



Creating Safe Social Spaces for the LGBT+
Community Across Cambridgeshire

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Introduction to Safer Spaces

What is a safe space?

A safe space is a place where LGBT+ people can feel safe, welcome and supported. If your establishment is a safe space, it means that people of all genders and sexualities can feel relaxed and protected. Safe spaces are vital as being out in public can often be dangerous and debilitating for LGBT+ people. Being a Safe Space means that you are committed to implementing policies that meet the needs that LGBT+ people have when visiting your place of business.

Who are we?

Encompass Network is a local charity that aims to promote a better quality of life for LGBT+ people in Cambridge and surrounding areas by enabling networking and capacity building for the LGBT voluntary sector and community.

What is the Safer Spaces Project?

Under this project, businesses, public and voluntary sector organisations can sign up to the charter and mark their organisation as a Safe Space by displaying our poster and putting the campaign logo in their window.

This helps us to populate a Directory of Safe Spaces that we will advertise. The requirements will be different for each type of business (shops, nightclubs, restaurants, bars, etc.) or public sector organisation and we will compile a list of LGBT+ Safe Spaces in Cambridge that members of the community can view online.

We will provide guidance and offer training to turn your organisation into a Safer Space. We will hold participating businesses accountable to the local community. All our campaign material on display will have our contact information and customers can contact us with their reactions.

If a business fails to respect their pledge then we will help the organisation to address their customers concerns. In extreme or persistent cases of offence we will revoke our logo and update our online list accordingly.

What do I need to do to become a Safe Space?

Ensure that your business is a safe and welcoming space for LGBT+ customers in the community

Sounds simple doesn't it? And to be honest it is. Most businesses would not survive if they were not welcoming and safe places for their customers. But ask yourself how you or your staff would react in the following scenarios:

- A gay couple come into your establishment and they are holding hands. They sit at a table and kiss?
- A Male-to-Female transsexual comes into your shop and asks to try on a dress. What dressing room would you point them to?
- A woman comes into your barbers and asks for a haircut?
- A Male-to-Female comes into your shop and asks for a makeup treatment, false nails or eyebrow plucking?

We are sure you would hope that your staff would respond in the "right way". But what is the "right way"? and have you ever discussed with your staff how you would expect them to react?

Respond to anti-LGBT+ behaviour immediately

Most organisations would expect their staff to respond to customers if they heard them being racist. But what would your staff do if:

- they heard a group of customers referring to other customers as "Fags" or "Queers" or "trannys"?
- if a customer complains about a gay couple dancing together or kissing?
- customers laughing and pointing at someone because of the way they are dressed?

Did you know all of the above can be constituted as Hate Crimes? And can be a criminal offence?

Never make assumptions about a customer's gender or sexuality

Lots of people want to be respectful to transgender and gay / lesbian people, but worry about saying the right thing. Being respectful in what

you say is really important because of how personal trans / gay /lesbian issues are.

Hold each other accountable for discriminatory behaviour

The Safer Space Campaign is an education project for businesses where we explore what it means to be LGBT+, what issues they have (sometimes on a daily basis), and how your staff should respond in the right way.

As with anything we do when we are learning, we make mistakes; especially when speaking. Be honest, how many times have you heard someone say “that’s so gay” and said nothing?

As you and your staff go through the Safe Space process, it is important that you and your staff hold each other accountable. Explain why something that was said or done was not the right way to respond and encourage your staff to hold each other accountable too.

What will be the benefit for my organisation?

MONEY!

- You will increase satisfaction of customers and can increase your revenue. LGBTQ people tend to have a 23% higher purchasing power than the average salary. But even better, 74% of LGBTQ people and 42% of the rest of the population are more likely to spend money in places that they believe to be 'gay-friendly' (YouGov).

PROMOTION

- You can use our logo for advertisement and we will also add you to a list of LGBTQ places.
- You can get space in our publications and thereby promote your business.
- Once a year, we award a prize to the business or organisation that has tried particularly innovative approaches to fulfil their pledge or that have been commended by customers through our feedback option on this website.

SUPPORT

- We can provide you with simple advice, training and check list guidance to help you fulfil your diversity and equality pledge.
- We facilitate discussion with other organisations and businesses about your practical experience of implementing Safer Spaces. You can learn from each other and also tell us how we can further improve the scheme, for example when new members are joining.

What will it cost me?

The Subscription options

Bronze Subscription

- Introduction to the scheme with Basic Training delivered by a member of the Safer Spaces Project
- Initial talk through of the Quality Assurance Framework

Silver Subscription (includes Bronze Subscription)

- Full Company Profile on Safer Spaces section of Website, including Social Media links.
- 2 Hours with Encompass Network to assist with Policy Development relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 2 Free Tickets for Safer Spaces Award Events, including Launch Event for 2018
- Quarterly Social Media Stream through Safer Spaces Social Media Channels

Gold Subscription (includes Silver Subscription)

- Company Profile on Safer Spaces and Encompass Network website, including Social Media.
- Monthly posts on Safer Spaces Media Channels
- 2 Hours Face to Face Policy Development with a further 2 hours virtually.
- a further 3 free tickets for Safer Spaces Award Events, including Launch Event for 2018
- Discounted Training from The Kite Trust and if appropriate Training from Encompass Network

The Costs

<i>All Prices Ex VAT</i>	Large Business TO: Over £50M Over 250 staff	Medium Business TO Less than £50M Under 250 Staff	Small Business TO Less than £10M Under 50 Staff	Micro Business TO Less than £2M Under 10 Staff
Gold	£5,000	£2,000	£500	£250
Silver	£3,000	£1,000	£250	£150
Bronze	£2,000	£750	£150	£50

What Do I Have to Do?

Commitment to Educate Your Staff

Businesses signing up to Safe Space make a commitment to train existing staff and new staff by asking them to read the Safe Space Guide and to hold a discussion about the guide with your staff and to make clear to staff what your expectations of them are. But you are not alone, we are happy to provide some help with the training too!

Sign the Charter and Display the Sticker

We ask business owners to sign the Safe Space Charter as demonstration of their commitment and to display it in a prominent place within their establishment.

We also ask businesses to display the project sticker on their front door

Encompass Network will then add the business to our public list of LGBT+ friendly businesses so that local people and tourists know that yours is an organisation they can visit with confidence.

Businesses should also aim to fulfill the following points:

- Ensure changing rooms and bathrooms are a safe space for transgender people.
- Implement gender-flexible uniforms and dresscodes for your own staff

How will this scheme be regulated?

In order to ensure that participating businesses are upholding their promises, Encompass Network will encourage members of the public who have used our list of businesses to keep us informed of their experiences.

If an establishment is failing to live up to the Charter, we will contact them to talk about the areas in which they could improve. If this continues, we will remove the business from our list.

Contact us

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