

Marriage Act 1949 and Civil Partnership Act 2004

Application for premises to be approved as a venue for marriages and civil partnerships

This form must be completed and forwarded to the Superintendent Registrar at The Register Office, York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham, TW1 3AA, together with the appropriate fee, cheques made payable to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

If you should have any queries please contact The Register Office on 020 8891 7188.

Please complete all questions in the form. If you have nothing to record please state N/A or None. If necessary continue answers on a separate sheet.

Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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1. APPLICANT

Applicant Details	
Full name	Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss
Email address	
Main contact telephone number	
Other contact telephone number	
Indicate here if you would prefer not to be contacted by telephone <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please specify if you are applying as a business, organisation, sole trader or individual?	
Is your business registered in the UK with Companies House? <input type="checkbox"/> registered outside the UK <input type="checkbox"/>	
Business name (if registered use registered name)	
VAT number	
Legal Status (e.g. Ltd Co)	
Your position in the business	
Country where business headquarters is located	
Business address and postcode	
Country	

2. TYPE OF APPROVAL

Type of approval requested	New <input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal <input type="checkbox"/>
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3. PREMISES TO BE APPROVED

Name of premises / trading name		
Address of premises and postcode		
Email address		
Telephone number		
Nature of the premises (e.g. hotel, stately home, civic accommodation)		
Primary and other uses to which the premises are regularly put		

4. OCCUPIER OF THE PREMISES

Are you the sole occupier of the premises?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If 'No' please provide details of the other occupiers		
Name		
Address of premises and postcode		
Email address		
Telephone number		
Nature of their occupancy		
Is the occupier aware of this application?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

5. CEREMONY ROOMS / LOCATIONS

Total number of rooms / locations for which you are seeking approval for ceremonies	
In addition, is there a room that the registrars can use before ceremonies, to interview the couple?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of first room / location	
Dimensions in metres	
Maximum number permitted to occupy the room / location under your fire risk assessment	
Description of the room / location	

Name of second room / location	
Dimensions in metres	
Maximum number permitted to occupy the room / location under your fire risk assessment	
Description of the room / location	

Name of third room / location	
Dimensions in metres	
Maximum number permitted to occupy the room / location under your fire risk assessment	
Description of the room / location	

Name of fourth room / location	
Dimensions in metres	
Maximum number permitted to occupy the room / location under your fire risk assessment	
Description of the room / location	

6. RESPONSIBLE PERSON

Details of the person who will be responsible for coordination of activities on the day of the ceremony plus one or more deputies.

Full Name	
Position / job title	
Address and postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Full Name of first deputy	
Position / job title	
Address and postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Full Name of second deputy	
Position / job title	
Address and postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Full Name of third deputy	
Position / job title	
Address and postcode	
Email address	
Telephone number	

7. FORMALITIES

Are the premises covered by public liability insurance?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of insurance company			
Policy number			
Period of cover			
Extent of cover (£m)			
Will the policy cover use of the premises for ceremonies?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do the premises have a current fire risk assessment?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of assessment (please attach copy to this application)			
Do the premises have a relevant licence under Licensing or Entertainment legislation?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please state which licence(s) and attach copy / copies to this application			
Do the premises require any planning permission before they can be used for civil ceremonies?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, has planning permission been obtained? (please attach evidence)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Copy of relevant permissions / correspondence re planning permission attached?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Will the premises be regularly available for members of the public for ceremonies?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do the premises have any recent or ongoing connection with religion or religious activity?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

DECLARATION

1. I apply for the premises named at item 2 of the application form to be approved for regular use by the public as a venue for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies in the presence of a Superintendent Registrar.
2. I attach a copy of the plan of the premises showing the room(s) in which it is intended that ceremonies will take place.
3. I understand that:
 - (a) the premises will be inspected for suitability before approval is granted and, if this application is successful, may be subject to subsequent inspection.
 - (b) before the approval can be granted, a public notice publicising this application must be displayed on the council's website to allow a period of 21 days for any public objections;
 - (c) approval, if granted, will be for a five year period, subject to revocation, and;
 - (d) the premises must satisfy the local authority on fire precautions and health and safety provisions.
4. I declare that:
 - (a) I have read and understood the information contained in this form and Annexes A, B and C; and,
 - (b) the building has no recent or continuing religious connection; and;
 - (c) I have consulted the planning authority as to whether planning consent is required and attach evidence that it is content that the premises may be used for ceremonies.
5. I further declare that, if approval is granted:
 - (a) the premises will be regularly available for public use as a venue; and,
 - (b) I will comply with the standard conditions (Annex A and B) and any local conditions attached to that grant of approval.

