

	<p>Buckingham Town Council</p> <p>Town Council Land Hire Policy</p>	<p>Date Agreed: 13 Apr 2026 Minute Number: 654.1/25 Prepared by: Estates Manager Version:</p>
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1. Policy Statement

Buckingham Town Council (“the Council”) manages parks, open spaces and amenity land on behalf of the community. The Council supports responsible use of its land where activities:

- Benefit residents and visitors
- Protect public safety
- Safeguard the environment and biodiversity
- Prevent damage to Council assets
- Minimise disturbance to neighbouring properties

This policy sets out the framework under which Council-owned land may be used, hired or licensed, and clarifies when charges will apply.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parks and recreation grounds owned by Buckingham Town Council
- Town Council-managed green spaces
- Temporary use of Council land for events, classes, markets or activities

This policy does not apply to:

- Lace Hill sports pitches (separately licensed)
- Long-term leases
- Allotments
- Buildings or indoor venues (separate hire policies apply)

3. Categories of Use

For charging and assessment purposes, land use is categorised as follows:

3.1 Community and Small-Scale Use (Non-Chargeable)

The following will normally **not be charged**, subject to prior notification and approval:

- Informal community gatherings

- Small regular classes with fewer than 15–20 attendees
- Activities that do not require exclusive use of space
- No commercial sales element

Conditions:

- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) must be provided.
- The activity must **not exclude** general public access.
- The Council reserves the right to review attendance levels.

If attendance regularly exceeds 20 participants, the activity will become chargeable.

3.2 Chargeable Use

Charges will apply where all three conditions apply:

- Events involve **20 or more attendees at any one time**
- The activity is commercial in nature
- The hirer is charging participants

Fees will distinguish between:

- **Charity / Community Benefit Events** (reduced rate)
- **Commercial Events or Lessons** (commercial rate)

Conditions:

- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) must be provided.
- The Council reserves the right to review attendance levels.

The Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges will set out applicable rates.

3.3 One-Off vs Regular Bookings

The Council distinguishes between:

One-Off Events

- Festivals, tournaments, markets, promotional events
- Assessed individually under the Event Classification Framework (Appendix A)

Regular Bookings

- Ongoing weekly or seasonal classes
- Subject to annual or seasonal agreement

- Reviewed periodically to ensure attendance and use remain within agreed thresholds
- Regular hirers must maintain valid Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) at all times.

4. Prohibited and Restricted Uses

4.1 Commercial Lessons in Designated Activity Areas

Commercial coaching or lessons are **not permitted** in:

- Children's play areas
- Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- The Pump Track (when constructed)

These areas are provided for free public recreational use and must remain accessible to all.

4.2 General Restrictions

The Council reserves the right to refuse applications that:

- Cause unreasonable disruption
- Risk environmental damage
- Conflict with the character or intended purpose of the site
- Pose reputational or safety concerns

5. Application Process

5.1 Submission

All requests must be made using the Council's Land Hire Application Form.

Applications must normally be received:

- At least 12 weeks prior to small or medium events
- 6 months for large-scale events

Regular class providers must apply before commencing activity.

5.2 Documentation

Depending on scale and risk, applicants will be required to provide:

- Completed application form
- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million)
- Risk Assessment

- Event Management Plan (where applicable)
- Site Plan
- Traffic Management Plan (if required)
- Relevant licences (e.g. Temporary Event Notice)
- Safeguarding arrangements

The Council reserves the right to request additional documentation.

6. Fees and Deposits

Hire fees are set annually by the Council.

Fees may vary depending on:

- Community/charitable or commercial status
- One-off or regular booking
- Duration and frequency
- Attendance numbers
- Requirement for exclusive use
- Infrastructure and vehicle access

A refundable damage deposit may be required.

The Council reserves the right to recover costs for reinstatement, cleaning or repairs.

