

Paul's Events

presents...

The Manor House



Your guide to a creative and enjoyable day

Thank you for joining us at the Manor House, you are in for a real treat. Your day here in rural Berkshire is the result of many years of development and experience of weekend and one-day events in the UK and abroad. By constantly listening to visitor feedback and making subtle improvements I've been able to provide events that photographers and models want to attend time and time again. It is my intention you have a great time and leave with some wonderful images, quite likely some new friends and maybe even one or two new techniques.

This guide has been written predominantly for new visitors but will hopefully serve as a refresher for the many regulars too. As it contains just a few 'rules' can I suggest everyone does read it.

There's quite a bit to read in this document, but I ask that you do read it carefully, as not only will it assist your enjoyment of the day but it contains some important information too.

This document is not intended to 'tell you what to do' but to make you aware of all the things you need to know in order to get the best out of the event. It also includes a number of tips and hints collected over the years that I thought it would be useful to share with you. Throughout the day I will be available to assist you, support you and if required, provide guidance and suggestions to ensure you capture images you can be proud of.

Travel Arrangements

Planning your travel to the Manor House is easy as it's not far from the M4 J12. It takes about 15 minutes from Central Reading and trains are available to either Reading or Tilehurst and there is a bus service to the main gate. Just call me if you need any advice regarding travel – but please don't leave it till the last minute.

Contact Details

You can contact me on 07930 462906 either before the event or at any time during.

Arrival and Plan

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|---------------------------------|---------------|
| ○ Arrival * | 09:30 |
| ○ Briefing and group allocation | 09:35 – 10:00 |
| ○ Tour of the house | 10:00 – 10:15 |
| ○ First zone changeover/break | 11:45 – 12:00 |
| ○ Lunch | 13:30 – 14:15 |
| ○ Second zone changeover/break | 15:45 – 16:00 |
| ○ Depart | 17:30 |

*** Please note main gates will open at 09:00 and house will open at 09:15.**

Parking is available on the grass at the end of drive just before the cattle grid on the right hand side.

During the initial tour of the house you will have time to evaluate the opportunities that exist as well as tap into our experience and photographers who have been to previous Manor House events.



The Property

This beautifully restored Grade 2 listed Jacobean manor house of considerable historic importance is set amidst 25 acres of classical gardens and parkland, yet less than an hour from London and 30 minutes from Oxford or Heathrow. The house was built in 1609 by the grandfather of Queen Anne and has been restored in a contemporary fashion providing the luxury and modern amenities of an upmarket country manor house. There is ample parking, all the facilities you would expect and most importantly, endless diverse locations plus plenty of space to make the most of what a Manor House location has to offer

The Manor House is a living home and we are therefore very privileged to be able to shoot here. With such privilege comes responsibility and we all share the responsibility to treat the house and contents with the utmost care and consideration at all times. The owners have been very generous and not imposed too many rules on the event, they have however asked us to adhere to several very reasonable requests, these are:

- **No food or drink in any of the rooms other than the breakfast room**
- **If you wish to move any items of furniture please LIFT them to avoid damaging the floors**
- **If you do move any furniture or fittings please return them when finished shooting**
- **No stiletto heels or similar on the wooden floors**
- **No smoking anywhere in the house**
- **No sitting/laying etc. on the billiard table**
- **No sitting/standing/laying on the piano**
- **Don't fill the baths or use the showers.**
- **Due to a number of new carpets being laid, you are asked NOT to wear outdoor shoes in the house. Please therefore bring some indoor shoes/slippers to wear or work in just your socks!**

You will be provided with a plan of the house as well as your shooting schedule upon arrival. This is an important document so please take good care of it. It is important you and your group adhere to the published times including changeover times to ensure the event runs smoothly and to schedule.

I have divided the house into a number of 'shooting zones' to ensure everyone gets a fair range of shooting opportunities. We have all been to those shoots where it is a free-for-all and as a result nobody gets a decent shot and the models get very demotivated. What this does mean however is that not you will not get to shoot in every part of the house but I can assure you every group will get equal access to the main areas and have the opportunity to take some amazing shots.

In addition to the house there are extensive grounds, which subject to agreeable weather are available to shoot in. The grounds are not zoned and therefore are available on a first come- first served basis. In the grounds there is a lake and fountain, small boathouse, an amazing folly, wall-garden, trees, shrubs and other hard landscaping features too numerous to mention. If you want any help locating any of these just ask us and we will happily show you where they are.

Do take advantage of the grounds and superb outside locations but please let one of us know so that we know where you are and others can use your vacated 'zone' whilst you are out of the house.



Lunch and refreshments

Refreshments and a buffet lunch are provided and we take breaks and lunch together in the breakfast room. Whilst water, cold drinks and hot beverages are provided guests might like to bring their own additional drinks and snacks as it can be a long day.

Please remember NO food or drinks of any kind in the rooms

Making the most of the Manor House

Having chosen to spend the day at such a wonderful location it would be a real shame not to make the most of it and my tips and hints are provided to help you get the best from the Manor House no matter what your level of skill or experience.

Studio Flash lighting will be available in a number of the rooms however don't underestimate how fantastic and creative natural lighting can be.

My first piece of advice is don't fall into the trap of letting all your pictures look like they were taken in the studio or in any old field?



