



Running Safer Social Events in YFC

P&G 109

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Safe Social Events in YFC

Discussions around YFC social events have been ongoing throughout the year as general enquiries, at staff conference and within the steering group meetings about making our social events safer within YFC for members of all ages. In many counties YFC social events generate the funding that allows the organisation to make such a difference to the lives of our members by offering development opportunities, celebrating hard work and as a reward for volunteering. Social events are managed in a variety of ways across the country and by sharing practice we can ensure our events are organised and coordinated in a safe way.

Planning your event

Advertising and promoting YFC events

The situation – Often to reach the largest audience, club and county events are advertised on websites and social media platforms, these are a great tool to spread the word but can also attract uninvited guests to events. These adverts are also a representation of YFC to the world outside – how do they appear to external bodies?

Things to consider– *A new club opening was advertised on the internet and an adult arrived for the evening offering to help, after behaving in a suspicious way they were asked to leave by a leader and their presence was reported to the police, they were found to be a registered sex offender who had travelled for over two hours to attend the event. This is an extreme case but represents the need to be cautious around the information we share and who can potentially see it.*

How we portray ourselves is important, are we behaving like a youth organisation? How do we portray ourselves – to sponsors/parents by what to put on our adverts, websites or posters.

Potential Solution– YFC need to consider how they promote their events and how these advertisements are worded, consider who you would like to attend and where will this message go to. Ensure clear language is used and as much detail as possible is included in the information, ensure language and pictures are appropriate for the membership, even if the event is for adults the information can still be viewed by younger members. Event themes like Foam Party, Toga, Moulin Rouge and Rubix cube (clothes swapping) may not be appropriate for a mixed age event.

Knowing your numbers - Crowd control

Situation – invites to events are often displayed on social media platforms and spread far and wide, this often allows members to pass invites to events to many people, often more than your venue can hold safely.

Things to consider – how will you keep track of the members coming to your event? Do you know who the advert is being shared with? How will it be managed if large amounts of people gather outside the venue, unable to enter?

Potential solutions – For larger events tickets can be coordinated by the county office or event organiser to monitor attendance levels. Websites that allow e-ticket printing like Event Brite can be used to allow members to confirm that they are coming to the event and print an entry ticket. Those that turn up without an entry ticket will be refused entry.

Supervision for U18 members

The situation – To allow our U18 members to attend events a supervision system is generally used, where parents elect an adult supervisor from within the membership and gives them the responsibility of caring for their child during a YFC event.

Things to consider - How many members can an adult member supervise during a busy event where alcohol is available? How often should they check on their supervisee? Should supervisors be consuming alcohol? An U18 member is injured and requires hospital treatment, the supervisor must accompany them to the hospital until the parents can be contacted and informed. Can the supervisor successfully answer the doctor's questions about the member if they are intoxicated? How would the parent feel if the person supervising their child is intoxicated?

Potential solutions – Normal ratios of 1 adult to 10 young people should be reduced due to the nature of a social event and the responsibility demands on the supervisor. Some counties reduce to 1:6 and others 1:3, by effective event planning and knowing the behaviour of your club members you can calculate an adequate supervision ratio for the event. Supervision of 16-17 year olds can be fairly light but we must avoid a situation where supervisors sign in members and don't see them for the duration of the event, the supervisor could arrange meet up times to check the members they have signed in are healthy and happy.

As an alternative to a steward per group of members, a team of stewards could be allocated on a rota basis for each event to abstain from drinking alcohol and supervise the U18 members; this could be rotated at each event to allow the adult members to enjoy social events without the responsibilities of supervision each time. Supervisors could be given free soft drinks as a reward/incentive for supervising U18 members at social events.

Although members between the ages of 16-17 enjoy the company of our adult members if the proper supervision is not available then the county could look at events for the U18 age group with attractions like a non-alcoholic cocktail bar, the senior members could run the event and this would allow them the chance to attend separate senior social events without supervision responsibilities. As this age group is the peak of our YFC membership clubs/counties need to look at ways they can be safely included in YFC social events.

Non members at events

The situation – Non members attending social events can be a good way to recruit new members to other elements of YFC activities. Non member guests are generally signed in by a YFC member who takes responsibility for them. Some counties have limits on the amount of non members that can be signed in per member.

Some counties allow non-members U18 to be signed into events, having an open door policy for non members U18 could potentially be problematic if an incident occurs. As a youth organisation we have a duty of care to protect our members and also those that we admit into our events, we operate under a different duty of care to a night club or bar.

