

# Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast  
City Council**

16<sup>th</sup> February, 2026

## **MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room, City Hall and remotely via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 18th February, 2026 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

## **AGENDA:**

### **1. Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

### **2. Delegated Matters**

- (a) Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority (Pages 1 - 6)
- (b) Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority (Pages 7 - 12)

### **3. Non-Delegated Matters**

- (a) Fleadh Update on Licensing Matters (Pages 13 - 22)
- (b) Model Conditions - Caravan Licensing (Pages 23 - 86)
- (c) Request for the Exhibition of Unclassified Films (Pages 87 - 122)





<b>Subject:</b>	Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licenses Issued Under Delegated Authority
<b>Date:</b>	18 February 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kevin Bloomfield, NIHMO Manager
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Kevin Bloomfield, NIHMO Manager Helen Morrissey, City Protection Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> After Committee Decision <input type="checkbox"/> After Council Decision <input type="checkbox"/> Some time in the future <input type="checkbox"/> Never	

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	Under the Scheme of Delegation, the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services Department is responsible for exercising all powers in relation to the issue and variation, but not refusal, of HMO Licences, excluding provisions relating to the issue of HMO Licences where adverse representations have been made. Those applications which were dealt with under the Scheme are listed below.
2.0	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the applications that have been issued under the Scheme of Delegation during January 2026.

3.0	<b>Main report</b>			
3.1	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>			
	Under the terms of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 the following HMO Licences were issued during January 2026.			
<hr/>				
Premise Name	Licensee	Ward	Housing Management Areas (HMAs)	Licence Type
Apartment B, 68 Fitzroy Avenue	Mr Christopher McCann	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
Apartment A, 68 Fitzroy Avenue	Mr Christopher McCann	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
11 Stormount Street	Mr Gerard Campbell	BEERSBRIDGE	NONE	New Application
50 St Albans Gardens	Ms Anna Marie Mallett	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
Flat C, 47 Camden Street	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	FITZWILLIAM HMA 2/10	Renewal Application
Flat B, 47 Camden Street	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	FITZWILLIAM HMA 2/10	Renewal Application
Flat A, 47 Camden Street	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	FITZWILLIAM HMA 2/10	Renewal Application
111 University Avenue	Miss Helen Stevenson	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
88 Edinburgh Street	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	Renewal Application
11b Stranmillis Gardens	Mr Trevor Breadon	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
79 Edinburgh Street	Ms Abbie Cassidy	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	New Application
80 Agincourt Avenue	Ms Christina Cunningham	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
29 Sandhurst Gardens	Mr Edwin Adams	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
67 Jerusalem Street	Mr Dara Macauley	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	New Application
28 Agincourt Street	Mr Colin Shields	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
24 Camden Street	Derrylodge Property Management Limited	WINDSOR	FITZWILLIAM HMA 2/10	Renewal Application
Flat 3, 120 Malone Avenue	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	Renewal Application
Flat 2, 120 Malone Avenue	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	Renewal Application
Flat 1, 120 Malone Avenue	Mr Richard Smyth	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	Renewal Application
Flat 2, 33 Ashley Avenue	Derrylodge Property Management Limited	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
23 St Albans Gardens	Mr Eoin Cleland	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
Flat 3, 111 Fitzroy Avenue	Mr Raymond King	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application

	Flat 1, 111 Fitzroy Avenue	Mr Raymond King	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Flat 2, 48 Eglantine Avenue	Mr Michael Smyth	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	New Application
	33 Stranmillis Park	Mr Bernard Brian Campbell	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	Flat 2, 95 Wellesley Avenue	Glenwherry Investments Ltd	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	Renewal Application
	82 Agincourt Avenue	Ms Ann-Marie Benson	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	137 University Avenue	Mr Shane P Murray	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	38 Springfield Road	Mr Francis McVeigh	CLONARD	NONE	Renewal Application
	27 Elaine Street	Mrs Lisa Brown	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	61 Lower Windsor Avenue	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	MEADOWBANK HMA 2/15	Renewal Application
	114 Dunluce Avenue	Mrs Mary McIntyre	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
	4 Rathcool Street	Mrs Anna Rankin	WINDSOR	ADELAIDE HMA 2/01	New Application
	42 Surrey Street	Mrs Avril Bruce	WINDSOR	MEADOWBANK HMA 2/15	Renewal Application
	132 Dunluce Avenue	Mrs Marie McKay	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
	5 Eblana Street	Mrs Nicola Parker	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	59 Lower Windsor Avenue	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	MEADOWBANK HMA 2/15	Renewal Application
	50 Melrose Street	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	Renewal Application
	27 Ridgeway Street	Mr Trevor Breadon	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	36 Tates Avenue	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	Renewal Application
	35 Carmel Street	Mr Conor Fox	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	New Application
	94 Edinburgh Street	Mr Trevor Breadon	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	Renewal Application
	30 Hatfield Street	Mr Kieran Campbell	CENTRAL	LOWER ORMEAU HMA 2/13	Renewal Application
	2 St Albans Gardens	Ms Una McNeill	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
	419 Woodstock Road	JRS NI Investments Limited	WOODSTOCK	NONE	New Application
	Apartment 8, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 7, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	785 Crumlin Road	Mr Edward Jackson	LEGONIEL	NONE	New Application
	Apartment 6, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application

	Apartment 5, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 4, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 3, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 8, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 7, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 2, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 6, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	20 Stranmillis Street	JMC Rentals Limited	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	Apartment 5, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 1, 58 - 60 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 4, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 3, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	6 Whitehall Gardens	Mr Barry O'Donnell	ORMEAU	NONE	Renewal Application
	Apartment 2, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 1, 54 - 56 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 8, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 7, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 6, 50 -52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 5, 50-52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 4, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application

	Apartment 3, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 2, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Apartment 1, 50 - 52 Cromwell Road	SOBE Developments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	74 Rugby Avenue	Mr Paul Donnelly	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	27 Agincourt Avenue	Mr Declan O'Neill	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Flat 3, 36 Lawrence Street	Mr Paul McKeown	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Flat 2, 36 Lawrence Street	Mr Paul McKeown	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	Flat 1, 36 Lawrence Street	Mr Paul McKeown	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	19 Landseer Street	FGW Property Ltd	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	New Application
	59 Castlereagh Street	Blue Square House Ltd	BEERSBRIDGE	NONE	New Application
	61 Sandhurst Gardens	Mr Terence McManus	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	10 Stranmillis Park	Mr Paul Duffy	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	Flat C, 39 Dunluce Avenue	Mr John Albert Montgomery	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
	Flat B, 39 Dunluce Avenue	Mr John Albert Montgomery	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
	5 Sandhurst Gardens	Mr Eamonn O'Loingsigh	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	54 Pretoria Street	Mr Neil O'Hare	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	205 Dunluce Avenue	Mr John Boardman	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	Renewal Application
	Flat 1, 5 Ashley Avenue	Glenburn Estates Limited	WINDSOR	ULSTERVILLE HMA 2/21	New Application
	38 St Albans Gardens	Mr Alan Mackey	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
	Flat 2, 139 University Avenue	Mr Patrick McGovern	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	17 Ridgeway Street	JMC Rentals Limited	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	461 Falls Road	B.M.C.A. Properties Ltd	BEECHMOUNT	NONE	New Application
	82 Willowbank Gardens	Mr Craig Appleby	WATER WORKS	NONE	New Application
	Flat 2, 3 Abercorn Street	Hawksdale Limited	WINDSOR	FITZWILLIAM HMA 2/10	Renewal Application
	32 Stranmillis Gardens	Mr Neil Rafferty	CENTRAL	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	60 Wellesley Avenue	Mr Michael Rennick	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	New Application
	13 Sandymount Street	Mr Brendan McCourt	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
	76 Cheviot Avenue	Maurice Noble Estates Ltd	CONNNSWATER	NONE	New Application

	30 St Albans Gardens	Mrs. Sharon Dennison	STRANMILLIS	SANDYMOUNT HMA 2/17	Renewal Application
	202 Ravenhill Road	Alamo Properties Limited	WOODSTOCK	NONE	New Application
	71 Tates Avenue	Mr David Tease	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	New Application
	61 Agincourt Avenue	Mr Thomas McAleer	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	34c Edinburgh Street	J and A Ventures Ltd	WINDSOR	EDINBURGH ST HMA 2/08	New Application
	Flat 2, 10 Wellington Park Avenue	MLM Properties Ltd	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	New Application
	Flat 2, 22 Wolseley Street	Enagh Investments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	112 Malone Avenue	Miss Laura Cassidy	WINDSOR	EGLANTINE HMA 2/09	New Application
	17 Collingwood Avenue	Mr Patrick MacFarlane	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	Renewal Application
	27 Sandhurst Gardens	Mrs Christina O'Brien	STRANMILLIS	STRANMILLIS HMA 2/19	Renewal Application
	Flat 2, 28 Magdala Street	Silverstream Property Investments Limited	CENTRAL	HOLYLAND HMA 2/22	New Application
<b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b>					
3.2	None				
<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b>					
3.3	There are no issues associated with this report.				



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Licences Issued Under Delegated Authority</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18 February 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning & Building Control, Ext. 2300
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Hipkins, Building Control Manager, Ext. 2435

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</b>	
Insert number	<input type="text"/>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Information relating to any individual</li><li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li><li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li><li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li><li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li><li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li><li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li></ol>	

<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>																																				
1.1	Under the Scheme of Delegation, the Director of Planning and Building Control is responsible for exercising all powers in relation to the issue, but not refusal, of Permits and Licences, excluding provisions relating to the issue of Licences where adverse representations have been made.																																				
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>																																				
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<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>																																				
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Under the terms of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 the following Entertainments Licences were issued since your last meeting.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Premises and Location</th> <th>Type of Application</th> <th>Applicant</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Aras Mhic Reachtain, 283-289 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2GZ</td> <td>Renewal – 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Ferdia Niall Carson, Cumann Culturtha Mhic Reachtain</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ballysillan Leisure Centre, Ballysillan Road, Belfast, BT14 7QQ</td> <td>Renewal – 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Michael McFarlane, Greenwich Leisure Limited</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bank Square Marquee, Bank Street, Belfast, BT1 1HL</td> <td>Renewal – 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Gary Hammond, Department for Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bank Square, Bank Street, Belfast, BT1 1HL</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual Outdoor</td> <td>Gary Hammond, Department for Communities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Belfast Boat Club, 12 Lockview Road, Belfast, BT9 5FH</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual</td> <td>David Annesley Harrison</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bootleggers, 46 Church Lane, Belfast, BT1 4QN</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Christopher Wolsey, Quay Street Merchants Limited</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Casement Social Club, St. Agnes Hall, 146a Andersonstown Road, Belfast, BT11 9BY</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Maria Toner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CIYMS, 91-93 Circular Road, Belfast, BT4 2GD</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Chris Shields, CI Trust</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cooke Centenary Church Hall, Park Road, Belfast, BT7 2FY</td> <td>Renewal - Occasional 14 Day</td> <td>Roger Mac Neill</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cregagh Sports Club, 3 Gibson Park Avenue, Belfast, BT6 9GL</td> <td>Renewal – 7 Day Annual</td> <td>David Cochrane</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deanes At Queens, 1-6 College Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6BQ</td> <td>Renewal - 7 Day Annual</td> <td>Michael Deane, Deanes Restaurant Group</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Premises and Location	Type of Application	Applicant	Aras Mhic Reachtain, 283-289 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2GZ	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Ferdia Niall Carson, Cumann Culturtha Mhic Reachtain	Ballysillan Leisure Centre, Ballysillan Road, Belfast, BT14 7QQ	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Michael McFarlane, Greenwich Leisure Limited	Bank Square Marquee, Bank Street, Belfast, BT1 1HL	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Gary Hammond, Department for Communities	Bank Square, Bank Street, Belfast, BT1 1HL	Renewal - 7 Day Annual Outdoor	Gary Hammond, Department for Communities	Belfast Boat Club, 12 Lockview Road, Belfast, BT9 5FH	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	David Annesley Harrison	Bootleggers, 46 Church Lane, Belfast, BT1 4QN	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Christopher Wolsey, Quay Street Merchants Limited	Casement Social Club, St. Agnes Hall, 146a Andersonstown Road, Belfast, BT11 9BY	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Maria Toner	CIYMS, 91-93 Circular Road, Belfast, BT4 2GD	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Chris Shields, CI Trust	Cooke Centenary Church Hall, Park Road, Belfast, BT7 2FY	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Roger Mac Neill	Cregagh Sports Club, 3 Gibson Park Avenue, Belfast, BT6 9GL	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	David Cochrane	Deanes At Queens, 1-6 College Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6BQ	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Michael Deane, Deanes Restaurant Group
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	<b>Premises and Location</b>	<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	
	Deanes Restaurant, 28-40 Howard Street, Belfast, BT1 6PF	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Michael Deane, Deanes Restaurant Group	
	Duke of York, 7-15 Commercial Court, Belfast, BT1 2NB	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Willie Jack, Commercial Court Inns Ltd	
	Duncain Culture & Arts Centre, Duncain Avenue, Belfast, BT14 6BP	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	David Gargan	
	Dunmurry Golf Club, 91 Dunmurry Lane, Dunmurry, BT17 9JS	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Steve Davis	
	Harland and Wolff Football and Social Club, 18 Dee Street, Belfast, BT4 1FT	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	John Davidson	
	Harp Bar, 35 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LB	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Willie Jack, Commercial Court Inns Ltd	
	Ligoniel Sports and Social Club, 186a Ligoniel Road, Belfast, BT14 8DT	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	James Forbes	
	Linen Hall Library, 17 Donegall Square North, Belfast, BT1 5GB	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Julie Andrews	
	McEnaneys, 1 Glen Road, Belfast, BT11 8BA	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Anthony Donnelly, Cal Inns Ltd	
	QUB, One Elmwood Student Centre, 77 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NF	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Ryan Feeney, Queen's University Belfast	
	Raven Social Club, 11-15 Castlereagh Street, Belfast, BT5 4NE	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Stuart McFadden	
	RBAI Common Hall, The Royal Belfast Academical Institution, College Square East, Belfast, BT1 6DL	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Claire Moore	
	Rock Bar, 491-493 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DE	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Gerard McIlhone, G&M Rock Limited	
	Ronnie Drews, 79-83 May Street, Belfast, Belfast, BT1 3JL	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Dominic Malone, Lameno Limited	
	Shankill Leisure Centre, 100 Shankill Road, Belfast, BT13 2BD	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Stephen Rosling, Greenwich Leisure Ltd	
	St Finnian's Church Hall, 13-27 Cregagh Park, Belfast, BT6 9LF	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Jim Haughey	
	St Matthews Church Hall, 403 Shankill Road, Belfast, BT13 3AF	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Tracey Elaine McRoberts, Shankill Rectory	
	St Molua's Parish Church Hall, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3LR	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Frances Hastie	
	Taughmonagh Social Club, 31 Finwood Park, Belfast, BT9 6QR	Renewal - 7 Day Annual	Colin Geary	

	<b>Premises and Location</b>	<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
	The Black Box, 18-22 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LA	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Neil Jacques, The Black Box Trust
	The Mount Inn, 156 North Queen Street, Belfast, BT15 1HQ	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Desmond Quinn
	The Parador, 471-473 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 3GR	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Peter Murray, Blaney Inns Limited
	The Rose and Crown, 142 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 2EB	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Geordie Forker, L.A. Drinks Company Limited
	The Rusty Saddle and Shake Or Stir, 15-21 Howard Street, Belfast BT1 6PJ	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Eamon Diamond, Braidview Trading Limited
	Turf Lodge Tenants Association, 35a Norglen Gardens, Belfast, BT11 8EL	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Thomas Mc Larnon
	Ulster Reform Club, 4 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1DA	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Matthew Laird
	Ulster Sports Club, 96-98 High Street, Belfast, BT1 2BG	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	James Sinton, Out Of Office Brewing Limited
	Whites Tavern, 2-6 Winecellar Entry, Belfast, BT1 1QN	Renewal – 7 Day Annual	Paul Langsford, Clover Pubs NI No.3 Limited
	Whitla Hall, Methodist College, 1 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6BY	Renewal - Occasional 14 Day	Fiona Woods

3.2 Under the terms of the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 no Amusement Permits were issued since your last meeting.

3.3 Under the terms of the Cinemas (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 no Cinema Licences were issued since your last meeting.

3.4 Under the terms of the Petroleum Consolidation Act 1929 the following Petroleum Licences were issued since your last meeting.

	<b>Premises and Location</b>	<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>Applicant</b>
	Albertbridge Filling Station, 310 Albertbridge Road, Belfast, BT5 4GX	Renewal	Richard Law
	Centra Blacks Road, 120 Blacks Road, Belfast, BT10 0NF	Renewal	Connor Fitzgerald, Musgrave Retail Stores NI Ltd
	Maguires Garage, 534-538 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6EQ	Renewal	James Maguire
	Rosepark Service Station, 719 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3NU	Renewal	Alan Armstrong, Henderson Retail Limited
	Tates Avenue Filling Station, 252 Tates Avenue, Belfast, BT12 6NB	Renewal	Alan Armstrong, Henderson Retail Limited

	Premises and Location	Type of Application	Applicant			
	Tesco Filling Station Yorkgate, Cityside Retail Park, 100-150 York Street, Belfast, BT15 1WA	Renewal	Gurdeep Ark, Tesco Stores Limited			
3.5	Under the terms of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 the following Street Trading Licences were issued since your last meeting.					
Location	Type of Application	Commodity	Hours Licensed	Applicant		
Outside Limelight, 17 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast	Grant - Temporary	Hot food and beverages	20/01/2026 19:00 – 22:00	Joel Neill, Hospitality Ulster		
Site #49, Area Beside Lagan Lookout Building #4, Donegall Quay, Belfast	Renewal - Stationary	Hot and cold food and hot and cold beverages	Mon – Sun 11:00 – 21:00	Kylah Dittmar		
Site #40, Area Beside Lagan Lookout #3, Donegall Quay, Belfast	Renewal - Stationary	Hot and cold food and beverages	Mon – Sun 09:00 – 21:00	Aaron McClelland		
Site #71, Writers Square #2, Donegall Street, Belfast	Renewal - Stationary	Hot and cold food and beverages	Mon – Sun 09:00 – 17:00	Gavin Brown		
3.6	Under the terms of the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 the following Road Closure Orders were issued since your last meeting.					
Location	Type of Activity	Date and Hours permitted	Applicant			
<b>Spar Craic 10K:</b> Chichester Street, Victoria Street, May Street, East Bridge Street, Upper Arthur Street, Donegall Place, Seymour Street, Joy Street, Alfred Street, Linenhall Street, Bedford Street, Upper Queen Street, King Street, Amelia Street, College Square North, Durham Street, Bankmore Street, Athol Street, High Street, Castle Place, Royal Avenue, Millfield, Carrick Hill, Great Victoria Street, Durham Street, Hope Street, Bruce Street, Boyne Bridge, Dublin Road, Ormeau Avenue, A12 Divis Off Slip East Bound, Divis Street, Falls Road, Grosvenor Road, Willow street, College Square North, Cullingtree Road, Sorella Street, Dunville Street, Leeson Street, Albert Street, Ardmoulin Street, A12 Grosvenor Road Off Slip East Bound, Hope Street, Marcus Ward Street, Salsbury Street, Pakenham Street, Donegall Pass, Posnett Street, Cameron Street, Lower Crescent, Mount Charles, India Street, Ireton Street, Cromwell Road, University Street, College Green Mews, College Green, University Square, University Avenue, Stranmillis Embankment, Annadale Embankment, Ormeau Road, Ormeau Embankment	Large Run	17 March 2026	Connla McCann			

