

Christmas 2009

Memo to Christmas organiser: Get a grip with plans

THE scene is not unfamiliar. Everyone has been talking about 'doing something' to celebrate Christmas but no-one has actually done anything about it. Time's getting short and nothing's been booked, nothing planned, everyone's grumpy and disaster looms!

Fortunately, there's still time. It may take a good deal of concentrated work, however, and someone will have to take on the responsibility and get to grips with the planning and booking, or it will be too late.

At this stage of the game you'll need a more accurate idea of the numbers attending than you might have needed earlier on. Most venues will already have bookings and it will be a matter of finding somewhere your group of colleagues can be fitted in. As soon as you know who wants to come, get to grips with the telephone and start ringing around.

Don't get discouraged. Don't be put off. Be persistent. Somewhere there will be a hotel, pub, club or restaurant, with room for your group. It's simply a matter of determination. While you are pounding away at the telephone, give some thought to viable alternatives. If you cannot find a catering establishment locally with room for your party, you will

have to think of something else. The first alternative is a properly equipped community or church hall, together with the services of an outside caterer and specially booked entertainment. Trouble is, others may also have had the same thought.

A coach trip to some more distant venue is another solution. There may be several catering establishments a few miles away with room. Some coach companies often have special excursions for just such an event with a restaurant and meal all thrown in. A coach will also allow virtually all your guests to enjoy a drink, especially if you can arrange for the coach to drop each one off at, or very near to, their homes.

Theme parks, zoos, exhibition and conference centres, and other places of entertainment, can also be booked for special events, and Christmas parties are no exception. Some have catering facilities and a full complement of staff, some don't, and again you may have to book outside caterers. Something really different may be the making of your party. How about a medieval Christmas banquet, or a boat trip down a river or canal? Anything's possible if you use your imagination and make enough enquiries. Once you have settled



upon the venue you must start to get in the orders. Most caterers will require some idea of who wants what, somewhat in advance. A menu circulated is the only way to do this, and when each guest places his or her order,

take a reasonable deposit. The caterer will certainly require a deposit, which is only reasonable because the places will have been reserved for

your party to the probable exclusion of another group. Catering for large parties means stocking up with food and drink,

and having a reasonable contingent of staff employed to serve. You don't want to be left paying for a number of folk who didn't turn up, which could easily happen unless you tie your colleagues down to a firm commitment.

If you are at a loss as regards booking entertainment and the venue does not already provide it, contact local theatrical agents. They will usually come up trumps.

Finally, when concluding the arrangements with the caterer, don't forget to mention if there are any special dietary requirements or vegetarians in the party. It isn't reasonable to expect any caterer to provide for the unexpected at the very last moment, especially when involved with a large catering operation.

6 Time's getting short and disaster looms. So, someone will have to take the responsibility for the planning and booking or it will be too late.

Freehold Street Auctions
10:00 am
Saturday 7th November & fortnightly thereafter
Viewing
12:00am - 8:00pm day before & from 9:00am day of sale
This Weeks Sale Includes Wurlitzer & Honer Electric Organs, Saxophone, Leather Jackets, Kitchen Units & Mannequins
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