

Towcester Town Council – Terms & Conditions of Hire 2025-26

This document contains the Terms and Conditions for room hire at premises owned or managed by Towcester Town Council. All Hirers are bound by the conditions of hire and by booking a venue agree to these conditions. All charges, bookings and conditions are subject to alteration by the Council without prior notice. The Council reserve the right to refuse any booking.

1. DEFINITIONS

“The Council” – Towcester Town Council, it’s Premises Committee or employees.

“Hirer” – the person or organisation taking responsibility for renting a room or rooms in the premises managed by Towcester Town Council.

2. VENUES, ACCESS & FACILITIES

2.1 Towcester Town Hall: Main hall (inc. stage) & kitchen

Towcester Town Hall is situated on the Market Square, Watling Street. Parking is on the Market Square or other nearby public car parks, such as Richmond Road or Northampton Road.

The main hall is accessed by two steps up to the Town Hall main front doors. Wheelchair access is via a gate to the left of the building into the side doors of the main hall. If you require wheelchair access, please state this on the booking form.

Male and female toilets and a gender-neutral toilet with wheelchair access, including baby-changing, are located from the main hall through side doors on the Watling Street side of the building.

Kitchen facilities, such as oven, microwave, hot water urn, kettle, refrigerator and washing up sink and hand wash basin are located to the right of the stage. The kitchen is available for the use of Hirers and their guests for food preparation at an additional charge.

Guest Wi-Fi is available for Hirers free of charge. Connection details are displayed by the main hall doors and the kitchen hatch.

The hall is approximately 14 m by 10.7 m, excluding the stage and accommodates a maximum of 150 people. 20 five-foot and six-foot folding tables and 150 folding chairs are available on trolleys free of charge located to the side of the stage.

Fire Exits are via the front and two side doors from the main hall and are clearly signed. **Fire Exit access must be kept clear at all times.**

The hall is licensed for public entertainment but does NOT hold a licence for the sale of alcohol on the premises. Hirers and their caterers must ensure that they obtain a Temporary Events Notice from West Northants Council well in advance of the date of the function where a bar is required. www.westnorthants.gov.uk/directory-record/820/temporary-event-notice

Unloading/loading of items into the hall should be done as quickly as possible and in no case exceed 30 minutes, nor obstruct access to Chantry Lane nor Market Square disabled parking spaces.

All other rooms and floors are occupied by other tenants and are not accessible to Hirers.

For hire charges, please refer to Appendix 1.

2.2 The Sawpits Centre: Committee meeting room, Self-Contained hall, Open-plan hall

The Sawpits Centre (formerly Towcester Library) is situated off Richmond Road via Towbury Court, with a small car park at the front of the building, exclusively for the use of Hirers. There is

one disabled parking bay next to the main doors. The venue is also accessible by pedestrians from Watling Street via the alleyway beside Hartwell's & Towbury Court Butchers.

The venue is level throughout and fully wheelchair accessible. Male and female toilets and a gender-neutral wheelchair accessible toilet facilities, including baby-changing, are located at the front of the building.

Kitchen facilities (suitable for light refreshments only), such as hot water urn, kettle, refrigerator and sink are located to the front of the building. The kitchen is available for the use of Hirers and their guests free of charge.

Fire Exits are via the front entrance, rear door at the end of the corridor, through the storeroom by the kitchen and the door to the garden and are clearly signed. **Fire Exit access must be kept clear at all times.**

Guest Wi-Fi is available for Hirers free of charge. Connection details are displayed on the noticeboard within the building.

- Committee Meeting Room is approximately 5.7 m by 6.2 m.
- Self-contained Hall is approximately 12.5 m by 6 m.
- Open-plan Hall is approximately 15.5 m by 6 m, excluding the central corridor.

The whole venue accommodates a maximum of 150 people. 20 five-foot and six-foot folding tables and 100 folding chairs are available on trolleys located in the storeroom at the rear of the open-plan hall free of charge.

The venue is licensed for public entertainment but does NOT hold a licence for the sale of alcohol on the premises. Hirers and their caterers must ensure that they obtain a Temporary Events Notice from West Northants Council well in advance of the date of the function where a bar is required. www.westnorthants.gov.uk/directory-record/820/temporary-event-notice

For hire charges, please refer to Appendix 2.

