Protocol for visitors and guests

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In general, Sidney Sussex College remains closed to visitors and guests¹ as a result of the pandemic situation. Exceptions to this are set out in this protocol.

Please note that the information outlined in this protocol is subject to change and will be continually reviewed in accordance with the latest Government and University guidance.

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1. Introduction

College planning is centred on keeping our members and the wider community safe and well by reducing the risk of transmission through a series of protocols.

This protocol will be continually reviewed as we move forward in line with the latest Government COVID-19 guidance and University COVID-19 guidance.

¹ “Visitors and guests” refers to any individual who is seeking to visit the College and is not a current Sidney student, Fellow, other academic staff member, or staff member.
2. Guidelines for all visitors and guests

Anyone visiting the College must adhere to the following guidelines for the duration of the visit.

- There must be a permitted reason for visiting the College (as outlined in this protocol). Drop-in visits are not permitted.
- All those present must adhere to social distancing guidelines at all times.
- All those present should take note of the signage in College and follow any guidelines as necessary.
- All visitors and guests should sanitise their hands using the dispenser provided outside the Porters’ Lodge before entry, and anywhere else around the College site where a dispenser has been provided.
- All visitors and guests should follow the College’s face coverings protocol (unless exempt) and should bring a face covering into College.
- All University members should have their University ID card on their person whilst they are visiting. Members may be asked the purpose of their visit and may be asked to leave if they are in College for a reason not covered in this protocol.

3. Visits for undergraduate supervisions

The supervision system is dependent upon a practical way for supervisors and students to have access to the various locations in which supervisions take place. Therefore, as a matter of principle, Cambridge Colleges will generally allow free access for students and supervisors visiting for academic purposes.

Please follow the guidelines outlined below.

- Access to the College is limited to the specific purpose.
- There is no requirement to check in at the Porters’ Lodge on arrival or to be escorted to the supervision.
- Directors of Studies and supervisors will be provided with risk assessments allowing them to hold in-person supervisions safely. These risk assessments will be continually under review to ensure they follow the latest Government guidelines. Please note that it will be the responsibility of the Director of Studies or supervisor to keep attendance records (for 21 days as per Government guidelines) so that this information can be provided to NHS Test and Trace if required.
- Should the College be required to quarantine as a result of a local resurgence, then in-person supervisions in the College would cease, with alternative venues arranged or provision moving online.
- Events related to academic study (ie research seminars) will be managed in College in accordance with the latest Government guidelines.
- Please refer to the College’s supervisions and academic meetings protocol for more information.

4. Visitors for other academic- or business-related reasons in College

As noted above, the College remains closed to visitors until further notice in an effort to reduce transmission and keep our College community and the wider community as safe as possible. Visits may be permissible in cases where there is a clear purpose for the visit, where the visit has
been pre-approved via the appropriate channels, and where the visit can be hosted safely within the current guidelines.

Please review the information outlined below for more detail.

4.1. College-related business

Visits for College-related work purposes are permitted (this includes visitors such as College advisors, donors, auditors, construction company, consultants, tenants, job applicants etc) providing that there is a specific meeting, or visitors have been pre-approved to work at College (eg contractors relating to building works, auditors etc).

4.2. Musical events

Choristers and performers from other Cambridge Colleges who are invited to Sidney will be permitted entry for Chapel services and College-approved musical events provided that they are active participants in the asymptomatic testing programme. The guidelines for any such visit are akin to Visits for undergraduate supervisions.

Performers will be asked to provide risk assessments in line with the current Government guidelines and this will be reviewed by the appropriate channels in College.

4.3. College facilities (ie Library and Chapel)

College facilities are restricted for use by current Sidney members only until further notice. Visitors are not permitted.

4.4. Archives

University members and other researchers who require access to the College archives for academic purposes may be allowed access to the College by appointment only. The guidelines for any such visit are akin to Visits for undergraduate supervisions. A record of attendance will be kept for a limited time for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

4.5. Boat-house

The College has a shared boat-house with Corpus Christi, Girton and Wolfson. There is a separate risk assessment outlining the approach to using the boat house which is in line with guidance from British Rowing and will be updated accordingly. From Thursday 5 November the Boat House will be closed during national lockdown.

4.6. Sports field (located at St John’s College)

The College shares sports-field facilities with St John’s College and Magdalene College. This is on St John’s land and will be subject to the protocols set out by St John’s.
5. Visits from prospective students

Visits from prospective students are not currently permitted. Please note that a virtual tour of College is available on the Sidney Sussex YouTube channel.

6. Visitors and guests for social activities

Social visitors, including alumni and those with dining rights, are only permitted access to the College if they are meeting with, and as a guest of, a current member of the College in the College gardens (within current Government guidelines).

Guests should arrange to be met by the current Sidney member on arrival at the College site. Guests should not be left unaccompanied within College or at a College property.

Please note that for the safety of our community and the wider community, only current Sidney members are allowed access to Sidney’s shared facilities, including the Library and Chapel. Unfortunately this excludes guests of current and resident members of Sidney.

7. Visitors and guests to student households within College

From 5 November, no guests are permitted to visit households within College accommodation. Generally no-one other than the members of a particular household should be within the physical location of that household unless absolutely unavoidable (ie when accessing a stairwell).

Exceptions to this include:

- needing to visit another household due to medical reasons (ie delivering food to quarantining or self-isolating residents);
- maintenance (by appointment);
- cleaning – bedders will access for cleaning of communal areas (eg shared kitchens and bathrooms) but only when there is no resident in the shared area.

8. Conference guests and events

The College is not currently accepting guests for guest rooms, bed and breakfast, events or conferences.²

Current members seeking to organise an in-person meeting or event should contact the Conference Office and outline requirements. The Conference Office will provide information about any restrictions or guidelines that must be followed.

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² Guests are not permitted for guest rooms, bed and breakfast, events or conferences unless the visit relates to an academic matter or has been agreed as an exception by College Council (and only where there is a clear purpose for the visit, where the visit has been pre-approved via the appropriate channels, and where the visit can be hosted safely within the current guidelines).