classical, unique and inspiring
“An outstanding venue for conferences and functions”
Twenty acres of beautiful grounds and gardens provide the perfect backdrop to the excellent state-of-the-art conference facilities within both the traditional nineteenth-century rooms of Downing College and the modern environmentally sustainable Howard Theatre.

Tailoring flexible meeting facilities to suit your needs, our professional and experienced conference team can accommodate a variety of events from small board meetings and private dining to large conferences and gala dinners.

This remarkable mix of stunning landscape, inspiring neo-classical architecture and exceptional facilities, alongside a consistently high standard of customer service, makes Downing College an outstanding venue for conferences and functions.
History

Downing College was founded in 1800 by the terms of Sir George Downing’s will and designed by William Wilkins in 1806. Greatly influenced by his travels in Greece, the Georgian architect envisaged classical buildings set amidst a large and beautiful landscape.

Between 1807-21, the West and most of the East ranges were built containing many of the College conference rooms; the chapel was added to the North side in the latter end of the 1950s, whilst the Paddock completes the Quadrangle. The award-winning Senior Combination Room was built in 1969 and the stately Hall was restored in 2009 in homage to Wilkins’ original design. In 2010, the Howard Conference Centre was completed, consisting of the Howard Building, Howard Lodge and the Howard Theatre, magnificent facilities generously funded by The Howard Foundation.
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“The College is very grateful to the Howard Foundation and Dr Alan Howard for this splendid new building”

Professor Barry Everitt, Master of Downing College (2003–2013)

Theatre control box
Combining neo-classical architecture with modern technologies, the Howard Theatre is a remarkable mix of old and new. Kindly donated by Dr Alan Howard, an Honorary Fellow of the College, this spectacular building was designed to high environmental standards by award-winning architects Quinlan & Francis Terry.

The Theatre has both tiered and gallery seating, and is fully equipped with state-of-the-art sound, lighting and presentation equipment. The eye-catching front-of-house curtain features Downing College amidst classical Greek architecture, whilst bespoke Italian leather seating offers the very best in luxury and comfort.

Fully accessible with both stairway and lift access to all floors, a large ground-floor reception room, an auditorium with 160 seats, and two small meeting rooms, the Howard Theatre is a first-rate facility for conferences, presentations and corporate hospitality.
“A versatile space with a natural and elegant feel”
Named in memory of Dr Howard’s wife, the Grace Howard Room offers a large versatile space on the ground floor of the Theatre. With minimal furnishings, the bespoke Georgian style lounge seating and tables and attractive stone floor create a feeling of simplicity and elegance.

If used as an overflow meeting space, Theatre presentations can be projected onto a large screen. For speakers waiting to present or staff on registration, an LCD visual and audio link is available from the Theatre to the Grace Howard Room.

With patio doors opening out onto the lovely West Lodge Garden of Howard Court, the room is perfect for exhibitions and poster displays or buffets, drinks receptions and cabaret-style formal dining.
Whether used for board meetings, conference offices, breakout areas or quiet workrooms for presenters, the two small meeting rooms offer extremely flexible spaces within the Howard Theatre.

The Smart Board facility, AV link to the theatre system, telephone and WiFi connection ensure that organisers, presenters and delegates have access to everything they need during their stay.

With ground-source heating and cooling systems throughout the building and pleasant views across the West Lodge Garden, the meeting rooms provide comfortable areas which can be booked independently from the Howard Theatre.
With seating areas for delegates to relax during coffee and lunch breaks or evening drinks receptions, the Loggia is perfect for unwinding and enjoying the garden and surrounding neo-classical architecture. Based on Palladio’s Doric order, the colonnade adorning the three buildings of Howard Court provides an elegant undercover outside space.

The West Lodge Garden is bordered by a variety of decorative grasses and beautiful flowers such as allium, the ornamental onion, mahonia with its yellow spikes and the award-winning perennial verbena bonariensis, which attract a range of wild butterflies.
“Relax and enjoy the scenery from the colonnaded seating area”
Set within beautiful grounds, the neo-classical style of the Howard Building Drawing Room conveys a sense of both elegance and tradition. A relaxing environment fitted with a fully licensed bar, surrounded by classical columns and furnished with easy chairs, it is the perfect venue for hosting a variety of celebration events, providing outdoor drinks receptions, organising registrations or serving light refreshments.

Ideal for taking a break after meetings, the Howard Building Drawing Room is located below the Assembly Room and opens out onto the West Lodge Garden of Howard Court. Delegates can relax in the colonnaded seating area and enjoy a summer barbecue or game of croquet.
“A flexible space flooded with natural light”
The impressive Howard Building Assembly Room blends perfectly with the classical feel of the College. A spacious and stylish room with decorative Ionic scrolls, its neo-classical style gives a Regency elegance and provides a unique setting for both conferences and civil ceremonies for weddings.

With stairway and lift access from the foyer, this purpose-built lecture room is fitted with a multimedia presentation system. A flexible space, the flat floor and small stage allow for a variety of layouts from board meetings to cabaret-style workshops or theatre-style presentations.
“Superb rooms in the most beautiful setting”
From study rooms to hotel-standard en-suites with views over the attractive College gardens, Downing offers a range of excellent accommodation whatever your conference needs. Our high standards were recognised by the inaugural Cambridge BID Customer Experience Special Recognition Award 2016 for Bed & Breakfast accommodation in a Cambridge College.

Serviced daily, all rooms have private modern bathrooms complete with toiletries, a welcome tray, television and wi-fi. There is a choice of superior double-bedded, single and twin-bedded rooms.

