

PARTISAN COLLECTIVE



MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

Hello and welcome to Partisan Collective!

Partisan is a social and arts multi-use space which is cooperatively ran, meaning that the members and users of the space own it. Partisan was born out of an idea to create a free or affordable meeting place for community, activist and social justice groups combined with having a non-exploitative music and arts venue that is owned by the people who use it. This sort of space has been missing in Manchester. Although there are other more community-minded venues, none have the same model as Partisan.

This handbook will take you through some basics of Partisan and what being a member is all about.

Contents

1. Structure and History of Partisan.....	2
2. The Space.....	4
3. Being a Member.....	6
4. Working Groups and Volunteering.....	8
5. Safe Spaces Policy.....	12
6. Using Slack.....	13

Last updated:13 Augustl 2018

1. STRUCTURE AND HISTORY OF PARTISAN

Structure

Partisan is registered as a workers' cooperative. Partisan is a collective of anyone with active membership. The co-op is a smaller group of people within the collective.

All members

- Have an equal say in how Partisan is run
- Have membership cards
- Have voting rights
- Can be added to our Slack group – which is the way we communicate internally
- Receive discounted tickets for in-house Partisan events
- Receive discounted bar drinks
- Receive our monthly newsletter – which gives you all the Partisan goings on, plus our recommendations of things going on in Manchester and other nice things
- Can attend general meetings
- Can get involved with working groups
- Can attend member socials
- Can book the space for meetings, workshops, events etc.
- Usually active in one or more working groups or help out when they can

The co-op (and coordinators)

- Commit at least 4 hours a week to Partisan
- Have been a member for at least 3 months
- Any collective member can join provided they meet the criteria above and the co-op members approve it
- Deal with the strategic, big-picture, financial and licensing side of Partisan
- Look at Partisan as a holistic way to run it for the use of the collective
- Make sure Partisan is being run in a sustainable way
- Provides monthly feedback reports at general meetings to the rest of the collective
- Held accountable by the collective
- To be employed by Partisan people will need to be in the co-op
- Currently made up of 9 people, including 3 part-time paid coordinators

History of Partisan

There was a lack of meeting places in Manchester for activist and campaign groups that are financially and wheelchair accessible. There are also too many profit-driven venues that charge high prices for people wanting to put on music and arts events. This is something that we wanted to change. The two ideas were merged and Partisan held its first general meeting in February 2016. Monthly general meetings have followed ever since.

Partisan has taken inspiration from similar places such as Leeds' Wharf Chambers and DIY Space For London, which proved the idea was viable. When Partisan was starting out, members spoke to Wharf Chambers to understand how they made their vision a reality and learn from them.

Ideas were formulated over time on how to create a space in which the users and members of the space own it. Partisan registered as a workers' cooperative at Companies' House. Fundraiser events and a crowdfunder were also organised by members.

In mid-2016, Partisan ran a temporary space on Mount Street for a few months in a set of abandoned offices about to be redeveloped. This was through working with 3space, a community-minded urban agency. Following this, members searched for available buildings online and by exploring Manchester on foot and looking for properties. In Summer 2017, we secured two floors of a building at 19 Cheetham Hill Road (more info on page 4).

To find out more about the origins of Partisan, listen to the first Partisan podcast from April 2017: www.mixcloud.com/PartisanCollective/episode-1-why-partisan-why-now/

Timeline

- February 2016: First meeting at Gulliver's on Oldham Street in the Northern Quarter (monthly meetings have taken place ever since)
 - May-September 2016: Temporary space on Mount Street
 - July 2017-present: Permanent space on Cheetham Hill Road
-

2. THE SPACE

After 18 months of searching for a permanent space, the hard work paid off. Partisan found and secured two floors of a three-storey building in the northern part of Manchester's city centre at 19 Cheetham Hill Road. It's just around the corner from Victoria station and just on the border of the Cheetham Hill area. Partisan occupies the first floor and basement floor. The ground floor is used as offices by immigration solicitors Salam's.

