



# RIDDLE'S COURT WEDDINGS

Frequently Asked Questions

## CORONAVIRUS IMPLICATIONS

### The Team

*What is the team at Riddle's Court doing right now?*

Riddle's Court, as with most other business right now, faced an uncertain future in the spring and summer of 2020. However, we're back to hosting fantastic weddings (following government recommendations), and we're constantly revising our options to see how we can do this as safely as possible.

Due to new and different work patterns, it may be that there's a slight delay in one of us coming back to answer your questions. However, we will try to get back to everyone as quickly as possible when we return. Any email enquiries should be sent to [events@riddlescourt.org.uk](mailto:events@riddlescourt.org.uk) as this inbox is monitored continuously.

### Weddings Moving Forward

*What will the impact be on weddings?*

While nobody knows what the next few months are going to bring, currently weddings are able to proceed in a reduced capacity. This may involve social distancing measures, live-streaming ceremonies, cutting back guest numbers or using innovative ideas to make sure everyone gets to celebrate in the safest way. We've recently published a blog post about our current situation and some information on smaller wedding options, so we would recommend you have a look at those to see what you might consider moving forward.

If you would like a phone or video call with a member of our team, please do get in touch and we would be happy to have a chat with you.

*We're already booked with you – should we be concerned?*

We're in touch with all of our couples and are keeping them updated as and when we know how the situation will develop. We are offering to reschedule your initial date free of charge to another, depending on availability, or go ahead with a smaller ceremony once lockdown has lifted with a larger celebration further on down the line. There are many options to consider, and we would recommend getting in touch with your events coordinator to look at your options in more detail.

We understand how disappointing it is to have to postpone your celebrations into the unknown, or go ahead with the wedding in a way that simply isn't what you planned. However, we want to make this as easy as possible for you, so if you have any concerns or ideas of what you might like to do, we are open to all the possibilities!

*I've just started looking for my wedding – what should I be aware of?*

We are still welcoming new couples to Riddle's Court and are happy to answer any questions you might have. We are hoping to return to some semblance of 'normal' in 2021, and we still have dates in our calendar that are available for all types of weddings.

If you're looking to have a smaller wedding in the near future, we would recommend looking into your options in terms of the legal process and potentially livestreaming your ceremony. We're in contact with a number of suppliers who are able to help with any questions you might have.

If you're looking for a full wedding, we are still happy to plan for this in a flexible and optimistic manner.

If you have any questions at all about our future planning, ceremony and reception options or the state of the venue, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us directly via [events@riddlecourt.org.uk](mailto:events@riddlecourt.org.uk) or call 0131 510 8789.

## VENUE

### History

#### *Where is Riddle's Court?*

Riddle's Court is a real historic jewel in the heart of Edinburgh's Old Town, only a short ten minute walk up from Edinburgh Waverley Railway Station. For those arriving by plane, both trams and buses will drop you outside the railway station. We are also conveniently located for taxi drop off and pick up on the Lawnmarket.

Our main entrance is situated close to the Royal Mile as you approach Edinburgh Castle, on the left-hand side.

Have a look at our 'How to Find Riddle's Court' downloadable PDF on our Wedding Resources page on our website.

#### *Why is Riddle's Court special?*

Built in the 1590s, Riddle's Court is a picturesque Category A-listed merchant's house full of authentic period features and genuine charm. It has been painstakingly restored by skilled craftsmen without compromising the integrity of the original building. Hidden until recently, new contemporary interventions carried out by the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust have transformed its atmospheric historic spaces into a state-of-the-art venue.

A visit to our building is a journey through 400 years; each room resonant of a different chapter in this complex tale, from the banquet of King James VI/I to the Arts and Crafts dining hall of one of Edinburgh's first university residences.

#### *What sort of weddings do you accommodate?*

If you are wishing to exchange vows in an atmospheric historic setting, Riddle's Court's captivating painted ceilings, grand rooms and romantic courtyards offer a unique venue for all types of ceremonies. You can take comfort in the knowledge that your entire celebration can take place under one roof, or we can accommodate different elements of your day if you choose to split your celebration across different venues.

### Capacities

#### *What sort of rooms do you offer?*

We have a suite of rooms of varying sizes and atmospheres to suit your needs. Today, the magnificent, spacious Library room looks over Victoria Street from its large south facing windows and is the perfect setting for a wedding reception.

