

**East Riding Registration and  
Celebratory Services**

**Guidebook for the  
Approval (Licensing)  
of Premises for  
Civil Marriages and  
Civil Partnerships**



## FORWARD

This guidebook sets out the arrangements currently operated by East Riding Registration and Celebratory Services for the licensing of venues as Approved Premises for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships and outlines other non-statutory celebratory ceremonies.

These arrangements also apply to the renewal of an existing licence.

### **Please read this guidebook carefully**

These arrangements and guidance represent the Council's position as at the date of this guidebook and may be updated from time to time as a result of policy or legislation changes. You should ensure that you are referring to an up to date version.

If you require any further explanation, advice or assistance please contact the:

**Superintendent Registrar  
The Register Office  
Walkergate House  
Walkergate  
Beverley  
East Riding of Yorkshire  
HU17 9BP**

**Telephone: (01482) 393600**

**Email: [registration.service@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:registration.service@eastriding.gov.uk)**

### **Notes:**

In this guidebook the term "Approved Premises" means "Approved Premises for the solemnization of Civil Marriages under Section 26(1)(BB) of The Marriage Act 1949, and the Registration of Civil Partnerships under Sections 6(3A)(a) of The Civil Partnership Act 2004".

Licence means the approval of any premises under The Marriages and Civil Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulations 2011 (Statutory Instrument No. 2661).

The registration and approval authority is East Riding of Yorkshire Council (East Riding Registration and Celebratory Services). Throughout this document this will be referred to as either the Council or ERRCS.

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## 1. Introduction and welcome

- 1.1 East Riding Registration and Celebratory Services (ERRCS) are responsible for the provision of the Registration Service in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Part of this service deals with the registration and ceremony provision of civil marriages, the registration of civil partnerships and includes the approval (licensing) of premises and venues where civil marriages and civil partnerships may take place.
- 1.2 Under current legislation, ERRCS may approve suitable venues where civil marriage and civil partnerships may take place without compromising the fundamental principles of English law and Parliament's intention to maintain the dignity and solemnity of the occasion for these important events.

## 2. What type of venue is suitable?

- 2.1 An Approved Premise must be a **permanent immovable structure comprising of a least one room**, or any boat or other vessel, which is permanently moored. This may include venues such as hotels, stately homes, sporting venues, civic halls and so forth. (This list is not exhaustive)
- 2.2 Marriages and civil partnerships cannot “legally” be held in the open air, in tents, marquees or any other temporary structure. The premises must be seemly and dignified. The primary use of the building should not render it unsuitable if that use could demean marriage or bring it into disrepute.
- 2.3 The secular (civil) nature of marriage and civil partnership precludes the use of any building with any recent or continuing religious connection. Generally this would rule out a building or room whose description, purpose or appearance is considered to be linked to religion - such as a chapel in a stately home, or a building containing furniture, fixtures and fittings associated with a place of religious worship, like stained glass windows or other items depicting a religious imagery.
- 2.4 However, guidance from the General Register Office (GRO) states that some premises may comply with these regulations provided they (and the religious elements) are not being used as part of the civil marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration. (If unsure, please seek advice from the Register Office)
- 2.5 Amendments made to the Civil Partnership Act in 2011 now mean that some religious premises (exceptions apply) may be approved for civil partnerships only, but not marriages. The approval of religious premises is outlined in Appendix 5 below.
- 2.6 The venue should where possible comply with disabled access requirements (under the Equalities Act 2010, Building Regulations and other associated statutory requirements). However it is accepted that this may not always be possible given the age, construction and style of an existing building – see Section 14 regarding current building regulations.
- 2.7 The premises must be regularly available for the solemnization of civil marriages or the formation of civil partnerships. This is subject to any exemptions in the Equalities Act 2010 – ie. owners of premises will not be able to refuse to host either marriages or civil partnerships on the grounds of sexual orientation (exemptions under Schedule 23 of the Act for some religious premises)

- 2.8 “Private dwelling-houses” are not appropriate venues to be approved as they are not known to the public for these proceedings and are not regularly available for this use.
- 2.9 Marriages and civil partnerships must be solemnized or registered in premises with “open doors”, which the regulations interpret to mean that the public must have unfettered access to witness the proceedings and be able to make objections prior to or during the ceremony. If disabled access is not readily possible then measures must be in place for a disabled objector to be able to make their concerns known, ie. via a member of staff or “responsible person” or access to instant communication to the ceremony location/registrar. No charge may be made to any member of the public attending a ceremony.
- 2.10 ERRCS welcomes enquiries and applications in respect of all types of venues, and will advise and assist customers towards meeting the requirements and conditions detailed in this guidebook, and what is required by legislation.
- 2.11 **Before making a start on the application, applicants are advised to contact ERRCS at the earliest possible stage to seek further advice and guidance, with the option to arrange an informal initial visit. This would provide an excellent opportunity to discuss any potential application, and would ensure that the venue is potentially suitable and that the applicant fully understands all the requirements of the licence and the process.**

### 3. Civil marriage

- 3.1 A civil marriage may take place on any day of the week including Sundays, Bank holidays and national holidays, but are always subject to ERRCS having staff available. Ceremonies arranged outside normal office hours may be subject to additional arrangements, checks and fees.
- 3.2 All civil marriages (which from March 2014 include same sex marriage) are solemnized by a Superintendent Registrar (or their deputy) and registered by a Registrar of marriages (or their deputy) – always two members of ERRCS staff. These staff will normally arrive at the venue 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.
- 3.3 All bookings for a civil marriage taken by the approved premises are subject to the availability of the Registrars and the couple’s capacity to marry and the premise holding a valid licence on the day of the ceremony. **Couples must be advised to contact the Register Office** as soon as possible to establish both. Premises owners should be aware of recent changes to the time periods required to give Notice of Marriage and changes to immigration controls. ERRCS advise couples and premises owners to always contact the Register Office for the latest guidance.
- 3.4 Ceremonies **MUST** commence on time. In cases of lateness the Registrars reserve the right to leave for their next engagement. If it is possible, they will return to facilitate the marriage later in the day. This may incur additional fees for the couple.
- 3.5 All guests should be assembled in the ceremony room (or designated area) at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the ceremony.

## 4. Civil partnerships

- 4.1 Similar to the above, civil partnership registrations may take place on any day of the week including Sundays, Bank holidays and national holidays, subject to staff availability etc as above. Ceremonies arranged outside normal office hours may be subject to additional arrangements, checks and fees.
- 4.2 Unlike a civil marriage, a civil partnership is legalised by a “registration” process. Couples may however, wish to enhance their registration with a ceremony and ERRCS is pleased to provide a ceremony combined with the registration.
- 4.3 All civil partnerships are registered by a civil partnership Registrar. When a couple wish to celebrate with a ceremony, a “celebrant” will conduct this. These staff are provided by ERRCS and will normally arrive at the venue 30 minutes prior to a registration and/or ceremony.
- 4.4 As with marriages, all bookings for a civil partnership taken by the Approved Premises are subject to the availability of the Registrars (celebrant) and the couple’s capacity to enter into a civil partnership and the premises holding a valid licence on the day of the registration. Couples must be advised to contact the Register Office as soon as possible to establish both.
- 4.5 Civil partnership ceremonies MUST commence on time. As above, in cases of lateness the Registrars reserve the right to leave for their next engagement. If it is possible, they will return to facilitate the civil partnership later in the day.
- 4.6 All guests should be assembled in the ceremony room/area 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the ceremony.

## 5. Celebratory services

- 5.1 In addition to civil marriage and civil partnership other celebratory and civil ceremonies may be held at Approved Premises. These ceremonies are outlined in more detail in Appendix 6 below – but currently include the following:
  - Renewal of Vows Ceremonies,
  - Naming Ceremonies,
  - Marriage or Civil Partnership Celebrations – including “*Sapphire*” ceremonies,
  - Citizenship Ceremonies and Civil Funerals.

## 6. Fees

- 6.1 Fees for licensing Approved Premises and the fees for ceremonies are set (and reviewed annually) by ERRCS. Fees in respect of ceremonies are paid to ERRCS direct by the couple or person/s booking the ceremony. The Approved Premise is not involved in this transaction. Current fees are available upon request or via our website.

- 6.2 The Approved Premise licence fee is submitted by the applicant for the venue in full with the application. Payment of the fee can be by cheque (made payable to 'East Riding of Yorkshire Council') or by debit or credit card. Card payments may be subject to a surcharge. An on-line application and payment facility is also available via ERRCS website – [www.eastriding.gov.uk](http://www.eastriding.gov.uk).
- 6.3 **Please note that payment of the licence application fee does not indicate or guarantee that a licence will be granted – there is no “tacit” agreement or consent at the application stage. A successful Approved Premise licence can only follow a full consultation and checking process and a final inspection must be carried out before the licence will be granted. Ceremony bookings for use of the venue should not therefore be advertised, taken or confirmed until a licence is in place.**
- 6.4 If the licence application is not approved (granted) then any costs incurred by the Council in the process will be retained.

## 7. Approved premise responsibilities

- 7.1 Below is a summarised list of responsibilities required from all Approved Premises:
- Designate a 'Responsible Person' or persons and deputies if appropriate (these duties are outlined below – also see our separate “Quick Guide”)
  - Abide by the requirements and conditions set out in this guidebook,
  - Ensure that ERRCS are kept informed of any changes to the structure, layout or access to the venue, or changes to name of the venue, ownership, responsible persons, opening times, facilities and any other matters appropriate to the licence,
  - Inform customers and couples of any limitations or conditions applying to the venue in respect of civil marriage, civil partnership and other ceremonies,
  - Respond effectively to complaints relating to ceremonies and keep ERRCS updated on relevant customer feedback,
  - Send representatives of their venue to ERRCS annual stakeholders meetings and participate in other consultations,
  - Provide a private interview room for use by Registrars prior to ceremonies,
  - Ensure clear, relevant signage is on display prior to each ceremony. (see point 8.11 below)

Other responsibilities and requirements are outlined in detail within this guidebook and the application form.

