



## **Volunteer induction crib notes**

Version #1 - 02/06/18

### **Today's induction will cover:**

- Intro to cinema collective
- How to use and access the website
- Safer Spaces / looking after each other
- Fire warden training
- Bar intro
- Box office intro
- A little about the cafe

### **Intro to our organisation and History**

The Star and Shadow Cinema has been running since 2006. It is entirely run by volunteers, and has now formulated as a Cooperative. We are here to support a playful and critically-minded culture of cinema, music, art and whatever people want to do, to feel free, create a space for face to face dialogue, and experiment with utopian ways of living and working. The core idea is that if you help make the S&S operational, you have somewhere to express yourself creatively in organising film screenings/ gigs/ making something yourself.

Originally S&S was made up of a collection of people into alternative and experimental film, LGBT culture, artist moving image and films to inform and inspire political action, running the Side Cinema from 2001-2004. In 2005-6 the group grew, and developed an abandoned warehouse at Stepney Bank, an enormous space which made it possible to screen films, have discussions, run gigs, performance events, club nights, facilitate community meetings, festivals, markets, and host all sorts of other creative or political DIY projects.

It is an environment designed on the principle of open participation, where mutually supportive individuals or collectives collaborate to keep a truly inspirational building and programme of events going on in Newcastle upon Tyne for as long as possible into the future.

## Our mission, in our constitution, is:

- To run a cinema and space for innovative, challenging and alternative culture, valuing all levels of creative production.
- To engage and develop local film producers, artists, musicians and event organisers, as well as diverse grass-roots audiences and activist networks.
- To respond to developments in technology as well as value old and specialised technologies, allowing opportunities for skill building and experimentation.
- To support and provide a space for grass roots/independent arts and community groups.
- To work in partnership with similar organisations nationally and internationally.

Our goal is to have a non-hierarchical structure that enables and encourages audiences to become involved in running the space. We make decisions based on consensus, and direct democracy. The way we organise is designed to encourage participation, welcomes critique and should be flexible to change in line with our core DIY ethic. This is an unusual way of working and counter to most organisations so it may take a little time to get used to or ways!

The S&S is based on DIY ethics - empowering ourselves to take creative, positive, direct action to change or take control of our lives outside of the dominant paradigms of consumerism, commodification, and hierarchies across class, race, gender, sexuality, ability, knowledge, culture, capital and others. We do this by teaching ourselves what we need to know and sharing that knowledge in accessible ways.

Some say that as an organisation, the Star and Shadow is like a doughnut. It has no centre - by which we mean that there is no core management group. It runs on decentralised working groups. There is a fortnightly general meeting that is the constitutional body for governance.

## Membership

There are TWO different types of membership - venue membership and co-op membership.

1. We always have, and so continue to ask all people to become a 'VENUE member' for £1 (FOR LIFE). This is a way of encouraging audiences to feel part of this place, in the hope they may get more involved. We add them to our mailout for upcoming events.
2. If you have volunteered for over three months and you would like to get further involved into the coop, you can become a co-op member for an additional £1 and

get a lovely certificate. This allows you to be involved in rare constitutional decisions that may affect the future of the organisation.

### Is the S&S a building, or is it people?

The capacity of the Star and Shadow activity is the collective energy and commitment of the volunteers who make things happen in it, not the building itself. Although we now own this building, it is just materials without people doing a whole load of work to make it operational.

To programme something, be it a film, a gig, an exhibition, a fundraising event, or any of the other things that happen here, involves everything to make that event happen - the logistics of running the building, publicising the event, covering costs and the content.

Although the cinema activity is dependent on volunteers to make stuff happen, its existence for our use is dependent on us raising enough money to pay for its upkeep.

This is set amounts in terms of mortgage, rates and insurance, and variable amounts in terms of use of resources.

Any activity that takes place in the cinema will incur costs, and these costs need to be covered.

### Finances

We have spent a lot on buying and renovating this building! We did this because we wanted to be free from the precarious position of landlords terminating our lease, which has happened twice in our history. We also value the idea of alternative ownership models in opposition to the corporatization of our city. We consider Star and Shadow common land, considering it is a community asset, and is completely open to involvement from any member of the public irrespective of gender, race, sexuality, ability or class. Our building is locked as a community asset, which means it should be protected from commercial development in the scenario that we can't pay the mortgage. But we don't want that to happen, so this is how the finances work:

To make this possible, we fundraised over £500k and borrowed over £500k. Our outstanding debt is a mortgage of over £400k to pay until we own our building outright. We have core running costs of about £4k per month. We are open around 200 days a year, which makes it cost

- £200 a day to cover mortgage, rates, utilities, license, insurance (i.e. to have a building in working order)
- The takings on the door should cover the costs of putting on events, plus a contribution to the running costs. For all programming this is the general rule, and

we hope that over time we balance out, by some events being cheaper and more popular, and some expensive and maybe less popular.

