



T3SC Factsheet 10

accessible events

A quick cut out and keep checklist of things to consider to ensure your event is as open and welcoming to as many people as possible. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list but just a few pointers.

O Physical access - is the building accessible for disabled people? Remember this is about more than wheelchair access; for example is there a hearing loop?

O Getting there. Is your location accessible by public transport? Is there adequate car and bicycle parking. Can you provide transport? Is the building signposted, do you need to prepare a map to give people?

O Facilities - are the surroundings pleasant, are there sufficient toilets, power points, kitchen facilities etc?

O Publicity - what formats were posters, flyers and other information available in? Make sure you think about your audience, where they go, what language they use etc. You need to make sure everyone knows what they are invited to.

O Timing - avoid clashing with major religious festivals (see www.countmein.org.uk for a list) and consider factors such as school holidays, likely weather conditions, if it is very dark at night etc

O Childcare - Can kids attend? Does anyone need a crèche? It may be more cost effective to offer childcare costs

O Interpreters - Do you need translators. Think about community languages including BSL (British Sign Language) Check a translator is needed before paying for one!

O Does anyone have any additional support needs, for example carers costs or large print handouts

The most important thing is to ask people - in a non patronising way -what they need to help them attend your event; then you can try to supply it. There may be cost implications, so try and build this into your budget.

T3SC can provide you with ideas and contacts to help solve any access problems you may have and to ensure your event reaches as many people as possible. They can also provide information and support with other aspects of organising an event—don't forget to think about licensing, funding, volunteers, health and safety and insurance.

Refreshments

Food and drink are an important way of making people feel welcome and valued. Food has a key role in many peoples belief systems and everyone at a community event should be able to eat together. Below is a list of some common diets and what they mean; again it is important to ask about individual requirements because of allergies etc.

O Vegetarian - Vegetarians do not eat food which require killing animals, i.e. they don't eat meat or fish (contrary to some beliefs fish is not a vegetable!) Ensure food doesn't contain gelatine and cheese is made with non-animal rennet

O Vegan - vegans do not eat or use any products derived from or exploiting animals; this includes meat, fish, dairy, eggs, honey, gelatine and isinglass. Such ingredients are often hidden so always check labels or ask your caterer.

O Hallal - Islam has strict rules about the slaughter of meat for food, and Muslims do not eat certain foodstuffs including alcohol, gelatine, pork and shellfish. Ramadan is a month of fasting so avoid organising events during this time

O Kosher - Jewish dietary rules state only animals with cloven feet and which ruminates may be eaten and meat must be slaughtered according to doctrine. Dairy and meat must not be eaten together

O Gluten free - gluten is found in wheat, some cereals & products containing them (eg bread, pasta, various processed items) Many people have to avoid gluten for health reasons.

O Diabetic - Diabetes is a disease that affects how the body uses glucose and many diabetics need to avoid foods with high levels of sugar and need to eat at regular times.

As a general rule a vegetarian meal, with vegan options, should be suitable for everyone and is healthy and cheap too.

For example, a buffet could contain various salads, hummous and other dips, fresh fruit, vegetable samosas or pakora, sandwiches with various fillings such as cheese or roast vegetables and cake. Other popular dishes include vegetable curry or chilli, jacket potatoes or pies.

Remember if you are serving meat and fish alongside vegetarian and vegan items keep them separate and always make sure everything is clearly labelled; consuming meat is deeply offensive to many people.

If you are providing drinks it is best to include caffeine free options - such as water, juice or herbal tea - alongside the traditional tea and coffee. Please contact Morag Rose at T3SC for more details about organising successful events, and good luck with your big day!

**for more info please contact T3SC
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