

Leith Festival Association

Running Leith Festival Outdoor Events Safely

<b>Implemented</b>	<b>Written By</b>	<b>Approved by board</b>
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**Revisions**

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## **Running Leith Festival Outdoor Events Safely**

Using the resources available at the event, emergency procedures will be identified to be followed by appointed people and volunteer stewards in a significant incident/emergency, eg thunder and lightening, high winds, flooding, fire, structural failure or terrorist attack.

Contingencies to deal with incidents and situations as varied as cancelling performers and traders at short notice, clearing a site of vehicles, cancelling or suspending an event and the unavailability of key staff or volunteers will be put in place

## **Sharing Leith Festival plans**

Event plans for Gala day and the Pageant need the prior approval of the Events Planning Organising Group (EPOG) coordinated by the City of Edinburgh Council. This is a multi agency safety advisory group including council licencing, community police and parks management which scrutinises arrangements for holding outdoor events to ensure that they are well managed.

The Tattoo requires approval from the Port Authority, with their own T&Cs for the use of their land

The detail and complexity of any discussions will be proportionate to the risks involved and any safety or land management concerns EPOG representatives may have which may require amendments to event plans.

The Events Industry Forum's '[purple guide](#)' is a further source of information on running events safely.

This document will be included in the volunteers handbook.

## **In the event of cancellation or suspension of an outdoor event.**

It costs around £23,000 to put on the three key events of Gala Day, the Pageant and the Tattoo. There are various significant costs from the Council to meet - licenses, park rental etc, and there are infrastructure costs such as stage and sound, insurance, toilets, security, first aid and electrical certification. Almost all of these costs are non recoverable, and all of the preparation work still needs to be completed, regardless of whether the events go ahead. Hence where possible a decision to go ahead with an event will be made following a safety risk assessment of the situation.

One major risk assessment for Gala Day is getting a large number of vehicles on and off Leith Links safely and without damage to the park. So once a decision to close or suspend an event has been made it cannot safely be reversed. The general risks involved with the Pageant and Tattoo are lower but the risk of very wet weather at the Tattoo is a risk for performers and has forced cancellations in the past. The pageant route maybe be subject to the risk of a last minute emergency or RTA on public roads or thoroughfares.

In the event of a cancellation or suspension there will be no refunds for the above reasons. Traders and performers should have their own insurance cover in place

and they take part at their own risk. It is their choice as to whether they attend or not. Leith Festival Association Ltd. has its own Employers Liability Insurance but this does not cover adverse weather for instance. Stall holder refunds minus a £10 admin fee are given if they cancel more than two weeks prior to Gala day and during Covid in 2020 when Gala Day had to be cancelled, any payments already made were carried over for the following year.

## **Develop an emergency plan**

Most event emergency plans should address the same basic requirements, to:

- get people away from any immediate danger
- summon and assist emergency services
- handle any casualties
- deal with those who have been displaced but not injured (eg at a festival with camping)
- liaise with the emergency services and other authorities and, where the situation is serious, hand over responsibility for the incident/emergency
- protect property

## **Emergency procedures**

Procedures for staff and volunteer stewards to follow in an emergency will include:

- raising the alarm and informing the public
- onsite emergency response, eg use of fire buckets
- summoning the emergency services and continuing to liaise with them
- crowd management, including evacuation, where necessary
- evacuation of people with disabilities
- traffic management, including emergency vehicles
- incident control
- providing first aid assistance

## **Emergency roles and responsibilities**

Appointed people need to implement procedures if there is an incident or emergency. For Gala Day the person responsible for the site is the Chair of Leith Festival.

Other Board Members, the Festival Coordinator and volunteers, whatever their normal role, need to understand what they should do in an emergency, for example:

- the location of exits
- how to use emergency equipment
- how to raise the alarm
- who they should receive instructions from
- Safety information for volunteers is also included in the online Volunteer Handbook

## Evacuation

Emergencies can develop very rapidly. Make sure you are equipped to move the audience or participants to a total or relative place of safety without delay. The following actions will help.

### Exit routes for pedestrians and vehicles

- Stewards will escort vehicles to exit routes and make exit routes remain available and unobstructed.

### Places of safety

- Plan how you will evacuate people to a place of relative safety from where they can make their way to a place of total safety. Create an evacuation assembly point in front of St Marys School.

### Vulnerable people

- Plan to provide additional assistance to people with a disability, people with learning difficulties, those with limited mobility and children if needed. Volunteer stewards to assist or seek guidance from appointed officials for the event..
- Where children are separated from their parents, in play areas etc, make arrangements for their safe evacuation clear so parents don't try to reach them against the normal direction of escape. Stewards to assist or seek guidance from appointed officials for the event

### Communicating with the public

- Plan for how you will communicate official event messages to the public in conjunction with the emergency services, using existing communication systems eg site PA, social media and volunteer whatsapp groups

### Stopping a performance or event

- Effective response to an emergency can sometimes mean a rapid and controlled halt to a performance to prevent further risk to the audience or to initiate an evacuation.

This sort of 'show stop' involves identifying the key people involved, particularly those who can:

- initiate a show-stop procedure
- communicate with the performer or participants
- communicate with the audience
- deciding how these key people will initiate a show-stop procedure
- having pre-agreed wording for public announcements (consider your lines of communication, eg two way radios, PA systems)
- briefing the management of performers or participants in advance about the show-stop procedure

- responding to more serious emergencies, including major incidents that will require help from the emergency services and implementation of their regional emergency plans (which may not be specific to the event).

## **Counter-terrorism**

The National Counter-terrorism Security Office have produced specific advice to help mitigate the threat of a [terrorist attack in crowded places](#).

The key message for the public is 'Run, Hide, Tell':

- **Run** - to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then
- **Hide** - it's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally, and only when it is safe to do so
- **Tell** - the police by calling 999

## **After the incident**

Once the risk has been reduced to a tolerable level, you can consider restarting the performance/event.

Only restart the performance/event after consultation with any other key agencies on site, eg police, emergency services. Make sure appointed people and volunteers are back in position