



# OUTDOOR EVENTS POLICY



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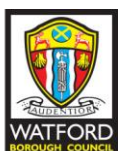
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **The importance of outdoor events to Watford**

Fun, safe outdoor events of a suitable quality are a vital part of Watford's cultural offer. They offer a great opportunity to bring to life the town's open spaces, including our recently transformed town centre with its dedicated events area, and, through this, make important contributions to Watford's prosperity, well being and reputation as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

By contributing to the town's cultural scene, outdoor events can showcase talent, celebrate cultural heritage and diversity, unlock potential and build pride in Watford. They are, therefore, at the heart of what makes Watford such a distinctive dynamic town and are enjoyed by a great many of the town's residents and visitors. Overall, we see the benefits of creating a positive environment for outdoor events as:

- creating a vibrant scene through increased town centre and park activities
- building a reputation for our cultural scene, one that attracts wider PR opportunities
- continuing to foster community pride and spirit through both large scale events and community events which brings local people together whether as participants or spectators
- promoting the health and well-being of our residents through regular participation in events and activities
- raising the profile of Watford at local, regional and national levels
- making a major contribution to the positive reputation of Watford
- increasing economic activity for the benefit of local businesses
- providing opportunities for Watford's home grown talent to be inspired and inspire others; and showcase local emerging talent in our community spaces
- the potential generation of income or sponsorship to the council which contributes to the support of community events or reduces the costs of commissioned events.

We believe there is scope for a 'mixed economy' of events from those with large scale / high impact to those which provide a stage for our local community arts groups, schools and artistes to showcase their talent.

### **The importance of an outdoor event policy**

However, to be successful and achieve positive outcomes, events have to be coordinated and managed effectively. This Policy, therefore, is designed to achieve the outcomes we, and our community, want for Watford by ensuring planning and running a fun and safe event of a suitable quality is as straight forward as possible - without compromising on the key elements that are essential for success.

In summary, therefore, the Outdoor Events Policy reflects our vision of 'Making Watford a destination of choice'.



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## The principles underpinning the Policy

This Policy aims to :

- set out principles and procedures, with the aim of providing clear and transparent processes for events organisers
- provide a framework for the application process for outdoor events in Watford
- make the process of booking an event user friendly, removing unnecessary bureaucracy, providing a clear framework for the application and approval process
- provide consistent control, management and monitoring of events in Watford especially during pre-event consultation and planning
- develop an events calendar to maximise opportunities and minimise event clashes
- maximise safety and minimises risk for those attending and working the event
- promote economic contribution to the local economy
- raise awareness of key areas as outdoor event spaces
- ensure that the sustainability of events is improved by protecting the environment
- minimise, where possible, the disruption of major events to residents and businesses. Where there is unavoidable and inevitable disruption communicate this in advance
- proactively work with partners to promote and develop events for a diverse audience
- support partnership working to promote and develop events for a diverse audience; and
- set out the guiding principle for all outdoor events in Watford



This Outdoor Events Policy will evolve and develop accordingly to meet the needs of the town and those organising events. The Policy will need to be flexible and responsive and, in order to retain a 'can do approach' will be reviewed regularly. The Events Team will take responsibility for the monitoring of the policy and this will include but not be limited to:

- number of events, small, medium and large
- safety and environmental impact of events
- local talent involved
- numbers attending events
- the economic impact
- the satisfaction of residents; and
- the satisfaction of event organisers

## 2. LINKAGES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIES, POLICIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND GROUPS

The Outdoor Events Policy contributes to the delivery of a number of council strategies and policies:

- Watford Borough Council Corporate Plan: our overarching, strategic plan that shapes our vision
- Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan: helping to support local businesses and encourage increased trading opportunities that boosts the town's economy
- Health and Well-being Strategy and Action Plan: encouraging a sense of well-being of people enjoying the programme
- Watford Cultural Plan: develop and build Watford's growing reputation as a cultural venue, supporting emerging talent and bringing to life our local infrastructure
- Watford Town Centre BID : local business and organisations working together to encourage increased footfall, support the local economy and encourage businesses to take part in the programming
- Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003:
- Safety Advisory Group – providing advice to events organisers for safer events
- Green Spaces Strategy: maximising the enjoyment factor in our wonderful parks and open spaces, helping to co-ordinate the events offer; and
- Arts Development: encouraging Watford's own to showcase their talent

Outdoor events are at the heart of what makes Watford such a distinctive and dynamic town and contribute across a wide number of areas and agendas.



