



Wild Law weekend – Policies and procedures for organisers

First Steps

- Remember that this is badged as a UKELA event so it is important to liaise with the staff team about the key aspects of the weekend such as the venue, budget and bookings. Useful contact details below. Keep liaising throughout, remember the staff team is here to help.
- Think of a theme for the weekend. Previous themes have been marine protection (Arran), rewilding, (Borders) sea birds (Yorkshire). Identify locations for walks/ site visits. Identify location of suitable venue – we have found that youth hostels work best.
- Find out how much the per person cost is at your favoured location, including any meals, see below; and that it fits within the broad budget. Recent weekends have had a delegate ticket price of £170-£190 for the weekend (which has included full board and all activities and use of the minibus over the weekend. It does not include travel costs to and from the venue, nor any incidentals such as drinks whilst at the weekend).

Venue

- The identified venue should be booked by about July for the following years event.
- Be clear with the hostel what the payment terms are and ask the UKELA staff team to check the T&Cs. Note UKELA policy is that 2 trustees are required to sign off on any unusual terms. A deposit to secure the accommodation will usually be required on booking, with the balance payable by about 6 weeks before the date of the weekend. This will set your cut-off date for bookings. UKELA must not be exposed to potential payment of full costs if bookings cannot cover them.
- Advantages with a hostel is that it can often be fully booked for the whole group (around 22 places). If you are booking space in a shared hostel, look to see if the UKELA group can at least have exclusive use of the bedrooms and see if there is a suitable room for holding evening discussions
- Check the position on catering. Will the hostel provide full board (the preferable option by far) or will you have to self-cater (note that you will set yourselves exacting goals if you attempt to self-cater. Far better to let the hostel worry about meals).
- Check with the hostel when they need to know numbers/catering requirements so you can gather that via the booking form in plenty of time.

Other important considerations for the venue

- It must be accessible by public transport, preferably trains and not too long a journey – most delegates will take time off work to attend, so we should not

make this onerous, nor costly. Look at return journeys, particularly if they are on a bank holiday as that can be when engineering works take place. If the weekend takes place over a bank holiday weekend, consider arranging the weekend so that people can travel up after work on the Friday and the activities occur on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday in the day, with return travel on the Monday afternoon. This means delegates have less need to take a day off work for the event.

- The venue should be accessible to areas of wild law interest and you should consider the availability of local speakers and guides who could come to help at the weekend.
- The venue should be accessible to a range of walking routes – you may need to offer a couple of alternatives to cater for all abilities in your party. Not everyone will want to climb up high mountains, so low level alternatives must be offered.

Budget

- It is UKELA policy that all events cover their costs, so your budget should reflect that. Once the budget is set and agreed, you should not agree to any additional costs without good reason.
- When preparing the budget, you should consider:
 - cost of hostel & food
 - cost of minibus
 - any costs for visiting any sites etc
 - speaker costs
- Look for sponsorship – sponsorship may well prove key in enabling ticket prices to be kept affordable and making sure the event covers its costs. This is a really important element of the budget.
- Once you have all the elements of your budget, you will be able to set the ticket cost. You may wish to include a couple of tickets for those on lower incomes, such as students, at lower than cost price. If so, other tickets will need to be priced accordingly, unless sponsorship covers the shortfall.

Transport

- Is a mini bus required to pick up attendees from a local train station/deposit them back at the end of the weekend; and to move people around during the weekend?
- If so, you will need to check local minibus hire, costs, insurance and make a booking. Bear in mind that if the weekend includes a bank holiday not all hire centres will be open to return the minibus. You may be able to make alternative arrangements regarding returning the minibus on a bank holiday but these will need to be agreed in writing with the hire centre and may cost an additional fee.
- Arrange minibus drivers (including arrangements for how the minibus driver will get to the hire centre if they are travelling to the area by train). It is worth having a couple of drivers in your group, in case of any issues.
- Driver eligibility: Anyone who has a driving licence pre 1997 will normally have minibus category D1 included. However, anyone with a driving licence

post 1997 will not have the D1 category included and will have to take a test for it. Most minibus hirers will also have an upper age limit for drivers too. You will need to take account of these restrictions when booking. It's worth bearing in mind too, that even if someone has the D1 category on their licence, they may not be confident to drive a minibus. If you do not have anyone in your group who can drive a minibus, then you should not hire one.

- Potential drivers can take the test which in any event is a useful skill:
<http://minibusdrivertraining.com/minibusdrivertraining.htm>

Taking Bookings

- All the information on budget, programme, speakers, accommodation etc should be sent to the UKELA staff team to set up the booking website in time for bookings to open in early February (if the weekend is in May).
- The Information for delegates should include details of the weekend, including any information on how to get to the venue, what transport will be available during the weekend or to pick up from the station, what equipment including clothes to bring, any costs not included in the fee such as cash for the bar.
- The booking form should include the following required fields: dietary requirements; mobile number; tick box to acknowledge that personal insurance is recommended and that UKELA has public liability insurance (standard form of words is available).
- The booking form should include confirmation about whether a space is required on the minibus from the station (if using a minibus) or if the delegate is driving/will require parking.
- Note, check that your minibus is enough to move delegates around during the weekend. If you don't have enough seats for the number of delegates, then you will need to plan an additional option.

Pre-event

- Book or check your booking for the minibus. You will probably need to pay a deposit to secure the booking – speak to the UKELA staff team about this.
- A reconnaissance trip to the hostel and sites/walk locations is wise before the event. If this isn't possible, you should phone the venue to check everything is in place for your visit. It is a good idea to have a named individual at the venue for liaison.
- Prepare the Risk Assessment, a template is available from the staff team.
- Check with your speakers and guides that they are still able to come (if not, you will need to find replacements at short notice). Be clear to your speakers (and make sure it is included in the budget) about any contribution/payment of expenses or donation to organisation/inclusion in any group meals.
- If more than one walk is setting off at the same time eg a high- and low-level walk, make sure that there is a walk leader for both and that they are clear on the route, timings, what to do in an emergency and meeting points eg for minibus at the end of the route. It is also important for each walk leader to have with them a basic first aid kit and means of contacting the emergency services (fully charged mobile phone) and to have a back marker in place.

You should also make sure everyone in the group is clear what to do in an emergency.

- Email out the final programme to your attendees. This should include a reminder of what to bring, contact details and arrangements about transport/travel (including what to do if running late).
- Check who is coming by public transport and needs to meet the minibus. Make sure they are clear on location and timings of the minibus so they don't miss it.
- Prepare a spreadsheet of attendees with their contact/mobile phone details & food requirements – take this with you!
- Let the hostel have details of rooming arrangements, names/numbers, food requirements by the deadline they specified.

The event

- Welcome your delegates with a smile and be ready to deal with problems and attendees' requirements. There will usually be someone who has forgotten something vital, so it's always worth knowing where the nearest supermarket is.
- For all walks ensure that it will be suitable for everyone joining. The walk leader has the final say on who joins their walk on the day eg if they do not have suitable kit/shoes. If more challenging it will probably be necessary to have a less strenuous alternative.
- Good luck!

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