

Requirements relating to the provision of bouncy castles and other inflatable devices to Brentwood Borough Council for its events



The hazards of bouncy castles and inflatable devices :

Inflatable equipment if not properly certificated, erected and operated can pose a significant risk to users and persons within its vicinity. In recent years that have been several high-profile accidents involving inflatable equipment where major injury has resulted when users have been thrown from or been hit by such devices. Many variables will affect safety including control of who uses such equipment, weather systems and anchorage. If such equipment is to remain safe, controllers and operators must take in to account all 'reasonably foreseeable' risk factors both before and during events and must demonstrate such control through risk assessment and staff training. Where this is not provided and to the detail required then the Council will refuse the facility before the event or during depending upon the circumstances. In all cases the Council will adopt a 'precautionary approach' to safety when considering inflatable devices. The statutory responsibility for safety ultimately rests with the controllers and operators of such equipment however, the Council may be deemed liable if an incident occurs.

This document is for Council Officers to use when sourcing and hiring inflatable equipment and the subsequent standards Controllers and Operators of inflatable devices must adhere to. It assists them as to what assurances are necessary from any supplier, together with a guide towards decision making, both before and during any event.

Definitions:

The following definitions are used within this document: -

Inflatable devices - Fairground equipment consisting of any air-filled structure designed to allow users to bounce, slide or climb upon them. They are made from flexible fabric, kept inflated by one or more blowers and rely on air pressure to maintain their shape.

Controller - The person, organisation or hirer (those who hire to others) having overall control of the inflatable device, including responsibility for maintenance, of the inflatable device.

Operator – Any person (over the age of 18) and appointed by the controller to be in charge of the operation of any inflatable at any time when it is intended to be available for public use.

Supervising Staff – Any person (over the age of 16) and appointed to work under the control and direction of an Operator to assist in the management of queuing and payment.

Attendant – Any person (over the age of 16) and appointed to work under the control and direction of an Operator to assist in the operation of the inflatable device.

Applicable Standards:

The Council expects that all Controllers of bouncy castle/ inflatables will adhere totally to standard EIS7 produced by HSE (Health and Safety Executive) and PIPA as a minimum. This standard can be found at <http://www.pipa.org.uk/publicBestPractice.pdf>.

The following are required to be provided by Controllers of bouncy castles/inflatable to the Council prior to any hire

The Council requires that the following information shall in all cases be provided and submitted by Controllers of such equipment prior any event. Copies of this information shall also be available for inspection at each event.

1. A RISK ASSESSMENT (refer to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm>) for all inflatable devices being used at the event. The risk assessment shall indicate the controls put in place to prevent all of the following hazards: -
 - Poor structural build of the inflatable device. (It should be built to the current British Standard BS EN 14960 and labelled so on device).
 - instability and blowing away of inflatable structures in windy conditions
 - failure of ground fixings used to hold inflatable devices down
 - situations caused by loss of pressure as a result of :-
 - failure of the fabric zips and seams;
 - failure or loss of power to the blower;
 - disconnection of the blower; or
 - litter blocking the air intake and/or vents
 - falls from the structure by the public or staff
 - windows tearing or detaching
 - tripping (particularly over anchorages)
 - injury to users caused by boisterous behaviour, overcrowding or not separating larger users from smaller ones by adequate supervision.
 - access to dangerous (parts of) machinery (e.g. inadequately protected, or unguarded, blower units); Minimum length of tube is 1.4 metres to connect to bag/inflatable device.
 - electrical hazards (e.g. shock or burns)
 - inadequate means of escape in case of fire
 - lifting injuries caused by manual handling injury to users caused by wearing inappropriate clothes and shoes
 - suffocation and entrapment of users
 - the effects of inclement weather making the unit slippery
 - bacterial contamination of the inflatable due to damp storage prior to use
2. A CURRENT VALID 'RPII' ANNUAL SAFETY INSPECTION CERTIFICATE for each inflatable (i.e. ADIPS or PIPA). The serial numbers on the certificates MUST match the serial numbers on the inflatable devices being used.
3. A copy of the MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS, including information on the anchorage method to be adopted and management; (including maximum individual weight loads per person, management of age groups, and methods of monitoring wind conditions throughout the event).

4. PAT TESTING CERTIFICATION for all 240 volt power supply attached to or serving inflatable equipment.
5. TRAINING RECORDS for all staff relative to their roles as 'Controller', 'Operator', 'Supervising Staff', and 'Attendants'.
6. Evidence of a minimum of £5million PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE (Policy Document covering the date of the event for which application is made).
7. A 'METHOD STATEMENT' that includes information on the following headings:-
 - Access to the site (i.e. management of vehicle movements)
 - Site induction of Operators, Supervising Staff and Attendants
 - Unloading of equipment and inflatable devices
 - Installation – step by step methods (including set up of queuing systems)
 - The means of securing the inflatable to the ground including the lengths and type of stake to be used, their bury angles and stated strength of guide ropes. The Minimum Standard to be applied requires all anchor points to be used. i.e. 'minimum' of 6 anchor points for small inflatable devices, larger devices requires additional anchor points (refer to manufacturer's instruction manual). Anchor points on inflatables should have a welded metal 'O' or 'D' ring fitted to the end of the inflatable. Metal ground stakes of at least 380mm in length and 16mm in diameter with a rounded top must be used and no less; or an alternative means of anchorage is anchor points attached to water or sand barrels equivalent to 163 kilograms or 25 stone in weight.
 - Manual handling assessment for unloading/loading inflatables and, for water or sand barrels.
 - Monitoring of environmental conditions affecting (equipment, ground and weather), including maximum wind speeds which must not exceed Beaufort scale 5, a fresh breeze, of 19 to 24 mph. At this wind speed cease operation of the inflatable device; and don't erect the inflatable device.
 - Management of participants on inflatable devices (ages and numbers)
 - Dismantling/deflation of any inflatable device in the event of an emergency,
 - Fuel storage and refueling method (if applicable)
 - Waste management
8. Information on expected weather conditions relative to the time, date and agreed location of the intended inflatable device must be provided to the Authority **no more than two days prior** to any event. This information must include likely wind speeds and their expected direction.

All paperwork concerning items 1-7 above must be provided to the Council at least one month before the event as well as being available during the event.

NOTE: Controllers and Operators are expected to consider all likely weather conditions and may refer to the following sites for guidance: -

- **Met Office:** <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/gcpvj0v07>
- **Windfinder:** https://www.windfinder.com/forecast/london_st_jamess_park This website also has a mobile phone app which may be of help to the Operator in conjunction with use of an Anemometer.

NOTE: If the above information is not supplied or if the submitted method statement or risk assessment are not deemed sufficient, or, if the Council has any safety concerns on the day of the event, then it reserves the right to require the operator of the inflatable devices to cease operation at the event forthwith.

Further information:

- **HSE:** <http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/faqs.htm>
- **PIPA:** <http://www.pipa.org.uk/>
- **British Standard**
<http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030243585>

For further information regarding the above requirements, please contact the Events Team on events@brentwood.gov.uk or call 01277 312500.