OUR YEAR
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

A toolkit for inclusivity, sustainability and health

OUR YEAR
Wakefield District 2024

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT...

This toolkit provides guidance on things to consider when planning events, activities or other work during Our Year. Each toolkit provides guidance in the form of quick checklists and useful links, based around the themes of:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Environmental Sustainability
- Health and Wellbeing

The toolkit has three sections, covering all aspects of event/activity planning where we can make impacts in inclusivity, accessibility, sustainability and health; planning, purchasing and communicating. The goal of these toolkits is to ensure that impact is positive.

If you think anything is missing from these toolkits, have suggestions for further topics for inclusion, or just generally have feedback, please do email ouryear@wakefield.gov.uk

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ACTIVITIES TOOLKIT

DELIVERING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT ARE INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE, SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY!

Accessibility checklist

☑ **Have you given details about how accessible your event is for everyone?** This includes whether the venue where the event is happening has ramps or elevators, if there's parking that's easy to use for people with disabilities, whether there is ample seating and if there will be sign language or other interpretations available. It's also helpful to mention if the event will be noisy.

☑ **If your event includes things to see**, like visuals or exhibits, have you thought about providing audio descriptions for visually-impaired people?

☑ **If your event includes audio**, have you considered sign language interpretation? Would lighting need to be adapted to accommodate this? Or if you will be sharing video content, is it captioned?

☑ **Can you provide a quiet space/rest area** for people to use? This is a place where people can go if they are overwhelmed or need to rest. The space may also be used for prayer or reflection.

☑ **Do you have a plan of the venue** that could be provided on the event listing?

☑ **Are staff aware of attendees with additional needs?** Do they have the information they need to support them appropriately?

☑ **Does the venue have gender-neutral or all-gender restroom facilities** available? This helps transgender and non-binary people feel comfortable and safe. This could include pointing out the disabled/accessible/inclusive toilets available, including in event promotion.

☑ **Are there facilities to enable people to breastfeed** more easily.

☑ If you have one, **does your feedback survey allow for attendees to report any issues** or concerns related to inclusivity and accessibility?

USEFUL LINKS

Find a sign-language interpreter

Find an Audio Describer

25 Reasons Event Organisers Should Provide a Quiet Room

Events for Children – SEND inclusivity checklist

☑ When creating activities, **have you considered children who may not be able to complete the task**? They may feel dejected, so consider offering alternatives.

☑ Can **Makaton** be incorporated into the activity?

☑ Many disabilities are hidden and sometimes we can wrongly assume a child is behaving badly. **Asking at the outset what you can do to help** makes a huge difference.

☑ Can you **provide a safe/quiet space** for children who may become overstimulated or need a break?

☑ Children with SEND (special educational needs and/or disabilities) may be sensitive to lighting, light effects and loud noises, however they may also make noise themselves. Are **practitioners aware of these needs** and able to make adjustments?

☑ Is there a **maximum number of attendees** to ensure events are not too crowded?

☑ Can you **provide parents with advanced information** to ensure they know what to expect? This could be presented as a Social Story (see links)

USEFUL LINKS

Autism Friendly Libraries Top Tips – Transferable tips

PTA tips for SEN Friendly Events - Guidance provided by PTA+

What is a Social Story? – Find out how social stories can help SEND children feel comfortable in new situations

About Makaton – Not sure what Makaton is? Find out here

Cultural Competencies checklist

☑ **Begin by researching** and understanding the beliefs and practices of the religions and faiths that may be represented at your event. This will help you anticipate the needs and preferences of attendees.

☑ **Be mindful of religious holidays and holy days** when scheduling your event. Avoid scheduling events on times or days that are significant to one or more religions or provide alternative dates or times for those who cannot attend on the chosen date.

☑ **If your event includes catering**, can you offer a variety of food options that accommodate dietary restrictions and preferences, including vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher, and gluten-free options? Label food clearly to show ingredients and any religious certifications.

☑ **Designate quiet spaces for prayer, meditation, or reflection** for attendees of different faiths. Ensure these spaces are respectful and accommodating, with appropriate facilities like prayer rugs or meditation cushions.

