



Marriage in the Shelswell Benefice

Thinking of getting married or celebrating a special anniversary?

A church wedding is special for all sorts of reasons and it would be great to share your special day. Many couples nowadays are also choosing to celebrate an anniversary, such as the tenth, twenty-fifth, or golden with a service of Thanksgiving and Renewal of Vows.

In addition to the beauty of our churches and their settings, we aim to give every couple a personal welcome and help you in every way as you plan your wedding and your future life together. Many couples have commented on how well they were welcomed and how meaningful the ceremony was. We will give you help with choosing music and readings and how to involve your family and friends. Every couple will have a minimum of two meetings with a member of the Benefice clergy to talk about their plans, plus (for getting married) an invitation to a short preparation course and a rehearsal a few days before the service.

Can we get married in the Shelswell churches?

If one or both of you lives within any of the eight parish boundaries of Shelswell, the answer is normally “Yes” and you may be able to choose which of the ten churches you might marry in – you are not restricted to your own parish church.

If one or both of you have a personal or family connection with one of the ten churches as shown below, then the answer will normally be “Yes” but you will only be able to marry in the church where there is the connection

- You are a member of the church membership roll
- You have worshipped regularly at one of the churches for at least 6 months or you used to in the past
- You were baptised or confirmed in one of the churches
- You used to live in the parish for at least 6 months
- Your parents lived in the parish or worshipped here regularly for at least 6 months during your lifetime
- Your parents or grandparents got married here



If you are not sure whether you are eligible then please do phone the Rector for advice.

What if one of us has been married before?

A number of couples have begun their second marriage in one of our churches, and we treat each situation on an individual basis and with sensitivity. If your former spouse is still alive, you will need to meet with a

member of the Benefice clergy first of all to discuss your situation. The teaching of the Church of England is that marriage is for life. At the same time, it is recognised that there are some cases where it is appropriate to help someone make a new start through a second marriage. You can be assured that the member of the clergy will listen to your story sympathetically and in complete confidence.

Marriage preparation

“A Wedding is for a day, a Marriage is for life.” And yet many marriages sadly do not live up to the expectations of the partners. We in Shelswell feel a sense of responsibility to help make **your** marriage a success. We therefore run a marriage preparation course to help you to think beyond the pressures of wedding preparations to your future life together. It is expected that you do attend this course which is run in February of each year.

How much will it cost?

The fee for a wedding service within Shelswell, including the reading of banns, a certificate of marriage, and an organist is £390.50 (2010 prices). If you require a choir or bells (depending on availability) there will be an extra charge.

What's the next step?

Please contact the Rector at the earliest opportunity.