Royal Society of
SCULPTORS

DORA HOUSE | VENUE HIRE

Royal Society of Sculptors, 108 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3RA
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A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales no. 83239 | Registered charity no. 212513

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WELCOME TO DORA HOUSE

Dora House is a striking Grade II-listed building in the heart of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Just minutes from South Kensington and Gloucester Road stations, it offers elegant, characterful spaces in an easily accessible and beautiful area of London.

With its unique architecture, original fireplaces, and tall leaded windows, the house has long appealed to creative professionals. Historically, it has been home and studio to sculptors, architects, photographers, painters and designers. Today, it serves as the headquarters of the Royal Society of Sculptors, continuing its legacy as a centre for contemporary art and conversation.

I love Dora House so much, it is such a cosy, pretty and historical place for an arts lover like me.

– Gilford Law, Director-General, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London

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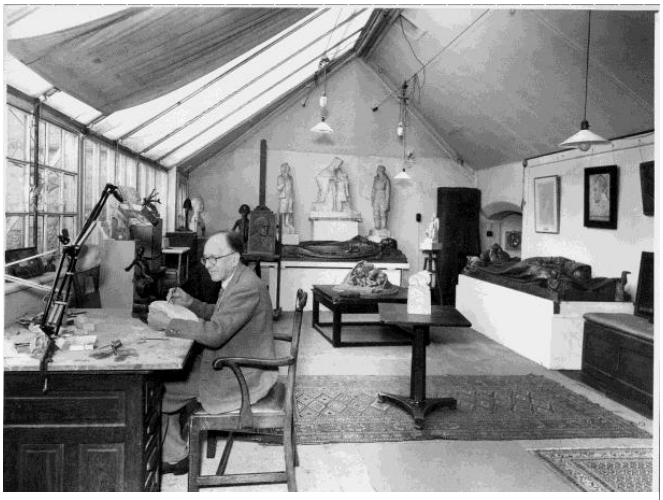
A SHORT HISTORY OF DORA HOUSE

Headquarters of the Royal Society of Sculptors

Dora House combines an early Georgian rear structure with a striking late Victorian frontage created in 1885–86 for the celebrated court photographers Elliott & Fry. Designed by Scottish architect William Flockhart, the remodelling transformed the house into an elegant studio and reception space with richly decorated interiors and a large north-lit studio, described at the time as “one of the most architecturally perfect studios in London”.

Inspired by Tudor and Dutch architectural styles, the red-brick façade with stone dressings remains one of the building’s defining features, still bearing the initials “EF” and the date 1886.

