

Public Realm Usage Policy



Approved by Council at the meeting on 22 October 2015

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. As owners and managers of a number of public spaces in Woking Town Centre, it is important to Woking Borough Council (WBC) that any activities taking place in these spaces enhance the image of Woking Town Centre as a quality destination in which to spend time, and do not compromise the safety or well-being of other users.
- 1.2. Jubilee Square is the focal point of activity in Woking Town Centre, but other open spaces that have considerable footfall and are covered by this policy include:
 - § Albion Square
 - § Commercial Way, including Sparrow Park
 - § Crown Square
 - § Gloucester Walk
 - § Market Walk
 - § Mercia Walk
 - § Old Bandstand.

In these places, people can participate in a variety of activities, including being entertained, browsing stalls, learning something new, and simply enjoying the open air.

2. Policy objectives

- § To promote and develop the image of Woking Town Centre as a quality destination in which to spend time.
- § To effectively manage the number of external activities taking place, in order to safeguard users and their enjoyment of the public space.
- § To ensure clear pedestrian routes and access for emergency vehicles are maintained.
- § To facilitate and encourage appropriate events and entertainment to take place.
- § To manage and maintain the public realm under the direction of the Council.
- § To enable local community groups, charities and similar not for profit organisations to use the public realm to promote their causes and activities free of charge.

3. Management Arrangements

- 3.1. Woking Shopping already manages bookings and events taking place within the Peacocks Centre (including Market Walk) and Wolsey Place (including Mercia Walk) and has an informal arrangement with the Council to 'supervise' events and activities taking place in public areas adjacent to the shopping centres, particularly at weekends, when Council staff are not in attendance.
- 3.2. In order to maintain a cohesive and coordinated approach to events and activities taking place in the town centre generally, Woking Shopping will be responsible for

booking and managing events and activities in those 'public realm' areas adjacent to the shopping centres as well as within the centres, within the context and principles of this Policy. (See Event Zones on page 6.)

- 3.3. The point above will ensure that events and activities are co-ordinated and controlled to ensure shoppers, visitors and others using the town centre have a positive experience, disruption and conflict is minimised and, where appropriate, a cohesive charging regime can be applied.
- 3.4. The Council will continue to have preference for its own events/activities or those that it specifically promotes or supports. These will be notified to Woking Shopping annually, or giving as much advance notice as possible, and due consideration will be given to any pre-existing bookings.
- 3.5. A central booking diary will be maintained by Woking Shopping and made available to WBC, so that any specific arrangements can be made, e.g. non-routine cleaning.

4. Booking terms

- 4.1. All bookings must be made through Woking Shopping or Woking Borough Council, as designated by the Event Zones on page 6. Market researchers using the area of Mercia Walk directly outside Christ Church Woking will book directly with the Church¹.
- 4.2. Bookings are made on a first-come, first-served basis.
- 4.3. The documentation required 14 days in advance of any booking is as follows:
 - § Written evidence of Public Liability Insurance cover for £5m minimum.
 - § Written method statement with a photo/sketch of proposed event (if applicable).
 - § Sample of any promotional literature (if applicable).
 - § Written risk assessment (if applicable). Depending on the nature of your event, Woking Shopping may also request to see a copy of your fire risk assessment.
 - § Evidence of any other licence required for the proposed activity.
- 4.4. Vehicular access is not permitted, unless express permission is granted for specific activities at permitted sites (fully comprehensive insurance is required for any vehicle involved in the event, for which the maximum gross vehicle weight is 3.5 tonnes).
- 4.5. Market stallholders must have the permission of Quarterbridge (Woking Borough Council's appointed market management company) to trade.
- 4.6. A maximum of one information distributor and/or coin collection may be made at any one time.
- 4.7. If any space is booked for a large scale promotion, sole use will be given to that organisation.
- 4.8. Woking Shopping will decide which organisations and activities are appropriate for each of the public spaces.

