
Event Management

The standards for the provision of services are, where reasonably practicable, in accordance with HSG195 The Event Safety Guide and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Order), Managing Crowds Safely.

The Event Management Plan document has been distributed to the following agencies:

- Stockport Council – Neighbourhoods Service
- Stockport Council – Museums Team
- Stockport Council – Events Team
- Stockport Council – Environmental Health:
- Stockport Council – Licensing Team
- Stockport Council – Public Realm
- Stockport Council – Highways and Traffic Management
- Stockport Council – Planning
- Stockport Council - Conservation
- Greater Manchester Police:
- Greater Manchester Fire Service:
- North West Ambulance service:

The organisers have an experienced management team. Cheshire Fest events are organised by Directors, Philip Osborne and Ben Harris, who are experienced event professionals. This event is being project managed by Josh Boyd, who also has extensive experience in setting up and project managing a range of events in the region.

The Event Management Plan submitted by the organisers (Appendix A) provides a detailed explanation as to how the organisers aim to promote the licensing objectives and manage health & safety, noise levels, event traffic and parking, stewarding, adverse weather conditions and many other matters.

Background

Cheshire Fest have put together an ambitious proposal for what sounds like a great Christmas festival that would complement the wider Stockport event offer well.

However, serious consideration must be given to whether Bramall Hall and Park is the most suitable location for a mass participation event such as Winter Wonderland, where the footfall cannot be predicted and access to the park is limited.

The event presents a number of risks and challenges for the local authority, including:-

- Potential disruption to the local community
- Risk to the Council's historic assets and the environment
- Car parking facilities being overwhelmed
- Congestion on the local road network, particularly at peak times
- Traffic management plans for the festival being not effective
- Safe ingress and egress to the site for pedestrians
- Events at Bramhall being significantly disrupted
- Loss of revenue to the Council's Museum and Events teams
- The event is dependent on successful applications for planning permission and a premises licence
- Reputational damage to the local authority

Cheshire Fest have compiled a detailed Event Management Plan (EMP), which has been considered by the Neighbourhoods Service, The Museums Services, Traffic Services, Planning and the Council's Events Team.

The EMP has also been considered by the Events Safety Advisory Group (ESAG). This is a multi-agency group designed to ensure that events taking place in the borough meet all legislative requirements and are executed in an efficient, safe and organised manner. This group consists of officers from Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service, the North West Ambulance Service and representatives from the Council's Licensing, Health & Safety, Environmental Health and Traffic Services sections. It is expected that event organisers will work closely with officers from the ESAG up to and during the event.

A number of observations have been made concerning the event and the EMP. These are set out in the following section and have previously been circulated to the event organisers and incorporates their comments and feedback.

Observations

1. This event would take place in a busy park and it is critical that disruption to other visitors to the park is kept to a minimum. The park and Stables Café would remain open to the general public. November and December is the busiest time of year for walk-up visits to the Hall; totalling 9,000 visitors during the same period last year. There is at least one school per day in this period requiring use of the designated coach bay. Whilst the Hall would wish to remain open as normal, there are concerns that the volume of additional event visitors to the Park and the impact on parking may cause significant operational difficulties and disruption to the day to day running of the Hall at peak times. It is worth noting that school visits will be unlikely to clash with peak visitor times for the proposed event
2. Bramall Hall already has its Christmas programme planned over this period. This includes the Hall being decorated for Christmas, family trail and two weeks' of evening concerts and carol services. These generate significant revenue for the Council. There are also weddings and private functions booked in the Hall over this period. There are concerns that the proposed Festival may have an adverse impact upon these. It is proposed that the organisers liaise regularly with staff based at the Hall, the Council's Events Team, and also the proprietors of The Stables café in order to minimise any disturbance caused by the event.
3. It is possible that any negative effect on the museum's business could be mitigated. Cheshire Fest have expressed a desire to work with the Council in order to devise a complementary offer involving Bramall Hall which would be promoted through the PR and marketing campaign that will be done around the festival. They may be able to build ticketed activities at the Hall (tour tickets, or any other relevant event tickets) into the Cheshire Fest Winter Wonderland website ticket shop - presenting it all as a wider scope of attractions available at Bramhall Park during the Xmas season 2020. However, the viability of such mitigation remains unknown.
4. Any negative impact from the event would be likely to result in a loss of significant revenue to the Events and Museums Teams. The extent of any "cross-over" between visitors to the event and the Hall is unclear. Other mass-participation events in the Park such as the annual Charity Duck Race show that there is little

positive 'cross-over' between event goers and visits to the Hall and the additional volume of people and lack of parking is more likely to have a negative impact on visits to the Hall. It is likely that revenue from parking will increase over the period concerned, but this is unlikely to cover all of the revenue that would be lost if the day to day operation of the Hall was disrupted or if its Christmas programme was affected.

5. It is noted that there will be at least nine days when waste collection vehicles will be attending the site and this would need to be managed in co-operation with staff at the Hall to avoid any related traffic management concerns.
6. The organisers have stated that the two existing car parks will be reserved for visitors to the park and Hall, however on page 18 of the EMP it indicates that the larger car park will be given over for the use of event staff and traders. It is possible that the event organisers and the Council could agree to shared usage of the car park but this would not prevent event visitors from first driving to the park in the hope of being able to park on site.
7. The applicant is aware of traffic management concerns associated with an event of this size and duration. They propose the creation of additional on-site parking and several satellite car parks. In order to work effectively this will require extensive stewarding from the entrance of the park to the event space. A "Park and Ride" option has been omitted from the EMP given the close walking distance from the confirmed satellite locations. If there is sufficient creation of on-site parking facilities there may be sufficient provision to avoid the use of satellite parking. The number of parking spaces required and the number it is possible to create has not been confirmed by the event organiser.
8. The EMP states that visitors must book a ticket on-line to gain entry, although entry will be free of charge. Also, that customers arriving on site without a ticket will be able to apply for one on arrival. If the event is at maximum capacity then "walk up" tickets will not be issued to visitors (a provision for less internet savvy visitors). Where the event is at maximum capacity, those who arrive will be advised that the site is full and may either wait for guests to leave or return at another time. In the same way that guests who are ticket holders that arrive early to a full site will not be able to gain entry. Cheshire Fest will have advance notice of potential busy periods by being able to monitor how many tickets have sold within any given time frame. It is likely, however, that this arrangement may compound traffic, parking and queuing difficulties at the site.
9. Based upon the schematic in the EMP, there are concerns as to whether there is sufficient space to accommodate people queueing for admission or using other onsite facilities such as the boot room or to access the event toilets. Cheshire Fest have stated that they would be able to provide a detailed CAD drawing of the site to allay concerns. The boot room would be positioned inside of the walled garden space, next to the ice rink. Event queuing is not considered to be a concern as there are large areas and pathways outside the walled garden and stables. Event toilets would be accessible from within the space and will be contained in their own fenced off area out the back of the walled garden area. The effect that those queuing for entry may have on facilities such as The Stables Café has not been determined.

10. Cheshire Fest indicate that the proposed location for the portable toilets would be clear on production of a full site map. There is a hardstanding footpath that links up the path where the toilets are positioned, accessible from the entrance to the archery lawn. Deliveries, collections and servicing will not take place during hours of operation.
11. The width of the walled garden is 30m, whilst the proposed ice rink structure will also be 30m long. It is recommended that a gap of 1m is left at either end of the rink in order to prevent damage to the structure of the Grade II listed wall. Cheshire Fest have given an assurance that adequate space is provide between the wall and the ice rink structure. The ice rink can be shortened by removing sections if necessary.
12. The organisers will provide all necessary detail concerning the operation of vehicle and pedestrian access to the site, in particular, how the arrangements for the shared route would operate in relation to shared pedestrian/vehicular access and egress. Cheshire Fest would manage vehicle access from Hall Lane and onto the temporary parking area through stewarding. They have stated that pedestrians would be separated from vehicles as far as possible with distinct paths for them to access the site. It has not yet been evidenced how this will be managed and concerns remain regarding shared vehicle / pedestrian routes.
13. The organiser will add additional lighting on the entrance road and pedestrian routes to ensure safe access to the venue (they would use small, standalone, floodlight units). There are few lights currently in place but the event will involve a considerable number of cars and people moving around the park at a time of year when the daylight times are short.
14. The ability to secure necessary provision for parking facilities is limited because of the built environment around the park. Whilst the existing car parks will be “reserved” for visitors to the park and hall, it is unclear how visitors to the Winter Wonderland event will be prevented from using these areas. There is a proposal to charge visitors parking on the boarded archery lawn. The proposed fee for parking for 2 hours on site would be £3, if people are attending for longer than 2 hours the organisers would consider having them park at a satellite location for a fee of £5. Greater Manchester Police have commented that parking will be a major issue as they believe people who attend will use the local streets rather than pay to park, thereby causing potential local traffic management issues.
15. Cheshire Fest do not believe the provision of temporary on-site parking would cause adverse impacts, however they accept that other parties may view this as a risk. It is also noted that if visitors are unwilling to pay £3 for a parking space (whilst stewards are in place and patrolling the area) then this will present a serious difficulty in terms of parking provision (i.e. the ability to fund the creation of temporary parking).
16. Use of the Archery Lawn for parking throughout the period of the event would result in a loss of amenity for visitors to the park. This area also has a climbing frame and is adjacent to a children’s playground which has open access onto the archery lawn. The play area is accessible from the main entrance gate and small existing car park and surrounding pathways. This area would be fenced off with a pedestrian barrier to prevent access onto the Archery Lawn.

17. The Archery Lawn would be converted into a temporary parking facility. Ground surfaces would be protected with the use of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) or aluminium track matting which prevents serious damage to ground surfaces. There will no doubt be some minimal impact however, and any damage would be remedied, but the organisers will strive to prevent this where possible. A full methodology will be included within the EMP prior to sign off, as would any other risk assessments and method statements for other aspects of the build and supplier's delivery on site. There is no detail as to how the narrow crossing point over the ha-ha would be negotiated.
18. Cheshire Fest propose to liaise with local schools and community groups with a view to them utilising a performance area within the walled garden. Cheshire Fest are also receptive to the proposal of allowing some of the Council's specific user groups to use the facilities free of charge. Residents living close to the event will also receive free tickets to the event.
19. The organisers will remediate any damage to the walled garden and the park in general at the conclusion of the event and will supply a bond to the Council should there be any outstanding works to be addressed. The organisers will also make payment in respect of hiring the walled garden area for the period of the event.
20. The organiser will work closely with officers from the Council's Neighbourhoods Service in order to address and mitigate any issues relating to noise, waste management or anti-social behaviour. Noise levels and monitoring arrangements will be set in line with recommendations from the relevant Environmental Health Officer. Other possible sources of nuisance, including lighting and odours from food stalls and fumes and odours from generators, noise from generators would also need to be considered.
21. The Council's Planning Service have indicated that Planning Permission would be required as the event would be within the curtilage of Bramhall Hall and no temporary use Permitted Development rights apply.
22. The organiser will work closely with officers from the Council's Public Protection Service in order to address and mitigate any concerns relating to food hygiene, health and safety and licensing.
23. Cheshire Fest have used the standard HSG 195 as a basic standard practice marker used in the initial development of their EMP. When a draft plan is in place and ongoing investigations are made, the modern Purple Guide (the standard reference guide) will be used to score the entire event and relevant information will be updated. More detail is required as to how attendance and capacity figures have been calculated and the operation of evacuation plans, although there is sufficient egress capacity through the main entrance gate for the entire event audience.
24. In the event of this application being approved the organiser will work closely with officers on the Events Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) to ensure that all relevant issues and concerns are properly addressed.
22. In addition to the responses to emergencies and incidents set out in the Event Management Plan, it is expected that the organisers will follow the advice of Council Officers, in relation to traffic and crowd management, health and safety, nuisance and other related issues and if required make necessary revisions to the event plan,

traffic management plan, maximum capacity and opening hours. If these recommendations are not followed and issues persist, the Council reserves the right to terminate the event should its negative impact be too great.

23. Organisers are expected to monitor the impacts of the event on the local community throughout and discuss any issues on a day to day basis with Council officers as necessary. Council officers and the Council's Control Room will hold emergency contact details and will be able to make immediate contact with the organisers in the event of any urgent issues arising.
25. The organiser has provided details of waste management arrangements with this application. Recycling receptacles will be available for commercial operators to dispose of their waste. The use of "single use plastic" receptacles for food and drink will be avoided. All food traders must sign a commitment to only use biodegradable food packaging and cutlery for serving to customers. Bars will only decant beverages into plastic cups which are not single use and can be reused on site after washing.
26. The organiser will work with the Council to ensure that the impact of the event on local wildlife is minimised. In respect of lighting the event back drop around the walled garden, the organisers are requested to work with officers from the Council to ensure that the identified trees are appropriate for use.
27. For the purposes of clarity, the reference to "fire pits" in the Event Management Plan refers to the possible use of "high tables" which have fire pits in their centre. These will be stewarded and would need to be designed in a way that does not impact the soft ground/grass areas where installed, or have any potential for injury to visitors/children.
28. For the purposes of clarity, the organisers will not include fairground rides at the event (although this was referred to in the original Event Management Plan).
29. Greater Manchester Police have noted that Page 29 of the document describes "Police on site contact". The Police will not be able to provide someone dedicated to the event. This has now been clarified in that the "Police on-site contact" refers to the agreed line of communication with the Police, whether it's a general number, direct line to specific office, 101 etc.
30. Clarity was sort regarding the finishing time being 11pm (the end of the licensable hours) as this is quite a prolonged period (every night for 6 weeks) which may cause concern for local residents. Cheshire Fest have confirmed that the event would not finish at 11pm each night and it is likely that business decline will come earlier in the evening during weekdays and that this will mark the closing point.

Summary of key considerations

- Bramall Hall is an unsuitable location in respect of the likely impact that the event would have in terms of car parking provision, traffic congestion, the effect on other park business (income), the loss of amenity (the archery lawn), disruption to existing events and disruption to the local community.

