



## FAQs

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

#### **When do I start planning my wedding with a Coordinator at Ashridge House?**

You will be assigned your dedicated co-ordinator 6 months prior to your big day, although your Wedding sales contact (or anyone else in the Events Team) will be able to help with any questions you may have in the meantime. Please refer to your congratulations pack for helpful tips and guidance for planning.

#### **What is the role of my Wedding Coordinator?**

At Ashridge House, the role of the Wedding coordinator is to help you plan all the venue aspects of your big day. They will be with you from 6 months prior and will ensure your big day is managed and planned to the highest standard. They are there to help with your timeline, arranging your menu tasting, invoicing, and co-ordination on the day of your wedding, as well as general advice and support throughout your planning journey. Please note that your co-ordinator is there to manage all elements being delivered by Ashridge House, if you have any entertainment aspects or external suppliers that require co-ordination, we would suggest hiring a planner or have a member of your Wedding party to oversee these arrangements. Please refer to our Wedding planners document.

#### **How many wedding meetings do we have?**

It is for you and your co-ordinator to decide how many meetings you would like to schedule but please see below an idea:

- 1 x initial introduction and planning meeting in person or via zoom (6 months before)
- Regular email and phone calls between this time (3-6 months before)
- 1 x scheduled meeting in person or via zoom post menu tasting (3 months before)
- 1 x 4 weeks before the wedding
- 1 x final meeting in person or zoom 1-2 weeks before

### YOUR WEDDING DAY

#### **How can I book my civil ceremony?**

You will need to book this with the Hemel Hempstead Registrars, we are not able to book this for you. Please ensure this is done as soon as possible to ensure they have your date and time. Please note that the registrars do have their own fees. Please email them on [Hemelhempstead.registrars@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Hemelhempstead.registrars@hertfordshire.gov.uk).

#### **Where can I have my civil ceremony?**

The most popular location is our grand staircase! Which can accommodate up to 180 people, 150 seated on the ground floor at the bottom of the stairs and the additional 30 on the mezzanine standing, overlooking the staircase. We are licensed for outside ceremonies, providing you with a beautiful outside backdrop.



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### **Can we have a wedding ceremony rehearsal?**

Yes of course, we can arrange a date that is convenient for you. We normally advise this takes place 1- 2 weeks before your wedding, and we encourage that any members of the wedding party that are involved in the ceremony are present. Please do note that this does depend on our availability.

### **Can we get married in the chapel onsite?**

You cannot legally get married in the Chapel, but you may wish to have a blessing. In the past, couples have either had their civil ceremony at Ashridge, followed by a blessing or are legally married before the day itself.

The Chapel can accommodate a maximum of 100 guests, 75 seated in the pews and the additional 25 on chivari chairs at the back.

Please note that only Christian blessings are permitted in the Chapel, this includes Roman catholic, Greek orthodox and Anglian blessings.

Please note that Chapel blessings are very limited and subject to availability.

### **How to book the chapel:**

It is an additional hire fee from Ashridge of £600.00 to have a blessing in the Chapel as well as a compulsory donation to the local parish, which is stipulated by the Chaplin

- Once you have confirmed your blessing with the Chaplain, please then let Ashridge know and they can add the fee onto your contract
- If you have an alternative service leader that you would like to lead the blessing, this is something that can be discussed and approved by the Chaplin and offered at a reduced fee.
- If you have an alternative organist that you would like to play during the blessing, this is something that can be discussed and approved by the Chapel Organist with no charge.
- Please note, the Vicar has strict décor and photography/videography rules, please refer to the Chapel rules for more information.

### **Can I have a civil ceremony and blessing on the same day?**

Yes, please note that you must have the ceremony first and then the blessing, in order to bless the ceremony. The registrars will not conduct a ceremony if there is any religious aspect shown, including music.

### **Do you have more than one wedding in the House on the same day?**

There will not be more than one wedding taking place in the Main House at one time, and you have exclusive use of the contracted spaces on the day. Ashridge House is a multipurpose venue which includes our second wedding venue Duke's Yard, which is not in view and not directly attached to the Main House, however there may be other events happening in these spaces or in other parts of the grounds.

