- If someone appears very drunk, aggressive or insulting at the door then act quickly and refuse entry. If they behave like this at the start of the night it is highly likely their behaviour will get worse. Also it is easier to refuse entry than to try and get someone to leave.
- It is licensing rules that everyone states their membership number and puts their name in the guest book, or shows their card. If someone gives hassle about doing this then you may refuse entry.
- If there are people outside kicking the door, being aggressive or that you don't want in then do not open the door or the shutter to them. It is wise to have someone stand inside in front of the door with their back to it so as to stop people going out. Encourage people to leave or wait awhile.
- Wait until they get bored and go away. Do not go outside until you are sure they have gone.

Although the above situations do occur occasionally, most people in the club are friendly and appreciative of your volunteer time. Volunteers should feel safe in the club and supported by other members of the Cowley Club.

As a community we are striving towards dealing with conflict collectively and developing an environment that is safe. This policy is part of achieving these aims.

Training in dealing with difficult situations and people will be held regularly. Notices will go up when the next session is near.

Please also read and use the **Information Folder** next to the till.

CONTACTS

General enquiries: cowleyclub@riseup.net

Volunteers discussion list: http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/cowleycrew/

Entertainments collective: cowleyents@gmail.com Bookshop collective: cowleybooks@gmail.com Library collective: cowleylibrary@gmail.com

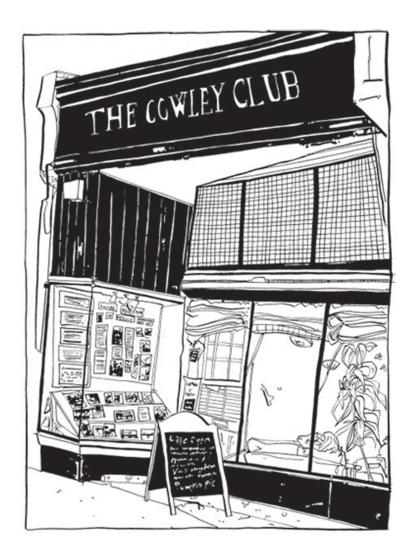
Back building bookings: cowleybookings@yahoo.co.uk

Address: 12 London Rd, Brighton BN1 4JA

Tel: 01273 696104

Web: www.cowleyclub.org.uk version 1 December 2009

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION



WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

The Cowley Club is a co-operative social centre.

It is collectively owned and run as a base for those involved in radical grassroots social change and those sympathetic to such activities, giving us control over our social space and resources. It is run entirely by volunteers - no one gets paid and no one is making any profit. Instead, we are trying to provide a much needed alternative to everything else around us.

The building was purchased in 2002. All money made by the club goes towards the running costs and paying off the mortgage and loans borrowed to buy the building (these outgoings total about £3,500 a month).

The Cowley Club is a member of the co-operatives network Radical Routes and the UK Social Centres Network.

The following information contains the main things you need to know to help out. It may seem like a lot of information but please don't be put off! We have tried to explain everything so that everyone has the same information. Please read through it and refer back to it. Also ensure you have read through and use the Information Folder by the till.

HOW IS IT RUN?

The Cowley Club is run non-hierarchically without bosses or managers. Although obviously some people have more experience in the club than others we try and make all decisions by consensus in which everyone has an equal say.

Day to day decisions are made by the volunteers on a shift.

There are **collectives** of volunteers that oversee certain areas, for example: cafe, bar, entertainments, bookshop, library, cleaning, maintenance, mediation, finance & fundraising. If you mainly volunteer in, or are interested in being more involved in, one of these areas please check the calendar for the next collective meetings or see the emails at the end of this booklet.

All major decisions about the club's use and its policies are made by members attending the **General Meetings** which are at 6.30pm on the first Monday of the month – everyone welcome!

- If you feel unable to deal with the situation or need help then ask others to do what you want them to do e.g. "Can you tell this person they can not speak to me like this" or "Can you tell this person it's last orders".
- Make decisions about what you want to happen e.g. person to stop behaviour, person to leave etc. Communicate this to other volunteers and people that you trust to help in the bar.
- Work as a team: Nominate / ask / volunteer (these can be other volunteers or members in the bar) people/yourself to take roles:
- 1. Someone to take the lead and talk to the person
- 2. Someone to support the lead person and take over if needed
- 3. Someone to observe but not participate so as to have a record of the incident and bear witness to action taken
- 4. Someone to keep others back or ask people to make space.
- 5. Someone to turn on the lights, turn off the music and shut the back door if needed.
- 6. Someone/people to give assistance in physically removing the person if needed.
- This list is not exhaustive and there may be other roles that people need to take.
- De-brief about the incident as a team afterwards (it may be useful to have a written account of what happened, which you can write in the Information Folder), and decide who will take any follow up actions e.g. take incident to mediation group or general meeting.

