

# MARRIAGE CEREMONY

## INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE



We hope this guide will give you all the information you require  
for your ceremony.

### OUTSIDE STRUCTURES

**As more and more couples are now choosing to be married in an outside structure please be aware that in order for a legal marriage to take place the statutory declarations must be made by the couple inside the licenced structure in the presence of the Superintendent Registrar, the Registrar of marriages, and the two witnesses**

Please remember that with great British summer being what it is, there may be rain, wind or even very hot and sunny conditions with no shade. Although the happy couple may be under cover it may be worth sparing a thought for your guests, arranging for umbrellas or some kind of canopy, to keep things dry/shady is a good idea, not every venue will have an indoor alternative. We also have to consider the protection of the official record of the ceremony.

We offer a choice of enhancements for your ceremony but if you find this selection does not suit your personal requirements we are happy for you to add your own words. Please send copies of these with your **checklist** as they need to be approved in advance to ensure the contents are non-religious, in accordance with the Marriage Act 1994.

#### **Enclosed in this information pack is guidance on the following:**

- ♥ Timings of the ceremony and arrival information (pg 2)
- ♥ Guests and witnesses (pg 3)
- ♥ Music & Readings (pg 3)
- ♥ Photography (pg 3)
- ♥ Framework of your ceremony (pg 4-5)
- ♥ Vow choices (pg 5-6)
- ♥ Completing your checklist (pg 7)
- ♥ Ordering extra certificates (pg 7)
- ♥ Our ceremony rooms (pg 8-9)



## Ceremony Guidance

There is no need to be nervous about the ceremony. Remember the Registrars are there to guide you through all you have to say and do.

### Ceremony Time

Our registrar will need to speak to you both individually before the start of the ceremony. This can take around **10 minutes** each.

**County Council Rooms in Edes House, Park House, Crawley and Worthing** - If you are arriving together please arrive **20 minutes** prior to your ceremony, if arriving separately partner 1 to arrive **20 minutes** before and partner 2 **15 minutes** before.

**Approved Licenced Venues** – please arrive at least **30 minutes** before we are due to commence. If you are travelling separately, we would recommend staggering your arrival so one of you arrives **35 minutes before** and the other **20 minutes before**.

The time booked for the ceremony is the time it will commence. Although we make every effort to accommodate late arrivals, your ceremony may have to be postponed if you are late. If the ceremony should commence later than planned then WSCC reserve the right to seek to amend the ceremony in order to reduce its duration. Should the ceremony not be ready to proceed within a maximum of 20 minutes of the scheduled time and WSCC are not responsible for any such delay, then WSCC reserve the right to delay or defer the ceremony.

### On Arrival...

It is a statutory requirement that you are both interviewed prior to your ceremony to ensure that all details entered into the register are correct as of that day, no documents are required for this interview.

The celebrant will talk you through the ceremony and answer any last minute queries to put you at ease so that you can enjoy your day. These interviews can be conducted together or separately in a designated room at the venue (this may be in the marriage room or the room where the bride is getting ready)

**Once these formalities have been completed the ceremony may commen**

## A Few Things to Note...

### Number of Guests

To ensure all of your guests can be part of your ceremony we would remind you that most venues, including our own, will have a maximum capacity. We would recommend that you check numbers with your venue and issue invites accordingly so nobody misses out. If you are planning on using one of the County Council venues, you can check our website for details of all the rooms including their maximum capacities.

### Witnesses

You will need two people who may be friends or relatives to witness your ceremony and sign the register. They must be credible witnesses who have been present for the **entire ceremony** and have sufficient command of English to understand what has been said. You may be asked to choose another witness if the Registration Service feels a chosen witness is unsuitable to undertake the role.

### Etiquette

Please check with the venue whether confetti may be used.

### Music

Music may be played at appropriate times during the ceremony. If you have a particular piece of music or a song you would like, details will need to be submitted with your completed choices form. Music will need to be provided by yourselves to your venue or County Council room. Please check with them what is acceptable (CD, iPad, phone etc.) Please note, in a County Council room, if you are providing music on anything other than a CD you will need to nominate a guest or family member to operate the device for you. If you want to use a phone please make sure you bring the connecting lead with you.

