



LOUGHBOROUGH  
**MARKETS**

ROYAL CHARTER • EST. 1221

# SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

## Severe Weather Policy

### Aim

The decision to close or curtail a market can cause a lot of disruption with the potential for financial and logistical impacts for all concerned and therefore is never taken lightly.

However, our key priority is always to protect the public, traders and staff safety in the event of any severe weather which would affect any open air market or event operated by Charnwood Borough Council.

This policy should apply in the following circumstances

- a) a severe weather warning is in force and has been issued by the Met Office

Or

- b) in the opinion of the Markets, Fair and Town Centre Operations Manager (MFTCOM) there is a risk to public safety due to adverse weather conditions

This is an operational plan focussed solely on markets and events.

An extreme weather event may also constitute as being a “Major Emergency” which would mean the Council’s separate major incident, flood or mass evacuation plans may need to be activated.

### Objectives

The objectives are

1. To comply with the Council’s duties and obligations to its staff, traders and members of the public under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
2. To comply with the Council’s common law duties under the Occupiers Liability Act 1984
3. To comply with the Council’s insurers.
4. To ensure any decision to close or curtail a market is taken fairly, consistently and transparently and is communicated to all parties as soon as a decision is made.
5. In order to help the MFTCOM make informed and effective decisions a weather diary will be kept to build up insight of the conditions that can seriously disrupt a market or event.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Head of Leisure and Culture (HLC)	Reviews and approves this policy as required ensuring emergency contact numbers and weather risk table are all up to date. See Appendix 1 and 3. When the policy is activated they will work with CCTV operators to act as a Silver Controller If the HLC is not available the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing will act in their absence. Discretion to waive or reduce fees.
Markets, Fairs and Town Centre Operations Manager (MFTCOM)	Makes the decision to implement this policy. If the MFTCOM is not available the Markets Officer (MO) will be responsible for making the decision. When the policy is activated they will work with CCTV operators to act as a Bronze Controller. Discretion to waive or reduce fees. Carries out a review of the decision to cancel a market/event post cancellation.
Markets Officer (MO)	Makes the decision to activate the policy in the absence of the MFTCOM.
Markets and Fairs Operations Team Leader (MFOTL)	Stay on site at all times until the infrastructure is taken down or the weather warning is downgraded.
Staff	Any staff that are deployed to help when the policy is activated are to follow instructions and not place themselves in any personal danger.
Health and Safety Officer	Advises on the policy and during any live situations.
Communications Team	Provides effective and timely public communications during any live situations.
Street Management Team	Generally assist, particularly if traffic needs to be moved outside of any traffic orders that are in place.
Waste and Recycling Team	Remove any waste especially if the normal arrangements need to be changed

### Activating the policy

A severe weather warning in itself may not be considered a reason to cancel or curtail the market/event. The management team will actively seek advance weather warnings from the Met Office, Leicestershire County Council and third party forecasting services.

In making a decision whether the market/event can go ahead in a reduced capacity or cancelled completely the MFTCOM or the Markets Officer (MO), in their absence shall use their judgement and experience together with the following

- Predicted and/or current weather conditions
- Weather and risk table – see Appendix 1
- Availability of staff
- Economic factors
- Insight – weather diary and previous occurrences

There are 2 key factors to be taken into account as follows

1. The infrastructure e.g. stalls/gazebos etc. can be erected safely and remain safe throughout the duration of the market/event.
2. That there is sufficient manpower readily available at all times throughout the market/event to dismantle any infrastructure should the weather deteriorate whilst the market/event is taking place.

The market stalls have been designed to allow for rapid dismantling. The stall once dismantled will be laid down on the market floor and zip tied to secure covers.

A minimum of 6 trained staff are needed to erect and dismantle infrastructure in severe weather conditions – See Appendix 2 for procedure. Market staff job descriptions include call out in the case of bad weather.

The MFOS must remain on site at all times until the infrastructure is taken down or the weather warning is downgraded.

The staff will be allocated into 2 teams by the MFTCOM and allocated a specific location to work in. Areas at highest risk to the public will be prioritised.

If the above cannot be guaranteed, consideration needs to be given to cancel the market completely.

If the market/event can still go ahead but at a reduced level priority will be given to those traders who sell perishable goods e.g. butchers/bakery/grocers etc. and those who are prepared to trade from un-sheeted stalls.

The MFTCOM will endeavour to make a decision as early as possible to cancel the market/event in full or part before any infrastructure is erected, this must be made no later than 4pm on the day before the market/event.

The HLC must be kept informed as to any decisions made.

Once a decision has been made Traders will be immediately advised through a variety of methods including but not exclusive

- Social Media e.g. Facebook and Twitter
- Charnwood website
- Recorded message on Market Phone
- Text
- Email
- Local Radio

In the case of cancellation the Regular Trader will be given a credit.

