

# Holding Picnics and Gatherings in The Royal Parks

## Policy Statement

### **Informal Picnics**

We welcome informal picnics in the Royal Parks. However, please be aware that the parks can get very busy during the summer, which limits available space. The parks are used by many people for different reasons and, as we are a public park, we are unable to allow any one group exclusive rights to an area. The parks are also home to rich variety of wildlife.

### **How we define informal picnics**

An informal picnic is defined as one with 'rugs on the ground' rather than one using tables, chairs or other structures which can impact the park, causing ground damage, habitat disturbance and scare wildlife.

To ensure that the park remains a space for everyone to enjoy, and to allow for the rich variety of nature and wildlife to thrive, we therefore ask you to follow these simple guidelines when picnicking in the Royal Parks.

### **Group sizes for informal picnics**

Visitors can gather for informal picnics in groups of up to 30 without prior approval or a fee. Be mindful of location and local signage to ensure your gathering is in a suitable area. Links to park maps are located below.

### **Large informal picnics**

Informal picnics larger than 30 and up to 100 may be approved in advance by the relevant park office, subject to space availability and notice given. Larger picnics require a picnic licence and a fee. If the application is accepted, the organiser should carry the licence with them on the day of the event.

### **School groups**

Please see information for Schools on self-led school visits:

[Self-led school visits | The Royal Parks](#)

### **Picnic enquiries**

Please read the guidelines below before submitting your enquiry.

For enquiries and requests related to picnics (up to 30) and larger picnics (31 to 100) attendees, please use the [Get in Touch](#) form. Select the relevant park and choose the subject "picnics".

If requesting a picnic licence for an informal picnic from 31 to 100 attendees, please include the below in the 'message' field:

- Business name (if relevant)
- Proposed date of picnic
- Approx timings (arrival to departure)
- Anticipated number of participants

If the event will exceed 100 attendees, a Small Events licence will be required. Please refer to the Small Events webpage for guidance on how to apply: [Hold a small event | The Royal Parks](#)

### Guidelines

- **Commercial picnics** – Commercial picnic companies are not permitted to operate within The Royal Parks. Instead, food can be collected from a professional picnic company and walked into the park by the attendees, which would then class this gathering as an informal picnic.
- **Please check our website** to ensure that there are no announcements or other events taking place that might impact your gathering.
- **Do check the park map** to help you to find the best area for your picnic. We suggest that you look for an open area, as it can be difficult to locate family and friends in one of the formal gardens:
  - [Bushy Park](#)
  - [Greenwich Park](#)
  - [Green Park](#)
  - [Hyde Park](#)
  - [Kensington Gardens](#)
  - [The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill](#)
  - [Richmond Park](#)
  - [St James's Park](#)
  - Picnics are not appropriate in Brompton Cemetery
- **Collecting or soliciting money** – If your picnic is for charity, any collections must take place outside of the park boundary.

- **Corporate advertising and distribution of leaflets** - If yours is an informal staff picnic, you will not be permitted to display any corporate banners or distribute promotional materials.
- **Playing music** - Please be respectful of other visitors and do not play music or commentary by PA system or other audio means
- **Ball games** – Ball games are only permitted in certain areas of some of the parks. These ball games must also be informal, which we define as 'jumpers for goalposts'. No nets permitted. Please see the list below which details where ball games can be played.
- **Alcohol** – We have no objection to alcoholic drinks, but they must be available free of charge (i.e. not for sale) and for consumption by your guests only. And, of course, alcohol must only be made available to persons over the age of 18.
- **Feeding the wildlife** – It is against the Park Regulations to feed or touch any birds, waterfowl, squirrels, deer or pelican.
- **No barbecues, or any form of cooking in the parks** –As well as being a fire hazard, abandoned barbecues can be a hazard to other visitors and to wildlife. There are catering outlets in each park selling a selection of hot and cold food.
- **Glass** – Please ensure that you use plastic cups and bottles where possible. Broken glass is a hazard to other visitors and wildlife and very difficult to remove from parkland.
- **Fixing anything to trees** – Avoid tying or pinning anything to them. Including pompoms, bunting, banners, and balloons.
- **Gazebos/ temporary structures** – Not permitted. Please do not drive anything into the ground.
- **Balloons** – Please remember to be careful when bringing balloons into the park, as when released they get caught up in the trees and are hard to remove. They can also be a hazard to the wildlife in the park. Balloon releases are not permitted in the Parks for these reasons.
- **Litter** - Please help us to look after the parks by taking any rubbish away with you or placing this in the bins provided.
- **Personal belongings** – Please do not leave any items unattended at any time, both to protect your items from theft and to prevent them from causing a possible security alert.

These guidelines have been informed by the [Royal Parks Regulations](#).

### Ball Games in The Royal Parks

If you plan for your picnic or gathering to include ball games, please use the areas below. For larger picnics (31 to 100 attendees) please include this in your application.

Park	Areas where ball games are permitted
Bushy	Anywhere <u>except</u> Woodland Gardens and Water Gardens
Green	None in Green. Suggest using Hyde pitches via <a href="#">Park Sports</a>
Greenwich	Bandstand field
Hyde	On booked pitches via <a href="#">Park Sports</a> only
Kensington Gardens	None in Kensington Gardens, suggest using Hyde pitches via <a href="#">Park Sports</a>
The Regent's & Primrose Hill	On booked pitches via <a href="#">The Hub</a> only
Richmond	On Sports Pitches
St James's	None in St James. Suggest using Hyde pitches booked via <a href="#">Park Sports</a> only