

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

03 January 2018

Report of the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 TONBRIDGE CASTLE – REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

1.1 Executive Overview

- 1.1.1 This review has taken a business-like-approach and has focussed on how Tonbridge Castle fees and charges have been set in the past and makes recommendations to increase revenue streams from a number of different areas.
- 1.1.2 Tonbridge Castle is used to deliver a variety of different services and functions. These include the Kent County Council funded Gateway; Tourist Information Centre; Attraction i.e. the Castle tour; Meeting Rooms; the Castle Lawn and offices (occupied by the Borough Council and Citizens Advice Bureau) which all have revenue streams attributed to them for a myriad of different activities.
- 1.1.3 Many of the different revenue streams covered in this report have long lag factors, where revenue can only be realised by ensuring there is a strong business plan which encompasses the key Marketing strategies, resulting in people interested to use Tonbridge Castle. Many people visiting Wedding Fairs are looking at finding venues for 2019 and 2020.
- 1.1.4 At the Castle the Borough Council arranges and facilitates many types of events, from music concerts on the Castle Lawn, art exhibitions in the Castle Chamber and weddings in the Castle Chamber and Gatehouse.
- 1.1.5 It is essential to have a strong working relationship between the different Directorates who manage different activities at the Castle to utilise this most valuable and historic asset. Leisure services organise many established mature events on the Castle Lawn which attract many visitors from the surrounding areas.
- 1.1.6 The main revenue streams from Tonbridge Castle are from the Attraction (Castle Tours), school visits, weddings and shop.

1.2 Visitors to the Castle

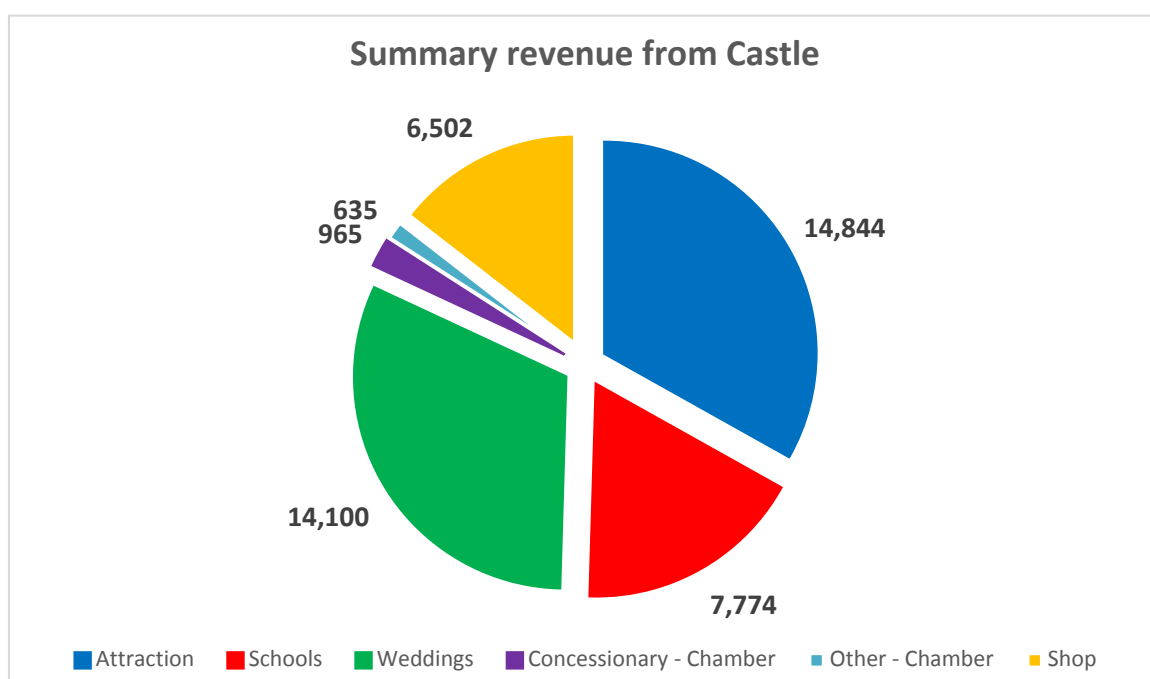
1.2.1 People visit the Castle for a wide range of services and needs seven days a week through the year.

