



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

Commissioners' guide to large-scale events

The term 'large-scale event' can be very wide-ranging. It is defined by Girlguiding as any event with 100 or more participants, ranging from one-day events to events that last for several nights. Events can be held jointly with other organisations or be multi-sectional. They can take place indoors or outdoors, and include camps, festivals, parties, sleepovers, outings and many more.

As a Commissioner, **you are responsible for giving approval for a large-scale event to go ahead**, and for appointing and supporting an Event Coordinator (though much of this support may be delegated to an Adviser). This guidance has been developed to help Commissioners and Advisers understand their responsibilities and the regulations that apply.

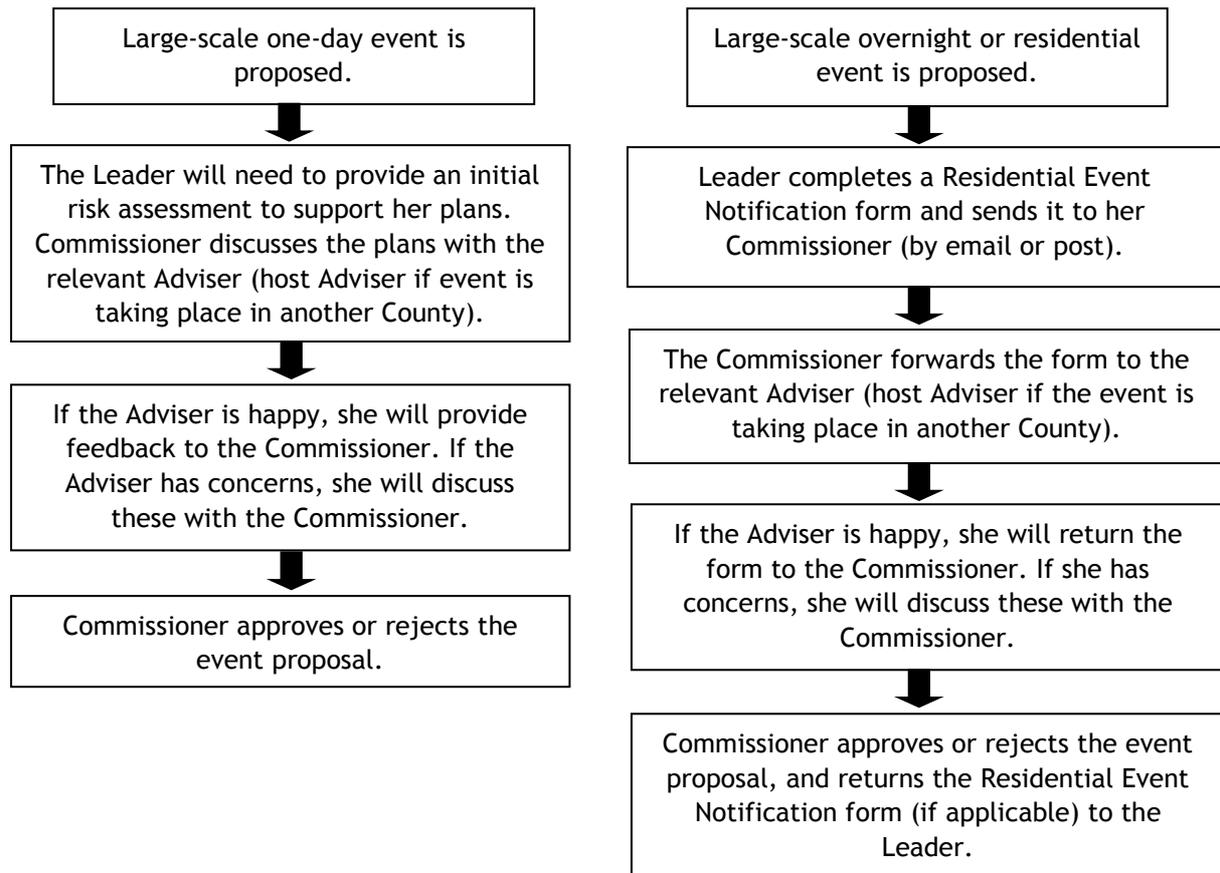
Initial steps

If a Leader wants to plan a large-scale event she must first talk to you. If further advice is needed, you can put the Leader in touch with the relevant Advisers. If the proposed event will take place overnight, a [Residential Event Notification form](#) needs to be completed and submitted to you. Ensure the Leader has read the guidance notes (which can be found on the first page of the form) and understands the process.

