



HALLOWEEN AND BONFIRE NIGHT

A mini guide to hosting autumnal events

This guide is interactive



INTRODUCTION

With days getting shorter and nights feeling colder, it's time to wave bye to summer and prepare for autumn. Autumn brings spooky Halloween events, cosy bonfire nights, and a great opportunity for pub owners to provide comfort and fun to customers.

This guide will cover:

- Setting the scene at your pub
- Games and activities
- Promoting your event
- Health & Safety



SETTING THE SCENE

It is important to set the scene at your pub. Consider these following factors to stand out this autumn and ensure that your pub event is the talk of the town:



Themed Menus

If you're feeling up for it, go the extra mile and curate a limited time themed menu.

For Halloween, this could include special spooky cocktails and pub food that has been rebranded with fun names and colours that fit the theme.

For bonfire night, you should focus on warm drinks for your customers. Sitting outdoors at night is cold, so offer drinks such as mulled wine, spiced ciders and other warm drinks.



Live Music

Having live music is a fun way to liven up your event while also giving spotlight to local talent.

For Halloween you could reach out to the community and see if there are any bands who will play popular Halloween songs. Alternatively, you could make a playlist if you are working with a tight budget.

For bonfire night, it's less about a theme and more playing songs that suit your customer demographic. Consider having speakers outside if that's where the majority of the event will take place.

SETTING THE SCENE



Outdoor Prep

Having suitable outside area and knowing the amount of attendees coming to your event is very important.

For Halloween, if you want outdoor space for any activities or decorations, ensure you have suitable space to do so but also consider if your customers will be comfortable.

For bonfire night, you will need to have enough outside space and seats safely placed outside for the bonfire. You may also want to consider extra heaters, additional lighting and other equipment that can aid the comfort of your customers.



Decorations

Investing in decorations is a great way to grab the attention of customers.

For a Halloween party you could hang up some cobwebs, spooky banners and even some witchy brooms. The best part is that there are lots of unique and cheap decorations meaning you don't have to spend a fortune (unless you want to!).

For bonfire night, decorations are less of a tradition. However, if you want to decorate you then you could try firework themed banners and balloons around your pub.

Planning games and activities does not have to be stressful or complicated. Sometimes simple games can actually be the most fun, so keep that in mind when you reference your budget. Offering prizes such as paying the winners bar tab will encourage your customers to get involved in the fun and may even bring them back for events.

Here are some spooky party games and classic activities for your event:

Halloween

- Apple Bobbing
- Costume Contest
- Pumpkin Carving
- Murder Mystery Night

Bonfire Night

- Marshmallow Toasting
- Fireworks Display
- Sparklers
- Bonfire Night Quiz

PROMOTION

Once you've decided what autumn events you plan to host, you'll need to promote them. Take factors such as budget, customer demographic and your local community into account when deciding how you want to promote your event. For bonfire nights and Halloween parties, I recommend utilising these three key strategies:



Posters:

Get creative with either your team or independently. Canva is a free tool that can be used to design simple and creative posters that can be placed around your pub. This is a cheap and effective way to advertise your upcoming events to your existing customers. **Follow this link for a free guide on how to use Canva: <https://www.canva.com/learn/how-to-canva-beginners-guide/>**



Word of mouth:

Make sure to be positive and enthusiastic about your event and discuss the information with customers and your team. They will most likely share this excitement and naturally pass the information on to their friends and family. You can also do this in your local community, going out of your way to make small talk about your event. This is a key strategy of promotion as it can be very effect and doesn't cost you a penny.



Social media:

Get active on all of your social media channels. You can create hashtags, go on live chats with followers, share videos and pictures, post in communities and do much more for free. Doing this as soon as possible can help the publicity of your event pick up speed. If it aligns with your budget, Facebook also allow you to promote posts in your local area for as little as £20 which can further raise the awareness of your event.

Bonfire night checklist

- Ensure you have suitable space for the fire/fireworks
- Inform your neighbours, the Local Authority and your local Fire Officer
- Check for weather risks
- Obtain your fireworks from a reputable supplier
- Check your alcohol license is valid and obtain a temporary event notice (TEN) to serve alcohol outdoors.
- Make sure that either your professional operative or your own Public Liability Insurance is in order

For more information regarding TENs, view our guide [here](#), or contact JG&P helplines [here](#)

If these health and safety precautions feel like too much, consider a simpler approach for your event, such as a theme, nice food and a fun quiz.

Fire safety

- Have fire exits signed and well lit
- Ensure emergency service vehicles can enter if needed
- Have fire extinguishers on hand



If you are inexperienced with fireworks and bonfires, **partner up with a local display or hire a trained professional.** This is recommended as a professional has the experience and knowledge to handle the fireworks correctly.

Food Risks

- Make sure to cater for attendees who have dietary requirements
- If external vendors provide food, ensure they have a Food Safety Certificate
- Check that your licence allows the provision of late night refreshments should your display continue after 11:00pm

Laws & Legislations

Important laws to research:

- Explosives Regulations 2014
- the Fireworks Act 2003
- The Fireworks Regulations 2004
- Pyrotechnic Articles Regulations 2015

Summary:

- Doing the display yourself means you're restricted to category 1, 2 and 3 fireworks
- Fireworks should not exceed 120Db
- It is illegal to let off fireworks in a public place including a street or road
- Fireworks should not be let off after 11 p.m. although the deadline is put back an hour on bonfire night when it is 00:00 midnight

KEEPING PUBS THRIVING AT THE HEART OF EVERY COMMUNITY



@BIIandBIIAB



@BritishInstituteofInnkeeping



@BIIandBIIAB



British Institute of Innkeeping



@BIIandBIIAB