1.2.2 The top ten customer services interactions (not including the Tourist Information Centre) are set out below:

Castle Footfall		
No	Description	Number 2016
1	Benefit	5,129
2	Parking	3,685
3	Housing	2,095
4	Council Tax	1,876
5	Self Help Kiosk & Computers	1,191
6	Toilet	757
7	Bus & Train Timetables	729
8	Waste Enquiries	438
9	Electoral Roll	279
10	Planning	276

Kings Hill; Castle and Surgeries		
No	Description	Number 2016
1	Benefits	14,129
2	Housing	5,160
3	Council Tax	4,722
4	Parking	4,126
5	Payments	3,833
6	Licensing	2,785
7	Post/Deliveries	2,322
8	KCC	1,092
9	Waste	855
10	Planning	796

1.3 Castle – Summary of Income Year-to-date 2017-18 (“£”)



Revenue Stream	Revenue (£) YTD
Attraction (Castle Tours)	14,844
Weddings	14,100
Schools – Visits and Educational workshops	7,774
Castle Tourist Information Centre Shop	6,502
Castle Chamber – Concessionary bookings	965
Castle Chamber – bookings (Not weddings/schools)	635

1.4 Tonbridge Castle - proposed fees

- 1.4.1 For many of the activities at the Castle, particularly weddings and castle tours, the Borough Council trades in a competitive commercial market and therefore needs to attract high footfall of businesses, tourists and residents alike to ensure a healthy revenue stream.
- 1.4.2 I am therefore proposing three levels of fees to accommodate the commercial environment we are trading in:

Type 1 “Fixed rate”	Type 2 “Discount / commission when criteria is met”	Type 3 “Events”
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction Tickets (Castle Tours) • Vast Majority of Weddings • Wedding Directory (Partners can advertise their service to prospective couples.) 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction Tickets (Castle Tours – e.g. discount for groups) • School parties (1 place free in 10) • Castle event partners (Partners who book Weddings / Events) 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events where different levels of commission or fees are negotiated between TMBC and Event Organiser for events on: • Castle Lawn and grounds (where the Chamber is booked as part of a package) • Gatehouse (Where Partners enter in to an agreement to hold functions and the income to TMBC will vary)

Attraction (Castle Tours) – Gatehouse Charges

1.4.3 The attraction has been open since 2001 and has attracted thousands of visitors with the first class tour of the Gatehouse and Castle Grounds.

1.4.4 There are many different Castles open to the public in Kent with varying admission prices

2017/18	Tonbridge	Rochester	Upnor	Hever	Leeds	Dover
Adult	£8.90	£6.40	£6.40	£16.90	£24.90	£19.40
Concessions	£5.50	£4.00	£4.00	Free to £14.70	Free to £21.90	£17.50
Student	£5.50	£4.00	£4.00	£14.20	£21.90	£17.50
Child 5 – 15	£5.50	£4.00	£4.00	£9.75	£16.90	£11.60
Senior 60+	£5.50	£4.00	£4.00	£14.70	£21.90	£17.50
Family Ticket	£24.00	£16.80	£16.80	£44.50	n/a	£50.40
Season Ticket Adult	£20.00	As part of English Heritage Membership	As part of English Heritage Membership	£42.25	As above	As part of English Heritage Membership
Season Ticket Concession	£15.00			£23.75 to £36.75	As above	

Example of recent promotions

Leeds Castle – Groupon £10 from £20

Tonbridge – 1 free in groups of 10

Rochester Castle – 01.04.2017 – 31.12.2017 --- 2 for the price of 1

Hever Castle – 2 for the price of 1 one full paying adult (only 2 persons allowed per voucher)

Upnor Castle – Groups of 10+ receive a 15% discount

Number of visitors to attraction

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2017/18	343	455	431	361	435	2,250	377	154					
2016/17	383	369	343	372	343	133	194	151	119	134	316	423	3280
2015/16	406	390	490	391	483	2,057	337	130	105	170	325	470	5754
2014/15	282	354	406	566	490	2,321	263	277	190	134	320	536	6139

1.4.5 In September each year as part of the Heritage weekend TMBC opens part of the attraction up free for members of the general public to look around. In 2016/17 this was done by strict appointment only, hence the reduced numbers.

