

GUIDANCE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO MARRY ON APPROVED PREMISES  
(TO BE ISSUED TO APPROVAL HOLDERS)

1. As soon as a couple have made provisional arrangements for their marriage on approved premises they should be advised to contact the superintendent registrar for the district in which the premises are situated.
2. Without the presence of this superintendent registrar and a registrar there can be no marriage and any arrangements for the use of the premises depend entirely on their availability. Although the County Council has appointed some additional staff, it can give no guarantee that a superintendent registrar and/or registrar of marriages will be available on any particular occasion and it accepts no responsibility for any matter arising as a result of such non-availability.
3. The couple will also have to give a notice of marriage to the superintendent registrar(s) of the district(s) in which they live. This notice must be given in person by each of them and is valid for twelve months. Both parties should, therefore, attend the register office where they live as soon as possible after notice can be given. If the couple live in different districts, then each of them will have to give notice in their own district. A separate fee is payable for each notice.
4. If either of the couple are subject to immigration control there will be further procedures to take before marriage notice can be given. The local superintendent registrar can advise further on these procedures.
5. The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a marriage to take place on the approved premises are dependent on:
  - a) the attendance of the superintendent registrar and a registrar for the district in which the premises are situated: and,
  - b) the issue of the authority or authorities for marriage by the superintendent registrar(s) to whom notice of marriage was given.
6. When notice is given in a different registration district from the one where the marriage is taking place, the couple will have to collect each authority before the ceremony and ensure that it is delivered to the registrar who is to attend the ceremony.
7. The couple should be advised that any ceremony conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature. In particular, the ceremony shall not:
  - (a) include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;
  - (b) be led by a minister of religion or other religious leader;
  - (c) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals;
  - (d) include hymns or other religious chants; or
  - (e) include any form of worship.

The marriage ceremony may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.

For this purpose, any material used by way of introduction to, in any interval between parts of, or by way of conclusion to the proceedings shall be treated as forming part of the ceremony.

The content of the ceremony must be agreed in advance with the superintendent registrar who will be attending the ceremony. The superintendent registrar and registrar of marriages are unable to attend any rehearsal of the marriage ceremony at the approved premises.

8. Any rights of copyright for music, readings etc permitted at the ceremony are a matter for the couple and the holder of the approval.