



The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

Guidelines for Planning an Event

The LCiGB is striving to provide a high quality service in assisting individuals and congregations with various administrative tasks. In response to an identified need to provide information on management and administration of events, this guidance note was drafted to assist those members who are planning an event, particularly when it is cross-congregational. For any LCiGB event, including those that may be funded centrally, it is essential that the following guidelines are followed. You may wish to use the guidelines also when planning your own congregational events.

In summary, for LCiGB event planning, it is essential to ensure that:

1. **Trustee approval** has been granted;
2. **the timing** of the event is appropriate and does not clash with other planned activities;
3. **maximum participation** is achievable;
4. **the quality of the administration** is assured, including **publicity** for the event;
5. **the venue** for the event is appropriate;
6. **financial planning** for the event represents good stewardship, in particular, that potential liabilities are limited.

Appendix 1 includes a sample budget that may need revision for particular event requirements.

Appendix 2 contains contact names for event planning in the LCiGB. Consult the appropriate contact(s) when you are proposing an event.

Appendix 3 provides a handy tick list for event planning.

1. Trustee Approval

Events held under the auspices of the church represent the church publicly and require resources of time and money. It is important that every event presents the church well and ensures good stewardship of its resources. For these reasons, trustees need to approve events held under the auspices of the church. You may contact the Senior Administrative Manager, or Council members, in particular the Secretary or the Treasurer if you wish to propose an event.

2. Timing

It is essential to assess the best timing for any planned event to ensure that it does not clash with other activities that may be taking place centrally or in congregations. Information is available centrally about events on the church's calendar and the central office holds details of many congregational events as well. Please consult the central office regarding potential dates.

When determining a date for an event:

1. consult the LCiGB web site: www.lutheranchurch.co.uk
2. ring the church office to check any proposed dates with the senior administrator (see Appendix 2 for contact details).
3. Once the date is decided, ask for it to be put onto the electronic calendar and onto the web site.



The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

3. Maximise Attendance

Attention should be given to groups or individuals who may wish to attend, and timely and appropriate circulation of information about the event is important, both to reach the largest number of potential participants and also in order to avoid accidentally excluding anyone. The central office holds contact lists in congregations and can help with circulating information.

4. Publicity Materials

Information about an event should be written up formally and proofread prior to circulation to ensure all necessary information is included. It does not need to be specially printed or expensively produced. However, it does need to be in a format that can be easily uploaded to the web site. The Senior Administrative Manager in the church office can help you and is able to use files in Word or pdf format, and can help to proof your publicity and upload your information onto the web site. This person can also help to produce publicity material for an event. If possible, the event should be included in the appropriate issue of *The Forum* (see Appendix 2 for contact details).

Publicity materials should cover a range of information including the following

1. days, date(s) of the event
2. venue for the event, and if accommodation is provided then details of what it includes, e.g. single or double rooms, en suite facilities, meal provisions, towels, etc.
3. map and information about how to get there
4. programme details and who will present on what topic(s)
5. catering arrangements (or lack of them),
6. special needs for attendees, e.g. special dietary needs, or access issues, e.g. for disability considerations
7. cost to participants, and if variable, then details of charges for specifics or options, e.g. rooms, meals, etc.
8. booking procedures – how to register your interest, or book for attendance
9. details of payment requirements and methods, e.g. deposit, timing of full payment, information about how to pay, including to whom payment needs to be made and deadlines for payments
10. cancellation policy

5. Venue

Choosing a venue for an event is both important and potentially complex. Venues often need to be booked far in advance of the event and availability and cost may depend on seasonal preferences. Booking a venue is more complex where overnight accommodation is required, but the principles of booking a venue are general.

Issues that need to be considered when booking a venue include the following:

1. Location – is it easy to get to, appropriate geographically for your target group, accessible via public transport?
2. Availability - Is the venue available for the date(s) you require or potential alternative dates?



The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

3. Numbers - Will the venue be able to accommodate the number in your group? How flexible is the space if numbers exceed expectation? Is there a limit to the size of the group that can be accommodated? Are there discounts for groups of a certain size?
4. Is there disabled access? Availability of ground floor rooms?
5. Cost issues – Does the cost include VAT? Is the total cost affordable or prohibitive for individuals? Does it include use of group rooms? Does your event require “break-out or small group” spaces and are these available at the same or an extra cost? Does the cost include catering (tea/coffee provision), accommodation, meals, etc? Is a deposit required and is it refundable or not (and if so, to what timeframe)? What is the cancellation policy?
6. Are there “House rules” for the venue, e.g. access hours, no smoking or no alcohol rules, facilities for pets or guide dogs, facilities for child care?
7. Does the venue have equipment and facilities for presentations? Is this charged at an extra cost? Items that may become important include projectors, screens, photocopying, wireless internet access, telephone or fax machines.