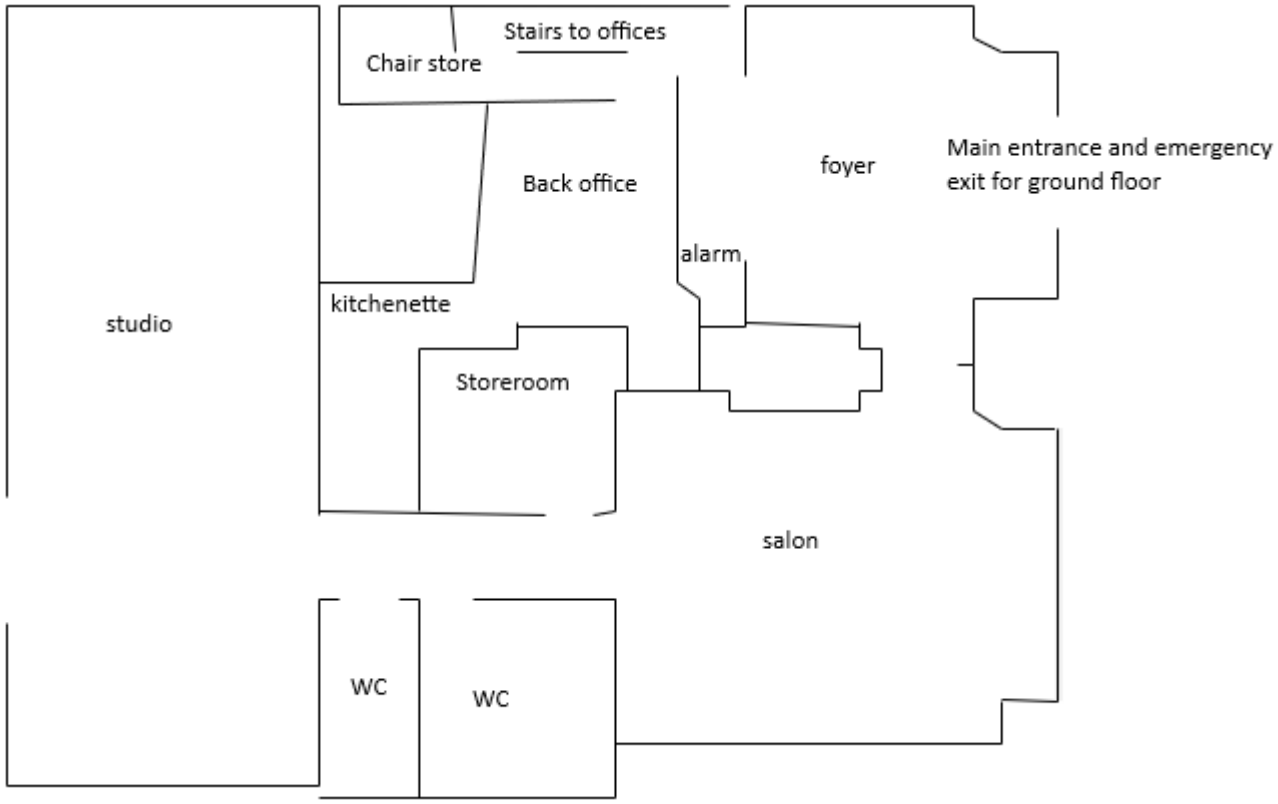
In 1919 the house became the home and studio of sculptor Cecil Thomas, who later established the Dora Charitable Trust to secure its future as a centre for sculpture. Today Dora House continues that tradition as the headquarters of the Royal Society of Sculptors.



Cecil Thomas at home at Dora House

Dora House regularly hosts drinks receptions, book launches, exhibitions, small conferences, children's parties and meetings as well as creative workshops.

We offer three ground-floor rooms that can be used together or individually: the Lobby, the Salon and the Studio.



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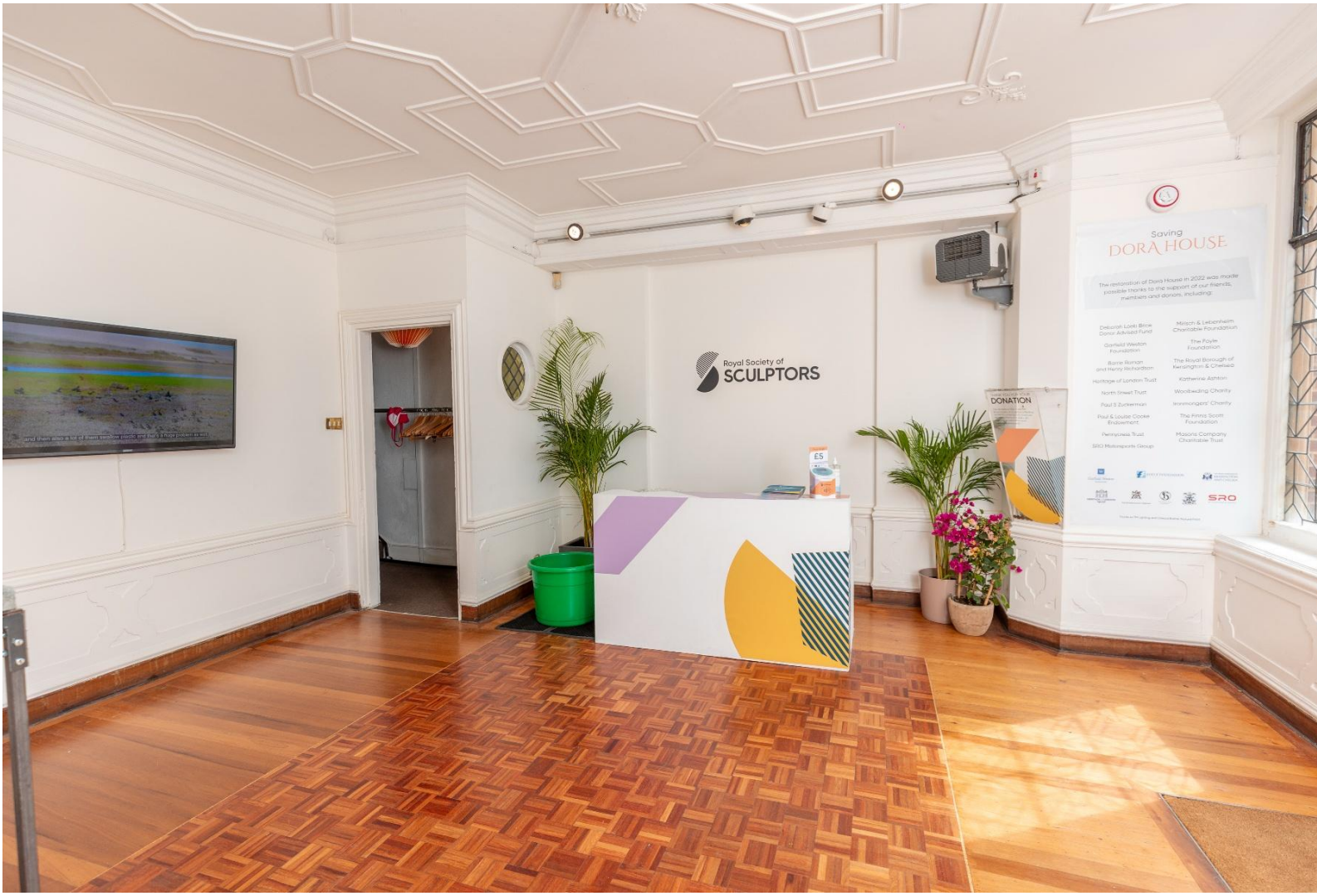
THE LOBBY