2.3 Towcester Youth & Community Centre: Main hall & kitchen

Towcester Youth & Community Centre is situated on Islington Road, opposite the Recreation Ground. There is a small car park at the front of the building. Please note that the Children's Centre service has exclusive use of the building during weekdays. Therefore, the Community Centre is only available to hire during evenings and weekends.

The venue is level throughout and fully wheelchair accessible. Male and female toilets and a gender neutral toilet with wheelchair accessible facilities, including baby-changing, are located at the front of the building.

Basic kitchen facilities, such as kettle, refrigerator and sink are located to the front of the building. The kitchen is available for the use of Hirers and their guests free of charge.

There is NO guest Wi-Fi at this venue.

The hall is approximately 13.5 m by 9.5 m and accommodates a maximum of 150 people. 10 five-foot and six-foot folding tables and 32 stacking chairs are available free of charge, located in a storeroom to the side of the hall. All other furniture is the property of the Children's Centre.

Fire Exits are via the front entrance, side fire doors in the hall and side door at the end of the corridor and all are clearly signed. **Fire Exit access must be kept clear at all times.** Please note: Access and Egress via the main auto doors is operated by pressing the green button on the inside of the doors. Do not attempt to force the doors open as this may damage the release mechanism. A key operated switch can change door priority from locked to auto and open.

The hall is licensed for public entertainment but does NOT hold a licence for the sale of alcohol on the premises. Hirers and their caterers must ensure that they obtain a Temporary Events

Notice from West Northants Council well in advance of the date of the function where a bar is required. www.westnorthants.gov.uk/directory-record/820/temporary-event-notice

All other rooms are occupied by other tenants and are not accessible to Hirers.

For hire charges, please refer to Appendix 3.

3. VENUE BOOKING PROCESS

- 3.1 To start using the Council's venues, you should first establish availability of the venue by contacting the Council's office at the Town Hall between 9am and 3pm, Monday to Friday on 01327 350995 or anytime by email at enquiries@towcester-tc.gov.uk. A provisional booking is then made by completing a booking form (online, by post or at the Town Council offices); giving full contact details of the Hirer, date(s) and times required and explain the purpose of hire. A booking enquiry form is available on the Council's website www.towcester-tc.gov.uk or can be requested by email or post.

No one will be permitted to hire venues until they have signed and returned the booking form accepting these terms and conditions. It is the responsibility of the Hirer to be aware of and to comply with all aspects of the document.

- 3.2 **Period of hire:** **The minimum booking period is one hour and must include the preparation and clearing-up time.** We do not have the resources to set up or clear up facilities for you.
- 3.3 **Booking confirmation:** All bookings will be confirmed by email upon receipt of payment (cash, cheque or BACS) for a single booking or the first session in the case of a regular booking.
- 3.4 **Restrictions:** Booking is for a specific date and time and specific activity agreed with the Council. Any variations will be regarded as a new booking and must have prior agreement. The Council reserves the right to move a booking to a different venue of similar size and facilities. Whilst every effort will be made to manage amendments to a booking, we cannot guarantee to be able to accommodate changes. No bookings are permitted on Bank Holidays unless agreed by prior arrangement.
- 3.5 **Regular Bookings:** New regular bookings must complete the above booking process prior to the commencement of regular sessions. The booking form must state the frequency of the sessions and any dates when the sessions will not be held, if known.
- 3.6 **Annual events:** In the case of established annual events, the Council may reserve dates up to 18 months in advance.
- 3.7 **Cancellations:** **A minimum of 48 hours' notice is required for all venue hire cancellations.** The Council reserves the right to charge the full rate if a cancellation is made less than 48 hours. The Council reserves the right to cancel bookings due to unforeseen circumstances, such as fire, power cuts or extreme weather conditions. No fees will be charged for cancellations made by the Council.
- 3.8 **Refunds:** Full refund if more than a week's notice; 50% for 7 to 2 days' notice; no refunds for less than 48 hours' notice.
- 3.9 **Venue Hire Charges:** For a list of current venue hire charges please refer to the attached Appendices or refer to the booking confirmation.

4. PAYMENT

- 4.1 **Single bookings:** Hirers will be invoiced at the point of booking. A booking is not confirmed until payment has been received. Some types of booking attract commercial rates or damage deposits.

