

DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER

DIOCESAN BISHOP'S DIRECTIONS

REGARDING PLAYS, CONCERTS, AND EXHIBITIONS OF FILMS AND PICTURES IN CHURCHES AND CHAPELS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CANON F16(2)

1. Consents

No concert, play or exhibition shall take place without the consent of the Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge, who must be informed of the nature of the event and provided with a draft programme. In the case of a vacancy in the benefice, the Churchwardens shall consult with the Rural Dean before accepting any event booking.

2. Vacant Benefices

In the case of a vacant benefice the Churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of Canon F16 and these general directions are complied with.

3. The Sacred Nature of the Building

The special character of the Church must be respected at all times. Particular care must be taken that the greatest of respect be shown to the font, the altar and the sanctuary.

4. Copyright

No concert, play or exhibition shall take place unless and until all applicable licences have been obtained for the performance of material (whether live or recorded) subject to copyright restrictions.

5. Insurance

No concert, play or exhibition shall take place without the approval of the Parochial Church Council's insurers (which may be given as a general or specific permission) and the requirements of the insurers shall be complied with at all times.

6. Safeguarding

- a) No person who is known to be subject to a Relevant Penalty in respect of Relevant Conduct (as defined below) shall be permitted to undertake any of the following roles in respect of a concert play or exhibition in any church or chapel:
 - i) Director;
 - ii) Conductor;
 - iii) Curator;
 - iv) Soloist; or
 - v) Actor in a leading role.

- b) A Relevant Penalty means:
- i) An unspent criminal conviction (as defined by *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*); or
 - ii) Included on a barred list under the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*; or
 - iii) A sentence of deprivation or current prohibition under the *Clergy Discipline Measure 2003* or the *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963*; or
 - iv) A current suspension under the *Clergy Discipline Measure 2003* or the *Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016*.
- c) Relevant Conduct means conduct related to abuse including any offence of a physical or sexual nature (or any other safeguarding matter or failure) of children or vulnerable adults or any offence under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*.
- d) Any question as to the applicability or interpretation of this direction is to be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer who shall, following consultation with the Diocesan Registrar, determine the matter.
- e) Any person subject to the restrictions set out in paragraph 6(a) who considers that, as regards any specified role, concert, play or exhibition, he or she should not be so subject, may apply to the Diocesan Bishop in writing to request a dispensation from paragraph 6(a) of this direction. The reasons for seeking that dispensation should be explained. Any such reasoned request shall be determined promptly.

7. Festivals and Series of Performances

All festivals and series of performances organised by external promoters require a Faculty or a Dispensation from Faculty from the Consistory Court of the Diocese.

8. Procedure and Cancellations

All ministers or, as the case may be, Churchwardens or other persons empowered to permit the use of a church or chapel for plays, concerts or exhibitions shall, before granting such permissions, obtain from the applicant confirmation in writing that the applicant has read and understood these directions and that, to the best of the applicant's knowledge, the proposed play, concert or exhibition would not contravene these directions. If, following receipt of such written confirmation, it transpires that the proposed play, concert or exhibition would contravene these directions, permission for that event shall be revoked. In such circumstances, no compensation shall be payable to the applicant and any deposit paid shall be forfeit.

9. Commencement and Review

- a) These directions come into effect on 1 July 2024 and apply to all bookings confirmed after that date.
- b) These directions shall be reviewed every three years.

The Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester
28 June 2024

Appendix – Canon F16

F 16 Of plays, concerts, and exhibitions of films and pictures in churches

1. *When any church or chapel is to be used for a play, concert, or exhibition of films or pictures, the minister shall take care that the words, music, and pictures are such as befit the House of God, are consonant with sound doctrine, and make for the edifying of the people.*
2. *The minister shall obey any general directions relating to such use of a church or chapel issued from time to time by the bishop or other the Ordinary.*
3. *No play, concert, or exhibition of films or pictures shall be held in any church or chapel except the minister have first consulted the local or other authorities concerned with the precautions against fire and other dangers required by the law to be taken in the case of performances of plays, concerts, or exhibitions of cinematograph films, and the said authorities have signified that the proposed arrangements are a sufficient compliance with the regulations in force as to precautions against fire or other dangers.*
4. *If any doubt arises as to the manner in which the preceding clauses of this Canon are to be observed, the minister shall refer the matter to the bishop or other the Ordinary, and obey his directions therein.*