

Weddings at

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL

Marriage in Church

Many congratulations on your decision to be married. When two people decide to marry, their first thought is often about whether the service should take place in church or elsewhere. All weddings contain promises made by the couple to each other, before witnesses. However, when a wedding takes place in church, something very important is said about a couple's love for each other and about their life together. They are saying, "We believe our love for each other is a gift to us from God and we believe that we cannot do without God's help in the sharing of our lives together and in the keeping of the commitment we make to each other".

The first thing therefore for those who intend to marry to do is to decide whether this is how they see it. If you answer YES to these questions then you will want to marry in church and you will be able to do so with integrity.

The church teaches that marriage is a sacrament – an outward and visible sign of a grace from God received internally. By making their promises to each other in church before a priest and their friends and relations, a couple celebrate this sacrament. They give each other wholly and totally to one another, making lifelong promises and exchanging rings. The congregation promises to support them in their life together and pray for them and the priest will bless the marriage in God's name.

In order to be properly prepared for this, the priest will invite you to a series of meetings. This is so that you can explore the meaning of marriage as God's gift and begin to appreciate something of the commitment involved. In these meetings you will be helped to plan the service and a rehearsal will be arranged just before the day so that you will not be too nervous. In fact, the Cathedral staff will do everything possible to help you prepare for a happy married life and to make your wedding a joyous and spiritually memorable occasion.

However, a Cathedral wedding is different because we do not allow the spiritual space created whilst the service is going on for any video, sound recording or photography which can distract and spoil that atmosphere. (All photos are taken before or after the service, both inside or outside and plenty of time is allowed for that to happen and can be posed wherever).

Where do I start?

The English legal rules relating to church weddings are very different to those governing civil marriages. Only certain people are permitted to be married in the Cathedral and in order to qualify one of you needs to fall into one of the following categories, either

- ❖ One of you must be resident in the Cathedral parish when the banns of marriage are published (this means that you actually live in the part of Portsmouth the cathedral parish serves – basically old Portsmouth and Gunwharf - it is *not* enough that your parents are resident here – however, see overleaf); banns have to be published on three Sundays within the three months before the wedding date, or

- ❖ If one of you is in the Navy serving on board a ship which is based in Portsmouth at the time of the reading of the banns, or
- ❖ One of you is a regular worshipper at the Cathedral and a member of the congregation and your name is entered on the Cathedral's Electoral Roll having been a regular worshipper for the six months prior to the banns being read.

However, under the new Marriage measure which came into force from 1st October 2008, couples are able to apply to be married in another parish church provided they can show that one of them has a qualifying connection with that parish church. Under the Measure, to prove a qualifying connection a couple must prove that

1. one of them
 - was baptised in the parish; or
 - has been confirmed and the confirmation has been entered in a church register book belonging to the parish. (This would have been done on the basis that the person concerned was prepared for confirmation in the parish); or
 - has at any time had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months; or
 - has at any time habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;

or
2. That person's parent has at any time during the person's lifetime:
 - had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months; or
 - habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;

or
3. That person's parent or grandparent was married in the parish.

(In this list references to being baptised, confirmed or married, or attending public worship, all refer to Church of England services.)

However, the new Measure does not currently apply to Cathedrals. We are told though that if a couple is able to prove a 'qualifying connection' with the Cathedral and would have been allowed to have been married there under the new Measure but for the fact that it is a Cathedral, then an Archbishop's Licence can be applied for. However, each is dealt with on a case by case basis – but if we believe that a couple should be entitled because they have a 'qualifying connection' then we will support an application for a Special Licence. (Special Licences can be granted up to 18 months in advance so it will be possible to get a ruling very quickly in each case and cost approximately £230.)

If you think you fall within any of the above categories, you should be in contact with the Cathedral Office who will put you in touch with a member of the clergy for an initial discussion about arranging your wedding here – 023 9282 3300 or info@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk.

If you do not fall into any of the criteria overleaf, then you may have time to get onto the Cathedral's Electoral Roll before your wedding, but this will require one of you to be an 'habitual worshipper' at the Cathedral for at least 6 months before the banns can be read. We shall not be able to confirm the wedding booking until those 6 months have elapsed and your name successfully entered on the Roll.

For more information about the legal processes, please see the following website:

www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/weddings

If you are not sure in which parish you are living, then we can tell you if you give us your postcode(s) or you can go on to the 'Find a Church' section of the Diocesan website:

www.portsmouth.anglican.org/index.php

Proof of nationality and special arrangements for non EEU nations

Under new legislation coming into force in March 2015, all parties intending to marry must show the priest proof of nationality (usually by current passport) and if one of the parties to the proposed marriage is non EEU national, then special arrangements apply and the couple will be required to complete civil preliminaries and give notice at a register office. We can advise further if this applies.

