



St Helens Borough Council

Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG)

Policy

Version 1.0	Issue Date: February 2025	Approved By: Cabinet
Issued By: T Wilcock	Review Date: March 2027	ESAG POLICY

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) for St Helens Council is coordinated by Regulatory Services and is made up of representatives from St Helens Council, the emergency services, and other relevant organisations. They meet to review event proposals and advise on public safety (this includes the safety of participants).

ESAGs provide a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event. They aim to help organisers with the planning, and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies.

They are non-statutory bodies and so do not have legal powers or responsibilities and are not empowered to approve or prohibit events from taking place. Event organisers and others involved in the running of an event, retain the principal legal duties for ensuring public safety.

The types of events that may benefit from the ESAG process include outdoor festivals, large scale community events and sports events such as cycling, rugby and car rallies.

Organising an event whether large or small will carry a certain level of risk. Understanding and managing these risks is crucial to ensuring the success and safety of an event. The guiding principle for determining which events will be invited to attend the ESAG process is where there is thought to be a significant public safety risk. The criteria for identifying which events will be invited to attend the ESAG process are identified under ESAG Criteria. Events will also be scored by using the Event Risk Matrix found in Appendix 3, completed initially by the event organiser along with the notification of event form found in Appendix 2.

All events scoring within the 'high risk' category will be invited to engage with the ESAG process. Events which score within the 'medium risk' category may be invited to engage with the ESAG process and those events scoring in the 'low risk' category will be provided with general information on organising an event and sign posted to the relevant guidance documents.

One of the important roles the ESAG performs is to bring all relevant parties together to ensure that the planning for an event is conducted in methodical and co-ordinated way. This in no way detracts from the legal responsibilities of the organisers of events

2.0. Scope

This document aims to set out how St Helens Council ESAG operates and how it can be utilised as a tool for planning the safety of events where there is a possible public safety and participant safety concern.

3.0. Legal & Other Aspects

The St Helens Council ESAG process does not have legal powers or responsibilities and is not empowered to approve or prohibit events from taking place. Members of the ESAG in their own right, may however have powers to require event organisers to comply with their legal obligations.

There are several Regulations that an event may need to comply with - an example of the types of regulations that should be considered includes:

- Health & Safety at Work
- Fire Safety
- Food Safety
- Environmental Protection
- Licensing
- Road Traffic Regulations
- Fireworks and Pyrotechnic
- Equalities
- Data Protection
- Private Security Industry
- Civil Contingencies
- Upcoming Protect Duty, known as Martyn's Law

4.0. Policy Statement

It is the policy of St Helens Council and all members of the ESAG to uphold an appropriate and sufficient standard of public safety that ensures compliance with legislative obligations and to encourage the wellbeing of the public, operatives, and participants.

The aim of the ESAG is to provide independent safety advice to event organisers (who retain the legal responsibility for ensuring a safe event), to discharge their public safety and wellbeing functions.

The ESAG will operate in accordance with this policy and keep and make available as appropriate, records of its activities, to evidence that it has effectively carried out this function and to ensure transparency of decision making.

5.0. Roles & Responsibilities

The Event Safety Advisory Group will:

- Have a standing monthly meeting.
- Review the information provided by the event organisers and advise on the event, venue and its immediate environment as required in relation to public health and safety.
- Declare any conflicts of interest in relation to any event put before the ESAG Group e.g., if member of ESAG involved with organisation of the event.
- Advise on the exercise of powers by the constituent authorities of the ESAG under relevant legislation, including health and safety legislation and licensing as it relates to the proposed event and associated venues.
- Advise on the enforcing actions and duty of care of the local authority and other partners as defined in related legislation.

- Provide a forum within which St Helens Council and other partners develop a co-ordinated approach to crowd and spectator safety.
- Where appropriate agencies will inform the event organiser of any charges for resources.
- Decide if an event debrief should be conducted to identify lessons learned and consider if the event is to be considered by a future ESAG.
- To be available if requested to co-operate with local authorities and emergency services to promote operational consistency and public safety.
- Share links to best practice advice with Event Organisers.
- Be aware that some event information is confidential and can be commercially sensitive and should be treated as such.

