

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH , LOCKSHEATH, PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Letting Policy

1. Introduction

This document sets out the Lettings Policy in relation to the letting of the church premises of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Locks Heath (St John's). The premises include the Church building, the Church Hall, the Grove Room and all rooms which form part of the Church Centre.

A booking form (Booking Form for the use of the Church Hall or Centre) must be completed and signed in respect of every booking of any part of the premises. The person signing the booking form 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 over the age of 18.

2. Primary Intent

The premises are primarily to be used for the hosting and promoting of Church related activities.

A secondary function of the premises is to act as a resource to the wider Church, other Christian organisations and the community of Locks Heath, through Church activities, Church sponsored activities and suitable community activities which help to build bridges between the Church and the local community.

3. Letting Restrictions and Priorities

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

We will not, however, accept bookings for activities which are in conflict with the Christian gospel and the Church's Mission Statement; which will prevent our regular activities from functioning in full or which promote any political party or opinion. The Church reserves the **right to refuse requests** for hire by groups or for activities which, in the opinion of the Church Council (PCC), 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. No acts of worship, other than Christian worship, are permitted on the premises.

The **Church** will be let only to other Christian organisations or for the purposes of concerts or fundraising events provided that use is consistent with St John's values and beliefs.

The **Church Hall, Grove Room, Attic, Carpenter, Chatfield, Curtis and Evens Rooms** may be let directly to church members, other Christian organisations and local community organisations provided that their use is not contrary to St John's values and beliefs.

Lettings will not interfere unduly with church life. They will not normally be accepted if the premises are already booked for a church event.

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. Lettings will not normally be taken for events likely to create **noise or other nuisance** to neighbours.

Except where previously agreed by the Church Administrator, all events are to **finish by 11.00pm**, with the premises to be empty by **midnight**. The premises will not normally be available to the Hirer before the beginning of the booking time, and must be vacated 15 minutes after the end of the booking.

All lettings will be considered as falling into one of the following categories:

PRIORITY 1

Use by St John's for its own purposes, e.g. Church groups, courses or other gatherings.

PRIORITY 2

Use by other churches, Deanery, Diocesan or Ecumenical bodies.

PRIORITY 3

External groups or individuals for private use in line with the priorities and core values of the church.

PRIORITY 4

External groups or organisations for private use unconnected to the priorities or core values of the church. This also applies to Church Family members who wish to hire space for private functions.

4. Charges

We will normally charge for the use of the premises by external organisations. However, charges may be waived or reduced in exceptional circumstances in line with the statements below and at the discretion of the Church Administrator.

Charges will be set at a reasonable rate consistent with covering costs and providing a modest contribution to maintenance costs. Details of charges levied and conditions relating to the charges may be found in the document entitled "Hire Fees for Church Hall, Grove Room and Church Centre Rooms". The schedule of charges will be reviewed by the PCC on an annual basis.

Discounts for Hirers who book a significant number of hours on a regular basis may be negotiated between the Hirer and the Church Administrator. All regular Hirers who book with us for more than two sessions must sign an individual agreement between themselves and us, concerning key-holder responsibilities, security, our requirements of them and invoicing proposals.

If the Hirer wishes to cancel the booking, the Church Administrator may, with absolute discretion, refund any fees paid, but shall be under no obligation to do so. The Church Administrator reserves the right to cancel the booking if exceptional unforeseen circumstances arise. In the event of the booking being cancelled by St Johns Church, all fees/deposits paid by the Hirer shall be fully refunded.

Discounts consequent on the priority to which each hiring is assessed are as follows:

Priority 1 Hirings will be subject to a discount of 100%.

Priority 2 Hirings will be subject to a discount of 50% of the basic charge.

Priority 3 Hirings will be subject to a discount of up to 50% of the basic charge.

Priority 4 Hirings will be not normally be the subject of any discount, except when a discount for multiple hours may be negotiated with the Church Administrator. Additionally, church family bookings will not be charged for setting up or clearing away.

In case of any doubt with respect to the application of these priorities, the Church Administrator may refer the matter from the Incumbent and/or Church Wardens,

5. Access and Security

St John's does not employ a full-time caretaker; therefore the Hirer is responsible for all setting up and putting away of any equipment used.

Any letting of the premises will require a responsible person provided by the Hirer 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.

If a key is provided, then this must be safeguarded 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 practicable. The keys shall not be copied nor given or lent to any third party. If keys are provided, or the Hirer already holds a key, it is the Hirer's responsibility to ensure that all fire doors and windows are closed, all doors locked and all lights and other electrical equipment switched off (including the toilets) at the end of the letting period.

The right is reserved for a representative of the PCC, or the Church Administrator, to enter any part of the building at any time during the period of the hiring.

6. Administration

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 PCC if necessary. The Incumbent will act as final arbiter if required.

