



## **Dorset Registration** **Service**

# **Approved Premises Application Form**

**APPLICATION FOR PREMISES TO BE LICENCED AS A VENUE  
FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

**Application form for premises to be approved as a venue for marriages in pursuance of section 26(1)(bb) of the Marriage Act 1949 and civil partnerships in pursuance of section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004.**

When completed, this form should be submitted to Dorset Registration Service, Dorset History Centre, Bridport Road, Dorchester DT1 1RP together with the appropriate non-returnable fee made payable to 'Dorset Council'.

**This application must be made by the proprietor or a trustee of the premises. If successful, the applicant will be the holder of the approval.**

Please note that granting a licence can take between 8 – 12 weeks.

**If you require further assistance or advice on the completion of this form, please contact: -**

Dorset Registration Service  
Dorset History Centre  
Bridport Road  
Dorchester  
DT1 1RP

Telephone: 01305 225153 (Monday to Friday)  
Email: [registrars@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

## **DORSET REGISTRATION SERVICE – APPLICATION**

**Application form for premises to be approved as a venue for marriages in pursuance of section 26(1)(bb) of the Marriage Act 1949 and civil partnerships in pursuance of section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004.**

The application must be made by the proprietor or a trustee of the premise. If successful, the applicant will be the holder of the approval.

<b>1</b>	<b>Full name and private address of applicant.</b>  The applicant must be an individual with an interest in the premises i.e. proprietor or trustee. An application may be made on behalf of a limited company by a director or the company secretary  <i>If the application is made by a Limited Company please give the address of the registered office and where different, state also the main trading address of the Company.</i>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Name, postal address and telephone number of the premises which is the subject of this application.</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>A description of the nature of the premises i.e. hotel, stately home or civic accommodation and the primary and other uses of the venue.</b>	

5	Is the person or company named in question 1 the occupier of the premises?	
6	If the answer to question 5 above is 'No' and there is another occupier, please give their name(s) and address(es).	
4	Is the applicant the proprietor of the premises?  If not, please give the name and address of the proprietor.	
7	Please state the name of the room(s) which is subject to being licensed as the 'Ceremony Room(s)' and the maximum number of people permitted by the premises fire risk assessment to occupy each room in which the proceedings are intended to be held.	

**Application – additional information and supporting documents**

a)	I apply for the premises named in section 2 of the application to be approved for the solemnization of marriages and the formation of civil partnerships.	Yes/ No
b)	<p><b>The non-returnable fee for this application is £1212.00</b></p> <p><b>I enclose a cheque made payable to 'Dorset Council'</b></p> <p><b>I will pay by debit/credit card by calling 01305 225153</b></p> <p><b>I will pay by BACS:</b> <b>BANK DETAILS</b> Account name: <b>Dorset Council Fund</b> Sort Code: <b>600701</b> Account Number: <b>59190019</b> Branch Address: <b>Nat West Bank PLC, 49 South Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1DW</b> Please email all remittance advices to: <b>incomegeneral@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</b> Please ensure ALL payments quote your account reference: <b>236201/100428 - VENUE NAME</b> VAT Registration Number: <b>GB 311 8339 23</b></p>	<p>Please tick</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
c)	<p><b>I attach a plan</b> (no larger than A3 size) of the built premises showing the room(s) in which it is intended that civil marriages and civil partnerships will take place and the boundary showing the extent of the full premises (the built premises and any outdoor linked area).</p> <p><b>The plans are to scale and show all aspects of fire safety</b> for the building such as – fire exits, fire extinguisher points, detection, alarm points etc</p>	Yes/ No
d)	<p><b>I attach 1 copy of the Insurance documents detailing the Public Liability Insurance cover</b> for at least £5 Million for the premises which is subject of this application.</p>	Yes/ No
e)	<p><b>I confirm</b> that I hold the appropriate planning permission for civil ceremonies to be conducted on these premises</p>	Yes/No

