

Wells City Council
Events on Public Land Process and Policy Document



AGENDA ITEM 7

**Wells City
Council**

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Events on council land

This paper presents a draft Events on Council Land Policy for the Committee’s consideration and adoption. The policy provides a consistent framework for assessing, approving, and managing events held across Wells City Council–owned open spaces, including (but not limited to) Wells Recreation Ground, Tor Furlong, Hawkers Road and Bignal Rand parks. It sets out clear responsibilities for event organisers, operational requirements, and procedures for safeguarding council assets and ensuring public safety.

As part of adopting this policy, Members are asked to consider the introduction of a formalised pricing structure to support the sustainable management of council land while ensuring accessibility for Wells-based charitable and community groups.

The proposed structure aims to:

- Support Wells charities and community groups by offering free use of council land, with only direct utility costs (e.g., electricity or water) chargeable.**
- Apply a clear, modest fee for non-Wells not-for-profit groups, ensuring fairness and cost recovery.**

- Provide a scalable pricing model for outdoor fitness and wellbeing groups, based on group size.
- Maintain flexibility by leaving commercial event fees to be negotiated, dependent on scale, footprint, duration, and likely impact.
- Require all commercial events to be considered individually for approval and fee agreement to ensure the best possible commercial return to Wells City Council

Example Pricing Structure for Consideration

Category	Day Rate	Hourly Rate / Notes
Wells Community Organisations (Not-for-Profit)	Free*	Free*
Wells Charitable Organisations (Not-for-Profit)	Free*	Free*
<i>*A charge may be made for any electricity or water used during the event.</i>		
Non-Wells Community Organisations (Not-for-Profit)	£250	£35
Non-Wells Charitable Organisations (Not-for-Profit)	£250	£35
Outdoor Fitness / Wellbeing Groups		
– 1–10 people	£250	£8
– 10–30 people	£250	£10
– 30+ people	£250	£12
Commercial Events	Price on application	

Cancellation Policy

- Six weeks prior to event: 10% of total fee
- Five weeks prior to event: 20% of total fee
- Less than five weeks: 50% of total fee

- **Less than two weeks: 100% of total fee**

If adopted, this pricing structure will provide a transparent, equitable approach that supports local organisations while ensuring that commercial operators make a fair contribution towards the maintenance and management of the city's open spaces.

The Committee is therefore invited to review the attached policy and the proposed pricing structure, and to provide direction on its adoption and implementation.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Wells Recreation Ground, Tor Furlong Park, Hawkers Lane Park and Bignall Rand Park are community public spaces for the use and enjoyment of all residents of Wells. The rules in place allow all users to co-exist side by side, enabling everyone to enjoy the spaces without overly interfering with the rights of others.

1.2 There are also activities curtailed by law; the breaking of these rules constitutes a criminal offence.

1.3 This document provides guidance on the use of City Council open spaces and the legal framework within which they are operated.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 The Town Council's open spaces are regulated, like any other public place, by byelaws specific to particular locations. These byelaws are available for inspection on the Town Council website and at the Town Council offices.

2.2 Breaching these byelaws is an offence which, upon conviction in a magistrates' court, may lead to a maximum penalty of a £500 fine and a criminal record.

3. Licensing

3.1 None of the City Council's parks are licensed for regulated entertainment under the Licensing Act 2003. Hirers must apply separately to Somerset Council for any required entertainment licences.

3.2 Any event that expects more than 500 attendees (staff and visitors) must follow Somerset Council's temporary events notice application process. All details can be found at

4. Event Approval (Events Over 500 People)

4.1 Any event expecting **more than 500 attendees** (including staff, volunteers, performers, exhibitors and members of the public) must be formally submitted to Wells City Council for approval.

4.2 Applications for larger events must be considered by the Town Clerk, and approval must be granted before any promotion, ticket sales, contractor engagement or on-site preparation takes place.

