

BUSKING IN SOUTHEND-ON-SEA TOWN

Introduction

All forms of street entertainment are viewed as an important part of the musical and cultural heritage of the borough, providing a means to new talent, while adding vibrancy and character to an area. Whilst Southend Borough Council welcomes most street entertainment and feel they add a lot to the street scene, to help buskers avoid complaints we have introduced a Code of Practice. We have also designated Busking areas which may change or be suspended as required. Following the Code of Practice will help you stay on the right side of the law.

Nuisance

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

The Law

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



CODE OF PRACTICE

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

DO:

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

DON'T:

4. Use mains or generator power for amplification. Busking must not be intrusive or be a nuisance to nearby premises. Music or voice should not be heard plainly at a distance of 30 metres.
5. Busk for more than **1 hour** in any one place. Busking shall not be repeated in that place for the next 2 hours. The only exception is under the railway bridge which shall not be repeated for the next hour. No more than 3 locations used at any one time.
6. Obstruct the highway (road, pavement or pedestrian area) or the flow of pedestrians in the street. In particular sites close to fire exits, cashpoints and shop/business doorways **must** be avoided.
7. Busk within 30 metres of another busker or group of buskers.
8. Sell CDs or other merchandise.
9. Ask for donations or payment for performing.
10. Perform in a manner that is dangerous to yourself or the public.
11. Act in a way or say anything that is likely to cause offence.
12. Position yourself on a footway or highway in such a way that could be deemed as begging by passers-by or the Police e.g. sitting on the ground or wrapped in a sleeping bag or blanket sitting on the ground.

(Full Terms & Conditions can be found at www.southend.gov.uk)

