

## **HALL AND CENTRE USAGE POLICY**

St Paul's Church has been blessed with a hall and a centre with many rooms that enable us to meet many different needs. It is important that the use of the facilities reflects the best we can do in discharging our role as God's stewards on earth. Demand for the facilities is high and there needs to be clarity about the purposes for which they are being used and where there is a conflict, how this can be resolved. The demand for the facilities comes from three sources and they are equally important.

Firstly, there is the use of the different rooms by members of the Church family or other Christians. Some of these are for routine activities and for others, the occasional event but all are about meeting the immediate needs of Christians.

The second source is from the community looking for space to hold non-profit making activities. Whilst these are not necessarily connected with the Church in its worshipping role, they provide timely reminders that the Church is at the centre of community life and provides opportunities for outreach.

Thirdly, there are those groups which are overtly profit-making and need accommodation within the community to hold their activities. Provided this group is not engaged in activities that conflict with Christian principles, they are welcome as they provide income that facilitates further our work of connecting with our local community.

There is a wide choice of rooms available but unless some clear rules are laid down about their allocation it is inevitable that there will be clashes of events and this can cause unnecessary frustration. This is especially true if a facility being used by a profit-making group is wanted by a church group as where possible the latter must take priority. However, once a contract, with its inbuilt safeguards has been agreed with a group, we must adhere to its provisions and it can be difficult to reconcile the conflicting demands. Ideally we need a solution that separates those facilities used predominantly for profit-making from those used for other purposes. Fortunately, we have the church hall away from the other accommodation which should, in priority terms, be used for profit making events. This is the current position and when vacancies occur there we should continue to offer that facility for profit-making use. Where and when possible we should encourage existing profit-making organisations who are using church centre facilities to move to the hall but, of course, not in a way that might cause offence.

In terms of letting prices, we should ensure that the charge we make to profit-making organisations reflects the market. Whilst we would not want to charge excessively, neither should we be subsidising profit-making activities by our generosity. We need to ensure that profit-making users are aware that our pricing policy will bring us into line

with organisations letting similar facilities elsewhere and that it is our intention to move progressively to that position with above-inflation increases in charges where necessary.

Profit-making users should be given at least three months' notice of forthcoming price rises.

In determining the priorities in usage of St Paul's premises, the following considerations determined by the PCC in July 2019 will apply:

1. The purpose of the St Paul's buildings is to facilitate the vision of the Church of seeing 'Lives Transformed by Jesus'.
2. No application will be entertained from an organisation whose aims or activities are incompatible with the tenets of the Anglican Church. Such groups include, but are not limited to the following: the martial arts, freemasonry, groups from other faiths, yoga or political parties.
3. Any organisation wishing to use the facilities must recognise that St Paul's is a Christian Church.
4. The Church itself may only be used for specifically Christian purposes and its use agreed by the Minister and/or Churchwardens.
5. Use of the premises for Church purposes will, whenever possible, take priority.
6. Use of the premises to meet the social needs of people within the proximity will take precedence over recreational and purely commercial use.
7. Implicit in any agreement that includes use of the kitchen is an understanding on the part of the hirer that the usage is on the basis of adherence to the current law in respect of food handling and absolves St Paul's Church from any liability. (Further information on Catering and Food Handling Issues can be obtained from Surrey Heath Borough Council, Environmental Health Department.)
8. All rubbish/left over food is to be removed from the premises.
9. The rooms hired must be left clean and in the same condition in which they were found.
10. Any damage or breakages must be reported to the Church Office and paid for by the hirer.
11. All lights must be extinguished, windows closed and the front door must be shut securely upon departure.
12. Government or local government funded and profit making organisations must always pay the full economic cost of usage.
13. The user must provide evidence of Public Liability insurance that includes indemnity to St Paul's as Principals unless alternative prior arrangements have been agreed.

14. Any agreement shall be capable of termination with three months' notice. In the event of the agreement being breached, the notice period can be waived.
15. Those wishing to hold raffles or similar activities must gain permission from the Church Office. Similarly those wishing to consume alcohol at a special event must seek permission from the Church Office and if selling alcohol or playing music, obtain the necessary Temporary Event Notice approval from Surrey Heath Borough Council and provide evidence of this approval to the Church Office.
16. All new bookings must be approved by the Church Administrator. If the suitability of a proposed activity is in doubt it should be referred to the Minister and/or Churchwardens.
17. The PCC reserves the right to make available, for individuals or organisations, information about the work and activities of the Church and its groups.
18. All hirers need to be made aware of Fire Safety procedures and any relevant Health and Safety Issues and are responsible for making their participants aware of these.
19. St Paul's Church, the vicar, churchwardens and the PCC do not accept liability for loss or damage to property or injury to any persons arising out of the use of St Paul's Church or St Paul's Church Hall and/or facilities.

July 2019