



Soulbury Parish Council
Buckinghamshire

Village Green Policies and Procedures

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1. Definition of a Village Green

This is defined in the Commons Registration Act 1965 as amended by The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, as land which has been allotted by or under any Act for the exercise or recreation of the inhabitants of a locality, or on which the inhabitants of any locality have a customary right to indulge in lawful sports and pastimes, or which falls within subsection(1A) of this section as follows: Land falls within subsection 1A if it is land on which for not less than 20 years a significant number of inhabitants of any locality, or of any neighbourhood within a locality, have indulged in lawful sports and pastimes, as of right.

2. Registration

The Soulbury Village Green is registered with the Commons Registration Authority at Buckinghamshire County Council. This provides protection as afforded by various acts of law (see note 3 below) that covers all aspects of the Village Green's use and management. Soulbury Village Green was registered on the 1st August 1972, under register unit number CL174 ,and is now managed and administered by Soulbury Parish Council.

3. Legislation

The following is a list of the most common legislation which currently exists for the protection and rights relating to Village Greens.

- The Inclosure Act 1845 and 1857
- The Commons Act 1876,1899 and 2006
- The Open Spaces Act 1906
- The Acquisition of Land Act 1981
- The Law of Property Act 1925
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

4. Responsibilities

The Village Green is managed and administered by Soulbury Parish Council, which is responsible for its maintenance, protection, and upkeep. All matters relating to the Village Green should be referred in the first instance to the Parish Council for consideration. Any rulings or actions will be made by them in accordance with present legislation and their own policies and procedures, or referred to other Authorities as deemed necessary by them. As custodians, the Parish Council must

ensure that the Village Green is protected against encroachment, damage and uses other than those consistent with normal enjoyment of the Village Green. Driving, cycling, motorcycles, or parking of any motorised or horse drawn vehicles on any part of the Village Green is not permitted, unless by prior written agreement with the Parish Council. No horse riding nor grazing of livestock is permitted. Maintenance and repairs relating to the Village Green will only be carried out by Contractors appointed to carry out such works by the Parish Council.

5. Lawful and Prohibited Uses

Whilst not exhaustive, the following is a list of lawful and prohibited uses permitted on the Village Green.

Lawful uses include:

- walking and dog walking,
- playing sports and pastimes,
- public gatherings for entertainment,
- village fetes,
- carol singing and maypole dancing.

Prohibited uses without prior written consent from the Parish council include:

- any physical alteration to the Village Green including altering the surface of the green,
- fencing of the Village Green, or otherwise making it inaccessible to the public,
- wilful damage e.g., from vehicles, horses, or bicycles,
- driving or parking of any motorised or horse drawn vehicle or bicycle/motorcycle unless the prior approval of the Parish Council has been obtained,
- grazing of cattle, sheep, horses or other animals,
- the pruning, cutting down planting or removal of trees or shrubs unless at the express request or consent of the Parish Council,
- the building of any temporary or permanent structure except with the authority of the Parish council,
- no fires, camping or caravanning nor overnight stays will be permitted.

Uses which could cause damage to property or people or are likely to be a danger or a nuisance to other users of the Soulbury Village Green or nearby residents such as flying of model aircraft, kites or drones and playing of loud music will not be permitted.

Dogs must always be controlled and kept on a lead where appropriate, and any waste or rubbish arising from the use of the village green must be removed.

Benches: Any resident of the parish who wishes to install additional bench or benches on the green must obtain prior written approval from Soulbury Parish Council and must follow the current style, type, size, standard, design and installation of those benches already located on the green and are to carry out future repair and maintenance at their own expense.

Privately run and/or financed events will not be permitted, whether open to the public or otherwise, unless prior written approval has been requested from, and granted by, Soulbury Parish Council.

Parish Council sponsored events should be run on a 'not for profit' basis, and any profits that are realised will be donated to local organisations and/or Charities approved by the Parish Council. Members of the Parish Council are not permitted to gain personally or financially, directly or indirectly, from these events.

6. Enforcement

Where person/persons are shown to have misused the Village Green, creating damage or alterations to its original fabric, the Parish Council will require those responsible to make good the damage to the satisfaction of the Parish Council or reimburse any cost incurred by the Parish Council in effecting repairs and reinstatement.

In certain cases, damage or encroachment may result in legal proceedings being taken by the Parish Council.

7. Maintenance

The Parish council is legally responsible for the maintenance of all parts of the Village Green whether grassed or hardstanding.

While grassed areas are regularly cut and seeded, other areas may be subject to repair or replacement from time-to-time dependant on the degree of wear and tear received.

All decisions relating to the maintenance and repair of the Village Green will be taken by Soulbury Parish Council in the first instance, before any works are carried out.

8. Inspection and working parties

The Parish Council will carry out an annual inspection of the Village Green to determine its condition and identify any works required to be carried out. Other inspections may be carried out on an 'ad hoc' basis as and when deemed necessary. The results of all inspections are to be formally recorded and reported to a Soulbury Parish Council meeting at the first available opportunity.

From time to time Soulbury Parish Council will conduct a working party to carry out minor works in relation to the Village Green's maintenance and upkeep.

9. Protection of trees shrubs flora and fauna

All trees, hedges shrubs and flowers planted on the Village Green are protected and must not be pruned, cut, damaged, or removed without prior written approval from Soulbury Parish Council.

In the event that trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order, or are in a Conservation area, additional authorisation will be required from Buckinghamshire Council. Soulbury Parish Council have the authority to remove or replant/replace trees and other plants on the Village Green.

10. Summary

This document will be available to be viewed on Soulbury Parish's website (www.soulburyparish.co.uk) and copies may be obtained from the Clerk to the Parish Council, email: clerk@soulburyparish.co.uk.

Adopted at Soulbury Parish Council meeting dated 17 February 2025.