The North Range and Lensfield Road houses are ideal for academic summer schools. Both the study rooms and houses offer single accommodation with shared bathrooms.
“Great food, superb wines, relaxing atmosphere and friendly people”
Using fresh, seasonal and where possible locally-sourced produce, Downing College’s Executive Head Chef and his team provide high-quality restaurant-standard cuisine. Catering for a variety of events from canapés for Drinks Receptions to Dinners in one of the College’s function rooms, the dishes are fresh, perfectly prepared and exquisitely presented.

**Medallion of Dry Aged Fillet of Beef with an Oxtail Bon Bon Shallot Purée, Compote of Wild Mushrooms, Buttered Spinach, Baby Heritage Carrots**

**Clotted Cream Panna Cotta Caramelised Apple, Rustic Crumb, Blackberry Curd**
“An impressive landscape of gardens, lawns, trees and flowers”
Hidden away in the heart of Cambridge, Downing College’s twenty acres contain an impressive diversity of gardens, lawns, trees and flowers, from the expanse of the Quadrangle lawns, to the unusual mixed borders of the West Lodge Garden and the rich assortment of trees in the Fellows’ Garden.

Limes, maples and a dawn redwood in the Paddock offer further variety, whilst the wild flower habitat lures bees and butterflies and the hazel spinney attracts wildlife. The East Lodge Garden has an extensive collection of trees, such as birch and snake bark maple with their ornamental bark and an Indian bean with its large floppy leaves and thin green pods. Through an archway, pillar crabs, irises and clematis can be found in a secret Rose Garden, alongside breeding and feeding bird boxes and bumblebee nesters.
“A wonderful environment for our guests”
Downing College offers a unique environment with inspiring neo-classical architecture surrounded by magnificent grounds. Delegates can take a stroll through the gardens or make use of the modern gym facility located near the Howard Theatre.

A large open space, the Paddock can be used for a variety of games from football and hockey to volleyball and frisbee. With two courts nearby; tennis, basketball or netball can also be played. For those in search of a rest, less energetic pursuits like reading can be enjoyed in peaceful hideaways such as the secret Rose Garden.
“The Hall has been restored to its original early 19th Century decoration”
Restored to its original early nineteenth century décor and surrounded by beautiful gardens, the award-winning Hall is the perfect setting for formal dinners and weddings.

True to the original architect’s vision, the design reflects the spirit of the Greek revival period. Based on Wilkins’ bold patterns and authentic colours, the classical interior is striking with limestone floor tiles, under-floor heating, bespoke oak furniture and newly-designed chandeliers inspired by the shape of classical Greek oil lamps.

Neo-classical in design yet modern and flexible, the stately Hall has an integrated audio system and a range of lighting options. From cafeteria-style and finger and fork buffets to gala dinners, the room can accommodate a variety of catering options with pre-dinner drinks on the Fellows’ Garden or in the Senior Combination Room.
“A versatile space with period detail including intricate mirrors and ornate friezes”
Adjacent to the Howard Building and equipped with a full range of audio-visual equipment, the West Lodge and Maitland Room are two adjoining areas of similar size. With a variety of set-up options from boardroom to theatre-style, they provide either individual seminar rooms, breakout areas or one large joined meeting room ideal for corporate presentations.

Full of character, with intricate mirrors and ornate friezes, these two traditional rooms date back to the nineteenth century. With patio doors opening out onto the West Lodge Garden of Howard Court where drinks can be served, they are ideal venues for private dinners, receptions and parties.
“Traditional rooms full of natural light”
Traditional rooms full of natural light with large windows overlooking Howard Court. The Tim Cadbury Room and Music Room are two adjoining areas located adjacent to the Howard Building providing a perfect venue for presentations, workshops, business meetings and drinks receptions.
“Overlooks the East Lodge Garden with its extensive collection of trees”
Named after Downing College’s original architect and one of the prominent figures in the Greek revival of the early nineteenth century, the Wilkins Room is simply furnished and comfortable. With a range of audio-visual equipment available, it is ideal for board meetings or lecture-style presentations and training sessions.

Located within the East Range, the Wilkins Room overlooks the East Lodge Garden with its extensive collection of trees, providing colour all year round. The large windows fill the room with natural light and delegates can enjoy the scenery whilst light refreshments are served.
The award-winning Senior Combination Room (SCR) gives an insight into the fellowship of the College. With views of the Fellows’ Garden, it offers a unique venue for drinks receptions before gala dinners or weddings.

Beyond the Senior Combination Room and containing an extraordinary collection of interesting trees such as incense cedars and blue spruce, the Fellows’ Garden is an area of exceptional beauty.
Downing College has converted the old Stable Block to create The Heong Gallery, designed by the world-renowned architects Caruso St John and renovated using sustainable materials. It has been named after Alwyn Heong, an alumnus of the College who is a passionate supporter of the visual arts.

Dedicated to modern and contemporary art, the Gallery is open to the public on several days each week and there is a programme of events for all ages. It is also available for private views by appointment.
A member of the Meetings Industry Association and Meet Cambridge, Downing College is fully committed to working in a sustainable way and complies with environmental legislation and officially approved codes of practice. This includes sustainable buildings – including The Howard Theatre with its ground-source technology and thermally efficient Ketton stone – use of local suppliers, landscaping plans and green meetings package.

These initiatives have been recognised by a Gold Award from Green Tourism for the College’s outstanding achievements.

For more information, please contact our Conference Services Team

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Or visit our website
www.downing-conferences-cambridge.com
Room locations key

**HOWARD COURT**
- Howard Theatre
- Howard Building
- Howard Lodge

**A - STAIRCASE**
- The Hall
- SCR

**E - STAIRCASE**
- West Lodge and Maitland Room
- Tim Cadbury Room and Music Room
- Conference Services Office

**R - STAIRCASE**
- Wilkins Room

**FIRST COURT**
- The Heong Gallery

[Map of Downing College with room locations indicated]