



Lord Speaker

GUIDANCE FOR USE OF THE RIVER ROOM



HOUSE OF LORDS

The River Room is a unique state room in the House of Lords with spectacular views of the Thames, and which the Lord Speaker makes available to members of the House of Lords and a limited range of external organisations for receptions, seminars and other similar events.

This document contains guidance on eligibility for use of the room and terms and conditions which must be observed by anyone using the room. Should you have any further questions, please contact 020 7219 3645 or collinscb@parliament.uk.

1. Eligibility

1.1 Use of the River Room is provided at the Lord Speaker's discretion. It is reserved for functions sponsored by members of the House of Lords either on behalf of UK-registered charities or for cross-party parliamentary events. The room is not available for meetings of All-Party Parliamentary Groups or events that could be seen to compromise the Lord Speaker's political impartiality.

1.2 A function to launch a charitable appeal on behalf of a UK-registered charity is allowed but:

- No collection of funds is permissible
- Charging for tickets is also not allowed

1.3 Charities using the River Room are limited to a maximum of two events per year.

1.4 To arrange a booking, the sponsoring peer must write to the Lord Speaker at lordspeaker@parliament.uk, at least four weeks in advance of the event.

1.5 Details of all events are published quarterly on the Parliamentary website.

2. Use of the Room

2.1 The River Room is only available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 12-2pm and 6-8pm. It is not available when Parliament is prorogued or in recess. Please note that the room must be vacated promptly by 2pm for a lunchtime event and by 8pm for an evening event.

2.2 The **sponsoring peer must be present throughout the event**, except when required to vote in the House, after which they should return immediately to the River Room.

2.3 Please note that events may have to be cancelled at short notice in the light of security alerts or because the House of Lords requires the River Room for the conduct of its business, or in the event of non-compliance with these terms and conditions. The House of Lords accepts no liability for short notice cancellations. Event organisers are encouraged to discuss terms of cancellation with their caterers etc.

2.4 The maximum capacity of the River Room is 80 people (standing) or 50 (seated, lecture-style). It is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure numbers do not exceed these limits. For a sit-down lunch or dinner, the maximum we can host is 30. Failure to comply with capacity restrictions may result in the organiser being asked to turn guests away upon arrival.

2.5 A list of guests must be sent to the River Room Supervisor and the Attendants office (see contacts: Appendix 1) at least **24 hours** in advance. The River Room Supervisor will only accept a guest list that complies with our capacity.



2.6 A microphone and lectern are provided. Equipment such as a TV and laptop can also be arranged with prior notification of at least 1 week. Presentations and other electronic material should be brought on a USB or similar—other laptops/tablets cannot be accommodated. Please contact the River Room Supervisor to arrange (see Appendix 1).

2.7 No open flames (e.g. candles) are permitted.

2.8 The Palace is a non-smoking building.

3 The Lord Speaker's attendance

3.1 Requests for the Lord Speaker to attend should be submitted to the Lord Speaker's Office well at least two weeks advance. This is not obligatory, and the Lord Speaker's office cannot guarantee his availability.

3.2 If the Lord Speaker's attendance is confirmed, we must ensure the Lord Speaker is properly briefed. Please send a short briefing about your organisation together with your list of guests to the Lord Speaker's Office as well as the River Room Supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

4 Access

4.1 Access to the River Room is via Black Rod's Garden Entrance, House of Lords. This is the last entrance to the Palace of Westminster, travelling away from Big Ben towards Lambeth Bridge, at the Victoria Tower end of the building (marked as point 10 on the map in Appendix 3). Security staff will be able to direct guests from the entrance.

4.2 All guests should bring their tickets and may be asked to show proof of identity, as these will form part of the security procedures. Visitors to Parliament are admitted on condition that they will allow themselves and their belongings to be searched in an airport style security (you should inform your guests of this in advance).

4.3. The Palace of Westminster is equipped to accommodate those with accessible needs. Those with such a need should be accompanied by a buddy who will help escort them via the step free route. The River Room Supervisor should be notified in advance of any accessible needs.

4.4 Those attending under the age of 16 should be accompanied by one responsible adult. The River Room Supervisor should be notified in advance if there are guests under the age of 16 due to attend.

