



COVID-19 Pandemic Hospitality Plan

July 2021 update

Cumberland Lodge is renowned as an inspiring place for debate and dialogue. We are fully Covid-secure, with 'We're Good to Go' industry accreditation from VisitEngland.

We have been gradually reopening our facilities to visiting groups as lockdown restrictions have eased in England, whilst maintaining a considered and vigilant approach to the COVID-19 pandemic. From Monday 19 July 2021, we will be able to welcome larger groups once again, but we are working hard to ensure that staff and guests feel safe and comfortable, and mindful that everyone's attitude towards the easing of restrictions is different.

With this in mind, we will be retaining many of the enhanced policies and procedures we put in place in response to the pandemic, in the coming months, whilst keeping them under constant review.

Our approach is informed by the risk assessment completed in consultation with our Health and Safety advisory service providers, Ellis Whittam. This risk assessment, which is available on request, is regularly reviewed by our senior managers and confirmed against any new direction and guidance from the UK Government and the NHS, and any change in the recognised COVID-19 threat level.

While we were closed

During periods when we have been closed to guests, our Housekeeping team has focused on the regular cleaning of hard surfaces, contact points and high-traffic areas, and we have paid particular attention to our carpets, in both public areas and guest bedrooms.

Our in-house Maintenance team has ensured the upkeep and routine health and safety management of the premises but has also redecorated and refurbished many of our bedrooms and bathrooms, to bring all rooms up to a common high standard. High-use back-of-house areas that we rarely have time to decorate when busy, have been improved, and external doors and window frames repainted.

Hand hygiene, face coverings and social distancing

While national legislation on the mandatory wearing of face coverings in the house no longer applies, with effect from Monday 19 July 2021, our staff (other than those who are medically exempt) are still asked to wear face coverings in all public areas and whilst moving

around the Lodge, to maintain rigorous hand sanitising, and to take Lateral Flow Tests twice weekly.

We encourage our guests to consider wearing face coverings whilst indoors as well, particularly when two or more visiting groups are sharing the house, or when in busy areas such as entrance ways, the Bar or at dining service points.

Regular handwashing remains one of the most important preventative measures for the spread of COVID-19, and we have highlighted this with signage and facilities throughout the building, both in offices and public spaces. We continue to encourage guests to return to their rooms to use their own en-suite facilities, to reduce reliance on shared washrooms, and to open windows and ventilate meeting rooms whenever possible.

Hand sanitising points are available at all entrances/exits, main public areas and dining rooms, as a supplement to encouraging staff and guests to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water. The Government's guidance on proper hand hygiene (both washing and sanitising) is also displayed prominently.

The requirement to maintain social distancing of at least 1 metre no longer applies, with effect from Monday 19 July 2021, but visiting groups still have the option of requiring social distancing during their stay and requesting room layouts that encourage social distancing. We ask all our staff and guests to be respectful of other people's entitlement to personal space, and to avoid congregating in groups where possible.

Responsibilities and expectations

Pre-arrival

- Guests must refrain from travelling to Cumberland Lodge if they have any of the recognised symptoms of COVID-19
- Guests must refrain from travelling to Cumberland Lodge if they are required to self-isolate at home due to prior exposure to someone with COVID-19
- We will minimise use of hard-copy contracts and confirmation letters, using email and online booking procedures wherever possible
- We will communicate clearly with guests, before arrival, our standards and expectation, and our understanding of guests' different needs and expectations
- We do not require Lateral Flow Testing, but we *do* encourage all guests to carry out their own test at home, prior to arriving, and to avoid travelling and inform their group leader if they receive a positive result
- Guests are encouraged to wear face coverings in public areas of the house, particularly in areas where people congregate, and to be respectful of people's personal space and different attitudes to the current threat of COVID-19
- Staff are encouraged to wear face coverings at all times, whilst in public and shared areas of the Lodge, and to take Lateral Flow Tests twice a week

Arrival and check-in

- **Car travel and parking:** Because of our location in the middle of Windsor Great Park, most of our guests arrive by private car and for the timebeing we continue to encourage this for public health reasons. We have plentiful car parking space allowing good separation between guests.

