



**THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S  
GUIDANCE TO AUTHORITIES  
FOR THE APPROVAL OF  
PREMISES AS VENUES  
FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES  
AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

**THIRD EDITION  
( REVISED APRIL 2007)**

**THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S GUIDANCE TO AUTHORITIES  
FOR THE APPROVAL OF PREMISES AS VENUES FOR MARRIAGES  
UNDER SECTION 26(1)(bb) OF THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949  
AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS  
UNDER SECTION 6 (3A)(a) OF THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004.**

## INTRODUCTION

1. This guidance is issued by the Registrar General under section 46A(k) of the Marriage Act 1949, section 6A(k) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 and Regulation 11 of the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3168) and supplements the provision made by those Regulations.

2. The Regulations refer to “proceedings”, defining these as the solemnization of marriages or the formation of civil partnerships and this guidance uses this term, where appropriate. It also refers to registration authorities and local authorities as “authorities”.

## TYPES OF PREMISES

3. The laws relating to “approved premises” are intended to allow proceedings 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.

4. The term "premises" is defined in Regulation 2(1) as a permanently immovable structure comprising at least a room or any boat or other vessel which is permanently moored. Any premises outside this definition, such as the open air, a tent, marquee or any other temporary structure and most forms of transport, would not be eligible for approval. In addition, there are requirements in Schedule 1 that must be met before an approval can be granted.

5. The premises must be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings, which must take place in an identifiable and distinct part of those premises. The primary use of a building would render it unsuitable if that use could demean proceedings or bring them into disrepute.

6. The premises must not be religious premises as defined by section 6(2) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004. These are premises which are used solely or mainly for religious purposes or which have been used solely or mainly for religious purposes and have not been subsequently used for other purposes. A building that is certified for public worship would fall into this category as would a chapel in a stately home or hospice. However, premises in which a religious group meets occasionally might be suitable if the other criteria are met.

7. The premises must not be any part of a register office on the plan submitted by the authority and approved by the Registrar General under the Registration Service Act 1953. Any rooms in the same premises as the register office that aren't on this plan, e.g. a council chamber in the same town hall, can be approved but a room in a register office cannot be approved. However, an authority can set its fee for attending a marriage or civil partnership on approved premises at the same level as the prescribed fee for a marriage or civil partnership in a register office.

8. The premises will be approved for the solemnisation of marriages and the registration of civil partnerships and must be regularly available to the public for use for one or the other. Under the terms of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 (which came into effect on 30 April 2007) it is unlawful for a person concerned with the provision to the public of goods, facilities or services to discriminate against a person who seeks to use those goods, facilities or services on the grounds of the sexual orientation of that person. The holder of an approval who does not allow premises to be used for both marriage and civil partnership, or who provides accommodation, services or facilities for one and not the other, is liable to legal action as a result. In common with other equality legislation, this action would need to be taken by the parties concerned against the holder of the approval. The local authority that granted the approval has no powers to act or intervene, unless, of course, it is the holder of the approval.

9. The requirement that the premises must be regularly available for use by the public will preclude a private house from being approved.

#### OTHER REQUIREMENTS BEFORE AN APPLICATION CAN BE CONSIDERED

10. In addition to being satisfied that the requirements relating to the type of premises are met, the authority will want to be satisfied that the fire assessment in place at the premises is suitable for the intended purpose. It would be prudent to seek the view of the fire / fire and rescue authority as to the fire safety self assessments offered by the premises with their application. The authority will also want to be content that no planning permission is necessary for the use of the venue for marriages or civil partnerships. However, it is likely that the great majority of applications will not require separate planning permission and the usual health and safety checks are likely to identify any concerns in this respect.

11. In addition to the national criteria, authorities may, if they wish, specify local requirements. These should apply to all premises within their area for which approval is sought. It is envisaged that these requirements will relate, inter alia, to disabled access, a separate room for pre-proceedings questioning by the registrar, toilet facilities, the seating capacity of the relevant room(s) and car parking provision.

