

## COLCHESTER QUAKER MEETING HOUSE

6 Church Street, Colchester, CO1 1 NF

### Booking information and conditions of letting[01.01.22](#)

With its quiet, relaxing atmosphere, away from all the usual interruptions, Colchester Quaker Meeting House is an excellent venue for your interviews, meetings, seminars, workshops, conferences etc. We recognise the need for groups to meet to share ideas, learn and give support to each other. It also provides us with the opportunity to be a Quaker centre of information about our work and beliefs.

Colchester Quaker Meeting House rooms are available to rent on weekdays by groups whose activities and aims do not conflict with Quaker beliefs. Hire fees contribute to the upkeep of the building and to the cost of non-profit-making work carried out by the Quaker movement.

The Quaker Meeting House is owned by Southern East Anglia Area Quaker Meeting but is managed locally by Colchester Quaker Meeting. Further information about the organisations can be found on their respective websites: [essexsuffolkquakers.org](http://essexsuffolkquakers.org) or [colchesterquakers.org.uk](http://colchesterquakers.org.uk)

The caretaker, or her assistant, are frequently around to help with the day-to day running of the Meeting House and can be contacted on the Meeting House telephone 01206 540447 and by email [warden@colchesterquakers.org.uk](mailto:warden@colchesterquakers.org.uk) Friends on duty (FoDs - Members of the Society of Friends – Quakers) may also be on duty to greet you and are very happy to spend time with you should you wish it.

Meeting House facilities include:-

- Five rooms of various sizes to suit groups from 2 to 80 people (details below)
- Kitchen facilities and tables on both floors
- Wheelchair access to ground floor rooms and toilets
- Proximity to the town centre, public transport and a public car park
- Availability Monday to Saturday, 9.00am to 10.00pm (not bank holidays)
- Very reasonable fees (details below)
- Regular bookings are welcomed

Parking is not available except for delivery or contractors.

Colchester Quaker Meeting House is a no-smoking, no alcohol, no gambling venue. It is a centre for Quakers in Colchester and the surrounding area, and the letting of rooms to outside organisations is subordinate to this function. Hirers are asked at all times to exercise due consideration for other users of the building and in particular to respect the forecourt and the lobby areas.

Rooms available

Main Meeting Room

Light, modern, hexagonal room at the rear of the building. Comfortable seating for about 70-80 people. **Blended zoom facilities available.**

James Parnell Room

Rectangular room on the ground floor. Seating for about 50 people, or about 30 seated at tables. Serving hatch from the downstairs kitchen. Curtains permit showing of videos etc during daytime. **Projector and large screen available.** The room is named after a 17th century local Quaker martyr who died imprisoned under terrible conditions in Colchester Castle.

Children's Room Light and informal upstairs room with seating for about 20 people, or about 12 seated at tables. Ideal for smaller events or for use as a crèche. With a sink, it is also useful for practical activities.

Committee Room

More formal upstairs room seating up to 10 people. Ideal for smaller meetings, interviews or tuition.

## Quiet Room

A small informal upstairs room seating up to 3 people. Ideal for one to one meetings or consultations.

## **FEES**

It is possible to hire a room between 9 am and 10 pm, 6 days a week unless in use by the Quakers.

All bookings must be for a minimum of 2 hours except the Quiet room.

Your booking time is for the actual time you will be in the room, **it includes all setting up and tidying away time.**

## Hiring rates from 01.09.21 (minimum 2 hours except for quiet room)

Meeting room (hexagon) - £15 an hour

Parnell room - £15 an hour

Children's room - £12 an hour

Committee room - £10 an hour

Quiet room - £5 an hour

Equipment – by arrangement

## **Booking procedure**

### First-time hirers

Potential hirers should initially make contact with the caretaker and obtain a booking form. If this is the first time you are hiring the Meeting House, we require information about the aims and purposes of your organisation, to ensure it complies with our lettings policy. The caretaker can then arrange a visit to the Meeting House if required, check room availability, confirm charges and provide the booking form. It is important that all hirers are familiar with the emergency procedures in case the building needs to be evacuated. You should contact the caretaker at least a week before your booking is due in order to arrange a time and day (Monday to Friday 10.00 to 16.00 only) to visit the Meeting House.

It is not possible to ensure full coverage of the premises by staff or a representative of the Meeting and you may need to be given the door code and instructions on using the building without a member of staff present. Similarly, please contact the caretaker well in advance if you wish to use any of our equipment for your meeting. Assistance will not necessarily be available in setting up **and is required for the zoom facilities or the projector. The use of the downstairs kitchen is free but must be booked.**

All bookings must be confirmed within five working days by returning a completed booking form to the office, or the booking dates will become free again. On return of the completed booking form, the caretaker will give you the arrangements for access at the time of your hiring. You will be sent an invoice with payment details by email. Invoices **must** be paid within 30 days of receipt of invoice or further hiring will not be acceptable or honoured. Bookings are accepted on a first come, first served basis.

Payment is made by BACS preferably before the hiring. **Please** remember to quote the invoice number on all BACS payments.

If you have made a new booking, do ensure you receive a confirmatory email. Regular hirers will receive a monthly invoice as described above.

## **The Hirer and the Nominated Person**

The Hirer means the person signing the application form and, in addition, any organisation for whom s/he is stated on such a form to be acting for. The liability under the hiring agreement of such person and such organisation shall be joint and several.

If the Hirer is **not** present, s/he must nominate a responsible person who must be thoroughly familiar with these conditions and with the procedures to be followed in case of emergency. No meeting can take place on the premises unless the Hirer or Nominated Person is present. The Hirer or Nominated Person shall ensure that these conditions are observed.

Use of the premises or the relevant part thereof and entry thereto is limited to the purposes and times stated on the application and booking forms and no sub-letting is permitted.

Organisations who wish to hire rooms must be approved by caretaker or Premises Committee of the Quaker Meeting. Certain categories, including some religious groups and political parties would not be considered appropriate hirers. Acceptance of a room booking does not imply that the Quaker Meeting endorses or supports the aims or activities of the hirer - no such inference may be given in publicity. Any ap-

plication for reduction of fees because of the circumstances of the hirer must be made to Colchester Quaker meeting as a whole and cannot be negotiated with the caretaker.

### **Insurance**

The Meeting House Public Liability Insurance only covers Quaker events, it does not extend to anything run by other parties. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to the property of those using the premises or any injury to persons. Any property belonging to the hirer is left in the building at their own risk. We would advise any hirer to ensure that they have their own public liability cover to safeguard themselves against any claims in respect of liability to any persons, or loss or damage to property, including personal injury and death of third parties (including employees and volunteers) and damage to the building or to the property of others, also any specific cover they may need in respect of their own property, or cash or activities during the use of the Meeting House resulting from the hirer's negligence that could be brought by a participant. The Hirer is responsible for obtaining Public Liability Insurance and any other relevant insurance. **The hirer must also ensure that their organisation has an appropriate Safeguarding policy and take responsibility for safeguarding all their activities. SEAQM has its own Safeguarding policy.**

The Hirer agrees to accept full responsibility for and to indemnify SEAQAM against all claims in respect of any accident, loss or damage (including personal injuries) either to property, or to the building, or to any person approaching, leaving or in the building (with or without the consent or knowledge of the Hirer) in connection with the hire.

**Cancellations** Any confirmed booking which needs to be cancelled should be notified to the warden as soon as possible. Cancellations made within a week of the intended hiring will still be invoiced. While every effort will be made to honour accepted bookings, we reserve the right to move, cancel, suspend or alter bookings to ensure best use of the premises. The building could be needed for a Quaker funeral for instance. Advance notice would be given and full reimbursement of any sum paid would be made. If payment in advance has been agreed but has not occurred, then the booking will be cancelled.

### **Please also note the following**

**PUBLICITY** for events at the Meeting House should bear a contact address or number for the organisers and should direct visitors to public car parks, of which the nearest is the Saint Mary's multi-storey. Charging for admission to the building is not allowed. Our address must not be used as a business address for hirers. Images of our building, inside or out, must not be used in hirers' publicity material.

**PARKING SPACE** is not available to hirers - please brief visiting speakers. The difficulties over blocking users in has made us limit parking solely to those assisting in the running of the building. There is ample space at Saint Mary's car park. Equipment can be dropped off or picked up.

People's attention should be drawn to the fire exit instructions displayed in meeting rooms. **Do not put furniture in front of the fire exits or fire extinguishers at any time.**

**ROOMS** should be left clean after use and furniture replaced where found. Cleaning materials may be obtained from the kitchens in the event of spillages. A dustpan & brush and cleaning products are provided in the sink cupboard to assist you with this. Should any damage occur then the warden should be notified. Any extra cleaning or repairs made necessary by misuse of the facilities will be charged to the hirer, and may jeopardise your ability to book that space in future. Any rubbish produced during the session must be removed by the hirer and taken home.

**SMOKING AND ALCOHOL** are not permitted in the Meeting House under any circumstances, this includes the use of electronic vapour cigarettes. We do not permit gambling, lotteries or raffles on the premises.

**USE OF THE KITCHENS** is included in the hiring fees quoted above. There is a kitchen on each floor, containing kettles, teapots, crockery and washing up materials. The downstairs kitchen also contains a cooker, fridge and microwave. Hirers are required to provide their own consumables. Please bear in mind that the kitchens will often be shared. Hirers are required to wash up, dry and put away all equipment used before leaving. Please take home all unused food and milk from the fridge which is used at your own risk. Hirers must bring their own tea towels. If items are taken from one kitchen to the other, please return them to their origin.

We care about the environment. We ask hirers to be mindful of waste in usage of water and power. Please only use the appropriate recycle bins in the kitchen if necessary but we have to pay for rubbish collections.

STORAGE space is also extremely limited and is only accessible during your hired times. All items must be stored in labelled lidded containers, clearly marked with the hirers' details. Therefore, except where special arrangements have been made, hirers may not leave their property on the premises between meetings. Under no circumstances will Colchester Quaker Meeting accept liability for loss of or damage to any property left or stored in the Meeting House. We will dispose of lost property after one month if it is not collected in that time, to charity shops if possible.

**VISUAL DISPLAYS** The walls of the Meeting House are not suitable for fixing up notices **Please do not use white/blue-tac, drawing pins, Sellotape or masking tape** of any kind on any walls. A notice could be put up outside the building while an event is taking place by negotiation with staff. An A6 (postcard) sized notice of your activity with your contact details can be put on the hirers' board in the lobby. Other publicity material about your organisation is not permitted unless by special arrangement with the staff.

HEATING controls are complicated and we ask hirers not to touch any settings. The visible thermostat in the Meeting Room is inoperative, the heating is controlled digitally remotely. Radiator valves in individual rooms can be changed but **please** return the setting to where it was when you found it. Small fan heaters are available if staff are around to help. For safety reasons they may only be used on the floor.

#### PERFORMING RIGHTS

We wish to make clear that any performing rights issues over music are the responsibility of hirers.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

A first aid box is available in the main lobby over the pigeon holes. We ask you to ensure that someone in your group carries a mobile phone and can call the emergency services should they be needed. Any accident or incident should be reported to the staff to ensure it is recorded in the accident book. Any hazards, defects in the building or similar problem should be reported to the warden.

We ask you not to use candles or any other inflammable substance or matches in the Meeting House. Personal electronic equipment must be safe and PAT tested.

If you are serving food in the Meeting House, we ask you to pay proper attention to food hygiene.

~~The SEAQM holds safeguarding policies but we ask all hirers to have their own safeguarding policies in place particularly if they have vulnerable adults or children among their number.~~

The person you have nominated as the **responsible person** for the hiring must be familiar with all the fire extinguisher points, the 'break glass' positions and the fire exits. Never put furniture in front of the fire exits or fire extinguishers. ~~If you are left in charge of the building, please also familiarise yourself of the procedure to turn off the fire alarm should it have been activated while you are in the building.~~

In the event of fire or smoke GET PEOPLE out of the building. The assembly place is across the road by the bicycle stands. Use a 'break glass' device to activate the alarm. Call the fire service on 999 and notify the staff as soon as possible.

#### PRIVACY POLICY

A data handling policy is held by the SEAQAM and can be found on their website.

We hold the following information:

Contact details – to communicate with you in order to organise the use of the premises by hirers.

Patterns of hiring – to compile our hiring database

Basic accounts data for invoices and payments.

The data is held by officers of the Meeting and are not displayed anywhere. You are entitled to see what data we keep ~~on you or your organisation~~, and seek for it to be amended or deleted.

We will never pass on or sell any information about you, or send you junk mail.

**CLOSURE. We appreciate you clearing-up early enough so that you can leave the premises promptly at the end of your hired time.** This is especially important at changeover times in the middle of the day. Hirers should ensure that they vacate the premises quietly with due consideration to our neighbours.

The office is not always staffed and no staff are resident. There is an answerphone. We accept compliments as well as complaints!