

Wirksworth Town Council



Lettings Policy

Policy – Adopted 17/03/2025

Minute - FBP24/107 10/03/2025

This policy will be reviewed annually
at the Annual Town Council Meeting

Letting Policy for of Town Hall and Memorial Hall: Occasional lets

Council policy is to:

- 1. Encourage full use of the Town Hall and Memorial Hall:**

The buildings will be promoted for use by groups, individuals and for commercial use. The Town Council see the buildings as community assets for use by the community. The costs of running the buildings are subsidised by the Town Council, income from occasional lettings is significant and therefore should be maximised.
- 2. Encourage use of the buildings which enhance the community life of our town:**

Priority will generally be given to local groups who are attracting a large number of local people to events, subject to booking terms of this policy.
- 3. Encourage the use of the Town Hall for performances, weddings, conferences, large events:**

The Town Council has equipped the building to a high standard and would like to see these facilities used as much as possible. Our booking system should allow the organisers of events certainty on their bookings.
- 4. Encourage regular use of buildings:**

Regular use by groups for education and regular meetings is encouraged. It is understood that such users will also require certainty of their bookings and clear prior notice of any interruptions to their regular bookings as laid out in process and procedures.
- 5. Martyn's Law**

Whilst none of the Town Council indoor spaces meet the threshold for statutory compliance with these regulations, the mitigation measures recommended in the legislation will inform the Town Council's own procedures and the hirer must ensure that they are compliant.
- 6. Ensure a safe environment for Users, Staff and the Community**

Where the Hirer or the booking purpose may lead to an increased risk, an additional level of scrutiny will be applied to the booking. In assessing such a booking, the Town Council will use additional documentation, the process may include sharing details of the proposed booking with Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Environment and Town and Chair of Finance, Building and Personnel. In such circumstances, it will be necessary to seek express agreement from the Town Council's insurer before agreeing to the booking (to comply with the Town Council's insurance conditions).

Should the Town Council or Insurer require additional measures (e.g. additional risk assessments, security staff, access controls) to mitigate the risks posed by a booking, it will be the responsibility of the hirer to arrange these and any costs* including additional administrative costs of the Town Council (staff time, additional insurance premium) will be met by the hirer before the booking is agreed. *These costs will be non-refundable and payable upfront.

Process and Procedure applied to both Town and Memorial Hall

Bookings will be classified into 4 categories:

1. **Block bookings:** these are *events which may result in disruption to regular users*.
 - These are to be made 12 months in advance in writing using booking form and are subject to agreement of the Clerk.
 - Only 1 booking in this category may occur in each quarter (Jan-Mar, April-Jun etc.) and is limited to a maximum of 10 consecutive days commencing on a Friday. At present, there are 2 standing events - Festival in Q3 and Glee Club (Panto) in Q4.
 - Block bookings are to make every effort to accommodate regular bookings whilst the rooms are not in direct use i.e. to keep rooms as clear as possible (again subject to negotiation and agreement by the clerk).
 - The Carnival uses the building for 3 days during May Bank Holiday Weekend and is not to be treated as part of the quota of block bookings.

2. **Regular bookings** – *Hirers that reserve space on a set time and day once a month or more*.
 - These will be split into two groups according to the time in the week.
 - Monday 8am to Friday 4pm: bookings can be made up to 12 months in advance.
 - Friday 4pm to Monday 8am: bookings can be made up to 6 months in advance (January & April)
 - A regular class/booking may be moved/cancelled to accommodate a block booking (Category 1). At least 3 months' notice of disruptions will be given and where possible alternative venues and/or dates within Town/Memorial Hall will be offered to regular hirers who are impacted by Group 1.

3. **Occasional bookings**
 - Mon-Thursday: these can be made at any time taking account of other bookings.
 - Fri-Sunday: typically these events will have long lead times e.g. weddings, concerts, dinners etc. and can be made up to 2 years in advance, taking into account expected utilisation of facilities by category 1 & 2 bookings.

