



The Abbey Theatre & Arts Centre Conditions of Hire

Managed by Nuneaton Arts Council

Last revised 16th January 2007

Note – the Nuneaton Arts Council reserves the right to modify these conditions as it sees fit without prior notice to hirers.

ALL user groups must adhere to these conditions – a signature on the booking form confirms that these conditions have been read and understood at the time of booking. Regular/repeat users must ensure that they are aware of the latest revision of this document.

A copy of these conditions will be made available on demand, and an up to date version can be viewed on our web site.

Information in Programmes: **This section is mandatory for all public performances.**

The following information must be printed verbatim on the programme of any public performance in the theatre and foyer on the same page as the cast or other particulars of the entertainment.

In accordance with the requirements of the Warwickshire County Council:-

- (i) The public may leave at the end of the performance or exhibition by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open.
- (ii) All gangways, corridors, staircases and external passageways intended for exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction, whether temporary or permanent.
- (iii) Persons must not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or to sit in any of the gateways.

Notes – Section (ii) includes all access-ways and corridors to exits in the backstage/dressing room areas

In addition to the above restrictions it is advisable for hirers to publish a statement to the following effect:

“The use of still or video photography is not permitted unless agreed in advance with the NAC and the company. The use of flash photography during a performance is strictly prohibited at all times”

Child Protection Regulations:

Nuneaton Arts Council can offer guidance for all societies who at any stage work with children in any capacity, either on stage or off. Strict guidelines are set down by all county councils, and may vary – the regulations applicable to any child are governed by the county in which that child lives. Each society **MUST** ensure that they are fully aware of the relevant legislation and **MUST** adhere to the policies concerning all matters of child welfare. These include maximum permitted performances, times of performances and the supervision of **ALL** children and the observance of the proper ratio registered matrons to children. Matrons may be registered via the Arts Council, although in some circumstances a charge may be raised to cover costs.

Failure to observe proper observance of these regulations may result in the cancellation of any event at the Abbey Theatre.

Performing Rights:

The NAC is charged an annual fee by the Performing Rights Society and Phonographic Performances Ltd. Those fees are based on the fact that either copyright material may be used either as recordings or played by musicians during any live performance.

Although the costs of annual payments to the PRS/PPL have been absorbed into the standard hire fees for the venue, the NAC must file an annual report to both of these bodies, detailing the total number of events produced, the number of tickets sold and the total income generated per performance. To this end, **ALL** companies must complete a standard form within 2 weeks of their final performance giving all relevant data. This form is available from the Abbey Theatre office on request, by e-mail from the e-address below or from our web site. (MS Excel format)

Pool Bank Street, Nuneaton, CV11 5DB
President - Mr Ken Loach
www.abbeytheatre.co.uk

Royalties:

Any commercial script used by performing companies will attract royalties to the copyright owners. Each user group is responsible for ensuring that all such royalty payments are met in accordance with the owners' specifications.

The NAC reserves the right to ask for sight of copies of any and all agreements in advance of any performance.

Failure to surrender copies of copyright agreements may result in refusal/cancellation of bookings.

Promotion of events:

Each user group is responsible for its own publicity and promotion of any event. The NAC will endeavour to assist where necessary, including the provision of contacts with local press.

The NAC will also list all events on its web site programme pages, in regular local press advertisements. Where practical, the NAC will use any and all other means to promote events as it sees fit either independently or in conjunction with the user group(s).

The quarterly NAC brochure will include at minimum a one-line entry for all events/performances fixed on the calendar at the time of going to print. Users can increase the information inserted by the provision of full details at the time of booking. Deadlines for copy to be submitted will be published each quarter.

All user groups must supply sufficient posters, handouts/flyers etc well in advance to allow the NAC to display on house notice boards and include with any pertinent mail-shots. Users are requested to forward copies of any graphics or logos pertinent to any event to allow the NAC to use these in the brochure and any other appropriate publicity material.

Ticket printing:

The NAC can produce professional quality 3-section tickets at a very reasonable cost. Users will need to indicate tickets are required on the booking form, and supply all relevant details as early as possible.

Cancellation of Bookings:

Hirers cancelling any booking or part thereof less than seven days prior to the date requested shall still be liable in full for payment of any hire fees due.

Cancellations less than one month prior to the date of the scheduled booking shall be liable to one third of full payments due.

Charges made are at the discretion of Nuneaton Arts Council.

Payment of Accounts:

Invoices for room hire will normally be issued either on the last date of a booking or at the end of each calendar month. Payment for room hire is due **within 14 days** of the invoice. Delayed payment of more than **4 weeks** will incur interest of 5% per week or part thereof until settlement is received.

Any disputed account must be raised with the NAC as soon as possible, in writing. Hirers who make any unauthorised deductions from invoices will be re-invoiced, with a 10% surcharge added to the total.

Car Park and Security:

The pay-and-display car park outside the NAC is run by the Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council. The NAC has no responsibility for the security of any vehicles left standing in this area. CCTV cameras owned by the NBBC are in operation over the car park. Anyone suffering theft, damage or vandalism must report the matter to the local police.