About the Building

It is a Grade II listed building (formerly a synagogue and before that a chapel). This means we are not allowed to make changes to the building without consent, which includes making it wheelchair accessible. We also do not yet have a full premises licence. So we currently run on temporary licensing in the form of Temporary Event Notices (more info about this under the 'Events' working group on page 10).

Here's an outline of what we need to get a full licence and make the space wheelchair accessible:

- Apply for a Change of Use from 'office and warehouse' to 'sui generis' (which means we can put on entertainment as well as have meeting space and offices).
- Apply for Listed Building Consent at the same time in order to apply for changes such as a ramp, a lift and adding more toilets (to make it suitable for the purposes of Partisan but also in-keeping with the heritage and listed status of the building).
- Once this is applied for there is an 8 week consultation period where the council can look it over and inspect. After 8 weeks they can say yes, no or yes with conditions. If it is the latter, it can be another 8 weeks for the conditions to be met.
- Once we have both Change of Use and Listed Building Consent, we can apply for a full premises licence.

The co-op largely deals with this side of things.

First Floor

There are a few offices on Partisan's first floor which are rented out at £100 per desk pcm (per calendar month). There is also a meeting room which can be booked at different rates for external groups but is free for members for internal Partisan use.

The other main use of the first floor, aside from offices, is for meetings and workshops by outside community, activist and social justice groups as well as internal Partisan working groups and general meetings. Meetings can be held in the meeting room or open plan space. The first floor is occasionally used for social and entertainment events too. On this floor is also a bar, a kitchen, two toilets and a storage room.

Basement Floor

The basement floor is primarily the venue area of Partisan where clubnights, gigs and parties happen. It is also used for meetings if the upstairs space is not available. An outside architect is currently helping us re-design the basement floor to make it wheelchair accessible and to increase capacity size, as well as assisting us on how best to install a lift to make the first floor wheelchair accessible.

As of January 2018, the Partisan office was moved from the first floor (where the meeting room now is) to the basement to allow more space to be rented out upstairs. The room marked 'Staff Room' is the Partisan office. There are also smaller rooms in the basement used for storage like bar stock and sound equipment. There is a bar, two toilets and urinals.

Day-to-day Use of the Space

On weekdays the offices are used during normal working hours. During evenings and weekends, there are meetings, workshops, events and more. Check the website calendar to be aware of what's going on: www.partisancollective.net/events. And if you are interested in booking the space for something please use the online booking form: www.partisancollective.net/bookings. There is normally at least one coordinator or co-op member here while the space is being used. To pay our rent and cover other costs, we charge for office use and have sliding scale rates for other uses.

User Groups

User groups are any group or organisation that book the space for their activities, e.g. meetings, workshops. They are listed on the website: www.partisancollective.net/user-groups. All user groups must have organisational membership to use the space.

3. BEING A MEMBER

As already covered, being a member gives you a whole host of things:

- Have an equal say in how Partisan is run
- Have membership cards
- Have voting rights
- Can be added to our Slack group – which is the way we communicate internally
- Receive discounted tickets for in-house Partisan events
- Receive discounted bar drinks
- Receive our monthly newsletter – which gives you all the Partisan goings on, plus our recommendations of things going on in Manchester and other nice things
- Can attend general meetings
- Can get involved with working groups
- Can attend member socials
- Can book the space for meetings, workshops, events etc.
- Usually active in one or more working groups or help out when they can

Being a New Member

If you are a member, you get a say in how Partisan is run and managed. If you have just signed up and are new, we encourage you to voice your opinion on anything related to Partisan. This could be at general meetings, working group meetings and on our Slack workspace. It is your right to have a say. If you are feeling a bit unsure of how to get involved or put forward your viewpoint, post in the #new-members Slack channel or contact info@partisancollective.net and someone from the co-op can help. Most people naturally find a way to ease themselves in.

The idea of a collectively owned space and cooperative, non-hierarchical decision-making may be a new way of doing things for lots of people joining Partisan, and that's totally ok. Many Partisan members probably have limited or no experience of this. We are all about trying new things and learning together.

