

Connecting Communities

# Community Fairs



COMMUNITY  
DIALOGUE  
MANUAL  
S E R I E S



DIALOGUE  
SOCIETY



## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MANUAL S E R I E S

### To readers of this manual:

This manual is part of the Dialogue Society's Community Dialogue Manual Series. The PDF version of this and the other manuals in the series can be downloaded from [www.dialoguesociety.org/publications](http://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications)

If you have any comments on this, or any of the other manuals in the series, we would be very glad to have your feedback. Please email your comments to [manual@dialoguesociety.org](mailto:manual@dialoguesociety.org)

We would like to showcase the valuable work and effort of groups that use the Community Dialogue Manuals to help inspire other groups to take part also. Please get in touch and let us know how this manual helped you and your group with any photographs and testimonials. Please email these to [manual@dialoguesociety.org](mailto:manual@dialoguesociety.org)

If you represent a local stakeholder or public body and are interested in Dialogue Society consultancy please email [consultancy@dialoguesociety.org](mailto:consultancy@dialoguesociety.org)



The Dialogue Society is a registered charity, established in London in 1999, with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It operates nationwide with regional branches across the UK. Through localised community projects, discussion forums and teaching programmes it enables people to venture across boundaries of religion, culture and social class. It provides a platform where people can meet to share narratives and perspectives, discover the values they have in common and be at ease with their differences.

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**DIALOGUE  
SOCIETY**

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## Community Fairs

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# Overview

01

## Preface

The Dialogue Society is a registered charity, established in London in 1999, with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It operates nation-wide with regional branches across the UK. Through localised community projects, discussion forums and teaching programmes it enables people to venture across boundaries of religion, culture and social class. It provides a platform where people can meet to share narratives and perspectives, discover the values they have in common and be at ease with their differences. It has done this through a wide range of events including community celebrations, interfaith sharing circles, and open cultural festivals as well as a broad variety of dialogue meetings and seminars.

The manual you hold in your hand is part of a series of ten Community Dialogue Manuals developed by the Dialogue Society to encourage interaction between members of different communities. The primary aim of the series is to help people to bring their communities together through a number of approaches and events that the Dialogue Society has found successful. We have always found that the most successful events have been those with clear objectives and where attention has been paid to detail. Therefore the manuals are full of advice, tips and checklists to help everything go smoothly as you plan, organise and host your own events.

This manual will help you to successfully plan and organise a community fair in your local area, bringing a large part of the community together for a fun and memorable day out. This sort of large and enjoyable local event can boost community spirit and encourage interaction between different sectors of the local population. This manual will advise you on a range of ways in which you can enhance the positive impact of your fair on the community.

Please get in touch with us to let us know if and how the manual was helpful, to give any feedback and comments about the manual's content, style and structure and with any other enquiries. Please see inside cover for contact details.

We hope that this manual and perhaps others will be helpful to you, and that you will enjoy uniting your community through the events you hold.

## The Dialogue Society

## Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to give practical advice and useful resources to help community groups, faith organisations, charities, schools and others to bring their local community together through a fun and sociable local event. A community fair, with a range of stalls, attractions and entertainment appealing to people of all ages is an ideal way of building community spirit and encouraging neighbourly interactions in a relaxed, friendly environment. A fun, family-friendly fair is an ideal way of reaching people from all sectors of the local community, whether or not they have an interest in intercultural dialogue and community cohesion.

You could carry out this project in a number of ways and on different scales depending on the size and resources of your group. Whether you organise a small fair for one day in a church hall, or whether you hire a marquee and host thousands of guests over three days, the event will surely have real value for the community spirit and social cohesion of your local area. (See “Planning Your Event” section below.)

The benefits of the event for dialogue, cohesion and community spirit can be increased in a number of ways. For example, you could encourage understanding and appreciation of local diversity by giving the fair a “Cultural Diversity” theme, with traditional food, craft stalls and music representing different local cultural communities. Or you could help to strengthen the voluntary sector in your area by inviting different community groups and charities to run stalls and to advertise volunteering opportunities. There is a huge range of possibilities. (See “Making a Fair Count for Dialogue and Community Cohesion” section below.)

This manual does not by any means give an exhaustive range of possibilities for community fairs. It is intended to be a starting point to inspire you to find further ideas for stalls and attractions to bring people together at your event. The greater and the more exciting and imaginative your range of attractions the more successful your fair will be in achieving your aims.

The overview near the beginning of this manual will give you a better idea of the elements of the planning and organisation involved in putting on a community fair, and of the guidance provided on each of these elements in the main body of the manual. In the appendices you will find an array of sample emails, letters and forms to give you ideas for preparing your own materials.

The PDF version of this and the other Community Dialogue Manuals can be downloaded from [www.dialoguesociety.org/publications](http://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications); you can copy and paste materials from the appendices to adapt for your own use.

This fairly long manual is not intended to be read from cover to cover. The intention is that reading the overview will give you a clearer idea of what advice the manual has to offer, and that you will then refer to relevant sections as and when they may be of use.

## Aims and Objectives of This Manual

1. To encourage community spirit
2. To encourage different community groups, stakeholders and businesses to come together to work in partnership
3. To facilitate neighbourly and community interaction
4. To encourage the opening up of different communities to one another by bringing them together in a relaxed and sociable context
5. To include those who may not necessarily be interested in intercultural dialogue in an event which brings different groups together for a fun day out
6. To encourage and support individuals and groups to engage in dialogue
7. To help community groups and charities successfully raise funds for their own work/for good causes popular among the local community
8. To provide strategies, tips, advice and know-how for organising a successful event

## Who is This Manual For?

Charities, community groups, faith groups, schools and local authorities looking to:

- Bring the local community together for an enjoyable day out, promoting community spirit, dialogue, social cohesion and citizenship
- Raise funds for their work and/or for other good causes



## Making a Fair Count for Dialogue and Community Cohesion

A community fair in a public place in the local area has clear benefits for dialogue and community cohesion by bringing local people from different social, cultural and faith backgrounds together for a fun day out, increasing local interaction and community spirit.

However, a range of steps may be taken to increase the effectiveness of your event, maximising the opportunities for contributing to dialogue and community cohesion. For example:

- Work in partnership with other community groups/faith organisations/stakeholders, building new and valuable relationships in the process of organising your event.
- Try to think up and deliver a wide range of fun and exciting stalls and other attractions to draw in as many people as possible and encourage them to spend time enjoying the fair with their neighbours. Have a big brainstorming session with your planning team right at the start and stay on the lookout for new ideas.
- Try getting the interest of a wider group of local people by making the planning process interactive through social media (see “Event Publicity” section below).
- Publicise the event with care to ensure inclusion of all sectors of the local community, especially those hard to reach communities (see “Event Publicity” section below).
- Reach out to different sectors of the community and different community groups when looking for stallholders (see “Stalls” section below).
- Invite local stakeholders including MPs, the Mayor, Councillors and police representatives and give them opportunities to address and interact with the local community (see “Planning Your Event” and “Event Publicity” sections below). This may help people to feel more connected to and comfortable with local democracy and local authorities. You might consider inviting an MP, the Mayor or a Councillor to make a speech, and giving the local police an information stand.
- Invite local schools to contribute to the event, preferably in collaborative projects that will build relationships between different schools and their students; for example, suggest a joint performance of school choirs (see “Extras” section below and Appendix 3).

- Introduce an element of discussion of local issues by hosting a seminar or debate at the fair, or even a public speaking or debating competition for students at local schools/colleges (see “Extras” section below).
- Consider possible themes for your community fair: for example, a cultural diversity theme, with food, crafts and music from different cultures represented locally, could promote appreciation of the richness of local diversity (see “Themes” section below).
- Consider the layout of the fair. Careful planning of positions of stalls and route through the site can encourage people to engage with a wider range of attractions, cultures and people (see “Layout” section below).
- Consider including a central attraction that will attract as many people as possible to the same area at the same time, enhancing a sense of community spirit. A community lunch or tea at a particular time, or a concert or drama performance could be ideal (see “Extras” section below).
- Invite community groups and local charities to run stalls, provide information on their work and advertise volunteering opportunities, attracting new people to get more involved in contributing to their local community (see “Extras” section below).
- Give different local stakeholders, community and faith leaders the opportunity to say a few words about the local community and key local issues. (See “Event Publicity” and “Extras” sections below.)

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### Planning Your Event..... 14

Advice on the key decisions and action that you need to take right at the start

### The Site and Essential Equipment..... 18

What you need to know about using public space for your event, and guidance on obtaining necessary equipment (electricity generator, tables and portaloos)

### Event Publicity..... 22

Guidance on the wide range of stakeholders, community groups, faith organisations and businesses that you may want to contact, and on how to reach a good proportion of the general public in your area

### Themes..... 25

A range of suggestions of overarching themes to add purpose and interest to your fair

### Layout Considerations..... 27

Guidance on setting out your fair to maximise engagement

### Stalls ..... 28

A wide range of fun and engaging ideas for stalls, and advice on involving diverse stall holders

### Preparing for the Fair ..... 33

Guidance on human resources arrangements, including a template Human Resources plan; advice on funding the fair; materials for the day

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# Advice for Planning and Running a Community Fair

# 02

## Working in Partnership

*For extensive advice on finding local partners and working in partnership please refer to the Building Partnerships Community Dialogue Manual.*

Consider inviting another community group, cultural group, charity or faith organisation to work with you on the planning and organisation of the project (see Appendix 2 for sample letter). The benefits of this go far beyond just the sharing of the workload:

- It unites your ends and your means; your goal of promoting interaction and friendship between different groups is served even at the planning stages of your event as your group and another work together on the project and get to know each other.
- It expands your range of expertise by bringing in the skills of members of another group.
- It expands your range of guests, as you can invite all your partners' contacts to your event(s).
- It can bring you new insight into the perspectives and concerns of a different cultural, social or faith group.
- It can increase trust and interest in your organisation; some sectors of the community who are unfamiliar with your work may already know and trust your partner organisation, and be more inclined to get involved with your projects because of the connection.
- It helps keep your work genuinely rooted in dialogue.
- It can establish a lasting, mutually beneficial relationship where each partner can sometimes benefit from the support, expertise, contacts and facilities of the other.

