

First edition

# The Guide to Busking and Street Performance in Bath



# Setting The Scene

Busking and street entertainment has long been part of the Bath experience, creating a vibrant and pleasant atmosphere for those who visit Bath. We welcome buskers and street entertainment that enlivens our city's streets. However, on occasion some performances can be intrusive and disruptive to those who live and work in the city.

These guidelines have been written and agreed by representatives of the busking community, Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) officers, the Bath Business Improvement District (Bath BID) and Bath Abbey to ensure that there is mutual respect, consideration and cooperation in resolving any issues.

It is in everyone's interest to have a positive relationship with all users of public spaces and these guidelines aim to support this objective.

Our thanks go to the Buskers and Street Entertainers in Bath, Bath Abbey, Bath BID, Equity and the Musicians Union, Keep Streets Live Campaign and B&NES Council in producing this Official Guide to Busking and Street Performance in Bath.



- 02 Setting The Scene
- 03 Map Of Popular Performance Areas
- 04-05 Buskers And Street Performers' Guideline
- 06 Bath Abbey
- 07 Specific Performance Issues
- 08 Selling CDs

# Map Of Popular Performance Areas

There are no specific pitches where street entertainers can perform however, please be especially mindful of the guidance when performing in the three red shaded areas.



# Buskers/Street Performers Guideline

Below are the guidelines for busking/street performing in Bath. Street Performers and Buskers are expected to adhere to these guiding principles. Where busking or street performances create a problem, please see page 7.

- a) Street performance and busking is normally for a maximum of one hour at a pitch. Performers should be prepared to move after this time period. There is a culture of swapping pitches and moving around the city. One pitch should not be dominated by one performance artist
- b) Noise from instruments or performance should not be above street ambient noise. Excessive noise and loud inconsiderate amplification is not welcome
- c) Before setting up your performance anticipate the impact that your act will have on others in the area you choose
- d) Entertainers should not set up in front of shop windows, doorways and fire exits. If you are unsure, ask the business or building owner's permission first
- e) Where fire and chemicals are used as part of your performance please clean the space when you have finished
- f) Performers should be mindful of street traders and others who use the public space under licence to perform their day to day living
- g) When performing around the Abbey, please adhere to the traffic light system that is shown on page 6



- h) Performance times in Bath City Centre are 10:00 - 20:00 hrs
- i) Entertainers should not ask for money but can accept donations
- j) Selling of CDs or products relating to the performance requires street trading consent obtainable from the local authority (see page 8)
- k) If you are approached by a member of the public, please be courteous. Similarly we ask members of the public to wait for a gap in the performance before approaching a performer to discuss any issue
- l) Conflict issues should be dealt with in a professional and courteous manner. Please see page 7 in supporting conflict resolution
- m) Performers are asked not to repeat the same material. Repeating a limited number of songs/performance pieces causes complaints
- n) SouthGate and Milsom Place are private shopping areas. Performing in these areas requires permission from the management.



# Bath Abbey

**Bath Abbey Precincts are a place of great significance to Bath and the hundreds of thousands that visit this holy site.**

Bath Abbey offers an oasis of peace and calm in this bustling city. This is an essential part of Bath Abbey's role and it is always being used for prayer and meditation even when it appears there isn't an event happening.



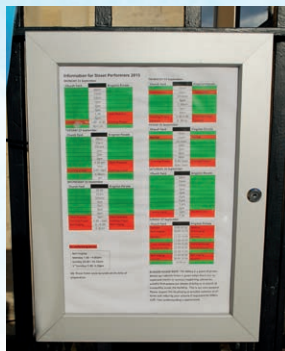
We ask that street musicians are very sensitive to the needs of people in the Abbey. They will be there for many reasons including ill-health, bereavement or anxiety as well as expressing joy and happiness.

This means that the volume of any performance (with or without amplification) should reflect the presence of the Abbey at all times.

There are daily services in the Abbey, choir practices and many other events in the year. To help Street Musicians, the Abbey publishes a traffic-light system on two public noticeboards. (On the board facing the Roman Baths, and the board on the railings on the side facing Kingston Parade.) Green means it is ok to proceed with care; the red means please do not busk.



