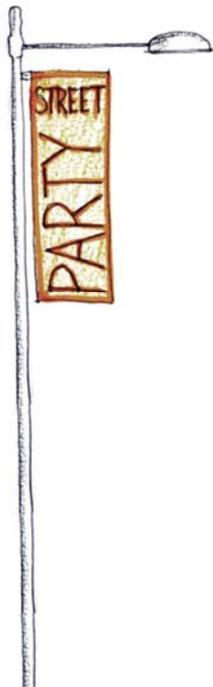




# Host a Neighbourhood BLOCK Party

And get to know your neighbours...



# Where to start

Neighbourhood BLOCK parties are a fun way to get to know the neighbours - to socialise and share ideas.

A successful block party could be as small and intimate as a few chairs in a back yard, right up to a BBQ in your local park, or a party in a community hall.

Block parties are a great way to connect with neighbours who you see regularly, but don't know well. Block parties are a chance to stop and say hello, and introduce yourselves. They enhance social cohesion, contribute to a greater sense of trust and safety, improve health and well-being and may assist our community in being better prepared in the case of an emergency.

The Augusta Margaret River Shire is offering funding towards block parties and has provided this Neighbourhood BLOCK Party Guide to assist with party planning. It includes helpful hints for a successful block party. So get partying!

The first step in planning a neighbourhood block party is to talk to your neighbours and find out the amount of interest there is in holding a block party in your neighbourhood. It's a good idea to have a few people on board before starting to plan a block party. Some neighbours may want to be involved in the planning, while others who have less mobility or are older may need help getting to the block party.



## When, Where and How Long?

For help in choosing a date, time and location for the block party, see *choosing the date, time and location* (page 3).

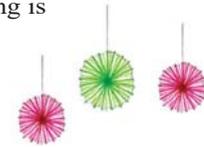
Generally, we recommend a daytime party of about two hours duration at a time that best suits as many neighbours as possible.

Good locations include a nearby park or green space, a back yard or community hall.

Safety and access are priorities when choosing the location for your block party. Consider children's safety near roads, and accessibility for older people or people with a disability. Access for pedestrians should not be compromised. **The Shire will not support street parties held on the road, or front verge.**

## Tips for Hosts

- Have at least 4 households participating
- Use a backyard, local park or community hall
- Do not publicise beyond the local residents, no external publicity or social media
- Funds cannot be spent on alcohol
- Receipts must be presented for reimbursement (no more than \$100)
- Block parties are non - commercial events. Food and alcohol cannot be sold and fundraising is prohibited.



## Event Management

The organiser is responsible for the smooth running of the event, and that includes public liability insurance in case anything goes wrong. If you are holding your party on a Shire reserve or community hall you will probably be covered under the Shire's Casual Hirers Insurance. See *Public Liability Insurance* (page 3).

## \*\*\*How can we help?\*\*\*

The Augusta Margaret River Shire will support your block party by providing:

- **Blank Invitations**
- **Loan of a Games Bag which includes a cricket set, bocce, quoits, hacky sack, Frisbee, soccer and football.**
- **Up to \$100 of receipts reimbursed (excludes alcohol)**
- **Contact Shire Community Development Team on 9780 5255 for more information.**

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## Public Liability Insurance

You should have public liability insurance to protect yourself against any personal injury or property damage claims. If you are holding your party in a backyard, speak to your insurer to ensure your household cover is adequate for this type of event. If you are holding your party on a Shire reserve or in a community hall you will probably be covered under the Shire's Casual Hirers Insurance Policy. A member of the Community Development Team will advise once you have lodged your Neighbourhood Block Party Registration Form.