Things to consider - *Should U18 non members be allowed access to our events? How do we get consent forms for them? If an U18 non member is involved in an incident who is responsible? Do non members attending social events respect the YFC ethos and standards of behaviour?*

Potential Solutions - Decide on your county plan for allowing non members to attend events both over and U18, consider how you are able to manage non members, will you have enough security at an open door event? The county could set up a system where U18 members need to purchase tickets for event and provide a consent form in advance of the event. Some counties have a pre purchase rule for U18 members and on receipt of a consent form they are issued personalised tickets to gain entry to the event. Some counties charge higher prices for non members to limit the numbers attending.

Lower age limits for events

The situation – For some YFC social events it may be appropriate to impose a lower age limit for members attendance dependant on the nature of the event.

Things to consider – how many members do you have aged 16-17 that would like to attend social events? Do you have enough adult members to supervise them? Much younger members require more focused supervision; can parents be involved/attend to supervise their own children? Does the venue have a minimum age? Should the younger members see people they consider role models and leader intoxicated?

Potential Solutions – Look at your membership range, the nature of the social events and decide on the appropriate age for a cut off – a county ball is a different situation to a harvest supper/quiz night which is more intergenerational. Many counties have restricted entry to some county social events for those members under the age of 16. Members under the age of 18 will require supervision by an adult. Also due to licensing restrictions in some areas the local authority may decide that your event only suitable for adults.

Risk Assessments and TENS

The situation – Every social event should have some form of risk assessment, for a larger event there is a lot to consider including the venue, the music, the bar ect... For some of our events a Temporary Events Notice (TENS) is granted and this places a lot of responsibility on the person who applies for that license to ensure the event runs safely.

Things to consider - *conducting a risk assessment can make you aware of potential risks and how to avoid them. Going through the TENS application as a group will highlight planning issues you should consider around managing attendees, alcohol and the venue. If a member is injured during a YFC social event they could in extreme cases sue the federation for damages. If a risk assessment has been carried out it shows that the organisation has taken reasonable steps to ensure that risks are managed appropriately.*

Potential solutions – Clubs can adapt risk assessments from previous events to suit the event if it is of a similar nature. Clubs can contact the county office for support in creating a risk assessment, the likelihood is that the county will have a risk assessment that you can alter to suit the event you are running.

Ensure that the person applying for the TEN is aware of the responsibility and potential repercussions if there was an incident at an event.

Bar – Who manages the Bar?

The situation – Many YFC's run their own bar which can maximise profits but it does come with the additional responsibilities of applying for a licence, buying stock, returning stock, running a legal bar, managing serving to members, identification/wristband checking and monitoring what people are drinking.

Things to consider – *are members aware of the legalities of running a bar and serving alcohol? Could advisory members be involved in running the bar?*

Potential solutions – Organising a briefing for members that are working on the bar regarding what they can and can't do with local licensing authorities, use a bar company to coordinate the bar or alternatively use a venue that is a licensed premises.

Security

The situation – For the majority of our events some form of security should be employed encase of an incident. Security can support the steward's team in managing the people attending the event.

Things to consider - *What events do we have them for? Is this based on the size of an event? What ratios of guests to security do we have? Are the security we use SIA trained? Do you brief security on the nature of the event and potential risks covered in the assessment before the event? Do you notify anybody else about the event taking place?*

Potential Solutions – Avoid open door events as this makes it difficult to be certain of your security needs, have a maximum number and sell tickets in order for you to keep track. Use SIA security to ensure a standard of trained professionals. Speak to the venue manager regarding the ratios of security required based on the numbers of people attending.

Consent Forms

The Situation – When organising events involving U18 members the organiser should have the correct consent details for each U18 member attending. These details will be needed in the event of an accident to give medical services instant information and to allow the organiser to contact the parents; it will also give them the details of the child's supervisor so they can be located within the event.

Things to consider - *How do we collect consent forms for U18 attending social events? Before the event or on the day? How do we book them into events? What do we do if an U18 attempts to attend an event without a consent form?*

Potential Solutions – Ensure all communication states that U18 members require a signed parental consent form to attend the event, if possible obtain consent forms before the event, this will help with planning the event if changes need to be made to accommodate members needs. It also allows for the forms to be checked ensuring that all the sections are completed by the parent and the supervisor. Another option could be not allowing an U18 member the option to purchase a ticket until a valid consent form has been received to ensure all U18 members attending are permitted to do so.