I exaggerate, but too often I do see images from the Manor House that don't take advantage of the wonderful environment and this disappoints me as it must be the people who took them. Therefore my suggestion is you take time to familiarise yourself with the house and when it comes to shooting you take a step back and look carefully at how you integrate the model into the scene. Consider the almost limitless range of setting, textures, shades, sunlight, architecture etc. and don't leave at 5:30 with any regrets. Over the last year or so I have been stunned on so many occasions by

the wealth of creative and imaginative images that have been shot at the Manor House; all I want is that yours join them.

Nobody will insist you speak to anyone else all day – that's your prerogative! However, if you do decide not to network, make new friends, share tips and images I can assure you that you will not get as much from the day as you could.

Past experience tells me that once in your groups it is essential that you communicate effectively, not only with each other but with the models too. I have seen groups where no communication or planning has taken place, the subsequent shoot is disorganised and nobody really feels like they made the most of it – that is a great shame.

It doesn't matter if you choose to shoot in succession or you allocate sections of time to each other – you also don't all need to shoot every set! The important thing is you find and agree on a style of shooting that suits all members of the group and is acceptable to the model. Remember, you have three hours shooting morning and afternoon, **how you divide that up between you is entirely up to you.**

Respect each other and the model, don't whatever you do shoot over each other as that really doesn't work and do speak to the model! How on earth will she know what you want her to do if you don't politely tell her? Involve her as well, as most of the girls have done this or similar trips before and they are all very experienced models and will as a result, have lots to contribute. Whilst the models will be happy to work outside in less than ideal weather do take good care of them and be considerate to their needs.

If a location or idea is too complex it will use up your valuable shooting time.

You will of course need to brief your models prior to their session with your group on what you want them to wear and any special requests you might have. Doing so in advance will reduce any time delays (and wasted shooting time) to a minimum. It is quite acceptable to bring your own props to use if you so wish.

If there is anything you are not happy with or don't understand please speak to us without delay, we are here to help and ensure you have a successful and enjoyable day.

As I said earlier, it is essential everyone sticks to the rota and in particular with regards to times.

Just to reiterate, you will get to shoot with two of our models during the day (as explained it is not possible to shoot with every model unfortunately) My team and I invest a great deal of time and effort, not only to bring the best possible models to these events but to match as closely as possible photographers to models based on any indicated preferences. Of course it is not always possible to meet everyone's desires all of the time – that unfortunately is the nature of a group shoot. I can assure you equal care is taken when forming the groups of photographers.



Finally consider sharing contact details, any photo-sharing sites you subscribe to or model sites. In my experience there is nothing better than seeing how others have interpreted the same location you shot in. As you probably already know I have an interactive gallery on my website and actively encourage you to upload your images to share with others who have been to the Manor House or are considering it for the first time.

As I've already said, be creative and make the very most of this fantastic location. Be mindful of where the sun is at any particular time as there are some great shots to be had if you are in the right place at the right time. Slowdown in order to get the best pictures! It is not a race (unless you really want it to be!!) and quality of images is far better than quantity. You will thank me for this little tip I am sure.

If you need help ask. It's your shoot and we'll be there to help you get the most from it.

Model Release

The day is intended for portfolio development including competitions and online forums and the images shot are not intended for commercial use. If you feel it is necessary you may request the model to sign a non-commercial release.

A few rules

I've no intention of introducing anymore rules than there needs to be but there are one or two things I need to make clear.

- Disruptive or abusive behaviour and comments will not be tolerated, a warning will be given and if repeated you will be asked to leave and no refund will be given – just have fun and respect the other photographers, the models and staff.
- 'Grabbed' shots taken while a model is getting into pose are unnecessary, unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Photographers should stay with their group for the day as these have been carefully planned, however mutual changing of groups can be considered in exceptional circumstances
- Paul's Events Manor House day is provided as a leisure activity and not a commercial shoot. If any photographer intends to take images for commercial use then please discuss this with me **BEFORE** commencing shooting.

Group Shoot Guidelines

- Respect the models, other photographers and treat everyone fairly.
- Assist and help other photographers.
- Ensure the models do not get overly cold or uncomfortable – always consider their welfare.
- Work with the model in turn and shoot on a one to one basis. Only shoot when it's your turn!
- Ensure everyone gets fair one to one time with the model.
- Quality shots count and not quantity. Don't just click away but work with the model, a few good shots are far more effective than a card full of bad ones.
- Guide and direct the model, don't tell the model how to pose, all our models are very experienced so just offer guidance not instruction.
- Don't over-shoot or overwork the model, there really is nothing to be gained from this.
- Don't ask the model to do something that may adversely affect following shots like get hair wet, get dirty etc.
- Don't distract the model.
- Shooting with fill in flash is great- but ensure you're not affecting others.
- Value and embrace other photographer's ideas and suggestions, you may learn something new.
- Ensure you make the most of the opportunities this superb location has to offer.
- Be sure you have fun, enjoy the day and shoots some good images.

The following may help with planning your shoots

- Take input and ideas from all photographers in your group and from the models, they have done this before!!
- Ensure the model for your session is aware of you plans and knows what to wear
- If a location or idea is too complex it will use up your shooting time.
- Plan ahead so you don't waste time.

Safety First.

- Be aware and don't take risks. Model, photographer and staff safety is of the utmost importance.
- It's your responsibility to evaluate the risk not the models, ensure you do not put their safety at risk.
- Check where you are asking the model to stand is safe no sharp objects or stinging plants also check for tripping hazards i.e. pot holes, loose floorboards or ground.
- During some months it will be dark when leaving the event to return to your car. I suggest you bring a torch as rural locations can get pretty dark at night!



You really are in for a superb day!