

Community Sports Facility Booking Policy

1. Introduction

This policy describes the considerations and principles for allocation of sporting fields and associated facilities for hire. The aim of the policy is to provide equitable, access and safe playing conditions for users while sustainably managing available sports facilities.

2. Policy Objectives

The objectives of the Community Sports Facility Booking Policy are:

- To provide a responsible, consistent, transparent, and equitable process for the use of Council sports fields and associated facilities
- To provide agreed principles to prioritise use and management of sports fields and associated facilities managed and/or owned by Council
- To assist Council in the allocation of sports fields and facilities when competing requests are received
- To provide clear direction which is consistent with other Council policies, local laws, and relevant legislation, affecting the use of sports fields and facilities, including the Sports Facility Closure Policy
- To ensure provision of adequate and timely maintenance activities to sustain quality sporting facilities for use by the community
- To provide guidance on establishing fees and charges for use and contributions for development
- To establish the expectations of respectful and positive interactions between users and Council as a condition of use

3. Scope

This policy applies to sports grounds and associated facilities located within the Yass Valley Council local government area which are owned and/or directly managed by Council.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Community Sports Infrastructure	Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.
Community Sporting Clubs	Local, not-for-profit community organisations established for the primary purpose of participation in sport and recreation activities.
Seasonal Agreements	Periodic agreements entered into by community sporting organisations and Council, to establish consistent training and match day access to community sport infrastructure

5. Policy Provisions

Sustainability

- If, during the season, the condition of the field deteriorates, Council may, at its discretion, reduce the hours or cancel the access for a user group to use a field as outlined in the Sports Facility Closure Policy.

Facility Allocation

- Council will consider the following hierarchy for prioritising facility allocation:
 - Major Events - Council endorsed major events
 - Equity of access
 - User groups with long standing agreements with Council - established usage patterns will be considered in allocating access
 - Associations, schools and community groups
- Bookings are to be made either through Council's Online Booking Portal or the Customer Service Team with final approval determined by the Recreational Assets Team.
- User groups who have been found to not meet the requirements of previous seasonal or casual booking agreements may have their booking requests declined

Eligibility to Hire Fields

- To be eligible to hire sports fields and associated facilities, user groups must provide proof of a current public liability policy with a minimum of \$20 million coverage.
- User groups must be able to show evidence of meeting legal requirements, including but not limited to:
 - Child Safe
 - Consumer Affairs Registration
 - Public Health (COVID-19)

Seasonal Requests

- Seasonal user groups are required to submit a new application for each season, to Council's Customer Service team
- While previous booking patterns will be taken into consideration, user groups are not guaranteed confirmation of a booking based purely on historical use

Temporary Ground Closure

- Whilst decisions to close grounds are not taken lightly, Council reserves the right to close any sports field and/or facility, where required, to protect the playing surface, reduce risk to competitors and the public, to complete capital or maintenance works, in poor weather conditions or to allow rehabilitation of the ground after damage as outlined in Councils Sports Facility Closure Policy.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed once each term of Council or as needed in response to any change of circumstances including changes in legislation.

7. Legislative and Legal Framework

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

Legislation	Local Government Act 1993
Policies and procedures	Yass Valley Council Sports Facility Closure Policy 2024 (DRAFT)

8. Responsibilities

Council Officers will

- Advertise ground bookings on Council website and through email
- Advise clubs of any clashes as soon as possible
- Work with clubs to reach the best possible arrangements
- Facilitate shared user group meetings where applicable
- Provide signed user agreements in a timely manner
- Keep internal bookings systems updated
- Send regular communications to seasonal user groups regarding future bookings
- Inform of ground closures as soon as the decision is made
- Provide all necessary administrative support for the operation of this policy
- Develop and document any procedures for the effective implementation of this policy
- Keep sufficient records to enable monitoring of compliance with this policy and provide information required for Integrated Planning and Reporting purposes and internal organisational performance measurement.

Community Sporting Clubs will

- Complete seasonal applications within the advised timeline
- Submit casual bookings at least two weeks prior to requested date (exceptions apply for finals season and rescheduled events)
- Inform Council of any changes to regular bookings
- Work with shared users in a positive and supportive manner

9. Approval History

Review Date	Report to Council	Minute No.	Exhibition Period	Adoption	Rescission Date

10. Ownership and Approval

Responsibility	Role
Author	Recreational Assets
Owner	Recreational Assets
Endorser	Executive Management Team
Approver	Council