e)	<b>Fire Safety - I attach 1 copy of the current fire risk assessment for the premises which are the subject of this application.</b>  <b>The fire risk assessment must show the maximum number of persons which can be safely accommodated in each of the proposed approved rooms and must conform to fire safety regulations. If advice is required, this should be sought from the Dorset &amp; Wilts Fire and Rescue Service.</b>	Yes/ No
	<b>I understand that:</b>	
a)	The premises will be inspected for suitability before approval is granted and, if this application is successful, may be subject to subsequent inspection;	Yes/ No
b)	Public notice of the application will be advertised on the Dorset Council website with a period of three weeks allowed for objections;	Yes/ No
c)	Approval, if granted, will be for a three year period, subject to revocation; and,	Yes/ No
d)	The premises must satisfy the local authority on fire precautions and health and safety provisions.	Yes/ No
	<b><u>I declare that: -</u></b>	
a)	I have read and understood the information contained in this form and Annexes A, B, C and D	Yes/ No
b)	The building is not a register office or religious premises.	Yes/ No
c)	I have consulted the planning authority as to whether planning consent is required.	Yes/ No
	<b><u>I further declare that, if approval is granted: -</u></b>	
a)	The premises will be regularly available for public use for the solemnization of civil marriages and the formation of civil partnerships.	Yes/ No
b)	I will comply with the standard conditions and any local conditions attached to that grant of approval (Annex B)	Yes/ No

<b>Name of applicant: (Block capitals)</b>	
<b>Interest in the premises:</b>  <b>If applying on behalf of a company or other incorporated business, please state position in company</b>	
<b>Address for correspondence:</b>	
<b>Contact telephone number:</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Website address:</b>	

**Signature of applicant:**

**Date:**

## **ANNEX A**

### **NOTES ON THE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE AN APPROVAL CAN BE GRANTED**

- The application must be made by the proprietor or trustee of the premises.
- A director or company secretary may apply on behalf of a limited company.

The premises must fulfil the following standard requirements stated in Schedule 1 of the Marriages and Civil partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and Amendment Regulations (referred to in these notes as Regulations):

1. Having regard to their primary use, situation, construction and state of repair, the premises must, in the opinion of the authority, be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings.
2. Subject to any exemptions in the equality Act 2010, the premises must be regularly available to the public for use for –
  - a. the solemnization of marriages; or
  - b. the registration (formation) of civil partnerships.
3. The built premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the authority, having consulted with the fire and rescue authority, and such other reasonable provision for the health and safety of persons employed in or visiting the premises as the authority considers appropriate.
4. The built premises must not be –
  - a. religious premises as defined by section 6(2) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004; \*
  - b. a register office, but this paragraph does not apply to premises in which a register office is situated, provided that the room which is subject to approval is not the same room as the room which is the register office.
5. The room or rooms in which the proceedings (marriage or civil partnership) will be held in the built premises, if approval is granted, must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the built premises.
6. *“Religious premises” means built premises which are used solely or mainly for religious purposes or have been so used and have not subsequently been used solely or mainly for other purposes.*



**In considering the suitability of premises as a venue, the authority will have regard to the following Guidance from the Registrar General:**

**STANDARD REQUIREMENTS**

1. The laws relating to “approved premises” are intended to allow proceedings to take place regularly in hotels, stately homes, civic halls and similar built premises without compromising the solemnity of the occasion.
2. Built premises are defined in the Regulations as a permanently immovable structure comprising at least a room, or any boat or other vessel which is permanently moored. “Linked outdoor areas” means any areas within the boundary of the land of which the built premises form part, which are not indoors, and which may be used in common with the built premises. “Premises” as now amended are defined as built premises together with linked outdoor areas. Any premises outside this definition, such as most forms of transport, will not be eligible for approval.
3. An area is indoors if it is a space which is considered to be enclosed, or substantially enclosed. Spaces are enclosed if they have a ceiling or roof; and except for doors, windows and passageways, are wholly enclosed either permanently or temporarily. Spaces are substantially enclosed if they have a ceiling or roof but there is an opening in the walls or an aggregate area of openings in the walls which is less than half of the area of the walls, including other structures that serve the purposes of walls and constitute the perimeter of the premises. Openings in which there are windows, doors or other fittings that can be opened or shut cannot be taken into account in determining the area of an opening or aggregate areas of openings.
4. The built premises must be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings, which must take place in an identifiable and distinct part of those built premises. The primary use of a building would render it unsuitable if that use could demean proceedings or bring them into disrepute.
5. The built premises must not be any part of a register office on the plan submitted by the authority and approved by the Registrar General under the Registration Service Act 1953. Any rooms in the same premises as the register office that aren’t on this plan e.g. a council chamber in the same town hall, can be approved but a room in a register office can not be approved. However, an authority can set its fee for attending a marriage or civil partnership in approved premises at the same level as the prescribed fee for a marriage or civil partnership in a register office.
6. The built premises may be used for the solemnisation of marriages and the formation of civil partnerships but must be regularly available to the public for use for one or the other. Under the terms of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 (which came into effect on 30 April 2007) it is unlawful for a person concerned with the provision of goods, facilities or services to discriminate against a person who seeks to use those goods, facilities or services on the grounds of the sexual orientation of that person. The holder of an approval who does not allow premises to be used for both marriages and civil partnership, or who provides accommodation, services or facilities for one and not the other, is liable to legal action as a result. In common with other equality legislation, this action would need to be taken by the parties concerned against the holder of the approval. The

local authority that granted the approval has no powers to act or intervene, unless, of course, it is the holder of the approval.

