

POLICY FOR USE OF TOWN COUNCIL PARKS / OPEN SPACES BY EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

(This Policy was reviewed by the Town Council at its AGM on 14 May 2025, minute 20/25-26.)

1. EVENT CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS.

1.1 An activity will be formalised into an event, in its own right, when it reaches one or more of the following trigger points:

- The activity introduces any formalised infrastructure, using an area which would impact on public use, for example gazebos, tables and chairs.
- Whether the event attendees are likely to exceed 20 in number, and will therefore use space, which will not be available to those not attending the event.
- Includes a fee to enter.
- A transaction to buy or sell a service or goods is involved.

1.2 Events will then be classified by type or scale.

2. EVENT TYPE.

2.1 Local Community/Charity Events: Community events are those which are organised by Swanscombe & Greenhithe based local charities (including the local branch of national charities) or community groups in support of the Swanscombe & Greenhithe community. Any monies raised are to be for the sole benefit of the group or charity organising the event. If fees are being levied for community or third sector stallholders, the organisers must inform the Town Council as part of the application process.

2.3 If the event involves corporate sponsorship and/or commercial stalls the organiser must inform the Town Council, as part of the application process. All charities will be required to provide a UK charity number. The Council will normally waive fees for use of the Parks / Open Spaces by charity and community groups, subject to the provisos above.

2.4 Commercial Events: This category includes any events where the organiser intends to generate a profit. Such events are typically open to the public, but in some cases, may require the public to pay an entrance fee to participate or enter a closed area. Although there is a fee structure for the use of the Parks / Open Spaces the Town Council reserves the right to negotiate another price, subject to the agreement of the Town Clerk, where the event will have major impact on the Park / Open Space and / or its surroundings, or has the potential to generate a substantial commercial return.

2.5 Corporate events: These can be team building, brand events or private functions by commercial organisations, which will involve the closure of areas of the Park / Open Space to the general public. The fees for such an event will be subject to negotiation and final agreement by the Town Clerk. Officers will ensure that the public still have access to recreational space in the Park / Open Space, whilst the event is on.

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3. EVENT SCALE

Please see Table 1 (page 4 of 4).

4. EVENTS WHICH WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED PERMISSION.

4.1 Any event which is deemed to contravene the terms and conditions for the use of the Park / Open Space, including:

- Any event which is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the infrastructure or fauna and flora of the Park / Open Space.
- Where adequate documentation, regarding details of the event and health and safety provisions, are not provided.
- Where an event fundamentally changes its nature having already completed the application process.
- Any event, which fails to implement any recommendations made by the Town Council.
- Any event which would be detrimental to public order.
- Any event, which discriminates against any of the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Any event using non-domesticated animals for performance purposes.
- Any event where the organisers have not signed the set terms and conditions for hire, before the event.
- Any event where organisers have previously not adhered to agreed terms and conditions or safety requirements.
- Any events considered likely to have a detrimental impact on the Town and / or wider community.

5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

5.1 The following principles will apply to the use of the Parks / Open Spaces for events:

- No more than one event will be allowed in a Park / Open Space concurrently, unless otherwise agreed by the Town Council.
- The majority of events will be expected not to start before 10.00am and finish by no later than 7.00pm.
- There is a general presumption against major or large events happening in the Parks / Open Spaces on consecutive weekends.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS.

6.1 Anybody wishing to stage an event in a Park / Open Space must complete an Event Notification Form to be submitted to the Town Council at least 14 weeks prior to the event, except for minor events which require at least 4 weeks.

7. EVENT SAFETY.

7.1 All events must have a risk assessment, an event management plan, insurance cover and / or necessary licences. Failure to provide any of these documents, or the submission of documents which are deemed not fit for purpose, will lead to the event being refused / cancelled.

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8. NOISE CONTROL.

- 8.1 Event organisers are reminded of the need to minimise disruption to nearby residents', particularly in terms of noise. Organisers must provide the Town Council with a contact person and telephone number, in case complaints are received, concerning noise from their events and will be expected to take measures to investigate and address complaints promptly and provide the Town Council with copies of all correspondences relating to any complaints.

If an event is using amplified sound, the event organiser should provide a risk assessment which includes details of the proposed sound sources (location and type), details of the predicted noise levels which may arise, and details of proposed mitigation measures (if any) to the Town Council.



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TABLE 1
EVENT SCALE

Classification of proposed event.	Size and definition of event.	Number permitted in financial year.
Major	<p>Likely to be over 1,000 attendees at any one time.</p> <p>Will involve a large footprint (up to 30% of the park / open space area).</p> <p>A potential need for ground reinstatement.</p> <p>Major impact on surrounding area.</p> <p>Temporary structures with a build / take down period of up to 3 days.</p>	2
Large	<p>Likely to be between 500 and 1000 attendees at any one time.</p> <p>Will involve a footprint of up to 20% of the park / open space.</p> <p>Impact on the surrounding area.</p> <p>May need some ground reinstatement.</p> <p>Temporary structures with a build / take down period of 1 or 2 days.</p>	3
Medium	<p>Between 50 and 500 attendees at any one time.</p> <p>Footprint of up to 10% of the park / open space.</p> <p>Unlikely to involve any reinstatement of ground.</p> <p>Temporary structures with a build / Take down period of 1 day.</p>	12
Small	<p>Likely to be no more than 49 attendees at any one time.</p> <p>Minimal use of the park / open space area.</p> <p>Unlikely to have any impact on surrounding areas.</p> <p>Minimal impact on the park.</p> <p>Minimal infrastructure.</p>	At the Town Councils discretion.
Minor	Any event which does not meet the criteria above but does meet the event criteria as set out in 1.1.	At the Town Clerks discretion.