## Tips for Working in Partnership

- Attending events run by other organisations with objectives linked to your own will give opportunities to meet possible partners.
- It is a good idea to invite prospective partners to an informal, social meeting, perhaps over lunch or tea. If they are interested in what you do and in working with you on the project you propose you can then arrange another meeting.
- Choose your prospective partners carefully. The most successful partnerships are those that serve the objectives of both/all partner organisations. You need partners who share your enthusiasm for bringing the community together through this event.

- When contacting an organisation to propose a meeting or collaboration on a particular project, emphasise the objectives that you share and show how collaboration makes sense for you both.
- Make sure that your partners have the opportunity to be involved at every level. If possible, try to get them involved in planning from the early stages, so that they are really part of the team.
- Make sure that your partners feel valued and recognised; be sure to include their names and details on any materials for a jointly organised event, and ensure that they are visible and acknowledged on the day.

## Planning Your Event

*NB. If you plan to hold a sizeable fair in a local park, it is worth starting the planning process at least 6 months in advance.*

A checklist such as the one provided below (“Checklist” section) will help you to make sure that no little jobs are forgotten. But you may also wish to produce an action plan, specifying key tasks that should be attended to during each of the months leading up to the event. For a helpful example, see the “Action Plan for Events” toolkit provided by the parks and green spaces registered charity,

GreenSpace: <http://www.green-space.org.uk/resources/communityresources/toolkits.php>

## Form a Planning Committee

Gather a planning committee from among your congregation/organisation/group.

## Consider Partnership

Decide whether you want to work in partnership with one or more other organisations. Contact them accordingly so that they join in the planning process as soon as possible (see Appendix 2).

## Decide on Size and Location

- Any community fair, regardless of size, can be a valuable contribution to local community spirit, social cohesion and intercultural interaction. Decide on the scale of the event depending on the size of your group, number of potential volunteers and experience of planning committee members.
- If your experience is limited and you want to start with an “easy-win” project, or if your numbers are limited you may want to start with a smaller scale fair in a community centre or church hall.
- If you have a large organisation or some experience of this kind of event, and if you are confident of finding sufficient volunteers, you may want to increase the scale, aim to attract a greater proportion of the local community, and plan a fair in a public park.
- If you want to run a large event in a season when the weather is unreliable, look for a large town hall, or an affordable/discounted large private venue. If possible find an indoor venue with access to a garden so that people can enjoy being outdoors if and when the weather permits.



## Contact the Council (if Using Public Space)

If you are planning to use a public space such as a park, securing the use of this space and making sure that you can arrange everything in accordance with their guidelines is a priority. Contact the Council as early as possible. (See “The Site and Essential Equipment” section below.)

## Check Licensing

You will need a Temporary Event Notice if your event will include the performance of a play, an exhibition of a film, the performance of live music or the playing of recorded music and your venue does not have a premises license. Remember also that you will need a licence from the Performing Rights Society if you are playing copyrighted recorded music. (See “Licensing” section in “The Site and Essential Equipment” section below.)

## Plan Finances

Work out how much it is going to cost to run your event and prepare a finance plan (see “Preparing for the Fair” section below).

## Decide on Key Aims, Type of Event and Any Theme

Is your key aim:

- to celebrate diverse local cultures;
- to bring together people of different faiths;
- to strengthen the local voluntary sector;
- to raise money for local good causes, including but perhaps not limited to your own work;
- to reach people would not normally attend an inter-communal or interfaith dialogue event;
- simply to give local people a fun day out together;
- to focus on families or young people...?

According to your key aims, decide whether you will give your event a theme, such as cultural diversity, the history of your area, local faith groups etc (see “Themes” section below).

Decide who you will try to involve in the running of the fair. Will you invite local faith groups to contribute, or voluntary organisations, or charities, or youth groups? (See “Stalls” and “Extras” sections below.)

## Decide on Your Target Audience

Who is your target audience? Are you simply trying to attract as many local people as possible? Are you looking for a representative group? Or will you target faith groups or a particular combination of cultural communities?

## Consider Accessibility

Make someone responsible for looking into ways that the fair can be made as accessible as possible and for ensuring that people with disabilities are considered in publicity planning and in decisions on stalls and activities. (See GreenSpace's "Accessibility at Events" toolkit at <http://www.green-space.org.uk/resources/communityresources/toolkits.php>.)

## Set Date, Time, Duration

- Set date, time and duration with your target audience in mind.
- If your event will be large, and you are going to the trouble of hiring public space and a marquee, you may want to hold the fair over several days. Bank holidays can be ideal for extending weekends.
- In the school holidays you would have the option of holding your fair on weekdays, or perhaps over a long weekend including the Friday and/or Monday.
- People have more time at weekends, but avoid a day when there is another significant local event such as a football match.
- Bear in mind that many Jews would not be able to attend on the Sabbath (Shabbat), which lasts from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday, making both those evenings difficult.
- If you are planning an open air event, consider seasons and weather when deciding on a date. (Booking a hall with a garden, or setting up marquees in a park can allow events to go ahead even if you are unlucky with the weather.)

## Identify Key Speakers or VIP Guests

- The attendance of an important local stakeholder can raise the profile of your event, attract more guests and bring your community into contact with an influential local figure. You could consider inviting your local MP, the Mayor and other councillors, and asking one or more to make a speech. It may be worth contacting possible VIP guests right at the start of the planning process, and choosing a date that works for them.
- See also "Event Publicity" section below.

## Organise Human Resources

- Assign volunteers responsibility for different areas: stalls recruitment, entertainment, children's activities, design, invitations etc.
- Produce a Human Resources (HR) plan with details of all the jobs which will need to be done at the event and how many staff/volunteers will be required. Later you will add the names of people assigned to particular roles. (See "Preparing for the Fair" section below for further details and a sample HR plan.)

## Produce a Publicity Strategy

Produce a strategy with reference to your target audience (see "Event Publicity" section below).

## Draft Content for Promotional Literature

- You will need to design/prepare posters, an event booklet for people to refer to on the day (giving the programme, layout, organisers' and sponsors' contact details and any forthcoming events) and letters/emails of invitation for all your potential guests.
- See "Event Publicity" section below and Appendices 5-6.

## Plan Stalls

- The greater the range of stalls the more there will be for people to enjoy at the fair, and the longer they will stay enjoying the attractions and the company of their neighbours.
- Brainstorm possible stalls with your planning committee at the start and stay on the lookout for further good ideas.
- You can brainstorm again at a meeting of potential stall volunteers; they may have ideas that you haven't thought of (see "Stalls: Who?" section below).
- For some ideas to get you started see "Stalls" section below.

## Plan Extras

Think about any 'extras' that can be included in your event.

Aside from stalls, all sorts of activities, performances and competitions can make your fair more exciting.

Brainstorm with your planning committee at the start and stay on the lookout for further good ideas.

For some ideas to get you started, see "Extras" section below and Appendix 9.

## The Site and Essential Equipment

### Using Public Space

#### Contact the Council

If you wish to use a public space such as a park for your event, the first step is to contact the Council for information and an application form. It is best to do this **right at the start** of your preparations for the event, ideally **6 months in advance**. Although your council may consider your application as little as two months before the event, you will need longer to prepare properly and it is well worth securing your venue at the start of the planning process.

Council staff will be able to explain Council requirements and procedures and answer questions you may have along the way.

You may find guidelines available on council websites. For example:

- <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4890>
- [http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/leisure\\_and\\_culture/parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/events\\_in\\_parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/leisure_and_culture/parks_and_open_spaces/events_in_parks_and_open_spaces.htm)

However, you will generally need to email or telephone. Search the website for an email address/contact number for a Parks Department, Green Spaces Department or Environment Department, or call a general contact number and ask for contact details for the appropriate person (see Appendix 1 for a sample email).

The appropriate person in one of these departments will be able to send you full details of what you need to do to use a park or other green space in the borough, town, city, county or district. You will need to liaise with them during the planning process, fill in the application form they supply and possibly meet with them.

Bexley Borough Council provides the application form and extensive guidance online; you can see this example at: <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4890>

### You may need to consider all of the following:

#### Insurance

You will need public liability insurance to cover any damage or accident occurring at the event, e.g. due to faulty equipment. The Council will probably specify the value which must be covered by the insurance. You will probably need to provide proof of your insurance policy.

Your contact at the council may be able to provide advice on obtaining insurance.

## Licensing

Unless the park that you are using has the necessary licensing for community fairs, you will need a Premises License or a Temporary Events Notices (TEN). (A TEN covers an event at which no more than 499 people are present at any one time.) The Council will be able to advise on what is required and on how to obtain it.

If you only need a TEN you will need to fill in a Temporary Event Notice form and send it to the Council's Licensing section, and to the local police, **a minimum of ten working days** before the event. The Licensing section will be able to give you the appropriate form and advise you on whom you should send the police copy to. An individual can apply for up to five TENs in a year, and a single premises can be used up to twelve times. Currently an application costs £21.

Woking Borough Council gives a helpful explanation of TENs: <http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/licensing/licensingact2/ten>

An example of the form can be found on the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council site: <http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/assets/Licensing/TENform.pdf>

Even if you do not need a TEN in your chosen location (for example, if the location itself has a license covering events like yours) it may be a good idea to inform the local police of your event.

If you are going to play recorded music you will need a licence from the Performing Rights Society (PRS). The PRS for Music website (<http://prsformusic.com>) has a "Charity and community" section (<http://prsformusic.com/users/businessesandliveevents/musicforbusinesses/charityandcommunity/Pages/default.aspx#10>). You can call them on 08453093090 or can request a callback via the website.

## Park Fees

You may have to pay a fee to hire space in a park, although there will usually be at least a discount for community groups and charities. You may need to pay a damage deposit or bond in case of damage to the park caused by the event.

