

Balloon and Sky Lantern Release Policy

Introduction

In recent years, outdoor balloon and sky lantern releases have become more common at summer fairs, fundraising events, store openings and commemorative or celebratory occasions.

- Sky lanterns pose a significant fire hazard to buildings, woodland and farmland.
- Some “degradable” items can persist in the environment for months or even years.
- Fallen parts from sky lanterns and balloons can become litter and may trap, entangle or choke wildlife and livestock on land and in marine environments.

1. Objective

The objective of this policy is to prevent the intentional outdoor release of balloons and sky lanterns on land and premises owned or managed by Dullingham Parish Council.

2. Scope

This policy covers all types of balloon and sky lantern materials, including latex or rubber balloons, foil balloons, also known as Mylar, and balloons described as biodegradable. Although latex balloons are biodegradable, they may still persist in the environment for several years.

Sky lanterns are also covered by this policy. They may contain wire, bamboo or other structural frames and use a naked flame as a heat source.

3. Policy

Dullingham Parish Council prohibits the intentional release of balloons and sky lanterns from any land or buildings it owns or manages. This applies to Council-run events and to events run by third parties on Council premises, land or grounds.

4. Current Guidance and Legal Context

Current guidance shows that there is no general UK-wide ban on sky lanterns or balloon releases. However, local authorities may apply local controls to restrict or prohibit releases on council-owned or public land. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has previously stated that existing controls are considered

Balloon and Sky Lantern Release Policy

sufficient, while recognising that local authorities can introduce local restrictions. This policy is therefore consistent with the approach of prohibiting releases from Parish Council-owned or managed land.

This document has been reviewed as part of the Parish Council's annual policy review process.

5. Monitoring, Assessment and Review

Dullingham Parish Council will:

- Inform event organisers of the Balloon and Sky Lantern Release Policy by including relevant information within booking forms and other promotional material.
- Include details of this policy within new letting agreements or leases for land or buildings where events may take place.
- Promote awareness of the potential harm caused by balloon and sky lantern releases.

Formal approval of this Balloon and Sky Lantern Release Policy

This is approved by:

Dullingham Parish Council

ADOPTED 5 November 2020

REVIEWED 3 July 2026