

# Parties boost neighbourhood spirit

The National Housing Federation and Streets Alive bring you this rough guide to street parties. Streets Alive is a charity which works with local people and agencies to organise street parties.

Street parties are a great way for neighbours to meet and get to know each other on neutral ground, in a space open to all. People reluctant to attend meetings are more likely to come to a street party. Streets Alive say that at least half the neighbourhood usually takes part.

You don't need a street to hold a street party - block parties are similar if organised in the same way.

## SEEING WITH FRESH EYES

Street parties offer kids the chance to play safely where they live, without traffic. Residents get to use the street as a social space, relaxing outside their homes and sharing food. The limited size provides a relaxed, family-friendly atmosphere.

## TOP TIPS

1. Local people should organise the event, with support from you
2. Don't raise money first time
3. Sharing food is an important part of socialising
4. Keep any music down
5. Involve all ages

## A CHANCE TO TALK

Streets Alive carries out after-event surveys, which are a good way to involve residents. They are an 'open door' to start a conversation with people who normally don't engage.

## CHUCK OUT THE RED TAPE

Plus - here's a surprise - parties of a single street (without wider publicity) do not normally need public liability insurance or licenses. They are not to be confused with larger public community events - the small scale is vital.

You should always remember to properly consider health and safety, though.



## BRISTOL GETS THE PARTY BUG

In 2005, 19 street parties were held in Bristol and they were supported by Streets Alive.

The self-image of the community was lifted by the shared efforts of local people. It has developed a real social cohesion, and they continue to repeat the events under their own steam.

Residents say that they feel safer, more relaxed, have a sense of belonging and look out for each other – real community safety.

Neighbours' events alone won't solve serious community issues, but they can add to the success of other initiatives by creating a positive atmosphere.

## EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS' DAY

Streets Alive wants to achieve a UK community spirit similar to that in France, where over 5 million people take part in Neighbours' Day every year.

You could hold a street party on any day, but this year Neighbours' Day is on 29 May. If you plan to hold an event on this date, please let us know as there may be scope for national or regional publicity.

If you would like more information about European Neighbours' Day, contact Corine Meier, European Communications Officer, on 020 7067 1034 or [corinem@housing.org.uk](mailto:corinem@housing.org.uk).

Streets Alive works with housing associations across the UK to organise street parties. For more information contact Chris Gittins on 0117 922 5708, [chris@streetsalive.net](mailto:chris@streetsalive.net) or go to [www.streetparty.org.uk](http://www.streetparty.org.uk).

