

Lettings Policy During COVID Restrictions 2021

1. Pre-amble

The Wesley Church Centre is a community venue in the heart of Chester city centre. The faith community makes the premises available to community groups on a lettings basis as part of its expression of God's hospitality. The hire fees we charge are to cover the costs of administering lettings and to offset some of the costs of running our premises.

2. Eligible hirers

Spaces will be let to groups and organizations from the commercial, statutory, faith, voluntary, community or charitable sectors. Differential rates may be applied (*see pricing*) to each sector. See section 7 for prohibited activities.

3. Facilities available for letting

Space	Approx size (m)	Approximate unrestricted capacity	COVID restricted Capacity with 2 metre social distancing	Accessible
Worship area	Body 16 x 16 Chancel 7 x 7	250	60 to 80	Yes
Hall	11 x 9	100	25 to 30 at tables	Yes
Coffee lounge	6 x 6	25	6 to 8	Yes
Upper room	6 x 4.5	25	6 to 8	Yes
Crèche	9 x 5.5	35	n/a	Yes
Atrium	9.3 x 5.5	60 (standing)	8 to 10	Yes

4. Equipment and facilities available

Chairs and tables – included

Flipcharts - included

Piano and organ – only included by specific arrangement

Kitchen and servery – any usage must be agreed with Wesley Administrator

IT equipment: additional charges apply

Other music or specialist equipment (e.g. PA system, portable TV, WA projector/screen, staging): additional charges apply

5. Booking, confirmation, variation, termination and payment process

Booking of spaces at Wesley should be made preferably through the Wesley Administrator, Linda Tudor, via the online Booking Enquiry form under the Room Hire tab on

<https://www.wesleychester.co.uk/>, or alternatively contact the Wesley Office by 'phone

(01244 323037), e-mail (office@wesleychester.co.uk) or in writing (The Office, Wesley Church Centre, St John Street, Chester CH1 1DA). A contact name, address and telephone number must be given at the time of booking. Email of the booking will then be sent out, identifying the date, time, space and cost.

Should a date or time need to be renegotiated, this must also be done through the Administrator and as much notice as possible is required in order to accommodate any changes. If a booking has to be cancelled, then 48 hours' notice is required. If 48 hours' notice is not given during the winter months a late cancellation charge will be levied to cover the heating costs incurred. This charge will only be waived in exceptional circumstances.

Termination of a regular booking requires one month's written notice to the Administrator.

Payment for use of a space is required after the session and an invoice will be issued at the end of that month.

OPTION 1: Payment by bank transfer to the bank account of 'Wesley Methodist Church', Lloyds Bank plc, Sort Code 30-91-92, Account no. 00446705, quoting Wesley's invoice number. Email office@wesleychester.co.uk to confirm that the payment has been made.

OPTION 2: Payment by cheque to 'Wesley Methodist Church'. Cheques can either be handed in to the Wesley Office, posted through the outside letterbox, or placed in a sealed envelope and pushed through the office door letter flap.

OPTION 3: Payment by cash is possible (but not preferred) for invoices of £25 or less. Where this option is used, the cash sum has to be handed over in person to the Administrator, Linda Tudor, in the Wesley Office (Tues to Fri, 10am to 1pm). Please note that the office is not able to provide change and we ask that groups/individuals have the right amount if they are paying by cash. ***Under no circumstances is cash to be pushed through the door of the office, left in the box outside the office or posted through the post box on the outside ramp.***

7. Restrictions and prohibitions

The following are prohibited on our premises:

- Bringing alcohol or illegal drugs onto the premises for any reason including consumption, prize or sale.
- Gambling (unless a raffle has been permitted beforehand by the Wesley Administrator and Wesley's Minister, for which the prizes are modest - not cash or alcohol - and the main purpose is fundraising).
- Approaching members of the public on the premises in connection with campaigning, fundraising or sales activities unless agreed in writing by the Wesley Administrator and Centre Manager.
- Meeting in connection with any illegal activity including extremist politics.
- Smoking anywhere on the premises.
- Use of the lift is only permissible if a group has booked an upstairs room.
- Stiletto/pointed heels are not allowed in the Worship Area.

