

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

A magazine containing news about various games conventions taking place in the UK

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- ManorCon XXX: Final Details

Forthcoming Conventions

Manorcon XXX Stamford Hall University of Leicester 20-23 July 2012 www.manorcon.org.uk	The 16th Mind Sports Olympiad University of London Union Malet St London WC1E 7HY 18-26 August 2012 mindsportsolympiad(at)gmail.com www.boardability.com	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XXIV The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street Burton upon Trent 28 September 2012 www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk
TringCon XXV Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 29 September 2012 Keith Thomasson: tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	Autumn Beer and Pretzels The Town Hall Burton-on-Trent Staffordshire 3-4 November 2012 www.spiritgames.co.uk	Pasteboard and Plastic 19 The Scout Hut Saltdean Brighton 10 November 2012 uk.groups.yahoo.com/ group/pasteboardandplastic
MidCon XXXIV Hallmark Hotel Derby 9-11 November 2012 jeremy.d.tullett(at)btinternet.com www.midcon.org.uk	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XV The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 28 December 2012 www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	SoRCon Ramada Hotel Colchester 1-3 March 2013 info(at)sorcon.co.uk www.sorcon.co.uk
TringCon XXVI Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 6 April 2013 Keith Thomasson: tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	BayCon Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Devon 4-7 April 2013 www.baycon.co.uk	UK Games Expo NEC Hilton Metropole Birmingham 24-26 May 2013 richard(at)ukgamesexpo.co.uk www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk
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Adventures in the World of Volunteering

Young Enterprise (www.young-enterprise.org.uk) is “*the United Kingdom's largest business and enterprise education charity. [...] Young Enterprise's mission statement is "to inspire and equip young people to learn and succeed through enterprise."* ... and I have been doing voluntary work with them for a couple of years now.

There are two strands with which I am involved: classroom-based workshops with around 120 12-16 year olds, and the Company Programme, for 15-19 year olds.

In the Company Programme, I act as a Business Adviser (BA) for a team of pupils who set up and run a business over a nominal 12-month period. They have to set up a board, create a product and sell it, all the while keeping sound accounts, and nominally paying VAT and corporation tax (which are just equivalent deductions that go back to Young Enterprise coffers).

The role of BA is as a mentor, and in theory I should not volunteer any help unless I am asked, or if the team is trying to do anything illegal or immoral, but in practice, BAs run the whole range of interaction from barely turning up, to virtually running the company. I try to stand-back myself, intervening to give the team a prod if they get stuck somewhere.

The team that I have been involved with this year has shown remarkable resilience. They have, on several occasions, looked as if they were going to crash and burn, but pulled back at the last minute, pretty much unaided, and they will have completed the business cycle in profit when we close down the venture in a couple of weeks. They were never going to win any prizes, but not all teams even reach the finish line, so good on them. As is usual, participants get more out the more they put in, and there will be a few in this team who will have learned a lot.

The classroom sessions are aimed at younger students, and help them to think about how they might reconcile their (often unrealistically optimistic) lifestyle aspirations with their (often realistically low) educational expectations. A professional speaker takes the 100-120 pupils through a workbook of games and exercises, and the volunteers like me prowl the room helping the pupils and answering questions.

I have been fortunate to attend some reasonable schools, and discipline (which is maintained – usually – by the teachers in the room) has not been too bad, but I have heard of volunteers in other schools who have had a pretty rough time. It is nevertheless pretty tiring, as one is on one's feet for several hours, and the noise level can be quite extraordinary.

I think one is supposed to say at this point that this is very fulfilling, and it is good to ‘give something back’, but I am not sure that these sentiments are quite ‘me’. I certainly find it interesting, and the company programme in particular has provoked me to thinking about my views on management, and how I do things. I also get to meet a few interesting adults along the way, so the networking aspect of it is entertaining as well.

If any reader would like to take their business and/or educational skills into the voluntary sector, follow the link at the top of the article, and see if your regional board is looking for volunteers.

www.manorcon.org.uk
20th to 23rd July 2012
Stamford Hall, University of Leicester
Progress Report Number 2 - June 2012.

Welcome to Progress Report Number 2. ManorCon is fast approaching, so here are the final details you will need before you get there.

Don't forget your chit!

As in previous years, we are issuing chits to everyone who booked accommodation in advance and paid in full. If you've done both of these, you should find a chit enclosed with this Progress Report. **You must take this chit with you to ManorCon and hand it in at the ManorCon reception desk to receive your room key.** If you forget to take your chit with you, then you will have to queue for a new one. Please note: your receipt CANNOT be exchanged for a key, only your chit can.