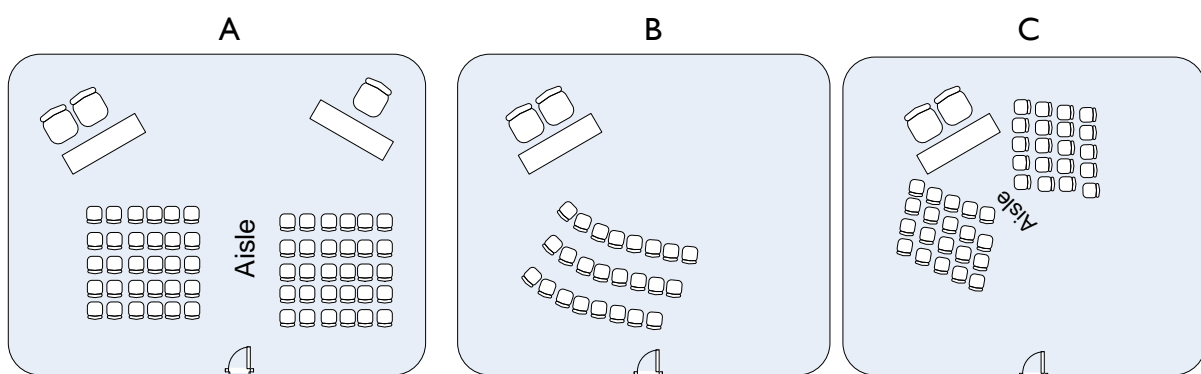
## 8. Within the venue

- 8.1 Within the venue, individual rooms or areas will be “**designated**” (named) for the purposes of the licence, therefore registrations and ceremonies may **ONLY** take place within these designated rooms or areas.
- 8.2 Whilst the ceremony rooms do not have to be separate from other activities at the venue they must not be affected by any other activity happening at the same time, ie. noise, disruption and interruptions.

- 8.3 There is no required minimum or maximum size of room or area, as this will vary between venues. Please refer to the sections below on working out room capacities. All proposed room capacities will be subject to final approval by ERRCS, the local Fire and Rescue Service and the Council's Building Control Officer to ensure that safe use and fire exits etc are adequate.
- 8.4 The designated room or area should have suitable decoration, fixtures and fittings, appropriate to its use for ceremonies, and in accordance with the overall décor, age, condition and style of the venue. Moreover, as noted above, this will be subject to final approval by ERRCS, the local Fire and Rescue Service and the Council's Building Control Officer.
- 8.5 Layout – for marriage ceremonies – two small tables will be required in the room. Each table size should be approximately 50cm x 100cm. There should be two chairs with one table and one chair with the other. The tables and chairs shall be placed at one end of the room where the ceremony will take place. At non-statutory ceremonies like renewal of vows and naming, only one table is required. (see the suggested diagrams below).
- 8.6 There should also be a comfortable space (between the tables) where the couple and the Registrar conducting the ceremony will stand. A number of chairs should be provided for guests and these may be set up in a 'theatre style' with a central aisle, or in an arrangement agreed with the couple, subject to final approval by the registration staff. Chairs do not need to be provided for all guests (subject to agreement with the couple). Whichever room layout is used it must allow for the safe exit of all in the event of a fire.
- 8.7 Allowance must also be made for disabled guests especially those with mobility and/or sensory impairment. Adequate space at the rear, sides or front of the room must be allowed for.

*Suggested layouts for marriages = A*

*Suggested layouts for civil partnerships and non-statutory ceremonies = B and C.*



- 8.8 At the final inspection, it would be appreciated if the designated room/s or area can be set up for a typical ceremony, so that the position and number of chairs, position of table and aisle can be agreed. This will also assist Council staff in assessing access and egress in the event of an evacuation.



- 8.9 In addition to the ceremony room a separate room or area should be available to allow for the confidential interviewing of the ceremonial party (bride and groom/civil partners) prior to the start of the ceremony. This must be on the same floor as the ceremony room and must not be an occupied bedroom.
- 8.10 The ceremony room and other rooms, entrance and waiting areas to be used must be clean, set-up and made ready no later than at least one hour before the agreed start time for the ceremony. All access and egress routes should be free from obstruction and potential tripping hazards.
- 8.11 SIGNAGE - Ensure clear, relevant signage is on display prior to each ceremony to be placed at **ALL** public entrances to the venue, at least one hour prior to and during the ceremony. As an example this notice shall state as a minimum the example wording below ....

**John Brown and Julie Green** (*full current names – not married names*)  
**are to be married in the Ceremony Room** (*actual name of the designated room*)  
**at 2.00 pm on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

- 8.12 The above notice will not only assist guests, but is required should there be an “objector” to the marriage. In these rare cases, it is advisable that the Responsible Person asks the objector to speak with the Registrar, rather than enter the ceremony room and confront the whole party in an unexpected manner.

## 9. Celebration, commemoration or blessing

- 9.1 Marriages and civil partnerships at Approved Premises can be followed by a celebration, commemoration or blessing, providing that it is separate from the civil ceremony and it is not a religious marriage ceremony.
- 9.2 If a religious blessing were to “mainly” follow the proceedings at a particular Approved Premise, or be considered part of the service being offered by that premise, then this may well be considered as a religious connection. This may breach the licence requirements and conditions and lead to the Council to consider the revocation of the licence.
- 9.3 There should be a clearly defined and measurable break between the end of the civil ceremony and the start of any such celebratory ceremony or blessing. (see our new “Sapphire” ceremonies”)

## 10. Fire safety

- 10.1 The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 2661) state that:

**“The premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the authority, having consulted with the fire authority, and such other reasonable provision for health and safety of persons employed in or visiting the premises as the authority considers appropriate”.**

- 10.2 The applicant will be deemed by ERRCS to be the responsible person (or acting on their behalf) under the **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**, to ensure that an appropriate, adequate and up to date **Fire Risk Assessment** has been carried out on the premises.
- 10.3 To ease the application process and ensure consistency, the Council refers all applicants to national guidance – such as **Fire Safety Risk Assessments for Small and Medium Places of Assembly and/or Large Places of Assembly**. These documents can be found on the various websites – examples:
- <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyrisk7>
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>
  - Also refer to Humberside Fire and Rescue Service website: <http://www.humbersidefire.gov.uk/your-safety/business-safety/clg-fire-risk-assessment-guides>
- 10.4 A full, complete and up to date Fire Risk Assessment covering all fire hazards, people at risk, control measures in place, actions required (responsibility and timescales) etc **MUST be attached to the application form**. The documentation will identify the location/areas that have been assessed (ie. whole premises or specific areas/rooms) and will also identify the responsible person, date carried out, date to be reviewed and will be “signed off” by the manager or premises owner.
- 10.5 **Local Fire and Rescue Service consultation** – on receipt of the licence application (including renewal applications) the premises details and a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment will be sent to the local Fire and Rescue Service. As a result, Fire Officers may wish to arrange a visit and inspect the premises
- 10.6 **In all cases, a licence will not be granted or renewed until the Fire Risk Assessment has been received, checked, consulted upon, and agreed to the satisfaction of the Council.**

## **11. Room occupancy capacity**

- 11.1 The application process requires the applicant to calculate the maximum number of people that are proposed to occupy the designated room or area. This calculation and final total will include the couple, their guests, the registrars, venue staff, photographers and anyone else present.
- 11.2 Section 4 of the “Fire Safety Risk Assessments for Small and Medium Places of Assembly” Guide provides detailed information on the calculation of safe room capacities. ERRCS has also developed a summary guide to assist in these calculations (see Appendix 3 below).
- 11.3 Premises applicants will be requested to clearly state the room capacity figures on their applications, and so it is important that applicants provide **scaled plans** of designated rooms showing measurements, including access and exit doors. This will enable Council staff to check and ascertain safe room capacities prior to the final inspection visit. The local Fire and Rescue Service may also wish to comment and advise. In all cases, the Council’s designation of safe room capacities will be final and the grant of a licence for that room or space will be granted accordingly.

- 11.4 **Copies of the room plans and capacity calculations are required** (together with the Fire Risk Assessment - above) and will be forwarded to the local Fire and Rescue Service for information and comment before any licence can be granted or renewed.
- 11.5 **Room Plans** – should be clear and legible and drawn to scale with clear measurements (in metric) – including as a minimum:
- the full boundary of rooms and adjoining corridors, sub rooms, annexes, bars, toilets etc
  - location of access and egress points and width of doors/exits – direction of door openings etc
  - clearly designated (named or numbered)
  - fire safety equipment – extinguisher/sprinkler locations, emergency lighting, alarm points etc
- 11.6 The provision of a current and adequate Fire Risk Assessment, room plans and agreed safe room capacity figures will become conditions of the licence and will apply to all applications and renewals. Breaches of these conditions may lead to revocation of the licence.

