# Community Room Policy

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## 1. Scope and purpose

This policy is for tenants of Derby City Council and Derby Homes, and the general public. It explains the safe and appropriate uses of Derby City Council's Community Rooms.

The purpose of this policy is to outline all the information and requirements for customers to use before a community room agreement can be put in place.

## 2. Information about Community Rooms

Community rooms are a great asset to Derby City Council and Derby Homes. They allow us to facilitate and support beneficial activities for tenants in areas such as social inclusion, health and wellbeing, training, volunteering, education, and access to employment.

We work with partners and other agencies to encourage tenants and residents to get involved in social events and activities, as well as delivering projects that have the potential to positively influence people's lives.

Projects based around community rooms can boost personal confidence, enhance life chances, and enable tenants to contribute to the wider community if they wish.

There are 22 Community Rooms across the city. These rooms are owned by Derby City Council and managed by Derby Homes.

## 3. Community Room Fees

The decision of fees for community rooms, and to which groups, is a decision for the Quality and Inclusion Manager. 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 are prioritised over other community room applications.

| **Free of charge usage** |
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| Groups facilitated by the public that have a direct positive impact on Derby Homes customers and work towards Derby Homes' strategic objectives are free of charge.<br><br>Free of charge usage may include:<br>• Tenants paying the service charge towards the cost of the community room for social activities or similar events.<br>• Consultation events, training and meetings involving Derby Homes and Derby City Council tenants and employees<br>• Residents' coffee mornings<br>• Not for profit public groups that actively involve Derby Homes tenants |
| **Charged usage .** |
| 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 on a case-by-case basis and may not be permitted to use the space.

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

- £20 for 1st 1 (minimum time slot)
- £15 per hour thereafter

Charged usage 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 for ntry etc.
- Private usage such as a party, celebration, or wake organised by Derby Homes Tenants who do not pay the service charge towards the room
- Any closed activity that is not open to the public and Derby Homes residents to attend

## 4. How to apply for a Community Room

To apply for the use of a community room all lead organisers must either

- Complete an online application form, or
- Send an application via email to hub@derbyhomes.org

To ensure safe use of the space. We ask all lead organisers to have relevant policies and procedures in place prior to making an application for a community room. 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

**Fob Access and Security Alarm**

All Community rooms are accessible by fob access only. Entry is permitted only to those authorised to hold a fob.

Lead organisers should only allow entry to their members only and must not leave the security door open for prolonged periods to maintain safety.

- One fob and the security alarm code will be issued to the lead organiser.

- Additional fobs may be purchased, but this must be agreed in advance with Customer Engagement and registered in the name of the fob holder.
- Fobs will be cancelled if we are made aware of the unauthorised transfer of a fob(s).
- Any fobs purchased will not be refunded.

**Returning a fob**

All fobs should be returned immediately within 7 days after usage of the community room(s). An unreturned fob, or if the fob is lost or damaged, will result in the lead organiser being charged a replacement fee. Fob damage or loss must be reported to immediately.

Charging information and how to pay can be found on the Derby Homes website Replacement door entry fobs - Derby Homes

**Useful Information and Cancellations**

Tenants who pay towards the charge of the room will be prioritised above all other groups and activities. We will cancel pre-agreed usage if such a request is made.

Derby City Council and Derby Homes reserves the right to:

- Make the final decision on community room fees .
- Cancel any groups that do not adhere to our Terms and Conditions, or any other purpose deemed unacceptable
- Suspend any groups where there are any outstanding room fees or recharges.
- Offer alternative rooms to groups, if essential maintenance and safety works to their regular room is required.
- Community room usage cannot be transferred to another responsible lead without agreement. Access to the room(s) will be cancelled if this happens. Groups must nominate a responsible individual and submit a new application form.
- Groups that purchase external services (e.g. instructors, equipment, or caterers) do so at their own risk. We will not be liable for any costs associated with these services if room usage is cancelled.
- Regular longstanding applications will need to be renewed at 12 months. lead organisers will need to reapply if they wish to keep using the community room. This process will ensure that we have up to date information on community groups, and that new groups have fair opportunity to utilise the rooms
- Long term use will be dependent on how sought after each community room is.
- All Community room applications are first come, first serve.

To give fair opportunity to others, we require at least 24 hours' notice for cancelations and that they are confirmed in writing or via email. Failure to do this may result in you being charged.

## 5. Terms and conditions

All applicants must be over 18 and agree to the terms and conditions. This agreement will be confirmed through submission of a completed application form.

**Non-Exclusive use**

Community rooms are shared spaces and are not intended for exclusive use. Derby City Council and Derby Homes staff and customers paying a service charge may access the rooms at any time.

**Storage of Items**

To reduce the risk of fire and ensure accessibility, the storage of items within community rooms is not permitted without prior written permission.

We do not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to items. All items left in the premises are at the owner's risk.

We reserve the right to remove and dispose of any items left in community rooms without permission.

Locks must not be installed or used on any internal doors, including kitchen cupboards.

**Times of Use**

- Standard community room hours: 9am – 9pm
- Requests outside these hours will only be considered in exceptional circumstances
- paying the service charge may access the rooms outside of these hours.