### **Do we have to use your preferred suppliers?**

To preserve the beauty and heritage of our historic venue, we ask all couples to choose suppliers from our carefully chosen recommended supplier list for following categories; Florists, Photographers, Videographers, Production, Musicians, DJs, Music Agency's & Fireworks. We highly recommend choosing your remaining suppliers from our trusted list, these suppliers have been fully vetted and have experience working at the House. Should you wish to use a supplier that isn't on the list, this is by prior approval only. They must undergo a vetting process to ensure compliance, including checks for insurance. A vetting fee of £250 per supplier will apply. Please consult your Wedding Co-ordinator as early as possible.



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### **Can I use a Wedding planner?**

We understand that balancing the planning of your special day with daily life can be challenging. If you're thinking about hiring a wedding planner, our team is here to help with recommendations. We can share with you our three top recommended Wedding planners, who will make your life easier and is well-acquainted with the Ashridge venue, which is especially important since it's a Grade I listed building.

### **Is there a room for both of us to get ready in, on the morning of the wedding?**

Yes, we include two dressing rooms in the House for the couple as part of our wedding package. Additional rooms can be booked if required, please refer to our additional enhancements.

### **Where can I store my items and who will put these in place on the day?**

A storage room is made available the day before from 18:00 until noon the day after the Wedding. This room is used to house items such as signs, place cards, favours etc. We do ask that no clothing or dresses are stored in this room.

Your wedding co-ordinator will be in charge of placing these items on the day, so please ensure that everything is labelled, and an itinerary list is provided.

Ashridge House cannot be held responsible for any items lost or damaged that were placed in this room. However we do provide you with a safe to put your treasured belongings in. Please ensure that yourself or a member of the Bridal party remove the items by the end of the night.

### **When can I bring my cake up to Ashridge?**

Please ensure this is delivered no earlier than the morning of your Wedding. We ask that your cake supplier positions your cake on the cutting table as this is not something Ashridge House takes responsibility for. If you have your cake cutting on the staircase and are also having a ceremony there, then your cake will need to be delivered and set up in the afternoon.

### **Do you charge for cake cutting?**

We do not charge for this service, it is complimentary! We will take the cake away after the cake cutting, cut it into portions and serve when required.

Please do let your coordinator know if any of your cake or decorations need to be saved.

### **Do you have speakers for the ceremony music if we do not have live music?**

Speakers can be provided if you are not having live music for the ceremony, but we ask that you either hire someone or a member of your wedding party is in charge of controlling the music on the day. This is not the responsibility of your co-ordinator as they will be working on the ceremony. This is a Bluetooth speaker system, so very easily operated from the guests seat.

### **Do you have speakers and a microphone for during the Wedding breakfast?**

Yes, we have Bluetooth speakers and hand held microphones that can be used for your wedding.

### **Can we play music outside?**

Yes, we permit background music outside. On the Italian Terrace and South Terrace, we allow acoustic music only. Due to consideration for our neighbours, amplified or electric music is not permitted. However, if needed, such performances can take place on the South Terrace.

### **Can we extend our evening celebrations past midnight?**

Yes, the bar and music can be extended from midnight till 1am for £500.

**Can we have confetti?**

Yes, but this must be handheld large biodegradable confetti (not red) and only inside please. We recommend a guard of honour confetti shot following your ceremony.

**Can we have open flames?**

We allow LED candles only, as the venue is a Grade I listed building and grounds are Grade II\* listed, we do not permit any open flames.

Religious ceremonial fire pits are permitted in certain areas of the grounds. You must have prior approval from Ashridge House, and if approved these have to be monitored at all times by the supplier.

**Is the venue wheelchair accessible?**

Yes, we have ramps at our main reception into the Main Hall. All other rooms within the ground floor level of the House have wheelchair accessible routes. We also have an accessible toilet.

**Are there are any restrictions?**

Our recommended suppliers will be aware of our restrictions, however, please note that we are a Grade I listed building, so we cannot have anything attached to the walls or floor. We do not permit the use of smoke, vape, haze, confetti canons, helium balloons, dry ice, haze machine, smoke machine, confetti cannons or indoor sparklers, inside and outside the venue. The Chapel has specific décor restrictions, please refer to the Chapel guide for these.

Please contact our team who will go through our restrictions with you.

**Can we have alcoholic favours?**

If this is your favour of choice, then one miniature bottle is permitted per adult and they can be no larger than 70ml.

