

## COMMON ROOM AND COMMON TABLE

### INFORMATION FOR FELLOWS

#### COMMON ROOM

The Senior Common Room (SCR) is primarily for use by the Fellows of the College and other designated members and associate members of the SCR. The SCR may be entered via the Fellows' staircase (opposite the Hall up to the Rotunda) or from Staircase IX. Lift access is also available off Lower Screens Passage (by the Servery). Entry is by means of an electronic fob key. Fobs and keys are issued by the Lodge. Users of the SCR may occasionally encounter visitors staying in the adjacent College guest rooms (located above the SCR).

The SCR comprises the Rotunda, Sitting Room, Old Dining Room, Lobby, lavatories, the Shackleton Room, and, by extension, the adjacent external balcony. The Rotunda, at the head of the staircase from the Hall gives on to the Lobby, thence to the Shackleton Room; on the other side of the Rotunda is the Sitting Room, from which the Old Dining Room can be accessed.

The Sitting Room is primarily for general relaxed use during the day (a 'club facility', one might imagine); it should not be thought of as an office. Whilst electronic gadgetry is not prohibited, other users sometimes find a proliferation of laptops and other equipment, bulky bags, coats, etc, tiresome. In the same breath and most particularly, it should be understood that the Old Dining Room is almost 'out of bounds' for any save official use (e.g. some lunches and dessert, and other pre-authorised activities), which is overseen by the Curator, to whom all applications for use should be addressed. The Butler, or in his absence the SCR Assistants, has strict instructions to ensure that this rule is implemented.

The Shackleton Room is used for breakfast and lunch. This room, too, has quaint customary usage and its facilities are likewise limited; there are times when it is used for staff meetings (and, e.g. their coffee breaks); we should resist overspilling into this room, too. The Lobby has hooks for coats and gowns and affords access to the lavatories which are not gender specific.

The Curator of Common Room is Professor Carole Bourne-Taylor and the Deputy Curator is Dr Simon Shogry; the correct email address for either of them is [curator@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:curator@bnc.ox.ac.uk). Any queries about the SCR or these guidelines should be addressed to them, not the support staff.

The Steward is Martin Wiseman ([steward@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:steward@bnc.ox.ac.uk)). The College Butler is Nathan Pyle ([scr@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:scr@bnc.ox.ac.uk)). Kim Smith, the SCR Assistant, serves the Common Room exclusively.

#### COMMON TABLE

Meals should be booked using the online meal booking system (<https://scrmeals.bnc.ox.ac.uk/>). This is accessed using your Oxford University Single Sign-On (SSO) Username, which is the same username and password used to access the University email system. If there is a problem with the online system, booking may also be done by telephoning the Lodge (01865 277830). Names for lunch or dinner should be entered by 10.00 a.m. on the day in question (10.00 a.m. on Friday for dinner on Sunday).

## **CHARGES**

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are Common Table meals, and Fellows are not charged for them. All drinks and desserts are charged to the batels (account) of the Fellow consuming them. Fellows are also charged for the meals, desserts and drinks consumed by their guests. The charge for wine at dinner and dessert will reflect the true cost of the wine divided among those who drink it.

Fellows may charge the cost of entertaining professional colleagues in the course of their duties to their Hospitality Allowance. The cost may be charged to a College budget only if the guest is involved in a project connected with business for the benefit of the College, and only with the prior agreement of the relevant budget holder or Bursar.

The annual subscription fee for the Common Room is charged automatically to batels.

### ***Common Room Drinks***

It is the responsibility of individuals to ensure that any drinks taken from the refrigerator or cabinets located within the Common Room are clearly recorded in capital letters on the sheets provided. Fellows are asked to ensure that this responsibility is observed by those who may not be familiar with the Common Room, such as guests at dinner or staying in the guest rooms.

## **BREAKFAST**

Breakfast is available for College Fellows, Academic Visitors, guests residing in the Fellows' Guest Rooms and others with breakfast entitlement. There is no need to sign up for breakfast.

### ***During term time***

A buffet-style breakfast is served in the Shackleton Room from 8.15 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. Monday to Friday. Brunch is served between 11.00 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

### ***During vacation***

Breakfast is served in the Shackleton Room from 8.15 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. Monday to Friday only.

A self-service continental breakfast is available from 9.00 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. at weekends in the Shackleton Room, unless otherwise advised. Guests residing in Fellows' Guest Rooms or equivalent should be asked to tell the Lodge on arrival if they wish to take breakfast at weekends.

## **LUNCH**

### ***Weekdays***

Lunch is served in the Shackleton Room from 12.45 p.m. to 1.45 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Fellows are asked to sign up for lunch before 10.00 a.m. on the day in question.

Places for lunch are laid until 1.45 p.m. Since space is limited, seats should be vacated as soon as the meal is finished and as soon as possible after 1.45 p.m. to enable the staff to clear at 2.00 p.m.

### ***Weekends***

Lunch is not served at weekends. Fellows may take brunch in Hall at any time between 11.00 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. This is a self-service meal through the Servery.

Please note that it is a College convention that spouses or partners should not be invited as guests to lunch on a regular basis.

A takeaway lunch service, bookable on a Upay app/website, was introduced during the pandemic. This service will continue in Michaelmas Term 2021 in addition to lunch in the Shackleton Room. You can request Upay login credentials from the IT office ([computer.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:computer.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk)) and a guide "Upay Order Ahead SCR/Staff Packed Lunch" is available on request.