## 3. OUR EVENT SPACES

Watford is fortunate to have a range of outdoor events space, which can accommodate a range of events and activities. We will work with event organisers to agree which space is right for them and their event.

Below is a list of these spaces:

Event space (name)	Location	Approximate size
A	The Parade (chequered event space by the Pond)	800m2



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B	The Parade (Nationwide to L'Artista)	530m2
C	The Parade (Twisted Monkey to Pret a Manger)	1750m2
D	St Mary's Square	75m2
E	Raised triangle area (outside Bosley's)	90m2
F	The Parade (outside LP Café)	80m2 (two areas)
G	Cassiobury Park (whole)	0.48km2
H	Bandstand in Cassiobury Park	2000m2

#### 4. WATFORD EVENTS CALENDAR

A key part of ensuring this Policy is effective is to ensure that the mix and balance of events across the town and throughout the year works effectively, with events supporting and enhancing each other rather than competing.

There is an annual events calendar that will show at a glance what is going on in the town and will allow you, and us, to plan an overall programme for the town.

#### 5. WATFORD'S EVENT TEAM

To support the effective management of the council's event space and to ensure that there is sufficient experience and knowledge to help events run smoothly and successfully, we have a small team of council staff who, together can provide advice to event organisers .

However, to make things straightforward for people who need to contact and liaise with us we have a single point of contact. Full details are enclosed in the application and guidance pack.

#### 6. CRITERIA FOR AGREEMENT TO AN EVENT

Before you can hold an event in one of the council's event spaces, the council will have to give approval for it to go ahead.

In order for this to be applied consistently and transparently, this Policy sets out the criteria for agreement.

Our aim will always be to help, facilitate and enable event organisers to stage outdoor events so whilst we have set criteria, we will work with event organisers to ensure criteria are met - and in many cases not all of the criteria will apply.

Certainly for small scale community events involving no infrastructure changes , licensing issues, crowd management and limited or no environmental impact the process is designed to be quick and easy to facilitate.

As appropriate the following criteria will be used depending on the scale of the event to determine whether approval will be given to a specific event.

- Compatibility with our vision and supports key objectives



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- Previous history of the event and /or confidence in the organisers' previous management of events
- Quality of the event
- Economic benefit of the event to the town as a whole
- Complimentary to the event programme and does not conflict with other events
- The ability of the event organiser to manage the financial requirements of the event
- The ability of the organisers to effectively plan, manage and control the event
- Impact upon the environment and any required mitigation
- Impact of the event on regular users of public spaces, stakeholders and local residents
- Timing of the event
- Size of location, numbers attending or numbers estimated to attend
- Impact on transport and traffic infrastructure to support the event e.g. parking
- Increased use of public transport and road closures
- Type, scale, nature of event
- Public safety and security issues
- The creation of opportunities for local participation
- The ability to demonstrate commitment to Watford Borough Council's equal opportunities statement
- Legal constraints
- Compliance with conditions specific to the event location set out in licence conditions or in by-laws
- Compliance with statutory requirements as required by the council as the Highways or Environmental Health and Licensing Authority e.g. noise disturbance and food hygiene
- Compliance with the council's policy on not allowing live animals at Circus or fairs
- Impact on traffic and transport infrastructure for those not participating in the event

### **The Safety Advisory Group**

The purpose is to offer guidance to help organizers [of large events] meet their responsibilities, to promote and encourage high standards of public safety and wellbeing at events.

The group will consider plans presented by organizers on the safety elements of an event. It is not the role of the group to help plan the event or write the plan.

The members of the group will not accept or adopt any of the responsibilities of the organiser.