South West door



Choir gates

Please honour this traffic light system. It is there to help you.

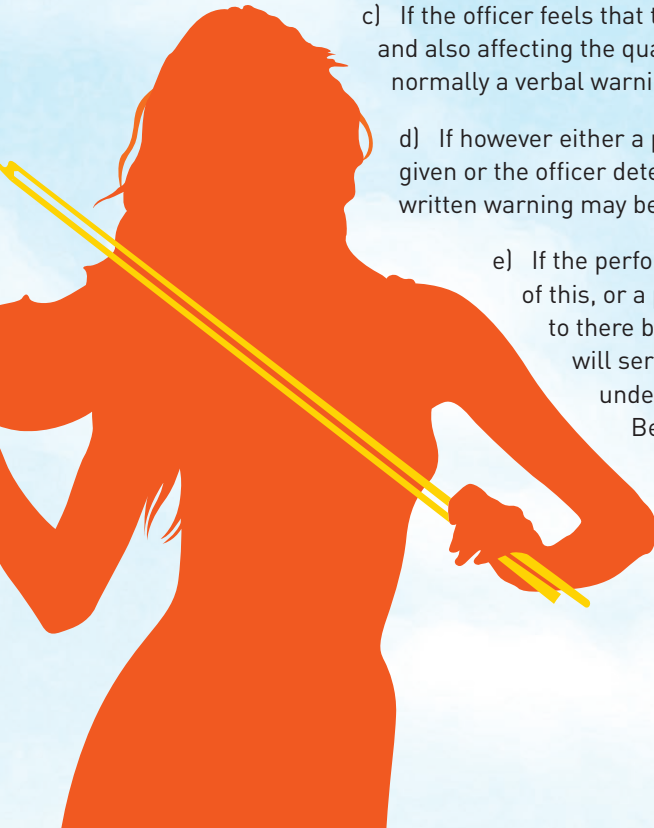
If approached by a member of the Abbey staff for any reason, please respect their request.

# Specific Performance Issues

Most local buskers and street performers are aware of these guidelines and will adhere to them. Should you feel that a performer is not complying with these guidelines, here are some suggested methods of resolving conflict.

Please note that these suggestions relate to the specific busker at the specific time in question and are not intended to apply to buskers more generally. These suggestions do not deal with the busker's style or quality.

- a) During a gap in the performance ask the busker if he or she is aware of these guidelines, if not present a copy. If they are aware and you don't feel the performance is complying to the guidelines, kindly ask the performer to re-evaluate their performance in light of your observations
- b) If this intervention does not result in a positive outcome, please call the B&NES Council on 01225 477551. Where possible, an officer will attend to assess the performance. If the officer's opinion is that the performance is not unreasonable, then no action will be taken.
- c) If the officer feels that the performance is unreasonable, and also affecting the quality of life of those in the area, normally a verbal warning will be given to the performer.
- d) If however either a previous verbal warning has been given or the officer determines that it is necessary, a written warning may be served on the performer.
- e) If the performer fails to adhere the conditions of this, or a previous written warning, subject to there being sufficient evidence the council will serve a Community Protection Notice under the provisions of the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Failure to abide with the formal notice will result in legal action under the above Act.



# Selling CDs

Under Schedule 4 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 all streets within Bath and North East Somerset have been designated consent streets which basically means that you need permission to trade from any street or highway within the authority.

Details of these provisions and an online application form can be found on the council's website at [www.bathnes.gov.uk/street-trading](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/street-trading).

Daily consents are available from the Bath Visitor Information Centre.

Any query please email [licensing@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@bathnes.gov.uk).



## Useful Contact Details

Bath and North East Somerset Council  
Environmental Protection Team –

Telephone **01225 477551** (Office hours)  
**01225 477477** (Emergency out of hours)

Web site for guidelines  
[www.bathbid.co.uk/busking](http://www.bathbid.co.uk/busking)  
[www.bathbuskers.co.uk](http://www.bathbuskers.co.uk)

