

Stratford St Mary Institute Hall

Complete Terms and Conditions

STAGE 1 — BOOKING ENQUIRY

1.1 — General Terms and Conditions

This form is a booking enquiry only. No booking is confirmed until costs and any conditions are agreed and payment arrangements are in place.

Responsibility and Eligibility

The named hirer must be aged eighteen or over and will be responsible for the booking, including the conduct of the event, the safety of attendees, and the condition of the hall during the period of hire.

Accuracy of Information

If details change, or if information is found to be inaccurate or incomplete, the Institute reserves the right to amend booking conditions, require further information or deposit, or decline the booking.

Safety, Risk, and Suitability

Hirers are responsible for considering any health, safety, or safeguarding risks associated with their activity and for managing these appropriately. Certain types of events, equipment, or attendee numbers may require additional information, conditions, or a risk assessment before a booking can be confirmed.

Trustee Discretion

All booking enquiries are subject to approval by the Institute Committee. The Trustees reserve the right to accept, refuse, or apply conditions to bookings in line with the charitable aims of the Institute and the safe management of the hall and assets.

1.2 — Fees and Cancellations

Booking Confirmation & Payment

Bookings are not confirmed until full payment is received.

For regular hirers, invoices will be issued monthly in advance, and payment must be made within 10 days. Failure to pay may result in future bookings being removed.

While existing regular hirers will be given first offer to continue within their current pattern of hire no booking is taken on an indefinite or “in perpetuity” basis.

We reserve the right to discuss changes to future booking patterns to meet our Charity Aims.

Refund Policy

If you need to cancel your booking more than one month before the event, we will normally refund any payments you have made, less any costs already paid by the Institute on your behalf, provided your booking has not prevented other bookings from being accepted.

If a cancellation is made within one month of the event, we will usually offer an alternative date where possible. Refunds at this stage are not normally available but may be considered at the discretion of the Trustees provided your booking has not prevented other bookings from being accepted.

Trustee Discretion on Bookings

In exceptional circumstances, the Trustees may need to adjust confirmed bookings to support the needs of Stratford St. Mary residents, for example during local elections or essential building works. Where this happens, we will identify the issue with as much notice as possible (and only in emergency under a month away) and offer suitable alternative arrangements and refunds where appropriate. We only make such changes when they are strictly unavoidable as we recognise the disruption and disappointment this can cause.

STAGE 2 — BOOKING CONFIRMATION

2.1 — Fees and Booking Conditions

Scope of Hall Booking

This booking is for the uninterrupted use of the main hall for the duration of the hire. The kitchen annex and toilet facilities may occasionally be shared with other users. If you wish for exclusive use of the entire building, please discuss this with the booking secretary as this may affect the fee charged. Any shared use will be managed at the discretion of the Trustee Committee.

Security Deposit

The Institute may require a refundable security deposit or mandatory cleaning fee or apply additional conditions for some bookings, particularly at the weekends, or where there are larger numbers of attendees, higher-risk activities, or additional cleaning requirements.

Any such requirements will be confirmed before the booking is accepted.

If a deposit is required, this will be collected before keys are issued. Deposits are normally returned within 30 days after the event, in full or in part, at the Trustees’ discretion.

2.2 — Licences and Insurance

Music Licensing

The Institute holds a limited music licence that covers the incidental use of recorded music during activities.

If your public event includes live music, a PPL/PRS licence may be required and must be obtained via PPLPRS.co.uk. This licence should be available for inspection if requested.

Alcohol and Regulated Entertainment

If your public event includes the sale of alcohol or regulated entertainment, you will need to apply for a Temporary Events Notice (TEN) through Babergh District Council. The Institute does not hold this licence on behalf of hirers.

Use of Bouncy Castles and Play Equipment

Bouncy castles are not permitted inside the hall. They may be used outside, but this is not covered by the hall's insurance. The hirer is responsible for ensuring that the supplier holds appropriate public liability insurance, and a suitable health and safety risk assessment has been completed.

If the hall's electricity supply is used to power equipment such as a compressor, an additional charge may apply.

Insurance and Liability Cover

Some events, particularly public events, clubs, or business activities, particularly where larger numbers of people are involved, may require the hirer to have appropriate public liability insurance in place.

The Institute Committee may request evidence of insurance and/or relevant health and safety assessments where appropriate or directed by a local regulatory authority. Failure to provide when requested may lead to a cancelled booking.

Liability and Property

The Trustees are not responsible for any loss of or damage to equipment, belongings, or vehicles brought onto the premises.

2.3- Safety and Security

Fire Safety and Emergency Precautions

Fire and emergency exits must be kept clear at all times.

Fireworks are not permitted anywhere on the premises, indoors or outdoors. Highly flammable substances must not be brought into or used within the building. Smoke machines and firework-style birthday candles are not permitted indoors, as they will trigger the fire alarm.

Gas or propane stoves are not allowed inside the hall or within ten feet of the building. Any proposed use of this type of equipment must be approved at the time of booking, and additional risk management conditions will apply.

