

Tourism Development
International

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An Fhleadh Cheoil

Event Organisation MANUAL

Prepared on behalf of



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Photographs: CCÉ, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Ena Doocey, David Waters



Introduction

Tourism Development International (TDI) are most grateful for the objective and considered feedback that we received from members of Comhaltas and Fáilte Ireland and we have endeavoured to provide a final manual to:

- Provide a documented and detailed overview of the essential and ancillary provisions associated with hosting Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, and
- Facilitate the subsequent transition of the event from one venue to the next. The overall aim of the manual is that it can act as a guide to make the most effective and efficient use of both organisers (the Fleadh Executive Committee or "FEC") and CCÉ's time and resources when developing and running the event.

The manual has been designed to firmly act as a guide to the specific mission of the Fleadh, translating the mission values, objectives and brand of the Fleadh making it clear what is mandatory in order to deliver the event in accordance with CCÉ's terms.

Finally, the manual has been structured so that it can be continually updated and "inception training" provided by CCÉ to new organizers and most importantly used as a reference check point throughout the process into the future. In serving this purpose it will be most effective if organizers also consult extensively with previous year organizing committees who can provide invaluable advice and guidance based on direct experience. It is planned by CCÉ that such organized and scheduled consultation will henceforth be a formal obligation for both incoming and outgoing committees.

Having consulted extensively with the members of the Fleadh Steering Group, we are mindful of the following two points made so succinctly by members of the Steering Group:

"The Fleadh is a unique festival in modern Ireland and in the world - In our endeavours to constantly improve the Fleadh we must never forget that we have a unique cultural product, one that is not replicated anywhere else in the world. We have people to participate and to listen. These people attend the Fleadh because they love the music, singing and dancing and want to watch, listen and take part. It is of the people and for the people. We must never water down the product that is the Fleadh. There are plenty of festivals in Ireland that cater for a wide variety of music. Our Fleadh must be kept within the traditional parameters."



“Community and Voluntary Movement - We are a community and voluntary movement and most of our participators are the same. Our organisers are volunteers who give of their free time and expertise to run the Fleadh. They do this for the love of the music, singing, dancing, language, our culture and heritage. At All Ireland Fleadh level, we have many volunteers who are not Comhaltas members but work tirelessly because they are committed community workers. Comhaltas is very aware of this and is very grateful for all their efforts. We must continue to encourage and include all of these people in the running of the Fleadh.”

This manual is at all times subject to the Bunreacht of CCÉ and Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil. CCÉ, has a clearly defined organizational structure overseeing all its activities. This structure is set out diagrammatically below. The sole interpreter of the manual is the Ardchomhairle (the Central Executive Council) of CCÉ, which may amend the manual from time to time.

Réamhrá

Bhí Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann ar siúl gach bliain ó 1952 i leith. Tháinig an Fhleadh chun cinn de réir a chéile agus tá stádas bainte amach aici anois mar cheann de phríomhfhéilte cultúir na hÉireann, a bhuí le hobair chrua agus tiomantas na gcoistí eagraithe go léir a chuir imeachtaí den scoth ar bun, bliain i ndiaidh bliana, le cabhair ó theaghlach iomlán an Chomhaltais. Cé nach raibh ar na coistí eagraithe tosú go baileach as an nua gach uair, go dtí seo níorbh ann d'aon lámhleabhar ná treoir chuimsitheach amháin mar chúnamh dóibh agus an Fhleadh á heagrú acu. Tá an lámhleabhar seo i gcomhair lucht eagraithe Fhleadh Cheoil na hÉireann ina thoradh ar phróiseas comhtháite comhairliúcháin agus taighde a rinne Tourism Development International (TDI), thar ceann an Chomhaltais, le baill foirne de chuid Cheanncheathrú an Chomhaltais (CCÉ anseo feasta), le baill de chomhlachtaí réigiúnacha de chuid an Chomhaltais, le baill de Shainghrúpa Stiúrtha na Fleidhe agus le Fáilte Éireann.

Tá TDI an-bhuíoch as an aiseolas oibiachtúil, machnamhach atá faighte againn ó bhaill den Chomhaltas agus ó Fháilte Éireann agus rinneamar iarracht lámhleabhar deiridh a chur ar fáil chun:

- Doiciméad a sholáthar ina bhfuil forbheathnú mionsonraithe ar na cúraimí riachtanacha agus na cúraimí coimhdeacha a bhaineann le Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann a óstáil, agus
- Éascú don imeacht a aistriú ó ionad amháin go dtí an chéad ionad eile. Is é is aidhm fhoriomlán don lámhleabhar ná é a bheith ina threoir maidir leis an úsáid is éifeachtaí agus is éifeachtúla a bhaint as am agus acmhainní an lucht eagraithe (Coiste Feidhmiúcháin na Fleidhe) agus am agus acmhainní CCÉ agus an t-imeacht á ullmhú agus á reáchtáil acu.



Ceapadh an lámhleabhar lena bheith ina threoir dhaingean i leith mhisean sonracha na Fleidhe, ina dtugtar léirmhíniú ar luachanna an mhisin sin agus ar chuspóirí agus ar bhranda na Fleidhe ionas gur léir cad nach mór a dhéanamh chun an t-imeacht a chur ar bun de réir théarmaí CCÉ.

Mar fhocal scoir, leagadh amach an lámhleabhar sa chaoi is gur féidir é a nuashonrú go leanúnach agus gur féidir le CCÉ 'oiliúint tionscnaimh' a chur ar fáil d'eagraithe nua, agus, rud is tábhachtaí, gur féidir leas a bhaint as mar phointe tagartha ar fud an phróisis feasta. Chun freastal ar an gcuspóir sin, is fearr mar a éireoidh leis an bpróiseas má théann an lucht eagraithe i ndlúthchomhairle le coistí eagraithe na bliana roimhe sin freisin. Beidh siadsan in ann comhairle luachmhar a chur orthu agus iad a threorú ar bhonn a dtaithe féin. Tá sé beartaithe ag CCÉ go mbeidh comhairliúchán eagraithe, sceidealaithe den sórt sin ina dhualgas foirmiúil ar choistí atá ag glacadh oifige agus iadsan a bheidh ag dul as oifig as seo amach.

Tar éis dul i gcomhairle go forleathan le baill Ghrúpa Stiúrtha na Fleidhe, táimid ag cuimhneamh ar an dá phointe bheachta seo a leanas a rinne baill den Ghrúpa Stiúrtha:

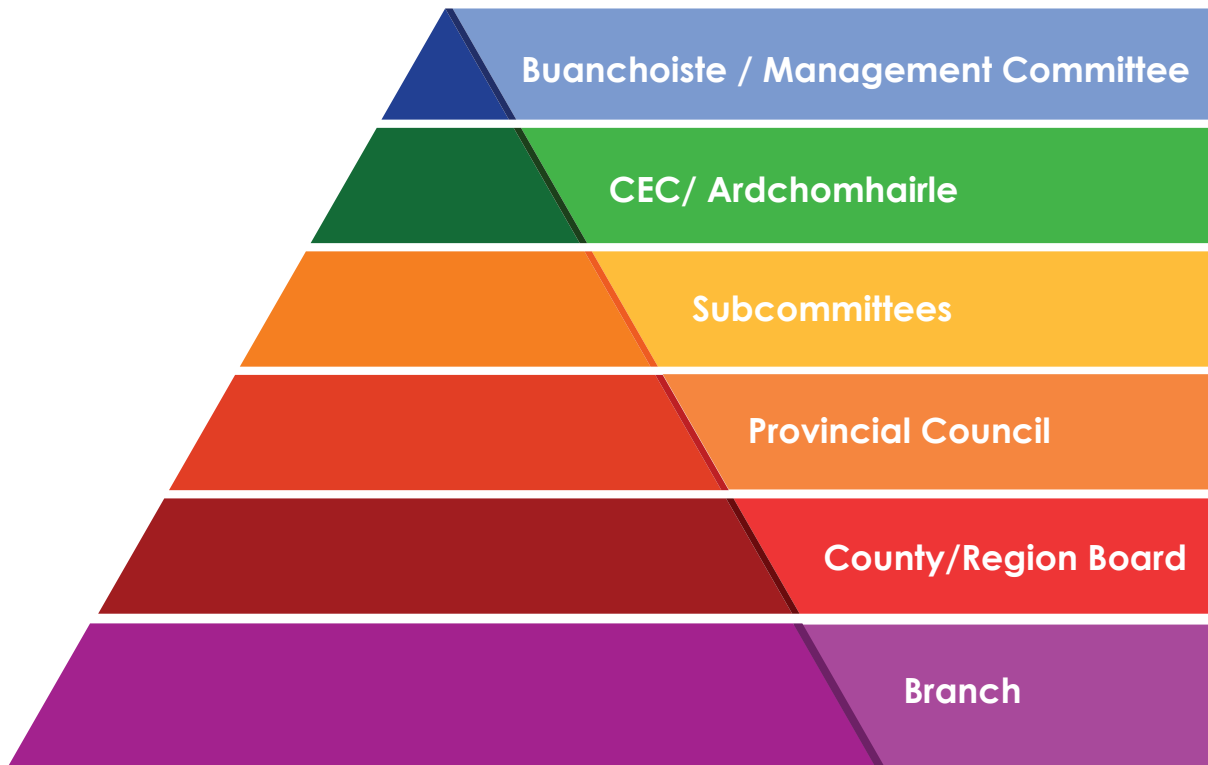
"Is féile ar leith í an Fhleadh in Éirinn na linne seo agus ar fud an domhain – agus muid seasta ar ár ndícheall ag iarraidh an Fhleadh a fheabhsú, ná déanaimis dearmad choíche go bhfuil táirge cultúrtha uathúil againn, ceann nach bhfuil a mhacasamhail in aon áit eile ar domhan. Tá lucht féachana agus lucht éisteachta dílis aici. Freastalaíonn an dream sin ar an bhFleadh mar gheall gur breá leo an ceol, an amhránaíocht agus an damhsa, agus mar gheall gur mian leo féachaint ar na himeachtaí, éisteacht leo agus páirt a ghlacadh iontu. Tá an Fhleadh dírithe ar an bpobal, agus is é an pobal féin a chothaíonn í. Ná déanaimis maolú choíche ar tháirge sin na Fleidhe. Is iomaí féile in Éirinn a fhreastalaíonn ar réimse leathan ceoil. Ní mór don Fhleadh seo againne cloí leis an traidisiún."

"Gluaiseacht Phobail agus Dheonach – Is gluaiseacht phobail agus dheonach muid agus is oibríthe deonacha nó daoine den phobal iad formhór na rannpháirtithe. Tugann ár n-eagraithe am agus saineolas go fial gan táille ar bith chun an Fhleadh a reáchtáil. Déanann siad é sin le teann grá don cheol, don amhránaíocht, don damhsa, don teanga, dár gcultúr agus dár n-oidhreacht. Ar leibhéal Fhleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, tá go leor oibríthe deonacha againn nach baill den Chomhaltas iad ach a bhíonn ag obair gan staonadh toisc go bhfuil tiomantas acu don phobal. Is maith mar is eol don Chomhaltas gur mar sin atá agus is mór aige an obair sin go léir a dhéanann siad. Ní mór dúinn leanúint ar aghaidh ag spreagadh na ndaoine sin chun a bheith páirteach sa Fhleadh agus á gcur san áireamh agus í á heagrú."

Tá an lámhleabhar seo faoi réir Bhunreacht CCÉ agus na Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil i gcónaí. Is í an Ardchomhairle (Lár-Chomhairle Feidhmiúcháin CCÉ) amháin a bhfuil sé de cheart aici an lámhleabhar a léirmhíniú, agus féadfaidh sí an lámhleabhar a leasú ó am go ham.



Structure of CCÉ



The structure of the CCÉ is illustrated by the diagram above.





1. Fleadh Management – Background and Vision

The voluntary body with responsibility for the promotion and preservation of Irish traditional music is Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (hereafter “Comhaltas”) which was founded in 1951. Comhaltas’ mission is to promote Irish musical culture as a living, community tradition. As well as a conservational role, Comhaltas nurtures new musicians, trains music teachers and aims for the maximum degree of community involvement in events to promote enjoyment and involvement in Ireland’s music, song and dance tradition.

The most important ongoing series of events organized by, and under the aegis of, Comhaltas are the annual series of “Fleadh Cheoil” (hereafter Fleadhanna Ceoil). Each year over 44 Fleadhanna Ceoil, festivals of traditional music with competitions and a wide range of associated events, are organised by Comhaltas. These are organized on a county and regional or provincial basis and culminate every year in August in the major national cultural and musical festival known as Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. This is the most important event in the traditional music calendar, and has been held continuously on an annual basis since 1951. The Fleadh encompasses a range of entertainment activities including concerts, céili/set dancing, traditional sessions, etc., plus competitions in music, song, language and dance at the local (County/Region), provincial and national/international levels. For those who compete in Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann it is the culmination of months of hard work and practice as, having qualified at county and provincial Fleadhanna, they compete against fellow musicians, singers and dancers to achieve the recognition of being an All-Ireland champion. For others, it is a unique and welcoming festival of the best of traditional arts that offers a wide range of activities to be enjoyed by all. For passive spectators a Fleadh is a unique large-scale celebration of Irish music which takes over the town or village in which it occurs. At Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann level it is comparable in its impact to a great Fiesta in Spain, the Eisteddfod in Wales, the Mòd in Scotland or the Festival Interceltique in Lorient, Brittany.

Fleadhanna Ceoil attract large attendances. In recent years Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann has been attracting up to 450,000 visits over the course of the ten day festival. Competitors alone number ca. 6,000. County Fleadhanna are followed by provincial Fleadhanna. These take place from April to July. While considerably smaller they are also important events attracting both visitors and locals alike.



The Comhaltas vision, which underpins the organization of every Fleadh, has been stated as follows:

“Traditional arts should be an enriching part of the lives of Irish people everywhere, particularly our young people; they should be a living, highly visible and vibrant part of society; they should be easily accessible to all; and their unique social, cultural and economic benefits should be fully realised by communities and individuals throughout the country and in Irish communities abroad”.

Comhaltas (CCÉ) has set out a mission statement for Fleadhanna Ceoil. They are events which are primarily held to propagate, consolidate and perpetuate Irish traditional music both vocal and instrumental, dance as well as the Irish language/An Teanga Gaeilge. This should be done by presenting the music in a manner worthy of its dignity, and in accordance with the Aims and Objectives of Comhaltas. It is not intended that competitions should be merely a means by which a competitor may gain a prize or defeat a rival, but rather a medium in which “these competitors may pace each other on the road to excellence”. The general principles and rules concerning the competitions element of a Fleadh are set out in the periodically updated document (included here as Appendix 3) known as Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil (hereafter “Rialacha”) published by CCÉ. The Fleadh, in addition, should bring established traditional musicians together in concert mode, as well, having a full programme of educational and learning events, with a prominent emphasis on the use of the national language. There is also an imperative to spread an appreciation of Irish music and culture, which is achieved in part through broadcasting, joining up with the national Irish language television channel TG4 and RTÉ.

This manual is essentially a “How to” guide or handbook. It primarily addresses questions relating to the key deliverables or outcomes, the implementation process, and how to ensure knowledge transfer to successive sets of organisers of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. While the handbook principally sets out to provide a documented and detailed overview of the essential and ancillary provisions associated with hosting Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann it also aims to facilitate the subsequent transition of the event from one venue to the next. This should act as a guide to make the most effective and efficient use of both organisers' and CCÉ's time and resources when developing and running the event. In addition, given that the overall principles and practice hold true for virtually every scale of Fleadh, the handbook should assist organisers at all levels.

The process of selecting locations for Fleadhanna is not part of the brief for this manual, but a brief outline of key information required to be provided by a town or district wishing to be considered for selection is given in Section 3.2.

2. Components of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

While the musical competitions are at the heart of a Fleadh Cheoil and encompass a wide variety of musical endeavour, from various elements of traditional Irish dancing through to sean-nós singing, a typical Fleadh programme also contains formal concerts and other events. Where Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is concerned, there are essentially five key components, which are:

- **Competitions** - music, singing, dancing, comhrá Gaeilge, storytelling. These competitions comprise the official Fleadh Cheoil competitions as per Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil. The CEC outlines the provision for these competitions and related requirements e.g. results office, Fleadh information point, etc.
- **Scoil Éigse** – which is an International Summer School preceding the Fleadh. Scoil Éigse, as one of the main flagship events in the Comhaltas education programme, has a reputation as a school of excellence in Irish traditional music, song and dance. It highlights the educational role, one of Comhaltas' key functions, as a central component of the Fleadh. CCÉ provide a set of core requirements for the content and organisation of Scoil Éigse, which are summarized in Appendix 2.
- **Seachtain na hÉigse** – a set of core Comhaltas events. The events during this week include:
 - *presentation of the Ard-Ollamh* (the Ard-Ollamh is a person chosen annually from among the ranks of the most distinguished exponents and collectors of traditional music);
 - *the Bardic Awards*: Comhaltas honour a number of “ceann ródaithe” every year at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. These are people who have made a significant contribution to the promotion of a variety of aspects of traditional Irish culture.
 - *Seomra na hÉigse*: a venue for other related artistic events held in conjunction with the Fleadh.
- **The Overseas Concert** - The Overseas Reception and Concert recognises the contribution of the men and women in and from outside Ireland in the preservation and promotion of Irish Traditional Arts.
- **Accompanying events and attractions** – while these can vary by location to reflect particular local strengths and/or history and culture, expanding the Fleadh to a wider-ranging cultural festival, they always include a locale or space devoted to interactions in the Irish language. This is colloquially referred to as *Seomra na Gaeilge*. (*Seomra in a n-eagraítear Cluichí boird i nGaeilge, neart bréagáin, leabhair Gaeilge, spás comhrá & cupán tae nó caifé le linn na seachtaine*). Paid admission concerts by well known national and local traditional musicians as well as céilithe are also increasingly a major part of the Fleadh week.

While not yet an essential component of a Fleadh, there may also be a case for ensuring that each major Fleadh features a concert or other live performance of the best of traditional music from other Celtic countries. Over 20% of Fleadh Cheoil na h-Éireann attendees come from outside the Republic, so active encouragement of the common elements of musical tradition which link Ireland and our Celtic neighbours is desirable.

Each FEC produces a comprehensive Clár or printed Programme of Events, which serves both as a historical record and a valuable souvenir for both competitors and attendees alike.



3. Pre-planning for the Fleadh

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

The key responsibility for awarding the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann lies with the Ardchomhairle (Central Executive Council-CEC) of CCÉ. Thereafter the operational responsibility lies with the Fleadh Executive Committee (FEC) which is established for each selected location.

3.2. Selection of Fleadh Host Location

The location for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is allocated annually by vote of the CEC. The process begins when, with the support and encouragement of other interested bodies in their locality, a branch applies to host Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. This application is then endorsed by the relevant County Board and Provincial Council. Only one submission per province for any one year's Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is permitted as per the current Rialacha.

The submission prepared by the Bid Committee should include details of, at minimum:

- Suitability of overall venue infrastructure in applicant location
- Competition venues and capacities
- Accommodation
- Funding
- Organisational structure
- Health & Safety
- Personnel – stewards, volunteers
- Local authority support
- Traffic management plan
- An Ghaeilge agus an Fhleadh
- Messages of support and sponsorship undertakings from local authorities, businesses etc.

Venue Assessment

While the timing for the holding of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is set by the Ardchomhairle considerably in advance, particular attention in reviewing any submission needs to be given at the outset to the extent to which other established or planned events in a town or region might impact upon the successful holding of a Fleadh. For example, proposing to hold the Fleadh in the immediate vicinity, timing-wise or location-wise, of another long-established major festival or event could negatively impact on relationships with other important public bodies and stakeholders. In the context of funding a particular concern will be the presence or otherwise of large companies or organisations in the area who have a record of appropriate cultural sponsorship.

