

Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting

HIRINGS POLICY AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR LETTING OF PREMISES

HIRING POLICY (from SMAQM website)

Date agreed by Trustees: 25 May 2023

Date agreed by Area Meeting:

Date for Review: 2027

This policy should be read in parallel with Quaker Faith and Practice (5th edition) 14.27. Reference should also be made to SMAQM Memorandum of Understanding 6c and Risk Register, Finance and Governance sections.

Meeting Houses are primarily places of public worship. Lettings and Hirings should take place only to bodies in accord with Quaker values and be sensitive to the feelings of the worshipping community.

We are encouraged to use our Meeting Houses for educational and other suitable purposes which serve the needs of the people living in our neighbourhoods. As premises used by the public, Meeting Houses must meet certain statutory requirements in respect of fire precautions, safety and hygiene. Those using our meeting houses should be expected to make an appropriate financial contribution to the running expenses and upkeep. In calculating this the starting point should be the total annual cost of the premises including insurance, compliance, housekeeping, specific cleaning due to covid or other regulations etc. The proportion to be attributed to hirers will depend on the nature and number of hirers and will need to be agreed by the relevant LQM MfWfB. In no case should the standard rate of charge be below the estimated cost of running the premises for the period of hire, **unless** a subsidy or discount has been agreed by the LQM MfWfB due to the group or activities being a minuted concern of the Meeting. (While all hirers will be those who F/friends will wish to support, there may be occasions where the LQM may wish to encourage an impecunious hirer by means of a discount from the standard rate of charge. Legally any such discount to a hirer outside SMAQM would count as a donation by SMAQM from its charitable funds. The option above allows the LQM MfWfB, by minute, to effectively give a discount, but in right ordering. If the sum is significant AM Trustees should consent.)

Below are the terms and conditions for hiring a property within the Area Meeting. which should be sent to every hirer when they first make a booking. Long term leasing must be approved by the Trustees.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR LETTING OF PREMISES

These Terms and Conditions are to be incorporated into all Hire Agreements relating to SMAQM property

They may form part of a booking form or a separate document as appropriate.

Wording below in normal type face should be included as written.

Wording below in italics provides guidance as to the matters which must be covered, but the actual wording will vary for each Meeting. Many points will seem obvious, but each represents a lesson which has been learnt the hard way.

Preamble

The Meeting House is owned and used by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and we welcome its use by other organisations when not needed by Friends. To ensure appropriate use we reserve the right to ask for information about the aims and activities of hirers in order to ensure that these do not conflict with our values. We reserve the right to cancel/amend a booking if the room is urgently required for Friends use (for funerals, memorial meetings, etc).

1. Identity of the Hirer

The identity of the hirer and the "Named Person" i.e. the person present at the hire, and taking responsibility for the conduct of the participants, if not the hirer, should be clearly stated.

If the fee is to be invoiced, the person to make payment should sign the booking form, or a Purchase Requisition provided before the booking is confirmed.

2. Identity of the LQM Friend taking the booking

Should be clearly stated

3. Premises/Room(s) hired, dates, times and period of hire

Should be clearly stated in a manner which cannot be misinterpreted, and should include details of any facilities or equipment shared between hirers or not included in the hire

4. Rate of charge and total amount payable

5. Named Person

It is the responsibility of the named person, who signs the hire agreement, to ensure that conditions of hire and instructions for room use are fully complied with. A new conditions form must be signed if it is necessary to change the named person.

The named person must ensure that the person in charge at the time of an activity has seen and complies with the instructions for room use

6. Keys

Responsibility for keys, amount of deposit etc. Specific to each premises.

7. Subletting is prohibited

8. No smoking, drug use or gambling (including raffles) is permitted on the premises. Candles may not be used. Special permission should be sought if it is wished to have alcohol on the premises.

9. Fire Safety Procedures

There must be a designated person in charge of your group who is the 'responsible person' in the event of fire or other emergency. Their name and contact details must be notified to the Friend dealing with Meeting House bookings before your group meets. In the event of a fire, it is the responsibility of the designated person to be aware of evacuation procedures (*NB This section will have to be adapted to to each specific building*).

10. PEL - As our Meeting Houses do not have a Public Entertainment Licence, activities must not be advertised with an admission charge.

11. Maximum number of people in the building

Specific to safety Certificate for each premises

12. Public Liability Insurance for Hirers' activities

The Society of Friends (Quakers) is insured for its own public liability. This insurance does not cover the activities or property of Hirers, who are advised to arrange such insurance that they may need. Where Hirers bring electrical equipment on to the premises they should check with the Local Meeting representative. Hirer's property should not be left in the building between hires unless agreed in writing with the LQM Friend responsible for the booking.

13. Food preparation

State whether or not facilities for hot drinks preparation are available. that storage of foodstuffs between hires is not permitted, and that our Meeting Houses do not have facilities approved by the Local Authorities as suitable for food preparation for public consumption – unless of course you do have a certificate!

14. Mail

We cannot accept responsibility for any mail addressed to the Meeting House

15. Use of the premises does not imply that an activity or an organisation is sponsored or endorsed by the Society of Friends; advertisements must not be worded so that our endorsement is implied.

16. We reserve the right to levy a cancellation charge when appropriate.

17. We reserve the right to refuse further bookings if any of these conditions are breached

18. Animals

State whether animals other than Assistance Dogs are permitted

19. Safeguarding

If the Hirer's event includes children and/or vulnerable persons, then the letting is on the condition that the Hirer has safeguarding arrangements in place.

20. Risk assessments

The letting is subject to the condition that the Hirer has carried out an appropriate Risk Assessment relating to the Hirer's proposed activity.

The Quaker Meeting will have carried out a risk assessment related to its normal activities.

May 2023