If there is no chit included with this mailing, this is probably for one of the following reasons: a) we think you owe us money; b) you are non-resident; c) we may have made a mistake; or d) you haven't booked... In any case, don't worry about it - just come to the ManorCon Registration Desk when you arrive. We will not be sending out any further chits before the convention.

NEWS

Gaming rooms

There are a number of gaming rooms. The main gaming hall is where the ad-hoc gaming will mostly take place. It's also where all the food will be served. There are also rooms for the Diplomacy, the Pop Quiz and Treasure Hunt, the Second Hand Games Stall, a quiet gaming room, and a couple of other general gaming rooms.

The main gaming room is open from Breakfast until late. The Second Hand Games Stall will be locked when not open for sales. The other minor rooms are open 24 hours a day. The night porter will check noise levels, so please don't make too much noise late at night.

Food and Drink

Tea and Coffee is available continuously from breakfast until 30 minutes after the evening meal stops serving. The bar will be open 2pm to 1am Friday, noon – 1am Saturday, noon to 1am Sunday and noon to 2pm Monday, but may close early if not doing much business. Note that due to the licensing laws you are not allowed to bring your own alcohol onto the site.

Other facilities

The convention is 10 minutes walk from Oadby centre. Oadby is a suburban centre on the outskirts of Leicester, which has a collection of shops, restaurants, etc. There is also a large Asda between the convention and Oadby. If Oadby does not provide all the facilities you are looking for, then it is about 3 miles from the convention to Leicester City Centre.

Games Stall

Milestone Games have the sole right to sell first-hand games at ManorCon, and anybody else wanting to do so must speak to the committee first. If you wish to pre-order any games for collection at ManorCon, then please contact them on 01455 636 286 or email sales@milestonegames.co.uk

Second Hand Games Sale

This is the first year that Sara Merritt (nee Ball) will be running it. Volunteers are always welcome to help out in the running of the SHGS; if you would like to help, please contact Sara at saraljpx@gmail.com. Sellers can book games in between 5pm and 7pm Friday and 11am and 1pm Saturday along with a completed Second Hand Games Sale Form; this form can be printed off from the link on the ManorCon website: www.manorcon.org.uk. Selling sessions will be Friday 7.30pm to 9pm and Saturday 2pm to 3pm with pack up by sellers by 4pm Saturday. All games must be collected by 6pm Saturday.

Treasure Hunt

This year's treasure hunt will be run by last year's winners "Three Odd Bods" – David Winter, Hannah Gordon-Smith and David Tittle. This year's theme is a boardgames one, likely to be based on Settlers of Catan. It will be held on Sunday afternoon in the bar area.

Closing time....

The convention finishes at 2pm on Monday.

Full directions and a map appear at the end of this progress report, but meanwhile...

Address and Phone Number.

The full address is Stamford Hall, Stoughton Drive South, Oadby, Leicester LE2 2ND Telephone (0116) 221 2035 (John Foster Hall). If you need to contact one of the committee, the ManorCon mobile number is 0797 713 6609 (or +44 797 713 6609 from outside the UK). This can also be used if you want to contact someone who isn't on the committee, but only in an emergency, and only if we can find them... PLEASE do not use this number before the Thursday morning of ManorCon! If you need to contact us beforehand, please phone Steve Jones (01234-405878), or drop us a letter, or email info@manorcon.org.uk

Parking

For people in the standard accommodation, park in the car park south of the location. For the people in en-suites, park in the car park adjacent to the accommodation if you can, but as there is building works going on close by it may not be available. If it is not, park in any University car park nearby. There will be parking attendants around, so ask them where suitable parking might be found if there are no obvious parking spots available. Note that the white lines are a guideline and you can park outside of them if required.

The area in front of the hall will be available for loading and unloading, but should not be used for parking, including disabled parking.

When you arrive....

The ManorCon Registration Desk will be located just inside the entrance to the dining hall. If you are not staying in the University and do not owe us any money, simply collect your badge and programme booklet from the table near the ManorCon Registration Desk. If you have booked accommodation in advance, do not need to make any changes to your booking, and have your chit with you, simply report to the ManorCon check in desk to pick up your room key, and then collect your badge and programme booklet. ALL keys are to be collected from the ManorCon check in desk.

If you want to make changes to your booked accommodation, or if you still owe us money, or if you have forgotten your chit, you will need to report to the ManorCon Registration Desk first.

