



Events Policy

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Introduction

In 2022, 6.25 million trips were made to Stratford-on-Avon District. Stratford-on-Avon District Council ('the Council') is committed to enabling events and owns some public land across the District. This land is able to host a wide range of events, from charitable events through to fully commercial events. A diverse, well-managed programme of events can provide many benefits to the towns, villages and surrounding areas, promoting Stratford-on-Avon District ('the District') as a vibrant place for business, culture and community, ensuring the safe enjoyment of both residents and visitors attracted to the area.

An Events Policy ('the Policy') helps bring together these positive benefits to the District. The majority of events that are held in the District are managed by key stakeholders, which include but are not limited to Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council, Town/Parish Councils, the local Business Improvement District (BID), charities and other independent organisations.

However, the Council retains a role as a regulating authority; with responsibility for matters such as health and safety, licensing, road closures, environmental health and planning.

This Policy therefore sets out the Council's policy on events on Council land, irrespective of the event organiser. It promotes the aims of the **Council Plan**, including:

Core areas of focus:

- Local Economy Residents and communities

Aims and Objectives:

- Make the most of Stratford District's rich cultural heritage as a national and international tourist destination

For the purposes of this Policy, an event is defined as:

"A planned activity in a specific Council owned location, either indoors or outdoors, lasting for a limited period of time that will be attended by members of the public (whether paid or unpaid "admission") where the activity can reasonably be expected to attract a gathering of people that would not otherwise be expected as part of the normal course of daily business in that location at that time".

Concessions: The Council also leases a number of concessions on its land. These are put out to tender on a regular basis and includes food vendors, the Chain Ferry and fairgrounds. Any requests for 'concessions' will be considered alongside this Policy but will not be classed as events.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this Policy is to provide a clear framework for considering the programming of a variety of commercial and community events on Council land. The Policy aims to enable a wide range of sporting, recreational, cultural, social and educational activities in accordance with the Council's strategic aims.

The Council's objectives are to:

- Support and enable cultural, educational and leisure activities which widen access and increase participation from all sectors of the community.
- Encourage activities that enhance the quality of life for visitors, encourage healthy living and promote diversity.
- Enable the Council to offer its land for suitable commercial purposes to generate revenue from events which can be reinvested into land maintenance and other service provision.
- Use local products, services and people where possible to encourage active citizenship and promote a positive image of the District regionally, nationally and, where appropriate, internationally.
- Attract visitors and events to the District to bring inward investment and jobs prosperity to the local economy.
- Promote the District as a destination with a strong heritage complemented by a vibrant contemporary culture.
- Maximise the safety of event attendees and workforce to ensure that safety is placed as a priority in decision making.
- Minimise disruption to local residents and businesses.
- Manage events so as to protect, preserve and enhance the historic nature of the Council's land.

To meet these aims and objectives, events will fall into the following five broad categories:

- 1) Commercial events of local, national or international importance or significance that support the aims and objectives of the Policy and promote the District to a wider audience and encourage visitors to the town and bring revenue to the Council and the local economy.
- 2) Local commercial events that generate revenue for the Council, including weddings, parties, meetings, receptions and other suitable private bookings.
- 3) Events organised by registered charities and/or voluntary groups for the purpose of raising money for local and national charities and/or community groups.
- 4) Events and activities that aim to enhance the environment of the parks, public open spaces and land that educate users, encourage participation and promote the leisure activities or opportunities available.
- 5) Civic events.

Events Programme

The Council will seek to ensure a balanced programme of commercial, community and civic events as part of any approved programme. Some of the programme will be confirmed at the start of each year but it will evolve and change as necessary.

Within Stratford-upon-Avon, events regularly occur on Bancroft Gardens and the Recreation Ground.

The Council will give priority to those events that have a record of being well-promoted and well-managed with a safe and high-quality visitor experience, and those events which are already permitted by either contract or agreements with other organisations.

Regular annual or bi-annual events will normally be given priority, but the Council will not guarantee the provision of any site to any particular event or organising body based on previous use alone, and can refuse events based on income, payment, health and safety and performance history.