- **Use of public transport:** For guests who must use public transport, we strongly recommend following the Government’s advice at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers> and note that, at present, Government guidance is to continue wearing face coverings in crowded places and face coverings continue to be mandatory on the London public transport network, beyond 19 July 2021.
- To reach us from Windsor or Egham stations, we recommend booking a taxi with Windsor Cars, who know us well. They have their own COVID-19 safety policy, which is available on their website at <https://www.windsorcars.com>
- **Reception:** Our reception desk is fitted with a Perspex screen, for the added safety of staff and guests, but the welcome is as friendly as ever
- **Check-in:** For guests staying overnight, key cards are sanitised and placed in individual envelopes, marked with guests’ names, and laid out in our spacious Tapestry Hall for guests to collect one-by-one or in small groups. Guests are still encouraged to wear face coverings in shared areas of the Lodge, unless medically exempt.
- **Temperature screening:** For the timebeing, we are continuing to check the temperature of guests on arrival and ask anyone whose temperature is over 37.8°C to wait outside for 15 minutes before being checked again. If the temperature remains over this threshold for a fever, we regret that entry to the Lodge will be refused. Please contact our Meetings & Events team if you have any concerns about this policy.
- **Contact tracing:** In line with Government advice (and pending any further updates), we will maintain lists of everyone who visits, either as a day delegate or overnight guest, in order to assist with Track and Trace requirements. We will also encourage guests to scan the QR code for the NHS Track and Trace app at Reception, daily.

Accommodation

Our enhanced cleaning schedules remain in place. Our en-suite bedrooms are available on a single or shared-occupancy (twin or double) basis but we ask that allocated room occupancy remains the same throughout a group’s stay, wherever possible. In order to minimise staff contact, rooms will only be serviced between guest stays, with special emphasis on cleaning toilets, hard surfaces and multi-use items such as kettles.

Guests who are staying multiple nights and require a change of towels, for example, should ask at Reception. In this case, fresh towels will be provided, and guests asked to place used ones in hamper collection points. In addition to minimising contact, this reduced room service enables housekeeping staff to place additional emphasis on keeping common areas and hard surfaces clean.

Our full cleaning protocols are available to view, on request.

Maintenance

To further minimise staff contact, any maintenance needs identified by guests or housekeeping staff will only be addressed after rooms have been vacated, unless urgent, in which case they will be addressed as soon as possible but while guests are away from their

rooms. If emergency maintenance work requires the involvement of external contractors, the guests will be moved to alternative rooms before work is carried out.

Meeting spaces

The entrance doors to our conference facilities in The Mews and Groom's House are keycard-operated and open and close automatically, which helps to avoid shared touch-points. Our meeting room configurations can also be adjusted, to meet the needs of different groups for social distancing. We encourage guests to leave doors and windows open, as appropriate, to maximise ventilation in shared spaces.

In all cases, guests' requirements and our ability to meet them will be discussed in full, before arrival. We are fortunate in having a large amount of private open space available to us, and we encourage guests to make the most of these (to hold break-out sessions outside, for example), further lowering transmission risk.

In addition:

- All audio-visual equipment is set up to guests' requirements and fully sanitised before arrival. Antibacterial wipes are provided for guests' use throughout their stay and all equipment will be re-sanitised overnight
- Where flipcharts and notepads are provided, they are single-use and should be taken away by delegates or disposed of at the end of the event. All our meeting spaces either have fixed white/smart boards, or can have portable boards provided, and we encourage the use of these rather than flipcharts. Screens, marker-pens etc. are fully sanitised between bookings
- Sanitising wipes are provided, beside the communal water and coffee machines
- For the timebeing, we are not providing complimentary sweets in meeting rooms or at Reception
- Sanitiser gel is provided in every room, and guests are encouraged to use it often

Dining and catering

Catering is recognised as a 'pinch-point' for social gathering, and special attention has been paid to devising catering plans that minimise this. Guests are still encouraged to wear face coverings (unless medically exempt) whilst in our dining rooms, apart from when seated at the dining tables. Tray service is an option for dining service, for our larger visiting groups, with effect from 19 July 2021, but we encourage guests to take a seat at tables and come to the service area one table at a time, for the timebeing. Table-service is also available for smaller groups.