#### THE APPLICATION PROCESS

12. To simplify the application procedure authorities may choose to introduce an application form outlining the requirements for approval. **All rooms that might be used for proceedings, including those intended as a contingency, should be indicated as such on the plan that accompanies the application**, and proceedings may only take place in those rooms once approval is granted. The use of an additional room (one that was not specified on the plan as being intended for proceedings) would need a fresh approval to be granted following the same application process. We are aware of instances where such a fresh approval has been granted *solely for the additional room*. This leaves two approvals in force for the same site, and has led to confusion in some instances: the additional room has a different expiry date and description than the other approved rooms. When the “wrong” room is recorded on the notice of marriage / civil partnership, the proceeding has to occur in the room recorded unless fresh notice is given. Two expiry dates for the same site increases the risk of an approval expiring without being renewed in time. **We would therefore recommend that where an “additional” room is wanted before the approval is due for renewal, the application for its approval applies to the whole premises, with the plan showing**

**the “new” room and those already approved.** The new approval, when granted , will then describe the premises by one name with one expiry date.

13. Authorities may choose to place the advertisement in a local newspaper themselves or require the applicant to do so in a manner which meets the requirements of the Regulations. In the latter case, the authority should check that the advertisement has appeared. In either event, the paper must be one which is published at least once a week.

14. There are no restrictions on the address where applications and plans are made available for public inspection, although they should be available with policy advice on the attachment of local conditions and the review process. The attendance of people wishing to inspect the documents may be incompatible with the business of a register office.

15. The inspection of the premises may be carried out regardless of whether the advertisement has been published or the objection period has expired. Authorities may consider the views and experience of the local superintendent registrar to be helpful at the inspection, although this would be outside his or her registration duties.

#### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

16. The standard conditions in Schedule 2 have been framed so that the proceedings will comply with the legal requirements and maintain the dignity and solemnity of the occasion.

17. The responsible person or a deputy must be available on the premises before and during the proceedings to ensure that the arrangements comply with all the conditions attaching to the approval. The responsible person, or a deputy, must have sufficient authority to enforce these conditions and liaise with the superintendent registrar or civil partnership registrar over any matters affecting the proceedings.

18. Both the governing Acts provide that no religious service is to be used at proceedings. Following consultation, paragraph 11 in Schedule 2 specifies what shall not be included in proceedings. It also provides that readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context may be included in proceedings. The Registrar General will issue further guidance on this for superintendent registrars and civil partnership registrars. For these purposes, proceedings include an introduction to, an interval between parts of, and any conclusion to the proceedings. However, when the superintendent registrar and registrar or civil partnership registrar have left the approved premises, any ceremony would be separate from the proceedings and not the province of the registration service.

19. In addition to the national conditions, authorities may, if they wish, attach further conditions to the approval for individual premises. It is envisaged that these conditions will relate to such matters as the absence of noise from other activities and the clearance of confetti.

#### THE REVIEW PROCESS

20. An applicant may seek a review by the 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. A direction by the Registrar General to revoke an approval is not subject to

review by the authority.

21. The review must be carried out by a different officer, committee or sub-committee than that which made the decision which is being appealed against. The review panel may confirm the decision, rescind it or vary it with the imposition of fresh or further conditions.

#### GRANT, EXPIRY AND RENEWAL OF APPROVAL

22. The grant of approval will run for three years from the date on which it is granted, unless it is revoked, extended (see paragraph 23) or reinstated (see paragraph 24). Any change in the ownership of the premises will also change the holder of the approval. Any change to the details on the application must be notified to the authority.

23. The renewal process is the same as the approval process but can be commenced when the current approval has less than twelve months to run. An application for renewal made within this period will if, necessary, extend the approval until that application has been finally dealt with. A renewal should be expressed to take effect from the date on which the current approval expires.

24. Should an approval expire because the holder of that approval has failed to apply for a renewal, the approval will be reinstated by an application for renewal that is made within one month of the original expiry date. The reinstated approval will then continue until such time as the application for renewal is finally dealt with.

25. **Authorities are strongly recommended to have a reminder system to warn the holder of an approval, at least a month before it is due to expire, that an application for renewal must be made or no proceedings can take place after the expiry date.** The reminder system must also alert all officers in the authority who take notices and receive notices taken outside the authority so that they can warn the couple. An approval can be extended (see paragraph 23) or reinstated (see paragraph 24) but if the lapse is discovered more than one month after expiry, the full application procedure has to be followed – with three weeks of public advertising – until approval can be granted. Any proceedings arranged at the venue within that time must be postponed or moved to another venue after fresh notices have been given.

#### NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL, RENEWAL, CHANGES AND REVOCATION

26. Many authorities have decided to issue a formal document upon the grant of approval which will specify the conditions attaching to the approval and give the information that must be passed on to anyone who wishes to marry or register a civil partnership on those approved premises. In any event, the holder must be given a copy of the conditions in writing. Should any of the conditions attached to the approval not be complied with, authorities should arrange to meet the holder of the approval and explain to him the remedial steps required and confirm this advice in writing if asked to do so. The statement should make it clear what action is necessary, why, the period within which action should be taken and the consequences of not doing so.

27. It is essential that the local superintendent registrar, civil partnership registrars and the Registrar General are notified without delay of changes to the register of approved premises. **All officers in the authority who take notices and receive notices taken outside the authority must be notified immediately of a change of name.** The way the premises are specified in the notices may require an amendment that can only be made before the certificate or schedule is issued.

28. Difficulties have arisen when approved premises, which are not specified by a street number and name, change their name and the superintendent registrar's certificates for marriage have been issued. When notices and certificates do not specify the premises correctly fresh notices have been necessary. Regulation 15 now provides for the former name to continue to be used where it is shown on the notices and the certificates (for marriage) or schedule (for civil partnerships) issued before the name change. It will be a condition of the approval (Schedule 2, paragraph 14) that the former name remains valid in these circumstances. However, if the former name cannot be used for proceedings, e.g. for contractual or legal reasons, fresh notices will be needed.

29. The Registrar General will circulate regularly details of all approved premises to every registration officer, and details are also available on the General Register Office website ([www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk)).

30. Where the register with only the information specified in the Regulations is held on a computer by an authority, with the public right of access conferred by the Regulations, we understand that the data user is exempt from registration with the Data Protection Registrar. However, the position of a registration officer who holds personal information on a computer should be confirmed by the authority.

31. When an approval has been revoked, the Regulations lay the onus on the former holder to notify any couples who had arranged proceedings on those premises. Nevertheless, authorities may consider it prudent for a superintendent registrar or civil partnership registrar who has accepted a booking or been given a notice of marriage or civil partnership to notify the couple that the booking has been cancelled and the certificates or schedule for the proceedings will not be issued.

## FEES

32. There are four fees which may be levied, at the discretion of the authority. Each fee may be set locally at any level up to the full cost of providing the service. There is no power to charge any other fee, whether for inspection after the grant of approval, rehearsal of the marriage ceremony or any other purpose.

33. The fee for the application for approval and renewal can be determined in advance but cannot include any costs of a review. Authorities may choose to set classes of fees (according to the average cost of dealing with an application for all buildings or buildings of a particular type) or set individual fees according to the cost of dealing with each application.

34. The additional fee payable when a review is requested can be determined on the same basis as the fee for the application for approval and renewal but does not apply to a review of a decision to revoke an approval.

35. The fee for the attendance of the superintendent registrar and registrar at a marriage is a statutory registration fee, set by the authority, which will have to be accounted for by the superintendent registrar to the Registrar General. The fee for the attendance of a registrar does not apply to marriages on approved premises but the prescribed fee for any certificates of the marriage does and will have to be accounted for by the registrar to the Registrar General.

36. The fee for the attendance of the civil partnership registrar at a civil partnership is a statutory fee set by the authority and the fees for any full or extract certificates of the

civil partnership are prescribed. These fees are payable to the authority and accounted for to that authority, which will wish to make local arrangements. They should not be shown in a registration officer's Cash Book or accounted for to the Registrar General on a registration officer's form of account.

37. While there will be a core element to cover overheads, the overall fee can be a standard fee or can differ to take account of such variables as the cost of officer(s) attending outside their normal hours of work, the distance to the approved premises and the extra cost of providing deputy cover. Authorities may wish to consider publishing a scale of fees, perhaps for each approved premise, which will vary according to the hour of the day and the day of the week on which the proceedings are to take place. The intention is that this fee will be paid to the superintendent registrar/ civil partnership registrar prior to the proceedings to avoid bad debts or large sums of money being carried.

38. HM Customs and Revenue have advised that all these fees are exempt from VAT because they relate to a non-business activity of the authority.

## Appendix A

### **APPLICATION FOR PREMISES TO BE APPROVED AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 26(1)(bb) OF THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 6 (3A)(a) OF THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004.**

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. When completed, it should be forwarded to the Proper Officer for Registration Matters at ....., together with the appropriate fee (Annex A) payable to.....

