



LETTINGS PACK

Creating welcoming community places where people can connect, belong and thrive.

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PART 1: VOICES OF HOPE LETTINGS POLICY

1. Purpose and scope

Voices of Hope regards the Walton Community Hub and Hersham Community Centre as important community assets. We aim to make the centres welcoming, accessible and well-used while protecting the safety of everyone on site, maintaining the buildings responsibly and ensuring that activities are compatible with Voices of Hope's charitable purposes and values.

This policy applies to all one-off, occasional and regular hirers, whether the booking is paid, subsidised or provided without charge. It forms part of every Hiring Agreement. Where a centre-specific condition differs, that condition will be set out in the Booking Confirmation Letter or Centre Information Sheet.

2. Our approach to community use

We welcome bookings from community groups, charities, voluntary organisations, public services, health and wellbeing providers, education and training providers, arts and cultural organisations, faith groups, local businesses and private hirers where the proposed use is appropriate.

Priority may be given to activities that benefit local residents, reduce isolation, improve health and wellbeing, support children and families, promote inclusion, or provide support to people experiencing disadvantage.

Voices of Hope may decline a booking where the proposed activity:

- is incompatible with our charitable purposes, values or safeguarding responsibilities;
- presents an unacceptable safety, reputational, legal or financial risk;
- is likely to cause unreasonable disturbance, nuisance or conflict with other centre users or neighbours;
- promotes hatred, harassment, unlawful discrimination, violence, extremism or criminal activity;
- requires facilities, staffing, licences or controls that the centre cannot reasonably provide; or
- has previously resulted in non-payment, damage, repeated complaints or breaches of agreement.

3. Equality, inclusion and conduct

Hirers must operate in a respectful and inclusive manner and comply with applicable equality and human rights legislation. Harassment, threatening behaviour, unlawful discrimination or conduct likely to cause distress will not be tolerated.

The hirer is responsible for the conduct of everyone connected with their booking, including staff, volunteers, participants, guests, contractors and suppliers.

4. Booking process

1. **Initial enquiry:** The hirer discusses / submits online the proposed activity, room requirements, dates, times and access needs with the Centre Team.
2. **Application and due diligence:** The hirer provides the requested information and documentation. A provisional booking does not guarantee use of the premises.
3. **Review and approval:** Voices of Hope reviews suitability, availability, safeguarding, insurance and health and safety requirements. Additional information or a site visit may be required.
4. **Agreement and payment:** The booking is confirmed only when the Hiring Agreement is signed, required documents are approved and payment or agreed invoicing arrangements are in place.
5. **Induction:** Regular or out-of-hours hirers may be required to attend a building induction before their first booking.

The hirer must not make financial commitments, advertise the venue as confirmed or sell tickets until written confirmation has been received from Voices of Hope.

5. Mandatory documentation and due diligence

All groups and organisations must provide the following as a minimum before their booking begins:

- An up-to-date safeguarding policy appropriate to the organisation and its activities;
- The name and contact details of a designated safeguarding lead or safeguarding contact;
- Public liability insurance with a minimum level of cover of £5 million, unless Voices of Hope has expressly agreed in writing that an alternative arrangement is acceptable;
- A risk assessment appropriate to the activity and the premises (see appendix for support if needed);
- Any licences, registrations, qualifications or permissions required for the activity.

Additional documentation **may** include:

- Evidence of appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks where staff or volunteers undertake regulated activity or where checks are otherwise required;
- First aid certificates where the hirer will be on site without a suitably qualified first aider provided by Voices of Hope;
- Food hygiene certificates and food safety documentation where food is prepared or served;
- A Temporary Event Notice, premises licence permissions or other alcohol-related authorisation;
- Professional qualifications, membership, insurance and competency evidence for fitness, therapy, coaching or specialist activities;
- Portable appliance testing, equipment inspection certificates, method statements or supplier risk assessments; and
- A gym assessment process and evidence of competent supervision where participants will use fitness equipment.

Documents must be renewed before expiry. Voices of Hope may suspend or cancel bookings if required evidence is missing, expired, inadequate or materially inconsistent with the activity being delivered.

6. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a condition of hire. All organisations must maintain an appropriate safeguarding policy, identify a safeguarding lead and ensure that staff and volunteers understand how to recognise, respond to and report concerns.