7. Car Park

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.

The Car Park is limited and any designated disabled spaces must only be used by registered disabled people. Parking is strictly at the owner's risk. The PCC can accept no liability whatsoever for cars parked in its Car Park.

8. Health and Safety

Whilst St Johns 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 and Church Hall Kitchen	Outside the Church Hall kitchen on the wall.
Attic	“
Grove Room	Under the sink in the Grove Room kitchen.
Carpenter Room	Corridor outside Evens Room and office
Chatfield Room	“
Curtis Room	“
Evens Room	“

Any accident involving personal injury must be reported to the Church Administrator to be recorded in the Accident Book located in the filing cabinet in the Church Centre Foyer. If the Church Administrator is not available then the Hirer must complete the accident entry in the Accident Book.

All entrances, exits and fire 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	250 people
Church Hall (casual use)	110 people
Church Hall (any seated)	80 people
Grove Room (casual use)	75 people
Grove Room (any seated)	45 people
Attic	10 people
Carpenter Room	6 people
Chatfield Room	6 people
Curtis Room	15 people
Evens Room	25 people.

The Hirer will be responsible for ensuring that Security, Fire, Health and Safety requirements are met. In particular the responsible person must ensure that all attendees are briefed on the fire arrangements and the emergency exit points. If attendees include people who are disabled (whether registered or not) particular arrangements must be in place in respect of an emergency.

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.

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

9. Safeguarding

The PCC actively promotes the protection of children and vulnerable adults who may use the Church Room and therefore the following safeguarding policy and practice will apply.

In this regard, booking of the Church Room will fall within the following categories:

NAMED INDIVIDUALS.

Named individuals will note and accept the Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which accompanies the booking form, in particular:

“You are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.”

PCC AND GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS AFFILIATED TO THE PCC.

PCC and groups/organisations affiliated to the PCC (Category B above) must acknowledge and adhere to the Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Policy or where specifically authorised by PCC, may be permitted to adhere to their own Safeguarding Policy a copy of which must be provided to the Parish Administrator at the time of booking.

GROUPS NOT AFFILIATED TO THE PCC BUT WITH CONNECTIONS TO THE CHURCH OR PARISH.

Groups not affiliated to the PCC but with a church connection (Category C above) must adhere to their own Safeguarding Policy a copy of which must be provided to the Parish Administrator at time of booking.

OUTSIDE GROUPS AND OTHERS.

Outside groups Category (D above) are not required to evidence a Safeguarding Policy provided that children and vulnerable adults do not attend their events. If children and vulnerable adults do attend their events then this group must follow the safeguarding practice in c) above.

10. Smoking

A strict **No Smoking Policy** applies to all rooms (including toilets) in all the premises. This applies to both **tobacco based products and E-cigarettes**.

Alcohol is permitted, but consumption must be strictly controlled and agreed in advance with the administrator. Application will be refused, if, in the opinion of the administration, people under the age of 18 will have access to alcohol. A **Licence** from the Local Authority is required in all cases where **alcohol is sold**, for a fee payable to the council. This Licence takes several weeks to process and should be applied for in advance through Fareham Borough Council. The Administrator must be informed if a Licence is to be applied for.

Any advertising material must be submitted to the Parish Administrator for approval by the Incumbent and, if needed, the Church Wardens. All such material must clearly display the name of the person or organisation responsible for the event.

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

Chewing gum is not allowed on the premises.

All rubbish must be taken from the premises by the Hirer or deposited in the outside refuse bins. No food or drink may be deposited on the ground outside the premises or in the car park.

11. Responsibilities

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

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.

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.

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 re-arrange tables and chairs in the premises, but must restore them to their original places immediately at the end of the letting.

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.

12. Kitchen Use and Refreshments

Use of the Kitchens in the premises will be separately approved. Use of the Church Hall kitchen may incur an additional cost.

Kitchens may be used for the preparation of Tea/Coffee and refreshments by approved personnel and with the prior agreement of the Church Administrator. It will be the responsibility of the Hirer to provide the refreshment materials unless agreed otherwise in the Premises Hiring Agreement. 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.

Note: children are not allowed in the kitchen.

13. Insurance

It is the responsibility of the Hirer to effect whatever insurance they require to cover their liabilities. The insurance commissioned 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.

Hirer's must arrange their own policies both for their liabilities and also contents. Hirers must confirm their insurance cover with the Church Administrator.

14. Legal Requirements

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.

Hirers must also have in mind the provisions of the Children's Act 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.

The Hirer shall not use the premises for any other purpose than that specified in the Booking Form, and is specifically forbidden to use, or allow the use of the premises or its surrounding grounds for any illegal or immoral purpose.

15. Compliance

Failure by the Hirer to comply with any or all of the terms of **The Conditions for Use for Church Hall and Church Centre Rooms 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 with no reimbursement of fees.