The Chair of the ESAG will:

- Be a senior officer from St Helens Council with relevant competencies and experience to manage a multi-agency process.
- Ensure that the ESAG properly discharges its responsibilities by ensuring that all events which meet the criteria identified by the ESAG Core Group are subject to the ESAG process.
- Ensure that the membership of the ESAG reflects the need to address relevant risks associated with public safety and wellbeing issues.
- Identify any additional relevant stakeholders to invite to ESAG meetings.
- Ensure that due account is taken of the views of all members of the ESAG, including those attending by invitation.
- Keep an overview of the event programme to facilitate a consistent and co-ordinated approach.
- Act as the conduit between the ESAG and the event organiser in relation to ESAG matters.
- Ensure debrief of the event is undertaken when required, to ensure compliance with plans.
- Ensure that agendas are published in advance of the meeting and that minutes are recorded and circulated to all ESAG members and other parties (at least 7 days before and within 14 days after meetings).
- Ensure that the event organiser is informed when the decision is made either for support of the event or that an event has outstanding safety concerns associated with it.

Blue Light and any other relevant authorities will:

- Ensure that person attending has the appropriate experience and full authority of their organisation to give advice and guidance and make recommendation on safety issues.
- Advise on technical and legal aspects of legislation within their remit of their organisation as they relate to the events under discussion.
- Advise on matters relating to public safety.

St Helens Council Officers, who are in attendance, will:

- Attend any ESAG meetings as required or send an informed deputy in their place.
- Act in a coordinating role to the ESAG process on all matters relating to St Helens Council and provide relevant technical advice to the event to ensure public safety is maintained.
- Review documents submitted by the event organisers relating to public and participant safety and wellbeing and inform the ESAG of any implications arising, requesting additional information where this is deemed necessary to allow an informed position to be taken by the SAG.
- To advise event organisers on any relevant legislation and/or council procedures and provide advice in consultation with members of the ESAG group.

Note: This may include advice and guidance on ensuring compliance with food safety, event development, health & safety requirements, and compliance with relevant legislation related to temporary stands or staging, crowd capacities, noise etc.

The event organiser will:

- Retain full responsibility for the event.
- Supply within a reasonable time any information the ESAG may reasonably request in relation to the event.
- Notify the ESAG about any material/significant changes to an event which has previously been considered by the ESAG process.
- On being given reasonable notice, attend ESAG meetings as required or in their absence ensure that an informed deputy attends in their place.
- Ensure all relevant and appropriate permits e.g., Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and licenses are applied for in advance of their event and shall not hold the event unless all have been granted by the appropriate body.
- Provide information commensurate with the nature of the event, which will include a detailed safety event plan, maps and site plans, suitable and sufficient risk assessments, and contingency plans to enable the ESAG to assess the public safety risks and fully identify all activities taking place at the event.
- Ensure they have adequate and competent resources to ensure public safety and wellbeing and shall if required nominate an Event Safety Officer who is able to

demonstrate the required level of experience and competence commensurate with the proposed event to act on their behalf in relation to the ESAG process.

6.0. ESAG Membership

Core members of the ESAG

Role	Organisation
Chairperson	St Helens Council
Secretariat	St Helens Council
Licensing	St Helens Council
Environmental Health	St Helens Council
Corporate Health & Safety	St Helens Council
Emergency Planning	St Helens Council
Parks & Open Spaces	St Helens Council
Highways	St Helens Council
Fire Safety	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
Police	Merseyside Police
Ambulance Service	North West Ambulance Service

Depending upon the nature of the event the ESAG Core Group will identify the appropriate membership for each Event ESAG. As a minimum the Event Organiser must attend the ESAG meeting scheduled to review that event. If they are not able to attend they must ensure that they are represented by a person who has their full authority to implement any agreed actions.

Other invited members of the ESAG

In addition to the core membership as stated above, the chair of ESAG may invite other members to attend or set up subgroups.

This can include services who may need to be informed of such events to be able to discharge their functions and provide their expertise. This list can include, but is not limited to:

- NHS
- Public Health
- Legal Services
- Building Control
- Environment Agency

7.0. ESAG Criteria

As highlighted in the introduction above the guiding principle for determining which events will be invited to attend the ESAG process, is where there is thought to be a significant public safety risk. The criteria for identifying which events will be invited to attend the ESAG process are identified under ESAG Criteria. Events will also be

scored by using the Event Risk Matrix found in Appendix 2, completed initially by the event organiser along with the Notification of Event form found in Appendix 3.

All events scoring within the 'high risk' category will be invited to engage with the ESAG process. Events which score within the 'medium risk' category may be invited to engage with the ESAG process and those events scoring in the 'low risk' category will be provided with general information on organising an event and sign posted to the relevant guidance documents.

