

RPT Case Study Appendix

Real-World Scenarios for Practical Learning

This appendix contains a selection of real-world case studies designed to reinforce the training modules covered throughout the Responsible Persons course. These scenarios help illustrate the consequences of inadequate planning, highlight best practices and demonstrate proportionate responses across both large-scale and grassroots settings.

1. Manchester Arena Attack (2017)

Related Module: Introduction to Martyn's Law & Role of the Responsible Person

The terrorist attack at Manchester Arena in May 2017 was a defining moment for the events and venue security industry. The resulting inquiry revealed multiple failings in how the venue identified and responded to suspicious activity. Crucially, there was a lack of clarity about who held final responsibility for security decision-making. This tragedy led directly to the campaign for Martyn's Law and underlines the need for a clearly identified and accountable Responsible Person.

The 2017 terrorist attack exposed critical failings in perimeter security, situational awareness and role clarity.

The inquiry highlighted missed opportunities to challenge suspicious behaviour and a lack of ownership in decision-making.

This tragedy became the catalyst for Martyn's Law.

This case study is used to show why consistent leadership, clear roles and proactive preparation are now legal expectations and not just best practice.

- 🌀 **Situation:** A suicide bomber detonated an IED in the public foyer after an Ariana Grande concert, killing 22 people.
- 🌀 **Causal Factors:** No clear ownership of public space security; poor coordination between venue and security teams; missed opportunities to challenge suspicious behaviour.
- 🌀 **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** A full public inquiry followed. Martyn's Law was proposed to mandate protective security duties. Trust in venue security was damaged nationally.
- 🌀 **Lessons:** Assign clear responsibility for security leadership. Ensure staff are trained to identify and escalate concerns. Plan for vulnerabilities in public-facing areas at all times including egress.
- 🌀 **Learning Point:** Designating a Responsible Person is essential. Awareness, training and clear roles make a fundamental difference.

2. Boomtown Festival – Crowd Risk and Environmental Planning

Related Module: Risk Identification & Core Preparedness Principles

Boomtown Fair is known for its immersive and complex layout, often featuring steep terrain, enclosed spaces and decentralised zones. Organisers place a strong emphasis on crowd flow modelling, early warning signage and contingency planning for adverse weather. The festival also actively maps “pinch points” and uses scenario-based table-top exercises with partners.

Boomtown’s use of zoned layouts, terrain analysis and proactive stewarding showcases how large, creative festivals manage public safety.

This example demonstrates risk-based thinking, the importance of proportionate mitigation and how site-specific factors (terrain, scale, demographics) influence risk appetite and planning decisions.

- 🌀 **Situation:** Large festival site with complex terrain, immersive structures and dispersed crowd flows.
- 🌀 **Causal Factors:** Risk of crowd surges, inaccessible zones during rain, uneven ground.
- 🌀 **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Use of GIS mapping, pinch-point monitoring and dynamic crowd management plans. No major incidents occurred due to pre-emptive planning.
- 🌀 **Lessons:** Terrain and layout significantly influence crowd dynamics. Regular crowd modelling and visible controls reduce unplanned congestion.
- 🌀 **Learning Point:** Site-specific risks require tailored responses and continuous scenario planning.

3. Wireless Festival (2019) – Communications Breakdown

Related Module: Incident Response & Scenario Drills

At Wireless Festival in Finsbury Park, a sudden downpour and crowd surge during a headline set created confusion. Reports after the event suggested that stewards had limited access to real-time instructions and that communication protocols between contractors and organisers were unclear.

Rain and crowd surges led to confusion, worsened by fragmented communication between stewards and event management.

Although no serious injuries occurred, this scenario illustrates how a minor incident can escalate quickly if roles, briefings and response plans are not embedded across teams. It supports learning around clear communications strategies, established incident playbooks and steward cue cards.

- 🌀 **Situation:** A heavy rainstorm led to crowd displacement during a headline act.

- ⊗ **Causal Factors:** No integrated communications system between stewards and event managers; unclear contingency plan for weather impact.
- ⊗ **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** The event recovered without injury, but public feedback and media coverage raised concerns about safety and response time.
- ⊗ **Lessons:** Use consistent, multi-channel communication systems. Train staff with scripts and cue cards. Conduct weather-related drills. Monitor the long- and short-range forecast.
- ⊗ **Learning Point:** Even minor incidents can escalate without coordinated communications and trained response teams.

4. Notting Hill Carnival – Multi-Agency Coordination

Related Module: Stakeholder Engagement & Protective Security Integration

Europe's largest street festival presents unique challenges each year, from managing mass movement in residential areas to ensuring sufficient resources for welfare, crowd control and public order. The Carnival is an example of multi-agency coordination, including community organisations, local authorities, police and medical services.

This complex street festival balances policing, welfare, anti-terror measures and wide community management.

