



Our communal lounges

Information, terms and
conditions for hirers



watford
community
housing

The communal lounges within our Independent Living schemes are there to be enjoyed by residents and the wider community.

This booklet sets out our terms and conditions for hiring a scheme's communal lounge, to make sure they are kept clean and tidy for everyone.

Watford Community Housing scheme officers are often on site in the communal areas, and hirers need to be aware that staff will need access to office areas during the day. When communal lounges are hired, Watford Community Housing residents should be encouraged to join in with activities wherever possible.

Booking conditions

To book one of our communal lounges, visit our website at www.wcht.org.uk/halls and use the online booking form.

Please make sure you factor in the time it will take to set up your event and clear away afterwards, and include this in the time period you book for.

The person who signs the booking form will be considered to be the 'hirer' and must be over the age of 18. If you are hiring on behalf of an organisation, please make sure you have their full permission to make the booking beforehand, as the organisation will be considered a joint-hirer and will also be liable. You must also only use the venue for the purpose you specified on the booking form.

Fire and safety regulations

Please take note of all fire notices displayed in the lounges and make sure all members of your party are aware of the emergency procedures. Please do not block any fire exits while using the lounge – all exits should be unlocked and doors fitted with self-closing mechanisms should not be wedged open. We regularly test our fire exit doors and they should open easily, but if you do find anything wrong with them please report it immediately to a member of staff.

In the event of a fire, please **DO NOT** use the lift. You should leave the building immediately via the nearest safe fire exit.

Smoking or using e-cigarettes is not allowed on our premises.

Fire safety regulations mean we can only accommodate a certain number of people at a time. The limit will be noted on your booking form, but can also be found on our website.

Please make sure you do not bring any flammable materials or decorations with you – unless you have the express permission of the scheme officer. Gas bottles, naked flames or any other flammable substances are also not allowed – except for reasonable use, such as lighting candles on a birthday cake, for example – without permission from the scheme officer.

We ensure our electrical equipment is PAT tested. Any equipment you bring will need to be PAT tested and have the relevant certificates available upon request.

Care of our premises

Items such as blu-tack, pins or nails can leave marks on the walls, so please do not use these to put up any decorations or banners. We are happy for you to decorate the glass in the windows, but it is your responsibility to remove any marks that are left on the walls.

Please do not attempt to alter or modify any electrical equipment or plumbing in the lounges. When your event is finished, please turn off all lights, electrical switches and taps before leaving. If you have used urns for tea or coffee, please also make sure that these have been emptied into the kitchen sinks.

Any tables or chairs should also be returned to where you found them.

Ball games are prohibited as the spaces are not suitable for them. We also do not cater for parties for teenagers.

It is your responsibility to ensure the lounge is left clean and tidy, so please make sure any rubbish is put into black bags and left in the bins provided, and that any marks or stains on walls or floors are removed. If the lounge is not left in a fit state, or is left dirty, then you will be liable for the cost of any cleaning or maintenance.

No animals are allowed in the communal lounge – except for assistance dogs – without the consent of the scheme officer.

Please make sure you leave the lounge at the time your booking is due to end. If your event overruns you may be charged an additional fee, which will be taken from your deposit or charged to you after the event.

Examples of additional fees are available on request.

Liability

It is your responsibility to make sure that all property – whether it is yours or belongs to the communal lounge – is kept safe at all times. Watford Community Housing cannot accept responsibility for any property that is damaged during your use of the lounge. You must also make sure you have the correct insurance in place for the duration of your event, as staff may request copies of insurance documents for our internal records.

It is also your responsibility to make sure you adhere to all relevant laws and regulations relating to the activity you are using the lounge for, including regulations relating to employment, safety and access for people with disabilities.

You must also observe our policies on health and safety, equal opportunities and safeguarding – you can get details of these from the scheme officer. These policies include information concerning the appropriate use of our hubs, and we reserve the right to cancel or refuse any booking that we believe contravenes these. In this event, all payments made will be refunded without Watford Community Housing accepting any further liability.

Payment and cancellation

Regular hirers: If you wish to hire the communal lounge on a regular basis, you need to pay one month's fee in advance – using a credit or debit card – before the hire starts. Your hire will then move onto monthly invoice payments.

If you need to change or cancel your booking you must do so in writing, before the 25th of the month and not less than one calendar month prior to the event, in order to receive a refund of any payments made. You can do this by emailing hallsforhire@wcht.org.uk. We will assume that your booking applies to public holidays unless you let us know otherwise.

One-off hirers: Until we have received full payment, your booking will not be confirmed. If your event will take place after 4pm on weekdays or at a weekend, we will take a refundable deposit to cover the cost of any damages or other additional payments.

You must make all payments using a credit or debit card, as we cannot accept cash.

If you need to change or cancel your booking you must do so in writing, at least one calendar month in advance, in order to receive a refund for any payments made. You can do this by emailing hallsforhire@wcht.org.uk.

General: We cannot take responsibility for poor weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances leading you to cancel an event. We may cancel the event with immediate effect and without any liability to Watford Community Housing.

We reserve the right to cancel an event if we need to use the lounge as a polling station for a local or parliamentary election, or for an ad-hoc



community event. If we do need to cancel your event, all payments made will be refunded in full, and we will make every effort to find an alternative venue for your event.

Equality data collection

Regular hirers: As part of our commitment to equality, we regularly collect data on the users of our venues, which is then reported back to Watford Borough Council to show the value our community hubs provide to all members of our local communities. If you are a regular hirer, we will require you to report the number of people attending your events and any equality data you have collected once a month. This needs to be submitted to us by no later than the 2nd of the following month. We will provide an online survey to complete or provide a paper version upon request.



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