## Choosing the Date, Time and Location

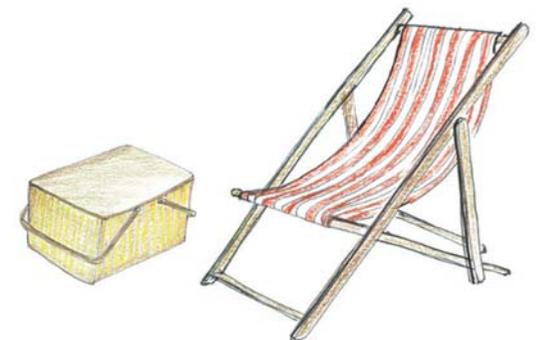
- Daylight hours are advised.
- Consider the time of year and weather e.g. Autumn and Spring may be better times with less severe weather.
- Consider when people are most likely to be home e.g. Sundays, and outside school holiday times.
- Consider when absentee owners may be in the region.
- Be aware of cultural or religious events that may prevent neighbours from attending.
- A successful block party will generally be about two hour's duration.
- A block party will create noise so finish before dark.
- Define a start and finish time.
- The easiest location is a park or green space near your street.
- **Please note:** The Shire will not support block parties held on the road, or front verge.



## Ways to Reduce Risk

Risks could include trips and falls, electrical cords, manual lifting, food preparation and handling, access to water, access to toilets, accessibility for older people or people with a disability, sunburn, fire, activities near the road, and alcohol consumption.

- Have a first aid kit that you can access during the block party if required.
- Have sunscreen and mosquito repellent on hand.
- Practice food safety.
- Appoint a first aid officer.
- Appoint a safety officer.
- Keep noise to a reasonable level.
- Stick to the start and finish time of the block party.
- Have a wet weather contingency plan.
- If cameras will be at the block party, you need to ask permission to take photos. Be aware of the law regarding photography of children.
- Appoint a marshal to escort any vehicles that need to get in or out, if applicable.
- Think about child safety, especially around BBQs.
- Only gas barbeques are permitted for use during the restricted burning period. Please contact the Shire on 9780 5255 if you require clarification.



# Helpful Hints

## Alcohol and Responsibility

- If alcohol is going to be consumed, and your party is on a shire reserve or in a community hall you need to complete the Consumption of Alcohol at Council Recreation Facilities and Reserves form.
- Familiarise yourself with the standard drinks and Australian Alcohol Guidelines.
- Provide plenty of non-alcoholic beverages and water.
- Persons under 18 are not allowed to access alcohol. Be aware of the penalties of supplying alcohol to minors.
- Keep the block party to a specific time to help prevent the party getting out of hand and to reduce inconvenience related to noise etc.
- If a guest is behaving inappropriately ask them to leave or call the police.



## Waste Management and Recycling

Please think about recycling and managing waste at your street party. Residents need to take responsibility for leaving the party location and surrounds clean and safe.



## Invitations

- Now that you have decided where to hold your block party and you have received approval for your application you can send out the invitations. It's a good idea to send the invitations out at least three weeks in advance. You can obtain blank invitations from the Shire or you might like to design your own. (see *AMR Shire Neighbourhood Block Party Invitation template* on page 7)
- It is best to invite everyone in your street so you do not exclude or isolate people. This might be a chance to get to know the neighbours that you do not speak to regularly.
- It is advisable to invite people face-to-face. Introduce yourself and give the invitation in person. If you are shy have a neighbour come with you. It is more likely that people will attend the block party if they are invited personally. A little effort may be required to invite some neighbours. You can assure them that the event is for everyone, all ages, and if they are not able to bring their own chair, seating will be available.
- Ask that RSVPs be returned to your letterbox or in person and give your contact details in case people have questions about the block party.
- Respect the decision of your neighbours as to whether they want to attend the block party or not.

- Include in the invitation what neighbours are to bring to the party, e.g. plate of food, refreshments, cutlery, a chair.
- Some neighbours may be worried about noise created from a block party, respect their concerns. It's a good idea to let them know the start and finish time of the party.



## What to bring

What do the neighbours need to bring to the block party?

