

Street Entertainment Guidelines for Woking Town Centre

Produced in conjunction with Woking Borough Council



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Risk Management Guidelines

1 Objectives

These objectives have been compiled with a view to improve the positive management of performing street entertainment (including buskers) in Woking.

The objectives are as follows:

- 1.1 To encourage street entertainment of a high quality enhancing the vibrancy, vitality and ambience of the town.
- 1.2 To identify locations suitable as busking and performance sites for specific events only.
- 1.3. To provide a framework to ensure street entertainment is fostered in a well managed manner, while maintaining the well being, comfort and safety of the public and performers.

Performers and patrons will enjoy a well-managed performance system in conjunction with a good working relationship with the Woking Council and business people.

Street performers in Woking can be placed into two categories: circle shows and passer-by entertainment.

Explanation of the terms “circle shows”, “passer-by entertainment” and “pitches“ are offered in greater detail in clause 4.

A table has been developed to show minimum requirements in respect to the various performers or performance type and pitches. These tables are attached to this document as Schedule “A”, Minimum Requirements in Respect to Performers and Schedule “B”, Minimum Requirements in Respect to Pitches”.

Performers are required to show proof of minimum £5m public liability insurance, which must be submitted to Woking Shopping at least two weeks before the date of your performance. Those who are unable to furnish this will be required to obtain it. Membership of the Phoenix Cultural Centre at £10 per annum will give a performer coverage under their policy as a member. In addition it gives reduced entry to events and free entry to Open Mic nights.

2 Principals

The Phoenix Cultural Centre recognises that:

- 1.1. Woking has not yet built a tradition of busking and street entertainment so it has a blank canvas to introduce the activities and embed them to reflect the character of the Town.
- 1.2. Busking and street entertainment contribute to a unique Woking identity.
- 1.3. Busking and street entertainment is a valid means for people to make a living.
- 1.4. Busking and street entertainment should not contribute to a lack of public safety or personal safety of performers.
- 1.5. Busking or street entertainment should not unduly disrupt or interfere with pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

3 Guidelines – TCU Policy code of conduct – highlighted green

- 3.1 A person under the age of 14 years should not perform in any part of a performance:
 - a) during school hours,
 - b) between 7.00 pm and 6.00 am, and
 - c) unless accompanied by an adult at all times.
- 1.2. Buskers and street entertainers must use locations specified in their confirmation letter only. They must not unduly interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic, public amenities or cause undue obstruction to traders or delivery vehicles.
- 1.3. Buskers and street entertainers may receive voluntary donations from the audience in all event zones, apart from in Jubilee Square where busking for money is not permitted. A hat or instrument case may be placed for such donations during your performance only. Signs or requests for money constitute begging and are prohibited.
- 1.4. Amplification of sound is not encouraged. If, however, some amplification is necessary because of the nature of the event or instrument/s then the performer should use a battery powered PA system and should be aware of noise sensitive areas/people/times and adjust amplification to suit. Amplifiers powered by a generator are only permitted with the express permission of Woking Shopping, and in exceptional circumstances only. If in the opinion of a Police Officer, Woking Borough Council Environment Health Officer or nominated Council employee/ partner the noise level is too high then the performer is expected to comply with the directions of that officer. Amplification may only be used as set out in Schedule B.

- 1.5. Buskers and street entertainers are permitted to sell CD's only, they may not advertise other goods/ merchandise for sale or associate themselves with such advertising in conjunction with their performance.
- 1.6. Official ID must be worn or displayed at all times by users representing an organization. If using an advertising board/ pull up banner, buskers and street entertainers must comply the 'placement of advertising boards' section of the Town Centre Usage Policy.
- 1.7. Buskers and street entertainers must comply with directions issued by members of the Surrey Police Force and/or authorised officers (Police Officer, Woking Borough Council Officers and/ or Phoenix Cultural Centre staff) of the town of Woking.
- 1.8. Buskers and street entertainers (and all associated) are expected to behave in an ethical and proper manner at all times.
- 1.9. Buskers and street entertainers (and all associated) must comply with the town centre's shared space policy, which allows for zones within the town centre to be used by both pedestrian and cyclists at certain times of the day,
- 1.10. Authorised officers (Police Officer, Woking Borough Council Officers and/ or Phoenix Cultural Centre staff) may ask buskers to cease busking immediately if:
 - 1.10.1. The busker/s are deemed to be causing a nuisance by Woking Borough Council Environmental Health or Neighbourhood Officers.
 - 1.10.2. The busker/s and street entertainer/s does not keep their site safe and clean while working.
 - 1.10.3. The busker/s and street entertainer/s is causing, or is contributing to, undue obstruction to pedestrians or vehicular traffic and entrances to shops or buildings.
 - 1.10.4. The busker/s and street entertainer/s is interfering in any way with an approved entertainment or activity.
 - 1.10.5. The busker/s and street entertainer/s is using dangerous implements or materials as part of a performance and do not have a valid permit issued by Woking Borough Council which can be produced on request.
- 1.11. A busker or street entertainer may be prohibited from performing in the town of Woking by a written direction from Woking Borough Council or an authorised officer of Woking Borough Council.

- 1.12. The Council reserves the right to prohibit busking or street entertainment in a designated area whilst Council or public works are in progress. Every effort will be made to inform buskers/ street entertainers in advance of any disruption that may arise as a result of emergency works.
- 1.13. A busker or street entertainer who is performing visual and/ or pavement art:
- a) must have their activity approved by Woking Borough Council in advance.
 - b) cannot use spray paint unless it has been approved for a specific event by Woking Borough Council
 - c) must return the location, including the pavement surface, to its former condition.
- 1.14. Woking Borough Council strongly recommends that performers obtain their own personal accident insurance.

4. Types of busking

4.1 Circle shows

As the term implies this is when entertainment is offered to the public in a fashion where the audience assembles around the entertainer for the duration of the show.

4.2 Passer-by entertainment

As the term implies this is when entertainment is offered to the public in a fashion where the audience walking by, may stop briefly, and then continue.

5. Pitches

A pitch is described as the area where a performance is held. There are a number of standard pitches in Woking. Listed below are some comments that apply to these pitches.

5.1 Jubilee Square pitch

Jubilee Square will become an integral part of people's cultural experience when visiting Woking for shopping or leisure. Many high calibre performers will wish to perform on the Jubilee Square pitch which will become a destination for visitors and provide an attractive and vibrant backdrop to Woking Town.

The Jubilee Square pitch will be home to some of the best street performers as well as circle shows.

Thousands of locals and visitors to Woking have enjoyed the vibrant street performance culture on such occasions as the annual Food Festival and the layout and acoustics of the Jubilee Square pitch lend itself perfectly to wider entertainment as well as music.

The Jubilee Square pitch is the only place circle show performers have enough room to work safely, other than the paved area previously home to the Town Bandstand which could serve too in this capacity.

The Jubilee Square pitch will be a well organised pitch run in conjunction by experienced, professional performers and Woking Borough Council /Woking Shopping/ The Phoenix Cultural Centre. Performers will be required to demonstrate rapport with audience and provide an engaging and entertaining show incorporating appropriate material with respect for the environment and business holders nearby as well as those attending Christ Church.

5.2 Other pitches include Commercial Way and the Old Bandstand site

Most common forms of this style of performance are guitarists, singers, classical musicians, balloon twisters, mimes, and statues. All these shows work well with a minimum of space and will also play an important part in Woking's colourful performance community.

5.3 Other Sites

There are a good variety of pitches around Woking which are well suited to those performers who do not have restrictions on their performance such as space or height as do most of the circle shows.

The following restrictions apply:

- a) Performers must stick to their agreed pitch location.
- b) Entrances and exits to shops and buildings must be kept clear at all times.
- c) It must not be located near, or interfere with, an entertainment or activity approved by Woking Borough Council.

Any noise created must not amount to a statutory noise nuisance as prescribed under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

Respect to the general public and shop owners should be adhered to at all times.

Time limits for any given performance are restricted to two hours, as per the public realm usage policy.

5.4 Special notes

The above guidelines, Public Realm Usage Policy and attached Code of Practice and schedules should be adhered to at all times.

Incidents are rare, however any disputes may be referred to The Phoenix Cultural Centre who will liaise with Woking Shopping and assist where possible.

The expectation of Woking Borough Council is that buskers will at all times comply with the intent and direction of these guidelines and comply with reasonable requests of residents and/or businesses. In the event that the guidelines are breached or a nuisance is created Woking Borough Council or police will ask that the activity cease, relocate or be modified in some way to remove the component considered unreasonable.

Woking Borough Council accepts no liability for loss or damage to performers privately owned instruments and belongings.

SCHEDULE "A" MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PERFORMERS

Type of Performer	Approved Pitches	Performance area delineation	Fire Blanket & Extinguisher	Noise Control	Time Limit	Public Liability Insurance and Risk Assessments
Solo Musicians & Musical Groups	All (however busking for money is not permitted in Jubilee Square)	N/A	If using amplified sound, all equipment must be PAT tested	Yes	Two hours	Required
Circus Acts, i.e. acrobats, cyclists and jugglers	Jubilee Square preferred	Boundary Required (soft)	N/A	Yes	Two hours	Required
Statue & Mime Artists	All	N/A	N/A	N/A	Two hours	Required
Balloon Artists and Face Painters	All	N/A	N/A	N/A	Two hours	Required
Chalk Artist/s	TBC	N/A	N/A	N/A	Two hours	Required

Recommended pitches

SCHEDULE "B" COMMENTS IN RELATION TO SPECIFIC 'EVENT ZONES'

Pitches	Comments
2. Albion Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No busking for money to take place in Jubilee Square • No mechanical implements eg chainsaws / whipper snippers etc • No live animal acts • CDs / tapes can only be sold if not available in retail stores in Woking contradicts bullet point 1.5 • Amplification only via battery powered PA. • The Public Realm Usage Policy outlines additional guidance for users undertaking specific types of activity, for which public spaces have been designated. This must be adhered to at all times by performers.
3. Old Bandstand	
4. Commercial Way	
5. Crown Square	
6. Gloucester Walk/ Square	
7. Jubilee Square	
8. Old Market Square	
9. Mercia Walk	
10. Market Walk	
11. Sparrow Park	

Code of Practice

TCU code of conduct –

- 1 Activities should normally 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,
- 2 Performers must position themselves so as not to obstruct any access/ egress points to shops and other premises. Where practical, this should be at least three meters away.
- 3 Users of electrical equipment must supply evidence of PAT testing for appliances.
- 4 No user should cause members of the public to feel pressurized or harassed by their actions or words, nor utilize manipulative techniques in order to engage with the public.
- 5 A performer or busker who is performing pavement or visual art
 - a) must have their activity approved by Woking Borough Council's Arts Development Officer
 - b) cannot use spray paint; unless it has been approved for a specific event by Woking Borough Council's Arts Development Officer., and
 - c) must return the location, including the pavement surface, to its former condition.
- 6 A performance must not involve:
 - a) anything that is offensive or obscene,
 - b) Live animals
 - c) the commission of a nuisance, or
 - d) any activity or act, which endangers the safety of the public or an animal or damage to public property.
 - e) any performer must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This will result in them being asked to remove themselves and their license to busk revoked.

Use of dangerous materials & implements in busking and street entertainment

Woking Borough Council recognises that many buskers and street entertainers operating in the town use materials and implements in their practices that may reasonably be viewed as dangerous. Woking Borough Council expects street

entertainers to risk assess their activity as appropriate and send a copy of their final risk assessment to Woking Shopping for approval.

The purpose of this Code of Practice, is to ensure that the use of dangerous materials and implements is restricted to performers who have highly developed skills and experience in their use, and who are acutely aware of the need to ensure the safety of the public as well as their own safety when using them, as well as having their own public liability insurance and an approved risk assessment and safety plan.

Special permits

Performers using dangerous materials and implements must hold a current Special Permit to use these items in their acts. All general conditions applying to busking and street entertainment in Woking apply to the holding of a Special Permit.

Application for these permits will only be considered when the application is accompanied by public liability insurance.

Performers holding Special Permits must display them at all times in a prominent position while performing their acts using dangerous materials and implements. Performers must have a safety management plan.

Conditions for special permits

Performers holding a Special Permit, when using dangerous materials or implements in their acts, must adhere to the following conditions in the interests of public safety, and their own. The performer must, at all times:

- 1 Ensure the health and safety of the audience witnessing the performance.
- 2 Ensure that public and private property is not damaged in the course of the performance.
- 3 Define the performance space to be used, by establishing a physical boundary of at least 2 meters between herself/himself and the audience utilising one of the following options:
 - a) ropes or chains, and/or
 - b) chalk line (if the surface to be drawn on is not of a porous material such as granite or sandstone, and if the line drawn is water-soluble and removed once the busker has completed the act).
- 4 Include a “Work Cover” approved Fire Blanket/water based extinguisher in their performance kit that is kept visible and accessible throughout the performance.

- 5 In the case of the use of flammable liquids, fuels are limited to kerosene, firewater or scented lamp oils (eg citronella) only. No other fuels will be permitted.
- 6 Store and transport any flammable liquids permitted under the Code of Practice in accordance with relevant law.

“Only portable plastic containers of no greater than a 2.5 litre capacity can be used”

- 7 Containers conspicuously marked with the words **“HIGHLY FLAMMABLE”**, in capital letters on both sides of the container of Class 3 flammable liquids, and the name of the liquid in the container, eg Kerosene etc.
8. Use a container as a drip tray for flares or torches, or preferably use a presoaking method for the flares or torches. Woking Borough Council will not tolerate drip stains on ground surfaces that are not immediately removed or able to be removed by the performer using the site after the act has been completed.
9. If using dangerous implements in a performance, as defined under the relevant Act covering prohibited weapons, all edges of metal implements must be blunted and rendered non-dangerous (the use of any mechanical devices is not permitted). An implement would be determined as blunt if it were rendered incapable of piercing human skin if thrown, or if pressure were directly applied to the edge against human skin.
10. Performers must have their own public liability up to £5m or be covered by the public liability insurance of a nominated organisation
11. Performers are encouraged to have personal accident insurance.

Definitions

Street entertainment:

Means the conduct, in a public place, of any form of theatrical, artistic, musical, audio or visual performance, including a performance commonly known as ‘busking’. This may be of a circle or non-circle nature and may involve a political statement or be a social comment relating to issues of the day.

High risk performances:

Means those, which involve the use of fire, pyrotechnics, knives, swords or whips or high wire (more than one and a half metre from the ground) or the use of giraffe, uni-cycle or other acts that involve the performers being more than 1.5 metres from the ground.

Locations

Within the town of Woking, street entertainment can occur at the locations in Schedule B only.

Contact Details

Name	Email	Tel	Responsibility
Tara Stevenson	Tara.stevenson@woking.gov.uk	01483 743696	Borough Council contact
Elaine McGinty	<u>phoenixculturalcentre@yahoo.co.uk</u>		Auditions and Bookings Urgent concerns
Woking Shopping Office	info@woking-shopping.co.uk		Approval of paperwork (Insurance and Risk Assessment)

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It is important to observe the requirements of the Risk Management Guidelines as well as this Code of Practice