**Timeslots**

Timeslots over consecutive days will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A Consecutive timeslot would only be considered if:

- it is for an event which is open to the public and our tenants.
- it involves the whole community.
- it is working towards Derby City Council ad 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 Children's 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**
We do not provide a music licence for the community rooms. If any music is played this will need to be organised by the group, and is royalty free.

Music and noise must be kept to a reasonable level and not disturb nearby residents.

Use of instruments are subject to approval.

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

- Bouncy castles
- BBQs
- Firework displays
- Crèche / nursery
- Extremist activities

We reserve the right to make the final decision of what activities are allowed in the community rooms and will review these on a case-by-case basis.

**Housekeeping**
To ensure the room(s) are being looked after, community room groups must

- Leave the space clean and tidy
- Take all rubbish and personal items away with you
- Ensure the room is secure on departure including setting the alarm and closing all doors and windows
- No chemical cleaning products will be left on site due to health and safety.

Groups must inform the customer engagement team if they notice that housekeeping has not been adhered to on arrival.

A cleaning company carries out a basic regular clean. All groups using the room(s) must ensure that floors and surfaces are clear to allow the cleaning to be completed effectively.

**Use of equipment and whitegoods**

Community rooms are provided with equipment (e.g., vacuum cleaner, mops, TV) and white goods (e.g., fridge, freezer, dishwasher, oven, microwave)

All groups are expected to use and maintain the equipment and white goods responsibly during and after use.

Any damage or malfunction must be reported immediately. Failure to take proper care of the equipment may result in recharges.

**Pets**
No animals are allowed in the room(s), with the exception of 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 that are linked to Derbyshire Fire and Rescue services.

Candles and Vapes must not be used within the premises; any cooking activities must be done safety and ensure the room is well ventilated.

Activation of the fire alarms will result in groups being recharged.

**Parking**
Limited residential on street parking is available around many of our community rooms, please research this before submitting your application. Vehicles should not block access to neighbouring properties and comply with the Highway Code.

Travel to and from the community rooms, including parking arrangements for you and your group members are your responsibility.

We do not take responsibility for any parking fines or damages incurred.

**Damage and recharges**
Any damages, misuse or breakages to the room must be reported and the lead organisers will be charged if found liable.

We will pay for the cost up front using our contracted services and you will be recharged accordingly.

Groups with outstanding repayments will either be postponed or cancelled.

## 6. Reporting any issues

If the community room has any repair, access, or other issues, please report these immediately to the customer engagement team on either **01332 956 356**, hub@derbyhomes.org or for customer service and out of hours call **01332 888 777.**

**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. Examples of who can use the Community rooms

**Derby City Council and Derby Homes 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 rooms if the activity is aligned with our strategic objectives.

**Religious Groups**

Community room applications that are celebrating religious holidays such as Christmas, Eid or Diwali will be welcomed, as long as they are open to our tenants and the wider public.

Our community rooms are not suitable for places of worship as the rooms are intended to be neutral shared spaces. Requests of this nature will not be accepted.

**Polling Stations**

During elections, Polling Stations will have priority.

Derby City Council are able 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 room(s) for party purposes outside of purdah.

Community rooms 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 rooms free of charge if the group is not for profit and the activity directly benefits our tenants and the wider community.

**Political neutrality**

Community rooms must operate as a neutral, shared spaces.

To maintain neutrality, community rooms cannot host activities, meetings or events that can be perceived as relating to political, campaign-focused, or international solidarity movements.

This approach applies consistently to all groups, regardless of the topic or viewpoint.

**Personal Occasions**

Community rooms are available for personal occasions such as children's parties, wakes, and gatherings. However, this is exclusive to our tenants.

Derby City Council and Derby Homes tenants not paying the service charge will be expected to pay the room fee.

**Indoor sporting groups**

Indoor sporting groups, such as boxing, wrestling and other contact sports, are not permitted to use the community rooms, 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.

## 8. Our equality and diversity commitment

We are committed to fostering equity, valuing diversity, and building an inclusive environment. We believe in putting customers first and treating everyone fairly and with respect.

Groups that discriminate against any protected characteristic will not be permitted to use our rooms.

## 9. Inspection

We will Inspect the community rooms in line with Inspection Procedure for Blocks of Flats with Communal Areas.docx This procedure is not exclusive to inspecting community rooms, as it covers communal spaces such as enclosed communal blocks of flats. However, this procedure is applicable to inspecting community rooms, such as these rooms in CAT2 Accommodation Schemes.

## 10. Derby City Council and Derby Homes' rights

We reserve the right to:

- Refuse any applications on reasonable grounds.
- Make the final decision on all room fees and review these periodically.
- Make the final decision of what activities are allowed in the community rooms.
- 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.
- Recharge any group for damage, unauthorised changes to the room or damage and or removal of white goods.

Any breaches to the signed terms and conditions will results in cancellation and removal of access..

## 11. Complaints

If you are unhappy with a service you've received from us, you can talk to us to raise a complaint. You can make a complaint online, through email, over the phone, in writing or in person. Complaints - Derby Homes

We will not be involved in complaints arising from the internal functioning of groups (e.g. disagreements between members, decision-making processes, or financial

management). Group members advised following their own policies and procedures or escalate matters to the relevant local authorities where appropriate to resolve matters.

Please click the link to view or Fair Processing Notice:

https://www.derbyhomes.org/site-info/privacy/fair-processing-notice/