

## South Dublin County Council - Allocation of Pitch / Sporting Facilities – Policy and Conditions

South Dublin County Council is currently reviewing its Policy and Procedure for the allocation of sporting facilities within its administrative area.

This interim allocation policy and schedule of conditions is being circulated to all sporting clubs in advance of the 2023/2024 Season and is subject to change. However, any further amendments likely to impact on clubs/sporting organisations will be notified in due course and in advance of such implementation.

### Policy

South Dublin County Council provides over 1,750ha of parks and open spaces throughout the County. The larger parks, in particular, provide space for a wide range of active and passive recreation facilities including circa 163 playing pitches/sport facilities for various sporting clubs such as Gaelic Football, Hurling, Soccer, Rugby, Cricket, Rounder's, Softball, Baseball, Athletic etc. The benefits of these facilities contribute to the Government's vision of an active and healthy society as detailed in the 2013 *Healthy Ireland* document – *A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025*.

The Allocation of playing pitches/Sport Facilities is granted on a **year-to-year basis**, subject to Clubs undertaking to abide by the various Acts, Bye-Laws, etc. governing the use of County Council Parks and Open Spaces. South Dublin County Council Bye-Laws for the control and regulation of the use of Parks and Open Spaces and recreational playing grounds came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011. A copy of the Bye-Laws is enclosed. Additional copies are available free of charge from the Council's Headquarters, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24, and on the Council's website, [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie)

In determining the merits of a Club's application for pitch/Sport Facilities allocation, South Dublin County Council will give consideration to the Club's ability to provide from its own resources and its contribution to the sustainable development of the Community and its social wellbeing.

### Conditions

Clubs are required to abide by the following conditions: -

#### General

1. Pitches/Sport Facilities will be let only to those clubs that have submitted an official, fully completed application form and who have certification from the appropriate League, Board or Association for all teams for whom accommodation is sought. The fees in respect of any letting shall be as is determined by South Dublin County Council from year to year.

2. Clubs are required to make arrangement to clear any outstanding fees as part of any application for allocation of facilities, failure to do so may result in the club losing its allocation for the following season.
3. Clubs are required to use the Pitch Manager software provided to book all usage of the pitches allocated to them. The Pitch Manager software will be monitored throughout the season for pitch maintenance, pitch sharing purposes and over/under usage. Failure to utilise the Pitch Manager software may jeopardise future applications for allocation of pitches. User instructions on how to use the Pitch Manager software can be found on the Council's website [www.sdcc.ie/en/services/sport-and-recreation/playing-pitches](http://www.sdcc.ie/en/services/sport-and-recreation/playing-pitches).
4. The hours of closing of South Dublin County Council Regional Parks vary from month to month and details are available on the Council's website [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie). Clubs must vacate the Park before official closing time.
5. Club members must gain entry and exit to the Park only through the authorised entrances and exits.
6. Clubs shall not assign its interest in the allocation agreement to any third party, in relation to the facilities or part thereof. If clubs do not utilise their full allocation, they are to inform the Council immediately.
7. Clubs must only use Council pitches/Sport Facilities that have been allocated to them.
8. South Dublin County Council reserves the right to alter pitch/Sport Facilities allocations within the season, if necessary.
9. Where car parks have been provided, clubs must ensure that both their members and the visiting teams avail of these facilities. Where no car park is provided, clubs must ensure that all cars are parked so as to minimise inconvenience to adjoining residents and to avoid unnecessary complaints and nuisance to owners and occupiers of surrounding properties. It will also be the responsibility of the club to ensure that visiting teams are fully aware of and respect the parking agreements.
10. Clubs must maintain a Public Liability Insurance Policy which indemnifies South Dublin County Council against all actions, claims, expenses, and demands by any person or persons arising out of the said allocation of pitches, and the County Council expressly repudiates all liability in respect of such actions, claims, expenses, and demands. Indemnity must also extend to loss of any article which may be lost or stolen while using the facilities of the Park. Evidence of Public Liability Insurance, the level of indemnity to be not less than €6.5 million in respect of any one incident, must be submitted with the Application Form.

Note: When insurance falls due for renewal during the letting period, Clubs are obliged to submit details of the new insurance policy with specific indemnity to South Dublin County Council immediately.

11. South Dublin County Council has full discretion on the playability of all pitches/Sport Facilities under its control. The Council's decision in this matter is final. No Club or Referee has the

right to decide that any pitch/Sport Facility is playable were the Council has declared the area unusable. Any claim for alternative accommodation arising from any such closure will not be considered.

Note: Pitches/Sport Facilities declared unplayable by the Council in the interest of health, safety and welfare; and in maintaining grass surfaces to ensure pitches/Sport Facilities are available for play in the long term.

12. Training is not allowed on pitches or on pitch surrounds during or after park opening hours, without the prior written approval of the County Council.
13. Information regarding the playability of pitches/Sport Facilities is issued every Friday by SMS text messaging and emailed to Club's dedicated contact personnel. Details of playability of pitches/Sport Facilities are published on the Council's Website [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie) and on Twitter. Subject to weather conditions prevailing the Council has authority to declare pitches/Sport Facilities unusable at their discretion on Saturday or Sunday, if conditions have deteriorated since the previous Friday when the pitches/Sport Facilities may have been declared playable.
14. The letting season is from August 2023 to June 2024 (excluding a Winter Break [closed season] period from 09/12/2023 to 02/02/2024). No access is authorised to pitches/Sport Facilities during the closed season, or outside of the letting season.
15. Clubs granted letting of pitches/Sport Facilities will be responsible for the behaviour of their visiting teams.
16. The Club shall not use, or allow the Park or Pitch/Sporting Facilities to be used, in such a way as to cause or constitute a nuisance, damage, danger, injury, loss, disturbance, annoyance, inconvenience or interference to the Council or any member of the public; other Clubs or their members; or the owners or occupiers of neighbouring properties.
17. All correspondence from the Council regarding pitches/Sport Facilities will be sent by email to the address supplied. Clubs are required to advise the Council of any amendment to their contact details. The Council will only correspond with the Nominated Point of Contact for official club business, this includes maintenance requests, meeting requests, facility queries etc.
18. Any Club or member of any Club which disregards, disobeys, or contravenes any condition of letting may be removed from their allocated pitch/Sporting Facilities.

### ***Pitches/Sport Facilities***

19. Clubs are required to satisfy by means of on-site recce that the pitch/activity surface is free from any and all hazards including but not limited to - broken glass, wire, cans, waste material, holes etc. prior to commencement of games/activities. The onus is on the Club to ensure that each pitch/activity surface is safe for play and that each game can proceed without danger to players, officials or other persons using the Park. Clubs shall implement all measures necessary to ensure the safety of such persons.

This does not alter the Council's sole right to call off the use of pitches/Sport Facilities depending on weather conditions at the time.

