

The Parish Church of
St Stephen
HOUNSLOW

Letting Policy for
the Parish Hall



Author	Fr D Cloake
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Introduction

1.1 This document sets out the policy of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for letting the premises, in whole or in part, of the Parish Hall, St Stephen Hounslow

1.2 The Hirer” must be a responsible adult and shall accept full responsibility for the due observance in all respects of this Policy.

Intent

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

2.2 To generate revenue to support the mission and ministry of the church communities

Letting Restrictions

3.1 We (the PCC) reserve the right to refuse requests for hire by groups or for activities which, in the opinion of the PCC, are either contrary to the purposes and beliefs of the Church of England, or where we consider that such use or activities may cause offence, on grounds of their religion or belief, to a significant number of Christians.

3.2 Lettings for church use have priority. Reasonable efforts will however be made by the church not to cancel other bookings made previously.

3.3 We may request references from a new user before agreeing a booking.

3.4 We will not normally hire out the premises for any parties which will involve large groups of teenagers or young adults between the ages of 12-25, and lettings will not be taken for events likely to create noise or other nuisance to neighbours.

3.5 All events are to finish by 10.30pm and premises vacated by 30 minutes later. In very exceptional circumstances, e.g. royal celebrations, an extension may be provided. The premises will not normally be available to the Hirer before the beginning of the booking time.

Charges

4.1 We will normally charge for the use of the premises by external organisations.

4.2 Charges will be set at a reasonable rate, 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, we may refund any fees paid, but shall be under no obligation to do so. We reserve 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/deposits paid by the Hirer shall be refunded.

Access and Security

5.1 There is no full-time caretaker; the Hirer is responsible for all setting up and putting away of any equipment used. The premises must not be left 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 Parish 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 in the toilets) at the end of the letting period.

5.3 Keys may be made available via a key safe. The code to the safe should not be disclosed to any third party. The key safe should be left locked with the numbers in a random position to ensure the security of the code. The code will be changed on a regular basis.

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.

Health and Safety

6.1 Whilst the PCC will take steps to ensure the premises are safe to use, it is 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 all three buildings.

6.2 Any accident involving personal injury must be reported to the Parish Administrator and will be recorded in the Accident Book in the Parish 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 in 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 made available for inspection upon request.

6.5 The Hirer is not permitted to bring in supplementary heating appliances.

General

7.1 A strict **No Smoking Policy** applies to all areas (including toilets) in all the premises. Our premises are fitted with smoke alarms, which will be activated by cigarette smoke.

7.2 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.

7.3 The PCC reserves the right to inspect any advertising material prior to its publication. All such material must clearly display the name of the person or organisation responsible for the event.

7.4 Religious images currently in the buildings may not be moved.

7.5 No adhesive or fixing material may be used which may damage the fabric of the premises.

7.6 Chewing gum is not allowed on the premises.

7.7 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.

Parking

8.1 St Stephen Hounslow do not have any allocated parking for the use of Hirers. Parking can be obtained on local streets in accordance with the regulations applicable to each. The PCCs cannot accept any liability for fines imposed upon the Hirer in the event that they park contrary to the displayed regulations.

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 faults or deficiencies.

9.3 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. 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 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.

Kitchen Use/ Refreshments

10.1 Use of the Kitchens in the premises must be separately approved. Kitchens may be used for the preparation of tea/coffee and refreshments by approved personnel and with the prior agreement of the Administrator. It will be the responsibility of the Hirer to provide the refreshment materials unless agreed otherwise. 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 will be subject to an additional charge.

Insurance

11.1 It is the responsibility of the Hirer to effect whatever insurance he/she requires to cover his/her liabilities. Insurance effected 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.

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 Hirers must also have in mind 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 must adhere to the parish Safeguarding Policy

12.3 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.

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 security deposit.

Administration

14.1 Bookings of the premises will be administered by the Parish Administrator. This includes the acceptance and declining of bookings in consultation with the Incumbent and members of the Standing Committee of the PCC if necessary. The Incumbent will act as final arbiter if required.

Signed _____

Date _____