The Door for the Bar

There have been many problems with the door in the past, and this is the collective advice based on experience of these situations.

- There is a spotlight pointed onto the area outside of the door, this should be turned on at the beginning of the night.
- Always look through the hatch before opening the door. It may be someone you know can't come in, someone who looks too drunk to be let in or the police. You can also put the latch on before opening the door.

with difficult people and situations.

Safety of volunteers

Volunteers are not expected to accept aggressive or insulting behaviour. The Club wants volunteers to feel safe and supported in their roles. If someone is insulting or aggressive in the club and you feel threatened then you can:

- Refuse to serve them or let them in
- · Tell them to leave
- Suggest they are barred at a General Meeting
- Approach the mediation group for help dealing with the person or for a club response to the situation (the contact number is in the Information Folder)

Dealing with difficult situations

At the start of the shift - please introduce yourselves to each other, find out each other's experience in the club, state how you are feeling as this may affect your ability to deal with confrontational or stressful situations. Maybe even nominate a person or people to take the lead if a difficult situation arises.

It is really important that a volunteer's decision is supported by the rest of the volunteers and not undermined. If you disagree with the action decided by another volunteer then it is better to discuss it after the incident has been dealt with rather than during it.

Difficult situations can include: Violence, aggression, insults, sexual harassment, intimidation, refusal to leave, drug use on the premises.

In these types of situations try and stay calm and avoid escalating the situation by being overly aggressive or insulting. If the situation can be dealt with by a few people then this is better than involving lots of people in the club. Try and discourage drunk people from getting involved as they can often escalate the situation.

This step by step guide may help:

• Stop and take a moment to think, take some deep breaths. Try to stay calm and appear confident e.g. comfortable posture and calm voice.

The general meetings includes the **Bar Members** meeting and the **Cowley Club Members** meeting.

When you first join and pay a pound you are joining the bar (called the '12 London Road Social Club') which has a private members club license. Your pound buys you a share in this co-operative club. It is a separate organisation that hires the space from the Cowley Club during licensed hours. The bar (12 London Road Social Club) has about 4000 registered members.

Once you have been helping out for **three months** you can apply at a General Meeting to become a member of the Cowley Club Co-operative. By becoming a member you have an equal say in the running of the whole project. Members must agree with the aims of the club and not be a member of a political party. This Cowley Club co-op has about 250 members.

As a co-operative, assets and control are placed into all members' hands, the idea being that those using the centre share the benefits, responsibilities and work that comes with running it.

VOLUNTEERING

The bar and the cafe need to be staffed by people enthusiastic and responsible enough to create a friendly and well run space, while all the other jobs that need doing regularly also need people to pitch in and take responsibility.

Volunteering in the Cowley Club is fun, and without volunteers, the club won't exist. But it can also be stressful, you may need to handle difficult people and it can be busy and demanding. Please be aware of this when you sign up for shifts, and when volunteering get the support you need to handle situations. There should usually be people around who can help. If you are easily stressed or suffering from mental or other health problems, you are welcome to be part of the club but it may not be a good place for you to volunteer. Also do read and respect the safety and conduct policies (see later).

If people ask about volunteering, try to take the time to have a chat with them, tell them what it involves, give them a copy of this booklet, and show them where they can sign up for shifts. If you are working with a new volunteer, try to take the time to show them how to do things, be friendly and encouraging, and give them support.

Finally, as a volunteer you can also sign up to the Cowley Crew email group for internal communication at http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/cowleycrew/

BAR INFO

The bar has a private members club license. It is called the '12 London Road Social Club' and is a separate organisation that hires the space from the Cowley Club during licensed hours.

To sign up for a shift put your name and telephone number in the 'new' section on the bar rota in the Rota Folder. If the coordinator position is not filled and you are new please don't try and run the bar yourself. If it is filled that person will show you the basics on the night.

The shift involves selling drinks, keeping an eye on things and answering the door. On busy nights it is necessary to have more people, including one or two people just on the door, answering it and checking memberships / signing people in.

The bar should be staffed by at least two people a night, one being a 'coordinator' - this person is not in charge but they know how to run the bar, deal with problems, cash up etc. This person should also have keys, or have arranged to borrow keys, to open up.

There is a list of key holders in the Information Folder.

Bar training days are organised every few months if you would like to find out more about changing barrels, cleaning lines, etc. please ask the bar collective.

