



Cinderford Town Council

Buskers and street entertainment

What is Street Entertainment/Busking?

A performance to the passing public who sometimes give money when they're enjoyed the performance. The busking activity is usually a live music performance however some people also perform magic, juggle, create sand sculptures or appear as living statues.

Where to busk

Cinderford Town Council welcomes buskers and street performers and we recognise that they can improve our streets and help increase footfall in our shopping areas.

We want to ensure that everyone benefits from this entertainment whilst minimising noise disturbance and any intrusive behaviour that could affect neighbouring businesses, residents, visitors or the surrounding environment. We have therefore developed this voluntary code of conduct.

The aim of this document is to set clear rules for buskers to follow to ensure busking can be conducted lawfully to enhance our town's cultural offer without generating complaints.

All performers should:

- Ensure that the location/pitch for any street performance or busking and method of activity, including the placing of equipment on the highway, does not cause undue obstruction to other users of the highway, or access to shops and business for pedestrians and those carrying out work in the town centre.
- Ensure that their performance or busking activity does not cause a noise nuisance to those living or working nearby due to either the volume and/or duration of the performance. Volume levels must be relative and considerate and performers must only use low powered amplification. The volume is too loud if a standard conversation cannot be held in a nearby shop. Equally, if the volume can clearly be heard 50 metres away it is likely to be too loud and performers must turn it down.

- Only be present for more than 90 minutes in any one location (including breaks) and not return to the same location within the same 24 hours. This is to be fair to all and prevent a location being monopolised by anyone.
- Keep backing tracks unobtrusive and turn them off when you're not performing.
- Comply If any council officers or representatives ask you to cease playing, reduce the volume or to move to a new location.

All performers should not:

- Use mains or generator powered amplification.
- Make use of street furniture such as public seating, lampposts, planters, railings etc; this includes the attachment of posters and adverts.
- Sit on the floor to perform.
- Bring a vehicle into the pedestrianised area of the town centre.
- Use amplification or drums, trumpets or other loud instruments or otherwise cause noise nuisance to residents or businesses.
- Leave equipment unattended or in a manner which poses an obstruction or trip hazard.
- Perform in a manner that could be considered dangerous and/or inappropriate and must not be dressed or conduct themselves in a manner that is likely to cause alarm, distress or offence to members of the public including the use of threatening, abusive or insulting words, costumes, props, behaviour or written material.
- Use live animals as part of their act.
- Actively collect money, using signage or any other means; however, it is acceptable to have a hat, music case or box for donations from the public.
- Sell any merchandise without a Street Trading Licence. If you wish to sell your items at a fixed price, then a Street Trading Licence is required.
- Request donations to a charity unless you have a permit.

In addition, Buskers/Performers are requested to take regular breaks in order to allow crowds to disperse and are expected to comply with any reasonable request made by a council, town centre official or police officer. A responsible adult should accompany minors busking or performing. (Those aged 16-17)

Resolving issues

Most issues can be resolved amicably. Always be respectful and considerate and try and understand another's point of view.

- If someone approaches you to say they have been disturbed by the noise of your performance, do not be confrontational.
- Be reasonable with the person complaining and ensure that you have been sticking to the Code of Conduct
- Try to reach a compromise - can you reduce your volume or move to another site?
- If you feel that you have adhered to the code but can't come to a compromise with the person complaining, politely inform them that you are following the code.

If there is a complaint about the music level of your performance, you may be asked to reduce the volume or move to another location or stop their performance.

For further information and advice on busking please go to: Busking Advice for Musicians in the UK | The MU (musiciansunion.org.uk) -

<https://musiciansunion.org.uk/working-performing/gigs-and-live-performances/working-as-a-live-performer/busking-licenses-and-schemes>

Approved Events Committee 7th July 2026

Review July 2030

CINDERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

BUSKING

(Adopted by Council on July 2023, Reviewed 7th July 2026)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Health & Safety

- 1.1 Each busker should have Public Liability Insurance to a level as recommended by their insurance company.
- 1.2 All performers should provide a risk assessment for their activity.
- 1.3 Performances should not contain anything that might place a person or property at risk of harm or damage. Performers must consider and take responsibility for public safety at all times when performing.

2. Noise

- 2.1 The use of PA or other amplified systems associated with a performance is prohibited.