7. The requirement that the built premises must be regularly available for use by the public will preclude a private house from being approved.

#### **LOCAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Two reserved car parking spaces should be provided for registration staff, free of charge, on ceremony days. These spaces should be near to the built premises and allow easy access and exit so that the registration staff may leave the venue quickly once the ceremony has finished.
2. In addition to the ceremony room, a separate room will be required for the Registrar of Marriages to interview the couple in confidence prior to the start of the ceremony. The room must be suitably decorated, clean and provided with two chairs and a table. The room must also be provided with drinking water and tissues.

## **ANNEX B**

### **CONDITIONS TO BE ATTACHED TO GRANTS OF APPROVAL**

#### **STANDARD CONDITIONS**

Proceedings means the solemnisation of a marriage or the formation of a civil partnership and does not refer to any other activities on the built premises.

1. The holder of the approval must ensure that there is at all times an individual with responsibility for ensuring compliance with these conditions attached to the approval and those conditions set out in Annexe C ("the responsible person") and that the responsible person's occupation, seniority, position of responsibility in relation to the built premises, or other factors (his "qualification"), indicate that he/she is in a position to ensure compliance with the conditions attached to the approval.
2. The responsible person or, in his/her absence, an appropriately qualified deputy appointed by her/him, shall be available on the premises for a minimum of one hour prior to and throughout each of the proceedings.
3. The holder must notify the authority –
  - (a) of his/her name and address immediately upon him/her becoming the holder of an approval under regulation 7(2) and,
  - (b) of the name, address and qualification of the responsible person immediately upon the appointment of a new responsible person.
4. The holder must notify the authority immediately of any change to any of the following –
  - a. the layout of the built premises and linked outdoor area, as shown in the plan submitted with the approved application, or in the use of the premises;
  - b. the name or full postal address of the approved premises;
  - c. the description of the room or rooms in which the proceedings are to take place;
  - d. the name or address of the holder of the approval; and,
  - e. the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.
5. The approved premises must be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by the authority.
6. For the purposes of proceedings held in the built premises a suitable notice stating that the premises have been approved for the proceedings and identifying and giving directions to the room in which the proceedings are to take place must be

displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to and throughout the proceedings.

7. For the purposes of proceedings held in the built No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which proceedings take place for one hour prior to and during those proceedings.
8. All proceedings held in the built premises must take place in a room which was identified as one to be used for that purpose on the plan submitted with the approved application.
9. For the purposes of proceedings held in the built premises the room in which the proceedings are to take place must be separate from any other activity on the built premises at the time of the proceedings.
10. The arrangements for and content of the proceedings must meet with the prior approval of the superintendent registrar of the district, or the registration authority of the area, as the case may be, in which the approved premises are situated.
11. Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.

In particular, the proceedings shall not:

- a. include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;
- b. be led by a minister of religion or any other religious leader;
- c. involve a religious ritual or series of rituals;
- d. include hymns or other religious chants; or
- e. include any form of worship.

But the proceedings may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essential non-religious context.

For this purpose, any material used by way of introduction to, in any interval between parts of, or by way of conclusion to the proceedings shall be treated as forming part of the proceedings.

12. Public access to any proceedings in approved premises must be permitted without charge.
13. Any reference to the approval of premises on any sign or notice, or on any stationary or publication, or within any advertisement may state that the premises have been approved by the authority as a venue for marriage in pursuance of section 26(1) (bb) of the Marriage Act 1949, and the formation of civil partnerships under section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 but shall not state or imply any recommendation of the premises or its facilities by the authority, the Register General or any of the officers or employees of either of them.

14. If a change of name to the approved premises occurs after the issue of the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document, but before the proceedings, the former name of the approved premises as recorded in the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document shall remain valid for its duration for the purpose of the proceedings.

