

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF CHRIST
CHURCH AND ST JOHN'S RADLETT (PCC)**

Letting Policy for the hire of Church Premises

Original Policy: January 2022

Revision Date: Approved by the PCC on 23 January 2024

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Halls Management Group (HMG), on behalf of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for the hiring of Christ Church, the Vision Hall, St John's Church and St John's Church Hall, Radlett.
- 1.2 This document sets out the policy of the PCC for letting these premises, in whole or in part. The Application form states the premises being hired
- 1.3 There is one Terms and Conditions of Hire (Terms and Conditions) for all the Premises. Prospective Hirers are required to complete and sign an application form, acknowledging acceptance of the Terms and Conditions. The Application and the Terms and Conditions together form the Hire Agreement.
- 1.4 The Administrator, members of the HMG and the Churchwardens are each authorised to sign the application on behalf of the PCC.
- 1.5 "The Hirer" must be a responsible adult and must accept full responsibility for complying with the Hire Agreement.

2 Intent

- 2.1 Whilst the PCC considers that the premises are primarily to be used for the hosting and promoting of Christian and church-related activities, the PCC considers that a vital secondary function is to support and encourage suitable community activities which help to build bridges between the Church and the local community.

3 Letting Restrictions

- 3.1 The PCC reserves the right to refuse requests for hire by groups or for activities which, in its opinion, are either contrary to the purposes and beliefs of the Church of England, or where it considers that such use or activities may cause offence, on grounds of their religion or belief, to a significant number of Christians. Any requests received which may fall in this category must be referred via the HMG to the Vicar (or in his absence to both Churchwardens).
- 3.2 Hire for ritual, worship, or 'spiritual' activities is not permitted without the permission of the vicar or, in the absence of a vicar, the churchwardens.
- 3.3 Lettings for church use will have priority. Reasonable efforts will however be made by the PCC not to cancel bookings which have already been agreed.
- 3.4 The PCC will not hire out the premises for any parties which will involve loud noise or other nuisance to neighbours.
- 3.5 On a Sunday, no part of the Vision Hall will normally be available for external hires starting before 2pm. Any request for a Sunday hire more than six months ahead must be referred to the HMG, checked against the liturgical calendar and if necessary, with the Vicar.

3.6 All events must finish by 10.30pm at Vision Hall and 10pm at St John's, and premises vacated by 30 minutes later. In very exceptional circumstances, e.g. national celebrations, an extension may be provided. The premises will not normally be available to the Hirer before the beginning of the booking time.

4 Charges

4.1 The PCC will normally charge for the use of the premises, but reserve the right not to charge, the decision resting with the HMG, Vicar or Churchwardens

4.2 Charges will be set at a reasonable rate, consistent with covering running costs and providing a modest contribution to longer term refurbishment costs. The HMG will review the charges annually, and regular users will be given due notice of any changes.

4.3 If the Hirer wishes to cancel the booking, the PCC may refund any fees paid, but shall be under no obligation to do so. The PCC reserves the right to cancel the booking if exceptional unforeseen circumstances arise and with or without a reason being stated. In the event of the PCC cancelling the booking, all fees paid by the Hirer shall be refunded.

4.4 For one-off events payment must be made in full on receipt of invoice or at least 14 days before the event. If payment is not made promptly the booking may lapse.

4.5 The PCC reserves the right to charge for damages caused by the Hirer or their guests.

5 Access and Security

5.1 The PCC will not provide a full-time caretaker. The Hirer may be responsible for all setting up and putting away of any equipment used. The Hirer must not leave the premises unattended during the period of the booking.

5.2 If a key is provided, this must be safeguarded at all times and returned to the Administrator (or posted into the Church office's letter box) at the end of the letting period or as soon as is reasonably possible. The keys shall not be copied nor given or lent to any third party. If keys are provided, it is the Hirer's responsibility to ensure that all fire doors and windows are closed, all doors locked and all lights switched off at the end of the letting period.

5.3 A representative of the HMG or their appointed officer will be allowed to enter any part of the building at any time.

6 Health and Safety

6.1 Whilst the PCC will take steps to ensure the premises are safe to use, it will be the responsibility of the Hirer to ensure that security, fire and Health and Safety requirements are met, and to ensure the safe conduct of their activity during the period of hire, including the presence of a suitably qualified First Aider if necessary. First Aid boxes are readily available in each of the premises. The Administrator will tell the Hirer where the relevant ones are kept. The Administrator will also tell the Hirer of any Public Access Defibrillator on the premises.

6.2 Any accident involving personal injury must be reported to the Administrator, and will be recorded in the Accident Book in the Church Office.