As a stimulus for conversation in the Geddes Room, Patrick Geddes himself commissioned the ultimate talking piece – a picture storybook painted on each of the panels of the ceiling. Some scholars believe that the ceiling's heraldic design was inspired by the Seton room next door, but its style draws heavily on the Celtic Renaissance and the Arts and Crafts movements. Most of our couples have exchanged vows under this magnificent design.

The Seton room is named after Alexander Seton, Chancellor of Scotland in 1603. His classical education is reflected in the magnificent plasterwork on the ceiling of the room, which he commissioned shortly before he died. This room was later a students' drawing room, and Geddes also installed the distinctive seating booths, possibly to encourage conversation and engagement with the outside world. The darkly panelled McMorran Room has a large press or wall cupboard, suggesting that this was a study or office originally; perhaps of Bailie John McMorran, the high-ranking magistrate who built Riddle's Court in 1587. Both of these rooms offer flexible spaces, which could be used for a bar, kids' room or bridal/groom's party, to name a few.

### *How many guests can be accommodated here?*

We do offer varying sized rooms to suit your needs, with the largest capable of hosting up to 80 seated guests, or 120 at an evening reception. We have had everything from a couple and their witnesses, to a full day of 80 people and a further 40 in the evening, spread across the whole building.

### *Do you have disabled access?*

The vast majority of the building is accessible through ramps on the ground floor and a striking lift taking you up to the first floor. We also have a 'destination' accessible toilet which is a hidden, historic gem in the building.

### *Do you have onsite accommodation?*

We have a beautiful honeymoon suite, The King's Chamber, situated in our courtyard residence. It was the location of King James VI's banquet in the 1590s, and is now a stunningly restored 1-bedroom apartment complete with a kitchen, dining area and lounge. The restored tempura-painted beams are the highlight of the space.

If you're still looking for accommodation for friends and family who are also looking for a unique stay, our newest project, Liberton Tower, is one not to be missed. This 15<sup>th</sup> century tower on the south side of Edinburgh has a great hall, four-poster bed, open fire, spiral staircases and a parapet walkway. It can accommodate up to 4 guests and is only 12 minutes away from Riddle's Court via taxi.

## PRICES

### **Packages**

#### *What is included in your normal wedding package?*

Our starting point for the wedding venue hire package is to include a full-day's exclusive hire of the building, and 2 nights in the King's Chamber. This would include setting up on the afternoon/evening before (availability dependant), a wedding running from around 1pm to midnight, and collection of anything on the next working day. Typically, our weddings comprise of a ceremony, drinks reception, wedding breakfast and evening reception, but there is no set running order and we take the lead from our couples. We are always happy to discuss other options if you are splitting your wedding across different venues.

#### *How much do you charge for weddings?*

As we don't work with packages, our prices are completely flexible to meet your needs and account for seasonality. This is subject to change depending on your requirements and the nature of the event – if you have any questions, just get in touch with us directly.

### **Invoicing**

#### *What am I expected to pay and when?*

A deposit of 50% of the venue hire is required to secure the booking on your chosen date. The remaining venue hire is due one month before the wedding.

#### *How can I pay?*

You will receive an invoice with the company bank details and a payment reference, so you can pay by bank transfer. Alternatively, you are welcome to phone up to pay via card.

## FURNITURE

### What's in the building?

*What furniture do you have available?*

We have rectangular tables that are available for a banquet-style setup for the meal. We also have plenty of chairs onsite that you would be free to use, but most of our couples have hired in chairs in the past.

If you would like to use the onsite chairs, but would prefer them with a chair cover, we can provide and dress these for £3.50+VAT per chair.

We have a number of antique pieces of furniture that you may wish to use, particularly our signing table.

### AV Equipment

*What AV equipment do you have?*

We have a discrete speaker, which is typically used during the ceremony and drinks reception, if there is no live music. We also have an amplifier available.

We have screens around the building, which can be made available if needed.

We have microphones for speeches.

We also have basic livestreaming capabilities if you would like to bring in guests remotely; alternatively we can put you in contact with our recommended videographers for further technical capabilities and a memento to remember your day.

*Do I have to pay extra for AV equipment?*

There is no extra charge for this.

### Furniture hire

*What can I hire in?*

Couples often choose to hire in chairs, at the very least. There are a few options and normally this will go through the caterers. If you would like a round setup for dinner, tables and cloths will need hiring in. For banquet setup, cloths will need hiring (usually taken care of by the caterers). It's also useful to remember high chairs for dinner if you have small children attending!

For the evening reception, you may wish to hire things like lights and a PA system (if you don't have other entertainment, like a band).

