



St Mark's Church, Holbrook
Knowing Christ and making Him known

Church Hiring Policy (Church and Hall)

Action	By	Date	Review date	Policy Owner
			Annually	Jo Allen Church Administrator
Agreed	St Mark's Holbrook PCC	November 2918		
Reviewed			November 2019	
Amended				

Church Hiring Policy (Church and Hall)

Purpose:

- 1.1 The following document sets out the Lettings Policy in relation to the letting of the Church premises by the Parochial Church Council of St Mark's in the parish of Holbrook (hereafter the PCC). The premises include the Church building and the church hall.
- 1.2 A Premises Hiring Agreement (booking form), which is attached to and forms part of this Policy document (Appendix A), must be completed and signed in respect of every booking of the premises, other than for St Mark's own events. The person signing the Premises Hiring Agreement shall be known as "the Hirer" and shall accept full responsibility for the due observance in all respects of the Terms and Conditions as set out in this Policy document. The Hirer must be a responsible adult.

Scope: this policy applies to hire of the church and church hall.

- 2.1 The premises are primarily to be used for the hosting and promoting of Church activities.
- 2.2 A secondary function of the premises is to act as a resource to the wider Church, other Christian organisations and the community of Holbrook, through Church activities, Church sponsored activities and suitable community activities which help to build bridges between the Church and the local community.

The Policy:

3. Letting Restrictions

- 3.1 Our attitude towards an application for the use of our premises will be a positive one. We will seek to encourage appropriate organisations to use the premises for meetings and activities, where such meetings are complementary to the Church's regular activities. St Mark's may request references from a new user before agreeing a booking.
- 3.2 We will not accept bookings for activities which are in conflict with the Christian gospel and the Church's Vision Statement. The Church reserves the right to refuse requests for hire by groups or for activities which, in the opinion of the Church, are either contrary to the purposes and beliefs of the Church of England, or where the Church considers that such use or activities may cause offence, on grounds of their religion or belief, to a significant number of

Christians; this includes yoga, kung-fu, tai-chi etc. Nor do we hire the hall out for Halloween parties. No acts of worship, other than Christian worship, are permitted on the premises.

- 3.3 Lettings will not be accepted that interfere unduly with Church life, such as preventing our regular activities from functioning in full. For example, they will not normally be accepted if the premises are already booked for a Church event.
- 3.4 Out of respect to other users and our neighbours surrounding the premises, we expect all users to conduct themselves in a reasonable and courteous manner whilst on the premises, and when leaving the premises.
- 3.5 All events are to finish by 11pm, with the premises to be empty by 11:30pm. The premises will not be available to the Hirer before the beginning of the booking time, and must be vacated 15 minutes after the end of the booking.
- 3.6 No animals may be brought into the hall without permission with the exception of guide dogs and no animals are allowed in the kitchen under any circumstances.

4. Charges

- 4.1 We will normally charge for the use of the premises by external organisations; however, charges may be waived or reduced in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Incumbent and the Leadership Team.
- 4.2 Charges will be set at a reasonable rate, below full commercial value, consistent with covering costs and providing a modest contribution to maintenance costs. A notice of Charges levied and Conditions relating to the Charges forms part of the Premises Hiring Agreement. The schedule of Charges will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 4.3 If the Hirer wishes to cancel the booking, the PCC may, at its absolute discretion, 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 without a reason being stated. In the event of the PCC cancelling the booking, all fees/deposits paid by the Hirer shall be refunded.
- 4.4 Payment is required in full at the time of booking, as set out in the Premises Hiring Agreement.

5. Access and Security

- 5.1 St Mark's does not employ a full-time caretaker, nor do we have a rubbish collection. Therefore, the Hirer is responsible for all setting up and putting away of any equipment used and removal of all rubbish.
- 5.2 Any letting of the premises will require a responsible adult to be present at the beginning and end of the letting period on each occasion that a letting is to take place to check that the facilities are in order. The premises must not be left unattended during the period of the booking.
- 5.3 If a key is provided, then this must be kept safe at all times and returned to the Church Administrator in the Church Office 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 (including the toilets) at the end of the letting period.
- 5.4 The right is reserved for a representative of the PCC or their appointed officer to enter any part of the building at any time.

6. Health and Safety

- 6.1 Whilst St Mark's will take steps to ensure the premises are safe to use, it is the responsibility of the Hirer 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 located as follows:

Church Hall – Kitchen

Church Building – Left hand cupboard at the back of church

Any accident involving personal injury must be reported to the Church Administrator to be recorded in the Accident Book located in the Church Office.

- 6.2 All entrances and exits must be kept clear at all times and the number of people attending must be declared at the time of booking to ensure that this does not exceed the maximum number allowed as follows:

Church Hall – 50 people

Church – 320 people

The Hirer will be responsible for ensuring that Security, Fire and Health and Safety requirements are met. A copy of our Health and Safety Policy is available on our church website contact page.

