

Guidance to event organisers

These guidelines are intended to provide assistance to organisers who are planning to hold a public event.

Public events

In general the public perception is that the police are the lead agency for approving all public events, including those which take place on the public highway. In reality the police have no authority to either approve or ban such events and, in fact, police powers to regulate traffic for planned events are extremely limited. Furthermore, the police have no general duty to preserve public safety at any public event, except where there are imminent or likely threats to life.

Legal opinion suggests that the responsibility for public safety rests with the organisers of an event, the owners of the land on which it takes place and the local authority if the event takes place on a road. However, other persons or agencies who undertake actions regarding public safety at an event may assume a duty of care and, therefore, also become responsible.

In the past the police service has taken the lead and undertaken actions to facilitate public events, acting for what they believed to be the public good. However, with the emerging spectre of civil litigation, a more focused approach, confining police action to those issues which are part of our core responsibilities and where there is legal authority, has been adopted.

This guide is aimed at standardising the police approach to all organised events staged in a public place and on all public highways. It creates an environment where, through consultation and partnership, public events will continue to take place. A greater awareness of the individual responsibility of the organisers and those of the other agencies involved should emerge, which will ensure a more focused approach by all concerned resulting in a better planned, safer and more resilient event.

Organising a protest march or static demonstration

Organisers of public processions are required by law to notify police at least 6 days before the event occurs, of the date, time, proposed route and the name and address of an organiser.

Completion of the form 732A (to be found in the '[additional relevant material](#)' section on the home page) satisfies the legal requirement to notify police of a public procession under sections 11(1) and 11(3) of the Public Order Act 1986.

Six days is the minimum period of notice. Organisers should try to give as much notice as possible.

If you wish to organise a protest march then please return the completed form 732A to the police station which is local to the location of the protest march. This is available to download from the '[additional relevant material](#)' section on the home page in a PDF format.

Notification can also be made by sending your completed forms to Greater Manchester Police Force Events Unit (details found in the [useful contacts](#) section of the website).

When organisers are planning a demonstration or march they should be aware of all the above guidelines but in addition should be aware of the provisions of the Public Order Act 1986. Failure to give the police written advance notice (six clear days) of the date, time and venue/route of the procession; variation of such details from those previously notified; or failure to comply with changes, conditions or prohibitions imposed by the police on processions or assemblies may constitute criminal offences.

The use of certain locations for assembly or dispersal requires permission from the relevant authority and this must be obtained well in advance by the organiser from the authority. A copy of this permission must then be sent, by the organisers, to the police as soon as possible.

If there is an intention to use the road for any march then authority must be sought from the persons who own the roads for use other than vehicular traffic. The bulk of these are governed by the relevant local authority.

Please identify in which Local Authority the roads lie. Contact them and seek advice over the issue of a Temporary Traffic Order (TTO).

Static Demonstration

There is no legal requirement to notify police that you wish to hold a static protest. However, it is very important that you do let the police know if you wish to do this and provide the following details:

- Organiser name, phone number and address
- Anticipated numbers of participants
- Event location
- Reason for event
- Start time
- Finish time
- Any advance publicity you are aware of
- Details of any stewards
- Details of banners/signs and their content
- Details of any arranged speakers and whether they will be using a Public Address system/loud speaker.

The benefits of notifying us are significant:

- Many organisations find such liaison, and the professional advice we are able to offer, of significant benefit, in holding a successful event
- You can ensure that your event or protest does not clash with another group aspiring to use the same venue
- We will facilitate your protest where possible and advise you on the best way to manage it
- We can make you aware of any information we have in relation to counter-protest.

This is particularly important if planning a protest in the area around University / Manchester City Centre which see a large amount of such events.

Please inform us by either, informing the police station local to the location of your static protest/march or contact Greater Manchester Police Force Events Unit (details found in the [useful contacts](#) section of the website).