Please note: we will NOT be able to make changes to the type of room you have booked.

Anyone who has not pre-booked will also need to go to the ManorCon Registration Desk. We hope to have both En-suite and Single rooms available on the door, although it may be that one of these is not available. Once you have registered with us, we will issue you with a chit to be exchanged for your room key. We will also sort out your name badge, any money owing, etc.

Please try to arrange your transport so as not to arrive before ManorCon opens at 2pm on Friday. If you are on public transport and you will be arriving early because that is what the timetable says, or the drive is quicker than you think and you do end up arriving early, you will be able to drop your bags off, but you will not be able to get into the gaming hall. You are welcome to arrive at any time after 2pm on Friday, although if it is after 11pm, the ManorCon Registration Desk may be closed.

Late Arrivals and Changes of Plan

If you plan to arrive on the Friday evening after 11pm, or have transport difficulties and end up arriving late, please let us know. Ring the ManorCon mobile on 0797 713 6609. If you haven't pre-booked accommodation but subsequently decide that you do want to stay over, please let us know (either via the ManorCon Registration Desk if open, otherwise track down the committee member on duty) before 11pm on the night in question, as we will have difficulties finding extra rooms after this point.

And when you leave.....

PLEASE NOTE: you **must** vacate your room and return your key by 9:30am on the day of your departure. Also, we will put out a box for you to return your badge.

Tournaments.

Most of the tournaments at ManorCon are Ad-hoc. Just play a game when you want, and put the results in the envelope. We anticipate ad-hoc tournaments for 18XX, Dominion, Puerto Rico, St Petersburg, and, for its first year, 7 Wonders. The non-Ad-hoc tournaments are as follows:

Diplomacy, for which you need to sign up by 5.30pm on Friday to play in round 1. For the Saturday tournament, please sign up by 9.30am on the Saturday. The Saturday round starts at 10am. For full details, please see the programme booklet. Prize giving should be completed by 7pm on Sunday. Up to date information will be posted on the Diplomacy notice board. In addition to the main tournament, there is also the Diplomacy Challenge, an individual one round tournament based solely on scores in the Saturday round.

Croquet is a four round knock-out tournament. Entries can be made up until breakfast on the Saturday morning, at which point the draw will be done. Advance entries are welcomed for those who will not be arriving at ManorCon before Saturday morning; contact Steve Jones via the ManorCon email address, info@manorcon.org.uk. The draw will be posted on the general notice board.

Midnight Party will as usual be run at midnight each night.

Pop Quiz: The pop quiz will as usual be run in the bar area on Saturday night.

Programme Booklet

When you arrive at ManorCon, don't forget to pick up your programme booklet and look through it. It will contain all sorts of useful information such as maps of the building and surrounding area plus directions to the nearest shops, ATMs and restaurants, instructions for finding a committee member, what to do if you have a problem, opening hours of the bar and the canteen, details of the tournaments, and lots more. Be warned that committee members sometimes get exasperated with people who ask them questions for which the answers are in the programme booklet! This year, we hope to have the Programme Booklet on the website in advance. – www.manorcon.org.uk

Directions.... or how to make sure you find us

Public transport directions first:

By air:

The nearest airport is East Midlands (www.eastmidlandsairport.com), which has flights to various European destinations and other parts of the UK (see for details).

Other relatively convenient airports served by low-cost airlines are London Stansted (www.stansted-airport-guide.co.uk/) and Luton (<http://www.luton-airport-guide.co.uk/>).

Intercontinental travellers are likely to have to use Birmingham International, London Gatwick or London Heathrow.

The following sections describe how to get to Leicester (either to the main railway station or to the bus station). Once there follow the instructions below for getting from the city centre to Stamford Hall.

By air, from Birmingham International Airport

Take the free Air-Rail Link to the Birmingham International station - it only takes a couple of minutes. Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take any train to Birmingham New Street (frequent). Change there and take a CrossCountry train to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 1h 20m. Alternatively take the scheduled bus service to Coleshill Parkway and change there onto the CrossCountry train to Leicester. The total journey time is about 1h 10m.

By air, from East Midlands Airport

Take the Leicester Skylink bus from the airport to Leicester City Centre (hourly during the day, every other hour in the evening; for timetable see www.skylink.co.uk). The journey time is under an hour.

