



Wexford County Council

Policy on the use of Public Library Spaces

Introduction

Public Libraries are open, inclusive and neutral public spaces that are used and enjoyed by a wide range of the citizens of Co. Wexford. Due to restrictions of size, capacity and time-tabling, library activity spaces are used primarily for the programmes and events organized by the staff Wexford County Council Public Library Service. Wexford County Council Public Library Service may make spaces available to community groups and agencies according to the criteria set out in this document when not required for library purposes.

Library spaces include separate meeting/activity rooms and other spaces in the five libraries in the network. The following elements come under the scope of this policy:

- Exhibitions
- Meetings
- Launches / Readings / Recitals
- Classes / Lectures / Talks
- Other events
- Library notice boards

Criteria

1. Libraries are for all, an inclusive cultural and social space.
2. Permission to use library spaces may be granted to community, non-profit, cultural, intellectual, charitable and educational groups and organizations when the space is not being used for library events.
3. Exhibitions and displays organized in partnership with external agencies are deemed to be library exhibitions for the purposes of this policy.
4. Book launches and readings organised by libraries in partnership with external bodies are deemed to be library events for the purposes of this policy.
5. Meetings and gatherings of library-affiliated reading circles and other affiliated library groups are deemed to be library events for the purposes of this policy.
6. Classes, talks etc. organized in partnership with other agencies e.g. ETB, SOLUS etc, are deemed to be library events for the purposes of this policy
7. Space(s) will be made available to Wexford County Council departments, other public bodies and state agencies, when not required for library purposes.
8. When an application to use library spaces is received, priority will be given to groups that best fit Wexford County Council Public Library Service core purpose:

Reading development/literature

Learning, in all its forms

History/heritage

Community & local authority information

Support for enterprise and employment

9. Space(s) will not be made available to any organization for commercial purpose, or to sell any materials, goods or services without the express approval of the County Librarian.
10. Space cannot be made available for an exhibition or event organized by a political party or movement, an organized religion or anything perceived as such by any fair-minded person, or for any polemical or party-political event.
11. Space cannot be made available for an exhibition or event that is obscene, racist, defamatory or illegal or is deemed to be offensive by any fair-minded person.
12. All exhibitions and events will be deemed to be open to members of the public and free of any charge.
13. Space(s) will generally be made available during advertised hours of the library involved.
14. All exhibitions and events must be compatible with general library use, and must not impinge on the enjoyment of the library by other members of the public, or on the health and safety of the public and staff. Many library event spaces are open to adults and children and content of talks and exhibitions in open spaces must be suitable for the wide audience that libraries cater for.

15. Permission to use the space cannot be construed as endorsement of the group or its aims, policies or activities. Any promotional material for the event must be approved by Wexford Public Libraries in advance of being disseminated. Permission may be withdrawn if Library management deems publicity for the event to be incompatible with the purposes of the library service.
16. No petitions or requests for funding may be made in connection with any group or organization using library space(s).
17. Wexford County Council Public Library Service reserves the right to recoup any special costs that may arise in the use of library space(s) by other agencies, or the costs of repair or making good should they be entailed.
18. All groups and organizations shall indemnify Wexford County Council Public Library Service and its employees in respect of any claims or actions of any kind arising from any negligent act, omission or error of such groups and organizations.
19. Wexford Public Libraries reserve the right to cancel or postpone an exhibition or event, should the larger interest of the service so demand.
20. Permission to use library space is revocable and does not constitute a lease. Denial of an application may be appealed by any person adversely affected to the County Librarian. The County Librarian may overrule or amend a grant or denial or permission to use space(s), should the larger interest of the service so demand. The decision of the County Librarian on granting or denial of permission to use library space is final.

How to apply/Specific Conditions

Events: meetings, classes, talks etc.

1. Community groups or organizations must apply in writing to the Senior Executive Librarian or the Executive Librarian in charge. The application must include a written outline of the event, its content and any accompanying handouts.
2. Application should generally be made **at least** two months before the scheduled date, and no event can go ahead until receipt of confirmation from the staff member responsible.
3. Permission may be granted to groups or organizations for multiple events over a period. Renewal applications, if required, must be submitted at the beginning of September each year. Prior use of a library space shall not entitle applicants to future use.
4. Wexford County Council Public Library Service staff reserve the right to attend and monitor any meeting, class or other event.
5. Organizers of events shall comply with Wexford County Council Public Library Service's obligations under the Disability Act, 2005.

6. It shall be the responsibility of groups and organizations to ensure that the event and its attendees will not interfere with other library users and/or staff. Wexford County Council Public Library Service may impose reasonable conditions on any event, in the interests of the library users in general. Failure to comply with such conditions will result in cancellation of permission to use library space(s) by such groups or organization.
7. It shall be the responsibility of groups and organizations to ensure that the number of attendees at the event complies with health & safety regulations.
8. Light refreshments may be served at events with the permission of the Senior/Executive Librarian.
9. Library spaces shall be left in good clean order after events.
10. Wexford Public Libraries reserve the right to offer alternative space from the one originally agreed, when circumstances require.
11. The decision of the County Librarian on granting or denial of permission to use library space for events is final.
12. The event organizers should consult the Senior Executive Librarian or the Executive Librarian in charge regarding the protocol for launches held in libraries.

Notice Boards

1. Local community groups/organizations or individuals must apply to the Senior/Executive Librarian in charge for permission to place a poster or notice on the board of the library involved.
2. In all cases a copy of the poster or notice must be submitted with the request.
3. The relevant Senior/Executive Librarian will decide on whether or not to place the poster or notice on the notice board, taking into consideration the appropriateness of the material and the availability of space. Due to constraints of space it is not always possible to place the poster or notice immediately.
4. Priority will be given to community information over commercial notices.
5. All notices will be dated and removed after a 30 day period or sooner if the information has expired.

ENDS