Description of the YM Accommodation (Bedrooms) Function

1. Workload of the function

Time Interval	Tasks	Workload
12 months prior to YM start	Contribute to choice of venue for YM. Visits to potential venues with other committee members. Liaison with potential providers. Meetings to discern suitable venue.	20 hours
6 months prior to YM start	Continuing resolution of selection issues. Detailed liaison with provider.	Monthly meetings of two hours
	Starting trial allocations. Trial data uploads.	Two hours per week.
1 month prior to YM start	Room allocations finalization. Final data to database	An hour per day
1 week prior to YM start	Organising security tokens (if applicable)	An hour per day
First 2 days of YM	Available to sort anything that arises	Up to major
Whole of YM	Continuing liaison with providers. Return of security tokens. Reconciliation of accounts.	An hour per day
1 month after YM	Work with Treasurer to reconcile accounts and payments. Contribute to YM report.	10 hours
Overall workload:	Heavy. Most tasks cannot be delayed. Have to deal with many individual demands.	
Skills required to undertake this function	Ability to negotiate. Be familiar with the YM Child Protection Policy. Ability to keep track of details. Knowledge of some of the people who come to YM is an advantage. Ability to use and learn Excel is helpful.	
This functions works most closely with:	The accommodation provider's liaison manager. The disability coordinator of YM. The Registration person of YM. The YM Catering person. YM Children's Coordinator	

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2. Tasks included in this function

This function includes doing these tasks:

1. With other committee members, inspect the various facilities under consideration, and contribute to the selection of facilities for use for YM. This will be helped by your having familiarized yourself with the room allocation principles below.
2. Negotiating with the provider to understand what rooms are available, and under what agreement.
3. Possibly investigate accommodation alternatives, such as camping, local motels, etc.
4. Liaising with the treasurer to help formulate the YM budget.
5. Allocating bedrooms to registrants
6. Becoming aware of the layout of the YM buildings, so that people with special needs can be accommodated well.
7. Generating lists of participants' rooms, returning them to the Registrations person, for inclusion in the database.
8. Arranging for the issue of keys, access cards, etc, at the start. Arranging return of keys, etc at the end.

2. Tasks to be done 18 – 12 months ahead

2.1. Choosing a venue

This task needs to be done about a year and a half prior to the YM event. Someone will have created a list of candidate venues, which need to be inspected, and assessed for suitability.

Familiarize yourself with the principles of allocating registrants to rooms, below. Go on the inspections of venues. If you have not done this job before, it may help you to make a check-list of factors to look for, and ask about. Ask for any maps, leaflets and schedules that the provider has.

Take a camera, and take pictures of the venue. Photos of any aspects which may be tricky, areas which can be used, typical bedrooms. The photos will help you remember details of the venue later.

Since JYFs will probably go to a camp during YM, they will use their bed for a couple of nights, then leave them empty, then return to them. It is preferably to strike a deal where empty beds are not paid for.

Some Friends will come to YM for part of the time. Work out with the provider how you will pay for the use of a room for only part of the time.

2.2. Budget

Accommodation is usually a component of the cost of YM, so the treasurer needs to know about the deal which has been struck with the provider. Pass on a copy of any room schedules you have obtained. Discuss how you foresee using the bedrooms accommodation with the treasurer, so you both form a clear picture of how to model use of the venue, and consequent costs.

It is probably preferable to arrive at one rate (per bed-night for an adult) for all registrants, rather than have choices of facilities and price (unless this results in a manifestly unfair pricing). As Accommodation Coordinator, you want to be able to allocate people according to your discretion, rather than by the price the Friend has paid.

3. Tasks to be done 10 - 6 months ahead

3.1. Liaise with Registration Person, and Publicity Person

The information which goes out as publicity must be correct and clear. At about this time, this task will be being done. Accommodation information needs to be included—your job to contribute.

The Registration Form will be set up, and it needs to contain correct information about pricing, etc, and accommodation facilities. Work with the Registration Person to do this. This is usually a person on the YM Planning Support Committee.

4. Tasks to be done once bookings are open

4.1. Allocations test

Especially if you have not done room allocations before, it's essential to test out the allocations process, and become familiar with it.

