



## **Certification and Registration of Religious Buildings for Worship and Marriage**

---

### *How to apply for a building to be.....*

#### *1....certified as a place of worship.*

You will need two forms 76, which can be obtained from the superintendent registrar at your local register office. The forms can be signed by any person who can represent the congregation. When they are filled in you should return them to the superintendent registrar with:

- A floor plan of the building. This does not need to be professionally drawn or to scale, but must show all the rooms, doorways, floors and staircases.
- An average weekly timetable of religious and any other activities that take place at the building. This must also include any activities not run by the congregation. This is to allow the Registrar General to be satisfied that the building is primarily used for religious worship.
- The fee. (Please ask the superintendent registrar for details about this).

---

#### *2....registered for the solemnisation of marriages.*

To apply for this the building must also be certified as a place of worship. (If the building is not already certified the two applications can be made at the same time).

You will need two forms 78, which can be obtained from the superintendent registrar at your local register office. These must be signed by twenty householders who regard the building as their usual place of worship. A householder is any person who resides at an address and has either sole or joint responsibility for that household. The forms must also be countersigned by a trustee of, or the proprietor of, the actual building.

The forms should be returned to the superintendent registrar with the fee. (Please ask the superintendent registrar for details about the fee).

Occasionally further information is needed. If this is necessary you will be contacted direct by someone from Marriages Section at the General Register Office.

---

---

## *What to do if.....*

### *3....you stop using the building.*

If the congregation stops using the building there is a legal obligation to let the Registrar General know.

You will need to get a form 77 from the superintendent registrar. This form can be signed by any person who can represent the congregation. The completed form should be returned to the register office.

### *4....the building is demolished and re-built on the same foundations.*

If the new building is finished within a year of the demolition, and will be used by the same congregation, the certification (and registration) will not be affected.

If the re-building will take longer than twelve months you should follow the instructions at 5.

**If marriage registers and certificates have been issued to the building, please ask your local superintendent registrar to take custody of them until the new building is ready.**

---

### *5....the building is demolished and re-built, but the same foundations are not used or .... you stop using the building, and start using a different one.*

A form 77 must be completed for the original building.

You will then need to apply for the new building to be certified as a place of worship (and registered for the solemnisation of marriages), and follow the instructions at 1 (and 2).

**All these forms must be handed to the superintendent registrar at the same time.**

### *6....there have been structural alterations to the building.*

You should send a floor plan of the whole building to Marriages Section, at the General Register Office. The plan must clearly indicate the new layout of the building. You should also say what the various areas are now used for.

### *7...you want to change any of the recorded details of the building.*

You should put in writing what the change is and why you want it made. The letter must be signed by two trustees of the building and sent to Marriages Section at the General Register Office.

### *8...you need a further copy of the worship certificate.*

You should make your request by telephone or in writing to the General Register Office.

---

We hope this leaflet has answered your questions about the certification of your building as a place of religious worship and its registration for marriages. Should you have any further queries the staff at your local register office will be happy to help you. Alternatively you may contact us by telephone Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm on:

**0151-471-4803**

or write to:

**Marriages Section  
General Register Office  
Office for National Statistics  
Trafalgar Road  
Southport  
PR8 2HH**

*Note:* You do not have to apply for a building to be certified by the Registrar General for it to be used as a place of worship. However, following the recording as a place of worship you may be entitled to a reduction in or exemption from council tax. You should contact the Valuation Office at your local authority for more information.