



1. Document Control Information

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2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline both the Co-op's responsibilities to community members and groups, and our expectations of affiliated groups and community members. This policy also provides detail on what community groups we will accept to affiliate with MCS.

3. Scope

This policy applies to anyone interested in or currently using Mara Community Space as an individual or group. It is important for groups interested in affiliating to read this document.

4. Definitions

The Co-op / Mara Co-op – Mara's Housing Co-operative Limited

Member – All those who have been accepted as full member by a General Meeting. This definition includes tenants and prospective tenants of The Co-op.

Mara Community Space (MCS) – The parts of the Co-op's building which is explicitly used as space open to the public.

Community member – All those who are not formal members of the Co-op but attend and make use of the MCS.

5. Secondary Rules – Participation and Group Affiliation

5.1 Decision making

Decisions are made by consensus through open, monthly meetings at the MCS. Some decisions may only be made by housing co-operative members, though this will be made clear in their specific circumstances. Community members and groups of the MCS (internal or external) have autonomy to pursue their aims as long as there is no conflict with our aims, principles, and safer spaces policy. Affiliation of new groups will be decided at general meetings.

5.2 Organising structure

The Mara Community Space is run on voluntary, non-hierarchical lines. Working groups for organising MCS may be created to complete a certain task or achieve a certain aim. They will disband once their aim is achieved or task is completed.

5.3 Local involvement



We aim to encourage local involvement, and welcome all sections of the local community, insofar as they respect the values of the MCS.

5.4 Political parties and organised religion

No political parties or organised religions are permitted to hold events or to promote themselves at the MCS. Individuals connected to a political party and/or religious group are welcome into the space, but the MCS is a secular place and does not promote any particular religion. Mara Co-op has the priority to allow local communities to organise and direct themselves autonomously, and we do not seek to encourage affiliations by national parties which direct campaigns for our local community. We also seek to bridge gaps between individuals and build a communal network that recognises and celebrates differences. We believe that officially supporting any political party or religious group by their affiliation to MCS would disadvantage that aim.

5.5 Safer spaces policy

All users of the Mara Community Space should treat each other with respect and follow our Safer Spaces Policy.

5.6 Intention for use

As outlined in our Statement of Values and Aims, this space is intended for communal care, learning, and communal living. The Co-op promotes and supports activities that increase wellness such as gardening, crafting, communal cooking and eating, artistic expression, learning and sharing knowledge, sharing resources, and any other connecting activities like film clubs, book clubs, jam sessions, and so on.

One of the main functions of the MCS is to promote, support and provide resources for positive social change via collective care. All member bodies of the MCS should be working for positive social change, guided by the values defined in our statement of values.

6. Secondary Rules – Ecological Impact

6.1 Waste management

The MCS will seek to minimise the environmental damage caused by its operations. In particular, materials will be reused or recycled wherever possible, and organic waste composted on site. Waste reduction and reduced consumption is also an aim.

6.2 Energy supply

The MCS will buy its energy supply from renewable-generated electricity. We will also look for affordable options to generate renewable electricity on-site, subject to planning permission.

6.3 Reuse & Repair

White goods, furniture, tools, etc. purchased by the co-operative will be bought second-hand wherever possible. The co-op will seek to repair broken items before replacing them.

6.4 Garden

The garden space will be managed according to organic principles.

6.5 Building efficiency



We will move towards greater energy efficiency and environmental improvements to the building, where funds permit. Any new-build projects or renovations are to be as ecologically sound as possible.

7. Ethical Policy

7.1 Purchases

When the Co-op is purchasing products for distribution in the MCS, the following guidelines will apply as far as possible. Products will be:

- Vegan and non-animal tested
- Fairtrade
- Organic and GM-free
- Locally sourced

We will purchase goods and services from sources that share our values/aims where possible.

7.2 Financing

We will not accept financial support in the form of donations, loans, or sponsorships from organisations which actively oppose our values and aims. For example, organisations that evidence complicity in genocide, exploitation of poorer nations, contribution to climate change on an industrial-scale, combating efforts to reduce human impact on our planet, etc.

7.3 Surplus

In the event of the co-operative making a financial surplus, it shall be used in one of the following ways:

- a) to improve the facilities of the building
- b) as a grant or interest-free loan to not-for-profit organisations that share our aims and values
- c) as an interest-free loan to other Radical Routes Co-ops
- d) as donations to groups supported by the MCS. Donations to groups which find it hard to attract funds (eg activist groups) will generally be prioritised.

Allocation of these funds must be approved by a general meeting.

Affiliated community groups should have a policy on dealing with any surpluses or profits which does not conflict with the aims and values of the Mara Community Space.

7.4 Access

The public spaces of the MCS will be wheelchair-accessible. We will work towards accommodating other access issues, especially when undertaking new-build or renovation.

All toilet facilities will be gender neutral.

We aim to make the space accessible to all regardless of culture, sex, race, sexuality, or any other aspect of identity.



8. Related Documents

The Fully Mutual & Common-Ownership Rules of Mara's Housing Co-operative Limited

MCS Safer Spaces Policy

Statement of Values and Aims

9. History of Changes and Scheduled Reviews

Date	Version	Reason for Review	Changes Made

END OF POLICY