



## **Common Rooms and Community Space Policy**

### **2023-26**

#### **Policy Control**

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## **1. Scope**

This policy is for our customers and the public to use our common rooms and community spaces safely and efficiently.

The purpose of this Policy is to outline all the information and booking requirements for customers to use before a booking can take place.

To summarise, this policy will outline:

- Charging information
- Terms and Conditions of the booking
- Reporting any issues
- Who can use the rooms and examples of use
- Derby City Council and Derby Homes' rights.

## **2. Information about Common Rooms and Community Spaces**

Common Rooms and Community Spaces are a great asset to Derby Homes. We fully support bookings that focus on social inclusion, health and wellbeing, training, volunteering, education, and access to employment. We work with our partners and other agencies to encourage customers to get involved with social events and activities, as well as delivering projects that have the potential to influence people's lives.

Projects in our rooms aim to boost personal confidence, enhancing life chances and enabling customers to contribute to the wider community if they wish. Each room has different activities based on their community and priorities - as we recognise that one size does not fit all.

Primarily, the use of the rooms are for our customers who pay towards a service charge, and their needs are our priority.

We have 22 Common Rooms and Community Spaces over the city. These rooms are owned by Derby City Council and managed by Derby Homes.

## **3. Charging structure**

The decision of service charges for community hire, and to which groups, is a decision for the Head of Housing Management and Director of Housing Services. Below is a guideline for the structure.

Tenants who pay a service charge towards the upkeep of the room can use the spaces for free and prioritised over other bookings.

### **Free of charge bookings**

Groups facilitated by the public which have a direct positive impact on Derby Homes customers and work towards Derby Homes' strategic objectives are free of charge.

Free of charge booking examples may include:

- Tenants paying the service charge towards the cost of the community space for social activities or similar events.
- Consultation events, trainings and meetings involving Derby Homes and Derby City Council tenants and employees.
- Residents' coffee mornings

### **Charged for bookings**

Any group or activity that is not open and advertised to the public and Derby Homes customers will be charged.

Groups or activities that charge members for entry or attendance to the group will also be charged.

Any group that undertakes any commercial activity will be reviewed as a case-by-case basis and may not be permitted to use the space.

The charges for the community spaces, plus VAT, are:

- £20 per 2 hours (minimum hire slot)
- £10 per hour thereafter

Charged bookings include:

- Profit making businesses, including self-employed people and franchisees, which would include:
  - i. Exercise classes charging per class
  - ii. Staff training courses
  - iii. Any class or activity that charges per person/child etc. entry
- Private hire such as a party, celebration, or wake
- Any closed activity that is not open to the public and Derby Homes residents to attend

## **4. Booking a room**

To book a room, email [hub@derbyhomes.org](mailto:hub@derbyhomes.org) or call 01332 956546

To confirm a booking, we will need information from the group to ensure the use of the space is appropriate and safe. The room will not be booked unless the booking form is signed.

Health and Safety is our number one priority for using the rooms. If your group does not have this information available, we can supply templates on request. We will ask for information such as (but not limited to):

- Risk Assessments
- Public Liability Insurance Certificate
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Constitution of the group
- Equality and Diversity Policy

### **Returning a Fob**

All fobs should be returned to Derby Homes shortly after the booking is complete.

An unreturned fob, or if the fob is lost or damaged, will result in the hirer being charged a £20 replacement fee. Fob damage or loss must be reported to Derby Homes immediately.

### **Useful Information and cancellations**

Tenants who pay towards the charge of the room will be prioritised above all other groups and activities.

Derby Homes reserves the right to:

- make the final decision on community space hire charges.
- cancel any bookings that do not adhere to our Terms and Conditions, or any other purpose deemed suitable by Derby Homes.
- suspend any bookings where there are any outstanding room hire fees.
- offer alternative rooms to groups, if essential maintenance and safety works to their regular room is required.

We require at least 24 hours' notice to cancel a room booking. If the cancellation is made with less than 24 hours' notice, Derby Homes reserves the right to charge for the room hire.

Regular room hirers must inform Derby Homes and return their fob if they wish to permanently cancel a room booking.

## **5. Terms and conditions**

To use our community space, you will need to agree to our terms and conditions before we can issue a fob and approve your request. Our terms and conditions cover a wide range of topics, below is an overview of our most frequent enquiries.

### **Access to the rooms**

On hiring and using the community space, groups agree that the space is not for exclusive use. During a booking, it is possible that at any time Derby Homes staff or tenants paying the service charge may access the room. All bookings must consider this risk before agreeing to use the room.

### **Storage of Items**

To reduce a risk of a fire and maximise accessibility, storage of items within common rooms is not permitted without prior written permission from Derby Homes, or unless a Service Level Agreement is in place. The Service Level Agreement will not be permitted unless it is in line with the fire risk assessment, and authorised by the Director of Housing Services and Derby City Council.

Derby Homes reserves the right to dispose of any items which are left in the community spaces without permission.

Locks are not permitted to be installed or used on any of the internal doors (including kitchen cupboards) unless they have been installed by Derby Homes.

### **Times of Use**

Functions should be held at a reasonable time of the day and ending no later than **9pm** (without prior consent under exceptional circumstances) so that residents living close to the community space are not disturbed. We reserve the right to review your booking based on noise nuisance.

### **Block Bookings**

Block bookings (consecutive booking of over a day or more) of a community room will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A block booking would only be considered if:

- it is for an event which is open to the public.
- it involves the whole community.
- it is working towards Derby Homes' strategic objectives.

### **Wi-Fi Policy**

Wi-Fi access is allowed if it:

- is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998
- is not used to store, transmit or publish any material that is legally 'obscene' under the Obscene Publications Act 1959 or anything that breaches The Childrens Act 1978
- You must not use e-mail or the Internet for knowingly doing anything that is illegal under any law or for any of the purposes

### **Music Licence**

Derby Homes do not provide a music licence, if any music is played this will need to be organised by the group.

### **Activities not permitted**

Due to the size and location of the community spaces, and in the interest of health and safety, certain activities are not permitted. Examples include:

- bouncy castles
- BBQs
- firework displays
- crèche / nursery

- extremist activities

Derby Homes reserves the right to make the final decision of what activities are allowed in the community spaces and will review these on a case-by-case basis.

### **Housekeeping**

Individuals or groups using the community space must leave the facilities, room, and kitchen clean and tidy and take their rubbish and perishables away with them. Rubbish must not be left in the rooms.

### **Pets**

No animals are allowed in the rooms other than assistance dogs.

### **Alcohol Consumption**

No alcoholic beverages are to be stored, consumed, or sold on the premises.

### **Fire Alarms and Safety**

All rooms have a no-smoking policy and are fitted with extra sensitive smoke alarms. If candles are being lit at a birthday party or event, please make us aware at the time of booking.

## **6. Reporting any issues**

If the community space has any repair, access, or other issues, please report these immediately to the Hub on either 01332 956546, [hub@derbyhomes.org](mailto:hub@derbyhomes.org) or for out of hours call **01332 888777**.

Breakages should be reported to Derby Homes and will need to be paid for.

### **In case of an emergency**

Should an emergency occur, Derby Homes reserves the right to override any agreement and use the facility as deemed appropriate.

## **7. Template toolkit**

To help our groups operate to a safe and good standard, we have templates of different documents to consider when thinking of your community group.

If you need any specialised help, Derby Homes or Community Action Derby will give support and guidance. Templates for the following can be requested:

- Risk Assessments
- Safeguarding information
- Constitution information
- Roles and responsibilities

## **8. Examples of who can sue the Community Spaces**

Derby Homes must consider who is using the facilities to ensure community safety. Open groups and activities for residents are prioritised above any closed group.

Below is an overview of what is permitted.

## **Our Tenants**

Priority is given to our tenants who pay a service charge towards the room.

## **The Public**

We encourage all external groups to use the community space if the activity is aligned to our strategic objectives. This is reviewed with the information on the booking form.

While we do invite groups to use the community spaces, it is on the understanding that it is not for exclusive use. Derby Homes' residents who pay a service charge can access the facilities at any time, and trades staff, the Police and Public Protection Officers are also permitted to use the facilities for comfort breaks. We encourage everyone to be considerate and respectful of those using the community spaces.

## **Multi-faith groups**

Faith groups can use any space. Charges may apply depending on the location and nature of the booking.

## **Polling Stations**

During elections, Polling Stations will have priority booking over all community space usage. Derby City Council to use any community room as a Polling Station at £75 plus VAT per full day (6am – 10 pm).

## **Councillors**

Councillors and political parties are permitted to use the community spaces for party purposes outside of purdah. Specifically, open groups such as resident surgeries, are free of charge.

Community spaces are not to be used during purdah for any activity to ensure that the Council's buildings and facilities are not used contrary to legislation and guidance during the pre-election period.

## **Partners and organisations**

Partners and other organisations can use the spaces free of charge if the group is not for profit and the activity is open to the wider community and of benefit to Derby Homes customers. If the space is requested to use for closed activities such as internal training for staff or team meetings, room hire charges will apply.

## **Occasions such as wakes, parties or gatherings**

Community spaces are available to use for activities such as children's parties, wakes and gatherings. As these activities are not open to the public, we will charge for the use of the spaces unless the user is a resident who contributes to the room through their service charge. Some spaces are not able to facilitate these types of bookings due to the proximity of other properties and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The use of the space for these activities does not permit the consumption of alcohol.

## **Indoor sporting groups**

Indoor sporting groups, such as boxing, wrestling and other contact sports, are not permitted to use the community spaces, due to the layout and size of the rooms. Low level exercise that does not require a large space or equipment, such as yoga, and chair aerobics, may be permitted. A Risk Assessment will be required for all bookings to ensure health and safety is maintained.

## **9. Our equality and diversity commitment**

Derby Homes is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect. We value inclusivity and creating opportunities for everyone to access our community facilities. Groups that discriminate against any protected characteristic will not be permitted to use our rooms.

## **10. Derby Homes' rights**

Derby Homes' reserves the right to:

- refuse any booking on reasonable grounds.
- make the final decision on all booking charges and review these periodically with Derby Homes' Head of Housing Management and Director of Housing Services.
- make the final decision of what activities are allowed in the community spaces
- in case of emergency, the right to override any agreement and use the facility as deemed appropriate.
- dispose of any items left in the rooms without permission.

Derby Homes reserves the right to review bookings and community spaces periodically to ensure that the use of the room is appropriate and as stated at the time of booking.

Any breaches to the signed terms and conditions will result in cancellation of a booking and removal of access to the space.