Revenue from Attraction (Castle Tours) – Adult “£”

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	467	659	673	560	1240	574	645	609	248	602	694	673	7644
2017/18	682	749	823	816	927	534	682	445					

Revenue from Attraction (Castle Tours) – Child / concession “£”

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	458	362	433	596	828	413	375	242	88	228	438	354	4815
2017/18	779	403	532	977	894	481	537	329					

Revenue from Attraction (Castle Tours) – Family “£”

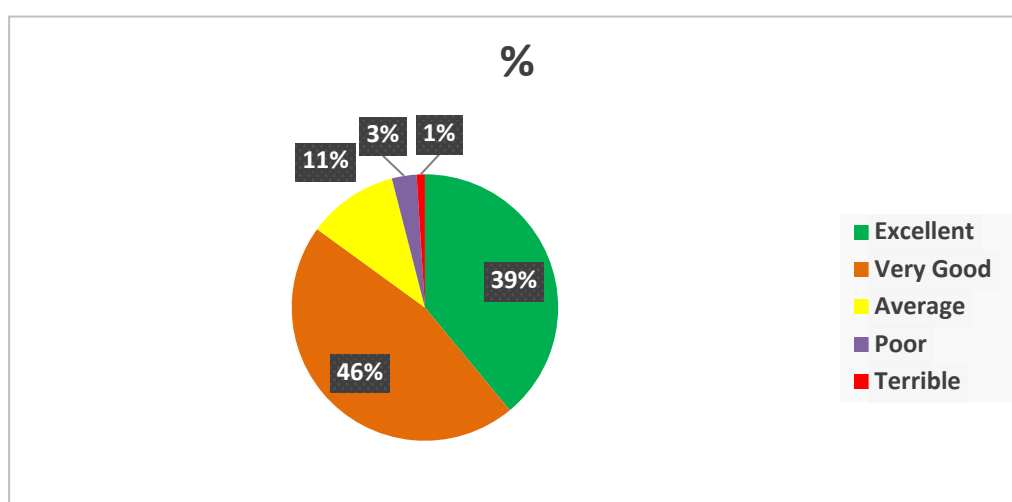
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	115	153	249	249	518	134	326	43	115	177	153	153	2385
2017/18	260	240	220	220	480	120	420	80					

Revenue from Attraction (Castle Tours) – Total “£”

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	1040	1174	1355	1405	2586	1121	1346	894	451	1007	1285	1180	14844
Cum	1040	2214	3569	4974	7560	8681	10027	10921	11372	12379	13664	14844	
2017/18	1721	1392	1575	2013	2301	1135	1639	854					
Cum	1721	3113	4688	6701	9002	10137	11776	12630					
= / - Year on Year	681	899	1119	1727	1442	1456	1749	1709					

Trip Advisor

- 1.4.6 At Tonbridge Castle we have received very positive feedback on the Trip Advisor Website. Looking at the Trip Advisor website on 1 December 2017 there were 162 reviews shown:



Attraction (Castle Tours) Exhibits

- 1.4.7 Since the attraction has been open the exhibits in the attraction have been in place for 16 years, without any specific replacement programme to refresh or replace them.
- 1.4.8 Some are looking tired and some have been damaged and repaired.
- 1.4.9 I am proposing that 50p form each admission price is ring-fenced to be spent on replenishing and ensuring the attraction exhibits are well maintained and refreshed with additional appropriate and interesting items.

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Adult	£8.50	£8.90	£9.00
Concessions Jun/OAP/Student/Leisure	£5.00	£5.50	£5.85
Family Ticket	£23.00	£24.00	£25.00
Season Ticket Adult*	£20.00	£20.00	£25
Season Ticket Concession	£15.00	£15.00	£16.00

* Only one season ticket sold during 2016 –17, none so far during 2017-18.

Recommendation

- 1.4.10 **That the new pricing model for the Castle Tour at Tonbridge Castle be approved as set out at paragraph 1.4.10 above.**

1.5 Schoolchildren

Number of Schoolchildren and Education workshops 2017/18

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
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Children	84	225	172	30		60	96	45					712
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Revenue Schoolchildren visiting attraction

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2016/17	0	705	951	930	0	748	117	150	127	104	300	901
Cum	0	705	1656	2586	2586	3334	3451	3601	3728	3832	4132	5033
2017/18	0	552	1351	371	24	0	678	476				
Cum	0	522	1903	2274	2298	2298	2976	3452				

Revenue School Education workshops

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2016/17	0	195	417	0	46	0	130	130	650	588	195	390
Cum	0	195	612	612	658	658	788	918	1568	2156	2351	2741
2017/18	0	205	560	70	0	0	210	210				
Cum	0	205	765	835	835	1045	1255					

