

KENT CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
ALTERNATIVE VENUES BRIEFING NOTE

Following our last Committee Meeting I have been looking at alternative venues. There is a venue that looks particularly suitable at Aylesford, just outside Maidstone and a stone's throw from the M20. There is a website for the Community Hall at <https://avcc-hallhire.co.uk>

There are 3 spaces available. The Main Hall looks to be well suited to our needs and has a proper kitchen attached. It is a bright and airy space with a stage area than could accommodate further tables if required and otherwise provide a commanding point for the TD. The Hall does not provide catering but recommend a local provider for sandwich/buffet style catering. Not sure what we do at present but I would think there is some scope for approaching a caterer to provide a hot food service and we might be able to command a 'licence fee' for doing so. Caterer then supplies the goodies and keep the revenue to make a profit.

There are two further spaces, The Madge Jackson Hall and the Kings Studio. I have not seen these spaces but understand that they adjoin each other separated by a kitchen (more of a light refreshments kitchen than full catering).

Hire charge includes the provision of tables and chairs but the tables are not suitable for us (6x3ft or 4x2.5ft). We would need to provide our own tables, I think. Even if we were to put the smaller tables together, they would not have enough of them for our needs. I think we would need to round up tables from our various clubs, which means someone has to bring them and take them back again. Ditto table cloths and bidding boxes.

There is a projector and screen available for results/info display from our own computers. This facility is charged as an extra @ £30. If we provide our own PJ I think the screen will probably be provided as a goodwill but do not hold me to it. Alternative is we provide our own flatscreen display.

There is ample free car parking but it is shared with the adjacent football club and users of the adjacent recreation ground. Fortunately there is paid for overflow parking in a council carpark over the road.

So far as availability is concerned, Saturdays are a better bet than Sundays. There is a regular Sunday booking for the Main Hall from 9.00am to 1.00pm although this activity (children's exercise classes) may be struggling post covid. There is a church group that uses the Madge Jackson Hall on Sundays 10.30am to 11.30am. We can probably work around

that but not the children's exercise classes – unless they can be persuaded to use the Kings Studio on the odd Sunday we might want to book something. Saturdays are pretty free but the football club tends to play Saturday afternoons. That might cause a parking issue albeit timings suggest the issue will be no parking for the football fans rather than no parking for our folks.

Location looks to be ideal given its proximity to the M20 for east and west kent travellers but public transport not so great for folks who want to travel by train or bus compared to TWBC. That said there is a station at Aylesford within a comfortable walking distance.

Have not asked about the bar facilities so not sure what happens about competition booze-ups – if any.

Charges as per website

Main Hall £29 per hour on a Saturday and £24 per hour on a Sunday. If we need a smaller space, each of the other two spaces are charged at £19 per hour on a Saturday and £18 per hour in a Sunday. Cost includes table chairs and catering facilities.

Charles Scott
6 September 2022