The criteria used to assess the risk includes:

- Nature of event
- Event venue
- Expected numbers
- Audience accommodation
- Audience age and profile
- Additional factors
- Distance from major A&E
- Distance from Fire Station
- Previous event history

If an event is held on a regular basis, for example annually, without any changes, the ESAG Group may, based upon risk assessment, agree that the ESAG process does not have to take place each time the event is held and may choose to review this event less frequently. If there are any changes to a regular event it is the responsibility of the event organiser to notify the ESAG.

8.0. ESAG Debrief

Where it is considered necessary, debrief meetings will be arranged with event organisers. Debriefs are an important stage in the process and will allow both event organisers and agencies to feedback and learn from previous event delivery.

9.0. ESAG & Conflict of Interest

It is recognised that there may be events run by St Helens Council which will come under the ESAG process.

St Helens Council will nominate an Event Organiser who will attend the ESAG meetings.

Any decisions regarding the event and event safety remain the responsibility of the Event Organiser e.g., Markets Team, who should ensure they are familiar and compliant with the requirements of the relevant St Helens Council policies.

In addition, there will be events which take place upon or within St Helens Council property and premises. As a landlord/occupier St Helens Council recognises that it still retains its legal responsibilities under the relevant health and safety legislation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees and any other person affected by an event, and as such under certain circumstances may place upon the event

organiser certain conditions with regards to the use of St Helens Council premises and property. St Helens Council, Police and the Fire service are separate entities as relevant enforcing authorities.

Their respective involvement in the ESAG process in no way replicates or replaces their responsibility for enforcing the relevant statutory provisions for ensuring public safety and wellbeing in relation to events.

10.0. ESAG Record Keeping

Agreed documentation for agendas, minutes and letters will be used for each Event reviewed and will be used by the SAG process to ensure consistency of communication and record keeping. All documents will be sorted on the relevant SharePoint which all ESAG members has access.

11.0. ESAG Process

Appendix 1 shows the flow chart for the ESAG process.

Appendix 1 – Flow Chart for ESAG Process

St Helens Borough Council Event Safety Advisory Group – Event Planning Guidance

Stage 1 – Complete Event Notification Form (at least 12 weeks for events where expected numbers are <1000, 24 weeks for events 1000 – 5000, 36 weeks for events > 5000) also complete Event Safety Check and email to esag@sthelens.gov.uk

[https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8062/Event-Submission-and-Hire-of-Land-Application-Form/pdf/Event Submission and Hire of Land Form 13bwtjyecmbcq 1.pdf?m=1730213285040](https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8062/Event-Submission-and-Hire-of-Land-Application-Form/pdf/Event%20Submission%20and%20Hire%20of%20Land%20Form%2013bwtjyecmbcq%201.pdf?m=1730213285040)

Emailing this information to us will start the process of engaging with the ESAG. You will receive an email confirmation within 5 working days

If your event is being held on Council land, please follow the guidance in the Parks & Open Spaces Small Event Planning Guidance

[https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8785/Small-Event-Guidance/pdf/Local Small Events Guide.pdf?m=1720709998257](https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8785/Small-Event-Guidance/pdf/Local%20Small%20Events%20Guide.pdf?m=1720709998257)



Stage 2 – On receipt of the completed Event Notification Form and Event Safety Check your event will be assessed. If your event is considered: -

Low risk - The information in Event Notification Form and Event Safety Checklist will be noted and your event will **not** need to proceed to an Event Safety Advisory Group. You will be advised of this via email. It is strongly recommended you follow guidance on the Health & Safety Executive events website, the Events Industry Purple Guide and St Helens Council guidance to assist organisers of small events

<https://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/>

[https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8785/Small-Event-Guidance/pdf/Local Small Events Guide.pdf?m=1720709998257](https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8785/Small-Event-Guidance/pdf/Local%20Small%20Events%20Guide.pdf?m=1720709998257)

Medium risk - The information in Event Notification Form and Event Safety Checklist will be noted and your event will **may** need to proceed to an Event Safety Advisory Group. If this is the case, you will be advised of this via email. If your event does not need to proceed to an ESAG then it is strongly recommended that the follow the guidance in the highlighted documents above.

High risk - The information in Event Notification Form and Event Safety Checklist will be noted and your event **will** need to proceed to an Event Safety Advisory Group. You will be advised of this via email. You will also be advised the date your event will be discussed at an ESAG You will need to follow the stages below to progress your event.

If upon review of the Event Safety Check List there is any dispute on the risk rating of your event we will contact you to discuss the issue.



