

Wantage Town Council

Removal of Unauthorised Fixings Policy



Introduction

This policy sets out Wantage Town Council's approach to the removal of unauthorised fixings from its property and from highway related property where delegated authority has been granted by Oxfordshire County Council. It aims to:

- Protect Wantage Town Council owned property
- Ensure public safety
- Maintain the appearance of the town

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Wantage Town Council owned property, except for noticeboards, which are managed under the Noticeboard Policy
- Highway related property where Wantage Town Council is authorised to act by Oxfordshire County Council under the Highways Act 1980

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bus shelters
- The statue of King Alfred the Great
- Flower basket posts and brackets
- Benches and seating
- Bollards, railings, walls and street furniture
- Christmas lights, festive decorations, and seasonal displays
- Land owned by Wantage Town Council

It applies to councillors, staff, contractors, volunteers, community groups, businesses, and members of the public.

3. Definitions

- **Fixings:** Any item attached to, placed on, or otherwise installed on Town Council property or highway related property within the scope of this policy. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Signs, posters, banners, decorations, lights, cables, brackets, ties, stickers, or equipment.
 - Movable items left on council property without permission, such as tables, bins, A-boards and planters
- **Unauthorised fixings:** Fixings installed or placed without the appropriate consent of Wantage Town Council or the relevant authority.

4. Delegated Authority on Highway Property

Oxfordshire County Council, as the highway authority, has powers under the Highways Act 1980 to remove unauthorised signs and objects that obstruct or create a safety risk on the highway and may delegate these powers to an agent, typically a parish, town, or district council, to act on its behalf in removing unauthorised fixings from highway related assets. Where highway related property is owned by Oxfordshire County Council and no delegated authority exists, Wantage Town Council will refer unauthorised fixings to the highway authority for action.



5. General

- Wantage Town Council property and delegated highway property must not be altered, damaged, or defaced.
- Fixings must not be installed or removed without authorisation, except by the Council or its appointed contractors.
- The Council will act proportionately and in accordance with its delegated powers.

6. Installation of Fixings

- No fixings may be attached to or placed on property without prior written permission from the town clerk or delegated officer.
- Permission may be granted for:
 - Council notices
 - Approved community or civic events
 - Christmas and seasonal displays
- For guidance on what may be displayed on Town Council noticeboards, see the [Noticeboard Policy](#).
- Approval will specify location, duration, method of fixing, and responsibility for removal.

7. Christmas and Seasonal Displays

- Wantage Town Council is responsible for all Christmas lights, seasonal decorations, and any supporting poles or structures in the market square and around shops and businesses (which remain in private ownership).
- All displays and structures are suitable for outdoor use, comply with health and safety requirements, and are removed at the end of the approved period.
- The Council may remove any display or structure if it becomes unsafe or is not properly maintained.

8. Flags

- Flags may only be displayed on the Town Council's approved flagpoles.
- Flags may not be attached to any other Town Council property or assets

9. Removal of Unauthorised Fixings

The Town Council may remove any unauthorised fixing or item from:

- Town Council owned property
- Highway related property where delegated authority applies

Removal may take place where:

- Permission has not been granted
- The approved period has ended
- The fixing or item poses a safety risk, obstructs use of the property, or causes damage

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Notes:

- The Council is not responsible for any loss or damage to removed items.
- Any unauthorised movable items, such as tables, bins, planters, or equipment, are treated the same as attached fixings under this policy

10. Enforcement

- Failure to comply with this policy may result in:
 - Refusal of future permissions
 - Recovery of costs
 - Further action in line with Council powers and delegation arrangements

11. Damage and Making Good

- Any damage caused by the installation or removal of unauthorised fixings must be repaired at the expense of the responsible party.
- If the Council undertakes the work, costs may be recharged.

Date of Policy	Approving Committee	Date of Committee Meeting	Policy Reference Version	Supersedes	Adopted by Council	Date for next review
January 2026	Council	26/01/2026	V1	N/A	26/01/2026	January 2028