

Scarborough Borough Council

A policy for the use and management of Scarborough's North and South Bay Beaches.

February 2007

This policy document is concerned with those activities that take place on the beaches themselves (often referred to as the sands). It seeks to outline clear guidance for the use of these important recreational areas in order to inform the management and use of the beaches by the Council, its partners and associates for the benefit of all beach users.

The primary aim of the beach policy is to maintain the amenity and attractiveness of the beaches for the enjoyment of beach users and the overall benefit of Scarborough town.

1. By-laws

Both of Scarborough's beaches are governed by existing by-laws, which correspond to Home Office standards for beach use and management. The by-laws are not intended to inhibit or restrict the recreational enjoyment of beach users but to ensure that everyone using the beaches does so with consideration and thought for other users so that everyone can enjoy the beaches in a harmonious way.

A summary of the by-laws governing the beaches is as follows:

1.1 Pleasure boats and craft

By-laws concerning the use of pleasure boats and jet skis introduced regulations to create a 'safe bathing zone' within which all craft are restricted to a eight nautical miles per hour and must exercise due care and attention for other users. Safe bathing zones are an important element of the by-laws and should be policed rigorously.

1.2 The Seashore

By-laws governing use of the seashore apply between May and September each year and are concerned with a range of activities including:

The erection of booths and tents (excluding personal windbreaks)
Performances
Selling and Hawking
Beach Barbeques
Games requiring the exclusive use of any part of the seashore

..all of which are permitted only where express permission is given by the Council and suitable notices erected to inform seashore users of the proposed activity.

The by-laws also concern:
the use of vehicles
the lighting of fires

...both of which are only permitted with the express permission of the Council.

informal games
fishing
riding and driving – excluding the hours of 9am – 6pm between May and September when this is not permitted
sandlines
noisy instruments and music playing equipment

...are all permitted providing that due concern is given to the safety and comfort of other beach users.

Interference with life saving appliances is not permitted unless in the case of an emergency. The removal of barriers, railings and any other structure is not permitted without reasonable excuse and the posting of placards on any structure on the seashore is not permitted.

Policies for beach management.

2. Scarborough - South Bay

The area of the South Bay Beach lies between the harbour and the South Bay Pool and includes an area between Aquarium Top and the Harbour within which the by-laws apply. This area of the town represents the more traditional side of Scarborough's history as a seaside resort and includes amusement arcades, entertainment venues and a variety of retail and catering outlets.

2.1 Catering

Two catering outlets have concessions on the South Bay. These are relatively small outlets the larger of which has been improved in recent years. A third catering outlet is located under Aquarium top roundabout looking out onto the sands.

(i). No further catering outlets will be permitted on the South Bay sands. The size and location of existing outlets will not alter from the existing and will be subject to planning regulations. Where the opportunity arises to relocate and re-house the existing slipway kiosk within the West Pier a catering kiosk in the location of the existing slipway kiosk will no longer be permitted.

Justification – there are a range of catering outlets in the area of the South Bay to cater for all requirements. To maintain the open nature of the beach any additional catering or retailing should be located within the built areas of the South Bay on Foreshore Road and adjacent streets, subject to planning regulations.

2.2 Amusements / attractions

An ongoing concession exists for a site for children's rides located on the south bay beach. The site is restricted to 29.74 square metres (320 square feet). This is a temporary, seasonal structure, which is subject to planning permission. This policy refers specifically to any activity that requires a structure of any kind to be placed on the sands themselves other than that connected to a one off event.

(i) No additional seasonal or semi-permanent rides or paying attractions will be allowed on the South Bay sands other than the above mentioned area which is subject to its existing terms, conditions and planning consent. Any future alteration to this site will only be permitted where it results in the permanent removal, reduction in scale or significant improvement in quality of the attraction itself.

(ii) Permission may be granted for the short term erection of such attractions where they are connected to a special event as identified in policy vii and will only be permitted for the duration of the event itself.

Justification – consultation with beach users has identified a strong preference to maintain as open and uncluttered aspect to the beach as possible. Local and national research supports the view that the addition of further rides or attractions on the beach is not necessary to enhance its attractiveness to visitors and would in some cases prove a disincentive to visit the south bay sands. The scale of the existing site for attractions should be reduced where the opportunity arises.

2.3 Deck chair hire

Three deck chair hire points are currently located on the Foreshore Road, South Bay.

(i) Three deck chair hire points will continue to be used for the hiring of deck chairs and other beach equipment subject to their consistent and regular maintenance to ensure the highest quality of provision. The style and size of the structures should be in keeping with the architectural quality of the area in compliance with planning regulations.

Justification – the hire of deck chairs remains popular and is part of the tradition of the resort beach. The deck chairs are traditional in style and should remain so. The hire points themselves are located on the edge of Foreshore Road and do not impinge on the beach itself in any significant way.

2.4 Donkey / pony rides

Concessions exist for Donkey / pony rides on the South Bay beach of which there are four. Donkey rides are a traditional feature of the resort beach and continue to be popular with visitors in the summer months.

(i) Donkey ride concessions will continue to be let to a maximum of four concessions at any given time.

Justification – Donkey rides are an expected and familiar component of the beach scene and do not require any kind of structures to be placed on the beach. Consultation has supported the continuing presence of Donkey Rides however limits are placed on the number of licenses to be granted and the number of donkeys that may be used at any given time. This reflects the overwhelming preference of beach users for an open and unimpeded beach and maintains the principal amenity of the beach for all of its visitors.

2.5 Events

The use of South Bay beach for medium to large scale events has proved popular. The music festival 'Beached' and events such as 'Thundercat' power boat racing have proved successful in promoting the town and bringing local people and visitors to the beach who might not visit otherwise.