Transport to events – minibuses

The Situation – Due to the logistics of operating in rural areas some members book group transport to social events including minibuses and coaches. The party often begins on the journey with members drinking alcohol on the way to the event.

Things to consider - *Do clubs/counties arrange transport to events? How is this managed? Is the travel risk assessed as part of the event? Does this transport come under the YFC banner or is it arranged privately by members?*

Potential Solutions – In order to avoid U18 members travelling on arranged transport with older YFC members that may not be suitable, parents could be asked to bring their children to an event. Event organisers could telephone parents and confirm who will be bringing their child or ask the parents to write a note and attach to the consent form regarding who will be dropping off and picking up that child.

Booking venues (terms and conditions/security deposits)

The situation – when booking venues for large events it is important to understand the terms and conditions of the venue, the content of contracts of hire, the deposit required and any special requirements.

Things to consider – *are you able to view the venue to ensure it is suitable, do you have your events attendance numbers and requirements to tell the venue, do you have a budget for the event, what kind of event would you like to have? Have you read the contracts fully? Do you understand what you are signing?*

Potential solutions - Take an experienced staff member or member that has YFC event planning experience with you to view potential venues. Working closely and building up good relationships with venues can be very beneficial when planning events and working with changing numbers and requirements. Contact your county to ask about venues that have hosted YFC successfully before.

Contingency plans for event cancellation

The situation – the venue can no longer host your function and you have sold all the tickets for the event.

Things to consider – *where will you go? Can you still run the event? How would you go about cancelling the event so all members that were attending are aware?*

Potential solutions - It is good planning to look at alternatives for your events if an issue did arise which meant that particular venue could no longer host you.

Members drinking alcohol in the car park before entering the event

The situation- members bringing their own alcohol to events and staying in the car park to drink it before coming in to the event to avoid paying for alcohol at the event. Resulting in members requesting entry to the event obviously intoxicated.

Things to consider – *How will the car park be managed? Does security extend to the car park? How can we encourage members to enter the venue on arrival?*

Potential solutions – Ask members to enter the event on arrival, don't allow groups to form in the car park, have security/stewards team patrol the car park to usher people inside the venue. Some counties charge for late entry after a certain time and re-entry as a deterrent for members to stay near cars or to return to cars to access alcohol.

Searching members on the door

The situation – members/attendees may be carrying unsuitable items into the event which could lead to issues later in the event, these items could include alcohol, drugs or weapons of any kind.

Things to consider – *Can we search? Who can search? Letting members know about search policies.*

Potential solutions – It is acceptable to search members/attendees on entry to an event to prevent potential incidents occurring. These searches should be carried out by your trained SIA security team only. Members/attendees should not be searched in private; all searches should take place in public sight. These searches are not invasive and can be done on entry to the event. This may also include handbag searches for those carrying handbags. Members/attendees should be alerted to the fact that

there will be random searches at the event during the event advertisement and by signage at the event entrance stating that a '**Random Search Policy is operated**'. You have the right to refuse entry if a member/attendee refuses to be searched. When a random search policy is in operation it is good practice to have both male and female SIA security available.

The Event

Members arriving intoxicated (Over and U18)

The Situation – Due to the location of some of YFC events members can arrive 'drunk' and this can cause issues for members that are managing the door.

Things to consider - what do we do with them? What if we are unable to contact parents? What if the young person is in a serious state and needs to go to hospital? Who goes with them? Do you have paramedics at the event?

Potential Solutions - Have an area set aside 'chill out room' for those that have over indulged with a supply of water, a bucket and a steward available to sit with them. For U18 members locate their supervisor to sit with them and contact the parents/guardians to collect them or arrange for the supervisor to take them home. Some venues ask that YFC members are breathalysed before entering an event.

Fraudulent Membership cards

The situation – a member attempts to use a membership cards that is not theirs or the card has been tampered with (photo/DOB changed).

Things to consider – *Do stewards know the members attending, are membership cards checked on the door? Are members refused entry without a valid membership card?*

Potential Solutions – Ensure that members know that cards should be their own, should have a valid picture on from the current membership year and should hold the correct date of birth. Members should be informed of the rules around using someone else's membership card to participate in YFC events. Some counties cut the corners off membership cards that belong to U18 year olds to deter members from tempering with dates of birth.

Managing alcohol at events/Checking ID

The situation – The laws around under 18's accessing alcohol are fairly simple, if licensed premises/events knowingly serve people U18 they can be prosecuted and if adults supply U18 members with alcohol they can also be prosecuted. When organising events involving children (those U18) safeguarding these members should be involved in the planning of events i.e. organising consent forms, supervisors and managing access to alcohol. Failure to properly plan events where alcohol is available or U18 year olds are invited could leave the organisation vulnerable to investigation if an incident was to occur. The organisation needs to ensure that they have taken reasonable steps to ensure children are safeguarded from harm. The wellbeing of our adult members should also be considered as once they consume alcohol they can easily become vulnerable.

Things to consider – *Are all members checked on entry? What forms of ID are acceptable? Is ID checked at the bar? What if a member arrives without ID? Are members bringing alcohol to events? Are older members buying for U18's?*

Potential solutions – Access to alcohol needs to be controlled at events. This is usually done through wrist banding and ID checks at the door and at the bar to confirm ages. Ensuring that stewards and bar team are checking ID thoroughly, have a stewards briefing to ensure the team are aware of wristband colours and any particular issues. Some counties set up a bar for 16-17 year olds specifically selling soft drinks, juices and non alcoholic cocktails to steer them away from the alcohol bar. Some counties use different colour glasses for alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks to help them distinguish and steward the event effectively. Some counties operate a two strike policy for U18 members that are found with alcohol, whilst others counties ban immediately and contact parents.

Your local alcohol awareness team will usually provide resources for young people around knowing their limits and may be available to attend events or club nights to speak to young people about drinking responsibly so that members are making positive choices about alcohol and their relationship with it.

Drinks promotions/happy hours

The situation – YFC's need to be aware of the legislation around alcohol and serving it at events, activities that promote consuming high levels of alcohol over a short period of time must be avoided. Events like happy hours, tickets that included unlimited drinks, shots bars, BOGOF offers and promotions that encourage drinking to win a reward should be avoided at YFC events.

Things to consider – *how do YFCs run bars? Are they aware of the laws around serving alcohol? Would the events team benefit from attended training around event management and running a licensed bar? Are members aware of local TENS requirements?*

Potential solutions – Ensure members know the requirements and rules of the Temporary Events Notice (TENS), ensure members are aware of the laws around drinks promotions when running their own bars.

Availability of free water/soft drinks

The situation - It is good practice to have water available at all events to allow members to stay hydrated and healthy. It is important to provide non alcohol alternatives at our events for those that do not wish to drink alcohol.

Things to consider – *Is water always available? Is both tap and bottled water available? Do you charge for water?*

Potential solutions – some events now operate a system of giving free soft drinks to designated drivers as a way of keeping members safe and ensuring other members have suitable transport to return home.

Violence at events

The situation – Acts of violence at YFC events have been on the increase, the large volumes of people and access to alcohol can sometimes escalate situations to violent outcomes.

Things to consider – *do you have the correct security, who decides when the police should be called? What happens to members that cause problems at social events? How do we ensure stewards do not put themselves in danger trying to stop trouble?*

Potential solutions – Ensure members are aware of the way they should behave at social events, ensure the stewards team and security are vigilant at spotting situations before they potentially escalate. Ensure your county has a consistent response to issues that occur at social events and this is documented.

The use of items that have the potential to cause harm within events

The situation – Despite the random search procedures in place at events members/attendees will occasionally manage to bring unsuitable items to an event. Items such as crow bangers have the potential to cause harm to members and the venue.

Things to consider – *How are they getting through the random search procedures – does this need to be reviewed? Have they had enough information about acceptable behaviour within YFC or within the actual event advertising?*

Potential solution – Ensure that members/attendees are aware of acceptable behaviour at social events and remind them of these before events. Apply search procedures at all events and ensure that event organisers are briefed with the actions that should be taken should a member/attendee bring an item into an event. Take action against all members/attendees that are involved in these incidents to prevent future occurrences.

Ejecting members from events

The situation – A situation occurs where a member needs to be removed from a social event for their own safety or the safety of others.

Things to consider- *where do they go? Should a friend be asked to go with them? What if they won't leave? Should their supervisor stay with them? Should parents be called?*

Potential solution – Ensure the stewards and security team know what to do if a member needs to be removed from the event and when to contact the police if this is required. If the member is under 18 a parent should be called or the supervisor should be asked to take them home or sit with them until they are collected.

If members are identified as 'repeat offenders' around issues at social events this should be addressed to prevent further risks and often sanctions are applied around social events and other YFC privileges.

