

Rother District Council

Policy for the use of Council owned land (including the beach) for firework displays

The Council supports the cultural importance and entertainment provided by professionally organised firework displays and recognises the importance to tourism of these events. The Council aims to ensure that such events are well organised, safe and limit the disturbance to local residents and animals.

Council owned land will only be permitted to be used if 20 working days before the event an application is made to the Council and other responsible authorities are notified.

The event organisers must have sufficient public liability insurance and indemnify the Council against all claims arising out of the event.

To avoid disturbance the frequency and times of displays will be limited and excessively loud fireworks are not permitted.

Satisfactory safety plans and risk assessments must be carried out and adhered to. Event organisers must comply with all reasonable requests by Council Officers, Police, Fire Authority etc. having regard to developing circumstances relating to the weather, site conditions, crowd behaviour etc including cancellation or termination of the event, with no compensation being payable. Event organisers are expected to pay for any costs incurred by the Council arising from the event.

The Director of Services will publish from time to time guidelines to assist organisers in complying with this policy.

The Council supports the RSPCA's campaign to reduce the noise levels produced by fireworks.

The Council encourages other organisations to adopt a similar policy.

Guidelines for the use of Council owned land (including the beach) for firework displays

Notice:

One month before the event an application must be made to the Head of Housing and Community (RDC)*, and copied to the Head of Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety (RDC)*, Fire Safety Officer (ESFRS), Maritime & Coastguard Agency (if appropriate) and Police. To take into account changes in wind direction and wind strength where possible an alternative site can be identified at this stage.

*please e-mail to customer.services@rother.gov.uk

The role of the Head of Housing and Community (HHC) is to give permission for the use of Council land and that of Head of Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety to comment on the safety plan and advise the HHC accordingly.

Insurance:

£10 million public liability insurance shall be obtained and a copy of the certificate sent two weeks prior to the event commencing.

Frequency:

To avoid causing disturbance to local people a maximum of six displays to be held at the same location in one calendar year.

Noise and Nuisance:

To reduce disturbance to local people any display shall cease by 22:00 (autumn and winter) or 23:00 (spring and summer). Displays shall not normally take place on a Sunday.

To avoid causing unnecessary disturbance to local people and animals fireworks must only be used which produce a sound pressure level of SEL or L_{Aeq} 95 dB (one second) measured at ground level, as recommended by the RSPCA. This can be calculated from information provided by the manufacturer.

Cleaning:

The cost of cleaning and restoration of the land is normally included in the fee and damage deposit charged for the use of the land as set by fees and charges.

Safety:

A safety plan and risk assessments shall be submitted with the application for the first choice and the alternative site. The plan to include the date and precise time of the event, details of the types and sizes of fireworks, the safety distances to be used, the names of the operators and the reasons why persons are considered competent. Fireworks shall only be lit by competent fire display operators.

The risk assessment may refer to the HSE document “working together on firework displays, 1995” (withdrawn but not replaced).

The risk assessments shall consider the requirement for (dependent on the size, nature and location of the event):

- Traffic arrangements
- Car parking arrangements
- Pedestrian routes
- Arrangements to contain and designate the crowd arena
- Alternative exits for the public from the arena
- Arrangements for lost children
- Illumination of entrances & exits for pedestrians
- Security of bonfires before, during and after the event
- Number of marshals
- Injured persons and first aid provision
- Use of competent fire display operators
- Fire fighting equipment
- Use of radios for communication

Category 3 fireworks (which are suitable for displays) are permitted at the Polegrove recreation ground. Category 4 fireworks are not permitted at the Polegrove recreation ground.

Alternative site:

If the alternative site (previously notified one month before) is to be used the organiser will notify the Head of Housing and Communities and copied to the Head of Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety (RDC) at least 24 hours before the event.

Summary:

An application to be sent to the Head of Housing and Community one month before the event.

The application to include:

- Public liability insurance certificate for £10 million (two weeks prior to the event)
- Safety plan and risk assessments.