

Environmental Information Regulations – Response - 27399

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to a hunt event that has taken place (or is permitted to take place) within Suffolk, namely Bungay, particularly where it involves the use of public spaces or town centres.

Please provide the following information:

Please find the responses below, covering the last five years.

1. Council Engagement with Event Organisers

o Has Suffolk County Council ever formally requested that the hunt organisers relocate their meet(s) to a private location away from the public centre of town?

o If so, please provide copies of correspondence or records of such requests.

2. Health and Safety Risk Assessment

o Has a full and independent health and safety risk assessment been conducted in relation to the event, where it takes place on council land?

o Please provide copies of any such assessments, including details of who carried them out.

No information held by Suffolk County Council.

o If these have not taken place, who permitted the event to take place on council property?

Suffolk County Council does not grant permissions in relation to this event. To the best of our knowledge, the event does not take place on Suffolk County Council owned land; the public highway is not Suffolk County Council property. Please find attached a letter issued by Suffolk County Council to the Waveney and Norfolk Harriers regarding the Boxing Day hunt event in each of the past two years.

3. Road Closures and Traffic Management

o Have the organisers applied for and obtained a formal road closure order for the use of public highways during the event?

o Please provide documentation of any road closure orders granted, including conditions, costs charged, and traffic management plans.

4. Council Position and Public Communication

o Has the Council taken any steps to publicly distance itself from the hunt to clarify that the event is not council-endorsed or supported?

o Please provide copies of any public statements, press releases, or internal communications on this matter.

5. Street Collection or Fundraising Licensing (may be licensing at East Suffolk)

o Are the organisers collecting money during the event?

o If so, has a street collection or charitable fundraising licence been applied for and granted?

o Please provide copies of any such licence(s) and associated application records.

6. Security and Counter-Terrorism Compliance (Martyn's Law / Protect Duty)

o Has the Council assessed whether the event meets the thresholds for Standard or Enhanced Tier requirements under the Protect Duty (commonly referred to as Martyn's

Law)?

o If applicable:

§ Has a basic or enhanced terrorism/security plan been submitted by organisers?

§ Have staff training, communication plans, or vulnerability assessments been completed?

§ Has there been any liaison with the Security Industry Authority (SIA) or other relevant bodies?

o Please provide copies of relevant documentation, assessments, or correspondence.

No information held by Suffolk County Council.

Date: 01 December 2025

Enquiries to: Customer Services, Suffolk County Council, Constantine House, Constantine Road, Ipswich, IP12DH

Tel: 0345 606 6171

Email: customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk



Dear Event Organisers,

EVENTS ON THE HIGHWAY

I am writing to you about organised events which may take place on the highway (which includes, but is not limited to, the verge, footway/pavement, or road), within the county of Suffolk. The below seeks to ensure future event organisers are aware of their responsibilities, and some of the necessary steps which should be taken to undertake those events, legally and safely.

This letter does not constitute legal advice and is provided purely to encourage early engagement with the County Council whenever an event is being planned on the highway. If you have any concerns about your rights and responsibilities after reviewing this letter you are encouraged to seek your own independent legal advice.

Managing Traffic

Your event may require a Section 16A Order of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which you may receive from Suffolk County Council following a successful application.

You should consider applying for such an order if your event is likely to obstruct or cause safety concerns for users of the highway. You are not permitted to obstruct a highway (see below) or otherwise redirect traffic without an order in place, which will determine what traffic is permitted on the identified roads at set times. You will need to use an accredited marshal to direct traffic around your event.

If your event requires a temporary traffic restriction, you will need to complete an event application form. Suffolk County Council ask for a minimum notice period of **3 months** from receipt of a complete application.

Further information can be found by visiting: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks/apply-to-close-a-road-for-an-event>

Other tips for running an event on the highway safely

Good planning and organisation is essential to putting on an event that is both safe and enjoyable. For many events all that is required is to follow a basic series of steps and produce an Event Management Plan (EMP) that helps to ensure that everyone knows what they are responsible for and all necessary contingencies which are in place.

A good starting point is to access this webpage: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/index.htm> which is aimed at helping organisers and others run events safely.

Organisers should consult with their area Safety Advisory Group (SAG) at an early stage. The purpose of the Safety Advisory Group is to enable the relevant regulatory and response agencies to consider events that have implications for public safety.

Although the SAG has no statutory powers, individual members may have regulatory powers. Therefore, organisers will be advised if any aspects cause the group concern although the SAG is not able to make decisions about the event.

Further information about the role of the SAG and further guidance on running events safely is available on this webpage: <https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/covid19/>

Highway authority approval to restrict certain traffic on the road to support an event going ahead safely does not cover everything an Event Organiser may require. Organisers should be aware of their responsibilities when looking to host an event on the highway and that they take the necessary steps to ensure that all relevant permissions including licences, insurances, planning and risk assessments / method statements are in place prior to proceeding with an event. This will help you to avoid causing any offences or being subjected to costly legal claims in the event of an incident.

Using the highway to stage an event, without prior approval, could result in “wilful obstruction of the highway” per Section 137 Highways Act 1980. Even where a Special Event Order is in place authorising obstruction of certain traffic, this will not permit obstruction of the highway to others who may still be using the highway, like pedestrians. Obstruction can occur not only from unauthorised structural barriers, but also gathering on the highway in a way that prevents people exercising their public rights to use the highway to pass and repass.

Failure to use the highway safely and considerately, in compliance with the Highway Code, may (amongst other possible contraventions / offences) also risk causing road traffic offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988. This risk is increased where no Special Event Order is in place and / or other measures have been taken to ensure safe use of the highway.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that Event Organisers engage early in their plans to ensure that events are not undertaken in contravention of any requirements or obligations.

Yours sincerely,



Head of Highway Regulation
Growth, Highways & Infrastructure