

We are delighted that you have thinking about being married here. Your wedding is something you will always remember and we are prepared to do all in our power to make it an event that will strengthen your marriage for many years.

Eligibility and Preliminaries

Anyone who has a *qualifying connection* may be married by right in our churches as long as they are single. This is done by the reading of *Banns of Marriage* within three months before their wedding on three successive Sundays at church. As long as no one has any legal objection the marriage will proceed! You do not need to be baptised to be married in church.

There is a range of qualifying connections which give this right:

- One of you
 - lives in the parish,
 - is on the church's electoral roll (not the civil roll but the list of church members),
 - has at any time lived in the parish for at least 6 months,
 - has habitually attended church services in the parish church for at least 6 months (at least twice per month),
 - was baptised in the parish,
 - was prepared for confirmation in the parish,
- one of your parents; at any time after you were born:
 - has at any time lived in the parish for at least 6 months,
 - has habitually attended church services in the parish church for at least 6 months,

- one of your parents or grandparents:
 - was married in the parish.

If you are not sure if you live in the parish you can find out here:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

Your banns would be read both at Hellingly and in the parish church where either of the other party to the marriage currently reside. It is the couple's responsibility to ensure their banns are read at their 'away' parish. You would need to approach your parish church and organise this. A certificate from that parish church must be shown to the minister marrying you before your wedding can proceed. If one of you has a marriage which was previously dissolved the marriage can take place at the discretion of the Vicar. This decision would follow a couple of confidential conversations between you and the Vicar.

There are other methods by which a marriage can be authorised:

- *Common Licence*
 - This might be used where banns cannot be read in the place where one or both of the couple reside, eg if one lives abroad.
 - As long as there is a qualifying connection for one of the couple an application is made to our local Surrogate for Marriages who arranges for the licence to be issued.
- *Special Licence*
 - There are some circumstances where an overriding pastoral reason means that a licence might be granted where no qualifying connection exists. These are rare but not impossible as they must be for

genuine pastoral need. The Vicar will assist in making this application to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office in London.

- *Superintendent Registrar's Certificate*
 - This is a civilly administered process used when one of the parties to the marriage is an overseas national outside the EEA.
 - A qualifying connection must exist for the non-foreign party.

Both parties to the wedding will need to provide evidence of identity, nationality and residence before a wedding date can be confirmed.

If attendance at church is required to establish a qualifying connection then this will be discussed with the Vicar. It will be the responsibility of the couple to establish this connection and an agreement will be made. Attendance will be monitored and if not satisfied the wedding date will not be confirmed.

Sometimes it may not be appropriate for a religious marriage ceremony to take place in church in which case a *Thanksgiving for Marriage* service will be offered (often called a marriage blessing). This has no eligibility requirements. It may be used following a civil wedding or as a second service following a religious marriage elsewhere. It can also be used as a way for couples who have been married for many years to renew their vows.

Preparation

Once all the legal preliminaries are satisfied your wedding date will be confirmed. (*It is important that you do not make financial commitments regarding your wedding before this point.*) Then you will be put in touch with your officiating minister who will

WEDDINGS

take responsibility for preparing you for your wedding. He or she will help you with in shaping the marriage service with readings and hymns. They will also help you to explore the meaning of the vows and actions you will make in the service. Finally they will guide you through the service at a rehearsal a day or two before the service.

Each year we hold a *Loving for Life* day to which all prospective wedding couples are invited. It can be a great way to prepare for your wedding and to meet other couples.

Times and dates

Weddings can take place on any day except during the seasons of Lent and Advent. In general we offer three times: 11am, 1pm and 3pm. This is to allow for two weddings to take place on the same day. Weddings can be arranged up to 18 months ahead.

Clergy

One of our parish priests will normally officiate at the wedding. However, the Vicar welcomes family and friends who are clergy of any Christian denomination to assist at your wedding. If you wish to suggest clergy, please discuss with the Vicar.

Music

The Director of Music will assist you in choosing music. You will be provided with an organist and choir if you wish to have them. You can also bring your own musicians with permission of the Vicar. There are fees for using the church provided musicians.

Bells

You can enjoy a peal of bells before and after your service if you wish. There is a fee for this.

Photography

You can arrange of a photographer to take pictures throughout your wedding service. They must stay at the edge of the space and keep movement to a minimum. Shots from the aisle during your entrance and exit are permitted.

Video recordings can be made from static cameras only. There may be a copyright fee incurred if you record any music currently in copyright.

Decorations

You are more than welcome to arrange for your own flowers and decorations to be installed. Decorations must be removed after the service.

Fees

There are set fees common to all Church of England churches. These can be found at the official CofE website. There are also supplementary fees to cover local costs of holding your service. These will be discussed when you arrange your wedding. An invoice will be sent out a few weeks before your wedding day.

The next step

If you wish to discuss the possibility of being married in the parish at either Hellingly or Upper Dicker please contact the Vicar or the Parish Office.

Further information

The Church of England website on weddings is very helpful:

<https://www.yourchurchwedding.org>



PARISH OFFICE 07414 856807
EMAIL: HELLINGLYDICKERCH3@ICLOUD.COM
VICAR: FR JEREMY SYKES
TEL: 01323 441872 • MOB: 07714 426286
EMAIL: REVJEREMYSYKES@ICLOUD.COM