

# MUD GANG

MEMBERSHIP TERMS AND CONDITIONS  
& FAQs



## Mud Gang Pottery Studio Membership

We have two tiers of membership available:

- £195 per month - up to 12 hours per week
- £240 per month - up to 18 hours per week

This includes:

- use of equipment and hand tools (including wheels, extruder, slab roller)
- reasonable use of studio glazes and firings\*
- storage shelf
- minimum 2 consecutive months commitment
- 1 month notice from date of joining
- opportunity to feature in our shop
- open studios and events you participate in
- wifi

We sell clay at a wholesale friendly price

- Sanded buff at £12 for 12.5kg bag
- Draycott stoneware at £12 per 12.5kg bag
- Reclaim can also be purchased @ £6 per bag
- other clays from £12 - £16 depending on availability

Members can access Mud Gang communal kitchen, toilets and seating areas.

### Opening Hours

Monday **closed**

Tuesday 10am - 9pm

Wednesday 10am - 9pm

Thursday 10am - 9pm

Friday 10am - 8pm

Saturday 10am - 8pm

Sunday 11am - 6pm

On occasion, with reasonable notice, we may close for events and maintenance.

## Membership Terms and Conditions

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**What does 'being a member' involve?**

This is a friendly **shared studio space where members can thrive, learn and develop their practice.**

In return we ask that **you know how to use the studio safely, without damaging our equipment or anyone else's work, and that you follow all of our procedures.** This involves observing COSHH guidelines, keeping work moving through the studio so as not to occupy space and making work in a sustainable manner. If work consistently and/or extensively has issues we will inform you that we will be unable to fire it as this is simply not sustainable or safe - including but not limited to large/extensive/repeated cracking at the greenware stage, glazed work that isn't wiped down adequately and heavy/solid pieces that may explode in the kiln. Please refer to the COSHH section of the handbook for more information.

By purchasing a membership, you are agreeing to adhere to the terms & conditions and guidelines set out in this document. If rent is paid late or there are any breaches of the terms & conditions and guidelines set out in this document we reserve the right to terminate your membership and you shall not be entitled to any refund.

### **Can I bring a guest?**

Visitors are permitted if you wish to show someone around **briefly** - please notify us in advance where possible or upon entry for health and safety purposes. They may not use the space to produce any work or use any of the materials/equipment/tools. At our discretion, if the studio is busy or we are running classes, we may refuse entry to visitors so as not to disturb members or students.

If you wish to bring a guest to collaborate/assist with your production or carry out any photography etc, please arrange this with us **in advance**. There will be an additional charge depending on the access required. If approved, please ensure you put the guest(s) name in the rota.

### **What criteria must I meet to become a member?**

Mud Gang Pottery is a new studio and we aim to preserve our space for as long and for as many people as possible. If you wish to become a member, **we ask that you have basic knowledge of ceramic practice. We ask that you have completed at least a beginner's pottery course and are confident working independently.**

If you haven't, we recommend that you start with our drop-in weekly sessions to see how you like it and gain some material knowledge!

### **Will someone assist me on site?**

Being a studio member entails having access to the space to produce your own work. This doesn't involve any tuition or teaching and is why we ask that members have some initial ceramic experience.

Although there will be a technician on site, they will be busy with other tasks and may not be able to assist you with simple, straight forward questions and/or advice. Please be mindful that Mud Gang technicians work part time and also access the studio to produce their own work and are not able to assist members individually. You may contact us via email at [mudgangpottery@gmail.com](mailto:mudgangpottery@gmail.com) and we

will aim to respond within 2 working days (Mon-Wed 10am-7pm). We will not respond to queries via our personal phone numbers, social media, etc.

If you wish to learn **a new technique, process**, or want more **in-depth assistance, tuition will be the answer**. Any of our staff are available for private tuition which you can arrange directly with them and enquire about pricing. All our staff members have at least 5 years professional training and are confident that they can assist you.

## How many hours can I come? Do my unused weekly hours carry over?

Your weekly hours allowance is indicated in your choice of membership. **Hours do not carry over from week to week** (Unused hours cannot be made up).