Where activities involve children, young people or adults at risk, the hirer must:

- Ensure appropriate safer recruitment, supervision, codes of conduct and reporting procedures are in place;
- Complete and maintain all legally required DBS checks and suitability checks;
- Obtain relevant emergency contacts, medical information and consent arrangements;
- Ensure participants are released only to authorised persons where appropriate;
- Have procedures for managing allegations against staff, volunteers or other adults;
- Know how to contact the relevant local authority safeguarding service, children's social care, adult social care and the Local Authority Designated Officer where applicable; and
- Report immediately to Voices of Hope any safeguarding concern or allegation connected with activity at the centre.

Voices of Hope may request evidence of policies, checks, training and procedures at any time. Failure to meet safeguarding requirements may result in immediate suspension or termination of the booking.

Walton Community Hub and Hersham Community Centre | Draft for review

7. Hirer responsibilities

The named hirer or nominated responsible person must be present throughout the booking unless otherwise agreed in writing. The hirer has overall responsibility for the activity and must:

- Ensure attendance does not exceed the agreed room capacity;
- Provide appropriate staffing and supervision;
- Keep an accurate record of attendees where needed for safety or safeguarding;
- Ensure participants use only the rooms, equipment and access routes included in the booking;
- Maintain clear emergency exits and access for emergency services;
- Ensure reasonable adjustments and accessibility arrangements are considered;
- Prevent unauthorised access to the premises;
- Report accidents, incidents, safeguarding concerns, damage, faults and near misses promptly;
- Comply with lawful instructions from Voices of Hope staff; and
- Leave the premises safe, clean, secure and ready for the next user.

8. Risk assessment, health and safety

The hirer must assess risks arising from its activity, equipment, participants and suppliers. The assessment must be proportionate, recorded and reviewed when circumstances change. It must take account of emergency evacuation, vulnerable participants, accessibility, food, equipment, electrical items, manual handling, slips and trips, lone working and any activity-specific hazards.

Voices of Hope's building risk assessments do not replace the hirer's responsibility to assess its own activity. If an activity changes materially, the hirer must notify Voices of Hope and provide an updated assessment before continuing.

9. First aid, accidents and incidents

The hirer must make suitable first aid arrangements for the nature of the activity and the people attending. Where no Voices of Hope first aider is scheduled to be on site, the hirer must provide evidence that a suitably trained first aider will be present, unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed in writing following a documented assessment.

All accidents, injuries, near misses, damage, security incidents and safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Centre Team as soon as practicable and before leaving the premises where possible. Emergency services must be contacted directly where required.

10. Fire safety and emergency evacuation

The hirer must read and comply with the centre's Fire Prevention and Emergency Evacuation Procedure. The hirer must nominate a responsible person to lead evacuation, make participants aware of relevant exits and assembly points, keep routes unobstructed and account for attendees following evacuation.

Fire doors must not be wedged open unless fitted with an approved automatic release device. No fire alarm, extinguisher, emergency lighting or other safety equipment may be interfered with.

11. Insurance and liability

The hirer is responsible for loss, damage, injury or claims arising from its activity, people, equipment, suppliers or breach of this policy, except to the extent caused by Voices of Hope's negligence or breach of legal duty.

The hirer must maintain adequate insurance, normally including public liability cover of at least £5 million. Voices of Hope may require a higher level where the activity presents additional risk.

Voices of Hope does not accept responsibility for loss of or damage to personal possessions, vehicles, equipment or materials brought onto the premises, except where liability cannot lawfully be excluded.

12. Charges, invoicing and deposits

Standard hire charges (Schedule 1B) relate solely to the use of the agreed facilities during the booked times. Where a booking requires additional support from Voices of Hope staff, extra charges may apply. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Provision of a caretaker or premises supervisor outside standard opening hours.
- Cleaning before or after an event where requested by the hirer or where the premises are not left in the agreed condition.
- Additional room set-up or furniture layout changes beyond the standard arrangement.
- Technical or operational support requested before or during the hire.
- The booking overruns the agreed hire period.
- Damage, excessive waste or additional costs are incurred as a result of the hire.

Any additional charges will be confirmed with the hirer in advance wherever possible. Concessions or waived charges must be approved in writing and do not create an entitlement for future bookings.