- 2.2 Noise from any street performance should not be greater than reasonable background noise when heard from more than 30 metres from where the performance is taking place.
- 2.3 If the volume is too loud and causing a nuisance the performance must be moderated or stopped immediately if requested by a Council/ Police Officer or Street Warden.

3. Collection of money

- 3.1 The principle of street entertainment and busking is for the public to voluntarily donate money as part of the performance, therefore under no circumstances must an approach be made to the general public to encourage them to donate money.
- 3.2 If collecting money for charity, a Street Collection licence must be obtained. In no other circumstances should a street entertainer or busker advertise that they are entertaining on behalf of a charity, cause, organisation or group.

4. General

- 4.1 No busker or street entertainer has the right to any pitch.
- 4.2 Busking for more than 1 hour in any one place is not permitted.
- 4.3 Busking shall not be repeated in that place for the next 2 hours.
- 4.4 Under no circumstances will generators be allowed on site.
- 4.5 Performers must not cause any congestion outside shop frontages or public walkways.
- 4.6 No performances may be given by a performer whilst under the influence of any intoxicating substance.
- 4.7 Performers must ensure that the content of their performance does not cause offence to members of the public, and appeals to a wide range of people including children, families and older generations.
- 4.8 Performers must not sell CDs or other merchandise.
- 4.9 No vehicle will be permitted on site at any time.
- 4.10 There must be sufficient variety in the performance i.e. no repetition of material within an hour set.
- 4.11 There must be an acceptable degree of musical competence i.e. the performance must be melodic and in tune
- 4.12 Single tone rhythmic performances and one piece of music played over and over again are not acceptable.

- 4.13 Performers are required to be skilled and experienced in using the props of their performance. They must have an understanding of, and a commitment to safety for the public, themselves and the environment.
- 4.14 The use of fire in a performance is not permitted e.g. juggling fire eating/breathing.
- 4.15 The Council reserves the right to vary the Code of Conduct at any time.

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BUSKING

(Adopted by Council on July 2023, Reviewed 7th July 2026)

CODE OF PRACTICE

Introduction

All forms of street entertainment are viewed as an important part of the musical and cultural heritage of the town, providing a means to new talent, while adding vibrancy and character to an area. Whilst Cinderford Town Council welcomes street entertainment and feel they add a lot to the street scene, to help buskers avoid complaints we have introduced a Code of Practice. We have also designated busking areas which may change or be suspended as required.

Following the Code of Practice will help you stay on the right side of the law.

Nuisance - For those living, working or visiting the town centre, busking can become the source of intrusion and annoyance and, under some circumstances, could lead to a nuisance being caused, which would warrant action by the authorities. This is especially so when amplification is used to support the performances. Police also receive complaints about the volume and sometimes the nature of busking and obstruction to the highway caused by gathering crowds.

The Law - The law requires a District Council to take action to abate a noise which is deemed to be a nuisance and prohibit recurrence, which could lead to formal enforcement action to deal with buskers who are not following the code and are causing a nuisance. This may include the confiscation of musical instruments and amplifiers.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The code is intended to set out a standard which if followed, should enable busking to continue and thrive whilst protecting businesses and residents from excessive noise or prolonged exposure to the same performances.

DO:

- Only perform within the designated busking areas.
- Entertain only between 10 am – 5 pm.
- Smile, enjoy yourself and entertain others!

DON'T:

- Use mains or generator power for amplification. Busking must not be intrusive or be a nuisance to nearby premises. Music or voice should not be heard plainly at a distance of 30 metres.
- Busk for more than 1 hour in any one place. Busking shall not be repeated in that place for the next 2 hours.
- Obstruct the highway (road, pavement or pedestrian area) or the flow of pedestrians in the street. In particular sites close to fire exits, cashpoints and shop/business doorways must be avoided.
- Busk within 30 metres of another busker or group of buskers.
- Sell CDs or other merchandise.
- Ask for donations or payment for performing.
- Perform in a manner that is dangerous to yourself or the public.
- Act in a way or say anything that is likely to cause offence.
- Position yourself on a footway or highway in such a way that could be deemed as begging by passers-by or the Police e.g. sitting on the ground or wrapped in a sleeping bag or blanket sitting on the ground.

