

# A guide to organising sponsored events

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## How to make your event a success

October 2010



**Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.** Our work makes it possible for people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in. It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today.  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk).

Head Office  
Sustrans  
2 Cathedral Square  
College Green  
Bristol  
BS1 5DD

0845 113 00 65

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VAT Registration No. 416740656

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## 1 Introduction

This guide is for anyone thinking of organising a sponsored event for Sustrans. It will help you decide on an event, offer practical tips to help you organise and promote it, and direct you to other sources of information. **If you are organising a fundraising (rather than sponsored) event or taking part in a run, triathlon, cycle challenge or other organised event then our Fundraising Pack is full of hints and tips** to help you raise as much as you can for Sustrans – call our Supporters Team on 0845 838 0651 to request a copy or email: [supporters@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:supporters@sustrans.org.uk)

**Fundraising for Sustrans through organising a sponsored event is a fantastic way to support the charity as not only does Sustrans benefit from much needed donations but your event can also raise the profile of the charity and its achievements, such as the National Cycle Network and even recruit new Supporters!**

Try to keep your event straightforward, cheap and simple. With enthusiasm, good planning and a well thought out idea, you're bound to succeed!

## 2 What do you want to achieve?

The following need to be addressed to help you decide what event you want:

- When and where do you want the event?
- Number of people you want involved?
- How much would you like to raise?
- Do you want to recruit Supporters/get people cycling/increase awareness?

Make sure your objectives are realistic!



## 3 Organising an Event



### 3.1 Event Ideas

- bike ride or walk - either solo or with your friends – why not use the National Cycle Network? (see below for more information on bike events)
- a sponsored dance, silence, give up something, cook-off, the list is endless!
- choose an idea suitable to your area/available time/skills/contacts/finance etc.

### 3.2 Planning

#### Timing

Be realistic about a time scale; depending on the scale of the event you may need to start promoting your event at least 3 months in advance.

#### Date

Ensure it doesn't clash with other events – or if it does, could you combine events? Is a weekend/holiday/weekday best?

#### Venue

What does your event need from a venue? Refreshments/electricity/space/playing field etc. Choose a couple of possible venues to avoid disappointment, as they may be booked.

## Transport Provision

How do people get to and from the event? Is it easily accessible for all? Can you provide public transport details/is there cycle parking/a car park?

## Permission

You may need permission from a number of the following:

- a land owner
- the council – if public land/a big event they need to issue a licence. Also the Highways/Rights of Way dept in the local council if your event is planned on the public highway/a right of way
- raffles/prize draws and lotteries also have their own rules – check with your local authority before going ahead.

## Helpers

Recruit friends and relatives, contact Sustrans to see if a volunteer group in your area can help or try your local volunteer bureau.

## First Aid

For a small event - ensure you have a basic First Aid kit and know the address and phone number of the nearest Accident and Emergency Unit. For large events – first aid cover from qualified first aiders should be provided.

Contact St John Ambulance on 08700 104950 [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk) or The British Red Cross on 0870 170 7000 [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

## Size of the Event

This needs an educated guess so you can plan the venue/materials/ tickets etc – or if it's outdoors – (cycle) parking/ standing room/access etc.

## Contingency Plan

If it is an outdoors event, just in case the weather is atrocious, an alternative plan/venue is advisable. Also a minimum number of sponsors/ticket sales should be established. If this is not reached – cancellation/scaling down of the event should be considered.



## Security

Both for storing bikes/equipment and for personnel (if necessary)

### 3.3 Finances/Budget

Consider approaching local companies in exchange for mentioning their name in press release/having their picture somewhere etc. If not able to offer financial assistance some companies could offer discounts – on a venue or prizes. Please don't contact Trusts in Sustrans name as our contact here has longstanding relationships with many charitable trusts.

### 3.4 Insurance

You should arrange adequate insurance cover for your event.

### 3.5 Sponsorship

**We can provide information and resources to help you with collecting sponsorship and we would love to hear about your event. We can provide template press releases, sponsor forms, fundraising packs and t-shirts for your participants and helpers, thank you certificates, poster templates and more.** Get in touch with the Supporters Team on 0845 838 0651 or email:

[supporters@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:supporters@sustrans.org.uk)

- Think of all the people you know and approach them all. Any old friends? Clubs you belong to? Evening class? Download a sponsorship form template and carry it everywhere!
- Set up a fundraising page at [www.justgiving.com/sustrans](http://www.justgiving.com/sustrans) and email the link to all your contacts
- Ask friends/relatives to take a form to their workplace
- Ask your employer/different departments/different regions (if applicable)
- Approach local businesses – particularly those where you are a customer
- Set yourself/event participants a fundraising target and let everyone know you are doing this event to support Sustrans and why it's important to you
- Request a fundraising pack and free t-shirt for you and the other event participants – call 0845 838 0651 or email: [supporters@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:supporters@sustrans.org.uk)

### 3.6 Press/Promotion

Once you have decided on the type of event you want to hold and the number of people you hope to attract you need to begin to promote your event to attract participants.

