

Events policy for the borough's parks, commons, open spaces and towpaths (adopted 13 January 2026)

Policy heading	Final version for adoption (January 2026)
Event size	<p>Events size is defined by the anticipated maximum overall daily attendance or the maximum anticipated peak capacity for events in parks, commons, or open spaces. Overall daily attendance is the anticipated total attendance throughout the day. Maximum peak capacity is the maximum number expected at any one time.</p> <p>Event size is defined by the maximum number of participants for towpath events. This recognises that towpath events are linear in nature rather than occupying a specific event area in a park. Their impact is better assessed by considering participant numbers.</p> <p>Events are grouped into four categories, depending on their size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small event - up to 499 • Medium event - 500 to 4,999 • Large event - 5,000 to 9,999 • Major event - more than 10,000 <p>The final decision on the category of an event will rest with the council.</p> <p>At discretion of the council some events may be treated (i.e. in terms of the application process and approvals etc) as a falling into a higher category, i.e. if the event is deemed to have a more significant impact for its capacity.</p> <p>If the size of an event is anticipated to be very close to the limit of the category, the council reserves the right to choose which category the event lies in.</p> <p>Where the organiser is seeking a premises license for an event the final capacity will be set as part of the premises licensing process.</p> <p>Events shall not exceed the maximum attendance size approved under the application process and event organisers shall be required to produce control measures for approval, to ensure this.</p>
Event frequency	<p>Recognising that there needs to be a balance between the hosting of events and other uses of parks, commons and open spaces, the following restrictions on event frequencies shall apply for large and major events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will not be any large or major event days at any site on the same park, common or open space on consecutive weekends unless this can demonstrably reduce the duration of event infrastructure being on site compared to non-consecutive event weekends, or where this can provide increased social impact benefits; • There will not be more than 4 major event days on the same park, common or open space in any six-month period; and • There will not be more than 6 large event days on the same park, common or open space in any 6-month period. <p>Event organisers will be required to demonstrate that they have minimised the number of build and removal days.</p> <p>Sport and physical activity events shall not be considered event days within the limits set above, recognising that while they may have high number of participants, their impact is significantly lower than other events such as concerts or festivals.</p>
Weekend events	<p>Events on weekends shall generally be limited to those that are open to the general public through open access, ticketing or open applications for participation, subject to the exception below. Examples of events that are not open to the public may include weddings or other events which are by invitation only.</p> <p>Weekend events which are not open to the general public shall only be permitted in areas of open spaces which are not normally open to the general public, subject to there being minimal disruption of the primary purpose of the site.</p> <p>No restrictions on events that are by invitation only shall apply to York House Gardens and Orleans House Gardens as both locations are established function venues, including for weddings and civil partnerships.</p>
Noise control	<p>Events that involve significant noise generating sources (such as music or other amplified sound) must provide sufficient and suitable noise management plans that address the licensing objectives of the Licensing Act 2003 and must follow best practice for event noise management, including, but not limited to, the Noise Council Code of Practice 1995. Noise limits for events including licensable activities will be set through the licensing process, including the relevant stakeholder consultation.</p>

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	Other events should minimise any noise impact on other users within the park or outside the open space boundary.
Event finish times	A curfew of 10pm shall be imposed on all events unless otherwise agreed through a premises licence or temporary event notice. The curfew is the event end time with egress and infrastructure removal permitted after the event end time. In exceptional circumstances later finish times may be agreed by officers under delegated authority in consultation with the relevant Committee chair (such as New Year's Eve or all-night running events). The event start and finish time for all events requiring licensing permissions shall be determined through the licensing process. The curfew of 10pm shall not apply to established regular events that have operated a later finish time prior to the adoption of this policy. Such events shall continue to benefit from the later finish time.
Premises licences, temporary event notices (TENs) and other statutory permissions	<p>Permission to use a space for an event granted under this policy is subsidiary to any statutory requirements for the use of the space as an events venue.</p> <p>A Premises Licence or Temporary Event Notice (TEN) will be required for events that include licensable activities such as regulated entertainment or the sale of alcohol. While small events may be covered by a TEN, larger events must apply for a Premises Licence. The issue of a TEN or premises license does not itself constitute permission to use the land.</p> <p>Event organisers must also ensure that they have planning or other statutory permissions for the use of the space.</p>
Ecology and biodiversity	<p>Biodiversity is very important. By giving due prominence to this important part of our environment, it is intended to safeguard the ecological future of wildlife within the borough. Event organisers must make every effort to minimise the impact of events on the biodiversity within the borough's parks and open spaces.</p> <p>The protection of the Council's owned and managed land is a priority for all event organisers. This also includes the protection of wildlife, flora & fauna and trees, maintaining biodiversity and protecting the natural habitats of the park's wildlife. If it is believed that an event will be detrimental to the local ecosystem, then this will be considered as grounds to deny an application.</p> <p>Events shall not take place in, or immediately adjacent to, any area of specific ecological importance within a park, open space or common. Site plans will be reviewed by council's ecology and biodiversity team. The minimum distance to such areas will be agreed between the event applicant and the council's ecology and biodiversity team.</p>
Grass areas	<p>Events on grassed areas are generally permitted, subject to the requirements set out below. The use of grassed areas between 30 September and 1 April shall be carefully assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering the playing season for different outdoor sports and the expected time it may take to carry out any remedial action after an event. Decisions to permit events on grassed areas between 30 September and 1 April would be under delegated authority to officers in consultation with the relevant Committee chair.</p> <p>Event organisers must make provisions to protect grass and footpaths from damage. Vehicles are not allowed on site without the consent of the Events Representative. If inclement weather is forecast vehicles may be prohibited from driving on grassed areas, alternatively provisions such as track way, or similar ground covering, may be required in agreed areas.</p>
Trees	Careful planning must be undertaken to avoid damage to trees and their roots through the compaction of soil or direct damage to roots themselves. In some cases, a member of the council's arboricultural team will be consulted to establish measures that are needed to ensure the healthy retention of trees and their roots. Once a procedure has been agreed with the council officers, any deviations from this that cause damage will be rectified at the expense of the event organiser.
Sustainability	<p>All event organisers will be required to make their events as sustainable as possible, including waste reduction and recycling, promoting sustainable practices with suppliers, reducing air pollution, reducing carbon emissions, promoting active travel and the use of public transport.</p> <p>The council's terms and condition will set specific requirements that will be reviewed at least every two years to ensure requirements reflect best practice in sustainable event management.</p>
Changes to this policy	<p>Material changes to this policy shall only be possible if they are approved by the appropriate committee following public consultation. Non-material changes to this policy are delegated to officers in consultation with the relevant committee chair.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, non-material amendments include those that involve updating references to relevant legislation or new and emerging best practice. Material amendments are those that would fundamentally alter the limits or parameters set by this policy.</p>
Stakeholder consultation, engagement and communication	See below
Stakeholder consultation, engagement and communication – small events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event proposal is shared with lead members and ward councillors for initial comments • Community stakeholders are encouraged to participate in formal licensing consultations (if a licence is required) • Updated Events Diaries distributed to Management Advisory Committees (MACs) / Friends groups