As an organiser, you may be invited to attend a safety advisory group meeting to present your plan and to hear the joint views of the various interested statutory agencies and stakeholders. You may wish to attend a SAG meeting to obtain advice about your event too.

Although all comments and observations made by the safety advisory group are always advisory, they are made by professionals in the interest of public safety.

Failure to follow advice from the safety advisory group may affect your public liability insurance, licence permissions and leave you exposed to possible litigation.



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The core members of the group are:

- Watford Borough Council:
  - Environmental Health
  - Licensing
  - Events Team
  - Emergency Planning Team
- Hertfordshire Highways
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service and
- East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Organisers of medium and especially large events should also refer to **The Purple Guide** to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Other Events ([www.thepurpleguide.co.uk](http://www.thepurpleguide.co.uk))

## 8. HOW TO APPLY TO HOLD AN EVENT

**Please call the Events team in all instances who can help guide you through the appropriate process for your event.**

We wish to make this process as easy and informative as possible for you so that your event planning and delivery goes well. We have an events calendar that you can look at to see if the date is free and the area you wish to use available.

For any event, you will be required to complete an Event Application Form. There are 2 forms Depending on the nature of your event. The events team can advise on what form you should complete. This contains questions and guidance on the areas you will need to consider before holding an event. Some of the questions for some small scale community events will not be applicable so just say so, its perfectly ok and will let us know your event is small scale and can be fast tracked.

Event Organisers will be expected and responsible for undertaking appropriate risk assessments and event management plans as appropriate to comply with appropriate relevant legislative guidance to ensure the safety of the audience, participants, general public and staff.

We have some example event plans for the town centre and the park to help assist you, these can be downloaded from our website. These plans follow good practice as identified in the purple guide for running safe events.

Most events differ depending on their scale, location, content, purpose and target audience. Through the classification of the 'type of event', hire charges, licence fees and other associated costs can be determined along with the level of planning and the appropriate notice required to plan effectively for said event. Event classification can be broken into various considerations detailed below:

### i. **Type of event**

What is the purpose of the event? Is it a community led project, a commercial venture, a private event or a corporate event? The purpose or category of the event will impact the



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fees and charges applied - see section 11.

### **Community**

Any event organised by not for profit, community or voluntary groups that directly benefit the residents and visitors

### **Commercial**

These events provide a commercial benefit to a profit making business or operation including product launches, corporate events and other marketing and promotional activities for profit making organisations.

### **Charity**

Events organised by registered national charities and are predominantly fund raising events for the benefit of the charity. Or events organised by the registered local charity for the benefit of local residents. Some charitable events are charged non commercial rates in the Park

## **ii. Content**

The content of the event will play a part at the approval stage the event. Watford BC will consider each application individually to ensure there is a broad spectrum of events within the annual programme that benefit the community and local businesses as a whole.

We wish to host as many as 12 large events in Cassiobury Park each year with a maximum of 6 events per year having a significant amplified musical element which requires a noise management plan to be submitted and agreed prior to the event. Other smaller events particularly those near the bandstand are to be unlimited in number. (NB large events include the Fireworks display, Annual Funfair and Race for Life Event which are well established and are included within this limit of 12 annual events held in Cassiobury Park).

The Heritage Lottery Fund Activity Plan highlights a number of large events in Cassiobury - this was circa 4 but was on top of the regulars that we host such as Race for Life, Herts Pride, Fireworks. So the 12 highlighted covers the one offs (up to 4) for events like the Inland Waterways Festival and Jazz Festival and does not constitute an increase in total large events

In the town centre, the maximum number of large events to be limited to 20 however musical events or events which may have a significant amplified musical element to be limited to 6.

In all cases, event plans will consider effective plans to manage the noise levels, stewarding and care of the environment so that events are complimentary to the retail and business offer.

In addition to these considerations Watford BC reserves the right to determine the types of events deemed suitable for council owned and managed land.

Watford B.C reserves the right to refuse an event if it does not meet the criteria set out previously, has the potential to damage the council's reputation or that of the town.



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## 9. LICENSING, PERMISSIONS & INSURANCE

The event organiser must provide evidence that they hold adequate insurance appropriate to the scale and nature of the event.