Alternatively take the Loughborough Skylink bus from the airport to Loughborough station (half-hourly during the day, hourly in the evening; for timetable see www.skylink.co.uk) and then any train from there to Leicester (at least two per hour). The bus journey time from the airport to Loughborough station is about 30 minutes, the train journey time from there to Leicester about 15 minutes.

By air, from London Gatwick

Follow the signs in the airport to the station (if you have arrived at the North Terminal, this will involve using the transit to the South Terminal).

Buy a ticket to Leicester, specifying that you will NOT be travelling on the Gatwick Express service. Take a First Capital Connect train to London St Pancras (every 30 minutes). From there take an East Midlands Trains train to Leicester (every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 20m. Alternatively continue on the First Capital Connect train to Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and change onto the East Midlands Trains train there. This avoids the short walk between the subsurface and overground parts of London St Pancras station, but there is only one train to Leicester per hour from each of Luton and Luton Airport Parkway, so you must find out which station it is correct to change at.

By air, from London Heathrow

Follow the signs in the airport to the station. There are three stations - one for Terminal 4, one for Terminal 5 and one for Terminals 1, 2 and 3. The following instructions are valid for all the stations.

Buy an Underground ticket to Zone 1, take the Piccadilly Line from Heathrow to St Pancras (frequent), and then buy a rail ticket to Leicester and take an East Midlands Trains train from London St Pancras to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 30m.

Alternatively - this is a more expensive option - buy a ticket to Leicester valid for use on Heathrow Express services (this will cover both parts of the train journey and also the cross-London transfer on the Circle Line). Take the Heathrow Express train to London Paddington (every 15 minutes). Then take the Circle Line to Kings Cross St Pancras (frequent), and then an East Midlands Trains train from London St Pancras to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 20m.

By air, via London Stansted Airport

Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take a direct Central Trains train to Leicester (hourly). The journey time is about 2h 30m.

By air, via Luton Airport

Take the free shuttle bus to Luton Airport Parkway station - it's only just over a mile. Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take a direct East Midlands Trains train to Leicester (hourly). The journey time is about an hour.

By coach

Though not always as fast as trains, coaches provide direct and cheap links between Leicester (St

Margaret's Bus Station) and many other cities. Find out more information on bus routes operated by National Express. www.nationalexpress.com Booking line on: 08717 818181. Disabled Persons Travel Helpline: 08717 818179. Textphone: 0121 455 0086.

By train

Details of train times can be found on www.nationalrail.co.uk.

The following paragraphs describe how to get to Leicester from various parts of the UK. Once there follow the instructions below for getting from the city centre to Stamford Hall.

There are direct East Midlands Trains services from Derby, London St Pancras (Eurostar services from Paris and Brussels arrive here), Nottingham and Sheffield.

There are direct CrossCountry services from Birmingham New Street, Cambridge, Nuneaton and Peterborough.

From much of the South and South East it will be quickest to travel via London, using the Underground to cross London from the relevant rail terminus to St Pancras (though walking between Euston and St Pancras is also an option if you are lightly loaded). If, however, you have a direct service to Cambridge or Peterborough, it might be quicker to go that route.

From stations such as Brighton and East Croydon that are served by First Capital Direct services, the cross-London journey on the Underground can be avoided by taking one of their trains to St Pancras.

From the South West a CrossCountry service to Birmingham New Street and then a CrossCountry service from there to Leicester is likely to be the best route. Travelling via Birmingham New Street will probably also be the best route from South and mid Wales.

From North Wales, the North West and parts of Scotland travelling via Birmingham New Street might be the best option, but if you have a direct service to Nuneaton, it's likely to be quicker to change there.

From the North East and parts of Scotland the best options are likely to be either a CrossCountry service to Sheffield and then an East Midlands Trains service from there to Leicester, or an NXEC service to Peterborough and then a CrossCountry service from there to Leicester.

From the city centre

The easiest way to get to Stamford Hall is by taxi or by bus.

The 31/31A bus service stops immediately in front of the railway station and runs at frequent intervals. The correct stop for the university campus is just before the Asda at Oadby, soon after the junction with the A563 Ring Road (which is also where the racecourse is). You can't see Asda from where you stop so watch for the ring road & racecourse junction. From here it's a 5-10 minute walk up Stoughton Drive South to Stamford Hall.

There are taxi ranks at both the bus station and the railway station.

Useful information.

Up to date travel information can be found in a number of places. As most of you will know, road

information is available online at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/travelnews/> Useful websites for public transport information are www.arriva.co.uk , <http://www.kinchbus.co.uk/> , and <http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/eastmidlands/leicester/home/index.php> Finally there is a link from our website to a maps webpage showing the exact location of Stamford Hall. Click the link on www.manorcon.org.uk.

