



Organising a Street Party or a 'Big Lunch'

A guide for residents in Oxford

Why have a street party?

Meet your neighbours in your traffic-free street, and give the kids the chance to play out, **safely**. Having the party right outside your house, means that most people join in.

Note - this Guide is only about organising a simple street party in 1 or 2 quiet streets without outside publicity. A public event in more streets needs extra planning.



Make food to share

Top tips - What to do

- Everyone bring food to share at fixed times
- Keep music low and varied in styles
- No need to raise money in advance. Do a raffle on the day if you need to
- Try sofas and carpet for any toddlers
- Bunch activities together over a short time and in the middle part of the street
- Keep it simple for your first event

When to hold the party

Anytime is fine. Mid July or September are good dates. Sundays are good as fewer people work and it is more of a family day.

Planning and meetings

- Start planning 2-3 months in advance. Start by chatting with a couple of neighbours you know. Agree on a date early on.
- Hold 2-3 meetings in the street as it is more welcoming – more people will come.
- Share out the jobs such as talking notes and writing invitations to all houses.



Involve everyone

Inviting people face to face is a must but you also need to send round 2-3 paper invitations. No outside publicity is needed. Most neighbours will want to take part so allow for all tastes. Some, such as the elderly, can feel wary and so encourage them and put out lots of chairs.



Invite all ages with lots of seats

But you will not be able to suit everyone - as long as you invite everyone, respect differences and don't seriously inconvenience anyone; you should be able to have your event anyway.

More ideas for activities

- Cake competition gets them all out!
- Bring & Buy table or hold an auction
- Celebrate birthday of oldest person
- Best decorated front door
- Tug of war, volleyball, skittles, swing ball
- Dancing – any sort, adults or teenage display
- Survey or petition on local issue



Road closure

You will need to apply **at least 6 weeks** in advance to close your road. Oxford City Council's website explains the process and has the forms you will need. See:

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20146/streets>

There is a small charge for charge for this, and one resident will have to sign an indemnity form.

Leave room for a fire engine or ambulance which may need to come down your street at any time.

Road signs & bunting

Bunting can be bought from www.partypacks.co.uk or you can make it yourself. In the lead up to the street party you can gather a few people to cut out shapes from any sort of material. Then sow or staple it to some string.

You can borrow road closed signs from [the city council](#). Phone Oxford Direct Services on 01865 252956 or email highways@odsgroup.co.uk

Local community groups may be able to lend you road closed signs and bunting.

Safety and insurance

Think about any risks such as electricity, accident or burns on a BBQ. Agree that everyone should take responsibility and watch out for each other. We do not advise you have bouncy castles as you can't get insurance for anyone using them.

Providing residents agree to the terms and conditions set out by Oxford City Council it has waived the requirement for public liability insurance for "Small Events" as defined by them.

Residents can still take out public liability insurance should they wish. There are many insurance companies that offer this. You could see this: www.streetparty.org.uk/insurance.aspx

Day before and on the day

Put a note round all houses or on cars a few days before, and on the day remind the last few people to move their cars. Get the bunting up early to get people going, along with the road barriers. And don't forget to clear up and move the barriers at the agreed time.



What can go wrong?

- Will people turn up on the day? Don't worry, they will, as most people are keen.
- What to do if a resident really does not want the street party? Listen to them; they may have the wrong idea about it or they may worry about their car. Some people don't like parties, so if noise is kept low and you let people come and go, they should have no reason to stop you going ahead.
- It won't rain all day! Cover things up and wait till it passes.
- Kids can fall over, so all adults should watch out for them.
- Gatecrashers won't come, unless you have loud music late at night.
- Keep the BBQ safe.

More information – try this site:

www.streetparty.org.uk

Let's make street parties a regular part of British life.

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