

Church Hall Hire: Terms and Conditions

St Peter's, Colchester

Adopted by the PCC: March 2026

Review date: March 2029

Policy owner: The Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council ('the PCC') of St Peter's is pleased to make the Church Hall available for hire by the community.

By making a booking, the Hirer accepts the terms and conditions set out below.

Bookings

1. Booking requests must be made using the online booking form. (A £25 admin fee will be applied in cases where alternative booking and payment provision is required.)
2. Once a booking has been agreed in principle, the prospective Hirer will receive an email with their invoice and a link enabling online payment. The booking is not secured until the required deposit or payment has been received.
3. The PCC reserves the right to change or cancel any booking. Except in extreme circumstances, one month's notice of such changes will be given.
4. The Hirer must not use the premises for any purpose other than that clearly described on the Booking Form. There must be no sub-hiring, illegal activity, or any activity that risks damage to people or property, nothing that would void insurance, and nothing that would bring reputational damage to the PCC.
5. Use of the Hall for any act of worship, spiritual ministry, religious or political address, or lecture, must be made clear on the booking form. Such use requires prior written approval from the Vicar. (Details of the programme must be emailed to the Vicar at least four weeks before the proposed event, and the booking will not be confirmed until the Vicar has agreed to the proposals in writing.)
6. The PCC does not normally permit bookings earlier than 8:00am or later than 10:30pm on any day of the week.
7. It is not normally our policy to accommodate 18th or 21st Birthday parties.

Safeguarding

8. The Hirer must comply with [St Peter's Safeguarding Policy](#) insofar as it applies to the Hirer's use of the premises, and must follow St Peter's Safeguarding Expectations for Hirers. Where the event involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Hirer is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place,

including supervision, safer recruitment, DBS checks where legally required, suitable safeguarding training, risk assessment, and clear reporting procedures. The Hirer must inform St Peter's promptly of any safeguarding concern connected with use of the premises, or any concern which may create a safeguarding, legal, insurance or reputational risk for St Peter's.

9. If the event involves children (under 18) or vulnerable adults, the Hirer is required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any injury, loss, damage or harm, and ensuring that all appropriate children's statutes are complied with. It is the Hirer's responsibility to ensure that leaders have been DBS checked as legally required and have undertaken suitable safeguarding training. It may not be necessary for all adults present to be DBS checked (e.g. parents/carers who are not also leaders), however the responsibility for determining this lies with the Hirer; further information can be found on the Government's DBS website.

Access and Departure

10. Keys must be collected from the KeySafe by the Hirer or the designated Responsible Person at the start of the allotted booking time. (The code will be emailed to the Hirer in advance of the date.) Keys must not be removed from the premises, must not be lent to another person, and must be returned to the KeySafe by the end of the allotted hire period.
11. If keys are lost, the Hirer will be liable for costs of cutting all replacement keys and, if necessary, the costs of replacing all the locks affected by the lost key.
12. The Hirer must ensure that stewards and guests are aware of the hire period and that no-one enters before, or leaves after, the agreed hire period.
13. The Hirer must unlock the emergency exits at the start of the hire period.
14. The Hirer is responsible for leaving the premises and surrounding area in a clean and tidy condition. (Cleaning supplies and a Hoover are kept in the kitchen.) Any items moved from their usual positions must be properly replaced.
15. No property may be left unattended on church premises without the written permission of the PCC. Any property left behind is at the Hirer's risk and may be disposed of without warning by the PCC.
16. The Hirer must allow any duly authorised officer or employee of the PCC to access any part of the premises during the hire period.
17. The Hirer is responsible for ensuring all exterior doors and windows are securely locked when they depart.

Charges and Cancellations

18. Information about hire charges is available from the Bookings Administrator. Discounted prices may be available for regular 'block bookings' comprising 10 or more sessions.

19. For 'one off' bookings: A non-refundable deposit is required to secure the booking. This deposit will be equal to the cost of the first two hours of the booking. The balance must be paid no later than 28 days prior to the event, or at the time of booking if fewer than 28 days remain.
20. For 'block' bookings: A non-refundable deposit is required to secure the booking. This deposit will be equal to the cost of the first four sessions. Hire charges will then be invoiced monthly in arrears. The original deposit will be held until the end of the agreed hire period and applied to the final invoice. Any surplus will be refunded assuming there have been no damages or cleaning costs incurred by the PCC.
21. For all bookings, notice of cancellation must be made in writing to office@stpeterscolchester.org and will become effective on the date received by the Church Office. Cancellation charges prior to the event will be applied as detailed below:
 - more than 28 days' notice: Non-refundable deposit only
 - 28 -15 days' notice: 50% of the total cost
 - 14 days or fewer: 100% of the total cost
22. The PCC reserves the right to cancel a booking if necessitated by circumstances beyond their control. Money paid to the PCC in advance will be refunded, but the PCC does not accept liability for any other losses incurred due to the cancellation of an event.