8. Security

8.1 Lettings during public opening hours

If a letting occurs during hours when the premises are normally open to the public, the staff present carry responsibility for the security of the premises.

8.2 Lettings outside of public opening hours

1. Regular bookings (activity not open to general public)

- The hirer must nominate a keyholder willing to supply their name, address and telephone number. This person takes personal responsibility for:
 - o The security of the premises during the letting period
 - o Rubbish removal, locking up and leaving the premises secure at the end of the letting period
 - o The safekeeping of the key provided - Wesley will impose a charge of £60 for each lost key

2. Ad hoc / irregular bookings where the activity not open to general public

- The hirer will normally be asked to collect a key and to return it the next day or by a specified time. This person takes personal responsibility for:
 - o The security of the premises during the letting period
 - o Rubbish removal, locking up and leaving the premises secure at the end of the letting period
 - o The safekeeping of the key provided - Wesley will impose a charge of £60 for each lost key
- Any variation on this must be agreed with the Wesley Administrator.

3. Ad hoc bookings where the activity is open to the general public

- Wesley will appoint a paid warden to open the premises and stay on site during the letting period. This person will be responsible for building security during this time. The hirer will be responsible for the cost of paying the warden.

If a group has booked the premises outside of public opening hours and security of the building is compromised during the lettings period, they can contact Brian Heald on 07734 582061 or Stephen Bowden on 07739 278206.

If the fire alarm sounds during the lettings period, it is the group's responsibility to call the fire brigade and ensure swift evacuation of the premises through the nearest exit. The fire alarm panel can be found on the left-hand side of the wall at the open entrance to the kitchen. To cancel the fire alarm, once the fire brigade has been called, type in

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using the number keypad in the middle of the panel and then press the bottom, furthest right key with the ✓ on it, then the key 'reset alarm'. Brian Heald should then be contacted on 07734 582061. If he does not respond, please ring Stephen Bowden on 07739 278206 or Julie O'Connell on 07849 145100.

Hirers should note and familiarise themselves with the fact that from autumn 2020 until further notice the rear emergency exits from the building lead to a tunnel under Council's Scaffolding Structure supporting the City Walls/diverted City Walls walkway, and then via a push bar escape door and an unlocked gate into the passageway to St John Street.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Health and Safety:

The **hirer** carries primary responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of those involved in the letting activity, including members of the general public for events which are open to the public.

Should an accident happen during the letting period when the Centre is open, the **hirer** must record the accident in the **Accident Report Book** kept in the Office. If an accident occurs during a letting period outside the Centre's normal opening hours or when the Office is closed, the **hirer** must submit a written report to the Wesley Administrator as soon as possible using one of the 'Accident Report Forms' found at the top of the stairs above the small notice board.

The church carries responsibility for notifying the hirer of any significant or new risks presented by the premises themselves.

9.2 COVID-security

Wesley's COVID-secure Risk Assessment in summary requires visitors to the building to:-

- Stay at home if they have any COVID symptoms or are feeling unwell.
- Wear a face covering everywhere inside the building, except when seated for table service in the Café.
- Provide 'NHS Test and Trace information' i.e. name and contact phone no. on entry (Wesley's NHS QR code is on display in the foyer).
- Practise good hygiene by washing hands and using sanitiser frequently while in the building.
- Observe the one-way system and 2 metre social distancing.

Wesley's COVID-secure Risk Assessment requires Wesley's staff and volunteers to ensure conformance to the above requirements and also to carry out regular touch point cleaning in all areas of public access during normal opening hours.

As part of the lettings agreement for hirers while the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions continue, Wesley requires **hirers** to submit their own Covid-secure Risk Assessment for their activity or event. Wesley's Covid-responsible team and Managing Trustees will review the hirer's Risk Assessment and determine whether it is compatible with Wesley's and whether the proposed hire can proceed in the context of the other existing agreed uses of the premises. A specific agreement in writing between Wesley and the hirer (see page below) needs to be signed.

