



# LEICESTER DIOCESAN REGISTRY

Boundary House, 91 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6HR

020 7796 1007 [registry@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:registry@stoneking.co.uk)

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## COMMON LICENCES PROCEDURE DURING COVID-19 CHURCH CLOSURE

### Surrogates

We are pleased to announce the formal appointment on 28 April 2020 of the following as Surrogates for the granting of Common Licences in the Diocese of Leicester:

- Peter Hooper
- Adrian Jones
- Gillian Pinnington
- Mark Poskitt

Including the Registrar and his Assistant, this now brings the number of persons available to grant Common Licences in the Diocese to six, which we hope will be sufficient to cover the anticipated increased volume of applications once church weddings are once more permitted. We are very grateful to our new Surrogates for taking on the role – thank you!

### Surrogate role

The appointment means that as Surrogates Peter, Adrian, Gill and Mark can take the oath from an applicant for a Common Licence.

Taking the oath will involve a face to face meeting (with appropriate social distancing measures) with the half of the couple who is making the oath. In the oath, that person declares the truth of various details given in the Licence application e.g. identification, marital status, qualification for marrying in the parish.

The taking of the oath triggers the grant of the Licence.

### Common Licence Applications

Please note that **all Common Licence applications will continue to be dealt with centrally by the Registry.**

**Please do not approach the Surrogates directly for application forms or to arrange appointments for couples but continue to contact the Registry in all instances by emailing [registry@stoneking.co.uk](mailto:registry@stoneking.co.uk)**

Appointments between Surrogates and couples will be arranged by the Registry following an assessment of couples' qualification for a Common Licence and receipt of a correctly completed application form, fee and acceptable supporting documentation.

If couples are marrying in Leicester but live in a location from which it may be easier to meet with the Registrar or his Assistant in London for the grant of the Licence, then this option will be available to couples.

### **Common Licence Fee**

The fee for a Common Licence is £50 until 1 August 2020, when it will be reviewed. This fee is intended to be commensurate to the fee for banns whilst public worship is suspended. Therefore, if the suspension continues beyond 1 August, it is likely that the fee will remain at that level.

Currently, the reduced fee applies to all Common Licence applications received during the period to 1 August, even if a couple would not have been able to marry by banns (e.g. because they are British citizens living outside of England). This will be reviewed in August.

### **Common Licence validity**

A Common Licence lasts for 3 months from grant and applies only to the couple marrying in the particular church stated on their application form.

The Licence cannot be transferred to enable a couple to marry in another church, parish or Diocese.

### **Quarterly returns**

The Registrar has received confirmation from the County Superintendent Registrar for Leicestershire Registration Service that all quarterly returns only need to be submitted as soon as clergy can gain access to their buildings.

The General Register Office are aware of this issue and understand that the returns for March and June will be delayed.

**Lee Coley, Registrar**

**Frances Reynolds, Registry Assistant**

**May 2020**