USEFUL LINKS

Major Religious Observances 2023 & 2024 – Key dates in 2024

Religious Dietary Needs Guide – Learn more about religious diets

UK Major Religions Guide

Sustainability checklist

★ See also Health & Wellbeing

- ☑ **How can you encourage audiences to use green transport options?** Can you use Citizen Coin (when live) to reward active travel? Can we show cycle routes on the event page (see links)? Can you show the nearest bus stop to the event?

- ☑ **Before printing** any marketing materials, have you checked whether you already have suitable materials? If you must print, can you use recycled paper or un- chlorinated and uncoated paper, and water or vegetable-based inks? Have you made a plan to recycle or re-use any surplus?

- ☑ If there will be artists/performers/speakers at your event, have you tried to **hire people from the local area**? If they are coming from afar, have you encouraged them to use public transport if possible?

- ☑ **If food is to be offered at the event**, can you encourage the use of sustainable packaging and cutlery? Consider a ban on single-use plastics at the event. Where a bar is in operation can reusable cups be used to reduce waste?

- ☑ **If you are hiring traders / vendors**, can you choose ones who can demonstrate sustainable practices e.g. locally sourced produce, vegan options? Ideally traders should have NCASS (Nationwide Caters Associated) certification.

- ☑ Will attendees be able to **refill their own water bottles**? This could be at a refilling station, or local businesses could provide refills free of charge.

- ☑ Have you provided enough **recycling bins** at the event? Could you provide separate bins for plastics, metals and wood/cardboard? Are they visible and clearly marked?

- ☑ If you have one, **does your feedback survey capture travel**, and allow for attendees to report any issues or concerns related to sustainability?

USEFUL LINKS

Cycling journey planner – a tool for planning cycling routes

Wakefield District Bus Guide

Julie's Bicycle - Sustainable Events Guide – useful events hints and tips

Health & Wellbeing checklist

☑ **How can you encourage audiences to use active travel?** Can you use Citizen Coin (when live) to reward active travel? Can you show cycle or walking routes on the event page (see links)? Can you provide temporary bike storage solutions?

★ *See also Environment*

☑ **If you are planning a large festival or event, can you provide advice on when it may be less busy?** This could be helpful for people who find crowds overwhelming.

☑ **If there will be food at the activity**, will there be healthy options available?

☑ **Can smoking/vaping be banned at your activity?** If not (for example if it takes place outdoors) can you make a 'smoking unfriendly' environment using marketing messaging and signage? Drug use should be banned at all activities.

☑ **Have you communicated if there will be alcohol** at your event/activity? If there will be, are there alternative soft drink options? You should also highlight if alcohol is banned at an event

☑ **If your activity involves a lot of sitting down**, have you factored in opportunities for movement breaks?

☑ **If your activity involves stewards or other volunteers**, have they been properly briefed and do they feel prepared and confident about their tasks?

USEFUL LINKS

Cycling journey planner – a tool for planning cycling routes

Wakefield District Bus Guide

Five Ways to Wellbeing – tips for improving wellbeing

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PURCHASING TOOLKIT

TAKING AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING

Sustainability checklist

Please note that if you are purchasing for an event or activity, you may also find it helpful to refer to the Sustainability checklist in the Activities Toolkit

☑ Consider **whether you really need to buy something** – do you or any of your group/organisation already have the things you need?

☑ **Before printing** any marketing materials, have you checked whether you already have suitable materials? If you must print, can you use recycled paper or un- chlorinated and uncoated paper, and water or vegetable-based inks? Have you made a plan to recycle or re-use any surplus?

☑ Have you done **research into sustainable alternatives** to non-recyclable materials? Are there new innovations and products you can use instead?

☑ **Have you considered the lifecycle of the product**? If the material is not commercially recycled (paper/cardboard, metals, hard plastics) are there any other recycling or reuse options? Can it be donated?

☑ You might find it useful to **create a sustainable event plan** to help identify ways to adapt and be more sustainable. What will happen before the event, during, and after? What waste will be generated and where will it go?

