



POLICY FOR USE OF COUNCIL OWNED PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

1.0 THE REQUIREMENT FOR A POLICY

- 1.1 Wymondham Town Council (the Council) own and manage a range of open spaces across the town, ranging from small amenity areas within housing estates* through to larger parks. These open spaces are utilised by a wide range of different users all year round and it is important that the Council ensures they remain safe and available to access.
- 1.2 Requests are occasionally received from organisations to utilise areas of Council open space for a variety of uses.
- 1.3 Such is the number of requests now being received, including requests for regular use, it is felt a policy setting out the criteria against which each request will be assessed against is required to establish a fair and transparent system.

2.0 AIMS OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The overarching aim of the policy will be to ensure the Council's open spaces remain a safe place for members of the public to use, while also allowing organisations to benefit from them where it is deemed appropriate and not to the significant detriment of the general public use. In addition, the policy will aim to protect the Council's existing income streams and/or third-party arrangements, as well as to identify additional income streams.
- 2.2 The policy will set out the framework against which applications to use the Council's open spaces will be made.

3.0 SCOPE

AREAS

- 3.1 Council owned areas which will be considered to fall within the scope of this policy include (but are not limited to):
 - Becketswell
 - Browick Road Recreation Ground
 - Queen Elizabeth Memorial Garden (on Chandler's Hill)
 - Fairland Green
 - Market Square
 - Priory Garden
 - Rothbury Park
 - Toll's Meadow
 - Woodland at Ketts Park
 - Bellrope Park*
- 3.2 Any part of a Council owned open space which has been leased to, or is managed by, another organisation will be out of scope on the basis those organisations will have control over those areas and any applications to use them should be made to those organisations.

ACTIVITIES

- 3.3 The policy will be used whenever an application is received to use an area of Council owned open space that would be considered not to fall within the broad parameters of 'normal' use of a public open space, whether that be for a one-off event or regular activity.
- 3.4 These events will include those run by individuals, voluntary and charitable organisations, as well as commercial organisations. Examples may include (but are not limited to):
- Fitness classes or events
 - Dog walking and training for more than 1 household
 - Sports events or classes
 - Markets
 - Entertainment events
 - The sale of food and beverage
 - Fund raising events
 - Fun fairs

4.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- 4.1 When an application is received it shall be assessed against the following criteria.

SAFETY

- 4.2 The Council will need to determine the impact of the proposed event on the potential safety of those attending the event and/or members of the public using the open space at the same time. This will be achieved through the requirement to submit relevant safety documentation to demonstrate the organiser has considered all relevant safety matters to the full satisfaction of the Council.
- 4.3 The Council will provide comments and advice on the applicant's plans but will not 'approve' them in a formal sense as the responsibility for managing health and safety will be that of the applicant.
- 4.4 For larger events, attracting a significant crowd, an Event Management Plan may also be required (as advised on the South Norfolk and Broadland District Council [Safety Advisory Group](#)).

INSURANCE

- 4.5 The Council require evidence for public liability insurance in place for an event. Where it is determined insurance is required, then minimum cover should be in place and adequate proof provided, although some events may require a higher indemnity limit.

TYPE OF ACTIVITY

- 4.6 The Council will determine whether the proposed event is in keeping with the specific area of open space on which it is to be held. This will include an assessment of the following:
- 4.6.1 The purpose of the event.
(To ensure safe, orderly, and successful execution of outdoor events while considering the community's well-being, public safety and environmental

sustainability the Town Council reserve the right to deny an event application if significant risks to public safety, conflicts with local regulations, or lacks adequate planning measures. Event organisers must adhere to all local and national laws, regulations).

- 4.6.2 The number of people attending. Can the area of open space cope with the proposed number of people whereby irreparable damage will not be caused?
- 4.6.3 Duration and/or frequency of the event. On what day(s) will the event take place and at what time(s)? Will the duration or frequency of the event have an adverse impact on the location or other users?
- 4.6.4 Infrastructure support for the event. Is the organiser providing enough facilities to manage the event, for example toilets, bins, barriers, marshalling, lighting, power generation etc?
- 4.6.5 Proposed equipment to be used. Is the type of equipment appropriate for the particular open space and event? Are there any safety issues which may arise as a result of its use? In certain circumstances documents will be needed to demonstrate the piece of equipment is safe to use, such as electrical testing certification or testing and tagging for inflatable play equipment (PIPA).