If the nature of any particular booking is thought by the Council to put at risk any part of the building, then a substantial refundable deposit may be required.

- 4.2 Regular bookings: Hirers are invoiced monthly in advance (except for the first session of a new regular booking, which will be due immediately upon booking) and invoices must be paid within 14 days unless otherwise agreed. Any cancellations made within the notice period (see section 3.7) will be credited on the following invoice.
- 4.3 Method of payment: Payment by BACS transfer is preferred. The Council also accepts payment by cheque or cash. Unfortunately, the Council does not have the facilities to take credit/debit card payments. **Please make sure the invoice number is quoted as a reference on all payments.**
- 4.4 Non-payment: Non-payment of invoices may result in the booking being cancelled and will result in the Hirer being unable to make further bookings until all outstanding fees are paid. Non-payment beyond 30 days may result in formal recovery action.

5. CONDUCT

General: The room Hirer is responsible for their own conduct, as well as the conduct of their guests, at all times. This includes the area outside the venues.

This includes, but is not exclusive to, the following specific areas:

- 5.1 Noise & Music: Hirers are reminded of the multi-use of the venues and must ensure that events are conducted in such a manner as to cause minimum disturbance to other occupants of the building and adjoining premises. The Hirer will be responsible for completing the Performing Rights Society's form, when certain music is played at a function.
- 5.2 Care of facilities: The Council aims to maintain venues to a pleasant and high standard. If you break or discover broken furniture, fixtures and fittings, please report it as soon as possible to the Facilities and Operations Officer on 07894 933071. Broken or damaged equipment will be recoverable from the Hirer at full cost. Furniture must be returned to original positions and tables wiped. Clearance and removal of waste (e.g. empty cartons, containers, non-returnable bottles, discarded decorations, waste, broken and surplus food stuffs) is the responsibility of the Hirer. Any additional clearing-up found to be necessary will be charged to the Hirer. **Decorations may not be affixed to any part of the premises, internal or external, without prior written permission from the Council.** Helium balloons must be weighted, and hirers will be responsible for the cost of retrieving any which get caught in ceiling fans and roof beams.
- 5.3 Food: Food (except drinks) is not allowed in any venue unless agreed by prior arrangement.
- 5.4 Venue Use: A booking is for a specific hall and venue. You cannot switch rooms or extend your time, without receiving prior approval from the Council. Using a venue without booking will result in the occupiers being asked to leave immediately. **You are responsible for the setting out of furniture and equipment that you require and returning it neatly to storage at the end of your booking.**
- 5.5 Timing: Please ensure you allow enough time to set up and clear up before and after your event, and to leave the venue you have booked in good time and in good order. Hirers must respect the bookings made by others and should time their sessions so that subsequent Hirers have free access at the start of their booked slot. It is not acceptable for Hirers to have to ask the previous occupant to vacate the venue. Where this is not observed we may have to withdraw booking rights.
- 5.6 Personal Possessions: You are responsible for your personal possessions. The Council does not accept any responsibility for lost equipment or personal possessions, including those left in the buildings by regular Hirers. Hirers and their guests are advised to keep all personal belongings

with them at all times. **Hirers must not leave any items at any venue unless formally agreed in writing by the Council's Premises Committee.** Storage facilities are for Council use only.

- 5.7 Violent and or abusive behaviour will result in those involved being asked to leave immediately. Violence against a member of staff will always result in prosecution.
- 5.8 No Smoking Policy: In accordance with the law, all venues are no smoking and vaping areas. This includes spaces like the enclosed garden at the Sawpits Centre. Charging of vapes/e-cigarettes is also prohibited.
- 5.9 Alcohol and Drugs: Alcohol may be consumed on the premises only with prior agreement of the Town Council. With the exception of alcohol, it is illegal to consume any substance of abuse on or in the Council's premises at any time; nor may a Hirer or their guests enter the premises heavily under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- 5.10 Messages: The Council does not provide a service to take messages for Hirers. You must contact your guests directly, if there is a change in circumstances.

6. SECURITY, FIRE PRECAUTIONS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- 6.1 Security: On entering or leaving the venue, you must never let anyone else into the building unless they are your responsibility (i.e. your guests). If someone forces their way into the building, or you see someone enter who you have reason to suspect does not have business in the building, please notify the caretaker. If you feel threatened, do not approach the suspect and contact the police immediately.