Invoices must be paid by the stated due date. Voices of Hope may suspend future bookings, retain deposits or terminate the agreement where payment is overdue.

A schedule of additional charges can be found in Schedule 1C.

13. Cancellations and changes

Unless otherwise stated in the Hiring Agreement:

- **Hirer Cancellations & Refunds:** All cancellations, booking modifications, or non-attendances by the Hirer are governed by the fee scales, notice periods, and refund conditions set out in **Schedule 1C (Part 1C)** of this document. Non-refundable costs incurred by Voices of Hope will be deducted from any refund.
- **Regular Hirers:** Must give at least eight (8) weeks' written notice to end or reduce a recurring booking.

Where Voices of Hope must cancel due to an emergency, essential works, safety concerns or circumstances outside its reasonable control, any hire payment for the affected booking will be refunded or credited. Voices of Hope will not normally be liable for consequential loss and the liability for Voices of Hope will be capped solely at the refund of hire and deposit fees and specifically excluding any consequential losses to the hirer such as, but not limited to, external catering costs, tickets refunds, printing costs, etc..

Voices of Hope will give at least eight weeks written notice to end any regular booking.

14. Access, keys, fobs and security

Access arrangements will be confirmed for each booking. Keys, fobs, alarm codes and access codes remain the property of Voices of Hope and must not be copied, shared or used outside agreed booking times.

Out-of-hours hirers may be required to sign a Key / Fob Holder Agreement and complete an induction. The hirer must ensure doors and windows are secure, alarms are set correctly and keys or fobs are returned as instructed.

The following charges may apply, subject to actual cost and the centre's current schedule:

Issue	Potential charge
Lost or unreturned key	Replacement key and, where necessary, lock/cylinder replacement plus 10% administration charge
Lost or unreturned fob	Replacement cost plus 10% administration charge
Alarm or emergency call-out caused by hirer error	Actual contractor/staff call-out cost, subject to a minimum charge of £60
Premises left unsecured	Actual costs incurred plus a charge of £[insert]
Late departure	Additional hire time and/or staffing cost, subject to a minimum charge of £25

15. Rooms, furniture and equipment

Only rooms and equipment listed in the booking may be used. The hirer must not enter offices, storage areas, kitchens, gym areas or other restricted spaces unless these are included in the booking.

- Furniture must be moved safely and returned to the agreed layout.
- Nothing may be fixed to walls, doors, windows, floors or ceilings without written permission.
- Confetti, glitter, smoke machines, dry ice, pyrotechnics and similar items are not permitted unless expressly authorised.
- Electrical and technical equipment must be approved in advance and must be safe and suitable for use.
- Any fault or damage must be reported and equipment must not be used if unsafe.

16. Food, kitchen use and allergens

Food and drink may be prepared or consumed only in agreed areas. Hirers preparing or serving food must comply with food safety law, allergen requirements and any centre kitchen rules. Appropriate food hygiene certification may be required.

The hirer is responsible for safe storage, temperature control, allergen information, hygiene, cleaning and disposal of food waste. Centre food, utensils or equipment must not be used unless included in the booking.

17. Alcohol, smoking and prohibited substances

Smoking and vaping are not permitted inside either centre or in any area within the grounds which is designated as smoke-free. Illegal drugs and unlawful substances are prohibited.

Alcohol may be brought onto or supplied at the premises only with prior written approval. The hirer is responsible for obtaining and complying with any Temporary Event Notice, licence or other legal requirement. Alcohol must not be served to anyone under 18 or to anyone who appears intoxicated.

18. Noise, neighbours and timing

The hirer must keep noise at a reasonable level and comply with centre-specific operating hours and planning restrictions. Music, amplified sound, deliveries, arrivals and departures must be managed so as not to cause unreasonable disturbance.

The booking time includes set-up and clearing away. The premises must be vacated by the agreed end time.

19. Children, adults at risk and supervision

Children and adults at risk must be appropriately supervised at all times. They must not be allowed to enter kitchens, offices, storage areas, plant rooms, car parks, or other higher-risk areas unless this is part of an approved and appropriately supervised activity.

Parents or carers remain responsible for children attending private or family events unless the hirer has explicitly taken responsibility through an organised childcare or activity arrangement.

