



Department for

**Infrastructure**

An Roinn

**Bonneagair**

[www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

## **Special Events on Roads**

### **Guidance for Promoters of Events**

**Issued by the Department for Infrastructure  
under paragraph 5(a) of Schedule 3A to the Road  
Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997**

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# SPECIAL EVENTS ON PUBLIC ROADS

## GUIDANCE FOR PROMOTERS OF EVENTS

**Before reading these guidance notes it is recommended that you read through the following definitions.**

**The Department** means the Department for Infrastructure.

**Notice** means a notice placed in at least one local newspaper by the relevant authority when it is minded to grant the application. It gives details of the proposed event and its location and invites written representation on it.

**Order** means an order issued by the relevant authority to prohibit or restrict traffic from using the road to facilitate the event.

**Public road means** any road which is maintained by the Department. It includes the carriageway, footway and verge.

**Relevant authority** is either the local District Council or the Department, depending on the type of road the application is for. Paragraph 4 provides further details.

**DfI Roads** : is an agency of the Department and exercises the Department's function, as road authority.

**Special road** means road designated as such under the Roads (NI) Order 1993 (Appendix 1 contains a list of the Special Roads in Northern Ireland).

### **Special Events are defined as:**

- (a) Any sporting event, social event or entertainment which is held on a public road; or
- (b) The making of a film on a public road.

Examples of possible 'special events' could include:

- Fun runs/marathons etc;
- Street parties; (Community based small events such as street parties are considered a traditional part of community life and specific guidance is attached as Appendix 5.)
- Concerts.

The making of a film includes the making of TV programmes, films or advertisements.

There are a number of activities which are not “special events” for the purposes of this Act, these are:

- Public processions;
- Motor road races; or,
- Cycle races or trials.

Paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 3A refers.

An exhaustive list of the types of sporting, social or entertainment event is not provided, and the relevant authority will decide which events are eligible events. **The restriction or prohibition of traffic using a public road for a special event will only be permitted for:**

- facilitating the holding of a special event; or,
- enabling members of the public to watch a special event; or,
- reducing the disruption to traffic in adjacent streets as a result of holding a special event.

Promoters should note that although the legislation provides the power to prohibit or restrict the use of a public road, pedestrian access to any premises situated on or adjacent to the road or any other premises accessible for pedestrians from, and only from, the road must be maintained at all times. This means that any form of access control, including charging for admission, could be viewed as being contrary to the intention behind the legislation and the District Council will decide whether, from a health and safety and crowd control perspective, there is need for access control. Where it is deemed necessary to control access to events for public safety purposes, arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the intention of the legislation is complied with.

Requests for events that are not considered to be a ‘special event’ will be refused and the promoter informed accordingly. Promoters should be aware that the legislation does not make provision for an appeals process.

This guidance has not been written as a guide to event management. Event management should be undertaken by the promoter and should be carried out in accordance with the relevant standard e.g. “*The Event Safety Guide - A Guide to Health, Safety & Welfare at Music and Similar Events*” or ‘*Purple Guide*’ as it is known, published by the Health and Safety Executive. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg195.htm>

Where an event extends into more than one relevant authority’s area e.g. the Belfast Marathon, an application should be made to each relevant authority.

This guidance will be reviewed and amended as necessary.

## **Applying to hold a special event on a public road:**

1. The underlying principle in relation to special events on roads is that it would not be reasonably practicable to hold the event elsewhere. Consequently, promoters should be aware that holding an event on a public road should only be considered when all other options/locations for holding the event have been ruled out. Restricting the use of a road impacts on other road users, who may have to find other routes, and, if not done properly, may create a road safety hazard. The relevant authority must be satisfied that it is not reasonably practicable for the event to be held elsewhere, if it considers that there is a suitable alternative then an order will not be made. An order to restrict or prohibit traffic using a special road for holding a special event is likely to be given only in exceptional circumstances, given the nature of those roads, the volumes of traffic using them and the impact on traffic of diversionary routes.
2. Each application will be considered on its own merits.
3. To allow sufficient time to process an application and to make an Order which restricts or prohibits traffic from using a public road for the holding of a special event, the relevant authority requires at least 12 weeks' notice. However, it is suggested that promoters should give as much notice as possible to enable appropriate consideration to be given to all aspects of the application.
4. In most cases, the relevant authority will be the District Council for the district in which the road is situated. The exceptions being those roads designated as 'special roads' for which the Department for Infrastructure Roads (DfI) is responsible. A listing of these special roads is provided in Appendix 1. An application to hold a special event on a special road should be referred to the Statutory Functions Officer in the relevant DfI Roads office. A list of DfI Roads Offices can be found at Appendix 2.
5. Traffic on a road will only be restricted or prohibited to:
  - facilitate the holding of a special event; or,

- enable members of the public to watch a special event; or,
- reduce the disruption to traffic in adjacent streets as a result of holding a special event.