The Council reserves the right to prioritise use of its own and associated partner organisation events above all others. For example, civic events including Shakespeare`s Birthday Celebrations (April), the Mop Fairs (October), Remembrance Sunday (November), and the Victorian Christmas Market (December) will take precedent over all other events. The Council also receives regular requests for use of its land for filming purposes and these are prioritised as they bring in income and raise the profile of the District.

Whilst these events are usually known far in advance, in exceptional circumstances this may include short notice changes that are beyond the Council`s control. The Council accepts no liability in such circumstances.

Types of Event

Examples of events in our area include:

- Civic events
- Arts and cultural events
- Musical concerts
- Drama events
- Historic re-enactment
- Exhibitions
- Sporting and recreational events
- Children`s activities
- Entertainment events
- Guided and Sponsored Walking Tours
- Environmental and horticultural demonstrations
- Private events (weddings, parties etc.)
- Business and corporate events including filming for television.

Considerations when making a decision about events

These would generally include:

- Degree of public safety
- Risk of public disorder
- Use of performing animals, except those which are normally regarded as domesticated in the United Kingdom (e.g. horses, dogs, cats, birds used in falconry demonstrations, caged birds and rabbits) which may be used as an ancillary part of a performance
- Use of animals as prizes, including goldfish at a funfair
- Impact on the integrity of the Council
- Balloon releases and Chinese lanterns.

The Head of Environmental and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and ward member(s), will have the discretion and ultimate decision on determining whether a proposed event is permitted to take place or not.

Private Events

These will include but not be limited to weddings, parties, filming, meetings and similar. These will all be available on a full commercial basis in competition with other local providers. All private events will meet all the necessary requirements for licences, insurance and health and safety and where relevant, consultation with the Safety Advisory Group, as with all Council events.

Operation

Event organisers must comply with completion of all relevant documentation. All events at Council locations are subject to specific terms and conditions which need to be agreed and signed prior to the event.

Operating hours for outdoor events will generally be between 9am to 11pm (excluding set-up and clear-down). In exceptional circumstances, an extension of these hours may be sought from the licensing authority for celebrations on festival days such as New Year's Eve, civic occasions, or where celebration of a significant local, regional or national event is required.

Although not always practical, whenever possible existing facilities such as concessions should be accommodated throughout events and disruption be minimised (in consultation with the event operators).

Firework displays and other pyrotechnics will only be permitted where they are an integral part of an event such as Bonfire Night or New Year's Eve celebrations, civic events, military festivals, historical re-enactments, certain musical concerts and private functions (by prior written agreement only).

Organisers of larger events will be encouraged to liaise directly with local residents and businesses to minimise any disruption or disturbance and limit the impact that their event might have on the wider local communities.

Event Costs

All events, irrespective of size, have a cost to the Council (and its stakeholders). The Council is unable to subsidise costs, for example, staff time, trading license applications, hiring of equipment and services, organisation, health and safety requirements, set-up and clear-down. These costs will be passed on to all event organisers where incurred.

The cost of waste collection and/or cleansing will be calculated on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature, location and duration of the event.

While registered charities and non-profit making community groups may be offered a "charitable hire rate", costs will still be passed to the event organiser to ensure that there is no additional burden on the Council, although these costs will be kept as low as possible.

Flexibility to change standard hire fees and charges is delegated to the Council's Events Team and the Council's relevant Head of Service, in accordance with the needs of the organisation.

Damage to Land and Severe Weather

For all events, the Council will secure a bond from the event organiser in advance for repair and reinstatement works following events. The full cost of any repair and reinstatement work by the Council's approved contractors will be charged to the event organisers.

For outdoor events, the protection of the environment, wildlife and features will need to be considered when planning events and, in the event of wet ground conditions, the Council will require the event organiser to introduce additional ground protection measures to avoid excessive damage, which may include the use of protective matting and running boards, close supervision of vehicular movements or changes to event layouts.

In such circumstances, the Council may also require the event organiser to increase the value of the bond prior to the event.

The Council will require evidence that the event organiser has considered sufficient measures to protect the public in the event of inclement weather conditions. In the case of severe winds creating dangerous conditions associated with trees on site or temporary structures, including but not limited to inflatables and marquees, the Council reserves the right to cancel the event if it is considered that public may be at any risk. Such requirements will be at the events organiser's expense.