Use of External Electrical Equipment

Any electrical equipment brought onto the premises must be declared to the Booking Secretary before use and must either be less than six months old or have a valid PAT testing certificate.

The use of electric heaters plugged into the mains will incur an additional charge to cover increased electricity usage. Electricity usage is tracked.

The hirer is responsible for the safe use and condition of all personal, borrowed, or hired equipment used during the event.

Supervision and Security

The hirer or a delegated representative must remain on site for the full duration of the event. The hirer is responsible for hall security, including ensuring that doors and windows are locked when not in use and secured properly at the end of the hire period, with the key returned to the key box. Children must be supervised at all times by the hirer, parents or carers, or another responsible adult.

The Trustees do have a camera with 7-day recording placed in the front hall area and the rear annex focussed on the doors only. This is a security measure and is viewed in case of a security concern and can be shared with the police if needed. Please make sure your attendees are aware that they may be filmed in that area. A notice is posted.

STAGE 3 — EVENT DELIVERY

Hall Instructions

Access and Key Arrangements

The key code required to access the hall key will be issued four days before the event.

The key code must not be shared with any other person. The code is changed regularly.

After opening the key box, the code dials must be rotated to ensure the access code is not left visible.

While on site, the door key must be placed on the hook to the left of the main door. At the end of the hire period, the key must be returned to the key box as agreed.

In case of emergency in the hall, please telephone **07352 317908**.

Preparing the Hall for an Event

The hirer is responsible for preparing the hall for their event and for ensuring that the hall is used in accordance with these Terms and Conditions throughout the hire period.

Please sweep the hall BEFORE use to ensure it is clean before use.

Tables and chairs are stacked in the far-left hall storeroom

There are 80 soft chairs and 20 hard chairs. The soft chairs should not be taken outside or used for messy activities. Hard chairs may be taken outside and are also good for messy activities, children's parties or arts and crafts.

Failure to look after our equipment will result in a post event charge for remedial checking and cleaning. Every hour is charged at £24 plus repair costs.

Optional Equipment and Storage Areas

Optional Hall equipment may only be used where this has been agreed with the booking secretary during the booking process. This includes things like the table tennis table or projector or baking ovens, as there may be specific instructions or deposits needed.

Where use has been agreed, the hirer may access the right-hand cupboard solely to use the equipment discussed. Other items stored there are the property of other village charities or hall users and must not be used or interfered with in anyway.

The hirer is responsible for returning any agreed equipment after use in the condition in which it was found.

Kitchen Equipment

Tea towels and tablecloths are available in the kitchen drawers. This includes two dark green banqueting table covers in a cupboard for larger table displays.

Any soiled tea towels or tablecloths must be placed in the laundry basket provided in the cupboard closes to the kitchen entrance.

If a significant quantity of tea towels or tablecloths is used, the hirer is requested to email ssminstitute.caretaker@gmail.com so that laundering can be arranged promptly.

The Institute supplies consumables like toilet paper, soap and cleaning supplies but we advise you to have a contingency plan if high use items run out between cleaner visits.

Equipment

- A hot water urn and two kettles are available along with a domestic microwave.
 - A small refrigerator is provided. There is no freezer compartment. Please clean out all food and leave clean at the end of hire.
 - There is an electric hostess trolley in the annex room if needed to keep food warm.
 - The cooker is a domestic hob and oven and should be cleaned after use. You may notice that there are additional countertop ovens in storage. These should only be used with prior notification and permission and may have a small cleaning fee attached.
 - There is a good supply of mugs, teacups, plates bowls and cutlery. However, please do not rely on specific equipment like knives or catering serving bowls etc being available on the day as these items often go missing. It is advised to bring anything essential.
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Heating Arrangements

The hall is heated by metered electric heaters, which are individually controlled via mains switch below each one. The heating meter is located between the disabled toilet and the entrance lobby.

Heating is operated using £1 and £2 coins. Hirers are advised to bring an adequate supply of coins.

Care must be taken to insert coins into the correct denomination slot, as coins inserted into the wrong slot will not register and will not be refunded.

Hirers are advised to assess carefully which heaters are required and to avoid unnecessary use. To give you an idea, running one heater for an hour costs 70p. To run all heaters in the main hall would be £5.80 an hour, approximately (Prices correct Nov 2025).

Use of Hall Broadband

Broadband access is available in the hall and is provided by Gigaclear as a community donation.

Use of the broadband connection is entirely the responsibility of the hirer. The Institute accepts no liability for the availability or performance of the connection, and no refunds or compensation will be issued in the event of service failure.

Use of the broadband connection is entirely the responsibility of the hirer. The Institute accepts no liability for any use made of the connection during the hire period.

The broadband must not be used:

- to watch, stream, display, or record live or on-demand television or broadcast content where this would require a television licence or other permission, unless the hirer has obtained the appropriate licence.
- for any unlawful activity, including activity that infringes copyright or other legal rights.

