



# Civil Partnership

Your enhanced ceremony

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars)

*The Civil Partnership formation for*

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*is to be held at*

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*on*

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*at*

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## Introduction

Congratulations on deciding to celebrate this special occasion using our services. We aim to help you make your civil partnership a special day to remember and cherish.

In this booklet you will find details for the day, suggested readings and a checklist to help prepare for your ceremony. It outlines what to expect, explains the choices you need to make and is a reminder of what to do on the day.

## Planning your ceremony

If you are having a ceremony, you need to think about your special day and how you wish to personalise it.

You will have to make and sign a legal declaration. You will then have an option of making a pledge to one another, or could write your own extra words if you wish.

You need to decide which guests to invite and most importantly the special guests who will act as your witnesses, deliver a reading and look after any rings.

You have the option to choose readings. We have included a selection but you are free to select something more personal or write a poem if you wish. Please send a copy with your checklist.

You will also need to choose the music you wish to have played at your ceremony. Please be aware your reading and music must have no religious content. Approx 20-30 minutes of music should be provided.

## How many guests

Our venue can hold the couple and a total of 60 guests; this includes children and your witnesses. Our other approved venues do differ so you will need to confirm guest numbers with them directly but it would be helpful for us to know approximate numbers.

**\* subject to government restrictions on numbers and content**

## Witnesses

You will need to decide who will act as the two witnesses to your partnership. These may be friends or relatives. Your witnesses will sit at the front and will sign the schedule; they should be over the age of 16 and must be able to understand English and the nature of the ceremony.

## Photography and video

You are welcome to take photographs (without flash) or video your ceremony; however, we ask that this is done discreetly. We do not want you or the team distracted during the proceedings as we want you to get the best out of your ceremony.

If you would like someone to video your ceremony please let the Registrar know, so that the best position may be pointed out. For safety reasons, we cannot allow extra lighting and the recording equipment must run on batteries. If your ceremony is taking place elsewhere please check with your chosen venue.

## Parking and grounds

We have no parking at our venue for the ceremony car, so ask that you organise yourself and guests where possible to travel together.

Your guests are welcome to throw biodegradable confetti as you enter the garden.

We have a no smoking policy in our venues and gardens (this includes electronic devices).

If you are using one of our approved venues please check arrangements with them.

## Certificates

Civil Partnership certificates can be pre-ordered or ordered online after your partnership has been registered. No certificates are available on the day. Any ordered will be posted to you.

## On your big day...

### Arrival at the Flowers Suite or approved venue

It is important that you and your guests arrive 15 minutes before your ceremony; this gives everyone time to get settled and seated before we begin and ensures we start your ceremony on time.

You will be greeted together by the Civil Partnership Registrar for a brief meeting. This is essential to ensure that all the correct information for the day will be recorded. You will be asked to confirm the information given on your notices, including your natural, step or adopted parents' full names and occupations. These details will be recorded in the schedule and in certificates. We will be happy to answer any last minute questions at this time.

Our Registrar will then conduct your ceremony by welcoming everyone who is sharing this celebration with you.

They will ask you to make and sign the declaration and for your witnesses to sign. You can either read the legal declaration aloud or read this to yourself before signing.

You will be asked to confirm what your signature says to ensure the exact information is contained in the schedule. You sign in the name that you are using at the time of the ceremony. Witness full names will be recorded.

It is important to check all the details on the schedule, so take a few moments before signing.

Our team will then guide you through any pledges, readings and ring exchanges, introducing people as necessary.

After congratulations are made to you, you will exit the ceremony room and are then free to continue your celebrations as planned.

## What you need to do now...

Please now

- sign and return the last page of this booklet to us within 14 days to confirm your booking
- at least two weeks before your ceremony return your choices form to us
- if you are having your own music send us your CD two weeks before your ceremony for the Flowers Suite. If your ceremony is at a venue discuss your music with them

Our address and email are at the back of this booklet.

We look forward to helping you celebrate your special day and thank you for choosing to use our services.

If you need any further help or guidance please call or email us at any time.



# Readings

The following is a sample of possible poetry and readings that you may wish to use during your ceremony; or you may have a favourite reading which you would prefer to use. Due to legal constraints no religious or undignified material may be used and the Superintendent Registrar must approve any readings beforehand.

## 1

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

*William Shakespeare*

## 2

### I'll be There

I'll be there my darling, through thick and through thin  
When your mind's in a mess and your head's in a spin  
When your plane's been delayed, and you've missed the last train.  
When life is just threatening to drive you insane  
When your thrilling whodunit has lost its last page  
When somebody tells you, you're looking your age  
When your coffee's too cool, and your wine is too warm  
When the forecast said "Fine", but you're out in a storm  
When your quick break hotel, turns into a slum  
And your holiday photos show only your thumb  
When you park for five minutes in a resident's bay  
And return to discover you've been towed away  
When the jeans that you bought in hope or in haste  
Just stick on your hips and don't reach round your waist  
When the food you most like brings you out in red rashes  
When as soon as you boot up the bloody thing crashes  
So my darling, my sweetheart, my dear...  
When you break a rule, when you act the fool  
When you've got the flu, when you're in a stew  
When you're last in the queue, don't feel blue  
'cause I'm telling you, I'll be there  
I'll be there for you.

*Louise Cuddon*

## 3

### The Magic Of Love

Love is like magic and it always will be,  
For love still remains life's sweet mystery.  
Love works in ways that are wondrous and strange  
And there's nothing in life that love cannot change.  
Love can transform the most commonplace  
Into beauty and splendour and sweetness and grace  
Love is unselfish, understanding and kind,  
For it sees with it's heart and not it's mind.  
Love is the answer that everyone seeks –  
Love is the language that every heart speaks.  
Love can't be bought, it's priceless and free.  
Love, like pure magic is a sweet mystery.

*Helen Steiner Rice*

## 4

### Give Lavishly! Live Abundantly!

The more you give – the more you get.  
The more you laugh – the less you fret.  
The more you do unselfishly – the more you live abundantly.  
The more of everything you share – the more you'll always have to spare.  
The more you love, the more you'll find – that life is good and friends are kind  
For only what we give away, enriches us from day to day.

*Helen Steiner Rice*





## Readings

### 5

The meaning of true love isn't found in a book  
or explained in a word or a phrase.  
It can't be defined in a casual thought or explained  
in the simplest of ways.  
Love gives only itself, it does not possess  
yet creates a bond strong and true.  
Love does not demand, it stays young and free yet  
grows with you all your life through.  
Love isn't a fashion, a trend or a whim that's  
forgotten or just cast aside.  
Love is constant, fulfilling your hopes and your dreams,  
it doesn't destroy or divide.  
Love isn't accusing, it does not condemn and though  
some may say it is blind – love  
is trusting, forgiving and honest because it lives in the  
heart and not the mind.  
Love is not bought or sold, it's not borrowed or has  
a price you would willingly pay.  
Love is a gift that can only be kept as long as it's given  
away.



### 6

#### Captain Corelli's Mandolin

Love is a temporary madness,  
it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides.  
And when it subsides you have to make a decision.  
You have to work out whether your roots have so  
entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should  
ever part.  
Because this is what love is.  
Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not  
the promulgation of eternal passion.  
That is just being 'in love' which any fool can do.  
Love itself is what is left over when being in love has  
burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate  
accident.  
Those that truly love, have roots that grow towards each  
other underground, and when all the pretty blossom have  
fallen from their branches, they find that they are  
one tree and not two.



## Readings

7

### What Is Love?

Sooner or later we begin to understand that love is more than verses on valentines and romance in the movies. We begin to know that love is here and now, real and true, the most important thing in our lives. For love is the creator of our favourite memories and the foundation of our fondest dreams.

Love is a promise that is always kept, a fortune that can never be spent, a seed that can flourish in even the most unlikely of places.

And this radiance that never fades, this mysterious and magical joy, is the greatest treasure of all – one known only by those who love.

*Author Unknown*

8

### I'll Still Be Loving You

When your hair has turned to winter  
And your teeth are in a plate,  
When your get up and go  
Has gone to stop and wait –  
I'll still be loving you.  
When your attributes have shifted  
And you're not as spry as now,  
I'll count the joys you bring me, not the wrinkles on your brow  
I'll still be loving you.  
When the crackle in your voice  
Matches that within your knee,  
And the times are getting frequent  
That you don't remember me –  
I'll still be loving you.  
Growing old is not a sin,  
It's something we all do.  
I hope you'll always understand – I'll still be loving you.



## Ceremony preparation to do list

You've chosen and booked your venue and booked your Notices of Civil Partnership; follow our guide to help you prepare for your special day.

### 9 to 12 months before

- Attend your notice appointments.
- Decide on your attendants and other special guests.
- Prepare a guest list.
- Check your ceremony insurance.
- Choose cars, flowers, catering, music, photographer, filming and decoration suppliers.
- Start to think about what you will all be wearing.
- Book any time away for after the ceremony.

### 6 to 9 months before

- Prepare gift list.
- Book transport to and from the ceremony.

### 4 to 6 months before

- Organise invites for your celebration – include advice about car sharing and parking.
- Confirm suppliers and make choices for cars, flowers, catering, music, photographer, filming and decorations.
- Buy any rings and outfits.
- Choose reception menu and order the cake.

### 3 to 4 months before

- Ensure you have completed your legal preliminaries (Notices of Civil Partnership).
- Decide if there are any name changes and arrange passport amendments.
- Finalise holiday arrangements.
- Think about local accommodation for yourself and guests.
- Send out invitations.
- Arrange gifts for special guests.

### 1 month before

- Complete and return your ceremony choices form including any readings or music.
- Chase up guests and give final list to caterers.
- Book your hair, nails and make up.
- Check all arrangements are in place.

### 1 week to go!

- Time the journey to make sure there are no unexpected delays.
- Check that your ceremony attire fits, and your shoes are comfortable.
- Hair and make-up trial.
- Pack for your time away after your ceremony

## Looking to the future

In the coming years as your family grows you may choose to have a naming ceremony for your children or you may wish to renew your declaration, this may be as part of a special anniversary or just as a reaffirmation of your love for each other.

Here at Milton Keynes Registration Service whatever your ceremonial needs we will be happy to guide and advise you on all the services we offer.

## Planning meeting

We do offer the option to meet and chat to our staff if you think that will help plan your day better. This is a chargeable service.

**Remember: You can email or call us anytime if you have any queries about your special day**



# Flowers Suite Civil Partnership Ceremony

Names .....

Date and time of the ceremony ..... No. of guests .....

Partners entering with .....

**WITNESSES** 1 .....

2 .....

Person in charge of any rings .....

**Legal Declaration** - You must say or read the following:

"I declare that I know of no legal reason why we may not register as each other's civil partner. I understand that on signing this document we will be forming a civil partnership with each other."

☐ Say aloud      OR      ☐ Read to yourself

**Pledge** - Please decide which pledge you would like to make from the following choices:

☐ 1 I pledge to share my life openly with you  
I promise to cherish and care for you  
I will respect you as an individual  
be true to you through good times and bad  
and above all love you as my partner and friend  
to these things I give my word

☐ 2 I choose you above all others  
to share my life  
I promise to honour this pledge  
for as long as I live

☐ or add your own words to be used .....

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*Please see overleaf ....*

**READING (Optional)**

Title	To be read by
1) .....	1) .....

**MUSIC (Optional)**

Please provide us with a CD of the music you would like to have played at your ceremony otherwise we shall play our classical music.

If you wish to have your own music please list the tracks to be played below.

You can also play your own music from your own hand held device via bluetooth. In this case provide track details below.

Regrettably it is not possible for us to locate particular tracks at particular times, however, if you have a specific track for your entrance please ensure this is track one on your CD. We will start playing your music from track two at all other times.

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Photographer .....

**Please ensure there is no religious or inappropriate content in additional words, readings or music.**

# Venue Civil Partnership Ceremony

Names .....

Venue .....

Date and time of the ceremony ..... No. of guests .....

Partners entering with .....

**WITNESSES** 1 .....

2 .....

Person in charge of any rings .....

**Legal Declaration** - You must say or read the following:

"I declare that I know of no legal reason why we may not register as each other's civil partner. I understand that on signing this document we will be forming a civil partnership with each other."

☐ Say aloud      OR      ☐ Read to yourself

**Pledge** - Please decide which pledge you would like to make from the following choices:

☐ 1 I pledge to share my life openly with you  
I promise to cherish and care for you  
I will respect you as an individual  
be true to you through good times and bad  
and above all love you as my partner and friend  
to these things I give my word

☐ 2 I choose you above all others  
to share my life  
I promise to honour this pledge  
for as long as I live

☐ or add your own words to be used .....

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## READING

Title

To be read by

1) .....

1) .....

2) .....

2) .....

## MUSIC FOR:

Guests being seated : .....

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.....

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Entrance : .....

Couples exit : .....

## NAME OF:

Photographer .....

Videographer .....

**Please ensure there is no religious or inappropriate content in additional words, readings or music.**

## Please sign and return

Within 14 days of booking your ceremony please both sign and return this page.

I have read and agreed to the latest terms and conditions available on the Milton Keynes Council Registration Services website, including the section 'Late start of a ceremony' and the possible consequences of lateness by us or our guests at: [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars)

Signed: .....

Signed: .....

Print full name: .....

Print full name: .....

Date: .....

Date of ceremony: .....

Venue: .....

☐ If you have booked an outside ceremony please tick to confirm you accept the terms and conditions for this.

Please return this to us at the address / email on the back of this booklet.



Intentionally blank



**The Register Office**  
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East,  
Central Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ  
01908 372101  
[registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk)