

Licence:

Sometimes banns are not appropriate and the couple will need to obtain a Common Marriage Licence from the diocese where the wedding is to take place. A Common Licence may be issued by a Surrogate or the relevant Diocesan Registry depending upon the detailed circumstances.

If no other preliminary is possible for a church wedding, a couple may need to apply for the Special Marriage Licence from the Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Superintendent Registrar's Certificate (SRC):

From 2nd March 2015 the wedding of any non-European (EEA) national in church must take place after a Certificate has been issued by the civil Superintendent Registrar, unless a Special Marriage Licence has been granted.

At present the law does not require a priest to accept an SRC and it is important to check that the relevant priest will accept an SRC as preliminary to your marriage before making any firm arrangements.

What you will need to do:

Having worked our way through your application and checked it we will advise as to the appropriate form of legal preliminary to be used. Where Banns are to be used it is your responsibility to ensure that they are called in all the relevant churches and that certificates are obtained and given to us in good time.

Where any Licence or SRC is needed we will then advise you as to which other organisation you need to contact (whether the relevant Diocesan Registry, the relevant civil Register Office, or the Faculty Office) about obtaining a preliminary. They will need evidence from us that your application has been accepted.

[All information and guidance in this booklet is believed accurate to the best of our knowledge as at 1 Nov 2016]

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Frome St John the Baptist & Woodlands, St Katharine



Guidance notes to aid completion of a marriage application form

Thank you for your interest in arranging a wedding at one of our churches. This booklet has been designed to help you complete the application form as fully and accurately as possible.

Bookings are regularly dealt with on the second Saturday of each month at St John's church in Frome between 10am and 12noon.



All couples are encouraged to consult the following website which deals with all aspects of preparing to be married in the Church of England:

<http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>.

When considering a Church of England wedding, couples should make sure that they will be able to meet the legal requirements for marriage in the church or chapel where they wish to marry. This needs to be done in good time as some preliminaries require at least a month to complete.

Please read the guidance notes carefully as you complete the application form so that we can ensure that all the correct preliminaries are followed and that your wedding will be fully legal.

[Image: Jesus as a guest at a wedding at Cana in Galilee]

Gender:

The form identifies the two parties to the marriage as groom (male) and bride (female). Whilst civil marriage in England and Wales has been extended to be available to same-sex couples it is not legally possible for such marriages to take place in the Church of England.

Church of England clergy are also not allowed to conduct a service of blessing of a same-sex marriage. Same sex couples may wish to discuss with their parish priest what form of prayer with and for them may be possible in parallel with their arranging a civil marriage / partnership.

Persons of acquired gender (who have been issued with a Gender Recognition Certificate) are entitled to be treated fully as of their acquired gender and are therefore also entitled, without intrusive questioning, to be married in church to a person of the opposite gender.

Documents / Evidence checklist:

The following is a list of some of the documentation that we will / may need to see in connection with your application:

Passport or other evidence of nationality.

Recent utility bill/ bank statement or other evidence of residential address.

Evidence relating to any change of name or other name you are known by.

Evidence relating to any qualifying connection you have with the church at which you wish to be married.

Data Protection:

The information that you provide will be held securely under the control of the incumbent of the parish and relevant details may be shared with others assisting in the preparation for, conduct of and registration of your marriage.

We would normally expect to take a copy of the identity pages of your passport(s) as evidence of nationality and keep them securely for up to two years after the date of the marriage after which they will be destroyed.

Preliminaries:

By law, a marriage can only be conducted after an appropriate preliminary. This is a legal formality which authorises the wedding to take place.

Banns:

In the Church of England the normal preliminary is the calling of banns in each party's parish church. Banns are an announcement in church for three Sundays during the three months before the wedding of your intention to marry and a chance for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place. Banns need to be read in the parish where each of you lives as well as the church in which you are to be married, if that is somewhere else.

- Have either of you been divorced more than once?
- Are you wanting to grow in the Christian faith?

Address:

The address given should be your residential address at the time of application. The full address must be given; in sufficient detail for correspondence to be correctly delivered.

We also appreciate having phone numbers and email addresses: It is often easiest to work through draft printed orders of service and other matters by email.

Please do advise of any change of address or other contact details during the time between your application and the wedding itself.

Your parish church:

The Church of England and the Church in Wales are divided geographically into parishes and for each parish there is normally at least one parish church.

Details of the parish boundaries in England and their parish churches can be found here, searchable by place-name or post-code:

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/>.

Parish churches in Wales can be searched for through the Church in Wales website: <http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/life/marriage/>.

Historically couples had the right to married in the parish church of their parish of residence and additionally the parish church where they usually worshipped and had joined the Church's Electoral Roll.

Couples retain these rights, but since the introduction of the 'Marriage Measure' in 2008, couples have also had the legal entitlement to marry in the parish church of a parish to which either of them could demonstrate a 'qualifying connection'.

Nationality:

Evidence of nationality in the form of a passport or other relevant documents must always be provided.

If either party to the intended marriage is not an European (EEA) citizen then it will be necessary for you both to attend at a Register office and apply for a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate rather than Banns being published or any form of Licence obtained.

It is also important for us to check that your marriage will be recognised in any country of which you are a national or hold a passport.

Language:

The wedding ceremony is required to be in English, whatever your nationality. Where appropriate we are glad to try to include / repeat some parts of the service in another language to help those present understand all that is going on. If appropriate we are also glad to work with you in seeking the services of an interpreter where the use of another language or British Sign Language (BSL) would improve accessibility and understanding of the service.

Parent:

In the Church of England Marriage Measure a parent means: parent of either a legitimate or an illegitimate child;

Or, an adoptive parent (This requires legal adoption);

Or, a person "who has undertaken the care and upbringing" of another person.

For a grandparent one of the above three types of relationship must apply between each generation and the next, i.e. between the grandparent and the parent and between the parent and the person completing the form.

Date and time:

Depending upon other services and events already booked or planned we will do our best to accommodate your choice of date and timing. Marriages in church must begin after 8.00am and be completed before 6.00pm.

Qualifying Connection:

If either of you:

- i) have at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least six months;
- ii) were baptized in the parish concerned (this does not apply where the baptism formed part of a combined service of baptism or confirmation);
- iii) were prepared for confirmation in the parish (and when confirmed had his or her confirmation entered in a confirmation register in the parish);
- iv) have at any time habitually gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of six months;

or

If any of your parents, during your lifetime:

- v) has lived in the parish for a period of at least six months;
- vi) has habitually gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least six months;

or

If any of the your parents or grandparents

- vii) was married in the parish;

then you are deemed to have a 'qualifying connection' to that parish. You can choose between marrying in any of the churches where you have a legal entitlement to marry.

The references to baptism, confirmation and marriage, and to attending public worship, are all confined to services according to the rites of the Church of England.

Name:

Please supply your full name including all forenames and surname. If you have ever changed your name or been known by another name, then full details will also be needed together with relevant evidence.

Status:

The old descriptions of 'bachelor' and 'spinster' are no longer used. If you have neither married nor entered into a civil partnership before then you are 'Single'. Where either party has been in a previous marriage or civil partnership please indicate accordingly. Where any such previous relationship ended in divorce the decree absolute will always need to be seen.

Previous marriage / civil partnership dissolved / ended in divorce:

The Church of England teaches that marriage is for life. It also recognizes that some marriages sadly do fail and, if this should happen, it seeks to be available for all involved. If you are thinking about a church wedding in such circumstances please be prepared to talk frankly about the past, your hopes for the future and your understanding of marriage.

The Church accepts that there are circumstances in which a divorced person may marry again in church during the lifetime of a former spouse. The circumstance most likely to be an obstacle to a marriage in church would be where the new relationship contributed to the breakdown of the previous marriage.

The sort of questions that we might wish to air in discussion, and that you and your intended spouse might therefore like to be prepared to talk about include:

- What does marriage mean to you?
- What have you learned from your previous marriage?
- Has there been healing of past hurts?
- If you have children, how are they being looked after?
- What do others think of your marriage plans?
- When did your new relationship begin?