**Can we have Fireworks?**

Yes, the displays take place on the South Lawn with guests viewing from the terrace. We work with two firework suppliers who can be found on our supplier list. Please note that Fireworks are only permitted until 09:55 and during November and December we do not permit fireworks in the garden due to health and safety reasons for our Christmas light trail in the gardens.

**Can we have outdoor sparklers?**

The use of handheld sparklers within the grounds of Ashridge House are permitted however it is entirely at your own risk, and must be supervised by your sparkler provider. During periods of dry weather, permission to use sparklers may be withdrawn to maintain the safety of Ashridge House and gardens.

You must be over 6 meters away from any building before lighting a sparkler, sparklers should not be given to children under 5 years of age. Everyone handling sparklers must wears gloves and sparklers should be held arm's length while being lit. Don't wave sparklers about close to other people and when the sparklers have finished place them in the bucket of sand provided.

**Are dogs allowed?**

We allow dogs to attend the ceremony and drinks reception, if accompanied by a chaperone and on a lead at all times. Please note no animals are permitted in the Chapel unless they are service animals.



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#### **What size are the tables used on the day?**

Our round tables are 6ft and seat 10 people on each.

Our trestle tables are 4ft in length and 2.63ft in width.

Our oval top table can accommodate up to 10 people and is 10.5ft in length and 4ft in width.

#### **Can I supply charger plates?**

To bring your vision to life, we want to make sure the charger plates you choose complement our wedding plates. If you're considering hiring plates, please inform your coordinator.

At Ashridge, we take pride in presenting beautifully plated dishes, but not all hire plates are suitable or large enough for the selected dishes. Therefore, we request that you advise in advance and bring two sets of your chosen starter, main, and dessert plates to your menu tasting. This way, we can serve the dishes on them, allowing you to see how they will look on your special day.

#### **Do you have a dancefloor and what size is it?**

We include a wooden dancefloor complimentary, which has been carefully chosen to match the antique wooden panelling in the reception room. It is 15ft by 15ft.

## **FOOD & DRINK**

#### **Your Wedding breakfast menu**

At Ashridge House we pride ourselves on crafting your Wedding Breakfast fresh on the day of your celebration. Our menus are thoughtfully designed around seasonal ingredients sourced from trusted local suppliers. This approach allows us to deliver the high-quality dishes that our couples and their guests love, all in a more sustainable way.

We are delighted to offer your guests a choice from the following menu options. We kindly ask for a pre-order one month before your special day:

**Starters:** One meat/fish option & one vegetarian option

**Mains:** One meat/fish option & one vegetarian option

**Dessert:** One selection for all guests

We offer thoughtfully curated menus designed to provide choice and quality for your guests. If you are looking a wider selection, enhanced menu options may be available upon request.

#### **Wedding breakfast timings**

Please consider the timelines below for the total serving time of your Wedding breakfast, based on the number of your guests.

Up to 100 guests: 2 hours

100 to 120 guests: 2 hours, 15 minutes

120 to 150 guests: 2 hours, 30 minutes

150 to 180 guests: 3 hours

#### **Can you cater to dietaries?**

Yes, once the wedding tasting is complete and you have chosen your additional vegetarian starter and main, all other dietaries will be adapted from your menu to suit all guests needs on the day by our Head Chef.

**How many canapés can we choose?**

We offer 3, 4 or 5 canape options. We strongly recommend ordering canapes, especially if your reception is 1.5 hours or more. These start from £15.00 per person for 3 options.

**What is included in the children's price?**

Included in the children's package is soft drink options on the day as well as a three course children's meal for the wedding breakfast.

**Can a teenager have an adult's meal?**

Yes, they can have the adult's option and portion, without alcohol at an additional £25.00 per child.

**Where should I hold my evening buffet?**

The Main bar is the perfect location for an evening buffet. However, if your numbers are over 100 for catering purposes, you will need to use Repton.

**How many people do we have to cater for in our evening buffet?**

As part of the package you are required to cater for a minimum of 80% of the total number of day and evening guests attending in the evening. We do not ask that 100% is catered for, however you can of course cater for 100% if you would like.

**What options are there for the evening buffet?**

We have evening food options starting from £20.00 per person. Please refer to our menus for more details.

**Can the wedding party have a private breakfast whilst getting ready?**

Of course, please do refer to our additional enhancements for the options available.

**What are the options for pre and post wedding dining?**

We have some fantastic options available for you and your guests to enjoy, please do refer to our additional enhancements for the options available.