From this, delegates should learn how to navigate shared responsibilities, pre-event threat intelligence and practical measures that reflect a joined-up protective security model, including visible policing, measures such as anti-vehicle barriers and situational communications.

- ⊗ **Situation:** Annual street event involving up to 2 million attendees in open, residential environments covering 3 miles.
- ⊗ **Causal Factors:** Overlapping jurisdictions, varied stewarding providers and community sensitivities.
- ⊗ **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Pre-planned strategy between police, local authority and community reps. Deployment of barriers, medics and dispersal zones reduced tensions and risk.
- ⊗ **Lessons:** Complex events need early and inclusive planning. Engage all stakeholders and understand shared responsibilities.
- ⊗ **Learning Point:** Shared responsibilities require pre-planned collaboration and real-time coordination.

5. Boardmasters Festival (2019) – Weather Cancellation

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-49259812>

Related Module: Decision Logs & Reasonable and Practical Judgement

Just 12 hours before gates opened, Boardmasters Festival was cancelled due to high wind forecasts. The decision followed in-depth modelling, consultation with emergency

planners and consideration of site integrity. While the cancellation had significant financial consequences, it demonstrated responsible leadership, transparent communication and a documented, reasoned response.

The decision to cancel the event 12 hours before opening due to storm forecasts demonstrated effective leadership and risk-based thinking.

This case study supports the use of decision logs, weather-related thresholds and the role of the Responsible Person in upholding safety even when it involves reputational or commercial cost.

- 🌀 **Situation:** High winds and storm warnings prompted cancellation hours before gates opened.
- 🌀 **Causal Factors:** Site exposure, risk to infrastructure and visitor safety.
- 🌀 **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Decision was documented, shared via media and direct messaging. Financial loss and customer disappointment, but public safety prioritised.
- 🌀 **Lessons:** Use decision logs with risk-based rationale. Prioritise life safety over commercial pressure. Communicate proactively.
- 🌀 **Learning Point:** Documented decisions, made early and transparently, reinforce public trust and compliance confidence.

6. Community Fireworks Display – Gaps in Steward Briefing

Related Module: Staff Briefing & Public Awareness

A local fireworks display in a village green drew an unexpectedly large crowd. The event relied heavily on volunteers, but due to the informal structure, no formal steward briefing or communication plan was issued. When a child became separated from their guardian in the dark, volunteers were unsure how to escalate or respond. While the situation was resolved safely, it highlighted the risks of under-preparedness, especially in areas of child safeguarding, lost persons protocol and public reassurance.

This case study is used to demonstrate how even low-risk events require proportionate planning, clear volunteer briefings and predefined escalation routes, all achievable with low-cost measures like cue cards and a basic playbook.

- 🌀 **Situation:** A child was briefly unaccompanied during a crowded, low-light community event.
- 🌀 **Causal Factors:** Lack of formal steward briefing, no designated safeguarding officer and informal volunteer roles.
- 🌀 **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Organisers resolved the issue safely but recognised safeguarding responsibilities.
- 🌀 **Lessons:** Even volunteer-led events must brief stewards on safeguarding and reporting. Basic protocols cost nothing and reduce risk.
- 🌀 **Learning Point:** Even informal events need simple, structured briefings and escalation protocols.

7. Church Hall Fundraiser – Lockdown Scenario

Related Module: Invacuation, Evacuation & Lockdown

During a Christmas fundraiser at a community church hall, nearby police activity led to reports of a potential armed individual in the area. The Responsible Person made a decision to lock the doors, but attendees were not informed, causing panic and confusion. The organisers later acknowledged they had no lockdown or communication plan and hadn't considered such a scenario in planning.

This real-life situation shows how even small venues must think through low-probability but high-impact risks and how invacuation procedures and clear public messaging can prevent fear and maintain control.

- ❁ **Situation:** Local police advised lockdown due to nearby armed suspect. Venue locked doors without informing attendees.
- ❁ **Causal Factors:** No lockdown protocol or public comms plan. Public became agitated and confused.
- ❁ **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Organisers debriefed and created a simple lockdown SOP with scripts.
- ❁ **Lessons:** Always pair action (e.g., lockdown) with communication. Small venues can prepare effectively with simple templates.
- ❁ **Learning Point:** Lockdown must be planned, rehearsed and accompanied by calm, clear public communication.