## Food

If you have caterers providing food you will need to give details to the Council. They will have to be registered with their local authority and may have to have public liability insurance. They may also have to provide a risk assessment, a method statement and a copy of a food hygiene certificate or of part of their last food hygiene inspection report.

If you intend to supply food prepared by volunteers you will need to make sure that everything is done in accordance with the Council's Environmental Health requirements. You will not necessarily need any certificates or qualifications to provide food at your event; you will just need to follow any guidelines given by the Council and provide all the information they ask for.

Bear in mind that if you are inviting different stallholders to sell/give away food you may need to provide the Council with information on the type and preparation of all of it.

### Risk Assessment

You will almost certainly be required to provide a risk assessment for your event, setting out possible hazards, people potentially affected, measures that you will take to reduce risks etc.

Your Council may provide its own form and guidance. Bexley Borough Council gives risk assessment guidelines and a template online:

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4328&p=0>

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4329&p=0>

The Health and Safety Executive also provides guidance: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm>

### First Aid

You will probably be required to have at least one qualified first aider present. Check with the council what level of qualification is required. A “First Aid at Work” certificate or an “Emergency First Aid” certificate may be sufficient.<sup>1</sup> If you know a local doctor or nurse personally you could ask him/her to be present for the event and provide cover.

### Stewarding/Security

You may have to give details of your plans for stewarding and security, including how you will communicate with your staff/volunteers. The levels of stewarding required will depend on the size of the event and on your particular council.

### Electricity

In some cases you may be able to connect to electricity supplies in the park/other public space. In other cases you will have to obtain a generator. Ask your contact at the Council for guidance.

### Toilet Facilities

If the park does not have toilets, or if these are insufficient for the numbers you expect,

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<sup>1</sup> St John's Ambulance (<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/training-courses.aspx>) and the British Red Cross (<http://www.redcrossfirstaidtraining.co.uk/>) provide a range of first aid courses. Local branches can also offer first aid cover for events at competitive rates.

See <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Accidents-and-first-aid/Pages/Introduction.aspx> for a First Aid guide.

you may be required to hire porta-loos. You may need to provide a certain number of accessible toilets for disabled guests.

### Premises Inspection

Before the event you will often need to carry out a safety inspection of the site with a park ranger/manager.

### Child Protection

If children are performing or helping at the event you may need to provide a child protection policy. See the Charity Commission website for advice ([http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Charity\\_requirements\\_guidance/Charity\\_governance/Managing\\_risk/protection.aspx#4](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Charity_requirements_guidance/Charity_governance/Managing_risk/protection.aspx#4)).

You can find sample policies online, for example on the Volunteering England website: <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/ProtectionandSafeguarding/Example+child+protection+policy.htm>

Volunteers working with children closely, unaccompanied or for extended periods should have CRB checks ([www.direct.gov.uk/crb](http://www.direct.gov.uk/crb)).

### Equipment

- If you are organising a fair in a park or other public space your contact at the council may be able to suggest where you can hire a marquee. If none of your acquaintances and contacts can advise you, an internet search engine (such as Google) should enable you to find a suitable local company.
- Similarly, ask your council contact for any advice on hiring generators. Unless your location has an electricity supply you will need one of these for any recorded music, microphones, electrical cooking equipment etc.
- You will need to hire a PA system, and may wish to hire a stage to give the fair a focal point.
- As mentioned above, you may also need to hire portable toilets.
- If you do not have folding tables and chairs for stalls it is worth asking around other local organisations, such as churches and community centres to see if they can lend you these for free or for a modest donation to their organisation. Otherwise you will need to hire them

## Event Publicity

### Planning Ahead

Effective publicity is a key element in bringing a diverse range of local people to the fair and ensuring that it has real value in promoting intercultural friendship and social cohesion.

Your planning group, or a sub-group focusing on publicity, should develop a full plan of what needs to be done and when between the beginning of the planning process and the event itself. Your publicity activities will depend on the size of your event and your target audience.

### Using Social Media

Try getting the interest of a wider group of local people by making the planning process interactive through social media. Set up a Facebook fan page, spread the word among local contacts and use your page to ask what people would most like to see at the fair. See if you can get a link to the page on the websites of the local council and local charities. You could also try starting discussions about the fair on Twitter.

### Designing and Preparing Invitations

- The design of your posters and invitations is key to a well-attended event. See if you can find a volunteer who has some experience in design, or enlist the help of design students at a local college/university.
- Why not run a competition among local school children to design a logo or a poster for the event on your chosen theme? Another possibility would be to include the best pictures from this kind of competition in your event booklet and/or to display them at the fair. As well as providing original and appealing artwork for use in your promotional materials this will allow you to develop links with local schools.
- Remember that your designer also needs to design booklets giving the programme, layout, organisers' and sponsor's contact details and any forthcoming events.
- You will also need to prepare letters/emails of invitation (see Appendices 5 and 6).

### Identifying Who to Invite and Sending Invitations

#### VIP Guests

Remember to give VIP guests plenty of notice of the event. As mentioned above ("Planning Your Event" section) you may wish to contact possible VIP guests right at the start of the planning process so that you can find a date on which they can attend. It is best to give MPs, MEPs and Mayors two months' notice, and to give councillors at least one month's notice (see Appendix 5 for sample letter of invitation).



## Community Groups

Please see the *Building Partnerships* Community Dialogue Manual for advice on finding and contacting a range of community groups, faith groups, businesses and stakeholders. If you are organising a large-scale event, targeting a range of groups will boost attendance levels and add to the diversity and interest of your event.

When inviting a community group/faith group you could write to them (see Appendix 6) or better still, consider attending a service/meeting and inviting your guests in person. Leave printed invitations for reference. (For advice on visiting places of worship, see *Celebrating Festivals* Community Dialogue Manual.)

Ask the priest/rabbi/group leader to print details of the event in the church's/synagogue's/group's printed notices or newsletter, if they have these.

Groups/individuals you may like to approach include:

### Local stakeholders:

- MPs
- MEPs
- London Assembly Members
- Mayor
- Councillors
- The Council
- NHS health professionals (doctors, nurses, dentists, managers and support staff)
- Schools and teachers
- Universities and academics
- Police or Police Community Support Officers
- Firefighters

### Local community groups:

- Faith groups and religious leaders
- Local support and development organisations <sup>2</sup>
- Supplementary schools

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<sup>2</sup> Find your local organisation through <http://www.navca.org.uk/membersdirectory> (England)/ [http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk/third\\_sector\\_interfaces.html](http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk/third_sector_interfaces.html) (Scotland)/

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/grants/voluntary/contact/?lang=en> (Wales)

Local support and development organisations are organisations that provide support to voluntary organisations and volunteers in a particular borough, district or city. They provide a range of valuable resources, from free or affordable training to networking and funding opportunities.

- “Friends of” groups
- Tenants and residents organisations
- Older people’s groups
- Women’s groups
- Cultural community groups/centres
- Local charities and voluntary organisations
- Local campaign/issue-focused groups
- Sports groups
- Music/art groups

### Local businesses and shop owners:

- Local firms (solicitors, accountants etc)
- Small local shops
- Local restaurants and cafés
- Large local businesses: supermarkets, department stores, chain stores

### Inviting Local Residents with Door to Door Invitations

If you are organising a large event for the whole community it may be worth delivering individual flyers door to door, especially in neighbourhoods where people tend to be less involved in community events. This will help ensure that different neighbourhoods and different cultural groups are represented at the fair. Post flyers through letterboxes, or, even better, knock at doors and deliver the flyers in person. It is always nice to take children with you - people tend to be more receptive and friendly around children.

### Posters

Put these up in as many locations as possible: newsagents, Post Offices, shops, libraries, community centres and places of worship are promising possibilities. If you can, leave piles of invitations/flyers also.

### Preparing a Press Release, and Contacting the Media

Invite members of the press to attend and to cover the event in their publications. Contact as many local media outlets as possible two weeks in advance. Avoid sending emails with attachments. Prepare a press release (see Appendix 4), but in your initial email simply give a brief, clear explanation of what is happening. The journalist will contact you if he/she is interested and you can then send your press release. Follow up with a call one week before the event.

Immediately after the event send your press release with photos of the event to local news outlets. They may still be interested in covering the story at this stage.

## Themes

Giving your event a theme can add interest and enhance the value of your event for intercultural dialogue, community spirit and social cohesion.

### Promising themes include:

#### Delightful Diversity Fair

Celebrate the richness of cultural diversity in your area by inviting representatives of different cultural groups to help provide edible treats, crafts and products from a range of cultures. Arrange performances of music, dance and drama from different cultures. Include traditional English/Welsh/Scottish/Irish food, crafts etc.

#### Multi-Faith Festival

Invite different faith groups to bring and sell traditional crafts and foods from their religious traditions, such as food made for particular festivals. You can also ask them to provide displays: colourful posters, interesting objects related to the religion, etc. Storytellers from different faith traditions as well as traditional music and dance can really bring the event to life. Be sure to make it clear that the fair is about sharing and respect, not conversion, and that people of all faiths and none are welcome. For inclusion and diversity, why not invite a humanist or other atheist/agnostic group to contribute a stall?

It is worth checking the content of proposed displays and performances, and the literature that different groups intend to bring, to ensure that people are contributing in the intended spirit of respectful sharing. Make it clear to your contributors that this is not the time or the place to try to convert people, and do not allow any displays, performances or literature that other groups are likely to find offensive.

#### Religious Festival Fair

Have a fair in the run-up to Christmas/Hannukkah, or Eid. Sell traditional festive foods, crafts and gifts. A fair with the theme of a religious festival can still be very much open to people of all faiths and none; make sure this is clear and be sure to invite guests from a range of cultural/faith backgrounds to join the fun.

Years in which different important religious festivals fall close together provide an ideal opportunity for fairs on the theme of these different festivals. (For example, in 2007 Eid fell close to Christmas and Hannukah.)