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Stakeholder consultation, engagement and communication – medium events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event proposal is shared with lead members and ward councillors for initial comments • Community stakeholders are encouraged to participate in formal licensing consultations (if a licence is required) • Updated Events Diaries distributed to Management Advisory Committees (MACs) / Friends groups • Notices are placed in the park and online to ensure park users are aware of upcoming events, expected impacts, and how these are mitigated
Stakeholder consultation, engagement and communication – large events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event proposal is shared with lead members and ward councillors for initial comments • Community stakeholders are encouraged to participate in formal licensing consultations (if a licence is required). • Relevant ward councillors, committee chair and spokesperson, MACs / Friends groups are consulted on the event impact mitigation measures in place • Notices are placed in the park and online to ensure park users are aware of upcoming events, expected impacts, and how these are mitigated • Relevant ward councillors, committee chair and spokesperson, MACs / Friends groups alongside residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site are invited to provide post-event feedback to inform future event management.
Stakeholder consultation, engagement and communication – major events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event proposal is shared with lead members and ward councillors for initial comments • Community stakeholders are encouraged to participate in formal licensing consultations (if a licence is required) • Relevant ward councillors, committee chair and spokesperson, MACs / Friends groups are consulted on the event impact mitigation measures in place • Notices are placed in the park and online to ensure park users are of upcoming events, expected impacts, and how these are mitigated • Relevant ward councillors, committee chair and spokesperson, MACs / Friends groups alongside residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site are invited to provide post-event feedback to inform future event management. • Event organisers provide channels for on the day questions and comments.
Social value	Commercial event organisers are required to deliver social value in line with the Richmond Social Value Toolkit (or any successor social value policy applicable at the time).
Inclusive ticket offer	Organisers of ticketed events are required to provide an inclusive ticket offer for Richmond residents, in line with eligibility criteria for the Fairer Access scheme or any similar successor scheme..
Scope of the policy	<p>This policy is the council’s decision-making framework for determining applications for the booking of a park, common, open space or towpath as an events venue.</p> <p>The policy applies to all council parks, commons, and open spaces and towpaths managed by or on behalf of Richmond Council. The policy does not apply to street parties and other events on the public highway or on other council managed land, for which there are separate booking arrangements or licensing processes in place.</p> <p>Any organisation or individual looking to make an event booking be it for commercial, charitable or community use, must adhere to the requirements of this policy. The policy covers the obligations, responsibilities, and limitations which all event organisers have.</p> <p>The policy must be read in, and operates, in conjunction with relevant legislation, including but not limited to legislation relating to planning, licensing, open space, environmental, health and safety. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as superseding applicable legislation or other legal restrictions on the use of sites for events.</p>
Definition of an event	<p>An event is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an organised activity where there are 50 or more people, and/or • where infrastructure is taken on site (except a single small gazebo and associated furniture to provide shade and shelter), and/or • where licensable activities are planned (sale of alcohol or provision of entertainment). <p>The following activities shall not be regarded as events for the purpose of this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group or organised sport or physical activities involving less than 50 participants at any one time, for which there are separate booking or licensing processes in place • Sports pitch bookings for training or matches, or sports days for which there are separate booking arrangements in place. <p>If the event has fewer than 50 people attending and no infrastructure beyond what is set out above is taken on site, no formal application is required.</p>