#### Publicity

When producing leaflets and posters for your event please make sure you use official Sustrans logos. Please contact the information team on 0845 1130065 to obtain these.

On any publicity materials that you produce it is advisable to include the name of the event, where and when it is being held (date and start time), the purpose of the event (raising money for Sustrans and/or promoting Sustrans work) and a contact name and telephone number for further information.

How to promote your event:

- Word of mouth
- Advertisements
- Invitations
- Banners
- Online including company intranets, Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites
- Flyers and posters in schools, colleges, workplace, hospitals, notice boards in shops, bike shops, leisure centres, libraries, doctors and dentists surgeries, sports clubs etc.

#### Local Radio

Radio, like newspapers, are an excellent way to get into peoples homes and reach a mass audience. It gives you a much more individual approach than posters or leaflets.

#### Local Television

Getting access to local television is more difficult than radio. But don't let that put you off. A strong message and compelling story will stand you in good stead.

## Press Releases

With all media attention the important thing to remember is to prepare a good news release. This lets journalists know what you are doing or what you are planning. The first sentence of a news release must make an instant impact on a journalist, so always keep it simple and short and remember the five **W's**: what is happening, who is doing it, and where, when and why.

Mark the top of the paper " News release" or **use our template news release for sponsored events** – available from: [supporters@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:supporters@sustrans.org.uk) Include quotes from representatives or other prominent figures. Send your news release in good time to the news desk, and follow up your release with a phone call.

### Four top tips for a press release

Double check all your facts, that dates and times of an event are accurate and that you have spelled names and places correctly.

Be realistic about what kind of coverage you expect – a very local story is unlikely to attract national media coverage.

A good photo can help. You may decide to have a photo call as part of your event, or send a photo from the Sustrans image library. Contact our Picture Library on 0117 915 0120 or email [photos@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:photos@sustrans.org.uk)

Run your release past the press office. We will be able to give advice and help to issue releases. Email [press@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:press@sustrans.org.uk) or call 0119 927 7555

## 4 Bike Events

### 4.1 Introduction

12,000 miles of the National Cycle Network are open and ready for use with new routes being developed all the time - providing an expanding network of high quality routes and a major amenity for walkers and wheelchair users. The routes pass right through the middle of most major towns and cities in the UK, providing for journeys to work, to school and for leisure and tourism.

One third of the network is traffic free, with the remainder on minor or traffic calmed roads, passing within one kilometre of 11.3 million people in England, Scotland and Wales.

The National Cycle Network is available for events. The traffic-free sections are particularly good for events with children, less confident cyclists and walkers. Sustrans volunteers organise Fresh Air Miles sponsored rides on the Network each year and we're always looking for more volunteers to organise these.

Depending on the size of the event, you may need to inform the local council/police/residents that it is taking place. Another courtesy may be to put up posters on the section in advance, so regular users know what is going on, which will also publicise the event.

We may be able to help in the promotion of your event and provide some display equipment on the day as well as free t-shirts for helpers and riders. Please call the information team on 0845 1130065



for more information. See the useful contacts below for more sources of help and advice. However, the responsibility for the event organisation must fully remain with the organiser.

## 4.2 Practicalities

### Route Planning for a Bike Ride

Depending on the size of your bike event, you may need to think about some or all of the following points:

- The start and finish point(s) should be accessible i.e. near public transport, have sufficient space for cyclists to gather, and preferably be close to a local landmark that people will be able to find easily, e.g. a railway station, supermarket or town hall.
- Well in advance of the event, carefully check out and record the route's physical characteristics (i.e. on road and traffic-free sections, major road crossings, steep climbs and descents), facilities (telephones, refreshments, toilets) and surface quality, especially in winter.
- Record the distances and timings between destinations/landmarks, to help you plan the day's schedule. NB: A large group will travel far more slowly than individual cyclists so allow approximately 7-10 miles/hour for a group of about 30 people.
- Don't be too ambitious with the route; choose a flattish route of 10-20 miles.
- Consider traffic-free sections for junior or family rides. Your route could be linear, circular or even a figure of 8, which gives riders the option of a longer or shorter route.
- If your route is linear, you may need to return cyclists and their bikes to the start point. If you anticipate doing so by rail, you will need to contact the relevant train operating company early in the planning stage to discuss logistics. If the company has a Group Bookings office, this may be the best place to start. Be aware that they may not be able to accommodate this.
- If possible ride circular routes anti-clockwise to avoid right hand turns across traffic on roads.
- Decide on a suitable start time (for large bike rides you may wish to stagger the departures).
- Decide whether to hold an event (eg bbq, fun day, picnic) at the start or finish of the ride.

### Assistance

The number of assistants required and the nature of their roles will depend largely on the size of the event and whether it is on roads or traffic-free routes. Roles might include a leader (who knows the route well and sets the pace), a backmarker or sweeper, who stays at the back of the ride to assist people with difficulties and ensure no-one gets left behind, mechanic(s), direction giving marshals, photographer, support van driver (if a large ride) and an overall 'logistics' organiser who deals with registration, refreshments, media etc. It might be useful on the day to identify the staff in some way, for instance, with tabards or jackets.

**Participants may need to be issued with an info sheet** providing an event schedule, information on the marshalling, signing and mapping, safety requirements, on-highway riding rules, health and safety issues, emergency procedures, bike maintenance and fitness training ideas, and a map of the route.

**Encourage them to bring:** water, refreshments, wet and cold weather clothing plus sun protection, helmet, reflective bands (plus bright clothing if on road) and lights and lock and bell.

**Event organisers may need:** refreshments, bin bags, publicity materials, sponsor forms, basic tool kit (puncture repair kit, spanners, link extractor etc.), registration forms, T-shirts, marshal jackets, route maps/schedule, camera(s) and spare memory cards/batteries, large water containers, mobile phones with emergency/media contact numbers, basic first aid kit.

### Health & Safety/security for Bike Events

- You may want to think about the security of the bikes - provision of temporary bike racks and/or volunteer bike minders at start/finish points and destinations on the route.
- If you are riding on-road, encourage riders to cycle single file, and discourage overtaking. You may wish to stipulate that under 16 year olds should be accompanied by an adult.
- You may wish to approach your local police for assistance with particularly busy sections or dangerous crossings. If you are organising a ride of more than 50 cyclists this may cause traffic problems. Contact the police to notify them, if they consider it necessary they may close off some roads. The police will also be able to provide you with a contact number to call in case of emergencies. NB: It is illegal for ride 'marshals' to stop or direct traffic.
- If it is a large ride you must inform the local police of your route, so that they can make adequate provisions for traffic/pedestrian safety.
- If you would like to install temporary route signs you will need to contact your local cycling officer about arrangements.



- If your route is in an urban area and there are problems with litter and glass, you might want to ask the council to do a sweep beforehand.

Prior to the event riders should be encouraged to:

- have their bike professionally serviced
- train for the event - they should start gradually if they haven't cycled before or for some time; stop exercising if they feel sick, dizzy, over-tired or in pain; leave at least 30 minutes after eating before starting to exercise; and cover up with loose clothing in hot weather
- consult their doctor if they have health problems or any worries about becoming more physically active

## 5 The National Cycle Network Good Cycling Code

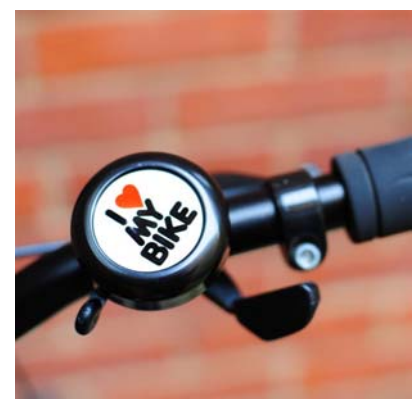
You should ensure that participants are aware of the issues covered in the Good Cycling Code:

### On all routes

Please be courteous. Always cycle with respect for others, whether other cyclists, pedestrians, people in wheelchairs, horse riders or drivers, and acknowledge those who give way to you.

### On shared use paths:

- **fit a bell and use it, don't surprise people**
- please give way to pedestrians, leaving them plenty of room
- keep to your side of any dividing line
- be prepared to slow down or stop if necessary
- don't expect to cycle at high speeds
- be careful at junctions, bends and entrances
- **remember that many people are hard of hearing or visually impaired so don't assume that they can see or hear you**
- give way where there are wheelchair users and horse riders



### On roads:

- always follow the Highway Code

- be seen - most accidents to cyclists happen at junctions
- fit lights and use them in poor visibility
- consider wearing a helmet and conspicuous clothing
- keep your bike road worthy
- don't cycle on pavements except where designated - pavements are for pedestrians
- use your bell - not all pedestrians can see you

#### **In the countryside:**

- follow the Country Code
- respect other land management activities such as farming or forestry
- take litter home
- keep erosion to a minimum if off-road
- be self-sufficient - in remote areas carry food, repair kit, map and waterproofs
- try to cycle or use public transport to travel to and from the start and finish of your ride
- cycle within your capabilities
- match your speed to the surface and your skills

## **6 Useful Contacts**

### **Sustrans**

Sustrans, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol BS1 5DD

Tel: 0117 926 8893 Web: [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Information Team (for maps, help with route planning and for reporting problems with routes):

Tel: 0845 113 0065 Email: [info@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:info@sustrans.org.uk)

Supporters Team (for fundraising information, resources and free t-shirts for your event):

Tel: 0845 838 0651 Email: [supporters@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:supporters@sustrans.org.uk)

**CTC (Cyclists Touring Club)** The CTC is a national organisation devoted to the protection of cyclists' interests and the encouragement of recreational cycling. They produce a range of useful leaflets on organising cycle events, details of local cycle groups, a UK Cycle Hire Directory, insurance cover and more.

CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 9JX

Tel: 0844 736 8450 Web: [www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk) Email: [cycling@ctc.org.uk](mailto:cycling@ctc.org.uk)

**RADAR** RADAR provides information about venue accessibility for people with disabilities

RADAR, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London, EC1V 8AF

Tel: 020 7250 3222 Web: [www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk) Email: [radar@radar.org.uk](mailto:radar@radar.org.uk)

### **Cycle proficiency/training courses**

For details call your local cycling or road safety officer. However if you are having difficulty finding a contact in your local area, contact the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA):

RoSPA House, Edgbaston Park, 353 Bristol Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7ST

Tel: 0121 248 2000 Web: [www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com) Email: [help@rospa.com](mailto:help@rospa.com)

**Cycle Training** is a network of professional cycling instructors covering the London area. They provide individual tuition for all levels of ability as well as training cycle instructors nationally.

Tel: 020 7231 6005 Web: [www.cycletraining.co.uk](http://www.cycletraining.co.uk) Email: [info@cycletraining.co.uk](mailto:info@cycletraining.co.uk)

### **Other useful websites:**

[www.cyclenation.org.uk](http://www.cyclenation.org.uk) Find contact details for affiliated local cycle campaign groups.

[www.cycling.org.uk](http://www.cycling.org.uk) Useful local routes and cycling project information for North West England.

[www.bikeweek.org.uk](http://www.bikeweek.org.uk) Resources to help with your event if you're holding it in Bike Week.

## 7 Checklist

### Choosing an event

- Have you decided on your objectives?
- Do you know what type and numbers of people you want to get involved?
- Have you taken their abilities and limitations into account?
- Is the type of venue and location suitable?
- Have you given enough time for participants to register and raise money?

### Getting assistance:

- Have you established a sufficient team of people with clearly identified tasks?
- Have you produced a budget that takes account of all potential outgoings and in-comings?
- Have you pursued sources of funding (direct or 'in-kind')?
- Have you identified and contacted useful local sources of advice/information?
- Have you let Sustrans know about your event?

### Legalities/Health & Safety:

- Have you contacted the local council and/or police as necessary?
- Have you considered and taken action on: transport, signage, access, security, space, facilities, equipment?
- Have you established a pre-event checklist?
- Have you researched legal issues such as fundraising, licences, bylaws, use of the public highway, lotteries and insurance?
- Have you covered all the necessary health and safety issues, including first aid?

### Promoting your event:

- Have you issued news releases to all your local media? (TV/Radio/Newspapers).
- Have you invited relevant celebrities/dignitaries?
- Have you produced and distributed your marketing materials and displayed them effectively?

### Event planning:

- Is the route/day planned?
- Have you identified all the necessary tasks?
- Do the participants have all the necessary advice/information to join the event?
- Have you accumulated the necessary equipment?

### After the event:

- Are the accounts tidy and funds sent in to Sustrans?
- Are any required assessments complete?
- Has everyone been thanked?

Good Luck!