

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, MAIDSTONE. ME14 1EE

Booking Secretary: Janet Tibbit

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The Society of Friends, more usually known as "the Quakers", is a religious body concerned that its premises should be used for the good of the community at large. It welcomes all that are engaged in worthwhile activities, especially those that are charitable or philanthropic. It does not concern itself with the beliefs, religious or otherwise, of those who use its premises, though it does not accept bookings from organisations with objectives directly opposed to its own. In the case of new users, unless the objectives are obvious, it asks for a letter setting out the aims of the organisation and explaining what it wishes to do in the premises. The Meeting House is not available for political or commercial activities, nor may it be used to further antagonism towards any other group.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2011

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

The Hall has 40 chairs with room for 20 more. It is hexagonal and suitable for lectures and discussions. It can be blacked out only with difficulty. The Social Room has 20 chairs with room for 8 more. It contains a piano and can be blacked out for the showing of slides. It can be divided by a sliding partition and has a hatchway to the kitchen, which is available to all users. If both the Hall and Social Room are occupied, the two organisations should come to an arrangement about sharing it.

CURRENT CHARGES

<i>Room</i>	<i>Basic 3-hour booking</i>	<i>Additional time per half-hour</i>
<i>Hall alone</i>	<i>£21.00</i>	<i>£4.00</i>
<i>Social Room alone</i>	<i>£16.50</i>	<i>£3.50</i>
<i>Both Hall and Social Room</i>	<i>£35.00</i>	<i>£6.50</i>

All charges include use of the kitchen, possibly shared with others.

FURNITURE etc.

Users are free to move tables and chairs (but not the piano) to suit the needs of their meeting, but only within the room being hired. They are asked to put everything back before they leave. Users should ensure that the fire escape routes are kept clear at all time. Users are reminded not to carry stacked chairs due to the possible risk of back injury. Spare tables are in Cupboard A, spare chairs in B, convection heaters in C along with brooms and brushes (just in case there is an accident!). Crockery is in cupboards G and H; cutlery and spoons (mostly plastic) are in the drawers next to the cooker. Trays are in the upper part of Cupboard M. Users of the kitchen are asked to wash up afterwards (using their own tea cloths and washing-up liquid) and to put everything back, the cups in piles of two.

PAYMENT

Each month the book-keeper invoices users for the month just past.

ACCESS

Regular users are supplied with a key of their own. Copies may be made only with permission. On terminating a booking, users must return all keys, including any that they have had made themselves. **Occasional users must make arrangements for access**

with the Booking Secretary. A deposit of £10 is required when collecting the key, which will be refunded on its return.

HEATING

In both rooms the heating is automatic, and is controlled by time switches and thermostats. In no circumstances may users interfere with the settings of the thermostats or the controls on the heaters. Users must not cover or place anything on the heater guards.

If a room gets too hot, each wall heater has a local switch to turn it off; if a room is too cold, the convection heaters in Cupboard C may be used. The automatic system fails if the windows are opened when the heating is on.

BOOKINGS

All reservations must be made through the Booking Secretary, whose name appears on the first page. No others are valid.

REGULAR BOOKINGS. The usual arrangement is for an organisation to become a regular user, i.e. it makes a booking for a certain day each month or perhaps more often (it may, for example, opt for first Tuesdays or some such arrangement). That entitles it to a key and admits to limited cupboard space (if available) at a small additional charge (see below). Such bookings necessarily have to be a little flexible and can be adjusted for holidays, Christmas and other special occasions.

LATE BOOKINGS. It is recognised that organisations sometimes have crises and may need bookings at the last moment, but there could be difficulties about altering the programme for the automatic heating system. For that reason users who book giving less than seven days notice may have to rely on the convection heaters in Cupboard C. Late bookings will be subject to an additional charge of £2.00.

CANCELLATIONS. If a reservation is made and is then cancelled with less than seven days notice, the booking charge will remain payable.

NOTICE BOARDS

Users are asked not to put up notices on the boards (either outside or inside) or to leave leaflets for others to pick up. A user who wishes to display a notice concerning an event of general interest is invited to send it to the Clerk at the Meeting House with the suggestion that the Society of Friends might like to put it up.