Please note: The main doors of the Towcester Youth & Community Centre can only be opened externally by the caretaker, or from inside by pressing the door release button. Do not attempt to force the doors open as this may damage the release mechanism.

- 6.2 Fire Precautions: Hirers will be instructed in the use of appliances provided and the evacuation procedure and must ensure that the Nominated Steward and one other adult be similarly instructed. **Fire exits must be kept clear at all times.** Tables and chairs must not be sited in front of any fire exits or the access to the kitchen, toilets, storeroom(s) and boiler room.
- 6.3 Portable heaters: All types of portable and additional heaters are prohibited for use at all Town Council venues.
- 6.4 Electrical Equipment: Any electrical equipment bought into our venues should be PA Tested prior to use.
- 6.5 E-scooters and E-bikes: E-scooters and E-bikes are prohibited from any Town Council venue. The charging of E-scooter and E-bike batteries is also prohibited.
- 6.6 Flames: Use of naked flames, candles, pyrotechnics, lasers, highly flammable liquids, smoke machines, party sparklers are strictly prohibited.
- 6.7 People with disabilities: Groups hiring our venues must take responsibility for the evacuation of those with disabilities.
- 6.8 Stewarding: When booking, the Hirer must nominate a person over 21 years of age to be in charge of and present in the premises at all times when the public are present. The Nominated Steward must provide sufficient additional stewards to be on duty during that time to maintain order and safety.

In the event of any DANGER, EVACUATE THE BUILDING: LIVES ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN PROPERTY OR PERSONAL POSSESSIONS – if in doubt, GET OUT.

7. PUBLICITY

Towcester Town Council is open to allowing promotional materials to be posted or distributed in certain areas – such as the notice boards in each venue. All publicity materials must be pre-approved by the Council. If you wish to have information posted on the Council's website, or in the Town Crier publication, please contact the Town Council offices for more information. Materials that are displayed without approval will be removed.

8. SANCTIONS FOR BREACH OF THIS AGREEMENT

The Council reserves the right to remove for the remainder of the day any person who does not observe these policies, without refund, for that day.

Failure to observe these policies may also lead to permanent termination of the Hirer's use of the Council's facilities.

See also Section 3. Payment.

Name of Hirer:

Organisation:

Signature of Hirer:

Date signed:

Appendices: Hourly Hire Rates Per Venue from 1st April 2025

Towcester Town Hall

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 7pm (Private Hire)	£12.00	£12.00	£12.00	£12.00	£12.00	£16.00	£16.00
8am – 7pm (Commercial Hire)	£14.00	£14.00	£14.00	£14.00	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00
7pm - Midnight* (Private Hire Only)	£16.00	£16.00	£16.00	£15.00	£20.00	£20.00	£20.00
Light use of the kitchen (e.g. tea/coffee) free of charge, otherwise £3.00ph (Private) £4.00ph (Commercial)							

*** After 10.00 pm, bookings attract an additional one-off charge of £20.00 weekday and £25.00 weekend in respect of Caretaker's duties.**

The Sawpits Centre

Commercial rates will be set at a 20% surplus of room hire charges

Meeting Room	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 7pm	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£15.00	£15.00
7pm - Midnight*	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00

Self-contained Hall	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 7pm	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£18.00	£18.00
7pm - Midnight*	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00

Open-Plan Hall	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 7pm	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£17.00	£17.00
7pm - Midnight*	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00

Whole Centre	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 7pm	£22.50	£22.50	£22.50	£22.50	£22.50	£34.00	£34.00
7pm - Midnight*	£34.00	£34.00	£34.00	£34.00	£34.00	£34.00	£34.00

*** After 10.00 pm, bookings attract an additional one-off charge of £20.00 weekday and £25.00 weekend in respect of Caretaker's duties.**

Towcester Youth & Community Centre

Commercial rates will be set at a 20% surplus of room hire charges

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8am - 5pm	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£15.00	£15.00
5pm – 7pm	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£11.50	£15.00	£15.00
7pm - Midnight* (Private hire Only)	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£19.00	£19.00

*** After 10.00 pm, bookings attract an additional one-off charge of £20.00 weekday and £25.00 weekend in respect of Caretaker's duties.**