**LHTD Gazebo Safety Information**

Gazebos are used in many environments from the back garden, school sports days, displays at
events and often for temporary market stalls. They usually do not come with information from the
manufacturer about what wind speed they can operate safely in as primarily they are designed
for home use. Manufacturers of gazebos and other similar temporary structures designed for
commercial use do provide more information about safety and the safe wind speeds they can be
erected and used in.

Any gazebo has to be suitable and sufficient for the use it is being put to and where there are potential *significant* risks, a risk assessment should be completed.

**The hazards presented by Gazebos**

Gazebos are relatively lightweight and will act like a kite in even a gentle breeze. If left unanchored or insufficient anchorage is used or the anchorage gives way they can easily become airborne and the metal frame can cause injury or damage when it comes into contact with someone or something.

**Controls required by LHTD**

Users should have an understanding of the principles and limitations of temporary structures
such as gazebos, good anchorage, and assessing weather conditions correctly.

For example, one particular brand of commercial 10' x 10' (3m x 3m) Gazebo (based on long established use) has a maximum safe wind loading of 50mph when it's ground anchors are used (weighted down with 28kg of the manufacturers 'jigsaw' weights locked on to the foot of each of the four legs), this drops significantly to 25mph when used on hard standing On the Beaufort scale 25-31 mph winds (Force 6) are described as a Strong Breeze where small trees will sway.

Anchorage points on any gazebo are only as strong as the stitching and or the cord attached to the anchor point so users need to assess if additional fixings are needed between the frame and what the gazebo is ultimately held down by.

Any object that provides compact weight in a form that can be securely attached to the frame of a gazebo can serve as a weight. Sandbags, while not elegant, can easily serve the same function as commercial weights, concrete blocks make excellent weights if hardware or cordage is available to secure them to the gazebo. A 25 litre container full of water for example weighs 25kg which is just short of the 28kg mentioned in the earlier example.

Even on a seemingly pleasant day gazebos should be not be left unattended or un-secured. Weather conditions can very quickly change and event participants need to be prepared for the affect that even slight changes in weather can have on temporary structures such as gazebos; adjacent buildings can also add to the effect of any wind. Should any gazebo start dragging any of the weights it is attached to, or is pulling out any of its anchorage points this is an indication that immediate action must be taken which may involve dismantling the gazebo. It is also essential to take steps to anchor gazebos when they are being erected and dismantled as an unexpected breeze or sudden gust is all that is sometimes needed to make a gazebo 'disappear'!

**Event Safety Management**

For any event where gazebos are planned to be used it is the ultimate responsibility of the vendor/ stallholder to ensure safety is maintained. In those situations where a risk assessment or method statement is required these must be supplied. This applies whether gazebos are being supplied and erected by someone contracted by the event organiser, by someone taking part in the event and erecting their own gazebo for their own use or if gazebos are supplied and erected by the event organiser for use by others. Those who are supplying and erecting gazebos etc. for use by others should check with their insurers that they are covered for this aspect.