



Case Study:

OKTOBERFEST

2024



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The Client



Barbican Events

Location

Multiple Locations over Bedfordshire,
Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire

Dates

October 2020 - present

The Background

Oktoberfest Oxford is a vibrant celebration of Bavarian culture, attracting thousands of people every year. Featuring traditional German beer, food, music, and dancing, the event has become a key fixture in Oxford's cultural calendar. As the event has grown in both size and popularity, ensuring a safe and secure environment has become increasingly important.

For Oktoberfest 2024, Barbican Events sought the expertise of GuardTec Security(GTC) and Patrol Uk Ltd, a premier provider of tailored security solutions, to manage the safety and security of the festival. With a reputation for excellence in event security, GTC was chosen to ensure that the event would be safe, well-organised, and enjoyable for attendees, performers, and staff alike.



The Objectives

GuardTec Security and Patrol Uk Ltd were tasked with addressing the following objectives for Oktoberfest 2024:

- ▶ **Comprehensive Risk Assessment:** Identifying and mitigating potential risks to ensure a safe and secure environment.
- ▶ **Crowd Management:** Maintaining smooth and safe crowd movement across the venue, with particular attention to high-traffic areas.
- ▶ **Physical Security and Access Control:** Securing the event's perimeter and ensuring restricted areas were protected from unauthorised access.
- ▶ **Emergency Preparedness:** Preparing for various emergency situations, including medical incidents and potential crowd-related issues.
- ▶ **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Coordinating with local authorities and attending alcohol licensing meetings and liaising with the local Safety Advisory Group and Emergency Services to ensure a cohesive and rapid response to any incidents or safety hazards that endangered the attendees.

The Approach

► Comprehensive Risk Assessment

GuardTec Security and Patrol Uk Ltd began their involvement with a thorough risk assessment, reviewing all aspects of the event to identify and mitigate potential threats. The process included:

- **Venue Analysis:** An in-depth assessment of each venue and its layout, identifying key areas of concern such as access points, crowd flow bottlenecks, and vulnerable areas.
- **Historical Data Review:** GTC analysed data from previous Oktoberfest events, factoring in crowd behaviour and historical security incidents, ensuring a proactive approach to risk mitigation.
- **External Factors:** GTC evaluated local crime trends, terrorism risks, weather conditions, and potential threats posed by the surrounding area, preparing security strategies for all eventualities.

Based on these findings, GTC devised a tailored security strategy, including crowd control plans, emergency evacuation routes, and specific measures for high-risk areas.



► Crowd Management

With over 3,000 people expected at each event, managing the crowd efficiently was a critical focus for GTC. Their approach included:

- **Access Control:** Security personnel were stationed at key entry points to perform bag checks, verify tickets, and ensure prohibited items did not enter the venue. These checks were done efficiently to minimise delays and maximise safety.
- **Crowd Flow and Barriers:** Temporary barriers were strategically placed to direct attendee movement, reducing the risk of overcrowding or bottlenecks in high-traffic areas such as food stalls, restrooms, and entrances.
- **Signage and Communication:** Clear signage and visual cues were installed throughout each venue, as well as the roads and pedestrian walkways leading to site. These signs helped direct people to the parking and turnstile areas assisting with efficient traffic flow around the site, and the movement of people getting into the venues. The signs within the site helped to direct guests to essential areas such as exits, medical stations, and first aid points. GTC's security staff were equipped with radios for instant communication, ensuring swift coordination in emergencies.

► **Physical Security and Surveillance**

GTC provided an array of physical security measures to ensure the event remained secure:

- **Perimeter Security:** A robust perimeter was established around each event site, utilising good temporary perimeter fence and constant patrols by security officers to ensure the integrity of the fence and as a visual deterrent to anyone trying to breach the site. We also strategically placed CCTV cameras monitoring entrances, exits, high-traffic areas etc. and set up a control where security operations could be directed from, ensuring a quick and efficient response to any incident.
- **Access Control to Restricted Areas:** To ensure that only authorised personnel entered restricted areas, GTC implemented strict access control measures. These areas were secured by officers with lanyards issued to staff and contractors, to maintain the integrity of restricted zones such as alcohol & other stock storage or maintenance areas.
- **Staff Training:** GTC staff are thoroughly trained in not only physical security protocols but also conflict de-escalation techniques, crowd management, and emergency response procedures. This is training undertaken by all staff as extra learning above what is undertaken by the SIA. Our training programmes ensure that security staff can respond effectively to any incidents, from minor disturbances or safety concerns to large-scale emergencies.



► **Emergency Response and Preparedness**

Given the size of the event and the dynamic nature of large crowds, GTC designed a detailed emergency response plan to address potential risks, including:

- **Medical Assistance:** Several first aid stations were set up around the venue, staffed with fully trained medical professionals. In addition, medical teams were stationed at strategic points to respond rapidly to any health-related emergencies.
- **Evacuation Procedures:** Emergency evacuation routes were clearly mapped out, and evacuation plans were communicated to security personnel, staff, and volunteers. This ensured a smooth, coordinated response in the event of a need for evacuation.
- **Incident Command Structure:** GTC developed a clear command structure to enable swift decision-making in case of emergencies. A designated security lead was in place, working closely with local authorities and emergency services to ensure a rapid response.

► **Collaboration with Local Authorities**

Collaboration with local authorities was integral to the overall success of the event. GTC worked closely with the councils local Police force, ambulance and fire services to ensure all parties were aligned in their approach:

- **Pre-event Coordination:** GTC conducted detailed briefings with local authorities, reviewing the event layout, security plans, and potential risk factors. This allowed all parties to be fully prepared and aware of the security protocols.
- **Real-Time Communication:** During the event, GTC maintained continuous communication with local authorities and emergency services to ensure rapid response to any incidents.
- **Post-event Review:** After the event, GTC participated in a debriefing with local authorities and Barbican Events to evaluate the effectiveness of the security plan. The feedback gathered helped refine strategies for future events.



The Results and Impact

GuardTec Security and Patrol Uk Ltd played a pivotal role in the success of Oktoberfest 2024. The event saw a range of positive outcomes, including:

- ▶ **Zero Major Incidents:** Through meticulous planning and proactive security measures, there were no major security incidents during the event. Minor issues were quickly addressed before they escalated.
- ▶ **Smooth Crowd Movement:** Over 3,000 attendees navigated each event with ease, thanks to the efficient crowd control and management systems implemented by GTC.
- ▶ **Positive Feedback:** Attendees provided positive feedback, praising the professionalism and friendly demeanour of the security team. Many noted how well the event was managed and how safe they felt throughout the celebration.
- ▶ **Recognition from Authorities:** Local authorities commended GTC's professionalism, highlighting their role in maintaining a safe environment for attendees, staff, and performers.

The Conclusion

Oktoberfest 2024, secured by GuardTec Security and Patrol Uk Ltd, was a resounding success, demonstrating the company's capability in handling large-scale, high-profile events. By implementing a comprehensive security plan, providing well-trained staff, and collaborating with local authorities. GTC ensured that the event was safe, enjoyable, and incident-free. This case study reinforces GTC's position as a leader in event security, trusted by major organisers like Barbican Events to deliver exceptional security services for large public events.





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This work was undertaken by Total Security and Cleaning Services Ltd, who changed their name to GuardTec Security and Patrol UK Ltd from January 2026.