

Your wedding is fast approaching and we are privileged to play a part in your special event. We want to make everything run as smoothly as possible for you and have created this guide to help you prepare for the big day.

You may wish for your ceremony to be a formal and traditional celebration or you may prefer a relaxed informal gathering. You might be dreaming of a big event or feel more comfortable with a quiet intimate ceremony. This is your day and the choice is yours.

You can personalise parts of your ceremony with a choice of music and a reading. You will find further information about the options in the following pages.

Please read through this guide then complete and return your ceremony planner. You can find this on your online ceremony account or on our website. We request that completed the planner at least 14 working days before your ceremony to allow us time to prepare.

If there is anything else you would like to know or are unsure about, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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# Section 1: Information about your Ceremony

Visit our website - <https://www.cambridgeshireceremonies.co.uk/rooms> - to confirm the number of people who can attend your ceremony.

## Arrival

We kindly request that you and your guests assemble in the buildingabout fifteen minutes before the time of your marriage. Any photographs of the couple arriving should be completed before this.

## Entrance into the ceremony room

How would you like to enter the ceremony room? Would you like to enter accompanied by bridesmaids and page boys? Do you want to be formally ‘given away’ or would you like a more casual start to your ceremony where you enter with your guests? Just let us know what you would like to do and we will incorporate this into your ceremony.

## Checking details

The Registration Officers will need to see you both before the ceremony. This is to check the details which will be recorded on the marriage schedule and on your marriage certificate. This can be done either separately or together depending on whether either party is planning to make an entrance. You do not need to bring any documents to your ceremony unless you have changed your name by deed poll.

## Time of Ceremony

The time booked is the time at which the ceremony will begin. It is essential that you keep to the time arranged for your marriage. We therefore respectfully request that you and your guests are ready to start the ceremony at the agreed time. If the start of your marriage is delayed for any reason the Registration Officer may have to curtail your ceremony, for instance by leaving out any reading. It is also possible that the marriage may have to be postponed until later that day, or at worst, rescheduled for another day. This may require new notices of marriage to be given and the payment of all fees again.

You should ensure that you and your guests have ample time to arrive at the venue. It is a good idea to check the local travel news on the day and make allowances for traffic and parking, etc.

## Witnesses

You must provide two witnesses to your marriage, both of whom must speak and understand English. Ideally, they should be aged 18 or over. Both must also be able to understand what is taking place and be able to testify to what they have seen and heard should the need ever arise. They can be family or friends.

## Seating

The ceremony rooms have maximum numbers that can be accommodated in each room. These have to include everyone in the room, including two Registration Officers, the photographer, babies and young children. All guests have to be seated. Please ensure you do not exceed these limits; they are set for safety reasons. The two witnesses should take seats at the front if possible. If an entrance is being made accompanied by attendants, the appropriate number of seats should also be kept free at the front.

## Rings

Please ensure that the person presenting the rings has them in their possession at the start of the ceremony.

## Music

You can choose your own music or we can play a selection of music for you. You are having a civil ceremony so the music **must have no religious connotation** including religious lyrics. For instance, music played on a church organ or pieces such as ‘Pie Jesu’ and ‘Amazing Grace’ would not be acceptable.

Music is played as you enter the ceremony room, for about 10 minutes during the checking and signing of the schedule and photographs and as you exit the room. We advise that you supply up to 3 music tracks for the signing of the schedule. All rooms have Bluetooth speakers. One of your guests should be nominated to liaise with the Registration Officer and operate the music via a phone or similar device. Please let us know the titles of the music you have chosen on your planner. If you wish to have live music then please contact us beforehand to discuss the suitability of the room and whether this may be possible.

## Words and Reading

You can choose to add additional words including personal vows, ring exchange words and a reading of your choice to the ceremony. Further details of the options are detailed on the planner form which can be found on the plan your day section of our website.

You can find a document detailing some suggested readings on our website. Your choice of readings will need to be read by a friend or family member. Please provide us with a copy of any additional material when you return the ceremony planner.

Civil ceremonies are not permitted to include any religious content or connotation. Please bear this is mind when personalising your ceremony. Personal vows must not be taken from any religious marriage ceremony; and examples of texts which would not be considered appropriate are passages from the Bible, the Koran, and the Torah.

## Photography

You may wish to organise a professional photographer or nominate a guest (who is not a witness) to take non-flash photos during your ceremony. The Registration Officers will speak to them on the day and advise on timings and positioning for photographs.

We request that general photography during the ceremony is kept to a minimum as this can detract from your ceremony. As long as the ceremony has started on time, there will be plenty of time for guests to take photos after the legal paperwork is completed. The grounds outside are available for further photographs afterwards if you wish.

## Video

We are happy for the ceremony to be filmed or live streamed. The person filming will be positioned at the front near the Registration Officer. We are unable to guarantee the wi-fi connectivity during your ceremony. The only part of the ceremony that cannot be recorded is when the couple and the witnesses sign the legal paperwork.

## Exit from the ceremony room

At the end of the ceremony you and your guests will be guided to the outside area where further photographs can be taken.

## Mobile Phones

Please remind all concerned that mobile phones should be set to silent before entering the ceremony.

## Confetti

Guests may throw biodegradable confetti or rice once they are outside the building.

## Car Parking

Information about parking for your ceremony room venue is available from: <https://www.cambridgeshireceremonies.co.uk/rooms>

## Re-Registration of Children’s Births

If you have a child or children together, you will need to re-register the birth(s) again after your marriage. Guidance and the relevant forms to apply for a re-registration can be found on the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-to-re-register-a-childs-birth-following-marriage-of-natural-parents>. You should complete the forms and telephone 0345 045 1363 for an appointment.

## Animals at a ceremony

Only formally registered assistance animals are allowed at ceremonies held in our council ceremony rooms. We must be made aware of the presence of any assistance animals at least two weeks in advance. No other animals are allowed.

# Section 2: Marriage Ceremony Script

## Council Ceremony Room – Marriage Script

Good morning / afternoon everyone, please can I have your attention – would you all be upstanding for the arrival of . . . the bride / the groom / bridal party / name(s) . .

*Entrance of bridal party*

Good morning / afternoon everybody, and welcome to the wedding of . . . (first name) . . . and . . . (first name) here at The . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Room, which has been duly sanctioned, according to the law, for the celebration of marriages.

*Escort Words –* *These words are optional –* *Please see additions to the ceremony document for the available options.*

My name is . . . (DSR’s name) . . . and I have the pleasure and privilege of conducting today’s ceremony. With me is my colleague, . . . (DR’s name) . . ., who will be creating the legal and historical record of this marriage.

The ceremony will be in accordance with the civil law of this country; this law requires . . . (first name & first name) . . . to declare their freedom to marry each other, before making their commitment of marriage. Their vows are a formal and public pledge of their love and promises to each other.

You are here to witness the joining in matrimony of . . . (full name) . . . and . . . (full name) . . . If any person knows of any lawful impediment to this marriage, they should declare it now.

Traditionally, couples have sought to unify their individual lives through the security of marriage. A marriage is a promise between two people who love each other and wish to spend their future together. It is making a commitment to share their dreams and memories, their joy and laughter, and to help and support one another.

. . . (first name) . . . and . . . (first name) . . . before you are joined in matrimony, I have to remind you of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. Marriage, according to the law of this country, is the union of two people, voluntarily entered into for life, to the exclusion of all others.

I am going to ask each of you, in turn, to declare that you are free to marry.

*Declaration – You must choose one from the available options (this is a legal declaration that must be made during your ceremony however, you do not have to choose the same) - Please see additions to the ceremony document for the available options.*

We start with . . .(party A). . ., will you please repeat after me:

*Declaration - Party A – You will repeat these after the registrar*

And now . . . . (Party B). . . .

*Declaration - Party B – You will repeat these after the registrar*

*I Do/I Will Declarations - These words are optional – Please see additions to the ceremony document for the available options or submit your own - you do not have to choose the same option.*

Before they make their legal vows, . . . (first name & first name) . . . have chosen to make their own personal declarations to each other.

. . . (Party A). . . please repeat after me (if selected):

*Optional I Do/ I Will Declaration for Party A if chosen*

And now . . . (Party B) . . . would you also repeat after me:

*Optional I Do/ I Will Declaration for Party B if chosen*

(to the guests) . . . (first name & first name) . . . are now about to make their vows to each other so those of you that are able to, would you please stand.

*Vows - You must choose an option for this part of the ceremony (these are the words that legally marry you, so must be included before any personal vows. You do not have to choose the same) - Please see additions to the ceremony document for the available options.*

(To party A). As you make your vows, please take ……’s hand/s in yours and repeat after me:

*Vows - Party A – You will repeat these after the registrar*

And now, . . . (Party B) . . . would you please repeat after me?

*Vows - Party B – You will repeat these after the registrar*

*You have the option to add Personal Vows to the ceremony - These words are optional (Choose from one of the options offered or submit own – you do not have to choose the same)*

. . . (first name & first name) . . . have also chosen to share some personal vows today.

*Personal Vows - Party A – You will read these from a card*

and now . . . (party B). . .:

*Personal Vows - Party B – You will read these from a card*

(Guests, would you please be seated)

We now come to the exchange of rings. The ring has long been the symbol of vows taken in marriage; these rings, chosen with love and care, are the outward sign of the promises you have made to each other today.

. . . (ringbearer’s name) . . . ) would you please bring forward the rings.

.. (name). ., please take .. (name’s). . ring, place it on their finger and repeat after me:

*Ring Exchange - These words are optional (Choose from one of the options offered or submit own – you do not have to choose the same)*

*Ring Exchange - Party A – You will repeat these after the registrar*

And now . . . (party B). . .:

*Ring Exchange - Party B – You will repeat these after the registrar*

*The ringbearer will retake their seat.*

*Optional reading - by family member or friend – Please see additions to the ceremony document for the available options or select your own choice. If selecting your own please attach a copy.*

. . . (first name) . . . and . . . (first name) . . . , in the presence of your witnesses, your family and your friends, you have both made the declarations required by law and you have made solemn promises to each other. A strong marriage is formed by love and friendship, by learning to compromise, and by caring for one another.

Your celebrations today are the start of a new chapter in your life together and we hope the love that you feel for each other will deepen and grow throughout the years to come.

It gives me great pleasure to declare that you are now husband & wife, husband & husband, wife & wife, legally married.

 *Optional - First kiss – Please let us know if you will be sharing a first kiss?*

I believe now may be a good opportunity for you to seal your union with a kiss (if chosen).

Congratulations, handshakes etc

Everyone, there is now going to be a brief pause while we complete the legal record of marriage; we do ask that you remain in your seats and enjoy some music chosen by . . . (first name & first name) . . . ; we will *return to the ceremony shortly.*

*Signing of the schedule by couple, witnesses and registrars with background music playing. Photographs can be taken by professional photographer or nominated guest. (No photographs to be taken of the real Marriage Schedule.)*

Our final task as registrars is for . . . (DRs name). . . and I to wish . . . (name & name) . . . many congratulations for a fabulous celebration day, and a long and happy life together.

. . . (name & name) . . . are ready to lead you from the room, so would you all please stand to welcome, the newly married Mr and Mrs / Mr and Mr / Mrs and Mrs / name and name.

*Finally, the newlyweds can lead guests out of room with background music playing.*