

Visitor Experience Code of Conduct

Adopted by Council: 20 November 2024

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Introduction

Section 1 and 2 of this Code of Conduct establishes the standards of behaviour you can expect from staff and other visitors while at the following Council facilities:

- EA Network Centre,
- Te Whare Whakare (Ashburton Library & Civic Centre),
- Ashburton Art Gallery & Museum

The behaviour of visitors directly impacts the safety and enjoyment of other people either visiting and working within a Council facility and for this reason we take it seriously, with *Section 3* outlining the actions should behaviour not meet our expected level.

1. Our Visitor Experience

1.1. Our Visitor Experience Commitment

Our Visitor Experience Commitment:

Community facilities are here for the enjoyment of everyone who visits and works here. To ensure they are safe and respectful environments:

Council staff are responsible to:

- Provide friendly and helpful service.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Create a safe and welcoming environment.

Visitors are responsible to:

- Treat other visitors and staff with courtesy and respect.
- Follow our rules and instructions.
- Treat our buildings and everything within them with care.

Staff will decide if a given situation is inappropriate. If you choose not to uphold your visitor responsibilities, we may ask you to leave.

1.2. Facility Rules & Expectations

- a) Visitors must comply with all staff instructions and conditions of use.
- b) If staff consider your actions or behaviour threaten or impact the safety of yourself or others or their enjoyment at the facility, you will be asked to stop any [nuisance behaviour](#) and may be asked to leave immediately. If [extreme behaviour](#) or repeated nuisance behaviour occurs, your rights to visit one or all Council facilities for a period of time may be subject to supervision conditions or entry withdrawn for up to a period of two years.
- c) Be responsible for your own personal items. Council will not take responsibility for any lost or damaged items.
- d) Please leave our facilities and their contents as you found them so that others can enjoy them as well.
- e) Children are welcome in all our facilities. Please be aware that Council staff will not assume any responsibility for any child's supervision and care, including if the child leaves a Council Facility. The exception to this is where Council has stated that a programme provides full supervision, i.e EANC School Holiday programme.

For their safety and wellbeing it is Council's expectation that children aged 13 and under are not left at Council facilities unattended. If children aged 8 -13 are left unsupervised at a Council facility, their parents/guardians remain responsible for their wellbeing. Parents/guardians must ensure all the child's needs are addressed and that they are only left for a reasonable length of time and in reasonable circumstances.

If staff are concerned about a child's lack of supervision, wellbeing or care, they will first attempt to contact the child's parent or guardian, if this is not possible they will contact the Police.

Please note that EA Networks Centre has additional [age based pool supervision ratios](#) in accordance with PoolSafe.

- f) Guide and other assistance dogs are welcome in Council facilities. Other animals are not permitted, unless prior approval is given by the Facility Manager.
- g) Bicycles, skateboards, scooters and rollerblades must not be used at our facilities unless part of a programme. Council facilities may provide options for such equipment to be stored or parked at the owner's risk.
- h) No commercial activity can occur within any of our facilities, unless prior approval is given by the Facility Manager.
- i) All Council facilities and immediate surrounds are smoke and vape free environments as per Council's [Smokefree Policy](#).
- j) The consumption of alcohol by visitors at a Council facility may only occur if authorised by the Chief Executive. The use and/or possession of drugs in Council facilities is not allowed.
- k) Visitors are not permitted to have dangerous goods, flammable spirits, or weapons in and around Council facilities.

- l) Within Council facilities:
 - i. Fundraising associated with events, exhibitions or programmes, hosted in council facilities may occur with prior approval from the appropriate Facility Manager.
 - ii. Unmanned Charity donation boxes may be approved by the appropriate Facility Manager to be left at appropriate locations at the charity's own risk.
 - iii. No unsolicited information sharing or requesting signatures on any petition will be permitted.
- m) Manned Charity promotions, unsolicited information sharing or requesting signatures on any petition may occur outside of Council facilities, for example, in Baring Square East, if the activity is non-invasive, away from the entrance ways, does not obstruct pedestrians or other businesses and comply with Council's Public Places Bylaw.

2. Standards of Service

2.1. Utilisation and Access

Entry is free at Te Kete Tuhinga (Ashburton Library) and Art Gallery & Museum. Spectators can also watch local sport or supervise their children at EA Networks Centre for free, with users either paying entry fees/memberships directly to EA Networks Centre or indirectly via their sports club membership.

Special programmes or services are provided by Council and/or a partner to encourage the use of our facilities by all members of the community. Programmes include Books on Wheels, Wriggle & Read, Microbytes Club, Couch to Wellness, special population programmes, Kōwhai Mums and Art Addicts. Online access to the library collection and some museum collection items is available. Where participation in a Council programme will incur a charge this will be communicated in advance.

The promotion of programmes and services is available through Council websites and other channels.

Accessibility aids (such as walkers, wheelchairs and or hoists) are available to enable all visitors to enjoy our facilities. Mobility scooters are welcomed, however if they are too large staff will advise where they can be parked and a wheelchair will be provided.

Council has a range of **bookable meeting rooms and spaces** see Appendix 2 for more details. Council facilities are restricted to maximum numbers for safety purposes under the Building Act 2004.

