



**Application Form**

**For APPROVAL OF PREMISES AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 26(1)(bb) OF THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND AS A VENUE FOR CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 6(3A)(a) OF THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004**

Before you complete this form please read the guidance notes on the accompanying appendices.

When completed this form should be returned to The Superintendent Registrar, The Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU, together with the non-refundable fee. Cheques should be made payable to Wandsworth Borough Council.

- 1. Full name and private address of applicant (if the application is made on behalf of a limited company, please give the address of the registered office and, if different, the main trading address of the company) :

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Telephone No ..... Email .....

Position in organisation.....

- 2. Name and address of premises to be approved

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Give a brief description of the premises (e.g. hotel, stately home, civic building etc).

State also the primary use(s) of the premises

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Give details of other uses of the premises

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3. State names, addresses and occupations of the proposed Responsible Person and Deputy :-

**Responsible Person**

Name.....

Position in organisation.....

Address.....

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Telephone No ..... Email .....

**Deputy Responsible Person**

Name.....

Position in organisation.....

Address.....

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Telephone No ..... Email .....

4. Give the name and location of the room(s) which will be used for marriage ceremonies (e.g. Conference Room, First Floor)

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(Remember to attach a plan of the premises showing the location of the marriage rooms)

5. State the maximum number of people permitted to occupy the proposed room(s) under any relevant Fire or Health and Safety Certificates ..... (Please attach copies of any certificates in force)

6. Do you have an Entertainment Licence for the premises which is currently in force? Yes / No  
Please attach a copy of the licence to your application

7. Is there a separate room which may be used by the registrar to interview the couple privately prior to the ceremony? Yes / No If Yes give a brief description of its location and mark its location on the plan of the premises.

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8. Do the premises have any recent or existing connection with any religion or religious body?  
Yes / No If Yes please give details

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9. Do you propose to hold wedding receptions on the premises. Yes / No If Yes please give details

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10. Give details of other activities that will take place on the premises at the same time as marriage ceremonies

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11. Do the premises require any planning permission before they can be used for civil marriages?  
Yes / No

If Yes, has the planning permission been obtained? Yes / No Please attach evidence.

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I certify that the particulars given above are true and correct.

I understand that 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 three weeks (21 days) for any public objections. The Approval if granted will be for a period of three years, subject to revocation.

I understand that the premises will be inspected for suitability before approval is granted and, if this application is successful, may be subject to subsequent inspection.

I declare that I have read and fully understand the *Requirements for the Grant of Approval and Conditions Attached to Grant of Approval* set out on the attached appendices. To the best of my knowledge and belief the premises listed above meet these requirements and I agree to comply fully with all conditions attached to the Grant of Approval.

I enclose:

- Current fire / health and safety certificates
- Entertainment licence (if applicable)
- A plan of the premises indicating the room(s) to be licenced and interview room
- A cheque made payable to WBC (Wandsworth Borough Council).  
£859.10 - standard licence (3 years)  
£1,430 - extended licence (5 years)

Signature of Applicant: ..... Date: .....

Print Name: ..... Position: .....

Address: .....

Telephone No ..... Email .....

## **NOTES ON THE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE AN APPROVAL CAN BE GRANTED**

The non-returnable fee for this application must be submitted with the application and supporting documentation to the Superintendent Registrar, The Town Hall, Wandsworth High St, London SW18 2PU.

The application must be made by the proprietor or trustee(s) 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 which are as follows:-

1. 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 solemnization of marriages.
2. The premises must be regularly available to the public for use for the solemnization of marriages.
3. The premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the 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 authority considers appropriate.
4. 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 solemnization of marriages in pursuance of section 26(1)(bb) of the Act.
5. The room or rooms in which ceremonies of marriage will be solemnized if approval is granted must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the premises.

*The premises must also fulfil the following requirements set by the authority:*

6. The maximum number of people who can safely be accommodated will be set for the room or rooms to be used for marriage ceremonies and this will be determined by the size and capacity of the premises.
7. Adequate toilet facilities should be available and this will be determined having regard to the capacity of the premises.
8. Appropriate parking facilities must be made available for the registration officers attending the

premises to conduct the civil marriage.