If you're unsure about which working group you want to get involved with, it might be a good idea to volunteer for more general roles as an easy, fun way to start your involvement. This can be a good way to get to know more Partisan members and understand how things work before, say, getting involved in the more organisational side of things. Here are some suggestions for general roles new members can volunteer themselves for:

- Help out at work days
- A host role at general meetings

- Bar shifts
- Door shifts for in-house Partisan events
- Help collect items for use within the space or bar stock

General Meetings

There are two main reasons for general meetings. One is for all collective members to discuss the latest developments and issues, and the other is to introduce Partisan to new people interested. Agenda items, coop feedback and working group feedback are arranged in advance of the meeting through Slack. There are two co-chairs (one to read out agenda points and facilitate discussion and one to keep time and help point to people with something to say), a minute-taker (to keep a record of everything) and a host (to introduce new members to Partisan half an hour before the meeting starts).

Working Group Meetings

These are meetings for working groups to discuss the latest developments relevant to their group. Check the relevant Slack channel, our website (www.partisancollective.net/events/category/partisan-meeting/list) or Facebook page to find when they are. If you're a bit nervous about attending one, ask about it in the #new-members Slack channel or email info@partisancollective.net.

Joining the Co-op

To join the co-op, you must have been a collective member for at least three months and volunteered for an average of four hours a week. These hours aren't formally measured, it's more of a guideline to show that you're committed. If you'd like to join, talk to an existing co-op member who will bring it to the rest of the co-op and vote on it. You'll then be able to get involved with the day-to-day and strategic running of the space, attend co-op meetings, join the private co-op Slack channel and be added to the co-op register. The co-op also occasionally do socials of their own.

4. WORKING GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERING

The working groups of Partisan cover distinct areas of work that need doing. This greatly helps with division of labour and keeps Partisan running. There are several of them. You can get involved in as many or as little as you'd like at any time by joining the relevant Slack channel, attending working group meetings and carrying out some tasks related to the group. There is no prior experience required for any of the working groups. If you're unsure of how to help, speak to someone active in the group at the end of a general meeting or ask in the *#new-members* channel on Slack. You are also welcome to put forward ideas to start a new working group.

Accountability and Accessibility

This working group merged two separate groups addressing access and accountability, to bring these connected areas together

One of the group's main aims regarding accountability is to create and enforce a safer spaces policy for Partisan. This is essentially a code of conduct all Partisan members will have to abide by. It is there to ensure that members and users of the space are free from discrimination and able to feel autonomous and safe. It will hold people who violate the terms accountable for their actions. There has been a provisional safe spaces policy since the Partisan Open Weekend in July 2017 that can be found in full on page 12.

The group's work on accessibility includes supporting the review of the architect's plans for the building to make it accessible. Since both of Partisan's floors have stair access only, this is a significant challenge that we're working to address. Our grade II listed building also makes these improvements a longer and more complex process. The group also work on other ways to make Partisan more accessible.

This is the group to join if you are interested in shaping the safer spaces policy and making Partisan more accessible.

This group meets most months. Check the Slack channel #accountabilityandaccessibility, the website or Facebook page to find the next one.

Bar and Food

This working group is for discussing and implementing how the bar runs and what it stocks. It's also for learning how to do a bar shift. They periodically review bar stock and see what is popular and what is not and what new drinks to stock.

This group meet most months. Check the Slack channel #barandfood, the website or Facebook page to find the next one.

Community Outreach

This working group does a number of things to make connections with the local and wider Manchester communities.

- Email and telephone community, activist and social justice groups in Manchester
- Explore Cheetham Hill area as a group and approach local community organisations
- Respond to community enquiries in their inbox community@partisancollective.net
- Hold community open days, socials and networking events
- Research the history of Cheetham Hill and add to our history documents

This is a good group for understanding Partisan's context in terms of providing a unique space for community, activist and social justice groups in and around Manchester.

This group usually meet once a month at 6:30pm. Check the #communityoutreach Slack channel, the website or Facebook page to find the next one.

Design

This group is for the physical design of Partisan - from aesthetics to construction - as well as reviewing the architect's plans to make changes to the space. It also takes the lead on work days when the space needs a good tidy up.

This group usually meet on Sundays at 2pm followed by a work day starting at 3pm. Check the #designteam Slack channel, the website or Facebook page to find the next one.

