

Welcome to the Red & Black Umbrella Social Centre!

By entering and using this space you are agreeing to our
Safer Spaces Policy

People who are not willing to do so are excluding themselves from the space and will be asked to leave.

We want the Red and Black Umbrella Social Centre to be a space where everyone can feel safe. The basic idea is respect - respect for each other, our backgrounds, identities, ideas and bodies and respect for the space we've created together. Here it goes...

1. Any behaviour that demeans, marginalises or dominates others, or perpetuates hierarchies, is unwelcome. We reject all forms of oppression and bigotry including but not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, speciesism, transphobia, ableism, ageism, classism, nationalism and religious intolerance. Be aware that anyone in the space could be a survivor of a particular form of oppression - act with sensitivity.
2. Police, bailiffs, immigration officers and members of far-right organisations are completely unwelcome in this space and will not be let inside. We do not consider law enforcement personnel to have any legitimate authority.
3. It is everyone's responsibility to challenge prejudice & oppression, and if we ignore it we are complicit in it. As much as possible, try and challenge people in a way that is constructive, rather than demeaning. Everyone in this space is expected to identify their own privileges - the things that sometimes give us an easier ride than others - and actively challenge them.
4. Everyone has an equal right to be heard and an equal responsibility to listen. People who are used to talking may feel the benefit of listening more, and vice versa. However strongly you feel about a particular topic, resist abusive discussions.
5. Decisions regarding the Social Centre space are made by consensus at monthly general meetings which are open to all. Decisions regarding residential spaces are made at weekly house meetings open to residents.
6. People who use this space all have different brains that work in different ways. Some people who use this space have diagnosed mental health conditions such as ADHD, various forms of cognitive illness, Post Traumatic Stress and OCD among others. We do not believe that anyone's brain is 'normal' and encourage everyone to be sensitive to each other's mental health issues. This includes respecting when someone asks for something they find traumatic to think about not to be discussed and refraining from making negative comments about the way each others' minds work.
7. This is a multilingual space. We recognise that people speak many different languages here including Welsh, English, Arabic and Farsi, and we support their right to do so.
8. We agree to respect and look after the building as a physical space and a resource for all. Communal and personal property must be respected. Guests and residents are expected to practise basic courtesy and hygiene in their use of the communal spaces, including washing their plates and leaving guest beds clean and tidy. Interesting, funny and well-considered graffiti is cool, but mindless tagging is not.

9. Donated and skipped items are welcome! Please ask in advance whether a donated item will be useful or wanted here. Items donated to the space should be immediately dealt with, for example clothes hung up in the free shop or skipped food processed and stored in the kitchen, rather than left lying around to be cleared up at some other time, or tidied away by others.
10. Anyone staying here has the right to ask people displaying loud or disruptive behaviour to tone it down. If they have to be asked twice they will be expected to leave or go to bed.
11. We want this space to be free from violence. People instigating or escalating violence will have to leave the space. Any instances of violence will be taken seriously and complaints will be addressed, with the needs of all concerned taken into account. Emergency meetings can be called at short notice to decide how to deal with difficult situations.
12. Everyone has an ultimate say over their own body. We agree to respect the personal space and boundaries of each person, acknowledging that these can be very different between different people. We agree to actively practice consent in interactions with each other - if there is any doubt whether a behaviour is appropriate or wanted, it is our responsibility to ask first. We in this space stand opposed to all who use coercive or non-consensual acts against other people - if such behaviours arise the perpetrator should be held to account. If someone feels that their personal boundaries have been infringed, or that they have been subjected to coercion, abuse or non-consensual physical contact, we agree to believe them, and to enter into a dialogue to work out how to respond as a group.
13. People in the space identify in different ways, in respect to their gender, class, sexuality and cultural background, so we avoid making generalisations, or assumptions about people. We expect people to refer to others using their preferred pronouns. For example if someone states that they want to be called “she”, “he” or “they” please respect that, regardless of how their gender identity appears to you. If you’re unsure, ask.
14. We take care not to behave in ways that can harm the space, ourselves or other people due to drink or drug abuse. No-one is to be pressured into consuming drugs or alcohol, and communal spaces are considered ‘dry’ spaces unless everyone present agrees otherwise. No quantities of drugs are to be kept in the space and no drugs or alcohol are to be sold from here. A number of drugs are specifically banned from the Red & Black Umbrella Social Centre, including but not limited to: heroin, ketamine, cocaine, crack, m-cat, crocodile and solvent abuse. There is zero tolerance for injecting drugs.
15. Animals are welcome in this space and should be treated with the same respect you would show to anyone else. We will not tolerate any form of abuse directed towards an animal, including neglect. If you leave an animal here it is your responsibility to make sure a particular person has agreed to care for the animal, that they know what this will involve, that the animal is not dangerous and that the group has been adequately consulted. If you are caring for an animal you are responsible for helping to keep the peace between animals in the space. If your animal friends are incapable of cleaning up after themselves, we expect you to do it for them.
16. Groups who wish to create a temporary Safe Space, meeting space or workshop space for a specific group facing a particular form of oppression (for example female only or LGBTQ meetings), are welcome to do so.

This policy is not exhaustive and it is up to all of us to help create a space where everyone feels safe and included. If you are feeling uncomfortable with behaviour arising in this space, we want you to feel empowered to challenge it, or to ask someone else to raise it on your behalf. We are committed to working through any issues in a compassionate, mature and constructive manner. We welcome engagement from the rest of the community in doing this.