Stage 3 – Once your event is approved to go to ESAG you must provide the following. This should be provided no later than 10 weeks prior to the event.

Risk assessment – you need to consider all the possible risks that your event poses and how you will reduce the risks. The following template may be of use.

https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8786/Template-Risk-Assessment/doc/RA_Template.doc?m=1720710036563

Public liability insurance

An online map / site plan of the event site

An event management plan

https://sthelens.gov.uk/media/8787/St-Helens-Borough-Council-Event-Plan-Template-and-Guidance/doc/St_Helens_Council_Event_Management_Plan_-



Stage 4 – Upon receipt of the information in Stage 3 the information will be circulated to ESAG members for comment.

You may be contacted directly by ESAG members should they require clarification on any aspect of the information you have provided.



Stage 5 – Receive feedback & amend event plan accordingly if needed.

Members of the ESAG will provide advice and guidance on how to improve the safety of your event. You should amend the relevant documentation accordingly.



Stage 6 – Resubmit any amended documentation – This should be done no later than 5 weeks before the event.

It is important that you have addressed, and recommendations made in the documentation you submit.



Stage 7 – Attend ESAG on the date you were given at Stage 2. You will receive instructions on how to joining the meeting 7 days in advance.

After consideration of all information and discussions ESAG members need to be satisfied that the event is safe to go ahead.

If the event is being held on Council land then you will receive approval and land hire agreement as per Parks & Open Spaces small event planning guidance.



Appendix 2 – Event Notification Form

St Helens Borough Council Event Safety Advisory Group

EVENT NOTIFICATION FORM

	Details	ESAG Actions
Event name		
Event date (s)		
Event duration		
Event time (s)		
Event location (including postcode)		
Full name of enquirer		
Telephone number		
E-mail address		
Event manager or organiser (if different to enquirer)		
Telephone number		
E-mail address		
Type of event – please provide a brief description		
If the event has been held previously, please provide details		
Who owns the land / venue. Please note that if the land is owned by St Helens Council you will need to complete and		ESAG to check that hire of land application form has been completed for

submit a hire of land application form		the hire of council land
Has permission been sought from the landowner? please provide details and supporting evidence		
Will the event take place on, or affect the highway?		Notify highways of proposed event
Proposed number of people to attend the event?		Notify Licensing of event
Will access to the site be restricted? please provide details		
Licensing – For further information on licenses please visit generallicensing@sthelens.gov.uk		
Will any licensable activity take place? please provide details		Notify Licensing of event
Environmental Health – For further information please contact environemnatalhealth@sthelens.gov.uk		
Have you considered what responsibilities you have in relation to the Health & Safety at Work Act? please provide details		Notify commercial services of event
Food Traders should be registered and inspected by the local authority in which they are based. There is a simple way to check this by visiting www.food.gov.uk/ratings it is recommended that you only allow traders who have a food rating of 3 or above to trade at your event. Please provide details of any food traders		

Signed Date.....

Next Steps for Event Organisers

1. Submit completed event notification form and Event Risk Matrix to esag@sthelens.gov.uk
2. You will receive an email confirmation from ESAG acknowledging receipt of form within 5 working days.
3. Your event will be assessed, and a decision made if it needs to be referred to ESAG. You will be advised of this via email.
4. If your event is referred to ESAG you will need to provide some additional information. An Event Management Plan, Risk Assessment, Public Liability Insurance and a map/plan of the event site will need to be provided not later than 10 weeks prior to the event taking place.
5. Once this information has been provided it will be considered by ESAG members.
6. Following consideration of the documentation you will be invited to attend an ESAG meeting either in person or remotely. You will be notified of these 7 days in advance of the meeting.

Appendix 3 – Event Risk Matrix

St Helens Borough Council - SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP EVENT RISK MATRIX

1. Purpose

This Event Safety Check has been produced to help organisers of events in St Helens Council to check their event against a set of common event activities to give an idea of whether their event could be classed as a LOW, MEDIUM, or HIGH risk.

2. Criteria

The check list includes aspects of an event which adds to the level of risk to health and safety of those who may be affected by the event, including participants, spectators and members of the public. The check list involves consideration of both the risk of harm, the extent of control and the availability of emergency response. The check list is outlined in table one.

