

The HAWOG Guide to Planning an Event



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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to HAWOG, the Harrow & Wembley Outdoor Group. Our Group has a long history of arranging social, fun, and sometimes challenging, outdoor activities for a wide range of people to enjoy.

Our Group depends on our [Full Members](#) to plan and run all events in our Programme. This is why our Full Members pay a lower annual membership fee than our [Casual Members](#).

There are a minimum number of events which Full Members must contribute to the programme in order to meet their membership obligations. We refer to these as 'Contributing events'. After twelve months as a Full Member, Members are expected to contribute either:

- a single-day event to each of our Winter and Summer programmes; or
- a multi-day event (comprising at least two nights away) to either programme (if they attended 3 or more multi-day events in the previous programme year that were organised by other members).

Members are encouraged to submit as many additional events as they would like to the programme over and above their Contributing events!

The deadlines for submitting events are as follows:

- Single-day events for the Winter programme must be submitted by the end of September
- Single-day events for the Summer programme must be submitted by the end of March
- Multi-day events must be submitted by the end of September

This Planning Guide takes Members through all of the steps they need to go through to plan and run a successful event.

We wish you happy planning!

The HAWOG Committee

Are you confused about any of the information in this Guidance?



Please ask the HAWOG team for help!

If you would like some help in any aspect of planning an event, then contact the HAWOG team at: info@hawog.org.uk.

Click [here](#) for our list of frequently asked questions.

You can also come along to one of our regular evening events in Harrow, and seek advice from other Members.

Choosing your Event

Here are the basics you first need to consider when choosing your event:

- You can choose from a wide selection of outdoor activities – for example walking or cycling (other outdoor activities, such as mountain-biking, rock climbing, caving or horse riding are not covered by our liability insurance, so should be booked with a provider who has their own insurance). We have lots of information on our website about different kinds of activities to help you. You can find this [here](#).
- You can choose locations anywhere in England, or for longer visits the UK and Europe.
- Please do consider the best points to start and end your event. If the start location of your event is only accessible by car, then participants will need to be able to get back to their cars at the end of the event. If it is possible to reach the start location by public transport, then the end location will also need to have public transport links. You will also need to work out whether participants will need to bring their own lunch, or if there are potential pubs or cafes to visit along the way.
- You will need to select a date for your event. For weekends away, organisers often require participants to travel on Friday, with overnight stays on Friday and Saturday. Events can also take place over public holidays, with longer events planned mostly during the summer time.
- You will be expected to organise accommodation for visits with overnight stays. Our Members often use [YHA accommodation](#), bed & breakfasts, or camping. You should specify what kind of accommodation you are going to book when you first submit your event details, but you will not be expected to make any payment for accommodation until you have an idea of the numbers of people who would like to join the event.

Submitting a Basic Details Form

Once you have your activity, location and date, you can now submit a Basic Details form to the HAWOG team. This is a short online form, which you can find [here](#).

The team will review your form, and post your basic details into the main [Programme](#). If the team have any queries about your event they will contact you prior to publication.

Please note: If you already have all of the necessary details for your Event, you can skip this process and just submit a Full Details form.

Submitting a Full Details Form

You will need to submit a new, Full Details form for your event at least 30 days in advance of a day event and 90 days in advance of a multi-day event. You can find the forms [here](#).

Please note that you will need to complete all of the information in your form – we are unable to transfer information you have already submitted in your Basic Details Form into the Full Details Form.

Planning Your Event

Route Planning

As event leader, you will be responsible for guiding participants along a pre-planned route. We would always recommend that you plan your route carefully in advance, and carry a map with you. If you are planning a route which is entirely new to you, we would advise you to walk the route in advance with a friend.

There are lots of guides available to help you plan routes. We list a number of websites [here](#) which can give you pre-planned walk information.

You can find Ordnance Survey (OS) maps in your local library. OS also have an online tool to help you create your own map, available [here](#).

If you are unsure about how to plan a route, or would like help with navigation skills, please let us know. We organise a number of events throughout the year to help Members can these skills.

For Contributing Events

In order to ensure that our programme contains a good balance of events, we ask Members to organise Contributing events which are commensurate to the kinds of events in which they themselves participate. So, if you enjoy participating in medium to long walks, we'd like you to plan this kind of event. We know it can be tempting for Members to choose a shorter, 'easy' Contributing event. However, if all Members did this, it would be a pretty boring programme! So please, do put in what you take out of HAWOG.

For Additional Events

Members are welcome to submit additional events to the programme. These don't have to be exclusive to HAWOG, but may be organised in partnership with another organisation, e.g. the Ramblers. However, we still expect Members to undertake some 'organising' activity within these events – we cannot post events in our programme which have been organised entirely by external groups or individuals.

Buddy-Up

If this is your first time organising a multi-day event, or you want some advice and support from someone experienced, then you can pair up with someone else. Two Members are able jointly to organise a multi-day Contributing event. Two Members can also organise a single-day Contributing event, although only one Member will be able to credit this as their Contributing event.

Event Protocols

Check the Online Programme

Please check our online events programme to ensure that your event details have been uploaded. If you can't see your event, or if some of the details are incorrect, please contact us immediately.

Colour-coding Events

We assign a colour code to every event in the programme. These are:

Blue = social events

Grey = training events

Green = easy outdoor events, suitable for anyone with minimal fitness

Amber = moderate outdoor events, suitable for anyone with reasonable fitness

Red = challenging outdoor events, suitable for anyone with good fitness, possibly also requiring specialist skills or equipment

The colour code for your event will be added by the HAWOG team. If you disagree with our choice, please contact us.