9. Where the use of the premises for marriage ceremonies gives rise to a material change in use, constituting development for which planning permission would be required, then evidence must be provided that such planning permission has been obtained.

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

1. Premises are defined as "a permanently immovable structure comprising at least a room or any boat or other vessel which is permanently moored".
2. The new law is intended to allow civil marriages to take place regularly in hotels, stately homes, civic halls and similar premises without compromising the fundamental principles of English marriage law and Parliament's intention to maintain the solemnity of the occasion.
3. Marriages must take place in readily identifiable premises. This will preclude marriages from taking place in the open air, in a tent, marquee or any other temporary structure and in most forms of transport.
4. Marriages must be solemnized in premises with open doors, which the Registrar General interprets to mean that the public must have unfettered access to witness the marriage and make objections prior to or during the ceremony.
5. A private house is unlikely to be an appropriate venue for civil marriage. It would not be known to the public as a marriage venue or regularly available for their use.
6. The primary use of a building would also render it unsuitable if that use could demean marriage or bring it into disrepute.
7. The secular nature of civil marriage 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.
8. Marriages on approved premises may be followed by a celebration, commemoration or blessing of the couples choice, providing that it is not a religious marriage ceremony and is separate from the civil ceremony. However, if a religious blessing were to regularly follow marriage 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.

**THE CONDITIONS TO BE ATTACHED TO GRANTS OF APPROVAL**

The authority must attach the following standard conditions from Schedule 2 of the Regulations to any approval:

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 (his "qualification"), indicate that he is in a position to ensure compliance with these conditions.
  
2. The responsible person or, in his absence, an appropriately qualified deputy appointed by him, shall be available on the premises for a minimum of one hour prior to each marriage ceremony and throughout each marriage ceremony.
  
3. The holder must notify the authority -
  - (a) of his name and address immediately upon him 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 marriages are to be solemnized,
  
  - (d) the name or address of the holder of the approval, and
  
  - (e) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person and deputy.
  
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 solemnization of marriages in pursuance of section 26(1)(bb) of the Marriage Act 1949 and identifying and giving directions to the room in which a marriage ceremony is to take place must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to the ceremony and throughout the ceremony.
7. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which a marriage ceremony takes place for one hour prior to that ceremony or during that ceremony.
8. All marriage ceremonies must take place in a room which was identified as one to be used for the solemnization of marriages on the plan submitted with the approved application.
9. The room in which a marriage is solemnized must be separate from any other activity on the premises at the time of the ceremony.
10. The arrangements for and content of each marriage ceremony must meet with the prior approval of the superintendent registrar of the district in which the approved premises are situated.
11. Any reading, music, words or performance which forms part of a ceremony of marriage must be secular in nature; for this purpose any such material used by way of introduction to, in any interval between parts of, or by way of conclusion to the ceremony shall be treated as forming part of the ceremony.
12. Public access to any ceremony of marriage solemnized 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 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.

***Any further conditions the local authority considers appropriate upon grant of approval.***

Examples of additional conditions which will normally be attached to approvals, as a matter of course, include :-

14. Prescribing the maximum capacity having regard to fire and other health and safety requirements together with the maintenance of prescribed toilet facilities.
15. Ensuring that there is no noise or other nuisance during the ceremony which might affect the



solemnity of the occasion.

16. Requiring that the premises are maintained in an acceptable standard of repair and decoration.

17. Requiring that car parking facilities are reserved on the day of the ceremony to accommodate the registration staff.

18. Requiring that any activity which debases or demeans the solemnity of the marriage ceremony must not take place on the premises at any time.

19. Stipulating any conditions necessary to ensure that the facilities provided at the premises are suitable and that the solemnization of marriages does not give rise to a nuisance of any kind.

## **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.

### **REVOCAATION**

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 marriage 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 marry on 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 Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee may confirm the decision, rescind it or vary it with the imposition of fresh or further conditions.

7. A direction by the Registrar General to revoke an approval is not subject to review by the authority.

### **REGISTRATION**

8. 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 the premises are situated and to the Registrar General who will periodically circulate the details to all superintendent registrars.

Any queries regarding the application for approval should be directed to :-

The Superintendent Registrar

Telephone: 020 8871 6120      Email: registeroffice@wandsworth.gov.uk