Total Revenue School Children Education workshops

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2016/17	0	900	1368	930	46	748	247	280	777	692	495	1291
cum	0	900	2268	3198	3244	3992	4239	4519	5296	5988	6483	7774
2017/18	0	757	1911	441	24	0	888	686				
Cum	0	757	2668	3109	3133	3133	4021	4707				
= / - Year on Year	0	-143	400	-89	-111	-859	-218	188				

Proposed fees

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Adult	£8.50	£8.90	£9.00
School Children	£5.00	£5.50	£5.85
Education Facilities includes toys, dressing up clothes, games, paper, pens and 2 tour guides (1 teacher free per 10 children. For special needs groups, carers admitted free as required)	65.00	70.00	75.00

Recommendation

- 1.5.1 That the new pricing model for Schoolchildren Educational workshops at Tonbridge Castle be approved as set out at paragraph 1.5 above.

1.6 Weddings

Number of weddings 2017/18

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Chamber		1	3		2	3	1		1				11
Great Hall				2		2			1				5

Revenue from Weddings 2017/18 (Including deposits (£100))

Fees	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Chamber	2080	1180		740	1480	740		1890					8110
Great Hall			1150	2300			100	100					3650

Revenue from Weddings 2016/17 (Including deposits (£100))

Fees	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Chamber	1500	1500	1200	400	3700	0	460	300	0	940	0	1300	11300
Great Hall	0	200	1100	1100	100	100	200						2800

Cost of hiring venue for ceremonies - current fee model agreed at the Finance, innovation and property advisory board 04.01.2017.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Weddings			
• Chamber	800	840	900
• Gatehouse	1200	1250	1300
Renewal of Vows/Baby Naming			
• Chamber	560	600	600
• Gatehouse	900	900	900

- 1.6.1 There are no current bookings for any renewal of Vows or baby naming.

- 1.6.2 It is proposed that we adopt a new pricing model to reflect the competitive market we are operating in. A table showing comparative costs at other wedding venues is attached as **Annex 1**.

Proposed new fee model - Chamber

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Weddings -			
Monday - Thursday	800	840	880
Friday	840	880	920
Saturday	900	940	980
Sunday	900	940	980
Renewal of Vows/Baby Naming -			
Monday - Thursday	300	315	330
Friday	400	420	440
Saturday	500	525	550
Sunday	500	525	550

Proposed new fee model - Gatehouse

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Weddings -			
Monday - Thursday	1000	1050	1075
Friday	1200	1250	1300
Saturday	1300	1350	1400
Sunday	1300	1350	1400
Renewal of Vows/Baby Naming -			

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Monday - Thursday	600	630	660
Friday	600	630	660
Saturday	700	735	770
Sunday	700	735	770

A particular challenge relating to weddings is the current inability to offer a discount to prospective bookers in appropriate circumstances. It is therefore proposed that authority be delegated to the Director of Central Services to depart from the fixed fee structure above where he considers that it is in the financial interests of the Council to do so in a particular case.

Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer to have the ability to discount (Partners / last minute bookings etc.)

Recommendations

1.6.3 (a) That the new pricing model for weddings at Tonbridge Castle be approved as set out at paragraph 1.6.2 above.

(b) That authority be delegated to the Director of Central Services to depart from the fixed fee structure set out at paragraph 1.6.2 above where he considers that it is in the financial interests of the Council to do so in a particular case

1.6.4 Wedding Directory

1.6.5 This directory will enable partners to advertise their service associated with a Wedding.

1.6.6 The cost for each partner to feature on this register will be £100 with a renewal fee for the second year of £50

	2018/19
Wedding Directory	
Cost to register	£100
Cost of renewal	£50

Recommendation

1.6.7 That the new pricing model for entries into the Wedding Directory at Tonbridge Castle be approved as set out at paragraph 1.6.6 above.

1.7 Council Chamber bookings – Concessionary Users

- 1.7.1 There are currently 30 Concessionary Users who can book the Council Chamber at Tonbridge Castle at a discount, payment ranges from between 16.76 – 66.67 % of fixed rate. The current booking fees are shown at 1.8.2.
- 1.7.2 The current designated concessionary users are set out at **Annex 2.:** Members are invited to review the list of concessionary users.
- 1.7.3 Out of the 30 Concessionary Users only 8 have booked the Chamber during 2017/18 so far this year.
- 1.7.4 These bookings have generated a total revenue of £965.