20. Gym and specialist equipment

Gym equipment may be used only where the booking expressly includes access and Voices of Hope has approved the hirer's assessment, induction and supervision arrangements. The hirer must provide evidence of a documented participant assessment process, competent instructors, appropriate insurance and emergency arrangements.

No participant may use equipment unsupervised unless this has been specifically authorised following assessment.

21. Decorations, candles, animals and external suppliers

- Decorations require approval and must be fire-retardant where appropriate. Adhesives, nails, screws or fixings must not be used without permission.
- Candles, incense, naked flames and cooking flames require prior written approval and a suitable risk assessment.
- Assistance dogs are welcome. Other animals require advance approval and appropriate welfare, hygiene and safety controls.
- External suppliers such as entertainers, caterers, equipment providers or inflatable operators must be approved in advance and provide suitable insurance, risk assessments, inspection records and licences.

22. Cleaning, waste and damage

The hirer must leave rooms, kitchens, toilets and shared areas clean, tidy and ready for the next user. Waste must be removed or placed in the designated bins as instructed. Additional cleaning or waste costs may be charged where the standard is not met. Where additional cleaning is required, or where a hirer requests Voices of Hope to undertake cleaning before or after an event, the cost of this service will be charged at the current published rate.

The hirer must pay the reasonable cost of repairing or replacing property damaged or lost as a result of the booking, other than fair wear and tear.

23. Subletting, publicity and use of name

The hirer must not transfer or sublet the booking. Publicity must accurately describe the activity and must not imply that Voices of Hope endorses, funds or delivers the activity unless written permission has been given.

The Voices of Hope name, logo, photographs of the premises and centre branding may not be used in promotional material without prior approval.

24. Breach, suspension and termination

Voices of Hope may refuse access, suspend or terminate a booking immediately where there is a serious or repeated breach of this policy, non-payment, unsafe practice, safeguarding concern, unlawful activity, unacceptable conduct, significant nuisance, damage, misuse of access credentials or material misrepresentation.

Where a breach can reasonably be remedied, Voices of Hope may provide written requirements and a deadline. Continued use will depend on satisfactory action.

25. Data protection and records

Voices of Hope will process hirer information for booking administration, finance, safety, safeguarding, legal compliance and service improvement in accordance with applicable data protection law and its privacy information.

Hirers are responsible for the personal data they collect from participants and must store and use it lawfully and securely.

26. Complaints / disputes, and exceptional circumstances

Concerns should first be raised with the Centre Team so they can be resolved promptly. Formal complaints will be considered under Voices of Hope's complaints procedure. Nothing in this section prevents either party from seeking legal advice or using any contractual remedy available to it.

Voices of Hope reserves the right to amend, relocate or cancel bookings where necessary due to emergency maintenance, health and safety concerns, severe weather, safeguarding issues or other exceptional circumstances. Where possible, reasonable notice and an alternative booking or refund will be offered.

27. Review and legal status

This policy may be reviewed and updated from time to time. The version supplied with or referenced in the current Hiring Agreement applies to the booking, unless a change is required by law or for urgent safety reasons.

If any provision is found to be unenforceable, the remaining provisions will continue to apply. This policy and the Hiring Agreement are governed by the law of England and Wales.

Additional Charges

The following services are available where required and may incur an additional charge:

- Caretaker or premises supervisor attendance
- Cleaning before or after an event
- Room set-up or furniture reconfiguration
- Technical or operational support
- Extended hire beyond booked times
- Replacement keys or access fobs
- Repair of any damage caused during the hire

Charges will be confirmed at the time of booking.

Booking Information

- Community rates are available for registered charities, community groups and not-for-profit organisations.
- Commercial rates apply to businesses and guest organisations operating for commercial gain.
- Long-term bookings may qualify for discounted rates by agreement.
- Hire charges include reasonable use of the guestbooked room and standard utilities.
- Additional documentation (including Public Liability Insurance and a Safeguarding Policy) is required before bookings can be confirmed

Documents forming the agreement

The following form part of this agreement:

- Voices of Hope Lettings Policy, version/date: July 2026
- Booking Confirmation Letter (emailed on confirmation)
- Fire Prevention and Emergency Evacuation Procedure (below)
- Key / Fob Holder Agreement, where applicable (emailed on confirmation)
- Any special conditions listed above or attached

Hirer declaration

I confirm on behalf of the hirer that:

- I have authority to enter into this agreement;
- All information provided is accurate and I will notify Voices of Hope of material changes;
- I have read, understood and agree to comply with the documents forming this agreement;
- I accept responsibility for the activity, participants, staff, volunteers, contractors and suppliers connected with the booking;
- I will ensure that the required safeguarding, insurance, risk assessment, first aid and licensing arrangements remain valid throughout the hire period; and
- I understand that serious or repeated breach may result in suspension or termination and additional costs.