- Light-filled room with original fireplace, panelling and parquet flooring
- Capacity: 40 standing
- Ideal for receptions, check-in areas, small gatherings; cannot be darkened
- 28.3 m² / 304.62 ft²



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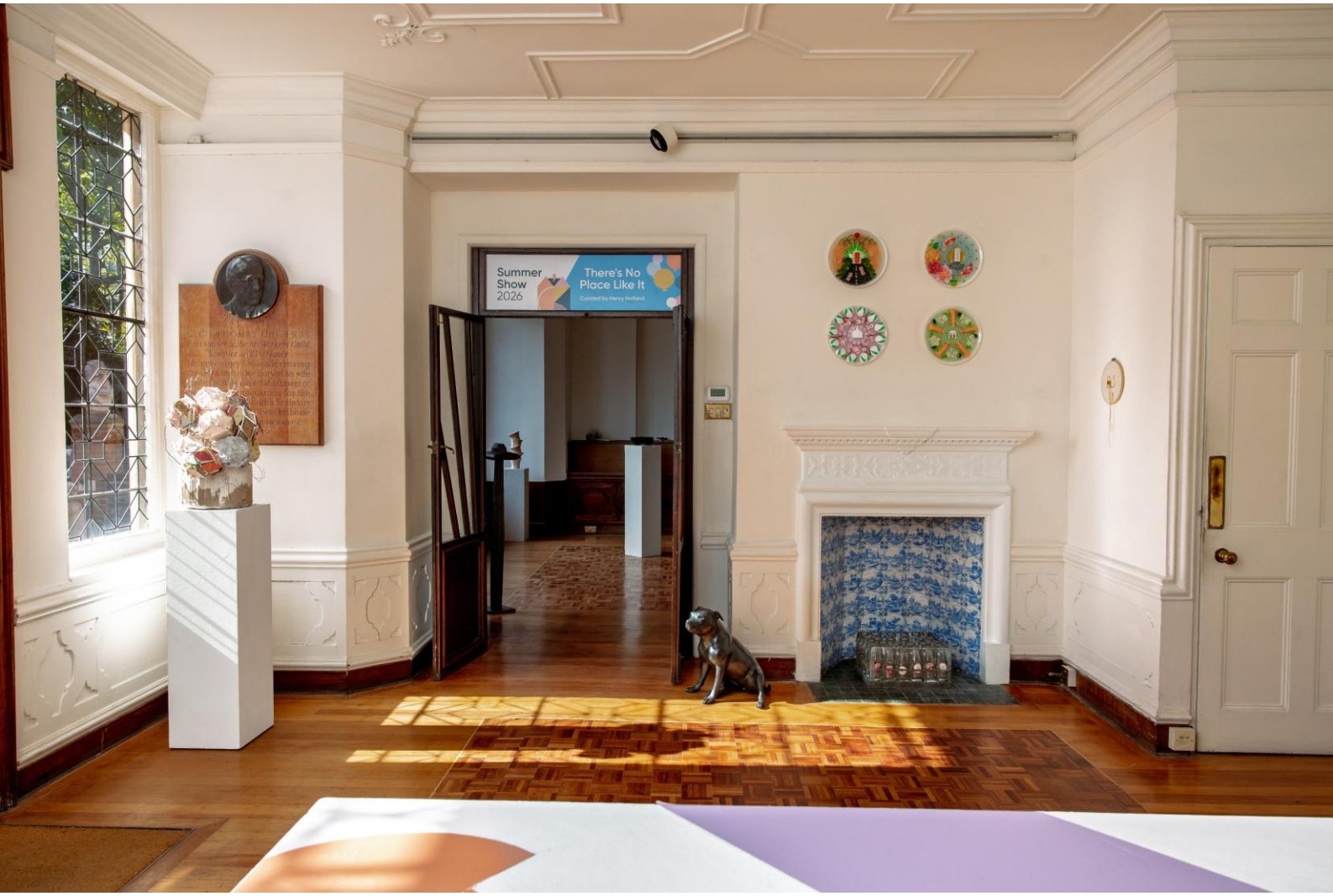