A Fleadh will not normally be awarded to a location in Ireland which has not already secured firm (though contingent) commitments of funding. The views of Fáilte Ireland should also be sought at this point.

Following receipt of the Bid document and initial review the Buainchoiste (Ardchomhairle Standing Committee) then visits the proposed location, assesses the submission and reports to the Ardchomhairle.

Establishment of Fleadh Executive Committee

Subsequent to selection and ratification of the venue for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann a meeting is convened at which a Fleadh Executive Committee (FEC) is selected, and a Chairperson is appointed. Advice on this process is provided centrally by CCÉ. Specifications for the composition, functions and operations of the FEC are set out in the Rialacha. With the selection of location (town or district/locality) ratified a formal understanding is entered into on behalf of the selected location and Comhaltas. This is in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding between the FEC and the Local authority. Simultaneously or very soon thereafter relevant subcommittees may be structured. The appointment of chairpersons with appropriate/specialist experience along with proven commitment is vital to their successful functioning. An example of how the subcommittees may be divided follows, though it is important to note that, while all the areas below should be covered, the FEC has discretion to add others, or, if appropriate, to merge some.

- Finance Management and Fund Raising
- Public Relations
- Marketing
- Clár Cuimhneacháin
- IT and Website
- Signage
- Accommodation
- Clár/Events
- Catering
- Venue Management
- Street Decoration
- Traffic Management
- Health & Safety
- Scoil Éigse
- Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Seachtain na hÉigse
- Youth Events, etc.

With regard to County/Fleadhanna Cheoil the responsibility for annual location selection lies with the County Board – elected officers and branch delegates. Likewise the final responsibility for the Provincial Fleadh rests with the elected Provincial Council.

As for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, advance planning in selection of the venue greatly enhances final outcomes. Ideally, as is the practice, the County Board invites applications from branches interested in being the host town both for the County and the Provincial Fleadh. Permission is granted by the County Board and Provincial Council after examining the proposal and submission, following a similar format to that outlined above, and after thoroughly viewing the available facilities. At the very outset a key factor in determining the suitability of a proposed location will be an assessment of that location's ability to secure adequate numbers of volunteers for the myriad of activities which need to be supervised at any Fleadh.

3.3. Recruiting Volunteers

Differing considerations apply when recruiting volunteers as distinct from paid suppliers which is separately discussed. An event as large as Fleadh Cheoil na h-Éireann can require as many as 1,200 to 1,800 volunteers spread across roles as diverse as marshalling traffic, stewarding at concert venues, street performances and campsites to registration and central administration, photography, public relations and marketing. While older and/or less mobile volunteers often bring significant experience to many roles within a Fleadh, certain duties such as stewarding and crowd management need particularly to be allocated appropriately. One must clearly define the total number of volunteers that are needed per area along with their job description.

At the outset it is important that recruitment and selection of stewards only takes place when a full schedule of activities and events has been determined which will allow a specific exercise in manpower planning to take place. Further details on stewarding are set out within Section 5.4 of this manual.

A recruitment drive ideally should commence some 12 months before a major Fleadh, and even before the precise schedule of activities and events has been fully determined. It is critical that as large a pool of volunteers as possible is built up. It takes a lot of time to recruit in excess of 1,000 volunteers and despite the best intentions commitments given at an earlier stage will not be met for many reasons when the event takes place. The recruitment of volunteers is a slow process, so best to start as soon as possible. It is very important that having started early, those who sign up are kept motivated and committed through involvement and contact.

At the outset established local networks are a key resource for successful recruitment. To the maximum extent possible, volunteers should be recruited from existing key organisations in the community such as the GAA, Active Retirement clubs, and other major community bodies. This brings the advantage that potential volunteers are likely to be experienced with a solid track record and proven enthusiasm for community development. Volunteers of all age groups from 18 upwards should be sought, and in order to make communication as immediate and effective as possible information on requirements, duties, training and other key aspects of the volunteers' roles should always be distributed online with hard copies being then made available to those who require such. Volunteering applications are best made online so that a complete and accurate database is created. Health and Safety legislation requires specific event organisers to have Employers Liability insurance cover in place for all employees including unpaid helpers or volunteers. This needs to be done in consultation with CCÉ Ardchomhairle.

The FEC needs at an early stage to plan and prepare a suitable volunteer training programme. This is best done in conjunction with other community organisations, (e.g., Special Olympics, GAA, etc) who will benefit from, or may already have contributed to, the legacy of a body of trained volunteers present in the locality.

3.4. Recruiting Contractors and Suppliers

While maximising the use of volunteers and their skills, an event as large, and with as many complex requirements, as Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann cannot be delivered without a degree of reliance on external contractors and suppliers for specialist services, equipment and other goods.

At the outset, it is important to ensure that the procurement and hiring of all suppliers takes place in a transparent and verifiable fashion. Whenever a major event seeks public funding support, the funding agencies normally have stipulations with regard to how contractor beneficiaries are sourced. Naturally they have to guard against excessive costs being incurred (and being funded partly by the public purse) due to lack of competitive tendering or sourcing of suppliers. As the stipulations and tendering thresholds are regularly subject to revision the FEC should make contact at an early stage with the potential funding agencies to establish their precise requirements in this regard. Even if no funding agency was to be involved, good practice should demand that the Fleadh and the participants receive the best possible value-for-money from all those supplying goods and services during the event. For example, while the FEC has but limited control and influence on the range of food and catering options experienced by Fleadh-goers, it is important that no reputational damage to the Fleadh is caused by permitting caterers who do not have a satisfactory quality and value track-record to offer food and/or beverage services within venues directly hired by, or under the control of, the Fleadh organisers.

Specifically for the staging of the Fleadh, it will frequently be necessary to engage the services of contractors and sub-contractors to undertake such tasks as the construction and teardown of temporary structures and the installation and maintenance of services to any large site (particularly outdoor) being used. The set up and take down of major event sites can be extremely hazardous and all the necessary precautions need to be put in place by any contractor hired by the FEC/Fleadh organisers. The following documentation should be requested from all contractors:

- A copy of their company's health and safety plan
- Proof of insurance
- A specific risk assessment of the work to be carried out on the FEC's behalf
- Work method statements for any construction activities
- Certification for materials used e.g. fire certificates for carpeting etc.
- Site plans and specifications where required
- Structural engineers certificates
- Documentation as required under the construction regulations.



It is essential that the Venue Management and Health and Safety sub-committees agree to recruit or co-opt a Safety Advisor to vet the selection of contractors to ensure they adhere to safe working procedures on the site and to supply or source, as necessary, structural engineering advice to satisfy the FEC that any temporary structure is built to specifications.

Should any direct labour be hired for temporary construction and/or installation activities, the safety advisor should ensure that safe systems of work are in place together with qualified supervision and any necessary training. Due consideration of potential risks requires a detailed outline in its own right, while event licensing is also very concerned with these elements.

3.5. Assessing and Managing Risk

Every event such as a Fleadh has attendant risks; the first step in managing those risks involves examining all areas of the event to determine where injury or losses can occur. This examination is not limited to safety issues, but can ensure that the event is conducted in the safest possible manner and if something unfortunate does occur that the loss does not further impact the organisation either financially or through adverse publicity. There are four general areas of losses associated with events:

- Personnel
- Property
- Income
- Liability

By examining all areas where losses could possibly occur, one can allow all insurance requirements to be satisfactorily covered.

Although the process may not guarantee that every possible risk factor associated with the event is identified, the risk assessment exercise, usually managed by an external consultant, which shows diligence in attempting to identify those that can be managed and controlled can be a factor in reducing obligatory insurance costs.

For big events the combination of individual risk factors is extremely important in establishing the degree of risk. Changing one aspect of a Fleadh may greatly increase the risk factors. Some examples include: if concert free admission is allowed as a last minute decision that will change the whole nature of risk for the event. If the event is transferred from one location to another with less capacity one may have a serious problem of not being able to seat everyone. If the weather suddenly changes there may be unforeseen risks for which the organisers are not prepared.



In compliance with Health and Safety law there is a legal requirement to undertake a risk assessment of those hazards, which could cause harm to employees and volunteers and/or members of the public attending the Fleadh. A risk assessment is a systematic approach to the control of hazards and should be done in relation to the physical characteristics of the venue(s), likely audience or spectator behaviour, technical installations, nature of performance etc. It involves the identification of foreseeable hazards, evaluating the risks associated with them and considering what needs to be done to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. The process must be comprehensively documented and recorded. Write down all the activities and attractions, which make up the Fleadh and identify ways in which anyone present could be harmed. There also needs to be a contingency plan in the event that events cannot take place as planned.

3.6. Working with the local authority and other public bodies

An event of the scale of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is a significant organisational and administrative challenge. A licence to manage this largest annual national traditional music event is required from the local authority, who must issue an event licence for specific events.

It is under the Planning and Development Act 2001: Part XVI that the licensing of outdoor events regulations is regulated. These regulations are specific to outdoor displays of public entertainment comprising of an audience of 5000 or more. Preliminaries to event licensing should be raised with the local authority as soon as possible after the Fleadh has been allocated to the locality concerned and prior to a formal licence application. A number of local authorities have drawn up guidance templates for event management and licensing application, one particularly useful one having been issued by Limerick City and County Council, following the publication of the Part 16 Planning & Development Regulations, 2001-2012 (which have been further revised in 2015 as outlined in 4.7 below). CCÉ can also provide a process summary.

Event licensing is subject to conditions that relate to the safety of people, health and welfare, protection of the environment and litter control as well as transport, public liability and communications. Should the Fleadh require that a public roadway is closed a separate application for a Road Closure Order will also need to be made to the local authority 2 months in advance.

The organizing committee will always need preparatory meetings with the County Council, An Garda Síochána, Fire Service, HSE and Civil Defence. Such meetings are mandatory under legislation and are preliminary to formally lodging an Event Licence application with the Planning Authority, advisedly six months before the event is due to take place. As well as programme details, significant traffic management and crowd management proposals need to form part of the Event Licence application. The relevant regulations are now summarized.

3.7. Licenses, Permissions and Legal Issues

In addition to the common law “duty of care” owed to those attending an event there are a number of key pieces of legislation, which are applicable to events; the most relevant include: The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts of 1989 and 2005 together with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 (the “2007 Regulations”) Planning and Development Act 2001:Part XVI (licensing of outdoor events: revised regulations 2015) Fire Services Act 1981 (responsibility for fire safety on persons in control of premises) Fire Services Act 1981 and 2003 (licensing of indoor events regulations) Waste Management Acts, 1996 and 2001.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts of 1989 and 2005 and associated regulations (e.g. Construction Regulations, General Application Regulations) applies directly to employers, employees, contractor and anyone who is affected by a work activity (member of the public, passer-by, trespassers).

Fleadh organisers should satisfy themselves that their work/preparation activities are safe and do not endanger their employees or volunteers, contractors, the general public or anyone affected by those activities. In the case of contractors or others working on the Fleadh's behalf, the FEC must satisfy itself that those employers also manage their work so it does not endanger anyone else. This, as noted, includes ensuring that safety statements and risk assessments have been prepared.

Revised Regulations in relation to the Licensing of Outdoor Events came into force in October 2015. In practice, the event licensing process will determine how a great many aspects of the Fleadh are organised in detail.

A summary of principal points is listed below:-

- Mandatory for event promoters to have a pre-application consultation meeting with the relevant local authority prior to submitting an events licence application.
- Events licence applications will not be accepted by a local authority unless a pre-application consultation has already taken place with the event promoter.
- Event promoters will not be entitled to advertise or sell tickets for events prior to the holding of a pre-application consultation meeting with the relevant local authority.
- Where tickets for events have been advertised and sold prior to the holding of a pre-application consultation meeting, an application for an event licence will not be accepted by the relevant local authority.
- Event licensing applications must be lodged with the relevant local authority at least 13 weeks in advance of the proposed event.

- Local authorities must make their decision on an event licence application no later than 4 weeks in advance of the proposed event.
- Where it is proposed to add a performance to a schedule already announced, a further pre-application consultation meeting will be required to take place before the announcement of any additional dates.
- The public consultation period in relation to event licence applications is now set at 3 weeks.

The Fire Services Act 1981 covers all aspects of fire safety and is applicable to both outdoor and enclosed venues. Event organisers have a responsibility to ensure that there are adequate means of escape for all persons in attendance. Particular attention should be paid to materials used in the decoration of the venue and the construction and use of temporary structures to ensure they are in compliance with fire safety standards.

Licensing of Indoor Events Act 2003 is an addition to the Fire Services Act 1981 and is intended to ensure the safety of persons attending events taking place wholly or mainly in a building. Unlike the licensing of outdoor events regulations, the licence application for an indoor event is not restricted to an event with an expected attendance of more than 5000. In addition, the regulations provide for the licensing of events on an annual basis.

In respect of all of the above it is the responsibility of the FEC to ensure they are in compliance with the terms and conditions of the regulations and relevant legislation.

The event organizer, under health and safety legislation and in the provision of their "duty of care", must appoint a competent person to take responsibility for the provision of medical/first aid and ambulance assistance, as appropriate, to those involved in an event, including event staff and members of the public. A Site Medical Officer must be appointed where an audience will exceed 5000. He/she must be a qualified doctor, with A and E (accident and emergency) experience; consultation with the HSE/local health authority on this appointment is recommended.

First Aid/Medical posts should be clearly signposted and provided with easy access for spectators and an ambulance. There should also be a designated, clear exit route for an ambulance at all times. All aspects of medical provision at the Fleadh should be fully documented in a Medical Plan.

4. Venue Management

4.1. Space, Design and Layout Considerations

Venue Design: Slightly differing considerations apply with regard to venue design, depending on whether one is using an indoor or an outdoor space. For the core Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann activities such as Scoil Éigse and the competitions, CCÉ acting through the Árdchomhairle will provide an outline of essential requirements. Most events at the Fleadh will take place indoors, but on occasion there may be need to use outdoor spaces, either on parks, streets or squares or other public land, or within sportsgrounds. With outdoor events in particular the site choice and preparation is obviously vital if an event is to be run successfully. It needs to be large enough to accommodate the size of the audience expected, taking account of the space that will be occupied by structures, the activities and the facilities provided.

The suitability of any outdoor site will also depend on the ground conditions, orientation and gradients, access routes, the provision of services, and any environmental constraints such as the potential for noise disturbance if there are houses, institutions or workplaces close to the venue.

A site-layout map should be prepared showing the position of all the activities/attractions, the facilities and existing structures along with proposed temporary structures, the circulation routes and entrances and exits. There should be sufficient, well dispersed exits to allow for safe and rapid evacuation and a specific non-pedestrian route may need to be identified for emergency vehicles.

At the outset, the site needs to be surveyed and particular hazards identified such as steep slopes, uneven ground or kerbs on which people could trip. Consideration should also be given to weather conditions (including prevailing winds and the effect they can have on any necessary stage and rigging requirements) and under foot conditions in this regard. Temporary pathways may be necessary. Draw up an itinerary for the erection and dismantling of all structures on site and consider how to facilitate the safe movement of vehicles within the site.

When using existing theatres, halls or other indoor structures, the venue director at each venue also needs to establish the requirements of, and available facilities for, competitors and attendees including persons of limited or restricted mobility, the details of the sound and lighting systems, the provision of less mobile instruments such as pianos and the standard and emergency evacuation procedures. A primary consideration always has to be to ensure that attendance numbers do not exceed the capacity of the venue to provide a safe and pleasant experience. Fire officer guidance needs to be sought at the outset.

Venue Capacity Restrictions: The objectives in restricting the numbers in attendance at any event is to avoid the dangers of overcrowding and to ensure that the means of escape in an emergency are adequate for the numbers of people being evacuated from the venue. To determine the total number of people who can be placed in a given space you will need to calculate the "occupant capacity". The following factors should be considered:

- Layout of the venue/site
- Viewing areas
- Seating arrangements and space requirements
- Site/venue infrastructure
- Circulation areas
- Exit doors and routes
- Stewarding availability

The advice of a competent person and the fire authorities should be sought when determining the numbers of people who can be accommodated at the event, especially where the venue is not in regular use as a concert or theatre facility. If the event involves the provision of seating only, then the number of seats the venue can hold will be a determining factor.

Projected capacity requirements for the various competition venues are provided by the CEC, these projections being based on previous attendance figures. Capacities should be arrived at not only by calculating space allowances, but also through considering appropriate rates of entry and exit from areas of the facility within specific time limits. This involves monitoring crowd or audience levels in particular areas. A well-managed and secure system of advance ticket sales is the best method of avoiding over-capacity, although this is not a practical option or necessity for the big majority of competition venues at the Fleadh. Where this is not an option but there nevertheless is a limit on attendance numbers, it is important to have some method for assessing the numbers admitted to ensure the "occupant capacity" is not exceeded. This can be achieved by using designated entrances manned by stewards in a way, which will allow them to carry out an accurate form of head counting.

Venue Access and Signage: Approaches to the venues must be well sign-posted from parking areas and public transport points. CCÉ have published a directional sign template which can be downloaded from the Comhaltas website. The plans for using a venue for a particular event must safeguard pedestrians from traffic movement in the vicinity of entry and exit points. Temporary stands or trading points must not be allowed to obstruct circulation. Any form of attraction should never be placed immediately in the pathway of persons entering or exiting a venue. The impact that the Fleadh will have on the existing arrangements for traffic and pedestrian movement should be addressed with the local Gardaí/PSNI.



Entrances and exits should be sufficient in number to allow the desired rate of ingress to and egress from the venue, and should be as evenly distributed as is practicable. They should be clearly labelled in terms of where they lead to, and should provide a smooth flow within a time period, which will not cause frustration. Inappropriate positioning, width or impeded flow rate may constitute a hazard by creating bottlenecks, which result in crowd congestion with possible tripping and crushing injuries. Any security checks required, which can reduce flow rates, should be carefully positioned.

Exits should not disgorge people into a place of danger, for example into traffic or where a heavy crush is likely through crowd build-up. Ensure wheelchair users and persons with mobility impairment have means of access; this may necessitate supplying rampage and the designation of access facilities wide enough to allow free movement.

Safety signs, way marking and labelling of entries and exits must be large, legible, unambiguous and, above all, suitably elevated. Directional signage must be consistent with, and easy to relate to, information on tickets and ground plans. Signage designating key items such as the location of first aid points, emergency exits and fire equipment should be easy to see.

Large-scale events where activity ends at a given time will require exit planning to take account of the discharge of large numbers into surrounding areas. This exit plan needs to be agreed between the FEC and An Garda Síochána/PSNI who have responsibility for managing off site movement. Check whether the provision of extra Gardaí/PSNI personnel to police an event may incur charges, as, if so, this will need to be budgeted.

4.2. Controls, Structural Safety and Medical Issues

Event Control Room or Space: The provision of a room or space as the event control point is essential for the smooth operation of an event. Even smaller Fleadhanna should have a central point where the administration and co-ordination of the event takes place. Some of the reasons why the organisers should designate an event control room with limited access are:

- for the display, collection and distribution of information for key event staff
- for the collation of event documentation
- as a point of contact for persons visiting the event on business
- as a focal point for the Event Controller whose responsibilities are outlined under 5.4
- as an incident room in the event of a major incident occurring



Structural safety: The failure of any temporary structure in a crowded, confined space could have devastating effects. It is therefore essential to ensure that any temporary seating, staging, sound towers, large tents, marquees, stalls, attractions etc, are acquired from reputable companies, comply with the appropriate standards and are erected by experienced persons using safe working practices. A competent person should provide certification on the stability of all such structures and advise of the maximum wind loading which structures can withstand. Once the structure has been erected, a competent person (structural engineer) should “sign it off” as being sound. Wherever an event is programmed for a temporary structure, which may not be usable at the programmed time because of severe weather conditions or other unforeseen occurrences, a contingency plan must exist with clear directions as to whether the event is to be cancelled, rescheduled, or modified and relocated to a back-up facility.