4. **Concessionary bookings:** these will be subject to the Concessionary Let policy and will be monitored and reported on an annual basis.

Bookings/Hire Purpose which may lead to increased risk (to Staff, Hirers, Public & Property):

Additional information will be sought from the hirer to allow completion of the *DCC Responsible event booking guidance form*. This information will be shared with Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Environment and Town and Chair of Finance, Building and Personnel for further discussion, including consideration of possible mitigation measures to address the risk. The information will then be discussed and assessed before submission to WTC's Insurer. The hirer will be advised that due to the nature of the booking, it will not be possible to confirm acceptance of the booking until the WTC's insurer has indicated if additional mitigation measures will be required to allow the booking to proceed.

Failure to Comply with Booking Conditions: If a hirer fails to provide all the documentation required for a booking, then the booking may not be honoured.

Letting Policy for of Town Hall and Memorial Hall: Concessionary lets

Wirksworth Town Council's policy is:

1. One – Off Events (Town Hall)

Where a group, individual or charity book the Town Hall to hold a function e.g. Charity Dinner, Fund Raising Concert no concession is available; the change to licensing within the Town Hall provides the opportunity to generate funds by operating a bar during an event.

2. Concessionary Lets (Council Chamber/Ante Room in Town Hall)

Local Community Groups (non-profit making) wishing to book meeting space in either the Ante Room or Council Chamber at the Town Hall may apply to the Town Council for support; this would consist of a maximum of 11 meetings, of up to 2 hours per meeting in each financial year.

The conditions applied are:

- The group must submit a community grant request for consideration by the Council. If agreed, meeting space must be booked using the standard booking form with at least **14 days'** notice.
- The Council reserve the right to change rooms to accommodate paid bookings.
- Each meeting is limited to a maximum of 2hours including set-up.
- Any utilisation over 2 hours (per meeting) will incur a charge at the standard room rate (minimum 1 hour).
- Booked meeting space which is not required must be cancelled with **7 days'** notice (to release the facilities for use by other groups/ users) otherwise a charge may be made for the room hire.
- Repeated no-show and/or cancellation of bookings will result in withdrawal of the concession (after 3).
- The support will be provided for 12months and will be reviewed each May (a further application will be required).
- The provision of meeting space is a limited resource and the Council does not guarantee that any group will be provided with concessionary lets on a recurring annual basis.

3. Memorial Hall

The Town Council does not provide concessions for booking of the Memorial Hall.

4. Councillors (Town, District and County Council)

Councillors may use the Council Chamber for meetings on matters related to Council Business within Wirksworth. To avoid clashes with other bookings, the room must be booked in advance with the office. Meetings are not expected to extend beyond 2 hours.

5. Priority will be given to paid bookings.

Note: The Town Council also operates a Community Grant Scheme (local groups may apply for support and the funds may be used to cover room booking costs).

Letting Policy for Large/One-Off events:

Wirksworth Town Council's policy is:

1. Encourage Large One – Off Events

Work with larger events to help ensure that they can run safely and successfully, so they may contribute to the visitor economy and vibrancy of the Town.

2. Manage Risk

Larger events by their nature will have a greater associated risk, the Town Council will work with event organisers to ensure that they are able to demonstrate due diligence in their planning and execution of events. Dependant on the level of risk, an enhanced booking assessment process may be required.

3. Documentation

The use of Town Council assets requires the completion and presentation of documentation to evidence due diligence (this includes Public Liability Insurance, Risk Assessments etc). These requirements will be outlined at the time of booking and may change to reflect each event's risk profile.

4. Failure to provide documentation

The provision of documentation is an important risk mitigation factor for large events using Town Council assets, and must be provided at least 1 month before the event.

If documentation is not provided in a timely manner, the event organiser will be advised that their event is no longer booked, but becomes a provisional booking only. The matter will be referred to the Council for a decision on whether the event may proceed without the documentation.

Event Organisers are encouraged to seek support and guidance from the Derbyshire Dales District Council Events team. More information can be found at:

<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/leisure/planning-an-event>