## **MENU TASTING**

**When will our menu tasting take place?**

We host menu tasting events on selected dates throughout the year, ensuring our dedicated team of wedding professionals can provide the best experience. In the year of your wedding, you will receive a list of available dates to choose from. These tastings take place in the evening, with the first sitting at 17:00, followed by sessions every hour until 19:00.

**What should we expect at our menu tasting?**

As your tasting date approaches, we will contact you to collect your pre-order, which will include one starter, one main course, and one dessert per person.

On the evening of your tasting, you'll be welcomed with a glass of Prosecco from your wedding package and a selection of canapés prepared by our chefs. Once seated, you'll be served your pre-selected three-course meal, accompanied by tastings of the wines included in your package. You will also have the opportunity to sample premium wine upgrades that pair beautifully with your chosen dishes.



### **Can we have additional people for the menu tasting?**

You are welcome to invite up to two additional guests to join you for the tasting. Each extra guest will be charged £100.00 for the full experience, and they will need to select the same menu choices as you for the evening.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

### **How do our guests book accommodation?**

We will set up a unique weblink for your wedding accommodation once your Wedding has been confirmed. You can send this out to your guests so that they may arrange their own accommodation and liaise with us directly.

Please note that your accommodation link will close one month prior to your Wedding.

### **What time is check in, check out and breakfast for our guests that are staying on site?**

Check in is from 15:00

Check out is at 11:00

Breakfast is included in the accommodation price and served until 10:00, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

All adults can access our lifestyle centre complimentary throughout your stay with us.

### **Can I have early check in or late check out?**

This is subject to availability and is therefore something we could look at during the week of the wedding. We can't guarantee an early check in, so we do ask that guests arrive dressed.

Bedrooms are guaranteed to be ready from 15:00, if you need somewhere for your guests to get changed beforehand then please refer to our Enhancement options.

### **What do the bedrooms have in them?**

All bedrooms are comfortably furnished with and include an en-suite bathroom, soaps, TV, hairdryer, tea and coffee making facilities, safety deposit box, iron and ironing board. All bedrooms are non-smoking and are fitted with smoke alarms for your safety. Rooms accessible for wheelchair users are available and we can cater for most special requirements e.g. hypoallergenic pillows, blankets, duvets etc. Please advise us of any such requirements before you arrive at Ashridge.

### **Where are the bedrooms located?**

Here at Ashridge House, we have 189 bedrooms, in 5 separate accommodation blocks situated on site, and within walking distance from the Main House. Our rooms range from standard rooms to Deluxe rooms. Our rooms offer a selection of bed types - single, twin, double, king and super king's. If you'd like to learn more about our room types, please refer to our accommodation guide.

### **What happens if we cancel a bedroom?**

Bedrooms can be cancelled with no fee up to 48hrs before the check in time, in which case a full refund will be issued. If rooms are cancelled less than 48hrs before the check in time, the full rate is payable.



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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **Parking**

We have over 130 car parking spaces onsite, so ample spaces for your guests. Any of your guests who are staying in an Deluxe room, also have private parking at their accommodation.

### **Access time**

Your suppliers will have access to the venue to start setting up from 06:00, if they require earlier, please advise. If there is nothing taking place the night prior to your Wedding, then you can of course set up then. We won't be able to confirm this though, until one week prior.

Please note, if you have your Wedding breakfast in Repton Hall, access for suppliers to dress the room is 12:00.

### **Timeline of the day**

Our experienced Wedding Coordinators recommend the below timeline for your day. You can of course amend the ceremony time, using the below timeline you can work out the rest of the day based on this.

13:30 – 14:00 Ceremony to commence  
14:00 – 14:15 Confetti line  
14:15 – 16:00 Drinks reception  
16:00 – 16:15 Guests announced into Wedding Breakfast  
16:15 – 16:30 Couples entrance/wine served into Wedding Breakfast  
16:30 – 18:30 Wedding breakfast served & speeches  
19:00 Evening guest arrival  
19:15 Cake cutting  
19:30 First dance  
19:40 Party time  
20:30 – 22:30 Evening street food served

**We do hope that you find these FAQ's to be helpful, if there is anything else that we can assist with please do not hesitate to ask!**

*Please note that the contents on this document are subject to change.*



**ASHRIDGE  
HOUSE**