9.3 Use of equipment and spaces:

The **hirer** is responsible for leaving hired spaces as they were found (e.g. restoring the original layout of furniture). If you have a mobile telephone we advise that you take a photo of the layout before you move any furniture to ensure you can restore the layout correctly. Tables in the Hall, Atrium and Coffee Lounge must be lifted, and not dragged, as dragging damages the table legs.

The hirer is responsible for cleaning all touch points with sanitiser before and after use. Touch points include those on chairs, tables and equipment used and also door handles, door plates, light switches and handrails in the room hired as well as those in access and egress areas to/from the hired space and any toilets used.

9.4 Safe use of electric wheelchairs, scooters, etc. on the premises:

The **hirer** is responsible for controlling movement within crowded areas for electric wheelchair and scooter users for any event attracting more than 10 people. Vehicles may, for example, need to be guided through at a different time from the main flow of people to ensure total separation. The onus is on the **hirer** to make vehicle occupants/operators aware that they must remain stationary when others are moving within the space.

9.5 Safeguarding:

Where an activity involves people aged under 18 or vulnerable adults as defined by the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the **hirer** must complete a declaration to confirm that its safeguarding arrangements comply with the standards laid down by the Methodist Church, as described on the policy summary on page 7.

9.6 Damage:

The **hirer** is responsible for the costs of putting right any damage which occurs to the premises, its equipment goods or materials, which can reasonably be attributed to the letting activity.

9.7 Contents insurance:

Our insurance policy will not cover losses to equipment belonging to lettings groups. Hirers storing equipment on our premises should consider arranging their own cover.

9.8 Public liability insurance:

Our insurers (Methodist Insurance) limits cover to the policyholder's own activities. *Lettings groups must therefore obtain their own policy cover.* The only exception is that one-off events held by lettings groups will continue to be covered, up to a maximum of three events by any one group in any 12 month period.

9.9 Copyright / performing rights:

Wesley is not a licensed performing rights venue and the onus is on the **hirer** to ensure their compliance with all prevailing copyright and performing rights law, and to pay any fees due.

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COVID-secure Lettings Agreement between Wesley Methodist Church and Hirer

The **Hirer** acknowledges that it is fully aware of the requirements of Wesley’s Lettings Policy, including the Safeguarding Policy on page 7 and Wesley’s Covid-secure Risk Assessment principles as summarised in sections 9.2 and 9.3 above.

(The full Wesley Covid-secure Risk Assessment document is also available for inspection on request).

Wesley Methodist Church acknowledges that it has received and accepted the Hirer’s Covid-secure Risk Assessment dated

It is agreed that Room Hire may proceed in line with the above Lettings Policy and in accordance with the Hirer’s Covid-secure Risk Assessment, starting on

Signed:(Hirer)

Date:

Signed:(Wesley Methodist Church)

Date:

**WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH CENTRE:
SAFEGUARDING POLICY SUMMARY FOR LETTINGS AND KEYHOLDERS**

In accordance with the principles and guidance of the Methodist Church, Wesley Methodist Church Centre is committed to ensuring that the church provides a Safe Space for all, and particularly for children, young people and vulnerable adults, for whom we have a special responsibility.

As a keyholder, or as a representative of a group which uses our space, we ask you to sign up to the Methodist Church's Safeguarding Principles. We ask you to do this whether or not you have a policy of your own. Wesley's policy can be found on the notice board by the window in the foyer. This policy is reviewed annually in June and is in line with the Methodist Church's Model Policy. Our list of Keyholders and Group Lettings is reviewed annually in January.

Should any safeguarding concerns arise in connection with your group or activity, please contact any of the following church safeguarding officers:

Revd Dr Christine Dutton (Minister), Wesley Methodist Church (07840 285725)

Jane Krause (Church Safeguarding Officer), Wesley Methodist Church (01244 323037)

Fiona Weir (Chester and Stoke Methodist District Safeguarding Officer) (07305 141501 – 24 hours)

The following is a summary of the principles underpinning our policy:

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our Church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

For further information, go to:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/>

This website contains all of the guidance, policy and training information on safeguarding in the Methodist Church