involved?

3. Health & Safety Plan

Consider preparing a dedicated **Health & Safety Plan** for your event. It should include the following sections and should elaborate on your planning under each heading

- 3.1 Risk Assessment Policy Statement
- 3.2 First Aid Stations – number, locations, personnel, resources etc
- 3.3 Incident Report Templates
- 3.4 Emergency Plans -
- 3.5 Contingency plans – for instance, weather issues, local emergencies.

Developing your event plan - support information.

4. Has your Planning Group considered all relevant Legal Issues, Permits, appropriate Insurance etc?

4.1 **Insurance:**

- 4.1.1 Consider the **type of insurance** needed for your event?
If it's a sports event, check with the relevant Governing Body of Sport / County Board; if it's a school event, check with the School Board of Management and if it's a community or charity event, check with the community organisation.
- 4.1.2 Check if the event requires **public liability insurance** and whether it may be provided by the relevant parent body – NGB of Sport, Charity, School Board. Are your volunteers insured?
- 4.1.3 The group should ascertain the **correct insurance** for your individual event and this should be considered by the planning group before any date is decided or announced.

4.2. **Permits:**

- 4.2.1 Some governing bodies have a **permit or licence system** including Athletics Ireland, Cycling Ireland and Triathlon Ireland. This process is valuable as they can provide guidance and advice to strengthen your event.
- 4.2.2 However, you should check if there is a corresponding licence or permit required from other **authorities**.
- 4.2.3 If your event involves fundraising you need to consider whether your event requires a **fundraising permit**, from An Garda Síochána.
- 4.2.4 If your event requires a **road closure**, you need to make an application to Donegal County Council. This process can take some time and should be commenced as soon as possible.

Developing your event plan - support information.

5. Has your Planning Group outlined all Communications needed within the Group, with participants, with Agencies, the public, the media etc?

- 5.1 **Communication** is needed within your planning group, with relevant authorities, with the local media and the wider community, as well as any relevant charities.
- 5.2 Check in with **relevant services**, including An Gardai Siochana, Donegal County Council, Donegal Sport Partnership, The Irish Coastguard, Donegal Mountain Rescue Team, Civil Defence, Ambulance & Fire Service, Irish Water Safety and others regarding your event.
- 5.3 Communicate with **local residents and businesses** likely to be affected by your event.
- 5.4 You need to communicate with the **participants** regarding registration format, safety issues, routes, schedule and event changes.
- 5.5 You need to communicate with **local media** especially around the event routes, traffic and any event changes.

6. How many Volunteers or Marshalls does your event require? Have you clarified their responsibilities and training needs?

- 6.1 A dedicated **Volunteer Manager / Coordinator** is needed.
- 6.2 Calculate the required **number of volunteers**, based on the **ratio** for your sport, to participants or with regard to the number of junctions/hazards along your route.
- 6.3 Do your volunteers need a **qualification or to have specific skills**? E.g. water sports and lifesaving skills, hill walking, first aid etc. Do you have role descriptors to ensure the correct people are assigned to correct jobs?
- 6.4 Is **Child Protection** and/or Gardai vetting required?
- 6.5 How will you **recruit volunteers**? Have you contacted the Donegal Volunteer Service for support?
- 6.6 Volunteer **training may need to include** - Health & Safety, First Aid, Route Information, Radio Communications, Dangerous Junction Management and Risk analysis.
- 6.7 Have you considered how to keep volunteers **motivated** and appreciated during and post event?
- 6.8 Have you communicated clear **roles and responsibilities to your volunteers? Have you drawn up a clear volunteer role description?**
- 6.9 Is there effective liaison with the **wider planning group**.
- 6.10 **Relevant Volunteer Training:** Smaller events may require a simple information talk, however, consider whether larger events require more **in depth volunteer training** eg specific health and safety or first aid training.
- 6.11 Consider **transport and food requirements** for volunteers throughout the event.
- 6.12 Will your volunteers require **visibility and safety equipment** e.g. high-viz jackets, radios, first aid kits.

Developing your event plan - support information.

7. Have you planned to Review your Event, in order to improve future events?

7.1 A **De-Brief** is a very positive end to your event

7.2 A De-Brief meeting after the event should include relevant observations from key people and should ask three key questions:

- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- What needs to be improved?
- How will your group make these improvements for future events?

7.3 Useful prompts for this meeting could be to answer questions listed in each of the checklist areas – e.g. volunteers, pre planning, communication etc

Planning Template

The following planning template in the form of 21 Questions can be used to effectively plan a safe community sports event.

- 1) Has your organisation set up a dedicated planning group for the event?
- 2) Have you assigned the following roles within the planning group – Event Leader, Safety Officer, PRO, Communications Officer, Administration/ Finance Officer, Volunteer Manager and Child Protection Officer?
- 3) Have you checked with your governing body before proceeding and have you conducted a local audit so that your date doesn't with other events?
- 4) Has the group made themselves familiar with this checklist?
- 5) Would the group find it helpful to have some training on the advice contained in this booklet?
- 6) Has your group prepared a dedicated Health & Safety Plan?
- 7) Has your group considered what insurance is required for the event?
- 8) Does your group need a permit or licence for the event?
- 9) Does your group need to apply for a fundraising permit?
- 10) If raising funds for a Charity, have you sought their permission?
- 11) Does your group need to apply for a road closure?
- 12) Have you informed relevant services such An Gardai Siochana, the Irish Coastguard, Civil Defence, Donegal Mountain Rescue Team etc about your event?
- 13) Do you need to inform local residents and businesses about your event?
- 14) Has your group developed a Public Relations Plan and has it been communicated to the local media?
- 15) How will event participants be recruited and how will ongoing communication with them happen?
- 16) Will your event require volunteers and/or marshalls and if so how many? Have you contacted the Donegal Volunteer Centre?
- 17) Do the volunteers need qualifications, training etc

- 18) How will your group outline volunteer duties and responsibilities?
- 19) How will you provide volunteers with transport, food, safety equipment etc
- 20) Does your event require a registration process and area on the day?
- 21) Following the event, will your group have a de-brief to record what worked well, what did not work and what improvements are needed for future events and detail how the group will achieve this?

Useful resources

The following are some online resources which may be of help to groups when organising community and sporting events:

Donegal Sports Partnership	www.actedonegal.com
Donegal County Council	www.donegalcoco.ie
An Garda Siochana	www.garda.ie
Mountaineering Ireland	www.mountaineering.ie
Civil Defence	www.civildefence.ie
Donegal Volunteering Centre	www.volunteerdonegal.ie
Donegal Mountain Rescue Team	www.donegalmrt.ie
Irish water Safety	www.iws.ie
Irish Coastguard Service	www.ircg.ie
Coastal Rowing	www.coastalrowing.net
Rowing Ireland	www.rowingireland.ie
Bluestack Ramblers	www.bluestackramblers.com
Athletics Ireland	www.athleticsireland.ie
Cycling Ireland	www.cyclingireland.ie
Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre.	www.gartan.com
Sport Ireland	www.irishsportsCouncil.ie

Sample Accident Report Form

Name of Casualty:

Address:

Telephone No:

Age:

Date & Time of Incident:

Details of Incident:

Injury Arising:

Action Taken:

Attended By:

Witness - Name & Address:

Witness Signature:

Casualty's Signature :

Signature of Attendee: Date:

Notified to Event Director: Date:

Donegal Sports Event Management Working Group