#### Seasonal Fair

Give your fair a simple theme common to the experience of all your guests and have a spring, summer or autumn fair. Decorate your venue with seasonal images, garlands, flowers and greenery. You may want to invite local school children to create displays of art work or poetry. Or ask students at a local art college to provide short seasonal films, photography or other artistic displays. A local choir or dance group might provide seasonal songs/dance.

Or you could give your fair the theme of a particular national or international season or day, such as Black History Month, International Women's Day, St George's Day or the International Day of Peace (21<sup>st</sup> September, see <http://internationaldayofpeace.org>). Choose decorations, displays, music and attractions to reflect your theme. For example, for an International Day of Peace themed fair you might use symbols such as doves in your decorations and advertising, invite a choir to sing songs on the theme, display information and films on great peace-makers and invite school children to contribute poetry and art. A St George's Day fair might feature volunteers dressed up as knights and dragons and displays of children's writing on the theme of England. A nice way of developing designs for publicity materials and decoration is to run a competition for local school children to design a logo on the fair's theme.

### Local History Fair

Combine fun stalls, crafts and food with attractions celebrating the unique history of your local area. Ask local schools to contribute displays, performances or presentations, and invite any local historians to give talks. You could also invite older people from the area to give short talks about their memories of the area at a different period. Include, if you can, older people who came to the area from abroad when they were young. Invite children, and adults, to come in fancy dress.

### Royal Jubilee/Wedding Themed Fair

Use the jubilee celebrations of the head of state, or a royal wedding, as a focus for local festivities (note that the HRH the Queen's Diamond Jubilee is in June 2012). Put up patriotic/royalty themed decorations and sell some royal memorabilia. Local children may contribute displays, for example pictures on the theme of the Queen's life, or of previous royal weddings.

### Strong Community Fair

Invite local charities and community groups to be a part of the fair, running stalls and bringing promotional materials and information on volunteering opportunities. Invite local stakeholders such as the police and health professionals to man information stalls. If it is financially viable, use the fair to raise money for one or more other local good causes as well as your own organisation.

### Fundraising or Campaign Focused Fair

You may want to focus specifically on fundraising for a good cause, whether this is your own charity, a local educational project or sports centre, or a popular national charity such as Cancer Research or the NSPCC. Publicity materials could make reference to the cause/charity and its importance, and posters and short films could be displayed at the fair to show where the money raised would be going. If you are fundraising for another charity contact them to tell them what you are doing; they may provide promotional materials, speakers and other support.

## Layout Considerations

It is worth giving some consideration to the physical arrangement of the fair. In addition to practical considerations, attention to layout can enhance the value of the fair for community spirit and intercultural dialogue. Particularly if your stalls and attractions represent different cultures, communities and/or religions present in your community, you will want to encourage guests to engage with as many of these as possible, and to encourage stall holders of different faith/cultural groups to engage with each other.

- You could form a fixed path through all the fair's stalls to ensure that guests come in contact with every stall as they progress down the path. You can achieve this through the arrangement of your stalls so they form a single path or corridor, or perhaps with some kind of fencing between them (or just cord/ribbon). You will need to have a single point of entry and single exit point to achieve this goal.
- Mix up stalls run by people of different cultural and faith backgrounds so that they have a chance to chat to nearby stallholders from different groups.
- To protect crafts and other products from any food-related mess, you may want to keep most of the food stalls to a special Food Fair area.
- It may be helpful for parents if you put most of the children's stalls and attractions in one area. If possible, cordon this area off to reduce the risk of children wandering off and getting lost.
- Consider where any performers will give performances. You may want to have a dedicated performance area. Make sure it is big enough for your largest/liveliest groups of performers.
- Make sure you provide some seating for elderly/disabled/tired guests.
- At larger events you will need a reunion point in case children get lost. You could also collect lost property here.

## Stalls

It is worth aiming for as large and diverse a range of stalls as possible to give your guests plenty to enjoy and encourage them to spend more time enjoying the fun with their local community. The ideas given here are just a starting point. Why not invite a range of local people to contribute their ideas and their time to help you achieve a wonderful array of stalls?

## Who?

- Invite representatives from a range of groups to contribute stalls and attractions (especially at a fair with a cultural diversity/faith-based theme, see “Themes” section above).
- Think about ways of bringing people from different groups and cultural/faith backgrounds to work together on stalls. Why not invite people from a range of community groups/places of worship to join volunteers from your own group at a stall volunteers’ meeting? At the meeting, discuss what stalls will be included and assign volunteers to particular stalls. Where possible, assign volunteers from different groups to work together on one stall - for example, assign a person from a local church group and a person from a Muslim community centre to work together on the cake stall.
- If this is too complicated, you can ask different community/faith groups to volunteer to organise and run a particular stall each. This increases your human resources, ensures that different groups are represented at the fair, and will bring volunteers from different groups together at planning meetings and at the fair itself.
- •You might want to invite community groups and charities to run stalls and bring along information and promotional materials, for example on volunteering opportunities (see also “Themes” section above). Depending on your finance plan, you may want to allow certain charities and groups to run their stalls partly or wholly in aid of their own organisations.
- Ask professional craftspeople, food outlets and other businesses to run a stall and donate a certain percentage of their takings to your charity/charities and to cover the costs of the fair.
- Invite local stakeholders such as the police and social workers to run stalls informing local people about their organisations, their work and how they can help local people.
- See “Event Publicity” section and the *Building Partnerships* Community Dialogue Manual for ideas of different people/groups to approach to run stalls.

## What?

There is no end to possible stalls for adults and children to enjoy. Here are a few ideas to get you thinking:

### General

*(For ideas on further attractions see “Extras” section below)*

- Henna tattoos or temporary tattoos.
- Make up stall. If you can find an expert to do this it will be more popular.
- Card lottery. Very simple to do. People pay 50p to choose a card from a pack. Another pack of cards are laid out attached to small gifts/sweets. You win the gift attached to the card you choose. You can keep it simple and put sweets on many cards and chocolate bars on a few, for example on the picture cards.
- Recycled craft stall. A craft stall with added ecological value. It could feature sewing with unwanted fabrics (Freecycle may help with materials- <http://www.freecycle.org/>), jewellery made with scrap paper and card, buttons, jigsaw puzzle pieces etc. See <http://recycledcrafts.craftgossip.com/> and <http://www.craftbits.com/recycled-crafts> for inspiration. If you give enough notice you can challenge a range of community groups and schools to contribute something to this stall.
- General craft stall.
- Tombola. People pick a raffle ticket and win a prize if it matches the ticket on one of the prizes.
- Jam Jar stall (a variation on the tombola). Appeal for all the members of a faith group/community group to donate at least one jam jar filled with anything they like- it could be stationery, shampoo sachets, sweets, little toys... You can charge at least 50p but give a prize every time. As in the traditional tombola, the person receives the prize that matches their raffle ticket, but in this case all the available raffle tickets match the tickets on the jars.
- A raffle is a good way of making money. Ask local businesses to donate some good prizes - perhaps a local restaurant could donate a meal for two, a hairdressers offer a free haircut, or an electrical goods store an exciting electrical prize. You will sell far more tickets if volunteers circulate selling them.
- Festive crafts and decorations if the fair has a festive theme or is close to an important festival. For example, at a Christmas fair homemade decorations may sell well.
- Book stall. Ask people to donate books which they no longer want for a second-hand book stall, or invite a local bookshop to sell books and donate some of the profits.

- Human fruit machine. Three people each have a bag around their waste containing three (plastic) fruits. When someone pays to use the fruit machine the three people pick a fruit from the bag (preferably with some authentic whirring noises) and display it. If they all pick the same fruit a prize is awarded.
- Live crafts such as calligraphy on plates, posters, mugs etc or marbling painting.

## Children

*(For ideas on further attractions for children see “Extras” section below)*

- Face painting.
- Lucky dip. Small wrapped gifts in a tub of shredded paper.
- Biscuit/cupcake decoration. With coloured writing icing, hundreds and thousands, silver balls etc for children to use to decorate their own biscuit/cake.
- Temporary tattoos.
- Rainbow hair spray.
- Plant pot painting. With a good number of cheap/donated plant pots and some paint this can provide a creative activity for children.
- Glass painting. Invest in some glass paints and collect donated jam jars.
- See if any brave teachers will volunteer to let children pay to throw wet sponges at them.
- Splat the rat. You need a length of drainpipe or a cardboard tube fixed to a strong board; a stuffed rat (which could be easily made with a sock and a bit of creativity) and a rubber mallet or cricket bat. The child wins a small prize if they can splat the rat against the board when it comes out of the bottom of the drainpipe.
- Hook a duck. Young children try to hook a duck out of a paddling pool.
- Toy stall. This could be donated toys, or new ones sold by a local shop which will donate a proportion of profits.
- Children’s books stall. Again, this can work in either of the above ways.
- Sweets stall. Ask a local shop to run this and donate a percentage of profits.
- Hoopla stall. Children try to knock over bottles by throwing a bean bag.
- Lucky straws. All you need is a box of sand, a lot of straws and some strips of coloured paper. Roll up strips of paper and tuck them into one end of some of the straws. Stick the straws in the sand. People pay to pick a straw. If they get one with coloured paper inside they win a small prize. Prizes can be varied with the colour of the paper or can all be the same. If you want to keep it simple, award a lollipop for any straw with coloured paper.



