

AfH Brighton – event guidelines

By Paul, Josh and Stan Feb 26th 2015

1. Background:

Action for Happiness Brighton was formed in March 2012. We follow the policy set by the national AfH office. The original founders were Alistair Elliot, Stan Rosenthal, Tom Bourner, Karen MacMillan, Paul Tofts and Cat Fletcher (later). On Feb 26th there were 920 members on Meetup.

2. Events

a) Events should be within this **national policy** (i.e. promoting evidence-based ways of making people happier), and be essentially charitable (not designed to make money as part of a business activity). The event should support at least one of the 10 keys to happiness, or it can be about the general topic.

b) Small **donations** (typically £2, waived if there is resistance) can be taken to cover expenses of the speaker (printing, travel, babysitting, food and drink at the event), and also to cover AfH expenses (e.g. loss-making events, publicity, website etc). Speakers can advertise their own events and business in moderation.

c) Events can be **created** and designed by anyone; please then discuss with a co-organiser and/or at a co-organisers meeting how these might be put on. An announcement of the events should then be created by a co-organiser in Meetup (see below).

d) If you are **not a co-organiser**, then approach one of the co-organisers and discuss the proposed event. How many people will it attract? Is it in keeping with the principles of AfH? What will the timetable be? Does it contain enough to keep the interest of the people coming, and also give them the chance to express their own feelings and thoughts?

e) **Large events** are usually at the Latest Bar, and we have to be reasonably sure that enough people (at least 30) will come (see below).

f) **Happy Lab**: Smaller events, usually social ones, are often at the Emporium (details elsewhere). Other venues can be considered in conjunction with a co-organiser but paid-for ones will have to take account of our donations policy. A Happy Lab event has to be sponsored by at least one co-organiser, who takes responsibility for making sure the venue is in line with AfH guidelines, and agrees to be present at the event.

g) *Latest Bar*

This venue is a valuable resource for AfH. It is free for us to use, with the assumption that we will bring in enough people for the bar to make money. Paul is the liaison with the bar, and James the manager. It holds up to 90; 30-40 is a viable number. There is a microphone, and a projector which can be used for £15.

A suggested running-order would be:

- i) Before an event at the Latest Bar make sure the speaker understands the time constraints and that the content must be compatible with AfH policy. Clarify expenses situation with speaker. Book a projector if necessary (£15 from Latest bar). Advertise event on meetup and maybe on our website. Make sure you have sufficient postcards and leaflets. Line up at least one other co-organiser to help (needs one to take care of door, one to take care of speaker).
- ii) Prepare room for the event by putting up our AfH banner and AfH posters (usually stored at the Latest Bar) and putting out the 10 keys postcards and Happy Café flyers.
- iii) By 7:30 man the door, welcome new people, hand out the postcards and flyers, encourage new people to sign up to Meetup, take donations. If the event seems to be heavily booked, then you may want to give preference to people who have booked a place via Meetup (however bear in mind that about 20-30% of people who book will not come). The venue holds a maximum of 90 (if the floor is covered in chairs).
- iv) Welcome the speaker, check the audiovisuals work OK. Buy them drink, + maybe food
- v) 8:00 pm: introduce AfH, then speaker
- vi) Speaker talks until about 8:45
- vii) 8:45-9:05 (about) break; encourage people to buy drinks and to mingle ('talk to a stranger')
- viii) 9:05 summarise next AfH events; maybe ask for volunteers for our co-organisers group
- ix) 9:10-9:40: discussion; may need to be chaired to keep people on topic and well-behaved
- x) close; pay for projector; pay speaker expenses; take money, postcards and flyers home, put banner and posters away (in Latest Bar room).

3. Publicity

Meetup is the principle method (<http://www.meetup.com/Action-for-Happiness-Brighton/>). We have free use courtesy of national AfH (Mark Williams, the national AfH coordinator, holds the subscription). A local subscription costs about £80 pa. There are several named co-organisers who can set up new events in Meetup. They can be messaged at the Meetup site. Meetup sends out emails to all registered members (this can be configured). Looking at how many people have pre-booked (RSVP'ed) gives some idea of how many people will come.

Our **website** www.actionforhappiness_inbrighton.org.uk shows the principle events, with pointers to Meetup. This is hosted by Paul.

Emailing list: there is a list of 400 people, built up in 2012, which can be access via mailchimp. Paul knows how to do this. This was last used about Jan 2014.