USE OF ADDRESS

Hirers should not do anything to imply that they are operating under Quaker auspices. Correspondence should be directed to the home address of the Secretary, and not to the Quaker Meeting House

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Mostly the premises are taken for private gatherings, but sometimes for public. If the latter, the usual conditions apply but in addition there must be regard for public order, especially if the subject is contentious. If there is any risk of violence from objectors, the police should be informed and their advice taken. Whatever the subject of the meeting, the organisers must advertise it under their own name. The publicity must not suggest that the cause has the support of the Society of Friends unless that has been agreed beforehand.

INSURANCE

Regular users are expected to have their own public liability cover so that they are covered for any accidents (to them or to our property) caused by their own negligence.

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

It is against the law to smoke in the Meeting House. Users are requested not to consume alcohol anywhere on the premises.

CUPBOARD SPACE

By arrangement limited cupboard space can be made available to frequent users, but anyone leaving property in the Meeting House is warned that the Society of Friends accepts no liability if it is stolen. Thefts do unfortunately occur. (For that reason users are warned against leaving letters in the foyer for others to pick up, especially any addressed to treasurers.). Users are reminded not to place anything hot in the cupboards nor place heavy items on high shelves to avoid the risk of personal injury.

The charge is 35p a month for a shelf in Cupboards J, K and L and 50p a month for one in Cupboards M, N and O. Special arrangements for bulky articles can sometimes be made.

FIRST AID

There is a first aid box in the signed drawer adjoining the sink in the kitchen. It contains a few bandages, etc., such as might be found in any home for minor cuts and burns. Users with medical problems and those who engage in strenuous activities should bring their own supplementary first-aid equipment. There is an accident book located on the notice board in the Foyer. Users are requested to ensure all accidents and their causes are recorded so that if necessary, remedial action can be taken to avoid a repetition.

EMERGENCIES

There is no telephone in the Meeting House. There is a fire blanket in the kitchen, and extinguishers in all the rooms. Users should familiarise themselves with their location and operation against different types of fire. They should only be used if there is no risk to the operator. Users should familiarise themselves with the procedures set out on the 'Action in case of Emergencies' notice on the notice board and 'Fire Action' notices.

On entry to the Meeting House, users are requested to familiarise themselves with the fire escape routes and ensure they are not obstructed.

HOT WATER

Hot water for drinks is best obtained by use of electric kettles. For larger groups an urn is available. To obtain hot water for washing up, pressing the knob over the sink will switch on the tank heaters and turn them off after 30 minutes. That will supply hot water to the taps in the cloak rooms and over the sink. If the water begins to run cold, the knob can be pressed again.

USE OF KITCHEN

There is an electric cooker in the kitchen which is to be removed. If used, please ensure the oven and all hobs are switched off after use and the isolation switch is switched off. Please be aware, the hobs and surfaces around the hobs get extremely hot. Extreme care should be exercised if used. Children should not be allowed in the kitchen, but if they are they must be supervised at all times.

There is a micro wave provided. Please ensure users read the instructions for use and in particular, not put any metal utensils or foil containers in it when heating items.

DURING THE MEETING

Users are strongly urged not to leave the front door open after their meeting has started. It makes the building cold for everyone. Moreover it invites thieves to enter and see what

they can take, e.g. from coats left in the cloakrooms. Some users prefer to keep the door locked. There is a door bell, which works only if switched on from inside the building.

BEFORE LEAVING

Before leaving, users are asked to put all the furniture back where it came from, being especially careful to leave emergency exits uncluttered. They are also asked to pull back the curtains in the Social Room and to check that the convection heaters, if used, have been returned to Cupboard C after first being allowed to cool. The switches of the wall heaters should be left "on". Also, windows, outside doors and the garden gate should be left shut. The front door bell, if "on", should be turned "off". Users must ensure that if there is no other authorised user on the premises the outer door is locked on leaving.

Amended 12.10.2010