	<p><b>Blue Lights Season 4:</b> Northumberland Street, Beverley Street, North Howard Link, North Howard Street, Third Street, Fifth Street, Cupar Way.</p> <p><b>Blue Lights Season 4:</b> Royal Avenue (North Street to Rosemary Street)</p> <p><b>Blue Lights Season 4:</b> Massey Avenue</p>	Filming	10 – 11 February 2026	Robert Huffam												
		Filming	11pm 9 February – 3am 11 February 2026	Robert Huffam												
		Filming	2 February 2026, 1-9pm	Robert Huffam												
3.7	Under the terms of the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 the following Pavement Café Licences were issued since your last meeting.															
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Premises and Location</th><th>Type of Application</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Caffe Nero, 24 Belmont Road, Belfast, BT4 2AN</td><td>Grant</td></tr> <tr> <td>Caffe Nero, Unit A1 Fountain Centre, College Street, Belfast, BT1 6ET</td><td>Grant</td></tr> <tr> <td>Seatons of Sailortown, 57 Dock Street, Belfast,</td><td>Grant</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Premises and Location	Type of Application	Caffe Nero, 24 Belmont Road, Belfast, BT4 2AN	Grant	Caffe Nero, Unit A1 Fountain Centre, College Street, Belfast, BT1 6ET	Grant	Seatons of Sailortown, 57 Dock Street, Belfast,	Grant	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Applicant</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Charlotte Griffin, Nero Holdings Limited</td></tr> <tr> <td>Charlotte Griffin, Nero Holdings Limited</td></tr> <tr> <td>Kelvin Collins, Gricol Pubs Ltd</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Applicant	Charlotte Griffin, Nero Holdings Limited	Charlotte Griffin, Nero Holdings Limited	Kelvin Collins, Gricol Pubs Ltd
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Kelvin Collins, Gricol Pubs Ltd																
3.8	<p><b><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>															
3.9	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>There are no issues associated with this report.</p>															



<b>Subject:</b>	Licensing procedures and the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann
<b>Date:</b>	18 February 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control, Ext. 2300
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Hipkins, Building Control Manager, Ext. 2435

#### Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes  No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

#### Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes  No

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	This report sets out the proposed approach to a number of licensing regimes operated by the Council in relation to the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.
1.2	Location map for the Fleadh road closure area is attached as Appendix 1
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to note the information provided and to agree to the proposed approaches outlined, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the Road Closure application procedures set out;</li> <li>2. Note that the Building Control service will work to ensure that appropriate pavement café licences are in place for the Fleadh, but that suspension of some licences may be necessary in the lead up to or during the Fleadh for Health and Safety purposes;</li> <li>3. Note that a further report Street Trading at the Fleadh will be brought to a future committee to determine location and process and agree that any applications received to date will be returned and refunded;</li> <li>4. Note the ongoing work of the Building Control Service in relation to ensuring appropriate Entertainment Licensing is in place for the Fleadh; and</li> <li>5. Agree that additional special meeting(s) may be required in July 2026 (dates to be determined)</li> </ol>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<b><u>Background</u></b>
3.1	The Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is to take place in Belfast on Sunday 2 to Sunday 9 August 2026
3.2	It is anticipated that the Fleadh will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city for its duration. The successful hosting of the event will require input from a number of Council functions, communicating on a cross departmental basis within the Council and also multi agency liaison with external organisations. The ability to safely accommodate significant numbers of people within a designated city centre area will require a shared understanding of the programme of events and activities within this designated area in conjunction with planning for crowd safety.
3.3	As the Committee are aware, the Building Control service undertake a number of licensing duties across the city including determining road closure applications, pavement café licensing, street trading licensing and indoor and outdoor entertainment licensing. The Building Control Service therefore has a significant role to play in the event planning process and will be in continual communication with a range of internal and external partners in the lead in to and during this event.
3.4	As the event planning continues, the Building Control service will require the ability to make decisions that are compatible with ensuring the successful delivery of the event. This may require delegated authority on a number of issues that are detailed below.
	<b><u>Road Closure Order</u></b>
3.5	Under the Road (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (NI) 2010 and the Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997 applications can be made to the Council for a Road Closure Order if an event is to be held on a public road.

	<p>The Building Control Service and statutory partners have been engaged in pre-application discussions with the Fleadh Event Team around the extensive road closures necessary to facilitate an event of this size to ensure the safety of citizens and visitors. This has led to significant engagement from the event team with businesses and city centre stakeholders which is being stepped up during February, with a number of further public engagement and information meetings scheduled.</p>
3.6	<p>The road closure application was formally submitted to Building Control on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and the Service is now embarking on formal consultations with Statutory partners before publishing the public notification, including a list of affected roads with timings and restrictions applied, in local newspapers and on the Council website which is planned for March.</p>
3.7	<p>This will commence a 21-day statutory public notification period which gives an opportunity for members of the public to send written representations / objections to the Council.</p>
3.8	<p>In line with the current Scheme of Delegation if no objections are received during the notification period, the road closure order will be issued under delegated authority.</p>
3.9	<p>If any objections are received during the notification period that cannot be resolved, they will be brought along with the application itself, for consideration by the Committee at your May 2026 meeting,</p>
<p><b><u>Pavement Café Licensing</u></b></p>	
3.10	<p>A pavement café licence authorises a person who operates a business supplying food or drink (in or from premises) to place furniture on a public area for use by customers. As Members will be aware, the Council is not responsible for alcohol licensing, which is administered by the Courts and enforced by the PSNI.</p>
3.11	<p>However, when a premises with a liquor licence, such as a pub, obtains a pavement café licence we inform the Courts, and their liquor licence is automatically extended to include the pavement café area.</p>
3.12	<p>Any business interested in providing such facilities at their premises for the Fleadh is advised of the need to apply in good time to allow the application to be properly considered. Any new pavement café licence applications should therefore be made by the end of April 2026 at the latest if they intend to operate during the Fleadh. These timescales are required for consideration of the application due to the processes that need to be followed in relation to notification, consultation and to allow time for any appeal should that be necessary.</p>
3.13	<p>Existing pavement café licensees are being reminded of their responsibilities in relation to pavement cafés and the Building Control Service continues to carry out enforcement of any illegal pavement cafes in the city centre area.</p>
3.14	<p>Some premises will want to maximise their sales footprint to capitalise on the business opportunity the Fleadh presents. Any proposals to extend an existing pavement café footprint must similarly be discussed with the Building Control service at least 3 months before the event to allow a variation application to be considered.</p>
3.15	<p>Modelling of crowd numbers and crowd management is currently being undertaken by the Fleadh team. This may determine that there are concerns around expected crowd density in certain locations. It may therefore be necessary to suspend some pavement cafes for health and safety reasons, potentially for the duration of the Fleadh, for set periods during the week of the event or as a result of crowd movement during the Fleadh event. Potential crowding</p>

	<p>risk may necessitate that pavement café furniture be removed to enable the free-flow of people on the footpath/street.</p>
3.16	<p>It will be important that information on locations that require pavement cafés to be removed due to crowd density and health and safety, and areas where pavement cafés could remain or even be expanded is provided as soon as possible to allow decision making on individual pavement cafés to be clearly communicated to licensees. It is expected that crowd modelling will be able to determine in the next month whether pavement café licences may need to be suspended.</p>
3.17	<p>In line with the relevant legislation, there are two mechanisms to suspend a pavement café licence or have furniture removed. For the purposes of doing so during the Fleadh the most appropriate options are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where a potential health and safety risk has been identified through crowd modelling prior to the event, a licensee will be notified of a reasonable request to remove furniture and / or barriers at least 21 days before the event (to allow time for any representation or appeal to be made). A licence condition is applied to all pavement café licences (previously agreed by Committee) and this will be used to make the reasonable request. This states:</li> </ol> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Licensee will comply with any reasonable request from a duly authorised officer of the Council to remove such furniture and barriers from the licensed area as is necessary to facilitate the safety of the public, including the safe movement of vehicles, during special events*. Licensees will be notified of any such special events at least 14 calendar days before the event where possible.</p> <p><b>*Special Events</b></p> <p>A special event includes, but is not restricted to, an event such as a rally, procession, marathon or other sporting event or an open-air concert.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Where a health and safety risk is identified during the event and immediate action is needed to in the public interest to remove any risk from a pavement café (and / or its furniture), the power delegated to the Strategic Director of Place and Economy as outlined in the Corporate Scheme of delegation, (I) v. below will be used:</li> </ol> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(I) Exercising all powers in relation to the issue, but not refusal, of pavement café licences, including the setting of trading hours in relation to pavement café licences, but excluding provisions relating to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. applications for the grant, renewal or variation of licences where adverse representations are received;</li> <li>ii. compulsory variation of licences;</li> <li>iii. revocation of licences;</li> <li>iv. setting of licence fees;</li> <li>v. suspension of licences except where in the public interest the Strategic Director, in consultation with the City Solicitor, considers that there are particular circumstances which make it necessary to suspend a licence immediately;</li> </ol>
3.18	<p>Prior to the commencement of the Fleadh, notice will be given to any licensed premises where it is believed a health &amp; safety risk may be posed in relation to crowd safety and the placement of temporary street furniture is required to be suspended.</p>
3.19	<p>Where a premises does not hold a pavement café licence, direct formal action will be commenced to ensure the removal of any temporary furniture.</p>

3.20	During the Fleadh, it is planned to have an enforcement team on hand to remind premises, if necessary, that for health and safety reasons the placing of furniture in a particular location has been suspended and, should compliance not be achieved, to promptly remove any furniture that may be deemed to be potentially hazardous.
3.21	It is hoped that with prior notification and engagement, formal enforcement action will seldom be required.
	<b><u>Street Trading Licensing</u></b>
3.22	<b><u>Existing Stationary Street Traders</u></b> The locations of all designated pitches that have a current operating licence within the city centre have been mapped out and provided to the Fleadh team for consideration and inclusion in their planning.
3.23	It has been established that there are 3 licensees who may be affected by the proposed event plan trading Hot and Cold Food & Drink on pitches at Writers Square, as this location is proposed for the official event merchandiser. Discussions are being held to accommodate those traders or provide alternative pitches for the duration of the event within the Food Village area being set up in the Cathedral carpark.
3.24	The modelling of crowd numbers and crowd management currently being undertaken by the Fleadh team and ongoing discussions on the Road Closure Order and health and safety arrangements will determine where there are opportunities for Street Trading within the proposed pedestrianised zone. Once those opportunities have been identified, a further report will be brought before the Licensing Committee to agree the locations and commodities to be sold (e.g not food and drink).
3.25	Committee will also then be able to consider how any identified pitches can be operated and whether applications will be taken from individuals to operate from those locations. If applications are to be invited, it is likely that this will be within a certain timeframe and that delegated authority will be sought from the Committee for officers to determine between any competing applications. This would save significant time as such matters would then not have to be referred to Committee for determination.
3.26	The Council has, however already received a number of applications for street trading during the Fleadh. In order to ensure fairness if applications are to be invited within a set timeframe it is proposed that all applications received to date are returned and refunded.
3.27	Due to crowd control health and safety measures that are being implemented during the event it will be necessary to robustly prevent the setting up of illegal stalls or any illegal activity that causes the infringement of free flow of people especially in areas that are known to have limited space.
	<b><u>Entertainments Licensing</u></b>
3.28	The Building Control Service has a well-established regime to complement an Entertainment Licence granted by the Council. This involves engagement with licensees, and their consultants, at the initial grant of their licence. Further to this, engagement continues at the renewal and/or variation stage(s) of their licence. Additionally, these processes are then complemented with a during performance inspection process involving unannounced inspections of venues when entertainment is being facilitated.
3.29	In preparation for the Fleadh, when it is anticipated that an increased footfall will be experienced by the hospitality sector, an enhanced frequency of during performance

	<p>inspections has been introduced across licenced venues in Belfast. In delivering this, the Service has sought to remind licensees of their responsibilities to manage their venues in accordance with the Entertainments Licence granted to them by the Council. In particular, licensees of indoor venues and their staff, are being encouraged to be familiar with the conditions set out within the BCC Rules of Management; conditions which they must adhere to when granted a licence. This inspection regime will continue over the duration of the Fleadh.</p> <p>3.30 Recognising that entertainment will not solely be confined to indoor venues, the Service have been proactive in its consideration of outdoor entertainment. To upskill relevant parties, an invite to attend training delivered by an internationally recognised expert on crowd management was extended to, and availed of by the Fleadh team.</p> <p>3.31 Many event spaces in the city which are commonly used for outdoor entertainment continue to be licenced and may therefore be available for activities associated with the Fleadh. The Service remains available to assist event organisers in developing their event management plans when using such spaces.</p> <p>3.32 For operators of any venue who wish to consider providing indoor or outdoor entertainment, or existing licensees who wish to modify their venues in preparation for the Fleadh, it is essential that engagement with the Service takes place prior to commencement of any work. It is a statutory requirement to have in place an Entertainments Licence prior to any such offering. Notification, or discovery, of entertainment being provided without an Entertainments Licence will result in investigation by the Service.</p> <p>3.33 To assist operators of venues which do not currently have an Entertainments Licence, the Service advises that any submission of an application for the grant or variation of an Entertainments Licence should be made before the end of April 2026 to allow at least three months for consideration of the application. These timescales are required for consideration of the application due to the processes that need to be followed in relation to notification, consultation and to allow time for any appeal should that be necessary.</p> <p><b><u>Licensing Committee</u></b></p> <p>3.34 The last planned Licensing Committee before the Fleadh is scheduled for the 17th June 2026. Given the extent of organisation underway for the Fleadh and the expectation that this will continue to involve licensing issues up until the date of the event, officers believe that it may be prudent for the Committee to have a special sitting in July 2026 to cater for such matters.</p> <p>3.35 In addition, where Committee is being asked to make decisions on certain matters, this may be accompanied by a recommendation to agree that the decision is not subject to normal call-in processes. This would allow more responsive decisions to be made in the lead into the event in association with any delegated authority sought. This will be vital in ensuring that the licensing functions of the City Council can be undertaken quickly to address any health and safety issues identified. Any report will be clear as to whether this is required for a particular decision.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
4.1	There is an additional resource requirement for the carrying out of enforcement activities in the run-up and during the Fleadh period, a time when particularly outdoor musical entertainment is already at its peak in the City.

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</b>  5.1 There are no issues associated with this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appendix 1 – Road Closure Location map</li></ul>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6  
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Model Conditions – Caravan Licensing</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18 February 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control, Ext. 2300
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	David Bone, City Services Manager, Ext. 3301

#### Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes  No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

#### Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes  No

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	This report sets out how the model conditions for Caravan and Campsites have been updated by the Department for Infrastructure in July 2025.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the background to the model conditions and the updated model conditions for Caravan and Campsites (in Appendix 1 and 2) and agree that they will be adopted by the Council and referenced on our website.
<b>3.0</b>	<p><b>Main report</b></p> <p>Under the <a href="#">Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963</a> ("1963 Act") the development of caravan sites and their physical standards are controlled through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. planning permission granted for the use of land as a caravan site and</li> <li>2. the 1963 Act's site licensing system.</li> </ol> <p>Applications for a caravan site licence must be made to the Council. There is no charge to apply.</p> <p>There are currently no licensed caravan or camping sites in the Belfast Area.</p> <p>Before applying for a licence, the operator must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secured planning permission,</li> <li>- Sufficient insurance,</li> <li>- Met the appropriate licence conditions.</li> </ul> <p>The Department has a role in providing Model Licence Conditions regulating the layout and provision of facilities, services and equipment for caravan sites including water supply, electricity and fire points.</p> <p>In drawing up the conditions which will attach to any licence, councils must have regard to the Model Licence Conditions.</p> <p>Updated model conditions were published by the Department for Infrastructure on 1 July 2025. These conditions revise and update the Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites 1992 (Holiday Caravan Sites) and Model Licence Conditions 1994 (Residential Caravan Sites) and apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• permanent residential caravan sites;</li> <li>• holiday caravan sites; and</li> <li>• touring caravan sites</li> </ul> <p>This review has been prompted by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers' Accommodation in NI' investigation report published on 6 March 2018. The report made a number of recommendations for public authorities, including that the Department should:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>"review the legal and policy framework concerning site licences. This should include the development of a model site licence setting out the minimum standard of provision and safety requirements for each type of Travellers site in NI, along with enforcement powers for any breach."</i></p> <p>The Department has accepted this recommendation and has published a stand-alone set of Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites.</p>

	<p>While addressing the report's recommendation the Department has also taken the opportunity to update and amalgamate the current Model Licence Conditions for holiday caravan sites <u>as well as</u> residential caravan sites into one document, creating greater clarity and ease of reference for councils and stakeholders.</p> <p>Although the conditions remain largely unchanged there are some revisions and updates including to emergency telephones, flood risk and fire safety measures.</p> <p>The updated licensing conditions represent what would normally be expected as a matter of good practice on all caravan sites and should be applied with due regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the physical character of the site, any facilities or services that may already be available within convenient reach, and other local conditions.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</b>
4.1	There are no financial or resource implications that arise as a result of this report.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</b>
5.1	There are no issues associated with this report.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 1 – Model Conditions – Residential Sites and Holiday Sites</li> <li>• Appendix 2 – Model Conditions – Travellers Sites</li> </ul>

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# **Model Licence Conditions 2025**

## **Residential Sites and**

## **Holiday Sites**

**Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 Section 5**



An Roinn

**Bonneagair**

Department fur

**Infrastructure**

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## Introduction

1. The use of land as a caravan site is controlled by relevant planning legislation, whereas the physical standards and layout, amenities and other standards within the site are controlled by a site licence issued by local councils under the Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 (“the 1963 Act”). Section 5 of the 1963 Act enables councils to set licence conditions.
2. Under section 5(7) of the 1963 Act the Department may from time to time specify model conditions with respect to the lay-out and the provision of facilities, services and equipment for caravan sites or particular types of caravan site; and that, in deciding what (if any) conditions to attach to a site licence, the council shall have regard to any conditions so specified.
3. These conditions revise and update the Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites 1992 (Holiday Caravan Sites) and Model Licence Conditions 1994 (Residential Caravan Sites) and apply to both holiday and residential caravan sites:
  - permanent residential caravan sites;
  - holiday caravan sites; and
  - touring caravan sites
4. This review has been prompted by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) ‘Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers’ Accommodation in NI’ investigation report published on 6 March 2018. The report made a number of recommendations for public authorities, including that the Department should:

*“review the legal and policy framework concerning site licences. This should include the development of a model site licence setting out the minimum standard of provision and safety requirements for each type of Travellers site in NI, along with enforcement powers for any breach.”*
5. The Department has accepted this recommendation and will publish a stand-alone set of Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites.

6. While addressing the report's recommendation the Department has also taken the opportunity to update and amalgamate the current Model Licence Conditions for holiday caravan sites as well as residential caravan sites into one document, creating greater clarity and ease of reference for councils and stakeholders.
7. Although the conditions remain largely unchanged there are some revisions and updates including to emergency telephones, flood risk and fire safety measures.
8. These conditions should be considered when: -
  - applying licence conditions to new sites;
  - applying licence conditions to sites that have been substantially redeveloped; or
  - renewing or reviewing a current licence.
9. Where current licence conditions are adequate in serving their purpose, the council do not need to apply new conditions.
10. Where it is appropriate to amend an existing condition or apply a new condition to a licence the council must be able to justify its reasons for doing so, having regard to all the relevant circumstances of the site. In deciding whether to apply a new condition the council must have regard to the benefit that the condition will achieve and the interests of both residents and site owners (including the cost of complying with the new or altered condition) and should consult the site licence holder on the proposed variations. They may also wish to consult with residents or a Residents' Association, where appropriate.
11. The model conditions represent those standards normally to be expected as a matter of good practice on caravan sites. They should be applied with regard to the particular circumstances of the relevant site, including its physical character, any relevant services, facilities or other amenities that are available within or in the locality of the site and other applicable conditions.
12. The council should also consider the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) guidance<sup>1</sup> when applying conditions on a site licence.

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<sup>1</sup> "NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators", available via NIFRS website at [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org)

13. The Explanatory Note to this document provides advice on the application and enforcement of the model conditions when considering attaching conditions to licences.
14. Councils should allow a reasonable period of time after any site licence alteration for compliance with the revised conditions, unless the reason for making the alteration is to address a matter requiring immediate attention.
15. When considering taking enforcement action councils should undertake a risk assessment to consider all possible factors in relation to the prosecution.
16. This document should be referred to as Model Licence Conditions 2025 (Residential Sites and Holiday Sites).
17. The Model Licence Conditions for Caravan Sites 1992 and Model Licence Conditions 1994 shall cease to have effect from 1 July 2025.

## **Interpretation**

18. In the model conditions any references to "site" includes a park home site (including a mobile home site) and to "caravan" includes a mobile or park home.
19. In this document the term "site owner" is referred to throughout, as normally that person would be the licence holder.

# **MODEL LICENCE CONDITIONS 2025 (RESIDENTIAL SITES AND HOLIDAY SITES)**

## **1. The Boundaries and Plan of the Site**

- (i) The boundaries of the site from any adjoining land should be clearly marked by a man made or natural feature.
- (ii) No caravan or combustible structure should be positioned within 3 metres of the boundary of the site (subject to the particular characteristics of the site).
- (iii) A plan of the site should be supplied to the council upon the application for a licence and, thereafter whenever there is a material change to the boundaries or layout of the site, or at any other time on the demand of the council.
- (iv) The plan supplied must clearly illustrate the layout of the site including all relevant structures, features and facilities on it and should be of suitable quality.