The paved area to the front of the building **MAY NOT** be used by any users or members of the public whilst the building is in use for performances. Use of this area for parking is permissible for members of the NAC at other times.

Insurance:

All user groups performing on stage must ensure that adequate public liability insurance cover has been taken out for the duration of rehearsals, set-up and performances. The NAC holds public liability insurance, but this will **NOT** cover accidents occurring as a result of negligence by user groups or unsafe/insecure practices exercised by them.

Note that the NAC insurance policy will cover all volunteers working specifically on behalf of the Arts Council.

The NAC reserves the right to demand sight of any or all insurance policies prior to bookings being accepted – failure to provide such policies may result in refusal/cancellation of bookings.

Tidiness:

Hirers are responsible for maintaining the rooms used in good order, including toilets and public areas. This means ensuring that all areas hired are left in a tidy state when the premises are vacated. The Arts Council may levy a deposit *per booking*, refundable when the account is settled provided that this regulation has been adhered to. Any litter created by hirers is to be deposited in rubbish bins (bin liners can be provided on request), glasses/crockery to be returned to bar areas and any furniture rearranged must be returned to their original positions.

Signs and notices may only be displayed in public areas with the permission of the NAC. AT NO TIME should notices be affixed to painted surfaces using tape, Blu-Tak or any other adhesive medium.

Those using the stage area for either performance OR rehearsal are responsible for ensuring the stage is swept clean after each use. Any furniture/properties used for rehearsals must be returned to its proper place at the end of each rehearsal.

Furniture from the main foyer bar **must NOT** be used for any rehearsal or performance.

The main foyer bar must not **in ANY circumstances** be used for the storage, building or decorating of any scenery, properties or other aspect of performance hardware.

Any user who finds the premises in an unacceptable state upon arrival must advise a member of NAC staff as soon as possible.

Damage to NAC property, fixtures or fittings must be reported as soon as possible to a member of the Arts Council. Where applicable costs against repair of damage caused by hirers will be charged accordingly.

Staffing – Technical Areas:

The hirer is responsible for engaging staff for backstage & technical duties. Technical staff **must** be experienced in the use of any relevant equipment, as well as any pertinent safety regulations. If any proposed operator is deemed to be unsuitable or inexperienced for any technical role, the NAC reserves the right to refuse to allow said person to operate any or all theatre equipment. Training or appreciation of equipment used in the building may be given on request to the NAC Stage Director. If a user is unable to engage technical personnel they must advise the NAC Stage Director as soon as possible, who will endeavour to staff the vacant positions on behalf of the customer. However, this will involve additional charges. Technical staff are responsible for the care and correct use of all NAC equipment – any misuse or abuse will be charged to the hirer.

Staffing - Front of House:

The hirer is responsible for engaging staff for Front of House and Box Office duties. If a user is unable to engage FoH personnel they must advise the NAC as soon as possible, who will endeavour to staff the vacant positions on behalf of the customer. This will also involve additional charges being raised.

Front of house staff must be aware of their duties with respect to the safety and wellbeing of the audience. Overall responsibility for emergency action (such as evacuation for a fire alarm) lies with the Front of House Manager, whether engaged by the visiting company or the NAC.

Front of house staff should be smartly dressed, preferably with some identification badge for the benefit of customers.

Bar/coffee bar staff will be engaged by the NAC for performance events and for some rehearsals where possible, but due to the voluntary nature of all such staff, NAC cannot always guarantee a full compliment.

Only staff registered with the NAC as bar personnel are permitted behind the bar areas at ANY time.

The consumption of alcohol on NAC premises is restricted to that purchased at the NAC licensed bar except where explicit permission has been granted in advance by the licensee. Failure to observe this will result in *corkage* being charged at the discretion of the Chairman/committee. Any hirer wishing to bring in their own refreshments during either rehearsal or performance should consult the NAC first.

Glassware/crockery is not permitted inside the auditorium during performances. Drinks will only be permitted in the auditorium in bottles/cans.

The stairs from the rear of the auditorium to the emergency exit must at all times be kept clear, and there must be at ALL TIMES a clear and unobstructed route to the main exterior crash doors leading out onto Pool Bank Street.

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Control Room/Storage areas:

Access to the control room for lighting and sound is **strictly** restricted to those directly involved in those departments.

Access to store cupboards within the control room, the electrical (LX) and property stores is restricted. Items held therein must be requested in advance – failure to do so may affect the smooth running of rehearsals/performances if a key-holder is not in attendance.

Any item used for rehearsal/show **MUST** be returned in good condition to its home location. All storage cupboards and rooms **MUST** be kept in a clean and tidy condition.

Scenery/Items brought into the theatre:

Scenery imported into the NAC must be erected in a safe and secure manner. Care must be taken to ensure entranceways and wing spaces are kept clear of obstruction.

All scenery **MUST** be fireproofed to a standard acceptable to the NAC Stage Director. Any item found not to be satisfactory may be disallowed from any production. If in doubt, consult the Stage Director at the earliest opportunity. The NAC may be able to provide suitable fireproofing solution for textiles etc at a small charge to hirers. The use of paper or cardboard as part of a stage set is not permissible unless agreed in advance with the Stage Director.

Any electrical items brought in to the NAC must carry a current valid PAT (portable appliance test) label. The NAC reserves the right to refuse to allow the use of any equipment not carrying a valid label or which appears to be in unsatisfactory repair. Where extra cabling is required to supply those items, such cable must be installed so as not to create hazards, either physical or electrical.

No fixings shall be made to the stage floor or walls without prior arrangement with the NAC Stage Director.

The use of glassware on stage and backstage is prohibited except as part of a valid performance. When not in use all breakable properties must be removed from stage to the storage shelves in the Green Room.

NAC Equipment:

Any item of NAC equipment that fails to work or is found to be defective/dangerous in any way must be reported to the Stage Director as soon as possible. Any such item proved to be dangerous must be removed.

The NAC holds an increasing stock of standard lighting/sound/stage equipment, the majority of which is available to all users as part of the regular hire fee. Certain items may only be available at the expense of the user, due to the complexity/potential high maintenance costs of said items. Details of all stock items and potential costs can be requested via the NAC Stage Director. The NAC also enjoys discounts from many theatre hire and sales companies, and will usually be happy to pass on any savings to user groups as appropriate. It is recommended that technical staff enquire with the Stage Director before booking any additional equipment.

Use of the theatre radio microphones is now chargeable, and each mic will also require batteries for operation. These can be supplied by the user, or from NAC stock, in which case users will be charged the cost price of any and all batteries used.

No modification to NAC equipment or cabling is to be attempted at ANY time without the express permission of the Stage Director.

Pyrotechnic Effects:

The planned use of any pyrotechnic effects **must first be registered** with the NAC Stage Director.

Use of pyrotechnic effects will not be permitted unless the company Stage Manager can demonstrate full competence and awareness of all safety regulations regarding the use thereof.

ALL pyrotechnics **MUST** be tested in front of full cast and crew before being used as part of any rehearsal/performance to ensure all involved are aware of the effect.

Any pyrotechnic effects **MUST** be fired using an approved firing system. This can be provided by theatre staff on request.

The use of naked flames and lighted cigarettes/cigars etc on stage is only permitted when agreed in advance with the NAC Stage Director and only then where provision has been made for the safe disposal of said items.

Dressing Rooms:

Both the corridor through the Green Room area between the inner swing doors and outer crash doors and the space between the inner doors and outer crash doors in the dressing room behind stage **MUST** be kept clear of **ALL** obstacles at **ALL TIMES** during performances. This includes scenery/properties, costumes and furniture. These access-ways are essential to the safety of all users as they are the prime emergency exit routes for cast and crew.

Upon discovery of any item(s) blocking any of the emergency exit routes, the user group will be advised of the situation, at which point the item(s) **MUST** be moved immediately. However, the NAC reserves the right to remove any such item(s) *without* notice at any time for repeat offences or if it feels that any item constitutes a particular hazard.

The dressing rooms become the responsibility of the user group at the dress rehearsal or time of first use. The NAC will undertake to ensure that all dressing rooms are clear and clean before use, although in periods of high use, this may not always be practical. It is the responsibility of the users to maintain a level of cleanliness/tidiness within the dressing areas both during and after any performances. Glassware etc must be cleared to the bar by the end of each evening and any rubbish deposited in the bins provided. The NAC cleaning staff will **NOT** clean inside dressing rooms during a show run.

The three main dressing rooms are available at no additional charge to hirers of the theatre. No 4 dressing room may also be available at no extra cost, but this must be stipulated at time of booking, as this can sometimes be used for storage. Additional changing space in the Etone Lounge or Milby Room may be requested, but use of these rooms will incur charges at the standard applicable rate.

Notice boards have been provided in and outside each of the main dressing rooms for users to pin signs and notices. Please do not allow users to affix any items to walls or other painted surfaces with tape, Blu-Tak or other adhesive medium.

Smoking:

The Abbey Theatre is a no-smoking building.

Fire Safety:

Anyone discovering a fire on the premises should first of all sound the fire alarm using the break glass buttons situated at strategic places about the building. The NAC staff will take responsibility for the evacuation of the building together with any front of house staff present. If you suspect there may be a fire but cannot confirm the fact, advise a member of NAC staff immediately. Normal fire safety rules apply – ie **DO NOT** attempt to tackle any fire – raise the alarm for the evacuation of the premises. Follow directions on the fire safety notices to the assembly points outside of the building.

The NAC holds regular fire safety training for regular staff. Any user or group who would like to be included in future training sessions should advise the committee in writing.

First Aid Safety:

It is recommended that every event be covered by trained first aid staff. It is usual for some events to engage the assistance of the local St John's Ambulance Brigade, who normally dispatch their own volunteers on request. This may involve a donation to the Brigade. The responsibility for this engagement lies with the user group involved.