



Facilities Hire Policy

The Strongpoint Centre
Chowdene Chapel
660 Durham Road
Low Fell
NE9 6JA

1. Introduction

Strongpoint/Chowdene Church (hereafter referred to as “S/CC”) recently renovated and made fully accessible, the building formerly known as Chowdene Chapel and now The Strongpoint Centre and welcomes the use of its facilities for both church-related activities and appropriate external events. The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines on the hiring and use of the premises, while ensuring the safety, care, and respect of the building, its users, and its mission.

2. Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines the terms and conditions of use when hiring the premises, ensuring the facilities are used in a manner that aligns with the values and mission of S/CC. It aims to balance community engagement with maintaining the integrity and sanctity of the church environment.

3. Facilities Available for Hire

The following spaces are available for hire:

- Main/Upper Church Hall
- Lower Church Hall
- Meeting Room
- Kitchen Facilities (subject to training in the use thereof or under the supervision of a Strongpoint representative for which there will be an additional charge)

The facilities may be hired for a range of events, including but not limited to:

- Community events
- Educational activities
- Social gatherings
- Charitable events
- Private functions (subject to conditions)

Note: The S/CC reserves the right to refuse any booking.

4. Eligibility for Hire

The church's facilities can be hired by:

- Church members
- Local community groups and charities
- Individuals for personal events
- Businesses and other organisations

Note: The S/CC reserves the right to refuse any booking.

5. Application Process

- All hire requests must be made via a **Facilities Hire Form** which can be obtained on the church website.
- Applications must include details of the event, duration, number of attendees, and any special requirements.
- The S/CC reserves the right to refuse any booking.

6. Terms and Conditions of Hire

6.1. Booking and Payment

- A non-refundable deposit (typically one-third of the total fee) is required to confirm the booking.
- The balance must be paid before the date of the event, as agreed with the S/CC administrator.
- Failure to pay the balance on time may result in cancellation of the booking.

6.2. Cancellations

- **Hirer Cancellation:** The hirer must inform S/CC of any cancellations at least 7 days before the event. Deposits are non-refundable, but the remaining balance may be refunded at the discretion of S/CC.
- **Church Cancellation:** S/CC reserves the right to cancel a booking under exceptional circumstances. In such cases, any fees that have not been incurred, including the deposit, will be refunded.

6.3. Insurance and Liability

- The hirer is responsible for any damage to the premises or its contents during the hire period.
- The hirer must ensure they have adequate public liability insurance and provide evidence thereof prior to commencement of the hire period.
- The hirer agrees to indemnify and hold harmless S/CC against all claims arising in respect of any injury, death, sickness, or ill-health caused to or suffered by the S/CC and its personnel arising from this Agreement.
- S/CC is not liable for any personal injury, damage, or loss of personal belongings incurred during the hire period unless caused by S/CC's negligence.

6.4. Use of Premises

- The hirer is responsible for the supervision and safety of all attendees.
- The premises must be used respectfully, ensuring no damage or excessive noise.
- No illegal activities or events that conflict with the values of S/CC are permitted.
- The S/CC premises are alcohol-free unless specific permission is granted.

6.5. Health and Safety

- The hirer must adhere to all health and safety regulations, including fire safety protocols.
- All exits must be kept clear, and no hazardous materials or equipment are allowed on the premises.
- The hirer is responsible for familiarising themselves with the location of fire exits and extinguishers.

6.6. Safeguarding

- The hirer must ensure that any activities involving children or vulnerable adults comply with safeguarding guidelines. The S/CC Safeguarding Policy must be followed, and any concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- Where appropriate, the hirer must provide evidence of DBS checks for any individuals working with vulnerable groups.

6.7. Cleaning and Maintenance

- The hirer must leave the premises in a clean and tidy condition, removing all waste and decorations after the event.
 - Any damage to the premises, furniture, or equipment must be reported immediately, and the hirer will be liable for the repair costs.
 - Failure to thoroughly clean or care for the premises may result in additional charges or termination of any future hire agreements.
-

7. Use of S/CC Equipment

- Any S/CC owned equipment (such as AV systems, chairs, tables, etc.) must be used carefully and returned to its original state after the event.
 - The hirer must request permission to use specific equipment during the booking process.
 - Breakages or misuse of equipment will incur repair or replacement costs.
-

8. Safeguarding Policy

S/CC is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. All hirers must agree to follow S/CC Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that all activities held on the premises protect the well-being of vulnerable groups.

9. Alcohol, Smoking, and Noise

- Alcohol is not permitted on the premises without prior approval from S/CC.
 - Smoking, including vaping, is strictly prohibited inside the S/CC buildings and in its immediate surroundings.
 - Noise levels must be kept reasonable, especially when events are held in the evening, to avoid disturbing neighbours.
-

10. Disputes and Enforcement

Any disputes or complaints regarding the hire of the premises must be made in writing to the S/CC administrator. S/CC reserves the right to terminate a booking or refuse future hire requests if the terms of this policy are violated.

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to serve the needs of S/CC and the community. The S/CC leadership reserves the right to amend the policy as needed.

Contact Information

For enquiries, bookings, or further details, please contact:

Strongpoint/Chowdene Church
660 Durham Road
Low Fell
NE9 6JA

Email: info@chowdene.co.uk

This Facilities Hire Policy is designed to ensure that all events are conducted smoothly and in harmony with the S/CC values.

We look forward to working with you and supporting your event!