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THE SALON

- Elegant room with tall leaded windows, original panelling and walnut parquet flooring
- Capacity: 60 standing, 35 seated in rows, 15 seated at tables
- Can be darkened for projections
- A refined setting for presentations, talks and meetings
- 35.1 m² / 377.81 ft²

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STUDIO

- Once a photography studio: bright, airy and versatile
- Capacity: 60 standing, 60 seated in rows, 30 seated at tables
- Adjacent to newly refurbished toilets (disabled access & baby changing)
- Can be darkened; patio doors can be opened for ventilation
- Ideal for workshops, conferences and larger events
- 62.1 m² / 668.44 ft²

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THE WORKSHOP

- Newly refurbished, private and comfortable space
- Access via steep steps
- Own front door or entry through the main Dora House entrance
- Capacity: 10 seated at table
- Toilets available in the basement, disabled access & baby changing upstairs on ground floor
- Can be darkened
- Ideal for workshops, conferences and meetings
- Sink, Tea and coffee making facilities in room

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IMPORTANT CAPACITY NOTE

We can accommodate a maximum of 60 people in total, including organisers and Royal Society of Sculptors staff, due to fire regulations.

FEES

Venue hire fees support our charitable work.

All bookings have a 4-hour minimum – set up and take down time needs to be completed in the booking time. Bookings for under 30 people have one dedicated staff member, and over 30 people will be allocated two.

Photography/filming hire - No room set-up, AV, refreshments or catering

A maximum of 10 people present

Weekdays (10 am – 4 pm) starting at **£75** per hour

Evenings (5pm onwards) and **weekends** starting at **£125** per hour

Small Event - Room set up, catering/refreshments and/or AV required

Up to 30 people (including staff)

Weekdays (10 am – 4 pm) starting at **£100** per hour

Evenings (5pm onwards) and **weekends** starting at **£150** per hour

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Large Event - Room set up, catering/refreshments and/or AV required

30 to 60 people (including staff)

Weekdays (10 am – 4 pm) starting at **£125** per hour

Evenings (5pm onwards) and **weekends** starting at **£175** per hour

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If you are a small community group or a small/local charity, please email us to discuss pricing further. If you are a Royal Society of Sculptors member you receive a 25% discount on the room hire fees.

- All rates are for dry hire only.
- Caterers, security, invigilation, and AV equipment are not included.
- Any in-house items hired (AV, glasses, urns, etc.) are available at an additional charge.
- If additional staffing is required, costs will be agreed in advance.
- Events finishing after 9pm incur an additional £100 charge on top of the additional hours - There is a strict 11pm close time for the building
- No VAT is charged as the Royal Society of Sculptors is not VAT registered

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CATERING & ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In house we can supply glasses (wine/flute/highball), portable double hob, hot water urn, mugs, large portable tv (on stand), hybrid meeting owl, large plastic ice buckets, extension leads, portable heaters, electric fan, gallery spotlights, tall industrial metal art plinths, black wooden folding chairs and 6ft rectangle plastic folding trestle tables available.

