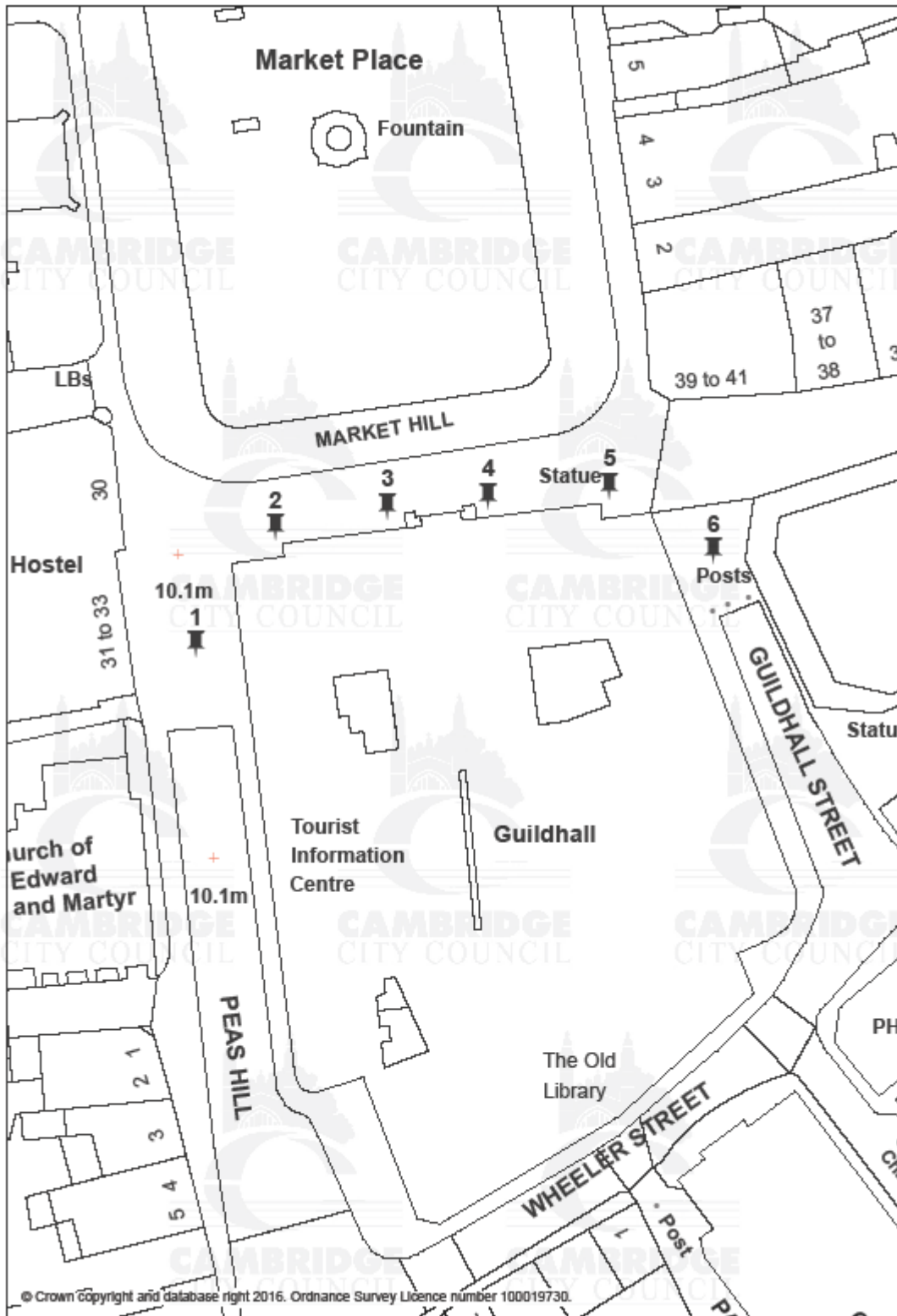




A GUIDE TO:
COLLECTION PERMITS
FOR
SATURDAY STALLS

Business Processing Team
Cambridge City Council
PO Box 700
Cambridge
CB1 0JH
Tel: (01223) 457000



© Crown Copyright and Database right 2016. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019730.

Introduction

Anyone organising a charitable collection in a street or public place in Cambridge must, unless the collection takes place at a meeting in the open air, obtain a Street Collection permit from the Council. If they do not have a permit, they will commit a criminal offence.

A “collection” means either a collection of money where the proceeds will benefit “charitable or other purposes.”

It is not just recognised charities that may need permits. The words “charitable or other purposes” cover a wide range of humanitarian, benevolent and philanthropic causes.

This guide explains a scheme set up by the Council to make available to “special interest” groups wanting to set up primarily “information stalls,” in the City Centre on Saturdays, with the facility to collect money for their cause at the same time.

Within this guide, you should find:

- (1) A plan showing the location of nine numbered pitches with a list identifying each one.
- (2) A section the voluntary Code of Practice.
- (3) A section on the Criteria for the Allocation of Permits

Attached to this guide, you should find:

- (1) A copy of the Street Collection Regulations in force in Cambridge.
- (2) An application form.