The risks associated with the supply and use of temporary structures can be minimised by adherence to the following safety guidelines:

- provision of a clear brief to the supplier
- provision of clearly defined site layout and working drawings
- accurate setting out and levelling of bearing pads
- an organised work sequence and regular inspections of all components
- adherence to design without site modification unless absolutely necessary
- adequate time for erection

Temporary covered accommodation can range from small tents used as first aid posts, catering outlets, craft stalls etc. to large tents and marquees. The anchoring of such structures will depend on the type of ground available, whether soft or on hard standing surfaces. Hazards associated with such temporary structures include:

- Trip hazards; ropes and stays
- Ponding from heavy rain running off
- Underground cables, overhead power lines and tree branch obstruction
- Fire hazard resulting from unsafe materials, decoration and/or electrical supply

Marquees and large tents should be made of appropriate material that does not permit rapid surface spread of flame and certification should be provided from the supplier to confirm this.

An adequate number of fire exits should be provided in accordance with the number of people likely to be accommodated in the marquee at any one time and fire extinguishers and emergency lighting must be provided.



Safety Barriers and Fences: Barriers or fencing may be required for a number of purposes including securing the site, controlling entrances and crowd movement, relieving crowd pressure, excluding people from unauthorised or dangerous areas, protecting the public from dangerous equipment and preventing climbing on structures.

The basic design criteria for barriers are that they are capable of withstanding the load which is likely to be placed on them. Obviously the effective use of such systems also depends on the provision of sufficient numbers of trained stewards

Medical Issues: A Medical Plan should be prepared and submitted in conjunction with the Event Licence application. This may need to be commissioned from outside consultants, as is also likely to be the case for an overall Risk Assessment. The Plan should take full account of the 2013 document Health Service Executive Requirements and Guidance for Outdoor Events.

4.3. Fire Prevention, Electrical and Environmental Issues

Fire Precautions: At the outset event organisers must take advice from the Fire Authorities on all aspects of fire prevention including the type of safety equipment required.

An adequate number of the appropriate types of fire extinguishers and, if required, other types of fire suppression equipment should be provided in key positions, such as close to catering areas, power sources and materials storage zones. Fire extinguishers should conform to the requirements of IS 290 and IS 291 or other standard approved by the Fire Officer. Fire blankets should conform to BS6575: 1985.

Special care should be afforded the use of LPG cylinders at catering concessions, they should be caged, located in the outdoors and access should be limited to the user.

Dependent on the level of fire risk at an event, one should consider designating a number of event stewards as a fire watch team. All stewards should know the location of the fire prevention equipment and how to use it. They should be trained to inform their immediate superior as soon as an outbreak of fire is confirmed and should only the fire watch stewards should attempt to use the equipment to suppress a fire for a short time, after immediately having contacted the emergency services. In the case of fire the primary consideration is to evacuate those in danger and to inform the emergency services.



Electrical Systems: Electrical installations for one-off events, particularly outdoor events, can be complicated and extensive and are definitely a job for an expert. If not installed and managed correctly, serious injury to volunteers, employees and/or members of the public can occur. Only electrical equipment designed for outdoor use should be provided at outdoor events. The positioning of cables often causes problems where temporary supplies are used - where cables have to cross pathways and roadways, they should ideally be buried to protect them from damage and prevent trip hazards. Where this is not possible, cables should be covered with suitable matting or, where there is a risk of vehicular damage, be provided with additional sheathing or routed and supported overhead. Again professional help is essential. In all circumstances, inappropriate equipment and connections or inadequately protected circuits may cause electric shock and/or overloading, which can lead to lighting/sound failure or result in a fire.

A qualified electrician should check generators, including those, which have been brought to the venue by other persons such as caterers. Where necessary, they should be properly earthed and located away from public areas or surrounded with appropriate barriers.

Lighting: If a venue is intended for use outside daylight hours, all parts of a venue should be provided with suitable levels of artificial lighting to allow people to leave, enter and move about the venue and its surrounds in safety. An adequate emergency lighting system should be available as a back-up if the normal system fails. Particular attention should be given to clear illumination of exits and directional signs, which indicate escape routes and clear lighting of entry and exit ramps and stairways. CCÉ or the FEC should never help to publicise events, including fringe or "impromptu" sessions, taking place in venues which do not have such safety systems in place.

General Environment Issues: Matters relating to public health at events such as food hygiene, sanitary and drinking water provision and noise/ air pollution are monitored and regulated by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs). EHOs are employed by the Health Services Executive (HSE) and implement national and EU laws on food safety and hygiene. They sometimes provide services for the local authorities as well, and may also be involved in monitoring the effects of noise and air pollution, drinking water provision and sanitary accommodation. The relevant EHO has responsibility for all issues related to food hygiene at event catering concessions.

Noise: Site design, layout and management systems are important in minimising the environmental impact of noise. The location of outdoor stages, the orientation of the speakers, the type of sound system, the control of sound power levels, and the duration and timing of the entertainment can all be engineered to reduce the noise impact. Conditions and restrictions may be specified in a Notice under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992 in order to prevent persons in the neighbourhood of an event, such as the Fleadh, being unreasonably disturbed by noise.

4.4. Catering, Sanitary and Waste Management Issues

Catering, Food Safety and Permits: One very central aspect of the Fleadh experience is the supply of catering available around and adjacent to the venues. The FEC may need to proactively seek caterers. As organisers they should ensure that all caterers operating on their behalf are reputable, with appropriately trained staff and safe food handling and preparation techniques. Caterers operating concessions should be asked to produce food stall licences, occasional food permits (where appropriate) and, where required, a casual trading permit from the local authority. The suppliers of catering outlets must satisfy the EHO that they have the facilities required, including hot and cold holding facilities and staff sanitary facilities in order to prevent the contamination of food.

Under Article 2 of the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1950/89 a food stall is defined as: "a vehicle, vessel, aircraft or structure... in, at or on which food is offered for sale or from which food is sold." A food stall must be licensed "...where meat products (other than fish or fish products) are sold or where food is prepared, cooked or heated for sale directly to the public". The following categories of food stalls must be licensed with the HSE:

- Soft ice cream stalls;
- Hot dog/baked potato stalls;
- Burger/fried fish/chip stalls;
- Chinese and other ethnic food stalls.

The event organizer/FEC should draw up a list of all food stalls attending the event. These will normally be assigned to the various Casual Trading Areas which the local authority will designate and map as part of the Event Licence application process. Details of all licensable food stalls should be sent to the HSE in advance of the event. This offers an important element of protection for users and for the FEC.

Water: Where large outdoor gatherings are involved a minimum of one drinking water point per 1,000 persons should be provided. Drinking water where possible should be supplied from the rising main and should be dispensed through spring loaded standpipes. Discussion on how to provide this should take place at an early stage between the FEC and the local authority/Irish Water/ Water Service. A suitable non-slip surface adequately drained must be provided to all drinking water supply areas.

Sanitary Facilities: The provision of such facilities in outdoor settings is based on the anticipated numbers of persons attending the event. When determining the sanitary accommodation required the organisers, working in cooperation with the local authority, should also take in to account:

- Male, female ratio expected
- Duration of the event

Temporary facilities should be in a suitable location, clearly marked and sufficient types provided to avoid unnecessary queueing; this will entail undertaking consideration of the actual male: female ratio likely at the Fleadh event and the needs of people with disabilities or impairments. Facilities should be located to deter queues forming which could impede circulation near to entries, exits, steps etc. While they should not be in the vicinity of catering outlets the location should be clearly identified by directional signage close to these outlets. Regular inspection and maintenance are very important, particularly for events of long duration. Non-slip flooring will reduce the risk of accidents and if it is necessary to locate sanitary accommodation in the open they should be protected from the weather. Separate sanitary facilities must be provided for food workers.

The minimum facilities recommended as per relevant Codes of Practice is 10 water closets per 1000 female patrons, 2 water closets and 8 urinals or 3.6 metres of slab urinals per 1000 male patrons. In addition there should be a minimum of 1 appropriate toilet facility per 13 disabled persons. Each unit must be provided with an integral hand wash facility. Where individual urinals are provided; hand wash units should be installed at a ratio of 1 per 5 urinals installed in the urinal accommodation area.

All temporary sanitation units should be in- situ on an open venue site a minimum of 24 hours before the public are admitted; any deviation from this timescale is at the discretion of the relevant EHO. Temporary drainage arrangements must be in accordance with Section 3 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, which applies to the pollution of ground water and surface watercourses. On no account should waste be discharged into the ground.

Litter and Waste: The local authority waste management services can offer advice on the collection and disposal of waste, and may, in some cases, provide this service. When outdoor spaces are being used for Fleadh events, arrangements should be made with the local authority or other owner or the facility provider (e.g., the GAA) for the cleaning of the venue before, during and after the event. Arrange for adequate litter bins/refuse collection points to be positioned on the approaches and throughout the venue. Ensure in particular that sufficient bins are located in the vicinity of catering outlets as the main accumulation of waste on the event site usually occurs around catering concessions.

At all phases of the event, keeping the venue clean and tidy will aid in the prevention of trips and falls. Litter and waste generated at events includes such items as food and drink containers, plastic sheeting and paper, left over food and liquid wastes. Event medical facilities can generate hazardous waste, which must be disposed of in accordance with biohazard disposal regulations. In addition it is important to ensure that roads and streets in the vicinity of the event are cleared of litter generated by persons attending the Fleadh.

4.5. Estimating Visitor Numbers

Being able to produce convincing and solidly-based estimates of the numbers attracted to a Fleadh is important for a number of reasons. These include the attraction of sponsorship, the requirements of funding agencies, traffic management and planning, other facility provision, and the determining of optimum locations for future Fleadhanna based on historical experience.

Leaving aside the prohibitively expensive cost of a national household survey (which would only measure Irish-based attendees), there is no statistically rigorous method for precisely calculating the number of people or their profile characteristics (e.g. families, young singles, etc) who visit a town during the course of a Fleadh. This is mainly because, for virtually all Fleadhanna, the numbers who come solely to enjoy the general atmosphere, listen to street or pub sessions, etc., far exceed the number who go to or participate in ticketed events. In other situations, aerial photography and associated grid analysis is sometimes used to estimate numbers at non-ticketed events, but this is of very limited value in the case of a Fleadh day or week, when many will be indoors in pubs, halls and other venues.



For ticketed events it is relatively straightforward to provide attendance figures. For outdoor events, as mentioned, aerial photography can be used. Thereafter the best indications are likely to come from traffic counts, given that most outside attendees will arrive by private car. In 2015, the local organizers, in liaison with the Gárda Síochána and the local authority, estimated that some 450,000 people had attended Fleadh Cheoil na h-Éireann in Sligo. Within the earlier outlined limitations, the Garda Síochána/PSNI have been principally relied upon to date to estimate visitor numbers; the challenge of estimating numbers is not unique to Fleadhanna Ceoil or to Ireland.

4.6. Managing Attendees, Traffic Parking and Accommodation

Crowd safety at any public event is related to space, the attractions on offer, the environment, surroundings and effective management of human behaviour. Compliance with regulations and the application of standards of best practice can go a long way to ensuring safe venues and activities, but the most difficult factor to manage at events is human behaviour. This section addresses how volunteers and staff can manage attendance behaviour at the Fleadh to prevent as far as possible crowd related accidents/incidents and ensure enjoyment of the event.

Poor management and a poorly designed layout can cause injury and unsafe behaviour irrespective of the numbers in attendance. It is essential that a professionally designed easy-to-read map be placed prominently on the Fleadh website, included in "apps" as appropriate, made available to print and other media and widely distributed at key venues. The map should clearly indicate location of main venues, together with circulation and access routes, car parks, public transport nodes (including shuttle bus routes when provided), and major accommodation points (hotels and the official campsite). In this way it can provide a "one-stop/one-pager" piece with the essential information on getting around the Fleadh location.

It is important to make a distinction between crowd management and crowd control; crowd management is proactive while crowd control is reactive. Crowd control will only be required when problems are encountered. Most problems with crowds (of whatever size) can be prevented or quickly resolved when all aspects of crowd management are well organised.

Effective crowd management adds to the enjoyment of the event and can reduce risk of injury. The key components of a crowd management system include clear directions and signage, ease of movement and ease of exit.

The number and size of entrances and exits, viewing arrangements, the presence of clear directional signage, public information systems, well designed pedestrian flow routes and queuing systems and the presence of well trained, courteous and knowledgeable stewarding personnel are all influencing factors on crowd behaviour and can assist with preventing frustration and anger which can lead to problems of control. One relevant factor is the age profile of attendees. Research by Fáilte Ireland at the Sligo Fleadh in 2014 showed that 49% of a limited survey of some 400 attendees were aged 45 or over. While this older-than-normal festival age profile is generally a positive where crowd management is concerned, one needs to be aware that procedures such as evacuation will take longer with an older grouping.

In circumstances where it is anticipated that crowd control may be an issue it is appropriate to draw up a statement of intent in advance concerning the relative responsibilities of the Gardaí/PSNI, security companies and the event stewards. This written document should make it clear which positions will be staffed by whom and who will assume responsibility in particular circumstances. This will assist with the formulation of clear procedures for ejecting or detaining persons who break venue rules.



Traffic Management and Parking: Decide how people are likely to travel to the Fleadh and how one needs to provide advice (most practically via the website and media/press releases) on public transport or parking facilities. It is best to keep as many vehicles as possible away from venue environs. The objectives of traffic management at any event are:

- To ensure pedestrians and vehicles are separated
- To minimise the impact of the event on routine traffic movement
- To ensure emergency vehicles can access the event venue

All likely types of vehicles requiring access to the immediate area of event venues should be considered, including:

- construction vehicles during build up and take down
- supplies and maintenance vehicles during the event
- emergency services vehicles
- vehicles driven by, or transporting, disabled attendees
- invited guests and production and Gárda/PSNI vehicles
- media broadcast units and equipment carriers

If vehicles are to be allowed access to outdoor event sites, then arrangements should be made to segregate them from pedestrians either by providing separate routes or by allowing vehicles onto and off the site at pre-arranged time slots. The operation of one-way systems within some sites can also reduce risks.

For events as large as Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, park and ride facilities using buses to shuttle people between the town centre/key venues and remote car parks or campsites can work well. Advice should be sought from public and private transport companies for the provision of such a service.

Adequate directional signage in respect of diversions, parking etc. should be located at all key intersections where they are visible from a driver's perspective at adequate height above street level not to be obscured by passing large vehicles such as trucks and buses. Such signage needs to be in place a week before the event. In addition to signage, ensure any stewards located at diversions for alternate routes limit the disruption on other road users who are going about their daily business.

Where there are traffic implications or where a temporary road closure is sought liaise with the Gardaí/PSNI and the relevant local authority well in advance of the event. There are minimum notice periods involved in this regard, which vary by local authority. It is best to apply at least 8 weeks in advance. One may also need to inform the residents and businesses in the area of any traffic diversions that may affect them.

It is important that a parking plan for the town for the duration of the event be agreed with the Gardaí/PSNI. This should include signage to organized and managed car parks.

Accommodation: Host town committees have traditionally been pro-active in ensuring that sufficient visitor accommodation is available for Fleadh attendees. An essential requirement, in current practice, is the selection and nomination of official campsite(s) for the duration of the Fleadh. Such provision is usually best delivered by entering into an agreement with a major sports club or other landowner who thereafter will manage all aspects of the site and user bookings.

Hotels and other major commercial accommodation enterprises manage their room stock independently of third party intervention, so the role of the FEC in securing such accommodation will be limited to carrying full details of the relevant premises on the website, and to booking sufficient rooms well in advance to meet CCÉ's own organizational requirements. These organizational requirements include the accommodation provisions as per the CEC including adjudicators and other CCÉ personnel. This provision is detailed by the CEC in advance.

With regard to private room and self-catering accommodation, private home owners, who do not normally make their properties available for short-term lettings or visitors, make a valuable contribution to ensuring that adequate overnight beds are available for competitors and other staying visitors to the Fleadh. The Fleadh office can act as a central management coordinator in this regard. Example guidelines issued by the 2017 Ennis Fleadh are attached. In making a decision to act as an accommodation intermediary, the FEC should take appropriate advice from Fáilte Ireland and CCÉ. Visitors to the Fleadh will be increasingly aware that new entrants to the hospitality business such as AirBnB, booking.com and other on-line marketplaces and intermediaries have transformed the approach to searching for and booking accommodation.

4.7. Insurances

Insurance is one of the most important factors in organising any event. The law requires the organisers to have Employers Liability cover for all employees including unpaid helpers or volunteers and to have Public Liability cover for event attendees. While policies held by Comhaltas may cover much of the liability issues any Fleadh may encounter, the specific needs of each Fleadh should be discussed with CCÉ.

5. Running the Fleadh Events

The specific procedures and rules for competitions and other core annual events at the Fleadh are set out in considerable detail in rules and regulations published regularly by CCÉ. These are referred to here in the main body of the manual and reproduced in the Appendices. Comhaltas also has a particular objective to emphasis end fully involve the use of the Irish language in all its activities, so guidelines in this respect are set out in the concluding section of this chapter.

5.1. Participation in Fleadhanna Ceoil Competitions at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

Qualification procedures for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann are set out in detail in the Comhaltas document Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil, the latest edition of which is attached as Appendix 3 to this Manual, and which is updated every 3 years. As of 2017 there are 51 competitions, 47 located indoors, in solo and ensemble music, singing, dancing, comhrá Gaeilge and storytelling. There are also Marching Band competitions which require an outside venue with specific dimensions detailed in the Rialacha.

CCÉ determines the qualification process through its 7 qualifying Provincial Fleadhanna Ceoil: Connacht, Leinster, Munster, Ulster, Britain, and the two North American regions of Mid-Atlantic and Mid-West. There is also provision for the entry of overseas competitors from outside of North America. The official competitor listing for the competitions is made available from the CEC.

Venue requirements as set out by CCÉ for the competitions are based on estimated audience numbers and specifics of the competitions. These venue requirements also include stewarding specifications etc. Importantly the Competitions “staff” – adjudicators, competitions stewards and clerks are under the auspices of the Ardchomhairle/CCÉ.

Particular attention should be devoted to the requirements where age-based competitions are concerned. Child protection is a key responsibility. The FEC needs to pay particular attention to policy in this regard as communicated by CCÉ.

5.2. Competition Procedures

Competitions procedures are set out and included in the Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil which is published and implemented for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann under the guidance of CEC. A competitions programme, Clár na gComórtas, is published each year, with details extracted from the Rialacha. It provides relevant information and guidance to competitors. Official Fleadh Cheoil Competitions at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann are under the direction of the CEC but provided for by the FEC. The host will be informed of all core competition provisions, including venues and other related requirements, accommodation and meals provision for adjudicators and other CCÉ personnel etc. by the CEC.



5.3. Scoil Éigse and Seachtain na hÉigse

Scoil Éigse is CCÉ's flagship International Summer School which precedes Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. The students at this immersive programme include Fleadh competitors who have been scholarships awarded by the CEC. Scoil Éigse is organised under the auspices of the CEC, CCÉ's Head-Office and the Scoil Éigse Director who outline the local provisions for Scoil Éigse to the FEC (See Appendix 2).

Seachtain na hÉigse comprises a series of events which are undertaken and hosted by the FEC liaising with Head Office; these include the Ard-Ollamh and Bardic Awardees Ceremonies/Dinner, Archive exhibits, as well as the Overseas reception and concert.

5.4. Managing the Fleadh on the ground

Within the management structure to be established by the FEC for each Fleadh Cheoil, key roles during the Fleadh itself are occupied by the Event Controller, the Safety Officer and the Chief Steward(s). In all cases the responsibilities attached to an appointment must be clearly set out, there should be no duplication, overlaps or gaps. Any doubts about who is responsible for what should be openly discussed in pre-planning meetings so that no potentially dangerous assumptions are made - responsibilities must be expressed explicitly. The persons appointed to these positions should have sufficient knowledge and experience to be competent in undertaking their onerous duties. Deputies should be appointed to key positions to ensure continuity in the control of the event in the absence of key personnel and to facilitate events with long lead-in periods. For smaller Fleadhanna some positions may be combined during the operation of the event, however it is essential that a designated competent person have responsibility for all aspects of safety, which may often also be the person designated for logistics. The event controller, safety coordinator, chief steward and medical manager are the key people involved with the management of safety at an event, however all staff should be encouraged to take responsibility for safety matters within their area of event operations.