Test it Once you have a body of registrations, say 50, there will be enough accommodation requests that you can start to exercise the allocation process.

Find a friend This is a good point to include someone who is offering to help you. Especially if you can gain knowledge about the people coming, this is very valuable. In any case, this role comes under increasing pressure close to YM, so sharing the load, and developing cooperation patterns is very valuable.

Get a list of rooms Ensure that you have a list from the provider of the rooms that are available, and the characteristics of each (which floor of the building, how close to bathrooms, are some bathrooms gender-specific?).

Get down and data Ensure you know the coding system you will use for rooms. Usually the venue will have this worked out. The YM Registrations system (which needs to incorporate your allocation information eventually) can deal with three (text) fields for each room. So, you may have "Building", "Floor", "Room" to identify each room. You might need only two, which is fine. If possible obtain a map from the provider, or make one yourself.

Classify Identify which rooms are most suitable for each type of registrant. Will you have a families wing? Which rooms are the rooms of last resort?

Try it out Use the Principles listed above for your test allocations. Allocate the registrants in the sequence listed in the Principles: families, people with special needs, couples, individuals. If you need more information about particular individuals, ask old YM-groupies in your Meeting, ask the YM Registrations person, ask anyone who may shed useful light.

It'll change! You will likely have to change allocations as registrations come in, so don't get too far locked in to any particular match (person to a room).

Close the data loop It is good to practice sending room allocations to the Registration person at some point(s) as a practice of the information managing process. The Registrations person will include your information into the database, and send you back sample results, so you get a feeling of how it is all working.

Do it all again You might check and update your allocations when there are 100, 150 people registered, or when you have a span of time to allocate to it (with your colleagues). Add in the new registrants. You may find you have to adjust some previous ones. You may have to seek new information.

5. Tasks to be done six weeks before YM

5.1. Redo the room allocations

Incorporate the new registrations, adjust the previous ones, if necessary. Start you understand the likely pain points you will encounter. Inform the committee.

You and the Registration person need to agree when final room allocations need to be given to them. You will supply results of your trial allocations along the way, but eventually you need to give information which is finalized (even though there are bound to be further adjustments to it).

Supplying this final information is done the same way as you have supplied practice information—as an Excel file, as agreed with the Registration person. The Registration person will load the file, and start to prepare room allocation lists, etc ready for the Check-in process, and for the provider. Changes after that will likely be done by making individual adjustments.

5.2. Security Tokens for the Building

We need to know what system of building security is used at the venue. Usually bedrooms have a way of locking them, as do external doors.

Some venues (especially university colleges) have a swipe card system, so a swipe or proximity card is programmed to open a particular bedroom, and the external doors. Some venues use a metal key for the bedroom, perhaps with a swipe card for external doors.

Whatever is used, it is likely to mean issuing a security token (swipe card or key) to each person who lives in—perhaps to each registrant. It is important to know in advance what is used and how the venue manages them, and how we must manage them. Please discuss this with the Registration person, who will help you in negotiating with the venue. Usually, we have to issue particular tokens to particular registrants, perhaps getting each person to sign for the tokens. This will be part of the check-in process when Friends first show up at YM, and we welcome them and give them a pack of items they need. We can make any system work, it is essential to be well prepared.

6. Tasks to be done during the week before YM

We all hope that calmness will reign at this stage—that all the glitches will have been sorted out. Reality may be otherwise, and ad hoc changes may have to be dealt with. Try to stay calm, breathe, and get some sleep! There will be last minute changes. Some will pull out, others will appear out of nowhere expecting to be accommodated unannounced. Whilst these are a pain, they can be used to advantage. Unexpected arrivals may be able to be used to fill cancellations.

Liaise with the Registration person to understand clearly how check-in is to be done. Get clear about what your role will be, whether you need to rally any volunteers to help. Keep them p to date with changes. Understand the consequences on security tokens, etc.

7. Start of YM

By now you are likely to be in good working relationship with the accommodation provider, and understand how they work.

There are likely to be continuing surprises. Work with the others to remain calm, and make the best of what can be done. Don't expect yourself to be able to deliver every miracle, but do the best job you can.