## 12. Other health and safety matters

- 12.1 The following documents/matters will be considered with all applications and checked and verified at the final inspection prior to licence approval:
- **Safety Statement** - an adequate premise Safety Policy and/or Safety Statement,
  - Other appropriate **Safety Risk Assessments** in relation to the performance of events and/or ceremonies, which the Council and/or local Fire and Rescue Service may deem necessary,
  - Evidence of up to date **fire equipment testing**, including fire detection and alarm systems, extinguishers, evacuation procedures, emergency lighting, signage and so forth. (This will normally be covered within the Fire Risk Assessment and relevant documentation available to inspect within the venue's **Fire Log**),
  - Adequate, safe and suitable **access and egress** – especially in relation to disabled customers. Premises must comply with the most recent legislation, or make suitable and adequate adaptations and alternative provisions. (ie. in compliance with The Equalities Act 2010 and Building Regulations),
  - Evidence and records of **staff induction and training** on safety matters, including first aid provision,
  - **Public Liability Insurance** – copy of current policy certificate (see 15 below).
- 12.2 At the final visit/inspection Council officers will wish to see sight of and evidence of the above records. It will be appreciated if these (and other documentation) are made ready for this visit. Premises owners will receive a reminder and checklist prior to the visit.
- 12.3 The responsible person for the venue or one of their deputies must be present in the ceremony room at all times. The health and safety of the public is the responsibility of the venue and not of ERRCS.

### **13. Use of candles (or other naked flames) in ceremonies**

- 13.1 Decorative candles (or other naked flames) can be used by prior agreement between ERRCS and the venue, but should not be sited as to restrict the area where the ceremony is to be conducted and/or registered, or pose a health and safety/fire risk. The venue will be expected to have covered this provision with an appropriate risk assessment.

### **14. Planning permission and building regulations**

- 14.1 Prior to making any application for a premises licence, applicants must first make enquiries with the Council's Planning and Development Management Services section to check whether the "use" as an Approved Premises for civil marriages and civil partnerships would constitute development requiring either a Planning or Building Regulations application to be deposited. This is best done by submitting a "Do I need planning permission?" request with accompanying information. The form can be found on the Council's website. Please note there may be a fee for a planning application.
- 14.2 Planning Permissions - a copy of any recent or proposed planning applications, permissions and/or decisions (ie: within the last 3 years) relating to the venue and those which could affect its use for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies should be enclosed with the application. Alternatively, for new venue applications written evidence must be submitted confirming that the local planning authority is content that the premises may be used for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies (for example the correspondence under 14.1 will provide this).
- 14.3 Building Regulations Permissions - applicants should contact the Building Control Section, County Hall, Beverley, HU17 9BA, (Helpline number: 01482 393800) to check whether any building or premise to be used as a licensed venue has in place, or requires an application to be deposited for Building Regulations consent. The proposal may involve a change of use under the Building Regulations or building works to be undertaken to provide additional safety measures or facilities if the premise is to be used as a licensed venue. As above there may be a fee for this service.
- 14.4 Premise owners should ensure that they are fully aware and comply with the current Building Regulations and associated guidance documents. These Regulations are outlined in a series of Approved Documents and cover measures such as fire safety and disabled access and use, amongst many others. They generally apply to any material change of use and material alterations to existing buildings. These regulations may not exclude older or historic buildings.
- 14.4 ERRCS will consult with the Planning and Development Management Services, which includes the Building Control Service, on ALL applications and renewals. A Building Control Officer may also be present at the final inspection of the premises.
- 14.5 Only once ERRCS has confirmed that all necessary consents are in order, and upon agreement with the appropriate Council officers, will a licence be approved.

## **15. Public liability insurance**

- 15.1 The building or structures to be licensed must have public liability (third party) insurance cover in place, throughout the whole three-year period of the licence. The applicant must declare (and sign to accept) that insurance is in place. ERRCS will also seek a copy of the existing policy document or cover note with the application.
- 15.2 It is recommended that, the public liability insurance cover should be for a minimum of £5m (five million pounds) in respect of any one act. This should not be confused with employers/employee liability insurance.

## **16. Car parking**

- 16.1 Where car parking is available, two free reserved car parking spaces should be provided for the use of the registration staff. These spaces should be near to the main entrance of the building and must allow safe access and exit so that the Registrars may leave the venue promptly once the ceremony is finished.
- 16.2 The applicant will be responsible for car parking and access arrangements for the bridal and/or partner's car and for any car parking provided for guests attending the ceremony. There should also be suitable and safe access for all guests from the car park, setting down sites and/or pathways etc.
- 16.3 During any visit, ERRCS will consider whether special licence conditions are to be applied, where it is considered that traffic issues, car parking or vehicular access and egress may be a nuisance to residents and/or hazardous to other road users and pedestrians on the public highway. It is good practice that premises owners have carried out a Traffic/Pedestrian Safety Risk Assessment. ERRCS may consult with relevant Council services on highways and parking matters.

## **17. Public nuisance and noise**

- 17.1 Premises will wish to ensure that their operations do not disturb their neighbours or give rise to representations being made against their licence application. It is important that applicants are able to demonstrate practical steps have been implemented to reduce nuisance.
- 17.2 Issues to be considered may include: (this list is not exhaustive)
- noise from music, guests arriving/leaving, cars and traffic, fireworks and so forth,
  - hours of operation,
  - litter, confetti, streamers,
  - light pollution,
  - cooking odours,
  - adequate signage and notices.
- 17.3 Premises owners shall outline these considerations and remedies in their application. These issues may be covered within the Council's application process for an Entertainments Licence (also known as a Premises Licence). Evidence of this will suffice for this purpose.

## 18. Animals

- 18.1 Strictly NO animals with the exception of assistance dogs or other assistance animals are allowed in the ceremony rooms immediately before or during the ceremony.

## 19. Food and drink

- 19.1 No food or drink should be displayed, sold, served and/or consumed within the ceremony room or designated area for **one hour prior to** the ceremony commencing, or **during** the ceremony itself. (In respect of a gazebo or other permanent outside structure ERRCS will agree a designated area around the structure where food and/or drink may not be served or consumed during these times)
- 19.2 Food and drink can be served and consumed elsewhere at the venue but the applicant is responsible for ensuring that neither food nor drink is brought into the ceremony room or the designated area during the times outlined above.
- 19.3 If there is a bar located within the ceremony room, this must be closed and screened from view at least one hour before and also during the ceremony (this may be via curtains, portable screens or shutters). This is to ensure that proceedings are seemly and dignified.

## 20. Guests

- 20.1 The number of guests that can be safely and comfortably accommodated within the ceremony room or area will be discussed and agreed with the venue. ERRCS may place a restriction on the number of guests dependent upon the size of the room/area. (See item 11 above)
- 20.2 If a venue is seeking to include a permanent outside structure within its licence (see Appendix 4), consideration will need to be given to the number of guests that can be accommodated within an alternative indoor room/area if for any reason the ceremony cannot proceed outside – ie. due to adverse weather conditions. (Also refer to above on room capacities)
- 20.3 Guests should be assembled in the ceremony room at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement time of the ceremony.
- 20.4 Registrars will have the discretion not to proceed with a ceremony if any of the party and/or guests use threatening or abusive behavior or appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It will be the responsibility of the venue management (responsible person) who should always be present in the room/area and during the ceremony to deal with inappropriate behavior of guests.

## 21. Heating, cooling and ventilation

- 21.1 All rooms included within the application should have suitable heating and cooling systems appropriate to their use, age, construction and location. Any person booking the venue for a ceremony must be informed, in advance, if heating or cooling systems are not available.
- 21.2 Any open fires must have an appropriate safety guard in place or advisably be extinguished prior to commencement of the ceremony. Such facilities/features will be expected to be covered under the premises Fire Risk Assessment.
- 21.3 Ventilation - where appropriate all designated rooms and areas should have suitable ventilation to either fresh or outside air or by opening windows or the use of regularly maintained air conditioning systems.
- 21.4 At the final inspection officers may request sight of or evidence of adequate testing, servicing and maintenance records for heating and cooling systems.

## 22. Lighting

- 22.1 Lighting levels must be satisfactory, and appropriate to the size and location of the designated room or area. At the discretion and requirement of the Registrars additional portable lighting may be required in that part of the room where the register and other documentation is to be completed and signed.

## 23. Sanitary accommodation - toilet and washroom facilities

- 23.1 Suitable sanitary accommodation should be accessible and available to everyone, including both sexes and disabled people. Applicants should refer to the relevant building regulations and appropriate codes of practice for design and provision.
- 23.2 As a general “rule of thumb” the table below sets out the required sanitary accommodation requirements:

| <b>Sanitary Appliance</b> | <b>MALES</b>  | <b>FEMALES</b>   |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| WC cubicles               | 1 to 2 per 250 males, plus 1 per every additional 500 males.        | 2 per 40 females, 3 up to 70 females, 4 up to 100 females, plus 1 extra per every additional 50 females. |
| Urinals                   | 1 for every 50 to 100 males, plus 1 per every additional 100 males. | NA   |
| Wash basins               | 1 per WC and 1 per 5 urinals  | 1, plus 1 per 2 WCs  |

- 23.3 Where the premise is subject to an entertainments licence the scale of provision and location and arrangements of the sanitary accommodation needs to be agreed with the licensing authority. This will be carried out as part of our consultation process.

## **24. Confetti**

- 24.1 It is traditional for confetti to be thrown at ceremonies. The licence holder will need to decide whether to allow confetti to be thrown as this may cause a nuisance to adjoining properties and be detrimental to the environment. Premises owners are encouraged to promote the use of biodegradable confetti.