## Food

- Cake stall. If a good number of volunteers will provide one or two cakes or a batch of cupcakes each this is likely to be a popular attraction and make plenty of money.
- Noah's Pudding is a delicious, nutritious alternative to cakes with a great story behind it. See the *Noah's Pudding* Community Dialogue Manual for details.
- Ice cream factories can also earn a lot of money, especially at a summer fair. Buy cheap vanilla ice cream to which people can add hundreds and thousands, crushed biscuits, chocolate sprinkles, sauce etc.
- A chocolate fountain will also be popular if it is affordable. See if you can get a discount from a local events company.
- A barbecue will always go down well at a summer fair.
- So will a stall selling strawberries and cream.
- Beverages stand. Tea and coffee will always sell well.
- Vans providing kebabs, burgers or other fast food will generally do good business. Ask owners to give a certain percentage of their profits.
- Cream teas are also popular.
- Food stalls representing the cuisine of different countries bring delicious variety and cultural interest to a fair, and are likely to make a lot of money.
- If you live in an area where a number of people grow their own vegetables in gardens or in allotments, arrange a fresh produce stall.
- You could also have a competition for the best produce in different categories. Ask a successful local/guest gardener to judge, charge a small entrance fee and award a certificate and/or small prize.
- You can also run competitions for cake-baking, jam-making and/or flower arranging.
- Another interesting food-based attraction is a recipe sharing stall. Invite your guests to print multiple copies of favourite recipes and bring them along to exchange with other guests. This will be all the more interesting if you have recipes from different cultural/ethnic communities. It is a good feature in a fair with a cultural diversity theme.

## Food Stall Considerations

- Food stalls are always very popular and a good way of raising money to cover costs and to contribute to good causes. Make sure you have a good number and range on offer.

- Make sure that you have food to cater for a range of common dietary requirements. Offer vegetarian food and halal/kosher meat. If you can, offer some food that is reliably nut free, some that is wheat free, some that is dairy-free and some that is vegan. For guidance on religious dietary requirements see *Fast Breaking Dinners* or *Community Engagement Dinners* Community Dialogue Manuals.
- Make sure that stalls have labels to indicate vegetarian/vegan/halal food, and food containing ingredients to which guests may be allergic, such as nuts.
- Make sure that you brief volunteers to maintain high standards of hygiene and safety throughout. Volunteers working with food must make sure they wash their hands regularly and ideally wear food gloves; any food being cooked or reheated must be piping hot all the way through; cold cooked food should be kept chilled.
- If you are using public space such as a park you will need to make sure that food you provide meets the food safety standards required by the Council. You will need to give the details of caterers to the Council so that Council staff can check their food hygiene records and liability insurance, and volunteers providing food may need to provide information on type and preparation of food. (See below, “The Site and Essential Equipment: Using Public Space”.)

## Preparing for the Fair

### Human Resources

Early in the planning process, make particular people responsible for different areas of work:

- General coordination (finalising programme, chairing meetings and overseeing project in general)
- Venue organisation
- Accessibility considerations
- Publicity coordination
- Design of publicity materials
- Non-designed materials (feedback forms, layout plan etc)
- VIP guests
- Media
- Equipment hire (generator, portaloos, tables and chairs)
- Technical management
- Records of the event: filming, photography, interviews etc
- Performers
- HR planning
- Health and safety/first aid
- Food and drink stalls
- Other stalls
- Children's area
- Venue set-up
- Venue decoration

## Sample Human Resource Plan

(Some roles – first aider, security, children's area coordinators, MC, site attendants and lost property assistants - will not necessarily be required at smaller indoor events)

Role	Responsibility Description	Numbers
ENTRANCE VOLUNTEERS/ SECURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greet guests</li> <li>Count number of guests entering</li> <li>Watch out for any security issues and act on them</li> </ul>	1-2
WELCOME TABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greet guests</li> <li>Collect entrance fee (if you are charging for entrance)</li> <li>Give out fair booklets/programmes</li> <li>Answer any questions</li> </ul>	1-2
EVENT MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome people</li> <li>Introduce the event, including practical information such as fire procedures, mentioning feedback forms and contact lists and explaining that there will be some photography and filming</li> <li>Introduce any VIP officially opening the fair</li> <li>Introduce any invited speaker(s) including VIPs</li> <li>Thank guests and organisers at the end</li> <li>Make loudspeaker announcements concerning lost children, lost property etc</li> </ul>	1
STEWARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate site in recognisable uniform</li> <li>Direct and assist any guests as required</li> <li>Accompany any unaccompanied children to reunion point</li> </ul>	1-5
STALL HOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Man stalls</li> <li>Collect money and give change</li> <li>Keep a record of money received</li> <li>Ensure that stalls meet high standards of hygiene/ health and safety</li> <li>Replenish stocks as necessary if selling goods/ food</li> </ul>	10-50
TECHNICAL SUPPORT PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up and check all equipment</li> <li>Turn music on and off</li> <li>Deal with any technical issues/problems</li> </ul>	1-2
REUNION POINT/ LOST PROPERTY ASSISTANTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect any lost property handed in</li> <li>Return lost property to owners (who can describe it accurately)</li> <li>Take care of any lost children</li> <li>Arrange announcements concerning lost children, lost property etc</li> </ul>	1-2
CHILDREN'S AREA COORDINATORS*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate activities</li> <li>Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children enjoying the children's area</li> </ul>	1-2

CHILDREN'S AREA VOLUNTEERS*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run activities for children and take care of them</li> </ul>	1-3
AMENITIES INSPECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check toilets for cleanliness and hygiene</li> <li>Dispose of rubbish regularly</li> </ul>	2
PHOTOGRAPHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take photos of the crowd, people eating and talking etc</li> </ul>	1-2
VIDEO CAMERAMAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tape scenes from the fair</li> <li>Interview people about their experience of the fair</li> </ul>	1
MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look after media representatives and meet their needs</li> </ul>	1-3
VIP LIAISON OFFICER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greet VIP's</li> <li>Look after them and meet their needs</li> </ul>	1-2
EVENT COORDINATOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with Food Manager, MC, speakers and VIP Liaison Officers to ensure that the event runs to schedule</li> <li>At a marquee event liaise with Council contacts as required</li> <li>Solve problems</li> </ul>	1
FIRST AIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be on site at all times to respond to accidents and medical problems and contact relevant support</li> </ul>	1-4

\* Ideally, at least the coordinators should have CRB checks and should have experience working with children. See <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/> for guidance and up-to-date information on legislation in this area.

## Finance

Depending on the scale of your event, the cost of putting on a community fair can be quite high. If you are organising a fair in a park try to start looking into possible sources of funding **6 months in advance**.

Work out the likely total costs of the event as early as possible. For a sizeable event in a park, remember to consider the following significant costs:

- Any charge for use of the park
- Portable toilets hire
- Marquee hire
- PA system
- Stage hire, if you wish to provide a focal point to the fair by having a stage
- Printing costs for promotional materials
- First Aid cover (e.g. requested donation for Red Cross/St John's Ambulance cover)
- Professional entertainers/musicians

Formulate a plan, outlining how much money you hope to obtain from which sources.

There are a range of possibilities which may contribute to covering costs:

- Investigate any relevant funding available from the local council. Search their website and phone to check if there is anything available. You could also contact your local voluntary support and development organisation which may direct you to funding opportunities.<sup>3</sup>
- The Funding Central website may also be helpful:  
<http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/Default.aspx>
- The Big Society Network lists a variety of possible sources of funding:  
<http://thebigsociety.co.uk/what-is-big-society/faq/>
- Look for sponsors. Some large supermarkets have small budgets for sponsoring community events; it is worth approaching local supermarkets to enquire whether they could donate money or goods to the event. Smaller businesses may offer goods or services. A local company might sponsor a particular attraction, such as a bouncy castle or chocolate fountain, if

<sup>3</sup> Find your local organisation through <http://www.navca.org.uk/membersdirectory> (England)/ [http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk/third\\_sector\\_interfaces.html](http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk/third_sector_interfaces.html) (Scotland)/ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/grants/voluntary/contact/?lang=en> (Wales)

Local support and development organisations are organisations that provide support to voluntary organisations and volunteers in a particular borough, district or city. They provide a range of valuable resources, from free or affordable training to networking and funding opportunities.

this is properly acknowledged. Offer to add the logos of your sponsors to your promotional materials. You could also offer them free use of stalls to promote and sell their products/services.

- Sell tickets on the door. A nominal entrance charge of £1 (50p for children) should not put people off attending but could contribute significantly to covering costs. You could sell tickets in an indoor venue, or in an outdoor venue if you have fences and an entrance.
- However, note that if you are holding the event in a public space you may not be permitted to charge for entrance: check with the Council.
- Food stalls can be a good way of making money to cover costs, especially where volunteers are willing to donate food without asking for expenses.
- Bouncy castles are also a particularly good source of income as they are usually very popular. Hire one for the day, ensuring you have enough well-briefed volunteers to look after health and safety, and put the profits towards covering costs. Alternatively, hire a castle with an attendant who will run the attraction and take care of health and safety. He/she will run the attraction for the company's own profit but you can ask for a percentage of the money earned on the day, which will probably still be a significant amount.
- Charge stallholders for the use of their stall. If you are concerned not to put off potential local stallholders the price need not be high - perhaps £20 for the day.
- However, if you are inviting community groups and charities to run stalls and would rather not charge them at all for the stalls you could still ask for some of their profits to go towards the fair's costs. You could, for example, ask that all money raised through selling food goes towards the costs of the fair, or specify that a certain percentage of general profits should go towards those costs.
- For further advice on budgeting see the "Budgets for Events" toolkit produced by GreenSpace:

<http://www.green-space.org.uk/resources/communityresources/toolkits.php>

## Materials

- Prepare and print plenty of feedback forms (see Appendix 7) as well as designed materials - posters, flyers and event booklet. In the event booklet include safety information and a note informing guests that photography and filming will be taking place.
- If your site is large consider handing out a layout plan.