Events

This working group programme all licensed events at Partisan and organise our in-house events. As Partisan doesn't have a full premises license, we have a limited number of Temporary Events Notices (often referred to as 'TENs') which must be used in order to have amplified music playing and to serve alcohol (so for any gigs or clubnights). We can currently run 15 TENs a year across 21 days (e.g. we can run one event on a Friday night going past midnight that runs into Saturday as well, which then uses up two of the 21 TEN days. But the TEN will cover both the Friday and Saturday meaning it only uses one TEN.).

We get numerous booking requests which would require the use of a TEN but we cannot say yes to all of them because we are very limited in what we're legally

allowed to put on. It is the job of the events working group to decide how to allocate these limited TENs.

This group is also responsible for organising in-house events, including both TEN and non-TEN ones (non-TEN events is simply anything where alcohol isn't being served and there's no amplified music). The group also arrange 'Partisan in the City' where Partisan Presents fundraiser events are held in other venues in Manchester.

This group meet regularly, usually every two or three weeks, on weekday evenings at 6:30pm. Check the #events Slack channel, the website or Facebook page to find the next one.

Finance and Fundraising

This working group is where members write funding bids, brainstorm fundraising ideas and find other fundraising opportunities. Funding bids are often used by community and similar groups for to help stay afloat. People involved in this group team up in pairs to write bids and fill in applications for grants.

It's a good way to get to know Partisan and learn more about how it's run, as bids often require thorough explanations of what Partisan is and why it matters. This is an essential group for Partisan's financial survival. No experience is required and it's a great way to learn more about bid writing skills

Check the Slack channel #financeandfundraising, the website or Facebook page to find the next meeting.

Media and Print

This working group are responsible for social media, promotion, putting together Partisan's monthly newsletter, updating and developing the website, designing posters and flyers, writing press releases, contacting the media and pretty much anything else to do with our external communication. Contact media@partisancollective.net.

Check the #media_print Slack channel, the website or Facebook page to find the next meeting.

Podcast

Recording Partisan podcasts is currently happening irregularly. The podcasts that have been recorded so far are:

- 'Why Partisan? Why Now' (April 2017) - A summary of what Partisan is and its aims
- 'People POWER' (July 2017) - A preview of the Partisan Opening Weekend event
- 'What Are You Doing for New Year's Eve' (December 2017) - A preview of our New Year's Eve event

They can be found at www.mixcloud.com/partisancollective. If you have any ideas for podcasts, post them in the #podcasts Slack channel.

Check the #podcasts Slack channel to find the next meeting.

Sound

This group deal with PAs, sound equipment, soundproofing and sound techs. We would love input from people with soundproofing expertise and sound engineering knowledge. Or if you'd like to learn a bit more about sound, please get involved.

Check the #sound Slack channel to find the next meeting.

Other Volunteering

Aside from working group activities, other volunteering can include:

- Cleaning and tidying the space
- Preparing the space for events
- Bar shifts
- Door shifts for in-house Partisan events
- Distributing posters and flyers
- Running Partisan stalls at events in other venues
- Co-chairing, hosting or minute-taking general meetings
- Collecting items for the space
- Helping run external Partisan fundraisers
- And more!

Partisan depends on volunteers. Keep an eye out on the *#volunteering* and *#general* Slack channels for things you can help out with.

5. SAFER SPACES POLICY

The Accountability and Accessibility working group are currently formulating a safe spaces policy to be enforced by those using the space. This is essentially a code of conduct all Partisan members will have to abide by. It is there to ensure that members and users of the space are free from discrimination and able to feel safe and autonomous. It will hold people who violate the terms accountable for their actions.

If you'd like to contribute to this, please join the *#accountabilityandaccessibility* channel on Slack and/or attend their meetings. All input is welcome.

There has been a provisional safe spaces policy since we've occupied our current building that was intended to be for the opening weekend in July 2017. You may see it around on posters in the space:

"Partisan aims to be a safer space.

This poster is our first step towards that. In a safe space, all feel welcome and all lives and experiences are acknowledged, so that everyone can enjoy themselves. Harmful and discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

Partisan is shaped by everybody together through what we say and what we do. In a safe space, you take ownership of your words and actions and you are mindful of their effects in each different situation.