Recommendations

- 1.7.5 **Members are invited to review the list of concessionary users and confirm the rate of discount to be given to any booking by an approved concessionary user.**

1.8 Council Chamber bookings – other Users

- 1.8.1 The other users fall into the following categories:

- Tonbridge organisations which hold regular meetings in the evening for which there has been no charge.
- User Panels, such as Haysden Country Park for which there has been no charge.
- Organisations that hold events on the Castle Lawn, where the Chamber has been made available to them during the event at no additional charge (e.g. The Tonbridge Lions – Tonbridge Carnival; Illyria).
- Paying users, such as Election Services; Private family functions etc.

1.8.2 Current Model

Hire Charge	Current 2016/17 £	Current 2017/18 £	Current Concessionary Rate 2016/17 £	Current Concessionary Rate 2017/18 £

First 3 hours	100.00	100.00	26.00	30.00
Plus each additional hour or part hour	40.00	40.00	9.00	10.00
Caretaking per hour	30.00	30.00	18.00	20.00
Cleaning charge *1	45.00	45.00	35.00	35.00
Daily rate	200.00	200.00	50.00	75.00
Weekly rate	895.00	895.00	110.00	150.00

1.8.3 Proposed new model - Current fee model agreed at the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board 04.01.2017.

	Fixed Price		Concessionary	
Hire Charge	Current 2017/18 £	Current 2018/19 £	Current Concessionary Rate 2017/18 £	Proposed Concessionary Rate 2018/19 £
Monday – Friday – AM (09:00 – 13:00)		100.00		35.00
Monday – Friday – PM (14:00 – 17:00)		100.00		35.00
Monday – Friday – PM (18:00 – 21:00) NB: outside normal caretaker hours		100.00 (plus caretaker costs)		35.00 (plus caretaker costs)
Saturday – AM or PM (09:00 – 13:00) (14:00 – 17:00)		100.00		35.00
Saturday (18:00 – 23:00) NB: outside normal caretaker hours		200.00 (plus caretaker costs)		200.00 (plus caretaker costs)
Sunday – 10:00 – 16:00		120.00		120.00

Cleaning charge *1	45.00	45.00	45.00	45.00
Weekly rate Monday - Friday		Contact Castle for pricing		Members direction sought
Weekly rate Saturday - Friday		Contact Castle for pricing		Members direction sought

- 1.8.4 It is proposed to investigate whether it is possible to save or reduce the set £150 (minimum 5 hours rate) it currently costs from our current Caretaker/security provider to lock up the Castle after functions.

Recommendation

- 1.8.5 That the new pricing model for hiring out the Council Chamber at Tonbridge Castle be approved** as set out at paragraph 1.8.3 above

1.9 Great Hall Banquet Charges

- 1.9.1 The Great Hall is a great asset for Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and is currently used to generate revenue through weddings.
- 1.9.2 Earlier this Summer we held a test event to understand the practicalities of holding a sit down dinner in the Great Hall. This was run by the Tonbridge Old Fire Station and proved to be a huge success.



- 1.9.3 Given the success of the above event, we would now like to propose to hire out the Great Hall under strict supervision to a chosen partner(s) for a series of sit down meals.
- 1.9.4 It is envisaged that these events for the season for 2018/19 would not be set at a fixed fee, however would be on a shared profit basis.

Recommendation

- 1.9.5 **That the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer be authorised to agree Gate House fee charges for special events.**

1.10 Tourist Information Centre (TIC) Shop

1.11 Tic Shop revenue

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	699	620	677	575	841	573	472	338	320	381	530	478	6502
Cum	699	1319	1996	2571	3412	3985	4457	4795	5115	5496	6026	6504	
2017/18	604	824	548	650	704	608	533	461					
Cum	604	1428	1976	2626	3330	3938	4471	4932					
= / - Year on Year	-95	109	-20	55	-82	-47	14	137					

1.12 TIC Shop revenue Walk Cards*

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2016/17	6	17	6	0	2	10	3	0	2	0	0	7	
2017/18	2	2	0	4	13	7	10	6					

*Walk cards are a folder containing 15 cards of individual local walks that people can follow.

1.13 Filming at the Castle

- 1.13.1 The Castle offers a great opportunity for film companies to film adverts, documentaries and use the Castle as a back drop for different media projects.

However, at the moment there is no fee structure for such events, so it is proposed that authority be granted to the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer to negotiate and agree fees with parties wishing to use the Castle for filming purposes.