7. Conditions of Hire

7.1 Health and Safety

Hirers are responsible for compliance with all relevant legislation. The Council accepts no liability for injury or loss arising from the activity, except where caused by Council negligence.

7.2 Protection of Land

Hirers must:

- Prevent damage to grass, trees and infrastructure
- Use protective matting where necessary
- Remove all litter and equipment
- Leave the site in a clean and safe condition

7.3 Noise and Disturbance

The Council may impose:

- Restrictions on timings

- Limits on amplified sound and lighting
- Curfews

7.4 Vehicles

Vehicle access is by prior agreement only. Vehicles must not access grassed areas without permission.

7.5 Alcohol and Licensable Activities

Appropriate licences must be obtained and evidenced to the Council.

7.6 Biodiversity Protection

Activities must not damage ecologically sensitive areas. The Council may restrict use during certain seasons or weather conditions.

8. Commercial Use

Commercial events and lessons may be permitted where they:

- Are compatible with the character of the site
- Do not unreasonably restrict public access
- Provide identifiable community benefit

Higher fees will apply to commercial activity.

Appendix A – Event Classification Framework

Category	Attendance (at any one time)	Characteristics	Notice Period
Small Event	Up to 300	Limited infrastructure, low risk, no road closures	12 weeks
Medium Event	300–1,000	Amplified sound, temporary structures, possible licensing	12 weeks
Large Event	Over 1,000	Significant infrastructure, traffic management, multi-agency coordination	6 months

Additional Notes:

- Events with 20+ attendees are chargeable.
- Regular hirers exceeding agreed attendance thresholds will be reclassified.

- High-risk elements (fireworks, inflatables, motorised activity) may result in escalation regardless of attendance.
- Annual events require fresh approval each year.

Buckingham Town Council – Land Hire Fee Matrix

Event / Activity Type	Attendance	Frequency	Use Type	Fee / Notes
Small Community Class	Up to 15 - 20	Regular (weekly / seasonal)	Community / Charity	Free (PLI required; no exclusive access)
Small Community Event	20-300	One-off	Community / Charity	Nominal fee: £25 - £50 (covers admin and minimal site wear)
Small Commercial Class / Event	20-300	One-off	Commercial	£50-£150 per session, depending on impact & site
Medium Community Event	301-1,000	One-off	Community / Charity	£100-£250 (depending on infrastructure required)
Medium Commercial Event	301/1000	One-off	Commercial	£250–£600 (plus charges for utilities, infrastructure, or exclusive access)
Large Community Event	1,001+	One-off	Community / Charity	Assessed individually - typically £300-£1,000; deposit required
Large Commercial Event	1,001+	One-off	Commercial	Assessed individually - typically £1,000+; deposit and full risk management required
Regular Commercial Lessons (<15–20 attendees)	<15-20	Weekly / Seasonal	Commercial	Free, PLI required; fees apply if attendance >20 or exclusive access is needed
Regular Commercial Lessons (20+ attendees)	20+	Weekly / Seasonal	Commercial	£50-£100 per session (depending on site and impact)
Prohibited Commercial Lessons	Any	Any	Commercial	Not permitted in Play Areas, MUGAs, or Pump Track

Additional Notes:

1. Deposits:

- a. Small events: £50
- b. Medium events: £150
- c. Large events: £500+ (refundable if no damage or extra costs incurred)

2. Infrastructure & Services Charges:

- a. Use of electricity, water, staging, or fencing may incur additional costs.
- b. Vehicle access beyond agreed areas will be charged separately.

3. Insurance Requirement:

- a. Minimum Public Liability Insurance: £5 million for all bookings.

4. Charity / Community Discount:

- a. Events raising funds for charitable purposes may qualify for reduced rates at the Council's discretion.

5. Booking Classification:

- a. Events exceeding agreed attendance thresholds or adding exclusive access may be reclassified and become chargeable.

6. Application Fees:

- a. Small events: Included in hire fee
- b. Medium/Large events: £25-£50 admin fee (non-refundable)