In addition to our normal hygiene procedures, we encourage guests to maintain good hand hygiene, by washing hands before entering our dining rooms – preferably by using the en-suite facilities in their own rooms, if staying overnight, to minimise the use of shared facilities – or using the hand sanitising stations in dining areas.

We are maximising the use of our outdoor dining spaces during the warmer weather, and we encourage their use where possible. We continue to give special attention to the sanitisation of tables and chairs, after use, and we are providing individual cutlery and napkins for guests at our dining tables, and condiments in individual sachets on request.

Breakfast: Breakfast is served from the hot and cold counters, with an offering of both cooked and continental options.

Lunch: Lunch is either served pre-plated at the dining tables, or (with effect from 19 July 2021) available to collect with trays from the service area in the dining rooms, according to groups' requirements. For the time being, we are not offering the famed Cumberland Lodge buffet, but we hope that, as the situation improves and when the time is right, we will be able to reintroduce this, with more 'pre-packaged' options and staff-assisted service to avoid guests' shared use of utensils.

Dinner: Dinner is either served pre-plated at the dining tables, or (with effect from 19 July 2021) available to collect with trays from the service area in the dining rooms, according to groups' requirements.

Bar: The Bar is reopening with effect from 19 July 2021, but guests are encouraged to avoid gathering around this area before or after purchasing drinks or snacks. We continue to encourage contactless payment where possible, rather than cash transactions.

Contractors

All contractors are required, on arrival, to report to Colin Baker, the Buildings Manager, to be briefed on our site Health and Safety Policies - which now includes our COVID-19 risk mitigation measures, to which they will be required to adhere.

Behind the scenes

Offices and 'back-of-house' cleaning: Cleaning regimes have been reviewed by the Hospitality Director and adjusted to ensure an emphasis on cleaning hard surfaces and common areas (hallways, toilets etc.). Night staff are focusing their cleaning time on hard surfaces, contact points and high-traffic areas, in both offices and public areas.

Kitchen staff: Kitchen staff are encouraged to work side-by-side rather than face-to-face, and to maintain social distancing where possible, in our kitchens. Normal environmental health and hygiene standards are being strictly maintained.

Staff lunches and drinks room: Staff are encouraged to continue observing social distancing of 1m+ in shared areas of the Lodge, wherever possible. For example, no more than three people are expected to be in the staff refreshments room at any time, and the staff dining room has been re-arranged to encourage at least 1.5–2m spacing between seats. Office staff are encouraged to take their meals at their desks and to ventilate shared work spaces.

Summary

As we adjust to the easing of Government restrictions, we realise that the guest experience will be a bit different to normal. We want our guests to feel safe and comfortable, confident that we are continuing to take appropriate steps in response to ongoing risks of transmission.

The Risk Assessment that accompanies this plan has been prepared in consultation with Ellis Whittam, our health and safety advisors, and it is regularly reviewed and adjusted in the light of any changing Government policy and guidance. We welcome your feedback on the measures we have put in place and will gladly discuss with you any changes or additional measures you feel are necessary.

We ask you to impress on your delegates the need to comply with *all* health and safety requirements, and to be mindful of people's concerns about COVID-19 and people's differing needs for personal space.

It remains crucial that nobody with symptoms of COVID-19 should attend events at Cumberland Lodge, and any guest who develops symptoms whilst staying with us must alert us immediately, self-isolate and follow any advice we receive from Public Health England.

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Further documents, including Risk Assessment and Cleaning Schedules can be found at: <https://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk/venue-hire/covid-secure-events>