How do I book the Cathedral?

If you think that you qualify legally to be married at the Cathedral, then please telephone the Cathedral Office as over. When telephoning, please be prepared to give two or three preferred dates and times for your wedding so that the Cathedral's availability can be checked whilst in touch. The Cathedral is a very busy place, particularly on Saturdays, and we shall only be able to confirm the booking after the weekly Tuesday morning diary meeting which agrees new bookings week by week. **You should not treat the booking as confirmed until we have written to you confirming the date and time and you have paid the non-refundable deposit of £275.** This will, of course, be deducted from the final bill. Please also note that we cannot guarantee that the Cathedral (inside or out) will be free of work – much of it is a mediaeval building and scaffolding and regular work is ongoing. We shall do our best to warn you well in advance if any such work is likely to be taking place around the date of your wedding and to minimise any disturbance. Please also note that although the wedding will be in the Quire (or St Thomas's Chapel if a small occasion), the nave may be set up for a concert that evening or exhibition or special service and may not therefore be totally free of charring. Once again we shall do our best to minimise any inconvenience.

Please note that you do not have to restrict yourselves to a Saturday – other days of the week are often easier to book, and Sunday afternoons (2pm) are becoming increasingly popular for weddings. However, weekdays may be difficult for choir members and bellringers although we shall do our best to provide these if required.

How do I plan the service?

When you meet a member of the clergy, they will arrange for the Banns of Marriage Application form to be completed by you and, if necessary, put you in touch with the Director of Music so that you can discuss your music requirements with him and whether you require a choir. If you are not sure about music or hymns, please do not worry as the Director of Music can help you find appropriate music. Once you have agreed the music, we can then prepare a draft Order of Service for your approval. The Cathedral produces the Orders of Service as that way accuracy can be better guaranteed and the text will reflect what you want it to say. For several reasons, including those of copyright, we do not encourage "wedding stationery" orders of service.

We arrange marriage preparation mornings and couples are expected to attend one of these – the next date will be arranged for early 2016. These are light-hearted occasions enabling

couples to meet each other, ask questions about the practicalities of weddings in the Cathedral and also explore the significance of marriage and its importance to the two of you.

We always offer a rehearsal prior to the wedding day (usually the Thursday evening before at 1845 or sometimes Friday afternoon/evening) and it will be good to book this as soon as possible to ensure that as many people as possible who are taking part in this service will be able to attend.

What will the service cost?

Charges go up every year and will be confirmed to you at the beginning of the year in which your wedding takes place. As a guide the charges for 2015 are as follows:

Cathedral Fee to include	950.00
- Marriage preparation, calling of banns, rehearsal, facilities, Marriage Service (to include 1 hour before service starts and 45 minutes after for photos etc) and one copy of Marriage Certificate	
- Organist/Music*	205.00
- Ringing of Bells after the service*	240.00
- Order of Service* depending upon number and content £50-£70	
- Choir(s) *	
<i>The choice (if you wish a choir) is either:</i>	
- a small group of semi- professional singers drawn from the Cathedral's Music Foundation (10-12) singing from the organ gallery. The cost with conductor is	650.00
- or full robed choir singing from St Thomas's Chapel drawn from the Cathedral Choir and Cantate with conductor costing	800.00
- Special flowers*	On application

*You only pay for these if you want them – they are extras - not essential

It may also be possible to arrange for a solo singer and this can be discussed with the member of clergy and the organist subject to agreeing the fees payable. If your wedding date is outside term-time, it may not be possible to arrange for any choir – however, we sometimes have visiting choirs who might be available to sing and the cost will be agreed with you well in advance. We will nearly always be able to have a small group of singers whatever time of year. We may also be able to arrange for instrumentalists to play subject to agreement of fee (eg solo trumpet). **If you require a choir or extra musicians (other than the Organist) it is very important that this be booked with the Cathedral Office at least 4 months in advance so that bookings can be made with appropriate personnel in good time.**

All charges (which will be notified to you well in advance) must be paid at least 14 days in advance of the wedding.

The next step?

We hope that these notes, together with the points to remember overleaf, are helpful and we look forward to helping you plan, not only a very special day but also a fitting start to your married life together. If however, having read the above, you might not be entitled to be married in the Cathedral, the member of clergy will be pleased to discuss other possibilities with you – including remarriage and blessings. The next step therefore, whatever your situation, is to phone the Cathedral Office on 023 9282 3300 or send them an e-mail at info@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk and make an appointment to see a member of the clergy – giving an indication of dates and times of a possible service so that the Cathedral's availability can be checked before the meeting.

Some helpful pointers:

PUNCTUALITY – There is nothing worse than being delayed by someone else's lateness. Remember that Saturday traffic into Portsmouth is notoriously congested, especially if Pompey is playing at home or there are special events at Gunwharf Quays. So please tell all your guests to leave enough time to arrive on time and not keep people waiting. Once it was considered fashionable for a bride to arrive late for her wedding: this is no longer the case. Indeed, if you are late it may be that there won't be enough time for your wedding to take place on that day as another marriage service may follow yours or the Cathedral could be booked for another event. Groom, Best Man and Ushers must be at the Cathedral at least 45 minutes before the start of the service. **All guests** should be in their places at least 15 minutes before the start of the service, enabling the bride (preceded by bridesmaids and Bride's mother) to arrive unhastled at least 5 minutes before the start of the service to allow plenty of time for photographs. Drivers must be made aware of this timing.

PHOTOGRAPHS – You may arrange for a photographer to take pictures as you arrive at the Cathedral door and walk out through the tower arch. If you wish, you may be able to pose in the Cathedral for other pictures after the service and we allow 45 minutes after the service. Apart from the posing of the signing of the registers, there must be **NO PHOTOGRAPHY during the service** as this is very distracting. By all means, come back into the Cathedral to pose for photographs after the service

VIDEOS – The laws relating to copyright and performing rights are very strict and because of these, and the fact that our cathedral musical staff are all professionals, it is the policy of the cathedral that **no video cameras or sound recordings are permitted to be used at all in the Cathedral during the service.**

CONFETTI – The effect of confetti may be lovely in the photographs: however, it is a great nuisance to the local residents and soon blows across Cathedral Green and the surrounding streets. We have received so many complaints in the past that the Cathedral requests a cheque for £25.00 when you pay your invoice for the service; this will not be paid in and will be destroyed if confetti is not used at your service either in the Cathedral grounds or the immediate vicinity. We have been asked about natural flower petals which are allowed within reason.

ORDERS OF SERVICE – These will usually be printed by the Cathedral several days before the wedding itself. On the day, the verger will make sure that they are available to the ushers.

USHERS – You will need a minimum of three ushers to help with arrangements before the service. One handles the distribution of the printed orders of service and two show guests to their seats. After the service they need to gather up all the spare orders and check no valuables have been left behind.

ROUTES IN AND OUT – incoming congregation/guests should enter by the central High Street door and the bridal party by the west door (or south west High Street door if preferred). Afterwards the couple leave via the West doors, and all the congregation back through the central High Street doors. Photographs may then be taken. Please do not use the area of the memorial garden on the north east corner of the building as this is a burial ground

REFRESHMENTS – The Cathedral is now licensed and it is possible for us to arrange for your guests to have a glass of wine, soft drinks (or whatever you wish) after the service served in the nave (or outside the west doors if fine) while the photos are being taken). We can also put you in touch with an outside caterer who can provide canapés. Please talk to the member of clergy and they will tell you what we can do.

RECEPTION - Cathedral House (opposite the north side of the Cathedral) has been refurbished and has a hall which can seat 80 plus kitchen. We will show you around if you are interested in a day-time/early evening reception venue but we require all parties to be finished and the premises vacated and left tidy and ready for next day by 10pm as we are a residential area.

TELLING PEOPLE IN ADVANCE – It is your responsibility to ensure that your guests, photographers and drivers are familiar with the Cathedral rules and regulations. They are designed to ensure that your day goes as smoothly as possible, without difficulty or disruption. Please ensure that they know it is the Anglican Cathedral of St Thomas in Old Portsmouth (there is also the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John – the fact there are two cathedrals often confuses people!). Please also be aware of the strictness of the parking patrols in and around the area (2 hours maximum parking or metered depending upon the particular road) – special arrangements may be available via the City Council’s Parking office direct if needed. There is a Coach Parking Bay on the south side of the Cathedral.

Some useful names and telephone numbers

Cathedral office	023 9282 3300
Jo Spreadbury, Canon Precentor (Day off Friday)	023 9282 3300 x 226
David Price, Organist and Master of the Choristers (Day off Wednesday)	023 9282 3300 x 228