In the case of severe weather creating dangerous (or potentially damaging) wet ground conditions, the Council reserves the right to cancel the event. If severe weather makes it necessary to cancel an event, the Council will not be liable for any costs. The decision to cancel an event or the use of its land for an event due to severe weather is taken by the Council's Events Team and the relevant Head of Service whose decision is final.

Insurance

Event organisers are required to obtain and provide evidence to the Council of Public and Employers Liability Insurance to a minimum value of £5million in accordance with national guidance (unless an alternative provision has been agreed by exception).

This minimum figure is subject to review and may be updated at any time on the advice of the Council's insurers. For some events, the Council may request a higher minimum value. Event promoters and organisers will be responsible for ensuring that all third-party suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors are adequately insured.

Regulation of Events

The Council looks to facilitate a range of great events and activities on their land, in accordance with the aims set out in this Policy. We recognise the need to balance these aims with the environment (both within and around the event); as such the Council will require all event organisers to adhere to relevant guidance and procedures when holding events, including **licensing requirements, environmental protection guidance, planning laws**, as well as having an **Event Management Plan(s)** and the prioritisation of public safety.

Event organisers are encouraged to work with local residents and relevant authorities to minimise the impact of events on the community. Where considered appropriate by the Council, event organisers will be required to inform local residents in advance of major events which may cause local disruption.

Advertisement Control

Event promoters and organisers are required to comply with any legislation, including advertisement controls as it is a criminal offence to display certain advertisements without the correct consents from the local planning authority.

Illegal flyposting or other failures to comply with advertising restrictions could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued or other legal/enforcement action by the Council, including court action.

All materials displayed at the location must be approved by the Council in advance and meet the required specification with regard to size, materials used and content. Approved advertising may then only be placed at the location, during the time period approved by the Council or other authorised persons.

Food Safety

All food outlets at an event (however large or small) must provide evidence of food registration with the relevant local authority and food hygiene ratings for all temporary catering outlets.

Waste and Recycling

The event organiser must provide a written Waste Management Plan which is approved by the Council. The Waste Management Plan should show how the event organiser will manage, recover, reuse, recycle or dispose of waste and street litter safely, and meet all environmental regulations and statutory requirements. Waste should be minimised and recycled as much as possible. The full cost of waste collection and clean-up associated with the event will be paid for by the event organiser.

Environmental Sustainability

Sustainability is about protecting our environment from harm as a result of human activities and taking positive action to improve it. There are many ways that people can adopt sustainability, some of which involve making small lifestyle changes. The Council declared a climate emergency to become net-zero carbon as an organisation by 2025, and by 2030 to ensure total emissions in the District as a whole, are as close to zero as possible. All events organisers are expected to put the environment at the forefront of their planning, to minimise environmental impacts.

Examples may include,

- the use of reusable and/or recyclable sustainable products and materials, such as using recycled biodegradable cups, plates and cutlery.
- adequate arrangements put in place to prevent damage and potential loss of trees and biodiversity.
- CO2 emissions from any machinery or equipment used.

Licensing

Event organisers, during all licensable activities, shall be required to detail how they will meet the four licensing objectives:

- 1) The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- 2) Public Safety
- 3) The Prevention of Public Nuisance
- 4) The Protection of Children from Harm.

Event organisers are required to understand and put into practice policies relating to noise control, the sale of alcohol, proof of age, safeguarding children and adults, registered security and drugs. The Hire Agreement will specify requirements and the need for the event organiser to present the Event Management Plan to the Council's Safety Advisory Group if the attendance at the event is to be greater than 1,000 people or is classed as high risk.

In accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, event organisers will be required to obtain all appropriate licenses and permissions from the relevant authorities, e.g., **Temporary Events Notices**, where these are not already provided for under the terms of a Premises Licence.

The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that all required licences are obtained in sufficient time and all conditions specified in these licences are adhered to. The costs for any licence shall be incurred by the event organiser.

The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that their event complies with the relevant Temporary Events Notice or Premises Licence. Compliance will be strictly monitored by the Council's authorised officer, Designated Premises Supervisor or appointed deputy.

Environmental Protection

Noise levels generated from an event need to be agreed in advance and kept at a reasonable level. Noise should not create an unreasonable impact on any business or residential premises in the vicinity of the event site. Events must also comply with health and safety legislation for staff and contractors on site.