## Can I suspend my membership?

A studio Member, at the sole discretion of the company, may suspend their membership for a minimum of one month, maximum 2 months (but not a lesser/greater period) in any 12 month period. An administration fee to hold the membership of £80 per month will be payable by way of reduced monthly fee or as otherwise indicated by the company for the period of suspension.

## What materials and equipment are provided?

Mud Gang provides basic tools for hand building and throwing and reasonable use of studio glazes - these are labeled accordingly. We stock clay, oxides and dry glaze materials that you can purchase directly from the studio at a wholesale friendly price. You can use the glaze tongs and mixing tools we have in the studio, scales and buckets for mixing (not for storage).

**We do not provide buckets or containers for storing your personal materials and tools.** Any other materials - such as underglaze, wax resist, and sanding materials - are **not** included in the membership. These should be sourced by yourselves.

## Members commissioned work

**Mud Gang is a shared studio space and the use of the kiln** (like all the other facilities) **is communal**.

If you have accepted a commission, we recommend a minimum 8 weeks lead time. This doesn't mean that this is how long it will take necessarily, but **the communal use of the studio means that we can't prioritise anyone's private calendar**. Requests to fire specific pieces will be declined.

## Kiln information & Firings

We will not fire work that has been glazed too thickly or is too thick or solid to prevent kiln breakage and damage to others' work.

If you have purchased/mixed your own glaze please test it first to avoid kiln damage.

**Technicians will load and unload the kiln.** Please **do not** open or take anything out of the kiln and avoid touching it. Do not leave anything on or around the kiln. Please do not enter the kiln area.

Due to the nature of the studio being communal - sometimes your work may get damaged between loading firings. Of course we take care to prevent this - but, unfortunately, accidents can happen. There are also many reasons why work may crack before, during or after a firing. Drying time, types of clay, air bubbles and how work is built are some of the main causes of cracking; this is something that we cannot control. As practicing ceramicists ourselves, we understand how frustrating this is and we are always disappointed when something breaks! It's good ceramic practice to make a few spares in case of any breakages or faults. The communal nature of the studio means that glaze finish may vary and oxide flashing may occur. Due to the delicate and uncertain nature of ceramics, you will not be eligible for any refund in the aforementioned circumstances.

Please leave your work to be fired on the labeled shelving and **avoid moving and/or touching others' work and potentially damaging it.** Please do not place any boards, labels, plastic or wet work on the shelves.

We estimate 2 - 3 weeks per firing.

### **\*Reasonable use of glaze and firings**

Membership includes reasonable use of our studio glazes (labelled) and firings; We aim to fire around 15L per month for 12hr/week and 25L per month for 18hr/week access - anything over this amount is either done at our discretion (depending on how busy the studio is and general status of workflow in the studio) or may be charged depending on the quantity of work and this will, of course, be discussed with you prior to firing any additional work should this occur.

We endeavor to ensure all studio glazes are topped up regularly, however, occasionally some may run low due to material shortages or other unexpected circumstances. You will not be eligible for any refund in the aforementioned circumstances.

### **Storage and workflow**

We ask that members store their work on their personal shelf where possible so as not to occupy space in the studio. Work on work in progress shelving must be labeled with your name and the date and cannot be left here for over 2 weeks.

Work will be date stamped once bisque fired and placed on the communal shelving (labeled). Once glazed and unpacked from the kiln, work will be placed on communal shelving (also labeled) for finished work to be collected by members.

Work or personal belongings left unclaimed here or in any other communal spaces for any period over 4 weeks may be disposed of at our discretion to avoid congestion of communal areas.

You will not be eligible for any refund in the aforementioned circumstances.

Members may store a reasonable amount of glazes under the glaze bench - however, at our discretion, we may request that these are removed and stored on personal shelving to avoid congestion.

Members are allocated a storage space for clay; please ensure this remains organized and is cleaned regularly.

## **What do the staff members do?**

Mud Gang Pottery was launched in June 2019. We've had to show creativity in our practices and services in response to the covid outbreak.