8. During YM

Demands on your role should reduce significantly. Until everyone has arrived and settled into their rooms, surprises can occur. This can include Friends who arrive totally unannounced, expecting to be accommodated. It is useful that you know if you can meet any such requests (either to fill cancellations, or because the provider is flexible).

There may be requests to change room for a variety of reasons. You will need to negotiate these with the provider.

9. At the end of YM

At the end of YM there is another burst of activity associated with Friends vacating their rooms, returning keys, etc.

9.1. Vacating rooms

The accommodation provider will have a time by which they need all YM participants to be out of their rooms. Make sure you understand this, and make it known to Friends in time for them to comply.

It is usually a good plan to provide a place that Friends can put their luggage after they vacate their room, during the final sessions. Some frail Friends may need help with moving their luggage from their rooms.

9.2. Collection of keys, etc.

Consult with the accommodation provider to work out how they want keys, access cards returned to them. The registration process will have mad records of the keys each person has been given. These can be used to account for the keys, cards being returned.

Make a plan for any sorting out of keys, dealing with lost keys or cards that may arise.

9.3. Feedback

Tidy up any loose ends with the accommodation provider. Provide appropriate feedback to them. Listen to any difficulties they may have encountered with YM.

Work with the treasurer to reconcile the monies owed to the accommodation provider.

Contribute suitable feedback to your planning committee, and the report it may write about YM.

Provide any feedback to the YM Planning Support Committee about the suitability of this planning guide, and of their helpfulness. They want to provide a fully useful support to future years' planning committees.

Reference Information

10. Factors in Allocating Accommodation

The following headings explains how to set about allocating rooms. Read these at the stage when you are choosing a venue, so you are familiar with what to be looking for.

Once some fifty registrations have come in, it is good to start allocating, so that you understand the process and have exercised it well in advance. Registrants generally do not need to be notified of allocated rooms until close to YM, or even once they arrive. However, if there are differences in room types (eg family rooms), registrants will expect to know what they are allocated.

10.1. Young Friends

Commonly Young Friends find their own accommodation, often at a separate venue. This is not always the case, and sometimes they use the venue accommodation.

It is useful to liaise with the national Young Friends clerk to find out if they need you to organize anything for them.

10.2. Families/Children

YM Child Protection Policy requires that any young person (under 18) must have a parent or guardian at YM. The guardian is responsible for looking after the young person when the young person is not in a YM program—this includes in free time and sleeping. Note that it is common that the guardian is a grand-parent, or another adult from the same Meeting, who is prepared to supervise the young person.

Thus, a young person must be in a bedroom with their guardian, or close enough that the guardian can supervise the young person. Several children can share a room, but it must be close to their guardian(s).

This policy affects how you allocate rooms to families. The Registration process will ensure that the guardian for each child is known. The registration report “Families” shows registrants sorted so that members of a family are listed together. Members of one family for accommodation are listed with the same family name in the report. The report “Guardians” shows the guardian/parent for each child/young person. These should give you all the information you need to understand family structure, and allocate rooms. The Registration person and the YM Childrens Coordinator may have useful extra information about specific children or care arrangements.

10.3. People with Special Needs

The Registration Form elicits information on Mobility Needs, specifically: Limited Walking, No Stairs, Needs a toilet in the night, Snores loudly (info collected if shared rooms are offered.

The Registration report “Mobility Needs” lists those who have ticked any of these characteristics. This will help you allocate rooms to meet these needs as much as possible.

A person with a mobility disability may appreciate having a Friend from the same Meeting in a room close by.

10.4. Couples

Many people come to YM with their partner. Especially since there are quite a few gay couples, and partners often do not have the same surname, you might not know them unless you are an old YM attender.

The Registration report “Families” gives you the information you need, by showing couples (& families) with the same family name. if double rooms are available, couples will usually (not always- beware) prefer to share a room. Otherwise rooms close to each other is appreciated.

10.5. Friends staying for part of YM

Some Friends will come to the first few days of YM, then go home. A few will come part way through. The provider may prefer to re-use the same rooms, or to leave part-used rooms. It is important to know which way will work for you.

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