1. I apply for the premises named at item 2 overleaf to be approved for the solemnization of marriages and the registration of civil partnerships.
2. I attach 3 copies of a plan of the premises showing all the room(s) in which it is intended that marriages or civil partnerships 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) public notice of the application will be given by advertisement in a newspaper with a period of three weeks for objections;
  - c) approval, if granted, will be for a three 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 is not a register office or religious premises;
5. I further declare that, if approval is granted-
  - a) the premises will be regularly available for public use for either the solemnization of marriages or the registration of civil partnerships; and,
  - b) I will comply with the standard conditions (Annex A) and any local conditions attached to that grant of approval.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Full names and private addresses of applicant.<br/>If the application is made by a limited company please give the address of the registered office and where different state also the main trading address of the Company.</p> |  |
| <p>2. Name, postal address and telephone number of the premises which are the subject of this application.</p>  |  |
| <p>3. Please describe the nature of the premises at question 2 (eg. hotel, stately home, civic accommodation) and the primary and other uses to which it is regularly put.</p>  |  |
| <p>4. Is the person or company named in reply to question 1 the occupier of the premises?</p>   |  |
| <p>5. If the answer to question 5 above is 'No' and there is another occupier, please give their name(s) and address(es)</p>  |  |
| <p>6. Please state here the maximum number of people permitted to occupy each room in which ceremonies are intended to be held, under your fire risk assessment.</p>  |  |
| <p>7. Do the premises currently have the benefit of any licence issued under the Licensing Act 2003 which may be relevant to this application (eg for the provision of regulated entertainment) If so please attach a copy.</p>       |  |

Signature of applicant:

Date:

Interest in the premises:

Address for correspondence and contact telephone number:

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

The non-returnable fee for this application is £        and must be submitted with the application to the Proper Officer for Registration Matters at .....

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 to the Regulations:

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 proceedings.

2. The premises must be regularly available to the public for use for the solemnization of marriages or the registration (formation) of civil partnerships.

3. The premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the authority, having consulted with the fire/ fire and rescue 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 not be-

(a) religious premises as defined by section 6(2) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004;\*

(b) a register office, but this paragraph does not apply to premises in which a register office is situated provided that the room which is subject to approval is not the same room as the room which is the register office.

5. The room or rooms in which the proceedings (marriage or civil partnership) will be held if approval is granted must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the premises.

*\* "Religious premises" means premises which are used solely or mainly for religious purposes, or have been so used and have not subsequently been used solely or mainly for other purposes.*

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

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

1. The laws relating to “approved premises” are intended to allow proceedings 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.

2. The term "premises" is defined in Regulation 2(1) as a permanently immovable structure comprising at least a room or any boat or other vessel which is permanently moored. Any premises outside this definition, such as the open air, a tent, marquee or any other temporary structure and most forms of transport, would not be eligible for approval. In addition, there are requirements in Schedule 1 that must be met before an approval can be granted.

3. The premises must be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings, which must take place in an identifiable and distinct part of those premises. The primary use of a building would render it unsuitable if that use could demean proceedings or bring them into disrepute.

4. The premises must not be religious premises as defined by section 6(2) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004. These are premises which are used solely or mainly for religious purposes or which have been used solely or mainly for religious purposes and have not been subsequently used for other purposes. A building that is certified for public worship would fall into this category as would a chapel in a stately home or hospice. However, premises in which a religious group meets occasionally might be suitable if the other criteria are met.

5. The premises must not be any part of a register office on the plan submitted by the authority and approved by the Registrar General under the Registration Service Act 1953. Any rooms in the same premises as the register office that aren't on this plan, e.g. a council chamber in the same town hall, can be approved but a room in a register office cannot be approved. However, an authority can set its fee for attending a marriage or civil partnership on approved premises at the same level as the prescribed fee for a marriage or civil partnership in a register office.

6. The premises may be used for the solemnisation of marriages and the registration of civil partnerships but must be regularly available to the public for use for one or the other. Under the terms of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 (which came into effect on 30 April 2007) it is unlawful for a person concerned with the provision to the public of goods, facilities or services to discriminate against a person who seeks to use those goods, facilities or services on the grounds of the sexual orientation of that person. The holder of an approval who does not allow premises to be used for both marriage and civil partnership, or who provides accommodation, services or facilities for one and not the other, is liable to legal action as a result. In common with other equality legislation, this action would need to be taken by the parties concerned against the holder of the approval. The local authority that granted the approval has no powers to act or intervene, unless, of course, it is the holder of the approval.