Some items incur an additional charge for use.

TV use | £25	Mug use <10 | £10	Glasses < 10 | £10
Hybrid meeting set up |£25	Mug use 10 – 30 | £25	Glasses 10 – 30 | £25
Hot Water Urn | £25	Mug use 30 – 60 | £50	Glasses 30 – 60 | £50

We welcome external catering and suppliers to Dora House.

BOOKING

A 50% deposit is required to confirm your booking. The remainder to be paid 14 days before the event, unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Royal Society of Sculptors.

Follow the link here to enter a booking request on our website.

For a tour or to discuss your event, please contact:

awards@sculptors.org.uk | 020 7373 8615

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OUR RECOMMENDED SUPPLIERS

Our **Suppliers' Circle** is a selection of relevant industry specialists who support the Society and engage with our members.

FOLLOW THE LINK TO SEE WHO IS IN OUR SUPPLIERS' CIRCLE

EVENT SUPPLIERS FOR DORA HOUSE

A full-service hospitality agency.

Regularly providing staff for our events.

5% discount for bookings at Dora House

welcome@1929agency.com | www.1929agency.com

For over 30 years, Allens has been committed to offering a great range of quality products and impeccable service. They understand the events industry and offer a fabulous selection of products, including glassware from Riedel, crockery by Villeroy & Boch, and cutlery from Robert Welch, along with an extensive choice of tablecloths, napkins, chairs, and more.

10% discount for orders to Dora House.

sales@allenshire.co.uk | www.allenshire.co.uk

Artplinths specialises in premium plinth hire for fine art and sculpture exhibitions.

Their range includes a variety of sizes and finishes, all expertly prepared and freshly painted to Professional standards.

They also offer bespoke plinths and display cases for purchase, custom-made to complement and elevate your artwork with precision and care.

5% off hire costs for bookings made for events at Dora House

hire@artplinths.co.uk | www.artplinths.co.uk

FACILITIES

We have two bathrooms including a fully accessible loo and baby changing facilities.

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ACCESS

- There is stepped access into the building.
- We have a ramp for wheelchairs which can be installed in advance - just get in touch.
- There is a bell at street level to enable visitors to request support if they need it to access Dora House.
- The exhibitions are on one level on the ground floor.
- Our toilet and baby changing facilities are on the ground floor.
- We welcome guide dogs, hearing dogs and assistance dogs.
- While we do not have a dedicated quiet space, visitors who may need a break can make use of our downstairs office (where there is a printer and people coming and going).

DROP-OFF & BLUE BADGE PARKING

- Drop-off is possible immediately outside Dora House.
- There are a number of Blue Badge parking bays nearby - **read the borough's accessible parking guidance**
- The walking times supplied are as advised by Google Maps and provided to give an idea of distance from Dora House

STREET PARKING NEAR DORA HOUSE

- Cranley Place, SW7 3LE, 3 mins walk, at the side of 99 - 101 Old Brompton Road
- Queen's Gate, SW7 5AB, 3 mins walk, outside No. 90
- Roland Gardens, SW7 3PW, 4 mins walk, outside No. 40 - 46
- Glendower Place, SW7 3DU, 5 mins walk. outside 5 to 13 Jerome House

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Society is committed to equality and diversity, and we aim to be mindful of this in all that we do. Please see link here for more information on our EDI plan – **EDI at The Royal Society of Sculptors**

Dora House is a non-smoking environment – this includes the use of e-cigarettes and vapes.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HIRE

Venue hire supports our charitable work and the wider sculpture community.

These Terms and Conditions form part of the agreement between the Royal Society of Sculptors ("we/us") and the Hirer ("you"). They are intended to ensure clarity, fairness and the smooth running of your event.

1. Booking Confirmation

A booking is confirmed once:

- We have received a signed booking agreement; and
- A non-refundable deposit of 50% of the total hire fee has cleared in our account.

Until both are received, we cannot guarantee that the date will remain available.

2. Fees and Payment

The total Contract Price includes:

- The agreed venue hire fee; and
- Any additional services agreed in writing (e.g. staffing, equipment, security, cleaning or licensing support).

The remaining balance must be paid no later than 14 days before the Event.

If payment is not received by the due date, we reserve the right to cancel the booking and retain any sums already paid.

