

Your guide to organising a street party

Foreword by Eric Pickles

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Britain has a great tradition of communities coming together to celebrate national events by throwing a street party. Thousands of people across the country took part in street parties for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012. The forthcoming 70th anniversary of VE Day on Friday 8th May marks another momentous occasion in our nation's history. We want people to take to the streets, as they did in 1945, and celebrate with a party.

Street parties are simple to organise. This guidance sets out what you need to think about, busts the myths about what's needed, and includes a simple form to let your council know about your plans.

There are plenty of other reasons to throw a street party throughout the year, including The Big Lunch in early June, national holidays or just because you want to get together with your neighbours.

So get cracking on planning your party!



What sort of events does this apply to?

This is about the sort of street parties that groups of residents get together to arrange for their neighbours. The main differences between a small street party and other public events are listed below:

STREET PARTIES

For residents/neighbours only
Publicity only to residents
In a quiet residential road or street
Self-organised
Normally no insurance
No formal risk assessment needed
No licences normally necessary unless the sale of alcohol is involved

OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

Anyone can attend
External publicity (such as in newspapers)
In buildings, parks etc.
Professional/skilled organisers
Insurance needed
Risk assessment common
Licence usually needed

It's that simple

Organising a street party just for residents and neighbours is very simple and does not need a licence. Use the form at the end of this guide to apply to your council, which in most cases will be the district or borough. This should provide all the

information they need. You can find your council by entering your postcode at [Find your local council](#).

The number one tip for holding a party is to plan early, share jobs out amongst residents and get in touch with your council at least 4-6 weeks in advance. A good first point of contact will be your council's highways, events or communities team. If you encounter any difficulties speak to your local councillor who will be happy to help.

More helpful tips, advice and support for organising a successful event can be found on the Streets Alive website www.streetparty.org.uk and The Big Lunch website www.thebiglunch.com. Do check them out, they're great.

Street Parties - the myths and the facts

Myth 1: It's too difficult and confusing

Streets Alive and The Big Lunch have great websites to help you plan (www.streetparty.org.uk and www.thebiglunch.com). You can also use Gov.UK to access local information and contact details for more advice (enter your postcode at: [Apply to hold a street party](#)).

You should not need a risk assessment – as long as consideration is given to the needs of all those attending, common sense precautions should be enough.

Myth 2: You need a licence

The Licensing Act 2003 does not require a music licence at a street party unless amplified music is one of the main purposes of the event.

However, if you plan to sell alcohol you will need to check whether you need a Temporary Events Notice. This is a temporary permission for licensable activities which currently costs £21 and covers events of less than 500 people. For more information or to make an application, please contact your local licensing authority by entering your postcode at [Temporary Events Notice](#).

Myth 3: The law requires complex forms for a road closure and councils need to sign off every detail

For most small parties in quiet streets, all your council needs to know is where and when the closure will take place so they can plan around it (for example, so emergency services know). They will need a few weeks' advance notice as they will need to put in place a traffic regulation order. If councils really need more information they will contact organisers, but they are expected to take a 'light touch' approach. If your council asks for excessive information, you should challenge them.

Or you can organise a gathering or 'Street Meet' on private land, such as a driveway or front garden, without any requirement to fill in council forms. Residents should speak to their council about plans - Streets Alive has some excellent guidance on how to go about it (<http://www.streetparty.org.uk/residents/street-meet.aspx>)

Myth 4: The law requires a fee to be charged for a road closure

The Department for Transport has scrapped guidance that led some councils to over-complicate the process and to charge people wanting to close their road. If your

council is making a charge, you have every right to question what those charges are for.

Myth 5: It's too late to ask for a road closure

Some councils have set deadlines to help them manage their work. But there are no deadlines in law, so if they look unreasonable ask your council to be flexible. If you can't or don't want to close your road, you could plan a simpler Street Meet (see Myth 3 above).

Myth 6: You need to buy expensive road signs

Some local councils will lend you signs and cones, or you can hire or buy signs, or even print your own from downloadable templates if they are for use in daylight. Streets Alive gives advice about this (<http://www.streetparty.org.uk/road-closed-signs.aspx>).

Myth 7: You need expensive insurance

There is no requirement from central government to have public liability insurance. Many councils do not insist on it so you should challenge those who do.

But if you think insurance would be a good idea, have a look at the advice on the Streets Alive and Big Lunch websites and shop around. Quotes for insurance start from as little as £50, which can be split between people attending, or you could hold a raffle or ask for donations to cover the costs.

Myth 8: You need a food licence

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has confirmed that one-off events such as street parties aren't usually considered food businesses, so there are no forms to fill in. However you must ensure that any food provided is safe to eat.

The FSA provides more detail about street parties on its web site at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/parties>

Further advice for community groups on providing safe food can be found here: <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/food-hygiene/charity-community-groups>

The NHS Choices website has practical tips on how to prepare and cook food safely at <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/homehygiene/Pages/Foodhygiene.aspx>

Celebrating your community

Application form for a street party

Road closure for residential street parties

Name of person:

Organisation (if applicable):

Contact address (including postcode):

Telephone number (daytime):

Telephone number (evening):

Email address:

Name of road(s) to be closed:

Date and time of road closure

If you plan to close only a section of the road(s), where will the closure begin and end?

From:

To:

Give a brief list of properties affected. This means any property, residential or commercial, which is located on or accessed only by the road(s) you wish to close – e.g. Cedar Close numbers 1-20 and numbers 21-98

Are any of the roads to be closed used by through traffic?

YES/NO

If yes, you may need to send a traffic plan showing the extent of the closure and an alternative route for traffic.

Are you planning on closing a road that is part of a bus route?

YES/NO

If yes, the bus company will need to be consulted.

Will access for emergency vehicles (if required) be readily available at all times?

YES/NO

If not you will need to change your plans to accommodate them.

How will people know the road has been closed off - have you thought about barriers/diversion signs needed?

If yes, can you say what you will be doing?

If no, you can speak to your council or Streets Alive who will be able to help you with street signs (<http://www.streetparty.org.uk/road-closed-signs.aspx>).

Have most residents agreed to this event?

YES/NO

The council will want to ensure most people are happy with this event, so if there are any objections you should let them know. They may be able to help you resolve any objections. Not everyone will be able to participate so let everyone know what time the party will start and end (you may want to finish by 9pm to minimise noise).

If you are planning a road closure you will also need to consult businesses in the wider area that may be affected. Have you already consulted all premises about the road closure?

YES/NO

If yes, please attach a copy of your consultation invitation/notice and confirm the date it was sent:

What happens next?

Send your completed form to your local council. To find your council enter your postcode at Find your local council [Find your local council](#). In areas where there is a district or borough council **and** a county council, it will normally be the district or borough council which deals with road closures for street parties.

Once you've completed a form and sent it to your local council, they will look at what you are proposing, process your application for a road closure and let you know if there is anything else you need to consider.