



Access to the Observatory Tower Room for tours and events

Access to the Observatory Tower

1. The College wishes to celebrate the iconic 18th Century Radcliffe Observatory that sits at its heart and forms an integral part of its history. Members of the College are welcome to enjoy the ambience and views from the Tower Room either as small groups of up to 11 or through specially organised events. These restrictions are necessary in recognition of fire regulations and health and safety associated with accessing the upper floors of the Observatory.
2. The College site including the Observatory and Tower Room is not open to the public.
3. General access to all parts of the Observatory Tower Room is restricted to a group of no more than 11 people accompanied by a member of the College or competent person (including trained students), who has been authorised to do so by the Bursar. A list of members of the College authorised to conduct tours is held in the Porters' Lodge.
4. Each member of the group visiting the Observatory Tower Room is required to sign a copy of the "Tower Instructions and disclaimer" and to give it to the authorised person before the tour. A copy of the "Tower Instructions and disclaimer" is available on the College web site.
5. College members are encouraged to sign up to tours of the Tower which are held before dinner on Thursday evenings during term time.
6. There is no furniture in the Tower Room and food or drink are not normally allowed due to difficulty for staff in delivering a service and health and safety issues. Concessions may be made for key events with the agreement of the Principal or Vice Principal.

Exceptional Access to the Observatory Tower Room

7. Exceptional access may be permitted for groups of more than 12 people to use the Observatory Tower Room for special events; such events can only be organised through the College Events Office. The number of such events held each year is envisaged to be small, and need to be agreed by the Events Office and authorised through the Bursar a month in advance. Additional staffing costs may be incurred which will be charged to the event.
8. There are restrictions on the management of the Observatory, related to evacuation in the event of fire, when groups of more than 12 guests visit the Observatory Tower Room.
9. A detailed protocol for the management of events when a group larger than 12 are in the Observatory Tower Room is available on the College web site.

Paul Beerling
Bursar



Green Templeton College
25/10/14

Annex A

The Radcliffe Observatory

This instruction should be given by a member of College staff to any person or group intending to visit the Tower Room of the Radcliffe Observatory. All visitors must be accompanied by a member of staff or authorised Fellow.

In the event of a **fire alarm**, exit as quickly as is safe down the stone staircase and onto the College lawn at least 50 yards from the building.

In the event of a **fire** which leads to **smoke or flames arising up the staircase**, it may not be safe or possible to escape down the stairs. The emergency fire exit from the Observatory Tower Room is out through one of the two windows onto one of the two balconies, preferably the one closest to Woodstock Road as rescue is easier from that side.

The Fire Department will advise whether persons should stay on the balcony until the fire is brought under control or if that is not possible a high-lift fire appliance will rescue people from the balcony and carry them down to the ground. The rescue requires people to climb onto the balustrade and thence onto the rescue platform.

Visitors who are in any doubt of their physical ability or who suffer from vertigo or panic symptoms are advised not to go up to the Observatory Tower Room. We are also informed that the ambulance service is not able to rescue people by stretcher from the Tower Room.

Paul Beerling
Bursar
Tel: 01865 284593

Please read the following information and sign below that you understand the content

For those hardy enough to climb to the top floor, there is a magnificent view of Oxford and nearby countryside. However, before making the decision as to whether to climb, please bear in mind the following:

- There are a total of 98 stone stairs to the top floor Tower Room. The hand rail only runs along one side of the staircase.
- Entry to the Tower Room is via a wooden staircase. There is no hand rail at all in this part of the building.
- Entry to the upper gallery is via a metal spiral staircase. This staircase is such that it is not wide enough for two people to pass. Members of staff will instruct you as to when it is safe to go up and when it is safe to come down.



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- The top floor Tower Room is at a height of 20 metres. The upper gallery is at a height of 26 metres. It is not uncommon for vertigo sufferers to feel a bit queasy!
- You need to be confident that you are physically able to carry out the climb. The College cannot make this decision for you. It is your responsibility. If you choose to climb to the Tower Room top of the tower, **you do so at your own risk.**

For safety reasons the College has determined that children under the age of 12 will not be allowed into the Tower Room. Children over the age of 12 will be permitted to visit provided that they are accompanied by an adult.

Again for safety reasons the College has determined that a maximum of **12** people will be permitted to enter the Tower Room at any one time.