We are a small team and do everything from running workshops, maintaining the studio and all it's equipment, loading and unloading the kiln, mixing glazes, reclaiming clay and managing the inventory and storage as well as running classes, working on charitable projects and trying to find time for developing our own practice and having other work commitments. **Please be mindful of how much time they have to dedicate to you. We are happy to help answer simple questions and give advice, however if you want/need more in depth advice, please refer to 'Will someone assist me on site?' above.**

## **What happens if it gets busy?**

Hours are limited from 12-18hrs a week allowing the studio to operate on an open access basis (meaning you can come in whenever you like). We have a diverse group of members with different lifestyles, ensuring that people come and go at different times. We aim to keep this community feel alive whilst not getting too busy.

During the covid-19 pandemic we implemented a digital rota to limit the number of people in the space. This system has worked well to ensure all members have fair access to the space and is something we will continue to use for the foreseeable future. Members are expected to change their hours accordingly on the rota; we are not responsible for any limitations on space if more members show up than have put their name down. Please be respectful of each other's workspace and move up if you notice someone come in.

On occasion, we may further limit the number of people in the space to accommodate private/community workshops. This will be highlighted in advance on the rota.

Members are encouraged to attend classes and workshops that may enrich their practice and we offer a 5-10% discount to members depending on the workshop programme.

## **Why is Mud Gang now a CIC?**

We are very happy that as of June 2020, Mud Gang Pottery is now a community interest company. The covid outbreak and its social, environmental and cultural consequences, highlighted the duty of care that we owe to our community and although this was part of our ethos, it prompted us and gave us the time to make it happen!

Being registered as a CIC means we run charitable community programmes/events based around ceramics practices.

## COSHH & Cleaning guidelines

Please dedicate at least 30 minutes of your time in the studio to clean up.

Make sure you rinse your sponge with fresh water a few times while cleaning.

Technicians and work exchanges will carry out basic cleaning and maintenance - however, it is **essential** that all members adhere to the following guidelines in order to avoid build up of silica in the environment.

Silica is in clay and virtually all the materials used in ceramics (glaze, slips etc.) When anything containing silica dries, it can become airborne and breathed into the lungs which cannot filter it out. **Long term exposure to large amounts of silica dust can result in a disease called silicosis and other associated lung diseases.** COSHH (Control of Substances Harmful to Health) is a regulation that has been in place for over 25 years and included in this is silica. Oxides are also toxic. To avoid contamination, we restrict the use of these in workshops. We ask that members who have oxides use them responsibly, as detailed below. The good news is that **good studio practice can minimise the levels of silica dust in the environment** — so that we can all breathe easy!

### General cleaning:

- Always **mop any spillages** asap to avoid drying and dust
- Please **clean, dry and return: tools, bowls, jugs and scales after use. Wipe down and return molds and wooden boards.**
- Please **wipe down communal shelving and your workspace after use with a sponge and water** and **give the floor a mop** where you have been working.
- **Do not sweep** as this kicks up dust - all spillages should be mopped/cleaned with a wet sponge.
- **Please wipe things down twice** - first, use the bucket in the sink/a jug of water to get rid of all muddy bits and then rinse/wipe down again with clean water.
- **Dry and put equipment/tools back in its designated area.** Use paper towels or jay cloth provided. Please ask a technician if you are not sure where things live. • Place any waste/dry clay labelled reclaim bins.
- **Do not dry fettle** - fettling is when you tidy up pieces by shaving or trimming off excess clay with a grater, metal kidney, metal tool etc.
- **Do not dry sand** - all sanding must be done outside the studio wearing a mask.
- **Please use the communal kitchen to clean any food-related items** to avoid contamination.
- **Consider deep cleaning your personal and clay shelf every few weeks / once a month** to minimize collection of dust.
- **Wash your apron frequently.**
- **Please wipe down plastic used to cover work** especially thrown work as this can leave a lot of



clay residue.

## Throwing:

- pour throwing slops into the reclaim
- after cleaning the **wheel head and basin**, please use a clean cloth or a clean sponge and wipe **switches, pedal and legs**
- wipe the **stool**, the **bottom of the stool, and its legs**
- clean the **shelf above the radiator** if used
- wipe the **heat gun and mirror** if used
- wipe down the **area around the wheel** i.e. wall/radiator/cables
- mop the **floor around the wheel**

## Glazing:

- **Clean & return glazing equipment** (e.g. tongs, stirring sticks, buckets) after use and between using different glazes to avoid contamination.
- If you are using multiple glazes, **put the lid on those which you aren't using** to avoid contamination.
- Make sure the **lid is properly closed** - **wipe any spillages** on the rim or around the bucket.
- **Do not blow on/rub/scrape off glaze** unless absolutely necessary - if so do this outside with a mask.
- If you are using **dry materials** (e.g. powdered oxides, glaze materials etc.) please ensure the **windows are open** and you/anyone else in the studio are **wearing respirators** with particulate filters.
- **If using dry materials/oxides please be mindful of potential contamination, particularly with the following:** chrome, manganese, lithium, barium, lead, cobalt, copper etc. You must wear gloves when handling these and store in airtight containers. Please use gloves and separate sponges when cleaning anything with heavy contents of oxides/toxic materials.

Last of all, if you need any advice or are unsure about how to do any of the above, just ask us! We are here to help, as well as keep the environment clean and safe for everybody who uses it.

## General Health and Safety & Repairs

Mud Gang shall not be held responsible in the event of an injury caused in the premise and/or as a result of non adherence to the above guidelines and induction.

Should any repairs be the result of any member(s) conduct and/or failure to adhere to COSHH guidelines they may be liable for associated costs.

We may close our premises for reasonable periods of time to carry out essential maintenance, repairs, refurbishment, or for other reasons outside of our control at our discretion and with reasonable notice. We will endeavor to reopen facilities as soon as possible in these circumstances. Kilns need to be serviced and have minor repair works done in order to keep them in working order. This may, on occasion, cause a delay in the usual time frame for firing. You will not be eligible for any refund for the temporary interruption in services during these periods.

## **Covid-19 & infectious disease control**

Technicians and work exchanges sanitise and clean the studio on a regular basis and adhere to government guidelines where applicable.

## **What happens at the end of my membership?**

When joining as a member, we will ask for a deposit followed by rolling monthly payments. Membership is a fixed monthly fee and we require a one month notice period. Notice needs to be given on the date you joined or **before**, for example - if you join on the 1st and give notice on the 3rd, you would still need to pay in full for the following month. You will need to pay the following month's membership fee in full - this is taken from the deposit paid at the beginning of your membership.

Towards the end of your membership it is a good idea to organise and plan your time around completing your work if you don't wish to have anything left unfinished. When doing this, please refer to the time frames for firings set out in the 'Kiln information & Firings' section to guide you.

Please ensure that you take all of your personal belongings and work with you and clear your storage spaces promptly at the end of your membership as we're unable to store anything past the end of your membership. We will not be held responsible for anything left at the studio past the end of your membership and may dispose of this at our discretion to avoid congestion of the studio.

We recommend that members do not produce any more greenware in the last 6 weeks leading up to the end of their membership. This is because it takes, at the very least, 2 weeks (if not more for larger/thicker pieces) for greenware to dry sufficiently to be fired, and then you'll need to glaze them and put them in the queue to be glaze fired.

## **Can I come back and glaze bisque after my membership has ended?**

Once your membership has ended, you're no longer paying for our services and therefore we can no longer fire your work or give you access to the space. If you have leftover work you would like to glaze, please book a workshop with us via our website.

## **Changes**

**We may, at our discretion, review and amend our terms and conditions at any time. In the event of this, we will send an updated copy to all existing members and upload it to our website.**

## **Resources**

The following is a list of resources for purchasing ceramic materials.

[www.potclays.com](http://www.potclays.com) - this is where we purchase our clays. Potclays are a nice company to deal with and they stock everything you could need. If you wish to buy your own clay that is not one we stock in the studio, please make sure it can be fired to stoneware temperature.

[www.bathpotters.com](http://www.bathpotters.com) - reasonable delivery prices, like potclays stocking materials and equipment.

[www.scarva.com](http://www.scarva.com) - a bit more expensive, but sometimes has a wider range of materials.

[www.pottery crafts.com](http://www.pottery crafts.com) - another alternative to the above suppliers.

[www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk) - good for purchasing buckets for glazes and miscellaneous equipment and tools such as whirlers and sandpaper. For reference, the largest glaze buckets we have are 5 galleons.