If appropriate to your event, event organisers must ensure that all required permissions and licenses are acquired in an appropriate and timely manner including but not necessarily limited to:

- Performing Rights Society Licence (PRS)
- Phonographic Performance Limited Licence (PPL)
- A Temporary Events Notice (TEN) or time limited premises licenses under the Licensing Act 2003 may be required
- Permission to use the highway from the Highways Authority (Hertfordshire County Council)
- Permission from the council to use the Town centre premises license where relevant

The Licensing Team can advise whether you need a license depending on the size and nature of your event and guide you through the appropriate process.

## 10. CONSULTATION

A key element to the successful delivery of any event lies in consultation. Through consultation event organisers can identify potential problems in advance and put measures in place to ensure they are avoided, in extreme cases it can also identify why a particular event would not be suitable to the proposed location. It is for this reason that one of the first steps in staging an event in Watford is to seek approval, through an application process followed by consultation.

Not every event will require consultation each time it takes place.

The details of when an event requires consultation and the level it requires are detailed in the first of the following sections:

For community events involving no major infrastructure or crowds consultation may be limited or not appropriate. The Events team will assess, advise and support if appropriate.

For other events, the Events Team will either advise, support or instruct and will be carried out by the Events organiser and/or Events Team within the timeframes allowed.

The consultation process may include some of the following:

- Initial consultation by the organiser with the Events Team to ensure it fits within the Outdoor Events Policy
- Safety Advisory Group
- Watford Town Centre Partnership
- Emergency services
- Local ward councillors
- External partners specific to an event location
- Communities of interest specific to the event

## 11. FEES AND CHARGES

**All fees are subject to change and will be reviewed annually. You will be informed if any fees apply.**

### **Reinstatement Deposit**

A refundable deposit may be required to be lodged with the council or the council's contracted partner where there is a potential risk of damage to the physical environment from the event. The deposit will be required at the time the hire fee is due and will be used to fund any repairs or damage caused by the event.

### **Licensing Fees**

Applies to town centre premises licence if varied.

### **Waste Management**

Event organisers are required to have arrangements in place to minimise waste, promote recycling and where unavoidable, dispose of waste.

Normal service levels are provided by the Council's partner, Veolia for the cleansing of public areas or management and disposal of waste.

If the event organisers' arrangements are not considered sufficient then separate arrangements can be made via our partner, Veolia.

### **Highways – Road Closure fees apply**

Where road closures are required to comply with Highway Regulation and Enforcement, a fee will be made to the event organiser for these formal road Closures.

### **Parking**

The Events Team will monitor the large events to ensure compliance with the policy and the location hire agreement. The costs of these visits are not recharged. However, where the council is required to provide staffing, equipment or other resources to the event, the costs for such resources may be charged to the event organiser.

In the town centre special parking permits and arrangements can be made via the Events Team depending on the nature and duration of the event.

### **Noise**

With events being planned it is inevitable that residents and businesses around the Park and The Parade will experience some level of noise impacting from events but the measures we expect event organisers to put in place below will help to mitigate against some of that. Overall, the number of music events will be offset by the benefits of bringing increased trading opportunities to the town.

Where necessary it is expected that the event organiser will have suitably qualified and accredited noise consultants to measure, monitor and control and report noise and these will be identified and approved as part of the event management plan. Should it be necessary for the council to carry out noise monitoring an hourly fee will be applied. Noise level, controls and management



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plan will be agreed with the Events Team and the event organiser will be instructed to provide advance notification to residents, ward councillors and businesses as appropriate. A copy of the report demonstrating the levels measured during the event shall be provided to the Council within 5 working days of the event finishing.

### **Cancellations**

If the hirer cancels the booking less than 28 days before the date of hire there will be no refund.

If payment has not been received when stated on the approval letter prior to the event taking place the council can cancel the event.

Watford BC reserves the right to cancel events by refusing the use of land should the terms and conditions of hire, legal requirements or financial obligations not be met and inclement weather or other circumstances seen or unforeseen circumstances.



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