We may also request a refundable damage/security deposit depending on the nature of the Event.

3. Capacity and Guest Numbers

- The maximum capacity of the venue is 60 persons at any one time.
- Final guest numbers must be confirmed at least 7 days before the Event.

For safety reasons, this capacity cannot be exceeded.

4. Use of the Premises

The venue may only be used:

- For the purpose agreed in the booking;
- During the agreed hire period;
- In accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.

We ask that all events respect the nature of the building as an arts venue and gallery space.

Activities not disclosed at the time of booking may not be permitted.

Bookings may not be sublet or transferred to another party.

5. Event Timings

Events must finish at the agreed time.

The building has a strict closing time of 11:00pm.

If an event overruns:

- Additional hourly hire charges will apply (charged in full-hour increments); and
- A £100 late administration fee will be added.

Our team's decision regarding event timings is final.

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6. Cancellation by the Hirer

All cancellations must be made in writing.

The following cancellation charges apply:

- More than 8 weeks before the Event: 50% of the Contract Price (deposit retained).
- Between 4–8 weeks before the Event: 75% of the Contract Price payable.
- Less than 4 weeks before the Event: 100% of the Contract Price payable.

If cancellation occurs 14 days or fewer before the Event, the full Contract Price becomes immediately payable.

These charges reflect the difficulty of re-letting dates at short notice and costs incurred in preparation.

7. Changes to a Booking

If you need to request a change to the date, time, or key details of your Event, please notify us in writing at least one calendar month in advance.

All changes are subject to availability and approval.

- Revised hire rates may apply depending on the new date or requirements.
- An administration fee of £100 will apply to cover the costs of rescheduling and additional administration.
- A maximum of two date changes will be permitted. Further requests may be treated as a cancellation.

No change will take effect until confirmed in writing by the Royal Society of Sculptors.

8. Suppliers and Contractors

All external suppliers must be approved in advance.

We may request:

- Public Liability Insurance documentation;
- Risk assessments or method statements;
- Details of equipment to be brought on site.

We reserve the right to refuse suppliers where necessary to protect the venue, artwork or safety of guests.

9. Insurance

You must hold adequate Public Liability Insurance for your Event.

Proof of insurance must be provided at least 4 weeks before the Event.

Failure to provide appropriate documentation may result in cancellation.

10. Care of the Venue

The Royal Society of Sculptors premises include gallery and exhibition spaces containing artworks and specialist fixtures.

You are responsible for:

- The conduct of guests and suppliers;
- Preventing damage to the building and artwork;
- Ensuring nothing is affixed, installed or moved without written consent.

Any damage caused during the hire period (other than through negligence by Royal Society of Sculptors staff) will be charged on a repair or replacement basis.

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11. Liability

Nothing in these Terms excludes liability for death or personal injury caused by negligence. Subject to this:

- The Royal Society of Sculptors shall not be liable for loss of profits or indirect losses;
- We are not responsible for loss or damage to personal property;
- Our total liability shall not exceed the total hire fee paid.

You agree to indemnify the Royal Society of Sculptors against claims arising from the Event or breach of these Terms.

12. Licensing and Compliance

You are responsible for complying with:

- Fire and safety regulations (maximum 60 persons);
- Licensing requirements;
- Health and safety law;
- Agreed conditions relating to alcohol and music.

Non-compliance may result in termination of the Event without refund.

13. Force Majeure

If circumstances beyond our reasonable control prevent us from hosting the Event (including fire, flood, power failure, strike, government restrictions or other emergency), we will:

- Attempt to offer an alternative date where possible; or
- Refund monies paid (excluding any non-recoverable costs).

We shall not have further liability in these circumstances.

14. Other Activities on Site

The Royal Society of Sculptors operates as a working arts venue. Unless exclusive hire has been agreed in writing, other activities may take place within the building.

15. Electrical Equipment

All electrical equipment brought onto the premises must be PAT tested. Proof may be requested in advance of the Event.

16. Right to Refuse or Terminate

We reserve the right to refuse a booking or terminate an Event where:

- These Terms are breached;
- Safety is compromised;
- The nature of the Event differs materially from what was agreed.

No refund will be payable in such circumstances.

17. Dora House is a non-smoking environment – this includes the use of e-cigarettes and vapes. Smoking of any kind is not permitted in the building, garden, at the entrance or on the terrace.

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