

## 1 Planning a street party



A street party is a good event to organise because it is held in your street, right outside your front door. There are opportunities for everyone to get involved in some way – either in the overall organisation of the party or in a specific role such as sorting out music or bringing a plate of food. It is also an enjoyable way for different generations to mix and get to know each other. You will need to start organising some aspects of it three to four months in advance – specifically you need to decide on a date and applying for street closure (if that is what you wish to do).

### Planning meetings

- invite people to meetings in someone's house
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- decide who is doing what
- make sure nobody dominates
- take notes

At the first meeting, or very early on you need to decide on a date so you can let everyone know. Apply for a road closure as this can take six to 12 weeks; see below for more details

### **Time and date**

September is good. It's often still warm but most people are back from their holidays. Sunday is also often a good day because fewer people work. Set start and finish times e.g. 3.00pm to 6.00pm.

### **Letting everyone know in advance**

Invite everyone to the party face to face and give them a flier as well to remind them of the details. If anyone has objections listen to what they want to say and try and reassure them.

### **Things to organise:**

#### **❖ Car moving**

Ask everyone to move their cars to a local car park or other suitable place by mid morning so you can start to set up your party. Leave reminder notes on car windscreens the night before.

#### **❖ Food**

Ask everyone to bring food to share. You could ask residents on one side of the street to bring savoury things and snacks, and on the other side sweet things and soft drinks. Also ask everyone to bring their own crockery and cutlery and suggest they put their names on them.

#### **❖ Recycling and waste**

Arrange containers for collecting any recyclable items and for any waste and rubbish that cannot be recycled.

#### **❖ Chairs, tables, rugs**

Bring them out from people's houses so your party is comfortable as well as fun.

#### **❖ Music and entertainment**

If some residents are musical and have an instrument they may be happy to play. If not you could use a CD player and someone could be in charge of collecting and organizing suitable CDs. Do not play music late into the night. Think of lots of different types of entertainment for all ages...

### **Suggestions for entertainments**

- ❖ Competitions – cake making, largest vegetable, best name or logo for your group, decorations for your new planters, the best hanging basket, best Xmas wreath
- ❖ Exhibitions – old photos and maps, children’s drawings of their street
- ❖ Games – tug of war, egg and spoon races, swing ball, dancing, three legged race
- ❖ Plant stall or seed swap
- ❖ Clothes swap or bring and buy
- ❖ Art workshop / craft making stall possibly
- ❖ seasonal or themed (e.g. mask making,

**Decorations** – put up bunting across the street if possible to give that party feel! Ask for suggestions of simple, cheap things that people can make because there is often a lot of untapped creativity. Put up the decorations as early as possible to kick things off.

### **Licences**

You will not need a music licence if you are having incidental background music. You would need a licence, however for a programme of bands or if you want to sell food or alcohol etc.

You will need to register in advance if you are planning on having a collection on public property. Have competitions instead of lotteries to avoid the need for a separate license. If you are serving food consider the Food Safety Laws.

The licences are fairly cheap but you will need to apply for them well in advance. Contact the Licensing Department of your Council.



## **Road closure**

It should be straightforward to have your street closed.

Check it is OK with every household and business in the street. If a resident objects they may have the wrong idea about the event so listen to their worries and explain things to them. The Council will not refuse your plans if there is only one person who disagrees.

- ❖ Think of alternative traffic routes.
- ❖ Apply to your Council's highways/traffic team 6 -12 weeks in advance.
- ❖ You or the Council will have to consult the emergency services (your Council will advise you).
- ❖ You will need a "Road Closed" sign – your Council will advise where to hire or buy one – and display it in the street before the event.
- ❖ The council may charge to close your road but you can include the cost in your application to the community fund.

## **Insurance and safety**

The events that you hold for residents are not usually considered to be public events and the risks will normally be very low. If you do not insure your activities:

Think about any potential risks (electricity, accidents, burns etc) and agree that everyone is responsible for themselves and they should take reasonable care.

If you do want insurance cover for your activities:

See [www.streetparty.org.uk](http://www.streetparty.org.uk) 0117 922 5708 for advice

Make sure that any suppliers of equipment e.g. of a bouncy castle, have their own insurance and ask to see their certificate. This will, however normally only cover the equipment and not personal safety.

### **On the day**

- Have a timetable for the day e.g. start at 12.00pm, have lunch at 1.30pm and finish by 5.00pm. Put up the timetable in a clearly visible place on the day.
- In case it rains, think of places you can shelter till it dries up.
- If there are elderly or vulnerable people make sure they have a chair and meet them at their front door to accompany them out if they feel shy or nervous.
- Make sure parents keep an eye on their children.
- Remind people to take reasonable care to avoid accidents.
- Don't play the music too loudly.
- Take lots of photos.
- Finish the party at a reasonable time so people aren't disturbed at night. If some people want to carry on partying suggest they go to someone's house.

### **Follow up**

It is a good idea to have a follow up meeting to look at photos and ask people's opinions – as well as having a chance to plan your next street party!