Tunbridge Wells Commons Conservators:

Advertising Policy (temporary banners, posters and signs)

1. **Purpose**

The Commons Conservators have responsibility for the management and protection of Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons. The Conservators have a duty to maintain and preserve the Commons and to keep them free from encroachments.

Permission to display a banner, poster or sign is discretionary. Nothing in this policy creates a right or entitlement to display signage on the Commons.

2. **Applications**

The Conservators will consider the nature and purpose of the proposed sign, its location, size, appearance and duration, together with its potential impact on the Commons and on the public's enjoyment of them.

Where permission is granted, it will normally be subject to written conditions specifying the location and period for which the sign may be displayed.

3. **Applications that will normally be considered**

The Conservators will normally consider applications for temporary banners, posters or signs which:

- advertise or provide information about a temporary event;
- relate to an event taking place on Tunbridge Wells Common or Rusthall Common;
- relate to an event taking place at St Paul's Church, Rusthall;
- relate to a community, charitable, cultural, educational or similar activity which is considered appropriate for display on the Commons; or
- are otherwise considered by the Conservators to be compatible with the proper management, protection and enjoyment of the Commons.

Generally, the event being advertised should be of limited duration and the banner, poster or sign should not normally be displayed for more than two weeks, but the Conservators have discretion to make exceptions.

4. **Applications that will not normally be permitted**

The Conservators will not normally permit temporary banners, posters or signs which:

- advertise a commercial business, product or service, unless an exception applies under section 5 of this policy;
- relate to a permanent or semi-permanent event or activity;
- advertise an event or activity taking place at a location with no clear connection to the Commons or the local community;
- are excessively large or visually intrusive;
- would adversely affect the character or appearance of the Commons;
- obstruct public access or interfere with paths, roads, visibility or other facilities;
- are likely to cause damage to trees, vegetation, buildings, fences, posts or other property;

- create a health and safety risk; or
- would otherwise conflict with the Conservators' statutory duties or the proper management and enjoyment of the Commons.

The Conservators may refuse an application even where it falls within a category that would normally be considered, where the circumstances justify doing so.

5. Businesses operating from the Commons

Where a permanent business is lawfully based on and operates from the Commons, an application for signage or advertising relating to that business may be considered separately.

Each application will be considered on its individual merits, considering:

- the nature and purpose of the business;
- the location of the premises;
- the size, design and appearance of the proposed sign;
- the proposed duration;
- the visual impact on the Commons;
- public access and safety; and
- the Conservators' statutory duties and responsibilities.

Permission for signage associated with one business does not create an entitlement or precedent for signage associated with another business.

6. Size, design and installation

The Conservators may specify the maximum dimensions, design, position and method of installation of any banner, poster or sign.

Signs should be of an appropriate size and appearance for their location and should not dominate or detract from the character of the Commons.

Unless specifically authorised by the Conservators, banners, posters or signs must not:

- be attached to trees;
- damage or interfere with vegetation;
- obstruct paths, roads, entrances or sightlines;
- interfere with existing signs or facilities; or
- involve digging, fixing or other works to the Commons.

The person or organisation receiving permission is responsible for installing and removing the sign safely and for making good any damage caused by its installation or removal.

7. Duration and removal

Permission will normally specify the date on which the sign may be installed and the date by which it must be removed. The person or organisation receiving permission must remove the sign promptly when the permitted period ends.

The Conservators may require a sign to be removed earlier if:

- it has been installed contrary to the conditions of permission;
- it becomes damaged or unsafe;

- it causes an obstruction, nuisance or other unforeseen problem; or
- circumstances arise which mean that its continued display is no longer appropriate.

8. Decisions

Applications will be considered by the Conservators or by the Clerk, acting under authority delegated by the Conservators.

The Conservators may impose conditions on any permission granted.

Where an application is refused, the applicant may request that the decision is reviewed by the Conservators, providing any additional information or circumstances they wish to be taken into account.

Date of review: October 2026

Date of next review: October 2029