

Organising your event



Now that you've decided on your event, take time to sit down and think about everything you'll need to do. Who will you sell tickets to? Where will you hold your event? How much will you charge? Will you hold a raffle?

Carefully consider all possible costs and balance that with how much you're likely to raise. How much can you get donated – raffle prizes, catering, venue? If you or other members of your team are employed – would your employer match what you raise?

Plan who needs to do what and start early!

Remember Tommy's Community Fundraising Manager is here to make your life easier! If you have any queries, about anything at all, just get in touch! **Phone 08707 70 70 70**

1. Attracting participants

- Whatever your event, you need to make sure that people will want to come to it, support it and pay for it! Try to find an original idea to encourage optimal attendance.
- Ensure your event doesn't clash with any other activity taking place on the same day in the same area.

2. Managing the sums

To ensure that your idea is viable and a profit is possible, carefully balance anticipated costs against likely income. Be realistic. Some of your costs may include:

- Design and artwork
- Printing
- Postage
- Photocopying
- Publicity
- Hire of venue
- Food and drink
- Entertainment (e.g. live music)
- Equipment (e.g. staging, amplifiers)
- Flowers

Every event is different and may include other items not listed above. Make sure you've thought about all costs unique to your event.

Remember to keep accurate records of all income (especially ticket sales!) and expenditure. Wherever possible, try to have as much as possible donated or supplied at a reduced charity rate.

Ways of generating income from your event could include:

- Sponsorship
- Raffle ticket
- Ticket sales
- Auction sales
- Advertising sales

Remember to try and aim for a 35% cost to income ratio - this means your costs shouldn't add up to any more than 35% of your gross income.



3. Sourcing sponsorship

Are there any local businesses that might sponsor your event? Leave yourself plenty time to find one. It's extremely difficult to find event sponsorship so consider any income from sponsorship a bonus and don't rely on it!

4. Venue

The venue can be as important as the actual event in attracting people, particularly if it is unusual or not normally open to the public. Make sure the facilities are suitable (does it have suitable access, parking, public transport, cloakroom, lighting, catering, tables and chairs, equipment?). Ask if you can hire your venue at a special charity rate, if not for free.

5. Catering

Choose the caterer who offers the best service at the best price – not always the cheapest! Obtain at least three quotes and remember – you may have to use one nominated by your venue. Decide on a menu with the caterer and discuss whether they'll provide any extras like flowers, drink or equipment like cutlery, glasses, tables and chairs, etc. If you get alcohol donated, ask the caterers whether they charge corkage to serve it.

6. Brochure/Programme

A special souvenir brochure marks the occasion, increases awareness and can help raise funds. Decide whether your event requires a brochure – this could simply be a list of the day's activities. You could sell advertising space to cover the production cost. Think about who might buy advertising – try local companies or companies with a product related to your event. Work out how much it will cost to produce your programme and set the advertising rates to cover these costs, or more. Set a deadline for ads making sure you allow yourself plenty of time!

NB All approaches to national companies should be passed by the Community Fundraising Manager beforehand to avoid possible conflicts of interest.

8. Tickets/Mailings

Research potential areas of interest in your event, to help you work out who to sell tickets to, and how many you can sell. Send out printed promotional material well in advance to confirm ticket sales as early as possible.

9. Committee

Consider whether you need a committee to help sell tickets or organise specific aspects of the event. Committees can help enormously by tapping into new sources of income by networking new sets of contacts.

11. Raffle/Auction

Raffles and auctions can raise significant funds during the day of your event. Ask local companies, restaurants and theatres to offer prizes, like free meals, tickets, or two for one deals. If you sell raffle tickets before the day of the event you will need to apply for a Lottery Licence from your local authority.

12. After the event

Organise a debriefing meeting with everyone involved in organising the event to evaluate its success and talk about aspects which could be improved if the event is to be repeated. Write letters of thanks to anyone involved in the organisation. Check invoices before payment to ensure you've only been charged for goods and services received – mistakes do occur.

After all income has been received and payments settled, assess your profit – hopefully this will be large! If the event has been a success and everyone present has enjoyed themselves, maybe you could think about repeating it and making it an annual occasion.

Congratulate yourself and your team!