6. Prior to making an application, event promoters should make preliminary contact with the relevant authority to discuss the overall concept of the event.

The relevant authority will discuss the proposed application with the promoter. The potential for the relevant authority to recover any or all costs incurred by it in connection with or in consequence of making an order to restrict or prohibit traffic using the road for the special event will be discussed at this stage. Promoters should be aware that the relevant authority may recover all its costs in relation to the making of the order.

Promoters of events should also be aware that they will generally be expected to provide any barriers or traffic signs needed to facilitate the restriction or prohibition of traffic. Promoters may be asked to provide stewards for events that will have a significant impact on traffic.

If other statutory agencies incur costs assisting with the management of an event, they may also seek to recover any costs incurred directly from the promoter.

Promoters should also be aware that the relevant authority may require that appropriate insurance cover is in place for the event.

7. Promoters of events should be aware that any requirement placed on the promoter by the relevant authority will be detailed in the order when made and that any promoter to who fails to comply with any of the requirements will be guilty of a criminal offence.
8. Promoters are also advised to read the Home Office document 'The Good Practice Safety Guide – for small and sporting events taking place on the highway, roads and public places'. The document can be viewed via the

following link <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/operational-policing/event-safety-guide?view=Binary>

9. Relevant authorities can only process a request to hold a special event on a public road on receipt of an application form submitted by on behalf of a promoter, an application form must therefore be submitted - Appendix 3 contains a draft application form. It is important that this is completed in full as any omissions may cause delays in the consideration of the application. If in any doubt about any part of the form a promoter should contact the relevant authority. Relevant authorities can recover from the promoter the whole of the costs incurred by it in connection with or in consequence of making an order. Some relevant authorities may decide to use standard set costs for different sizes of events and may ask that any payment be made in advance and that it should accompany the application.
10. Depending on the nature of the event promoters may also be asked to provide the following information as part of your overall application:
  - (i) a detailed location plan/street map. Promoters may also be asked for a plan showing the length of road to be prohibited or restricted in use (indicated in red), and the proposed diversion route (indicated in green). This plan must be clear and indicate road numbers. Promoters should identify, on the plan, any restrictions or obstacles on the diversion route that may affect traffic, e.g. *low bridges, narrow sections of road, tunnels, fords, one way streets and movement restrictions, roads with weight, height or width restrictions or restrictions on vehicle class*. A similar or higher class of road to the one being closed should be used as the diversion route, taking into consideration that heavy goods vehicles and buses may have to use them. On narrow rural roads consideration may need to be given to providing a separate diversion route for each direction. It may also be necessary to have a separate diversion for HGVs and cars, because of the nature of the roads in the area;
  - (ii) details of all safety measures including all signs, equipment etc. required to protect the public and property in the vicinity of the event and on any



diversionary route needed for the duration of the closure. This may also include a detailed Traffic Management Plan depending on the nature of the proposed closure and event. Traffic Management plans require a full risk assessment which clearly identifies all risks to the travelling public, participants and employees attending the event. The nature, location and environment of the event may also need to be considered, with all risks recorded, giving recommendations on how the risks will be managed. The amount of detail and information to be provided in a Traffic Management Plan can vary depending on the nature and complexity of the traffic management arrangements;

- (iii) details of any structure or equipment to be erected on the public road as part of the event and the methods to be employed to protect road surfaces;
- (iv) evidence of insurance cover for the event (please see next section);
- (v) evidence that the promoter has consulted with and received comment from residents, businesses, bus/taxi companies etc., which may be affected by the proposed special event. Promoters should be mindful of the needs of others when planning events and the District Council is required to comply with its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- (vi) an Event Management Plan/Safety Plan, where necessary.

