

Bishopswood Golf Ltd

Need to book an off-site venue? Where do you start?

Most of us have either booked or attended a meeting that was held off site, away from the office. The reasons for off-site meetings are varied. If you're tasked with finding a venue you probably have a convenient and familiar 'go-to' option; as a delegate, you travel to work and can generally travel to an alternative location. Event organisers and delegates can have different viewpoints when it comes to the convenience of off-site locations.

Nowadays there is a large choice of potential venues available. The two main categories are hotels and purpose built conference centres, but other businesses now offer room hire services and are competing with the larger establishments on quality of service and price. Whether you are looking for something on a regular basis or as a one off, take the time to have a look at what is available. A good venue will help set the tone for your meeting and its success, it can influence the experience for delegates and the venue is probably the highest cost item of the event. Let's take a look at some Pros and Cons:

Venue Type	Pros	Cons
Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional • Customisable room spaces to accommodate the number of attendees • Will generally be able to cater for group sizes over 150 delegates • Generally located in populated areas, off motorways and close to public transport • Can offer accommodation to delegates in same location • Generally well maintained • Can generally provide all equipment requirements • On-site catering and refreshments • Parking generally available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be busy with a number of simultaneous events running and other users of hotel • Increased noise pollution • Staff availability may be reduced due to number of simultaneous events • May not offer outside space and/or natural daylight if located in built up areas • Higher cost due to having high overheads • Can be impersonal due to size of hotel • Depending on location there may not be parking on-site and/or it may not be free
Conference Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional • Primarily only used for business events • Business friendly and well maintained • Facilities for business events are readily available, have good provision of resources • Parking generally available • A variety of room sizes to hire • Will generally be able to cater for group sizes of over 150 delegates • Accommodation may also be available for delegates on site • Generally have on-site catering and refreshments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be busy with a number of simultaneous events • Higher cost due to their specialisation • Very business orientated which may not fit with the tone of the event being planned • Can be large and impersonal • May be limited facilities for delegates who are staying overnight

The alternatives to consider are:

Golf Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional • Able to service both business and private events • On-site catering and refreshments • Generally modern facilities with views over the golf course • Free ample parking • Generally found in quiet locations • Cost effective with other facilities/services available at reduced rates, for example, rounds of golf, driving ranges • Outside space generally available for use during the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be easily accessible for public transport • May not be able to cater for group sizes of over 150 delegates • Standard room equipment provided but may need to hire in specialist conference equipment • Business operation may not be 24 hours so early/late access to venue could be limited • May not have on-site accommodation
Pubs/ Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effective • Smaller and informal atmosphere • Good for short term events • Good for smaller meetings in terms of delegate numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources limited for business events • Informal atmosphere may not fit with the tone of the event • Parking may be limited • Busy with users of the pub especially over lunch periods etc • May not be able to cater for larger delegate numbers • Some pub rooms are of low standard of decoration
Community Centres/Parish Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effective • Local and available for short term hire (generally by the hour) • Very informal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources will be limited for business events • No internal refreshment and catering facilities • Some are not staffed on a regular basis • Setup and clear up may be your responsibility • Some community centres and halls are of low standard of decoration and furnishing • Possible interruption from other local community users
Business Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be cost effective depending on location • Available by the hour or day • Professional • Primarily only used for business events • Business friendly and well maintained • Facilities for business events are readily available, have good provision of resources • Parking generally available • A variety of room sizes to hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very business orientated which may not fit with the tone of the event being planned • Can be impersonal • Limited support staff available • Catering choices can be limited • No facilities for delegates who are staying overnight • Room sizes usually limited to 50 people or fewer

Not all options will be right for your business/event but, rather than going straight for the obvious or your 'go-to' choice, it might be worth weighing up the different venues available first.

A golf club may be a short drive from the nearest motorway or be 10 minutes further on from your head office than a hotel, but if it were more cost effective overall, then maybe the additional expense of mileage would be worth considering providing all other factors fit with your event. If time is a more pressing concern than cost then using the venue located a few miles up the road from the office or just off the motorway could be the answer.

Venues like golf clubs can offer a different type of service compared to hotels and conference centres, it can be more personal and tailored to individual needs.

Key considerations:

- Event objectives and required tone
- Day Delegate Rates (or overall costs) and what is included in the package
- Room size, date availability and facilities provided
- Additional cost implications based on requirements for the event, time and money
- Location, mileage and parking costs for delegates
- Accommodation needs and/or consideration for other facilities at the venue
- Public transport and links to main traffic routes

With internal competition for meeting room space increasing daily, the task of booking can quickly become time consuming and a logistical nightmare, hold your event at Bishopswood and we can help reduce the hassle of preparation – we'll manage everything from set up to clear up.

Bishopswood is located on the North Hampshire/West Berkshire border, just 15 minutes drive from the M3 and M4 motorways, we have three excellent fully-equipped suites that will ensure your delegates and visitors receive a warm reception. So whether you have a regular requirement for meeting facilities or an upcoming conference, we can offer competitive delegate rates combined with superb facilities. Our rooms comfortably cater for up to 120 seated guests, are air-conditioned with natural lighting and have stunning views across one of the finest golf courses in the country; they provide the perfect location to stimulate minds.

At Bishopswood we understand that an ineffective event can mean limited productivity and major costs. To help avoid that, we provide quotations to meet your budget requirements. All our room hire facilities are included within your package so that there are no hidden costs: lunch, refreshments, AV equipment, Wi-Fi and flipchart are all included; ample free parking is also available.

To get more information, to check availability of dates or to organise a visit call our Events Coordinator on 0118 940 8600 option 2.