



# Naming and Renewal of Vows ceremonies

Your ceremony

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

 **Milton Keynes**  
City Council

*The Ceremony for*

---

*is to be held at*

---

*on*

---

*at*

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## Introduction

Congratulations on deciding to celebrate this special occasion using our services. We aim to help you make the event a special one to remember and cherish.

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

## Naming ceremonies

The naming of your child is one of the most important decisions a parent has to make. A name gives a child an identity and provides a sense of belonging to the family and wider community. A naming ceremony is a unique occasion for all your family and friends to feel involved as they offer their love and support for your child's future development.

Naming ceremonies are as individual as your child and provide a formal, non religious way to celebrate their birth, welcome them into the family, announce their names, choose adults to provide a special supportive relationship to your child and to make promises of commitment.

Naming ceremonies are not just for babies. Children of any age can have a ceremony and you can include your other children at no extra charge. A naming ceremony can also be used to welcome adoptive and/or step children into your family and to announce the new relationship.

Any parent can arrange a naming ceremony whether married or not.



## Renewal of vows ceremonies

A renewal of vows ceremony is a special way for couples to celebrate and renew the original vows they made to each other. For some this is a unique opportunity to celebrate a special anniversary, be it their first or 50th. For others it helps to confirm their commitment to one another in celebrating their years together and affirming their strength and unity as a couple. Couples who marry abroad may also wish to confirm their vows on their return or it could simply be a personal gesture to share your love for one another. Whatever your individual reasons are it is a unique way to celebrate the occasion with friends and family.

Renewal of vows ceremonies are as individual as you and provide a formal, non religious way to celebrate your vows to one another again, to share this commitment to one another with your friends and family, to make your promises and vows anew and to have special guests to contribute to your special day.

Renewal of vows ceremonies are for any couples who are legally married or in a civil partnership. There are no limits on length of marriage, age or where you live or where married originally.

## Planning your ceremony

We will provide a framework for you to select your ceremony from. To ensure your ceremony is something unique and special to you. Your ceremony will be run by a fully trained celebrant from your local authority and contain some, or all, of the following:-

- Introduction and welcome
- Readings/poems
- Promises and pledges
- Exchange of gifts / rings
- Your own music
- Closing words
- Signing of a commemorative certificate

You need to think about your special day and how you wish to personalise it. You need to decide what guests to invite and most importantly the special guests who will act as your witnesses or honorary parents. You also have to choose readings. We have included a small selection but you are free to select something more personal, or write a poem, or additional promises or words if you wish, please send a copy with your checklist.

Naming and renewal of vows ceremonies have no legal status and cannot be used to change a name.

## Planning your ceremony

Ceremonies can be held at the Register Office in our ceremony room or at any of our approved venues across Milton Keynes. Please visit our website for details and fees [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars)

## How many guests

Our venue can hold 60 guests in total, this includes you, children and your special guests. 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.

You will need to decide who will be your witnesses/honorary parents. For renewal of vows your witnesses will sit at the front to hear you say your vows and sign the certificate at the end of the ceremony. For naming ceremonies honorary parents will make promises to provide a special supportive relationship to your child and sign the certificate at the end of the ceremony. You may choose other special guests to deliver a poem/reading.

## Photos and video

You are welcome to take photos or video your ceremony however we ask that this is done discreetly. We do not want you or our celebrant distracted during your ceremony as we want you to get the best out of your celebration.

## Parking and grounds

We have no parking at our venue so ask that you organise yourself and guests where possible to travel together. If you are using one of our approved venues please check arrangements with them.

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

## On the day ...

On the day we need you to arrive 30 minutes before your ceremony at your chosen venue. This gives everyone time to get settled and seated before we begin. Our celebrant will then conduct your ceremony by welcoming everyone who is sharing this celebration with you. They will then guide you through the rest of your ceremony including the readings, introducing people as necessary and conduct the promises with you and your special guests. This takes about 30 minutes. You are then free to continue your celebrations as planned.

## What you need to do now ...

We now need you to return your contract if you haven't already done so, please then complete the checklist at the back of the booklet and return it to us at least two weeks before your ceremony. If you have your own music it needs to be sent to us on a CD at the same time along with any additional readings, poems or words. Our address is on the back of this booklet.

Together we will ensure you have a special ceremony to remember and cherish for years to come.

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



# Readings for naming ceremonies

## Choice 1

May the strength of the wind and the light of the sun,  
The softness of the rain and the mystery of the moon  
Reach you and fill you.

May beauty delight you and happiness uplift you,  
May wonder fulfil you and love surround you.  
May your step be steady and your arm be strong,  
May your heart be peaceful and your word be true.  
May you seek to learn, may you learn to live,  
May you live to love, and may you love- always.

*Unknown*

## Choice 2

Let our children learn to be honest, both with themselves  
and with others. Honesty is the ability to distinguish  
between what is and what is not, and thus to deal  
effectively with reality. Let our children learn to love  
truth. When truth is present, there is no prejudice. By  
fidelity to truth the mind is nourished. Let our children  
discover their strengths and find courage. Let our children  
cultivate kindness, tolerance and acceptance of other  
people. These abilities do not come without cultivation.  
Let our children learn that they are like others, even  
people they do not like; and that there is good and bad in  
all of us.