☑ Can you **calculate your carbon footprint, and set a goal** for next time? See link below.

USEFUL LINKS

Calculate the CO2 footprint of your event – CO2 calculator

Pass It On - Wakefield Council Guidance – find out about local recycling options

A to Z of Recycling – Renewi – Find out which materials can be recycled

COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

HOW TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Inclusive Communications

General

☑ **Writing should be in Plain English** – avoid using jargon, long words and complex sentence structures. Hemingway is a useful tool for checking the reading level of your text, while Chat GPT or other AI services can be useful for re-writing in Plain English (just type: Rewrite this is Plain English and paste your text – never include personal data).

☑ **Avoid using 'script' fonts** for large bodies of text as these can be difficult to read:
Some people find script fonts hard to read

☑ Depending on your audience, **can you provide alternative formats** for your communications? This might include easy-read documents, braille versions or audio descriptions. The possibly of producing these should be factored into your communications budget. If your communications are targeting a particular group (for example the D/deaf community) you may of course need to provide all communications in another format.

☑ When writing large amount of text, ensure it is **aligned to the left** of the page, and avoid using lots of columns.

☑ Ensure that the language you use is inclusive – see the Inclusive Language Glossary in this toolkit.

USEFUL LINKS

https://hemingwayapp.com/ - check the reading level of your text

Chat GPT – Free AI model which allows you to ask it to change text into 'plain English' – just say 'Make this plain English' and paste text

Free Text to Speech Generator – translate short texts to speech

Home - Braille Translations – if you need something in braille

Social model of disability – how barriers constrain people, not impairments or differences

Inclusive Communications
Digital

☑ **If you have a dedicated website** this should be navigable by using a keyboard. Test this out by pressing the tab key on your keyboard – can you see where you are on the page?

☑ **All text should be in word format, not image format**, as screen readers cannot read images.

☑ **All images should have alt text** that clearly describes the image or marks it as decorative.

☑ **How readable is your content?** Font sizes should be minimum of 12 points, and adjustable on websites, while text over images or coloured backgrounds should use sufficient colour contrast:

☑ **Video content should always be captioned** – free caption services are available online (see links)

☑ **On social media**, images used should be an addition to your message, not the main message. Alternative you could provide a description of the image in your caption.

☑ Hashtags should be capitalised on each word to be read by screen readers

USEFUL LINKS

Screen Reader (google.com) – test if your work can be read by a screen reader with this free plug-in

Microsoft guide to writing alt text

Free Video Caption Generator

How to Meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Inclusive Communications

Print

Please note that if you are printing materials, you may also find it helpful to refer to the Sustainability checklist in the Purchasing Toolkit

☑ **Not everyone has access to digital.** Have you considered whether you will need print materials to be make your communications more inclusive?

☑ Using a **font size** of at least 12 points is the basic requirement, but it's better to use 14 points, even for image captions and logo credits.

☑ **Use bold** instead of italics – many people, including people with dyslexia, struggle to read italic text.

☑ **Pick matte paper** instead of glossy as glossy paper reflects too much light.

☑ **Avoid complicated folds** in leaflets as these can make it difficult to unfold and put back together (such as a concertina fold in a map).

☑ **The size of the print matters**; if it's too big, it's hard to handle, but if it's too small, you can't fit a large enough font size.

USEFUL LINKS

<u>Unlimited Resources</u> - a list of useful resources for artists, commissioners and marketers

<u>Dyslexia Friendly Style Guide</u> – how to design to be inclusive of dyslexic people

<u>Designing for Colour Blindness</u> – how to design to be inclusive of colour-blind people

Useful glossaries and guides:

Inclusive Language Glossary - Guidant Global

Climate Change Glossary - Met Office

Glossary of Disability Terminology - DPA

Writing about ethnicity - GOV.UK

Sex and Gender Writing Style guides - University of Bristol

Guidelines for Age Inclusive Communication - CNPEA

If you know of any other useful glossaries or guidelines that should appear in this toolkit, or have any other feedback, please email ouryear@wakefield.gov.uk