You may want guests to bring a plate of food and cutlery. Include this information on the invitation so the neighbours have advance notice about what to bring on the day. It is a nice idea if food can be shared, a BBQ could be a good idea. Neighbours with specific dietary requirements might like to bring their own plate of food to eat on the day. Asking neighbours to bring their own chair to the block party will assist with set-up on the day. It might be a good idea to have a few extra chairs available for people who may not bring a chair.



## Other suggestions of things to bring:

- You could hire a gas BBQ or use your own
- Trestle tables
- Table cloths
- Umbrellas for shade
- Sunscreen
- Hats
- Mosquito repellent
- Drinking water
- CD player and CDs / iPod



## Name tags and introductions

Wearing name tags may make conversation easier. We see our neighbours regularly but if we are being introduced for the first time there may be many new names to remember. You could have the neighbours put their street number on their name tag and how long they have lived in the street for.

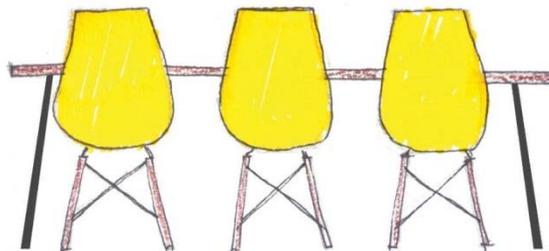
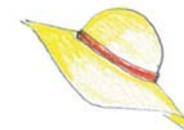
It is important to make introductions on the day so that everyone feels included and comfortable. You could do the introductions or organise for a neighbour to be in charge of the introductions on the day.



## Decorations

Having festive decorations helps to give a party feel. Someone in your street may know how to make bunting or other types of decorations. People might like to bring flowers from their gardens or colourful table cloths to add to the festive look. Feel free to use the Shire's Neighbourhood Block Party Funding towards decorations. It can be a good idea to get the decorations up early as this will create some anticipation and excitement to the event.

Note: Think about sustainability and recycling when choosing your decorations.

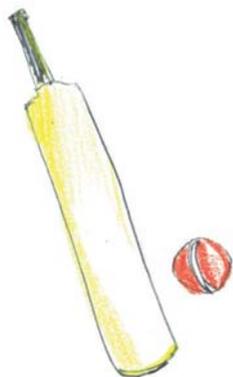


## Activities for the Neighbourhood BLOCK Party

A couple of activities could help get the block party going. Consider the diversity of the residents in your street and what people might enjoy i.e. different ages, nationalities and interests. Perhaps each house or unit could bring their own CDs and take turns playing music at the block party. It is good to consider people's mobility, perhaps the livelier activities can be for children. Consider safety of activities at the block party. Activities shouldn't be near cars or the road. Respect that some neighbours may not want to participate in activities but still be part of the block party.

### Activity suggestions:

- Bushfire Ready street meet
- Street garage sale
- BBQ in local park
- Party in local community hall
- Sports day in local park
- Special event party e.g. Christmas party, Neighbour Day event
- New residents welcome lunch
- Inviting neighbours to tell stories about when and why they moved to the street.
- Give a brief history of your street.
- Sport – cricket, soccer, volley ball or table tennis. Ask about the Shire's games bag for hire.
- Swap shop – have a chat about what could be swapped between neighbours e.g. books, tools, toys, favourite recipes, DVDs, gardening and bartering (babysitting, handy man, dog walking).
- Face painting for the children if there is someone in the street that knows how to do this.
- Starting an exercise group.
- Music can liven up a party, you could take turns playing CDs or there may be a musician in your street that might be willing to play for part of the party.
- Children might like to put on a play or sing some songs.
- Tug-of-war.



## Bushfire Ready Street Meet and/or Property Assessment

Why not combine a street party with a Bushfire Ready Street Meet and/or property assessment.

Bushfire Ready is a local community action program aimed at encouraging local residents to work together in preparing and protecting their families and properties against bushfires.

Trained Volunteer Bushfire Ready facilitators are available to meet with your street to provide information and advice on bushfire risk in your area and guide you through how to prepare your property.

