



# Strategic Highways

## Street Party Policy



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## 1. Why have a street party?

Street parties are a good way for residents to meet their neighbours and help to build and strengthen communities. The events can be held anytime; they are not reserved only for national celebration days. Many residents attend, mixing all ages and backgrounds, and the events are usually self-organised and funded.

Street parties build communities by:

- supporting social cohesion between ethnic and cultural backgrounds and age groups.
- reducing fear of neighbours.
- reducing fear of crime and may reduce crime through watchful neighbours.
- perhaps reducing anti-social behaviour.
- giving children a chance to play together in their street for a day.

With busy, independent lives, people have fewer chances to meet. It feels good to know the people around you, rather than being strangers.

There is something special about having an event right outside your house. The street is a shared public space, open to all and normally cars get in the way. With the road closed to traffic, people can mingle easily.

This document applies to simple street parties organised by residents in a single residential street without external publicity. Larger public events in more streets require more complex arrangements.

## 2. The role of the council

The council can play a small but important role in making the task of organising the event easy for residents. This is important as barriers can put event organisers off, particularly for their first event.

This guidance suggests ways of simplifying procedures for street parties.

## 3. Road closures

Durham County Council's Highway Network Management Section (HNMS) is responsible for road closures and support residents in making the necessary road closure arrangements by:

- providing a simple and accessible road closure application form on the Durham County Council website for residents to [apply for a temporary road, path or public right of way closure for an event](#).
- waiving any charges for the road closure service. The income from charges is very modest for the council, but any charge for residents in a first-time street party is a deterrent to confidence, particularly in less affluent areas.
- requiring residents to provide, erect and supervise road signs and barriers and suggesting where they may borrow, hire or buy them.
- providing information about and signposting to other relevant council services.

## 4. Insurance

Most small street parties do not require public liability insurance, although the council does recommend it. Our licence contains conditions and disclaimer/indemnity clauses on the application form. The risks at a small street party are very low and the cost of insurance is a block for residents, though they may choose to purchase it themselves. Larger public events do require insurance.

## 5. Licensing

The council will support residents applying for a road closure and bunting licence when planning a street party.

## 6. Noise control

Noise is a potential issue at even small street parties. Usually, it does not become a problem as residents manage to negotiate amongst themselves. The council recommends limiting the timing and volume of music as tastes in style, volume and lateness vary widely.

## 7. Cleaning

It is the responsibility of the event organiser and residents to ensure the area is left clean and tidy after a street party.

## 8. Community engagement

Area Action Partnerships play a role in supporting communities to organise street parties by providing information and encouragement, ensuring that events remain fully in the ownership of residents so that they gain the skills and confidence to repeat them.

## 9. Councillors

Councillors can support street parties by encouraging the various services to make things simple for residents.

## 10. Licence conditions

- 10.1. Any bunting shall be placed so as to avoid undue obstruction and interference with users of the highway and shall not block sight lines. Where the bunting is erected over any part of the highway it shall be at least 5.2m clear of the highest point of the carriageway (including a publicly maintainable precinct or similar) or 2.5m clear of the highest point of a footway or similar and must be securely fixed in such a manner so as to restrict undue movement.
- 10.2. The applicant shall ensure that the bunting does not cause a danger or nuisance to the public. Lightweight construction is preferable so as to limit any impact upon any street furniture to which it is attached.
- 10.3. Except where agreed as part of this consent, no part of the highway may be closed at any time without the express and specific consent of the highway authority. If a road closure is required, please [apply for a temporary road closure](#).

- 10.4. Any request for an extension to the period for which the consent has been granted must be made by submitting a further application to the highway authority at least 48 hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays) prior to the expiry of the existing consent.
- 10.5. The applicant shall either sign a disclaimer or indemnify the highway authority against all liability, loss, claim or proceeding whatsoever arising under the statute or common law, which may arise from the placing, maintenance or removal of bunting over the highway.
- 10.6. It is optional for the applicant to hold public liability insurance for the duration of the consent in an amount not less than £5 million in respect of each and every occurrence or series of occurrences caused by or attributable to any event giving rise to a claim.
- 10.7. The applicant can alternatively accept liability for any damage caused to the highway by the bunting or by the erection, removal or maintenance of the bunting and any such damage shall be repaired to the satisfaction of the highway authority at the expense of the consent holder.
- 10.8. Any alterations to a consented bunting shall cause the consent to be withdrawn unless the highway authority first agrees such alterations. Where such alterations are to be made, the applicant shall seek the consent of the highway authority in writing giving full details of the alterations proposed.
- 10.9. Nothing in this consent permits the applicant to interfere with or prevent or restrict access to apparatus owned, used or maintained by statutory undertakers.
- 10.10. The consented bunting shall not advertise any event product or business that is of a commercial nature without the relevant planning permission required for advertisements. Any such wording or logo size and content shall also be agreed with the Highway Authority in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 or any amendment thereto or superseding legislation. Banners/bunting of a purely advertising nature are not permitted.
- 10.11. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain the necessary permission from any property owners to which the bunting will be attached or overhang. Where the bunting is attached to such property the applicant shall be responsible for any damage caused to property by the banner/bunting whilst it is present, including during erection and removal of the bunting.

## Notes

- The 'highway' can include the carriageway, footway and any verge.
- If the applicant objects to these conditions or a refusal by the highway authority to approve a consent, then he may appeal to the magistrates' court.