

DON'T PANIC FESTIVAL 2026: Official Marshal Handbook

"How to Safely Guide Humans, Vehicles, and Mild Chaos Without Losing Your Towel"

1. Welcome, Marshal

Congratulations. You are now the thin, highly visible line between **order and utter roadside confusion**. Your role is simple in principle: **Keep people safe. Keep traffic calm. Keep everything moving.**

The Golden Rule: DON'T PANIC.

You are the calm, hi-vis embodiment of common sense. Think of yourself as a safety guardian and an information point, not a police officer or a human roadblock.

2. Core Safety & Priority

In any traffic environment, we follow a strict hierarchy of safety. If you are ever in doubt, remember: **People > Cars. Always.**

Pedestrian Safety

- **Separation:** Keep pedestrians within the designated safe lane (minimum 1.5m wide).
- **Redirection:** Politely guide anyone drifting into the vehicle lane back to safety.
- **The Hard Stop:** Stop **ALL** vehicles when pedestrians are crossing.
- **Blind Spots:** Be hyper-aware of vans, SUVs, and children who may appear suddenly.
- **The Path Rule:** Never move a vehicle if a person is anywhere near its path.

Your Personal Safety

- **Visibility:** Wear **Hi-Vis (Level 2/3)** at all times.
- **Positioning:** Stay in the **Safe Zone** (behind or beside barriers).
- **Non-Physicality:** Never use your body to block traffic or stand in front of moving vehicles.
- **The "Step Back" Rule:** If a driver ignores you, step back, let them pass, note the registration, and radio the Event Lead. **You are not paid to be run over.**

3. Managing the Road Closure

The integrity of the Road Closure Order is vital for the festival's legal compliance and safety.

The Barrier System

- **Status:** Barriers must remain **closed at all times**.
- **Entry:** Only open briefly for authorized vehicles; close immediately after entry.
- **Weighting:** Ensure all signs and barriers are weighted with sandbags.

Emergency Access

- **Immediate Access:** Required by law for Police, Fire, and Ambulance.

- **Action:** Remove barriers instantly, clear pedestrians, and do not delay. Ever.

Non-Ticket Holders

If someone tries to enter without authorization, be polite but firm:

"This road is legally closed for the Don't Panic Festival. Please follow the diversion signs at the previous junction."

4. Vehicle Entry & Risk Assessment

Follow this specific process for every vehicle arrival to maintain "The Walking Pace" (5mph).

The Entry Process

1. **Stop:** Vehicle stops at the marked **Stop Line**.
2. **Verify:** Approach only once the vehicle is fully stopped and straightened.
3. **Check:** Inspect tickets/passes through the window.
4. **Clear:** Check that the pedestrian lane is 100% clear.
5. **Signal:** Use a calm **"please proceed"** gesture (no police-style hand signals).

Risk Matrix & Levels of Concern

Level	Type of Concern	Action	Who Leads
Level 1	Welfare (e.g., Tiredness)	Record + monitor	Staff
Level 2	Safeguarding Concern	Report to DSL	Staff $\rightarrow$ DSL
Level 3	Significant Risk	External referral	DSL
Level 4	Immediate Danger	Emergency services	Anyone

5. Risk Register & Control Measures

We have identified the following risks. Please use the associated control measures to mitigate them.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
Lost Child	Medium	High	Wristbands, signage, trained staff
Vulnerable Adult Distress	Medium	Medium	Welfare area, trained volunteers
Disclosure of Abuse	Low	High	DSL, reporting procedure
Volunteer Misconduct	Low	High	DBS, code of conduct
Online Exploitation	Low	Medium	Social media policy

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
Radicalisation Concern	Low	High	Prevent awareness training

6. Communication & Conflict

Radio Use

Use your radio for:

- Traffic backing up onto the main road.
- Approaching emergency vehicles.
- Unauthorised access or safety concerns.
- **Breaks:** Marshalling is tiring. If you feel less alert, radio for a break immediately.

Conflict Situations

If a driver becomes aggressive or argumentative:

1. **Do NOT engage** or enter a debate.
2. **Step back** from the vehicle.
3. **Call** Event Lead or Security.

7. Prohibited Actions (The "Absolutely Not" List)

- **DO NOT** stand in vehicle turning areas.
- **DO NOT** allow cars and pedestrians through at the same time (**Two-Gate System**).
- **DO NOT** leave barriers unattended.
- **DO NOT** use your body as a barrier.
- **DO NOT** guess—if you aren't sure a path is clear, don't signal the car forward.

Final Word

Before letting any vehicle move, use the **Double Check Rule**: *Look left, look right, and look again.*

This is a shared space. People are excited and drivers are often confused. Your calm presence prevents a small-scale apocalypse. **Be clear, be visible, and be safe.**

Volunteer Declaration: *By wearing this hi-vis vest, you confirm you understand your role, will follow these safety procedures, and will—under all circumstances—Not Panic.*

GUGG ARTS: Integrated Safety, Safeguarding & Operations Manual

Scope: Traffic Management, Marshal Safety, and Safeguarding Integration

PURPOSE & LEGAL STANDING

Traffic management at GUGG ARTS events (including the **Don't Panic Festival**) is defined as a multi-agency compliance function. It is not merely logistical; it is:

- **A Safeguarding Function:** Protecting vulnerable road users.
- **A Public Safety Function:** Managing the interface between high-mass vehicles and pedestrians.
- **A Legal Compliance Function:** Adhering to Road Closure Orders (RCO).

Core Definition: Traffic marshals are formally designated as **Frontline Safety Personnel** within the GUGG ARTS safeguarding system.

MARSHAL STATUS & LIMITATIONS

To ensure operational clarity and insurance compliance, the status of a Traffic Marshal is defined as follows:

Authorized Roles	Prohibited Roles
Event Safety Stewards	Law Enforcement / Police
Safeguarding Ecosystem Guardians	Traffic Enforcement Officers
Event Control Representatives	Physical Vehicle Interceptors

THE SAFEGUARDING PRIORITY PRINCIPLE

GUGG ARTS formally adopts a **Pedestrian-First** hierarchy. This policy aligns with the UK Highway Code and Event Safety best practices.

Hierarchy of Care: Pedestrians and vulnerable persons take absolute priority over vehicles at all times.

Traffic Risk as a Safeguarding Threat

Traffic risk is recognized as a primary threat to:

- **Minors:** Due to height visibility and unpredictable movement.
- **Neurodivergent Individuals:** Due to sensory overload or different spatial processing.
- **Older Adults:** Due to reduced mobility or reaction times.

Operational Mandate: Marshals must prioritize **Safeguarding-First principles** over traffic flow efficiency.

CONTROLLED VEHICLE MOVEMENT PROTOCOL (CVMP)

Vehicles may only proceed when the following four-point check is completed:

1. **Full Stop:** Vehicle is stationary at the designated Stop Line.
2. **Marshal Verification:** Credentials/Tickets are visually confirmed.
3. **Route Clearance:** The pedestrian lane is confirmed 100% clear.
4. **Authorized Signal:** Marshal provides a clear "Proceed" gesture.

Speed Restriction: A mandatory site-wide limit of **walking pace (5mph)** is enforced.

PEDESTRIAN & VEHICLE SEPARATION (PVS)

To minimize the risk of collision, strict physical separation is mandated:

- **Infrastructure:** Use of physical barriers or weighted cones.
- **Spatial Standards:** A minimum **1.5m width** for pedestrian-only lanes.
- **The Two-Gate System:** In high-traffic areas, vehicle and pedestrian gates must operate independently.

NON-NEGOTIABLE: Vehicles and pedestrians must **NEVER** move simultaneously within the same shared operational space.

CRITICAL SAFETY & PPE STANDARDS

Mandatory Requirements

- **Safe Zones:** Marshals must remain behind physical barriers or in designated flanking zones.
- **PPE:** High-Visibility clothing must meet **EN ISO 20471 Class 2/3** standards.
- **Situational Awareness:** 360-degree visual scanning is required at all times.

Prohibited Actions

- **NO** stepping into live traffic lanes.
 - **NO** standing in the direct path of moving vehicles.
 - **NO** use of physical force or "body blocking" to stop traffic.
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HUMAN FACTORS: FATIGUE & CONFLICT

Fatigue Management

Fatigue is a safety risk that directly impairs safeguarding judgment.

- **Rotations:** Regular shifts and mandatory breaks.
- **Self-Reporting:** A "No-Blame" culture for reporting exhaustion or loss of focus.

Conflict Resolution & Disengagement

In the event of driver aggression or non-compliance:

1. **Disengage:** Cease verbal communication.
 2. **Retreat:** Move to a safe, barriered position.
 3. **Escalate:** Radio Event Control/Security immediately.
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RADIO PROTOCOL & ESCALATION

All Traffic Marshals must maintain active radio contact. The escalation route is:

Marshal → Event Control → Safety Officer / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

SITE SETUP STANDARDS

A site is not "Live" until the following equipment is in place and inspected:

- **Signage:** "Road Closed" (Reflective), "Access Only," and "Caution: Marshals."
 - **Barriers:** Full-width physical barriers weighted with sandbags.
 - **Layout:** Clear "Stop Line" and vehicle funneling cones.
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THE "DOUBLE CHECK" RULE

Before any vehicle is permitted to move, the Marshal must perform the **Triple-Look Check**:

1. **Look Left:** Check for approaching pedestrians.
 2. **Look Right:** Check for cyclists or secondary vehicles.
 3. **Look Again:** Specifically check blind spots for children or pets.
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CULTURAL INTEGRATION & TRAINING

The GUGG ARTS ethos is "Calm, Human, and Serious." A calm marshal prevents escalation.

Training Requirements

Prior to deployment, all marshals must complete:

- **Site Induction:** Layout and emergency exit locations.
- **Safeguarding Level 1:** Basic awareness and reporting.
- **Emergency Protocol:** Procedures for Blue Light (Emergency Vehicle) priority.