## **25. Flowers**

- 25.1 Flowers, floral arrangements and associated accessories will be at the discretion of the venue but should not be sited so as to restrict the area where the ceremony is to be conducted and registered (ie. restrict the opening of the register book) or to restrict access or egress or cause a potential tripping hazard.

## **26. Music**

- 26.1 Couples may choose to have music played before, during and after their ceremony. The venue is required to provide a music system (compatible with current music formats) which can be operated either by a member of the venue staff or someone nominated from the guests. Alternatively if live music is to be provided space should be made available either in the ceremony room or adjacent rooms, without compromising the area needed to conduct the ceremony.
- 26.2 Music should be of a “secular nature”, although music that contains an incidental reference to religion eg. the word “heaven” or “angels” in a pop song may be permissible, at the discretion of the Superintendent Registrar.
- 26.3 The venue is responsible for ensuring compliance where necessary with the Licensing Act 2003 and Performing Rights and Phonographic Performance licence requirements.
- 26.4 Controls and measures should be in place to ensure that fire alarms can be heard where music is being played.

## **27. Photographs, filming and photographers**

- 27.1 Facilities should be available either within or outside the approved premise for photographs and/or filming. A limited number of photographs/film will be allowed during a ceremony by prior arrangement with the conducting Registrar. It is requested that photographers must not be allowed to cause any unnecessary delays or interruptions to the commencement and performance of ceremonies.
- 27.2 ERRCS has a ‘code of conduct’ for photographers. Responsible persons are requested to be aware of this and assist Registrars to maintain the seemly and dignified nature of the ceremony. This code of conduct is available from the Register Office and will be discussed with the Approved Premise at the time of the application.



## **28. Interruptions**

- 28.1 Couples entering into a marriage or civil partnership are forming a legally binding contract, and as such the procedure should not be subject to any unnecessary distractions or interruptions. If the Registrar feels that any event or individual is responsible for such interruption to the legal proceedings they reserve the right to respectfully ask for the interruption to cease or for individuals to leave the room until the completion of the contract.
- 28.2 Ceremonies should not be interrupted by events or noise from other parts of the premises ie. bar areas, kitchens, other functions. The responsible person should always be present in the room/area during the ceremony to assist with any disruptions, if necessary.

## **29. Security**

- 29.1 The safety of Registrars, premises staff and guests is paramount, and Approved Premises owners will wish to ensure that their premises are safe and secure at all times. Although not a condition of the licence, ERRCS will wish to assess measures and procedures in place to enhance security and reduce the risk of being subject to physical or verbal threats, inappropriate behaviours, intimidation and so forth.
- 29.2 Measures that are expected to be in place may include (this list is not exhaustive):
- The role of the Responsible Person present during the ceremony (this is a Licence Condition),
  - Reception or door staff present at all times during ceremonies,
  - Staff training and awareness - acting in a vigilant manner,
  - Specific safety risk assessments,
  - Door access controls/secure and restricted areas,
  - CCTV and alarm systems.

## **30. Emergency callout service**

- 30.1 ERRCS operates an emergency callout service so that Approved Premises may contact a duty officer in case of an emergency affecting a ceremony or the non-attendance of registration staff.
- 30.2 The arrangements and details of the special contact telephone number will be issued to Approved Premises with their licence.

## **31. Visits and inspections**

- 31.1 Initial visit – as outlined above, ERRCS will usually carry out an initial visit to new venue enquiries. This provides an ideal opportunity to discuss in greater detail the potential suitability of the venue and to fully understand the arrangements and commitments required before submitting an application. This can prove invaluable as each venue is individual and may have particular requirements.

31.2 Formal (Final) visit or inspection – this is carried out once all the other processes and checking mechanisms have taken place and ALL necessary documents and regulatory consents have been obtained, checked and agreed. The following Council officers will make this visit:

- The Superintendent Registrar – (or deputy) who will concentrate on registration and ceremonial aspects of the application – a checklist will be completed and applicants will be asked to sign this as confirmation that all requirements have been explained and understood, and
- The Proper Officer Representative for Registration Matters – who will focus on the application process and health and safety matters.
- A Building Control Officer (optional) – who will consider planning and building regulation issues (including fire safety matters).
- A Fire Officer (optional) - who will consider fire safety matters. The local Fire and Rescue Service may carry out a separate visit prior to ERRCS's final visit.

## 32. The application procedure

32.1 For all new applicants it is advisable to contact the Registration Service in the first instance, to discuss your intentions and seek guidance and assistance with your application.

32.2 **APPLICATION FORM** - ALL applications must be made on an ERRCS Approved Premises Application Form (Appendix 7). The form must be completed in full with adequate information and explanations where applicable. It can be completed manually by hand with ALL copies of the necessary attachments/documents enclosed, or it can be completed electronically on-line by accessing the registrar website. (Any documents can be scanned and attached)

32.3 **ADVERTISEMENT** - the details of the application will be advertised in a newspaper that is circulating within the district. A period of 21 days is available for any person or organisation to make comment on or object to the application. The advertisement will be placed by ERRCS and the cost is included in the application fee.

32.4 ERRCS will consult with the following Council services and organisations to ensure that various requirements are met and evidenced:

- Humberside Fire and Rescue Services,
- Planning and Building Control,
- the Council's Licensing section.

32.5 Following this consultation period, and subject to resolving any matters arising from comments, objections or other consents required to be put in place, then a final visit/inspection will be arranged. If objections are received then ERRCS will commence a process to investigate and resolve these matters. All parties will be informed of the process at that stage and extra fees may be incurred.

32.6 **INSPECTION VISITS** – as outlined above, the Final Inspection takes place to ensure that the requirements of the process and legislation have been put in place to the satisfaction of the Council's Registrar, Proper Officer, Building Control Officer and the local Fire and Rescue Service.

32.7 **LICENCE APPROVAL** – following a satisfactory final inspection and the verification of all other documentation/consents etc, then the licence will be approved (granted) and the applicant will be notified of this in writing. Marriages and civil partnerships can only start to be booked and conducted following the formal written approval of the licence.

### 33. The licence

33.1 The licence is valid for a period of **THREE YEARS** from the date of approval. If the applicant wishes to add further rooms or areas at a later date within the three year period, this will require a fresh application and corresponding full fee.

33.3 The “Licence Notice” (certificate) supplied by ERRCS must be displayed prominently and permanently at the main entrance to the venue.

### 34. Refusal to approve a licence

34.1 If a licence is not approved, the applicant will be given notice in writing together with the reasons for the decision. An applicant who is aggrieved in relation to either the refusal by ERRCS to grant a licence, or the attachment of Additional or Special conditions to the grant of a licence, may seek a review by The Proper Officer for Registration Matters (The Director of Corporate Resources).

34.2 This may require an investigation, report and decision to be made by either the Proper Officer or by a licensing committee. This process may incur an additional fee.

### 35. Renewing a licence

35.1 The licence may be renewed at the end of its three year period. The holder may apply for the renewal of an approval when the current approval has between 6 and 12 months left to run. An application for renewal made in this period will extend the current approval until the application has been finally dealt with unless there is a legal reason to revoke it, for example a breach of the licence conditions has occurred in the meantime. A renewal will run from the expiry date of the current approval.

35.2 ERRCS monitors all approved premises licenses and will contact Approved Premises within 12 months prior to the expiry of their licence.

35.3 The premises owner must complete the full application process as outlined above and provide all necessary documentation and fees etc.

35.4 The licence will lapse if a renewal application is not made and no further ceremonies will be permitted or be lawful unless and until a new application has been successfully made. The Premises owner shall be responsible for contacting any couples/parties who have made bookings.

## **36. Revoking a licence**

36.1 In summary, a licence may be revoked if:

- Any licence requirements and/or licence conditions have been breached or not complied with (these are set out below).
- The use of, or the structure of the approved premises has changed in that the Council no longer considers the premises to be a suitable venue for the solemnization of civil marriages and the formation of civil partnerships.
- If directed to do so by the Registrar General.
- The Equality Act 2010 requires providers of goods, facilities and services to ensure that they are not treating their customers unfairly on the grounds of sexual orientation. If the holder of an approval is deemed to discriminate on the grounds of the sexuality of the couple the Council reserves the right to revoke the licence.

36.2 The licence holder may voluntarily revoke the licence at any time within the three-year licence period, but must have regard for any ceremony bookings that they have taken. The licence holder shall duly provide written notice to the Superintendent Registrar. No fees (partial or full) will be refunded in this case.

36.3 The Premises owner shall be responsible for contacting any couples/parties who have made bookings.

## **37. Transfer of a licence**

37.1 The licence is NOT transferable between premises. However, the licence, subject to the approval of ERRCS, may be transferred between licence holders. This would normally apply on the sale of a venue or appointment of a new manager/owner.

37.2 ERRCS requires immediate notification of any change of details including change of the name of the venue, management or ownership or the appointment or change of responsible persons or their deputies.

## **38. Licence requirements and conditions**

38.1 All applications MUST meet the following licence requirements and conditions:

- Statutory Requirements - set out in Schedule I of The Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2011 (Statutory Instrument No. 2661). (See Appendix 1)
- Additional Requirements and Additional Conditions set out by ERRCS and applying to all applications – these are set out in detail in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 below.

38.2 The applicant/licence holder having read and understood the requirements contained within this guidebook (and in accordance with statutory regulation) shall sign to evidence their declaration to abide by and comply with the requirements and conditions. By signing the application they are declaring that certain requirements are in place, are current and comply with the relevant legislation. This is particularly relevant to:

- Health and Safety,
- Equalities,
- Planning and Building Control,
- Other Council licensing arrangements (ie. Entertainments Licence),
- Insurance cover.

