Scottish Churches National Sponsoring Body for Local Ecumenical Partnerships


Introduction: In situations where two or more congregations share the same building for worship and/or other activities, it is good practice to set out in writing, the relationships between the parties involved, the responsibilities of each and any financial or other arrangements which have been put in place. This agreement should be adopted by the local governing bodies of each congregation and should be reviewed on a regular basis. The document below sets out some of the issues which may need to be addressed in such a situation and is followed by an actual example of a shared building agreement.

1. Constitutional status
The agreement should
- State the parties involved in the Shared Building Agreement
- Whether they are constituted as a Local Ecumenical Partnership and if they are
- include references to the Founding documents and the date of the LEP’s creation.

2. Ownership of the Building.
This section should cover
- Ownership of the building
- Who is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep

3. Building Use
This section should cover
- Agreed regular times of use by each congregation for worship, nurture, business and social activities.
- The mechanism for making bookings for additional use of the building

4. Caretaking
This section should cover
- Arrangements concerning keyholders and loss of keys
- Cleaning duties
- Tidying up at the end of meetings
- Arrangements for making the building secure
- The mechanism for reporting problems and breakages
- Storage facilities available to each party
- Noticeboard facilities available to each part

5. Health & Safety Issues
This section should cover
- An agreement about how health and safety policies, (including fire risk assessments) will be implemented in the local context.
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- An agreement about how safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policies will be implemented in the local context.
- An agreement about how additional denominational specific policies and good practice guidelines may be implemented in the local context.
- The arrangements concerning the insurance of the building, its contents, public liability and employer’s liability.

6. Restrictions
This section should cover
- Any restrictions on use on the building
- Any restrictions on activities which may occur within the building i.e. gambling, consumption of alcohol
- Sensitive consideration of the policies of one party which may not be that of another i.e. one party being designated a ‘fair trade church’.

7. Financial arrangements
This section should cover
- Any arrangements put in place for financial upkeep of the building by the ‘tenants’
- The methods and timing of payments
- The method and timing of the review of this payment

8. Amendments
This section should cover
- The mechanism for reviewing the shared building agreement
- The timing of such reviews

9. Agreement
This section should make provision for
- The Agreement to be accepted by each party involved
- The Agreement to be formally signed and dated by each party involved

ROSYTH METHODIST CHURCH

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF USE OF THE CHURCH PREMISES BY ST MARGARET’S

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1. The constitution of the Local Ecumenical Partnership between Rosyth Methodist Church & St Margaret’s Scottish Episcopal Church recognises that ownership & responsibility for maintenance & upkeep of the premises & furnishings remains with Rosyth Methodist Church. Consequently, the aim of this document is to set out the terms & conditions of use agreed with St. Margaret’s Church (St. Margaret’s) to aid the efficient management of the premises & to avoid any potential misunderstanding. In this context St Margaret’s Church includes the choir & any other groups sponsored or co-ordinated by St Margaret’s who make use of the Church premises.

SCNSBLEP Resource Document: Shared Building Agreements
Version 1 May 2008
2. **Payment.** St Margaret’s will make a financial contribution towards the upkeep & use of the premises. The amount will be reviewed annually in December by St. Margaret’s Vestry Committee taking into account the running costs published in the most recent accounts published by the Rosyth Methodist church & the number of members on each church’s roll. Payment will be made monthly by banker’s Standing Order.

3. **Meetings.** Except when joint services with Rosyth Methodist Church are held, St. Margaret’s will normally meet for worship at 9.30am each Sunday & 6.00pm on the fourth Sunday each month. The choir will practice in the Lounge from 7.00pm to 8.00pm each Friday evening. Requests for rooms for additional meetings will be notified to the **Booking Secretary.**

4. **Caretaking.**
   - Two members of St Margaret’s will be nominated as keyholders. The keys will not be duplicated without prior permission from the **Property Committee Chairman.** Loss of either key will be reported to the **Property Committee Chairman.**
   - Chairs & tables used for Church meetings will be replaced after use. Similarly crockery & cutlery will be washed up & put away after use. When necessary, the floor of any rooms will be hoovered or brushed at the end of meetings to remove any debris created.
   - Members of St. Margaret’s will assist with the cleaning of the Church & the arrangements of flowers.
   - When last to leave the premises, St. Margaret’s will ensure that all lights & wall heaters have been switched off, doors & windows closed & exterior doors locked.

5. **Problems & breakages.** Any problems experienced with the premises & equipment will be reported to the **Property Committee Chairman** at the earliest opportunity.

6. **Notices.** St. Margaret’s will have a notice board for their own use in the Crush Hall.

7. **Storage.** A cupboard has been assigned for use by St. Margaret’s. If any further furniture or storage space is required this will be first discussed with the **Property Committee Chairman.**

8. **Insurance.** Insurance of the premises & fittings is provided by the Rosyth Methodist Church Council (Church Council) through a policy with Methodist Insurance. St. Margaret’s is responsible for insuring all furniture & equipment it owns & for arranging public & employer’s liability insurance suitable to cover services & other meetings held on the premises & any outings or organised activities away from the Church. St. Margaret’s will also ensure that outer doors of the church are locked when necessary & handbags & valuable items suitable stowed to avoid the risk of theft.

9. **Youth Policy.** St. Margaret’s will follow the code of good practice for Vestries & Congregations in the Scottish Episcopal Church ‘Safeguarding Children & Young People in the Church’.

10. **Restrictions.** St. Margaret’s agrees to adhere to the restrictions imposed by the Church Council on users of the premises. Specifically, these include a ban on smoking, throughout the church & and a ban on the use, supply, sale or consumptions of alcohol on the premises, with the exclusion of wine when celebrating the service of Holy Communion. Raffles will only be held at fundraising functions, usually for donated prizes, & subject to the following rules:
    - The only expenses that can be deducted in connection with the raffle are those of printing the tickets & of purchasing prizes.
• The sum expended on prizes must not exceed £50
• None of the prizes may be cash prizes or alcohol
• The sale of tickets & the announcement of the results must take place during the course of the event

11. **Fire Precautions.** St. Margaret’s will observe the fire precautions displayed in each room.
12. **Amendments** These terms & conditions may be revised from time to time with the agreement of the Church Council & Vestry Committee of St. Margaret’s.

Issued on Behalf of Rosyth Methodist Church:

Signed Date

Accepted on behalf of the Vestry Committee of St. Margaret Church

Signed Date