### **TEA**

Afternoon tea is available in Common Room from 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday from 0<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> week. No booking is necessary.

### **DINNER**

Dinner is provided if one or more College Fellows have signed up, and it is served in Hall at 7.15 p.m., Monday to Friday. Sunday dinner is served in Hall at 7.30 p.m. There is no dinner on Saturday night. Out of term dinner is served in the Old Dining Room from Monday to Friday.

Dessert is also served on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday in term time, which are formal Guest Nights.

Any Fellow may bring up to three guests to dinner on any evening, as above.

Names for dinner should be entered by 10.00 a.m. (10.00 a.m. on Friday for dinner on Sunday). The names of any guests for dinner should be included, and how the cost is to be met. Fellows should indicate, when entering their names for dinner, any allergies or special dietary requirements and, on dessert nights (Sunday, Tuesday and Friday), whether or not they propose to stay for dessert in Common Room.

Please note that the maximum number of spaces available for dessert is 22 and if dessert is full, the booking system will not allow you to sign up for dessert. On special occasions a 'standing dessert', which may accommodate more participants, may be permitted by the Curator.

Fellows who have not signed up may take dinner from the Servery when Informal Hall occurs on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings (6.15 – 7.00 p.m.). On guest nights

(Tuesday and Friday), Informal Hall is from 5.45 – 6.15 p.m. There is no Informal Hall on Sunday.

The place of assembly for dinner is the Common Room. Guests should be introduced to the Principal or the presiding Fellow before dinner. When dinner is announced, the Principal or presiding Fellow will lead those dining into the Hall and Fellows with guests should enter first. Once in place, the diners should stand in silence until the grace is said. After the closing grace, they should remain in their places while the Principal or presiding Fellow leaves the Hall. Please brief your guests in advance.

When dinner is served in Hall, the seat at the north end of the High Table (towards the Old Quad) is assigned to the Vice-Principal when he is dining or to the next most senior Fellow, and that at the south end to the Bursar when he is dining or to the next most senior Fellow. In the absence of the Principal, the Vice-Principal or the most senior Fellow presides at dinner.

When a seating plan is drawn up by the Curators (which applies on dessert nights), it must be adhered to. On Sunday, the seating plan is drawn up by the Butler.

On Sunday, diners are encouraged to attend the Choir Drinks, usually in Lecture Room VII or the Medieval Kitchen and served after the evening service, before going into dinner. Choir Drinks normally begin around 7.00 p.m.

### ***Dress code***

Some sartorial formality should be observed; College Fellows should wear MA gowns when dining in Hall, but not when dinner is served in the Common Room or at dessert in the Senior Common Room. Unless otherwise announced, the dress code for men at formal dinner is a jacket and tie and equivalent for women. Hosts should ensure that their guests are aware of this. Guests who are members of the University are welcome to wear gowns if they wish. (It is no longer suggested that dinner jackets should be worn on Sundays.)

### ***Dessert***

In Oxford Colleges, dessert is a separate occasion in a separate room. Dessert at Brasenose usually takes place in the Old Dining Room within the SCR. Dessert is provided when at least four diners, which must include at least one College Fellow, have signed up for it.

At dessert, the Curator presides; in the absence of the Curator or the Deputy Curator, the most senior Fellow presides. The Principal sits at the west end of the table; in the Principal's absence, this place is occupied by the most senior Fellow (other than the Fellow presiding at dinner).

Snuff is also provided for those who wish to partake; should this be the case, it is customary that a Fellow will be able to offer the snuffbox to those present when directed by the presiding Fellow. That said, no pressure should be put on them or anyone else to offer or take the snuff.

The expectation is that dessert finish no later than an hour after the end of dinner, usually after the port has circulated twice. The presiding Fellow should rise and leave the room as an indication that dessert is concluded. All the remaining people at the table should leave as soon as possible after his or her departure. It is the responsibility of the presiding Fellow to ensure that the candles are extinguished and that the fire and lights in the room are turned off.

There may be occasions when, due to staffing levels or a small number dining, the table is laid without silver and not cleared until the following morning. Staff will normally stay until 9.00 or 9.15 p.m., in order to make sure that the guests have settled, and clear up the dessert room in the morning. N.B: Gowns are not worn at dessert.

## **GUESTS**

Fellows may bring up to three guests to any meals with the exception of special Feasts. If a College Fellow wishes to bring more than three guests to a meal in connection with a College or University activity, they should discuss the matter in advance with the Curator(s).

Please note that Undergraduates are not invited to dine during Term.

## **FURTHER DETAILS**

A Fellow who has signed up for a meal and is subsequently unable to attend should inform the Common Room staff (the Steward or Butler: [scr@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:scr@bnc.ox.ac.uk)) as soon as possible.

Wine for personal consumption from the College Cellar can be purchased by contacting the Cellararius, Steward or Butler.

Use of the Old Dining Room is to be authorised by the Curator(s).

The use of mobile phones (or earphones) is not permitted in the Hall or Old Dining Room; the same is true for computers. If it is absolutely necessary to take a call, Fellows or their guests should go to the Rotunda, the outside patio or the Lobby. The Senior Common Room is a place for relaxation, not work; the use of computers and the like should be at an absolute minimum, particularly during busy times.

During the coronavirus pandemic, various adjustments were made in College in response to Government and University guidance. From the start of Michaelmas Term 2021, the majority of restrictions in College are being lifted. Please check the College Covid-19 page: <https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/covid-19> for the latest information, which will change according to circumstance.