

**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 forward to the Proper Officer for Registration Matters at Bridgend County Borough Council, together with the appropriate fee (Annex A) payable to Bridgend County Borough Council.

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 of 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;
  - b) the building is not a register office or religious premises; and,
  - c) I have consulted the planning authority as to whether planning consent is required and attach evidence that it is content that the premises may be used for marriages or civil partnerships.
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.

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| 1. Full names and private address of applicant. (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)   |  |
| 2. Name, postal address and telephone number of the premises which are the subject of this application.  |  |
| 3. Please describe the nature of the premises at question 2 (e.g. Hotel, stately home, civic accommodation) and the primary and other uses to which it is regularly put.   |  |
| 4. Is the person or company named in reply to question 1 the occupier of the premises?   |  |
| 5. If the answer to question 4 above is 'No' and there is another occupier, please give their name(s) and address(es).   |  |
| 6. Please state here the maximum number of people permitted to occupy the room or rooms for which application is made: this should be based on the fire safety risk assessment which the responsible person has carried out under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Please include the name by which the room is known (if appropriate). |  |
| 7. Do the premises currently have the benefit of any licence authorising use for public entertainment or similar purposes? If so, please attach a copy.  |  |
| 8. If your company name has already been translated into Welsh please include it here.   |  |

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 must be submitted with the application to the Proper Officer for Registration Matters at Bridgend County Borough Council.

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.*

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 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, eg 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 a 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 both but must be regularly available to the public for use for one or the other. The holder of an approval may decide that the premises are only available for marriages or for civil partnerships and not for both. If a person is aggrieved by approved premises not being available for both, he or she should be advised that this cannot be enforced under marriage and civil partnership legislation. The authority has no powers to intervene and it is a matter that the person will have to pursue with 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 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/she 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 ceremonies are to be held
  - (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 the ceremony 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 or during the 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 a ceremony is 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 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 marriages in pursuance of Section 26(1)(bb) of the Marriage Act 1949 and the formation of civil partnerships under Section 63(a)(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.

## LOCAL CONDITIONS

The Licensing Authority is entitled under the legislation to impose local conditions as it thinks reasonable. It is considered that the following conditions are appropriate:-

Premises must have the following:-

1. Satisfactory disabled access.
2. Adequate tables and chairs must be available for Registration Officers and the parties for all parties at the proceedings, including seating for officials and the majority of guests.
3. An additional room must be available for the interview of the parties prior to the proceedings.
4. Toilet facilities must be available.
5. Car parking spaces for Registration Staff must be guaranteed.
6. Absence of noise from other activities.
7. Any music played before or during the proceedings ceremony must have the prior consent of the Superintendent Registrar.
8. The holder must notify the Authority of any proposed change to the layout of the premises, from the plan submitted with the approved application.

**An applicant who is aggrieved in relation to the attachment of further conditions may seek a review of those conditions by the local authority.**

**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 make application 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.

**REVOCATION**

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 made 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.