



MILTON HILL HOUSE
Oxford



THE VENUES COLLECTION

LESSONS FROM LOCKDOWN

A back to business case study



Milton Hill House is situated in 22 acres of tranquil parkland just 13 miles from Oxford, the venue effortlessly blends a graceful Georgian manor house with modern facilities.

The conference & event venue offers 20 flexible and contemporary event spaces and an experienced and professional events team. The venue is ideal for meetings, training, conferences & weddings for up to 170 guests.

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Milton Hill House re-opened in July 2020, and since then the team has been working with several interesting events and clients, in accordance with Government guidelines.

Keeping social distancing in place during an event is paramount to the Milton Hill House team. The venue now has a one-way flow system and signage across the venue to help guests keep a safe distance from others. The team works with organisers to prevent congestion and to suggest options such as staggered arrival/departure times and catering breaks to make sure they don't get too busy. The venue hosted a group of overseas students for a fortnight's quarantine period, keeping them isolated and safe in a separate accommodation wing. Chris Steadman, Regional General Manager explains: "We followed our 'Covid Secure Standards Charter', and being part of Compass Group UK & Ireland helped enormously too. Compass Group has been operating in schools and hospitals throughout the lockdowns, so we were able to adopt their learnings and best practice and apply them to our venue. We were also able to take guidance from our sister venue Kents Hill Park because it was used by the Government in March 2020 to quarantine around 150 British citizens and their families who were flown from Wuhan City in China back to the United Kingdom."

COVID SECURE

In addition to our COVID Safe Charter we are also accredited by Visit Britain's, "We're Good To Go" standard, which is the official UK mark to signal that a tourism and hospitality business has worked hard to follow Government and industry COVID-19 guidelines and has a process in place to maintain cleanliness and aid social distancing.



The Group's 'Stay Safe, Feel Safe' Covid Secure Standards Charter is a six-point charter committed to reassuring organisers and keeping everyone safe. The team has adapted the food available and the way it is served; more 'grab and go' options are now offered to guests to take back to their rooms, buffet meals are plated up and screen guards have been installed at counters. Restaurant seating and bar service areas have been adapted to enable each delegate to have lots of space and keep a safe distance from others.

The venue also worked with a leading internet brand to provide the training area and accommodation for apprentices from a local fulfilment centre. Chris says "We enjoy having apprentices at our venue – we create the perfect environment for them with a homely but safe setting for them whilst they are away from home. The client created training bubbles so they didn't have to eat alone and could socialise, and we created a safe and socially distanced social area with a games console and TV."

Milton Hill House is the perfect environment to host Covid secure 'celebration of life' services and weddings. Chris and his team are very flexible and even through lockdown they were able to cope with some last-minute requests! He explains: "One couple had booked their wedding with 15 guests for the following month, but then new rules were announced which meant that their planned wedding could only go ahead with a couple of guests. In order to beat the new rules, and with two days' notice, we worked with them and our suppliers to bring their civil service and celebratory meal forward by a month so they could be married before the new rules came in to force. The team went above and beyond, and the bride and groom were so appreciative and happy. It feels really great to be able to help people celebrate through the lockdowns."



A regular and thorough cleaning regime has also reassured customers. The team uses recognised cleaning products and antibacterial cleaners used by the NHS and they have increased the frequency of cleaning, paying close attention to high contact areas such as door handles, handrails and card readers. Hygiene stations with hand sanitisers have been placed around the venue for customers and colleagues to use and the team actively reminds everyone to continually practice safe hygiene measures. For extra safety, any colleagues working in close proximity to one another and our guests must wear personal protective equipment.

“We are offering our customers an extra 25% more space at no extra charge,” says Chris. “We have 20 flexible event spaces that allow for the many configurations that we have created in line with our social distancing guidelines. Our clients have also been really impressed with the procedures set out in our six-point Covid Secure Standards Charter, and this has given them the confidence to book,” continues Chris. “We have been strict at following our Covid procedures and our clients have told us that this has made them feel very safe at our venue.”



Get in touch to find out more:

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