6. Financial Planning

Prior to seeking trustee approval, create a budget for the event. It may be possible to provide some central church funding to assist with costs, but any requirement for this needs to be outlined in detail and sent to the treasurer of the LCiGB (see contact list in Appendix 2) who will ensure that the proposal is considered by the trustees.

Budgets need to take all costs into consideration, and a sample format is provided in Appendix 1. Some events may have special budgetary requirements and these should be explained in detail where necessary.

If the cost of an event needs to be covered in full by participants, then determining the fee or registration charge requires calculating all costs and dividing this by the number of individuals who will attend. Predicting this, however, can be difficult. Estimating the number of participants should be done with care, and consideration given to how to cover any shortfall that may result if numbers fall below the expected. It is best to have a committed number of participants in these circumstances. However, it is not always possible to ensure specific numbers, so care needs to be taken if an event is to be self-financing.

In some cases (as above), it may be necessary to require full payment with registration or booking, to avoid liabilities. Certainly the cancellation policy of the venue needs to be looked at carefully to avoid cancellation charges. You may need to assess the flexibility of any cancellation policy with the venue manager. However, keeping close attention to the cancellation policy is essential. Event insurance can be taken out to cover losses due to cancellations, but often one must disclose previous claims against insurance companies and a history of claims is likely to result in increased insurance costs to a point where purchasing cover may not be cost-effective.

The principle of avoiding losses due to cancellations means that timely bookings of participants becomes important, and collecting non-refundable fees or registration charges in accordance with the venue’s cancellation policy is essential. A typical policy is as follows:



The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

SAMPLE CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation of booking and reduction of numbers:

- More than 6 months notice: loss of only your deposit.
- Less than 6 months notice: 20% of full fees for those not attending.
- Less than 4 months notice: 40% of full fees for those not attending.
- Less than 2 months notice: 60% of full fees for those not attending.
- Less than 1 months notice: 80% of full fees for those not attending.

Final numbers should be confirmed in writing at least 2 weeks before event starts. The manager should be advised by telephone of any changes in numbers that occur within these 2 weeks.

This means that money should be collected from participants in accordance with the above timeframe, or collected in full well in advance of the event. In fact, it is advisable to obtain a non-refundable full cost 6 months in advance of the event. [You may, as a concession, indicate that a refund may be possible according to the timetable for cancellations or if a non-attender's place can be filled by a late applicant.]

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The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

APPENDIX 1 Sample Budget

The following table provides a SAMPLE for a typical budget for an event.

Figures in red are example figures only.

N.B. In column two, the heading "Units" refers to the number of items, e.g. no. of persons, no. of days, no. of rooms, etc.

Category	No. units*	Amt per unit	Total	Notes
INCOME				
Fees per person				
Maximum no., persons	25	150	3750	Lower attendance might raise individual costs
Grant			750	Lower attendance might increase grant required
Total Income			4500	
EXPENDITURE				
Venue costs (incl VAT)				
Conference room per day	1	500	500	
Break-out rooms	2	150	300	
Equipment (projector)	1	75	75	
Catering (tea, coffee, biscuits)	50	1.50	75	
Meals (1 evening meal)	25	15	375	
Presenter costs				
Fee	250		250	
Expenses (travel, materials, etc)	50		50	
Accommodation				
Charge per night (adults)	25	85	2125	
Charge per night (children)				
Meals (lunch)	25	10	250	
Services, e.g. nursery				
Travel (if funded)				Could cost this as average per person
Grants per person	25	20	500	Or detailed research could be done
Misc				
Contingency?				You may wish to include 5 or 10% of total costs as contingency, e.g. to cover the loss of a deposit
Total expenditure			4500	
Surplus/deficit			00	



The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

Appendix 2 Contacts

The best way to get in touch is by email as all staff are able to access their emails regularly and from home.

The following persons will be able to assist you with proposing, planning and publicising an event:

Senior Administrative Manager: Rosanna Mason
admin@lutheranchurch.co.uk
Tel. 020 3384 1928
Work hours:
Tuesdays & Thursdays 1400 – 1800

The Treasurer: Linda Bruch
treasurer@lutheranchurch.co.uk
Tel. 020 7554 2946 or 01326 319265
Mobile: 07952 205370

The Editor of *The Forum*: Sarah Farrow
editor@lutheranchurch.co.uk

General information about events may be found on:

The LCiGB web site: www.lutheranchurch.co.uk

Appendix 3 Check sheet for event planning

For your convenience, the following is a handy tick list to use when event planning:

- Draft a short description for your proposed event
- Consider possible dates & venues
- Call the LCiGB office to discuss dates
- Draft the event budget
- Obtain Trustee approval for the event
- Draft the publicity
- Send the publicity to the church office for proofreading, editing and uploading to the LCiGB website