Consideration should be given to the suitability of events to meet our requirements at each location. Each event is different and the Hire Agreement with the event organiser will specify exactly what is required. However, when entering into a Hire Agreement with an event organiser where loud amplified music (or another significant impact to residents or the environment) is expected, then a Noise Management Plan will need to be submitted and approved in writing by the Council's Environmental Health Team prior to the event commencing.

The Noise Management Plan is required at least twelve (12) weeks in advance of the event. The event organiser will then be responsible for monitoring and recording noise levels during the event and for making adjustments (as required) to ensure compliance with the Premises Licence conditions and the Noise Management Plan.

The event organiser is expected to reduce sound levels on the day if conditions require it. Following the event, and if requested to do so by the Council, the monitoring data collected by the event organiser must be provided to the Council's Environmental Health Team.

Local residents in direct proximity to large-scale events (see definition below), including those with outdoors amplified music shall be notified of those events not less than four (4) weeks before the event. The residents to be notified shall be indicated on a plan, which is to be agreed in writing by the Council, before they are notified.

Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

The first priority of any event is public safety, which is the responsibility of the event organiser. The Council and its partners have a duty to ensure that all relevant health and safety guidance is followed. This is undertaken through the **Safety Advisory Group (SAG)**.

The role of the SAG is to consider large-scale or high-risk public events regardless of who owns the land and advise the event organiser on the requirements. SAG is a multi-partner group including the Council, Police, Fire, Ambulance and Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Highways. In general, large-scale public events will be considered as those where more than 1,000 people are expected to attend, although smaller events may require the involvement of the SAG depending on the nature of the event.

The SAG remit also includes outdoor events which require a Premises Licence under the **Licensing Act 2003**, firework displays, carnivals, parades, music festivals and other large-scale events of a similar nature.

As the remit of the SAG is to advise on how to ensure public safety is maintained by event organiser, SAG members will expect to review a safety plan before any event. For the SAGs consideration, the Premises License holder or event organiser must risk assess each event and produce a plan proportionate to the size and nature and audience profile of the event being held. For large-scale events a written **Event Management Plan** must be submitted (by the Premises Licence holder or designated event organiser) to the SAG.

Event Organisers will be expected to actively participate in the SAG process as relevant. This includes adhering to event plans and/or details agreed with the SAG. Similarly, event organisers should comply with any instructions given by the Council.

Failure to do so may result in the event being stopped or cancelled. Every event should have a designated safety officer and the event organiser is required to provide evidence (where required by the Council) that they are complying with:

- All relevant Health and Safety Legislation; and
- The Council's own Health and Safety Policy and procedures; and
- If deemed necessary using predefined criteria, presentation of event safety documentation may be required at a SAG meeting.

The SAG may also co-ordinate safety debrief meetings post events so that future events may be improved. All issues will be discussed with the event organisers so that the safety risk can be resolved, as the cancellation of an event is the last resort.

Traffic Management and Parking

Events can involve increased levels of vehicular traffic. The SAG includes WCC Highways representatives who can advise event organisers of traffic requirements that may need to be put into place. Event organisers have a responsibility to notify and discuss traffic considerations with WCC Highways for any large event.

Requests for road closures should be made via either WCC or the Council depending on the type and scale of the event.

Car parking should also be considered and contact with the relevant organisations should be made prior to the event to discuss the requirement for any special events. When promoting events to the public, event organisers should provide details of suitable car parks to help prevent traffic issues.

Safeguarding Children and Adults

All event organisers, their employees, contractors and sub-contractors are required to comply with Warwickshire County Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy.

All event organisers and promoters are required to provide evidence of procedures for dealing with lost children, and this should be included in the Event Management Plan.

The content of each event shall be considered by the Council and an age limit agreed with the event organiser. These limits may be monitored by the Council and failure to comply with them may result in the closure of the event.

Review of the Policy

All events are unique, therefore the challenges posed by each event are different. As events evolve and develop, it may be necessary for the Policy to be amended accordingly. All the partner agencies recognise the importance of events to the District and will work together to provide a programme of safe and well-managed events for the benefit of residents and visitors.

The Policy will consequently be reviewed by the Council every three years. Minor changes will be considered by the relevant Head of Service, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, and where major changes are considered necessary, the Policy will be referred to a formal decision-making process.