The hirer is responsible for ensuring that all users of the broadband during the hire period comply with these requirements.

Caring for the Hall, Grounds and Neighbours

We take great care to ensure that the hall remains well-maintained and presentable for all events. To assist us in this, we ask all hirers to follow these guidelines:

Floor Protection

- Do not sprinkle sawdust, sand, or any other substances on the hall floor. Ensure the surface is clean with a quick sweep with the red microfibre brush before use.
- Stiletto heels should be heavily discouraged, as they damage the historic dance floor. Damage to the floor will be charged.
- Do not drag tables or chairs across the floor to prevent damage to the varnish. Please lift.

- The Hall floor should be carefully swept after every use, and spot treated with the ONLY the provided PH neutral cleaning spray and a soft cloth. More substantial spills can be cleaned with the 'Hall' mop only.

Decorations & Wall Fixtures

- Do not use Blu Tack, sticky tape, or adhesives on the walls or ceiling paint work. Metal loops are provided around the hall for hanging decorations and bunting.
- All decorations must be fully removed after the event, including ribbons and strings.
- Please ensure flooring and skirting boards are not left dirty.
- Hirers will be charged for repairs if damage occurs.

Noise & Neighbour Consideration

Music must be turned down after 10:45 PM to minimise disruption to neighbours.

Fire Alarm and Fire Safety Equipment

The hall is fitted with a fire alarm system. In the event of a fire or suspected fire, the alarm can be activated using the manual alarm call point, which will sound an audible alarm throughout the building.

If the fire alarm sounds, all occupants must leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit and move to the assembly point by the playground.

Fire extinguishers are located at points around the hall. They are provided for use only where it is safe to do so and must not be moved or tampered with.

The hall also has wireless smoke and heat detectors which are linked together. Hirers must not adjust, disable, or interfere with any fire detection or alarm equipment. The Hall safety folder contains further information on the system if needed.

In the event of fire, serious injury, or any immediate danger, the emergency services must be called on 999 without delay. Please then telephone us as soon as possible and safe to do so: 07352 317908

Clearing Up and Cleaning after Use

Cleaning, Security, and Damage Cleaning Responsibilities

The hirer is responsible for ensuring the hall is left clean at the end of the hire period. Cleaning materials are provided in the storeroom. Please use the right materials for each space. See guidance on wall.

Please sweep the entire hall floor using the hall broom provided after every session, and spot mop as needed.

Waste Disposal and Recycling

Please follow local recycling guidance. If you are unsure, take waste home rather than placing it incorrectly in the bins as we will charge you to pay someone to sort the bins.

Internal bins should be emptied at the end of your hire into the main bins behind the hall.

External bins must not be overfilled and used correctly. If the waste needs to be re-sorted due to glass or inappropriate sorting, your deposit may be retained.

Glass must be taken away, as it cannot be disposed of at the hall at this time.

We are aware of changes in local rubbish and recycling arrangements in June 2026 and will provide additional information at the hall when we have it.

Furniture Use and Storage

- Please return the hall to the state you found it at end of hire,
- Tables and chairs must be cleaned thoroughly after use and returned to the store cupboard.
- A stacking plan is provided in the cupboard and must be followed. 10 stacks of 8 soft chairs, or 2 stacks of 10 hard chairs, with a clear walkway to the cleaning materials.
- Our new padded chairs should not go outside or be stood on. Black hard chairs may be used outside but please return them to the cupboard clean and dry and dirt free.
- Adhesive tape must not be left on tables.

End-of-Session Security

Before leaving the hall, please complete the following checks:

Waste and Kitchen

- All internal bins have been emptied into the outside bins appropriately
- The back door is securely shut

- The kitchen is left clean and tidy and the fridge is cleaned out
- The kitchen water heater and oven are switched off at the wall
- Kitchen and annex lights are switched off

Main Hall and Store Cupboards

- The main hall floor has been swept and spot cleaned.
- The chairs and tables have been returned to how you found them in the cupboard
- Store cupboard lights are switched off
- The hall side door is closed securely and Main hall lights (including spot lights) are switched off, and heaters are switched off at each main

Toilets and Entrance Area

- The sinks are not dripping or flowing and are left clean and tidy
- Toilets are left flushed and tidy and every cubicle light is switched off
- Toilet and cloakroom lights are switched off and the toilet sink water heaters are switched off at the wall
- The entrance area lights are switched off

Locking Up

- The hall door is locked securely and the key is returned to the key box
- The key box dial is spun so the code is not visible
- A final visual check has been made from outside to confirm all lights are off

Reporting Issues and Breakages

Any breakages or safety concerns must be reported to the Booking Secretary as soon as possible after the event.

Non-urgent issues can be reported using this form:

<https://forms.gle/PVDZH83EFxnAerZPA>

Urgent issues should be reported by phone on **07352 317908**.

Damage

Normal wear and tear is expected. However, the hirer is responsible for any additional or avoidable damage and must cover the cost of repairs or replacements carried out by the Institute's approved suppliers, within a reasonable timescale.