7. The requirement that the premises must be regularly available for use by the public will preclude a private house from being approved.

*The authority has also resolved to adopt the following policy:*

## THE CONDITIONS TO BE ATTACHED TO GRANTS OF APPROVAL

The authority must attach the following standard conditions from Schedule 2 to the Regulations to any approval. Proceedings means the solemnisation of a marriage or the registration of a civil partnership and does not refer to any other activities on the premises.

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 and throughout each of the proceedings.
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 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 proceedings are to take place;
  - (d) the name or address of the holder of the approval; and,
  - (e) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.
5. The approved premises must be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by the authority.
6. A suitable notice stating that the premises have been approved for the proceedings and identifying and giving directions to the room in which the proceedings are to take place must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to and throughout the proceedings.
7. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which proceedings take place for one hour prior to during those proceedings.
8. All proceedings must take place in a room which was identified as one to be used for that purpose on the plan submitted with the approved application.

9. The room in which the proceedings are to take place must be separate from any other activity on the premises at the time of the proceedings.

10. The arrangements for and content of the proceedings must meet with the prior approval of the superintendent registrar of the district, or the registration authority of the area, as the case may be, in which the approved premises are situated.

11.(1) Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.

(2) In particular, the proceedings shall not :

(a) include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;

(b) be led by a minister of religion or other religious leader;

(c) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals;

(d) include hymns or other religious chants; or

(e) include any form of worship.

(3) But the proceedings may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.

(4) 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 proceedings 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 1949, and the formation of civil partnerships under section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 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. If a change of name to the approved premises occurs after the issue of the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document, but before the proceedings, the former name of the approved premises as recorded in the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document shall remain valid for its duration for the purpose of the proceedings.

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

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### RENEWAL AND REINSTATEMENT

1. The holder may apply for the renewal of an approval when the current approval has less than 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.
2. If the holder fails to apply for renewal before the expiry date and the approval expires, it will be reinstated by an application for renewal made within one month of the expiry date and continue until the application has been dealt with.

### REVOCAATION

3. 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.
4. 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 or civil partnership on the approved premises. This is not subject to review by the authority.
5. When an approval has been revoked the regulations require the former holder to notify any couples who had arranged to marry or register a civil partnership on the premises.

### REVIEWS

6. 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.
7. The review must be carried out by a different officer, committee or sub-committee than that which made the decision which is being appealed against. The review panel may confirm the decision, rescind it or vary it with the imposition of fresh or further conditions.
8. 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.

### REGISTRATION

9. Details of approved premises will be held for public inspection by the authority, copied locally and sent to the Registrar General who will publicise them.

**NOTIFICATION OF 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**

*Name of authority*

has granted approval for the premises shown below for the solemnization of marriages and the registration of civil partnerships under the provisions of sections 46A and 46B of the Marriage Act 1949 and section 6A of the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

Name and full postal .....  
address of the approved .....  
premises. ....

Name and full postal .....  
address of the holder of .....  
this approval. ....

Marriages in the presence of a superintendent registrar and registrar, and civil partnerships in the presence of a civil partnership registrar, may take place in the room(s) shown on the plan of the premises (Annex A), subject to the conditions attaching to this approval (Annex B) and the legal preliminaries to the proceedings (Annex D).

This grant of approval will continue, subject to revocation (Annex C), until the ..... day of .....

Application for a renewal of approval may be made on or after .....

The holder of this approval must now notify the authority of the name, qualification and full postal address of the responsible person. This person must be qualified in accordance with the Regulations (see Annex B, Condition 1).

This Approval is granted by *Name of authority*  
on this.....day of.....

*To be accompanied by:*

- Annex A* a copy of the plan submitted with the application marked with the room(s) which have been approved.
- Annex B* a copy of the standard and any local conditions.
- Annex C* additional information (as Annex C to Appendix A).
- Annex D* guidance for those who wish to marry on approved premises.
- Annex E* guidance for those who wish to register a civil partnership on approved premises

THE CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO THIS GRANT OF APPROVAL

The following standard conditions from Schedule 2 to the Regulations are attached to this approval. Proceedings means the solemnisation of a marriage or the registration of a civil partnership and does not refer to any other activities on the premises.

