

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT BY: Director of Housing, Operations and Development

TO: REGULATORY PANEL - LICENSING  
OF 23 June 2026

---

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL INSPECTION AND SAFETY CERTIFICATES FOR THE  
REGULATED STANDS AT AYR RACECOURSE**

---

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To advise the Panel of the outcome of the annual technical inspections at Ayr Racecourse, and to seek approval for the issue of revised Safety Certificates for the two stands.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:**

- 2.1.1 agrees that the current Safety Certificates remain in force until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026, provided that no adverse reports are received at the meeting; and
- 2.1.2 agrees that the revised Safety Certificates will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026, for the period of one year.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Ayr Racecourse is covered by the provisions of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sports Act 1987. Part III of the Act applies to sports grounds which provide covered accommodation in stands for spectators but are not designated sports grounds in terms of the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975. Safety Certificates require to be issued for grandstands ("regulated stands"), which provide covered accommodation for 500 or more spectators.
- 3.2 Main guidance is given in the "Guide to Safety of Sports Grounds", the ("Green Guide"). Although the guide has no statutory force, its recommendations can be made statutory by their inclusion in Safety Certificates.

- 3.3 Ayr Racecourse currently has two grandstands which are classed as regulated stands, the Princess Royal (also known as the Club Stand) and the Eglinton Stand.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the Safety Certificates cover only the grandstands, their associated entrances and exits and the concourses in front of the stands. The Racecourse is not classified as a designated Sports Ground under the 1975 Act. The certificates do not cover the Eglinton Rooms, Rothesay Stand, Paddock area etc.
- 3.5 The current Certificate remains in force until 30th June 2026, unless withdrawn by the Council.
- 3.6 The Safety Certificates states that all assessments, surveys, and reports required, should be completed by 28<sup>th</sup> February each year, with any remedial works carried out to the satisfaction of the Council by 31<sup>st</sup> May. It should be noted that additional inspections are carried out prior to the Scottish National meeting, normally held in mid-April and the Gold Cup held in September each year. Both of which attracts the largest attendances. There are also Safety Advisory Group (Stadia) meetings held prior to both these events and debriefs to learn any lessons learned.

## **4. Proposals**

### **Technical Reports**

#### **4.1 Building Standards Services, South Ayrshire Council**

- 4.1.1 The annual inspection was made to the Racecourse on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026. It can be reported that all the required assessments, surveys, certification, and reports are now in place, including the Structural Certificate, which has been signed off after the 2026 Maintenance Programme has been completed.

The 2026 Maintenance Programme contained a number of minor items to be repaired, and these have been completed. Some of the ongoing issues highlighted within the structural report are outlined below.

- 4.1.2 The structural report submitted as part of the required assessments, highlighted concerns regarding the condition of the reinforced concrete structural frame to the Eglinton Grandstand. A series of record photographs were taken as part of the structural survey.

No immediate action is required in relation to safety, however there are works required to prolong lifespan of the structure. We are currently working with the racecourse management team and the safety officers to determine how the work to this area will be programmed.

It should be noted that there is no public access currently to the upper tier of the Eglinton grandstand, and as such the spectator numbers for this stand have been reduced. This area of the stand is not required generally during the year, due to the spectator numbers, and is not included within the capacities for the Safety Certificate.

There is no current proposal to utilise this area for viewing. If it was be used in the future then an amended Safety Certificate would be required to be issued, to include this area again within the approved spectators for the Eglinton Stand.

- 4.1.3 The Scottish Grand National meeting was held this year on 18th April 2026 and attracted an attendance of 15,010, and the Ayr Gold Cup meeting was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2025 with an attendance of 8,347. No adverse reports specifically in relation to the grandstands were received about either meeting.
- 4.1.4 The Contingency Plan and Evacuation Procedures were updated in March 2026. There have been some training exercises of the updated Plan throughout the year at some smaller race meetings. It has been scheduled to carry out a tabletop exercise to test the Multi-Agency Incident Response Guide (MAIRG) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026 at the Racecourse.
- 4.1.5 The Medical Plan for the Racecourse has been through a review with input from the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Resilience Team. The updated Medical Plan was signed off on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The Medical Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 4.1.6 The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent in April 2025. There is an implementation period of at least 24 months, from 3 April 2025, before the Act comes into force and this is to give sufficient time for venues to understand their new obligations.

This legally requires sports stadia and major event venues to implement proportionate security and preparedness measures against terrorist threats on tiered approach, based on capacity.

Initial discussions have been held with Racecourse as to the obligations of this new legislation and how this relates to the Zone Ex requirements of the Green Guide. This will not affect the issuing of the Safety Certificate this year but will be included into the certificate issued on the 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2027.

It is proposed that further discussions on the requirements of the Legislation will be held through the Safety Advisory Group for Stadia (SAG).

An interim review of the Safety Certificate will be made against the Legislation and any amendments required will be incorporated into Safety Certificate that will be issued next year. If additional measures are required to be implemented prior to the issuing of the certificate a Temporary Certificate may be required to be issued.

### **Safety Advisory Group (Stadia)**

4.2 This was the first year that the Safety Advisory Group (Stadia) and meetings were held during the certification process. Members of the SAG group attended a stadium inspection on the 6<sup>th</sup> May and the formal SAG to review the issuing of the Safety Certificate was held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026. All attendees were asked for any comments on the issuing of the Safety Certificate.

#### **4.2.1 Environmental Health Services, South Ayrshire Council**

No adverse reports received.

#### **4.2.2 Scottish Fire & Rescue**

No adverse comments

#### **4.2.3 Police Scotland**

No adverse comments.

#### **4.2.4 Scottish Ambulance Service**

No adverse comments.

#### **4.2.5 NHS Ayrshire & Arran**

No adverse comments.

### **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

### **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 The cost of staff time spent on inspections and on the preparation of revised Safety Certificates was met from existing Planning and Building Standards revenue budget.

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

Not applicable.

## **8. Risk Implications of adopting the recommendations.**

### **8.1 Risk Implications of adopting the recommendations.**

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### **8.2 Risk Implications of rejecting the recommendations.**

8.2.1 Rejecting the recommendations may impact on the reputation of the Council.

## **9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)**

9.1 This report is required in order for the Panel to make a determination under existing legislation, and is not in relation to any policy or procedure of the Council, therefore an integrated impact assessment is not required

## **10. Sustainable Development Implications**

10.1 Considering Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

## **11. Options Appraisal**

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## **12. Link to Council Plan**

12.1 This work contributes to Priority One Spaces and Places, Priority Two Work and Economy Priority Three Pride in South Ayrshire.

## **13. Results of Consultation**

13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this paper.

13.2 Consultation has taken place through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Stadia with SAC Environmental Health Services; Scottish Fire and Rescue; Police Scotland; Scottish Ambulance Service; and the NHS and Arran.

**Background Papers**

Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975.  
Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987.  
Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (6<sup>th</sup> edition) (“the Green Guide”).  
Safety Certificates for the Princess Royal and Eglinton Stands, Ayr Racecourse.

**Author and Person to Contact**

Hugh Talbot | Co-ordinator – Planning and Building Standards | Housing, Operations and Development | [Hugh.talbot@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Hugh.talbot@south-ayrshire.gov.uk) | Direct Line: 01292 616178

**Date.** 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026