By car

From almost anywhere in the country, the best driving route to the convention is via the M1 Junction 21 - the junction with the M69.

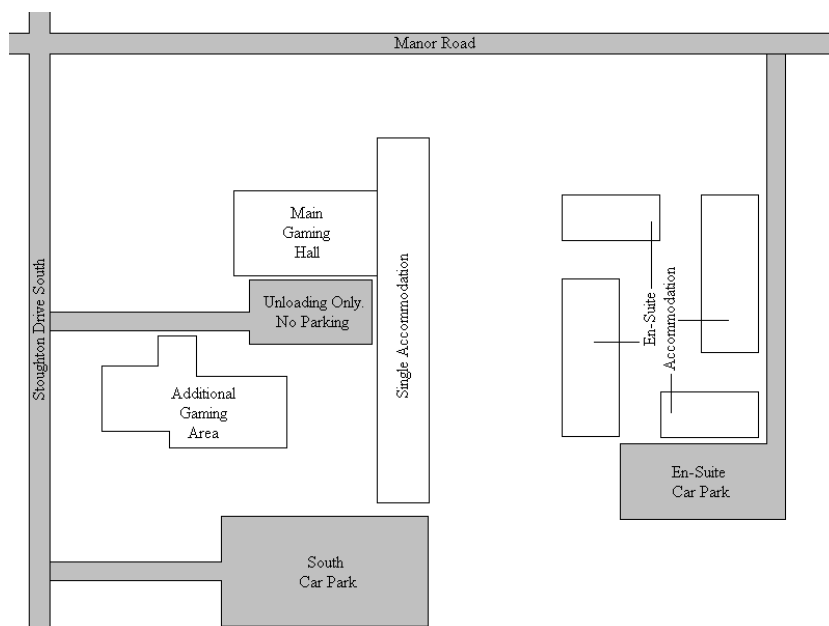
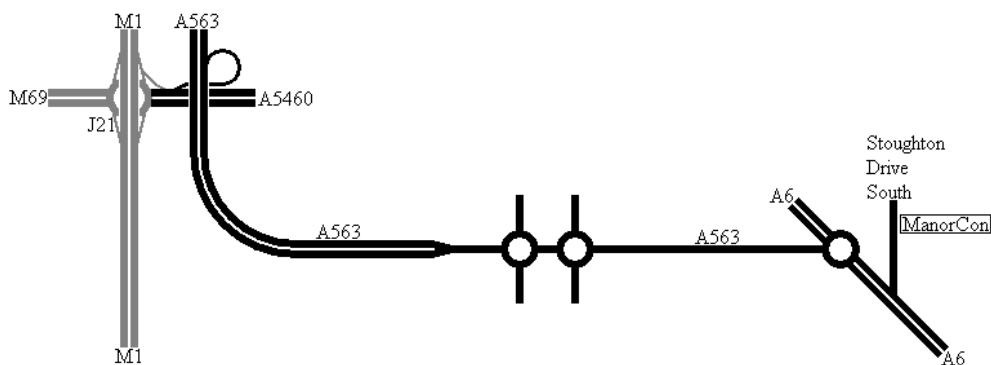
From the M1 J21, take the A5460 towards Leicester for about 1/4 of a mile.

As you go under the A563, immediately turn off to the left, looping back on yourself, and going over the bridge you have just gone under, on the A563 (Leicester ring road) heading around the South of the city.

Follow the A563 for about 4 miles, until you get to the roundabout with the A6.

Take the second exit off the roundabout, turning right. Then immediately turn into the first road on the left - Stoughton Drive South.

Stamford Hall is along this road on your right. If you come to the junction with Manor Road, you've gone too far.



MidCon 2012 (Jeremy Tullett)

Booking is running slightly ahead of previous years, and I am pleased to be able to be able to confirm that the following bookings have been received and confirmed.

Lee Edwards	Malcolm Booker
Mark Jones	John Cudmore
Hilary Jones	Chris Martin
Derek Wilson	Gemma Binns
Ken Simpson	Colin Freeman
Bill O'Neill	Bill Mayling

If you think you've booked, but are not on this list, please let me know. As always, I encourage early booking from everyone in order to avoid problems when the hotel starts clawing back unsold rooms in late October.

We have looked into two comments about the room arrangements: the location of the games stall, and the lighting.