(i) An annual programme of major events will be permitted on the South Bay sands subject to permission by Scarborough Borough Council. The Head of Tourism and Leisure Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Tourism Leisure and Community, will retain the discretion to permit additional events where a significant local economic benefit would result.

Justification – consultation demonstrated wide support for festivals and events on the South Bay sands and this is consistent with wider policy including the Borough's Strategy for Tourism and the North Yorkshire Cultural Prospectus. To ensure consistency with other aspects of this policy any structure associated with an event should be removed promptly from the sands in order to ensure minimal disruption to beach users. Events will be programmed so that the general amenity of the South Bay beach is not compromised by a predominance of events or by events of an inappropriate length of time.

2.6 Jet skis and pleasure craft

Safe bathing zones exist in both North and South Bays. The North Bay makes provision for the launch of jet skis and the harbour entrance in the South Bay remains outside of the Safe bathing area.

(i) Pleasure craft are not permitted to enter the safe bathing zones unless forced to do so.

Justification - under normal conditions there is no need for any craft to enter the safe bathing area in the South Bay and although under by-laws a maximum speed limit of 8 nautical miles per hour exists, craft should be discouraged from entering the safe bathing zone altogether.

3. North Bay

The North Bay provides a different experience from the South being separated from the developed area of the town by the cliffside. This creates a far more natural feeling location similar to a rural beach. The North Bay is nearby a number of larger leisure developments although these are due to be replaced by the Sands Development over the coming years. The Sands will have a dramatic effect on the area although there is strong support to maintain and enhance the rural undeveloped feel of the North Bay sands.

3.1 Deck chair hire

Two deck chair hire points are currently located on the North Bay.

(i) Two deck chair hire points will continue to be permitted subject to their consistent and regular maintenance to ensure the highest quality of provision. The style and size of the structures should be in keeping with the architectural quality of the area in compliance with planning regulations.

Justification – the hire of deck chairs remains popular and is part of the tradition of the resort beach. The deck chairs are traditional in style and should remain so. The hire points themselves are located on the edge of the sands and do not impinge on the beach itself.

3.2 Donkey Rides

A single concession exists for Donkey Rides on the North Bay Beach. Donkey rides are a traditional feature of the resort beach and continue to be popular with visitors in the summer months.

(i) No more than a single donkey ride concession will be let on the North Bay Beach.

Justification – Donkey rides are an expected and familiar component of the beach scene and do not require any kind of structures to be placed on the beach. Consultation has supported the continuing presence of Donkey Rides however limits are placed on the number of licenses to be granted and the number of donkeys that may be used at any given time. This reflects the overwhelming preference of beach users for an open and unimpeded beach and maintains the principal amenity of the beach for all of its visitors. The general terrain of the North Bay, the height of the tide and the need to allow access to the water for motorised watercraft are further limiting factors in respect of the number of donkey rides permitted on the North Bay sands.

3.3 Organised Activities

There is support for organised activities on the North Bay particularly for children and the opportunity exists to increase this provision. Such activities are covered by the coastal by-laws and there is no requirement to identify a specific policy in respect of this.

3.4 Jet Skis and Pleasure Craft

A launch area for motorised craft is identified on the North Bay within the safe bathing zone. By-laws stipulate a maximum speed of 8 nautical miles per hour within the safe bathing zone.

(i) Pleasure craft are not permitted to enter the safe bathing zones unless forced to do so.

Justification - under normal conditions there is no need for any craft to enter the safe bathing area in the North Bay and although under by-laws a maximum speed limit of 8 nautical miles per hour exists, craft should be discouraged from entering the safe bathing zone altogether.

3.5 Amusements / Attractions

No amusements are located on the North Bay sands and consultation supports this. Temporary, seasonal amusement rides are located on the area of ground opposite the former Corner complex. Although these rides are not located on the Sands they do impact on beach users by their presence and by the noise they create.

(i) No attractions, rides or amusements will be allowed on the North Bay sands.

(ii) Rides or amusements operated opposite the Corner complex adjacent to the North Bay should do so without amplified sounds or music.

Justification – the North Bay sands are enjoyed for their undeveloped nature. This is to be maintained.

4. General Comments

4.1 Signage and information

There is an opportunity to create improved signage and interpretation in both North and South Bays. Consultation has identified an opportunity to interpret the wildlife in the North Bay and an opportunity exists to improve information for beach users in both of Scarborough's bays.

4.2 Additional facilities

Facilities for beach users such as showers and feet cleaning points would improve the amenity of the beaches. Opportunities to implement such measures are dependent on funding however and these opportunities are to be investigated further.

4.3 Character of the Bays

The distinct characteristics of the North and South Bays is cherished by both local people and visitors and should be maintained. The development of the Sands in the North Bay will have a significant impact on the North Bay area and care should be taken to resist the possibility of exploiting the beach for commercial activities that would not be welcomed by the majority of users.

4.4 Beach maintenance and cleansing

To preserve the amenity of the beaches and maintain beach award status it is incumbent upon the Council to maintain their cleanliness. A regime exists to do this and this should be maintained in order to meet beach award standards and ensure the ongoing amenity for beach users.

4.5 Blue Flag Awards – Beach Safety

Blue Flag awards are assessed on the basis of beach safety provision including lifeguards, first aid and information provision, and on water quality which is assessed by the Environment Agency. Scarborough Borough Council is committed to Blue Flag status for all its resort beaches and will maintain provision of required beachside facilities and continue to work with the Environment Agency to achieve the required water quality in the bay.