License: The license is in a plastic holder next to the bar fridge. Time at the bar is 11pm on weekdays, 12pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and 10.30pm on Sundays. All alcohol should be locked away after time is called. Drinking up time can be up to an hour. Longer openings are possible but need to be agreed at general meetings or with the entertainments collective, and with agreement of the people living in the flat upstairs, in advance. It has to be quieter shortly after time, this also means no music.

Door: When the bell rings, answer the door, looking through the hatch first. People need to show their membership cards OR sign into the book. If they have guests, they must sign into the book with their number and

not sellotape (which ruins the walls/glass) on the notice boards/ in toilets and on the green wood not the walls.

Lighting: please turn all the lights on in the cafe (it makes it look very dim and uninviting otherwise). In the bar turn off and dim the relevant lights to create a good atmosphere. You can also use tealights and candles on tables but make sure they are in glass jars and properly secured.

No Smoking: anywhere in the building – the club will be fined £1000!

Dogs: are not permitted for hygiene reasons. They can be brought through to the back yard if the owner takes responsibility for them.

Bikes: should be left outside the front (not in the yard) as they obstruct.

Illegal drugs: are not permitted anywhere on the premises as they are likely to lead to the club losing its bar license.

BEFORE YOU GO

- leave the club clean and tidy floor swept, tables/surfaces wiped, everything washed up and put away including the kitchen and backyard.
- turn off and drain the glass washer.
- make sure all appliances and lights are off (also in the basement!)
- and the till put away and cashed up.
- take rubbish out. Non-recyclable waste goes in the 'team waste' plastic wheelie bin out the back. We recycle bottles, paper, tetrapacks, cans and cardboard collected in the clear plastic Magpie bags kept under the bar and by the bins. Please sort the recycling!!! If it is left in a mess it will not be collected and the probelm just gets worse. See instructions posted by the bins.
- make sure all doors are locked you can lock the front door with the keys on the big bit of wood and post them back through the letter box.

SAFETY AND CONDUCT

Cowley Club Behavior Policy (Agreed at general meeting 2007)

This policy is intended for the use of volunteers in the club. It is the result of volunteer's experiences in the club, discussion and training in dealing

Clear tables if people don't do it themselves, and wipe them down, as well as keeping the servery tidy.

Put music on but keep the levels down – it usually sounds quieter behind the servery than out in the club. Also please respect that the club is open to everyone - don't put people off with your personal music tastes!

Put the herb tea menu out. Loose herbs can be replaced from the bags downstairs which are all labelled. Make the tea in a small pot and give them a strainer.

Change the tea towels etc at the end of your shift. Laundry is next to the loos. Use green or blue surface cloths only – red and yellow ones are for the loos!

If you would like to cook it is best to help someone else first or come to a cafe meeting. **Meetings:** The café collective meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 4.30pm. All volunteers and those interested welcome!

GENERAL INFO

Fire Safety: As a volunteer in the Cowley Club you must pay particular attention to fire safety. When opening up at the beginning of your shift please ensure all fire escape routes are clear. In the event of a fire, raise the alarm (alarm points at front and back door) and ensure everybody evacuates the building via the nearest safe exit. Assist people with limited mobility and try to alert anybody in the back building/flat/main building who may be unaware. Call the fire brigade and assemble volunteers either in front of Somerfield or on the park at the back on Providence Place. Now read the full fire safety sheet in the Information Folder.

It is also your responsibility to visually check any electrical item for damage or wear before use. Anything that appears to be faulty must be placed in the basement and clearly labeled not to be used until fixed.

Health & Safety: read the Health & Safety procedure folder (on the top left shelf above till) and follow accordingly.

First Aid: there is a first kit on the Health & Safety shelf and in the kitchen along with burn treatment. The accident book is also kept on the Health & Safety shelf and any incidents should be recorded here - there are instructions on the book as to how to do this. Regular first aid training is provided to volunteers, if you are interested please put your contact details

on the form in the Health & Safety folder.

Noise: Repeated exposure to excessive noise can damage your hearing, which may result in permanent hearing loss. Read the noise information sheet in the Information Folder.

Folders: kept next to the till include the folders for the Bar and Café cashing up sheets, the Rota Folder, and the Information Folder for communication between shifts (please have a look, and write down any incidents or useful information), the maintenance log (please write in if you find something that you can't fix but needs sorting out), useful information and phone numbers.

Till: Don't leave the till unattended. The till drawer should be kept in the beer cellar when not in use. The float should always be £50. Money that doesn't go in the till goes with a note saying what it is/what for and the date, into the small drop safe next to the till (along with book sales see info later). Cashing up sheets must be completed at the end of each shift, follow the instructions on them or ask someone to show you how to do them.