## **2. Density and Spacing Between Caravans**

- (i) Subject to the following variations the minimum spacing distance between any two caravans should not be less than 6 metres in permanent residential caravan sites and touring caravan sites. On holiday caravan sites the minimum spacing should not be less than 5 metres between caravans, 3.5 meters at the corners, made of aluminium or cladded with Class 1 fire related materials or 6 metres between those made of plywood or similar skin. Where there is a mixture of holiday caravans of aluminium and plywood the separation distance should be 6 metres.
- (ii) The point of measurement of porches, awnings etc., is the exterior cladding of the caravan, excluding the draw bar. It is recommended that the distance from any part of a caravan to any part of a road within the site should not be less than 2 metres where appropriate.
- (iii) Porches may protrude 1 metre into the 5 or 6 metres space and should be of the open type.
- (iv) Where awnings are used, the distance between any part of the awning and an adjoining caravan should not be less than 3 metres. They should not be of the type which incorporates sleeping accommodation and they should not face each other or touch.

- (v) Eaves, drainpipes and bay windows may extend into the 5 or 6 metre space provided the total distance between the extremities of 2 adjacent units is not less than 4.5 metres in a 5 metre space, or 5.25 metres in a 6 metre space.
- (vi) Where there are ramps for disabled people, verandahs or stairs extending from the unit, there should be 4.5 metres (3.5 metres on a holiday caravan site which has holiday caravans only) clear space between them and such items should not face each other in any space. If they are enclosed, they should normally be considered as part of the unit and, as such, should not intrude into the 5 or 6 metres space.
- (vii) A garage, a shed or covered storage space should be permitted between units only if it is of substantially non-combustible construction (including non-combustible roof) and sufficient space is maintained around each unit so as not to prejudice means of escape in case of fires. Windows in such structures should not face towards the unit on either side. Car ports and covered walkways should in no circumstances be allowed within the 5 or 6 metres space. For cars and boats between units see paragraph 13.
- (viii) The density should be consistent with safety standards and health and amenity requirements. The gross density should not exceed: -
  - 50 caravans per hectare in permanent residential caravan sites;
  - 60 caravans per hectare in holiday caravan sites; and
  - 75 caravans per hectare in touring caravan sites;
 calculated on the basis of the usable area (i.e. excluding lakes, roads, communal services and other areas unsuitable for the siting of caravans) rather than the total site area.

### **3. Roads, Footpaths, Pavements, Gateways and Overhead Cables**

- (i) Roads and footpaths should be designed to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.
- (ii) Where the approach to the caravan is across ground which may become difficult or dangerous in wet weather, each standing should be connected to a road by a footpath with a hard surface.
- (iii) Emergency vehicle routes within the site should be kept clear of obstruction at all times.

- (iv) New roads should be constructed and laid of suitable bitumen macadam or concrete with a suitable compacted base.
- (v) All roads should have adequate surface water/storm drainage.
- (vi) New two-way roads should not be less than 3.7 metres wide, or if they are designed for and used by one way traffic, not less than 3 metres wide.
- (vii) One-way systems should be clearly signposted.
- (viii) Where existing two-way roads are not 3.7 metres wide, passing places should be provided where practical.
- (ix) Vehicular access and at least 1 gateway to the site must be a minimum of 3.1 metres wide and have a minimum height clearance of 3.7 metres.
- (x) Roads and footpaths should be maintained in a good condition.
- (xi) Cable overhangs must meet the statutory requirements.
- (xii) Every caravan should be connected to a road by a footpath with a hard surface.
- (xiii) Where practicable, communal footpaths and pavements should not be less than 0.9 metres wide.

## 4. Lighting

Taking into account the needs and characteristics of a particular site, roads, communal footpaths and pavements should be adequately lit between dusk and dawn to allow the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles around the site during the hours of darkness.

## 5. Bases

- (i) Every unit must stand on a concrete base or hard-standing.<sup>2</sup>
- (ii) The base must extend over the whole area occupied by the unit and must project a sufficient distance outwards from its entrance or entrances to enable occupants to enter and leave safely. The hard standings must be constructed to the industry guidance, current at the time of siting, taking into account local conditions.

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<sup>2</sup> Councils should refer to paragraph 25 in the Explanatory Notes in respect of holiday/touring sites.

## **6. Maintenance of Common Areas, including Grass, Vegetation and Trees**

- (i) Every part of the site to which the public have access should be kept in a clean and tidy condition.
- (ii) Every road, communal footpath and pavement on the site should be maintained in a good condition, good repair and clear of rubbish.
- (iii) Grass and vegetation should be maintained and cut at frequent and regular intervals and removed where necessary.
- (iv) Trees within the site should (subject to the necessary consents) be maintained.
- (v) Any cuttings, litter or waste should be removed from the immediate surrounds of a pitch.

## **7. Supply & Storage of Gas etc.**

- (i) Gas (including natural gas) and oil installations, and the storage of supplies should meet current statutory requirements and relevant Standards and Codes of Practice.
- (ii) Liquefied Petroleum Gas cylinders must not be positioned or secured in such a way as to impede access or removal in the event of an emergency.
- (iii) Exposed gas bottles or cylinders should not be within the separation boundary of an adjoining unit.

## **8. Electrical Installations**

- (i) On the site an electricity network of adequate capacity should be installed to meet safely all reasonable demands of the caravans and other facilities and services within it.
- (ii) The electrical network installations are subject to regulation under current relevant legislation and must be designed, installed, tested, inspected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of the current relevant statutory requirements.
- (iii) Any work on electrical installations and appliances should be carried out only by persons who are competent to do the particular type of work being undertaken, in accordance with current relevant statutory requirements.
- (iv) Any work on the electrical network within the site should be done by a competent person fully conversant with the appropriate statutory requirements.

## **9. Water Supply**

- (i) All pitches on the site should be provided with a wholesome water supply sufficient in all respects to meet all reasonable demands of the caravans situated on them.
- (ii) All new wholesome water supplies should be in accordance with all current legislation, regulations and relevant British Standards.
- (iii) All repairs and improvements to water supplies and installations should be carried out to conform with current legislation and British Standards.
- (iv) Work on water supplies and installations should be carried out only by persons who are qualified in the particular type of work being undertaken and in accordance with current relevant legislation and British Standards.

## **10. Drainage and Sanitation**

- (i) Surface water drainage should be provided where appropriate to avoid standing pools of water.
- (ii) There should be satisfactory provision for foul and wastewater drainage either by connection to a public sewer or sewage treatment works or by discharge to a properly constructed septic tank or cesspool approved by the council.
- (iii) All drainage and sanitation provision should be in accordance with all current legislation and British Standards.
- (iv) Work on drains and sewers should be carried out only by persons who are qualified in the particular type of work being undertaken and in accordance with current legislation and British Standards.
- (v) For caravans without their own water supply and water closets, clean and properly maintained communal toilet blocks should be provided, with adequate supplies of water, to at least the following scales: -
  - Men: 1 WC and 1 urinal per 15 caravans or less;
  - Women: 2 WCs per 15 caravans or less;
  - 1 wash basin for each 2 WCs (or urinals).
- (vi) Toilet blocks should be sited conveniently so that all site occupants may have reasonable access to one by means of a road or footpath.
- (vii) On holiday and touring caravan sites, where laundry facilities are not available, at least one deep sink with adequate supplies of hot and cold water should be provided.

## **11. Disabled Persons**

- (i) Particular consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people in the provision made for water points, toilets, washing points and showers if appropriate.
- (ii) Provision for access for disabled people to common buildings should be in compliance with Building Regulations extant at the time the building was erected, altered or extended. Particular consideration should be given as to how any new standards may be introduced where appropriate.

## **12. Refuse Storage & Disposal**

- (i) Where communal refuse bins are provided these should be housed within a properly constructed bin store which should include a facility to enable it to be hosed down with clean water.
- (ii) All refuse disposal should be in accordance with all current legislation and regulations.

## **13. Parking**

- (i) Private cars, jet skis and boats may be parked between adjoining caravans provided that they do not obstruct entrances to caravans or access around them and they are the appropriate distance from an adjacent caravan.
- (ii) Fuel tanks for motorboats should be disconnected and stored in a shaded area, not below a caravan.
- (iii) Suitably surfaced parking spaces should be provided to meet the requirements of residents and their visitors.

## **14. Communal Recreation Space**

On sites where it is practical to do so, suitable space equivalent to about one tenth of the total area of the site should be allocated for recreational purposes, unless in the council's opinion there are adequate recreational facilities within close proximity to the site.

## **15. Notices and Information**

- (i) The name and address of the site should be displayed on a sign in a prominent position at the entrances to the site together with the current name, address and telephone number of the licence holder and manager and emergency contact details.
- (ii) In addition, the following should be available for inspection in a prominent place on the site: -
  - a copy of the current site licence.
  - a copy of the most recent periodic electrical inspection report.
  - a copy of the site owner's certificate of public liability insurance.
  - a copy of the local flood warning system and evacuation procedures, if appropriate.
  - a copy of the fire risk assessment made for the site (if required by the NIFRS Caravan Sites Operators Guide).
- (iii) A current plan of the site with roads and pitches marked on it should also be prominently displayed at the entrances.
- (iv) All notices should be suitably protected from the weather and from direct sunlight, preferably in an area lit by artificial light.

## **16. Emergency Telephone**

- (i) An emergency telephone for calling the emergency services is only required if mobile phone reception in the area is poor.
- (ii) If provided, the telephone should be immediately accessible and a notice by the telephone should include the name, address and postcode of the site.

## **17. Flooding**

- (i) The site owner should establish whether the site is at risk from flooding by referring to the Department for Infrastructure's Flood Maps.
- (ii) Where there is risk from flooding the site owner should consult the Department for Infrastructure (Rivers) for advice on the likelihood of flooding, the depths and velocities that might be expected, the availability of a warning service and on what appropriate measures to take.

## 18. Fire Safety Measures

### Fire Points

- (i) These points should be located so that no caravan or site building is more than 30 metres from a fire point. Equipment provided at a fire point should be housed in a weather-proof structure, easily accessible and clearly marked "FIRE POINT".

### Firefighting Equipment

- (ii) All fire hydrants should conform to the current British Standard.
- (iii) Access to hydrants and other water supplies should not be obstructed or obscured.

### Fire Warning

- (iv) A suitable means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire should be provided at each fire point on permanent residential caravan sites, holiday caravan sites and touring caravan sites.

### Maintenance and Testing of Firefighting Equipment

- (v) All alarm and firefighting equipment should be installed, tested and maintained in working order by persons who are qualified in the particular type of work being undertaken and be available for inspection by, or on behalf of, the licensing authority or the Fire and Rescue Service.
- (vi) A record should be kept of all testing and remedial action taken.
- (vii) All equipment susceptible to damage by frost should be suitably protected.

### Fire Notices

- (viii) A clearly written and visible notice should be provided and maintained at each fire point to indicate the action to be taken in case of fire. This notice should include the following:-

“On discovering a fire:

- I. Ensure the caravan or site building involved is evacuated.
- II. Raise the alarm.
- III. Call the fire brigade (the nearest phone is sited at .....).”

In applying the conditions above in respect of fire safety measures the council should refer to NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators.

## **Annex to Model Licence Conditions 2025 (Residential Sites and Holiday Caravan Sites): Explanatory Notes**

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# MODEL LICENCE CONDITIONS – EXPLANATORY NOTES

## *Introduction*

1. These explanatory notes are designed to be read in conjunction with the Model Licence Conditions 2025 – Residential Sites and Holiday Sites (“the conditions”) and are intended to offer guidance on the application and enforcement of the conditions for councils.
2. The conditions represent what would normally be expected as a matter of good practice on caravan sites. They should be applied with regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the physical character of the site, any facilities or services that may already be available within convenient reach and other local conditions.
3. It is recognised that not all sites will easily be able to meet the conditions in every case due to their particular characteristics, but a council will need to be able to justify any decision not to have regard to the conditions in setting a licence condition.
4. The conditions are not intended to be the “ideal”; councils may in certain circumstances set more demanding ones if it is appropriate and can be justified.
5. There will be some licence conditions which require inter and cross agency input, advice from other sections within the council and external organisations, such as the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS), Northern Ireland Water (NI Water), and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). It is important for all parties concerned with sites that effective lines of communication are established to ensure that any problems are identified and resolved as early as possible.
6. Disability Discrimination legislation applies to sites and this should be borne in mind when framing licence conditions and considering possible enforcement action. Guidance can be found at [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) and this can also help councils in their consideration of licence conditions. Further guidance can also be found on the Equality Commission's website at <https://www.equalityni.org>.

## **Legal background**

7. Under the Caravan Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 (the 1963 Act), most privately owned sites must be licensed by the council, unless exempted under the 1963 Act<sup>3</sup>. A licence will be granted unless the applicant does not have a relevant planning permission to operate the site or has had a licence revoked in the last three years<sup>4</sup>.
8. The council may attach conditions to the licence, but these can only relate to the physical use of the site and its management<sup>5</sup>. The Department for Infrastructure may issue Model Licence Conditions which the council must have regard to in deciding what conditions to attach to a licence<sup>6</sup>. The council may from time to time alter a site licence condition (either of its own volition or upon the application of the licence holder)<sup>7</sup>.
9. A licence holder may appeal against the imposition of a condition in a licence or any proposed alteration to a condition or a refusal to alter a condition<sup>8</sup>.
10. It is an offence to breach a licence condition and on summary conviction the offender can currently be fined up to £2,500<sup>9</sup>. Where a condition requires works to the site to be carried out and these are not done either within the time specified or to the satisfaction of the council, the council may carry out the works itself and recover from the licence holder any expenses it has reasonably incurred in doing so<sup>10</sup>.
11. The council may apply to the court to have a licence revoked if the licence holder has been convicted on two or more occasions of breaches of licence conditions<sup>11</sup>.
12. The council is required, under section 22 of the 1963 Act, to maintain an accurate register of the site licences in their area. Given the number of different types of sites that councils may deal with, it is recommended that the register shows what type of

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<sup>3</sup> Section 2 and Schedule to the 1963 Act set out in which circumstances a site licence is not required.

<sup>4</sup> Section 3 (3) and (6).

<sup>5</sup> Section 5 (1) to (6). For restriction see *Mixnam's Properties v Chertsey UDC* A.C. 735.

<sup>6</sup> Section 5 (7).

<sup>7</sup> Section 8.

<sup>8</sup> Sections 7 and 8 (2).

<sup>9</sup> Section 9 (1). The maximum penalty on summary conviction is a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.

<sup>10</sup> Section 9 (4).

<sup>11</sup> Section 9 (2).

site each is, be it holiday, residential or mixed use. It is recommended as a minimum the register contains:-

- the name and address of site (if available the Geographic Information Service mapping code should also be logged);
- the name of the licence holder, the site owner (if different) and any person managing the site on behalf of either of those persons;
- type of site;
- the number of pitches; and
- the licence conditions (if any).

13. The council should be aware of the general requirements in relation to their own operated caravan sites, namely, the need for planning permission for the use of land as a caravan site, consent from the Department under section 21 of the 1963 Act and that regard must be given to the Model Licence Conditions.

## **The Boundaries and Plan of the Site**

1. The boundary should clearly define the limit of the site owner's responsibility. The boundary should be suitably marked and properly maintained. This boundary could be formed of a fence, hedge, wall or natural feature or any other suitable structure (or any combination of these) or it may in whole, or part, be formed by an appropriate natural feature, such as a river or a wood. It would not normally be appropriate for that natural feature to simply include an open field.
2. Plans of the site should be provided to the council at the site owners' expense.
3. It is best practice for copies of the plan to be made available to the emergency services.
4. The 3 metre separation distance inside the boundary serves the purpose of ensuring privacy from whatever is on the other side of the boundary, such as a road, and other developments, such as houses etc., and for health and safety, including the spread of fire. Given the particular characteristics of the site the council may be of the opinion that a 3 metre separation distance is not necessary in all circumstances.
5. The 3 metre separation distance measurement should be taken from the caravan wall.

## **Density and Spacing Between Caravans**

6. The 5 or 6 metre separation distance is required for two reasons:
  - Health and safety considerations; and
  - Privacy from neighbouring caravans.
7. Health and safety matters, such as the positioning of gas bottles, etc., should also be taken into account.
8. For the purposes of calculating the distance between the caravans, the point from which measurements are taken is the exterior cladding of the relevant caravan. Eaves, drainpipes, gutters, sills, threshold, door canopies and bay windows should be discounted.

9. Porches should not render the home incapable of being moved, which means they should be demountable.
10. If structures, other than garages, are on pitches within the separation distance and are of a combustible construction, then the council should consider allowing sufficient time for them to be replaced with an acceptable non-combustible model.
11. At no time should a garage constructed of combustible material be allowed within the separation distance.

### ***Enforcement***

12. In considering the enforcement of the separation distance the council should refer to the NIFRS guidance. It should also seek the views and take account of representations from the site owner and affected residents before taking any steps to enforce this condition, where practicable.
13. Before the council undertakes any enforcement action it should consider the benefit of the works against the potential impact on the residents' enjoyment of their caravans and the cost to the site owner.

## **Roads, Footpaths, Pavements, Gateways and Overhead Cables**

14. Roads should be constructed of bitumen macadam or concrete with suitable compacted base. However, sites with roads constructed of tarmacadam should not be required to upgrade their roads as a result of the updated conditions. The roads should only be required to be upgraded as and when they begin to fall into disrepair.
15. Some larger sites may have traffic calming measures such as speed humps on their roads. Though not specifically covered in this standard, it will be worth ensuring that any legal requirements applying to un-adopted roads are met. Guidance and assistance can be found on the Department for Infrastructure website, [www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).

16. Gateways, roads and turnings should have enough clearance to allow safe entry for emergency vehicles and new units on lorries. The widths and heights given are based on the maximum sizes of emergency vehicles that may regularly attend incidents on sites.
17. In determining the permitted height of cable overhangs the council must take into account the current statutory requirements. Those applying as at the date of this guidance are found in the Electricity Safety Quality and Continuity Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 SR 2012/381 (ESQCR). These regulations provide that, in general, cables should not overhang a road at a height of less than 5.8 metres for lines not exceeding 33KV.
18. The Technical Specification (TS) published by the Energy Networks Association (ENA) ["ENA TS 43-8"](#) specifies that where:-
  - The overhead line follows a route along a hedgerow, fences, boundary walls or similar features, the minimum clearance in these circumstances is 4 metres.
  - The overhead line crosses a driveway with an access width of no more than 2.5 metres (and the driveway is defined by gateposts or similar features), the minimum clearance is 4.3 metres.Further advice on minimum clearances is available from the HSENI.
19. It is good practice that all overhead lines on sites should be fully insulated and where a cable is within easy reach of a property; it must be protected from interference.
20. Where the site owner generates their own electricity, the council should require the site owner to comply with regulation 3 of the ESQCR and in considering any enforcement action in relation to cables must consult with the HSENI.
21. Communal path widths should normally be 0.9 metres in respect of new sites or sites that are undergoing substantial redevelopment (including expansion to part of the site); otherwise paths of not less than 0.75 metres should be accepted where they already exist.

## **Lighting**

22. The lighting provided for communal paths and roads should be adequate to allow safe movement around the site during the hours of darkness. Many sites use low lighters rather than traditional street lamps and these work well as long as they are well maintained and plants/vegetation are not allowed to grow around them and stop them emitting light effectively. The lighting must be fit for purpose i.e. to allow vehicles and pedestrians to navigate around the site between dusk and dawn.

## **Bases**

23. It is important to note that the construction, maintenance and repair of the concrete base are the responsibility of the site owner. New bases should be laid as a minimum in accordance with the current industry guidelines.
24. Particular attention should be paid to the terrain of the site before a base is laid, which may mean a thicker base is needed. The base should be sufficient to handle the load placed upon it by the caravan and its contents.
25. On holiday caravan sites and touring caravan sites hard standings may not be necessary if the caravans are removed during the winter or if the ground on which they are situated is firm and safe in poor weather conditions.

## ***Enforcement***

26. When considering any enforcement action, the council should also seek the views and take account of representations from the site owner and affected residents before taking any steps to enforce this standard, where practicable.
27. Before the council undertakes any enforcement action it should consider the benefit of the works against the potential impact on the residents' enjoyment of their homes and the cost to the site owner.
28. Where a caravan has to be removed in order to facilitate works to the base the council should normally, if it is feasible and if it is the resident's desire, require the site owner to

reinstate, at his own expense, the caravan on the original pitch on completion of the works.

