

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## For Group Leaders

Updated May 2025



Welcome and thank you for choosing to stay at Hill House!

This small handbook is designed to give you information to help you plan and prepare for your stay. We ask that you read the information to ensure that you are familiar with its contents and know what your responsibilities are as the leader of your group. If you need further help prior to or during your stay, please do not hesitate to ask.

The Hill House Team



## TERMS & CONDITIONS OF BOOKING

### HIRING THE HILL HOUSE SITE

The terms and conditions of booking the Hill House site are documented separately and can be found on the Hill House website. It is the group leader's responsibility to familiarise themselves with and abide by these conditions.

Additional booking documents to assist us with your stay will be sent to you the month prior to your visit. These will include the general information form for your group and a bedding plan. The documents assist us to make your stay run as smoothly as possible. Please return them a week before your arrival date.

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

### HOUSE RULES

Our Centre aims to impose a minimum of rules. However, the rules we do have are there for the safety and comfort of all groups and staff, and we ask that you and your group members abide by them.

### CHRISTIAN TEACHING

Under the Charities Act and in accordance with one of the governing objectives of Hill House Christian Centre Ltd is committed to fulfil its charitable purpose. This is 'further the Christian faith'. Each group is required to have a time of Christian teaching / input during their stay. All groups will be asked to provide details of the aims of the visit and it is anticipated that their program will incorporate such a time.

As an organisation, Hill House Christian Centre Ltd may impose restrictions on groups in accordance with the exemptions under the Equality Act 2010, if they do not promote an ideology, morality, or lifestyle compatible with our Christian values and ethos.

### ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Weekend groups are to arrive no earlier than 4pm on Friday (Catering team can gain earlier access but will need to be approved by the site team) and leave no later than 3pm on Sunday.

Mid-week groups are to arrive and depart as arranged with the Hill House staff, however, on the day of departure bedrooms are to be vacated by 8:30am to assist with housekeeping.



#### UPON ARRIVAL:

- Upon arrival the group leader should call at the office to be officially welcomed and shown into the buildings
- Please familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures, exits and evacuation routes which are displayed in all rooms
- Please inform Hill House staff of any individuals with special needs, disabilities, behavioural or social problems that may affect them evacuating the buildings in an emergency. This is to protect the well-being of the individual concerned, as well as other group members and Hill House staff. We also recommend that they are accommodated on the ground floor of the Main House or Room 12 of the Annexe.
- Please make time in your program shortly after arriving for a brief 'Welcome Talk' by the Hill House staff on duty
- Please familiarise yourself with the 'lockup' procedures at night-time. These are displayed on the notice boards in both the Main House and Annexe. You are responsible for the security of the building during your stay.

#### BEFORE DEPARTURE:

- Bedding - please remove bottom sheet, pillowcases and duvet cover and leave in a pile outside your room by 10am
- Rubbish - please empty all bins (including bedrooms) and recycling bins to the main refuse compound behind the office
- Tables & Chairs - please stack all conference room and dining room chairs and tables as they are found upon arrival
- Kitchen - please clean cooker tops, sinks and work tops
- Dishwasher - please empty and wash down

#### PARKING ON SITE

Please use the car park provided and avoid parking in front of the Main House and Annexe entrances. These areas need to be kept clear for emergency access, gas deliveries and refuse collections.

#### ACCOMMODATION

We would appreciate groups wearing slippers or indoor shoes in all the carpeted areas, particularly the hallways and bedrooms. Shoe racks are provided.

#### BEDROOMS:

The Main House sleeps 68 people in a dormitory style. The Annexe sleeps 28 people in twin en-suite rooms. It is the group leader's responsibility to manage the sleeping arrangements for their group.

All bed linen is provided. Towels are not provided.



#### LOUNGE:

The lounge in the Main House is to be used solely for the purpose of sitting, reading, group study and relaxing.

No extracurricular activities are to be carried out such as painting, artwork, etc.

Please do not remove furniture from the lounge.

#### CONFERENCE ROOM:

The conference room facilities are well equipped with a 75" TV, portable sound desk, digital mixer (Soundcraft) on an IPad, microphones and stands, leads, music stands, and flip charts (not paper). Laptops can be connected through a HDMI connection either at the front or rear of the room.

Please contact the office if you wish to check anything specific.

The Main House also has an electronic piano and drum kit.

Laptop adaptors are available from the office upon request (HDMI or VGA to USB, but not from Apple devices).

All groups are required to record the music and words that are used during their services for CCLI licence purposes.

#### KITCHEN AND CATERING

A fully commercial kitchen is available in both the Main House and Annexe.