*What will this cost?*

When hiring through us, the following is a guide to costs (excl. VAT):

- Chairs: around £3-£4 each
- Round tables: around £6 each
- Round cloths: between £10 and £14 each
- Rectangle cloths: around £5 each
- Poseur tables: £18
- High chair: around £12 each

Lights and a PA system would need to be arranged yourselves. We've had a recent wedding where they hired a 'disco in a box' which worked great and cost around £100. It included some lights and a small PA system.

## Possible room set-ups

*What room set-ups can you accommodate?*

Ceremony (2-100 guests):

For a full wedding, the ceremony must take place on the first floor to accommodate the meal in the Library Room. The capacity is 80 in the Geddes Room (central picture). Have a look at our room guides on our Wedding Resources page for more information.



Wedding Breakfast (up to 80 guests):



Evening (up to 120 guests):



## CATERING

### External Caterers

*Who can we use for our wedding catering?*

We have four main appointed caterers and these are Appetite Events, Orde Catering, the Pantry and Edinburgh Larder. Our building is unique and quirky, which is why we stick to caterers who we know and trust.

### *How much are we in contact with the caterers?*

You should arrange everything directly with the caterers. You can start with emailing to find out about what kind of packages and food they can offer and when you are happy you can book them in for your date. Throughout the process there will be lots of communication about menu choices, timings and you will also do a tasting. In the few weeks running up to the wedding, we will discuss arrangements directly with them to ensure smooth running of your day.

### *When can they get onsite to set-up?*

Typically the caterers will have deliveries arrive the day before, but will only come to setup the morning of the wedding. Your events coordinator at Riddle's Court will check with all your suppliers to make sure we're onsite in time for them to get everything ready for you!

### *Will I be responsible for any catering on the day?*

Absolutely not! There will be an events coordinator present for the whole day who will manage everything. We have a very detailed schedule, which manages all of the catering timings, as well as everything else that goes on throughout the day, so everything runs smoothly and you can enjoy yourselves.

If you're at all concerned, we would recommend appointing a member of your bridal party to check in every now and again while you're enjoying yourselves.

## **Alcohol/Bar**

### *Who is responsible for the bar?*

The caterer will take care of all the food and drink throughout the day.

### *What do I have to provide?*

For minimal effort, you could provide absolutely nothing. Most of our couples have decided to provide all of the drinks for the early reception and the meal, and are charged corkage to minimise costs. The caterer must provide the drinks in the evening and they typically run a cash bar.

## **DAY BEFORE**

## **Rehearsal**

### *Can I have access to the building for a rehearsal?*

Absolutely, just get in touch with one of the events coordinators here and we can arrange something.

## **Delivery/Set-up**

### *Can I have access to the rooms to decorate/set-up the day before?*

Generally, you will be able to access at least one main room from around 3pm the day before the wedding. If we have a room hire, you will at least get into all the rooms from 6pm. We try to get as much setup as possible done the afternoon before the wedding; you should not be setting anything up on the morning of your wedding!

### *Is there a space I can use to setup all day?*

Our McMorran Room is the ideal space to use to arrange flowers, store decorations and drinks, and get everything ready as early as possible. We can offer this space from 10am the day before your wedding for a reduced rate to help you get organised throughout the day.

## STOCK ONSITE

### Décor onsite

*Do you have a blackboard I can write on?*

We have two blackboards that can be used, and one is already decorated with a 'welcome to the wedding of...' design which can be kept if you like it.

*Do you have table number stands?*

We do have table number stands and we'd be happy to let you use these.

*Can we use candles?*

You can use candles in the building, during the ceremony and meal, and there are a few small guidelines to abide by as Riddle's Court is a restored, historic building.

## DURING THE EVENT

### RC staff responsibilities

*What are the venue staff responsible for on the day?*

Our key responsibility is ensuring the whole wedding runs without a hitch. We have a detailed schedule which includes catering timings, arrival of different suppliers, setup requirements and any guest movements. Whilst the caterers are running the day, we keep track of everything and make sure the bride and groom enjoy themselves without any worries!

*Who do I talk to if I need to check-up on anything?*

The function manager from the catering team will be able to answer any questions you have. There will also be a Riddle's Court events coordinator available throughout the day.

### Music

*What music options do you have available onsite?*

We have a speaker and an amplifier, which you are welcome to use.