4.3 Event organisers must submit the following documentation **no fewer than 30 days** before the scheduled committee meeting:

- Completed Event Application Form
- Full Site Layout Plan
- Comprehensive Risk Assessment(s)
- Public Liability Insurance documentation
- Traffic/transport management plan (if required)
- Noise management plan (if applicable)
- Emergency and contingency plan
- Details of fairground rides, inflatables or specialist attractions
- Safeguarding procedures if children's activities are involved

4.4 The Council reserves the right to request additional information before an event is considered for approval.

4.5 No final commitment, booking, marketing activity, or commercial arrangement may be made until formal approval has been granted.

4.6 Wells City Council reserves absolute discretion to:

- Approve the event
- Approve subject to conditions
- Defer a decision pending further information
- Decline the event

4.7 Written confirmation of approval will be provided following a review by the Town Clerk and the management team.

5. Conditions of Use – Events on Public Land

5.1 The Council's decisions regarding use of the land, any resulting damage, and any costs incurred as a result of such use shall be final and binding on both the Council and the hirer.

5.2 The hirer shall fully indemnify the Council against all claims of any kind arising from the hirer's use of the land.

5.3 The hirer must observe all relevant laws, regulations, statutes and licences relating to the land and the staging of the event. This includes (but is not limited to) the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, the Highways Act 1980, and the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Failure to comply may lead to criminal prosecution.

5.4 The hirer must ensure that no nuisance, annoyance, or inconvenience is caused to the Council, neighbouring residents, or adjoining properties.
Commercial lettings must end no later than:

- **10:00 pm** Sunday to Friday
- **11:00 pm** on Saturdays

5.5 Access to the land for the general public must not be restricted without written consent from the Council. This does not prevent the hirer from selling tickets or programmes for the event.

5.6 The hirer must not charge the general public for access to the land unless permitted in writing by the Council.

5.7 The hirer is responsible for providing adequate toilet facilities and liaising with Bristol Water (potable) or Wessex Water (sewerage) where necessary.

5.8 The hirer must pay any expenses incurred by the Council in preparing the land for use, including erection of barriers and fences.
Equipment must not be taken onto the land when ground conditions could cause damage or inconvenience to the public.

5.9 Equipment must not be brought onto the land earlier than the permitted hire period without written permission.

5.10 All equipment must be removed by the end of the hire period. The Council may charge for any additional days of occupation and for restoring the land to its original condition.

5.11 No vehicles other than event equipment may enter or remain on the land without prior written approval.

5.12 The hirer is responsible for restoring the land to its original condition and clearing litter/debris by noon the day after the event. Costs from failure to comply will be enforced against the hirer.

5.13 The Council reserves the right to withdraw permission to use the land if adverse weather renders it unsuitable. An alternative date or refund will be offered, but the Council will not be liable for additional costs or losses.

4.14 No less than 16 days before the hire period, the hirer must provide:

- A full site plan
- Public liability insurance documents
- Test certificates (e.g. ADIPS) for rides and equipment

5.15 The Council may require alterations or removal of equipment.

4.16 The hirer must hold public liability insurance with a minimum indemnity limit of **£10 million** per incident. The policy must note the Council's interest and indemnify the Council.

5.17 Evidence of insurance must be provided at least 16 days before the hire period. All on-site facilities must be covered.

5.18 The Town Clerk or delegated officer must be permitted access at any time for inspection. Their decisions regarding safety and fitness for use are final. Additional visits may incur costs payable by the hirer.

5.19 The Council may refuse permission for fairs and circuses unless valid certificates of fitness for every ride are provided, covering the full hire period and submitted at least 16 days beforehand.

5.20 Precautions must be taken to prevent oil or similar discharge damaging the land. Sawdust or similar protective materials must be used where necessary.

5.21 Hirers must ensure fairground machine operators have adequate public liability insurance.

5.22 Notification of intention to employ fairground contractors or funfair equipment must be made at least 14 days prior. Permission is at the Council's absolute discretion.

5.23 Pyrotechnics, including fireworks and stunt performances, are not permitted without prior written approval.

Approval requires submission of a detailed risk assessment **at least 6 weeks** before the event.

6. Event Participation List and Check-Sheet

This section should be completed by the event organiser and submitted to Wells City Council as part of the event application process.