All washing up liquids, sprays, cloths, aprons, tea towels and hot cloths are provided. Please place dirty items in the laundry basket next to the washing machine.

Please do not switch off the fly zappers.

A 'burns kit' is on the wall by the fire extinguisher and fire blanket.

We request that children under the age of 11 are not allowed in the kitchens for Health & Safety purposes.

Please recycle as much as possible using the bins provided. Note, food waste must go in the general rubbish bins.

For self-catering groups, it is your responsibility that your caterer is suitably qualified to cook for your group. It is advised that they hold at least a level 2 food and hygiene qualification. This is available through the Safer Food Better Business website [here](#).

Supermarket food deliveries are available at Hill House, but we ask that deliveries are made when one of your group members are available to receive the delivery. The office can also advise on local butchers and takeaways.



For groups wishing to use a caterer during their stay, we recommend contacting the office to see if the site team are available to cater for your weekend.

## GENERAL BEHAVIOUR

It is the responsibility of the group leader for the general behaviour of their group members. In the unfortunate circumstance of a person disrupting a visit through behavioural issues, we reserve the right to arrange with the group for that member to leave the Hill House site. No refund will be given and collection will be the responsibility of the group leader or person with primary duty of care. Group leaders must take responsibility for the discipline of their group and assist the duty staff in the smooth-running of the Centre by addressing any disciplinary problems that may occur.

In general, alcohol is not permitted on site. However, exceptions may be made by Hill House management for special occasions.

The following will **NOT** be tolerated and may result in arranging for group members to leave the site: taking illegal substances, smoking indoors, tampering with the fire alarm detectors / system, theft, fighting and aggressive or abusive behaviour.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Hill House Christian Centre Ltd pursues a policy of safety, control and protection for all those that use the premises. However, everyone hiring and using Hill House has a responsibility to comply with Health & Safety law.

As a company, the Trustees and Manager ultimately have responsibility for Hill House as a site, but the Group Leader has a responsibility for their group members.

### Those organising the stay at Hill House have a general duty to:

- Take care of themselves and others in their care
- To Risk Assess any activities that they will be undertaking
- To ensure that your group does not undertake silly or reckless behaviour
- To ensure that your group are aware of their responsibilities to each other
- To comply with the Hill House risk assessments, guidelines and rules
- To co-operate with the Hill House staff

## FIRE SAFETY

Fire is one of the biggest threats to Hill House and must be taken seriously by all who use the site.

Fire safety will be included in the 'Welcome talk', but it is the Group Leaders responsibility to pass on to those that do not attend, including Day Visitors, the emergency evacuation procedures.



**Group leaders can take these preventative actions to prevent a fire starting:**

- Do not smoke in any of the buildings
- Do not use defective electrical equipment (all Hill House portable electricals are PAT tested annually)
- Do not leave unused electrical leads and chargers plugged in / on
- Do not leave lights left on, including shaving lights (Annexe only)
- Do not cover portable heaters
- Regularly empty rubbish bins

**It is your responsibility as group leader to ensure that you:**

- Keep emergency exits are kept clear
- Ensure that fire doors are kept closed and not propped open
- That if a fire is discovered, your group raises the alarm as quickly as possible and calls the fire brigade by dialling 999
- Know what to do in the event of a fire
- Know that the fire assembly point is by the children's play area
- Know how many are in your group so that a role call or head count can be made after evacuation
- Make sure that children, vulnerable adults and those with disabilities are assisted to evacuate.

## USE OF ENERGY

As a non-profit making charity, we try to be as efficient as possible with water and electric use. As group leader, please encourage your group members to turn off lights and unplug chargers when not in use and to not excessively run taps. Thank you.

## PERSONAL AND LOST PROPERTY

Please note that Hill House does not accept responsibility for any lost or damaged personal property. Most of the rooms are unlocked during your visit, but secure storage of valuables can be provided upon request to the Hill House staff.

If you discover you have lost personal possessions when you return home, please contact the Centre immediately and we will endeavour to return it to you (we hold lost property for one month). There is a minimum charge of £5 for postage.

## DAMAGE

The group is responsible for the costs of replacement or repair for any loss or damage to Hill House Christian Centre equipment and / or property caused by members of your group. You may also be charged for any costs arising from additional cleaning that is necessary.

## NOISE

Whilst we are in a rural area, noise generated can carry, and therefore to avoid disturbing our neighbours and other residents, guests must ensure that any noise is not audible outside of their meeting rooms or bedrooms between 11pm and 8am.



## PETS / DOGS

No pets are allowed on site. The exceptions are only guide and assistance dogs; however, they must remain the responsibility of their owner during your stay. We would appreciate advance notice of any dogs coming on site please.