*Can I have a disco or a ceilidh?*

Yes! The Library Room is the perfect place for a disco or a ceilidh, and this can run until midnight. We suggest that you can get around 30-40 people dancing at one time, depending on furniture layout. Perhaps if you are having a disco or ceilidh in the evening, you may wish to have the bar and any evening food elsewhere – but our events team is here to talk through all options if you have any questions.

*Do you have any musicians you would recommend?*

We have worked with quite a few musicians who we would love to recommend.

- Ceremony/reception:
  - Debbie Snowdon
    - 07724 727281
    - [snowdond Deborah@gmail.com](mailto:snowdond Deborah@gmail.com)
  - The Four String Quartet
    - [fourstringquartetScotland@gmail.com](mailto:fourstringquartetScotland@gmail.com)
- Ceilidh

- The Shandoneers
  - [willoke@gmail.com](mailto:willoke@gmail.com)

## Timings

*Who is responsible for everything sticking to time on the day?*

The Riddle's Court events coordinator will manage all of the main timings – start of ceremony, reception, meal – and will also keep track of musicians setting up and the catering team staying on schedule.

If you are planning to play music through the speakers or a PA system using a playlist, we would suggest one of your trusted wedding party are in charge of controlling it. We also think it's nice to have one of your wedding party make the calls to your guests throughout the day.

The catering team ensure the delivery of all matters relating to your food and drink.

## THE KING'S CHAMBER

### Check in/Check out

*I'm using your onsite accommodation – when can I get access to the flat?*

The standard check-in time is 3pm. If there is no checkout before you, we can try and get you in earlier, but there is no guarantee. Again, standard checkout time is 11am, but we always try to delay it if possible. We will be able to let you know closer to the time.

*What facilities do I need to be aware of in the flat?*

There is a sofa bed which can be useful if you have any of the wedding party staying with you beforehand. There is a fully-equipped kitchen, dining area and lounge. As part of the wedding package, you have the flat for 2 nights. These can be taken however you want (1 night before & 1 after, 2 nights after, or if you want it for longer we are happy to add on another night).

### Storage

*Can I store my belongings in the flat during the wedding?*

You can store whatever you want in the flat during the wedding. We would recommend entrusting the key to someone in the wedding party so they can access things if needed.

*What happens with cards and gifts?*

These can be put in the flat for you, or often for ease, we store these in the McMorran Room, a small space on the first floor.

## AFTER THE BIG DAY

### Collection of décor/alcohol

*What needs to be done at the end of the night?*

We will not ask you to do too much at the end of the night, but it will be helpful to nominate someone to collect all of your belongings and decorations around the building, and move them to one place.

*Can I have access the next day to pick up decorations?*



You can leave everything in the building at the end of the night and collect it the next working day, i.e. for a Saturday wedding, you can collect everything the Monday after. If you want to collect on a Sunday, we can accommodate this but would have to apply a staffing charge.

### *Who is responsible for taking away any leftover alcohol?*

If any of your alcohol is left, you can collect this along with the rest of your things. The caterer will take away any of theirs.

## **Rubbish disposal**

### *Who is responsible for dealing with rubbish and recycling?*

The caterer is responsible for leaving our building as they found it, so they should take care of all rubbish and recycling. It is worth checking this with them, but we will also confirm.

If you are supplying your own drink, please ensure that the caterer is indeed disposing of the recycling.

If Riddle's Court need to dispose of excessive rubbish or recycling, this will be charged per uplift.

## **Feedback**

### *Where can I find past wedding reviews?*

The best place to see reviews from couples who have had weddings with us over the past two years is on our Wedding Dates page. There are also lots of photos on the page.

<https://www.weddingdates.co.uk/venues/riddles-court-119/>

"We had the best wedding at Riddle's Court last month. It's a beautiful historic venue, right in the heart of Edinburgh and has been wonderfully restored. Our day ran like clockwork and we couldn't have dreamt of a more perfect wedding. A big part of what made it all so perfect, was the wonderful team at Riddle's. Gail and Louise were so helpful and accommodating in the run up to our special day, always willing to chat to us and have us in to see the venue when we needed to. On the day itself, all of the team were great - helpful and around whenever we needed anything, but not at all intrusive. Finally, since the day Louise and Gail have been in touch to help us deal with post-wedding pickups etc - nothing has ever been too much trouble. We couldn't recommend Riddle's Court any more highly. If you want a romantic, stress-free wedding in the heart of Edinburgh, it's definitely the spot for you."

Katy & Andrew

04.05.19



If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact the events team:

[events@riddlescourt.org.uk](mailto:events@riddlescourt.org.uk)