

Town and District Centre

Busking Policy

April 2026

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1. Purpose

To promote cultural vibrancy through street performances while ensuring compliance with Harrow's Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), maintaining public safety, and minimizing disruption.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals or groups wishing to perform music, dance, theatre, or other entertainment in public spaces within the town centre.

3. Definitions

Busking:

The act of performing in public spaces for voluntary donations.

Street Performer:

Any individual or group engaging in busking.

Pitch:

A location where a performer sets up to perform.

PSPO:

Public Space Protection Orders for more information see <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/environment-parks/public-spaces-protection-order#town>

Busking Licence:

Licence provided by the London Borough of Harrow to permit a performer to busk within Harrow.

4. Legal Context

Busking is permitted in Harrow town & district centres only when the performer holds a valid Harrow Busking Licence and it does not breach PSPO conditions.

Key PSPO restrictions relevant to busking include:

- Use of amplification requires prior permission.
- Blocking access to businesses is prohibited.
- Aggressive or intimidating behaviour, including begging, is not allowed.
- Unauthorised street trading is prohibited.
- Distribution of leaflets may require permission.

5. Permissions

Performers must:

- Hold a Harrow Busking Licence

- Apply for permission if using amplification, placing furniture, or distributing materials. Use the [Town Centre PSPO form](#)
- Hold current valid public liability insurance if performing physical acts or using props.

6. Harrow busking licence

All performers must apply for a Harrow busking licence. To do so they shall provide:

- Their full name and address
- Current photo
- Current public liability insurance documentation

Once granted, buskers will be provided with a photo licence. This is a pilot scheme; therefore, any licence granted will be valid for six months. The policy will be reviewed thereafter, and the duration of future licences will be determined accordingly.

Licences are issued to specific named performers and are non-transferable. Performers are required to update us if their contact or insurance details change.

Performers must display the licence whilst busking.

7. Performance Guidelines

Times:

In Harrow town centre there are busking slots that outline the time and type of busking that are permitted. More information can be found in Appendix 1.

Busking is permitted in other locations in Harrow between 10:00 hours–20:00 hours.

Duration:

In Harrow town centre there are busking slots that outline the time, duration and type of busking permitted. More information can be found in Appendix 1.

Busking is permitted in other locations in Harrow up to a duration of 2 hours. A busker cannot return to a location for the remainder of that day.

Volume:

Amplification must be moderate and approved. The level of performance must allow persons in the vicinity to hold a conversation without raising their voice.

As guidance, 75 dB at three metres is considered appropriate; however, the officer's decision on the appropriate volume will be final.

Conduct:

No aggressive solicitation of donations; signage requesting money is not allowed.

8. Location Restrictions

Locations busking is permitted are:

Harrow Town Centre

Outside Tesco, 53-61, College Road, Harrow, HA1 1FB

By the Katie's Corner parklet, St Anns Road, Harrow HA1 2AD

Please note that busking is not accepted outside of these locations due to environmental and operational considerations.

Other town or district centres

Busking is **not permitted**:

- Near shop entrances or exits.
- At transport stops or pedestrian crossings.
- Where it obstructs public movement or access.
- Near residential properties

9. Busking Conditions

Performances must be considerate of nearby businesses, residents, and other public space users.

Amplification:

Prior approval must be applied for under the PSPO

Must not exceed ambient street noise.

Mains or generator-powered amplification is prohibited. Battery-powered amplification may be used at moderate levels. The use of rechargeable batteries is encouraged.

Performance Times:

In Harrow town centre the allocated busking slot must not be exceeded.

In other locations, busking is permitted between 10:00 hours – 20:00 hours, Monday to Sunday. Maximum of 2 hours per pitch, with no return to that location on the same day.

Noise and Repetition:

Avoid repetitive songs or acts.

Volume must be adjusted if requested by nearby businesses, BID officers or council officers.

Location Restrictions

In Harrow town centre the permitted location must not be exceeded

In all other locations Performers must not obstruct:

- Shop entrances
- Fire exits
- Cashpoints
- Pedestrian crossings
- Public transport stops

Maintain a minimum distance of 50 metres from other buskers.

Avoid using street furniture (e.g., benches, railings) as part of the performance setup.

Safety

Performers must:

- Be sober and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Ensure their act does not endanger themselves or the public.
- No animals may be used in performances.
- No signage soliciting donations is allowed; contributions must be voluntary.
- Performers are responsible for securing cables, avoiding trip hazards, and ensuring electrical equipment is PAT tested where necessary.

Following instructions

All buskers must stop performing immediately if requested by a BID employee, or council or police officer.

Merchandise and Trading

Selling items (e.g., CDs, artwork) is prohibited unless under a Street Trading Licence.

No unauthorised commercial activity is permitted.

10. Complaints and Enforcement

Complaints will be addressed through dialogue and informal resolution where possible.

Persistent breaches may result in:

- Formal warnings
- Seizure of equipment (under Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Prohibition from performing in the London Borough of Harrow

11. Equality and Inclusion

Acts that cause offence, distress, or alarm will not be tolerated.

The London Borough of Harrow supports equality and diversity in performances offered.

12. Event-Specific Rules

During major events, for example Christmas Switch on in the Town Centre, busking may be suspended in an area. Information in relation to any such decision will be advertised on the webpage.

13. Annual Review

This is a pilot scheme which will be reviewed after six months and annually thereafter.

Appendix 1 Harrow Town Centre – Busking slots