**\*If burning your own CD it is advisable to test it works at your ceremony venue before the day to ensure it plays on the music system. It is a good fail-safe to have the music backed up as a playlist on a phone/iPad in case for any reason the CD does not work on the day\***

Please remember that any music must be non-religious

### Readings

A list of readings can be found on our website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ceremonies](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ceremonies) or submit your own. Please remember that any readings must be non-religious

### Photography

A designated photographer can take photographs throughout the ceremony except during the official signing of the register. We will, however, recreate the moment for photograph opportunities after the official signing. A static video recorder is also acceptable but, again, recording of the official signing is not permitted.

It must always be remembered, however, that the ceremony creates a solemn and binding contract between the couple and it is essential that their attention should not be distracted in any way from the meaning and dignity of the occasion.

### Interpreters

If either of you are unable to, or have difficulty in speaking English you will need to bring an interpreter along with you. He or she could be a family member or friend. Afterwards the interpreter will be asked to sign the legal document as one of your witnesses.

# The Ceremony

## Personalising your ceremony

- ♥ There are many ways to enhance your ceremony with poetry or prose readings and additional vows.
- ♥ There are many options available to you, detailed in the choices section of this brochure.
- ♥ **Please note that the wording and format of each ceremony may vary slightly** as each celebrant will use their own words of welcome and conclusion they will, however, always include the statutory words and any choices you have made.
- ♥ **Please ensure you return, your completed choices form to us at least 8 weeks prior to the ceremony so that your celebrant receives it in plenty of time to plan your ceremony.** Remember to attach copies of any readings and vows not included in our lists.
- ♥ Of course you may want a simple legal ceremony without much fuss, no problem it's not required, however please be aware that with no additions the ceremony will be quite short.

**\*If you don't submit a checklist you will still have a lovely ceremony, it just won't have your\*  
personal choices**

Your registrar will contact you by phone, to introduce her/himself, a couple of days prior to your ceremony. Any changes to your checklist can be dealt with at this time

## Framework of the ceremony and your choices

**In West Sussex we regard it as a privilege to be involved in your special day. The following choices have been prepared for you to select the ceremony to suit you as a couple.**

### Guests stand

for the entrance of the marriage party.

### Music

may be played for the entrance.

### Giving away (optional)

### Welcome and introduction

by the celebrant conducting the ceremony.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Reading (optional)



**There are statutory words that must be spoken by the registrar and the couple, in order to be legally married.**

Celebrant will say

(Informal name) and (informal name) before you are joined in matrimony it is my duty to remind you both of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. Marriage in this country is the union of two people, voluntarily entered into for life, to the exclusion of all others.

I am now going to ask each of you in turn that to declare that you are free to marry. You will then be making a formal and legal contract with each other.

Please choose from the following sets of statutory legal declaratory and contracting words . It is necessary to state your full names once during the declaratory words, after that the choice is yours.

### **Traditional**

**Declaratory** I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I,  
(full name), may not be joined in matrimony to (full name)

**Contracting** I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, (name) do take thee, (name),  
to be my lawful wedded wife (or husband)

### **Modern**

**Declaratory** I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, ( full name), may not be joined in  
marriage to (full name)

**Contracting** I (name) take you (name) to be my wedded wife (or husband )

### **Short**

**Declaratory** Are you (name) free lawfully to marry (name)? reply..... "I am"

**Contracting** I (name) take thee (name) to be my wedded wife (or husband)

### **Exchange of Rings/Promises** (optional)

*If you are exchanging rings, you may wish to add extra vows. You can write your own or choose from our examples below. If writing your own please include these in the notes section of the checklist or on a separate sheet.*

#### **Additional Promises** (may be added if required)

**V1** I promise to give you my love and friendship. To support and comfort you. To care for you with love and patience. To respect and cherish you, and to be faithful always. These promises I make to you for the rest of my life

**V2** From this day we will stand together through all that life offers. I will give you help and support through times of hardship and share times of joy. I will love you as I do now, for the rest of our lives

**V3** As we set out in partners in married life together, I declare my love for you and I give myself to you as your husband/wife. I promise you my love, loyalty and my trust

#### **Vows for the Exchange of Rings** (Optional)

**E1** I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage and a symbol of my love and commitment

**E2** I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and commitment and as a pledge of our marriage. With this ring I thee wed and I promise to love, respect and cherish you always

**E3** I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and devotion. Just as a circle is without end, my love for you is eternal and my commitment forever. On this day I give you my hand and my heart

**Conclusion** – by the registrar

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** (optional)

**Signing**

**You will both be asked to check carefully before you sign. It is very important to ensure your details are correct, a fee of £90.00 is charged by the General Register Office for any corrections after the day.**

Your two witnesses will then sign, followed by the two Registration Officers.

**Music** - may be played during the signing.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Reading** (optional)

**Presentation of the Certificate**

Your certificate will be completed and presented to you. Any further pre-purchased copies will be posted to you within 7 days.

**Exit of the happy couple.**

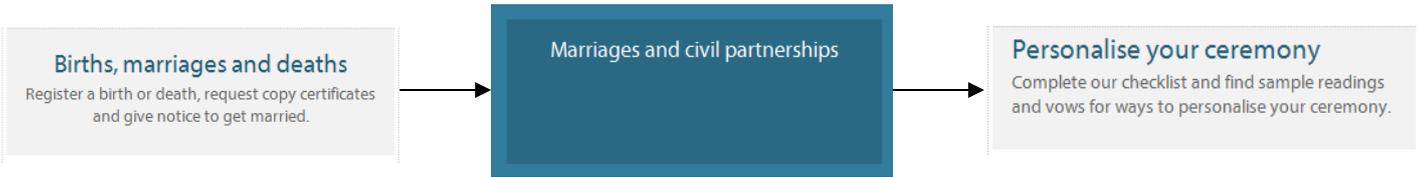
**Music**

may be played for the exit of the couple



### To complete your Ceremony Checklist:

Please go online to [www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk) and click the following links:



Please email your checklist as an attachment (in Microsoft Word or Adobe format only) to [ceremonies@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ceremonies@westsussex.gov.uk)

If you have any readings that are not from our selection please also attach these to the email.

**If you are a Mac / iPhone / iPad user we may not be able to open the document as we use Microsoft Applications. We have an email version of this form (which will work on iPads/iPhones) so please request this if required (please do not send in photos).**

**Alternatively, please print and complete by hand and post to Ceremonies Team, Crawley Registration Office, Southgate Avenue, Crawley, RH10 6HG**

### Ordering Extra Certificates

Extra certificates can be ordered up to 1 month prior to your ceremony by calling the ceremonies team on 01243 642122. If you would like to purchase further marriages certificates after your ceremony, you can either visit our website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/registration](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/registration) to order on-line, or telephone 01243 642122.

**PLEASE NOTE EXTRA CERTIFICATES CANNOT BE PURCHASED ON THE DAY OF THE CEREMONY.**

West Sussex Registration Service will endeavour to perform your ceremony on your chosen day. We strongly recommend that you take out ceremony insurance to cover losses or expenses incurred in the case of events outside our control.

These events could include severe weather conditions, fire, flood, pandemic, epidemic, civil war, armed conflict, terrorist attack, governmental action or any other act or matter which notwithstanding the reasonable diligence and foresight of West Sussex County Council and its partner providers, is beyond their reasonable control.

We are now on Facebook! Like our page for further guidance on planning your big day, pictures and reviews from West Sussex ceremonies and useful FAQs – find it at [www.facebook.com/westsussexregistrationservice](https://www.facebook.com/westsussexregistrationservice)



**We'd love to see pictures and videos of your ceremony – you can share them as a visitor post**

## Our Ceremony Rooms

### Worthing Ceremony Room (Centenary House, Durrington Lane)

#### Maximum guests 30

<b>Parking One Ceremony Car</b>	One reserved parking space is available for the ceremony car
<b>Guest Parking</b>	Parking is available on Saturdays to the rear of the building, (the entrance to the Ceremony Room is at the front of the building) but it is unrestricted so could be full. Please bear this in mind when planning your ceremony.
	The ceremony duration is approximately 30 minutes, please advise your guests to leave plenty of time to park and arrive at the venue
<b>Confetti</b>	Confetti is not permitted at this venue.
<b>Photographs/Videos</b>	You can video your ceremony and photographs can be taken inside and outside the venue.

### The Parlour / The Drawing Room and The Chairmans Room (Park House, Horsham)

#### Maximum guests: The Parlour/The Chairmans Room 10 and The Drawing Room 40

<b>Parking One Ceremony Car</b>	One reserved parking space is available for the ceremony car
<b>Guest Parking</b>	There are public car parks nearby for guests.
	The ceremony duration is approximately 30 minutes, please advise your guests to leave plenty of time to park and arrive at the venue
<b>Confetti</b>	Confetti is not permitted outside at this venue or in the garden.
<b>Photographs/Videos</b>	You can video your ceremony and photographs can be taken inside and outside the venue.

### The Balcony Room / The Henshall Suite (Crawley Registration Office)

#### Maximum guests : The Balcony Room 30, The Henshall 80 and The West Sussex Register Office, Crawley holds the couple plus 2 witnesses only

<b>Parking One Ceremony Car</b>	One reserved parking space is available for the ceremony car, 30 minutes prior to your ceremony start time.
<b>Guest Parking</b>	There are plenty of public car parks nearby for guests.
	The ceremony duration is approximately 30 minutes, please advise your guests to leave plenty of time to park and arrive at the venue
<b>Confetti</b>	Confetti is not permitted at this venue.
<b>Photographs/Videos</b>	You can video your ceremony and photographs can be taken inside and outside the venue.

## Edes House

**The Cowdray 6, The Warnham 20, The Goodwood 16, The Norfolk 40, The Richmond 80**

<p><b>Parking For one Ceremony Car</b></p> <p><b>Please always check the West Sussex website for up to date parking Information</b></p>	<p>There will be <b>one</b> space, nearby, available for a ceremony car. The parking space provided is on the campus but not right outside the building so you may wish to be dropped off outside Edes House before parking:</p> <p><b>Weekday Ceremonies:</b> Please report to <u>County Hall Reception</u> on arrival (<i>situated across the green from Edes House</i>) who will direct you to the car park space designated for the ceremony car.</p> <p><b>Saturday Ceremonies:</b> Please advise the parking steward on arrival you are parking for the ceremony, there will be one space given free of charge for the ceremony car.</p> <p><b>Sundays/Bank Holidays:</b> Ceremony car / guests can park free of charge in the County Hall campus car parks.</p>
<p><b>Guest Parking</b></p>	<p>There are public car parks close by in Orchard Street, Northgate and the multistorey on Avenue de Chartres. Very limited Pay &amp; Display Parking is available on Saturdays at County Hall.</p> <p>Chichester can be very busy, please advise your guests to leave plenty of time to park and arrive at the venue.</p>
<p><b>Emergency Evacuation</b></p>	<p>In the event of an emergency evacuation, to comply with health &amp; safety regulations, please ensure all guests requiring additional assistance are accompanied by a chaperone that can assist them in an emergency.</p> <p>It is important that you pass this on to any guests that you feel necessary</p>
<p><b>Confetti</b></p>	<p>Confetti is not permitted at this venue, unless you have booked the bespoke package.</p>
<p><b>Photographs/Videos</b></p>	<p>You can video your ceremony and photographs can be taken inside and outside the venue.</p>
<p><b>Animals</b></p>	<p>Due to the nature of the building no animals other than assistance dogs are permitted.</p>

**PLEASE CHECK THE WEST SUSSEX WEBSITE FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE ROOM YOU HAVE BOOKED**

**We hope you enjoy planning your ceremony, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to email or phone us and we will be more than happy to advise you.**