06 Safeguarding, health and safety, and insurance

The areas of insurance, health & safety and safeguarding are vitally important matters to consider when organising any event. Below a non-exhaustive list of things to consider.

Please do note: The Royal College of Organists and organisers of Play the Organ Year 2025 can accept no responsibility or liability for any aspect of events organised and publicised as part of Play the Organ Year 2025. All responsibility and liability remains with the organiser(s) and/or venue concerned.

A. Insurance and Health & Safety

- Do you have adequate insurance to cover the event and any rehearsals? For instance, how would you meet a claim for injury or damage to the building? Check with the venue to see if you are covered by their policy and, if not, consider taking out your own insurance.
- Does the venue have a Health and Safety risk assessment you need to complete in advance? If not, do your own in advance and make sure someone is assigned on the day to check for any hazards and record the findings. For instance, older buildings, especially churches and areas around organ consoles often have steps and/or uneven floor surfaces. Make sure that these are marked and pointed out and that everybody knows to take care.
- Is your event large enough to need a First Aider — can your church or venue help with this?

Useful links:

Government advice on managing risks and risk assessments at work
www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm

St John Ambulance Event First Aid Cover
www.sja.org.uk/what-we-do/our-first-aid-services/event-first-aid-cover/

B. Safeguarding

- Whose safeguarding policy and procedures are you following?
- Who is responsible for ensuring all appropriate safeguarding checks are undertaken?
- Who is responsible for safeguarding at the event?
- Who have you approached to seek safeguarding advice and support?
- Have you spoken to your parish/diocesan or equivalent safeguarding officer?
- Do you know who to refer disclosures, allegations or concerns to?
- Are safeguarding contact details available and displayed at the event?
- Do you need to make and retain an attendance list for safeguarding purposes?

Useful Safeguarding Resources:

NSPCC
learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/voluntary-community-groups

National Charities and Volunteer Organisations (NCVO)
www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/safeguarding/steps-safer-organisation/policies-and-procedures/

Musicians' Union Safeguarding Code of Conduct
musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/education-and-teaching/music-teaching-essentials/safeguarding/safeguarding-code-of-conduct