Please note that because a large-scale event involves a considerable amount of planning time, the form needs to be submitted to you **before** you approve the plans.

The flowcharts on the next page explain the process for large-scale one-day events and overnight or residential events.

Organisation process flowcharts



Approving an event

Large-scale events can involve a considerable investment of time, finances, people and resources, so you'll want to make the right choices. Before you decide to go ahead and approve an event, discuss the proposal with the relevant Adviser(s) and conduct a feasibility study, exploring the following questions.

- Does the event fit in with my overall strategy for guiding in the local area?
- Is the timing right? Is it the right time of year? Does it clash with another event?
- Is the event appropriate for my community?
- Are the budget and timescale realistic?
- What will the benefits be to girls, members and/or the local area?
- Are there any disadvantages?
- How will I measure the event's success and evaluate it afterwards?

As a Commissioner, you are responsible for the participants attending the event, so authorisation should not be given unless you are satisfied that:

- the event is feasible
- the Residential Event Notification form (if applicable) has been completed
- an initial risk assessment has been carried out
- the ratios of adults to girls and licence holders to girls meet Girlguiding's requirements
- the make-up of the Leadership Team is appropriate (for example, there is a good balance of age groups or an extra adult included to take responsibility for other young children attending)
- guidelines for large-scale events and adventurous activities will be followed
- you have been provided with details of a Home Contact in case of emergency.

What are your responsibilities?

The key responsibilities of the Commissioner are:

- approving the event, following advice from the relevant Adviser(s)
- appointing the Event Coordinator
- agreeing the concept of the event
- setting clear aims and objectives for the event
- setting the budget
- agreeing methods and frequency of communication with the Event Coordinator for reporting back
- providing support to the Event Coordinator (though much of this can be delegated to other members of your team, such as Advisers)
- taking the decision to cancel or postpone an event if it is not feasible.

What if an event isn't feasible?

It may be that someone has approached you full of enthusiasm to ask if they can put on an event, but it just isn't feasible. Turning down someone's idea may seem unfortunate, but there will be a very good reason for not commissioning the event, such as the following.

- Lack of finances for a large-scale event.
- The timing isn't right - it clashes with another event or school terms, or there are seasonal factors.
- The concept isn't appropriate or it doesn't fit with your aims and objectives.
- It isn't relevant to today's girls.
- Lack of experience - you may be concerned that the person doesn't have the experience to deliver the event they are proposing, and there is no one else available with the right experience either.

If you do have to reject an event proposal, try to approach the situation in a positive way. Use the following tips to help you.

1. Be honest and explain the situation clearly so that the Leader understands your rationale for not approving the event.
2. If you are concerned that the Leader doesn't have the experience to deliver the event she is proposing, discuss with her what is involved in more detail so that she understands the skills or experience required. Suggest ways she can gain more experience, or options for approaching someone who could help her put on the event.
3. There may be other events happening that the Leader can get involved with; encourage her to take part so that you don't lose her enthusiasm.
4. Explore other options and ideas - perhaps the event isn't appropriate right now, but it could be in the future.

Appointing an Event Coordinator

The Leader who has proposed the event and Event Coordinator can be the same person, but this is not a requirement.

You should appoint an Event Coordinator based on her skills, experience and knowledge of large-scale events gained either in guiding or from another role in her life. Ask for references and seek recommendations from people you trust.

Please note that the Event Coordinator does not necessarily have to be a licence holder.

The Event Coordinator is responsible for:

- managing the event
- appointing a planning team to be responsible for the various aspects of the event (catering, health, safety, site services, finances etc) and chairing that team
- delegating tasks to the planning team, then coordinating and monitoring their input
- booking the venue and agreeing terms and conditions
- coordinating the documentation required by the venue and local council to demonstrate adequate plans are in place
- ensuring risk assessments are completed
- reporting to the Commissioner as required.

The Event Coordinator must:

- be an active Girlguiding member and volunteer
- discuss her plans with her Commissioner and the appropriate Adviser
- follow the large-scale events guidance as appropriate to the event
- have demonstrable experience of coordinating or managing large-scale events, either within guiding or from another role in her life.