The Spirit Games stall can be relocated from the bar area to another part of the main games room, which should create a better flow around the bar, provided that people don't play too many games there instead.

There was only one complaint about light levels, and clearly tables near the windows will be better illuminated than those further away. There is nothing that the hotel can do about lighting levels – they have no spare lamps – however the committee is considering whether we can find a cost effective solution.

We plan to have a selection of real ales on offer again, and a couple of the committee are considering a pre-convention sampling session in order to choose which beers to offer, rather than just picking off a list. At least one of the barrels on offer on 2011 was not very popular, it being rather dark and heavy. Not that I know anything about this, you understand. Most real ales taste like warm washing-up liquid to me.

Diplomacy players will be pleased to know that we have selected a different conference room from the one in use for EuroDipCon last year. It is smaller, and nearer the bar, the front door (for smokers), and the toilets.

We also expect to have the usual Saturday night quiz, and the second-hand games sale.

Convention goers who enjoyed the tapas restaurant in London Road last year will be disappointed to know that has closed, and is now a French restaurant. The place has potential, but it'll need more custom than I have seen it with, if it is going to survive to November. Mango Tang, which received a party from MidCon, is now defunct, and has not yet been replaced by anything. One of Derby's real ale pubs has also closed, but I don't believe anyone found their way to it - in fact, its somewhat obscure location is probably a factor in its demise.

We need photographs of the convention in progress. Bring your cameras! I am prepared to offer a small prize for any pictures that we subsequently use in our literature.

MidCon 2012 Booking Form

Registration Fee

£20 per person for the whole weekend, when booked before 1st November, £25 afterwards, and on the door. The day rates are £10/£15/£10 for Friday/Saturday/Sunday. Please note: convention fees are *not* refundable.

Our block booking is held until 12th October, so YOU ARE ADVISED TO BOOK AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

After October 12th, rooms will be open for sale to the open public, and so are likely to sell out. After 1st November we will not be able to accept postal bookings, and accommodation will have to be booked directly with the hotel, whilst the convention fee will have to be paid at the convention.

Room Prices

Hallmark Hotel Accommodation: Bed and breakfast prices of £58.00 Single, £70.00 Double / Twin per room per night Thursday 10 November 2011 available at £63.00 Single, £75.00 Double/Twin

Hallmark Inn Accommodation: Bed and breakfast prices of £48.00 Single, £60.00 Double /Twin per room per night Thursday 10 November 2011 available at £53.00 Single, £65.00 Double / Twin

Payment for the Registration Fee and for Accommodation

For the **registration fee** we accept payment by PayPal (visit www.midcon.org.uk for details), sterling cheques (made out to "MidCon Convention"), or cash. We *cannot* collect convention fees from credit cards.

Name(s)			
Address			
Post code		Tel:	
E-mail			
I enclose a sterling cheque (payable to "MidCon Convention") at £20 (£25 after 1st November) for:		£	(See above for registration rates)

Accommodation deposits may be made when booking through the **MidCon** website, by supplying us with a credit card number and expiry date, or with a sterling cheque made out to the 'Hallmark Hotel', accompanied by this form.

Please select one of the following options by ticking the appropriate box.

- I hereby give permission for **MidCon** to pass my credit card details to the hotel to reserve my room. My credit card details are given *here*:

Name on Card	16 Digit Card Number	Expiry date

- I enclose a sterling cheque for 50% of the total cost of my room booking, payable to "Hallmark Hotel".

HOTEL NAME?	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
N ^o . of single rooms				
N ^o . of twin rooms				
N ^o . of double rooms				
Sharing with ...				

You will settle anything charged to your room directly with the hotel on your departure.

The cancellation policy of the hotel is complicated; please seek advice from a member of the **MidCon** committee if you have to cancel to minimise your financial exposure.

When complete, return this form, together with your registration fee (payable to "**MidCon**") to: Jeremy Tullett, **MidCon**, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR

The Queen's Lane Advertiser (incorporating Convention News)

Editor: Jeremy Tullett

Coordinator: David Norman

Please contact the coordinator if:

- You run a convention and would like to be a part of the 'zine.
- You run a convention and would like to be included in the upcoming conventions list.
- You would like to offer to help out in some way.
- You are not on the mailing list for this 'zine, but would like to be.
- You would like to advertise in QLA.

The coordinator can be contacted at david(at)ellought.demon.co.uk

This issue of *The Queen's Lane Advertiser* was brought to you by:

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