

# **CHARITIES STEP BY STEP GUIDE**

*All the information below has been collated from the various civilian and military regulations for ease of reference. It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are compliant with all regulations at all times. The regulations can be found at the following link*

<http://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code>.

*Failure to comply with regulations can result in administrative or disciplinary action, or even imprisonment. If you are in any doubt, contact the Station Charities Committee for advice.*

## **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

### **Who, what, where?**

Decide what kind of activity you want to do, where it will be held and who will be your nominated charity/ies. Look at the core charities that the Station will support on the Sharepoint Page.

### **When?**

Choose a date – We will look at the Station Forecast of Events to check that it doesn't clash with anything else happening on station, especially if it's an event that may involve a lot of Station/Armed Forces people or if it happens on Station. Support for your event, particularly in terms of fundraising, may be reduced if it clashes with other events.

## **REGISTERING**

### **The Charity**

Before you begin to raise money, you must register your event with your chosen charity (or charities), giving full details of who will be doing what, where and when. This includes every person that will be raising money with you. The charity will give you a reference that helps to identify the funds you have raised (they need it for their audit purposes) and will confirm all the relevant information you will need to provide when you are fundraising.

### **The Station**

Whilst it seems ridiculous to have to register with the Station if you're doing something in your own personal time, it is essential that everyone raising money for charity registers with their fundraising with the Charities Committee. Not only can they then assist with advice and guidance, as well as publicity and practicalities, they can also make sure that you don't fall foul of any of the fundraising regulations. This protects both you and the reputation of the Armed Forces.

## **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

### **Cost**

Whilst most events can be conducted without personal cost, often there will be costs associated with conducting fundraising. These costs could be travel or transport, overnight accommodation, raffle tickets, kit, ingredients... anything that you will have to pay for to allow you to conduct your event successfully. Funds raised for the charity must not be used to meet costs. Every penny that is donated to you must go to the charity. The charity may, with prior agreement, reimburse you with minor expenses. If your event is not for fundraising but is to raise awareness or support an engagement activity, the charity may also offer a grant to cover some or all of your expenses (eg promoting SSAFA at a local event by manning a stand, SSAFA may cover transport costs).

If the cost of your event is prohibitive, you can approach companies for sponsorship or donations that support your event and reduce your personal cost but it must be made explicitly clear to the company that they are supporting the costs of your event and not contributing to the charity itself. Furthermore, if you are approaching a company or organisation as a member of the Armed Forces, or refer to yourself as a member of the Armed Forces or your work in any way, you must obtain permission in advance from the Station MCO. Personnel are not permitted to communicate with the public on anything other than personal matters without obtaining permission in advance as this can lead to administrative or disciplinary action being taken against you.

## **Transport**

If you're looking to arrange transport, bear in mind that the use of Military Transport is not permitted for charitable events. It is publicly funded and public funds cannot fund charitable endeavours, whether it is for charitable fundraising or charitable engagement (for example, attending a veteran event with the Royal British Legion or Age UK).

## **Force Development**

Charitable events cannot be combined with official Force Development or Adventurous Training activities. If you wish to undertake an FD or AT activity whilst on duty you must go through the normal channels (TD Flt/Ped Flt) and must not include any charitable activity. If charitable activity is included it will be seen as a charity event and will not be authorised as FD/AT.

## **Publicity**

Publicising an event, before or after it takes place, is one of the best ways to ensure support and to increase fundraising. Any questions regarding publicity can be sent to the Charities Committee Publicity Representative. The MCO can also provide support with guidance on how to write stories, articles and features for a specific purpose, so contact them if you need any advice. Don't forget that personnel are not to contact the media without the explicit permission of the Media Office if they are going to mention, in any way, their Armed Forces connection. Therefore it is imperative to make contact with the media office at the earliest opportunity as they can help you maximise your publicity (including advice on designing clear posters, using social media and using the media) and ensure that you have full authorisation for any communication activities.

## **DONATIONS AND COLLECTIONS**

### **Online**

If you are collecting donations online, the majority of 'giving' websites will pay the money straight to the charity. Be sure to read the small print as some will only allow you to fundraise for one charity at a time and others will charge a fee for any transactions. If you want to refer to yourself as military, give any details about your work or use an image of you in uniform, ensure that you have permission from the MCO before the web page goes live.

### **Gift Aid**

Make sure that you include 'gift aid' as an option on all donations - this increases the amount given to the charity. Anyone who is a UK tax payer can 'gift aid' their donation by simply providing their name and address and ticking a box on an official donation form (or ticking a box on the 'giving' website).

### **Collections**

If you are going to take cash donations, for example using collection buckets, you must ensure that they are sealed, tamper-proof buckets. They must also be clearly labelled with the charity for which you are raising funds, including their charity number. If you are raising funds for more than one charity, you must make sure that the collection buckets are clearly annotated with all charities and how the funds will be shared eg 'shared equally between A and B'. You don't need a licence to leave a collection box anywhere, just the permission of the owner (eg of the business). It must be a secure and tamper-proof box and, where possible, be secured in the location.

#### **Street collections**

If you want to collect donations in the street, you will need to obtain a licence from your local authority.

#### **Private collections**

If your collection is open to the public but is on private property (eg shopping centre, on station), you must obtain permission from the landowner or manager. For the Station this is from the Station Commander via the Charities Committee.

#### **Door-to-door collections**

These have to be authorised by the local authority unless it is for a charity that holds a National Exemption.

**Cash handling**

You will need to contact Service Funds and request a temporary service funds account so that funds can be processed properly. If you have raised funds in cash through sealed collection boxes, you must have a cash handling certificate. Once the cash has been collected it should be taken to a secure environment and counted and recorded by two unrelated individuals. It should then be held in a secure location before it is banked. It must be banked through Service Funds, who will place the money in a temporary account and issue a cheque to your charity.

**Children collecting donations**

It is against the law to allow children under the age of 16 to undertake street collections (except in London where, with special permission, collections can be made by children aged 14).

**SPECIFIC ADVICE FOR CERTAIN EVENTS****Raffles**

If you are selling raffle tickets on the same day as the event, this is fine. However, if you're selling the tickets at any point before the day, you will need to apply to the local authority for a lottery licence.

**Live music**

If you're holding an event that has live music involved, or plans to use commercially available music, make sure the venue has the necessary licence.

**Alcohol**

If you plan on selling alcohol at your event, make sure the venue has the necessary licence. If it is on station you will also need permission from the Station Commander.