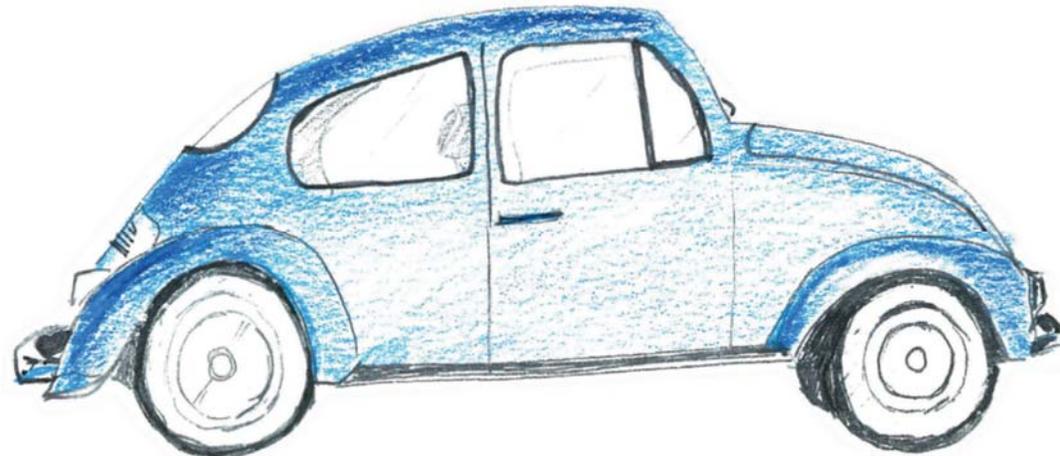
To organise a Bushfire Ready Street Meet contact Bushfire Ready Facilitators Gordon Temby on 0419 954 658 or Georgina Theile on 0417 998 461.

## Set up a Neighbourhood Phone Tree

Why not swap contact numbers with your neighbours at the block party? The next step could be setting up a neighbourhood phone tree.

Phone trees provide a localised method for neighbours to give each other early warning of an emergency. In its simplest form a phone tree may be a list of phone numbers of the members of your street. In a more complex form it may have a defined structure and an agreed set of rules.

For information about how to set up a neighbourhood phone tree contact the Community Development Team at the Shire on 9780 5255 or your local Bushfire Ready Facilitator.



## Street Party Registration Form

### Neighbourhood BLOCK Party Registration Form



#### Host's Details

Name of Applicant / Street Party Organiser \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Bank Account Details (for reimbursement): Account Name \_\_\_\_\_  
BSB \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Account Holder's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Neighbourhood BLOCK Party Details

Venue \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of party \_\_\_\_\_  
Start \_\_\_\_\_ Finish \_\_\_\_\_  
Expected number of people attending \_\_\_\_\_  
Will you have amplified music at the Street Party? YES/NO  
Would you like to hire the games bag for your street party ? YES/NO

#### Guidelines

- \* Funds can not be spent on alcohol
- \* Receipts must be presented for reimbursement
- \* No more than \$100 worth of receipts will be reimbursed
- \* Need at least four households participating
- \* Must hold the party on either private property, local park or community hall
- \* The games bag must be returned to the Shire the following week
- \* Get to know your neighbours & have fun!



For more information contact :  
Susie Elton, Shire Community Development Officer  
9780 5233 or selton@amrshire.wa.gov.au

## Street Party Example Invite

Dear Neighbour,

### Please join us for a Neighbourhood BLOCK Party!

I/We \_\_\_\_\_  
from (address) \_\_\_\_\_  
would like to hold a street party as an opportunity for us all to get to  
know our neighbours.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Venue: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish : \_\_\_\_\_  
My contact number/email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please let me/us know if you would like to attend by (date) \_\_\_\_\_

We will provide:

We propose that people bring:

Hope to see you there!

The Community Street Party Initiative  
is partly funded by:

