

RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Use of Communal Lounges Policy

DRAFT

Review due:

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy applies to Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) tenants, leaseholders, and anyone that visits tenants or leaseholders.

1.2 This policy outlines the use of communal lounges within our Independent Retirement Living Schemes (IRL).

2. Aim

2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure;

- Safe use of communal lounges
- Communal lounges are used in the best way to benefit all tenants, leaseholders, staff and visitors.
- Communal lounges can be safely evacuated in the event of an emergency

2.2 This policy provides a framework for how communal areas will be managed and what is expected of residents.

3. Scope, definitions and legislation

3.1 The legislations that apply to this policy are;

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Housing Act 2004
- Building Regulations 2000, 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988

4. Communal Lounge

4.1 The Council has five Independent Living Schemes. Each scheme has a communal lounge which is a space that can be used by all residents.

4.2 Tenants own items should not be stored in these areas.

4.2 Communal lounges are managed by the scheme manager. Permission for items to be placed in the communal lounges must be granted by the scheme manager.

4.3 The following are classed as permissible items that can be in communal lounges but not limited to;

- Festive lights subject to installation and testing agreed and completed by RBC
- Festive decorations subject to installation agreement by RBC
- Soft furnishings installed by RBC. No furniture to be gifted or donated for storing/placing in communal lounges
- Walkers or Wheelchairs, subject to a risk assessment

4.4 Communal lounges can be used with scheme manager's approval for (not an exhausted list);

- Family visits
- Coffee mornings
- Celebrations
- Approved events
- Selling of appropriate items
- Physical fitness sessions

The communal lounge cannot be booked out by residents and will always remain open to all tenants.

4.5 Where a scheme has a Tenants' Association with an Amenity Fund this is used to help pay for social occasions like parties and outings.

5. External Companies

5.1 In some instances external companies may request to use the communal lounges within the IRL schemes in these instances request need to go to the scheme manager for approval.

5.2 Any external companies requesting to use the communal lounges must provide;

- Evidence of suitable insurance cover
- Ensure event is suitable for IRL tenants to attend if wanted
- DBS checks (where appropriate)

6. Unauthorised Items in Communal Lounge

6.1 Residents are not permitted to leave any items in the communal lounge. If any items are found in communal lounges which breaches this policy, the Council will take action to remedy.

6.2 The Council will consider the following before taking any action;

- Whether item is of immediate risk to residents and visitors
- Whether item poses a risk, but risk is not reasonably considered immediate, but requires remedy to reduce the overall risk to residents and visitors
- Whether ownership can be reasonably determined and whether further investigations are necessary

6.3 The IRL scheme manager will provide written notice to the owner(s) of the item(s) to allow them to be removed. If items are not removed within agreement timescale the council will in result remove them and tenants may be recharged for the removal.

6.4 Tenancy agreement includes a condition that residents must not keep items which would constitute a health or fire safety risk in communal areas.

7. Consultation, communication and training

7.1 RBC will provide clear and comprehensive advice and information to residents, with an aim for a single point of contact.

7.2 Residents and tenants have been consulted.

8. Monitoring and performance management

8.1 We aim to review this policy in three years to ensure it reflects current legislation and latest examples of best practice.

8.2 Overall monitoring and review of this policy will be undertaken in consultation with staff, the Runnymede Council Residents Association, Surrey County Council ASC, Runnymede Community Services team and other relevant partners and stakeholders.

9. Equalities Implications

9.1 In producing this document an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out.

9.2 An EIA is a way of assessing the impact, or likely impact, that a particular policy, procedure or decision will have on particular groups. This is used to assess whether in making the decision whether the Council has complied with its public sector equality duty under S149 of the Equality Act 2010 (as amended) to; eliminate discrimination and any other conduct that is prohibited under this act and to advance equality between those who share a protected characteristic.

9.3 The screening found ***details to be added***

10. Related strategies/Documents

Tenancy Agreement

11. Version Control

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
V1	February 22	First Draft completed			