11. Promoters may be required to:

- (i) Indemnify the relevant authority, its officers, servants and agents from all liabilities, costs and expenses in respect of any claim or demand from any person or persons in respect of any damage, loss, accident, injury, mishap or occurrence of any description fatal or otherwise arising out of or in any way connected with the holding of the special event or by reason of anything done by the promoter in holding the special event. For this purpose, the promoter shall maintain adequate insurance (namely public liability cover of £10,000,000 for any incident, number of incidents unlimited) to the satisfaction of the relevant authority and shall produce for inspection, the relevant policy or policies of insurance

together with the receipt for the current premiums if so required by the relevant authority. When insurance is required promoters will generally be expected to provide original insurance documentation confirming this before an order will be made;

- (ii) pay costs for processing the application and publishing the Notice;
- (iii) obtain any consent from DfI Roads to enable the placing of any form of structure or equipment on the public road. Please note that promoters may also need to place a deposit with DfI Roads which would be used to pay for the repair of any damage to the road. Depending on the structure or equipment being placed, technical approvals/safety certificates for any structure erected may also be needed;
- (iv) provide, erect, maintain and promptly remove all safety measures, including all lighting, signs and barriers etc required to protect the public and property at the site of the event and on the diversionary route for the duration of the special event and to bear all the costs incurred;
- (v) provide stewards to marshal the event;
- (vi) pay all costs associated with making good any damage to the road/street furniture for reasons of making the Order including damage to any alternative route for diverted traffic;
- (vii) remove all objects on the road and/or material deposited during the event. The promoters are also expected to remove any litter from the site after the event. If the promoter fails to comply, the District Council will arrange cleaning and charge the cost to the promoter;
- (viii) maintain pedestrian access to all premises on or accessible from the road(s) on which the special event is taking place;
- (ix) keep access clear at all times for emergency vehicles during the special event and acknowledge that the prohibition/restriction will apply to all other traffic;
- (x) consult all residents, business, bus and taxi companies which may be affected by the prohibition/restriction of traffic and confirm in writing to the relevant authority that they have done so;
- (xi) be available before, during and after the event so that they can be contacted by the relevant authority; and,

- (xii) Accept that failure to comply with any of the conditions may impact the success of any future applications.
12. The order when made will contain all the conditions that the promoter must comply with when holding the event on the public road. Promoters should be aware that any promoter who fails to comply with any requirement imposed by the order will be guilty of a criminal offence.
13. When considering the holding of a 'special event', consideration should be given to the types of vehicles that may require access to the event's location, including:
- Construction vehicles during set up and removal;
  - Supplies and maintenance vehicles during the event;
  - Emergency services vehicles;
  - Disabled vehicle access and/or drop off and pick up points;
  - Invited guests and production vehicles;
  - Media broadcast units and equipment carriers;
  - Catering/merchandising vehicles.
14. If certain vehicles are to be allowed access to the site, then arrangements should be made to segregate them from pedestrians either by providing separate routes or by allowing vehicles onto and off the site at pre-arranged time slots. The operation of one-way systems within some sites can also reduce risks. A Traffic Management Plan may be required and this will have to be agreed with the police and DfI Roads.
15. Promoters of events will generally be expected to provide enough stewards to cater for the size and nature of the event. Private stewarding has become a recognised way in which events are supported. This, however, does not preclude any local arrangements between police and the event promoter. The police may charge for their officers' attendance at events and promoters will be advised by the police where this appears appropriate. Early discussion with police by event promoters is consequently strongly advised.

16. Only legally prescribed signs, barriers and cones may used on public roads, these must:
- (i) conform to Chapter 8 (Ch8) of the Traffic Signs Manual (TSM) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-manual> A copy of the most commonly used signs is attached in Appendix 4;
  - (ii) only be placed by suitably qualified persons – the promoter(s) will be required to provide evidence of this. Promoters should be aware that there are specialist temporary traffic management contractors who offer this type of service;
  - (iii) be paid for by the promoter(s); and,
  - (iv) be removed prior to the expiration of the Order.
17. Promoters should be aware that for some roads, mostly motorways, DfI Roads will only permit its staff or other people working for it to place signs and cones. The relevant authority will advise. If it is the case then DfI Roads will organise the work but only after it has received the necessary payment for doing so.
18. When assessing an application, the relevant authority will consider any or all of the following:
- the type of event proposed (refer to the list of events not covered by legislation on page 1);
  - the event location and whether it could disrupt local businesses or impact on neighbouring properties/residents. During its assessment the relevant authority will also look at alternative off road locations for the event. If it is reasonably practicable to hold the special event other than on the public road, the request will be refused.
  - the timing and duration of the event, and how this would impact neighbouring properties/residents/businesses;
  - whether there are any other events planned for the area at the same time; and,

- the competence of the event promoters to provide temporary traffic management to facilitate the event.
19. If not using set costs (see section 9), the relevant authority will calculate the indicative cost of making the order and the promoter will be informed accordingly.
  20. If the relevant authority is the District Council, it will also seek the consent of DfI Roads before it can make an order. DfI Roads will consider the proposal and will amongst other issues assess:
    - the impact on local traffic management and road safety;
    - the suitability of proposed diversion routes;
    - the proposed signing arrangements; and,
    - whether there are any other closures planned in the general vicinity at the time.
  21. Please note that if DfI Roads does not consent to the proposal, approval will not be given.
  22. The police, fire and rescue, and ambulance services must also be consulted about the proposals. Any issues that these bodies raise will have to be considered before a special event is approved.
  23. If the relevant authority is not satisfied with any aspect of the request to hold a special event on the public road, permission will not be given. The relevant authority's decision is final and the promoter will be informed of the reason(s) for refusal. There is no appeals process within the legislation.

