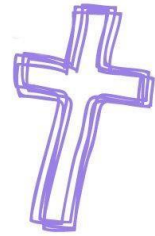


# worcester park baptist church

the avenue worcester park

surrey KT4 7EW [www.wpbc.org.uk](http://www.wpbc.org.uk) Registered Charity No. 1128662



## **POLICY COVERING THE USE OF CHURCH PREMISES BY EXTERNAL GROUPS**

### **1. INTRODUCING OURSELVES**

- 1.1 Worcester Park Baptist Church is an evangelical Christian church. Our Christian identity, ethos and values are summarised in the Appendix.
- 1.2 It follows that the church premises exist primarily to promote, practice, and teach the Christian faith - namely the worship of God, Christian teaching and learning, church family life and Christian outreach.
- 1.3 However, one of our priorities is to serve the local community and one way of doing so is to encourage greater community use of the church premises.

### **2. THE POLICY**

- 2.1 We want to encourage and develop external uses of our church premises which support our overall aim of serving the local community.
- 2.2 The church's own requirements for accommodation take priority. This means that, on rare occasions, it may be necessary to cancel a booking by an external group if an emergency, unforeseen need by the church for accommodation occurs (e.g., a funeral).
- 2.3 The church has the discretion to decide which external uses to allow. There are restrictions on the uses of our church premises by external groups so as to –
  - (a) not conflict with the purposes of our church (see the Appendix below);
  - (b) comply with the doctrines or beliefs of our church (see the Appendix below);
  - (c) avoid causing offence to our church members and family for whose Christian belief and faith (in the Baptist tradition) the premises are held; or
  - (d) avoid causing conflict with the strongly held religious convictions of a significant number of the followers of the Christian faith (in the Baptist tradition).
- 2.4 When deciding which external uses to allow, we also consider the need for good stewardship of resources; the limitations on available cleaning, caretaking, and administration time; and potential community benefit.

2.5 On the basis of paras 2.3 and 2.4 above, the more obvious restrictions on external lettings include -

- (a) no meetings by or for political parties
- (b) no worship or prayer sessions by or for other faiths
- (c) no parties (adults or children)

2.6 We prefer and encourage regular (as opposed to one-off) lettings and may offer discounted rates for regular bookings.

## **May 2022**

### APPENDIX

#### THE CHURCH'S IDENTITY, ETHOS AND VALUES

1. These are based on the Baptist Union of Great Britain's Declaration of Principle and Five Core Values which we set out here –

##### “Declaration of Principle

That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried and rose again the third day'.

That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.

##### Five Core Values

A Gospel People called to be a prophetic, inclusive, sacrificial, missionary, and worshipping community.”

2. Our emphasis is on trusting and following Jesus together in Christian discipleship. Our identity as Christian people is determined by the life of Jesus. We believe that this involves living in radical commitment to him. We are called to follow him, doing as he did and giving ourselves to God's loving purposes in the world. We exist to bear witness to Jesus Christ in the world, to share in his mission, to make known his faithful and saving love for all creation, and to express his concern for the wholeness and harmony of all that he has made.
3. So, this is our Christian identity and ethos; the values – who we are and what we stand for - which affect and shape our behaviour and attitudes to each other, to society and to those whom we serve.