



Frequently Asked Questions

• Who is responsible for Contractors?

You are responsible for all Contractors that you employ on site, including arranging access with the House Manager and making sure any gates opened are closed. Please ensure that all your Contractors adhere to all current Health & Safety Regulations and they are fully insured, including Public Liability.

All contractors, including friends and family, using electrical equipment at Smedmore House and in the grounds must have Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) and all appliances must be PAT tested. Smedmore will require a copy of your contractor's Public Liability before they are allowed to operate.

• Do I have to use your listed suppliers?

No, but it is helpful to use the suppliers on our list as they know and understand the logistics of the site. If for any unlikely reason the caterers and marquee providers on our list are unable to provide what you want, you may bring in your own suppliers but there will be an extra charge of £350 for each. This applies only to marquees and catering.



• When can my marquee go up?

Your marquee is erected on the day before your wedding (normally the Friday for a weekend wedding) and taken down on the Monday or day after for a mid-week wedding. The contractors can come as early as required on the Friday morning. If you need your marquee up from the Thursday, there will be an additional charge of £500 made as we cannot let the house to other clients on that day. This fee is waived if you take a further night's accommodation in the house at the special wedding rate of £1000 for the night.

• Do I need insurance?

We strongly recommend that event insurance is taken out despite the recent Covid related problems with wedding insurance. Some household policies may cover certain points but please read and check this thoroughly. Please note:

- a) Smedmore House can sue you e.g. for damage
- b) Your guests can sue you e.g. for Public Liability
- c) Make your suppliers liable so you can sue them if necessary

• Do we need to pay a damage deposit and is this refundable?

Yes a damage deposit is required. We take a deposit of £500, which is usually in the form of a cheque or a bank transfer, prior to the start of your contract period. Subject to satisfactory completion of the Contract this will be refunded within 7 days of the end of the Contract period. The cheque will only be cashed if problems arise.

• Does the venue have a license to hold Civil Ceremonies?

Yes, six rooms within the house and the Summer House in the Walled Garden are all licensed. Since summer 2021 it has also been possible to hold a legal ceremony in anywhere in the grounds as the Government relaxed the rules during the pandemic and in March 2022 they announced that this change would become permanent. (Previously it was possible to hold a blessing or symbolic ceremony in the grounds but the legal part had to take place under a fixed roof.)





• For Civil Ceremonies, who will contact the Registrar?

For a Civil Ceremony, the law stipulates that you must make your booking with the Local Registrar (Dorset Registration Service) who can be contacted on 01305 or (01202) 225153 - registrationinformation@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Please bear in mind that a booking at Smedmore House does not imply a booking with the Registrar and that a third party cannot make a booking on your behalf. Please contact the Registrar to arrange your Civil Ceremony date before you finally confirm your booking with Smedmore.

• If I choose an outdoor ceremony, do I need to hire chairs?

For an outdoor ceremony, it will be necessary to hire chairs as Smedmore House's chairs are suitable only for indoor use. In most cases, your marquee company should be able to provide.

• If I have booked an outdoor ceremony, and the weather is bad, can the wet weather option be inside the House?

This will depend on your numbers. Smedmore House is licensed for a maximum of 60 people in the Dining Room and Drawing Room. These numbers include the Registrars, the couple and any children and cannot be exceeded. If you have larger numbers than this, you can have a smaller ceremony inside to comply with these regulations but only 55 of your guests (including children and babies) can attend. In most cases of inclement weather, couples hold their ceremony in their marquee.



• Can I use confetti?

No, but you can have natural rose or flower petals.

• Do I need a Temporary Event Notice?

If you are supplying alcohol for free you do not require either a Temporary Event Notice or an Alcohol License.

• Do I need a license for alcohol?

If you are intending to have a bar at your wedding or event where you are planning to sell alcohol then in addition to a Temporary Event Notice, you will require at least 1 person who holds a personal alcohol license to run the bar. Most companies offering mobile bar facilities have this license but please check with them.

• Do you charge corkage?

