

Festival Safety Flash

Following a significant incident recently with a festival in Dorset and with the increase in temperatures, here are 5 main fire safety points to consider for your event.

CALL 999 – GIVE THE FULL PICTURE

If you discover a fire, call **999** immediately and tell the operator:

-  Exact location of the incident (festival name, area, nearest entrance or What3Words)
-  Confirm that it is a festival or an outdoor event, the type of festival or event, and whether there is camping or sleeping on site
-  What is burning (grass, tent, vehicle, structure, generator, etc.)
-  Approximate size of the fire
-  Whether anyone is injured, trapped or at risk
-  Any hazards nearby (fuel, gas cylinders, generators, fireworks, chemicals)
-  The best access route for emergency services
-  Your name and contact number

Stay on the line until the operator tells you it is safe to end the call.



KEEP THE SITE FIRE SAFE

Remove cut grass from the site.

Dry cut grass can ignite quickly and help fire spread.

- ✓ Remove all cut grass promptly.
- ✓ Dispose of it in designated waste areas.
- ✓ Never leave piles of vegetation near tents, fencing, generators or vehicles.

🚒 ALWAYS HAVE A BACKUP ALARM

Always have a means of raising the alarm; there must be a way to warn everyone on site of a fire (including overnight for festivals with camping).

Examples include:

- 🗣️ Public Address (PA) system
- 📢 Air horn or manual siren
- 🔔 Hand bell
- 📻 Radio message to Event Control and Fire Wardens
- 🧑 Designated staff alerting nearby areas

Everyone should know both the primary and backup method before the event begins.



🔥 KEEP TENTS WELL SPACED

Adequate tent spacing saves lives.

Maintaining a suitable distance between camping tents helps to:

- Prevent fires from spreading rapidly between tents.
- Protect campers and their belongings.
- Maintain clear access for emergency vehicles and firefighters.
- Reduce the risk of injury during an emergency evacuation.

🚫 **CONSIDER BANNING BBQS AND OPEN FLAMES**

Due to the current wildfire warning and the increased fire risk caused by hot, dry weather, even a single spark or hot ember can quickly ignite dry grass and vegetation, putting people, wildlife, and the festival at serious risk.

This includes:

- 🔥 Disposable BBQs
- 🍷 Charcoal BBQs
- 🔥 Gas BBQs
- 🍖 Wood-fired grills and smokers
- ⚠️ Any other open-flame cooking equipment

📢 **How We Recommend You Communicate This**

To make sure everyone is aware of the potential BBQ/ Naked Flame prohibition, we are communicating it through:

- ☐☐ Pre-event emails to ticket holders
- 🌐 Festival website and official social media channels
- 📱 Festival app and event notifications (where available)
- 📋 Signage at all entrances, campsites, car parks, and key locations
- 🗣️ Briefings from stewards, security teams, campsite staff, volunteers, and traders
- 🔊 Regular Public Address (PA) announcements throughout the event



ACTIONS FOR EVENT ORGANISERS

Organisers must ensure that a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is completed and recorded for their event, considering current weather conditions and any increased wildfire risk.

General fire safety considerations

- Smoking arrangements and appropriate control measures.
- The use of barbecues, fire pits and other sources of open flame.
- Maintaining adequate emergency vehicle access and egress routes.
- Suitable separation distances between ignition sources, vegetation, structures.
- Appropriate fire prevention and emergency response measures for the event.
- The heightened risk of wildfire due to prevailing weather conditions.
- Vehicle parking arrangements, ensuring vehicles are not parked on long, dry grass or other combustible vegetation, as hot exhaust systems and catalytic converters can ignite dry material. This is particularly important for temporary event parking, campsites and off-road parking areas.
- Any additional controls required to reduce the risk of fires spreading to surrounding vegetation, particularly where events are located on or adjacent to heathland, grassland, woodland or agricultural land.

It is a requirement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 that a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment is completed for all licensed venues and open-air events and that it is recorded. For further guidance on your responsibilities under this legislation, please refer to the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service website www.dwfire.org.uk or contact the Fire Safety Team on 01722 691717 or businessfiresafety@dwfire.org.uk.



Further guidance can be found on our website

[Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service | Licensing and events](https://www.dwfire.org.uk/business-fire-safety/events-and-celebrations/open-air-events/)

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