- 6.3 The Hirer must ensure that he/she has access to a mobile telephone in case of emergencies (there are no public telephones on the premises).
- 6.4 Any portable electrical appliance or device brought in from elsewhere and used on the premises must have an up-to-date safety certificate which must be provided on request.
- 6.5 The Hirer will not be permitted to bring in supplementary heating or air conditioning appliances.
- 6.6 Hirers will be made aware that the kitchen is not an allergy-free zone, and that it is the Hirer's responsibility to ensure that all Government regulations (e.g. regarding food preparation, prevention of disease) are followed on the premises.
- 6.7 One or more "emergency contact numbers" will be provided.

7 General

- 7.1 All rubbish must be taken from the premises by the Hirer and must not be deposited in the outside refuse bins. No food or drink must be deposited on the ground outside the premises or in the car park.
- 7.2 A strict **No Smoking Policy** applies to all rooms (including toilets) in all the premises. The premises are fitted with smoke alarms, which will be activated by cigarette smoke.
- 7.3 Illegal drugs are not allowed on the premises
- 7.4 Alcohol may not be sold in the building. The Hirer is not permitted to apply for Occasional Licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor in the building.
- 7.5 Chewing gum is not allowed on the premises.
- 7.6 No adhesive or fixing material may be used which may damage the fabric of the premises.
- 7.7 Any advertising material (printed or electronic) must be submitted to the Administrator for approval by the Vicar and/or Churchwardens. All such material must clearly display the name of the person or organisation responsible for the event.
- 7.8 Religious images in the buildings must not be moved.

8 Car Park

- 8.1 The car park at each premise has limited spaces and parking is strictly at the owner's risk. The PCC can accept no liability for cars parked in its car parks. A notice to this effect is/will be displayed in each car park.

9 Responsibilities

- 9.1 The PCC will be responsible for providing the facilities as agreed in good working order throughout the letting period.

- 9.2 The Hirer will be responsible for ensuring that all users are aware of the procedures for safe and correct use of equipment and facilities, and shall report any faults or deficiencies to the Administrator.
- 9.3 Out of respect to other users and our neighbours surrounding the premises, the PCC expects all users to conduct themselves in a reasonable and courteous manner whilst on the premises, and when leaving the premises. Consequently, the Hirer shall ensure that there is a responsible adult or adults present and able to supervise at all times during the letting and responsible for the orderly behaviour of guests/members on the premises.
- 9.4 The Hirer must leave the premises in a clean and tidy condition. Losses, breakages and damage must be reported, and paid for. Hirers may re-arrange tables and chairs in the premises, but must restore them to their original places immediately at the end of the letting.
- 9.5 The Hirer agrees to indemnify the PCC against all claims, demands, actions, proceedings, damages, costs and expenses arising out of non-observance of the Hire Agreement.

10 Kitchen Use/ Refreshments

- 10.1 Use of the Kitchens must be approved at the time of booking and there may be an additional charge. It will be the responsibility of the Hirer to provide any refreshments. It is the responsibility of an external Hirer to ensure that any persons using the kitchens are aware of the requirements of the relevant Food Hygiene Regulations and Food Safety Act Codes of Practice. Particular attention should be paid to the cleanliness of the kitchen, kitchen utensils and crockery at the end of the letting. Any breakages must be reported immediately in writing and be paid for.

11 Insurance

- 11.1 The PCC has Public Liability insurance in place, and a notice to this effect is displayed at each premises. The PCC accepts no liability for damage to and/or loss of personal property consequent on using the premises.
- 11.2 The Hirer will be responsible for any further insurance necessary to cover their liabilities arising from their activities.

12 Legal Requirements

- 12.1 The Hirer must comply with any legal requirement concerning music, singing and dancing licences, theatre licences and copyright. The Hirer shall be fully responsible for obtaining any such licences or any other permission required, always providing that no such application shall be made without the approval of the PCC. Any licence obtained must be provided when applying to hire the premises.
- 12.2 Hirers must comply with the provisions of the Children's Act 2004 at any event involving children. Events for persons under 18 years of age must at all times be properly supervised by an adequate number of responsible adults, in accordance with the Children's Act 2004. All leaders of organised activities should have a safeguarding policy, and if they do not have one, they must agree to adopt the PCC's Safeguarding Policy which will be part of the Hire Agreement and sign the declaration of compliance at the time of application.

12.3 The Hirer shall not use the premises for any other purpose than that specified in the Hire Agreement, and must not use, or allow the use of the premises or its surrounding grounds for any illegal or immoral purpose.

13 Compliance

13.1 If the Hirer breaches any part of the Hire Agreement, whether intentionally or not, this may be deemed by the PCC to be just cause for immediate cancellation of any letting or series of lettings

14 Administration

14.1 The Administrator deals with all matters relating to the bookings of the premises. This includes the acceptance and declining of bookings in consultation with the HMG, Vicar and Churchwardens. The Vicar will act as final arbiter if required.

December 2023