

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY FOR THE HIRE OF COUNCIL LAND FOR EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
ADOPTED JANUARY 2025

Background:

The council's Code of Corporate Governance states, in the section on Community Focus, that:

- The Council provides a wide range of facilities and activities which all help to build a sense of community.
- It is committed to maintaining the traditions associated with Dorchester's historic role as County Town and to organising civic events which celebrate this in response to both local and national issues.
- It will continue to organise a free programme of summer events which have proved to be effective in enhancing community life.

However, this statement primarily focuses on the Council's own events rather than providing a framework for considering third party requests to use council land.

This policy aims to provide such a framework by clarifying the council's approach to assessing request to use the Council's land for events and activities.

Responding to requests to use council land for events and activities:

1. With regard to the hiring of the council's outdoor spaces by third parties, each request for a booking will be assessed by council officers with regard to its suitability for the space in question (e.g. might the event be harmful/damaging to the greenspace or inappropriate for the neighbourhood). This assessment by officers will be undertaken in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Management Committee where appropriate.
2. When taking bookings for events on council land, officers will ask the organisers to provide a risk assessment and evidence that they have Public Liability Insurance. Meetings will be held with organisers in advance to discuss layout of stalls, vehicle movements, additional toilet provision, parking and access to power supplies.
3. For larger events, the Council will require the organisers to inform the police and Dorset Council's licensing & community safety teams. In turn, Dorset Council may then request that the organisers submit detailed event management plans to the countywide Safety Advisory Group for consideration.
4. Where deemed necessary by the Council, event organisers will be required to provide their own marshals and security staff in order to ensure the event remains safe. There should be no expectation that Council staff will help marshal or supervise events.

5. The Council will require hirers to liaise with other organisation using the site on the day of the event in order to avoid any conflicting demands on the available space and areas for parking.
6. For most events, public access to the Council's open spaces will be largely uninterrupted although there may be discrete areas which require ticketed entry (such as outdoor theatre in the centre of Maumbury Rings or the inflatable theme park on The Great Field).
7. The Council is not obliged to allow its open spaced to be used for events and requests may be declined if what is proposed is considered inappropriate.
8. Each year the Council will publish its scale of charges for the hire of its land for events. The fees charged will vary according to the status of the organisation (e.g. charitable or commercial) and the nature of the event (free access or pay-to-enter).

Dorchester Town Council
January 2025