## Extras

Aside from stalls, all sorts of activities, performances and competitions can make your fair more exciting. The more attractions you can think of and include the more people will want to come along and enjoy it together, helping you to achieve your objectives. Here are just a few possibilities to consider:

*(NB volunteer/professionals working with children closely, unaccompanied or for extended periods should have CRB checks. See [www.direct.gov.uk/crb](http://www.direct.gov.uk/crb).)*

- Bouncy castles and other inflatable attractions. Other possibilities include rodeo rides, climbing walls, inflatable slides, water-walking balls, bungee runs and inflatable games. Family-friendly inflatable attractions will always be popular and make money. If possible include several different kinds in the fair. See if you can find a local company/companies to sponsor the hire of one or more of these attractions, or ask the owners to run the attractions and donate a proportion of the profits.
- A clown or children's entertainer is a good attraction for children.
- Consider inviting street performers - acrobats, live statues, musicians, cartoonists, jugglers, dancers, magicians or portrait artists - to come along to the fair. There are often a lot of talented people working in central London and in other city centres who would be happy to join you if you pay their travel expenses and allow them to collect money from spectators. Have a look for good performers in the city centre and invite them.
- Circus performers (jugglers, acrobats, fire jugglers) can provide a spectacular show. If you do not know of any local performers try using an internet search engine such as Google to find people.
- A debating/public speaking competition for local young people can be an interesting feature for the fair and can encourage citizenship and confidence amongst those involved. See if teachers from different local schools are prepared to work together on this. It would be an excellent feature in a Strong Community themed fair (see "Themes" section above).
- Story-telling. A storyteller or storytellers can bring imagination and fun to your event for adults as well as children. Advertise storytelling sessions in your fair programme. Hold the storytelling at a central stage/performance area, or, if your fair is being held in a park, use an atmospheric location such as a wooded area.
- Storytellers from different faith traditions can be a great addition to a fair with a faith-related theme. The Society for Storytelling can help you find suitable storytellers, including storytellers with an interest in faith: <http://www.sfs.org.uk/> For information, resources and inspiration on storytelling see also the website of St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace: <http://stethelburgas.org/themes/power-of-stories>



- Music/drama performances can be a real highlight. Local choirs, bands, orchestras and drama groups may well be keen to contribute. Ask schools to suggest groups. Live background music can really liven up the fair. And a well-advertised performance from a popular group, a quality drama group or a big community choir can be great for drawing lots of guests together in one place, enhancing a sense of community spirit.
- For something a little different, invite a historical reenactment society to come and introduce your guests to lifestyles and crafts from another era. Reenactment groups will often come along to fairs if their travel expenses are paid, particularly if they can have an authentic camp on site. See the National Association of Reenactment Societies for further information (<http://www.nares.org.uk/>).
- Recorded background music can contribute to a festive atmosphere.<sup>4</sup>
- Invite VIP's to give short speeches and/or to open the fair.
- A talent show for musicians, comedians etc can also be fun and popular. Why not have a "Fair's Got Talent" spot (whether this is a stage or just a designated space with a microphone and a poster/banner)? You could have a panel of judges or public vote and give a prize, or you could just allow performers to enjoy their moment in the spotlight.
- Tug of war - a good, entertaining outdoor activity to get local people having fun together. You might want to make this activity free.
- Active competitions for children - sack race, egg-and-spoon race, relay race etc.
- Children's treasure hunt.
- A penalty shootout is good fun if you have enough space outdoors.
- Wheelbarrow races.
- If you have space and willing expert volunteers why not provide lessons in dance, aerobics or pilates? A local teacher may be glad to give a good proportion of profits to your cause, especially as giving the classes at the fair will be excellent publicity for him/her.
- If you have the space and suitable volunteers, or professionals who will donate a percentage of their profits, you could add a dimension of relaxation to the fair by offering health and beauty treatments, from head massage to a nail bar to hairdressing.

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<sup>4</sup> If you are holding your event at an indoor venue you will still need a Temporary Event Notice, if your event will include the performance of a play, an exhibition of a film, the performance of live music or the playing of recorded music and your venue does not have a premises license. Remember also that you will need a licence from the Performing Rights Society if you are playing copyrighted recorded music.

(See "Licensing" section in "The Site and Essential Equipment" section above.)

- See if a local police car or fire engine can visit. Children will enjoy having a supervised look round. This is a nice way of bringing local people into contact with stakeholders.
- Pony/donkey rides are usually a big hit with children if your site allows and you can find a volunteer or riding stables willing to lend you a quiet pony/donkey and supervise the rides.
- An auction of prizes donated by local companies can make a lot of money and can be a fun event.

## Event Essentials

Attention to detail can really affect the experience of people attending a fair. Below are some essential details worthy of your attention!

### The Venue

Make sure the venue is clean and aired.

In an outdoor venue, double check safety considerations - is the marquee in good order?

Decorate your venue with flowers/plants, paper chains, bunting, balloons, banners and/or posters as appropriate.

### Stalls and Stall Holders

If possible allow stall holders to set up stalls on the previous day.

Make sure all stall holders arrive in good time to get ready, and no less than one hour before the start time of the fair.

They will need to be briefed on health and safety, on the programme and on practical details such as arrangements for clearing up at the end of the day. Give out as much information as possible by email beforehand and confirm arrangements on the day.

Don't forget to thank them for coming.

Make sure stalls are clean, tidy and well presented.

### Health and Safety

Appoint a health and safety coordinator to talk through health and safety with the volunteers and make sure that they know what to do in an emergency.

Appoint a fire warden. Check that your fire alarm is working and that fire exits are fully accessible and clearly signposted.

Make sure that you have a well-equipped first aid kit(s) and that your volunteers know where it is.

Make sure you have a qualified First Aider on site in the event of an emergency.<sup>5</sup>

### Guests

Remember to assign some people the job of simply wandering through the fair giving directions and help, chatting to people and making sure that everyone is having a good time. These volunteers (stewards) should be recognisable through badges and/or some kind of uniform.

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote 1, above, page 20

Make sure that there are people at the entrance/exit to welcome people in and to thank them for coming as they leave. Don't let people just drift out without feeling that their attendance has been appreciated.

Leave a contact list or visitors' book at the fair's entrance/exit and invite guests to add their contact details so that you can keep in touch and also inform them of future events. You may wish to include a column that guests can tick if they wish to help at future events.

### Feedback Forms

Ask guests to take a few moments to fill these in on their way out.

### Filming and Photography

Try to take as many photographs as possible on the day for use on your website and in future newsletters, articles etc. Investing in a professional photographer can be worthwhile if you are likely to use the photos for future publications, brochures etc.

Filming of parts or the entire event can also be a useful resource later.

Try to record some interviews with attendees offering reflections and feedback on their experience.

### To Remember on the Day

Smile! There is no substitute. It will make people feel welcome.

Make sure everyone knows exactly what their job is and is confident doing it.

Keep everything clean and tidy throughout the day, disposing of rubbish regularly and checking that stalls are all in good order.

Remember to encourage all volunteers/participants to speak in English as much as possible. With events where one cultural community group is dominant, members can easily fall into conversations using their native language. This can be a little uninviting if you do not happen to understand the conversations taking place. The idea is to get the wider community to interact with and open up to each other.

## Checklist

### Planning: Why, What, How, When, Where

(At least 3 months in advance; for a larger event in a park leave at least 6 months)

- Form a planning group to take responsibility for organising the event. The group will need to meet regularly, perhaps once a fortnight with further discussion as necessary between meetings.
- Think of possible partners, such as local stakeholders, businesses or community groups. Invite them to join the planning process. Working in partnership has many advantages (see *Building Partnerships* Community Dialogue Manual for details and for full advice on finding partners).
- Decide on key aims, type of event and theme.
- Decide on the scale of your event and on your target audience. Will you focus on particular faith groups, community groups and/or stakeholders, or are you looking to attract a large, representative group from the local community? What are your priorities?
- Decide on venue.
- Set a provisional date. Make sure that no other significant events fall on the same day. If you would like a particular VIP guest to be present to give a speech or open the fair then it may be worthwhile agreeing the date with them according to their availability. Think of your target audience when setting dates, and don't forget to consider the weather.
- For a larger event in a park, make an action plan.
- Plan who you will try to involve in the running of the fair and how you will recruit stallholders and volunteers.
- Brainstorm what you want to include in the event and plan your event programme. See "Stalls" section above, "Extras" section below and sample programme, Appendix 9.
- Delegate responsibility for managing different areas of work: stalls recruitment, site booking, entertainment, children's activities, funding, schools liaison etc.

### Practical Priorities

(At least 3 months in advance; for a larger event in a park start at least 6 months in advance)

- Find and book a venue. If you plan to hold the event in a public space you will need to contact the Council, fill in the form they provide and fulfil other requirements. See "Planning" and "Preparing for the Fair" sections above. You will need to continue to liaise with the Council regularly if using public space.

- Find out if your venue has a premises licence; if it does not, consider whether you need to apply for a Temporary Event Notice (see “Licensing” section in “The Site and Essential Equipment” section above).
- Work out what the event is likely to cost altogether.
- Prepare a detailed finance plan (see “Preparing for the Fair: Finance” section above).
- Investigate any possible grants from the council and other funding bodies (see “Preparing for the Fair: Finance” section above).
- Contact possible sponsors.
- Keep finance plan up to date according to whether sponsorship/grants are secured.
- Ensure that all members of the planning group are kept up to date and know all that is relevant to them - for example, does the person liaising with the stallholders need to ask them to pay for stalls, or to donate a certain percentage of profits?
- Write to the Council regarding parking or similar permits.
- If using a park or other public space find out whether you need a generator and/or portaloos.
- Look into hiring/borrowing a generator, a marquee and portaloos as required.

## Design

- Involve local school children through a competition to design a logo or poster, or to provide artwork for an event booklet (see “Event Publicity” section above).
- Involve local design students (see “Event Publicity” section above).
- Design invitations/flyers.
- Design posters.
- Design event booklets (giving the programme, layout, organisers’ and sponsors’ contact details and any forthcoming events).

## Stalls

(Start 4 months in advance for a larger event in a park)

- Prepare a wish list of possible stalls, considering your finance plan as well as your theme and goals.
- As soon as possible, (preferably 4 months in advance for a larger event) contact groups which you would like to be involved.