#### **LOCAL CONDITIONS**

1. The holder of the approval must maintain relevant public liability insurance in respect of any legal liabilities which might arise from the use of the holder's premises as a venue for marriages and civil partnerships.
2. The following supplementary conditions apply for the approval of 'garden rooms' and other free-standing structures:
  - a) The structure must have foundations and be permanent and immovable and in this respect the decision of the Dorset Council on what is considered "permanent" and "immovable" will be final.
  - b) The structure must have a brick, stone or concrete base and ideally this should be raised above the surrounding ground level. The structure should have a roof, which should be tiled, although other covers e.g. thatch, will be considered providing they are waterproof and are a requirement of the local planning officer and/or a conservation/heritage decision. The roof should be supported by brick, stone, concrete or wood pillars or walls. The space between pillars may have the benefit of trellising or other decoration.
  - c) The structure should be able to be provided with electric light and power.
  - d) The structure should be of sufficient size to accommodate the following:

Celebrant	Registrar
The Couple	Two Witnesses
A suitable table and three chairs	Space for the ceremony to be conducted

The decision of Dorset Council on what is considered to be sufficient space will be final.

- e) The structure must provide a seemly and dignified venue in which civil ceremonies may be celebrated.
- f) The structure must be regularly available to be used for the celebration of civil ceremonies.
- g) The structure will only be approved if it forms a part of a larger venue, which must include either one or a number of other approved ceremony rooms. In this respect when ever a ceremony is booked with in a free-standing structure, another ceremony room must be kept available so that if the weather is inclement the ceremony may be moved inside.

- h) The decision as to whether, because of inclement weather, a marriage has to be moved into a ceremony room inside the venue will be made by the registration staff after discussion with the ceremonial party and the venue. The decision of the registration staff is final.
- i) The venue must make sure that any ceremonies taking place within the structure are not affected by any other activities taking place at the venue. The immediate area surrounding this structure is to be roped/barriered so as to restrict access one hour before and during a ceremony. No food or drink is permitted within this roped/barriered area one hour before and during a ceremony.

## **ANNEX C**

### **CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO GRANTS OF APPROVAL OF PREMISES WHICH ARE NOT RELITIOUS PREMISES RELATIONG TO PROCEEDINGS HELD IN LINKED OUTDOOR AREAS**

1. For the purposes of proceedings held in the linked outdoor areas, prior confirmation must be secured from the superintendent registrar of the district in which the approved premises are situated, or the authority, as the case may be, that in their opinion, having regard to the primary use, situation, construction and state of repair, the proceedings will take place in a seemly and dignified location within the linked outdoor areas.
2. The location within the linked outdoor areas at which the proceedings take place must be identifiable by description.
3. for the purposes of proceedings held within the linked outdoor areas, save as provided below, no food or drink may be sold to or permitted to be consumed by persons attending the proceedings –
  - (a) when gathering for the purposes of the proceedings; or
  - (b) during the proceedings
4. For the purposes of proceedings held within the linked outdoor areas, a suitable notice stating:
  - (a) that the premises have been approved for the proceedings;
  - (b) the description of the location within the linked outdoor areas at which the proceedings are to take place; and
  - (c) directions to the location within the linked outdoor areas at which the proceedings are to take place;must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises and the built premises for one hour prior to and throughout the proceedings.

## **ANNEX D**

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **RENEWAL AND REINSTATEMENT**

1. The holder may apply for the renewal of an approval when the current approval has less than twelve months to run. The receipt by Dorset Registration Service of an application for renewal made by the holder in this period will extend the current approval until the application has been finally dealt with. A renewal will run from the expiry date of the current approval.
2. If the holder fails to apply for renewal before the expiry date and the approval expires, it will be reinstated by the receipt by Dorset Registration Service of an application for renewal made by the holder within one month of the expiry date and continue until the application has been dealt with. A renewal will run from the previous expiry date.

#### **REVOCATION**

1. The authority may revoke an approval if it is satisfied, after considering any representations from the holder, that the use or structure of the premises has changed so that any of the standard or local requirements cannot be met or the holder has failed to comply with one or more of the standard or local conditions attached to the approval.
2. The Registrar General may direct the authority to revoke an approval if, in his opinion and after considering any representations from the holder, there have been breaches of the law relating to marriage or civil partnership on the approved premises. This is not subject to review by the authority.
3. When an approval has been revoked the regulations require the former holder to notify any couples who had arranged to marry or register a civil partnership on the premises.

#### **REVIEWS**

1. An applicant may seek a review by the local authority of its decision to refuse to grant an approval, to attach local conditions, to refuse to renew an approval or to revoke an approval.
2. The review must be carried out by a different officer, committee or sub-committee than that which made the decision which is being appealed against. The review panel may confirm the decision, rescind it or vary it with the imposition of fresh or further conditions.
3. The authority may charge an additional fee for a review of its decision to refuse to grant an approval, to attach local conditions or to refuse to renew an approval.

#### **REGISTRATION**

1. Details of approved premises will be held for public inspection by the authority, copied locally and sent to the Registrar General who will publicise them.