Keys: Make sure keys are always returned immediately to the key box. Don't leave them in other parts of the club or hand out keys to people you don't know; ask why they want them. Front door keys are available by contacting one of the key holders listed in the Information Folder. The front door keys are numbered and not copiable, please apply at a general meeting for a set. Your details will be recorded in the key book.

Book sales: are now the same for bar and cafe. Write down clearly the title of each book, cd, dvd, magazine or t-shirt sold and simply 'badge' or 'postcard' in the Book Sales Book. At the end of your shift add up what was sold and put this amount of money with a note saying 'booksales' the date and cafe or bar in a small plastic bag in the book sales dropsafe. We do not offer any refunds. Enquiries can be written in the back of the Book Sales Book or emailed to: cowleybooks@gmail.com

Bar Membership Applications: forms are by the calendar. Check they have written their name and email address clearly and have been proposed by two members with their membership numbers. Once completed put their name and date on the list on the notice board above.

The form goes in the plastic folder in the bar folder, with £1 going into the drop safe. Applications take between 7-21 days to be accepted. They need

to come and pick up their membership card. New membership cards and the register are in the box under the café counter. The register is in the order in which people joined. To give people their cards, look them up, tick them off and write their number on a blank card.

Financial support: there are forms for people to set up *standing orders* and to offer loans in the form of *loan stock*. The forms are with the rest of the Cowley information at the front of the club, please give them to people who enquire about helping financially.

Gig / Event / Meeting Bookings: please read and give others who enquire the 'Booking Gigs, Events and Meetings' leaflet.

Library: is upstairs in the back building and is open to the public during café opening times. It has a book and film lending section as well as computers for free internet access. The metal dvd returns box is on the wall opposite the bar. To get involved ask a library volunteer.

Telephone: answer the phone as needed, and take messages, leaving them in the mail tray downstairs in the office. There's a notice above the phone for how to deal with various phone enquiries.

Glass Washer: is for glasses only not ash trays or cups or anything else. Instructions are on the front of it. Make sure it is drained and off when you leave.

Cleaning: stuff is kept underneath the stairs in the basement. If there isn't any more toilet paper go and buy some. Laundry is by the washing machine, by the toilets. If there's a lot of washing, please do put the machine on, or if there's a load that needs drying or is dry, please hang it up or put away.

Maintenance: if you discover something is broken, and you know how to, please fix it - or go up to the library and find a book or search the internet and find out how to fix it. Failing that write it on the maintenance sheet in the 'Information Folder' and someone else will eventually fix it.

Mail: goes straight downstairs in the office, please separate into mail for the flat (12B London Road) and for the Club, don't leave it lying around the club.

Posters/Leaflets: for events/services for private profit or those from religous groups or political parties should not be displayed or distributed. Posters for campaigns and cowley events should be put up with blutack

their guests (up to two) names and addresses.

The door has to be kept shut and locked. You can refuse entry. If people don't have their card, ask them their membership number which you can check in the members register. See below for further advice on door policy and safety.

Front of building: Due to the license, during bar opening times, the blinds need to be down and the board on the door, and events have to be advertised 'members and guests welcome'.

Shutters on the front windows: need to be put up on Friday and Saturday nights. This is due a few incidents of people who have been denied entry breaking windows.

Stock: Beer, cider and spirits are in the cellar. Juices are in the basement with food. Soft drinks are on a dispenser; the black nozzle and drip tray need to be rinsed at the end of every shift. Most stock is in the basement but check if there is enough ice and wine (vegan) and go to the co-op/ somerfiled and buy these with money from the till if needed - get a receipt.

A price list for all drinks is displayed near the fridge.

Cellar: Don't change barrels or the gas unless you have been shown how to! See the 'Information Folder' for phone numbers of people who can help with the cellar or attend a bar training day.

Kids: are only allowed until 9pm, accompanied by an adult if under 16. No alcohol sales to under 18's. If in doubt, ask for ID.

CAFÉ INFO

Vegan meals are prepared by two or three people in the morning (please read the info in the kitchen about kitchen use), and two people come in at 11.30am to set up the servery, and then make drinks and take orders. The café shuts at 4pm (food may finish by 3pm). When we are shut, people need to leave unless they have a valid reason to be there – i.e. don't leave people you don't know about in the club when leaving.

Servery: Put the urn and coffee on at the start of your shift. Write up the menu on the counter and the outside board. All alcohol should be out of sight, and the board in front of the bar fridge. Take the juice and milk out of the fridge for your shift.