Checking the condition of the venue before and after the event re- damage ect

The situation- the event organiser/steward's team should be available to check the venue after an event has taken place to ensure that the facilities are in good condition. Toilets are usually an area that can be damaged during an event which then goes unnoticed until the end of the evening.

Things to consider- *which members will stay to check the venue for damage? Has the person had experience of dealing with damaged venues and working with the venue staff team to address the issue? Checks should not be left to one person to deal with alone.*

Potential solution – identify the staff/stewards that will do the venue check at the end of the event, ensure they know how to work with venue staff if any damage is identified.

After the event

Members camping at events

Situation – members often have the opportunity to camp at social events organised by YFC, we have a duty of care to look after our members when attending YFC social events and if they are given permission to camp this also needs to be managed as part of the larger event. When U18 are given permission to camp this should be organised similar to a residential event. This should be arranged in a reasonable and proportionate way considering that the majority of the members camping will be aged 16 and 17.

Things to consider – *where will they camp? Will members provide tents? Will camp fires be allowed? Parking should be contained in a separate field to the tents, Will U18's be allowed to camp? Will members of the events team/stewards stay over to monitor the site? Will members U18 be separated from over 18's? What will parents feel is acceptable for their children? Will camping be part of the consent forms so parents are fully aware of sleeping arrangements?*

Potential solutions - If camping is allowed at a venue the members need to know what is expected of them if they are staying over including the conditions imposed by the venue/farm. If U18 members are camping with adults this needs to be managed appropriately, consent must always be sought for an overnight stay and parents must be fully informed of the sleeping situation and the steps you are taking to manage them so that they can make an informed choice about their child participating or not.

It is never appropriate for U18's to share accommodation with those that are in a leadership role over them. Where 16-17 year olds are in a relationship with adult members and wish to share accommodation this should be authorised by parents and written on the consent form. Tent swapping should be discouraged amongst members once parents are informed of accommodation sharing arrangements.

Stewards should be onsite to support members if any issues did occur. Stewards should be briefed before the overnight stay and given a list of members that are camping on site. They should be easily visible to campers and their tents highlighted to the site, stewards should not operate in isolation. Parents could be given an overnight contact number for the stewards encase of an emergency.

Similar care should be taken for an event such as area weekends or competition stay over's when members are sharing hotel accommodation.

Members travelling home from events

Situation – How do we monitor the safety of our members when leaving events to reduce the potential of members being injured travelling home as a result of driving late at night. Statistics show that young people (statistically males) are more likely to die or be injured in cars between the hours of 2am and 5am.

Things to consider – *How do members get to and home from events? Driving? Lift? Minibuses? Taxis? How much can we be responsible for our members once they leave an event?*

Potential solutions – Allowing members to stay over at the event where available. Encourage members to plan transport arrangements before the event whether they are travelling home the night of the event or the morning after. Arranging lifts or having a designated driver is the safest way of travelling home from events. Many counties offer free soft drinks or water to a designated driver that is responsible for taking other members home.

What happens to a member if their guest causes trouble?

Situation – a non member causes an issue at a YFC event and they have been signed in by a YFC member. Do members face sanctions if their guests continue to cause concerns at YFC events.

Things to consider – *every individual is responsible for their own behaviour, members should be asked to only bring guests they feel can interact appropriately with members at a YFC social event.*

Potential solutions – If a member repeatedly brings a guest that causes issues this would need be addressed under the county behaviour standards.

Members arriving at competitions following an event appearing to still be under the affects of alcohol

Situation – The day after YFC events some members will still be affected by the alcohol they have consumed at the event they attended the night before.

Things to consider – *are there events the following day? Competitions? Work? With the members be operating heavy machinery, working with potentially dangerous animals?*

Potential solutions – Similar to the members travelling home from events, can educate members of the potential dangers of the affects of alcohol after an event, reminding them of the laws around driving under the influence of alcohol. Some counties have started competitions and events later in the day to allow members to recover from the events of the night before. There is unfortunately little we can do to prevent members going to work with alcohol in their system apart from educating them to the potential dangers it presents especially within the agriculture industry. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) produces resources on how to stay safe when working within the agriculture industry.



National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (England & Wales)

YFC Centre, 10th Street, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

Telephone: 024 7685 7200

Fax: 024 7685 7229

Email: post@nfyfc.org.uk

Web: www.nfyfc.org.uk

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