



St Mary & St Giles Church: 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 wellbeing. We have hosted hundreds of events to fund care of the Fr Willis organ and promote music by young, developing and local musicians. We look forward to welcoming you.

Location

St Mary & St Giles Church is attractively located in the middle of the busy High Street in the historic coaching town of Stony Stratford, in the northern part of Milton Keynes. The town has a wide range of good local restaurants, pubs, shops and pleasant town and riverside walks. The church has attractive gardens and 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 an uplifting and rewarding space for performers

and audience. The acoustic in the church is warm and rich and has been judged by many over the years to be "wonderful", and "good enough for recording". 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 seating capacity of 398 using both the downstairs space and the upstairs gallery:

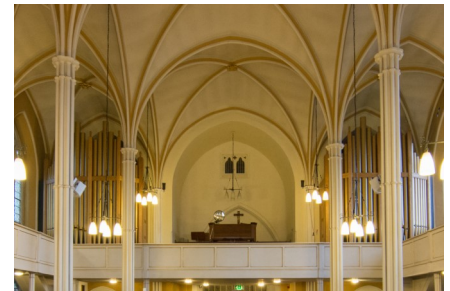
Downstairs - 182 linked cushioned seats in the Nave, plus the use of 116 additional modern plastic chairs in the side aisles – facing sideways and usually for choral singers when not singing – and other locations, up to a maximum of 314. Some seating downstairs has restricted views.

Upstairs gallery - Wooden benches on three sides (36 by window alcoves each side, 12 at west end by organ console) seat a maximum 84 audience/performers. Access to the gallery is by steep stairs.

The modern chairs can also be used to provide informal café-style seating at tables in the rear of the church.

The Fr Willis pipe organ

We have a wonderful fully-restored, historic Father Willis three manual organ, dating originally from 1882. Completed in 2016, funded by community activity and a Heritage Lottery grant, the restoration also completed the extension of the organ begun in 1932. A full specification can be found at www.musicforallsmg.org.



The Grand Piano

The grand piano is a Reid-Sohn, 6 foot, made around 2001. 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 **modern heating system** and is suitably heated throughout the year for rehearsal and performance. It has a **hearing loop, speech and CD player PA system**. 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 new Parish Hall on the north side of the church provides refreshment and/or green room and/or rehearsal space with its own kitchen facilities, under-floor heating, a ceiling mounted projector and screen and sound system for audio and DVDs. The Parish Hall can also be hired independently of the church for small events. It seats up to 60 people in theatre style and/or at small tables.

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

Each Event has a nominated volunteer Music for All @ SMSG Event Leader who is 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, and so incur no 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); **Homemade refreshments** (a very popular option - provided by us at no cost to you, with all takings retained by ourselves).

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 Booking 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 Booking 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 Booking Co-ordinator.
4. All presenters and speakers must use the microphone system provided, to ensure that our accessibility criteria are met. The system allows people with hearing aids to use their T-loop setting and ensures that audience can hear clearly wherever they are sitting in the building.
5. All fees agreed with the Booking 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 01908 567404 or by email at events@musicforallmsg.org

Tariff

1. Minimum hire charge of £120. This includes use of the Church and Parish Hall including both kitchens if required; use of the organ and/or piano; access on the day for rehearsal; and utility charges. A **Heating Charge** of £6 per hour (including warm up time) is added when the heating system is put on.

2. Plus a variable profit-share agreed in advance - a share (30% or more) of event profits reported after the event, based on all takings from admissions to the event (ticket, programme, collection, etc) less event costs on the day (e.g. soloists, performing rights licences, staging).

Examples of tariff calculations					
Ticket Price	£5	£8	£10	£12	£12
Number of tickets sold	55	60	72	95	140
Event income	£275	£480	£720	£1,140	£1,680
Deduct MfA venue minimum	£120	£120	£120	£120	£120
Deduct Other on-day event costs	£45	£60	£100	£150	£390
Event profits	£110	£300	£500	£870	£1,170
MfA share of event profits (30%)	£33	£90	£150	£261	£351
Promoter share of event profits	£77	£210	£350	£609	£819
MfA effective hire charge	£153	£210	£270	£381	£471