

Public Space Management Plan

EXAMPLE APPLICATION DECISION PROCESS

Example - not for use

Public Space Management Plan

Purpose

The purpose of the Public Space Management Plan is to ensure that Edinburgh's public spaces are used in a way that enhances the city's cultural identity, reputation and quality of life.

The use of public spaces must be balanced appropriately, to function for the wide range of people who live, work and visit the city, throughout the year.

Introduction

People's experiences of any city are partly shaped and influenced by the way its public spaces are used.

Public spaces in Edinburgh support the day-to-day activities of the people who live and work in the city, as well as playing host to temporary or seasonal cultural, civic and festival events.

Edinburgh's regional population is growing, and prior to Covid19 has been attracting increasing numbers of visitors. Numbers in the streets, strong festival and cultural sector growth, and changing consumer trends around leisure and recreation all added to the demands on Edinburgh's public spaces for basic access, and a wide range of uses, experiences and events.

Without a coherent framework for decisions, against agreed principles and criteria for use of space, public spaces may become overused, or identified for a single type of use. This can impact on people's quality of life and on the local environment.

This Management Plan is designed to help and support the event, festival and filming community while balancing demands on public spaces and supporting Edinburgh's community. Temporary events and activities that bring income and life to our city should have a positive enduring impact on the quality of life for residents and businesses.

The Public Space Management Plan can be applied to any existing or future public space in Edinburgh, which the Council owns, leases or manages, including plazas, roads, pavements, squares, gardens and parks. Additional area conditions are provided within the Management Plan for spaces where demand is known to be higher.

Guiding Principles

In 2016, feedback from a very wide range of people and interests was gathered, and used to develop a set of guiding principles for the use of public spaces.

The following seven principles, which have equal weight and importance, provide the context for decisions on temporary uses of public spaces.

1. The use of space must balance the needs of different users

No exclusive use, or single type of event, will dominate any one space. Uses of public space must reflect the interests of a wide range of user groups, and reflect the city's ever-changing context. The Council supports a range of types of events in public spaces; each of these is required to be well planned, well managed, deliver agreed outcomes and mitigate impacts on a wide range of different users.

The Council's consideration of proposed temporary events / activities must assess the needs of those who regularly access or interact with a public space (including residents and businesses) as well as providing opportunities for diverse attractions for the city's population.

The temporary use of public spaces for the provision of a bar only, or primarily bar focused facility is not considered to balance the needs of a wide range of different users of a public space and will not be supported.

2. The use of a space must support and reinforce the special 'place' quality of its surrounds

Temporary use of public spaces for events, activities or installations should support the qualities, characteristics, heritage considerations and functions of the surrounding built environment.

3. Each space must have periods of 'rest' when it is free from temporary events or activities

There must be periods of time when each public space is free from temporary events and activities, to support the 'normal' day to day use of a sustainable, living city.

The length of time a space should be kept free from temporary events and activities that impact 'normal' day to day use will vary, but will reflect the social, physical, historic, and economic context of the space, as well as the impact of previous events and activities.

Temporary events should not transform a space beyond a single season or festival period. Sometimes, there is a request to extend a temporary event. Only one extension can be supported. The duration of the extension should be for less than the original agreed length of the event.

4. The use of spaces must reflect Edinburgh's unique city offering

Temporary uses of public spaces should actively promote Edinburgh's role and reputation as:

- the capital city of Scotland,
- a globally recognised Festival City,
- an historic city, (with Unesco World Heritage Site status),
- a cultural and sporting city,
- a great place to live, do business, visit or study.

The use of public spaces supports Edinburgh's 2050 City Vision and Edinburgh's 'Events Strategy', which aims to attract the best events to Edinburgh, as well as actively encouraging local and grassroots activities, and acknowledges the Council's partnership role reflected in 'Thundering Hooves 2.0', the strategy to strengthen Edinburgh's position as the world's leading Festival City. Key partners of the Council, that contribute to the city's

unique offering, such as festivals, heritage bodies, cultural institutions and business improvement districts are well placed to help promote these principles in the public spaces that they utilise or own.

5. The use of public space should encourage all people to access the city, throughout the year

It's important that people can have opportunities to experience or take part in social and cultural activities across the year. Temporary events, or activities bring seasonal animation to a space and add interest and opportunity for social interaction, in the city.

Use of public spaces should encourage people outside throughout the year and provide opportunities to respond to and experience key festivals.

6. The spread of activities to spaces across a wider area of the city will be encouraged.

It is increasingly necessary to manage the intensity of activity in concentrated central areas of the city, and spread economic benefits of additional footfall over a wider area. The Council will support and encourage the use of a wider range of spaces for activities and events, while being mindful of the economics of organising and managing events and activities and delivering community benefit.

7. Temporary activities or events in public spaces must be well managed, and adhere to standard terms and conditions.

Events and activities in public spaces must adhere to the Standard 'terms and conditions of use' for Council-managed public spaces; previous management issues will be taken into consideration by the Council, before further use of public space is agreed.