Communication

From the early planning stages, it is important to make clear your preferred methods of communication and the frequency with which you would prefer your Event Coordinator to report back to you. Meetings are good for building rapport, but it may not be possible to meet often due to other commitments, so consider options like telephoning and emailing. This is important for the following reasons.

- To keep you updated on planning progress, including emergency plans.
- To keep you updated on budget - income and expenditure.
- To flag up any areas of concern.
- To bring to your attention any issues that require a decision.

You will also need to agree parameters for signing off expenses - who will be responsible and up to what amount?

Event types and regulations

There are different regulations for each type of large-scale event. Ensure you keep up to date with current regulations, which can be found in [The Guiding Manual](#).

One-day large-scale events

A licence is **not** required for a one-day event, but the correct ratio of adults to girls will need to be followed. One-day events can be attended by all sections.

Overnight large-scale events

For large-scale overnight events, the correct ratio of Going Away With Licence holders (Modules 1-4) to girls will need to be followed at the event, as well as the adult to girl ratios.

Overnight events can be attended by all sections; however, if Rainbows are involved the total number of girls should not exceed 30. For example, a sleepover with ten Rainbows should not have more than 20 girls from other sections in attendance.

The Leader will need to complete a Residential Event Notification form and forward it to you as soon as possible.

Residential large-scale events

For large-scale events lasting two nights or more, the correct ratio of relevant Going Away With Licence holders to girls will need to be followed at the event, as well as the adult to girl ratios. The licence requirements depend on the type of event, for example:

- Module 5 is required if catering is to be organised
- Module 6 is required if a programme of activities is being coordinated
- Module 7 is required if care and maintenance of facilities at the venue needs to be organised
- Module 8 is required if care and maintenance of camping equipment needs to be organised.

Residential events can be attended by Brownies, Guides and members of The Senior Section. The Leader will need to complete a Residential Event Notification form and forward it to you as soon as possible.

Joint events with The Scout Association

You can find helpful guidance in the [Joint activities with The Scout Association](#) section of the online *Guiding Manual*.

Joint events with other organisations

The responsibility for approving joint events rests with you as the Girlguiding Commissioner and your equivalent role at the other organisation. A committee should be set up with representatives from each organisation.

Planning a joint event has complexities and advantages. Bringing together budgets and resources can enable you to provide a richer experience for the girls, but it also requires more effort and time in planning. You'll need to agree a concept and how finances, tasks and resources will be divided, including how any surplus income will be shared.

There may be differences in the rules and regulations, for example your adult to child ratios may not be the same as those of another organisation. A pragmatic approach will be required to enable both organisations to operate within their own requirements.

Ratios for large-scale events

Section	One-day		Overnight		Residential	
	Licence holder: child	Adult: child	Licence holder: child	Adult: child	Licence holder: child	Adult: child
Rainbows	Not required	1:5	1:30*	1:4	Not applicable	Not applicable
Brownies	Not required	1:8	1:50	1:6	1:50	1:6
Guides	Not required	1:12	1:50	1:12	1:50	1:12
The Senior Section	Not required	A minimum of three adults must be present.	1:50	A minimum of three adults must be present.	1:50	A minimum of three adults must be present.

* If Rainbows are attending a sleepover, the total number of Rainbows should not exceed 30.

Useful resources

- The [Residential Event Notification form](#) must be completed if the event is overnight or residential. (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Resource library > Forms > Forms for events and activities)
- [The Guiding Manual](#) is kept up to date with regulations, requirements, forms etc. (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Guiding Manual)
- Information on [Joint activities with The Scout Association](#) can be found in the online *Guiding Manual*.

(www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Guiding Manual > Activities > Additional information > Joint activities with The Scout Association)

- The [Event Coordinators' guide to large-scale events](#) provides information for Event Coordinators. (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Building your skills > Going away > Large-scale events > Event coordinators' guide to large-scale events)
- The [Taking Girls to Large-scale Events](#) resource includes helpful tips for success for Leaders. (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Resource library > Unit Leader resources > Taking girls to large-scale events)

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Writing group: Sophie Allen, Debs Bettsworth, Lisa Buchanan, Rebecca Cook, James Etheridge, Susannah Hodge, Dawn Neary, Caroline Norden, Harriet Raey, Joan Ramsay, Karen Tricker.