Codes of Practice

Size of Stall – stalls should be approximately two metres x one metre in size. Space can be taken up at the rear of the stall to produce a backdrop for people operating the stall to stand. Obstruction of the pavement, and blocking street furniture, e.g. by bicycle racks or seats must be avoided.

Appearance and Design – stalls should be simple and makeshift in design giving the appearance of temporary structures. They must not present a safety hazard to pedestrians or operators. They should be neat and tidy and attractively laid out.

Litter – operators must ensure that the area occupied by the stall and its immediate vicinity is kept free from litter. They must collect and dispose of all discarded leaflets, etc. properly at the end of the session.

Content of Display – displays must comply with legal requirements regarding obscenity and should not give offence to the public, e.g. graphic illustrations of cruelty to animals. The officers will endeavour to deal with complaints on an informal basis.

Disturbance – operators must ensure that their conduct does not cause a nuisance or disturbance to others, e.g. by the playing of loud amplified music or heckling the public.

Criteria for the Allocation of Permits

So far as possible, all applications from eligible groups should be granted.

So far as possible, all applicants granted a permit should be allowed the pitch of their choice. Where more than one applicant requests the same pitch and time, preference should be given to the applicant who has most often used that location in the preceding 12 months.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of pitches and times available, applicants who have carried out regular collections over the preceding 12 months should be allowed to maintain the regularity and frequency of their collections so far as that is possible without unfairly excluding other eligible applicants.

Regard shall be had to the number of occasions in the preceding 12 months when an applicant has not carried out a collection authorised by a permit.

When completing application forms, please remember that the answer to Question 4 (purpose of the collection and how proceeds will be disposed of) and Question 8 (issues of special interest on which the group campaigns) will have to be reflected in the information given on returns and in activity at the stall.

How are permits allocated?

The criteria for allocation are enclosed. In essence, the Council will try to give every group what they ask for. If demand exceeds supply, some measure of preference will be given to established groups but not so as to unfairly exclude groups that have not yet established themselves. The council will try to strike a fair and reasonable balance. If you think we are getting it wrong, please let us know.

It is expected that, in practice, most problems will arise when more than one group applies for the same pitch rather than as a result of there not being enough pitches to go around. Applicants are encouraged to communicate with other applicants to avoid clashes. Council officers will be ready to advise applicants on which pitches are most likely to be available for them, although no promises can be made before the permits are actually issued.

If it is not going to be possible for every group to have the pitch of its choice, Council officers will try to contact applicants to discuss possible alternatives.

When issuing permits, no account will be taken of the political disposition of a group except so far as may be generally charitable, benevolent or humanitarian, etc. In very exceptional cases, a group might be refused a permit if there is a good cause to believe that their presence or their activities might lead to a breach of the peace or involve a criminal offence.

Can groups exchange permits?

Groups can exchange permits only with the approval of the Council. The Council will only approve equal exchanges, i.e. where one permit is exchanged for one permit.

If groups want to exchange permits, they must return them to the Council with an explanation of what they want to do. The Council can then amend and re-issue the permits.

Permits cannot be transferred in any other way. If, for example, a group wants to replace its Promoter it will have to surrender the original permits and apply for fresh ones.

The need to exchange a permit or replace a Promoter will normally be accepted as a special reason

for an application at short notice.

What if a group discovers that it will not use a permit issued to it?

Please notify the Council and return the permit as soon as possible, so that the pitch can be made available to someone else.

The Regulations not only make it necessary to obtain a permit but also lay down a number of rules about how collections must be carried out and about reporting the proceeds and their disposal to the Council.

So far as the Regulations allow, the Council will try to apply them in a way that takes account of the practicalities of running information stalls.

Some of the Regulations need particular comment.

Regulation 10 – the Council interprets this as referring to collectors authorised under the same permit. Thus, one stall can be within 25 metres of another stall run by a different group with their own permit. However, no more than two people can be accepting money at a stall at the same time.

Regulation 3 – applications must be made at least one calendar month before the proposed collection. More about this, and applications at short notice, later.

Regulation 15 – collectors can be reimbursed for reasonable expenses, and the Council approves the reimbursement of reasonable expenses to any other person.

Regulation 16(1) – each Saturday is a separate collection. However, the Council will consider sympathetically, applications for permission under Regulation 16(4) to delay making a return for any collection until one month after the last collection in any given quarter.

When permits are issued, a form will be enclosed for use in making returns. The form is designed to allow returns for up to 14 collections to be made at the same time.

Applications under Regulation 16(3) to waive the requirement that returns be certified by a qualified accountant where the total proceeds of a collection do not exceed the stated amount will be considered sympathetically.

Is the Code of Practice legally binding?

No. It is voluntary, although a group which persistently and unreasonably disregards it so as to give rise to significant nuisance, obstruction, distress or hostility could find itself subsequently being refused permits.