I have read the above guidelines and have confidence that I am physically fit enough for the climb. I understand that on entering the Tower Room and/or the upper gallery, I am doing so at my own risk.

Signed:

Name (Please print):

Date:



Annex B

Protocol for Events involving groups of more than 12 people in the Observatory Tower Room:

Booking procedure

1. Events for groups of more than 12 people in the Tower Room must be booked via the Events Office and authorised by the Bursar. At the time of the booking the event organiser (normally the Conference and Events Manager) must complete the "Certificate for an Event with more than 12 people in the Observatory Tower Room". The proforma for the Certificate is at Annex C.

Building occupancy

2. The total number of people in the entire Observatory building (including the kitchens) during such an event must not exceed 60.
3. Prior to the visit, the Events Office will confirm the number of staff required to service the event including catering staff; this will determine the number of guests, up to a total building occupancy of 60, allowed into Tower Room for the event.

Supervision of events

4. During the event, one person will be responsible for overseeing the conduct of all visitors within the group. This person will usually be the event organiser or an alternative 'nominated individual (competent person)' authorised by the Bursar.

Responsibilities of the event organiser or nominated individual

5. Whilst there is a group of more than 12 people in the Tower Room of the Observatory, the event organiser or nominated individual is responsible for the following:
 - a. Ensuring that the total occupancy of the Observatory is no greater than 60.
 - b. That the entrance area to the Observatory is and remains clear of flammable material.
 - c. That the three stewards, described below, are in place, aware of their responsibilities and know where the fire alarm call points are.
 - d. A responsible guide is to be allocated to take charge of the group actually in the Observatory Tower Room. The responsible guide is charged with supporting the event organiser or nominated individual in ensuring that the group adhere to the protocols of this paper whilst actually in the Tower Room.
 - e. That there is to be no access, via the metal staircase, to the upper gallery of the Tower Room.



- f. When the visit to the Observatory Tower Room is over, informing the stewards and the duty Food Service Manager/Supervisor that access to the Tower Room is no longer required, and for ensuring that the door of the Tower Room is locked.
- g. Returning the key to the Lodge.

Stewards

6. When an event takes place, three stewards will be appointed to ensure the safety of everyone in the building during the event. The stewards are to be agreed by the Bursar or Domestic Bursar prior to the event.
7. Stewards will be positioned on the ground floor of the Observatory near the entrance, on the first floor outside the Common Room on the landing at the very top of the staircase outside the entrance to the Tower Room.
 - a. The steward on the ground floor is responsible for ensuring that the Observatory entrance remains clear of all flammable material, that the doors onto the entrance way are kept shut when not in use and for directing visitors on where to store coats, hats and bags. In the event of a fire the steward is to raise the alarm by activating the fire alarm using the break glass call point immediately, shouting up the stairs to the steward on the first floor to ensure that they also raise the alarm, and is to assist with the evacuation.
 - b. The first floor steward is to be placed at the entrance to the Common Room on the first floor of the Observatory. This steward is responsible for ensuring that the Common Room doors are kept shut when not in use and for raising the alarm in case of fire through activating the fire alarm using the break glass call point, shouting to the steward at the entrance to the Tower Room, and is to assist with the evacuation.
 - c. The third steward is to be placed outside the entrance to the Tower Room so that they can receive the fire alarm from the floor below, to raise the alarm to those in the Tower Room and to assist with the evacuation.

Storage of personal belongings

8. The ground floor entrance to the Observatory is to be empty of all flammable material during these events. This includes coats and bags which are to be stored in a nominated area elsewhere in the building. The Bursar or Domestic Bursar is to inspect the entrance area to ensure that it is clear of all flammable material before the event.



Annex C

Certificate for an Event with more than 12 people in the Observatory Tower Room

Name of Event Organiser or Nominated Individual for Overseeing the Event

Connection to Green Templeton College

Name of Allocated Guide in Tower Room

Names of Three Stewards:

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I hereby certify that I have read and understand the **Protocol for Events involving groups of more than 12 people in the Observatory Tower** Room; that I have briefed the Allocated Guide and three stewards on their duties and ensured that they know where the fire call points are.

Dated Signature of Event Organiser or Nominated Individual for Overseeing the Events:

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