- The bar and cafe sales (after costs), plus subletting and private hires, pays for the majority of our overheads.
- We get some funding from the local authority and trusts, the Arts Council and the BFI through the film hubs to support programming or building works.
- We work towards self-sufficiency.
- If you want to join the finance working group you can.

### How does it actually work, and how can you get involved?

We have a number of working groups/collectives that help to smooth the running of this beast. We have tried to centralise knowledge and make things work with minimum bureaucracy and bottlenecks through a website back end, based on the open source Django architecture. We also have a wiki. More about that below.

You can subscribe to different working groups on our website. The main subgroups are:

#### ***Volunteering:***

The main email list for communicating about what is going on at the cinema, what help is needed, and when.

This email list is where you can discuss about availability or request help. It is NOT where you actually sign up for a shift - for that you have to have a website login. Once you have completed an induction you will get a website user profile and be able to sign up to shifts..

#### ***Programming:***

The group that co-ordinates the event programme at S&S. They have an email list, where ideas are discussed and organised. They also field proposals from external promoters who want to hire the space. They prefer it when people see the potential of helping volunteer to put on their events, rather than just paying cash. Believe it or not cash is not as useful as giving time!

There will be occasional training offered for people who want to learn about programming films or gigs.

#### ***Cafe:***

The group that organises running of the cafe, sourcing simple, local, sustainable food and drinks, organic where possible. They organise level1 and level2 food hygiene training, so you can get cooking in the kitchen.

#### ***Bar:***

The group that makes sure there is enough stock for the week's events; sorts out line cleaning, stock taking, and giving people training in looking after the bar. They also take care of everything to do with licensing.

**Marketing:**

The group that thinks about how to tell everybody about S&S and what is going on through website, social media, print etc.

**Finance:**

Worries about the bills. Makes sure we sort out our accounts, VAT returns and VAT inspections and shares the knowledge with everybody else about our financial situation.

**Technical:**

This group makes sure all of the network, p.a system, the projection equipment and lighting stuff all works and is ready for whatever needs to happen, and for making it better. They organise training in projection and sound engineering.

**Building:**

This group is involved in sorting out things with the building, fixtures, fittings, fire safety, security, making new spaces, getting materials and ensuring everything is done safely.

**Policy:**

This group concerns itself with making sensible policies to keep us sorted, legal and safeguard everyone.

These groups generally communicate on email lists. They feed into the general meeting.

**Meetings**

General Meeting : 1st Monday of every month

Programming: 2nd / 4th Monday

And caretaking: the 3rd Monday

We really recommend volunteering on events, and/or perhaps joining one of the collectives to get an idea of the building and how we try to run things, particularly through the back end of our website, called /toolkit.

**Website**

At the end of this induction, we ask you to fill in your name and email address and then one of our volunteers will send you a login (**username** and **password**) to access your volunteer details and sign up to shifts. /toolkit has been developed by people at Cube Cinema in Bristol, who operate a really similar space in really similar ways.

To login to /toolkit, type in the following url:

<https://starandshadow.org.uk/toolkit>

You will be prompted for a username and password. When you have logged in, you should be able to see the volunteer rota, where you can input your name to fill a specific shift. You should also be able to see your volunteer profile, and what roles you are connected to.

### Signing up for shifts

If you login to /toolkit, you can see the upcoming shifts and input your name for a specific role (bar, box office, projectionist, sound engineer etc.)

### Fire info ( also held in the wooden cupboard by the door)

#### *Staffing*

The following minimum volunteers needs to be on duty for each room accessible to the public:

Front foyer/café space:- 1 fire controller and 1 fire warden

Cinema:- 2 volunteers (of which 1 is a fire warden)

Venue:- 3 volunteers (of which 1 is a fire warden)

#### *Raising the alarm*

If fire is detected by the automatic detectors, this will trigger the alarm.

If fire is discovered by any volunteer, or a customer informs a volunteer of a fire, and it has not yet triggered the alarm, then that volunteer must activate the nearest fire call point.

#### *Volunteers/Fire Wardens*

Upon hearing the alarm volunteers should begin immediately evacuating the building, with the following procedures for each room:

#### *Front lobby/café area*

Any volunteers should help direct the public out through the appropriate emergency exit. If other areas of the building are open, then they are to calm and control the crowd leaving the venue and cinema areas and direct them through the appropriate exit. The Fire Warden should put on the yellow Hi-Viz jacket in the box office and sweep the south disabled toilet, the back of house and kitchen area, the 'snug' and inside/outside space and then assist in the evacuation. Once the area is evacuated, they confirm this with the Fire Controller and then sweep any area as directed by the Fire Controller before evacuating themselves.