Signed for the hirer	
Name and position	
Signature	
Date	

Signed for Voices of Hope	
Name and position	
Signature	
Date	

Before the booking begins, please familiarise yourself with the Fire Prevention and Emergency Evacuation Procedure and Centre Information Sheet before your first booking. Where an induction is required, the booking may not begin until this has been completed.

Please sign and return the Hiring Agreement by [date]. Your booking is not fully confirmed until the agreement, required documents and payment arrangements have been accepted by Voices of Hope.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Kind regards,

Voices of Hope

PART 2: FIRE PREVENTION AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Hirer responsibilities

- Nominate a responsible person / evacuation warden for the booking.
- Familiarise yourself with the alarm call points, exits, escape routes and assembly point.
- Keep exits, corridors and external access routes clear.
- Ensure the agreed maximum occupancy is not exceeded.
- Maintain an appropriate attendance record or other way of accounting for people.
- Brief staff, volunteers and participants on emergency arrangements as appropriate.
- Provide suitable assistance for anyone who may need help to evacuate.
- Call 999 if fire is discovered or suspected; do not assume anyone else has called.
- Do not attempt to fight a fire unless trained, it is safe to do so and there is a clear escape route.

If you discover a fire

1. Raise the alarm immediately using the nearest call point.
2. Call 999 and give the full centre address.
3. Begin evacuation using the nearest safe exit.
4. Close doors behind you where this can be done safely.
5. Go to the assembly point and account for attendees.
6. Tell the Fire and Rescue Service about the location of the fire and any missing or vulnerable person.

On hearing the fire alarm

1. Stop the activity immediately.
2. Leave by the nearest safe exit; do not delay to collect belongings.
3. Do not use lifts unless specifically designated for evacuation.
4. Proceed to the assembly point.
5. Account for attendees and report anyone missing.
6. Do not re-enter until authorised by the Fire and Rescue Service or Voices of Hope.

Centre	Assembly point	Emergency / premises information
Walton Community Hub	Rear Car Park	Address: Manor Rd, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2PB Alarm monitoring: TBC Emergency premises contact: TBC
Hersham Community Centre	Rear Car Park	Address: 7 Queens Rd, Hersham, KT12 5LU Alarm monitoring: TBC Emergency premises contact: TBC

PART 3: OPENING AND CLOSING CHECKLIST

Opening checks

- Access only within the agreed booking time.
- Disarm the alarm correctly, where applicable.
- Check for obvious signs of damage, water leaks, hazards or unauthorised entry.
- Confirm escape routes and exits are clear.
- Check booked rooms, toilets and agreed facilities are safe to use.
- Report any concern before admitting participants where safety may be affected.
- Set out furniture safely and do not block doors, exits, alarms or extinguishers.

During the booking

- Keep entrances controlled and prevent access to restricted areas.
- Maintain appropriate supervision and attendance information.
- Keep noise within reasonable limits.
- Clean spills promptly and keep walkways clear.
- Report accidents, incidents, safeguarding concerns and damage.

Closing checks

- All participants, staff, volunteers and suppliers have left.
- Furniture has been returned to the agreed layout.
- Rooms, kitchens and toilets are clean and tidy.
- Food and waste have been removed or placed in the correct bins.
- Taps, appliances and approved equipment are switched off (including checking of toilet taps).
- Windows and external doors are closed and secured.
- Internal doors are left as instructed.
- Lights are switched off, except designated safety lighting.
- Alarm is set correctly, where applicable.
- Keys / fobs are returned or retained only under the Key / Fob Holder Agreement.
- Any fault, damage, accident or concern has been reported.
- The building has been vacated by the agreed time.