

▶ AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO COUNCIL FACILITIES POLICY

POLICY NUMBER:	48 (C)
NAME OF POLICY:	AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO COUNCIL FACILITIES POLICY
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	30 June 2027
DATE APPROVED:	16 May 2023, Date Effective 1 July 2023
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Manager Waste, Facilities and Community Safety
REFERENCES:	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>

INTRODUCTION

In most cases, the hire of other Council operated facilities is based on a user pays model to balance making facilities available to all and users contributing to the costs of their operation and maintenance. In many cases, a tiered structure applies to local community not-for-profits, other not-for-profits and private/commercial use reflecting the different community outcomes from the different uses.

This policy has been prepared to provide guidelines to make Council owned and managed facilities available to community not-for-profit groups free of charge.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the following halls, meeting rooms and community facilities directly managed by Council and made available through hire to regular or ad hoc users:

- Clunes Town Hall
- Creswick Hub meeting room (available during Creswick Hub opening hours)
- Creswick Town Hall
- Daylesford Senior Citizens Rooms
- Daylesford Town Hall
- Esmond Gallery and Ulumbarra Room at Clunes Warehouse (available during Clunes Warehouse opening hours)
- Trentham Community Hub (when opens)

This policy does not apply to:

- Other facilities (whether or not owned by Council) that are managed by community asset committees, DEECA committees of management, or third parties;
- Hire of facilities by Council for its own purposes;
- Facility hirers that have user agreements and / or ongoing regular usage of Council facilities;
- Waiver of any other Council rates, fees and charges (e.g. planning fees, or fines); or
- Any cleaning fees, insurance fees or bonds associated with facility hire.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are referred to in the policy.

Term	Definition
Community Asset Committee	As defined in the <i>Local Government Act 2020 S65</i>
Compassionate/Bereavement Event	<p>An event that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to honour the memory of a community member who has died, or has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, and the event must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ free to attend (minimal charges to costs for event) ○ fun by a not-for-profit organisation ○ be open to anyone to attend and be publicly advertised (e.g. community notice board, online/Facebook and/or newspaper) • for the purpose of raising funds to support medical treatment of a community member who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness and the event must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ nominate up front how the profits from the event will be distributed. • for the purpose of raising funds to support the family of a community member who has died or has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, and the event must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ nominate up front how the profits from the event will be distributed.
Council	Hepburn Shire Council
Council Staff	Includes permanent and temporary casual, full-time and part-time Council employees, and contractors and consultants while engaged by Council.
DEECA	Victorian State Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.
Hepburn Shire Community not for profit group	An organisation with representation within the boundaries of the Hepburn Shire that does not distribute its surplus funds to owners or shareholders, but instead uses them to help pursue its goals of providing benefits to the community, both while it is operating and when it winds up.
User agreements and / or ongoing regular usage	This applies to Facility hires who have access to Council facilities on a regular basis; multiply days of the week/end, weekly, fortnightly, monthly.
The Act	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>

POLICY

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to access a community facility at zero cost the hirer:

- must operate or be located within the Hepburn Shire; and,
- must not distribute its surplus funds to owners or shareholders, but instead uses them to help pursue its goals of providing benefits to the community, both while it is operating and when it winds up.

The zero fee will not be considered for a Hepburn Shire based not-for-profit groups auspicing a private or commercial event, or events being run by groups based outside the Shire or immediate surrounds.

2. Compassionate Events

The free fee or a reduction in the fee may also be requested for bereavement/compassionate events to recognise a community member, or fundraisers held for the benefit of a local person or family as long as:

- The event is open to the wider community;
- The purpose and distribution of donations is publicised in advance; and
- Council contribution is acknowledged at the event and in promotional materials.

3. Responsibilities of Hirers given free access to facilities

Hirers granted free use of Council Facilities must meet the following requirements:

- Where events are publicly advertised, the hirer is to recognise the contribution of Hepburn Shire Council in the advertisements.
- All set up of chairs, tables and equipment is to be performed by the event organisers and not by Council staff or contractors.
- Chairs and tables are to be returned to where they were prior to the event.
- The facility is to be cleaned and tidied after the event (including all waste in bins, bathrooms clean of debris (e.g. paper towels) on floors, all floors are swept).
- If any food or drinks are provided as part of the event, the floors must also be mopped, and all tables, benches, kitchen areas and stoves must be wiped down with soap/detergent and hot water.
- Any other responsibility that is outlined by Customer Experience staff or other Council Officer.
- All relevant bonds and fees (aside from hire fees) are fully paid before the date of the event.

4. Recovery of Costs to Council if Responsibilities Not Undertaken

If it is deemed by Council that the Responsibilities of a Hirer have not been undertaken, Council will seek to recover any costs to Council via the deduction of part or all bond monies.

If the bond is not sufficient to cover the costs of Council, the Hirer will be invoiced for the remaining balance.

5. Applying for free use of facilities

The facilities listed in the Scope section of this policy are listed as free for the following users in Council's Annual Budget – Fees and Charges:

- Hepburn Shire Community not for profit group
- Those seeking to use the facility for a compassionate/Bereavement Event

This fee option can be selected when submitting a booking form for the facility. No additional application form is required.

6. Approval of free use of facilities

Bookings for facilities under this policy will be reviewed by Officers as they are submitted. Users may be contacted by Council if additional information is required to consider their booking request.

7. Community Asset Committees

Council's Community Asset Committees are empowered to manage their own fees and fee waivers under their Instruments of Delegation. As the committees are the reliant on hire fees as a source of income, it can be difficult to provide their facilities free of charge. To address this, Council will provide the following Community Asset Committees with an annual stipend of \$500:

- Dean Recreation Reserve and Tennis Courts Community Asset Committee
- Drummond Hall Community Asset Committee
- Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee
- Lyonville Hall Community Asset Committee

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be available on Council's website, and can be made available on request at Customer Service sites.

The Chief Executive Officer is authorised to make minor administrative changes to the policy, that do not change the intent of the policy.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every four years or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes.