



making and sharing
MUSIC FOR ALL
@ SMSG

St Mary & St Giles Church: Stony Stratford

Hiring as a music venue

The church and its hall are available for hire by amateur, student and professional performers. Hiring is handled by Music for All @ SMSG, which is run by volunteers who are passionate about music, its importance in our daily lives, and its impact on well-being. We have hosted choral societies, symphony orchestras, brass bands, folk groups and solo performers. We look forward to welcoming you.

Location

St Mary & St Giles is the parish church of Stony Stratford and is located in the middle of the busy, attractive High Street of this historic coaching town. It has a wide range of good local restaurants, pubs, shops and interesting walks to explore. There is ample local free parking.

www.stonystratford.co.uk

Performance space

The church is light and bright, with a Strawberry Gothic interior, soaring slender columns and an unusual three-sided gallery surrounding the Nave which provides space for either audience or performers. Whilst recognising its primary purpose as a place of worship there is flexibility in how seating can be arranged. Performers are usually positioned within the semi-circular Chancel or immediately in front of it in the Nave.

Seating style and capacity in the church

There is a maximum audience seating capacity of 280 using both the downstairs space and the upstairs gallery:

Downstairs - 178 linked seats in the Nave.

Upstairs gallery - Wooden benches capable of seating a maximum of 84 people on three sides.

It should be noted that access to the gallery is by steep stairs not suitable for people with impaired mobility.

Some seats will have a restricted view because of columns or chandeliers.

Some seating capacity will be lost if there are many performers to be accommodated such as choirs or orchestras.

The seats are not numbered which precludes pre-booking specific positions.

The Fr Willis pipe organ

We have a recently restored, historic Father Willis three manual organ, dating originally from 1882. A full specification can be found at www.musicforallsmg.org.

The Grand Piano

The modern 6 foot grand piano is by Reid-Sohn. It is fitted with a humidity controller and is regularly tuned. The piano is normally locked in position by the pulpit but can be moved by prior arrangement.

Facilities for performers & audiences

There is **wheelchair access** via the Parish Hall side doors. There are two **toilets** in the lobby between the hall and church, and a **kitchen** at the west end of the church with cooker, hot drinking water boiler, fridge, washing up facilities, dishwasher, crockery and cutlery which can be used for serving hot and cold refreshments.

The church has a radiator **heating system** and is suitably heated throughout the year for rehearsal and performance.

A **Public Address system** using **radio microphones** and **CD** is available for announcements. There is an adjustable **conductor's podium** (60cm x 90cm x 40cm high) with a step and a back safety rail. There is also a **conductor's stand with light** and three music stands.

A **drinks licence** (Temporary Event Notice) can be arranged with 21 days' notice subject to local authority Licence regulations annual limit and SMSG's licence plans for the year. A **refreshment service for events** can be provided if required.

The Parish Hall

The Parish Hall is accessed through the church or through entrances in Church Street. It can be hired independently of the church and is suitable for small events, meetings, rehearsals, presentations and private parties. It has its own kitchen facilities, under-floor heating, a ceiling mounted projector and screen and sound system for audio and DVDs. A Roland electric piano is kept here for small choir practices. It seats up to 50 people in theatre style.

Attracting audiences / ticket sales

Music for All @ SMSG will advertise events on its website and on poster displays outside the church. Groups hiring the venue must arrange their own publicity and ticketing and provide their own programmes. We ask that you promote Music for All @ SMSG in your publicity materials, using resources our Publicity Officer will provide.

Arrangements on the day of your event

A volunteer from Music for All @ SMSG will be nominated as the Event Leader who will be in attendance before, during and after an event. In liaison with our volunteer Bookings Co-ordinator, they will arrange for the church to be open at agreed times for rehearsing and the event; arrange for any furniture moving; familiarise you with lighting control and sound equipment; organise heating as appropriate; and arrange any other requirements, for example refreshments, box office support, or audience 'meet and greet'.

Booking charges

Music for All @ SMSG takes responsibility for the maintenance of the musical facilities and also contributes to the Church's restoration projects, which together cost many thousands of pounds a year.

Many of our music venue users choose to contribute all their event profits to support our work. For this generous act we waive the booking charges.

Alternatively, we make the venue accessible on the Tariff set out below, which combines a low hire charge plus an agreed profit-share. This enables us to share risks and benefits, so that for small-audience events users have a modest outlay, and where events are successful financially, we both benefit.

We can also arrange additional services on request: **Piano and organ tuning** at cost; **Additional rehearsals** on other days (by arrangement, £25 charge per rehearsal day); **Home-made refreshments** (a very popular option - provided by us at no cost to you, with all takings retained by us).

Booking conditions

We ask all hirers to confirm their acceptance of our five simple booking conditions:

1. All rehearsal and event booking times must be agreed with our Bookings Co-ordinator at the time of booking. Please note: all our staff are volunteers. We recommend that each 'half' of an event does not exceed 45 minutes, and ask that a total event booking (excluding rehearsal time but including box office; refreshments time; tidying up and leaving) does not exceed a maximum of three hours.
2. All content must be approved in advance with our Bookings Co-ordinator as being suitable for performance in the church.
3. Performance space and all movement of furniture must be agreed in advance with our Bookings Co-ordinator.
4. All presenters and speakers must use the microphone system provided, to ensure that our accessibility criteria are met and the audience can hear clearly wherever they are sitting in the building.
5. All fees agreed with the Bookings Co-ordinator must be paid within 30 days following the event.

Making a booking

If you would like to hold a concert or recital here, please contact our Bookings Co-ordinator Lesley Salter on 07789 898847 or by email at events@musicforallsmg.org

Tariff

1. Minimum hire charge of £150

This includes use of the Church and Parish Hall; both kitchens if required; use of the organ and/or piano; access on the day for rehearsal; any utility charges (excluding heating).

2. Plus a variable profit-share agreed in advance

A share (30% or more) of the profits reported after the event based on all takings for admission to the event.

3. A Heating Charge of £10.00 per hour

In cold weather 5 hours of heating up time prior to the event is required for the church to reach a comfortable temperature.