The Event Controller: this is the term used to identify the person appointed by the FEC/Organising Committee with the status and authority to take full responsibility for all matters relating to the operation of the event. Some of the duties attached to this position include:

- Having overall responsibility for the management of the event.
- Ensuring the event is staffed by a sufficient number of competent staff.
- Ensuring effective control, communication and co-ordination systems are in place.
- Ensuring that adequate measures are in place for the safety of all persons at the event.
- Initiation, liaison and management of emergency action if necessary.

The Safety Coordinator: An overall safety coordinator should be appointed for the Fleadh. He/she should be involved in the event from the initial planning stages through to build up and wind-down. This is a key role to ensure that there is a common understanding of safety policy and procedures when dealing with safety and emergency response personnel such as event stewards and/or security personnel, emergency services representatives, contractors, sub-contractors and performers. Some of the tasks undertaken by the safety coordinator include:

- Coordinating all safety matters with the Event Controller and stewards and having overall responsibility for all aspects of safety
- Ensuring that suppliers of equipment carry out pre-event safety checks
- Being present during the event to monitor and manage all the safety arrangements
- Advising on the initiation of emergency procedures



Stewarding: Early appointment of an experienced person as Chief Steward will be critical to ensuring a successful event. The executive committee must ensure that an adequate level of stewarding is provided for the Fleadh, and that all stewards have attended a mandatory training programme prior to being rostered for the Fleadh. The chief steward will then have responsibility for the management of event stewards at designated locations.

Event stewards are the eyes and ears of the Fleadh management team and their training and knowledge of the event/ venues are critical to the smooth operation of an event and the safety of all persons in attendance. The number and type of stewards required for an event can be determined by carrying out an overall risk assessment. The number of entrances to the venue, whether there are restricted areas, potential areas of crowd pressures should all be considered when making this assessment. Stewards will also be required for general duties such as providing information to attendees, managing the flow of people through the venues and external ticket checks.

All stewards should be provided with readily identifiable coats or bibs in safety colour e.g. orange or yellow or combinations of both. Chief Stewards, particularly in the larger Fleadhs, should be in the possession of two way radios. Pre- event training and briefings should be held prior to the event to ensure familiarity with layout of venue and to emphasise the importance of dealing with the public in a friendly and welcoming manner.

Medical Care: A Medical Plan needs to be prepared for an Event License as earlier noted. Irrespective of whether or not a licence is required, as part of a Fleadh organizers' "duty of care", a competent person must be appointed to take responsibility for the provision of medical/first aid and ambulance assistance, as appropriate, to those involved in an event, including competitors and other participants, event staff/volunteers and members of the public. One option is to seek a person who is an officer from the health authority ambulance service. The first aid/medical and/or ambulance provision needed for the event will depend on the number and profile of the people expected to attend, the type of event, the duration of the event, seasonal/ weather factors, the range of attractions, etc. For smaller Fleadhs, it may be sufficient to provide a number of trained first-aiders, whereas for larger ones with greater risks, medical and ambulance facilities will be required on site.

While statutory, commercial and voluntary organisations (e.g., Order of Malta/Red Cross) have the training and experience to provide first response medical, first aid and ambulance personnel to events, in most cases there will be a charge for their services. Fleadh organisers seeking the assistance of any of these organisations should request their services well in advance of the event. The provision of a medical facility can also serve to minimise the effects of an event on the healthcare provision for the local population, and can reduce its impact on the local accident and emergency hospital and the ambulance services.

First Aid/Medical posts should be clearly signposted and provided with easy access for spectators and an ambulance. There should also be a designated, clear exit route for an ambulance at all times. It may be necessary for the Safety Coordinator, in liaison with the Event Controller, to designate a parking area for an ambulance close to the medical/first aid post. All event staff and Fleadh volunteers should be familiar with the location of the medical/first aid post(s).

The advice of the relevant Health Authorities should be sought when planning the medical provision for an event. The control and co- ordination of first aid organisations at large-scale events is within the remit of the Health Authorities.

For any event a medical operational plan should be developed to cover such areas as the type of service being provided, location of facilities, procedures for sending people off site for medical care, recording of data, and contingencies for untoward occurrences.

5.5. Accident and Emergency Planning

In addition to carrying out a risk assessment and developing procedures to prevent the likelihood of any accidents or serious incidents occurring, one must decide how the Fleadh team will respond if something does go wrong. This should be prepared in advance of seeking the Event Licence. Each individual who will play a part in dealing with an unexpected situation must understand their responsibilities and be given clear instructions at the planning stage. It is therefore important that there is a procedure and/or a contingency plan in written form outlining the management of such occurrences and the demarcation of duties particularly with regard to accidents/incidents of a more serious nature, which will require the response of the emergency services. Planning for the unexpected should take into account the following scenarios.

Major Incident: An incident such as a major fire, a serious accident involving a number of casualties, crowd disturbances which cannot be controlled by event staff, a bomb scare, structural collapse or even the effects of bad weather can necessitate control of the Fleadh venue to be relinquished to the emergency services. The response to a major incident will normally require a multi-disciplinary approach in which the Event Controller, the Gardaí/PSNI, the Health Authority, and the local authority may all play a part. The instructions of the emergency services will be conveyed to volunteers and event staff via the Event Controller, who will formally transfer control of the venue to the Senior Garda Officer/PSNI Officer present or Senior Fire Officer (as appropriate), who thereafter will manage the incident.

In an emergency situation it is important that an adequate standard of public address system is used which overrides other forms of entertainment noise. Clear directions must be given to ensure evacuation times are kept to a minimum. If the public address system is improperly used it can lead to confusion and critical loss of time in evacuating all persons on the site. Emergency and safety messages should be documented and agreed in advance and a designated person nominated to deliver such messages.

Minor incidents or issues: A minor incident may affect competitors or attendees at the Fleadh, cause a delay in a specific event or disrupt the smooth running of the Fleadh in some way. The responsibility for activating a pre-planned recovery mechanism to effectively bring an incident to resolution must be clearly defined in the event procedures and contingency plans. Undertaking a “what if” exercise at the planning stage can assist in identifying the procedures one needs to put in place to recover from such occurrences and allow the event to continue.

Examples of such incidents include difficulties with suppliers, the malfunction of equipment, blocking of accesses, the resolution of crowd management issues etc. It is important to appreciate that a minor incident could have the potential to develop into a major incident if not properly planned for and managed.

5.6. Monitoring

Whether for Fleadh Cheoil na h-Éireann with thousands of spectators or a smaller Fleadh event with anything from several hundred people present, there is a need for an ongoing monitoring programme which entails a certain amount of administrative work to be undertaken and documented. It is good practice for the FEC and its sub-committees to minute all decisions taken at all stages of planning for the Fleadh.

Forms and checklists should be formulated to capture information on incidents that may occur at the Fleadh and to assist with briefings, safety checks, staff rosters, equipment handover etc. In line with the regulations for the safety of persons at work, accidents should be logged and an accident report form completed for any significant injury.

The most informative document which should be produced by, and on behalf of, the FEC is the event management and monitoring plan; this is a written document outlining the organiser's proposals for managing and recording all aspects of the Fleadh. The document identifies the risks involved with the event, communicates details of particular aspects of the event and ensures a co-management of the event and any arising emergency situations. The document ensures that a unified approach is taken at the outset, and that the various stakeholders involved in an event work together.

The production of this plan is not a static exercise; it is a constantly evolving cycle. It involves initial proposals, information gathering, consultation and decision making before the production of the first draft of a detailed and comprehensive plan for the management and monitoring of the Fleadh.

All Fleadh personnel and bodies involved with the Fleadh should be kept informed of the plan content. The plan structure should be clear, concise and easy to read. All recommendations and advice given by the statutory agencies, emergency services etc. should be incorporated in the event plan. It should then be recorded how these recommendations were followed, along with any subsequent modifications which were considered necessary. Making the plan available to the agencies with responsibility for public safety will allow them to examine and offer advice on the operation of the Fleadh and the initial Plan will form part of the licence application and/or approval to hold the event.



5.7. Treoireacha i dtaobh na Gaeilge

Tá sé rí-thábhachtach go mbeidh ról lárnach ag an Ghaeilge in imeachtaí an Chomhaltais, Fleádhanna Cheoil san áireamh. Taispeántear lár-ionad na teangan trí úsáid na Gaeilge i gcomharthaí eolais, i gcur i láthair comórtaisí, ceolchoirmeacha, léachtanna agus ócáidí eile, chomh maith le Seomra na Gaeilge ina mbíonn teacht le chéile ag lucht na Gaeilge I láthair ag an Fleadh. Ba chóir go ndéanfar an Ghaeilge labhartha a úsáid go forleathan ar bhonn nádúrtha, líofa agus leanúnach, go meascfadh láithreoirí an Ghaeilge agus an Bhéarla sa chaoi is go bhfeicfidh an pobal go bhfuil níos mó ná “cúpla focal” i gceist. Tá dlúth-comhoibriú le TG4 agus Raidió na Gaeltachta tábhachtach freisin. i gcás Fleádhanna Chontae, Cúige agus Uile-Éireann, moltar go gceapfar Oifigeach Gaeilge, agus go mbeadh sé mar cúram ag an té a gceapfar, treoracha i dtaobh úsáid na Gaeilge a cur faoi bhráid an Choiste Feidhmiúcháin, agus féachaint chuige go gcuirtear i bhfeidhm iad. Bheadh sé de dhualgas freisin ag an Oifigeach Gaeilge pairtíocht na meáin Ghaeilge a eagrú i ngach gné d'imeachtaí na Fleidhe.

The Irish language needs to have a central role in every Fleadh Cheoil. Each event should appoint an Oifigeach Gaeilge who will have a central responsibility to ensure the active presence of the language in all events. Seomra na Gaeilge has been a feature of Fleadhanna Ceoil- at all levels; it should be positioned in a central / highly accessible venue.

Bilingual signage and the use of an Ghaeilge as appropriate in other communications is recommended. Many Fleadhanna organise a specific programme of events for Seachtain na Gaeilge.



6. Financing the Fleadh

6.1. Setting Budgets

Financial planning must be central to the activities of the FEC. The FEC may also have a business plan.

At the outset a realistic and manageable budget must be set out and agreed by the Executive Committee in conjunction with Comhaltas headquarters and/or the provincial board as appropriate. An experienced accountant should draw up the budget in conjunction with the Committee. Previous Fleadhanna audited accounts should be available to the FEC. These accounts will be submitted to the CEC within an agreed timeframe after each Fleadh. While prior year expenditures should always be critically evaluated, particular attention needs to be paid to any large variances, and any projected incomes which are not backed up with solid evidence as to their achievability (e.g., sponsorships still to be secured)

6.2. Accounting and Financial Control

It is good practice to review the budget at each FEC monthly meeting, where income and expenditure will be examined in detail. This review can best be facilitated by the Chairman of the Finance Sub-Team/Committee or the Treasurer circulating a budget report to all present at the meeting. This document should form part of the Minutes and be included in the Minute Book.

Planned expenditure for the coming month should also be agreed.

A Team/Committee should ideally have monthly income targets against which they can measure their monthly fund raising progress.

At an operational level budgets should be controlled on a weekly basis; in that way problems may be anticipated before they become a serious financial problem for the Fleadh. In respect of control measures the following points are critical:

- a. Realistic figures must be allocated to each budget heading when the budget is being drawn up. There must be a logical basis to all budget figures, both expenditure and income. Simply reproducing the previous Fleadh's budgeted figure for the item concerned is not sufficient.
- b. The budget policy must be reflected in the projected Income and Expenditure account. Remember that a break-even policy is not usually satisfactory – it is too close to a loss.
- c. If the budget is running over by 10%, then the cutting of all budget headings by a similar amount, to bring the budget into line, is not usually realistic.

It is better to use a “what if...” approach when trying to work out budget savings – this is called sensitivity analysis.

Transaction records (manual or preferably electronic) should be maintained in order to record the details of all receipts and payments, and these should be updated as frequently as possible. Supporting vouchers (such as invoices, expense claims, employment/tax records, cash reconciliations – see below) should be filed in orderly fashion, e.g. by transaction date.

Where there is cash income, such as from sales of day passes, single event admissions or car parking fees, the use of turnstiles or pre-numbered tickets or other vouchers or tags can provide a check to ensure that a cash reconciliation process is agreed and implemented and that all such receipts are lodged to the bank account (e.g. ticket serial numbers can be reconciled with the amount of cash collected). During the course of the Fleadh, accumulated cash should be placed in a safe place and lodged to the bank at the earliest opportunity. Within the Fleadh team a designated person, other than those involved in taking in cash from customers, needs to reconcile the physical cash with serial number or other such records before bank lodgment.

Contracts, which for amounts above an agreed minimum (possibly €5,000), should be vetted by, and approved by the Finance sub-committee prior to any expenditure being incurred. All expenditure should be evidenced by suitable documentation (such as invoices) and paid by cheque or by bank transfer. Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann has two Treasurers. One is local from the FEC and one is appointed by the Ardchomhairle. Accounts of receipts and payments, as well as a list of expenditure incurred but not yet paid, and cash received but not yet lodged, and bank account statements, should be presented to the Team/Committee or its Finance Sub-Committee on a monthly basis.

Professional advice and guidance on best practice in relation to financial control should be sought and implemented by the FEC. It is desirable that at least one member of the FEC should have an accountancy qualification and that such a person should chair the Finance sub-committee.

6.3. Ticketing Policy

Admission charges to competitions are determined as per Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil and/or by the FEC in conjunction with the Ardchomhairle. Ticketing policy involves pricing and distribution. A number of generally accepted methods of determining admission charges as relate to other festival events are as follows:

- a. Admission costs may be related to financial/ budget objectives. Take the cost of running the event and add to it any required level of contribution to overall Fleadh costs. This gross figure is then divided by the number of people that are expected to purchase tickets.
- b. Consider the admission prices for similar events in the region and use that figure; this figure may not relate the financial needs of the Fleadh budget.
- c. Charge a premium for unique/special events, but considering the high incidence of family attendance at Fleadhanna Ceoil.

Demands for online distribution continue to grow, but the need for more traditional distribution mechanisms remains.

6.4. Sponsorship and Benefit in Kind

A number of major community organisations involved in the provision of costly services and major events have moved to develop planned sponsorship policies. In the case of Comhaltas there is a recognition that appropriate corporate sponsorship is becoming an increasing necessity if the wide programme of events, under the aegis of CCÉ is to be delivered successfully. There are well-established approaches to seeking sponsorship, which are already widely used in the cultural and related sectors, for example offering sponsorship opportunities at different cost and benefit levels, e.g., Platinum, Gold, Silver, etc. The 2016 Fleadh Cheoil na h-Éireann had "Gold Sponsors" along with a listing of other sponsorship partners, many of them from the public and community/voluntary sector. At provincial and county level, the approach is more varied. For example, Munster Fleadh 2017 set out a range of sponsorship opportunities and costs on their website. It is desirable that CCÉ takes further professional advice on how to develop sponsorship opportunities at national, provincial and county level. In the interim some basic considerations and guidelines can be set out. The FEC will identify and engage with the sponsors; the CEC can input as to the appropriateness of the sponsor.

While it may be less true for those making small scale donations of €500 or €1,000 to a county or local Fleadh, it is critical to recognize that significant sponsors expect to receive tangible benefits in return for their support. Most sponsorships in the arts and culture areas offer a range of levels and costs, e.g. Platinum Sponsor, Gold Sponsor, Silver Sponsor, etc.



Spending on sponsorship is an alternative to using the same funds on advertising or public relations activity, so those seeking sponsorship need to be able to demonstrate how they will deliver value to the sponsor. In making the "pitch" to a potential sponsor it is vital to highlight the benefits that a Fleadh may be able to offer a sponsor:

- High visibility for the brand or product concerned with the availability of good locations for banners which may be seen by thousands of spectators and television audiences
- Presence in the brochure reaching target audiences important to the potential sponsor
- Association with the good national reputation of the Fleadhanna Ceoil
- A close match between the event visitor profile and the target clients of the sponsor, for example, radio stations, musical instrument retailers, etc.
- The Fleadh can provide corporate entertainment opportunities
- Networking opportunity for company executives at launch ceremonies, etc.
- Product promotional opportunities.

One must never promise a Sponsor a benefit unless there is certainty that the benefit can be delivered. Otherwise sponsor relationships will tend to be quite short!

In seeking sponsorships direct approaches will almost always be required. Non-specific invitations to sponsor will rarely elicit a response. It is important to research the sponsorship and other marketing strategy and tactics of the potential sponsor. If at all possible try and develop a "champion" in the potential sponsor Company. This may not be the decision maker, but hopefully he/she will champion the cause of the Fleadh within the Company up to decision making level.

A short case-making document should be forwarded to the person identified as being responsible for sponsorship decisions in the company. This should outline the nature of the sponsorship opportunity, the benefits which can be delivered to the sponsor along with the costs. It may also be advisable to seek the opportunity to make a very short presentation. In the event that a sponsorship is secured a clear letter of agreement should set out the terms of the sponsorship including the deliverables. One member of the FEC should also be assigned the responsibility for liaising with the sponsor in question including acting as host when the sponsors' representatives attend any Fleadh event.

"Benefit in kind" while not representing a direct cash transfer to the Fleadh can also be most important in relieving the Fleadh of cost burdens which it would otherwise incur. There is a wide range of such benefits which may be sought, from the most obvious such as providing lodging and hospitality to visiting adjudicators and other key personnel to other less obvious ones such as undertaking financial audits on a complimentary basis. Where there is a readily assessable value to such a benefit, those providing it may legitimately seek to be recognized and receive the same value from the Fleadh as cash sponsors.



6.5. Grant Schemes and requirements

It is vital at an early stage to investigate all possible sources of public grant support for the Fleadh. In addition to the more obvious possible funding sources such as Fáilte Ireland and the relevant local authorities, City and County Enterprise Boards, the Northern Ireland Events Company and specific foundations may also be possible grant sources. No matter which of these bodies is approached they will almost always require a fully completed application form. The current Guidelines for each agency's funding will generally be found on their website. The following points should be borne in mind when applying.

- *Read the Guidelines very carefully* – exactly what sort of application can the scheme consider for funding
- *Complete* all sections of the Application Form fully
- *Provide all necessary supporting documentation* with your Application Form. Audited accounts from previous events are often required
- *Beware of closing dates* for grant applications. Some schemes may close many months in advance of the date of the Fleadh.
- Most grant schemes have limited funding. An early application is more likely to be successful than those that are received when the fund is likely to be over-subscribed
- If your Fleadh is awarded a grant read the conditions attaching to the grant very carefully, and follow them exactly



7. Tourism Impact, Marketing and Publicity

7.1. Maximising Tourism Impact

The Fleadh brings a unique opportunity for regional economic development through the generation of new and additional tourism activity. Every effort should be made to maximise this by attracting new overseas visitors to the Fleadh. The organiser should work closely with Fáilte Ireland¹ from the outset and develop an appropriate and effective plan to attract tourists to the Fleadh. Fáilte Ireland has developed a number of regional brand propositions and the potential to leverage these should be explored by the organisers. Support from Fáilte Ireland will continue to be dependent upon the Fleadh being able to demonstrate that it both can act as an important economic driver and an event which delivers a unique and brilliant visitor experience.

7.2. Timing and Planning

Once a town has been awarded a Fleadh it is vital for the success of same that a carefully thought-out marketing campaign be immediately put in place.