Smedmore House does not charge corkage but remember that you are responsible for organising the removal of all bottles after your event. There will be a charge deducted from your deposit if we are obliged to remove bottles left behind.

• What time must my event finish?

You should ensure that your music (of any kind but especially amplified music) finishes at midnight. All guests, suppliers and staff should have packed and left the site by 1am at the latest.

• Can I have live music?

Live music is welcomed but the hirer must comply with the required noise levels in respect of loud music (95db) and public address systems. The music should be turned down from 11pm but can continue to midnight.





• Can I use the fridges in the house to cool my drinks?

You cannot cool your drinks in the fridges in the house as this will be locked during your event. It is strongly recommended that you hire extra refrigeration (Country Coolers 01258 840212) to chill your wines and other drinks.

• Is there any external lighting?

There is a small amount on the front of house and on the path to the side garden but it is up to the hirer to provide extra if necessary. Please follow and consider all Health & Safety Regulations and provide ample lighting where necessary e.g. to guide guests to toilets, car parking etc.

• Are there rubbish bins on site?

No, it is up to the hirer to remove all rubbish. Often caterers will take responsibility for a large amount but it may be best to hire a skip. The cost of removing any rubbish left on site by yourselves or your contractors will be subtracted from your damage deposit. This includes bottles.



• Can I have fireworks or Chinese Lanterns?

We do not allow fireworks because of the surrounding woodland and the livestock on the estate. Chinese lanterns are never allowed.

• Is there water available?

There is a single tap with a 30mm screw end feed from a 25mm pipe with good pressure.

• Where are the electricity points for an outside event?

We strongly advise all marquee events to hire a generator. Smedmore House is in the middle of the countryside and power cuts are not unknown.

There is a fully waterproofed exterior power supply box on the side of the House next to the kitchen with 3no 240v 32amp (max) industrial outlet sockets, fed from the building with a 63-amp total supply. Charges based on a meter reading will be made for use of any electricity from Smedmore's supply.

However, it is very strongly recommended that you hire your own generator. A party with no electricity because of a power cut is not much fun.

• What access do we have to the house during the Wedding Reception?

Only those staying in the house will be allowed access to the house during the wedding reception. Before the event, a list of houseguests should be handed to the House Manager and only these people will be allowed into the house during the event. The exceptions will be any children being cared for by a nanny in the house or any guests requiring access to the Disabled toilet. Their names should be added to the list of houseguests beforehand.

The fridges and cooking facilities in the house are provided for the house rental element of your booking only and must not be used by any caterers for the marquee. It is suggested that you either arrange with your caterers for adequate refrigeration for your drinks or that you contact Country Coolers on 01258 840 212 or 07734 055 913 and hire a separate refrigerated unit.





• Is there on site car parking and is it free?

There is car parking on the Front Lawn behind the marquee site and this is free. Please ensure you have Ushers on hand to marshal the car parking. Signage to the different areas is recommended. If very wet, you may be asked to park the cars along the side of the drive to prevent cars getting stuck.

• Is it possible for coaches to access the site?

Yes. It is advisable to check that they can get down the road from Steeple. The very biggest sometimes have problems as it is very winding.



• Are there Toilets?

No, it is the hirer's responsibility to hire self-contained toilets and arrange for them to be emptied. These are best located as close to the marquee as possible for ease of access.

• Can I camp on site?

With special permission, it may be possible to allow up to 5 tents on the night of the event for a small fee. No campfires are allowed in the camping area. These tents will have to use the wedding loos as the house will be locked overnight for security and they will have no access.

• Do you have special rates with local hotels?

No special rates but we have a list of local hotels, pubs, and b and bs which can be found on the Smedmore House website under the drop-down heading "Locally".



www.smedmorehouse.com

For all enquiries about weddings and availability:

Laura Dugdale - 0207 792 4565 - office@smedmorehouse.com

For appointments to view:

Eilish Butterfield - 01929 480719 / 07712 594023 - eilish.butterfield@outlook.com