Signature of applicant _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

This application must be made by the proprietor or a trustee of the premises. If successful the applicant will be the holder of the approval.

NOTES ON THE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE AN APPROVAL CAN BE GRANTED

Please see our current fees and charges list, and submit the appropriate fee with the application, to the Superintendent Registrar, The Register Office, York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham, TW1 3AA.

The application must be made by the proprietor or trustee of the premises. When made on behalf of a limited company there should be a separate statement of the names and addresses of all the directors.

The premises must fulfil the following standard requirements in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

- ◆ Having regard to their primary use, situation, construction and state of repair, the premises must, in the opinion of the authority, be a seemly and dignified venue for the celebration of marriages and civil partnerships.
- ◆ The premises must be regularly available to the public for use for the celebration of marriages and civil partnerships.
- ◆ The premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the local authority, having consulted with the fire authority, and such other reasonable provision for the health and safety of persons employed in or visiting the premises as the local authority considers appropriate.
- ◆ The premises must have no recent or continuing connection with any religion, religious practice or religious persuasion, which would be incompatible with the use of the premises for the celebration of marriages and civil partnerships.
- ◆ The room or rooms in which ceremonies of marriage and civil partnerships will take place must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the premises.

In considering the suitability of premises as a venue the local authority will have regard to the following Guidance from the Registrar General.

- ◆ The law is intended to allow civil ceremonies to take place regularly in hotels, stately homes, civic halls and similar premises without compromising the fundamental principles of English law and Parliament's intention to maintain the solemnity of the occasion. The term "premises" is defined in Regulation 2(1) and there are restrictions introduced in Schedule 1. These will mean that certain premises would not be suitable for approval.
- ◆ Ceremonies must take place in readily identifiable premises. This will preclude them from taking place in the open air, in a tent, marquee or any other temporary structure and in most forms of transport.
- ◆ Ceremonies must take place in premises with open doors, which the Registrar General interprets to mean that the public must have unfettered access to witness the ceremony and make objections prior to or during the ceremony.
- ◆ A private house is unlikely to be an appropriate venue for civil ceremony. It would not be known to the public as an approved venue or regularly available for their use.
- ◆ The primary use of a building would also render it unsuitable if that use could demean marriage and civil partnerships or bring them into disrepute.
- ◆ The secular nature of civil ceremonies precludes the use of any building with a recent or continuing religious connection. This effectively rules out any building or room whose description, purpose or appearance is still considered to be linked to religion. A chapel in a stately home and a building containing furniture or fittings associated with a place of religious worship, or which has stained glass windows depicting a religious image are examples of a continuing religious connection. However, premises in which a religious group meets occasionally may be suitable if the primary use of the premises is secular.
- ◆ Ceremonies on approved premises may be followed by a celebration, commemoration or blessing of the couple's choice, providing that it is not a religious ceremony and is separate from the civil ceremony. However, if a religious blessing were to regularly follow ceremonies on particular premises, or be considered part of the service being offered on the premises, there may well be a religious connection which would breach the requirements and lead to the local authority having to consider revoking the approval.

STANDARD CONDITIONS FOR APPROVED PREMISES VENUE FOR REGISTRATION OF CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS ON RELIGIOUS PREMISES

The following standard conditions from Schedule 2 of the Regulations are attached to all approvals:

1. The holder of the approval must ensure that there is at all times an individual with responsibility for ensuring compliance with these conditions ("the responsible person"), and that the responsible person's occupation, seniority, position of responsibility in relation to the premises, or other factors ("qualification"), indicate that they are in a position to ensure compliance with these conditions.
2. The responsible person or, in their absence, an appropriately qualified deputy appointed by them, shall be available on the premises for a minimum of one hour prior to each marriage ceremony / formation of civil partnership and throughout each ceremony.
3. The holder must notify the authority:
 - (a) of their name and address immediately upon becoming the holder of an approval under regulation 7(2), and
 - (b) of the name, address and qualification of the responsible person immediately upon the appointment of a new responsible person.
4. The holder must also notify the authority immediately of any change to any of the following:
 - (a) the layout of the premises, as shown in the plan submitted with the approved application, or in the use of the premises,
 - (b) the name or full postal address of the approved premises,
 - (c) the description of the room or rooms in which the solemnisation of marriages, or formation of civil partnerships are to take place,
 - (d) the name or address of the holder of the approval; and
 - (f) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.
5. The approved premises must be available at all reasonable times for inspection by the authority.
6. A suitable notice stating that the premises have been approved for the celebration of marriages / civil partnerships, and identifying and giving directions to the room in which a ceremony is to take place must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to the ceremony and throughout each ceremony.
7. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which a marriage or civil partnership ceremony takes place for one hour prior to that ceremony or during that ceremony.
8. All marriage / civil partnership ceremonies must take place in the room(s) identified on the plan submitted with the approved application.
9. The room in which a marriage / civil partnership is celebrated must be separate from any other activity on the premises at the time of the ceremony. Doors leading to and from the room should be closed, unobstructed and readily available during the ceremony.
10. The arrangements for and content of each ceremony must meet with the prior approval of the Superintendent Registrar of the district in which the approved premises is situated.