It is best that an outline Domestic and International Marketing Plan be prepared for the Fleadh. This should deal with the traditional “4Ps” of marketing: Product, Price, Place and Promotion, with the principal emphasis being on the latter. The nature of the Fleadh and its content (Product) need to be reviewed at the outset, for example, what, if any, special or non-perennial events ought to be included in this particular Fleadh. Pricing should deal with entry costs for competitions, ticket charges for concerts and any other ticketed events, together with any fees to be sought from concession holders as well as any other charge item over which the FEC has control. Place or distribution questions relate to where attendees receive information about the Fleadh, for example whether exclusive reliance is placed on a website and social media or whether more traditional mechanisms such as publicity brochures are used. The core issues which need to be resolved focus around the promotional campaign, which is now considered in more detail.

¹ See www.failteireland.ie for more details

7.3. Communications Strategy and Media

Every communication concerning the Fleadh should always incorporate CCÉ branding. The totality of the way in which Comhaltas is presented can be termed the “brand”. The “brand” should address Recognition and Association. Comhaltas Branding and use of Comhaltas Logo should be highly visible at all Comhaltas events. The “brand” must be instantly recognisable and be suitable for applying to numerous applications from stationery to banners, to programmes, stage backdrops and so on. The various Comhaltas logotypes are available to download from www.comhaltas.ie. When developing a custom logo or identity for any Fleadh event, designers must be briefed to include the Comhaltas mark in a “lock-up” with the new logo. CCÉ is a bilingual organisation and this should also be reflected in all communications.

The communications strategy needs to be developed in both a temporal and a channel dimension. In the temporal or timing sense, communications objectives will differ pre-Fleadh, during Fleadh and post-Fleadh. The channels to be used (e.g., public relations, website(s), social media, print and brochures, advertising) will vary in their importance in large measure related to the stage in the event cycle.

At the outset, Public Relations (PR) activity needs to take on a primary role, given that for the larger Fleadhanna, not just Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, but also the Fleadh Nua and Provincial Fleadhanna, one of the first objectives is to start building awareness of the host town as the venue and to encourage a demand for information. This is particularly important as the Fleadhanna (Fleadh Nua excepted) move around new venues from year to year or on a biannual basis.

Official Fleadh PR starts when the Fleadh is allocated to a host town, but there is an understanding that the current Fleadh is given space to market itself. Intensive PR for the Fleadh should commence in the Autumn of the year preceding the event. Initially this activity should be targeted at the local population in the town and county concerned. PR planning should start with an intensive local media relations campaign designed to stimulate knowledge and interest among the community in the town and locality to encourage participation and to ensure awareness among the local community. This will help to embed the welcome and knowledge that visitors will look for when the Fleadh arrives. This should be followed up by early-December with a national PR campaign to launch the Fleadh and ensure that it receives full coverage in media event planners and journalistic pieces about highlights of the year to come. One-to-one communications with selected journalists and media presenters can be very effective, but, at minimum, carefully crafted press releases will need to be issued, sometimes accompanied by a formal launch event which gives the opportunity to communicate Fleadh highlights in more detail. If one can create a novel or unusual human interest story around, for example, some of the participants or visiting performer, this can significantly assist in getting airtime or “column inches”.



Press Releases are the usual method of communicating details to the media either nationally or regionally. They should be tailored to the target audience. For example, one will need different releases for local community media, specialist music media (including radio and TV shows) and national media.

The following points are important:

- Press Releases should be just one page
- The main information should be contained in the first paragraph
- Release date and time should be detailed at the start of the Press Release
- Press Releases should end with the contacts details for the person who can provide further details

Ensure that the correct media contact is targeted: name, title and email address. Pay particular attention to both the music and travel media, making sure that the material reaches all the presenters of traditional and folk music programmes in all the national and regional radio stations, and the travel writers in the national media. It is important to have a library of images from previous Fleadhanna available for media use. Remember that if these images contain recognisable people permission should be obtained to include them in those photographs. An important part of the PR campaign can be the placement of carefully selected, highly targeted feature stories. Some options include: for National newspapers' weekend magazines, Lifestyle and In-flight magazines, pieces profiling a day at the Fleadh.

PR must be planned over a specific length of time and should centre around a documented plan that includes an outline of the current situation, a definition of a specific objective and the audience to be targeted. In addition, a good plan will set out realistic PR media and techniques that can be successfully delivered within the resources of the FEC.

In practice the bulk of the responsibility for the plan preparation and for the implementation of the consequent PR activity will lie with the Public Relations Officer (PRO) or Chairperson of the PR sub-committee appointed by the FEC. It is important that the PRO or the sub-committee agree the set of PR objectives with the overall FEC. While PR is often a low budget activity it can be very demanding in terms of person-time, so the outcomes of the PR undertaken need to be regularly reviewed and any remedial or supplementary action agreed. This can include the recruitment of more specialist assistance, the creation of more publicity events or decisions to engage in paid media advertising.

During the Fleadh itself there is also an ongoing need for PR activity. Much of this should be integrated with social media activity, particular in using channels such as Twitter. Social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, needs to be a continuing key element of marketing the Fleadh, from the outset through to post-event activity.



A vital component of a social media strategy is to come up with a short memorable branded hashtag. This hashtag needs to be equally format-friendly for all the social networks the Fleadh is using, so be mindful of the character limits on channels like Twitter. For example, a successful Tweet promoting the Fleadh should contain a call-to-action link and a picture, along with the branded hashtag.

Choice of social channels needs careful consideration. Assign different levels of importance to each to see where information will be updated first, and what kind of information will be released through each channel. For example, if the primary channels are Twitter and Facebook, schedule all social messaging with important information—e.g., competitor/performer information, concert description, and event details such as location and relevant times—to be published on these networks first. Secondary channels, such as Instagram or Pinterest, can have a slight delay in social messaging, but make up for the delay with more descriptive media, such as a video, a photo or a checklist. Create a big enough field for each social network to plan what kind of content to promote there, and a checklist to track progress on each of the social channels. Create buzz by showing off the Fleadh's greatest assets - e.g., multiple All Ireland winners or special guest performers. Once all these have been confirmed, take time to track and share any social media accounts they use, such as official Facebook Page or Twitter handle, and use these to get attendees excited about the talent the Fleadh attracts.

In the future, social media which is cleverly incorporated into the overall marketing strategy, may mean that a Fleadh may be effectively able to promote itself without needing to spend anything on print. In the meantime the audience should be directed to social media via brochures and other traditional promotional materials. Include the official Fleadh hashtag and the primary social media channels in any posters, invitations or flyers distributed. If using paper tickets and the ticket design allows for some extra characters, print the official hashtag in a prominent spot on the ticket.

Tweeting messages should continue right through the Fleadh. Twitter can be used to provide essential updates and very importantly to address any issues or complaints about the Fleadh surfacing elsewhere on social media. After the Fleadh it is worthwhile to tell the story and capture the highlights on Facebook, Instagram or other media where images and video can be posted.

PR and social media campaigns need, of course, to be complemented by a well-designed and dynamic website, perhaps following a template and guidelines provided by CCÉ centrally. A professionally designed website is essential, so the designer must receive a clear brief on the objectives behind the site and the primary target audiences. The FEC will need to appoint a webmaster to be responsible for the regular updating of the site. At the outset the designers must show that the site has been registered with all the major search engines, and that search engine optimization principles have been adopted.

In exceptional circumstances, such as a major concern that PR and social media activity is not generating sufficient impact, there may be a need for paid media advertising. Should the FEC decide this is necessary and have budget provision available for same, advice should be sought from professional marketing agencies including Fáilte Ireland.

7.4. Partnerships and Stakeholders

It is most important that a sense of ownership of the Fleadh be inculcated in all key sectors of the local community. While CCÉ are the custodians of the Fleadh, a really successful event needs the whole-hearted engagement of the entire community. It is important in this regard that community leaders outside of Comhaltas activists are seen to be involved in, and partnering with, the Fleadh. Mechanisms such as setting up a Host Town welcome committee can be considered in seeking to achieve this objective.

Apart from CCÉ there are other vitally important stakeholders for any major Fleadh. Primary among these are local businesses, especially in the hospitality industry, and the local authority for whom the Fleadh is a major opportunity to raise the profile and strengthen the image of the host town. Working successfully with the stakeholders requires a keen appreciation of their requirements and priorities. Where the hospitality industry is concerned it is most important that information about hotels, other accommodation, restaurants and bars, contained in Fleadh publicity material (including especially the website) be accurate and up-to-date. Such information, when in draft form, should always be sent to the facility owners or operators for their sign-off. Local authorities also require accurate information which needs to be timely and directed to the appropriate section or person. It is important also that the key personnel in local authorities, Chambers of Commerce, hotel and restaurant associations, etc., be invited to, and recognized at, launches and other formal occasions associated with the Fleadh. Sponsors and funders will require special agreed recognition at such events e.g., relevant private sponsors and Fáilte Ireland.

7.5. Review, Learnings and Knowledge Transfer

Following the holding of each Fleadh a formal review is required. This should be carried out initially by the FEC, and the draft should be completed, agreed and signed off by the Cathaoirleach not later than 6 weeks after the conclusion of the Fleadh. The draft review should then be forwarded to the Ardchomhairle, who can accept or amend it following consultation with the FEC. This process should be completed, as feasible, within a further 4 weeks.

Following adoption of the review, the key learnings should be summarized in a document to be prepared by CCÉ. The CEC may then commission a re-edit of this current manual, and make this available with minimum delay to the succeeding year FEC, and thereafter to the wider Comhaltas membership and relevant others. It is understood that the review and updating of this manual will be on an ongoing process. The updating of the manual will form part of subsequent Fáilte Ireland grant applications. Each FEC subsequent FEC in conjunction with the CEC commits to informing it appropriately into the future.





Appendix 1 – Core CCÉ - CEC Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Operational Requirements

Central Information/ Administration Venue

The CEC requirements at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann include an appropriately located Central Administration / Information venue, with adequate wi-fi, to accommodate the following:

- General Information Point with access to printer / PC with printer
- This general area may incorporate the Fleadh Results Display Area
- CCÉ Head Office retail area
- Accommodation Enquiries Office (CEC) with access to printer / PC with printer
- Press Office(s) with access to printer / PC with printer.

The Press Office issues Press Passes and thus should be located where media can also easily access further information / key personnel.

- Trophy Presentation area – see specific requirements
- Trophy Room – see specific requirements
- Fleadh official photographer
- Office for Competition Management Team, CEC personnel - with access to printer / PC with printer – This competition management team appoints from the CEC various Venue Competition Managers/ Co-ordinators throughout the various competition venues. This team, in conjunction with the CEC appointed Results Office staff, has oversight of all aspects of the competitions processes.
- Results Office – adjacent to the above, see specific requirements
- Additional Administration – Meeting rooms as required.
This to include a room large enough to accommodate the competition call stewards and clerks meeting/briefing session.
- Seomra na Gaeilge – This to be liaised by the FEC with CCÉ with consideration of the Seachtain na Gaeilge programme.
- Archival Display Area – see Seachtain na hÉigse section below



Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann: CEC, Competitions & Fleadh personnel

Accommodation and/or meals are provided to the above, based on directive from CCÉ. Competition personnel receive certain expenses, this to be advised by CCÉ.

All CCÉ competition personnel receive appropriate badges/lanyards etc. and details of their accommodation and/or meal provision.

The CEC representatives convene a meeting and briefing for adjudicators which has been combined with a pre-booked meal provided by the FEC.

Trophy Room - Presentation Area:

This refers to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann perpetual trophies.

Note: All Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Medals – for 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes are purchased by the FEC from CCÉ Head-Office.

Requirements for winner's area and trophy room, to be positioned beside official photographer are: -

1. Microphone and speaker
2. 13 tables, i.e. 2 for winners area, 1 for trophy cleaning room and the rest for private trophy room
3. Popup stands
4. Small stage/rise for winners
5. Access to Wi-Fi printer

All solo Trophies for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann should be presented at a 'Winners' Area' and not in the competition venue. Céilí Bands, Grúpaí Cheoil, Marching Bands and all Céilí Dancing and Set Dancing competitions should be presented at the venues, with a member of staff at hand to oversee paperwork.

There should be two-three presentation times where a high profile person can present the trophy officially. People who cannot make the presentation time may collect their trophy at any time during the Fleadh weekend.

The 'Winners' Area' must have a Comhaltas photographer only. These photographs are for Comhaltas use only and permission will be required to use these photos. Any individual photos required will be taken by the Fleadh's official photographer. The 'Winners' Area' will be branded with display boards etc. and this area must be convenient to the private Trophy Room, where trophies are held. A third space is also needed for the cleaning of trophies. This area requires 1 table with good ventilation, close to the private Trophy Room. There will also be a microphone with a small stage on which to make the presentations.

On being awarded an official trophy at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, the competitor is presented with a document containing the details of the trophy and information on how and where to collect it.

On arriving at the 'Winners' Area' the competitor (or appropriate adult in the case of a competitor under the age of 18) will complete the necessary paperwork. A member of the Trophy Room staff will be on hand to go through the full detail of the paperwork with the signatory. The paperwork will contain the responsibility of care in relation to the trophy as well as the date and venue of return.

Fleadh na hÉireann Results Office

Results office situated near to Competition Management Team as well as being near to area for display Competition results.

- 1 Large size office required.
- 2 7 long tables good size – (we need table space – re lap tops (3) and 2 printers, Results boxes etc. as well as checking and sorting documentation, space for collectors.
- 3 8 chairs
- 4 Up to date network printer/ photocopier with document feeder located in Results Office (to facilitate the print off of result documents rather than print on a small portable printer and copy) A4 and A3 facility. This should be available to be set up on Wednesday, prior to Fleadh
- 5 Strong Wifi connection for the week – use for 3 to 4 lap top connections re competitors/adjudication sheets/list preparations posters, etc. etc.
- 6 Arrangement to be set up re daily updating of results, via e mail, to local Fleadh web site co-ordinator- Twitter was successfully used in 2015, 2016 and 2017
- 7 8 copies of Official Fleadh Programme.
- 8 5 Pkt copying paper (approx.) A4
- 9 100 sheets of A3
- 10 150 envelopes -
- 11 70 plastic pockets (result board etc)
- 12 8 copies of Official Fleadh Programme.
- 13 Collection of Competition Results: In 2016 and 2017 A number of teenagers were recruited to help collect results at the bigger venues. The Clare Ladies Cycling Club, who were delighted to be involved for the 2nd year, then transported, by bicycle, the results from the various venues to the Fleadh Results Office. I would strongly recommend that a similar arrangement would be considered for 2018 in Drogheda.
Collectors will be required on Friday Saturday and Sunday, from 11. 30 am until late evening. Number will depend on venues location etc.
- 14 Display of Results – on solid Board, - space required for 50 A4 sheets, in plastic pockets.
Heading: *Torthaí Fleadh na hÉireann: 2018 Results.* This Display needs to be near to the Results Office and in place prior to Thursday.

Note: the result sheets are updated, during each day, on receipt of competition result.

- 15 Meal Vouchers for Call Steward/Clerks and Administrative Staff working in the following areas:
All competition venues, Music, Singing, Comhrá Gaeilge, Storytelling, Dancing, & Marching Bands
Admin staff in the following:
Results Office
Permit Desks at 4/5 venues, depending on venues.
Trophy Room (location requirement: ground floor, easy access necessary)
Adjudication Sheet Desks
Results Collectors
- 16 Lanyards/Badges required for all above
- 17 Phone listing of contact Nos. – Fleadh officers, Fleadh website co-ordinator, venue managers, I.T. contact, courtesy car,
- 18 Supply of drinking water available to all offices

Note. The Office requirements, Printer, Meal Vouchers, Stationery, lanyards, etc. should be available to the Admin staff on TUESDAY prior to Fleadh

Competition Venues:

As per *Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* presently hosts 182 individual competitions; 51 Competition Categories in different age categories- generally Under 12, 12-15, 15-18 and Over 18 (Senior).

All CCÉ Fleadh Cheoil competitions are open to the public.

Only the Marching Band Competitions are held outdoors; all other competitions are held in appropriate indoor venues.

All competitions venues are decided by the local host venue provision committee, which acts in accordance with the advice of the Fire Officer and Event Management guidelines and CEC nominated personnel.

Capacity for each of these venues is decided giving consideration to the capacity and audience numbers for the previous year's Fleadh.

The capacity requirements, based on 2017, vary from 80 to 2,200.

Visible road, external and internal venue signage is a key requirement.

In all competition venues it is understood that key competition personnel are appointed by the CEC as per *Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil*: Adjudicators, Competition Call Steward and An Adjudicator's Clerk. Admission / door / other internal and external venue staff are appointed by the host venue.

Meals are provided for all personnel.

The CEC provides the various documents required for the administration and adjudication of the Competitions.

It is understood that all competition venues are serviced appropriately in terms of First Aid etc. in line with the overall Fleadh Health and Safety plan.

Larger venues which have stages usually have appropriate backdrops. Such backdrops add to the setting both during the competition and enhance the various media coverage.

Consideration should be given to the provisions outside the actual competition venue (room/hall/theatre) ensuring adequate internal space for general admission staff / programme sales/ door staff etc. gathering audiences outside venues etc.

Similarly external venue logistics including parking should be considered relative to the expected audience capacities

The CEC appoints competitions venue managers/co-ordinators. These co-ordinators report to the Competition Management Team. Plans of the various buildings should be available, if possible, to these co-ordinators, or at least to the local FEC appointed logistics venue manager. These managers and the Competition Management team at the central administration venue also benefit from being informed on estimated walking/travelling time- distance between the various competitions venues.

The following are the core logistical considerations for the indoor venues are as follows:

Venue provision specifications for Fleadh Cheoil competitions depend very much on the type of competition being catered for, e.g. Céilí Band, Grupaí Cheoil, duets, trios, solo, etc.

Also, the type of instrument being played in solos need to be taken into account, e.g. large instruments like harps which need adequate space.

Overall, competition venues can be divided into three types – small, medium and large categories.

Adults sized chairs are considered standard.

Small Venues

These would usually seat up to upwards on 100 persons approx. and would be used for smaller attendance competitions. The venue should have chairs laid out theatre style, with adequate passageways to enable safe movement for patrons and competitors.

Other requirements include at least two door stewards (one inside and other outside), all doors to be manned in this way in any such competition venue. This will regulate entry and exit as appropriate to running of competition.

Other provisions include table(s) to allow three persons to be seated (2 adjudicators + 1 competition clerk) appointed by Head Office.

Adequate supply of bottled water to be provided by local hosts of Fleadh.

The competitor(s) should, if possible, face the audience while other competition staff should have their backs to the audience. Adequate chairs should be provided for both competitor(s) and competition staff. PA should not be needed in this type of venue.

Medium Size Venue

This type of venue would normally hold in the region of 100 to 500 patrons.

All the requirements as outlined for the foregoing small venue apply in this case also.

- Sufficient standard chairs to fill venue in theatre style layout. (Local Fleadh Comm.)
- Volunteer stewards to man all entry and exit doors both inside and outside.(Local Fleadh Committee)
- Tables for competition staff (3 staff from HQ)

Bottles of water (Local Fleadh Comm.)

Such venue require a suitable PA system to enable patrons and competitors to hear announcements by Competition Call Steward (PA to be provided by Local Fleadh Committee).

Venues such as this need a Venue Manager to coordinate the various volunteer stewards including door staff, and to ensure that venue is compliant with H & S at all times. This person to liaise with Competition Call Steward who is ultimately responsible for smooth running of competition.

This size of venue requires a raised stage to enable patrons to see competitor(s).

Large Venue

These venues are usually large Theatres, sports halls, domes, etc. and capable of holding in excess of 500 and up to 2,500 or so.

This type of venue would host the high volume attendances at competitions such as Céilí Bands, Grupaí Cheoil and some solo competitions e.g. Button Accordion.

All the normal requirements for the smaller venues apply in this case also but on a proportionately larger scale.