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- 4.7 If the proposed event is likely to impact on the movement of traffic in the surrounding area, then details will be required detailing what the impact will be and what mitigation measures will be put in place by the organiser. This will include an assessment of the following:

- 4.7.1 Will any proposed road closures and diversion routes cause unacceptable traffic issues elsewhere in the vicinity? Application for any road closures would need to be made to Norfolk County Council as the Highways Authority.
- 4.7.2 Are traffic marshals required and, if so, have an adequate number been provided with appropriate experience? Has their health and safety been taken into consideration?
- 4.7.3 Are there adequate car parking arrangements in place for both visitors and organisers/volunteers?

IMPACT ON EXISTING USER/USE

- 4.8 If an application is received which would impact upon an existing event for which the Council has already granted permission, the Council will determine which should take precedence. In arriving at a decision, the following factors will be considered:
 - 4.8.1 Is there a contractual or legal requirement which means a particular event has to occur?

- 4.8.2 Is there an existing contractual or legal requirement which means another similar event cannot take place? For example, where an existing agreement or permission has an exclusivity clause.
- 4.8.3 Is it more economically advantageous to the Council to cancel or offer an alternative location for an existing event to accommodate a new application, if contractual conditions allow?
- 4.8.4 Would the proposed event have a negative impact on an existing event or user for which the Council has already granted permission?
- 4.8.5 Would the proposed event have an unacceptable effect on members of the public using the open space?
- 4.8.6 Where events have already been given permission, can the Council agree with those organisers to change dates to allow concurrent uses, if deemed appropriate?

LOCATION

4.9 When assessing applications, the Council will have regard to the location of the proposed event and whether it is appropriate. This will include an assessment of the following:

- 4.9.1 Will the event cause an unreasonable nuisance or disturbance to adjacent sites or residents?
- 4.9.2 Is there sufficient space at the proposed location to support the event?
- 4.9.3 Is there a more appropriate location for the event?
- 4.9.4 Are there any existing restrictions or controls at the proposed location which would mean the event could not take place?
- 4.9.5 Is the proposed location not in keeping with the event and/or will have a negative impact on the location? Consideration will be made as to whether the site has any special designation (listed, ancient monument for example) or has any specific safety issues (water course/bodies for example)

5.0 CHARGING

5.1 The following charges will apply to one-off events taking place on Council owned land:

Type of event	Maximum attendees (at once)	Charge
Commercial	Less than 500	£500
	Between 500 and 1,499	£1,000
	More than 1500	£1,500
Charity or community	Less than 500	£50
	Between 500 and 1,499	£100
	More than 1,500	£100

- 5.2 Additional charges may apply where events require use of Council equipment, car Parks, or buildings. These charges will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.3 The charges, or rent, for regular activities will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be specified to the applicant. In arriving at a charge or rent the Council will take into account the following criteria:
- 5.3.1 The requirement for the Council to obtain best value. This assessment may result in the opportunity being tendered to provide other operators a chance to apply.
 - 5.3.2 The nature of the proposed activity, for example whether it is being run for commercial gain. The Council will assess the anticipated income/profit being generated and may seek comparable evidence from similar activities taking place in similar areas to arrive at a charge or rent.
 - 5.3.3 The frequency and duration of use. Activities which take place more frequently or for a longer duration will attract a higher charge than those taking place for short durations.
 - 5.3.4 The physical area on which the activity will take place. For example, the proposed location may result in additional income being generated.
- 5.4 Charges for some areas may attract VAT.

6.0 PROCESS, CONSULTATION AND DECISION

6.1 ONE-OFF EVENTS

Applications to use an area of Council owned open space for a one-off event should be made to the Council Offices. Applications should be submitted at least 2 months prior to the event.

It should be made clear to the applicant that additional permissions may be required from other Council(s) to hold the event, including (but not limited to):

- Planning permission
- Food safety
- Noise
- Drinks licence
- Temporary events licence

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

- 6.2 Applications to use an area of Council owned open space for a regular or re-occurring activity should be made to the Town Council.

DECISION

- 6.3 The applicant will be advised of the Council's decision to either permit the event or reject the application, and it will be communicated within 20 working days.

CANCELLATION

6.4 The Council reserves the right to amend or cancel an event as the result of particular circumstances which may include (but are not limited to):

- The Council or other public body requiring urgent use of the space.
- The Council becoming aware of new information which may have affected its decision to approve the event.
- Direction from the Police or other public authority that the event should be cancelled.

7.0 UNAUTHORISED EVENTS

7.1 Where the Council becomes aware of an event or activity taking place on Council owned land which has not been approved, the organisers will be told to shut down the event. Should any substantial damage be caused as a result of the unauthorised event the Council may seek damages from the event organisers.

7.2 If the organisers of an unauthorised event make any future applications for additional events the Council will factor into their decision making the fact an unauthorised event took place.

8.0 APPROVAL AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This policy shall be considered by Members of the Policies Review Working Group and reviewed on an annual basis.

Reviewed: July 2025
For approval: July 2026