Insurance and Licences

23. The Hirer must maintain an insurance policy against any loss, liability, claim or proceeding incurred by, or which may be brought against, the PCC or themselves in respect of any injury or damage whatsoever to any person or property, arising out of the use and occupation of the property for the sum of £2,000,000 (two million pounds) for Public and Product Liability and for the sum of £10,000,000 (ten million pounds) for Employer's Liability (where applicable) for any one claim, the number of claims being unlimited. For smaller social events Hirers are advised to check their personal property insurance as this level of insurance may already be covered under their policy. For larger social events Hirers are advised to seek additional insurance to cover all aspects of their event.
24. It is the Hirer's responsibility to obtain any requisite licences. The PCC must be notified in writing that such licences have been sought and granted. The Hirer must indemnify the PCC and keep it indemnified in relation to any liability in this respect.
25. The PCC accepts no responsibility for the property of persons attending or organising an event. Any property brought onto the premises is done so entirely at the owner's risk.

Health and Safety

26. The Hirer is the responsible person for all Health and Safety matters relating to an event and must be present to deal with any Health and Safety matters that occur. This responsibility may be delegated to another person who must attend the event. The

name of this Responsible Person must be provided on booking if this is different from the Hirer.

27. Full written details of any accident or incident (including damages and breakages) must be submitted to the PCC within 24 hours. The PCC reserves the right to charge the Hirer for the full amount of any costs thus incurred.
28. First Aid supplies can be found in the (marked) cupboard in the kitchen. Please record any usage in the book provided and inform the church office, by email, of any major incidents.
29. The Hirer must provide suitable numbers of stewards and ensure that assistance is always available for those attending the event, particularly persons with disabilities.
30. Fire exits and extinguishers must be always kept clear and visible. Fire doors must not be propped open. The Hirer is responsible for ensuring that people attending an event are aware of the fire evacuation procedures, including the location of the fire exits. All doors on escape routes should be easy to open while the premises are occupied. It is the Hirer's responsibility to unlock the fire doors at the start of a session and to lock them at the end of the session using the keys provided in the kitchen cupboard.
31. No smoking or vaping is permitted anywhere on the premises, including in the churchyard.
32. The use of candles, incense sticks or similar is not permitted without written consent from the PCC. Permission must be sought, by email, at least 4 weeks prior to the event.
33. In accordance with the advice of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the maximum capacity for the church hall is as follows:
 - 60 persons (seated at tables) or
 - 100 persons (close seated or standing)
34. The Hirer must ensure that no alteration is made to the light fittings or other electrics without permission and must permit no nail, screw, hook, drawing pin or fastening of any kind to be driven into the structure, furniture or fittings of the Hall. The Hirer is liable to be charged for any damages caused to the hall by decorations.
35. No posters, advertising or decorations may be placed anywhere on the premises without the express permission of the Vicar or Churchwardens.
36. The Hirer is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of all people attending the event. The PCC reserves the right to terminate the event, without any refund of costs, if the conduct and behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable.

Catering

37. If using the kitchen, the Hirer must comply with current legislation and regulations concerning food hygiene and preparation. Further details can be found on the food.gov.uk website. The PCC accepts no liability for food and refreshments provided by the Hirer.
38. Use of oven or hobs must be requested at the time of booking.
39. Leftover food and drink must be removed from the premises after the event.

40. If the Hirer wishes for alcohol to be brought onto the premises, this must be made clear on the booking form, and the request will be considered by the churchwardens. If the alcohol is to be sold (or supplied for reward or contribution) the Hirer must also apply to Colchester City Council for a Temporary Event Notice under section 100 of the Licensing Act 2003. A copy of this Notice must be emailed to the PCC at least 10 days before the event.

Storage

41. Storage facilities for hirers may occasionally become available at extra cost. This is subject to availability and in accordance with strict terms and conditions. Where relevant, this hire agreement will be entered into by mutual agreement and confirmed by email to the church office. In these cases:
- a. Storage charges will be added to invoices monthly, in arrears.
 - b. Only low-cost, non-perishable, non-leaking, non-hazardous, and non-flammable items may be stored.
 - c. All items must fit securely within the allocated storage space.
 - d. Storage areas may be accessed by others. All items are stored entirely at the Hirer's risk and are not insured by St Peter's Church against any theft, loss, or damage.
 - e. Access to storage areas is limited to the Hirer's booked hours only.
 - f. Storage arrangements may be terminated by either party with one month's written notice, or with immediate effect if the terms of the agreement are breached by the Hirer.

Data Protection

The Hirer acknowledges that the PCC has a lawful basis to process and retain all data supplied while making a booking. This information is kept in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and our policy can be seen here: [Data Privacy](#)

Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all information provided. The PCC does not accept liability for any errors or omissions and reserves the right to amend any information at any time.