## FIRST AID

Groups are advised to appoint their own First Aider during their stay. However, at least one of the Hill House staff on duty with you will be Lifeguard qualified and hence have a substantial first aid knowledge if required.

The Main House First Aid box is located on the wall outside the kitchen in the dishwashing area.

The Annexe First Aid box is located on the wall by the back door, opposite the toilets.

An AED machine is located in an unlocked yellow box on the side of the main office.

Please report accidents and incidents to the Hill House staff as soon as possible. You will also be required to complete an accident report form from the book located in the First Aid box.

In the event of a major incident please dial 999 to obtain medical assistance.

## SMOKING

No smoking or vaping is allowed in any of the Hill House buildings, the courtyard area and during on-site activities. If necessary, an area can be provided for smoking away from the buildings

## SWIMMING POOL

The unheated pool is available from May to October (weather depending). It has recently been refurbished and now has a constant depth of 1m. The pool will only be opened in the presence of a qualified lifeguard. It is your responsibility to make sure a lifeguard is present. Three of the Hill House staff members are qualified and can be booked with advance notice and an additional fee, or you may wish to provide your own lifeguard. A valid copy of their certification will be required and our Pool Operating Safety Procedures manual read and signed before using the pool.

## CAMPFIRES & FIREWORKS

Please arrange with the Hill House staff if you wish to have a campfire or let off fireworks. Group leaders are required read, comply and sign our risk assessments and guidelines prior to a having a campfire or letting off fireworks.

The campfire area is located behind the children's play area and fireworks will only be allowed in the Sports Field. Both are weather dependant.

All wood is provided free of charge.

Upon arrival, please discuss with the Hill House duty staff where to store the fireworks until they are needed. This will probably be in our locked workshop.



## BBQ

There are 2 portable BBQ's that are available for use by your group. Group leaders are again required read, comply and sign our risk assessment and guidelines prior to a having a BBQ. Please bring your own coals.

## TUCK AND GIFT SHOPS

Please do not bring your own sweets and gifts to sell during your stay.

Both shops are run by Hill House staff at an agreed time with your group. Please let the office know if / when you would like the shops open prior to your arrival.

The Tuck shop is stocked with pick 'n' mix, chocolate, ice creams and drinks. Allergen information is available at the shop.

The gift shop has books, cards and gifts for all occasions.

Cash payments are preferred, but the gift shop can take card payments.

## DATA PROTECTION

All personal information obtained via booking forms and other sources is used for Hill House Christian Centre purposes only. It is not passed or sold onto third parties. If you wish your details to be removed from our systems, please contact the office. Please also see our Privacy Policy [here](#).

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Whilst at Hill House Christian Centre, photos may be taken for our publications. If any of your Group does not wish to appear in any such pictures, please inform us at the beginning of your stay and we will happily oblige.

## SAFEGUARDING

All visiting groups must have their own Safeguarding Policy in place prior to attending Hill House Christian Centre.

## ACTIVITIES ON SITE

Hill House enjoys 15 acres of woodland, pasture and lawns.

You will see the children's adventure play area as you arrive at Hill House.

The Games shed has a range of equipment available for use, including foot, basket and rugby balls, volleyball, rounders and cricket. The Sports field has 2 metal goals for football and the lawns usually host a volleyball net. A basketball hoop is located on the tarmac area by the House.







The Gym / Games Room area hosts an indoor 15m traversing wall, table tennis, foosball table and snooker / pool tables.

Participants in these activities' do so at their own risk and it is the group leader's responsibility to manage them.

Hill House activity led activities include:

Archery, Escape Rooms and various Team Building activities. All are fully risk assessed and incur an additional charge. Please contact the Hill House office prior to your arrival if you wish to discuss further or to book these activities.

### ACTIVITIES OFF SITE

Hill House uses Black Rock Outdoors Ltd for high adrenaline activities at Cobbs Cross on the edge of the Quantock Hills (20 mins away). They are fully licensed and insured to run high and low ropes, kayaking, raft building, caving and mountain biking. Please contact Gof or Sophie at Black Rock directly if you wish to book with them [here](#).

### AND FINALLY

If you have any Prayer Requests prior to your stay, please let us know. As a team we would love to pray for your group.

We hope that you enjoy your stay with us.

If you have any questions unanswered or concerns over these guidelines or interpretation of the Hill House Christian Centre Ltd Mission Statement, please contact the Hill House office by phone 01278 652289 or email [hillhouse@hillhouse.org.uk](mailto:hillhouse@hillhouse.org.uk)

**"Providing a place for everyone to encounter Jesus"**