Open-Event Policy

All events in our programme must be open to all participants. You can issue guidance in your Full Event details in relation to fitness levels, equipment etc. necessary for participation in the event. However, you may exclude individuals from attending an event under reasonable circumstances (e.g. if there are concerns regarding fitness).

Prospective members (i.e. those new to our group) and Full members can attend any of our events without surcharge. Casual Members are sometimes asked to pay a surcharge to attend our events. If you are unsure about whether to add a surcharge for Casual Members to your event, please contact the team.

Cancellation or Changes to an Event

If your event needs to change, be cancelled or postponed at short notice then please email the group as early as possible with clear information and any necessary actions participants will need to take. If you, the organiser, become unavailable at short notice then try and find someone else to lead the event in your place. If this is not possible, please let the team know immediately.

Finance Information

Book Accommodation Early

You will get more choice and maybe a better price for your accommodation for multi-day events if you book early. Whilst some last minute deals on accommodation may be cheap, you are unlikely to be attract participants to sign up for your event if you are not able to give them confirmed details of their accommodation a good way in advance.

Contact the Committee for Help with Advance Deposits

If you need to pay a deposit to secure group accommodation, you can ask the Committee for help with this. Please send key details about your event, full details of costs (amounts, deposit/ balance due dates), and a list of signed-up participants to the Committee, who will review your request and send you their decision as soon as possible. You can contact the Committee at info@hawog.org.uk.

Our Online Payment System

We have a PayPal account which can be used by all of our event organisers. You will be given a user name and password to log in to our PayPal account to enable you to view online payments. It is your responsibility to check that people who have booked onto your event have paid the required amounts. You may find it helpful to set up your own system to record all payments made for your event.

Participants who wish to book on your event can contact you in two ways:

1. They can complete an online booking form. The form is available [here](#). Completed forms are sent directly to the event organiser.
2. Or, participants can contact the event organiser directly.

If there are still spaces available on your event, you can send participants an email containing a link where online payment can be made. The link will be generated by a Committee Member for all events that require advance payment, and sent to the organiser.

We advise event organisers to ensure that all payments for their events are made via PayPal. We do not as a rule accept cash or cheques, and so if you did want to accept payment via these means for your event, please contact the team to discuss this.

Promoting your Event and Communicating with Participants

Promoting your Event

We will put details of your event on our website, and include it in our regular programme update emails.

If you are organising a one-day event we ask you to send your own email to the HAWOG group promoting their event, around seven days in advance of the event. Please send the email to hawog@googlegroups.com.

If you are organising a multi-day event we ask you to send your own email to the HAWOG group a good three to six months in advance, to give participants an opportunity to sign up, book the dates and pay all costs. You should then send further updates to the group at monthly or two-monthly intervals or until all spaces have been booked.

We have a HAWOG group on Meetup (using the title [West London Outdoor Group](#)), which we encourage all event organisers to join (you only need to provide very minimal personal information to do so, and subscription is free). You will then be able to send out event notifications to our Meetup group.

Getting Responses to your Event

There are two main ways in which you'll get responses to your event.

- The first is via our website buttons. The 'Contact Organiser' web link on each event page is for anyone who has a question about an event, perhaps about shared travel, or maybe just to say they will be attending. The [Book Now](#) online form is for anyone who wants to book a place on an event.
- The second is via a reply to emails sent to our main email group promoting an event. These may be directly in reply to your own email, or in reply to our own email which we will then forward to you.

Organisers should keep a note of those who have expressed interest in participating in their event, including email addresses and mobile phone numbers. This will help them compile their attendee list on the day, and make it easy to send direct communication to known participants in advance.

Organisers should respond promptly as appropriate. Anyone who books a place on an event is committed to paying if a place is available and confirmed by the event organiser.

Event Administration

Travel Arrangements

Event organisers are not expected to arrange group travel (e.g. hiring a minibus). However, you are expected to inform the group about travel options to and from the event, and help co-ordinate travel where possible. Where it is possible to travel to and from events via public transport, we would ask you to give travel directions from North West London. Where events are only accessible by car, we ask you to provide exact locations, and help co-ordinate car sharing for participants. To do this, please email those who have signed up to your event and ask if they are able to car-share. You can then put participants in touch with each other to finalise meeting arrangements.

Collecting Participants' Information

We require all event organisers to collect names, mobile numbers and email addresses from all participants at the start of their event. This is important for two reasons:

- It means that you can manage your group effectively, and check to ensure that all participants are with you at points along the day. It also means that you can phone any participants that may have strayed from the group.
- Event organisers can then send names and email addresses to the HAWOG team after the event. We will contact all participants to thank them for attending, ask for feedback, and, if they are not yet Members, ask if they would like to join formally the group. It also means that we can monitor attendance levels at all of our events.

Please note that, if you are organising a Contributing event, there must be at least two participants attending your event for it to qualify. If you have had very little pre-event correspondence with participants please do send out further emails to the group to drum up interest!

Writing a Report

If you have organised a Contributing event then you are required to submit a report of your event to us, which we will then circulate via email and publish on our website [here](#).

The report should give a brief summary of the event (minimum 80 words), including who attended, what was achieved, and any interesting observations you would like to make.

Please send your report, and any photographs you would be happy for us to publish, to the Webmaster at: webmaster@hawog.org.uk within 2 weeks of the end of your event. We will read your report and contact you if we have any queries prior to publication.

A Final 'Thank You' From the Committee

Thank you once again for taking the time to organise a HAWOG event. We very much appreciate the time and dedication shown by all of our Members in helping to shape our great programme throughout the year.

And Please Remember

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