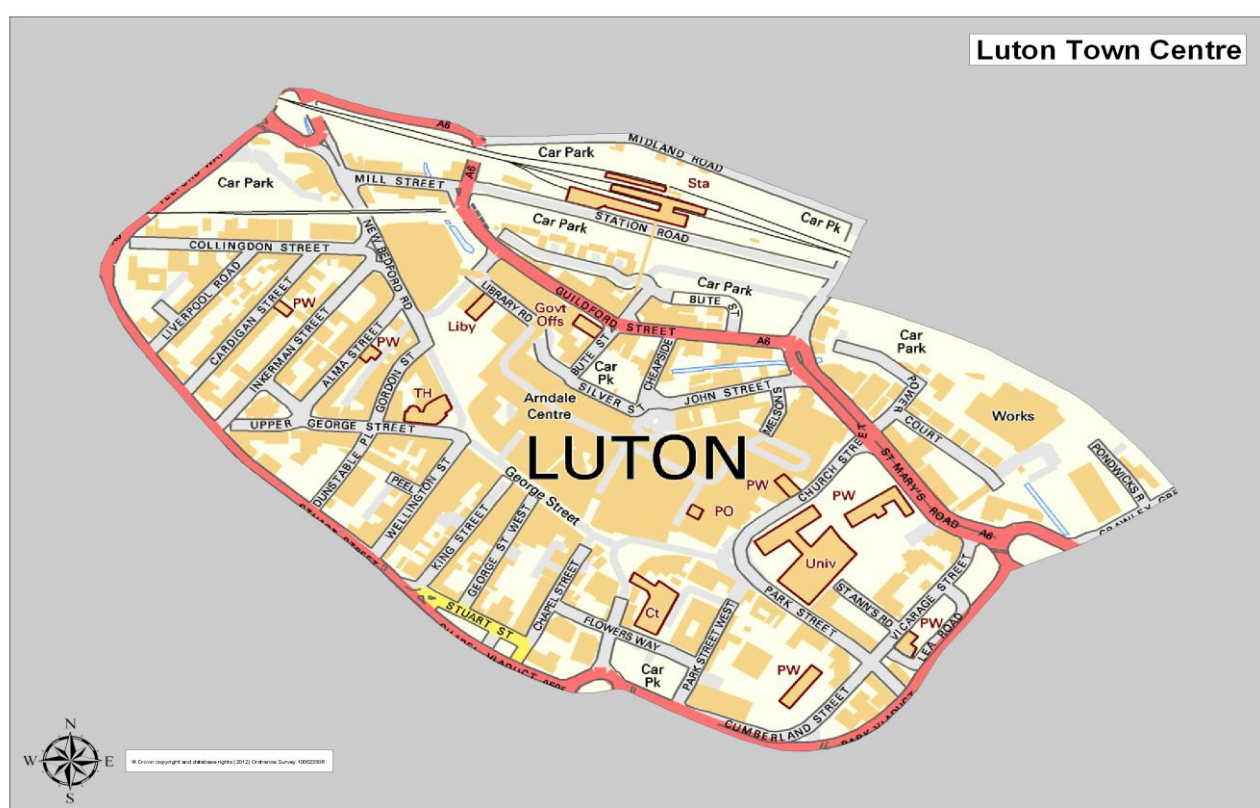


LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S POLICY ON THE USE OF TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC SPACE

Context

The physical improvements to St George's Square, and the economic regeneration of The Mall, that has taken place over recent years has enhanced Luton's position as the centre of community and commercial life.

This policy covers the following public spaces in the town centre footprint, as outlined in the map below – St George's Square, Manchester Street, Town Hall Square, George Street, Market Hill, Park Square.



St George's Square and the surrounding area provide physical spaces large enough to accommodate a substantial number of people. At the same time, they are the emblematic heart of Luton and its diverse communities, and provide access to the town's commercial centre.

The use of St George's Square and the surrounding areas beyond the day-to-day activities (access, shopping, leisure, rest area) that take place requires careful consideration.

Use of St George's Square and the surrounding areas must be fair and equitable in substance, and be widely perceived as such by most reasonable people.

This policy intends to clarify the status of public town centre spaces, and outlines the Council's approach in considering the use of this space.

Public space in this context divides into two areas:

- St George's Square and Market Hill – public open space
- Manchester Street, Town Hall Square, George Street, Park Square – public highway

Policy

The main purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, positive statement of activities that will be permitted in town centre public spaces. It is based on the fundamental, and reasonable, notion that a town's public spaces should be available for all communities to utilise and enjoy at all times.

The Council holds St Georges Square for the use and recreation of the people of Luton and will normally allow its use for funfairs, concerts, festivals and public information stands that **do not** disrupt local commerce. This principle can also be applied to other town centre spaces mentioned above.

The Council is dedicated to do everything it can to promote and maintain cohesion in Luton and strives to ensure this is embedded within all aspects of local and community life, therefore the Council **will not support** any events which may cause or lead to a breach of the peace, disrupt local commerce, effect community cohesion or have a detrimental impact on the reputation of Luton.

Where proper notice of a public procession or event has been served on the Police [pursuant to section 11 of the Public Order Act 1986] the Council **will do everything in its power** to minimise the impact and disruption on the community. This may include facilitating the procession or event away from key town centre spaces where there might be community safety issues or a disproportionately effect on local commerce.

Application

The principles and approach set out in this policy will be applied through the use of a Town Centre Usage Procedure with advice provided by the Council led Safety Advisory Group.

Review

Co-ordination of the implementation of this policy will be led by the Safety Advisory Group

This policy will be reviewed after 12 months in light of experience and the views of Luton's diverse communities.

Luton Borough Council
February 2013