

Licensing of Approved Premises

Guidance notes

Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

www.northlincs.gov.uk

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About this booklet

This booklet sets out the arrangements currently operated by North Lincolnshire Registration Service for the licensing of venues as Approved Premises for Civil Marriage and Civil Partnerships and other non-statutory ceremonies.

These arrangements also apply to the renewal of applications.

This booklet is aimed to provide information to support the application process and to provide practical guidance and considerations associated with becoming approved and once a licence has been granted.

The information in this booklet is correct at the time it was printed. North Lincolnshire Registration Service reserves the right to amend, add to, delete or otherwise change these arrangements from time to time as a result of policy or legislative changes.

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

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Notes

In this booklet the term 'Approved Premises', 'Approved Venue' or Venue mean 'Approved Premises for the solemnization of Civil Marriages in pursuance of Section 26(1)(bb) The Marriage Act 1949, and the registration of Civil Partnerships in pursuance of Sections 6(3A)(a) of The Civil Partnership Act 2004.'

Licence means the approval of any premises pursuant to The Marriages and Civil Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.

The registration and approval authority is North Lincolnshire Registration Service.

The information in this booklet was correct as at September 2019

Introduction and welcome

North Lincolnshire Registration Service is responsible for the provision of the Registration Service within the county of North Lincolnshire. The service deals with the registration and celebration of civil marriages and civil partnerships and includes the approval (licensing) of venues where marriages and civil partnerships may take place.

Since the Marriage Act (1994) and the Civil Partnership Act (2005) were introduced, this has widened the range of venues that may be used for the celebration of marriages and civil partnerships. Civil marriage and partnership ceremonies can take place in hotels, civic offices, stately homes, sports stadia, theatres, restaurants, and other premises, which are regularly available to the public, without compromising the fundamental principles of English law and Parliament's intention to maintain the solemnity of the occasion.

Under these Acts, North Lincolnshire Registration Service are able to approve venues where civil marriage and civil partnerships may take place; these venues are called 'Approved Premises'.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service is keen to work with local venues and is happy to discuss the requirements and conditions detailed in this booklet with anyone interested in providing a venue for ceremonies.

If you are interested in becoming an Approved Premise please contact us and we will be happy to visit you to discuss the application process and assess the suitability of the venue.

What type of venue is suitable?

- 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.
- Marriages and civil partnerships cannot legally be held in the open air, in tents, marquees or any other temporary structures.
- The venue must be in keeping with the solemnity and dignity of the marriage or civil partnership ceremony.
- The secular nature of civil marriage / civil partnership ceremonies precludes the use of any building with a recent or continuing religious connection. Premises in which religious groups meet occasionally may be suitable, as long as this is not the primary use of the building.
- The premises must be regularly made available for the solemnization of marriage and the formation of civil partnerships. This means that “private dwelling-houses” are unlikely to be appropriate venues as they would not be known to the public or be regularly made available to them for this purpose.
- Marriages and civil partnerships must be solemnized in premises with ‘open doors’, which means that the public must have unrestricted access to the building to witness the marriage or civil partnership and/or make an objection prior to or during the ceremony. No charge can be made to any member of the public attending a ceremony.
- The venue should, where possible, comply with disabled access requirements. However, it is accepted that this may not always be possible given the age, constructions and style of a building. If disabled access is not possible then there must be measures in place to allow someone with a disability to be able to voice their concerns i.e. someone available in an accessible place with instant communication into the ceremony location.

Within the Venue

A suitable notice stating that the premises have been approved for the solemnisation of marriages or civil partnerships must be displayed at each public entrance to the premises for one hour prior to the ceremony and throughout the ceremony.

- Within the venue, individual rooms or areas will be named for the purpose of the licence. Registrations and ceremonies must only take place within these rooms. If, for some reason, that room is unavailable, the licence and therefore the ceremony may not be transferred to another room or area.
- There is no limit to the number of rooms which can be approved within the venue. More than one room can be included within the same licence application.
- Whilst any ceremony rooms do not have to be separate from other activities at the venue, they must not be affected by any other activity taking place at the venue for one hour before or during the ceremony.
- There are no minimum or maximum size requirements for the room or areas, these will vary between venues.
- No food or alcoholic drink should be consumed in the ceremony room an hour before and during the ceremony. Soft drinks can be consumed up to the start of the ceremony but not during.
- The room or designated area should be suitably decorated, appropriate to its use for ceremonies and in accordance with the overall décor, age, conditions and style of the venue.
- Within the room, two tables, one with one chair and the other with two chairs, will need to be provided. The table must be large enough to accommodate associated paperwork and be appropriate for a registrar to sit at comfortably to undertake the registration and for the couple to sit at to sign the register or schedule. *
- Venues may choose a layout that is appropriate for the venue. Any layout must include sufficient space for the registrar and the couple to stand comfortably and must allow for the safe exit of all those present in the event of a fire.

*Please see suggested room layouts appendix 4

For the inspection visit it would be helpful if the room is laid out as if for a ceremony

- The ceremony room and other areas must be cleaned, set up and made ready at least one hour before the agreed start time for the ceremony

In addition to the ceremony room, a separate room or area should be made available to allow for the confidential interviewing of the couple as part of the legal preliminaries prior to the start of the ceremony. This must ideally be within close proximity to the ceremony room and not an occupied bedroom.

Outside structures

A freestanding or gazebo structure may be licensed if the structure is permanent and immovable, it is the council's decision on what is deemed permanent and immovable and this cannot be challenged.

- The structure must have a brick, stone, concrete or wooden base.
- The structure should have a waterproof roof, which ideally should be tiles, although other coverings (e.g., polycarbonate and glass) will be considered. The roof should be supported by brick, stone, concrete or wood pillars or walls. The space between the pillars may have trellising or other decoration.
- The front should be open and sufficiently wide to enable the ceremony party to enter. Steps may need to be provided if the structure is raised above the surrounding ground level.
- The structure should be of sufficient size (minimum 3 meters squared or equivalent) to accommodate:
 - Two registration staff
 - One table for the registrar to sit at, plus an additional if requested by the couple. Chairs should also be provided.
 - The couple and their chosen witnesses (minimum of 2)
 - Allow sufficient comfortable space in which the ceremony can be conducted.
- Any other activities taking place in the grounds, especially near to the free standing or 'gazebo' structure and adjacent area to be used by guests are to be kept separate from the ceremony. Access to the area should be restricted for one hour prior to the ceremony, with no food or alcoholic drink being consumed within it both during that hour and during the ceremony.
- Such a structure will only be approved where it forms part of a larger venue, which must include one or more other approved ceremony rooms.
- Whenever a ceremony is planned to take place 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 (i.e. due to weather), this can be done at short notice and so as not to incur a delay.

Any approval of an outside structure related to the proposed use for ceremonies does not constitute planning approval for the structure. The venue is responsible where appropriate for seeking approval by the local planning authority.

Fire Precautions and Health and Safety

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Approved Premise) Regulations 2005 state that ‘the premises must have the benefit of such fire precautions as may be reasonably required by the authority; having consulted with the fire authority, and such other reasonable provisions for health and safety of person employed in or visiting the premises as the authority considers appropriate’.

The applicant will be deemed by North Lincolnshire Registration Service to be the responsible person (or acting on their behalf) under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, to ensure that a fire-risk assessment has been carried out on the premises.

The assessment is required to reduce the risk of fire, and make sure that all people who might be on the premises can escape if there is a fire. The applicant must produce the fire risk assessment at the time of application.

As part of the application process, the applicant needs to consider the maximum number of people that is proposed to occupy the designated room or area. 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.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service is obliged to consult with the Fire and Rescue Service. On receipt of the licence application and subsequent renewals, details will be sent to the Fire Authority, because of this consultation Fire Officers may arrange to visit and inspect the premises. Any recommendations regarding fire precautions, alarms and signage etc. may need to be resolved prior to a licence being approved.

The responsible person for the venue or one of their deputies must be present in the ceremony room at all times during the ceremony. The health and safety of the public is the responsibility of the venue and not North Lincolnshire Registration Service.

Planning Permissions

Applicants are advised to consult with their local planning authority to check whether use as approved premises for civil marriage and civil partnerships would constitute development or change of use.

A copy of any existing planning permissions and/or decisions relating to the venue, and which could affect its use for marriage and partnership ceremonies, should be enclosed with the application.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service reserve the right to consult with the Building Control Section and only on agreement with these officers will a licence be approved.

Public Liability Insurance

The building or structures to be licensed must have public liability insurance (third party) cover in place throughout the three year licence period. The applicant must provide evidence of this insurance when making the application and may, at the discretion of North Lincolnshire Registration Service, be required to confirm this insurance cover at any time during the licence period.

The Licence

Once granted the licence is valid for a period of 3 years from the date of approval. A venue wishing to add extra rooms can only do this by completing an application renewal. It is advisable to include as many suitable rooms as possible when applying.

Licence Requirements

All applicants must meet the following license requirements:

- Statutory Requirements – set out in Schedule 1 of the Marriages and Civil Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.
- Plus any additional Requirements set out by North Lincolnshire Registration Service

These requirements are set out in detail in Appendix 1.

Licence Conditions

Once a licence has been issued the Licence Holder must comply with the following conditions –

- Statutory Conditions – Schedule 2 of The Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005
- In addition, any additional Local Conditions set by North Lincolnshire Registration Service.*

These requirements are set out in detail in Appendix 2 and 3.

* North Lincolnshire Registration Service reserves the right to apply special additional licence conditions to those set out in this booklet, to any licence at any time as it considers necessary.

The Applicant / Licence Holder

A proprietor or trustee of the premises or other person who has the authority of the owner or controlling body can make an application.

The applicant will be appointed as the Licence Holder unless otherwise agreed North Lincolnshire Registration Service.

The Responsible Person

The venue must have a person appointed as the 'Responsible Person'. This person is the main link between the venue and North Lincolnshire Registration Service. The responsible person or someone appointed as their deputy are required to be present at ceremonies and available and accessible one hour before the ceremony to assist the registrars with any issues that may arise.

The Licence Holder does not have to be the Responsible Person.

The Licence Notice

The License Notice supplied by North Lincolnshire Registration Service must be displayed prominently at the all public entrances to the venue; it is recommended that this is permanently in situ. However, as a minimum requirement, appropriate signage must be displayed for at least one hour prior to the ceremony and throughout the duration of the ceremony. Additional copies of appropriate signage can be provided for other parts of the venue or for display in the ceremony room(s).

Promotion of the Licence

The Licence Holder or anyone acting on their behalf may not imply in any advertisement, statement or document that North Lincolnshire Registration Service recommends the venue for civil marriages or civil partnerships. The Licence Holder can use the following words to describe the licence that has been granted:

“Approved by North Lincolnshire Registration Service as a venue for the solemnization of Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships”.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service will assist with promotional and marketing activities where practical to do so.

Details of the venue will included on the council's website and social media sites. Licence Holders are given the opportunity to provide photographs and contact information to be used for this purpose. There is no additional charge for marketing activities undertaken by North Lincolnshire Registration Service; this is included within the application fee.

Fees

North Lincolnshire Registration Service sets fees for licensing venues annually. The licence fee is payable at the time of making an application. Payment of the fee can be by cheque (made payable to North Lincolnshire Registration Service) or by debit or credit card via the North Lincolnshire Registration Service on 01724 298555.

The licence fee for 2019/20 is **£1200.00** and is valid for 3 years. (Grant of application)

A licence renewal for a further 3 years costs **£1000**. (Grant of renewal)

The licence fee is reviewed annually; the fee payable is the fee applicable at the time of submitting the application.

Payment of the application fee does not indicate or guarantee that the licence will be granted. A licence can only be granted following a full consultation, checking and inspection process.

It should be noted that this is a non-returnable fee. If the application is not approved and the licence not granted then any costs incurred by the council will be retained.

No additional fees are payable during the licence period. If a venue wishes to make changes to rooms available for ceremonies once a licence is approved, they should make a fresh application.

Fees in respect of Registration Staff attending a ceremony at the venue are paid directly to North Lincolnshire Registration Service by the person, or couple, booking the ceremony, the approved premise is not involved in this transaction.

The fee includes membership of North Lincolnshire Council's Tourism Partnership Scheme. The scheme aims to raise the profile of North Lincolnshire as a visitor destination of choice. To become a member, once the licence has been granted, you must complete an application form, which will be provided to you.

Membership of the scheme provides access to benefits designed to help promote your business, opportunities to buy into additional marketing activity and business initiatives that will promote your business to the visitor market. You will also be able to attend free networking events to help boost business, make contacts within the industry and share insights and knowledge.

Member newsletters also provide up to date information regarding the tourism industry locally and nationally, and Partnership Officers can assist with tourism or business related enquiries.

More information regarding the scheme can be found by contacting Partnership Officers at tourism@northlincs.gov.uk or 01724 297131.

The Application Procedure

Application Form

All applications must be made using the North Lincolnshire Registration Service Approved Premise Application Form; this can be found online at www.northlincs.gov.uk

The form must be completed in full, with adequate information and explanations where applicable; necessary supporting information and documents must be provided. A plan of the premises must be submitted with the application. This plan should be drawn to a suitable scale that clearly identifies the rooms to be approved.

Before you complete an application, it is always advisable to contact us to arrange a preliminary visit. This gives you the opportunity to discuss the application process and allows us to assess the suitability of the facilities and the likely success of any application submitted

The application will not be processed until North Lincolnshire Registration Service receives all correct documentation.

Public Notice – Advertisement

Upon receipt of your application, North Lincolnshire Registration Service will arrange for a Public Notice to be displayed. The details of the application will be displayed on the Councils website. A period of 21 days is available for any person or any organisation to make comment on or object to the application. Costs of the advertisement and dealing with any matters arising from it are included within the application fee.

Inspection Visits.

All new applications are subject to a formal inspection before a licence is approved to ensure that all requirements of the process and legislation have been put in place to the satisfaction of both North Lincolnshire Registration Service and the Local Fire Authority. On receipt of your application, North Lincolnshire Registration Service will forward details to the Local Fire Authority and invite them to make comment as to its suitability.

For the inspection visit by North Lincolnshire Registration Service, it is helpful if the room is set out as it will be for a ceremony.

In addition to the stated legal requirements, the premises will also be inspected for appropriateness as a venue for marriage / civil partnership. There are no specific guidelines but in general, the approved room should 'observe the dignity of the occasion and reflect the spirit or marriage / civil partnership formation'.

Further inspections may be carried out at any time should an Approval be granted.

Licence Approval

North Lincolnshire Registration Service aim to complete all applications within 30 days of receipt of the completed application form and payment.

Providing that no objections are received, and all other requirements being met, then the licence will be granted and notification issued in writing.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service will also notify the General Register Office of this decision.

Validity

The Licence will be valid for three years from the date of issue.

Refusing a Licence

If a licence is refused, written notification of this decision will be issued; this decision will detail any remedial action required before this decision can be reviewed.

Renewing a Licence

The 2005 Regulations state that a renewal application cannot be made more than 12 months before the current licence is due to expire.

It is recommended that a renewal application is submitted at the earliest opportunity to ensure continuity. Couples book ceremonies in advance and need to be sure that the venue licence will still be valid for their planned ceremony. Where a renewal application is made before the existing licence is due to expire; the new licence will run from the expiry of the current approval.

Renewal applications are subject to the same process as new applications and a further application fee is payable.

The licence will lapse if a timely renewal is not made and no further ceremonies will be permitted or be lawful unless a new application has been received and agreed.

Transfer of a License

The license is not transferable between premises.

The licence can be transferred between licence holders; this would normally apply on the sale of a venue or on the appointment of a new manager. North Lincolnshire Registration Service should be made aware in writing of any changes of this nature.

Changes during a Licence Period

North Lincolnshire Registration Service requires immediate notification of any of the following changes:

- Layout or the premises, as shown in the plan submitted with the original application, or in the use of the premises.
- The name or full postal address of the approved premises
- The description or name of the room or rooms in which proceedings are to take place
- The name, address, contact details of the licence holder
- The name, address, contact details of the Responsible Person

Revoking a Licence

A licence may be revoked if:

- The holder fails to comply with the necessary requirements and conditions attached to the grant of the licence.
- The use or structure of the approved premise has changed to the extent that North Lincolnshire Registration Service no longer considers the premises as a suitable venue for the solemnization of civil marriages and the formation of civil partnerships.
- If directed to do so by the Registrar General.
- If directed to do so by the Licence Holder
- If the holder of the approval is deemed to discriminate on the grounds of the sexuality of a couple.

Surrendering a Licence

The Licence Holder can, at any time, surrender the Approval, which will be revoked as soon as is practical. It will be the responsibility of the Licence Holder to notify any parties who have arranged to have a ceremony at the venue that their ceremony can no longer take place on the premises.

Ceremonies provided by the Registration Service

Statutory Ceremonies

Civil Marriages

Civil Marriages are conducted by a Superintendent Registrar (or their deputy) and registered by a Registrar of Marriages (or their deputy). The marriage is legalised through an exchange of statutory declarations and contracting words in front of two witnesses and the two registration staff. This legal process is usually combined within a ceremony, which is bespoke to the couple and can be as long or as short as they wish. An average ceremony will last approximately 20-30 minutes.

Civil Partnerships

Civil Partnerships are legalised by the signing (registration) of a schedule in the presence of two witnesses and a Civil Partnership Registrar. There is no requirement to speak any contracting words however, as with marriage, a bespoke ceremony, into which the registration is combined, is usually provided and can last 20-30 minutes

Outdoor non-statutory Celebratory ceremonies followed by a statutory ceremony

Whilst couples are not legally able to marry outdoors at present, North Lincolnshire Registration Service now offers a celebratory ceremony, which can take place prior to a legal marriage. These can take place outdoors in the grounds of any of our approved venues. The legal part of the ceremony and the signing of the register is carried out inside the venue directly after the outdoor ceremony.

Whenever a ceremony is planned to take place outside, a licensed ceremony room must be kept available so that if for any reason the ceremony has to be moved inside (i.e. due to weather), this can be done at short notice and so as not to incur a delay. The final decision on place of the ceremony is made by the Registrar attending on the day.

Non-Statutory Ceremonies

Renewal of Vows

A renewal of vows ceremony is a ceremony that provides an opportunity for a couple to make a public statement of continuing love and commitment to one another. These ceremonies may be associated with a special wedding anniversary, where couples have married abroad or formed a civil partnership in another country. A renewal of vows ceremony provides an opportunity for a formal ceremony, which their family and friends can share in.

Naming Ceremonies

Children of all ages can have a Naming Ceremony. In addition to celebrating the birth of a new baby, Naming Ceremonies are also a suitable way of welcoming an adopted child or stepchildren into the wider family.

These ceremonies offer a special 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 the opportunity to declare before their family and friends the promise to be as good a parent as possible.

A Naming Ceremony does not include any religious references.

It is possible to combine more than one different type of ceremony together.

Additional Information in relation to the ceremonies and licence conditions.

When a ceremony can take place

There are no restrictions on when a legal ceremony can take place. Ceremonies can take place on any day of the week, including Sundays and Bank Holidays subject to the availability of a registrar.

Registrars work to planned appointment slots, which take into account travel between venues. When planning a ceremony it is important that the register office is contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm availability of a registrar and an appropriate time slot.

Ceremonies outside of these time slots can be arranged at the discretion of the Registrar (i.e. evening ceremonies)

Timing of the ceremony

Registrars usually arrive at a venue 30 minutes prior to the ceremony, as they are legally required to interview the couple prior to the ceremony. It is the responsibility of staff at the venue to ensure that suitable private accommodation is provided to ensure these legal preliminaries to be completed.

It is the responsibility of staff at the venue to plan for the greeting of the couple and their guests on arrival and to ensure adequate arrangements are in place when a couple have chosen not to see each other before the ceremony.

Guests are recommended to attend at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony to allow for prompt commencement of the ceremony. It is the responsibility of the venue to ensure guest are directed to the ceremony room and seated appropriately.

Ceremonies must commence on time; in cases of extreme lateness, the registrars reserve the right to leave for their next engagement. If it is possible, they will return later in the day to facilitate the ceremony.

At the end of the ceremony it the responsibility of staff at the venue to facilitate the exit of the couple following the registrars final announcements and to ensure that guess are able to exit the room following the couple and are directed as appropriate to ongoing formalities.

Bookings

All bookings for a Civil Ceremony are subject to the availability of a registrar and also subject to the couple having completed the necessary legal preliminaries. Before making a firm booking at the venue, couples must be advised to contact the Register Office as soon as possible to establish both of the above.

For a Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership there is a legal requirement for a couple to give notice of their intention to marry or register their partnership within legally prescribed timescales. This notice must be given at the register office in the district in which the couple live. Couples should be advised to contact the Register Office to discuss this requirement at the earliest opportunity.

Fees

A fee is payable in respect of Registration Staff attending a ceremony at the venue. This is paid directly to North Lincolnshire Registration Service by the couple booking the ceremony. The approved premise is not involved in this transaction.

The fee payable depends on the day and time of the ceremony. Couples should be advised to contact the Register Office for information relating to fees.

Music

The venue should have a music system available for couples to use. It is recommended that where the couple provide music it be tested at the venue for clarity and suitability prior to the day of the ceremony.

Couples may choose to have music played before, during and after their ceremony. Music systems at the venue should be operated by a member of staff at the venue or one of the guests.

If live music is to be provided space should be made available in either the ceremony room or an area adjacent to it for the musicians or singers, this must not compromise the area needed to conduct the ceremony.

Music chosen must not include religious references or context; music written specifically for religious ceremony is not permitted, this includes Christmas carols/hymns. Christmas 'pop' songs are allowed. Incidental reference to religion e.g. the inclusion of word 'heaven' or 'angels' in a pop song may be allowed.

For example, "Angels" by Robbie Williams or Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" is permissible, however only the music from Schubert's "Ave Maria" is permitted as the words were written specifically for a Latin prayer.

Music should not contain explicit language.

Couples should be referred to the Register Office for music choices to be approved if there is any doubt to its suitability.

Any copyrights for music played at a ceremony are a matter for the couple and the licence holder.

Photographs / Filming

All couples want their photographer or videographer to capture the best images of their special day.

North Lincolnshire Registrars will work with them to ensure they are able to record the most important images whilst allowing the couple to concentrate on the dignity and solemnity of the occasion.

Interruptions / Behaviour

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. If the registrar feels that, any individual is responsible for unnecessary distractions to the legal proceedings they reserve the right to respectfully ask them to stop what they are doing or to leave the room until the completion of the contract. The responsible person at the venue present in the room should assist with this request as necessary.

The registrars have the discretion not to proceed with a ceremony if any of the guests or either of the couple is threatening, abusive, drunk or under the influence of drugs. The responsible person at the venue will be expected to deal with inappropriate behaviour by guests.

Confetti

It is traditional for confetti (or rice) to be thrown at ceremonies. The licence holder will need to decide whether to allow confetti to be thrown as confetti may cause a nuisance to adjoining properties, pose a health and safety risk, particularly on wet surfaces and be detrimental to the environment.

Approved premises are encouraged to promote the use of biodegradable confetti.

Flowers, Balloons and Candles

Flowers, floral and balloon arrangements will be at the discretion of the venue but should not be sited to restrict the area where the ceremony is to be conducted and registered or to restrict access, cause a potential trip hazard or be a health and safety risk.

Lighting a candle in memory of a relative/loved one is permitted.

Animals

Animals are allowed into the venue at the discretion of the licence holder but only allowed to be present in the ceremony with the agreement of the registrar. Animals such as dogs and owls are becoming an increasingly popular choice for being a ring bearer. Any requests of this nature should be forwarded to the Register Office for consideration.

Religious Content

By definition, civil marriage ceremonies should not include any religious element, including religious rituals. The inclusion of any symbol or ritual, which has religious connotation, should be avoided.

Couples may choose to have a religious 'blessing' following their civil ceremony. This may only take place once the Registrars have conducted their ceremony and have left the premises. It may not take place prior to the civil ceremony.

Couples should be referred to the Register Office to discuss this further.

Food and Drink

No food or alcoholic drinks may be served or consumed within the ceremony room or designated area for one hour before the ceremony.

Food and drink can be served and consumed elsewhere in the venue but the licence holder or responsible person is responsible for ensuring that no food and/or alcoholic drink is brought into the ceremony room or designated area.

If the ceremony room houses a bar area, this must be closed and preferably screened from view during the ceremony (this may be via curtains, portable screens or shutters) so as not to infringe on the atmosphere and dignity of the ceremony.

Car Parking

Where car parking is available up to two car parking spaces should be reserved for the use of the registrars. These spaces ideally need to be near the main entrance to allow ease of access and enable the registrars to leave the venue promptly when the ceremony has finished.

The licence holder will be responsible for car parking and access arrangements for ceremony cars and for any car parking provided for guests attending the wedding.

Lighting

It is important that an accurate written registration can be undertaken during a ceremony therefore lighting levels must be satisfactory. Additional portable lighting may be required at the discretion of the registrar.

Heating and Ventilation

Ideally, all rooms within the licence should have suitable heating appropriate to their use, age, construction and location. Open fires must have an appropriate safety guard in place or be extinguished and made safe prior to the ceremony.

Where appropriate all rooms / areas included within the approval should have suitable ventilation to fresh air, whether by opening windows or air conditioning.

Toilets

Toilet facilities must be available and should be clean and easily accessible.

Microphones

If your venue plans to hold outdoor celebratory ceremonies on a regular basis, you may wish to provide a microphone to ensure all guests can hear the words clearly. The practicalities of the microphone should be considered before purchase, such as distance to the speaker, the couple and the Registrar, appearance of a microphone stand

Non – Legal Ceremonies delivered by Independent celebrants.

Venues approved by North Lincolnshire Registration Service are deemed professional partners. North Lincolnshire Registration Service will actively promote its partners venues for the celebration of all civil statutory and non-statutory ceremonies through its website, social media activities, service literature and attendance at wedding and civil partnership fares.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service registrars are trained to provide a high level of service and are subject to regular assessments and observations.

If an approved premise allows independent celebrants to deliver non-statutory ceremonies on its premises then the public must be made aware that that celebrant is not associated with the venue's official partner, namely North Lincolnshire Registration Service.

North Lincolnshire Registration Service has no control over the standard of services provide by independent celebrants and therefore does not want its reputation to be adversely affected by assumed association.

APPENDIX 1.

Licence requirements (before an approval is granted)

The premises must fulfil the following standard requirements in Schedule 1 of the Regulations:

1. Having regard to their use, situation, construction and state of repair, the premises must, in the opinion of the authority, be a seemly and dignified venue for the solemnisation of marriages or the registration (formation) of civil partnerships.
2. The premises must be regularly available to the public for use for the solemnisation of marriages or the registration (formation) of civil partnerships.
3. 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 the health and safety of persons employed in or visiting the premises as the authority considers appropriate.
4. The premises must not be:-
 - (a) Religious premises as defined by section 6(2) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004. 'Religious Premises' means premises which are used solely or mainly for religious purposes, or have been so used and have not subsequently been used solely or mainly for other purposes.
 - (b) A register office but this paragraph does not apply to premises in which a register office is situated, provided that the room which is subject to approval is not the same room as the room which is the register office.
5. The room or rooms, in which the proceedings (Marriage or Civil Partnerships) will be held if approval is granted, must be identifiable by description as a distinct part of the premises.

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 Partnership (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and will apply to all licences for approved premises in North Lincolnshire. They may be amended from time to time on the instructions of the Registrar General. In addition, North Lincolnshire Registration Service may impose special licence conditions relating to a 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 throughout each of the proceedings.
3. The holder must notify the North Lincolnshire Registration Service -
 - (a) of their name and address immediately upon him becoming the holder of an approval under regulation 7(2); and,
 - (b) of the name, address and qualification of the responsible person immediately upon the appointment of a new responsible person.
4. The holder must notify the authority immediately of any change to any of the following -
 - (a) the layout of the 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 premises;
 - (c) the description of the room or rooms in which the proceedings are to take place;
 - (d) the name or address of the holder of the approval; and,
 - (e) the name, address or qualification of the responsible person.
5. The approved premises must be made available at all reasonable times for inspection by the North Lincolnshire Registration Service
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 alcoholic drink may be sold or consumed in the room in which proceedings take place for one hour prior to or 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 of the district, or the registration authority of the area, as the case may be, in which the approved premises are situated.

- 11 (1) Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.
 - (2) 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; or
 - (e) include any form of worship.
 - (3) But the proceedings may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.
 - (4) 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 Marriage Act 1949, and the formation of civil partnerships under section 6(3A)(a) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 but shall not state or imply any recommendation of the premises or its facilities by North Lincolnshire Registration Service, the Registrar General or any of the officers or employees of either of them.
 14. If a change of name to the approved premises occurs after the issue of the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document, but before the proceedings, the former name of the approved premises as recorded in the certificate for marriage or the civil partnership document shall remain valid for its duration for the purpose of the proceedings.

Any further conditions the authority considers appropriate upon grant of approval

APPENDIX 3. Additional Licence Conditions

The following licence conditions set by North Lincolnshire Registration Service will apply to licences issued for approved premises; North Lincolnshire Registration Service may amend them from time to time.

The licence holder must ensure that:

- They have read and are familiar with the guidance and conditions detailed in North Lincolnshire Registration Service Approved Guidance Booklet.
- The Licence Notice issued by North Lincolnshire Registration Service must be displayed in a prominent position within the main entrance to the building.

After booking the hire of the venue for a civil marriage, civil partnership or any other ceremony to be provided by North Lincolnshire Registration Service, the licence holder must ensure couples are aware of the following information:

- Immediately after making a provisional booking for a marriage or civil partnership in the approved premise, they must contact the North Lincolnshire Register Office to ensure the availability of a registrar to attend. This can be done by emailing registrars@northlincs.gov.uk or by telephoning 01724 298555
- An advanced booking of the date is required and is subject to a fee.
- A ceremony fee is payable directly to the Register Office no later than 3 months before the ceremony.
- Each partner must give formal Notice of their intention to marry or register their 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. This “notice” is valid for 12 months and can be given no earlier than 12 months prior to the date of the ceremony and no later than 1 month before. Couples should be advised to give notice at the earliest opportunity as it is not until the notice period has passed that the authorities that will allow the ceremony to proceed are granted.
- Couples are offered a choice of ceremony words/content. Any music, readings, words or performance, which forms any part of the ceremony, must have no religious content.
- The venue licence must be valid on the date of the ceremony.

Appendix 4
Suggested Layouts for Ceremony Room

Layout 1
Aisle and two tables either side. One for couple to sign register. One for registrar



Layout 2
Central table for couple to sign register one side table for registrar