24. If the relevant authority is content with an application, it will inform the promoter and if necessary ask for the payment of any previously indicated costs. Once the relevant authority has received payment of costs in full, the notice advertising the prohibition or restriction of traffic will be made in at least one local newspaper circulating in the District Council area and may be advertised on the District Council website. The notice must:
- a) identify the promoter(s) of the special event;
  - b) identify any affected road;
  - c) specify any restrictions or prohibitions which the relevant authority proposes to include in the order;
  - d) specify the dates on which and times between which the restrictions would apply;
  - e) specify any alternative routes for traffic or pedestrians;
  - f) state the address where copies of the application may be inspected by any person free of charge at all reasonable times; and,
  - g) state that representations in writing may be sent to the relevant authority within such period as is specified in the notice (usually 21 days from the date of the last publication of the notice) at such address as is so specified.
25. Promoters should be aware that other persons may make written representations about the proposed event. Some representation is likely to object to the proposals and it would be preferable if the promoter could resolve these directly. If however a compromise is not possible the relevant authority will consider all the information available and decide whether or not the restriction/prohibition of the road in question should go ahead. The relevant authority must: consider the representations made; have regard to the safety, convenience and suitability of the proposed alternative routes for traffic and pedestrians; and have regard to this guidance and the guidance for District Councils.

26. If the Order is made, the promoter will be required to arrange for copies of the Order to be posted on the affected routes.

*NB. Promoters should return the completed application form duly signed to the relevant authority office for their district along with any sign schedule, location maps, proposed insurance arrangements (or details of your insurance broker). Promoters may also be asked to provide proof of insurance before the District Council makes an Order.*

**List of Special Roads**

All Motorways

Westlink (A12)

(A8M) Sandyknowes to Corr's Corner



## **DfI TransportNI Section Office Contact Details**

### **ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY**

Tel: (028) 9025 4057

E-mail: [TNI.Antrim&Newtownabbey@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:TNI.Antrim&Newtownabbey@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

#### **Antrim Section Office**

Crown Buildings  
20 Castle Street  
Antrim  
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BT41 4JE

#### **Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus Section Office**

148-158 Corporation Street  
Belfast  
BT1 3DH

### **ARDS AND NORTH DOWN**

Tel: (028) 9181 9328

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#### **Ards Section Office**

Jubilee Road  
Newtownards  
Co. Down  
BT23 4YH

#### **North Down Section Office**

72 Balloo Road  
Bangor  
Co. Down  
BT19 7PG

### **ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON**

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BT60 1JD

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**BELFAST****Belfast North Section Office**

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**CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS****East - Ballymoney and Moyle Section Office**

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**West - Coleraine and Limavady Section Offices**

County Hall

Castlerock Road

Coleraine

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BT51 3HS

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E-mail: [TNI.CausewayCoast&GlensWest@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:TNI.CausewayCoast&GlensWest@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

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## **DERRY CITY AND STRABANE**

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### **Lisburn and Castlereagh Section Office**

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## **MID ULSTER**

### **North - Cookstown and Magherafelt Section Offices**

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### **West - Newry and Mourne Section Office**

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BT34 6AU

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## **MID AND EAST ANTRIM**

### **Ballymena and Larne Section Office**

Ballykeel Depot  
190 Larne Road Link  
Ballymena  
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BT42 3HA

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**Application to Hold a Special Event on a Public Road**

*(Please read the guidance notes before completing this form in block capitals)*

**ABOUT YOU**

Name of promoter \_\_\_\_\_

Name of contact (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Position/role of contact \_\_\_\_\_

Confirm you have authority to act on behalf of the company/club/society YES/NO

Address of promoter and/or contact \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency/Contact telephone No \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**ABOUT THE EVENT**

Name of event \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose and nature of event \_\_\_\_\_

Name of road(s) on which event is to be held \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of the event \_\_\_\_\_

Time of event - from \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm until \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

Type of restriction (full road closure/lane restriction(s)/ prohibition of certain types of vehicles/footway closure etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of the restriction \_\_\_\_\_

Time of restriction - from \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm until \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