6.1 Mandatory Information Required

- Name of Event
- Date(s) of Event
- Event Organiser / Organisation
- Contact Name and Details
- Description of Activities
- Anticipated Attendance Numbers
- Details of Contractors, Stallholders, Performers or Exhibitors

- Emergency Contact Information for Event Day
- Copy of Risk Assessment(s)
- Copy of Public Liability Insurance for All Participants (where applicable)

6.2 Site Safety Check-Sheet (example items)

- ☐ Ground conditions suitable
- ☐ Equipment positioned as per approved site plan
- ☐ Electrical equipment and cables safe and protected
- ☐ Fire extinguishers in place
- ☐ Adequate lighting
- ☐ First aid provision on site
- ☐ Emergency access routes clear
- ☐ Toilets installed and serviceable
- ☐ Waste and recycling facilities provided
- ☐ Signage installed (directional, safety, information)
- ☐ Public access routes safe and unobstructed
- ☐ Weather conditions assessed prior to opening

7. Site Layout Plan

7.1 A detailed **Site Layout Plan** must be provided for all events, submitted no less than 16 days before the hire period. The plan should show:

- All structures, marquees, gazebos and staging
- Rides, attractions or fairground equipment
- Vehicle access/egress points
- Emergency access routes
- Generators and electrical distribution
- First aid point(s)
- Lost children point (if applicable)
- Fire points
- Toilets and welfare facilities
- Waste management points
- Perimeter fencing or barriers

- Public entrances/exits
- Contractor/exhibitor areas

7.2 Any amendments to the site plan after submission must be approved by Wells City Council before the event proceeds.

8. Risk Assessment Template

Event organisers must provide a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. The following template may be used:

8.1 Risk Assessment Template Structure

Event Name:

Location:

Date:

Assessor:

Hazard	People at Risk	Controls Already in Place	Risk Level (L/M/H)	Additional Controls Required	Responsible Person
Fire	Staff/Public/Contractors	All venues have been assessed and extinguisher provision has been decided on numbers and ignition sources	m		Event Organiser

8.2 Minimum Risk Areas to Consider

- Weather conditions
- Slips, trips and falls
- Manual handling
- Public crowd management
- Temporary structures (marquees, gazebos, stages)
- Electrical equipment
- Fire risk
- Vehicle movement onsite
- Noise
- Working at height
- Children and vulnerable persons

- Hazardous substances (fuel, chemicals, pyrotechnics — if permitted)
- Water safety (where applicable)

8.3 Submission Requirements

Risk assessments must be submitted to Wells City Council at least **16 days prior** to the hire period.

9. Public Liability Insurance Criteria

9.1 All event organisers must obtain **Public Liability Insurance** with a minimum indemnity level of **£10 million** per incident.

9.2 The insurance policy must:

- Note Wells City Council's interest
- Indemnify the Council against claims for personal injury or property damage
- Cover all activities taking place during the event
- Cover all contractors, performers, exhibitor stands and rides (the organiser is responsible for collecting copies)

9.3 Insurance documents must be submitted no later than **16 days** before the hire period.

9.4 Certificates of fitness for rides (e.g. **ADIPS**) must be valid for the entire event period and submitted with insurance documentation.

10. Schedule of Charges

10.1 Charges for use of Wells City Council land for events are set annually by the Council.

10.2 Fees may include:

- Hire fee for use of land
- Additional charges for commercial events
- Charges for Council staff attendance or inspections
- Charges for additional visits by Council officers
- Charges for waste removal
- Charges for reinstatement of land if damaged
- Charges for extended hire beyond agreed periods

10.3 A full schedule of charges is available upon request or on the Wells City Council website.

11. Help, Guidance and Further Information

11.1 For help with event planning, risk assessment advice, or to submit documentation, please contact:

Wells City Council

Town Hall

Wells, Somerset

[01749 673091](tel:01749673091)

reception@wells.gov.uk

<https://www.wells.gov.uk/>

11.2 Additional guidance is available from:

- Somerset Council (Licensing, Highways, SAG)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – Event Safety Guidance
- Met Office – Weather Planning
- Emergency services – advice for public events

11.3 Early engagement with the Council is strongly recommended for all medium or large-scale events.