

Planning and Managing Court

In addition to the aspects of court that are visible to the populace, there is a substantial amount of planning, preparation, and adjustment that goes into making court successful. This work is shared between the Crown, their attendants, and the herald, and also relies on effective liaison with the event team, attending baronages, and anyone else presenting an item of business in court. This guide goes through the different stages of preparing for and managing a court, and the tasks involved in each.

Before the Event

The **Crown** should consider what business they would like to conduct. See *Planning a Court Agenda* for a list of types of business to take into account. It isn't necessary to make a finalised list at this stage, but comparing the recommendations list to the event bookings, and considering how many other items they want to add, will give a sense of approximately how much business they wish to conduct.

The **Crown** should consult with any peers being elevated about their preferences, and get a copy of the ceremony they wish to use. Custom ceremonies are subject to Crown approval; if a draft ceremony is concerning to the Crown, it can be discussed and amended. Be aware that the peers being elevated may have a specific herald in mind who they have already spoken to, or they may be willing to use whichever herald the Crown has selected for that court.

The **Crown**, taking into account the list of business and requests regarding any peerage ceremonies, should decide how many courts they would like to hold. Be mindful that in many cases, 10-12 items of business is a fairly full court; if a peerage ceremony is included, it is a very busy one. Once the Crown has decided what is needed, they should reach out to the event steward to discuss court scheduling, and amend it if necessary.

The **Crown or a representative** should confirm who their court herald/s will be. As some Crowns prefer to bring their own heralds, some local heralds do courts in their area by default, and some stewards recruit an event herald for the courts, it is easy for everyone involved to assume someone else has already made plans. If a

peerage ceremony or other complex ceremony (like Coronation) is taking place, make sure the herald has a copy of the version being used. If the Crown has reign-specific ceremonies, they should send the herald a copy.

The **Crown** should compare their draft list of business to the Book of Ceremonies to check what items will be needed, and what other preparation may be necessary. This information is listed in a box just under the heading on every ceremony script. At this time, it is also helpful to print out or write some notes about why each person is receiving their award, so that you don't have to consult the online recommendations list while at the event.

Both the **herald** and the **Crown** should plan to bring copies of the Book of Ceremonies, CHAFs, and any custom ceremonies to the event. This way, if either one forgets, the necessary documents are still available.

On Arrival at Event

The **herald** should seek out the Crown and their household to introduce themselves.

The **Crown** and **herald** should decide together on a time for the court planning meeting - this should be a period of at least fifteen minutes when the Crown can withdraw from public view and give the majority of their focus to making sure court will go well. If the same herald is doing multiple courts on the same day, you can hold one longer meeting to plan all of them, or schedule multiple meetings so you only have to think about one court at a time.

If the Crown agrees, the **herald** should make a public announcement reminding the populace to bring any court business to them.

*Note: If the herald has not introduced themselves to the Crown by twenty minutes before the first court of the day, **assume there is a problem**. The herald may simply be late, but something else may have gone wrong, and either way, you will be running out of time for the court planning meeting. Send someone to look for them, try to get in contact through online channels, and if you can't find them, appoint a back-up herald.*

Consultation with Local Baronage

If the hosting group of the event is a Barony or sub-group of a Barony, it is likely that the hosting Baronage will have some business in court. The **herald** should check in with them early in the event to get a sense of how much business they have, so that this can be taken into account during the court planning meeting.

Court Planning Meeting

The court planning meeting should take place in a private setting, such as the royal room, with the **herald**, **Crown**, and at least one **attendant**. Ideally, that attendant should be the person who will be the chief attendant during court.

The primary business of the planning meeting is to finalise the list of business and decide on the order. This should be a discussion between the **herald** and the **Crown**, taking into account the Crown's preferences and the herald's experience of what makes court flow well. See also *Planning a Court Agenda* for some of the considerations that affect this.

The **herald** should make note of the agreed-upon list of business, including all names. It can be helpful to write out a reference copy for the Crown and/or their attendants, which can be in short form (just the names of the ceremonies).

The **Crown** should, if needed, transfer their notes on the award recipients to a notebook or index cards that they can consult during court. Referring to a well-bound notebook never seems out of place.

During this discussion of the list of business, the **attendant** should gather or make a list of the tokens and other items that the Crown will need for the ceremonies planned.

The secondary purpose of the planning meeting is to make sure the herald understands the preferences of the Crown.

The **Crown** should inform the herald of their preferences about titles (e.g. use of ‘Rex’ and ‘Regina’ at the end of ceremonies), the general style and tone they are aiming for, and whether they intend to open the court while on the thrones or by processing in.

The **Crown** should inform the herald of their preferences for any ceremonies that have scripted words. The Crown may have memorised their lines, they may prefer to be prompted, or they may choose to copy out their lines into a notebook or onto index cards. It may be helpful for the herald to offer to write out the index cards for them, if they are able. If the Crown prefers to be prompted, discuss how long a prompt they are comfortable with.