In the case of reduced market the Regular Trader will be offered the opportunity to stand at a discounted price. Non attendance will receive full credit.

In the case of reduced market and if the circumstances allow, the MFTCOM has the discretion to allow trading from the Traders vehicles. If this is the case, the MFTCOM will advise relevant departments and partner organisations.

## Severe Weather Table and Risks

Met Office Terminology	Definition	Risk – who may be harmed and how	Controls and Actions
Heavy snow	Snow falling at a rate of approx. 2cm per hour or more expected for at least 2 hours	Slips, trips and falls from unsafe or icy ground. Manual handling injuries from attempting to set up infrastructure in icy/snowy conditions.	Check weather forecasts before market/event. Cancel or restrict market/event according to forecast.
Blizzards/drifting snow	Moderate or heavy snow with winds of 30mph or reduced visibility to 200 metres or less or drifting snow causing similar conditions	Impact injuries from vehicles (including the market tug) attempting to manoeuvre on icy or snowy surfaces and poor visibility. Increase in vehicle accidents on the highway and main roads and streets around the town centre if Traders and customers try to attend the market/event.	Ensure operatives/staff are on standby if forecast is uncertain. Monitor travel information around the town centre. In the case of lighter conditions ensure gritting of the main roads/streets and pedestrian areas.
Very heavy snowfall/blizzards /drifting snow	Expected to give depths of 15cm or more with potential to result in widespread disruption in communications. Blizzards are severe with visibility reduced to near zero		If a thaw is forecast consider if there is sufficient safe ground to host the market/event.
Freezing rain and widespread icy roads	Rain freezes on contact with road surfaces		
Severe gales/storms	gusts of 35 mph or more	Impact Crush injuries from flying debris, traders' goods, and collapse of stalls to stalls moving. Cuts and lacerations from shop windows broken by debris or stalls moving.	Check weather forecasts before market/event. Cancel or restrict market/event according to forecast. Ensure operatives/staff are on standby if forecast is uncertain. Monitor weather and circumstances throughout the market/event.
Heavy rain	Expected to persist for at least 2 hours and to give at least 15mm within a 3 hour period or a period of rainfall	Flash flooding of urban areas and main roads/streets around the town centre impeding the access of emergency	Monitor weather and circumstances in advance of the market. Flooding would be a risk if the ground area was already

Met Office Terminology	Definition	Risk – who may be harmed and how	Controls and Actions
	of sufficient intensity to cause flooding on already saturated ground (includes melting snow) e.g. around 25mm per day	services and causing traffic management difficulties. Collapse of market canopies/sheeting/gazebos.	at saturation points. Consider an early finish if flooding seems to likely Traders encouraged and requested to ensure that water is not allowed to build up on top of the gazebos.
Dense fog	Visibility less than 50 metres	Increased risk of vehicle accidents on the main entry roads/streets around the town centre. Increased time spent in traffic tailbacks. Increased risk of accidents, particularly with market tug, leading to crush/impact injuries	Monitor weather and circumstances throughout the market/event. Consider an early finish in daylight if fog persists. Consider staffing levels – additional banksmen.

## Decision Making Framework

Is the Manpower available?	Weather Conditions		
	Good but deteriorating later in the day	Bad but improving later in the day	Bad and Worsening
<b>Yes</b>	Hold the market/event if the time available to trade is acceptable.  Warn staff that they could be called in at short notice to dismantle the infrastructure should conditions deteriorate to an unsafe state.	If possible set out the basic stall infrastructure but leave stall boards off until the trader arrives with their stock to weigh the boards down.	Consider cancelling the market
<b>No</b>	Cancel the market/event	Cancel the market/event	Cancel the market/event
<b>The M must Stay on site at all times until the infrastructure is taken down or the weather warning is downgraded.</b>			

### Dismantling stalls/gazebos in high winds procedure

1. Call the emergency telephone numbers to secure the necessary manpower to dismantle the infrastructure.
2. Call the Police to make them aware of the difficulties and to request assistance if appropriate.
3. Assign teams to work on the most affected/high priority areas of the market. The team will consist of 2 lifters and 1 spotter.
4. Use barrier tape to define the working areas for the teams who are dismantling the infrastructure.
5. Bring the trailers to the work areas to minimise lifting and carrying.
6. Market stalls should be dropped, laid flat on top of stall boards and left in situ until they can be put away safely. Stalls should only be put onto trailers if the following conditions are met
  - ✓ the immediate vicinity is clear of members of the public e.g. the area surrounding the stall that is to be moved
  - ✓ Spotter confirms that no public are in the immediate vicinity
  - ✓ the trailer is moved as close as possible to the stall which is being manoeuvred
  - ✓ 2 people are needed to lift the stall and they must both be confident they can do so safely
  - ✓ the MFTCOM or most senior person in charge has verified that all conditions have been satisfied and gives permission to proceed