2.2. Visitor Communication

Staff will provide courteous and helpful service to visitors.

We will efficiently deal with visitor requests for information or service in accordance with our [Communication Policy](#).

Visitor information that is collected will be stored and used within the terms of the Privacy Act 2020 and our [Customer Privacy Policy](#).

Visitors can provide feedback in regards to our service or offering directly to a team member, via our customer service team or on-line using our [Visitor Experience Form](#).

3. Compliance & Review

3.1. Events & Complaints

- If visitors see or experience behaviour that does not meet the Facility Rules and Expectations within this Code, please make a staff member aware as soon as possible.
- Complaints regarding the facility, services offered, or programmes delivered will be investigated by the Facility Manager and/or Group Manager People & Facilities.
- Complaints regarding a privacy breach will be investigated by Council's Privacy Officer and in accordance with our [Customer Privacy Policy](#).
- Complaints regarding the conduct of Council staff will be investigated internally.

3.2. Alleged Visitor breaches of the Code of Conduct

Nuisance or Extreme Visitor Behaviour

Staff are trained to deal with a variety of situations and can call on external support from security or the police.

Where a visitor's behaviour does not meet our expectations, staff have the following options available for immediate action or following an investigation:

Instruct	Instruct a visitor to stop what they are doing.
Stop providing the service	Disconnect the phone call or walk away from the visitor, if the person continues to act/speak inappropriately after being instructed to stop.
Supervised Cool-down	Require the visitor to leave their immediate location to complete a 5 minute cool down under staff supervision.
Leave Now	Instruct the visitor to leave now and not return until the next day.
Conditional Entry	Set conditional future entry requirements – for example, a person is only allowed to return to the facility if they are directly supervised by an approved person for a period of time (1-6 months).
Investigation Ban	A visitor may be told to “leave now and do not return for 7 days while we investigate if a longer sanction is warranted”. If they don't hear from the Facility Manager or Police on our behalf within the 7 day period, they can return to the facility from the eighth day following the event.
Ban	Single facility Ban for 1-6 months.
Trespass Notice	Single or Multiple Facility Trespass Notice issued (s4 of the Trespass Act 1980). See Appendix 3 to this Code.

Investigation Principles

Where Council staff consider an investigation into visitor behaviour is appropriate, the following principles will guide the investigation:

- Council staff will gather all necessary information in order to investigate the incident or event and will undertake the investigation in an open minded and fair manner.
- CCTV footage may be used in accordance with our CCTV Policy and Guidelines.
- Following the investigation, a decision will be made on how to respond to the event or complaint.
- The level of consequence will align to the level and extent of behaviour exhibited by the individual.
- Only necessary parties will be informed of the outcome or result of the investigation or decision.
- Nuisance or extreme visitor behaviour may result in the visitor being trespassed from one or more Council facilities. [Council's staff delegations](#) identify the positions with authority to issue trespass notices.
- Where the Police or security contractor have been involved in an incident (and possibly, at the request of on-duty supervisor, asked the individual to leave the facility) they may also recommend to staff that the individual be formally trespassed under section 4 of the Trespass Act.

This recommendation will be taken into account during Council's investigation, but only delegated Council staff can make the decision to issue a trespass notice (under section 4 of the Trespass Act).

- The decision of staff following the investigation is final and cannot be challenged or appealed.

3.3. Review

Operational changes within the Code of Conduct can be approved by the Chief Executive as required.

Council will review this Code of Conduct every five years.

Appendix 1:

Definitions

Nuisance behaviour: This includes offensive language, disruptive or intimidating behaviour and disregarding our Facility Rules & Expectations.

Extreme behaviour: This is defined as situations that warrant no warnings being given, as it is of such a serious nature the event stands alone. It can include but is not limited to:

- Threatening behaviour and/or physical assault.
- Sexual harassment and/or assault.
- Vilifying or inciting hatred on racial, cultural, religious, ethnic or gender and sexuality grounds.
- Theft, extortion and related offences.
- Possession or use of weapons.
- Possession or use of illicit drugs or alcohol.
- Deliberate, dangerous or negligent acts that could or do cause personal injury or property damage.
- Ignoring a supervision order and/or ban from the facility.

Appendix 2:

Conditions of Use and Bookable meeting rooms/spaces

- [Te Whare Whakare](#)
- [EA Networks Centre](#)

Appendix 3:

Trespass Notices

Procedure

A trespass notice can only be issued by [delegated staff members](#) in accordance with the Trespass Act.

A written trespass notice can be issued by delegated staff members on the appropriate form. The notice will be served on the individual in person. Council will retain a copy of the notice and reason for trespass on Council's Trespass Register and will also provide a copy to the Police and Security. The Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive is responsible for maintaining the Trespass Register.

A person who has received a trespass notice commits an offence under the Trespass Act if they do not leave the property within a reasonable time after being trespassed, or if they come back on to the property within two years of receiving the trespass notice.

Withdrawal of Trespass Notice

In extenuating circumstances, Trespass Notices may be withdrawn prior to the expiry of the two year notice. These instances will be determined by the Chief Executive.