¹ See Contact Details on page 11.

- 4.9. Woking Shopping reserves the right to:
- § refuse any application where the public space is required for other purposes
 - § refuse entry to any organisation, relocate activities within the town centre or cancel any booking as it deems appropriate
 - § charge a fee to 'commercial' organisations as it deems appropriate
 - § propose amendments to this policy to the Council, as it deems appropriate.
- § Woking Shopping will not be liable for any loss or damage to equipment or goods belonging to or under the control or custody of booked users of public spaces.

5. Code of conduct

- 5.1. Activities should normally only take place between 10am and 6pm, with any entertainment performances lasting no longer than two hours, with no return within two hours unless special permission has been granted.
- 5.2. Any activity must cease if a request to do so is given by representatives of Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Woking Borough Council, or Woking Shopping.
- 5.3. Amplifiers may only be used at reasonable levels and not cause disruption to the activities of neighbouring organisations and businesses. Amplifiers powered by a generator are only permitted with the express permission of Woking Shopping, and in exceptional circumstances only.
- 5.4. Users of electrical equipment must supply evidence of PAT testing for all appliances.
- 5.5. Official ID must be worn or displayed at all times by users representing an organisation.
- 5.6. Users must position themselves and/or their stall so as not to obstruct any access/egress point to shops and other premises. Where practical, this should be at least three metres away.
- 5.7. The size and scale of activity for each proposed booking will be considered on its individual merits.
- 5.8. No user should cause obstruction of the highway, footpath, or physical or visual access/egress point to shops and other premises.
- 5.9. No user should perform in a manner that may be considered dangerous to themselves or members of the public, or speak or dress in a manner which is likely to cause alarm, distress or offence.
- 5.10. No user should cause members of the public to feel pressurised or harassed by their actions or words, nor utilise manipulative techniques in order to engage with the public.
- 5.11. Consideration must be given to the town centre's off-peak cycling prohibition, which affects a number of areas at certain times of the day.
- 5.12. Additional guidance follows for users undertaking specific types of activity, for which public spaces have been designated.

6. Event zones

Location	Managed by:	Charity coin collection	Consultation	Council-led events	Cultural Events	Direct Debit Collectors	Leafleting	Political, religious and lobby groups, and Parades	Roadshows (inc. vehicles)	Specialist markets	Street entertainment*
Albion Square	WBC	Permit required	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Commercial Way	WS	Permit required	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y
Crown Square	WBC	Permit required	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			Y
Gloucester Walk	WS	Permit required	Y	Y	Y			Y			Y
Jubilee Square	WS	Permit required	By special permission only	Y	By special permission only			Y			By special permission only
Mercia Walk	WS	Permit required	Y	Y	Y			Y		Y	Y
Market Walk	QB	Permit required		Y	Y			Y		Y	Y
Old Bandstand	WS	Permit required	Y	Y	Y			Y			Y
Sparrow Park	WS	Permit required	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		Y

Key
WBC: Woking Borough Council
WS: Woking Shopping
QB: Quarterbridge

Notes:

*Please refer to Woking Borough Council's Street Entertainment Guidelines for Woking Town Centre for full details of terms and conditions for street entertainers, including buskers.

Please see appendix for links to other guidelines referred to within this policy.

Promotional activity by commercial organisations can take place in any of the event zones listed if permission is granted by Woking Shopping or the Council, as appropriate, subject to the nature of the promotion/product and due consideration being given to adjacent businesses.

7. Jubilee Square

- 7.1. The use of Jubilee Square will be restricted to events and promotions managed by Woking Borough Council or partners authorised by it, unless special permission has been granted by the Council (such as for charity coin collections, or cultural events/entertainment). This will be done in liaison with and booked through Woking Shopping who will manage and supervise operational issues as appropriate. Only one booking may take place in the Square at a time.
- 7.2. Permitted annual public events organised by community groups may include, but are not restricted to, the following (with indicative dates):

§	Chinese New Year Celebrations	February/January
§	Shopmobility Pancake Race	Shrove Tuesday
§	Erection of wooden cross	Holy Week
§	Act of Witness	Good Friday
§	Easter Sunday Parade/Service	Easter Sunday
§	St George's Day Parade	April
§	Veterans' Day Parade	June
§	Woking Food and Drink Festival	September
§	Divali lantern parade	November
§	Remembrance Day	11 November
§	Remembrance Sunday Service	November
§	Christmas Tree installation/ Lights Switch on	November

8. Charity coin collections and other fundraising

- 8.1. Designated spaces: Gloucester Walk, Town Gate, Market Walk (each end), Mercia Walk (each end), Wolsey Place (each end), Commercial Way (at junctions with Church Path and Chapel Street).
- § Collections are only permitted on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays².
 - § A licence must be obtained in advance from Woking Borough Council for coin collections and/or a lottery (please allow ten working days for licence application processing).

² With the exception of the Poppy Appeal and Normandy Veterans, which are welcome for the length of their annual campaign.

- § Only one charity may conduct a collection at a time.
- § A maximum of four collectors per organisation may operate in the designated town centre spaces per day, at any or each of the spaces listed above.

9. Commercial promotions and selling (including market traders)

- 9.1. Market traders can apply to join the artisan market, regular farmers' market, and periodic specialist markets, at the discretion of the Council's market operator, Quarterbridge.
- 9.2. All traders within Woking's market are subject to conformance with the current regulations for their area of trade and current charges.
- 9.3. Promotional activities will be permitted on an occasional basis, up to six times per year per organisation.
- 9.4. Consideration must be given to businesses adjacent to the event location, to avoid conflict of interest (e.g. one restaurant cannot promote itself directly outside another).
- 9.5. Organisations involved with giving away or selling food must be registered as a food business with Woking Borough Council's Environmental Health Team, and operating to an acceptable standard.
- 9.6. Charges will be made for commercial organisations based on Woking Shopping's scale of charges. These rates will be subject to negotiation depending on individual circumstances, competition for spaces, time of year and the likely footfall in the area. Generally speaking, more attractive rates will be offered to smaller local commercial organisations than to those larger national/international ones. Commercial activity, rates charged and income generated will be subject to regular review between the Council and Woking Shopping.
- 9.7. A guide schedule of charges will be maintained by Woking Shopping but, as they will be subject to change, individual circumstances and market conditions, it is not included in the Policy.
- 9.8. The charging policy will generally apply to national charities that employ agencies or paid volunteers to collect donations, including through direct debits.
- 9.9. Income generated through use of public realm managed by Woking Shopping will be retained by Woking Shopping. The Council will benefit indirectly through rent and other income.
- 9.10. Use of public realm by local community groups, charities and other similar not-for-profit making organisations will continue to be free of charge, as will those events organised or supported by the Council.
- 9.11. Street vendors wishing to sell their products within Woking Town Centre will need to hold a license for their activity, and also to apply for consent from Woking Borough Council – both the license and the Council's written consent will need to be carried at all times when selling products.

Direct debit canvassers

9.12. Designated spaces: Albion Square

9.13. Canvassers must be member charities of the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA), of which written evidence is required 14 days in advance of any confirmed booking.

9.14. A maximum of 12 bookings are permitted per year per organisation, once a month only, between Monday and Thursday. Only one booking may be made at a time.

9.15. A bib or jacket clearly displaying the name of the charity must be worn at all times.

9.16. A sign clearly stating the costs involved in supporting the charity by direct debit must be displayed at all times.

9.17. A maximum of two canvassers are permitted at any time.

9.18. Canvassers should be positioned in such a way as to offer an adequate comfort zone to those users of the town centre who choose not to engage with them.