<http://www.stmarksholbrook.org.uk/contact.html>

- 6.3 There are no public telephones in the premises, therefore the Hirer must ensure that he/she has access to a mobile telephone in case of emergencies.
- 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 made available for inspection upon request.
- 6.5 The Hirer is not permitted to bring in supplementary heating appliances without prior agreement.

7. General

- 7.1 A strict **No Smoking Policy** (including e-cigarettes) applies to all rooms (including toilets) on the premises. The premises are fitted with smoke alarms, which will be activated by cigarette smoke.
- 7.2 A copy of any advertising material must be submitted to the Church Administrator. All such material must clearly display the name of the person or organisation responsible for the event.
- 7.3 No adhesive tape or drawing pins may be used which may damage the fabric of the premises.
- 7.4 Chewing gum is not allowed on the premises.
- 7.5 No naked flames are allowed on the premises, with the exception of birthday cake candles.
- 7.6 All rubbish must be taken from the premises by the Hirer as St Mark's does not have a refuse collection. No food or drink is to be deposited on the ground outside the premises or in the car park.

8. Car Park

- 8.1 The use of the Church Car Park is available to Hirers, but is **not** part of the Hiring Agreement and Hirers must be ready to vacate in case of emergency Church needs.
- 8.2 The Car Park includes 2 designated disabled spaces and parking is strictly at the owner's risk. The PCC can accept no liability whatsoever for cars parked in its Car Park.

9. Responsibilities

- 9.1 The PCC will be responsible for providing 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 deficiencies on the occasion of each use.
- 9.3 The Hirer shall ensure that there is a responsible adult or adults present and able to supervise at all times during the letting. During the period of hire, the Hirer is 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 in full. Hirers may rearrange 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 Terms of this Policy document.
- 9.6 If alcohol is sold in the building, the Hirer must apply for and obtain an Occasional Licence for the sale of intoxicating liquor in the building.
- 9.7.1 **SAFEGUARDING:** All hirers for private parties where children under the age of 18 are present must confirm on the booking form that they have read and subscribe to the Diocese of Chichester's safeguarding policy, which is available for inspection on the church website (www.stmarksholbrook.org) or by appointment at the church office.
- 9.7.2 **SAFEGUARDING** In the event that the hiring involves the attendance of children and young persons under the age of 18 or Vulnerable Adults at the premises, the Hirer confirms that appropriate Child and/or Adult Protection Procedures will be in place. If the hiring is a regular arrangement, it will be necessary for the organisation to have provided leaders with the appropriate safeguarding procedures and training. The Hirer agrees to ensure that all adults present on the premises are aware of these Procedures and will abide by them. The Hirer confirms that, when necessary under the terms of Child and/or Adult Protection Procedures, appropriate Criminal Records checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be carried out in respect of persons involved with children, young people or vulnerable adults on the premises during the course of the hiring.

10. Kitchen Use/ Refreshments

- 10.1 The kitchen may be used for the preparation of tea/coffee and refreshments. It will be the responsibility of the Hirer to provide the refreshment materials unless agreed otherwise in the Premises Hiring Agreement. Hirers are responsible for the safe storage, handling and serving of food brought onto the premises. (Please note there is no fridge in the hall kitchen). 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 may be subject to an additional charge.

11. Insurance

- 11.1 It is the responsibility of the Hirer to effect whatever insurance he/she requires to cover his/her liabilities (including Public Liability Insurance). Insurance effective by the PCC does not extend to a Hirer's liabilities. The PCC accepts no liability for accidents, injuries, damage and/or loss of personal property as a consequence of using the premises.

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.
- 12.2 The Hirer shall not use the premises for any other purpose than that specified in the Premises Hiring Agreement, and is specifically forbidden to use, or allow the use of the premises or its surrounding grounds for any illegal or immoral purpose.
- 12.3 No gambling, lottery or sweepstake is permitted on the premises.

13. Compliance

- 13.1 Failure by the Hirer to comply with any or all of the terms of this Policy document where applicable, whether intentionally or not, may be deemed by the PCC to be just cause for immediate cancellation of any letting or series of lettings and may result in forfeiture of the entire security deposit.

14. Administration

- 14.1 Bookings of the premises will be administered by the Church Administrator. This includes the acceptance and declining of bookings in consultation with the Incumbent and members of the Leadership Team if necessary. The Incumbent will act as final arbiter if required.

Policy Owner: Jo Allen

Next Review Date: November 2019

Appendices:

Appendix A Booking Form

Appendix B Frequently Asked Questions

References:

The Church of England – www.churchofengland.org

St Mark's Policies: Safeguarding - www.stmarksholbrook.org.uk/policies.html

Food Safety and Hygiene - www.food.gov.uk/food-safety

Alcohol Licensing - www.gov.uk/guidance/alcohol-licensing