

HSP 51 Social events

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Briefings

Having read this procedure all key points must be communicated to all staff involved in social events within a care home. This must take the form of a briefing based around the social events risk assessments (RAG51 to 55).

1. Introduction

Social events are an important part in the running of Elizabeth Finn homes and they provide residents the opportunity to undertake activities both within the home and away from their normal surroundings. The following procedure is designed to identify a process to follow to reduce the risks involved with these activities.

2. The risk

Without adequate planning and organisation, the running of activities can often lead to accidents and injuries. This is especially true in new external environments and where a large number of people are involved. The following risk assessments and guidance have been produced to cover the main types of social event activities.

- Social events within the home (RAG 51)
- Minibus driving (RAG 52)
- Social events at other premises (RAG 53)
- Open days (RAG 54)
- Firework displays (RAG 55)

3. What the Regulations require

All entertainment events are classified as work activities and therefore are subject to the Health & Safety at Work Act and the various regulations that are passed under it. Social events are no different to any other activity and any potential risks need to be identified and appropriate control measures put in place.

4. Assessing the risk

The risk assessment guidance documents have been produced to assist with the assessment of risk and they cover most of the usual activities. They should be reviewed when new activities are planned and any additional controls required should be added.

Risk Assessment	Example activities	Procedure to follow:
Social events within the home (RAG 51)	Arts and crafts activities Walks in gardens Music & movement Coffee mornings / afternoon teas Reading / Poetry/ discussion groups Lunches Food preparation	Assess activity to see whether controls in RAG 51 apply. If activity not included – add to ‘Additional activities’ section with controls to risk assessment.
Social events at other premises (RAG 53) & Minibus driving (RAG 52)	Pub lunches Drives into the countryside Shopping trips	For ‘new’ location or location not visited within 12 months complete social events location assessment. If previously visited review

	Visits to local gardens / places of interest Religious worship	<i>location record for learnings / comments.</i>
Open days (RAG 54)	Care home open days Fund raising fete Garden open day	<i>Use Open day Checklist as part of planning process.</i>
Firework displays (RAG 55)	Bonfires Firework display	<i>Complete Site additional controls for all bonfire or firework events.</i>

5. Social events within the home

Social events within the home tend to be the easiest to manage as you have the greatest control of the physical location and have medical assistance on hand if required.

It is important for all events that they are suitable for the particular resident taking part and this must be ascertained from a conversation with resident and nurse by reviewing resident care plan.

6. Social events at other premises

Outings can range from a simple trip to the shops to a day out visiting a new location. Whilst outings can be extremely beneficial, they must be carefully planned to ensure that all eventualities have been considered and things go smoothly and according to plan.

Locations which are either new or haven't been visited within the last 12 months should be pre-visited and assessed for suitability and this recorded on the location assessment (second part of RAG 53). The location form also records an area where visits / learnings should be recorded.

There are key areas which need to be considered.

Staff – volunteer / resident ratios. It is important that there are sufficient numbers of staff / volunteers to cope with the residents bearing in mind that a higher ratio of staff will be required for nursing residents. Residents may be unfamiliar with surrounds and additional staff will be required to deal with emergency while remaining staff look after residents.

Remember that the driver's primary role is to drive the minibus and they cannot help residents whilst driving. If it is assessed that residents may need assistance during journey, then a staff member should sit in the back of the minibus.

One member of staff / volunteer should accompany each wheelchair user at the chosen location unless the location allows for multiple short distance wheelchair transfers (eg seated venues such as theatre, churches).

First aid / Medication The length and nature of the trip must be taken into account when deciding what levels of First aid skills are required.

As a minimum every social event outing should have either a first aider or carer in attendance.

Residents medication will also need to be taken and a safety factor should be built in if the return journey is delayed. As a basic rule the party should be self-sufficient and not rely on obtaining medical equipment on route.

Where residents have expressed a wish not to be resuscitated – these forms should accompany the resident on outings.

Location A thorough investigation must be undertaken of any proposed new destinations, particularly bearing in mind access with wheelchairs. The presence of uneven surfaces, large numbers of steps and stairs and difficult access for wheelchairs needs to be noted and avoided if possible. General hazards also need to be considered bearing in mind the abilities of residents.

Contingency planning The assessment needs also to take account of things not going to plan – this would include vehicle breakdown, medical emergency etc.

Wheelchair / scoter users Is wheelchair /scoter suitable for outside use (are lap belts provided). Some wheelchairs are identified as ‘Indoor use only’ – these are typically designed to be more manoeuvrable but unstable for outdoor use. Wheelchairs with large wheels at front are often this type. EFH recommends use of lap-belt with outside use as the risk of tipping increases.

7. Open days

Open days must be arranged with the General Managers involvement. An increase in visitors can put a strain on resources of the home and this needs to be well coordinated. An open day checklist has been provided in RAG 54 to help this planning process.

Insurance The insurance cover provided by our insurance is only intended for mainstream fund-raising, such as social activities or events, but not those where there is a high risk of serious injury. If you are planning any event which includes activities of a hazardous nature such as bouncy castles, pony rides etc you must notify both insurers and Health & Safety Manager to ensure adequate public liability insurance is in place before event takes place.

Cash handling Consideration must be given before the event to the handling of cash and security involved in collecting and banking money. Every stall or attraction should be provided with a cash box of some kind. A float should be provided at the start of the day and takings removed on a regular basis.

8. Bonfires and firework displays

The presence of fireworks and crowds of people can result in personal injury or property damage. This activity is assessed as hazardous and additional insurance is required to be taken out before the event. As the weather has a large influence on bonfire and firework organisation each event has to be assessed. Bonfire and firework displays require a site specific additional controls to be completed every time an event is organised.

9. Associated documents

- RAG 51 Social events within the home
- RAG 52 Minibus driving
- RAG 53 Social events at other premises
- RAG 54 Open days
- RAG 55 Firework displays

10. A Summary of the main points

Check that:

- Employees / volunteers completing social events have received risk assessments.
- External locations are pre-visited, and assessments recorded. A folder is kept where these are available.

- Any unusual or hazardous activities are pre-assessed and reviewed by General Manager.
- Site specific controls recorded on RAG 54 each time a bonfire or firework display is held.

11. Document history

Author	Steve Andrews (Health & Safety Manager)
Date of Implementation	01/08/2015
Date of next full review	01/01/2027

Issue	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	01/08/2015	Steve Andrews	New document.
2.0	15/01/2018	Steve Andrews	Full review – no changes.
2.1	06/12/2018	Steve Andrews	Clarification of wording relating to staff: wheelchair user ratios.
3.0	13/01/2021	Steve Andrews	Full document review – no changes
4.0	01/02/2024	Steve Andrews	Full document review – added section 9 (Associated documents).
4.0	24/02/2024	Steve Andrews	Banner updated, no other changes, issue number kept same.
4.1	15/08/2024	Steve Andrews	Clarification added to review external visit locations every 12 months. Added additional info around wheelchairs. Updated to reflect change is RAGs.