- Visit them to explain your project and discuss stalls which they could contribute.
- OR, even better, invite diverse groups to a Stalls Planning Meeting and work out who will do what at the meeting. This allows you to pair up people from different groups to work together on stalls.
- Contact companies and shops which you would like to run stalls.
- Ensure that there will be enough food stalls and a variety of food on offer. Food is important for fundraising and can be a major part of an interesting theme, and valuable in promoting appreciation of different cultures.
- Ensure food stalls meet high standards of hygiene and any requirements of the Council if the fair is being held on public land.
- Make sure you cater for vegetarians and for religious groups with particular dietary requirements (halal, kosher etc).
- Take allergies into account; for example, ask everyone running food stalls to provide information on whether foods may contain nuts.
- Plan layout.

## Marketing and Invitations

(Begin 3 months in advance)

- Produce a marketing strategy. Involve any partners in this- if you are organising the event in partnership marketing and attracting guests will be easier (see *Building Partnerships* Community Dialogue Manual).
- Use Twitter and Facebook to increase public interest and make the planning process interactive.
- Assemble publicity material: invitations, posters, flyers, draft emails and letters etc.
- Send letters to the Mayor, councillors, MPs and other important people in your community inviting them to the event (two months in advance if possible).
- Send email invitations 1-2 months in advance.
- Give plenty of invitations to the priest of your local church, the imam of your local mosque and/or the rabbi of your local synagogue and ask him/her to announce the event after a service. Even better, go along and invite the congregation yourself.
- Put up posters advertising the event in local shops, places of worship, Post Offices etc. Where possible leave piles of flyers/invitations for people to pick up. 4-8 weeks in advance deliver invitations to local neighbourhoods.
- Announce the details of the event at a meeting of your own religious congregation/group, for example after Friday prayers, and give out invitations.

- Prepare a press release (see Appendix 4).
- Identify and contact as many media outlets as possible two weeks in advance. Follow up with a phone call the week before.

### Preparing for the Fair

Prepare your Human Resources plan which details all the jobs that need to be done on the day.

Find your volunteers and assign them to the various roles. (Make sure you have a balance of male and female volunteers.)

Put together and print items to give guests on the day: event booklet, feedback form (see Appendix 7). For a large site consider preparing layout plans.

### Extras

(Begin 4 months in advance for a larger event in a park)

- Hire a bouncy castle and/or other inflatable attractions (Rodeo, climbing wall etc).
- At least 3 months in advance contact schools to suggest a project requiring considerable organisation- such as a debating competition.
- Contact schools to suggest performances by choirs, music groups or drama groups.
- Find professionals/experienced volunteers for any dance/other sports classes you wish to provide and make arrangements with them.
- Find volunteers/professionals to offer health and beauty treatments if you would like to offer these.
- Arrange a visit from a police car/fire engine.
- Book performers, arranging when they will perform and for how long.
- If you wish to use a professional photographer or cameraman to capture your events, make sure you book them in advance. Otherwise, find experienced volunteers for photography and filming.
- Find any recorded music you want to play during the event.
- Obtain any necessary licences, including a licence from the Performing Rights Society if you are playing copyrighted recorded music (see “Licensing” section in “The Site and Essential Equipment” section above).
- Make sure you have the necessary equipment for playing music as well as any microphones needed for speakers/performers. Test all the equipment in the relevant area.
- Make sure you have all necessary seating, music stands, props etc for performers.



- Plan children's activities/competitions and ensure you have sufficient and appropriate volunteers to run these - preferably people who have experience working with children and have CRB<sup>6</sup> checks.
- Organise equipment and any additional advertising for community games/activities. For example, you may want to include entry forms for a talent show in invitations.
- Fix length and topic of speeches with any VIPs invited to speak.

## General Practical Preparations

(In the month before the event)

- Find, borrow or hire tables and chairs.
- Make sure that guests have clear information on what to expect on the day: include a provisional programme in the reminder email.
- Buy a visitors' book or a pad of paper for your contact list. You may wish to include a column that guests can tick if they wish to help at future events.
- Buy plenty of pens for feedback forms, contact list etc.
- Check health and safety considerations: marquee (if you have one); arrange any necessary security personnel; fire alarm; accessible, clearly signposted fire exits; limits on numbers; first aid kit(s); fully informed volunteers.
- Make sure you have a qualified first aider present. If there is no one among your volunteers, ask a local health professional or see if another community group can provide a volunteer.
- Make sure that there are enough bins/black bags for the rubbish.

(In the final few days)

- Make a list of all the jobs that need to be done on the day and in the final stages of preparation and assign these to specific people.
- Have a meeting with all the volunteers *a day before the event* and go through checklists, making sure everyone is clear on what they are doing on the day of the event.
- Make sure the venue is thoroughly cleaned/prepared/decorated the night before the event.
- Put out a visitors' book/contact list and pens for people to leave contact details and brief comments.

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<sup>6</sup> See [www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk)

## During the Event

- Volunteers should well in advance to set up/finish preparing their stalls and for a briefing. Time required will vary according to the scale of the event, but on average volunteers will probably need to arrive 3 hours in advance.
- Volunteers should stick to the job assigned to them to make sure that everything is done properly.
- Make sure you stick to the programme as far as possible.
- Make sure that stalls are kept clean and tidy, paying particular attention to areas where food is served.
- Before visitors leave someone should ensure that they have signed the visitors' book/contact lists and have filled in their feedback forms and handed them in.
- After the event the volunteers will need to stay to clean the venue and dispose of any rubbish left behind.
- Remember to record interviews with visitors giving reflections and feedback on the event.

## Follow-up

- Write thank you letters to anyone who helped (see Appendix 8).
- Within a month, get in touch with all who came on the day and who left contact details and thank them for coming.
- Put all the photographs from the day on your website, if you have one.
- Send the link to photographs uploaded onto website in any thank you emails.
- Also include any memorable comments in thank you emails and on website.
- Process feedback forms/questionnaires.
- Reimburse any expenses.
- Edit video footage and add to website if required.
- Hold a post-event debriefing meeting with the planning group and volunteers. Evaluate the event and discuss improvements for next time. Ensure that everybody's efforts are acknowledged and appreciated.
- And then keep in touch with guests and get to know them better. Suggest that they attend/help with others.



COMMUNITY  
DIALOGUE  
**MANUAL**  
S E R I E S

# Appendices

You can copy materials from appendices via:

[www.dialoguesociety.org/publications](http://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications)

# 03

## Sample Email to a Council Contact Who Deals with Public Spaces

Dear [Title Surname],

I am writing on behalf of [Your Organisation] to enquire about using public space in [Borough/Town/County/Area] for a community fair this [Month] [explain theme or occasion, for example: for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee]. Ideally, the fair would take place from [Time] to [Time] on [Dates]. We would like to hold it in [Name of Park] if possible.

[Give brief details of your organisation and your aims. For example: The Dialogue Society is a registered charity which aims to advance social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. By organising a fun-packed community fair on the theme of the Queen's Jubilee we hope to provide a fun day out for local people, taking advantage of the national celebration to bring the local community together and enhance community spirit.]

We would hope to host between [Number] and [Number] local people at the event each day. We plan to charge a small entrance fee (£1 for adults, 50p for children) if possible.

We would need an electricity supply, a marquee and some form of fence around the site of the fair. Perhaps you could advise us on whether we could obtain electricity or fencing through the Council and on whether we will need to provide toilets in addition to those in the park.

[Give brief details of your intended activities. For example: We provisionally plan to bring a bouncy castle and fast food vans in addition to the stalls in the marquee. Entertainment in the form of live/recorded music, drama and cultural shows celebrating diverse British identities will also take place throughout the course of the fair.]

I would be very grateful if you could provide me with as much information as possible on use of green spaces in [Borough/Town/County/Area] along with any application forms, guidelines and advice on insurance, health and safety/food regulations and licensing.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

## Sample Email for Contacting Your Local Church, Synagogue or Other Faith/Community Group

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation]. *[Give a very brief summary of your organisation's aims and work. For example: The Dialogue Society is a registered charity which aims to advance social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. We do this through a range of discussion forums, publications and community projects.]*

I am writing to ask whether you or any of your contacts at [Name of Their Organisation] would be interested in working with us on an exciting new project.

We are hoping to organise a community fair in [Month], in [Proposed Venue]. We hope to attract guests from all sectors of the local community and to host at least [Number] people over *[the course of the day/a weekend/the course of three days]*. *[Explain proposed theme: We are considering giving the fair a seasonal Spring theme that will appeal to the whole community's experience of this season of new life and renewal. The fair would include food, displays, crafts and music reflecting the theme and the perspectives of local people of diverse cultural backgrounds.]*

We would be delighted to be able to work in partnership with your group. Apart from the valuable experience that your members could bring to the project, it would be a great opportunity for us all to get to know each other and each other's work. We feel that there is substantial overlap between the social concerns and community work of our two organisations and that it can only be beneficial to explore possibilities for collaboration. We would like to invite members of your group to join our Planning Committee, which will next be meeting on [Date] at [Time], at [Location].

If you are not able to be involved with the planning of the event but feel that members of the group would be interested in some level of involvement, I hope you or others will be able to attend the Stalls Planning Meeting next month, [Date] at [Time], at [Location]. We will be planning stalls and finding volunteers to help run them, and we would love to have the input of a range of local community groups.

Perhaps we could meet for an initial discussion and a cup of tea before you decide whether to attend the Planning Committee meeting. If you are free at [Suggested Times] on [Suggested Dates] we would be very glad to see you at our offices at [Address], or at another mutually convenient location.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]  
[Position]  
[Organisation]  
[Address]  
[Telephone]  
[Email]

## Sample Email for Contacting a School

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation]. [Give a very brief summary of your organisation's aims and work. For example: The Dialogue Society is a registered charity which aims to advance social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. We do this through a range of discussion forums, publications and community projects.]

We are hoping to organise a summer fair in [Month], in [Proposed Venue]. We hope to attract guests from all sectors of the local community and to host at least [Number] people over [a weekend/the course of three days]. We would like to give the fair a "Multi-Faith Festival" theme, with themed decorations and displays portraying the diversity and vitality of religious identities in the area.

We would love to have the involvement of local schools in this project. The fair would undoubtedly benefit from the creativity of local young people, and we feel that it may contribute to their appreciation of religious diversity and their sense of belonging in the local community.