Is a traffic signing schedule enclosed? YES/NO

Has this event been held previously? YES/NO

If yes, are the arrangements previously applied for amended in any way? YES/NO

If yes, please give details \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Please provide details of any structures or other equipment that you plan to erect or place on the public road \_\_\_\_\_

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Please give details of any businesses, including bus services and residents which may be affected by the event and provide any confirmation that these have been contacted \_\_\_\_\_

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Please give any more detail which you feel you need to add \_\_\_\_\_

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I confirm that I have read the guidance for promoters of events, and understand that the District Council may apply any or all of the conditions as it feels necessary. I also understand that the District Council may request any further information that it feels necessary to process this application and that my application may not proceed if I fail to produce this additional information.

I acknowledge the following Data Protection Statement - In order to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, we would advise you that the personal information you provide on this form will be processed and held by the District Council and its agents, for the purpose of managing and operating special events on roads applications. The District Council may use non-personal statistical data collected to analyse current and plan for future operational purposes. The District Council will investigate all cases of alleged fraudulent use and the information you have provided may be used in conducting these investigations. The personal

information you provide may be checked with other agencies/organisations. If consent to these arrangements is not given your application will NOT be processed.

Signature of application \_\_\_\_\_

Date of application \_\_\_\_\_

Typical signs for road closures and diversions





### Small Events (i.e. Street Parties)

Small events such as street parties are a traditional part of community life; they are a simple way for us to get to know our neighbours and meet members of our community.

In order to be considered a 'small event', the event must: (please note this list is not exhaustive)

1. Be held on minor residential roads eg cul-de-sacs or side streets.
2. The proposed road to be closed must not have a bus route along it.
3. Not have a car park located on it or a car park which is accessed via the road to be closed (other than a car park for residents' of the road)
4. Not be publicised for the general public and therefore will not draw in people from the wider area.
5. Be an event which would apply to the residents of one or two streets only and not to larger areas of the district/borough/city. It is up to the relevant authority to consider factors such as the proposed attendance figures etc when making its decision on whether to grant an Order.
6. Finish by 11pm.
7. Not have a stage built from which entertainment would be provided.
8. Not have amplified entertainment which may cause nuisance to the wider area.
9. Not have fireworks, pyrotechnics or bonfires on the street.

10. Not have alcohol or food sold at the event.

The person submitting the application may be held responsible for any costs arising from the event, e.g. clearing up, damage to street furniture or road surfaces etc.

The District Council may decide that it will not require promoters to take out public liability insurance for your event. However, it is strongly recommended that promoters do so.

The promoter should be aware of the following requirements:

1. The promoter of the event must submit an application to the District Council.
2. The event must be organised in such a way that access for pedestrians and essential vehicles can be maintained.
3. That it is strongly recommended that promoters consult with local residents and businesses that may be affected by the holding of the event, prior to submitting the application. A copy of any letter or flyer sent, along with a list of those notified and copies of their responses should be submitted with the application form. If local residents and businesses object, the relevant authority will require that the promoter contact them to deal with any issues raised. In the event that issues remain unresolved, the District Council may decide not to make the order to hold the event.
4. That throughout the duration of the event the promoter is responsible for ensuring that the areas affected by the holding of the event are, so far as is reasonably practicable, kept free from rubbish and litter at all times. When the event finishes the promoter is responsible for ensuring that the roads are left clear of litter and in a clean and tidy condition to the satisfaction of the District Council.

5. Where a public road is to be closed to traffic it shall be clearly defined by means of a “**ROAD CLOSED**” sign, as shown in Appendix 4, supported by means of a trestle or suitable half barrier on the road. Diversion signs may also be required.
6. Any barrier to be placed on the road shall have alternate red and white bands approximately 600mm in width. Where these are to remain in place during lighting-up times the offside extremity of each barrier/trestle shall be lit by an approved road works lamp.
7. All signs and barriers shall be adequately weighted to prevent them from being blown over or dislodged.
8. All signing and other physical obstructions on the road shall be erected and removed, along with any debris on the street/road, at the times specified in the notice and subsequently detailed in the order. Failure to do so will render the promoter liable to charge for cleaning the road or even to prosecution for failing to do so or for obstructing the road.

Promoters should note that all proposals to hold special events on roads closures must be advertised by way of notice, in at least one local newspaper (or community paper) circulating in the district in which the road is situated. A relevant authority may, at its discretion, impose a charge/recoup fees incurred in the processing of any application. If there are a number of celebrations eg. national celebrations, which are occurring at the same time, where possible, a District Council will incorporate it into one notice and publish the notice accordingly.

The promoter must be available at all times during the event.