Higher demand sites have specific area conditions that must also be met by event organisers in addition to standard terms and conditions.

The Council may instruct additional conditions for *any* event, if required, at any stage before or during an event.

Organisers of larger events are required to support and facilitate Event Planning and Organising Group meetings and will be instructed on event specific safety (or other) requirements.

Organisers of events need to be aware that further roads consent, planning permissions or licensing conditions may be required.

How decisions on use of public spaces will be made

The assessment and decision-making process for events will be co-ordinated by the City of Edinburgh Council, through its Events and Filming Office, using the Public Spaces Management Plan. The Council will consider proposals and enquiries for events, filming and festivals in public spaces in a fair, timely, and reasonable way.

Stages in the decision-making process.

Stage 1. APPLICATION BY EVENT, FILMING, FESTIVAL ORGANISER

The organiser will identify preferred available location and dates using the web-based platform.

The organiser will use the 'Event and Filming Timescale Check Tool' to confirm there is enough time to process their application and any associated licences, permits and permissions.

The organiser then submits online, a completed application proposal web form.

The Events and Filming Office will verify timescales and the availability of space and/or permission to occupy the public space before proceeding to Stage 2.

Applications for permits or licenses made at this stage will only be considered once an agreement in principle is given.

Stage 2. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY - AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO USE OF SPACE

The suitability of an event, filming or procession will be checked against the guidelines and area conditions, as well as the considerations for use. Considerations are outlined below at 'Stage 2 outline'.

The Events and Filming Office will refer major events and filming to the Festival and Events All Party Oversight Group for consideration.

At the end of this stage, if a proposal is accepted by the Events and Filming Office, they will advise the organiser, and of the next steps required.

If for any reason, an agreement in principle is not given, the Events and Filming Office will explain why. In certain instances, the Office may try to identify a suitable alternative.

Stage 3. APPLICATION FOR OTHER PERMITS, PERMISSIONS AND LICENSES

This stage deals with statutory applications and processes. Other permits or licences should ideally only be applied for once agreement in principle has been obtained. An agreement in principle for use of a space does not guarantee that licenses or permits will be granted. Licence or permit applications will be considered if an agreement in principle to use a space is confirmed.

A permit or licence granted before agreement in principle to use a space has been given does not guarantee that the event will be allocated a space.

A permit or licence granted does not guarantee approval will be given by the Events and Filming Office (on behalf of the whole Council) for an event, filming or procession to take place.

Approval will not be given by the Events and Filming Office (on behalf of the whole Council) for an event, filming or procession to take place if the necessary permits, permissions and licences have not been granted.

Stage 4. EVENT PLANNING AND ORGANISING GROUP (EPOG) MEETINGS

Once permits and licenses are obtained, the Council may require one or more EPOG meetings to be held, where changes to elements of a proposal may be instructed, to address issues of public safety, traffic management and access, timings or any other.

Stage 2 outline: ASSESSMENT AND AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO USE OF SPACE BY COUNCIL

The process for assessing suitability, and making decisions on the use of public space.

Deciding what is or isn't appropriate for any public space requires sensible judgement and a wide understanding of current issues, and considerations.

Each individual proposal will be assessed on its own merits, as well as its fit with the city's role as a living, capital city, and pre-eminent festival city.

Not every activity will be suitable for every public space or proposed time, so decisions may be made to recommend changing these elements of a proposal. From time to time, proposed events may not be consented. The Council will be open about the reasons why this is the case. Part 3 of the application form 'The right activity, in the right place, at the right time' where the organiser describes how their activity meets each of the 7 points of the guiding principles is critical to this decision.

In addition to ensuring proposed events meet with the guiding principles, there are a range of considerations that will inform a decision on the use of public spaces, including the published area conditions for each frequently used area. These might include very local, one-off contexts or situations, so the following examples help to outline the kinds of questions that will be asked. The following is not an exhaustive, or absolute, list of considerations.

- Is the type of event compatible with the proposed space?
- Will the event support the quality of place of the surrounding area?
- Will the event reflect the social, physical, historic and/or economic context or profile of a space?
- What are the impacts of the event on surrounding residents or businesses?
- Is the scale of the event suitable for the proposed venue?
- Will the terms and conditions, and any site-specific conditions, be fully met?
- Does the event reduce access for, or exclude, any particular group(s) of people?
- Will the event encourage participation from local people, and how?
- Is the event funded by the Council or other partners?
- Have previous events of this nature been managed satisfactorily by the organisation?
- What other events are being hosted in the city at the same time?
- Has this site been used for other events recently?
- Has the site been impacted by other activity recently, such as roadworks or construction/development?
- Is this the right moment or time for this event or activity?

It should be noted that for some public spaces, the Council may establish a management agreement with an appropriate third-party partner organisation (for example, a Business Improvement District body) to manage the space including decisions about its use. All decisions taken on behalf of the Council must adhere to the principles and considerations of the Public Spaces Management Plan.