20. Clubs must remove all litter, including tape, sweet wrappers, drinking bottles and medical waste from pitches/Sport Facilities and both side-lines/end lines after each game. This responsibility extends to the removal of litter created by the visiting team and supporters. In this regard, Clubs must submit a detailed Litter Management Plan to ensure facility/pitch is kept free from litter. The Plan shall reference details for collection of all litter from the pitch/facility; pitch/facility surrounds, and the vicinity of the dressing rooms before and after each match. Random inspections will be undertaken by the Council to ensure compliance and clubs found in breach of this condition will be liable to Fixed Penalty Notice/On the Spot Fines of €150 each and risk withdrawal of use of the facility.
21. Pitches/Activity Surfaces are to be marked with proprietary pitch marking products only. Materials such as "Creosote", Hydrated Lime and Herbicides etc. are **not** permitted. Clubs found using non-proprietary herbicide, diesel oil or creosote to mark pitches/Activity Surfaces will be liable to penalties up to and including withdrawal of all pitch/Sporting Facilities allocations.
22. Nets are to be secured to posts by using the "Netfix" system or plastic 'S' net ties only. Clubs will be responsible for providing toggles to attach the nets to the "Netfix" slots provided on goalposts.  
The use of twine, tape, nails, hooks etc. is strictly prohibited. Clubs found using nails, hooks, tape or twine to secure nets to posts will be liable to penalties up to and including withdrawal of all pitch/Sports Facilities allocations. All forms of attachments for nets e.g. "Netfix", flags and goal posts should be removed after each game.
23. Where steel pins or ground anchors are used to secure nets, these must be removed immediately following each game. Under no circumstances may pins or ground anchors be left in or on the ground when a pitch/Sports Facilities is not in use. Clubs found in breach of this condition may be liable to penalties up to and including withdrawal of all pitch allocations.
24.
  - 24.1. All portable and demountable goalposts must be secured with a system that meets the requirements of IS EN 748: 1996 through the use of weights or pins. Use of portable or demountable goals that do not meet this standard is strictly prohibited. The club must designate a person to ensure goals are assembled and secured properly before each game and a written record of this inspection retained. Written records of all such inspections must be available for inspection by the Council at any time.
  - 24.2. Portable and demountable goal posts must be tested annually in accordance with the methods set out in IS EN 748:1996. Documentary evidence must be submitted to the Council confirming that portable and demountable goal posts were manufactured and tested to the standards set out in IS EN 748: 1996 and that the posts were tested and passed an annual test to IS EN 748: 1996 prior to the start of the season. Pitch allocations

for small sided games will not be processed unless documentary evidence of testing is submitted to the Council.

25. Rugby clubs must provide padding for goalpost uprights as recommended by the relevant national governing bodies and remove on completion of games.
26. The maintenance and upkeep of pitches/Sport Facilities is the sole responsibility of South Dublin County Council. Under no circumstances should Clubs/agents engage in maintenance or improvement works on pitches/Sport Facilities allocated to them.

**Facilities (Only Applicable to Clubs who have been allocated Dressing Rooms)**

27. Clubs must provide a sufficient number of stewards to keep order in the dressing rooms and on pitches/Sport Facilities and must prevent unauthorised entry to pavilions. No responsibility or liability is accepted by South Dublin County Council for loss or damage to any property left on/in Council property including pavilions.
28. Clubs must ensure that visiting teams use dressing rooms for changing purposes and under no circumstances should players change in public view.
29. Clubs must accept responsibility for the conduct of all persons admitted to dressing rooms; for keeping them clean and tidy and for repair of any damage caused to them.
30. Clubs must paint their dressing rooms in dark green paint at the beginning of the season and Clubs must remove all graffiti from the outside of the dressing rooms by painting over in dark green paint, as required from time to time.
31. It will be the duty of the club to provide all sundries such as toilet paper, cleaning equipment, cleaning materials etc. required to maintain the dressing rooms.
32. The Council reserves the right to visit the changing rooms at any time and to inform the club that it will, at a cost to be taken from the bond (where applicable), clean or repair the facilities.
33. Bonds (where applicable) and Annual Fees are to be determined each year by South Dublin County Council.
34. Where dressing rooms have been provided, keys must be returned at the end of the Season.
35. Bonds (where applicable) will only be repaid when a club relinquishes changing rooms in a satisfactory condition.

36. Any damage caused by clubs or visiting clubs to Council facilities will result in the withdrawal of the facility and / or financial compensation for any costs incurred by the Council in the reinstatement of the facility.

**Please Retain a Copy of these Conditions of Letting for your Information throughout the Coming Season**

**Please note if this declaration is not signed and returned to the Council the club's application will be considered invalid.**

I declare that I have read and understand the conditions of South Dublin County Council Policy and Procedure for the Allocation of Pitch/Sport Facilities. I agree to abide by these conditions and understand that failure to meet all conditions will leave South Dublin County Council with no alternative than to withdraw the pitch/ Sport Facilities allocation for my Club and notify the relevant League.

Disclaimer is be signed by the Chairperson

CLUB NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRPERSON NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_