10. Leafleting

10.1. Designated spaces: All except Jubilee Square and Gloucester Walk

§ A maximum of 12 bookings are permitted per year, per organisation, once a month only, between Monday and Thursday. Only one booking may be made at a time.

11. Market research

11.1. There is a presumption against market research being undertaken. However, Woking Borough Council reserves the right to permit it either in exceptional circumstances or for its own purposes when appropriate.

12. Political, religious and lobby groups, and parades

12.1. Woking Borough Council encourages the use of the public realm by groups which support the diversity of the Borough, but retains the right to refuse permission to organisations whose views or activities would lead to potential public order issues or widespread offence.

13. Street-scene advertising

- 13.1. Please see Woking Borough Council's 'Practical Guide to A-Boards', which applies to the public realm in Woking Town Centre (see appendix on page 12).
- 13.2. Phone booths – any change or modification to advertising panels in the public realm needs to complement the current/planned street-scene and have the approval of Woking Borough Council's Neighbourhood Services Manager.
- 13.3. The use of Woking Borough Council's Borough boards and drive-bys is restricted to community and other not-for-profit groups. Priority is given to arts and cultural organisations within Woking. The Ambassadors Theatre Group (ATG) has exclusive rights to all outbound board drive-by signs (e.g. Chertsey Road).

14. Traffic management and vehicular access

- 14.1. Vehicles will only be given permission to enter a public space in exceptional circumstances.
- 14.2. Any organisation given special permission to bring a vehicle into an event zone in the public realm must provide written evidence of fully comprehensive insurance for any vehicle involved in their event, and sign an agreement to compensate Woking Borough Council for any damage caused either voluntarily or involuntarily to the fabric of the road surface and/or built structures in or adjacent to their event site.
- 14.3. Please note that the only locations in which 'promotional' vehicles are allowed to park, as part of an event, are Albion Square and at either end of Commercial Way, unless special permission has been granted by Woking Borough Council.
- 14.4. Vehicular access to unload goods is also permitted in Commercial Way, subject to advance permission being sought from Woking Borough Council. Please note that there is controlled access only between Chapel Street and Cawsey Way.
- 14.5. Vehicles needing to access Christ Church to provide wedding or funeral services will continue to be able to do so via Town Gate, subject to the terms given above.

15. Contact details

General booking enquiries

Hire of space within the town centre, including Market Walk and Mercia Walk, Jubilee Square, Gloucester Square, Commercial Way, Old Bandstand, and within the shopping centres, should be made directly to Woking Shopping:

Woking Shopping
Centre Management Suite
Peacocks Centre
Woking
Surrey GU21 6GH

01483 741000
info@woking-shopping.co.uk

Market researchers

Please contact Christchurch Woking to book space on/within their premises:

01483 740897
admin@christchurchwoking.org

Market traders / food vendors

To apply to join the weekly or farmers' markets in Woking, please contact Quarterbridge:

01206 761000
www.quarterbridge.co.uk

New traders can also contact Woking Borough Council's Environmental Health Team for advice.

01483 743840
envhealth@woking.gov.uk

Street Traders

For more details on how to apply for consent to trade within Woking Borough, please see the Council's Street Trading webpage at www.woking.gov.uk/planning/licensing/trade

01483 743732
licensing@woking.gov.uk

Comments

Urgent concerns during the course of your booking should be raised in person with a member of the Woking Shopping security team (also available out of hours and at weekends).

Alternatively, please report any comments to the Woking Town Centre Neighbourhood Team Leader:

01483 755855
neighbourhoodteam@woking.gov.uk

16. Appendix

Map: Woking Town Centre

(Woking Borough Council, June 2015)

www.woking.gov.uk/towncentremap

Guide: Practical guide to A-boards

(Woking Borough Council, April 2015)

www.woking.gov.uk/guidetoaboard

Policy: Street Entertainment Guidelines for Woking Town Centre

(Woking Borough Council, June 2015)

www.woking.gov.uk/streetentertainment