

Background

We manage the Royal Parks for the enjoyment of the public, balancing the interests of our visitors with our responsibilities for wildlife, heritage and conservation. As pedestrians comprise the majority of visitors and include potentially vulnerable groups, such as small children and the elderly, we give them priority in the parkland and open spaces. At the same time, we try to cater for as many other recreational activities as possible, our main consideration being that by allowing one we do not interfere with the enjoyment or safety of someone taking part in another. This means that we must place restrictions on certain activities in certain areas of the parks. For some activities we also ask park users to abide by a voluntary code of conduct.

Skating

Skating is a healthy physical activity, with appeal to a wide range of age groups, and we welcome it in the Royal Parks. This policy concerns all forms of skating on what we describe in the Park Regulations as “foot propelled devices” – including roller blades, roller skates, roller-skis, skateboards and scooters. It sets out how we ensure that skating is accommodated safely and happily within the Royal Parks, to the broad satisfaction of skaters and without adverse impact on others.

Regulation

The Royal Parks Regulations set out that:

- you may skate on the roads, unless this is restricted by a park notice, and in any other area designated for the purpose;
- you must not skate in a manner that endangers or is likely to endanger any person;
- you must comply with any direction for the control of skating that is given either by a constable, or by notice.

Why we regulate skating in the Parks

The skates and scooters now available are enormously manoeuvrable, and their potential for speed makes them a ‘traffic’ issue in a park setting. Those travelling at speed present the most obvious potential hazard - to themselves as well as to others - but the unpredictability of learners moving gingerly, or those practising tricks, means that even in small numbers skaters can dominate roads and paths and be intimidating to others.

Most visitors, when they enter a park, want to be able to relax their normal vigilance against any sort of traffic hazard. Our rules and regulations in relation to skating are designed so that they may continue to do so.

Where you may skate in the Royal Parks

With some exceptions, we allow skating in the Royal Parks in the same places as we allow cycling, but skaters must be particularly cautious if skating on the park roads.

Hyde Park – on the roads and on the cycle tracks.

Kensington Gardens – on the cycle tracks and in the area set aside for skating on the Albert Memorial Road.

Regent's Park – on the roads.

St James's Park – on The Mall (when closed to traffic) and on the Mall North Horseride cycle track.

Green Park – along the Constitution Hill cycle track, and on Constitution Hill (when it is closed to traffic).

Greenwich Park - the lie of the land, the width of the cycle tracks and the Park's pattern of use mean that we allow it on the roads, but not on the cycle tracks.

In **Richmond and Bushy Parks** - on the tarmac cycle paths, and on the roads when they are closed to motor traffic.

There is also a skating park, managed by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, located near Hampton Wick within the bounds of **Bushy Park**.

Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct sets out how skaters should conduct themselves in the Parks:

- Stay alert and be courteous at all times.
- Give way to pedestrians.
- Know how to stop. Control your speed. Know how to turn. Learn the basic manoeuvres.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Adjust your speed and skating style to the conditions.
- Keep visible and wear appropriate safety equipment.
- Watch out for obstacles, such as uneven or broken pavements, water or oil, which could cause you to fall.
- Avoid areas of heavy motorised traffic.
- Be particularly cautious on the roads, and make sure you do not endanger yourself, pedestrians or drivers.

- Skate in single file, and to the left, when on cycle tracks.
- Indicate in which direction you intend to overtake.
- Give pedestrians a wide berth, and be careful of animals.
- Obey any instruction given by a police officer, PCSO or member of The Royal Parks staff.
- **Don't** perform jumps, tricks, dance steps or spins if you are skating on a cycle track or if there are pedestrians around you.
- **Don't** set up slalom obstacles where they might interfere with the safety or movement of other visitors - and look out for local notices which might prohibit use of such obstacles in certain areas.
- **Don't** accompany your skating with music that will be audible to other visitors, because this is not permitted under the regulations.