



How to plan and hold an event safely

Introduction





Holding an event in a CCT church is a great way to engage with the local community, raise funds for CCT or just have fun and enjoy the beautiful spaces that our churches provide.

Organising an event can be a lot of fun and sometimes completing paperwork can be seen as a chore but we also need to be sure that the event is run safely and isn't spoiled by foreseeable accidents. This event planning kit is designed to help you plan a safe and enjoyable event.

In this event planning kit we are providing information for our volunteers and supporters on how to complete a risk assessment and to consider where somebody may suffer an injury or harm as a result of the event they plan to hold.

By following CCT's procedures you will be satisfying our statutory responsibilities and meeting the requirements of our insurer.

All CCT churches are unique and so you will need to think about the specific circumstances of the event you want to hold. This event planning kit will help you to do this. It consists of five parts:

[How to plan and run an event safely – Introduction](#)

[Factsheet 1 – How to Complete a Risk Assessment](#)

[Factsheet 2 – Preparing and serving refreshments](#)

[Factsheet 3 – Cleaning for your event](#)

[Factsheet 4 – Emergency Planning and Fire Safety](#)

In addition CCT provides training and resources around **[Safeguarding](#)**, which all event organisers should be aware of, and what to do if you discover a **[Lost or Missing Person](#)** at your event.

What types of event can I hold?

CCT churches are used for a wide range of activities including:

- Services of worship
- Baptisms, weddings and funerals
- Performances of drama, comedy and music
- Professional and community productions rehearsal space
- Civic meetings, public meetings and local consultations
- Recreation, leisure and social gatherings
- Indoor markets
- Exhibitions of arts and crafts
- Voluntary sector provision, e.g. food banks
- Early years and youth provision
- Retail

How do I plan a safe event?

Book the date with your Local Community Officer

We ask that you let your Local Community Officer (LCO) know about your plans as early as possible. We ask that you complete a Booking Enquiry Form so that we have all the information that we need. That way the LCO can check that nothing else is planned on that day and can support you with paperwork and publicity for your event. Your LCO can provide you with a copy of our Booking Enquiry Form and will confirm with you that the church is available and your event can go ahead.

Complete a Risk Assessment

The best way to plan a safe event in a CCT church is to carry out a risk assessment. All this means in practice is: **Thinking through all the different things that will be going on during your event.**

We've put together a helpful guide, [Factsheet 1 – How to Complete a Risk Assessment](#) as part of this event planning kit. The next few pages will take you through the different things you are likely to need to include. You'll need to share your risk assessment with CCT's staff, usually your LCO, before your event takes place.



Working out how many people can attend your event

You will need to decide on the maximum number of people that can attend your event.

For more information about maximum capacity see [Factsheet 4 - Emergency planning and fire safety](#).



Your starting point

Your starting point is the predetermined 'maximum capacity number' that is noted in the church's fire risk assessment. This has been worked out by assessing: the escape route travel distances, the number of exits and the width of these exits. It is not about the number of people that can fit into the pews but is about the number of people that can escape the building in 2.5 minutes. Your LCO or other CCT representative will be able to share this figure with you.

Ordinarily ONE exit = 60 people maximum.



Keeping to this number

Once you have totalled up the number of people, you can start to think about how you are going to keep to this number. There are examples of popular CCT events being repeated on the same day so that all the people that want to attend can be accommodated. Selling tickets through an online ticketing system can help you manage the audience numbers and you won't usually be charged for organising free to attend events.



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Preparing the church for an event

Here are some suggested areas to think about depending on the nature of your event and your church

How can I support people to arrive and leave my event safely?

You may need to consider travel routes between transport hubs and the church.

Can your visitors park cars safely without creating an obstruction and allow people to walk safely between the parking area and the church?

How will people move about the church and churchyard safely?

This question is particularly important if you are introducing extra furniture or equipment for a fair or concert. You might want to direct people to move through the space using temporary signage and/or stewards.

What about toilets?

If there are toilet facilities make sure that they are cleaned before your event and well stocked with paper and towels. You may also like to think about how you will keep them clean and well stocked during your event.

Can I serve refreshments?

You can serve refreshments at your event. We've put together a guide, [**Factsheet 2 – Preparing and serving refreshments**](#), as part of this event planning kit.

What about clearing up after an event?

Most CCT churches are open for visitors daily. In planning your event, you must take this into consideration and think through how you will clean the church before and after your event. CCT churches are historic buildings and protected by the listing system, so we have developed a guide, [**Factsheet 3 – Cleaning for your event**](#), as part of this event planning kit. You will also need to think about how you will deal with any waste created by your event.

What about the weather?

British weather is notoriously difficult to anticipate, We can't control what the weather will be but we can think about what we would do in the event of heat, heavy rain, ice or snow. All of these create additional things to think about. Will your volunteers have hats, sunscreen and water in the case of extreme heat and how will you be prepared should it snow on the day of your carol service? Keep an eye on Met Office weather warnings and be prepared to change your plans if need be.

What time of day will the event be held?

Many of our churches have no electricity and so the time of day and year should be considered. When does it get dark? How will people move around safely both inside and outside the church if there is no electricity? Candles can be used but the additional hazards that they create should be included in your risk assessment.

Can I bring in extra equipment such as staging, sound and lights?

This will depend on the requirements of your event but please discuss this with your LCO as there may be conservation issues to consider if you plan to install items such as staging which could cause damage to floors and fittings. You should be aware that additional equipment might pose an additional tripping hazard or block a fire exit. If the electrical equipment is poorly maintained it could pose a fire risk.

What about health and hygiene?

Many of our churches do not have running water so you may need to consider how you will keep everything clean particularly if you are serving refreshments.

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After the event

Numbers

Please let your LCO know how the event went as they are not able to attend every event in the area which they cover. They need to know how many people attended as we are required to report to this to our funders, the Department of Digital, Cultural, Media and Sport.

Accidents or incidents

Your LCO needs to know about any incidents, near misses or accidents that took place. In the case of a serious injury we may have a legal requirement to report the incident. Your LCO can provide you with a form to record this.

Donations

We need to know how much was raised to support the church and CCT. If you would like to pay any donations in through your bank your LCO can provide you with the reference to ensure that the income is credited to your church.

Feedback

Please let your LCO have any feedback from the event. We welcome your positive comments or constructive criticism about how things might be improved for future events.

Where can I find more help?

We hope this event planning kit provides you with everything you need to know to plan and run a successful, safe event in a CCT Church. However, we know you are likely to have specific questions so, as you plan your event, please remember that CCT staff are here to help you.

Please do get in touch with us, usually by contacting your LCO, and ask us any questions. We are happy to work through any issues with you to help your event be a success.