Recommendation

- 1.13.2 That authority be delegated to the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer** to negotiate and agree fees with parties wishing to use the Castle for filming purposes

1.14 Legal Implications

- 1.14.1 None

1.15 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.15.1 These proposals are in accordance with the guidance in the Council's budget strategy.
- 1.15.2 Feedback from customers identifies that the charging regime provides value for money for casual visitors as well as group visits.

1.16 Risk Assessment

- 1.16.1 There is a risk that excessive increases in charges could deter visitors and lead to a fall in overall income.

1.17 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.17.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.18 Policy Considerations

- 1.18.1 Community
- 1.18.2 Young People

1.19 Recommendations

- 1.19.1 Recommendations are laid out within the report.

Background papers:

contact: Anthony Garnett

Nil

Adrian Stanfield

Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer

Annex 1

Wedding venues – comparisons with Tonbridge Castle

Venue	Type	Time hours	Cost	Registry Office / Fees	No Guests allowed	2018	2019	2020	2021	Discount available
Tonbridge Castle Chamber	historic building	2	£900	Direct to KCC	> 80	£840	£900			
Tonbridge Castle Great Hall	historic building	2	£1,300	Direct to KCC	> 32	£1,250	£1,300			
Chiddingstone Castle	historic building	3/4	£2,495	Direct to KCC	> 120	£2,495				Discount Available Thursday 30% Friday 20% as well as during 'Off Season'
Penshurst Place Fri-Sun	historic building	3	£1,995	Direct to KCC	> 200	£1,995	£2,250			
Penshurst Place Mon-Thurs	historic building	3	£1,500	Direct to KCC	> 200	£1,500	£1,750			
Bradbourne House E.Malling	historic building	1	£3,360							£2000 Out Season Nov-Mar
The Knowle	historic building	1								
Nettlestead Place Maidstone	historic building	2	£1,600	Direct to KCC	>120	£1,600				November-February ONLY for Just Ceremony
Spa Hotel Tunbridge Wells	Hotel	2	£1,200	Direct to KCC	> 45	£1,200				Mon-Fri £600 plus £15 per head compulsory charge for Drink or Canopy
Mansion House TW Regency	Registry Office	1	£667		> 80	£667	£667	£667	£667	Monday-Friday £553
Mansion House TW Wells Room	Registry Office	1	£327		> 16	£327	£327	£327	£327	Monday-Friday £215
Archbishops Maidstone Undercroft Room	Registry Office	1	£440		> 40	£440	£440	£440	£440	Monday-Friday £327
Maidstone The Great Hall	Registry Office	1	£1,071		> 100	£1,071	£1,071	£1,071	£1,071	Monday-Friday £801
Maidstone Solar Room	Registry Office	1	£667		> 50	£667	£667	£667	£667	Monday-Friday £553
Bexley Sir John Boyd's Room	Registry Office	1	£667		> 45	£667	£667	£667	£667	Monday-Friday £553
Dartford Anne of Cleves	Registry Office	1	£440		> 30	£440	£440	£440	£440	Monday-Friday £327
Bexley The Library & Dining Room	Registry Office	1	£1,071		> 65	£1,071	£1,071	£1,071	£1,071	Monday-Friday £801
Bexley The Salon	Registry Office	1	£667		> 45	£667	£667	£667	£667	Monday-Friday £553
Dartford Lord Irvine Suite	Registry Office	1	£667		>100	£667	£667	£667	£667	Monday-Friday £553

Annex 2

The current designated concessionary users are:

Bridge Trust

Citizens Advice Bureau

Guide Dogs for the Blind

Home Start West Kent

KCC Walking Bus

Lyons Commuters Tonbridge

Mencap

Police

Platonic Arts now 4 arts

Relate

Royal British Legion –Tonbridge Branch

Slade Residents Association

Small Businesses Federation

Tonbridge Adult Education Centre

Tonbridge Access Group

Tonbridge Allotments and Garden Association

Tonbridge Arts Group

Tonbridge Camera Group

Tonbridge Creative Art Group

Tonbridge Civic Society

Tonbridge Historical Society

Tonbridge Memorial Gardens

Tonbridge Model Engineering Society

Tonbridge Sports Association

Tonbridge Lions Club

Tonbridge Town Lands & Richard Mylls Charity

Voluntary Action within Kent –VAWK and West Kent Chamber of Commerce & Industries

West Kent Community Health Forum

West Kent Victim Support.