

Hull City Council Play Street Guidance and Requirements

Play streets enable children to play outdoors freely and safely in the street close to their own home. This is a resident/community-led initiative which Hull City Council supports. The process which allows neighbours to formally close their street to through traffic for up to three hours is administered by Hull City Council. This guidance has been prepared to assist Hull residents and communities who wish to organise regular or one off play street sessions.

Who can apply to close their road for a play street?

Residents and organisations can apply to the council for a 'Temporary Play Street Order' however some roads within Hull might not be suitable to be used as play streets. It will not be possible to close main roads or roads which are on a bus route. The most suitable roads are quiet residential streets or cul-de-sacs where an easy alternative route for through traffic can be provided.

To discuss the suitability of your street please email: HCCPermitScheme@hulcc.gov.uk

There will be a number of things to consider before making a formal application for a street closure;

1. Talk to your neighbours

Before submitting a 'Play Street' application, it is important to discuss the idea with the other residents on your street to see what the level of interest and support is. Consultation can offer the opportunity to answer any questions or concerns and can encourage neighbours to be fully involved.

As part of the application process evidence of consultation with all the residents who will be affected by the proposed road closure must be provided. All residents that may be impacted by the road closure sought must be contacted by the organiser in writing. An example contact letter is attached to the official application form on the council website.

A significant number of households must support the scheme and if organisers cannot prove that neighbours are in agreement, then the scheme will not be able to go ahead.

Following a positive consultation process it would be beneficial to hold a residents meeting to agree the dates of the play street sessions and discuss the different roles and responsibilities required to ensure the play street sessions are well organised and safe for everyone involved. It is important to identify the play street organiser and stewards to manage each point of closure and make sure through traffic is diverted safely.

2. Complete the application form

To put the street play plans into action the organiser will need to complete the application form and provide any required supporting paperwork. Applications will only be accepted if they are made on the appropriate form which can be found on the council's website.

2.1 Insurance and liability

Under no circumstances will the Council be held liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from the organisation of a play street event. Any claims made against Hull City Council with regard to damage or injuries caused by play street events will be passed on to the relevant organiser(s). Play Street organisers should be aware that there may be circumstances in which they would be held liable for any accidents. Hull City Council encourages everyone involved to be sensible and respectful about other people and their property. Whilst not a requirement, it is strongly recommended that organisers should consider taking out Public Liability Insurance.

2.2 Noise Nuisance

Consideration should be given to those living or working nearby and excessive noise should be minimised.

3. Organisation

3.1 Signage

You must provide and erect all appropriate signs and barriers necessary to affect the closure. This includes a 'Road Closed' sign and barrier at each point of closure, and any appropriate diversion signs for the alternative route, details of which will be supplied on the Legal Order. Each closure point must be supervised and maintained at all times by a responsible and clearly identifiable adult.

3.2 Risk Assessment

In practice Play Streets are usually very low risk events, but Hull City Council strongly advise that you carry out a risk assessment. The need for a risk assessment is to ensure that the session runs smoothly without any incidents. Conducting a risk assessment does not guarantee that an incident will not happen but can significantly help to reduce the probability.

A risk assessment requires you to identify **hazards** which are anything that you think may cause harm to any of the participants during the street play session. Then you need to assess the **risk** which is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed. Though there is no set way of writing a risk assessment, it is a good idea to clearly document what the hazards and risks are, how serious they may be and what action will be taken to reduce or eliminate them.

Agree in advance with everyone involved that participants should take responsibility for themselves and watch out for each other, especially children.

Please remember:

It is the organiser's responsibility to do the risk assessment and Hull City Council will not accept responsibility for it.

3.3 Publicity

Organisers may wish to publicise the event by distributing notices, posters, leaflets and flyers to residents. To avoid anyone 'gate-crashing' your session Hull City Council recommend keeping publicity within your own street and perhaps a few directly neighbouring streets.

4. What to do on the day

4.1 Supervising the session

Whilst parents and carers will remain responsible for the supervision of their children during the session the aim of play streets is to give children the freedom to play out on their street and help to promote their independence. To encourage children to make their own decisions about how and what they want to play organising adult led games and providing lots of toys and equipment is not necessary.

Supervision of the road closure points is essential, there must be sufficient stewards to position themselves by the road closure signs to answer any questions from motorists and also to stop non-residents from “gate-crashing” the event. Stewards must be fully informed of their responsibilities so that they can carry out their role correctly. Stewards must be an adult and clearly identifiable i.e. wear hi-visibility clothing

It is strongly advised that steward’s responsibilities are discussed before the play street session begins. The stewards have an important job and should be clear on what their respective roles are.

4.2 Closing the road

It is important that motorists approaching the road can easily identify that it is closed to through traffic. Ensure that road closure signs are positioned so that the writing on them is clearly visible to approaching drivers. Once in place, the stewards must remain at their posts except to let vehicles of residents or visitors in and out. After the road is closed vehicles (except emergency vehicles) are breaking the law if they go through. However, if a driver lives on the road or is visiting a person living on the road and wants access in or out, they must be granted permission to do so.

4.3 At the end of the session

It is the responsibility of the play street organisers to make sure that portable signs and barriers are removed and all rubbish is cleared before the road is re-opened.

For an informal discussion about your application please email:
HCCPermitScheme@hullcc.gvo.uk