*Adapted from E Powell Davies*

## Choice 3

Wishing you many smiles and happy times to come  
May life's adventures be exciting and sweet  
Filled with love from the friends that you'll meet  
You'll soon grow up for time does fly  
So cherish each moment as it goes by  
From crawling and walking  
To toddling and talking  
There's no knowing what you'll do next  
There's a threshold to cross and a wide open door  
And a wonderful world for you to explore  
Sleep with the moonbeams and play in the sun  
Let your life be a long one and filled with fun  
May today and tomorrow and all days hereafter  
Be days that are happy and filled with your laughter.

*Anon*

## Choice 4

**I want you to be happy**

I want you to be happy. I want you to fill your heart with  
feelings of wonder and to be full of courage and hope.

I want you to have the type of friendship that is a  
treasure- and the kind of love that is beautiful forever. I  
wish you contentment: the sweet, quiet, inner kind that  
comes around and never goes away.

I want you to have hopes and have them all come true. I  
want you to have a real understanding of how unique and  
rare you truly are. I want to remind you that the sun may  
disappear for a while, but it never forgets to shine. May  
the words you listen to, say the things you need to hear.  
And may a cheerful face lovingly look back at you when  
you happen to glance in your mirror.

I wish you the insight to see your inner and outer beauty.  
I wish you sweet dreams. I want you to have times when  
you feel like singing and dancing and laughing out loud. I  
want you to be able to make your good times better and  
your hard times easier to handle. I wish I could find a way  
to tell you- in untold ways- how important you are to me.

Of all the things I'll be wishing for, wherever you are and  
whatever I may do, there will never be a day in my life  
when I won't be wishing for the best... for you

## Choice 5

**Through Baby's Eyes**

I didn't expect a brass band,  
With welcome mat unfurled.  
To be on hand when I arrived,  
In this confusing world.  
Nor did I expect a doctor;  
To hold me by the feet,  
Then quickly turn me upside down,  
And spank me on the seat.  
At first I wasn't quite prepared,  
For this enormous place,  
Nor for the funny characters,  
That I would have to face.  
But soon I learned to get my way  
By looking sweet and shy,  
And when I wanted to be held,  
To make a fuss and cry.  
I've found it really doesn't take  
Much difficulty or guile  
To wrap them round my finger;  
All I need to do is smile.

*Anon*

# Readings for renewal of vows

## Choice 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*

## Choice 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.*

## Choice 3

**The Art of Marriage**

A good marriage must be created,

In the 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 having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together and facing the world.

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

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

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 not only marrying the right person-

It is being the right partner.



## Readings for renewal of vows

### Choice 4

#### Love

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.

### Choice 5

#### 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 for renewal of vows

### Choice 6

#### 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*

### Choice 7

#### I'll Still Be Loving You

When your hair has turned to winter

And your teeth are in a plate,

When you 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





# Naming ceremony checklist

Child's Name ..... Age .....

Parents' Names .....

Date and time of the ceremony .....

Place of ceremony ..... No. of guests .....

## READINGS *(you may include up to two reading as part of the ceremony)*

1) ..... to be read by .....

2) ..... to be read by .....

## HONORARY PARENTS

1) ..... 2) .....

3) ..... 4) .....

### Honorary parents promises

*(choose from the options below, you may have more than one)*

1) Do you promise to cherish and nurture this child throughout his/her life?

2) Do you promise to influence this child by good example so that he/she learns right from wrong, truth from dishonesty?

3) Do you promise to guide this child and to respect and support the choices he/she makes?

4) Do you promise to do your best to guide this child to take his/her place in the community as a kind and caring person?

Would you like to present a gift to your child? Yes / No

## MUSIC AND PERSONALISING YOUR CEREMONY

If you are having your own music or readings please list the tracks to be played below and send us the CD along with any readings, poems, or additional words you would like included in your ceremony, at least two weeks before your ceremony.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

email to [registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Post your CD or other content to us at the address on the back on this booklet.



# Renewal of vows checklist

Names of the couple .....

Date and time of the ceremony .....

Place of ceremony ..... No. of guests .....

Reasons for the ceremony.....

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

Do the couple wish to be escorted into the ceremony? Yes / No By whom .....

**WITNESSES** 1) .....

2).....

## **READINGS** (you may include up to 2 readings as part of the ceremony)

1) ..... 2) .....

To be read by ..... To be read by .....

## **RINGS**

Do you wish to exchange your original rings? Yes / No

Are you exchanging new rings? Yes / No

## **MUSIC AND PERSONALISING YOUR CEREMONY**

If you are having your own music or readings please list the tracks to be played below and send us the CD along with any readings, poems, or additional words you would like included in your ceremony, at least two weeks before your ceremony.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

email to [registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Post your CD or other content to us at the address on the back on this booklet.



## Please sign and return

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: .....

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



## Cancellation form

You may use this form to cancel your contract or write/email the following details to us. Please send this to us using the contact details at the end of this document.

I/We hereby give notice that I/We cancel my/our contract of sale of the following goods / for the supply of the following service (please insert details):

Description of goods/service: .....

Ordered/received on date: .....

Name of consumer(s): .....

Address of consumer(s): .....

..... Postcode.....

Signature of consumer(s):..... Date: .....

(only if this form is notified on paper)





**The Register Office**

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