#### *The venue*

Full house lights should be brought up, any sound should be turned off and each volunteer should wear a yellow Hi-Viz jacket located by the bar. 1 volunteer should go to each lobby and guide out the public, they wait until the venue is evacuated before following. The Fire Warden is to go to the stage door and sweep down the north corridor checking the toilets. When they reach the galley, if there is a Fire Warden in the cinema they return to the Fire

Controller and confirm the north toilets are clear, otherwise they continue sweeping the north corridor before returning to the Fire Controller.

### *The cinema*

Full house lights should be brought up, any projection stopped and any volunteers and the Fire Warden are to put on yellow Hi-Viz jackets (located in the projection booth and near the auditorium entrance). A volunteer is to stand by each exit guiding out the audience, they wait until the cinema is empty before following. Any additional volunteers help in the evacuation. Once the audience is evacuated the Fire Warden is to sweep the rooms in the north corridor. Once they reach the gallery, if there is a Fire Warden in the venue they return to the Fire Controller and confirm the north Workshops are clear, otherwise they continue sweeping the toilets in the north corridor before returning to the Fire Controller.

Turning off sound details in cinema and venue (PA and Projection booth comms)

Fire evacuation point – and map

Fire plan of cinema

### General management of the event/film with checklists

Before shift - Briefing, confirmation of roles and breaks, problems and concerns, stocking and prepping areas, general update from event manager

Shift – see above – plus cleaning, bins, tidying, breaks, TOILETS

End of night/shift process - plus cleaning, bins, tidying,

Bouncers

### Working in Bar

Operation of tills/where keep end of shift

Collecting glasses

Pouring pints

Alcohol measures

Underage/Rowdy/comatose drinkers/punters

Robbery

Harassment of punters/staff

Changing lines

Operating dishwasher/ ice

Last orders process

Cleaning, bins, tidying, breaks

### Working in Box office

Operation of tills/where keep end of shift

Membership/ volunteers

Where to find information to give punters

Difficult punters  
Robbery  
Harassment of punters/staff  
End of night/shift process  
cleaning, bins, tidying, breaks

### Working in café

The cafe will be open every Sunday, and will extend opening hours at some point soon.  
Operation of tills/where keep end of shift  
Hygiene  
Service  
Cooking  
Cleaning up  
Rubbish  
Difficult punters  
Robbery  
Harassment of punters/staff  
End of night/shift process  
cleaning, bins, tidying, breaks

### Safer Spaces Policy

Star and Shadow is an open and inclusive space where everyone is welcome has the right to feel safe and respected and equally the has responsibility to treat everyone with kindness and respect. We developed a Safer Spaces policy, based on one developed by the Kebele Klub Social Centre in Bristol, which helps us all recognise ways we can work together. Though we all come from different situations, have different opinions and beliefs, we can work together and build consensus.

We display a short version of the document on the wall of our Café (soon!!)

People come to the cinema from all sorts of experiences, at different, sometimes difficult times in their lives. We all are a diverse group of people with a wide range of emotional, physical and psychological nuances. We are volunteers, operating an open, DIY space, but we need to feel safe, respected and not limited by behaviour that is oppressive or dangerous. We aim for an open and inclusive environment that does not shy away from challenging behaviours that volunteers perceive as difficult or oppressive.

Please don't be silent if you feel uncomfortable or unsure.

If you feel that you need to raise an issue or are uncomfortable about the way that people are behaving you can talk to another vol/keyholder/email/or ring to ask for support, an ear, or mediation. We have a mediation process as set out in the full policy which is found in the



office policy folder. It goes into more detail in the safer spaces policy and a flow chart of resolution to help in mediation processes.

### Other volunteering opportunities

We are coming up with a programme of training ops to work in the café, finance, programming, admin, building, films, facilitating meetings, mediation, projecting

### Additional docs and items needed to deliver are:

Fire safety docs ( in the wooden cupboard)

Fire keys (in office)

Fire Zone

Fire training induction sheet (physical sheet must go in fire folder in the office)

Volunteer induction signing sheet if not able to access google doc, gather emails name and skills covered

Copies of Safer spaces policy

Membership cards ( if they don't have one!)

Projector and laptop

Eventually:

Volunteer booklet/guide

Card ( to log vol hrs)

### FORMS needed:

- safer spaces
- induction form
- lists of areas we can support you and areas of support you have to offer

Disclosure opportunity in form and verbally.

- Aspects of our organization need Safeguard training and DBS check. These roles are clearly defined in safeguarding policies.

Signpost further support and direct people to it. We will not, as an organization, be able to support all areas of need but can connect you to wider services.