### **39. Data Protection**

- 39.1 ERRCS complies with Data Protection legislation and will not provide personal information to third party requests without appropriate authorisation.
- 39.2 Licence records, applications and associated correspondence is held in a timely, confidential and secure manner and not used for other purposes other than the licensing process, nor are they shared with third parties.
- 39.3 Applicants are advised to also comply with Data Protection legislation and make their policies clear to customers when arranging ceremonies and related events.

## APPENDIX I

### Licence requirements (before an approval is granted)

The following approval requirements as set out in Schedule 1 of The Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2011, will apply to all licenses for Approved Premises in the East Riding of Yorkshire. They may be amended from time to time on the instructions of the Registrar General.

These require that:

1. Having regard to their primary use, situation, construction and state of repair, the premises must, in the opinion of the Council, be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings.
2. The premises must be regularly available to the public for use for:
  - (a) the solemnization of marriages, or
  - (b) the formation of civil partnerships.
3. The premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may reasonably be required by the Council, having consulted with the fire 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 premises must not be:
  - (a) a religious premises,
  - (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 are to take place if approval is granted must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the premises.

### Additional licence requirements

There are no other additional licence requirements. However, ERRCS may amend and update these from time to time. Licence holders will be advised in writing.

## APPENDIX 2

### Licence conditions (attached to the grant of approval)

The following licence conditions are set out in Schedule 2 of The Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2011 and will apply to all licenses for approved premises in East Riding of Yorkshire. They may be amended from time to time on the instructions of the Registrar General. In addition, ERRCS may impose “special licence conditions” relating to the particular venue.

The standard conditions state that:

1. The holder of the approval must ensure that there is at all times an individual with responsibility for ensuring compliance with these conditions ('the responsible person') and that the responsible person's occupation, seniority, position of responsibility in relation to the premises, or other factors (their 'qualification'), indicate that they are in a position to ensure compliance with these conditions.
2. The responsible person or, in their absence, an appropriately qualified deputy appointed by them, shall be available on the premises for a minimum of one hour prior to and in the ceremony room throughout each of the proceedings.
3. The holder must notify the Council:
  - (a) of their name and address immediately upon them becoming the holder of an approval,
  - (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 Council immediately of any change to any of the following:
  - (a) the layout of the premises, 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 premise,
  - (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,
  - (e) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.

(See below – Additional Licence Condition regarding the requirement that responsible persons read and understand their roles and responsibilities, and certify this as such)
5. The approved premises must be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by the Council.
6. 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. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which the proceedings take place for one hour prior to and during those proceedings.
8. All proceedings 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. The room in which the proceedings are to take place must be separate from any other activity on the 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.

11. Any proceedings regularly carried out 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 other religious leader,
  - (c) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals,
  - (d) include hymns or other religious chants,
  - (e) include any form of worship.

But the proceedings may include readings, songs, or music that may contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially 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 stationery 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 1949 Act and the formation of civil partnerships under section 6(3A)(a) of the 2004 Act but shall not state or imply any recommendation of the premises or its facilities by the Council, the Registrar General or any of the officers or employees of either of them.

The licence holder may use the following words to describe an approved premises licence - *“Approved by East Riding of Yorkshire Council as a venue for the solemnization of civil marriages and the formation of civil partnerships”*.

14. If a change of name to the Approved Premise 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.

### **Additional licence conditions**

The Local Authority may attach such further conditions to an approval as it considers reasonable in order to ensure that the facilities provided are suitable and that the proceedings are seemly, dignified and do not give rise to a nuisance of any kind.

The following additional licence conditions will apply to all licenses issued to Approved Premises. They may be amended from time to time by ERRCS.

The licence holder must ensure that:

1. The Licence Notice (certificate) issued by ERRCS is displayed in a prominent position within the main entrance to the building.



2. After booking the hire of the venue for a civil marriage, civil partnership or other ceremony provided by ERRCS, that the couple/customers shall be given the following information: *(this section may be used as an aide memoire checklist)*.
- (i) Immediately after the customer has made a provisional booking for a marriage or civil partnership, in the approved premise, they must contact the Register Office.
  - (ii) The customer must make an advanced booking with the Registrar. Without the Registrar's attendance there can be no marriage or civil partnership formation. A fee for this attendance will be payable directly to the Register Office no later than eight weeks before the ceremony and deposits may be required at the time of booking.
  - (iii) Each individual must give Notice of Marriage/Civil Partnership to the Registrar in the district in which they live. Documentary evidence will be required and there is a separate fee for this service.
  - (iv) This "notice" is valid for 12 months and can be given no earlier than 12 months prior to the date of the ceremony.
  - (v) The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a **marriage** to take place in an Approved Premise are dependent on:
    - (a) The correct time periods being satisfied and appropriate immigration controls – under the Immigration Act 2013,
    - (b) The attendance of the Superintendent Registrar and Registrar for the district in which the premises are situated,
    - (b) The issue of the "Authorities for Marriage" by the Superintendent Registrar to whom the notice of marriage was given,
    - (c) The venue holding a current valid licence on the day of the ceremony.
  - (vi) The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a **civil partnership** to take place in an Approved Premise are dependent on:
    - (a) The attendance of a civil partnership registrar for the district in which the premises are situated,
    - (b) The issue of the Civil Partnership Schedule,
    - (c) The venue holding a current valid licence on the day of the registration.
  - (vii) Customers should be advised that only a civil (non-religious) ceremony can be permitted by the Superintendent Registrar (or deputies). Any music, readings, words or performance, which forms any part of the ceremony, must be secular. The content of the ceremony must be agreed with the Registrar in advance of the ceremony. Subject to guidance outlined above.
  - (viii) Any rights of copyright music, readings etc permitted at the ceremony are a matter for the couple and the holder of the licence.
  - (ix) Alcohol and food is not prohibited in the room for one hour prior to and during the ceremony itself. Any bar or displays of alcohol within the ceremony room shall be adequately screened or removed from view.

3. The booking will be subject to the availability of Registrars and the couple's legal capacity to enter into the marriage or civil partnership.
4. Any person booking the accommodation for a civil ceremony must be informed of:
  - (a) Any limitations imposed on the size of the ceremony party by the size of the ceremony /room areas (see room capacities).
  - (b) Any 'special conditions' imposed on the usage of the premises for civil ceremonies.
5. The following individuals will have free and unfettered access to the approved premises when required:
  - (a) Representatives of ERRCS carrying out inspections in respect of the licence,
  - (b) Registration staff officiating at civil ceremonies,
  - (c) Registration staff officiating at a civil ceremony must have access to the ceremony room and private pre-interview room at least 30 minutes before the ceremony is to begin,
  - (d) Persons wishing to make an objection to a marriage or civil partnership,
  - (e) Where possible, access should be available for disabled persons. If disabled access is not possible then measures must be in place for a disabled objector to make their concerns known ie. someone available in an accessible place with instant communication to the ceremony location.
6. The Approved Premises must comply with all health and safety requirements and conditions as outlined above.
7. Smoking (including the use of e-cigarettes/vaping) is not permitted within the venue or ceremony areas.
8. Premises managers, responsible persons and staff directly involved in ceremonies shall ensure that their roles and responsibilities as outlined in this and other guidance material is read and understood, and that staff sign or certify to this effect. Evidence and records of this will be sought by council officers during the application process and at the final inspection stage.

### **Special licence conditions**

1. A "Platinum" or "Sapphire" ceremony is a bespoke ceremony whereby couples may personalise and enhance their civil marriage or civil partnership ceremony. These ceremonies must be available in all East Riding of Yorkshire Approved Premises for civil marriages and civil partnerships and ERRCS will ensure that they are appropriate and agreed with the licence holder.
2. Ceremonies performed by so called "independent celebrants" (please refer to page 31 below) – the licence holder shall display a suitable notice at each public entrance to indicate the performance of a non-ERRCS ceremony performed by any independent celebrant.

ERRCS reserves the right to apply special licence conditions, in addition to those set out in this booklet, to any licence as it considers necessary and at any time during the three year life of the licence. Premises owners will be notified in writing of such changes.

## APPENDIX 3

### A guide to calculating room occupancy capacities

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 With regards to the interests of health and safety for the users of an Approved Premise, the room occupancy capacities must be appropriate and safe.
- 1.2 Guidance has been provided by the local Fire and Rescue Service on calculating safe room occupancy capacities. This guide summarises and simplifies this guidance to meet the needs of the ERRCS licensing process and should be used as a “tool” to calculate room capacities for the purposes of marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.
- 1.3 In all cases, ERRCS and the local Fire and Rescue Service will have the final say on the safe capacity of any room or space as proposed. For guidance please refer the documentation outlined above and relevant websites etc. (see point 1.1 above)

