

The Town Centre PSPO

Frequently Asked Questions & Support

1. What is a PSPO?

Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in an area that has a detrimental effect on the local community's quality of life, by imposing restrictions on certain antisocial behaviours. The orders are designed so that we can all enjoy the use of public spaces, safe from antisocial behaviour.

A PSPO can last up to three years. The Council can – after further consultation – extend it for another three-year period. It would only do so if it is considered proportionate and necessary.

To view the full Town Centre PSPO, please see [bolton-town-centre-public-spaces-protection-order-2019](#)

2. How are PSPOs enforced?

The Council takes an 'engage, educate and enforce' approach to applying the conditions of the PSPO. In most cases early intervention and prevention will be used to help people change behaviour and access support services, depending on the nature of the prohibition.

Bolton is committed to supporting those who are in genuine hardship, and as a first response seeks to direct those in need into the appropriate services. We strive to work with those who are genuinely in need of support and the order is designed to deter those who continue to engage in antisocial behaviour in Bolton Town Centre despite warnings.

The PSPO seeks to engage, support and educate individuals to address their behaviour. However, there are occasions when enforcement is deemed necessary to protect the public and make the town centre a safer place for everyone.

If you breach a PSPO, you can receive the following penalties:

- A £100 fine on the spot, known as a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) which must be paid within 14 days.
- A fine of up to £1,000 if the charge goes to court. Defendants may also face the prospect of added court costs, and if convicted, they will obtain a criminal record for the offence.

For further information about PSPOs in general, please see [Public Spaces Protection Orders \(PSPOs\) – Bolton Council](#)

3. Why was the current PSPO introduced?

The current Town Centre PSPO was approved to address a range of behaviours which were causing significant concern for residents, businesses, and visitors to the area. These behaviours included, amongst others, the consumption of alcohol on street, peddling/street trading and street begging¹. If extended for another three years, the exemptions in the current PSPO would remain the same and continue. It is possible that, following the review, the Council could decide to vary or discharge the order.

The prohibitions included in the current PSPO are proportionate, based on evidence, consultation responses and analysis and we believe are necessary to address the issues of anti-social behaviour within the specified designated location. The net outcome of the public consultation conducted when the Council were considering whether to introduce the PSPO back in 2019, was an overwhelming support for the order across all prohibitions.

4. Why are you consulting?

The Council continues to work with partner agencies to improve community safety across the borough. The PSPO gives the authority additional powers to address specific town centre concerns.

The existing PSPO will soon have been in place for three years and will expire in February 2025. The Council is proposing to extend the order for a further three years (the maximum allowed by law) and is currently reviewing the existing PSPO to ensure the prohibitions remain proportionate and effective.

We are now seeking the views of residents, businesses and agencies in relation to the conditions included in the PSPO and the area covered by the order.

As a local resident, land or property owner, someone who works in the area, or other interested party, it's very important that you give us your views.

Following this consultation, the Council will carefully consider the results before making the final decision. As well as the consultation feedback we will also be considering a range of other information to consider if the order continues to be appropriate and proportionate, including for example recorded incident data.

The consultation period runs from 17th December 2024 – 20th January 2025 and all comments received during that time will be considered and be used to inform the final decision.

¹ For a full list of prohibitions please see the current Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

If you would like to comment on the consultation, please read through the current PSPO before giving your views on the proposed extension of the order and completing the questionnaire.

5. Can a PSPO be challenged?

Anyone who lives in, regularly works in, or visits the area can appeal a PSPO in the High Court within 6 weeks of it being made.

6. How do I find out the final decision as to whether the current PSPO is to be extended?

The decision around whether to extend the current PSPO will be published on the Council website. A notice will be erected around the area covered by the order, setting out the effect of the order and whether it has been extended.

7. Does the PSPO include mobility scooters?

Mobility scooters are exempt from the Town Centre PSPO.

8. Who can I turn to if I need to access further support?

There are many organisations in Bolton that can help you with homelessness, drugs, alcohol and more.

- **Housing Options and Advice** https://www.bolton.gov.uk/homepage/50/housing_options_and_advice - Housing advice and support
- **Urban Outreach** <https://www.urbanoutreach.co.uk/> - Health and Homelessness, Offender Support, Food and Cold Weather Provision, Children and Families
- **Homeless Aid UK, Bolton** [Homeless Aid UK | Helping the Homeless and Those in Need in Bolton, Manchester, Liverpool, and Wigan areas](https://www.homelessaid.co.uk/bolton) – Homelessness support
- **Local Welfare Provision** <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/benefits/help-crisis-emergency> - Crisis/emergency help with food or essential items
- **Homeless Aid UK, Bolton** <http://homelessaid.co.uk/bolton-food-bank-2/> – Foodbank
- **Street Link** <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/> - Connecting people sleeping rough with local support
- **Achieve** <https://www.gmmh.nhs.uk/achieve/> – Drugs and alcohol support and recovery service
- **Citizens Advice** <https://www.cabb.org.uk/> – Help with debt, money and housing
- **Bolton Money Skills Service** <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/debt-money-advice-services/bolton-money-skills-service-including-furniture4u> - Money and debt advice

9. Who do I contact if I see someone rough sleeping?

If you come across a rough sleeper in Bolton, email housingoutreachteam@bolton.gov.uk (in confidence) or call the council's Housing Options Services on 01204 335900.