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 and throughout each of the proceedings.
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 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 proceedings are to take place;
  - (d) the name or address of the holder of the approval; and,
  - (e) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.
5. The approved premises must be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by the authority.
6. A suitable notice stating that the premises have been approved for the proceedings and identifying and giving directions to the room in which the proceedings are to take place must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to and throughout the proceedings.
7. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which proceedings take place for one hour prior to during those proceedings.
8. All proceedings must take place in a room which was identified as one to be used for that purpose on the plan submitted with the approved application.
9. The room in which the proceedings are to take place must be separate from any

other activity on the premises at the time of the proceedings.

10. The arrangements for and content of the proceedings must meet with the prior approval of the superintendent registrar of the district, or the registration authority of the area, as the case may be, in which the approved premises are situated.

11.(1) Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.

(2) In particular, the proceedings shall not :

(a) include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;

(b) be led by a minister of religion or other religious leader;

(c) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals;

(d) include hymns or other religious chants; or

(e) include any form of worship.

(3) But the proceedings may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.

(4) 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 proceedings 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 1949, and the formation of civil partnerships under section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 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. If a change of name to the approved premises occurs after the issue of the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document, but before the proceedings, the former name of the approved premises as recorded in the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document shall remain valid for its duration for the purpose of the proceedings.

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

## **GUIDANCE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO MARRY ON APPROVED PREMISES**

1. As soon as a couple have made provisional arrangements for their marriage on approved premises they should be advised to contact the superintendent registrar for the district in which the premises are situated at .....
2. Without the presence of this superintendent registrar and a registrar there can be no marriage and any arrangements for the use of the premises depend entirely on their availability. It is, therefore, essential that the couple make an advance booking with this superintendent registrar for their attendance at their proposed marriage as soon as a booking can be accepted. A fee for this attendance will be payable before the ceremony.
3. The couple will also have to give a notice of marriage to the superintendent registrar(s) of the district(s) in which they live. This notice must be given in person by each of the couple and is valid for twelve months. The couple should, therefore, attend the register office(s) where they live as soon as notice can be given. There is a fifteen day waiting period after notice has been given before the marriage can take place.
4. If either of the couple is subject to immigration control, there will be further procedures to take before notice of marriage can be given. The local superintendent registrar can advise further on these procedures.
5. The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a marriage to take place on the approved premises are dependent on:
  - a) the attendance of the superintendent registrar and a registrar for the district in which the premises are situated; and,
  - b) the issue of the authority or authorities for marriage by the superintendent registrar(s) to whom notice of marriage was given.
6. When notice is given in a different registration district from the one where the marriage is taking place, the couple will have to collect the superintendent registrar's certificate for marriage before the ceremony and ensure that it is delivered to the registrar who is to attend the ceremony.
7. The couple should be advised that only a civil, non-religious ceremony can be permitted by the superintendent registrar. The content of the ceremony must be agreed in advance with the superintendent registrar who will be attending the ceremony.
8. Any rights of copyright for music, readings etc permitted at the ceremony are a matter for the couple and the holder of the approval.

**GUIDANCE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO REGISTER A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ON APPROVED PREMISES**

1. As soon as a couple have made provisional arrangements for their civil partnership on approved premises they should be advised to contact the registration authority for the area in which the premises are situated at .....

2. Without the presence of the civil partnership registrar there can be no civil partnership registration and any arrangements for the use of the premises depend entirely on his or her availability. It is, therefore, essential that the couple make an advance booking with the civil partnership registrar for his or her attendance at their proposed registration as soon as a booking can be accepted. A fee for this attendance will be payable before the ceremony.

3. The couple will also have to give a notice of civil partnership to an authorised person of the registration authority in which they live. This notice must be given in person by each of the couple and is valid for twelve months. The couple should, therefore, attend the register office(s) where they live as soon as notice can be given. There is a fifteen day waiting period after notice has been given before the civil partnership can take place.

4. If either of the couple is subject to immigration control, there will be further procedures to take before notice of civil partnership can be given. The local registration authority can advise further on these procedures.

5. The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a civil partnership to take place on the approved premises are dependent on:

a) the attendance of the civil partnership registrar for the area in which the premises are situated; and,

b) the issue of the civil partnership schedule by the registration authority for the area in which the premises are situated.

6. The couple should be advised that only a civil, non-religious registration can be permitted by the civil partnership registrar. The contents of any proceedings must be agreed in advance by the civil partnership registrar who will be attending the registration.

7. Any rights of copyright for music, readings etc permitted at the registration are a matter for the couple and the holder of the approval.