Chairs to be laid out theatre style with attention to H & S requirements.

In such venues a state of the art PA system is essential, that covers all areas of the venue.

A raised stage minimum of 1.5 meters high with sufficient space for 20+ people with a huge variety of large instruments + two pianos + table for trophies and medals.

This stage needs to be wheelchair accessible with a sloping ramp for all users.

Six separate tables to cater for céilí band adjudicators plus competition clerk.

Sufficient local volunteers to man all entry and exit doors (both inside and outside) plus general crowd control in corridors adjacent to competition rooms so that there is no noise disturbing competitions. This requirement should be a prerequisite around all competition areas.

It is very important to have specific entrance and exit doors for competitors

Carpark management is a matter to be considered here also due to the volume of competitors who need to bring heavy instruments, e.g. drum kits, harps, etc. very close to venue

Overall, this type of venue will require a dedicated Venue Manager (Local Fleadh Committee) to coordinate all the local volunteers working in and around the venue. This person to liaise closely with Competition Call Steward, who will be ultimately responsible for running of competition.

Adequate provision should be made for assembly/rehearsal rooms in the competition area or very close by.

Other matters to be considered with regard to competition venues is in respect of certain competitions in close proximity to one another, e.g. the placing of a heavy volume instrument next to a low volume competition e.g. singing, whistling, liltling, comhrá, etc.

Dividing walls need to be sound proof, not folding partitions

It is very important that a total floor plan be provided for all venues being used for competitions so that suitable rooms/venues are chosen for relevant competitions.

It is critical that all H & S equipment is in place is in place for all venues and all relevant and appropriate documentation is available to Venue Manager should venue be inspected by Fire Office staff.

Dancing Venues

The requirements for the Dancing Venues are communicated by the CEC Coiste Rince

Note: The host, under the guidance of the Coiste Rince provides the live music and the amplification for the Rince Ceilí and the Rince ar an Sean-Nós. Competitors provide their own live music for the Rince Seit. (c.f. Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil).

Dancing competitions at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann usually run over 3 days. In 2017 they started on Friday morning at 10am.

Two venues are required within walking distance of each other, the ideal situation being in the same complex.

Catering facilities are required in complex over the three days to cater for large crowds.

Ample toilet facilities are also required.

Dressing rooms and practice areas.

Venues: logistics outlined below:

Venue A: Set dancing venue.

Venue to hold 800 plus

Stage 20ft X 20ft approx., 3ft 6in – 4ft in height.

Amplification Microphones to facilitate up to 5 musicians at any one time,

1 microphone on stand on floor in front right of stage is required for M.C.

2 monitors are required at front of stage, either side, turned back to face dancers.

1 monitor faced towards musicians

Sound technician on call for day.

Tables

3 tables required for adjudicators approx. 3ft back from stage and set apart.

1 large table to right of stage for clerks and registration

1 large table to right of stage to display trophies

1 small table for M.C.

Reserve first row of seating for additional adjudicators

Seating for audience should start at least 3ft from adjudicators.

Teas and coffees and bottled water should be made available for adjudicators and staff during the day.

Additional requirements.

Changing area with toilet facilities must be available for dancers.

Practice area for to be provided for teams

Catering facilities should be on-site for weekend.

Provision to be made for Permit Office where necessary.

Venue B: Céilí dancing.

Venue to hold 500 plus.

Stage 20ft X 20ft approx., 3ft 6in to 4ft in height

Sound system

2 mics for musician

1 microphone for M.C

2 monitors at front of stage turned back to face dancers.

1 monitor turned back to face musicians.

Layout of venue

Two tables for adjudicators sitting together

1 large table for clerical staff to right of stage

1 large table to display trophies

A space of 3ft between adjudicators and audience.

Teas, coffees and bottled must be water available to adjudicators and staff throughout the day.

Additional requirements

Changing area for dancers.

Practice area for teams.

Catering facilities and toilets for large crowd.

Venue C: Rinne ar an Sean-Nós

Generally as per Venue B

Less changing area space

Adjudicator space requirements reduced.

Outdoor Venue: Marching Bands

CCÉ has a Marching Bands Subcommittee which liaises with the FEC in relation to the Marching Bands Competitions and Parade.

The operational requirements are as follows:

Access to the venue from 10.00 a.m.

A one acre field with adjacent parking for c. 15 large buses and extra cars, etc.

Marching space requires an arena 40 x 20 metres.

Additional space is required for lining up for entrance and, on the opposite side, for exit.

Badges/ vests if being used for the competition personnel to be available to the Band Committee for the Friday Marching Bands

Adequate Toilets or portaloos at the venue.

Adequate Bins, usual venue provision.

A gazebo type tent (This can be accommodated by the Marching-Band committee)

Adequate number of barriers in order to line out the marching area (C.50)

Adequate venue stewarding as required by the committee

Adequate Tables and seating as directed per the Marching Band Committee

Supply waterproof clip boards for competition personnel

Provide Clerks and Stewards for the arena.

Meals/ Refreshments to be supplied to the venue for c. 12 people.

Provision for Tuck shop / refreshment sales outlet 12 to 5pm.

The Marching Band subcommittee will liaise with the local stewards and Garda re time of parade.

SEACHTAIN NA hÉIGSE

The three main CEC events during Seachtain na hÉigse are:

(1)The Bardic Awards

(2)The Ard-Ollamh Award

(These awardees are nominated by the CEC)

(3)An Overseas Reception and Concert

The requirements for these events are liaised by the CEC with the FEC.

(4) A designated Archival Display Area also forms part of Seachtain na hÉigse.

The requirements for this space is liaised by the CEC with the FEC.

Note:

The above outlined requirements are subject to change based on ongoing communication between CCÉ and the FEC.

The core CEC-CCÉ events (that should be listed in the programme):

Fleadh opening

Céilithe

Scoil Éigse

Bardic Awards

Ard-Ollamh Award

Competitions

Overseas Reception/Concert

Archival Display

These are generally included in the overall Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann programme of events.

Appendix 2 – Scoil Éigse Basic Requirements

School(s)

65 – 70 Classrooms to accommodate 10 -14 performers in each.
A hall to accommodate sean-nós dance class.

Classrooms to have 17 chairs at least (not junior-school chairs). Should be set up before Sunday.

Staffroom with tea/coffee facilities to cater for the tutors during breaks etc.

Administration and Registration area in one of the Schools. Available from Sunday morning.

Schools should be in close proximity where possible to ensure convenient drop off for parents. This can be stressful.

Catering facilities at the schools to accommodate both the students and, separately, the tutors. Water supplies to be provided by FEC.

Lunch to be supplied daily by a recommended vendor. Price and menu to be negotiated by Scoil Éigse administrator.

Male and Female toilets.

Photocopy facilities should be supplied. Scoil Éigse to supply paper and ink where necessary.

Onsite parking facilities for the tutors with separate drop off area for parents/students.

Traffic management required at each venue.

Venue required for Afternoon recitals (Performances by Scoil Éigse tutors)
The recitals run from 3.30pm – 4.45pm. Scoil Éigse to supply PA

Venue required for Club Éigse (A tutor led seisiún mór to accommodate 250 musicians approx. These are the students of SÉ). Scoil Éigse to supply PA.

Venue required for the Scoil Éigse Tutors Concert (Held on the Friday morning at the end of Scoil Éigse). FEC to supply PA.

Volunteers required at each school to direct students and parents. Students from the schools are usually best placed to help in this regard.

Venue managers to deal with security and safety at each venue. Appointed by FEC.

First Aid box at each venue.

All staff and volunteers must have Garda Vetting.

It is desirable to have copies of the floor plans for each school prior to the event to facilitate planning.

School caretakers are central to the enjoyment and smooth running for Scoil Éigse. Should be engaged by FEC.

Accommodation for Tutors

All tutors should be accommodated in the same hotel, where possible on a Dinner/B+B basis.

The hotel contract is between CCÉ Head Office and the Hotel and the booking is undertaken and managed by the Scoil Éigse administrator. It is desirable to have this accommodation near the town centre as this creates a visibility and atmosphere throughout the town during the build-up to the Fleadh itself.

Appendix 3 – Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil 2017 (Extract)

FLEADH CHEOIL NA HÉIREANN

86. Should it be found necessary to change the date of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, the Ardchomhairle shall have the authority to do so, without reference to Congress. No other Comhaltas function shall be held on those dates.

87. The Centre may be located in any County having a strong County Board, and an active branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann at the centre.

88. The Provincial Council nominating the centre shall, through its Secretary forward to the General Secretary of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann prior to the appropriate CEC meeting, information supplied by the Branch applying for the Fleadh regarding the following:

- i. Population of the proposed centre
- ii. Numerical strength of the local branch
- iii. Facilities for competitions, concerts, céilithe: number, capacity, suitability of halls
- iv. Travelling facilities
- v. Facilities for lodgings and catering
- vi. Fundraising Structures

After the receipt of each valid application the Standing Committee shall visit the proposed venues and report to the CEC meeting at which the Fleadh is being allocated on the suitability of the proposed venues.

89. The venue shall be determined, at a meeting of the Ardchomhairle/CEC, from nominations submitted by branches to County Boards and recommended by the Provincial Councils. Provincial Councils shall submit one nominated venue only. It shall be decided by secret ballot of the Ardchomhairle/CEC. Where there are three or more nominations, the elimination system shall be adopted.

90. The CEC shall have complete jurisdiction over the Fleadh and in all matters appertaining to the Fleadh. Its rulings shall be final.

91. The County Board Sponsoring the Fleadh Cheoil shall convene a meeting consisting of members of the County Board and the local Branch. This meeting shall elect the Fleadh Executive Committee. This FEC shall be answerable to the Central Executive Council (Ardchomhairle). Members of sub-committees shall be subject to the prior approval of the FEC.

92. All monies received by the FEC shall on receipt be lodged to the credit of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in a current account in a Bank approved by the CEC in the names of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann with signatures of two treasurers (one

member of the County and the other a nominee of the CEC). All drawings on the said account shall be by cheque bearing their joint signatures.

93. The conduct of the Fleadh shall be reviewed and if necessary, revised or amended by the CEC in the light of progress reported at the CEC meeting held three months subsequent to the date on which the Fleadh was allocated to the centre, provided that such revisions and amendments are in keeping with Rules for Fleadhanna.

94. Admission Charges to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann competition centres, céilithe and concerts shall be fixed by the CEC in conjunction with the local organisers, when allocating the Fleadh to a venue, and reduced admission charge shall apply to U-18s.

95. Qualifiers: All competitions at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann are confined to the following:

- i. Those who have secured first and second prizes, together with the five prize winners in the "Comhrá Gaeilge" competitions at the Provincial Fleadhanna- the seven qualifying Fleadhanna as per Rule 3 - in the current year.
- ii. Competitors of a sufficiently high standard, normally resident in countries where no qualifying Fleadhanna are held and whose entries reach Cultúrlann na hÉireann not later than one calendar month prior to the Fleadh. Where more than two entries are received for any one competition from any one country, the Comhaltas Competitions Officer shall arrange an elimination competition prior to the competition proper.
- iii. Those who won First Prize in the O-18 (Age Group D) at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in the previous year, the winners of the O-35 Mixed Set Competition.(47L) and the Pipe Bands competition (30E) This does not include winners of Newly Composed Ballads, Amhráin Nuacheaptha and Newly Composed Tunes.

96. Programme: The Fleadh Executive Committee shall produce a Souvenir Programme, which shall contain the following information:

- i. Names of Competitors and Comhaltas Branches/Addresses, in Gaeilge if possible.
- ii. The names of the adjudicators.
- iii. The Centres for and the approximate starting times of each competition.
- iv. The names of the Fleadh Executive Committee.
- v. The names and addresses of the previous year's first prize winners.
- vi. The Perpetual Trophy available for each competition, with donor's name.
- vii. Diagram, or sketch of the town, showing the location of halls, etc.
- viii. The time schedule for the various events, Competitions, Parade, Pageants, Concerts, etc.
- ix. The names of the Officers of the Provincial Council.
- x. Articles/reports on local history, heritage, music, song, dance etc.



Appendix 4 - Planning Schedule Month-by-Month for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

The host learnings, from preparation and progressing the Fleadh bid and application process informs the initial planning process. Likewise the information sharing and download available from preceding FECs also informs the planning process.

Prior Year

Competition, Concert and Céilithe Venues, provisionally booked and passed by Fire Chief; Accommodation costings (for Comhaltas own requirements) agreed and provisionally booked. Branding and logos established. Broad principles of local authority support agreed, together with other essential commitments required by CCÉ as part of the host town bidding process.

Planning Check-list

A check-list based on the manual body-text and appendices is to be devised; this to form part of the schedule/manual moving forward.



Timescale for Planning and Organising Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann/ Suggested Chronology of Planning for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

First Month

- Elect committee heads
- Start local PR
- Confirm agreement on selected venues
- Develop Marketing Plan in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland

Second Month

- Book Céilí Bands
- Write to all venue managers regarding use of halls
- Ensure website with preliminary information in place
- Set up Facebook page.
- Write to school Boards of Management for permission to use premises
- Get logo/branding for use on all paper, tickets etc.
- Establish/progress fundraising initiatives e.g. applications to public bodies, sponsorships etc.
- Progress campsite venues
- Start Green Fleadh policy planning
- Discuss bye-laws for street trading and agree a policy

Third Month

- Follow up on Boards of Management re schools/other premises
- Agree/Confirm schedule of events for Seachtain na hÉigse
- Commence preparation for public events licence
- Continue local awareness programme in media
- Develop website with up-to-date information and interesting local facts
- Book gig rigs
- Book public address (PA) system for Fleadh
- Identify and book printing company for all Fleadh material
- Contact other local voluntary groups for help with stewarding, catering, etc.

Fourth Month

- Decide budgets for each committee
- Agree pricing for events
- Continue with follow-up on schools and other venues
- Plan set-up of Fleadh office

Fifth Month

- Continue with PR re accommodation
- Appoint accommodation officer/administrator
- Confirm venues for all Seachtain na hÉigse events
- Confirm all youth events and venues
- Confirm all céilí bands for céilithe
- Plan Seachtain na Gaeilge schedule
- Continue with fundraising initiatives
- Note Bardic Awards and Ard-Ollamh award
- Start regular monthly meetings with emergency services and gardaí

Sixth Month

- Finalise preparations for public event licence application
- Start compiling Fleadh Brochure
- Upload all new information to website as it becomes available
- Set up Fleadh office –administrator, internet, phone lines, etc.
- Continue with all committee work
- Hold public meeting to inform local people of details of Fleadh
- Book venue for Volunteers Night (to be held 4-6 weeks after the Fleadh)

Seventh Month

- Continue with all committee work
- Submit public events licence application
- Confirm that all agreements with venues are in writing
- Order pianos for venues
- Order chairs for venues
- Confirm Mass and other religious service times and venues
- Order all outdoor equipment for campsites
- PR for accommodation
- Write to local councils and neighbouring county councils re signage on main roads
- Meet HQ staff and visit Scoil Éigse venues

Eighth Month

- Continue with all committee jobs
- Confirm music at all religious services
- Arrange for adequate stand-by essential operations personnel during the Fleadh period
- Launch website
- Arrange for catering for all officials
- Coordinate official accommodation with Cultúrlann
- Order hi-visibility vests with logo for all outdoor stewards
- Order uniform polo/T-shirts with logo for all official workers
- Write to neighbouring county and local councils for permission to place road side advertisements

Ninth Month

- Continue with all committee jobs
- Meet with marching bands representatives
- Discuss town decoration – windows displays, flags etc.
- Merchandise shop – agree merchandise, fundraising etc
- Arrange date and venue for official launch

Tenth Month

- Continue with all committee work
- Compile official restaurant list
- Start printing of all tickets, passes, badges etc,
- Start finalising all details
- Select six Fáilteoirí and buy uniforms

Eleventh Month

- Review all details
- Confirm all keyholders of venues, carpark
- Itemise all hired and rented equipment and send to insurance company for full cover.
- Get letters of indemnity for all who require same

Twelfth Month

- Consolidate
- Review
- Finalise
- Confirm
- Sign off

Appendix 5 - Inis 2017 Organizing Committee Accommodation Checklist Room Only or B&B

Fleadh Accommodation Inspection Checklist- Room only or Bed & Breakfast

Ref No.: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

Inspector: _____

1. (a) Bungalow /Two Storey (b) Detached /Semi-D / Terrace (c) Apartment
2. Room only / B&B (continental) / B&B (Full Irish) En-Suite____ Standard____
3. (a) No. of bedrooms _____ (b). No. of bed spaces _____
4. Distance from Ennis Town Centre _____ km

Off-Street Parking Yes / No

Disabled Access Yes / No

*Clean Towels/Bed Linen Provided Yes / No

*Sanitary Facilities
(Clean and in Working Order) Yes / No

*Door Keys Provided Yes / No

*Central Heating Yes / No

*Guest Wardrobe/Cupboard in each Bedroom Yes / No

*Shower Facilities Yes / No

*Smoke Alarm Yes / No

*Blinds/Curtains for Bedrooms Yes / No

Access to Kitchen
(Kettle, Toaster, Fridge) Yes / No

Laundry Facilities
(Washing Machine, Iron, Ironing Board) Yes / No

Internet Access Yes / No

Revisit Required Yes / No Comments:

***Mandatory Requirement for inclusion on Fleadh Accommodation Register**

Appendix 6 – Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Campsite Provision

There should be 2 separate campsites

- The sites should be within 15 minutes walking distance from the Town centre – if this is not possible adequate shuttle busses must be provided.
- It is important to note that pedestrian safety is paramount – from previous Fleadhanna, we have experience of Campsites that were easy to access by car and bus but that were unsafe for the pedestrian.
- Two separate sites should be provided - one designated as Family Site and the other General Site.
- The family site is for attendees of Scoil Eipse – they arrive on the Saturday or Sunday before the Fleadh week-end and stay for the full week
- The General site normally opens from the Thursday before the Fleadh
- Both sites should remain open until the Tuesday after the finish of the Fleadh
- The Family site needs to be within a reasonable walking distance to the Scoil Eipse venues (consideration should be taken of the needs of parents who carry heavy instruments – banjo, accordions, harps from the site to the Eipse)
- If the site is not within walking distance shuttle busses must be provided running at appropriate times and frequency.
- The sites need to accommodate tents, caravans and campervans.
- The capacity of the Family site should be between 90 and 100 plots
- The capacity of the general site should be between 400 and 450 plots.
- Adequate toilet, shower and fresh water must be provided for each site.
- Separate car parking facilities should be provided at each site – this is normally charged separate to the fee for the Campsite plot.
- Security must be provided on each site 24 hours a day but particularly at night. Wrist bands have been provided in some sites for identification of campers.



Appendix 7 – Comhaltas Weblinks

- **Rialacha Fleadhanna Ceoil**
https://comhaltas.ie/press_room/detail/2017_fleadh_rules/
- **2017 Clár na gComórtas**
https://comhaltas.ie/press_room/detail/2017_clar_na_gcomortas/
- **Bunreacht CCÉ**
https://comhaltas.ie/press_room/detail/comhaltas_constitution_bunreacht/



Appendix 8 – The Consultation Process

A most critical aspect of this manual's preparation was ensuring that the views and opinions of members of Comhaltas and the Fleadh Steering Group were taken fully into consideration when preparing the manual.