#### 2. Room occupancy capacity guidelines

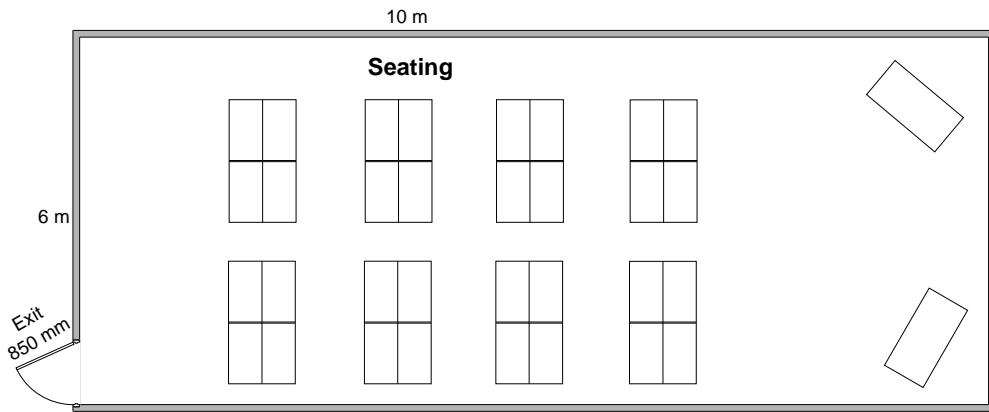
- 2.1 In summary, the Fire and Rescue Service guidance covers a number of issues to be considered when recommending room capacities – in brief these include:
  - The “**Risk Level**” of the premises – for the purposes of this document the premises to be licensed are considered by ERRCS to be of “normal” risk.
  - **Escape routes** – and the suitability of such – at least two exits are required for rooms occupied by more than 60 persons. One exit for less than 60 persons.
  - **Seating and gangways** – to allow for free access/escape.
  - **Mobility impairment** – and the provision of “safe refuge”.
  - **Capacity of escape routes** – dependent on width and the occupancy levels – consideration of reasonable escape times – ERRCS uses a time of 2½ minutes for normal risk premises.
  - **Travel distance** – to nearest place of reasonable safety – ERRCS uses a measurement of up to 15 metres where there is one exit or 32 metres for more than one exit.
  - **Occupancy calculations** – depending on premises use and mix of standing and seating - ERRCS uses a mid point calculation of **0.5m<sup>2</sup> per person**.

#### 3. ERRCS room occupancy calculation method

- 3.1 Most ceremony rooms have a mixture of guest seating (free standing guest chairs) and some standing room. The first stage is to calculate the room capacity by dividing the size of the room by the “occupancy calculation”. For example using ERRCS assumption of 0.5m<sup>2</sup> per person, a room that is 60m<sup>2</sup> could be occupied by 120 people, however this is not the final answer as the number and width of escape routes needs to be taken into account.

- 3.2 Therefore the second factor to be considered is the number and width of escape routes and exits. A standard fire escape will be 850mm wide (750mm minimum) – it is assumed that this will allow 100 people to escape within the accepted time (2½ minutes). An escape route wider than 1,050mm will allow 200 people to escape within this time.
- 3.3 Using the example above, if the 60m<sup>2</sup> room had two standard (850mm) fire exits then room occupancy could be 200 people, **however the largest exit must be excluded** (to take a realistic approach in the event of a fire). So in this case 100 shall be deducted from the total of 200 leaving a room potential maximum capacity of 100.
- 3.4 The final stage is to assess and consider both of these calculations and ERRCS shall recommend (and agree with the premises owner) the lowest figure as the maximum capacity.
- 3.5 It should be noted that many premises owners will already have an idea of what is safe and comfortable for their customers – in many cases they will suggest room capacities much lower than the calculated version – this is acceptable. In no circumstances can the recommended occupancy exceed the ERRCS calculation method.
- 3.6 Registrars attending ceremonies on the day will also assess if these agreed capacities are being adhered to, and in consultation with the premises designated “responsible person” may reserve the right not to perform a ceremony if there is a risk to health and safety.
- 3.7 The occupancy of any room shall include **ALL** persons present – including the couple, guests, the Registrars, venue staff, photographers and any other person/s in the room.
- 3.8 The diagram below outlines a number of simplified examples of this calculation:

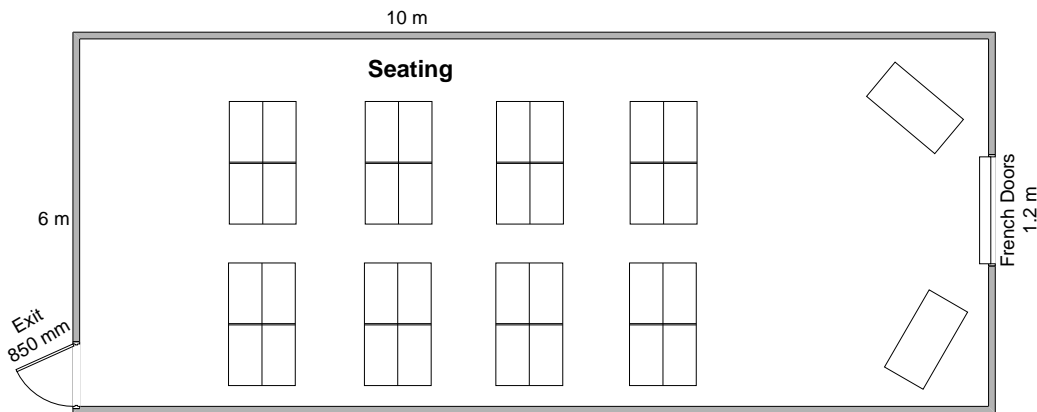
**Figure 1 – Small room – one exit**



Max potential occupancy  
 $60 \text{ m}^2 \div 0.5 = 120$

Max occupancy is **60** as  
 there is only one fire  
 exit route

**Figure 2 – Small Room – two exits**

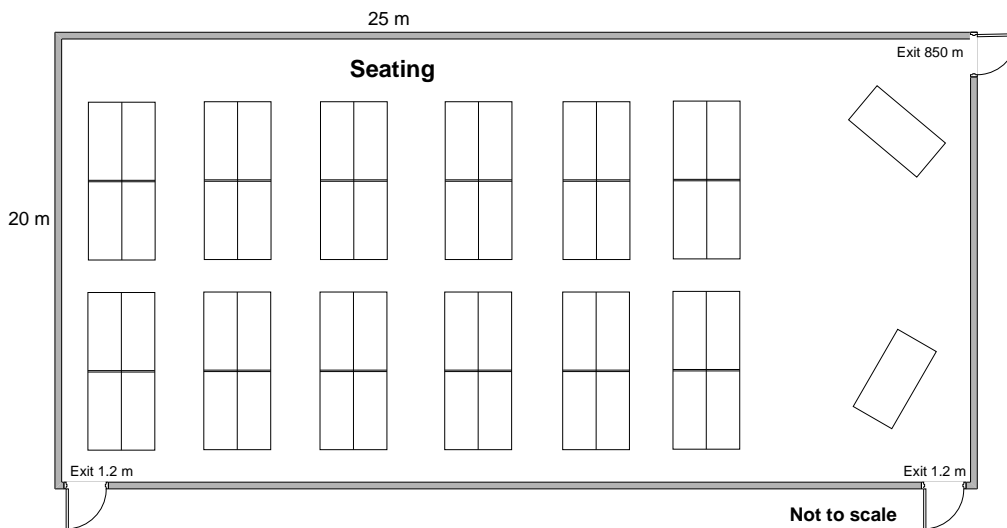


Max potential occupancy  
 $60 \text{ m}^2 \div 0.5 = 120$

Exit capacity  
 $1 \times 100 + 1 \times 200 = 300$   
 Less 200 = 100

Recommended potential  
 Max capacity = **100**

**Figure 3 – Large Room – multiple exits**



Max potential occupancy  
 $500 \text{ m}^2 \div 0.5 = 1,000$

Exit capacity  
 $1 \times 100 + 2 \times 200 = 500$   
 Less 200 = 300

Recommended max  
 capacity = **300**

The above guidance is for illustrative purposes only, as each room will need to be assessed on its own particular set of circumstances.

## APPENDIX 4

### Permanent ancillary structures

This is further guidance in respect of the licensing of permanent ancillary and miscellaneous type structures. These may include garden buildings, summer houses, gazebos and such like (this list is not exhaustive).



If you are considering including an existing structure with your application, or you are building a new structure, you are advised to seek advice from ERRCS to ensure that it will be acceptable to be included within the licence approval.

Such structures may be subject to Planning and Building Regulations and subsequent approvals may be required. Any venue wishing to construct such a structure to be used for civil marriages and civil partnerships must have the plans approved by the Council, and access must be available to inspect the construction of the structure. The venue is responsible, where appropriate, for any discussions with, or seeking approval by, the local Planning or Building Control authority.

For buildings and structures not subject to planning or building regulations, an assessment of the suitability of the building or structure will be required and should be submitted with an application. This should include:

- A copy of a current and adequate fire risk assessment completed by a suitably competent person.
- A general condition survey of the building/structure by a surveyor/Building Control Officer.
- A disabled access audit by a suitably competent person.

Such ancillary structures **MUST** be **permanent and immovable** and **regularly available**. In general, the building must comply with the following requirements:

- The structure must have a brick, stone, wood or concrete base or floor and ideally this should be raised above the surrounding ground level and be securely positioned (ie. footings or posts etc).
- The structure should have a roof which should be tiled, although other coverings, eg. polycarbonate, glass or thatch, will be considered appropriate, providing they are waterproof and satisfy the requirements of the local planning officer and/or a conservation/heritage decision.
- The structure should have walls of brick, stone, concrete, UPVC or wood pillars etc.
- The front of the building should be open and sufficiently wide to enable the ceremony party to enter. Steps and a ramp may need to be provided if the structure is raised above the surrounding ground level.
- The structure should be provided with electric light and power – which will have been appropriately maintained and tested.
- The structure must be in a safe condition with suitable access requirements, clean and dry, free from potential slip, trip and fall hazards. There must be suitable and sufficient fire escapes, fire prevention equipment and so on. It is recommended that the structure is fully risk assessed (including a separate and current fire risk assessment) and copies of these will be scrutinised during the application process.

