



**GREAT
SANKEY**
PARISH
COUNCIL

Winter Management Policy

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1. Executive Summary

This policy has been adopted in consideration of relevant HSE guidance on adverse weather precautions (www.hse.gov.uk).

During periods of adverse weather, the Parish Council will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that facilities, including community centres, remain open as normal but will not do so at the expense of the welfare of staff and the safety of members of the public.

Where it is practical to do so, paths will be gritted in advance of snowfall and swept & gritted when snow lies.

Time and resources are limited, and only key areas will be managed.

It is essential that all Councillors, employees and members of the public remember that they have a personal responsibility to take due care in adverse weather.

2. Planning & Authority

The decision to grit will be taken by the Parish Clerk in consultation with the Maintenance Officer and the Chair of the Council (if necessary). The decision will be based on alerts issued by the Met Office, local weather forecasts and advice from Warrington Borough Council and will consider the following:

- Expected severity of weather
- Predicted length of the freeze
- Planned use of facilities
- Availability of grit
- Availability of staff

3. Clearance

During periods of severe/persistent ice or snow the Parish Council will endeavour to clear the access pathways to each of the Council's five Community Centres. Priority will be given to areas of special risk, e.g., ramp to Council offices. It should be noted that in extreme weather conditions where transport is difficult or dangerous it may not be possible for Council staff to reach the centres. It should also be noted that in very low temperatures the effectiveness of salt is significantly reduced.

It is not the Parish Council's responsibility to grit public highways, private properties, or car parks.

4. Staff

The Parish Council recognises that adverse weather conditions will from time to time make travel to & from work difficult. However, staff are expected to make all reasonable efforts to reach their workplace. Staff arriving late will not lose pay provided that the Parish Clerk is satisfied that their arrival time is reasonable considering the distance travelled and the inclement weather conditions.

If staff are unable to reach their normal workplace, they should contact the Parish Clerk or Maintenance Officer as soon as possible.

In the event of the Community Centres being closed, staff will be informed by the Parish Clerk as soon as possible. In this event, Caretakers will be guaranteed their minimum 15 hours per full week (for those working five days out of seven).

5. Closure of Community Centres

The Parish Council will endeavour to ensure that Community Centres are kept open as normal during adverse weather conditions. The decision to close the centres will be taken by the Parish Clerk in consultation with the Maintenance Officer and the Chairman. Warrington Borough Council may also be consulted with regard to school closures in the area.

In the event that it is deemed necessary to close the centres for the safety of staff and customers, the Parish Clerk will ensure that everyone is informed as soon as possible and given notification of when the centres are likely to be re-opened.

Centre customers may be given permission to have access to the centres even if the Parish Council have deemed it necessary to close them. Such permission must be in writing by prior arrangement with the Council and will operate as follows:

If it appears that at the close of business the weather the following morning may hinder Council staff from safely opening the premises in time for the first users, the Caretaker will be instructed to leave the building on the user lock only and not activate the alarm.

The customer will be able to gain access using the keys they have **if they feel that it is safe enough** for them to do so. This will be at their own risk as Parish Council staff will not have inspected the premises that morning. The customer will be expected to leave the building as they find it, locking it when they leave.

Under these circumstances the Parish Council takes no responsibility for the condition of the premises or for the safety of the customer's staff and their members/customers.

7. Personal Safety

The presence of snow and ice presents Health & Safety risks as the potential for slips, trips and falls increases significantly. It is important for all persons on Council property to take due care and adhere to common-sense protocols such as:

- Allow more time for your journey
- Walk, don't run
- Be mindful of slipping, particularly on ramps and steps
- Wear appropriate footwear with a non-slip sole
- Where possible, leave hands free to aid balance