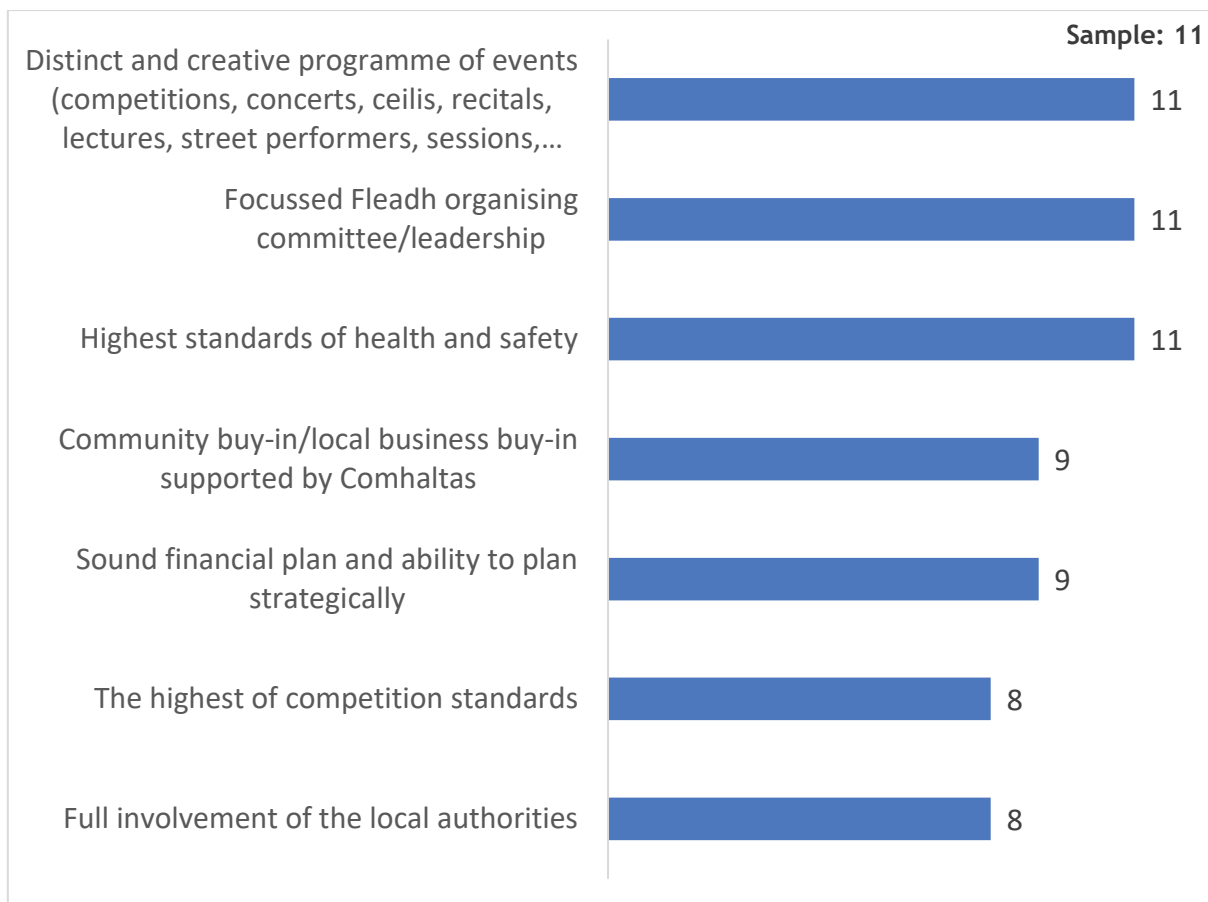
Accordingly, this Appendix to the manual presents in graphic form, with accompanying comments from Steering Group members, the summary of the consultation process. It was agreed that each member of the Steering Group would advise on his/her own priorities regarding the Fleadh Handbook/Manual. The consultation process findings contained overleaf represent a summary of in-depth feedback on the priorities and key factors relating to a Handbook/Manual for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann from the perspective of the members themselves. This input has been critical to determining the content of this Manual.

The Fleadh Steering Group was composed of the following members, all of whom are or have been national officers or Chairs/ members of FEC:

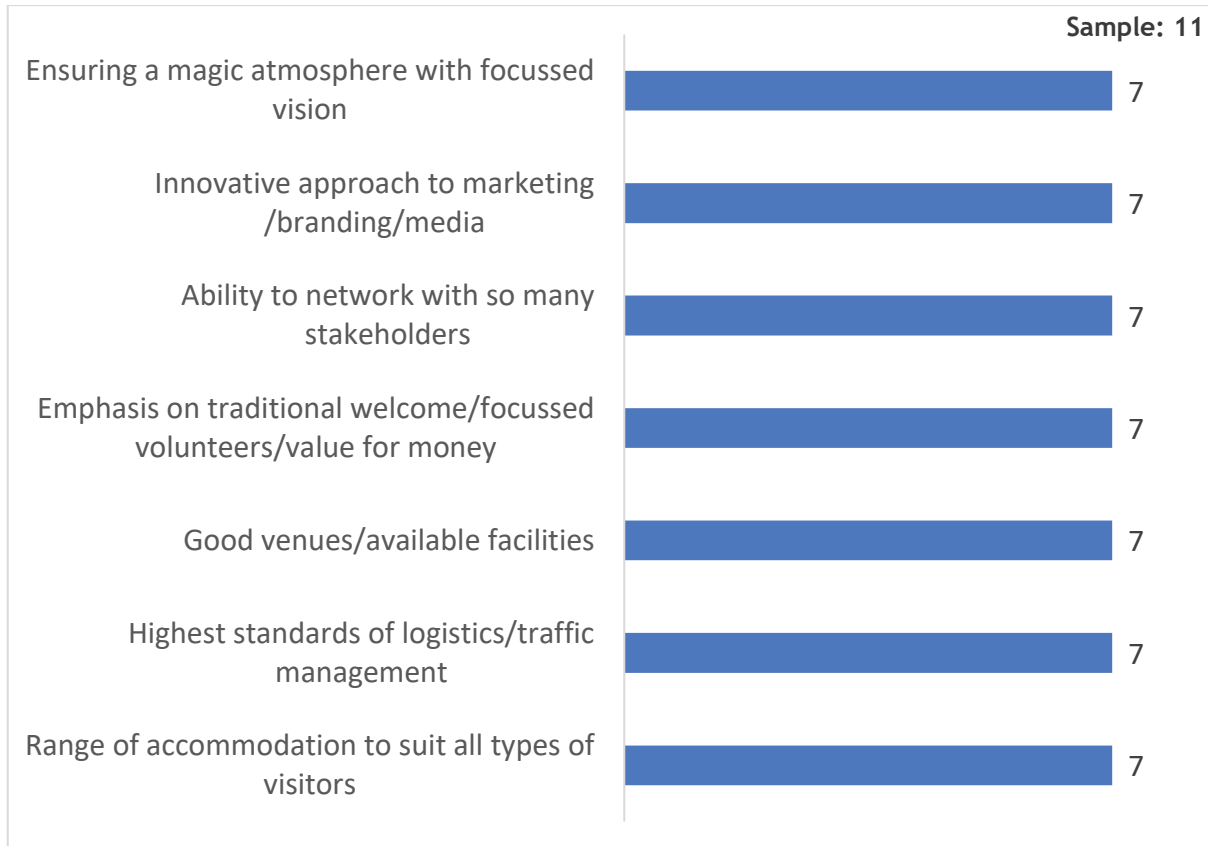
- Labhrás Ó Murchú, Ardstiúrthóir CCÉ
- Tomás O' Maoldomhnaigh, Ardrúnaí, CCÉ
- Pádraig Ó' Dufaigh, Ardchisteoir CCÉ
- Pádraig Ó' Flannagáin, PRO, CCÉ
- Attracta Brady, Cathaoirleach FEC, Tullamore 2007-2009
- Jack Keyes, Cathaoirleach FEC, Cavan 2010-2012
- Gearóid Ó' hÉadhra, FEC Doire 2013
- Bartley Gavin, Cathaoirleach FEC, Sligo 2014-2015
- Michael Brennan, FEC Sligo 2014-2015
- Séamus Mac Cormaic, FEC Sligo 2014-2015
- Peter Mc Carrick, FEC Sligo 2014-2015
- Micheál Ó Riabhaigh, Cathaoirleach FEC, 2016 Ennis
- Rory Casey, Rúnaí FEC, Ennis 2016-2017 Co. Clare
- Frank Whelan, Leas-Chathaoirleach FEC, Ennis 2016; Cathaoirleach FEC Ennis 2017
- Raymond Conway, Ennis 2016-2017
- Siobhán Ní Chonaráin, Riarthóir CCÉ

The following charts set-out a summary of key findings from our consultations with the Fleadh steering group. We have also included verbatim comments from various members of the Fleadh steering group.

Priority Components of a Successful Fleadh



Priority Components of a Successful Fleadh (Contd.)



Verbatim Comments

“Full involvement of local authority”

“Spaces for camping sites and car parks”

“A venue with good infrastructure and availability of large halls, schools, spaces for erection of domes”

“Cannot be just about impromptu sessions”

“Effective traffic plan/Garda, quality catering facilities, bookable accommodation, signage”

“Competitions should be held in easily accessible venues and run on time”

“Sponsors want to see that an event is financially successful”

“Financial failure could put off other towns”

“Commitment to the tradition of Irish culture”



"Different types of Fleadh goers catered for:

- Competitions and followers (need food venues in close proximity)*
- Concert and Ceili goers (high profile performers and bands)*
- Street visitors (quality entertainment)*
- TV and radio audience"*

"Competitions of the highest standard which are run punctually and smoothly in suitable venues to the satisfaction of the competitor, adjudicator and audience"

"Universal buy-in of host venue to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann"

"Delivering the Fleadh within budget and ensuring against a deficit when every aspect of the Fleadh is completed"

"Early as possible linkage with the national competition officer"

"Success with Scoil Éigse. Good numbers and positive experience for learners, parents and tutors"

"The Fleadh can be an enormous strategic benefit to the host community"

"Defining the organisation structure, areas of responsibility for each role, reporting structure"

"Meet the cultural expectations of visitors and participants"

"Well organised competitions running to time and in well ventilated and spacious venues"

"Fringe activities that complement the ethos of Comhaltas and encourage non-competitive participation"

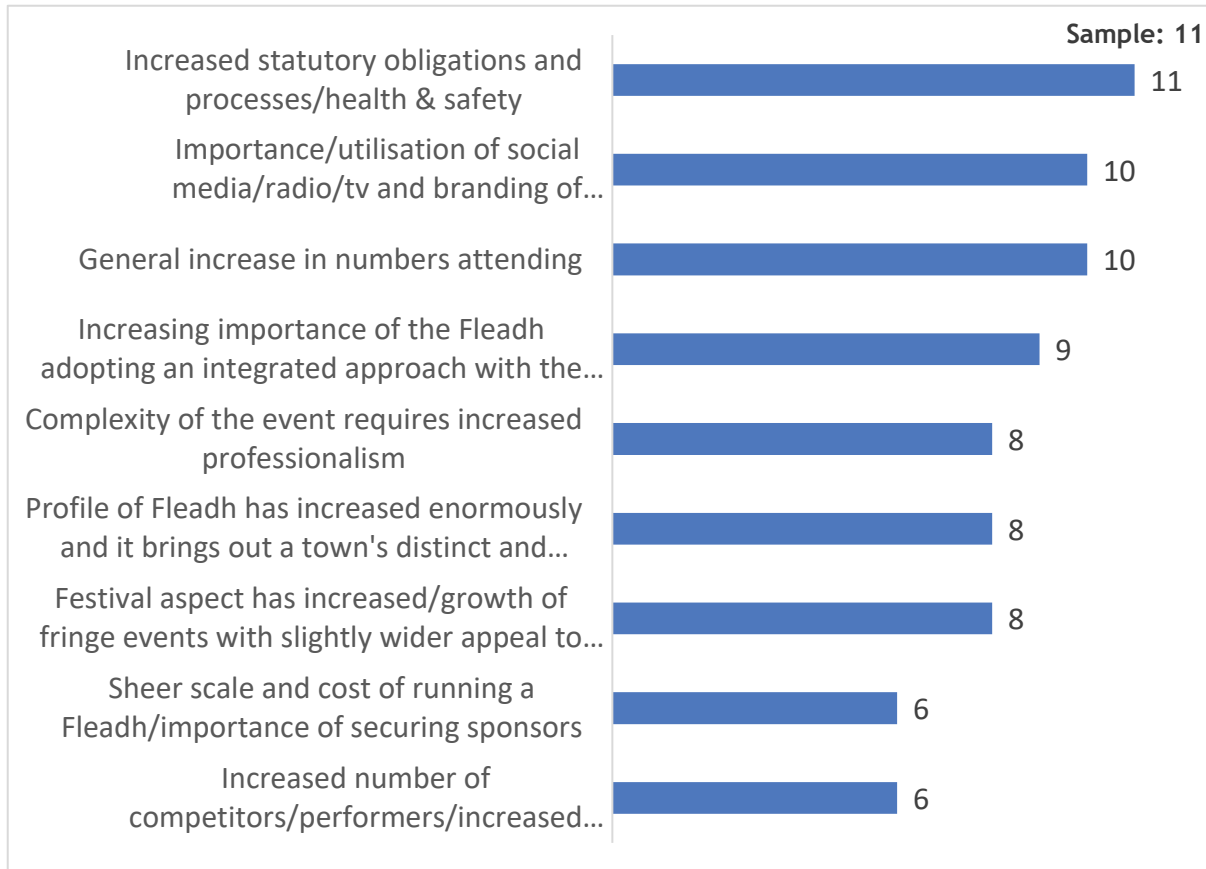
"Support, financial and practical from local business and national companies"

"Health and safety is an absolute priority"

"A range of events and activities to suit the diversity of festival goers"



Recent Fleadh Trends



Verbatim Comments

"Need to understand how modern media works and to be positioned to use the media to the benefit of the Fleadh"

"Increased requirement for quality governance, possibly less tolerance for amateurism"

"Statutory application for event licence – significant demands in terms of preparation planning and compliance"

"Success has led to heightened expectations, demands and obligations"

"Increase in numbers attending, demand for entertainers outside of Comhaltas"

"Every Fleadh endeavours to bring recognition to its own area"

"The Fleadh is a way of acknowledging past musicians or some other aspect of local culture and tradition"

"Sligo paid tribute to the great fiddle tradition of the area"



“Ennis paid tribute to the heroes of 1916 as the 100 years was commemorated”

“Regarding health and safety, a risk assessment should be prepared early and it should feature at all FEC meetings, thus the really important issues are kept before the FEC throughout and are considered and provided for and constantly updated”

“Increasing complexity in the process of meeting the requirements for an event licence”

“Greater demands on venues in respect of number, capacities and health and safety issues”

“Commercial interests growing”

“Local accommodation providers less co-operative and focussed on realising the full financial gain to be made from the Fleadh”

“Busking on the streets during the Fleadh reducing the traditional session experience”

“Busking on the street by children of many standards of performance”

“Difficult to source competent adjudicators willing to take on these very competitive competitions

“Reduction in the number of street sessions, as a result of busking”

“Smart phones and social media have also made a huge difference in how the Fleadh is experienced/tweeting/uploading videos etc.”



Overall Reaction to Development of a Fleadh Manual- Verbatim Comments

"A manual for organisers would be a very positive development for the future of the festival. One of the great things about the Fleadh is that it moves ... However, the experience gained by successive venues does not always move with it and there can be a sense that the host town is re-inventing the wheel and starting from zero"

"Handbook should not take from the sense of the host community implementing the Fleadh"

"Should give emphasis to the need for sub governance and should set down high standards"

"Will assist toward risk identification and management"

"Should be a construct for online – very little case exists for paper or hard copy focus"

"Recognition by Fáilte Ireland of the achievements of Comhaltas and previous FEC's over the years in growing the significance of the event in tourism/economic/social/cultural terms"

"The manual should be able to guide prospective towns looking to host FCNAH in relation to basic requirements"

"Opportunity for Comhaltas itself to frame the parameters for future development of Fleadhanna Cheoil in a manner which is wholly consistent with its aims and objectives"

"This is a very positive step and will assist groups greatly to evaluate the feasibility of preparing an application to host Fleadh and will give a very good understanding of the process of applying and more importantly of what is involved in hosting the Fleadh"

"The manual should also be supported by workshops and meetings hosted by head office where prospective applicants can discuss in detail all aspects of applying for and hosting the Fleadh, with executives of the organisation and with groups who have hosted the Fleadh in recent times"

"Many Fleadh committees over the years have gained valuable experience. This needs to be a) passed on and b) documented"

"The Fleadh manual should not be overly prescriptive, thus giving the committees guidelines to work with and the freedom to develop Fleadh events that most suit the local, national and international need along with showcasing the area's unique heritage and culture"

“Can provide a blueprint for good practice and can ensure that good ideas are passed on from one Fleadh to another”

“Should be updated on a regular basis”

“It will provide reassurance to sponsors that the event is professionally organised”

“It will facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience from one host venue to the next”

“Each of the 20+ sub committees could focus on a section relevant to them in the manual”

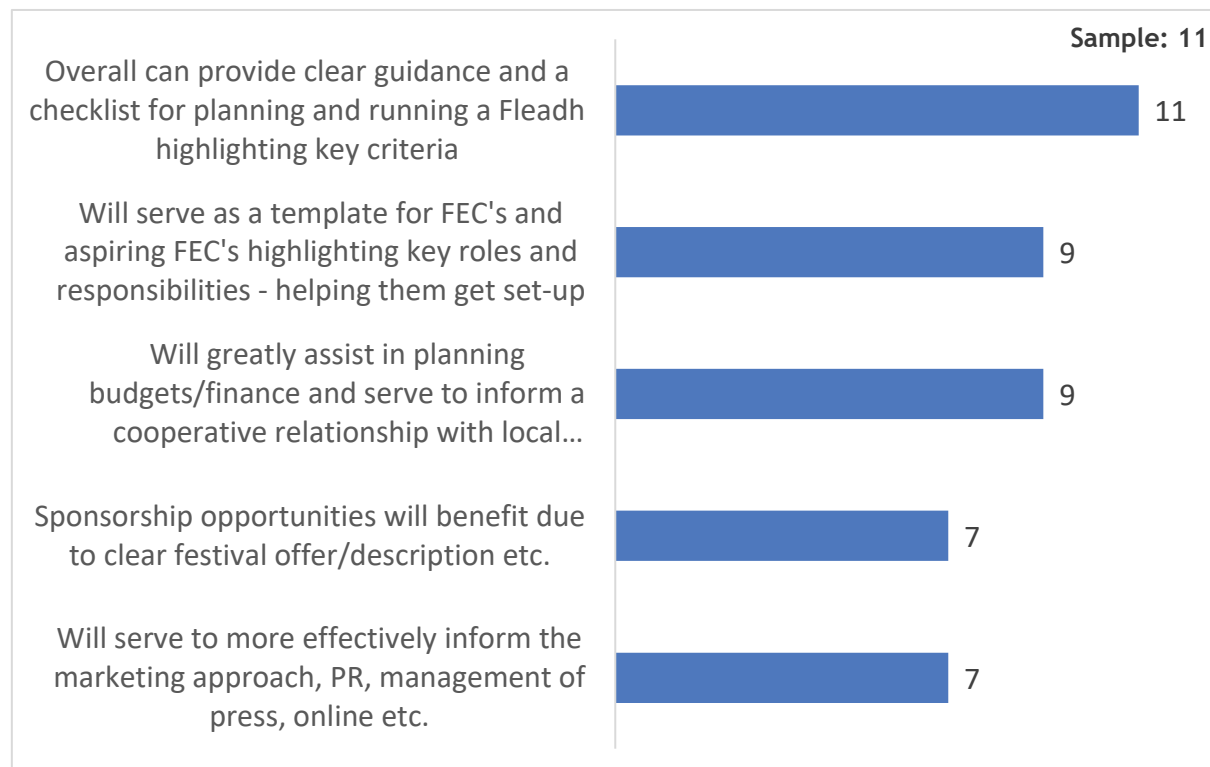
“Manual will act as a prompt to the FEC so that success is delivered”

“Each new venue has to learn the experience from scratch therefore given that the Fleadh is a 1m event it is essential that it is successful”