4.5 A Q-Park car park is available opposite the Palace. Parking is not available in the precincts of the Palace.

4.6 Coat racks are provided in the entrance foyer on the ground floor.

5 Photography, Social Media and Music

5.1 Photography or video recording by a single designated photographer for promotional purposes is authorised. The material can be used on your charity website and on your social media platforms. More complicated filming requests involving the media or multiple photographers should be discussed with the Lord Speaker's Office as permission must be sought.

5.2 Photography using mobile phones is not allowed.



5.3 Live music or other activities likely to cause a noise disturbance are not permitted. If you wish to make a specific request, please provide detailed information of your potential activity to the Lord Speaker's office for approval.

6 Heritage

6.1 Please be mindful that the River Room is part of a historic palace which contains heritage furniture and furnishings. Please be respectful and help to preserve the room for the future.

7 Catering

7.1 Organisers are only allowed to order food and drinks for their events via the House of Lords Catering and Retail Services team or from one of our approved caterers listed in appendix I. Own catering is not permitted.

8 Florists

8.1 If you would like to order flowers for your event, please contact the florist who is listed in Appendix I.

9. Staff support

9.1 The River Room Supervisor conducts onsite recces of the room in advance of events. We strongly recommend that you arrange a recce if you have not used the room before. For security purposes, only two people can be accommodated on such recces.

9.2 A maximum of ten representatives of the sponsored organisation will be required to assist at the event. The names of these individuals must be brought to the attention of the River Room Supervisor and the Attendants, in advance, so they can gain access to the estate to set-up. This is for security purposes; exceptions will not be permitted. Please note, these representatives **will** be included in the final guest count.



Appendix I: Contact Information

For availability and booking:

Jasmine Losasso, Lord Speaker's Events and Outreach Officer

Tel: 0207 219 3324 lordspeaker@parliament.uk

losassoj@parliament.uk

For facilities information and organisation of your event, *once confirmed*:

Catherine Collins, River Room Supervisor

Tel: 0207 219 3645

Tel: 07917 488523 collinscb@parliament.uk

The Attendants Office – please send guest lists here and to Catherine (above)

Tel: 0207 219 3366 HolAttendants@parliament.uk

Approved Caterers:

ALFRESCO FEASTS

tel. 020 7820 7456 / 07989 853057

sarah@alfrescofeasts.co.uk

GET STUFFED CATERING

tel/Fax: 017 373 58667 / 07984 858758

marcelle.gsc@btinternet.com

HOUSE OF LORDS CATERING AND RETAIL SERVICES

Banqueting Manager 020 72193356

holbanqueting@parliament.uk

Flowers can be booked through:

Windowflowers Ltd

Grove Road,
Burnham,
Slough,



HOUSE OF LORDS

SLI 8DT

Mob: + 44 (0) 7718 785766

Tel: + 44 (0) 1628 667227

Events Manager: Vanessa Rooney

Appendix 2: Suggested Invitation

 HOUSE OF LORDS	Your organisation's logo
<p>[Name of sponsoring peer] requests the pleasure of the company of</p> <p>.....</p> <p>between [12.00/6.00] and [2.00/8.00] pm on [date] in the River Room in the House of Lords in aid of [Organisation Name]</p> <p>Please arrive no earlier than [11.45 am/5.45 pm] with both this invitation and photographic ID</p> <p>Entrance: via Black Rod's Garden Entrance Dress Code: Lounge Suits</p> <p><i>By kind permission of the Lord Speaker</i></p>	

For security purposes, it is helpful for your invitations to be produced as closely as is appropriate to this template.

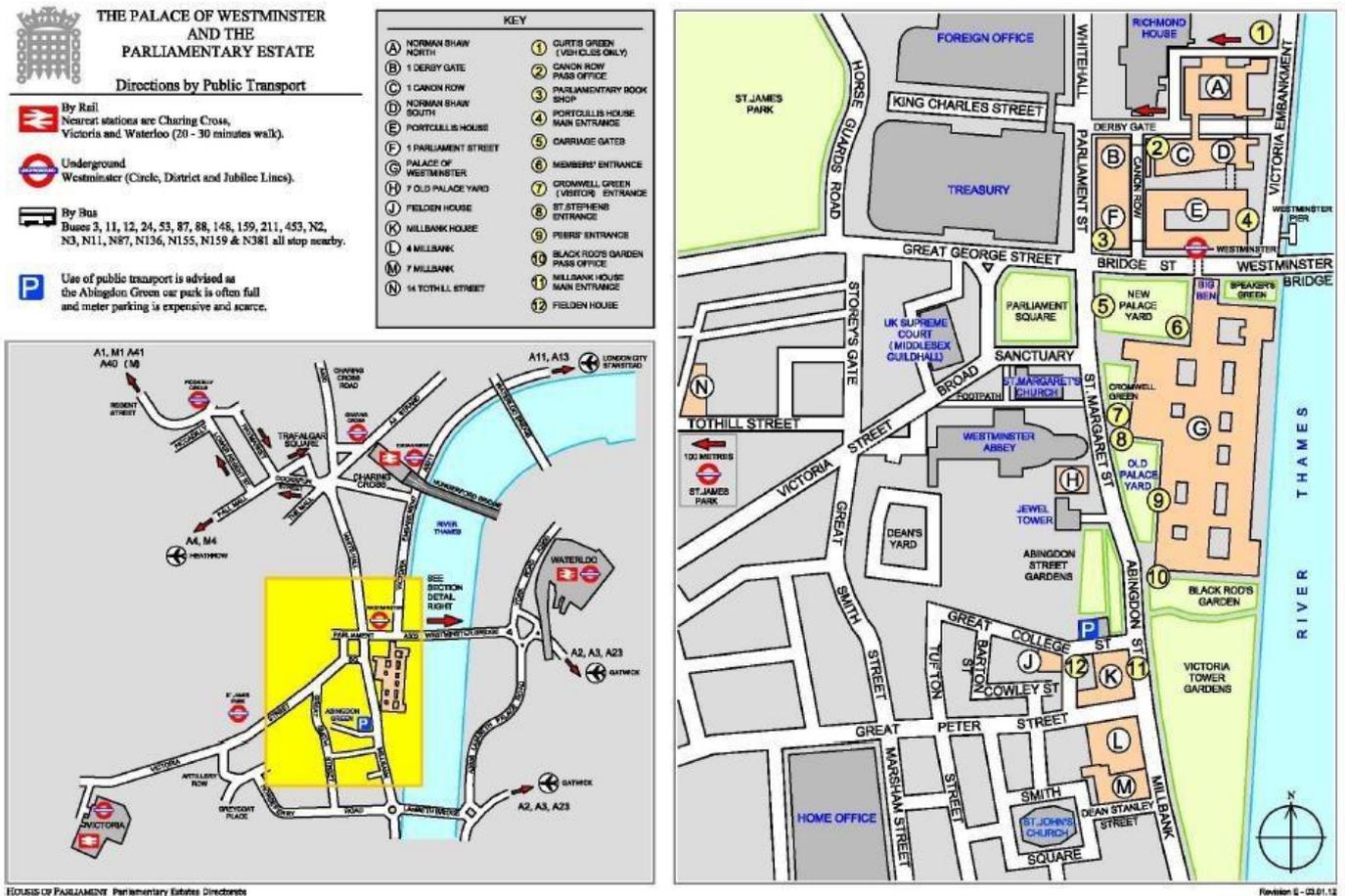
The name of the sponsoring peer, the House of Lords logo and the sentence 'By kind permission of the Lord Speaker' should always be retained.

If you are concerned that your invitation design deviates too significantly from this template, you are welcome to have a draft checked over by Jasmine Losasso in the Lord Speaker's office.



HOUSE OF LORDS

Appendix 3: Map



All guests and organisers will be instructed to enter and exit the parliamentary estate using Black Rod's Garden entrance (Number 10 on this map).

Guests who arrive prior to 11:45am (for lunchtime events) and 5:45pm (for evening events) will not be permitted to pass through security, as early admittance is prohibited. Event organisers and representatives may arrive earlier. Please liaise with our team to arrange this, as security will need to be informed.