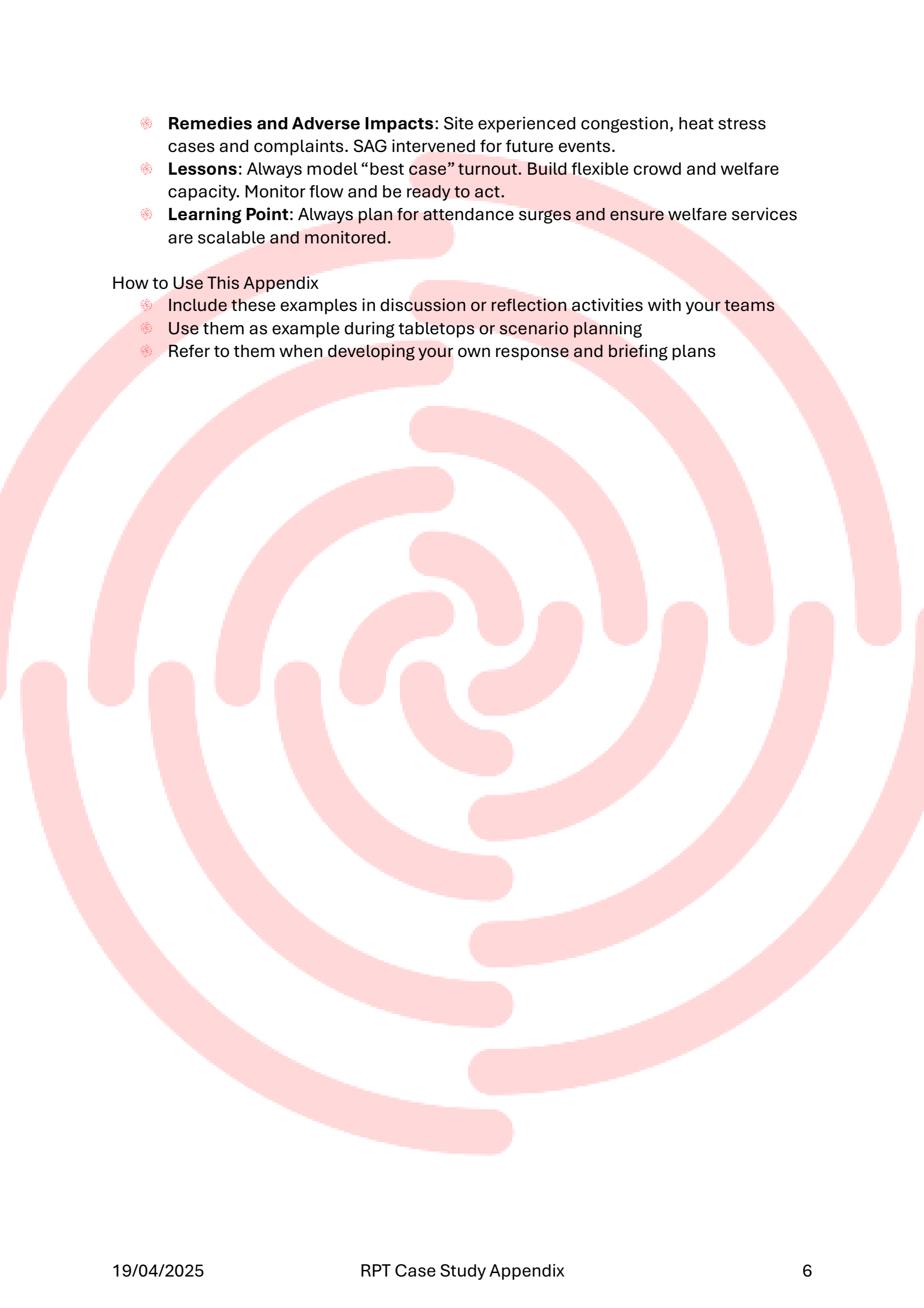
8. Local Food Festival – Overcrowding and Welfare Risks

Related Module: Crowd Risk & Welfare Planning

A popular regional food festival exceeded its expected attendance after good weather and a social media promotion that gained traction. The site became overcrowded, queues blocked walkways and toilet and welfare facilities were overwhelmed. With only two stewards covering entrances and no contingency for crowd diversion or welfare spikes, the event came close to being shut down by local safety officials.

This example reinforces crowd risk modelling, capacity setting and the need for early warning indicators. Delegates learn how to plan based on capacity thresholds, trigger actions and local Safety Advisory Group (SAG) expectations — all framed within reasonable and practical planning duties.

- ❁ **Situation:** A sunny weekend and viral social media campaign caused unexpected crowds to overwhelm site.
- ❁ **Causal Factors:** Inadequate capacity planning, too few stewards and insufficient toilets and welfare points.

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- ❁ **Remedies and Adverse Impacts:** Site experienced congestion, heat stress cases and complaints. SAG intervened for future events.
 - ❁ **Lessons:** Always model “best case” turnout. Build flexible crowd and welfare capacity. Monitor flow and be ready to act.
 - ❁ **Learning Point:** Always plan for attendance surges and ensure welfare services are scalable and monitored.

How to Use This Appendix

- ❁ Include these examples in discussion or reflection activities with your teams
- ❁ Use them as example during tabletops or scenario planning
- ❁ Refer to them when developing your own response and briefing plans