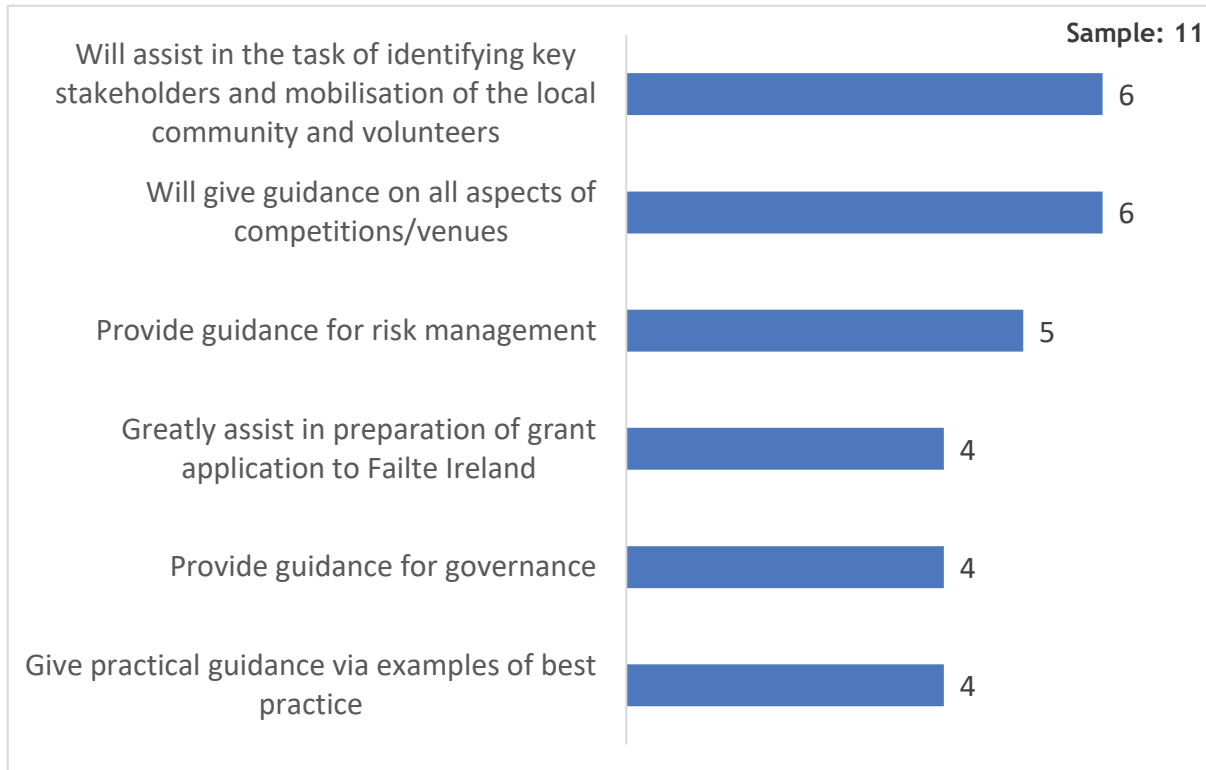
“Wonderful idea – long overdue”

“It will be a huge help in delivering a professionally run festival, well overdue”

Areas where a Fleadh Manual could be helpful



Areas where a Fleadh Manual could be helpful (Contd)



Verbatim Comments

“Manual of good practice from experience of towns/committees which have hosted successful Fleadhs”

“Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann should not be allowed to a town/city which does not meet most of the criteria laid down in the manual”

“Will give an insight into the breadth and complexity of issues involved for FEC and stakeholders”

“Will help to foster a culture for adhering to best practice”

“Handbook will provide a framework for the organising of the Fleadh”

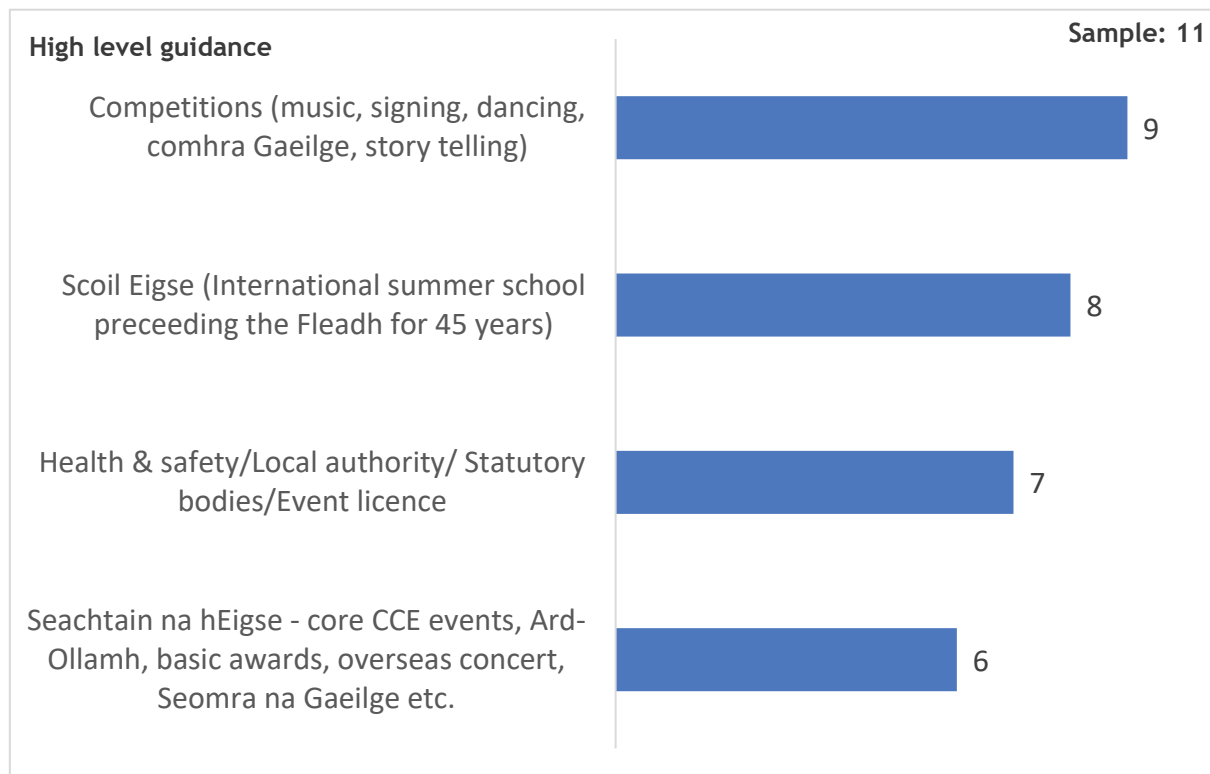
“Will allow for freedom to develop events within the Comhaltas parameters”

“The experience of Fleadh committees collected and collated for the benefit of future committees”

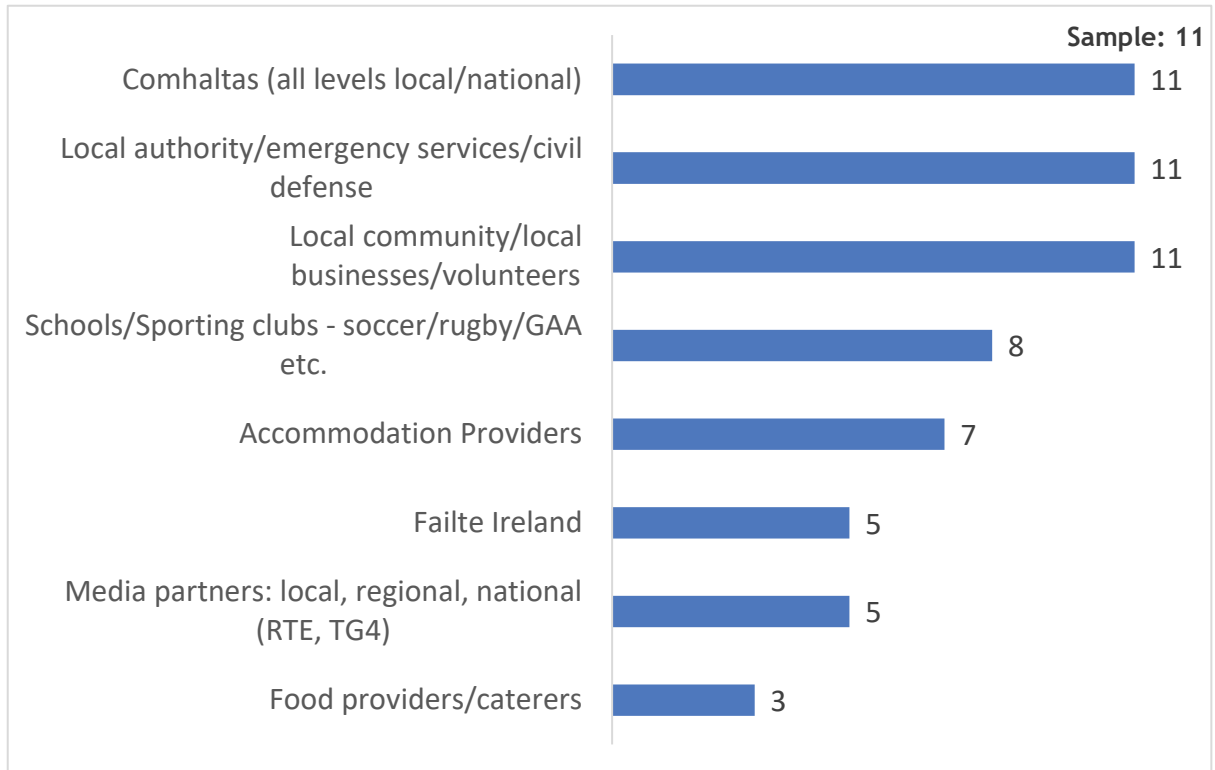
“A working document that can be updated regularly”

“Show pitfalls and problems that can be encountered”

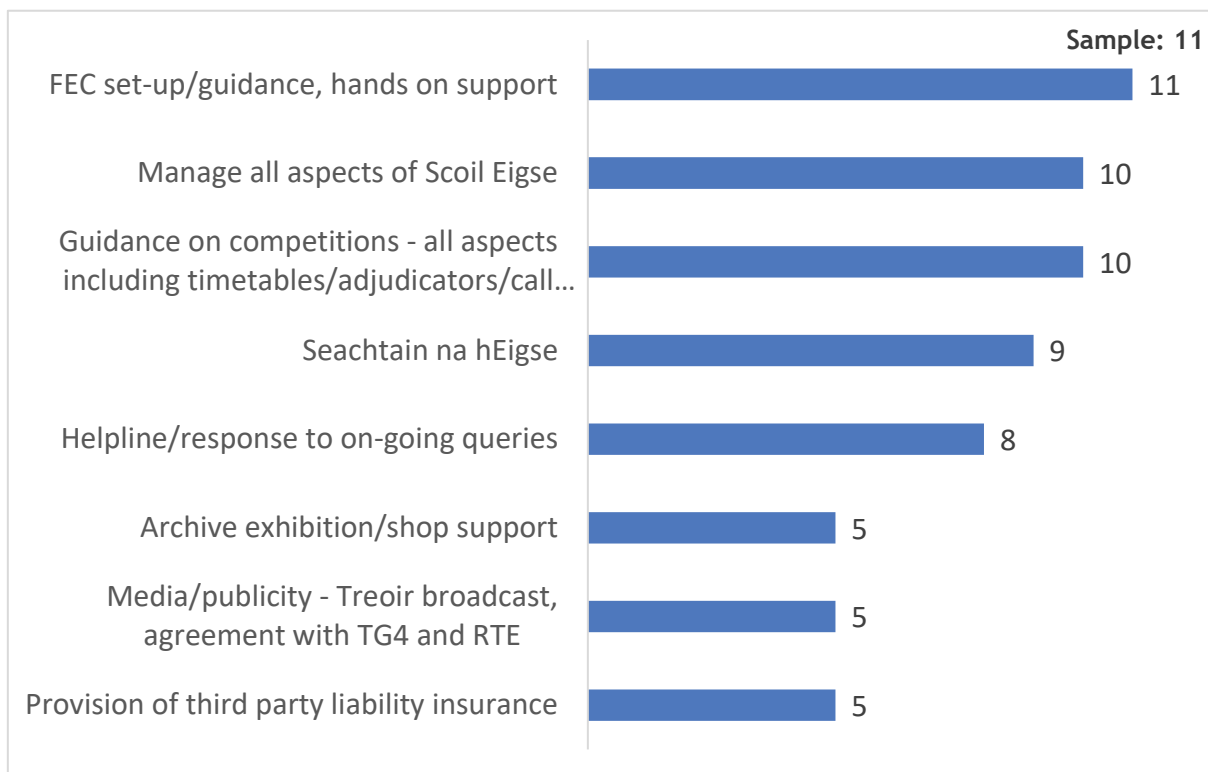
Aspects of Fleadh that would benefit most from more headquarter guidance



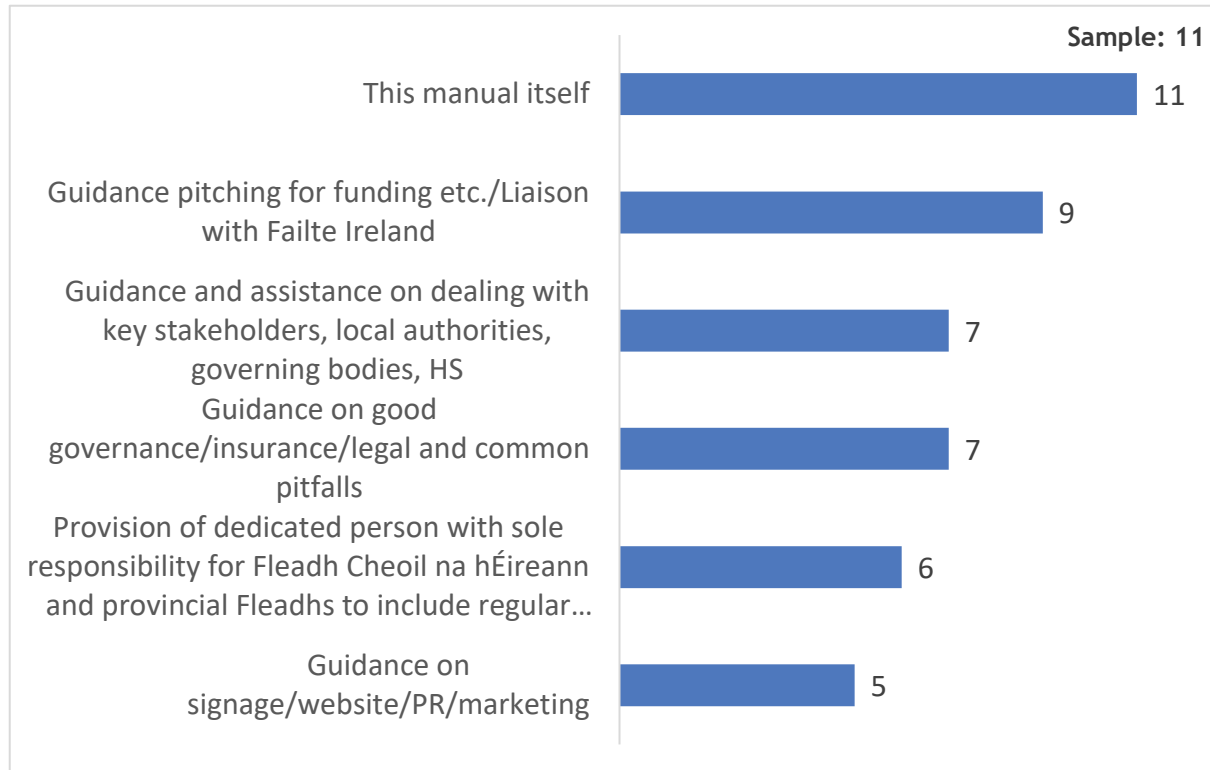
Key Players/Stakeholders Required to Deliver a Successful Fleadh



Services currently provided by Comhaltas HQ



Suggestions for future services to be provided by Comhaltas HQ



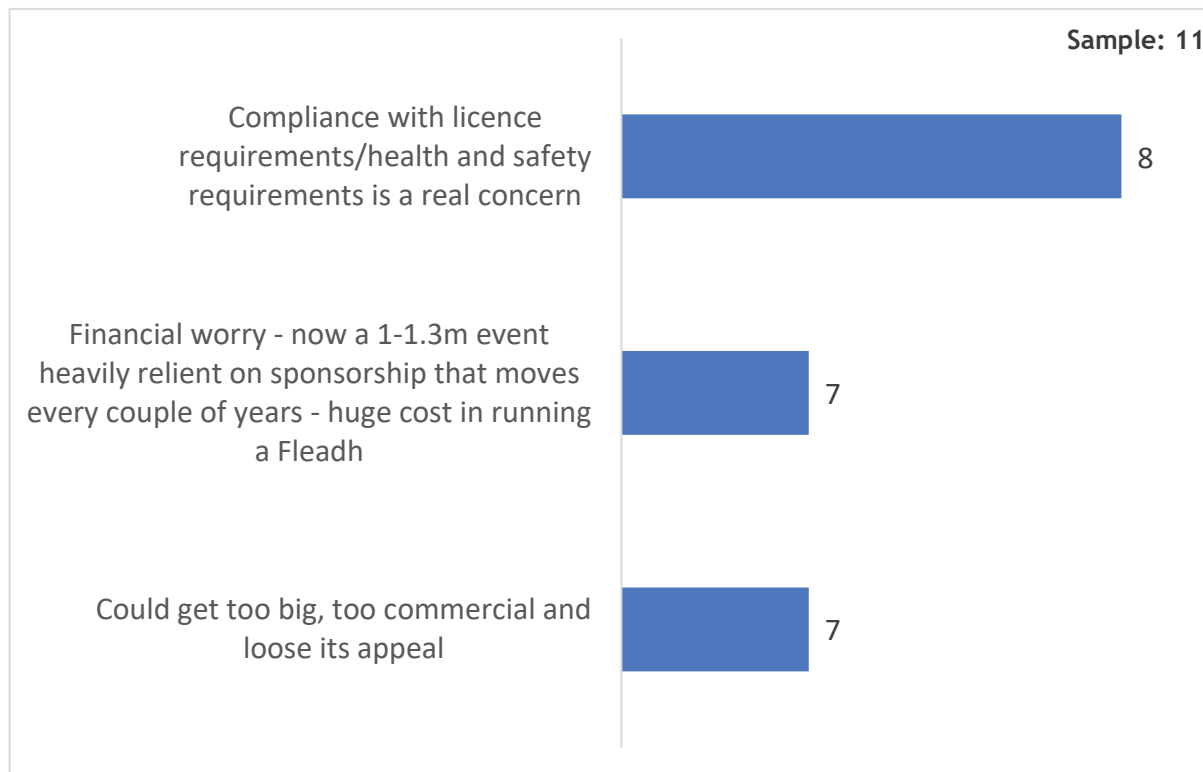
Verbatim Comments

“Appointment of a Fleadh coordinator to transfer information from one Fleadh to another to provide consistency”

“As Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann develops into a national brand, it is important that sponsorship opportunities are pursued and concluded at a national level (rather than FEC level) on a multi-year, multi-venue basis”

“This manual would be an excellent start”

Concerns for the Fleadh in the future



Verbatim Comments

"Ever expanding programme of events – difficult to keep everybody satisfied"

"Finding suitable towns large enough to accommodate crowds and yet small enough and compact enough to provide an intimate setting"

"Heritage and culture aspects is a positive to attract non CCÉ people"

"If it continues to grow in size at the present rate, its natural home, the rural large to medium sized towns will not be able to accommodate it"

"Will event managers be empowered to augment the excellent efforts of local FECs?"

"Health and safety issues relate in particular to narrow streets and large crowds – also venues exits etc."

"We need to have a better system of passing on financial info from town to town"

"Fleadh will be less appealing in large urban conurbations"



Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





Amendments





An Roinn
Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta

Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade

