



ALTON TOWN COUNCIL (ATC)

USE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES POLICY (2025)

Since 2021 when this policy was first created to allow people and businesses to use the open spaces for a variety of reasons during the covid-19 pandemic, the number of businesses using Alton's open spaces has increased dramatically, the impact of which is costing ATC money to repair and maintain. In response, this policy has been updated in order to reduce the number of people permitted to attend a business activity without ATC charging for the use.

ATC wish to continue to support small businesses, and anyone providing easy access to health and fitness, and so charging will be at a reasonable level to not discourage this, but to prevent the cost of this business use to be shouldered by the Council. There must therefore be more structure to how this is booked and charged on ATC sites.

In addition to this, activities which in themselves are seen as "kind" to the environment will be promoted on our open spaces, using natural sources of energy and reducing pollution and littering.

Outdoor classes.

ATC will permit, free of charge across all open spaces (except those managed through the use of livestock i.e. Northanger) free-to-attend classes of either physical activity or mindfulness. These classes can have a maximum attendance of 25 people (unless organised directly by ATC) and organisers must provide their contact details to ATC prior to undertaking any activity.

Commercial enterprises (defined as those classes whereby a charge is made by the organiser) are subject to permission from ATC and a hire fee being paid for each use. The organiser must contact ATC at info@alton.gov.uk to book the facilities. Charges will be applied per session as follows:

- 0 to 10 attendants £20
- 10 to 20 attendants £30
- 20 to 50 attendants £50
- 50+ attendants will not normally be permitted unless for a one-off event, in which case the Event Booking Application Form should be used, and the Events Terms and Conditions adhered to

Organisers are responsible for their participants and should ensure they have adequate public liability insurance for their activity, a copy of which must be provided to ATC. This would normally be a minimum of £5 million.

No loud music will be permitted.

Organisers should ensure that they do not obstruct pathways or cause nuisance to other open space users.

When using Jubilee Fields and Anstey Park organisers must ensure they do not encroach onto marked areas or interfere with football, cricket, rugby or other organised sports taking place.

ATC accept no liability for any damages or injuries to any Organiser or Attendant, or to anything whatsoever. Anything left on the site by the Organiser or any Attendant may be removed by ATC and taken to the Town Hall or one of the ATC compounds; if it is not claimed within fourteen days it will be disposed of.

It is the responsibility of the organiser to assess the suitability and usability of the site on each occasion; any repairs which ATC need to make to restore surfaces damaged by their activities to



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their former condition may be charged to the Organiser. ATC, whose decision is final, shall certify the amount of such damage.

BBQs and Camp Fires

ATC continues to ban the use of BBQs and camp fires across all sites. Disposable BBQs and naked flames are a fire hazard, charcoal barbeques add to global warming and the littering associated with BBQs and campfires remains a concern.

Drones

ATC will continue to consider approval of applications for the use of drones on a case-by-case basis. All applicants must demonstrate adherence to current Civil Aviation Authority Regulations in respect of legal and safe deployment of unmanned aircraft and will be required to produce their Flyer ID and Operator ID for any drone over 250g with or without a camera and all drones under 250g with a camera. For more information go to: <https://www.caa.co.uk/consumers/unmanned-aircraft-and-drones/>

Metal Detecting

ATC will continue to issue upon application, free of charge, annual metal detecting licences for the open spaces located at Windmill Hill, Flood Meadows and King's Pond.

Street Vendors

ATC will permit the use of their open spaces by street vendors where they can demonstrate that they are carbon neutral. This means, where vehicles or trailers are used for trading purposes, they must not use generators, gas stoves/ovens or keep their engines running (idling). Where vendors are permitted to trade, they will be charged a flat rate of £50 per week regardless of trading times, which will be limited to between the hours of 9am and 6pm each day. Vendors are requested to trade from hardstanding areas wherever possible to avoid damage to grass but must ensure they do not obstruct the use of parking bays or footways. All litter associated with their trade must be removed from site otherwise a charge of £50 will be made for every occasion when the ATC grounds team has to clean up afterwards. Vendors trade at their own risk, and must ensure they carry adequate insurance and all required health and safety and food hygiene certification for their business.

This policy will become mandatory from 1st April 2025 for all vendors including those at ATC hosted events and those operated by third parties, with a specific exemption for the Funfair and Circus at the Butts given the nature of their activities. Until such time as this section of the policy comes into effect, traders are requested to seek to minimise the use of generators and diesel engines wherever possible.

Sky Lanterns

ATC prohibits the use of Sky Lanterns from its open spaces due to the risk to farm animals and wildlife through ingesting the wires in the spent lantern frame, the risk to aircraft through distraction of pilots and the risk of fire from lanterns landing on property (e.g. thatched roofs), crops or areas of heath or bracken.



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Public Spaces Protection Order.

ATC's public open spaces are subject to the District Council Public Spaces Protection Order and as such members of the public may be fined for not removing dog waste, allowing dogs to enter fenced play areas or not putting their dog on a lead when requested to by an enforcement officer.

ATC reserves the right to alter this policy at any time and/or to prohibit any individual, business or organisation from using the town's public open spaces if they violate any of the terms of this policy.

For a full list of the ATC's open spaces please go to
http://www.alton.gov.uk/Open_Spaces_6315.aspx