The **herald** and the **Crown** should decide what they will do if someone does not come forward when called. If the person is at the event, it is possible to wait for them to be fetched, but it is usually better to move on and return to the item of business once the person arrives.

The **herald** and the **Crown** should discuss whether award recipients will be called before or after the litany, and whether armigerous awards will be accompanied by a proclamation that they are armigerous. See *Using These Ceremony Scripts*.

Sometimes, questions are raised in the court planning meeting that require follow-up, such as ‘what is this person’s preferred title?’ or ‘is this person present today?’. The **herald** should seek out answers to these questions after the meeting, requesting assistance from the royal household as needed.

After the meeting, the **herald** should also notify anyone who has business in the planned court that they will be called forward (e.g. for Baronial Court or presentations).

Shortly Before Court

Around five to ten minutes before court, the **herald** should check in with the Crown and their attendants. They should check whether there have been any last-minute changes of business, and make sure the Crown is ready for the ‘five minutes to court’ call.

The **herald** and/or **attendants** should check that the thrones are set up appropriately, and get help to move them if necessary. The **attendants** should gather the tokens and other items needed for ceremonies, and cups and a jug of water for the Crown.

The **herald** should privately check in with the Baronages and Heirs if any are in attendance and let them know that court is imminent. If any of them need more time, the herald should inform the Crown.

If court is meant to interlink with other parts of the schedule (e.g. between courses of a feast), the **herald** should check with the relevant members of the event team that they are ready for court to happen. If not, the herald should inform the Crown.

Once the Crown is satisfied that everyone will be ready shortly, the **herald** should announce that court will take place in five minutes.

Everyone should make sure that they have used the bathroom, they have any personal items they will need (such as notebooks or water bottles), and they are well-dressed. The **attendants** should check the appearance of the Crown and make sure they look as good as possible.

If there is going to be a procession into court, **everyone** in the procession should gather somewhere outside the court space and line themselves up. The herald may lead the procession, or wait for the procession from behind the thrones.

The **Crown** should give the herald final confirmation when they are ready to begin.

During Court

Everyone should be mindful that they are highly visible, and should cultivate expressions of appropriate solemnity and/or warmth, to match the ceremonies occurring. Keep visible fidgeting to a minimum, hidden behind the thrones or by clothing. For those standing up throughout court, wiggling your toes or flexing your calves are discreet ways to keep blood circulating if you start to feel dizzy.

The **herald** and **attendants** should place themselves so that both can reach the spot behind and between the royal thrones. This often works out as the herald behind one throne, the chief attendant behind the other, and both of them shifting towards the centre when needed.

The **attendants** should track which ceremony is happening so they are ready to hand award tokens and other needed items forward. They should refill the Crown's cups when they are empty, and accept any gifts or items passed back from the Crown. It can be helpful to offer the herald a hand if they are juggling a book of ceremonies and a notebook, or if they need someone to hold a light at an evening court.

The **herald** is responsible for keeping the Crown and attendants informed about what will happen next. After each item of business (while anyone called up is returning to their place), lean between the thrones and quietly confirm the next item (e.g. "The Golden Tear, your Majesties?"). If the attendants have a question about the order of business, answer quickly and quietly.

When someone called forward isn't present, the **herald** should either proceed as agreed during the court planning meeting, or quickly and quietly check what the Crown would prefer.

Note: The herald is the one with the Book of Ceremonies and the list of business, and they therefore do a lot of the management of a court in progress. Nevertheless, the court belongs to the Crown, and part of the herald's duty of court management is to give the Crown the information and opportunities they need to adjust the flow of court if they so choose.

After Court

The **Crown's attendants** should make a record of any gifts received, and who gave them, and provide this to the Crown.

The **herald** should give the Crown a list of any items of business that were skipped because of absences or time constraints.

The **herald** should fill out a CHAF with the awards given during that court. If there is difficulty working out people's mundane names for the form, the Crown may have this information, or it is sometimes on the sign-in forms at Gate. Only one CHAF is needed per day of the event, so if there will be another court, it can be left unsigned and kept by the herald or the Crown until later. The herald and the Crown should make sure that both are aware of who has responsibility for the CHAFs at any time.

The **Crown** should check the CHAFs at the end of the event and sign them. They may wish to take a photo of the completed form for their own records, and as a back-up in case it is not submitted properly after the event.

After the Event

The **herald** who took home the CHAFs should take photos or scans of them, and email them to Crux (herald@lochac.sca.org), the Kingdom Chronicler (pegasus@lochac.sca.org), Canon Herald (canon@lochac.sca.org), and to the local group herald. These are the people responsible for making sure the awards given are recorded and reported throughout the kingdom.

If the Crown were not able to sign the CHAFs at the event, the herald must cc crown@lochac.sca.org, so that the **Crown** can reply with confirmation that the CHAF is correct. Even if the Crown did sign the CHAF forms at the event, it is never discourteous to include them on the email, as this can be a reassurance that the task has been completed.