## **Maintenance of Common Areas, including Grass, Vegetation and Trees**

29. Cut grass and vegetation should be removed, where necessary, from the site as soon as practicable. Bonfires should not be used as a means of disposal. Vegetation is often used for sight screening but should be kept at a reasonable height.
30. Trees on the site will normally be the responsibility of the site owner. Where trees are in need of care and maintenance the council should, before any action is taken, ensure that all statutory and other requirements are complied with.
31. The common parts of the site (including roads, paths and pavements) must be kept free of any rubbish and maintained in a clean and tidy condition. The council may wish to consider whether appropriate receptacles for litter need to be provided in such areas. In any case the site owner should be required to make arrangement for the regular collection of routine refuse from the site. They should also be required to make arrangements for the prompt disposal of waste and other materials which accumulate on the site during any works etc. Secure non-combustible facilities should be provided on the site for the proper storage of refuse and waste from site works prior to its removal and disposal off the site.

## **Supply and Storage of Gas etc.**

32. The HSENI website, [www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk), provides details and information about the various legislative requirements and contacts if further information is needed. In addition the trade body for LPG suppliers, Liquid Gas UK, [www.liquidgasuk.org](http://www.liquidgasuk.org), also has information which may be of use.
33. Anyone being employed by a site owner to carry out work on gas (including natural gas) or oil installations should be suitably qualified to do the work. The [HSENI](#) pages contain details of various certification schemes which may apply.

### ***Enforcement***

34. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence conditions, the council should liaise with the HSENI to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action the HSENI is proposing to take.
35. Where areas of concern are identified on sites, the council should always consult the HSENI about the problem(s).
36. All new installations must be to the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

## **Electrical Installations**

37. The electrical installations on the site will be a distributor's network either belonging to the regional electricity network operator or the owner of the site. The Department for Economy's website: [www.economy-ni.gov.uk](http://www.economy-ni.gov.uk) contains information on legislation regarding the electricity supply in Northern Ireland.
38. A suitably qualified person for the purpose of carrying out work on electrical installations and appliances, including maintenance and inspections, includes a professionally qualified electrical engineer, a member of the Electrical Contractors Association, a contractor approved by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installations Contracting, or a qualified person acting on behalf of the above.
39. It may be necessary to ensure the electricity distribution network complies with ESQCR, in which case such work should only be undertaken by a competent person familiar with those Regulations.
40. All new installations must meet the requirements of the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

### ***Enforcement***

41. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence conditions, the council should liaise with the HSENI to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action the HSENI are proposing to take.

42. Where areas of concern are identified with site electrical networks and installations, the council should always consult the HSENI about the problem(s).

## **Water Supply**

43. The Utility Regulator lays down service standards for NI Water and details can be found on its website at [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk). In addition, there are various schemes for suitably qualified persons and authorities should check to ensure that those undertaking works are qualified. The main scheme is run by NIC certification and details can be found about the scheme at [www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com).

44. Where the water supply is wholly or partially supplied from a private water supply such a supply should be registered with the Drinking Water Inspectorate within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) before use. Further information can be obtained from <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/private-water-supplies>.

45. On any site of two or more caravans the site owner must consult with NI Water in respect of installing a water supply to the site.

## ***Enforcement***

46. With the majority of well-established sites enforcement of this section will need to be carefully handled, as most sites will have long established water systems. As with gas and electricity above, there may be a case for dual enforcement if an offence is identified. Consultation with NI Water and the Drinking Water Inspectorate is essential.

47. As with the previous sections, where an issue with water supply is identified on a particular site, the council should advise NI Water and the Drinking Water Inspectorate of the problem.

48. All new installations must be in accordance with the current regulations and maintained at the appropriate standard.

## **Drainage and Sanitation**

49. As with water supplies, provision of sewerage facilities is overseen by the Utility Regulator.
50. It is important that all drains and sewers are well maintained and are connected to the appropriate system. If left unchecked, there can be consequences for the health of residents, along with those who live near the site.
51. Where the proposed site is serving multiple caravans, those constructing must consider the requirements of Article 161 of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, as amended, with regards the construction and adoption of sewers serving two or more units.
52. It should be noted that the environmental quality of drainage is regulated by the NIEA, with whom the council must consult about any problems.
53. Where appropriate, particular consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people in the provision made for water points, toilets, washing points and showers.

## ***Enforcement***

54. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence conditions, the council should liaise with NI Water and the NIEA to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action NI Water or the NIEA are proposing to take.
55. Where areas of concern are identified on sites, the council should alert NI Water and the NIEA to the possible defects.
56. All new installations must be to the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

## **Refuse Storage and Disposal**

57. If communal bins are provided they should be housed within a properly constructed bin store. Liaison with council colleagues who deal with refuse collection matters will help in

ensuring that the bins provided by the site owner (in the case of communal bins) are acceptable to the council in undertaking its collection of refuse from them.

58. The site owner should be required to discuss with the council arrangements for the separation of waste for the purpose of recycling it, and required to provide the necessary receptacles etc., on the site.

## **Parking**

59. Parking needs will vary considerably between individual caravan sites. Parking requirements should reflect the reasonable needs of the residents, having regard to the size and layout of the site, the number of units, the occupation criteria of the site and the availability of public transport in the immediate vicinity.
60. Provision of parking spaces on new sites or those undergoing redevelopment or extension should be consistent with the relevant parking standards required through the planning process.
61. It should be noted that the guidance issued by the NIFRS (A Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators) recommends a 3 metre separation distance from an adjacent caravan and councils should consider this guidance as well as taking account of the individual site and the risk involved, when setting their site licence conditions.

## **Communal Recreation Space**

62. This standard should only be applied if the council is satisfied that it is both practicable to provide recreation space on the site and there is insufficient recreation space off the site in the near locality.
63. It will only be practicable to provide such space on the site if there is sufficient open space which is available, and it is possible to safely use that space for recreation. The standard requires the council to consider the need for recreation space; it does not require it to consider the need for recreation facilities, although the council may consider that need as part of a licence condition. The larger the site the more recreation space or spaces may be needed. On small sites there may be no need for space at all.

In deciding whether it is practicable to provide the space the council should also consider the site layout, the availability of private open spaces (e.g. within the pitch), the availability of other amenities on the site (e.g. club houses) and the age and number of residents on the site.

64. On site recreation space may be considered unnecessary if there is sufficient suitable space available off site within close (walking) distance of it. The space must, however, be freely accessible by the public, such as a municipal park, commons land, and greens or any part of the countryside to which the public have a right to walk.

## **Notices and Information**

65. It is important that all notices are protected from the weather and are prominently displayed, either on a board, in an office open to the public, or other places on the site which the residents have free and reasonable access to.

66. The notices must include the most recent site licence, and the contact details of the site manager, and, if different, the licence holder. This should include an out of hours contact number for emergencies, and if available an e-mail address.

67. The site owner is also required to make available certain information for inspection by residents in a prominent position on the site. That could be the site office, provided it is open at reasonable times, a community room which every resident is entitled to use and which is also open at reasonable times or a notice board located at the entrance to or in a central part of the site.

## **Emergency Telephone**

68. The council should decide whether an emergency telephone for calling the emergency services is required, taking account of the individual characteristics of each site including appropriate availability of mobile phone coverage and reception.

## **Flooding**

69. It is important that if a site is in an area susceptible to flooding, procedures are in place

to ensure that all those on the site are alerted quickly, and that they are aware of any evacuation procedures that may be in place. A notice should be prominently displayed with all relevant information.

70. The site should be included in any emergency arrangement plans held by councils.
71. Sites should consider surface water flood risk and how to mitigate any such risk. For those located within the inundation area of a Controlled Reservoir it would be advisable to have an evacuation plan in place.
72. Advice on flood risks is available from the Department for Infrastructure website: [www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).
73. It is important in those parts of the country where flooding is an issue that councils have effective liaison with the Department for Infrastructure Rivers Office for their area, as well as relevant officials across their own council. NI Water should also be contacted.

## **Fire Safety Measures**

74. The NIFRS website: [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org) contains a range of helpful information on fire safety and the requirements of The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. This includes links to fire safety guides including a specific guide relating to fire safety for caravan site operators.
75. In applying any conditions relating to fire safety measures, the council should consider the recommendations made in the NIFRS guidance.
76. The Fire and Rescue Service has a duty to provide fire safety advice to those who ask for it, although it will not carry out risk assessments.

## ***Firefighting Equipment***

77. Where fire points are advised in the NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators they should be visible at all times and marked in a way that makes it obvious as to what they are. They will need to be kept clear of any obstructions at all times

should they be needed in the event that a fire breaks out.

78. As of the date of publication of this document current guidance by the NIFRS is that a fire hydrant should be installed within 100m of any caravan standing and be capable of providing a flow rate of at least 1,500 litres per minute. Where a fire hydrant is not provided, or where the flow rate is insufficient, an alternative water supply may be acceptable, such as lake, pond, river, canal or a holding tank, provided it is capable of providing at least 45,000 litres of water at all times of the year, and to which access, space and a hard standing is available for a fire appliance.
79. The positioning of mains connected hydrants is the responsibility of NI Water, and any queries as to whether a site has a hydrant should be directed to them. The positioning of the hydrants should be recorded on the site map, which will assist the emergency service in locating them in the event of an emergency.
80. The site operator may decide, for additional protection, to install other measures such as water standpipes and hose reels at each fire point. Where these are provided, the water pressure and flow should be sufficient to project a jet of water approximately 5m. The hose reel should be a minimum length of 30 metres and comply with the current British Standard.
81. Fire Extinguishers should only be used if there is not enough water pressure for a hose reel. Where provided, extinguishers should comply with the current British Standard.
82. The previous Model Licence Condition in respect of an emergency telephone has been modified. An emergency telephone for calling the emergency services is only required if mobile phone reception is poor. On touring caravan sites, site owners are encouraged to provide details of the nearest available telephone for contacting the emergency services on the fire notice.

### ***Fire Warning***

83. The means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire should be appropriate to the size and layout of the site. If the responsible person is unsure of which form of raising the alarm is the most suitable to the site, then refer to the NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for

Caravan Site Operators.

### ***Maintenance and Testing of Firefighting Equipment***

84. It is important that all fire warning systems and firefighting equipment are regularly inspected and maintained. The suggestion is that these checks should be carried out on an annual basis. All testing and maintenance should be carried out by a person suitably qualified to do the work. Records should be kept of any testing and when the most recent inspections were carried out. The record of all tests and inspections should be kept on the site for inspection.

### ***Fire Notices***

85. The fire action notice should be displayed on a notice board, and at other suitable points around the site. The full address of the site, including the postcode should be included. Suggested text is available in the NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators.

### ***Enforcement***

86. The main enforcer in respect of fire safety is the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

# **Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites 2025**

**Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 Section 5**



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Department fur

**Infrastructure**

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## Introduction

1. The use of land as a caravan site is controlled by relevant planning legislation, whereas the physical standards and layout, amenities and other standards within the site are controlled by a site licence issued by local councils under the Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 (“the 1963 Act”). Section 5 of the 1963 Act enables councils to set licence conditions.
2. Under section 5(7) of the 1963 Act the Department may from time to time specify model conditions with respect to the lay-out and the provision of facilities, services and equipment for caravan sites or particular types of caravan site; and that, in deciding what (if any) conditions to attach to a site licence, the council shall have regard to any conditions so specified.
3. These conditions revise and update the Model Licence Conditions 1994 (Residential Caravan Sites) and apply to Traveller or Roma sites (including transit and emergency halting sites).
4. This publication of separate Model Licence Conditions for Travellers Sites has been prompted by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) ‘Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers’ Accommodation in NI’ investigation report published on 6 March 2018. The report made a number of recommendations for public authorities, including that the Department should:

*“review the legal and policy framework concerning site licences. This should include the development of a model site licence setting out the minimum standard of provision and safety requirements for each type of Travellers site in NI, along with enforcement powers for any breach.”*

This recommendation has been accepted, and the Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites 2025 will be published alongside the Model Licence Conditions 2025 (Residential Sites and Holiday Sites).

5. In response to a recommendation by NIHRC, the Department for Communities (DfC) has completed its review of the Design Guide for Travellers' Accommodation. The Design Guide for Travellers' sites in Northern Ireland<sup>1</sup> is intended to support the provision of appropriate, cost-effective sites for Travellers living in Northern Ireland.
6. These conditions apply to Traveller or Roma sites (including transit and emergency halting sites) and should be considered when: -
  - applying licence conditions to new sites;
  - applying licence conditions to sites that have been substantially redeveloped; or
  - renewing or reviewing a current licence.
7. Where current licence conditions under the Model Licence Conditions 1994 (Residential Caravan Sites) are adequate in serving their purpose, the council do not need to apply new conditions.
8. Where it is appropriate to amend an existing condition or apply a new condition to a licence the council must be able to justify its reasons for doing so, having regard to all the relevant circumstances of the site. In deciding whether to apply a new condition the council must have regard to the benefit that the condition will achieve and the interests of both residents and site owners (including the cost of complying with the new or altered condition) and should consult the site licence holder on the proposed variations. They may also wish to consult with residents where appropriate.
9. The model conditions represent those standards normally to be expected as a matter of good practice on caravan sites. They should be applied with regard to the particular circumstances of the relevant site, including its physical character, any relevant services, facilities or other amenities that are available within or in the locality of the site and other applicable conditions.
10. The council should also consider the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) guidance<sup>2</sup> and the DfC Design Guide for Travellers' sites in Northern Ireland when

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<sup>1</sup> "Design Guide for Travellers' sites in Northern Ireland", available via the Department for Communities website at [www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> "NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators", available via NIFRS website at [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org)

applying conditions on a site licence.

11. The Explanatory Note to this document provides advice on the application and enforcement of the model conditions when considering attaching conditions to licences.
12. Councils should allow a reasonable period of time after any site licence alteration for compliance with the revised conditions, unless the reason for making the alteration is to address a matter requiring immediate attention.
13. When considering taking enforcement action councils should undertake a risk assessment to take into account all possible factors in relation to the prosecution.
14. This document should be referred to as Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites 2025.
15. The Model Licence Conditions 1994 shall cease to have effect from 1 July 2025.

## **Interpretation**

16. In the model conditions any references to “site” includes serviced sites, transit sites and emergency halting sites.
17. In this document the term “site owner” is referred to throughout, as normally that person would be the licence holder.

# MODEL LICENCE CONDITIONS FOR TRAVELLER SITES 2025

## 1. The Boundaries and Plan of the Site

- (i) The boundaries of the site from any adjoining land should be clearly marked by a man made or natural feature.
- (ii) No caravan or combustible structure should be positioned within 3 metres of the boundary of the site (subject to the particular characteristics of the site).
- (iii) A plan of the site should be supplied to the council upon the application for a licence and, thereafter whenever there is a material change to the boundaries or layout of the site, or at any other time on the demand of the council.
- (iv) The plan supplied must clearly illustrate the layout of the site including all relevant structures, features and facilities on it and should be of suitable quality.

## 2. Density and Spacing Between Caravans

- (i) Subject to the following variations the minimum spacing distance between any two caravans should not be less than 6 metres.
- (ii) The point of measurement of porches, awnings etc. is the exterior cladding of the caravan, excluding the draw bar. It is recommended that the distance from any part of a caravan to any part of a road within the site should not be less than 2 metres where appropriate.
- (iii) Porches may protrude 1 metre into the 6 metres space and should be of the open type.
- (iv) Where awnings are used, the distance between any part of the awning and an adjoining caravan should not be less than 3 metres. They should not be of the type which incorporates sleeping accommodation and they should not face each other or touch.
- (v) Eaves, drainpipes and bay windows may extend into the 6 metre space provided the total distance between the extremities of 2 adjacent units is not less than 4.5 metres in a 5 metre space, or 5.25 metres in a 6 metre space.
- (vi) Where there are ramps for disabled people, verandahs or stairs extending from the unit, there should be 4.5 metres clear space between them and such items should not face each other in any space. If they are enclosed, they should normally be

considered as part of the unit and, as such, should not intrude into the 6 metres space.

- (vii) A garage, a shed or covered storage space should be permitted between units only if it is of substantially non-combustible construction (including non-combustible roof) and sufficient space is maintained around each unit so as not to prejudice means of escape in case of fires. Windows in such structures should not face towards the unit on either side. Car ports and covered walkways should in no circumstances be allowed within the 6 metres space. For cars and boats between units see paragraph 13.
- (viii) The density should be consistent with safety standards and health and amenity requirements. The gross density should not exceed 50 caravans per hectare, calculated on the basis of the usable area (i.e. excluding lakes, roads, communal services and other areas unsuitable for the siting of caravans) rather than the total site area.

### **3. Roads, Footpaths, Pavements, Gateways and Overhead Cables**

- (i) Roads and footpaths should be designed to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.
- (ii) Where the approach to the caravan is across ground which may become difficult or dangerous in wet weather, each standing should be connected to a road by a footpath with a hard surface.
- (iii) Emergency vehicle routes within the site should be kept clear of obstruction at all times.
- (iv) New roads should be constructed and laid of suitable bitumen macadam or concrete with a suitable compacted base.
- (v) All roads should have adequate surface water/storm drainage.
- (vi) New two-way roads should not be less than 3.7 metres wide, or if they are designed for and used by one way traffic, not less than 3 metres wide.
- (vii) One-way systems should be clearly signposted.
- (viii) Where existing two-way roads are not 3.7 metres wide, passing places should be provided where practical.
- (ix) Vehicular access and at least 1 gateway to the site must be a minimum of 3.1 metres

wide and have a minimum height clearance of 3.7 metres.

- (x) Roads and footpaths should be maintained in a good condition.
- (xi) Cable overhangs must meet the statutory requirements.
- (xii) Every caravan should be connected to a road by a footpath with a hard surface.
- (xiii) Where practicable, communal footpaths and pavements should not be less than 0.9 metres wide.

## **4. Lighting**

Taking into account the needs and characteristics of a particular site, roads, communal footpaths and pavements should be adequately lit between dusk and dawn to allow the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles around the site during the hours of darkness.

## **5. Bases**

- (i) Every unit must stand on a concrete base or hard-standing area.
- (ii) The base must extend over the whole area occupied by the unit and must project a sufficient distance outwards from its entrance or entrances to enable occupants to enter and leave safely. The hard standings must be constructed to the industry guidance, current at the time of siting, taking into account local conditions.

## **6. Maintenance of Common Areas, including Grass, Vegetation and Trees**

- (i) Every part of the site to which the public have access should be kept in a clean and tidy condition.
- (ii) Every road, communal footpath and pavement on the site should be maintained in a good condition, good repair and clear of rubbish.
- (iii) Grass and vegetation should be maintained and cut at frequent and regular intervals and removed where necessary.
- (iv) Trees within the site should (subject to the necessary consents) be maintained.
- (v) Any cuttings, litter or waste should be removed from the immediate surrounds of a pitch.

## **7. Supply & Storage of Gas etc.**

- (i) Gas (including natural gas) and oil installations, and the storage of supplies should meet current statutory requirements and relevant Standards and Codes of Practice.
- (ii) Liquefied Petroleum Gas cylinders must not be positioned or secured in such a way as to impede access or removal in the event of an emergency.
- (iii) Exposed gas bottles or cylinders should not be within the separation boundary of an adjoining unit.

## **8. Electrical Installations**

- (i) On the site an electricity network of adequate capacity should be installed to meet safely all reasonable demands of the caravans and other facilities and services within it.
- (ii) The electrical network installations are subject to regulation under current relevant legislation and must be designed, installed, tested, inspected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of the current relevant statutory requirements.
- (iii) Any work on electrical installations and appliances should be carried out only by persons who are competent to do the particular type of work being undertaken, in accordance with current relevant statutory requirements.
- (iv) Any work on the electrical network within the site should be done by a competent person fully conversant with the appropriate statutory requirements.

## **9. Water Supply**

- (i) All pitches on the site should be provided with a wholesome water supply sufficient in all respects to meet all reasonable demands of the caravans situated on them.
- (ii) All new wholesome water supplies should be in accordance with all current legislation, regulations and relevant British Standards.
- (iii) All repairs and improvements to water supplies and installations should be carried out to conform with current legislation and British Standards.
- (iv) Work on water supplies and installations should be carried out only by persons who are qualified in the particular type of work being undertaken and in accordance with current relevant legislation and British Standards.

## **10. Drainage and Sanitation**

- (i) Surface water drainage should be provided where appropriate to avoid standing pools of water.
- (ii) There should be satisfactory provision for foul and wastewater drainage either by connection to a public sewer or sewage treatment works or by discharge to a properly constructed septic tank or cesspool approved by the council.
- (iii) All drainage and sanitation provision should be in accordance with all current legislation and British Standards.
- (iv) Work on drains and sewers should be carried out only by persons who are qualified in the particular type of work being undertaken and in accordance with current legislation and British Standards.
- (v) For caravans without their own water supply and water closets, clean and properly maintained communal toilet blocks should be provided, with adequate supplies of water, to at least the following scales: -
  - Men: 1 WC and 1 urinal per 15 caravans or less;
  - Women: 2 WCs per 15 caravans or less;
  - 1 wash basin for each 2 WCs (or urinals).
- (vi) Toilet blocks should be sited conveniently so that all site occupants may have reasonable access to one by means of a road or footpath.

## **11. Disabled Persons**

- (i) Particular consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people in the provision made for water points, toilets, washing points and showers if appropriate.
- (ii) Provision for access for disabled people to common buildings should be in compliance with Building Regulations extant at the time the building was erected, altered or extended. Particular consideration should be given as to how any new standards may be introduced where appropriate.

## **12. Refuse Storage & Disposal**

- (i) Where communal refuse bins are provided these should be housed within a properly constructed bin store which should include a facility to enable it to be hosed down with clean water.
- (ii) All refuse disposal should be in accordance with all current legislation and

regulations.

## **13. Parking**

- (i) Private cars, jet skis and boats may be parked between adjoining caravans provided that they do not obstruct entrances to caravans or access around them and they are the appropriate distance from an adjacent caravan.
- (ii) Fuel tanks for motorboats should be disconnected and stored in a shaded area, not below a caravan.
- (iii) Suitably surfaced parking spaces should be provided to meet the requirements of residents and their visitors.

## **14. Communal Recreation Space**

- (i) On sites where it is practical to do so, suitable space equivalent to about one tenth of the total area of the site should be allocated for recreational purposes, unless in the council's opinion there are adequate recreational facilities within close proximity to the site.
- (ii) Where recreational facilities are provided, warning signs should be placed at the entrance to the site and throughout warning drivers of the presence of children where appropriate.

## **15. Notices and Information<sup>3</sup>**

- (i) The name and address of the site should be displayed on a sign in a prominent position at the entrances to the site together with the current name, address and telephone number of the licence holder and manager and emergency contact details.
- (ii) In addition, the following should be available for inspection in a prominent place on the site:-
  - a copy of the current site licence.
  - a copy of the most recent periodic electrical inspection report.
  - a copy of the site owner's certificate of public liability insurance.
  - a copy of the local flood warning system and evacuation procedures, if appropriate.

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<sup>3</sup> Councils should refer to paragraph 67 in the Explanatory Notes when applying Conditions 15(ii) and (iii) in respect of NIHE sites.

- a copy of the fire risk assessment made for the site (if required by the NIFRS Caravan Sites Operators Guide).

(iii) A current plan of the site with roads and pitches marked on it should also be prominently displayed at the entrances.

(iv) All notices should be suitably protected from the weather and from direct sunlight, preferably in an area lit by artificial light.

## 16. Emergency Telephone

- (i) An emergency telephone for calling the emergency services is only required if mobile phone reception in the area is poor.
- (ii) If provided, the telephone should be immediately accessible and a notice by the telephone should include the name, address and postcode of the site.

## 17. Flooding

- (i) The site owner should establish whether the site is at risk from flooding by referring to the Department for Infrastructure's Flood Maps.
- (ii) Where there is risk from flooding the site owner should consult the Department for Infrastructure (Rivers) for advice on the likelihood of flooding, the depths and velocities that might be expected, the availability of a warning service and on what appropriate measures to take.

## 18. Fire Safety<sup>4</sup>

### Fire Notices

- (i) A clearly written and visible notice should be provided and maintained on site to indicate the action to be taken in case of fire. This notice should include the following:
  - Ensure the caravan or site building involved is evacuated.
  - Raise the alarm.
  - Call the Fire & Rescue Service on 999.

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<sup>4</sup> Councils should consider the “NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators”, available via NIFRS website at [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org). See paragraph 75 of explanatory notes.

In applying the conditions above in respect of fire safety measures the council should refer to NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators. As regards to Traveller / Roma sites the guidance emphasises that in the event of a fire the occupier should Get Out, Get the Fire and Rescue Service Out, and Stay Out and therefore the provision of fire points, fire fighting equipment or a fire warning is not recommended.

- (ii) During meetings and site visits it should be emphasised that in the event of a fire the occupier should Get Out, Get the Fire and Rescue Service Out, and Stay Out.

# **Annex to Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites 2025: Explanatory Notes**

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# MODEL LICENCE CONDITIONS – EXPLANATORY NOTES

## *Introduction*

1. These explanatory notes are designed to be read in conjunction with the Model Licence Conditions for Traveller Sites 2025 (“the conditions”) and are intended to offer guidance on the application and enforcement of the conditions for councils.
2. The conditions represent what would normally be expected as a matter of good practice on caravan sites. They should be applied with regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the physical character of the site, any facilities or services that may already be available within convenient reach and other local conditions.
3. It is recognised that not all sites will easily be able to meet the conditions in every case due to their particular characteristics, but a council will need to be able to justify any decision not to have regard to the conditions in setting a licence condition.
4. The conditions are not intended to be the “ideal”; councils may in certain circumstances set more demanding ones if it is appropriate and can be justified.
5. There will be some licence conditions which require inter and cross agency input, advice from other sections within the council and external organisations, such as the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS), Northern Ireland Water (NI Water), and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). It is important for all parties concerned with sites that effective lines of communication are established to ensure that any problems are identified and resolved as early as possible.
6. Disability Discrimination legislation applies to sites and this should be borne in mind when framing licence conditions and considering possible enforcement action. Guidance can be found at [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) and this can also help councils in their consideration of licence conditions. Further guidance can also be found on the Equality Commission's website at <https://www.equalityni.org>.

## **Legal background**

7. Under the Caravan Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 (the 1963 Act), most privately owned sites must be licensed by the council, unless exempted under the 1963 Act<sup>5</sup>. A licence will be granted unless the applicant does not have a relevant planning permission to operate the site or has had a licence revoked in the last three years<sup>6</sup>.
8. The council may attach conditions to the licence, but these can only relate to the physical use of the site and its management<sup>7</sup>. The Department for Infrastructure may issue Model Licence Conditions which the council must have regard to in deciding what conditions to attach to a licence<sup>8</sup>. The council may from time to time alter a site licence condition (either of its own volition or upon the application of the licence holder)<sup>9</sup>.
9. A licence holder may appeal against the imposition of a condition in a licence or any proposed alteration to a condition or a refusal to alter a condition<sup>10</sup>.
10. It is an offence to breach a licence condition and on summary conviction the offender can currently be fined up to £2,500<sup>11</sup>. Where a condition requires works to the site to be carried out and these are not done either within the time specified or to the satisfaction of the council, the council may carry out the works itself and recover from the licence holder any expenses it has reasonably incurred in doing so<sup>12</sup>.
11. The council may apply to the court to have a licence revoked if the licence holder has been convicted on two or more occasions of breaches of licence conditions<sup>13</sup>.
12. The council is required, under section 22 of the 1963 Act, to maintain an accurate register of the site licences in their area. Given the number of different types of sites that councils may deal with, it is recommended that the register shows what type of

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<sup>5</sup> Section 2 and Schedule to the 1963 Act set out in which circumstances a site licence is not required.

<sup>6</sup> Section 3 (3) and (6).

<sup>7</sup> Section 5 (1) to (6). For restriction see *Mixnam's Properties v Chertsey UDC A.C. 735*.

<sup>8</sup> Section 5 (7).

<sup>9</sup> Section 8.

<sup>10</sup> Sections 7 and 8 (2).

<sup>11</sup> Section 9 (1). The maximum penalty on summary conviction is a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.

<sup>12</sup> Section 9 (4).

<sup>13</sup> Section 9 (2).

site each is i.e. Traveller site. It is recommended as a minimum the register contains:-

- the name and address of site (if available the Geographic Information Service mapping code should also be logged);
- the name of the licence holder, the site owner (if different) and any person managing the site on behalf of either of those persons;
- type of site;
- the number of pitches; and
- the licence conditions (if any).

## **The Boundaries and Plan of the Site**

1. The boundary should clearly define the limit of the site owner's responsibility. The boundary should be suitably marked and properly maintained. This boundary could be formed of a fence, hedge, wall or natural feature or any other suitable structure (or any combination of these) or it may in whole, or part, be formed by an appropriate natural feature, such as a river or a wood. It would not normally be appropriate for that natural feature to simply include an open field.
2. Plans of the site should be provided to the council at the site owners' expense.
3. It is best practice for copies of the plan to be made available to the emergency services.
4. The 3 metre separation distance inside the boundary serves the purpose of ensuring privacy from whatever is on the other side of the boundary, such as a road, and other developments, such as houses etc., and for health and safety, including the spread of fire. Given the particular characteristics of the site the council may be of the opinion that a 3 metre separation distance is not necessary in all circumstances.
5. The 3 metre separation distance measurement should be taken from the caravan wall.

## **Density and Spacing Between Caravans**

6. The 6 metre separation distance is required for two reasons:
  - Health and safety considerations; and
  - Privacy from neighbouring caravans.
7. Health and safety matters, such as the positioning of gas bottles, etc., should also be taken into account.
8. For the purposes of calculating the distance between the caravans, the point from which measurements are taken is the exterior cladding of the relevant caravan. Eaves, drainpipes, gutters, sills, threshold, door canopies and bay windows should be discounted.

9. Porches should not render the home incapable of being moved, which means they should be demountable.
10. If structures, other than garages, are on pitches within the separation distance and are of a combustible construction, then the council should consider allowing sufficient time for them to be replaced with an acceptable non-combustible model.
11. At no time should a garage constructed of combustible material be allowed within the separation distance.

### ***Enforcement***

12. In considering the enforcement of the separation distance the council should refer to the NIFRS guidance. It should also seek the views and take account of representations from the site owner and affected residents before taking any steps to enforce this condition, where practicable.
13. Before the council undertakes any enforcement action it should consider the benefit of the works against the potential impact on the residents' enjoyment of their caravans and the cost to the site owner.

## **Roads, Footpaths, Pavements, Gateways and Overhead Cables**

14. Roads should be constructed of bitumen macadam or concrete with suitable compacted base. However, sites with roads constructed of tarmacadam should not be required to upgrade their roads as a result of the conditions. The roads should only be required to be upgraded as and when they begin to fall into disrepair.
15. Some larger sites may have traffic calming measures such as speed humps on their roads. Though not specifically covered in this standard, it will be worth ensuring that any legal requirements applying to un-adopted roads are met. Guidance and assistance can be found on the Department for Infrastructure website, [www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).

16. Gateways, roads and turnings should have enough clearance to allow safe entry for emergency vehicles and new units on lorries. The widths and heights given are based on the maximum sizes of emergency vehicles that may regularly attend incidents on sites.
17. In determining the permitted height of cable overhangs the council must take into account the current statutory requirements. Those applying as at the date of this guidance are found in the Electricity Safety Quality and Continuity Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 SR 2012/381 (ESQCR). These regulations provide that, in general, cables should not overhang a road at a height of less than 5.8 metres for lines not exceeding 33KV.
18. The Technical Specification (TS) published by the Energy Networks Association (ENA) ["ENA TS 43-8"](#) specifies that where:-
  - The overhead line follows a route along a hedgerow, fences, boundary walls or similar features, the minimum clearance in these circumstances is 4 metres.
  - The overhead line crosses a driveway with an access width of no more than 2.5 metres (and the driveway is defined by gateposts or similar features), the minimum clearance is 4.3 metres.Further advice on minimum clearances is available from the HSENI.
19. It is good practice that all overhead lines on sites should be fully insulated and where a cable is within easy reach of a property; it must be protected from interference.
20. Where the site owner generates their own electricity, the council should require the site owner to comply with regulation 3 of the ESQCR and in considering any enforcement action in relation to cables must consult with the HSENI.
21. Communal path widths should normally be 0.9 metres in respect of new sites or sites that are undergoing substantial redevelopment (including expansion to part of the site); otherwise paths of not less than 0.75 metres should be accepted where they already exist.

## **Lighting**

22. The lighting provided for communal paths and roads should be adequate to allow safe movement around the site during the hours of darkness. Many sites use low lighters rather than traditional street lamps and these work well as long as they are well maintained and plants/vegetation are not allowed to grow around them and stop them emitting light effectively. The lighting must be fit for purpose i.e. to allow vehicles and pedestrians to navigate around the site between dusk and dawn.

## **Bases**

23. It is important to note that the construction, maintenance and repair of the concrete base are the responsibility of the site owner. New bases should be laid as a minimum in accordance with the current industry guidelines.
24. Particular attention should be paid to the terrain of the site before a base is laid, which may mean a thicker base is needed. The base should be sufficient to handle the load placed upon it by the caravan and its contents.

## ***Enforcement***

25. When considering any enforcement action, the council should also seek the views and take account of representations from the site owner and affected residents before taking any steps to enforce this standard, where practicable.
26. Before the council undertakes any enforcement action it should consider the benefit of the works against the potential impact on the residents' enjoyment of their homes and the cost to the site owner.
27. Where a caravan has to be removed in order to facilitate works to the base the council should normally, if it is feasible and if it is the resident's desire, require the site owner to reinstate, at his own expense, the caravan on the original pitch on completion of the works.

## **Maintenance of Common Areas, including Grass, Vegetation and Trees**

28. Cut grass and vegetation should be removed, where necessary, from the site as soon as practicable. Bonfires should not be used as a means of disposal. Vegetation is often used for sight screening but should be kept at a reasonable height.
29. Trees on the site will normally be the responsibility of the site owner. Where trees are in need of care and maintenance the council should, before any action is taken, ensure that all statutory and other requirements are complied with.
30. The common parts of the site (including roads, paths and pavements) must be kept free of any rubbish and maintained in a clean and tidy condition. The council may wish to consider whether appropriate receptacles for litter need to be provided in such areas. In any case the site owner should be required to make arrangement for the regular collection of routine refuse from the site. They should also be required to make arrangements for the prompt disposal of waste and other materials which accumulate on the site during any works etc. Secure non-combustible facilities should be provided on the site for the proper storage of refuse and waste from site works prior to its removal and disposal off the site.

## **Supply and Storage of Gas etc.**

31. The HSENI website, [www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk), provides details and information about the various legislative requirements and contacts if further information is needed. In addition the trade body for LPG suppliers, Liquid Gas UK, [www.liquidgasuk.org](http://www.liquidgasuk.org), also has information which may be of use.
32. Anyone being employed by a site owner to carry out work on gas (including natural gas) or oil installations should be suitably qualified to do the work. The [HSENI](#) pages contain details of various certification schemes which may apply.

### ***Enforcement***

33. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence

conditions, the council should liaise with the HSENI to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action the HSENI is proposing to take.

34. Where areas of concern are identified on sites, the council should always consult the HSENI about the problem(s).
35. All new installations must be to the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

## **Electrical Installations**

36. The electrical installations on the site will be a distributor's network either belonging to the regional electricity network operator or the owner of the site. The Department for Economy's website: [www.economy-ni.gov.uk](http://www.economy-ni.gov.uk) contains information on legislation regarding the electricity supply in Northern Ireland.
37. A suitably qualified person for the purpose of carrying out work on electrical installations and appliances, including maintenance and inspections, includes a professionally qualified electrical engineer, a member of the Electrical Contractors Association, a contractor approved by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installations Contracting, or a qualified person acting on behalf of the above.
38. It may be necessary to ensure the electricity distribution network complies with ESQCR, in which case such work should only be undertaken by a competent person familiar with those Regulations.
39. All new installations must meet the requirements of the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

## ***Enforcement***

40. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence conditions, the council should liaise with the HSENI to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action the HSENI are proposing to take.
41. Where areas of concern are identified with site electrical networks and installations, the council should always consult the HSENI about the problem(s).

## **Water Supply**

42. The Utility Regulator lays down service standards for NI Water and details can be found on its website at [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk). In addition, there are various schemes for suitably qualified persons and authorities should check to ensure that those undertaking works are qualified. The main scheme is run by NIC certification and details can be found about the scheme at [www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com).
43. Where the water supply is wholly or partially supplied from a private water supply such a supply should be registered with the Drinking Water Inspectorate within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) before use. Further information can be obtained from <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/private-water-supplies>.
44. On any site of two or more caravans the site owner must consult with NI Water in respect of installing a water supply to the site.

## ***Enforcement***

45. With the majority of well-established sites enforcement of this section will need to be carefully handled, as most sites will have long established water systems. As with gas and electricity above, there may be a case for dual enforcement if an offence is identified. Consultation with NI Water and the Drinking Water Inspectorate is essential.
46. As with the previous sections, where an issue with water supply is identified on a particular site, the council should advise NI Water and the Drinking Water Inspectorate of the problem.
47. All new installations must be in accordance with the current regulations and maintained at the appropriate standard.

## **Drainage and Sanitation**

48. As with water supplies, provision of sewerage facilities is overseen by the Utility Regulator.

49. It is important that all drains and sewers are well maintained and are connected to the appropriate system. If left unchecked, there can be consequences for the health of residents, along with those who live near the site.
50. Where the proposed site is serving multiple caravans, those constructing must consider the requirements of Article 161 of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, as amended, with regards the construction and adoption of sewers serving two or more units.
51. It should be noted that the environmental quality of drainage is regulated by the NIEA, with whom the council must consult about any problems.
52. Where appropriate, particular consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people in the provision made for water points, toilets, washing points and showers.

### ***Enforcement***

53. In considering whether to take enforcement action for a breach of site licence conditions, the council should liaise with NI Water and the NIEA to ensure any action taken by the authority is not in conflict with any action NI Water or the NIEA are proposing to take.
54. Where areas of concern are identified on sites, the council should alert NI Water and the NIEA to the possible defects.
55. All new installations must be to the current regulations and maintained at that standard.

### **Refuse Storage and Disposal**

56. If communal bins are provided they should be housed within a properly constructed bin store. Liaison with council colleagues who deal with refuse collection matters will help in ensuring that the bins provided by the site owner (in the case of communal bins) are acceptable to the council in undertaking its collection of refuse from them.
57. The site owner should be required to discuss with the council arrangements for the separation of waste for the purpose of recycling it, and required to provide the

necessary receptacles etc., on the site.

## **Parking**

58. Parking needs will vary considerably between individual caravan sites. Parking requirements should reflect the reasonable needs of the residents, having regard to the size and layout of the site, the number of units, the occupation criteria of the site and the availability of public transport in the immediate vicinity.
59. Provision of parking spaces on new sites or those undergoing redevelopment or extension should be consistent with the relevant parking standards required through the planning process.

## **Communal Recreation Space**

60. This standard should only be applied if the council is satisfied that it is both practicable to provide recreation space on the site and there is insufficient recreation space off the site in the near locality.
61. It will only be practicable to provide such space on the site if there is sufficient open space which is available, and it is possible to safely use that space for recreation. The standard requires the council to consider the need for recreation space; it does not require it to consider the need for recreation facilities, although the council may consider that need as part of a licence condition. The larger the site the more recreation space or spaces may be needed. On small sites there may be no need for space at all. In deciding whether it is practicable to provide the space the council should also consider the site layout, the availability of private open spaces (e.g. within the pitch), the availability of other amenities on the site (e.g. club houses) and the age and number of residents on the site.
62. On site recreation space may be considered unnecessary if there is sufficient suitable space available off site within close (walking) distance of it. The space must, however, be freely accessible by the public, such as a municipal park, commons land, and greens or any part of the countryside to which the public have a right to walk.

63. Councils should consider the DfC Design Guide for Traveller sites where recreation areas are provided. It is important to ensure they are designed and located with the safety of children in mind (taking into account the proximity of busy roads) and allowing for supervision. Warning signs should be placed at the entrance to the site and throughout warning drivers of the presence of children.

## **Notices and Information**

64. It is important that all notices are protected from the weather and are prominently displayed, either on a board, in an office open to the public, or other places on the site which the residents have free and reasonable access to.

65. The notices must include the most recent site licence, and the contact details of the site manager, and, if different, the licence holder. This should include an out of hours contact number for emergencies, and if available an e-mail address.

66. The site owner is also required to make available certain information for inspection by residents in a prominent position on the site. That could be the site office, provided it is open at reasonable times, a community room which every resident is entitled to use and which is also open at reasonable times or a notice board located at the entrance to or in a central part of the site.

67. The council should discuss and agree a suitable arrangement in respect of the display of notices and information required by Conditions 15(ii) and (iii) with the NIHE, regarding the sites provided for Travellers.

## **Emergency Telephone**

68. The council should decide whether an emergency telephone for calling the emergency services is required, taking account of the individual characteristics of each site including appropriate availability of mobile phone coverage and reception.

## **Flooding**

69. It is important that if a site is in an area susceptible to flooding, procedures are in place

to ensure that all those on the site are alerted quickly, and that they are aware of any evacuation procedures that may be in place. A notice should be prominently displayed with all relevant information.

70. The site should be included in any emergency arrangement plans held by councils.
71. Sites should consider surface water flood risk and how to mitigate any such risk. For those located within the inundation area of a Controlled Reservoir it would be advisable to have an evacuation plan in place.
72. Advice on flood risks is available from the Department for Infrastructure website: [www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).
73. It is important in those parts of the country where flooding is an issue that councils have effective liaison with the Department for Infrastructure Rivers Office for their area, as well as relevant officials across their own council. NI Water should also be contacted.

## **Fire Safety**

74. The NIFRS website: [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org) contains a range of helpful information on fire safety and the requirements of The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. This includes links to fire safety guides including a specific guide relating to fire safety for caravan site operators.
75. In applying any conditions relating to fire safety measures, the council should consider the recommendations made in the NIFRS guidance. At Traveller or Roma sites, NIFRS recommends that during meetings and site visits it should be emphasised that in the event of a fire the occupier should Get Out, Get the Fire and Rescue Service Out, and Stay Out, and therefore the provision of fire points, firefighting equipment or a fire warning is not recommended.
76. The Fire and Rescue Service has a duty to provide fire safety advice to those who ask for it.

### ***Fire Notices***

77. The fire action notice should be displayed on a notice board, and at other suitable points around the site. Suggested text is available in the NIFRS Fire Safety Guide for Caravan Site Operators.

### ***Enforcement***

78. The main enforcer in respect of fire safety is the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

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<b>Subject:</b>	Request for the exhibition of unclassified films
<b>Date:</b>	18 February 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning & Building Control, Ext. 2300
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Hipkins, Building Control Manager, Ext. 2435

#### Restricted Reports

**Is this report restricted?**

Yes  No

**Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.**

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

**If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?**

After Committee Decision  
After Council Decision  
Sometime in the future  
Never

#### Call-in

**Is the decision eligible for Call-in?**

Yes  No

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To consider a request from Nerve Centre Belfast to permit a one-off showing of three unclassified films to be screened at the QFT on Saturday 28 March 2026, as part of a screening event showcasing student films for participants of their Animation Academy.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested, having heard from any representatives of the Nerve centre, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) permit the screening of the three unclassified films in accordance with an age classification of 15, the highest rating which has been specified by the Nerve Centre; or</li> <li>b) permit the screening of the unclassified films in accordance with a different age classification; or</li> <li>c) refuse the screening of unclassified films in the venue.</li> </ul>
2.2	Whilst there is a general provision for appeals in relation to the conditions placed on Cinema Licences, there is no right of appeal in respect of this decision.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <p>3.1 The Council licences cinemas and other venues under the Cinemas (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 for the exhibition of films. The main functions of the legislation relate to technical matters such as structural stability and fire safety and, as such, the powers to issue licences are delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control.</p> <p>3.2 Unlike other types of Licences there is no public notification and representation process for Cinema Licence applications hence there is normally no involvement of the Committee with Cinema Licensing.</p> <p>3.3 However, the Order requires the Council to impose conditions or restrictions prohibiting the admission of children to film exhibitions involving the showing of films designated as works unsuitable for children.</p> <p>3.4 When issuing Licences, the Council establishes Conditions regarding the general running and administration of the premises. One such Condition is that only films which have been classified with a certificate issued by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) may be shown. These conditions are attached at Appendix 1.</p> <p>3.5 The BBFC is an independent body which classifies all films on behalf of local authorities, and they have strict guidelines and criteria in awarding films a classification. The BBFC categories and criteria guidelines are attached at Appendix 2.</p> <p>3.6 This system is used by all authorities within the United Kingdom and all commercial films will have been classified through this process. Independent films, shorts and features that have not been classified through the BBFC tend to be shown in private clubs and societies rather than in commercial cinemas licensed by the Council. However, in recent years the Council have received an increased number of requests to consider screening of unclassified films.</p>

3.7	There is a proviso in the Licence Conditions which allows the showing of an unclassified film if the Council is satisfied with the proposal. The Council can also append any Conditions it deems appropriate in relation to that film exhibition, including an age restriction. Such a decision does not attempt to 'classify' the film but merely permits its exhibition in the individual situation applied for.
3.8	The Service has previously received requests to screen unclassified films for which the Licensing Committee has provided its approval.
3.9	The Service reserves the right to take action for a breach of licence if any of the unclassified films are found not to be as described.
<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>	
3.10	The Service has received a request for unclassified films produced by students of the Nerve Centre's Animation Academy to be shown in the QFT. See Appendix 3.
3.11	The Nerve Centre receives funding from the Department for Communities to run a number of Screen Academies for young people aged 16-19 to learn more about the creative industries whilst working on their own projects.
3.12	The intended screening is to showcase work carried out over a six month period by around 25 young people aged 16-19 years, and to celebrate the creativity of the participants in both the BFI (British Film Institute) Film Academy and the Visual Effects Academy.
3.13	The request is to exhibit three short films together in one screening, with only one showing of each film on Saturday 28 March 2026, at 10am - 11.30am in the QFT, Belfast.
3.14	The proposed screening is intended to be by invitation only, with no admission charge and will not be open to the general public.
3.15	The films proposed to be exhibited are listed below with description provided by the Nerve Centre, representatives of which have been involved in the production and had final editorial control of the films:
3.16	<p><b>Film 1: "An Unlikely Friendship"</b> – under 10 minutes, a short dramatic film.  <i>Film synopsis - Scarlett, a warm and friendly new barista, also happens to be a budding fashion designer. She becomes intrigued by one very grumpy regular customer. (Depicted onscreen in puppet form) Scarlett's mission to befriend 'Bill' reveals just how little we have to have in common to find common ground.</i>  <i>There are themes around Bereavement central to the story and there is one use of a mild swear word (Prick).</i></p> <p><b>The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is PG.</b></p>
3.17	<p><b>Film 2: "Kill Your Darlings"</b> – under 10 minutes, a short dramatic film.  <i>Film synopsis - After a series of apparently unconnected women are murdered, and with only a few hours before the killer strikes again, a crack detective and her hapless colleague try to solve the case... but the plot is bigger and dangerously closer to home than she can imagine.</i>  <i>In the script there's use of the phrases 'hell' 'god damn' 'bastard', &amp; 'shit'.</i></p> <p><i>There's no on-screen violence depicted but there are crime scene photos on a scene background board that the camera does cut to Close Ups of. These depict women lying 'dead' some covered in blood - these photos were staged and captured by our participants as part of their set design. These are mid shots / full body shots.</i></p>

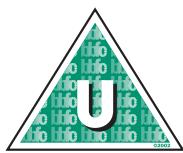
	<p><i>In the audio track the viewer does hear a gun fired at the end but onscreen viewers see no evidence of what the consequence were of its firing.</i></p> <p><i>Characters on screen do discuss the crime in the film quite matter of factly.</i></p> <p><b><i>The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is 15.</i></b></p>
3.18	<p><b>Film 3: “It’s About Time”</b> – under 10 minutes, a short dramatic film.</p> <p>Film synopsis - <i>In the 1950s a young scientist works in his workshop tinkering with a series of weird and wonderful machines. A TV announcer narration sets the context of the Time...of Superpowers gathering both strength and suspicion, and the Cold War crystallising. These offscreen events solidify the scientists resolve to achieve his goal - of securing a means to achieve Time travel in order to escape his perception of an impending Apocalypse... His wife, cleaning up the mess around him, accidentally activates his machine and transports herself to the present day...How will she cope with interacting with the modern world? How will her husband reunite them? It’s About Time....to find out.</i></p> <p><i>There is some very mild perceived peril in the section depicting the transportation of both characters through the Time portal.</i></p> <p><b><i>The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is PG.</i></b></p>
3.19	Representatives of the Nerve Centre have confirmed they have viewed the finished films and identified that they do not foresee any issues with appropriateness of content and would regard Film 1 and 3 as representative of a PG BBFC rating and Film 2 as a 15 BBFC rating.
3.20	None of the films have received classification from BBFC or equivalent body.
3.21	The expertise for film classification is considered to rest with BBFC and other statutory bodies established for this function. The Service has not viewed the films to validate the ratings. The applicant has offered to share the finished film if required.
3.22	A representative from Nerve Centre Belfast will be available at Committee to answer any questions Members may have in relation to the films.
4.0	<p><b>Financial and Resource Implications</b></p> <p>None. Any required inspections before or during the event will be catered for within existing Service budgets.</p>
5.0	<p><b>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</b></p> <p>There are no issues associated with this report.</p>
6.0	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 1 – Conditions of licence</li> <li>• Appendix 2 – BBFC Classification Guidelines</li> <li>• Appendix 3 – Applicant request</li> </ul>

## CONDITION OF LICENCE

1. No film shall be exhibited unless:-
  - (a) It has received a 'U', 'PG', '12A', '12', '15', or '18' certificate of the British Board of Film Classification.
  - (b) It is a current news-reel which has not been submitted to the British Board of Film Classification.
2. (a) No persons under the age of twelve years, unless they are accompanied by an Adult, shall be admitted to any Exhibition when a '12A' film is in the programme.  
(b) No persons under the age of fifteen years shall be admitted to any Exhibition when a '15' film is in the programme.  
(c) No persons under the age of eighteen years shall be admitted to any Exhibition when a '18' film is in the programme.
3. Notwithstanding the conditions hereinbefore contained, a film may be exhibited, or children, or any class of children, may be admitted thereto, or admitted unaccompanied, if permission of the Council is first obtained and any conditions of such permission are complied with.
4. A representation or written statement of the terms of any certificate given by the British Board of Film Classification shall be shown on the screen immediately before the showing of any film to which it relates and the representation or statement shall be shown for long enough in a form large enough for it to be read from any seat in the auditorium.
5. There shall be prominently exhibited in each public entrance whenever the premises are open to the public a notice indicating in tabular form and in clear bold letters and figures:-
  - (a) the title of each film to be shown on that day, other than trailers and films of less than five minutes' duration;
  - (b) the approximate times of commencement of each such film;
  - (c) whether each film has received a 'U', 'PG', '12A', '12', '15', or '18' certificate from the British Board of Films Censors;
  - (d) the effect of such 'U', 'PG', '12A', '12', '15', or '18' certificate in relation to the admission of persons under the age of eighteen years; and
  - (e) appropriate advice in respect of '12A' certificate films to enable an accompanying adult to decide upon the suitability of the film for children under the age of twelve years.
6. The nature of any certificate received in respect of a film from the British Board of Film Classification shall be clearly indicated by the letter 'U', 'PG', '12A', '12', '15', or '18' in any advertisement of the film displayed at the premises.
7. There shall not appear on any advertisement of a film displayed at the premises any reference to the Council or any wording to the effect that the film has been banned or not passed by the British Board of Film Classification.
8. No advertisement displayed at the premises of a film to be exhibited at the premises shall depict as a scene or incident in the film any scene or incident which is not included in the film as certified by the British Board of Film Classification or approved for exhibition by the Council, as the case may be.
9. Where the Council has given notice in writing to the licensee objecting to an advertisement on the ground that, if displayed, it would offend against good taste or decency or be likely to encourage or incite to crime or to lead to disorder or to be offensive to the public feeling, that advertisement shall not be displayed at the premises except with the consent in writing of the Council.
10. Where the Council has given notice in writing to the licensee prohibiting the exhibition of a film on the ground that it contains matter which, if exhibited, would offend against good taste or decency or be likely to encourage or incite to crime or to lead to disorder or be offensive to the public feeling, that film shall not be exhibited in the premises except with the consent in writing of the Council.
11. The licensee shall ensure that all attendants when on duty at the premises shall wear either distinctive clothing or suitable arm-bands.
12. The premises shall not without consent in writing of the Council be used for the purpose for which the license is granted on:-
  - (a) Sunday at any time or,
  - (b) other days between the hours of 1.00 am and 8.00 am.
13. Only films which have received a certificate from the British Board of Film Classification in the categories 'U', 'PG', '12A', '12', '15' and current news-reels will be permitted to be shown on Sundays during the hours of 3.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

**N. B. These conditions must be displayed with the licence in a conspicuous place on the premises at all times.**

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# Classification Guidelines

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# The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit, co-regulatory body. Our classification function is funded through fees charged to those who submit films and video works for classification.

We classify:

- films, trailers and advertisements on behalf of local authorities who license cinemas under the Licensing Act 2003<sup>1</sup>
- video works distributed on physical media under the Video Recordings Act 1984
- video works which are distributed over the internet under a voluntary, self-regulatory service
- commercial and internet content distributed via mobile networks under a voluntary, self-regulatory service

In addition to our classification functions, we are designated as the age-verification regulator under Part 3 of the Digital Economy Act 2017. The BBFC's responsibilities under this Act include:

- making sure that online commercial pornography services carry age-verification controls
- providing guidance on what kind of age-verification arrangements will ensure that these services comply with the law
- taking enforcement action against online pornographic services that do not carry effective age-verification and/or those that contain extreme pornographic material (as defined under UK law) which is illegal to possess

<sup>1</sup>Since 31 March 2016 the BBFC has sub-contracted the assessment of cinema advertisements for commercial goods and services to the Cinema Advertising Association, while retaining responsibility for classifying all feature films, trailers, public information films and charity campaigns.

Our Classification Guidelines follow an extensive public consultation to which more than 10,000 people contribute across the UK, as well as other research, expert advice and our accumulated experience over many years. The Guidelines, and our practice in applying them, pay particular attention to changes in public taste, attitudes and concerns, and changes in the law. They also take account of new evidence from research and expert sources. The Guidelines are reviewed every four to five years, and how we apply them is reviewed when necessary.

We take responsibility for the Guidelines and for their interpretation. This responsibility is subject to the normal considerations of fairness and reasonableness.

Here, and throughout the Guidelines, video works are taken to include films and programmes released on DVD or Blu-ray, or distributed by means of download or streaming on the internet.

The Guidelines cannot be a comprehensive account of everything that may at any time be of concern. If issues arise which are not specifically covered here, they will be dealt with by us on their merits and in line with the standards expressed and implied in these Guidelines. The Guidelines are not a legal document and should be interpreted in the spirit of what is intended as well as in the letter.

We will provide guidance on the interpretation of these Guidelines on request and their application to particular films.





# Guiding principles

## Our guiding principles are:

- to protect children and vulnerable adults from potentially harmful or otherwise unsuitable media content
- to empower consumers, particularly parents and those with responsibility for children, to make informed viewing decisions

We fulfil these roles chiefly by providing age classifications and publishing advice (known as ratings info) for individual films and videos. Ratings info gives a detailed breakdown of the issues that result in a particular classification, as well as other issues likely to be of relevance to viewers.

Our extensive research into public opinion guides us as we seek to ensure that classification decisions generally reflect public sensibilities and expectations as these change over time. We seek to ensure that films and videos reach the widest audience that is appropriate for their theme and treatment.

While media effects research and expert opinion can provide valuable insights, it can be inconclusive or contradictory on issues of suitability and harm. In such cases we must rely on our own experience and expertise to make a judgement as to the suitability of a work for classification at a particular age category, taking into consideration whether the availability of the material, to the age group concerned, is clearly unacceptable to broad public opinion.

We do this without infringing the right of adults to choose what they view provided that it remains within the law and is not potentially harmful.

In relation to harm, we will consider whether the material, either on its own, or in combination with other content of a similar nature, may cause any harm at the category concerned. This includes not just any harm that may result from the behaviour of potential viewers, but also any moral or societal harm that may be caused by, for example, desensitising a potential viewer to the effects of violence, degrading a potential viewer's sense of empathy, encouraging a dehumanised view of others, encouraging anti-social attitudes, reinforcing unhealthy fantasies, or eroding a sense of moral responsibility. Especially with regard to children, harm may also include impairing social and moral development, distorting a viewer's sense of right and wrong, and limiting their capacity for compassion.

We will not classify material which is in conflict with the criminal law, and we will have regard to whether the material has arisen from the commission of an unlawful act.

We act as a regulator across the United Kingdom. However, the UK does not have a single legal system, and so we take account of the different legal systems that coexist in the UK. Further details about the applicable legislation can be found in the Annexe – legal considerations.

# General classification considerations

**There are general factors that may influence a classification decision at any level and in connection with any issue. These factors are of particular importance when a work lies on the borderline between two age categories.**

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## Context

We consider the context in which an issue (such as sex, language or violence) is presented within a film or video. In doing this we take account of factors such as the setting of a work (historical, fantasy, realistic, contemporary); the manner of presentation (for example, an aggressive and directed use of bad or discriminatory language may result in a higher classification than a light-hearted and self-referential use of the same term); the apparent intention of the film; the original production date of the work (for example, outdated attitudes might be considered less offensive, and consequently classified at a lower category, in an old, obviously dated, work); the expectations of the likely audience; and any special merits of the work.

## Theme

Classification decisions will take into account the theme of a work, but will depend significantly on the treatment of that theme, and especially the sensitivity of its presentation. The most challenging themes (for example, sexual violence, paedophilia and suicide) are unlikely to be appropriate at the lowest levels of classification (U or PG). However, there is no reason in principle why most themes, however difficult, could not be presented in a manner which allows classification at 18 or even, where suitable, at lower levels. Classification decisions are likely to be less restrictive where difficult themes are handled in a reassuring and age appropriate manner, or where there is a positive outcome. Classification decisions are likely to be more restrictive where difficult themes are handled in a manner likely to create or reinforce anxiety.

## Tone and impact

The overall tone of a work may also affect the classification decision. While the presentation of specific issues, such as sex and violence, may not be problematic at a particular category, a work with a dark or unsettling tone may receive a higher classification. Other tonal considerations which might have an influence on classification include the extent to which the work presents a despairing view of the world, or the extent to which transgressive or harmful behaviour is condoned or made to appear normal.

We take into account the impact of a work (i.e. how it makes the audience feel), for example the presentation of credible real world scenarios about which viewers, especially younger viewers, are likely to be anxious (e.g. terrorism, abduction, suicide, self-harm). We also take account of audience expectations regarding genre, for example in relation to horror films where threat may be more significant than the level of violence, or in the case of action films, where viewers are likely to have certain expectations regarding the type of highly choreographed and unrealistic violence they are likely to contain.

Where multiple classification issues are present in the same work, this may produce a cumulative impact that makes a higher classification more appropriate.



# Specific classification considerations

**This section of the Guidelines identifies concerns which apply, to a greater or a lesser degree, at all classification levels, and sets out the general approach that we take. The concerns are listed in alphabetical order.**

**Pages 18 to 28 of the Guidelines provide specific guidance for U through to R18 with regard to such concerns. This should be read together with the General classification considerations.**

## Dangerous behaviour

Classification decisions will take into account any detailed portrayal of criminal and violent techniques, and glamorisation of easily accessible weapons, such as knives. Works which portray anti-social behaviour (for example, bullying) uncritically are likely to receive a higher classification. Works which, taken as a whole, actively promote illegal behaviour may be cut or refused a classification.

Portrayals of potentially dangerous behaviour (especially relating to suicide, self-harm and asphyxiation) which children and young people may potentially copy, will be cut if a higher classification is not appropriate. The relative ease and likelihood of imitation are also considered.

Classification decisions may be less restrictive where the risks of any dangerous behaviour are likely to be obvious to the intended audience, or where material is intended to educate younger viewers about dangers. Classification decisions will be more restrictive where novel information is presented (for example, about specific suicide techniques), where harmful behaviour is glamorised, or where risks are not made clear.

## Discrimination

Potentially offensive content relating to matters such as race, gender, religion, disability or sexuality may arise in a wide range of works, and the classification decision will take account of the strength or impact of their inclusion. The context in which such content may appear also has a bearing. Works with such content may receive a lower category where discriminatory language and behaviour is implicitly or explicitly criticised; or the work has a historical setting within which outdated attitudes or outmoded expressions would be expected; or the work is obviously dated, with little or no appeal to children; or the work seeks to challenge discriminatory attitudes and assumptions. Works with such content may receive a higher category where discriminatory language and behaviour is accompanied by threat or violence; or where there is a clear power imbalance; or where such behaviour is left unchallenged; or where discriminatory attitudes and assumptions are normalised. Where discriminatory language or behaviour occurs, this will normally be indicated in ratings info.

## Drugs

No work taken as a whole may promote the misuse of drugs and any detailed portrayal of drug misuse likely to promote the activity may be cut. Works which normalise or glamorise drug misuse are likely to receive a higher classification than works which show drug misuse while emphasising the dangers.

Where smoking, alcohol abuse or substance misuse feature to a significant extent in works which appeal to children, this will normally be indicated in ratings info. Classification decisions will also take into account any promotion or glamorisation of such activities.

## Language

Language which people may find offensive includes the use of expletives with a sexual, religious or racial association, derogatory language about minority groups and commonly understood rude gestures. The extent of offence may vary according to age, gender, race, background, beliefs and expectations brought by viewers to the work as well as the context in which the word, expression or gesture is used.

For these reasons, it is impossible to set out comprehensive lists of words, expressions or gestures which are acceptable at each category. The advice at different classification levels, therefore, provides general guidance taking account of the views expressed in public consultation exercises.

## Nudity

Nudity with no sexual context is in principle acceptable at all classification levels, but will not generally occur more than occasionally at U.

Nudity with a sexual context will receive a higher classification. Where the principal purpose of depicting nudity is to sexually arouse it will usually only be passed at the adult categories (18 or R18).



## Specific classification considerations continued

### Sex

The portrayal of sexual activity can range from kissing to detail of unsimulated sex. The normalisation of overtly sexualised behaviour is a concern at the junior categories (U, PG and 12A/12). The classification system allows progressively stronger portrayals of sexual behaviour as the categories rise.

Sex works (works whose primary purpose is sexual arousal or stimulation) will only be passed at 18 or R18.

We will apply these Guidelines in relation to sex to the same standard regardless of sexual orientation of the activity portrayed.

### Sexual violence and sexual threat

Depictions of the stronger forms of sexual violence, including rape, are not permitted at the junior categories.

When considering scenes of sexual violence, aggravating factors include:

- the presence of a gang dynamic (e.g. a 'gang rape' scene)
- a focus on the victim being overpowered or powerless
- prolonged, detailed or gratuitous depiction
- an emphasis on nudity
- an emphasis on the pleasure of the attacker

- a strong emphasis on the distress and fear of the victim
- a credible 'real world' setting
- a protracted build-up of sexual threat

Mitigating factors include:

- brevity and lack of detail
- a clear educational message aimed at young people
- a strong narrative justification

We may refuse to classify content which makes rape or other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour look appealing or acceptable, reinforces the suggestion that victims enjoy such behaviour, or invites viewer complicity in such behaviour.

References to sexual violence are likely to be treated less restrictively than depictions of sexual violence, although any references at the junior categories will generally be oblique or undetailed.

Sexual threat and abusive behaviour are not permitted at the lowest levels of classification and will only be permitted at 12A/12 if brief and negatively presented.

### Threat and horror

Where films are targeted at a younger audience, classification decisions will take into account factors such as the frequency, length and detail of scary or otherwise unsettling scenes as well as factors such as the impact of music and sound, and whether there is a swift and reassuring outcome.

The classification of threat and horror will take account of the general tone, impact, realism and supernatural elements of a work as well as the level of detail in individual scenes. Fantasy settings or the inclusion of humour may be mitigating factors. The presentation of 'real world' issues and fears may be an aggravating factor.

### Violence

Classification decisions will take account of the degree and nature of violence in a work.

Works which feature the following are likely to receive a more restrictive classification:

- portrayal of violence as a normal solution to problems
- heroes who inflict pain and injury
- callousness towards victims
- the encouragement of aggressive attitudes
- characters taking pleasure in pain or humiliation
- the glorification or glamorisation of violence
- gratuitous violence
- violence presented in a credible and realistic context (e.g. gang violence, domestic violence)

Works which feature the following are likely to be treated less restrictively:

- violence in a historical context
- violence in an action or fantasy context
- violence that lacks detail
- violence that looks unreal, fake or overly staged
- comic violence
- violence that is challenged or punished
- violence in a context where it is likely to be expected by the intended audience

We are unlikely to classify content which is so demeaning or degrading to human dignity (for example, it consists of strong abuse, torture or death without any significant mitigating factors) that it may pose a harm risk.

# Other matters

## Education videos

When classifying an education video, including a sex education video, for use in schools, we will take account of the educational purpose of the video and the context in which it is to be viewed (for example in the classroom mediated by a teacher).

## Music videos

In addition to the usual issues, the classification of a music video will take account of any elements which are of particular concern to parents, including glamorisation of behaviour which they consider inappropriate such as drug misuse or sexualised behaviour. Where music videos are short and self-contained, material may be less likely to be justified by context.

PG  
12  
15  
18

## Photo or pattern sensitivity, motion sickness and reactions to low frequency sound

A small number of viewers are sensitive to flashing and flickering light, or some shapes and patterns, and may experience seizures or other serious physical effects. Some viewers experience feelings of motion sickness or other symptoms when viewing works which feature hand held or otherwise moving camerawork, or which feature very low frequency sounds.

It is the responsibility of film makers and distributors to identify works in which such issues arise and to ensure that, when required, appropriate warnings are given to viewers. However, if it is obvious during viewing that the work contains strong examples of such imagery

or sounds, we will advise the distributor of the need to ensure that appropriate warnings are in place. Where necessary, we may require assurances regarding the display of appropriate warnings as a condition of classification.

## Release format

Classification decisions may be stricter on video works than on film. This is because of the increased possibility of under-age viewing as recognised in the Video Recordings Act (see Annex), as well as the increased possibility of works being replayed or sections viewed out of context. Accordingly, a video work (either packaged or online) may occasionally receive a higher classification than on film, or require new or different cuts. (Video works may also receive a higher classification because they contain additional content.)

The screen format or visual presentation of a submission may also alter a classification, for example, if the image has been processed in the 3D format, or is shown with an altered aspect ratio such as on an IMAX screen, or if the work is experienced as a piece of immersive linear VR (virtual reality).

## Titles

We will require changes as a condition of classification if the title of a work incites racial or religious hatred, or other criminal behaviour, or encourages an interest in abusive or illegal sexual activity.

If the title of a work is likely to cause significant offence to a significant number of people if displayed in a public place, we will advise the distributor to consider carefully the places in which it is likely to be seen and to take appropriate action, for example, by obscuring certain words on packaging or marketing materials. (This advice is not given in relation to video works classified R18 as such works may only be supplied or offered for supply in a licensed sex shop.)

## Trailers and advertisements

Audiences may choose to see a full-length feature based on expectations of the particular genre at the given classification and on the published ratings info. In contrast, audiences have no choice, and often no expectation, about the accompanying trailers or advertisements which may be very different in tone and content to the film the audience has chosen to view. In addition, because trailers and advertisements are short and self-contained, material is less likely to be justified by context and more likely to cause offence.

For these reasons, classification decisions for trailers and advertisements may be more restrictive than for equivalent material in a main feature. Strong language will not be allowed in trailers at the U, PG and 12A/12 categories. Strong language may be permitted in trailers at 15, unless significantly aggravated by other factors. Infrequent very strong language may be permitted in trailers at 15 but usually only where there are mitigating factors such as a comic context.

The more restrictive approach set out above may be relaxed where an advertisement is part of a public information campaign or has a charitable purpose.

Cinemas are responsible for the exhibition of cinema trailers and advertisements, and we have no involvement in deciding which films they precede. Questions or complaints about the exhibition of trailers or advertisements should be directed to the cinema management in the first instance.

## Video games

With a few limited exceptions we do not classify video games. We consider for classification those video games contained on discs which feature primarily linear video content and any pornographic video games.

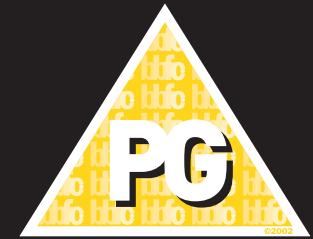
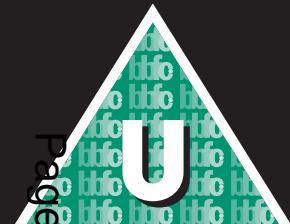
We also advise the video games authority on the classification of linear video footage contained in games which is not integral to the game. This includes, for example, rewards and video content in games which is designed to be viewed in its own right, without taking forward the narrative drive of the game.

## Virtual reality

The BBFC is responsible for classifying linear VR (virtual reality) content whereas the video games authority is responsible for classifying non-linear VR content.

# The classification categories

We endeavour to classify submitted works in one of the following categories:



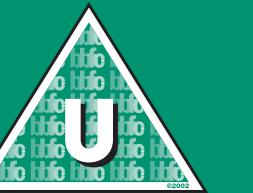
101

The following pages set out guidance on how the specific classification considerations (for example, sex and violence) are applied from U through to R18. The criteria should be read in combination with the general approach set out earlier under 'Guiding principles', 'General classification considerations' and 'Specific classification considerations'.

Because works from time to time present issues in ways which cannot be anticipated, these criteria will not be applied in an over-literal way if such an interpretation would lead to an outcome which would confound audience expectations.

# Universal

Suitable for all



**A U film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over, although it is impossible to predict what might upset any particular child. U films should be set within a positive framework and should offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence, threat or horror.**

#### **Dangerous behaviour**

Potentially dangerous or anti-social behaviour which young children may copy must be clearly disapproved of or be presented unrealistically. No emphasis on realistic or easily accessible weapons.

#### **Discrimination**

Discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly disapproved of.

#### **Drugs**

References to illegal drugs or drug misuse must be infrequent and innocuous, or have a clear educational purpose or anti-drug message suitable for young children.

#### **Language**

Infrequent use only of very mild bad language.

#### **Nudity**

Occasional nudity, with no sexual context.

#### **Sex**

Only very mild sexual behaviour (for example, kissing) and references to such behaviour.



# Parental Guidance

General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children



**A PG film should not unsettle a child aged around eight or older. Unaccompanied children of any age may watch, but parents are advised to consider whether the content may upset younger or more sensitive children.**

## Dangerous behaviour

No detail of potentially dangerous behaviour which young children are likely to copy, if that behaviour is presented as safe or fun. No glamorisation of realistic or easily accessible weapons such as knives. No focus on anti-social behaviour which young children are likely to copy.

## Discrimination

Discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly disapproved of, or in an educational or historical context, or in particularly dated work with no likely appeal to children. Discrimination by a character with whom children can readily identify is unlikely to be acceptable.

## Drugs

References to illegal drugs or drug misuse must be innocuous or carry a suitable anti-drug message.

## Language

Mild bad language only. Aggressive or very frequent use of mild bad language may result in a work being passed at a higher category.

## Nudity

There may be nudity with no sexual context.

## Sex

Sexual activity may be implied, but should be discreet and infrequent. Mild sex references and innuendo only.

## Threat and horror

Frightening sequences or situations where characters are in danger should not be prolonged or intense. Fantasy settings and comedy may be mitigating factors.

## Violence

Violence will usually be mild. However, there may be moderate violence, without detail, if justified by its context (for example, history, comedy or fantasy).



# 12A/12

Suitable for 12 years and over



**Films classified 12A and video works classified 12 contain material that is not generally suitable for children aged under 12.**

**No one younger than 12 may see a 12A film in a cinema unless accompanied by an adult. Adults planning to take a child under 12 to view a 12A film should consider whether the film is suitable for that child.**

**To help them decide, we recommend that they check the ratings info for that film in advance.**

**No one younger than 12 may rent or buy a 12 rated video work.**

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#### **Dangerous behaviour**

No promotion of potentially dangerous behaviour which children are likely to copy. No glamorisation of realistic or easily accessible weapons such as knives. No endorsement of anti-social behaviour.

#### **Discrimination**

Discriminatory language or behaviour must not be endorsed by the work as a whole. Aggressive discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly condemned.

#### **Drugs**

Misuse of drugs must be infrequent and should not be glamorised or give detailed instruction.

#### **Language**

There may be moderate bad language. Strong language may be permitted, depending on the manner in which it is used, who is using the language, its frequency within the work as a whole and any special contextual justification.

#### **Nudity**

There may be nudity, but in a sexual context it must be brief and discreet.

#### **Sex**

Sexual activity may be briefly and discreetly portrayed. Moderate sex references are permitted, but frequent crude references are unlikely to be acceptable.

#### **Sexual violence and sexual threat**

There may be verbal references to sexual violence provided they are not graphic. The stronger forms of sexual violence, including rape, may only be implied and any sexual threat or abusive behaviour must be brief and negatively presented.

#### **Threat and horror**

There may be moderate physical and psychological threat and horror sequences. Although some scenes may be disturbing, the overall tone should not be. Horror sequences should not be frequent or sustained.

#### **Violence**

There may be moderate violence but it should not dwell on detail. There should be no emphasis on injuries or blood, but occasional gory moments may be permitted if justified by the context.





**No one younger than 15 may see a 15 film in a cinema.**

**No one younger than 15 may rent or buy a 15 rated video work.**

#### Dangerous behaviour

Dangerous behaviour (for example, suicide, self-harming and asphyxiation) should not dwell on detail which could be copied. Whether the depiction of easily accessible weapons is acceptable will depend on factors such as realism, context and setting.

#### Discrimination

The work as a whole must not endorse discriminatory language or behaviour, although there may be racist, homophobic or other discriminatory themes and language.

#### Drugs

Drug taking may be shown but the work as a whole must not promote or encourage drug misuse (for example, through detailed instruction). The misuse of easily accessible and highly dangerous substances (for example, aerosols or solvents) is unlikely to be acceptable.

#### Language

There may be strong language. Very strong language may be permitted, depending on the manner in which it is used, who is using the language, its frequency within the work as a whole and any special contextual justification.

#### Nudity

There are no constraints on nudity in a non-sexual or educational context. Sexual nudity may be permitted but strong detail is likely to be brief or presented in a comic context.

#### Sex

Sexual activity may be portrayed, but usually without strong detail. There may be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour. Repeated very strong references, particularly those using pornographic language, are unlikely to be acceptable. Works whose primary purpose is sexual arousal are unacceptable.

#### Sexual violence and sexual threat

There may be strong verbal references to sexual violence but any depiction of the stronger forms of sexual violence, including rape, must not be detailed or prolonged. A strong and sustained focus on sexual threat is unacceptable.

#### Threat and horror

There may be strong threat and horror. A sustained focus on sadistic threat is unlikely to be acceptable.

#### Violence

Violence may be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury. The strongest gory images are unlikely to be acceptable. Strong sadistic violence is also unlikely to be acceptable.



**18**

**Suitable only for adults**



**No one younger than 18 may see an 18 film in a cinema.**

**No one younger than 18 may rent or buy an 18 rated video work.**

Adults should be free to choose their own entertainment. Exceptions are most likely in the following areas:

- where the material is in breach of the criminal law, or has been created through the commission of a criminal offence
- where material or treatment appears to us to risk harm to individuals or, through their behaviour, to society. For example, the detailed portrayal of violent or dangerous acts, or of illegal drug use, which may cause harm to public health or morals. This may include portrayals of sadistic violence, rape or other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour which make this violence look appealing; reinforce the suggestion that victims enjoy rape or other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour; or which invite viewer complicity in rape, other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour or other harmful violent activities
- where there are more explicit images of sexual activity in the context of a sex work (see right)

In the case of video works, which may be more accessible to younger viewers, intervention may be more frequent than for cinema films.

#### **Sex works at 18**

Sex works are works whose primary purpose is sexual arousal or stimulation. Sex works containing only material which may be simulated are generally passed 18. Sex works containing clear images of real sex, strong fetish material, sexually explicit animated images, or other very strong sexual images will be confined to the R18 category. Material which is unacceptable in a sex work at R18 is also unacceptable in a sex work at 18.



# R18

To be shown only in specially licensed cinemas, or supplied only in licensed sex shops, and to adults only



**The R18 category is a special and legally-restricted classification primarily for explicit works of consenting sex or strong fetish material involving adults. Films may only be shown to adults in specially licensed cinemas, and video works may be supplied to adults only in licensed sex shops.**

**R18 video works may not be supplied by mail order.**

The following content is not acceptable:

- material which is in breach of the criminal law, including material judged to be obscene under the current interpretation of the Obscene Publications Act 1959 (see Annex – legal considerations)
- material (including dialogue) likely to encourage an interest in sexually abusive activity which may include adults role-playing as non-adults
- the portrayal of sexual activity which involves real or apparent lack of consent. Any form of physical restraint which prevents participants from indicating a withdrawal of consent
- the infliction of pain or acts which are likely to cause serious physical harm, whether real or (in a sexual context) simulated. Some allowance may be made for non-abusive, consensual activity
- penetration by any object likely to cause physical harm
- sexual threats, humiliation or abuse which do not form part of a clearly consenting role-playing game



# Intervention

**Where possible we will carry out our responsibilities through appropriate use of the classification categories, particularly in order to protect children from any potential harm.**

**If necessary, however, we may cut or even refuse to classify a film or video work.**

In some cases, we require assurances, cuts or other changes (for example, the addition of warning captions) as a condition of classification, or as a condition of classifying at a particular category. In some circumstances we may refuse to classify a work at any category. We publish details of all interventions on our website.

#### **Cuts for category**

If the submitted work is suitable for classification, but only at a category higher than that requested by the customer, we will consider whether a lower category could be achieved through relatively minor or simple changes. If so, we may offer the customer a choice of accepting either the higher or lower category (the latter with defined changes as necessary).

Cuts for category are unlikely to be available if the required changes would be very extensive or complex, or would not address for example, a tonal or thematic issue running throughout the work.

#### **Compulsory cuts**

If a submitted work raises issues or concerns that cannot be addressed by classification at a particular age category, we may require cuts or other changes as a condition of classification. Such intervention is most likely when the submitted work contains:

- material which may promote criminal activity
- material which is obscene or otherwise illegal
- material created by means of the commission of a criminal offence
- portrayals of children in a sexualised or abusive context
- material which makes rape, other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour, or sadistic violence look appealing

- graphic images of real injury, violence or death presented in a salacious or sensationalist manner which risks harm by encouraging callous or sadistic attitudes
- material which reinforces the suggestion that victims enjoy rape or other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour
- material which invites viewer complicity in rape, other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour, or other harmful violent activities
- sex works which contain material listed as unacceptable at R18

When the issue relates to the circumstances of filming (for example, in relation to animal cruelty or public indecency) the customer will normally be given an opportunity to present evidence before a final decision is reached.

#### **Refusal to classify**

As a last resort, the BBFC may refuse to classify a work, in line with the objective of preventing non-trivial harm risks to potential viewers and, through their behaviour, to society. We may do so, for example, where a central concept of the work is unacceptable, such as a sustained focus on rape, other non-consensual sexually violent behaviour or sadistic violence. Before refusing classification we will consider whether the problems could be adequately addressed through intervention such as cuts. In deciding whether to refuse to classify, we will keep in mind the inherent difficulty of using behavioural research to draw conclusions about real world risks, and will have regard to the full range of available evidence, including the views of the public and our own knowledge and experience.

# Engagement with the public

**We publish detailed information about the content we classify, which we call ratings info. It's a helpful guide, particularly for parents, that gives a summary of how and why a film or video was given its age rating.**

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## Ratings info includes:

- a short description of the issues contained in a film or video, and this appears on the black card shown on the cinema screen before a film starts, for example:



**strong violence, sex, language, drug misuse**

- we publish a longer, fuller version on our website and app

All content classified since the early 2000s has a short line of ratings info, and content classified more recently also has a longer version, giving you a detailed idea of what issues – bad language, drugs, sex and violence, or the use of discriminatory language or behaviour, for instance – you're likely to find in the film. It also raises any other issues that may be of concern, such as divorce or bereavement.

We try to avoid giving away major plot points. When ratings info does contain plot spoilers we always post a warning. Occasionally, the longer version of ratings info describes full sequences in a film – for example, it might describe a specific fight scene to give you a flavour of the sort of violence in the film and how strong it looks and feels – so be aware of this.

We publish ratings info the moment a film or video is classified, but the longer version may not be available until 10 days before the film opens. Sometimes, we classify films many weeks or even months before they are due to open, which is why not all films listed on our website will have a link to the longer ratings info yet. We encourage viewers to check ratings info when they are choosing content for children and for themselves.

## bbfc.co.uk

Our website provides a comprehensive database of all the content we classify, including ratings info and information about cuts. You can read the Classification Guidelines, search through our press releases, research and Annual Reports. We also publish case studies on films, including many set film texts for Film Studies courses in the UK, a timeline of key events in our history and regular podcasts.

## cbbfc.co.uk

Content for younger children, including the chance to rate trailers for children's films and learn more about our work, can be found on CBBFC, our website for children. Parents can also find advice about choosing content for children on VoD platforms and information about our education programme.

## BBFC app

Our free app for iOS and Android devices lets you check the latest film classifications and ratings info, watch trailers and read our Guidelines.

## Twitter – @BBFC

We update our Twitter account, [@BBFC](https://twitter.com/BBFC), with all our news and latest film classification decisions. You can ask us quick questions there too. For more detailed questions, you can email us on [feedback@bbfc.co.uk](mailto:feedback@bbfc.co.uk)

## Newsletters

We produce a regular newsletter about our latest classification decisions, podcasts and news. Our education team sends a newsletter to teachers once a term, focussing on our outreach programme, partnerships and resources, including case studies. For industry we send a regular update on our services, news and classification turnaround times each quarter. You can sign up to receive any of these newsletters on our website, [bbfc.co.uk](http://bbfc.co.uk)

## Podcasts

You can stream and download our regular short podcast on our website, Soundcloud and iTunes. Each episode focuses on a particular theme, film or TV series, and their age rating, highlighting key issues we took into account and any interesting facts about the classification process, for example any advice we gave, or reductions made by the film maker or distributor to secure a particular age rating.



# Appeals, advice viewings and feedback

## Appeals

We offer a formal reconsideration procedure which is open to any customer dissatisfied with the determination made in respect of their work. The reconsideration is free of charge and will normally take fewer than 10 working days.

A customer may also appeal directly to an independent authority. Such an appeal may take place following, or instead of, our reconsideration. In the case of films, the customer (or any member of the public) may address itself to the local authority which licenses cinemas in a particular area. In the case of video works a customer may appeal to the Video Appeals Committee. The VAC is independent of the BBFC and can be contacted by post as follows:

The Secretary  
The Video Appeals Committee  
3 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 3HD

Customers should note that a reconsideration or an appeal involves looking at the issues afresh. This means that the outcome could, in some circumstances, be more restrictive than the original determination.

## Advice viewings

A customer may submit works for advice at any stage of the production process. We will inform them of the likely classification a work will receive, and where appropriate any changes required to achieve the customer's preferred classification. However, advice given in such circumstances is not binding and we reserve the right to reach a different decision when the final version of the work is submitted formally for classification. If the final version of the work submitted for classification differs in any significant respect from that seen for advice, and if those changes appear to reflect advice we have given, then details of the changes will appear on our website.

## Feedback

If you want to send us any feedback about our age ratings or classification decisions, please don't hesitate to email us at [feedback@bbfc.co.uk](mailto:feedback@bbfc.co.uk) or write to us at:

Chief Executive's Office  
BBFC  
3 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 3HD



# Annexe – legal considerations

**The following legislation is not listed according to chronology or importance. Instead, it reflects a useful way of explaining the structure of the legal framework that applies to our work.**

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## **The Licensing Act 2003**

England and Wales

### **Cinemas (Northern Ireland) Order 1991**

Northern Ireland

### **Cinemas Act 1985**

Scotland

Cinemas require a licence from the local authority in which they operate. The licence must include a condition requiring the admission of children (anyone under 18) to any film to be restricted in accordance with our recommendations or those of the licensing authority. One of the key reasons for the licensing requirement is the protection of children, including from potentially harmful content in films.

## **The Video Recordings Act 1984**

Video works (including films, TV programmes and some video games) which are supplied on a disc, tape or any other device capable of storing data electronically must have a BBFC classification unless they fall within the definition of an exempted work.

When considering whether to award a certificate to a work, or whether a work is suitable at a particular category, we are required by the Act to have special regard to the likelihood of works being viewed in the home, and to any harm that may be caused to potential viewers or, through their behaviour, to society by the manner in which the work deals with:

- criminal behaviour
- illegal drugs
- violent behaviour or incidents

- horrific behaviour or incidents
- human sexual activity

In considering these issues we have in mind the possible effect not only on children but also on other vulnerable people.

## **The Obscene Publications Acts 1959 & 1964**

England and Wales

### **The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982**

Scotland

### **The Obscene Publications Act 1857**

Northern Ireland

It is illegal to publish a work which is obscene. A work is obscene if, taken as a whole, it has a tendency to deprave and corrupt a significant proportion of those likely to see it. Under the Obscene Publications Act 1959, no offence is committed if publication is justified as being for the public good on the grounds that it is in the interests of science, art, literature or learning or other objects of general concern.

In Scotland, case law implies a similar test would be applied. In Northern Ireland, while there is no express defence of "public good" it is likely that English law would be taken into consideration.

## **Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008**

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### **Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010/Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982**

Scotland

It is illegal to be in possession of an extreme pornographic image. Under the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 an extreme pornographic image is one which is pornographic and grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an obscene character, which features an apparently real person, and which portrays, in an explicit and realistic way, an act which:

- threatens a person's life
- results, or is likely to result, in serious injury to a person's anus, breasts or genitals
- involves sexual interference with a human corpse
- involves intercourse or oral sex with an animal
- involves non-consensual penetration of a mouth, vagina or anus with a penis or non-consensual sexual penetration of a vagina or anus by anything

Under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 an extreme pornographic image is one which is pornographic and obscene, and which depicts in an explicit and realistic way, an act which:

- takes or threatens a person's life
- results, or is likely to result, in a person's severe injury
- involves rape or other non-consensual penetrative sexual activity

- involves sexual activity involving (directly or indirectly) a human corpse

- involves sexual activity between a person and an animal

Works we classify under the Video Recordings Act are excluded from the scope of the offence across the UK.

## **The Protection of Children Act 1978**

England and Wales

### **Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982**

Scotland

### **Protection of Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1978**

Northern Ireland

It is illegal to make, distribute, show or possess indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of a child. It is also illegal to make, distribute, show or possess indecent images of children which have been derived from a photograph or pseudo-photograph (for example, by tracing). Offences relating to the possession of such images are contained within the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (England, Wales and Scotland), and the Criminal Justice (Evidence, Etc.) (Northern Ireland) Order 1988. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.

## Annexe – legal considerations continued

### **The Coroners and Justice Act 2009**

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### **The Criminal Justice and Licensing Act 2010**

Scotland

It is illegal to be in possession of a prohibited image of a child. A prohibited image of a child is a non-photographic or non-pseudo-photographic image which is pornographic and grossly offensive, disgusting, or otherwise of an obscene character, and which focuses solely or principally on a child's genitals or anal region, or which portrays specified sexual acts by, of, or in the presence of a child, including masturbation, oral sex or penetration, including sexual acts with animals. A child is defined as being under 18 and an image of a child or other person can include imaginary representations. Works we classify under the Video Recordings Act are excluded from the scope of the offence unless images have been extracted from such works for the purpose of sexual arousal.

### **The Sexual Offences Act 2003**

England and Wales

### **Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009**

Scotland

### **The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008**

Northern Ireland

It is illegal to expose oneself with intent to cause alarm or distress – this offence augments the common law misdemeanour of indecent exposure. It is also prohibited for a person to record the private act of another, where the intention of the recording is for the sexual gratification of himself or a third party and where the recorded party has not consented to so being filmed.

### **The Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015**

England and Wales

### **Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016**

Scotland

### **Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2016**

Northern Ireland

It is an offence to disclose a private sexual photograph or film without the consent of any individual who appears in the photograph or film, if it is done with the intention of causing that individual distress (or causing them fear, alarm or distress in Scottish law).

### **The Public Order Act 1986**

England, Scotland and Wales

### **The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987**

Northern Ireland

It is illegal to distribute, show or play to the public a recording of visual images or sounds which are threatening, abusive or insulting if the intention is to stir up racial hatred or hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation, or if racial hatred or hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation is likely to be stirred up. It is also illegal to distribute, show or play to the public a recording of visual images or sounds which are threatening if the intention is to stir up religious hatred.

In Northern Ireland the relevant group of persons may be defined not only by colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, but also by "religious belief" or "sexual orientation" or "disability".

### **The Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937**

England, Scotland and Wales

It is illegal to show any scene "organised or directed" for the purposes of the film that involves actual cruelty to animals. This Act applies to the exhibition of films in public cinemas but we also apply the same test to video works. For the purposes of this legislation and The Animal Welfare Act 2006, only vertebrates which are domesticated or otherwise under the control of man are defined as "animals".

### **The Animal Welfare Act 2006**

England and Wales

### **The Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011**

Northern Ireland

### **The Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006**

Scotland

It is illegal to supply, publish, show or possess with intent to supply a video recording of an "animal fight" that has taken place within the UK since 6 April 2007.

### **The Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002**

It is illegal, in the course of a business, to publish a tobacco advertisement.

### **Blasphemy**

In Scotland and Northern Ireland, the common law crime of blasphemy exists but has not been utilised for prosecution in modern times. The offences of blasphemy and blasphemous libel under the common law of England and Wales were abolished in The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

The Act permits such restrictions on freedom of expression as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

### **The Digital Economy Act 2017**

Under Part 3 of the Act it is unlawful to make pornographic material available on the internet to persons in the United Kingdom, on a commercial basis, other than in a way that secures that, at any given time, the material is not normally accessible by persons under the age of 18. The BBFC is the designated age-verification regulator under Part 3 of the Act. The BBFC may take enforcement action against non-compliant pornographic services and/or where a service makes extreme pornographic material, as defined by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, available on the internet to persons in the United Kingdom.

### **Other unlawful material**

In carrying out its responsibilities the BBFC will have regard to whether the material itself appears to be unlawful in the United Kingdom, or has arisen from the commission of an unlawful act.



Get more info on our app  
**bbfc.co.uk/app**

**British Board of Film Classification**

3 Soho Square,  
London,  
W1D 3HD

T 020 7440 1570

[bbfc.co.uk/about-bbfc/contact-us](http://bbfc.co.uk/about-bbfc/contact-us)

BBFC Classification Guidelines 2019

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**bbfc** View what's  
right for you

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@nervecentre.org>  
Date: Thu, 12 Feb 2026 at 17:21  
Subject: Re: Cinema Booking licensing query  
To: [REDACTED] @belfastcity.gov.uk>

Hi [REDACTED]

We have collated the various information regarding the various films we wish to show on 7th March together and have set out both the context of how the the films came to be, the context of the planned screening and a narrative on the various short films content below. If there is additional information that is required we are happy to assist.

We are looking to exhibit three short films together in one screening (with just one showing of all three films on the day) to celebrate the creativity of participants in both our ***BFI (British Film Institute) Academy and Visual Effects Academy***.

**The three films we wish to exhibit are student made films and as such have not received a certificate from the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC).**

We would wish to have a proposal placed before the Licensing Committee for consideration and to decide whether or not to grant permission for these unrated films to be shown.

**Date, time and location that films are planned to be shown**

*Saturday 7th March 2026 between 10am -1130am at Queens Film Theatre Belfast*

**Admission to screening**

The planned Screening is *by invitation only* for members of the families and friends of our participants and Acting talent, and a select group of creative industry professionals and representatives from our funding organisations.

There is *no public admission* to the screening planned or permitted on the day of the event.

The event is being exhibited at *no cost of admission* to those invited to attend.

**Context of the learning environment in which these three Films were produced:**

*Two of these films are the creative product of participants of our BFI Film Academy*

Our BFI Academy is funded by the BFI nationally from London and is one of nearly 40 BFI Academies in the UK allowing young people 16-19 to get a fuller understanding of Film making and how creatives work collaboratively in the film and television industry.

Our BFI Academy here in Belfast brings 20 young people aged 16-19 together each year to work with ourselves at the Nerve Centre on two shorts films with engagement each week between September and February each year. They achieve an OCN qualification as part of their engagement with us.

The 20 participants are split into two film crews of 10 in order to work on two short films the entirety of which are their own creation.

They start from a blank page and are supported through idea generation to the pre production, production and post production of those two short films.

They receive instruction and support from industry professionals through workshops and masterclasses over the course of the BFI Academy. These interactions allow them to use acquired knowledge directly in the preparation planning and execution of their own short film productions.

At each stage Nerve Centre hold final editorial control of all of the content created

*One of these Films is the creative product of a cohort of participants of our **Visual Effects Academy**.*

The VFX Academy is part of a larger initiative in Northern Ireland which Nerve Centre runs for young people 16-19 who wish to learn more about the Creative industries. These are free to use for any young person wishing to engage with them.

We at the Nerve Centre receive funding to run Academies in **Visual Effects, Games Development and Animation** from local government in Northern Ireland - namely from the Dept For Communities. This allows us to offer these opportunities to all of our participants for free.

We are overseen in both the running and reporting of these Academies locally by **Northern Ireland Screen**, the body which looks after the interests and needs of the Creative Industries locally here in Northern Ireland.

In our Academies our participants are taken through a series of workshops the content of which have been designed in conjunction with creative professionals working in those industries to learn the workflow of creating content in each of those forms of media. They receive mentorship throughout the Academies by various creatives working in those respective industries.

Our participants are thus able to use that knowledge and experience to create content of their own in that medium.

The *Visual Effects Academy* film to be shown here is the product of one of our *Visual Effects Academy* cohorts of participants.

This cohort of participants were taken through how a Special Effects on set supervisor prepares for a film production shoot on Set. They planned for a film shoot with Special Effects in mind. They had a film shoot working with professional actors using a script written by ourselves at The Nerve Centre.

The footage captured was then worked upon by our Academy participants under the instruction and mentorship of Visual Effects artists working in the industry to add the necessary Visual Effects augmentation of the footage themselves using a professional VFX software called NUKE. Two of our participants then created an edit of the final VFX augmented film.

At each stage Nerve Centre held final editorial control of all of the filmed and edited content.

### **The Title of Film 1 - (From BFI Academy)**

*“An Unlikely Friendship”*

#### **Film Duration**

*Under 10 mins*

#### **Date, time and location that film is to be shown**

*Saturday 7th March 2026 between 10am -1130am at Queens Film Theatre Belfast*

#### **Description of the content**

A short dramatic student film that has been written, filmed and edited by participants of our BFI Film Academy as part of their engagement with us in the **BFI Film Academy 2025/26** run by Nerve Centre, Belfast.

#### **Film Synopsis**

*“Scarlett, a warm and friendly new barista, also happens to be a budding fashion designer. She becomes intrigued by one very grumpy regular customer. (Depicted onscreen in puppet form) Scarlett’s mission to befriend ‘Bill’ reveals just how little we have to have in common to find common ground.”*

#### **Confirmation of a certificate rating which has been set by a classification board which is equivalent to the BBFC**

*The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is PG. There are themes around Bereavement central to the story and there is one use of a mild swear word (Prick).*

#### **Confirmation that a representative from the Nerve Centre has viewed the material and no concerns exist**

*I can confirm that the Nerve Centre has been involved in overseeing the creation of this film at all stages as it is part of our **BFI Film Academy** program.*

*The participants of this program have come up with the story depicted themselves and it has been scripted by one of their number.*

*The filming of the short feature was conducted in conjunction with ourselves and professionals from local industry.*

*The Edit of the feature to its final form by participants has also been overseen by members of our staff.*

*At each stage Nerve Centre held final editorial control of all of the filmed and edited content.*

*The content as depicted in the finished film is thus in a form in which we can assure and confirm, that, having viewed the finished material, no concerns exist for the film to be seen in a public context.*

**The Council should be afforded an opportunity to view the material prior to broadcast**

*A copy of the finished film can be shared if required.*

### **The Title of Film 2 (From BFI Academy)**

*“Kill Your Darlings”*

#### **Film Duration**

*Under 10 mins*

#### **Date, time and location that film is to be shown**

*Saturday 7th March 2026 between 10am -1130am at Queens Film Theatre Belfast*

#### **Description of the content**

*A short dramatic student film that has been written filmed and edited by participants of our BFI Film Academy as part of their engagement with us in the BFI Film Academy 2025/26 run by Nerve Centre Belfast.*

#### **Synopsis**

*“After a series of apparently unconnected women are murdered, and with only a few hours before the killer strikes again, a crack detective and her hapless colleague try to solve the case... but the plot is bigger and dangerously closer to home than she can imagine.”*

#### **Confirmation of a certificate rating which has been set by a classification board which is equivalent to the BBFC**

*The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is 15*

*In the script there's use of the phrases 'hell' 'god damn' 'bastard', & 'shit'.*

*There's no on screen violence depicted but there are crime scene photos on a scene background board that the camera does cut to Close Ups of. These depict women lying 'dead' some covered in blood - these photos were staged and captured by our participants as part of their set design. These are mid shots / full body shots.*

*In the audio track the viewer does hear a gun fired at the end but onscreen viewers see no evidence of what the consequence were of it's firing.*

*Characters on screen do discuss the crime in the film quite matter of factly.*

**Confirmation that a representative from the Nerve Centre has viewed the material and no concerns exist**

*I can confirm that the Nerve Centre has been involved in overseeing the creation of this film at all stages as it is part of our British Film Academy program.*

*The participants of this program have come up with the story depicted themselves and it has been scripted by one of their number.*

*The filming of the short feature was conducted in conjunction with ourselves and professionals from local industry.*

*The edit of the feature to its final form by participants has also been overseen by members of our staff.*

*At each stage Nerve Centre held final editorial control of all of the filmed and edited content.*

*The content as depicted in the finished film is thus in a form in which we can assure and confirm, that, having viewed the finished material, no concerns exist for the film to be seen in a public context.*

**The Council should be afforded an opportunity to view the material prior to broadcast**

*A copy of the finished film can be shared if required.*

**The Title of Film 3 (From Visual Effects Academy)**

*"It's About Time..."*

**Film Duration**

*Under 10 mins*

**Date, time and location that film is to be shown**

*Saturday 7th March 2026 between 10am -1130am at Queens Film Theatre Belfast*

**Description of the content**

*A short dramatic student film that has been written by Nerve Centre staff, then filmed and edited by participants of our **Visual Effects Academy** as part of their engagement with us in the **Visual Effects Academy 2025/26** run by Nerve Centre Belfast.*

**Synopsis**

*In the 1950s a young scientist works in his workshop tinkering with a series of weird and wonderful machines. A TV announcer narration sets the context of the Time....of Superpowers gathering both strength and suspicion, and the Cold War crystallising. These offscreen events solidify the scientists resolve to achieve his goal - of securing a means to achieve Time travel in order to escape his perception of an impending Apocalypse...*

*His wife, cleaning up the mess around him, accidentally activates his machine and transports herself to the present day...*

*How will she cope with interacting with the modern world?*

*How will her husband reunite them?*

*Its About Time....to find out.*

**Confirmation of a certificate rating which has been set by a classification board which is equivalent to the BBFC**

*The equivalency of Certificate that we would ascribe to this short film is PG. There is some very mild perceived peril in the section depicting the transportation of both characters through the Time portal.*

**Confirmation that a representative from the Nerve Centre has viewed the material and no concerns exist**

*I can confirm that the Nerve Centre has been involved in overseeing the creation of this film at all stages as it is part of our **Visual Effects Academy** program.*

*The participants of this program have taken a story scripted by ourselves at the Nerve Centre and prepared its Pre production, production and post production.*

*The filming of the short feature was conducted by our participants in conjunction with ourselves and professionals from local industry. The edit of the feature to its final form has also been overseen by members of our staff.*

*At each stage Nerve Centre held final editorial control of all of the filmed and edited content.*

*The content as depicted in the finished film is thus in a form in which we can assure and confirm, that, having viewed the finished material, no concerns exist for the film to be seen in a public context.*

**The Council should be afforded an opportunity to view the material prior to broadcast**

*A copy of the finished film can be shared if required.*

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

All the best.

[REDACTED]  
Nerve Centre

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@nervecentre.org>  
**Sent:** 13 January 2026 12:13  
**To:** Building Control Licensing <[BuildingControlLicensing@BelfastCity.gov.uk](mailto:BuildingControlLicensing@BelfastCity.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Cinema Booking licensing query

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside our organisation. Do not click links, open attachments, or enter any details unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. If you think the email is suspicious please complete the Suspicious email form on interlink.

Hi there

We are in the process of booking a single one off screening event at a local Belfast Cinema for a showcase of student films for participants of our Animation Academy.

We at the Nerve Centre are funded by local government to run a number of Screen Academies for young people 16-19 to learn more about the creative industries whilst working on their own projects.

Our intended screening is a showcase of work carried out by around 25 young people aged 16-19 engaged in our Animation Academy over six months. The screening is not open to the public and attendees at the screening are invited only by participants or ourselves with no admission cost charged.

The local cinema we have approached for the booking has advised that we need local council liaison officer approval for this screening booking to go ahead. Is that correct? If so can you advise the formalities that we need to go through to seek approval?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Community Partnership Manager/Screen Academies

Nerve Centre, Belfast

E: [REDACTED] [@nervecentre.org](mailto:@nervecentre.org)

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