Would students at your school perhaps be able to contribute some displays of art, information or reflections related to our theme? The following are simply suggestions; if you have other ideas please feel free to propose them:

- Displays explaining key beliefs and practices of religions represented in the local area (Christianity (Catholic and Protestant), Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and any other religions represented among the children of your school).
- Art work portraying rites of passage (baptism, circumcision festivities, bar mitzvahs, weddings in different traditions etc).
- Reflections/poetry exploring what their religious identity means to the children.

We would also very much welcome a music or drama performance from local school children. I am also contacting [Name of School], [Name of School] and [Name of School] and would be delighted if children from all of these schools could work together on a performance for the fair.

Would you and/or appropriate colleagues be able to meet with myself and representatives from the other schools to discuss possibilities? I would like to invite you all to our offices on [Road Name] at [Time] on [Choice of Possible Dates]. I do hope that the school will be able to be involved in this project. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

## Sample Press Release

PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Fun for All at Islington's Charity Fair

*Islington's summer fair welcomes residents for a sunny weekend raising cash for local good causes*

(Islington, [Date], [Year]) On [Date] Finsbury Park will be hosting a community summer fair raising money for children's charity Islington Children's Trust and for the Dialogue Society's new intercultural projects for local young people. The two charities have joined forces with local faith groups to run a plethora of stalls and other attractions. The fair aims to bring diverse groups together for a fun-packed weekend while raising essential funds for the crucial services they provide to local people.

Different local community groups will be offering crafts, food and a huge range of stalls. A re-enactment society will be giving guests a taste of medieval life, food and crafts, a local multi-faith storytelling group promises spellbinding entertainment and each evening the fair will be lit up by spectacular fire-jugglers. Alongside these special features will be a range of popular fair attractions, including a bouncy castle, a chocolate fountain, a tug of war and a clown and a treasure hunt for the children. The fair will be officially opened by the Worshipful the Mayor of Islington, Cllr [Name Surname]. It will welcome community groups, stakeholders including representatives of the local police, faith groups and private individuals.

Ozcan Keles, Executive Director of the Dialogue Society said: "We at the Dialogue Society, along with our valued partners at St Mark's Church, Seven Sisters Mosque and Islington Children's Trust hope that the fair will be a great day out for Islington residents, uniting our diverse community and enhancing community spirit. We also hope and expect to raise significant funds for the invaluable work of Islington Children's Trust with local children and for our own work in connecting communities through dialogue projects."

[Name Surname], MP for [Constituency] said: "I am greatly looking forward to this event, which promises to combine a lot of fun with an invaluable fundraising effort for vital local charities. I commend the impressive teamwork of different community groups and charities in their work on what promises to be an excellent community event."

#Ends#

## Notes to editors

1. For further information contact Ilknur Kahraman, Co-Director of the Dialogue Society at [ikahraman@dialoguesociety.org](mailto:ikahraman@dialoguesociety.org) or on +44(0)2076190361.
2. Founded in 1999 as a registered charity, the Dialogue Society aims to advance social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It was founded by second generation British Muslims of Turkish background. See [www.dialoguesociety.org](http://www.dialoguesociety.org)
3. Islington Children's Trust ([www.islingtonchildren.org](http://www.islingtonchildren.org)) provides mentoring and recreation opportunities for disadvantaged and disabled children in Islington.



## Sample Letter of Invitation to a Local VIP

[Your name]  
 [Position and Organisation]  
 [Address], [Postcode]  
 [Telephone]  
 [Email]  
 [Date]

[Title Name Surname]  
 [Position and Organisation]  
 [Address], [Post Code]

Dear [Title Surname],

### **RE: Invitation to [Title of Fair], [Date]**

On behalf of [Your Organisation] and [Partner Organisation], I would like to invite you to officially open a [Title of Fair], provisionally planned for [Date(s)], [Time-Time] at [Venue].

*[Give a brief description of theme, attractions and planned highlights. For example, for a “Local History” fair: The fair will combine the usual popular stalls, food and entertainment with attractions on the theme of local history. Local schools will be contributing displays and a play set in the music halls of 19th Century Islington, and we will have accessible talks from local historians [Title Name Surname] and [Title Name Surname] and dressing up for the children. A local older residents club is contributing a display of memories of Islington in wartime. Non-historical highlights will include a bouncy castle, performances from local music groups, a chocolate fountain and a children’s treasure hunt.]* I attach a provisional programme for the event.

We would hope to attract guests from all sectors of the local community and to host at least [Number] people over [the course of the day/a weekend/the course of three days].

We would be honoured if you would be willing to officially open the fair and offer a few words of reflection to begin the festivities. We would also like to extend the invitation to your [wife/husband/partner and family] and hope that they will also be able to attend. The date has not yet been confirmed. If you would like to join us but have a prior engagement on the proposed date we would potentially be able to hold the fair from [Date] to [Date] or from [Date] to [Date].

Please contact me by telephone or email for any further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]  
 [Position]  
 [Organisation]

## Sample Email of Invitation to a Local Community Group

Dear [Title Surname],

On behalf of [Your Organisation] and [Partner Organisation], I would like to invite you and all the members of [Their Organisation] to a [Title of Fair], taking place on [Date(s)], [Time-Time] at [Venue].

*[Give a brief description of theme, attractions and planned highlights. For example, for a “Strong Community” fair: The fair will combine the usual popular stalls, food and entertainment with the participation of local charities, community groups and stakeholders. We will have visits from a police car and a fire engine, talks and information stalls from local stakeholders and information on a range of local charities and community groups, including, if you wish, your own. The aim is to combine a thoroughly fun day out with features that will increase general awareness of how the borough works, of services on offer and of opportunities for people to get involved in voluntary projects.]* I attach a provisional programme for the event.

We would hope to attract guests from all sectors of the local community and to host at least [Number] people over [the course of the day/a weekend/the course of three days].

*[For a “Strong Community” fair or similar: If you would like posters or information about your organisation to be displayed at the event please bring or send them to me at [Address] by [Date]. Information on volunteering opportunities is particularly welcome. We have a limited number of spaces for charities and community groups on stalls. Please contact me if you or a colleague/volunteer would like to represent your organisation at a stall and I would be happy to forward details of the terms and conditions of doing so.]*

Would you be so kind as to circulate this invitation? If you wish I would be very glad to drop off some paper invitations or to attend a meeting and invite the group in person.

Please contact me by telephone or email for any further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

## Sample Event Feedback Form

How was the atmosphere?	<input type="checkbox"/> Great <input type="checkbox"/> Nice <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Not very good
How closely did the fair follow the advertised programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Entirely <input type="checkbox"/> Pretty well <input type="checkbox"/> Not very well <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all
How was the entertainment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Not so good
How were the facilities for visitors (seating area, toilets)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Not so good
What was the best performance/ attraction?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
What were your 3 favourite stalls?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
How was the food?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Not so good
Would you want to come to another community event like this?	<input type="checkbox"/> Definately <input type="checkbox"/> Probably <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe <input type="checkbox"/> Probably not
Did you feel that the fair made a contribution to local community spirit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, very much <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Not Much <input type="checkbox"/> No
Any further suggestions or comments:	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Thank you!	

## Sample Thank You Email for Attendees

Dear [Title Surname/First Name (if you are on first name terms)],

I am emailing on behalf of [Name of Organisation(s)] to thank you for attending the [Fair Title] [on Day/at the weekend]. We really appreciate your support for the event.

We were delighted that so many local people came to join in the fun. We thoroughly enjoyed the day and we hope that you did to.

There are now some lovely photos of the event on our website, along with some comments from guests which can be found via the link: [Website link].

We are planning to hold another event to bring the community together. [Brief explanation of what the event is.] If you would like to help in any way with this event, provisionally planned for [Date], I would love to hear from you. We will be having our next planning meeting on [Date].

I will send details nearer the time and hope to see you there if not before.

Once again, many thanks for your support.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

## Sample Fair Programme (for example, for a “Delightful Diversity” themed fair)

<i>Day 1</i>	
11 am-11.15am:	Official opening by the Worshipful the Mayor of Islington, Councillor [Name Surname]
11.30am-12.45pm:	Music from steel band Caribbean Vibe (performance area)
12pm-12.45pm:	Children’s treasure hunt (starting in the children’s area)
1.30pm-2pm:	Performance from local schools’ Great Big Islington Choir (performance area)
2pm-3pm:	Clown and balloon artist (children’s area)
3pm-3.45pm and 4pm-4.45pm:	Aerobics classes (sports area)
3pm-4pm:	Storytelling from the Islington Interfaith Story Society (performance area)
5pm-7pm:	Music and dancing with local Ceilidh (folk music) band (performance area)

<i>Day 2</i>	
11am:	Fair opens
12pm-12.45pm:	Performance by Islington Amateur Dramatics Society (performance area)
1.30pm-2.15pm:	Music from St Stephen’s Gospel Choir (performance area)
2.30pm-3.30pm: Storytelling from the Islington Interfaith Story Society (performance area)	
4pm-5pm:	Active children’s competitions: sack race, egg-and-spoon race, relay race and wheelbarrow race (sports area)
5pm-5.15pm:	Tug of war (sports area)
5.20pm:	Raffle draw (performance area)
5.30pm-6.15pm:	Music from [Name of Mosque] Qawwali ensemble (performance area)



This manual is part of the Dialogue Society's  
Community Dialogue Manual Series:

1. Building Partnerships
2. Noah's Pudding
3. Celebrating Festivals
4. Community Fairs
5. Community Engagement Dinners
6. Community Centres Branching Out
7. Speed Dialogue
8. Open Mosque Day
9. Fasting Breaking Dinners
10. Media Engagement

The PDF version of this and the other  
manuals in the series can be downloaded  
from the Publications page of our website at  
[www.dialoguesociety.org/publications](http://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications)



COMMUNITY  
DIALOGUE  
MANUAL  
S E R I E S





# COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MANUAL S E R I E S

## Connecting Communities