We will support you if you choose to challenge people yourself. You can also come and talk to someone with a Partisan badge and we will listen to you and can ask people to leave.

If you are challenged, try to avoid being defensive. We're all trying to better the space for everyone.

The next step towards this aim is going beyond this poster to create an accountability agreement and policy."

6. USING SLACK

Slack can be a bit difficult to navigate and pretty overwhelming at first. It's fairly intuitive but can be confusing, so here's some guidance to help.

What is Slack?

Slack is a messaging platform that we use to communicate with each other between meetings. It can be accessed via a web browser or smartphone and tablet app.

What's Slack for?

As there's a lot going on all the time, things need to get done and not everything can wait until monthly general meetings or working group meetings.

How do I join?

Anyone with an active Partisan membership is welcome to join our Slack. If you wish to do so, email info@partisancollective.net or ask at a Partisan general or working group meeting to be added. You can be added to it by giving your email address to someone who's already on it. They will invite you to it and you'll get an email with a link to getting set up. The web address is www.partisancollective.slack.com where you'll be asked to login once you have an account.

How does it work?

Slack has its own starter guide for new members:

<https://get.slack.help/hc/en-us/articles/218080037-Getting-started-for-new-members>.

But we've also explained some of the essential things below.

Essentials

Creating a profile: Enter your name and username. If you have a popular name, add a surname or initial to your username so we can identify you. Underneath 'What I do', add in what working groups you are involved in and how you prefer to be contacted. If you're new, you can wait to see what you get involved in and what contact methods work best for you. Also try to add a picture if you feel comfortable to do so. As it's a very big collective, it can be easier to identify people that way.

Joining channels: After you're set up, one of the first things you'll probably want to do is join some different channels. You can join as little or many as you like. To do this, click on 'channels' on the left-hand menu, which will bring up a list of all the available channels.

There are a few default channels you'll be added to automatically:

- #general (for anything relevant to all members)
- #new-members (for new members to find out more and ask questions)
- #volunteering (to find volunteering opportunities)

- #coopcollectivecomms (for any collective members to ask the coop questions e.g. when the space will be open, building regulations and anything else under the co-op's remit))
- #random (for all non-Partisan related content that you think Partisan people would be interested in or can help with)

Each working group has a channel and this is a good way to see what's going on, as it is the way (outside of meetings) these groups communicate. There are also occasionally channels created for particular events. Once you've joined channels, you are welcome to introduce yourself and ask any questions that are not answered in this guide.

Posting messages: Try and keep everything you say in one message (press shift and enter to make a new paragraph without sending).

Creating or adding to threads: To reply to someone's message, make a thread by hovering over their message and pressing the speech bubble. Or simply click on their message and you can reply to it. When someone has replied to your thread you'll be notified.

Tagging: To tag a person, use @ then type their username. The person will be notified by you mentioning them. To tag a channel, use # then type the channel name. To notify a whole channel about something important use @channel.

Finding documents: Some documents are pinned to channels. You can find these by clicking on the pin symbol on the desktop version or on the downwards arrow in the top left-hand corner and scrolling down to 'Pinned items' on the mobile version.

Direct messaging: Click on the name of the person you want to message. Then click on 'Direct messages' on the desktop version or on the speech bubble symbol on the mobile version.

Notifications: Slack automatically snoozes notifications between 8pm and 10am. You can choose your notification settings under 'Settings' on the drop-down menu by clicking on the three dots in the top right-hand corner.

Setting a status: If you're away or ill or doing something else that means you won't be checking Slack when others might need to contact you, click on the main menu and then on 'Set a status'.

Reactions/emojis: These are a useful way to gauge opinion on something without adding to the Slack traffic.

If there's anything else you're unsure of, please contact info@partisancollective.net or post in the #new-members Slack channel.

Emails

General: info@partisancollective.net

Community Outreach: community@partisancollective.net

Events: events@partisancollective.net

Media: media@partisancollective.net

Website: www.partisancollective.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/partisancollective

Instagram: @partisancollective

Twitter: @PartisanCollect