11. (a) Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.
 - (b) In particular, the proceedings shall not –
 - (i) include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;
 - (ii) be led by a minister of religion or other religious leader;
 - (iii) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals.
 - (iv) include hymns or other religious chants; or
 - (v) include any form of worship
 - (d) But the proceedings may include readings, songs, or music that contains an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.
 - (e) For this purpose any material used by way of introduction to, in any interval between parts of, or by way of conclusion to the proceedings shall be treated as forming part of the proceedings.
12. Public access to any ceremony of marriage / civil partnership solemnised in approved premises must be permitted without charge.
 13. Any reference to the approval of premises on any sign or notice, or on any stationery or publication, or within any advertisement may state that the premises have been approved by the authority as a venue for marriage in pursuance of section 26(1)(bb) of the Marriage Act, and as venue for civil partnership formation under the Civil Partnership Act, but shall not state or imply any recommendation of the premises or its facilities by the authority, the Registrar General or any of the officers or employees of either of them.
 14. The responsible person shall take all reasonable precautions to protect the safety of the public and employees.
 15. Overcrowding shall not be allowed in the premises.
 16. All doorway and any corridors, staircases or external passageways intended for exit purposes shall be kept entirely free from obstruction, and all exit doors shall be kept immediately available for use.
 17. All exits shall be clearly marked.
 18. In the absence of daylight, normal lighting (sometimes referred to as artificial lighting) to the Council's satisfaction shall be maintained in all parts of the premises.
 19. In addition to the provision of normal lighting, all parts of the premises shall, in the absence of daylight, be provided with an approved system of escape (secondary) lighting supplied from an electricity source independent of the normal lighting.
 20. Any open fireplace or other high temperature heating appliance shall be guarded to the satisfaction of the Council.
 21. Adequate ventilation shall be maintained while the public are on the premises.
 22. All requirements of the Fire Authority must be complied with at all times when the public are on the premises.
 23. Facilities must be provided to enable users with mobility problems to gain access to the approved premises.
 24. The room in which marriages / civil partnerships are celebrated must have appropriate seating capacity.
 25. A separate room must be provided at the approved premises for pre-ceremony questioning by the Registrar.
 26. Adequate toilet facilities, to the satisfaction of the Council, must be available for use by the public attending ceremonies.
 27. Adequate car parking facilities (two spaces), to the satisfaction of the Council, must be provided at the approved premises.
 28. Noise from any other activities in the premises must not be allowed to intrude during the ceremony.
 29. All confetti etc. outside the premises must be cleared on the day of the ceremony.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RENEWAL

1. The holder may apply for the renewal of an approval when the current approval has between six and twelve months to run. An application for renewal made in this period will extend the current approval until the application has been finally dealt with. A renewal will run from the expiry date of the current approval.

REVOCATION

2. The authority may revoke an approval if it is satisfied, after considering any representations from the holder, that the use or structure of the premises has changed so that any of the standard or local requirements cannot be met or the holder has failed to comply with one or more of the standard or local conditions attached to the approval.
3. The Registrar General may direct the authority to revoke an approval if, in his opinion and after considering any representations from the holder, there have been breaches of the law relating to civil partnership on the approved premises.
4. When an approval has been revoked the regulations require the former holder to notify any couples who had arranged to use the premises.

REVIEWS

5. An applicant may seek a review by the local authority of its decision to refuse to grant an approval, to attach local conditions, to refuse to renew an approval or to revoke an approval.
6. The review will be carried out by the Licensing and Registration Sub-Committee. The review sub-committee may confirm the decision, rescind it or vary it with the imposition of fresh or further conditions.
7. The authority may charge an additional fee for a review of its decision to refuse to grant an approval, to attach local conditions or to refuse to renew an approval.
8. A direction by the Registrar General to revoke an approval is not subject to review by the authority.

REGISTRATION

Details of approved premises will be held for public inspection by the authority. These details will be copied to the Superintendent Registrar of the district in which the premises are situated and to the Registrar General who will periodically circulate the details to all Superintendent Registrars.