



# **Welwyn Garden City Public Spaces Protection Order**

## **Consultation information**



**WELWYN  
HATFIELD**

*Working better, together*

# What is a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)?

A PSPO is an enforceable part of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act 2014 which addresses behaviours and problems that are considered to be detrimental to the local community's quality of life. It imposes prohibitions and restrictions on the use of a certain area so the majority can enjoy our public spaces.

A PSPO can help give the local council and local police additional powers to tackle ASB in specific locations.



## Why is a PSPO being considered?

The Community Safety Partnership recently undertook a series of engagement events with business, residents and visitors of Welwyn Garden City town centre. This highlighted concerns about the level of anti-social behaviour and has formed the basis for the proposed PSPO set out on the final page of this leaflet.

## Why are we consulting on this proposal?

We need to fully understand if a PSPO is the right solution to address your concerns and tackle local issues. For a PSPO to be implemented successfully, it needs the support of local residents and the business community.

## How is a Protection Order put in place?

The exact details of a local PSPO can be defined by a local council, in this case Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. There is the option to put a blanket restriction in place, or target certain groups or types of behaviour at particular times of the day.

## How are PSPOs enforced?

Orders can be enforced by a police officer, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and delegated council officers (where appropriate, reasonable and practical). A breach of the Order is a criminal offence; fines of up to £1,000 can be handed down at prosecution, or a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100 can be issued on the spot.

## How is it decided what to put in the PSPO?

A PSPO shouldn't stop people enjoying themselves; it aims to strike a balance between preventing ASB and ensuring public spaces are enjoyed by all.

## What is already controlled by other laws?

Many of the day-to-day behaviours of people are already covered by a number of established laws and regulations. The conditions within the proposed PSPO are in addition to existing legislation that already covers:

- Littering
- Cycling on pavements
- Dog fouling

## How long could the order be in place for?

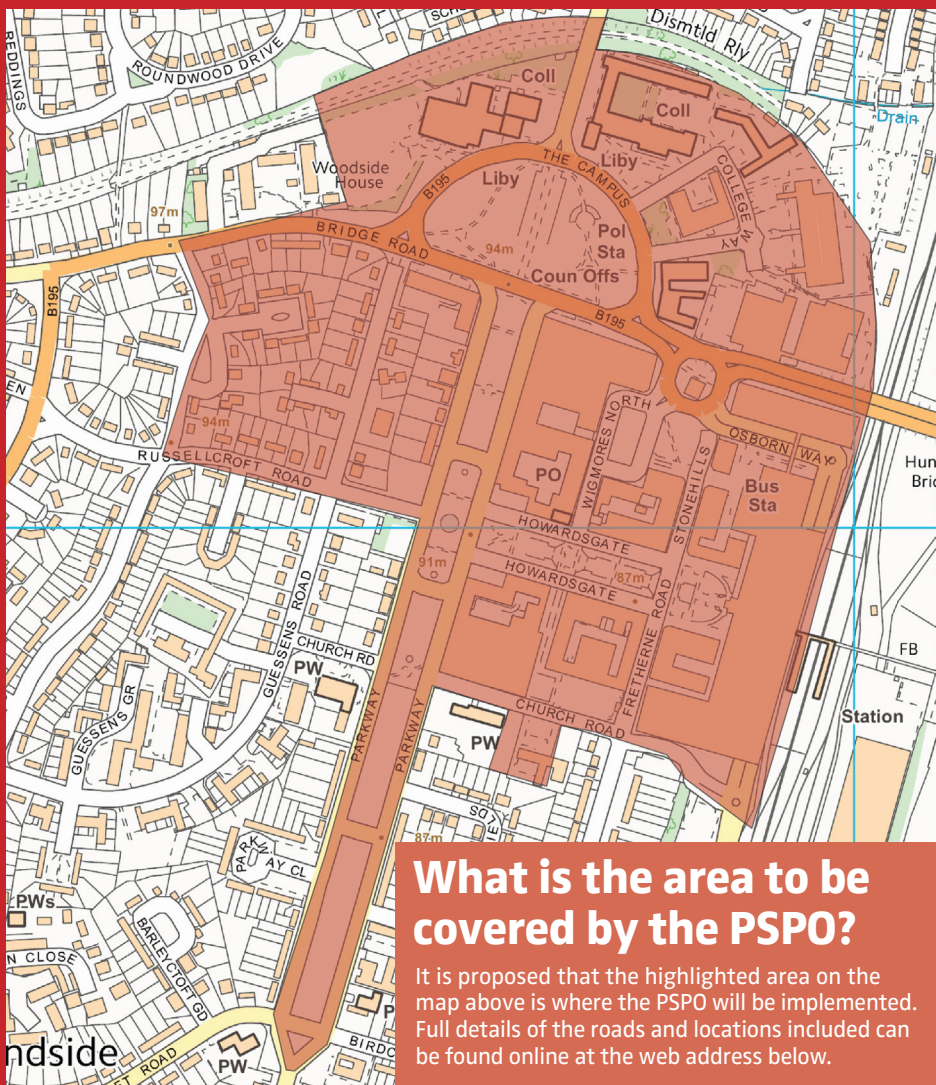
A PSPO can last for up to three years, after which it must be reviewed. If the review supports an extension and other requirements are satisfied, it may be extended for a further three years. There is no limit on the number of times an Order may be reviewed and renewed.

## What is being proposed to be included in the PSPO?

The below table outlines what has been highlighted by the local community during previous engagements. It is important to note that PSPO enforcement would be a last resort. Outreach work remains our focus to ensure the most vulnerable in our community can access the right help and support.

Proposed Protection Order Prohibitions	Why is this being suggested?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Not to consume alcohol in a public place</li><li>■ Not to be in possession of an open vessel(s) of alcohol in a public place</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Alcohol consumption would be contained within the boundaries of licensed premises. People under the influence of alcohol on streets and pavements may be anti-social and cause harassment, alarm or distress to others.</li><li>■ Individuals with drug and alcohol dependency issues need proper help and support which will be provided by the members of the Community Safety Partnership.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Not to approach another person either verbally or through action in order to beg from the other person.</li><li>■ Not to loiter at or within ten metres of any pay machine (including banks, supermarkets and car parks) unless waiting legitimately to use the machine for the purpose it is designed for.</li><li>■ Not to sit on the ground in a public place, street, highway or passage in a manner that may be perceived that you are inviting people to give you money.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ This can be intimidating to the public and beggars often need long term help and support rather than short term donations.</li><li>■ This support will be offered by members of the Community Safety Partnership.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Not to urinate or defecate in a public place.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ This is a public health matter. There is also a risk of indecent exposure.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Not to sleep in any public place which is or includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open to the air</li><li>• Within a vehicle for a sustained period</li><li>• Within a car park</li><li>• A non-fixed structure including a caravan or tent without the prior permission of the owner or occupier of the land</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Rough sleeping in the town centre has been linked to a possible increase in calls to the Police regarding criminal damage and an increase of abandoned drugs paraphernalia.</li><li>■ A coordinated multi-agency approach is required to ensure that anyone sleeping rough, or at risk of sleeping rough, is able to access the necessary support to help them off the streets and to address the problems that led to their homelessness.</li></ul>





## How to get involved

Complete the consultation documents which are available at the council offices or call 01707 357706 and request a consultation pack. Alternatively please visit [www.welhat.gov.uk/WGCPSP0](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/WGCPSP0) and complete the online survey.

**The consultation will run for 42 days from Wednesday 18 October to Tuesday 28 November.**