

BRYMPTON WEDDINGS Frequently Asked Questions

The Marriage Service

The words that you will hear, and the promises you will make in the service, have been spoken by couples virtually unchanged for hundreds of years. 'To have and to hold', 'in sickness and in health', 'for richer for poorer' will almost certainly be familiar to you. You can find more on planning the service at:

www.churchofengland.org/life-events/your-church-wedding/planning-your-ceremony/wedding-ceremony-words

With music and readings, the service normally takes about 45 – 60 mins. The exact form your service will take will form part of the conversation you have with the priest taking your service.

Who takes the service?

This has to be an ordained priest of the Church of England, and St Andrew's will look to allocate a priest for your ceremony following your application and basic legal requirement checks.

How many people can attend a ceremony at St Andrews?

The church is able to accommodate no more than 150 people.

What about music?

Music will almost certainly be an important part of your service. You will want a piece for when the bride enters the church, and a piece for when you leave the church together at the end of the service.

Then most couples choose one or two hymns, and another piece during which the register is signed.

You will find lots of suggestions for suitable music if you google 'music for church weddings'. The music you choose will form part of the conversation you have with the minister taking the service.

You may request that the St Andrew's organist accompany your service, or you may have friends who are musicians.

Wedding Bells!

You can also request that the bells be rung.

Flowers in church

It is possible to have floral displays in church. You will need to engage a florist who will work in consultation with the local contact.

The rehearsal

A rehearsal usually takes place on the evening or afternoon of the day before your ceremony. To this you should include your best man and bride's maids, any ushers and people reading for you in the service. It is usual to run through where all will be in processions and seating and especially for you, alone with the priest to rehearse your declarations, vows and exchange of rings – knowing where to stand and how to say the words removes a lot of stress on the day! The time of a rehearsal should be arranged with the priest conducting the ceremony.

Fees

The fees for a Church of England wedding ceremony are **Statutory** and set each November for the year following. In **2024*** it costs £652 if you marry away from where you live and less if you marry in your home parish.

This basic legal fee includes the cost of the minister, the church, calling your banns, a banns certificate (if necessary), lighting and all administration. (After your wedding the officiating priest will register the marriage by sending your signed Marriage Document to the Yeovil Register Office. It is recommended that you wait for a week from your wedding before applying online to Somerset Registration Services for copies of your wedding certificate [presently these cost £11 each] – the certificate is no longer issued by churches).

This required fee has ancient origins and ensures your church can maintain essential services like weddings, christenings, funerals and all kinds of other ministries for you and your community.

Additional costs associated with the service, music, bells etc are additional to the basic fee and **completely optional**. If you did request these the overall cost in 2024 would be in the region of £950. Organ is currently £250; bells are £65. You will receive an itemised bill which is to be paid (preferably by BACS) about four weeks before.

Attendance at Services

If you do not have a recognised connection to St Andrew's, Brympton you will be required to attend services regularly for a minimum period of 6 months and a day. **This is not optional**. Services are held:

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 st Sunday of month | Morning Prayer 8am |
| 3 rd Sunday of month | Morning Prayer 8am |
| 4 th Sunday of the month | Evening Prayer 3pm |

Banns of Marriage

- Banns are an announcement in church of your intention to marry and a chance for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place.
- Banns are an ancient legal tradition and have been read out every week in churches across the land for millions of couples, over many centuries.
- Banns need to be read in the parish where each of you lives as well as the church in which you are to be married, if that is somewhere else (see below for how to find out contact details for the parish where you live if it is different from Brympton).
- You must have your banns read out in church for three Sundays during the three months before the wedding. As such, the usual practice would be for the Banns to be read at the three services held in St Andrew's the month preceding the month in which your wedding will take place.
- If there is not enough notice given for the banns to be read before the marriage is due to take place, or if one or both of you are British but do not live in England (or Wales), the Common Licence procedure needs to be used rather than banns.
- If one or both of you is a national of a country which is outside the European Economic Area, you will require a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to marry, rather than have banns read.

Visit AChurchNearYou.com and either enter the postcode of your address into the search box, or start typing your road name and district. Addresses that match what you are typing will start to appear in a drop-down menu. Select the correct address when it appears, and then click the arrow button to search.

Your search results will show a list of churches near to you and a map showing the parish where you live shaded in orange. At the top of the list, highlighted in an orange box, will be the church or churches in the parish which cover your postcode/address. This will most likely be the church where your banns will be read. Click on the church's name to see more details about it, including the contact details.

Once you're in touch with the church, tell them your good news, the date of your wedding and that you require local banns. They will take your details, confirm that you live in the parish and will then let you know what happens next.

Same-sex marriage legislation

It is not legally possible for same-sex couples to marry in the Church of England.

Can we be married by a Roman Catholic (or other) priest or minister?

No. It might be possible for them to take a part in the service, to give the Address for example, but it is only possible for a Church of England priest to marry you at St Andrew's.

Can we be married by our friend who is a Church of England minister?

It may be possible for this to happen. However, a request for confirmation of a Priest's License to officiate and safeguarding status has to be entered into between Bishop's Offices of the diocese where the priest may be operating and Bath and Well's Diocese, and a notification of this status provided to the Area Dean of Yeovil. This all takes time!

One or both of us is divorced – does that matter?

Your church wishes you a lifetime of love that grows within God's protection. But we recognise that some marriages do fail for all sorts of sad and painful reasons. So, in certain circumstances the Church of England accepts that a divorced person may marry again in church, and this has been the case since 2002.

Some priests don't feel able to offer a wedding to couples where one or both of the partners has been divorced. St Andrew's will do their best to find a priest who is open to talking about the possibility of marriage with you.

Can we be married in Lent?

Yes. However, at St Andrews we do not contract any weddings on Good Friday, Easter Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day or on a Sunday.

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