



WATER LANE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2JZ

Charity No. 1129836

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR HIRERS – 2025

This section contains all legally binding clauses, rules, and obligations that hirers must follow.

1. Safeguarding

Water Lane URC takes the **safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults** very seriously. We expect all hirers to do the same by either having their own Safeguarding Policy with a nominated Safeguarding Officer or by agreeing to follow the Church's Safeguarding Policy. You can find our policy and statement on the Water Lane URC website at www.waterlaneurc.org.uk.

2. General Terms

- **Definitions:** "Church" refers to Water Lane United Reformed Church, its agents, and its facilities. "Hirer" refers to the individual or group making the booking, who is jointly and severally liable for all actions.
 - **Booking Policy:** The Church reserves the right to accept or decline any booking without explanation and to prioritise bookings that align with its mission. All bookings are provisional until confirmed by the Church.
 - **Termination:** The Church reserves the right to cancel a booking without compensation if the space is needed for Church purposes or to terminate any booking without notice if these terms are not followed.
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3. Booking and Payments

- **Occasional Bookings:** Full payment is required within **7 days** of the invoice and before the event.
 - **Regular Bookings:** You will be invoiced monthly or quarterly, by arrangement, with payment due within **14 days**. Overdue payments may lead to a week's advance payment requirement or cancellation of the arrangement.
 - **Cancellation Policy:** A minimum of **one week's notice** is required. The full payment is due if the booking is cancelled with less than one week's notice.
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4. Your Responsibilities

- **Health and Safety:** You are responsible for your group's health and safety. **Hirers must conduct and maintain their own risk assessments.** You must appoint a person responsible for evacuation.
 - **Prohibited Actions:** You must not block emergency exits, obstruct corridors, or tamper with fire appliances. You may not use flammable substances, open flames, or fireworks.
 - **Supervision:** Children must be supervised at all times.
- **Licensing and Prohibited Activities:** You are responsible for obtaining all necessary licences for your event.
 - **Music:** You are responsible for any licenses your event requires. For music, this may include public performance licences. You must ensure you have the appropriate licences in place.
 - **Alcohol:** The Church is not licensed for alcohol supply or sales. Serving alcohol requires prior permission and must comply with all licensing laws. Guests may not bring their own alcohol.
 - **Prohibited Items:** Bouncy castles, inflatables, pyrotechnics, fireworks, flares, naked flames, LPG appliances, and highly flammable substances are not allowed.
 - **Prohibited Activities:** Gambling, gaming, lotteries, jumble sales, or auctions are not permitted without prior permission.
- **Conduct and Security:** You must ensure all individuals maintain decent, sober, and orderly conduct.
 - **Noise:** Noise, particularly from amplified music, must be kept at a level that does not disturb neighbours.
 - **Smoking:** Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere in the building or on its grounds.
 - **Security:** You are responsible for the building's security during your hire period and must lock all external doors upon departure.

5. Use of Church Facilities

- **Respectful Use:** You are responsible for the condition of the property and its contents. You must report any damage or loss.
- **Equipment:** You must not interfere with the Church's electrical, heating, plumbing, or AV installations. Any electrical appliances you bring must have a valid Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) certificate.
- **Kitchen & Storage:** You are responsible for complying with Food Hygiene regulations if you hire the kitchen for cooking. The Church does not provide storage; all belongings must be removed at the end of the hire period.

6. Liability & Insurance

- **Disclaimer:** The Church accepts no responsibility or liability for any loss, damage, or injury to persons or property arising from the hire.
- **Indemnity:** You agree to indemnify the Church against any damages or claims resulting from your use of the facilities. You are also liable for the cost of repairing any damage.
- **Insurance:** You are responsible for ensuring your use of the Church is covered by public liability insurance. This is included for single, non-commercial events, but you must provide your own coverage if your event is commercial or you charge for entry. You are also liable for any increased insurance premiums the Church incurs due to your activities.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR HIRERS

This section provides practical details and helpful advice to support a successful event.

1. General Information

- **Booking:** Bookings are made via our online calendar system on the website.
- **Keys:** The Hirer is responsible for arranging the collection and return of the keys with the Bookings Team.
- **Concessions:** Reductions on charges may be available for regular bookings or for voluntary organisations and charity events.
- **End Time:** All bookings must end by **10:00 p.m.** unless a prior arrangement is made.
- **Overnight Bookings:** The Church is not available for overnight bookings.

2. Your Event

- **Fire Safety:** You are recommended to appoint one fire marshal for every 60 people and two for larger groups. You are responsible for creating an evacuation plan appropriate for your group.
- **First Aid:** An emergency first aid kit is in the kitchen. Please inform the Booking Team the next day of any incident and items used.
- **Emergency Contact:** For life-threatening emergencies, dial **999**. For other emergencies, see details posted in the building.
- **Music and Performance:** You are responsible for obtaining all necessary licences for any music used during your event. This may include public performance licences, which cover the right to play music in a public space.
- **Animals:** Only guide dogs and other assistance animals are permitted inside the building. No animals are permitted in the kitchen.

3. Use of Facilities

- **Heating and Lighting:** Heating is preset. Guidance on lighting presets will be available. You are not permitted to bring your own portable heaters.
- **Occupancy Limits:** Maximum occupancy numbers for each area are posted in the building.
 - Main Worship Area/Sanctuary: Standing: **180**, Seated (theatre style): **120**, Seated (at tables): **80**.
 - The Gallery (First Floor): Seated in pews: **100**. (No under-18s in the front row).
 - The Welcoming Area: Seated (theatre style): **40**, Seated (at tables): **30**.
- **Parking & Outside Space:** The outside area is for loading, unloading, and use by Church members or those with mobility needs. Public multi-storey car parks are nearby. You are responsible for supervising vehicle movements.
- **Set-up and Takedown:** You are responsible for setting up and returning tables and chairs. Please note that a **£50 fee** will be charged for lost keys.
- **Final Exit Procedures:** Before leaving, you must:
 - Remove all belongings and rubbish.
 - Clean kitchen surfaces and empty the fridge.
 - Ensure all windows are shut and lights are off.
 - Lock the outer door and return keys as arranged.

4. Contact Information

If you have questions, please email bookings@waterlaneurc.org.uk. The Church is run by volunteers, so please be patient as we will respond as quickly as we can.