

Quaker peaceworkers appeal 2008–09

Tips for organising events



Organising an event is a great way to bring a meeting together, sharing gifts and learning more about each other. And you get to raise funds together for Quaker work at the same time as having fun!

The key to an enjoyable and productive event is planning. Whatever the size or type of event, the following list of tips is here to help you.

Involve others and ask your meeting for support

We are blessed with a wealth of gifts and diverse experience in our meetings – these qualities can sometimes be lying dormant and unknown. All you need to do to bring them alive is invite your meeting to help you and be a part of putting their faith into action by raising funds for our peaceworkers appeal by organising and holding an event. What ideas do they have for an event? What would they like to do to help? What do they feel needs to be done to ensure the event is a success? When can you meet together to make this happen?

Theme the event

Have a theme for your event – ‘party for peace’, ‘poems about peace’, ‘peace quiz’. Make the theme clear in your publicity so that people know what the event is for.

Know your audience

Create a list of all the people within and outside your meeting that may be interested in attending. This will help to give you an idea about whom you are trying to reach. Perhaps you would like to use the event for outreach too – to increase your numbers, ask Friends to bring a friend.

Book a venue and set a date

It is always worth having a good look at sports events, local, national and international events that may be booked on the dates you are thinking of. Even the best quiz in the world will suffer on

FA Cup Final day. Is your event better held on a weekday or at a weekend?

Check how many people you can reasonably cater for at your venue and how they are going to get there and park their cars or secure their bikes. Build in contingency if you are planning to hold an outdoor event – decide what you are going to do if you get inclement weather. Make this clear in your publicity.

Publicise your event early

Now you have thought about who would be interested in attending, a venue and date, you are ready to start publicising your event. You can use posters (a suggested poster is included in this pack, or you can design your own) and place these on your noticeboard, the noticeboards of other local meetings and, where appropriate, the noticeboards of other faith groups and organisations in your local area. For some events it might be helpful to send out invitations with response slips and a deadline for replying so that you can give a good estimate of attendance numbers – but be careful to avoid giving the impression that if somebody misses the deadline they can't attend.

Use social networking to promote your event among your friends and contacts. The Quaker peaceworkers appeal has a Facebook group which you can join; post a message there to let others know about your event.

Alternatively you can sell tickets in advance if catering numbers are required.

Set a target

How much would you like to raise? It can help to have something tangible to work toward as a meeting. This also helps with budgeting for your event.

Make a budget

Your treasurer will be happy to help with this. All you need to do is estimate the cost of your event (venue hire, catering, and publicity) and deduct this from the amount you would like to raise. This will give you an idea of how much to charge for tickets.

Every little helps

Think about ways you can create extra funds by charging for additional items your audience would like to purchase. For example, if you hold a music event, don't forget to provide, and charge a small amount for, programmes. Create a display about the peacemaker appeal and encourage donations with a collection pot – help make giving tax-effective by providing Gift Aid envelopes for people to use for their donations (email fundraisingteam@quaker.org.uk to request these). Ask local businesses if they would like to provide a prize in return for publicity in a programme or on a poster.

Keep safe

If you are unsure of your obligations, visit the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk or contact Katie Frost at

katief@quaker.org.uk or on 020 7866 9508. If you are serving food, visit www.food.gov.uk for guidance. Don't forget your safeguarding responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Visit www.quaker.org.uk/safety or contact Katie for advice.

Remember as well to arrange a secure area, such as a locked room or cupboard, where people organising the event can leave their valuables while they are busy hosting.

Follow up your event

A simple thank you to everyone that participated and helped goes a long way in building relationships. Pass around a sign-up sheet for people to give their email addresses so that you can feed back to them about how much they raised – and to tell them about future activities. Use your event as a springboard for other ways of supporting the appeal. Perhaps people would like to hear a peacemaker speak at your meeting about the appeal? Don't forget to take photos of your event to share afterwards.

Tell others

Share your successes. Tell us and other meetings supporting the appeal what went well and what you've learned for next time – you can email your thoughts to Katie, or use the web to connect with other Friends. Join our Facebook group – search for 'Quaker peacemakers' and look out for the hands logo – or discuss your experiences at www.quaker.org.uk/forum.

The Fundraising made simple guide in your activity pack contains ideas for events of all sorts. Alternatively, you can contact Katie Frost at katief@quaker.org.uk or telephone Katie on 020 7866 9508 to discuss ideas and get help and support for your own event.