- The structure should be of sufficient size (suggested to be at least 4 metres square) to accommodate a ceremony in comfort – with at least, the following: two registration staff, preferably two small tables (size approx. 50cm x 100cm) and 2 or 3 corresponding chairs, the couple (bride and groom or two partners) and two witnesses.
- The structure must be easily accessible and well sign-posted for possible objectors. If disabled access is not possible then measures must be in place for a disabled objector to make their concerns known.
- Consideration should be given to the area immediately in front of the structure where guests may be seated or standing. Soft ground should be avoided and a hard standing may need to be provided. Sufficient room must be available for a central aisle to allow the ceremony party to make their entrance.
- The structure will only be approved if it forms part of a larger venue which must include either one or a number of other approved ceremony rooms. In this respect whenever a ceremony is booked within an outside structure another licensed ceremony room must be kept available so that if for any reason the ceremony has to be moved inside, venue staff are able to set up the room at short notice.
- Above all, the structure must provide a seemly and dignified venue in which civil marriage ceremonies and civil partnerships may be celebrated.

If an ancillary structure is approved then the following **Special Licence Conditions** will be applied:

- (i) Civil marriages and civil partnerships will normally only be celebrated in these structures between **1 April and 30 September** in any year. Any ceremonies outside these dates will be subject to the prior written agreement of the Superintendent Registrar.
- (ii) The structure and any approved adjacent area to be used for guests should be roped or barriers erected so as to restrict access one hour prior to and during the ceremony. No food or drink may be consumed in this restricted area one hour prior to or during the ceremony.
- (iii) Any other activities taking place in the grounds must be kept separate, and must not be allowed to interfere with, disturb or interrupt the ceremony or associated proceedings.
- (iv) A ceremony may not take place in the structure if the weather becomes inclement and unsuitable – this may include persistent rain, hail, sleet or snow, strong winds, uncomfortably low or high temperatures or other extreme conditions. The Registrar and responsible person will make a decision as to whether a ceremony has to be moved into a ceremony room inside the main venue, at least 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the ceremony. Registrars must not incur any delays as a result of late decisions.

ERRCS will consult with other related parties (including Planning, Building Control, the local Fire and Rescue Authority and so on) and any decision on the suitability and/or ceremony arrangements in such buildings will be final.

## APPENDIX 5

### Approval of religious premises for civil partnerships

Religious premises can now be approved for the formation of civil partnerships under section 6 (3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 – as amended in December 2011. These premises must be:

- a church or chapel of the Church of England or Church of Wales,
- a place of meeting or religious worship included on a list maintained by the Registrar General,
- a place of meeting or religious worship of the Society of Friends, or
- a Jewish synagogue.

Many of the requirements and conditions associated with secular premise approval apply, however consent is required from the relevant governing authority of the religious organisation to proceed. For example for the Church of England approval is required from the General Synod.

The Council will provide advice and guidance upon request. The application process and fee to approve religious premises will be the same as for civil (secular) premises.

## APPENDIX 6

### Celebratory services

The following information provides a summary of the range of civil, special and bespoke celebratory ceremonies and services offered by ERRCS. All of these ceremonies are carried out by fully trained and regularly assessed “celebrants” (ie. registration staff). In most cases, these celebratory services have no legal status. Information leaflets are available and also details are available on our website.

All these ceremonies should preferably be held in the licensed ceremony room/area at the Approved Premise, but may be held in any other agreed rooms, areas or outside within the grounds of the venue. ERRCS requires prior knowledge of such arrangements, as these other rooms/areas will require an assessment for suitability and safety.

If an outdoor celebratory ceremony is to follow on from a registration indoors (ie: a “*Sapphire*” ceremony), then the responsible person must seek prior agreement from the conducting Registrar (at the time of the booking) in order to allow for sufficient time to facilitate both proceedings.

### Naming ceremonies

A naming ceremony is a very special way of celebrating the birth of a child or welcoming an older child into a family and the wider community for parents who would prefer not to celebrate this event with a religious ceremony. These ceremonies offer a unique occasion for everyone to feel involved in the child’s future and to pledge their love and support for the child’s development and well being. For parents it offers an opportunity to declare before their family and friends the promise to be as good a parent as possible and for relatives to confirm their special relationship with the child.



A naming ceremony is a secular ceremony and does not include any religious references. The ceremony offers no legal status to the child but will bring as much meaning to the day as parents wish to bring to it. There is no age limit for the child to be welcomed. Often couples adopting a child will consider this form of ceremony as a way of celebrating the child's arrival into their family and share their commitment to the child's future.

The ceremony can also include more than one child within the same family unit. A naming ceremony can either be celebrated on its own or can be added after a marriage or civil partnership ceremony where couples remarrying wish to welcome children from the previous relationships into the new family unit.

## **Renewal of vows**

A renewal of vows ceremony is provided for couples wishing to renew their commitment to one another in a unique and personal way. These ceremonies are often associated with a special anniversary or are often held after a couple have married or formed a civil partnership abroad and their family and friends have missed the celebrations. The ceremony does however provide for a couple to make a public statement of their continuing love and commitment to one another. Renewing of vows can be made at any stage of a couple's marriage or civil partnership. There are no legal preliminaries and no residential requirements to satisfy.

## **Marriage and civil partnership celebration**

The legalities to a marriage and civil partnership must be carried out in a room in a venue approved for such. ERRCS are able to facilitate requests for ceremonies elsewhere, for example in the open air or in marquees etc. (subject to health and safety assessment) This is made possible by carrying out the legal elements in an Approved Premise beforehand, and then enabling the celebratory ceremony to follow on at another location. These legal registrations are a short procedure and may be carried out with just the couple, their two witnesses and the two registrars.

Celebratory ceremonies are bespoke and allow for the exchange of rings, personal vows and a wide choice of additional personal enhancements. The legal certificate may be presented at the end of the ceremony along with a commemorative script.

**Sapphire Ceremonies** – as outlined above, allow couples to hold their special and bespoke marriage ceremony at the venue of their choice. The legal marriage registration and “non-legal” celebratory ceremony can be arranged to take place seamlessly at the same Approved Premises. These ceremonies may require extra time to conduct. Couples and Approved Premises owners should contact the Superintendent Registrar for details or see the website.

## **Citizenship ceremonies**

Before adult applicants are granted citizenship they have to swear or affirm an Oath of Allegiance to the Queen and pledge to uphold the laws and democratic values of the country. These ceremonies are led by Registrars and may be held in venues approved by the local authority. Ceremonies are concluded with a ‘graduation style’ presentation of a certificate and a photographic opportunity.

Monthly group ceremonies take place within East Riding registration offices however some new citizens may wish to hold a private ceremony, which will enable them to invite more guests. They may choose to hold this ceremony in an Approved Premise and have a celebratory meal or gathering to follow.

## **Civil funerals**

A civil funeral ceremony reflects the wishes of the family and is focused on celebrating the life of the deceased. It is both a dignified tribute and highly personal memoir, created and presented by a professionally trained celebrant. Civil funerals may include some religious content, however they mainly focus on a tribute celebrating the life of the deceased.

Civil funerals are delivered by qualified ERRCS Funeral Celebrants and usually take place in a crematorium. Families may sometimes wish to hold a commemorative service to celebrate their loved ones life and they may choose to hold this in an Approved Premise.

## **Non statutory ceremonies delivered by independent celebrants (non ERRCS staff)**

It is hoped that venues approved by ERRCS for civil ceremonies will work closely with the Council to support each other's business objectives and as such are deemed to be "professional partners". ERRCS will promote its partners' venues for the celebration of all civil marriages, civil partnerships and non-statutory ceremonies through its marketing mechanisms such as the Council's website, social media pages, wedding fairs, consultation events, presentations, literature and so forth.

If an Approved Premise allows independent celebrants to deliver non-legal ceremonies on its premises then the public must be made aware that the celebrant/ceremony is in no way associated with the venues official ceremony partner, namely ERRCS.

These ceremonies are not legal marriages or wedding ceremonies and as such ERRCS do not wish their reputation to be affected by any assumed, incidental or inferred association or inaccurate representation.

ERRCS advise that the Approved Premises owners and responsible person/s shall notify guests that any ceremonies performed by independent celebrants are not associated with ERRCS, and that such ceremonies have no legal status. Premises will be requested to display a suitable sign at all public entrances. (An example pro-forma sign will be provided to applicants at the final inspection visit).

This is further outlined in the special licence conditions (above). This condition will be explained to applicants prior to the granting or renewal of a licence and forms part of the application process.

**This page is intentionally black to allow for any notes or questions. Application Form is below.**

## APPENDIX 7

### APPLICATION FORM AND DECLARATION

**(please DETACH these pages from this booklet and return the completed application form ONLY. Please retain the guidebook)**

Before completing the application form please read carefully this guidebook and the required declaration statements (page 41 below).

The completed application form and signed declarations, together with the appropriate fee and attachments/document copies and enclosures should be sent to:

**The Superintendent Registrar  
The Register Office  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
Walkergate House  
Walkergate  
Beverley  
East Riding of Yorkshire  
HU17 9BP**

**Telephone (01482) 393600**

**Email: [registration.service@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:registration.service@eastriding.gov.uk)**

*This form can be completed online and is available on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council website – under Registration Service*

#### **I. Applicant/s name and address**

**This should normally be a business address as it will be published as part of the licensing procedure. If however you would like correspondence from ERRCS to be sent to a home address please enter the home address below and tick the “home” box. In this respect the address of the venue will be used in any published arena.**

Name of business

Name of applicant

Full postal address:

Post code:

Tel:

Fax:

Mobile phone number:

Website address:

Email address:

This is a home address, please do not publish (tick here)

**2. Is the person named in question 1 the occupier of the premises?**

**YES ( ) NO ( )** please tick

**3. If the answer to question 2 is 'No', and there is another occupier please give their name/s and address/es below:**

| Name/s | Address/es |
|--------|------------|
|        |            |

**4. Name and address of the premises to be approved:**

Name:

Full postal address:

Post code:

Tel:

Fax:

Mobile phone number:

Website address:

Email address:

- 5. If the applicant is an organisation eg. limited company, registered charity, board of trustees or other organisation, please enter the status of that body.**

Please list the address of the registered office and the name/s and address/es of all the directors on a separate sheet.

- 6. Contact person to arrange a visit/inspection if different from applicant.**

First Name(s):

Surname:

Post Title:

Tel:

Mobile:

Email:

- 7. Name of person/s to be appointed as “Responsible Person/s”**

This person/s is the main link between the venue and ERRCS. He or she is required to be present in the room at any ceremony and also one hour before the ceremony to assist the Registrars with any issues that may arise (deputies may be appointed and their names and positions also need to be listed).

| <b>Name/s</b> | <b>Occupation at the premises (job title)</b> |
|---------------|---|
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |

**8. Names of Deputies to the responsible persons**

| <b>Name/s</b> | <b>Occupation at the premises (job title)</b> |
|---------------|---|
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |
|               |   |

**9. Contact name for ceremony enquiries**

| <b>Name</b> | <b>Occupation at the premises</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
|             |                                   |

**10. Public contact telephone number for ceremony enquiries**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**11. Public email address for ceremony enquiries**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**12. Describe the nature of the premises eg. hotel, public house, restaurant etc and the primary and other uses for which the premises is regularly used.**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**13. Do the premises have any recent or continuing connection with religion or religious activity?**

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| <b>YES ( ) NO ( )</b> please tick |
|-----------------------------------|

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| If <b>yes</b> please provide details: |
|                                       |

**14. Has the premises been used in the past for religious purposes?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

If **yes** please provide details, and how long ago:

**15. Is there on-site car parking for the Registrars?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

**16. Are private pre-ceremony interview rooms/facilities available?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

If **yes** please identify this room(s): (registrars will not enter guest bedrooms)

**17. Is adequate sanitary accommodation available? (washroom and toilet facilities) (refer to guidance above)**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

**18. Planning and Building Regulations – is the venue authorised for “use” as a ceremony venue? (ie: permitted use)**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

**Has the venue had any recent (within the past 3 years) Planning or Building Control applications/consents/approvals/notices etc**

Please provide details below and attach copies of all consents (and/or relevant correspondence) of any Planning Development/Building Control decision or application reference numbers, or any relevant Building Regulation decisions/documentation (see point 14 above):



**19. Is the premises covered by Public Liability insurance?**

**YES ( ) NO ( )** please tick

If **YES** - please attach a copy of the current and valid insurance certificate.

If **NO** then insurance cover will need to be obtained, the level of cover approved, and a copy sent to us prior to the licence being granted – refer to guidance above.

**20. Number of designated ceremony rooms/areas to be approved.**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**21. State the name/identification of ceremony rooms/areas eg. “The ABC room”, “The X function suite” etc.**

**Please list below:** (there is no maximum number – list separately if required)

| Name of room or designated area | Proposed Maximum Room Capacity * |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |
|                                 |                                  |

\* When calculating room capacity please refer to notes and guidance above

**22. Please attach THREE (3) floor plans of the premises (no larger than A3 size) that clearly identify the location of the ceremony rooms and designated areas.** Refer to Paragraph 11.5 in the guide - please ensure that the plans clearly show the measurements of rooms (to scale if possible), including access and exit doors, adjoining corridors, rooms, external areas, fire safety facilities/equipment etc.

**23. Has the applicant complete control over the internal corridors and rooms adjacent to the designated room/s?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

If **NO** or only partial control, please state what other use is made of the corridors/rooms – and how noise/disruption can be minimized.

**24. Has the applicant complete control over any external areas (eg courtyards, passageways) on which the premises abut?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

If **NO** or only partial control, please state what other use is made of the abutting areas and how noise/disruption can be minimized.

**25. Will the room/s be available for regular use as a venue for civil marriages, civil partnerships and celebratory ceremonies?**

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

**26. Do the premises currently have the benefit of any licence authorising its use for public entertainment, sale of alcohol or food or similar purposes (under the Licensing Act 2003)?**  
(Sometimes known as a Premises Licence or Club Licence)

YES ( ) NO ( ) please tick

If **YES** - please attach current and valid copies of this license

**27. Public nuisance and noise** – outline any potential issues associated with the granting of this licence in terms of potential impact on surrounding areas and neighbours, and the solutions and remedies required or in place? (refer to entertainment licence and/or planning related matters – also see point 17 above)

**28. Security Arrangements** – briefly outline your security arrangements to safeguard staff and guests from risks associated with threatening and intimidating behaviours? (see point 29 above)

**29. Do you have a current Fire Risk Assessment in respect of the premises?**

**YES ( ) NO ( )** please tick

If **YES** - please attach a copy of the current and full **Fire Risk Assessment** in accordance with the guidance above.

If **NO** - then an assessment must be carried out and approved by the Council in consultation with the local Fire and Rescue Service prior to the licence being granted.

Your **Fire Risk Assessment** should be undertaken under the provisions of the **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** – refer to notes above in this guide.

## DECLARATION AND CHECKLIST (please complete)

I/we, the applicant for an Approved Premises licence, having read and understood the requirements and conditions contained within this guidebook (and in accordance with associated statutory regulation). I/we agree with the said requirements and conditions (and any additional conditions or special requirements) associated with this licensing process.

By signing this application and declaration:

- (a) I/we agree to abide by and comply with the requirements and conditions of this licence.
- (b) I/we declare to be responsible that certain requirements and conditions are in place, that they are current, valid and comply with all relevant legislation and regulation. This is especially in relation to: (please initial to agree)

| <b>I/we declare that throughout the period of this licence:</b>  | <b>Initial or sign</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| A Fire Risk Assessment complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and/or guidance above, and will be reviewed annually,                        |                        |
| Adequate and appropriate health and safety measures are in place (as outlined in point 12 above) and appropriate records/documentation will be maintained,       |                        |
| Adequate and appropriate provision is made to reduce and/or minimise nuisance to surroundings/neighbours (as outlined in point 17 above – and application form), |                        |
| Adequate Public Liability Insurance cover will be valid and renewed,   |                        |
| The premises will comply with appropriate planning and building control/building regulation matters relevant to the application of this licence,                 |                        |
| We will notify ERRCS of any material changes to the structure and layout of the premises, ownership and/or responsible persons,                                  |                        |
| We will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 in respect of ceremony provision and access to the premises.                            |                        |

(Also sheet checklist below)

This is an application for premises to be approved as a venue for marriages and civil partnerships in pursuance of section 26(1) (bb) of the Marriage Act 1949 and section 6(3A) (a) of the Civil Partnerships Act 2004.

1. I/we apply for the premises named in question 4 above to be approved for regular use by the public for the solemnization of marriages and the formation of civil partnerships in the presence of a Registrar.
2. I/we attach THREE copies of a floor plan showing the room(s) in which it is intended that the civil marriages and civil partnerships formations will take place.
3. I/we attach the completed application form (detached from this guide book).

4. I/we understand that:
- (a) the premises will be inspected for suitability before approval is granted and if this application is successful will be subject to any subsequent inspection,
  - (b) approval, if granted will be for a THREE YEAR period and subject to revocation, and
  - (c) the premises must satisfy the local authority on fire precautions and health and safety provisions.
5. I/we declare that:
- (a) I/we have read and understood the information contained in this guidance booklet, and
  - (b) the building has no recent or continuing religious connection, and
  - (c) I/we have consulted the Planning Authority as to whether planning consent/building regulation is required and attach evidence that it is content that the premises may be used for marriages and civil partnerships.
  - (d) I/we have consulted the Licensing Authority as to whether authorisations are required in relation to the sale of alcohol, provision of regulated entertainment and late night refreshment.
6. I/we further declare that, if approval is granted:
- (a) the premises will be regularly available for public use as a venue for civil marriage and civil partnership registrations, and
  - (b) I/we will comply with the licence conditions and requirements attached to the grant of this approval.
7. This application is made by the proprietor or a trustee of the premises. If successful the applicant will be the holder of the approval/licence.
8. **CHECKLIST** – I/we enclose with this application form (tick if applicable):

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| The application fee (see website or contact the Register Office).  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Three floor plans (no larger than A3 size - with measurements) of the premises showing the location of the proposed ceremony rooms and designated areas. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A copy of the current Public Liability Insurance certificate or cover note applying to the premises.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A copy of relevant Planning Development Control or Building Regulations Decision(s).   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A copy of the current Public Entertainments Licence.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A copy of the current Fire Risk Assessment.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. Refer to East Riding of Yorkshire Council website (or contact the Register Office) for the current licence application fee. The fee is subject to annual review. Payment can be made by cheque (made payable to ERYC) or by card payment, or online via the website. Card payments may be subject to a surcharge. If the licence application is not approved (granted) then any costs incurred by the Council in the process will be retained.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Job Title/Position** .....

**Please detach the completed application form and the signed declaration from the Guidebook and send with the necessary documents and the fee to the Register Office. Keep the Guidebook for your reference.**

End of document



**EAST RIDING**  
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL