



Marriage ceremonies

Your enhanced ceremony

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars

 **Milton Keynes**
City Council

The Marriage of

is to be held at

on

at

Introduction

Congratulations on deciding to celebrate this special occasion using our services. We aim to help you make your marriage 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 marriage

You need to think about your special day and how you wish to personalise it. Would you like to see each other before or at the point the ceremony starts? Who will give you away? Who will you entrust to look after your rings?

You will have to make a choice of the legal vows but you can also write your own extra vows if you wish. You may like extra words to say to each other but do not want to write your own, if so, you can choose to have our Registration Service extra promises which are:

I promise to love and care for you
To comfort and protect you
To listen and confide in you
To be honest and faithful to you
To respect your thoughts and your dreams
And to trust and believe in you, above all others.

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 rings.

You also 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 readings and music must not have any 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 ceremony. These may be friends or relatives. Your witnesses will sit at the front to hear you say your vows and sign the schedule at the end of the ceremony; 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 wedding 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), and no food or drink is permitted in the garden.

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

Certificates

We take payment for one certificate when you book a ceremony with us. Additional marriage certificates can be pre ordered or ordered online after your wedding 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 20 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 by the Registration Service ceremony staff for a brief meeting. This may be conducted separately if you do not wish to see each other before the ceremony starts. 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 certificates. We will be happy to answer any last minute questions at this time.

Our ceremony staff will then conduct your marriage by welcoming everyone who is sharing this celebration with you. They will guide you through the rest of your ceremony including the declarations, vows, ring exchange and readings, introducing people as necessary before you and your witnesses sign the schedule.

Corrections can be expensive and difficult to make so it is important to check all the details on the schedule carefully, so take a few moments before signing. You must sign in the name that you are using at the time of the ceremony.

You will be asked to confirm what you actually sign as it is important that all signatures are recorded correctly to ensure future certificates contain the exact information eg: *someone called John Sam Smith may have a signature which says J Smith, J S Smith or John Smith.*

Witnesses full names will be recorded.

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

On your big day...

Please now

- sign and return the last page of this booklet to us with 14 days to confirm your booking
- at least two weeks before your ceremony complete your choices form online/or fill in and return the relevant form from the back of this pack 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 marriage 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

Marriage is.....

Marriage is a dynamic process of discovery.

Marriage is a journey, not an arrival.

In marriage, being the right person is as important as finding the right person.

Marriage is starting to love, over and over again.

Marriage is a life's work.

Marriage is an art ... and like any creative process, it requires active thought and effort.

We have to learn how to share on many different levels.

We need to practise talking from the heart, and understanding attitudes as well as words.

Giving generously and receiving graciously are talents that are available to anyone.

But all these skills need to be developed, if the marriage picture that we paint is to be anything approaching the masterpiece intended.

Anon.

2

A Walled Garden

'Your marriage,' he said, 'should have within it, a secret and protected place, open to you alone.

Imagine it to be a walled garden, entered by a door to which you only hold the key.

Within this garden you will cease to be a mother, father, employee, homemaker or any other of the roles which you fulfil in daily life.

Here you are yourselves two people who love each other.

Here you can concentrate on one another's needs.'

So take my hand and let us go back to our garden.

The time we spend together is not wasted but invested.

Invested in our future and the nurture of our love.

Anon.

3

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



Readings

4

The Art of a Good Marriage

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

A good marriage must be created.

In marriage the little things are the big things.

It is never being too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say “I love you” at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted,

The courtship should not end with the honeymoon,

It should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice,

But in the spirit of joy.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humour.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal.

Dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.

It is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

Wilfred Arlan Peterson



5

This day of love

On this Wedding day of ours we join our hands and hearts.

The journey that has brought us here begins a fresh new start.

This is the day that we've waited for to celebrate together

We begin our lives as husband and wife with love to last forever.

We thank our friends and family for being with us, we're touched.

We're honoured to share this special day with those who mean so much.

Special thanks to our parents for their devotion, love and care.

For the love they provide is something we now share.

For those that can not be with us we remember them on this day.

Their love and support surrounds us in each and every way.

On this day we say 'I Do' and kiss as husband and wife, We celebrate our marriage and our new journey of life.



Readings

6

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

7

Marriage

A marriage is a promise that two hearts gladly make.
A promise to be tender, to help, to give and take.
A marriage is a promise to be kind and understanding,
to be thoughtful and
considerate, fair and undemanding.
A marriage is a promise to share one life together.
A love filled promise meant to be kept lovingly forever.

8

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

9

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

10

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.

11

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.

12

A Parent's Tribute

Today seemed a lifetime away, now suddenly it's here.
How did it happen so quickly? – this wedding drawing
near.
How can I act so happy, how can I sound so gay?
When in such a very short time, I'll give my daughter
away.
I wish I could grasp a moment, and make the clock stand
still,
So I could let my heart catch up – but I know it never
will.
All the worries of being a parent, most of the battles
won, BUT
No one ever warned me about the day the job is done.
Yet there is another side, where my heart is not so sad,
When I look into my daughter's eyes, I feel joyful and
glad.
For I know that I was privileged when this child was lent
to me,
To love and care for and nurture, so she would grow to
be,
This lovely bright young woman today – a beautiful
bride,
And as always, I am there – with love, at my daughter's
side.

Anon

13

To Keep Your Marriage Brimming

To keep your marriage brimming,
With love in the loving cup,
Whenever you're wrong – admit it.
Whenever you're right – shut up!

Ogden Nash



Readings

14

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

15

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.



Readings

16

True Love

True love is a sparkling flame that burns eternally,
And none can dim its special glow or change its destiny.
True love speaks in tender tones and hears with gentle ear,
True love gives with open heart and true love conquers fear.
True love makes no harsh demands, it neither rules or binds,
And true love holds with gentle hands, the heart that it entwines.

Author unknown

17

On Your Wedding Day

Today is a day you'll always remember,
The greatest in anyone's life.
You'll start off the day just two people in love,
And end it as husband and wife.
It's a brand new beginning, the start of a journey.
With moments to cherish and treasure.
And although there'll be times when you both disagree,
These will surely be outweighed by pleasure.
You'll have heard many words of advice in the past,
When the secrets of marriage were spoken.
But now you know that the answers lie hidden inside,
Where the bond of true love lies unbroken.
So live happy forever as lovers and friends,
It's the dawn of a new life for you.
As you stand there together with love in your eyes,
From the moment you whisper 'I do'.
And with luck, all your hopes, and all your dreams can be real,
May success find its way to your hearts.
Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joy,
But today is the day it all starts.



Wedding preparation to do list

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

9 to 12 months before

- Attend your notice appointment.
- Decide on your bridesmaids, best man, ushers and other special guests.
- Prepare a guest list.
- Check your wedding insurance.
- Choose wedding cars, flowers, catering, music, photographer, filming and decoration suppliers.
- Start to think about what you will all be wearing.
- Book the honeymoon!

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 wedding cars, flowers, catering, music, photographer, filming and decorations.
- Buy rings and outfits.
- Choose reception menu and order the cake.

3 to 4 months before

- Ensure you have completed your legal preliminaries (Notices of Marriage).
- Decide if there are any name changes and arrange passport amendments.
- Finalise honeymoon 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, or complete the form online if you have created your account.
- Chase up guests and give final list to caterers.
- Arrange hen and stag nights.
- 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 honeymoon!

Looking to the future

Look no further than our list to inspire you to choose the perfect present for all your future wedding anniversaries

1st Paper	13th Lace
2nd Cotton	14th Ivory
3rd Leather	15th Crystal
4th Linen	16th Topaz
5th Wood	17th Amethyst
6th Iron	<i>other major anniversaries</i>
7th Wool	<i>include;</i>
8th Bronze	25th Silver
9th Pottery	30th Pearl
10th Tin	40th Ruby
11th Steel	45th Sapphire
12th Silk	50th Gold
	55th Emerald

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 marriage vows, 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

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Flowers Suite Marriage Ceremony - Civic

Names

Date and time of the ceremony No. of guests

Do you wish to see each other before the ceremony? Yes / No

Bride / Groom entering with/being given away by

WITNESSES 1

2

Person and their role who will be in charge of the rings

LEGAL VOWS: The Marriage Ceremony (Prescribed Words)

You must choose one from the Declaratory and one from the Contracting, please tick the box of your choice

Declaratory words

☐ 1 I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I AB may not be joined in matrimony to CD

OR

☐ 2 I declare that I know of no legal reason why I AB may not be joined in marriage to CD

OR

☐ 3 by replying "I Am" to the question "Are you AB free lawfully to marry CD?"

Contracting words

☐ 1 I call upon these persons here present to witness that I AB do take thee CD to be my lawful wedded wife / husband

OR

☐ 2 I, AB take you CD to be my wedded wife / husband

OR

☐ 3 I, AB take thee CD to be my wedded wife / husband

Would you like us to include the extra promises Yes / No

The extra promises are:

I promise to love and care for you
To comfort and protect you
To listen and confide in you
To be honest and faithful to you
To respect your thoughts and your dreams
And to trust and believe in you, above all others

Do you have any additional vows you would like included Yes / No
(please include a copy)

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 vows, readings or music.

Venue Marriage Ceremony

Names

Venue.....

Date and time of the ceremony No. of guests

Do you wish to see each other before the ceremony? Yes / No

Bride / Groom entering with/being given away by

WITNESSES 1

2

Person and their role who will be in charge of the rings

LEGAL VOWS: The Marriage Ceremony (Prescribed Words)

You must choose one from the Declaratory and one from the Contracting, please tick the box of your choice

Declaratory words

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Contracting words

☐ 1 I call upon these persons here present to witness that I AB do take thee CD to be my lawful wedded wife / husband

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Would you like us to include the extra promises

Yes / No

The extra promises are:

I promise to love and care for you
To comfort and protect you
To listen and confide in you
To be honest and faithful to you
To respect your thoughts and your dreams
And to trust and believe in you, above all others

Do you have any additional vows you would like included

Yes / No

(please include a copy)

READING

Title	To be read by
1)	1)
2)	2)

MUSIC FOR: *(please provide to the venue)*

Guests being seated :

.....

.....

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.....

Entrance :

Signing of the schedule :

Couples exit :

NAME OF:

Photographer

Videographer

Please ensure there is no religious or inappropriate content in additional vows, 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 City 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

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

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