

TWBC OPEN SPACES POLICY

Commons Conservators

Draft Policy for discussion purposes - 2nd Draft

Purpose of Commons.

The Commons are maintained and preserved by the Conservators for the enjoyment of townspeople and visitors, and therefore organised events on them are not in principle to be excluded. Most events would take place on the Lower Cricket Ground.

Appropriateness.

Each event must be judged individually on its merits, but the principles that guide the Conservators' decision would be as follows.

Events would normally be considered unsuitable if they:

- need unlimited sound amplification;
- charge an entrance fee;
- require considerable involvement from the Warden or office;
- are disruptive for the local community;
- Create unreasonable noise and disturbance for residents;
- require crowd control;
- may cause considerable damage to the Commons;
- are expected to continue beyond 22.00hrs;
- commercial events;
- have been refused permission by the Trustees of the Manor of Rusthall.

Events would be deemed suitable for further consideration if they are:

- traditional events;
- charitable events;
- children's events;
- sporting events;
- free and with controlled amplification;
- organised by the Friends of the Commons.

Profit.

Whether or not an event makes a profit is not, in itself, a consideration but no event would be allowed where the main motive is profit making. As no entrance fee can be charged, opportunities for profit making would be limited but the question of how profits are to be made (e.g. alcohol and food sales, raffles) must be taken into consideration.

Licensing.

Events which need an entertainment or alcohol licence are not, in principle, unacceptable if they meet the terms of the licence as well as the criteria of the Conservators. The Conservators can begin negotiations and, if appropriate, give agreement in principle, but they reserve the right to require a licence to be obtained before permission is granted. Their final decision would take into account any representations made to the Licensing Committee.

Local Authority Open Spaces Policy.

The Conservators are not bound by the Open Spaces Policy of other bodies, notably Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, although they can take such policies into consideration.

Explain decisions.

Conservators should give reasons for their decisions if they are judged to be contentious or of interest to the public. These will be recorded in the minutes and published on the website. If considered appropriate, the local press should be explicitly informed.