3. Evaluation

Each of the items on the check list has been allocated a score. The total score of all relevant factors should be added and compared to chart in paragraph 4 below which suggests whether your event could be classed as a **high**, **medium**, and **low** risk event. For multi-site or multi-activity events, organisers should use the likely worst-case scenario for the event when considering the scores. Very large events which may involve many activities over many sites or over many days are best considered as individual events, with the organisers ensuring that appropriate control and co-ordination is achieved across the entire event.

4. Scoring

The total score obtained from the table should be compared to the following risk categories to determine whether your event is considered low, medium, or high risk:

0 – 20	LOW RISK
21 – 30	MEDIUM RISK
31 +	HIGH RISK

5. Action

Where actions are subject to health and safety law, the actions given below are mandatory. For those not subject to that law, the actions illustrate good practice and are recommended.

For events posing a **HIGH RISK**, the guidance in the Health and Safety Executive events website and the Events Industry Forum's Purple Guide should be followed (see end of document for links).

Event organisers must provide an EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN together with associated documentation and attend a meeting of the Safety Advisory Group.

For events posing a **MEDIUM RISK**, the guidance in the Health and Safety Executive events website and the Events Industry Forum's Purple Guide should be followed (see end of document for links).

Event organisers must complete an EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN and associated documentation. Attendance at the Event Safety Advisory Group may be necessary.

FACTOR	Details	Value	Score
Event Nature	State Occasions/VIP Visits	1	
	Classical/Folk/Theatrical Performance	1	
	Athletics/Sports/Road runs/ Santa dash	1	
	Fetes/Fund raisers	1	
	Pop/Rock/Dance/ Similar Music Event	3	
	Agricultural Show	2	
	Parades and Carnivals	2	
	Fireworks Display	3	
	Aviation Sport and Display	3	
	Motor Sport and Display	3	
	Waterway Events/water hazard on site	3	
	Celebrations and Parties	3	
Event Venue	Indoor	1	
	Arena or Stadium	2	
	Outdoor with defined boundaries	3	
	Outdoor with widespread access	4	
Expected Numbers	Less than 500	1	
	Between 500-1,000	2	
	Between 1,000-3,000	3	
	Between 3,000-4,000	4	
	Between 5,000-10,000	5	
	10,000 plus	10	
Audience Accommodation	All seated	1	
	Mixed (at least 50% seated)	2	
	Standing	3	
Audience age and profile	Full mix, in family groups	1	
	Full mix, not in family groups	2	
	Predominantly adults	3	
	Predominantly children & young persons	4	
	Predominantly elderly	4	
	Conflict/rival factions	5	
Additional factors	Spring/Autumn	1	
	Queuing over one hour	1	
	Parking on site	1	
	Livestock	1	
	Winter/Summer timing	2	
	Temporary structures	2	
	Bouncy castle/sideshow	2	
	Onsite catering	2	
	Overnight camping	3	
	Traffic movement	3	
	Helicopter operations	4	
	Fireworks storage and use	4	
	Funfair rides	4	
	Alcohol available	5	
Distance from major A&E	Under 5 miles	1	
	5-10 miles	2	
	Over 10 miles	3	
Distance from fire station	Under 5 miles	1	

NB Whiston is the nearest A&E for St Helens	5-10 miles	2	
	Over 10 miles	3	
Previous event history	IP event histories previously held were complaints received from neighbouring properties or public bodies eg police, council	5	
		TOTAL	

For events posing a **LOW RISK**. It is strongly recommended that the guidance in the Health and Safety Executive events website and the Events Industry Forum's Purple Guide should be considered during the planning process (see end of document for links).

It should be noted that whilst this check list and assessment of risk doesn't replace the duty to carry out a risk assessment under health and safety legislation (where work activity takes place), it can be used to compliment such assessments and will help to deliver the various duties of care contained in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

St Helens Council – SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP **EVENT RISK Matrix**

If your event is **large**, or scores a “**High Risk**” or “**Medium Risk**” on the checklist then please forward it together with an event notification form and associated documentation to esag@sthelens.gov.uk where you will be contacted to arrange a date for the event to be discussed at the next available ESAG.

Early notification of your event will help members of the ESAG understand and plan for any resource implications that may be associated with the event. The event notification process also enables ESAG members to identify and inform you well in advance about any permissions or licences that may be needed for your event, and to offer other relevant advice to help you with event planning.

Whether your event is small, medium, or large it is important that the safety of the public is given the highest priority and that suitable measures are put in place to reduce any potential risks. There is a wealth of information available to help you whatever the size of your event.

Please see:

Health and Safety Executive: [Events health and safety \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
Events Industry: [The Purple Guide](#)