

Oxfordshire the place to marry



WEDDING GUIDE 



**OXFORDSHIRE
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welcome



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■ Welcome to your **Oxfordshire the place to marry** wedding brochure and congratulations on your forthcoming marriage.

Whether you live in Oxfordshire or not, getting married is a very special occasion and choosing your venue is very important. From the dreaming spires of Oxford to beautiful scenery and riverside settings around the county, Oxfordshire has everything to create the perfect place for your wedding.

We hope this guide will provide you with all the information you will need over the next few months. Whatever your arrangements, whatever your choice, we will do our very best to ensure that your day is happy, relaxed and everything you dreamed of.

Alicja Gilroy
Superintendent Registrar



Studio Blanco





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Oxfordshire the place to marry

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Barker Evans

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The Bridal Photographer



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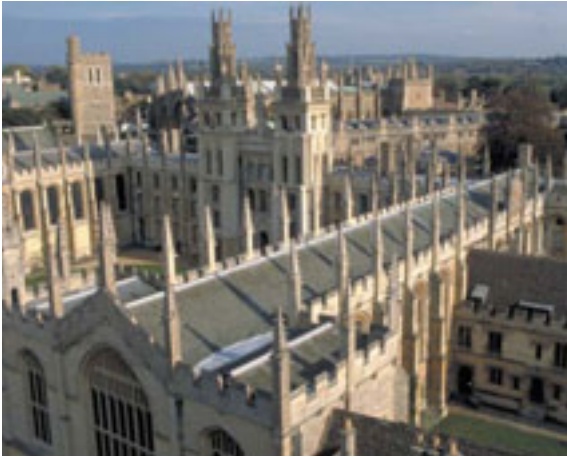


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From Oxford's dreaming spires and lively streets to the surrounding countryside's quaint cottages and stately homes, there is something for everyone in Oxfordshire.

a county of contrasts



Oxford, as an ancient university city, is both timeless and modern. Its dreaming spires and tranquil colleges coexisting with lively arts venues, bustling shops and fashionable restaurants.

■ You may already be familiar with some of the famous features that make a visit to Oxford unique. The sheer beauty of the city's colleges and riverside setting, national and international treasures, displayed in a family of museums (such as the magnificent Ashmolean, *pictured above right*) whose scope and scholarship is second to none; literary links and stunning film and TV locations; idyllic days on the river; shops with real character; and musical and dramatic performances, ranging from candlelit recitals in college chapels to open-air Shakespeare festivals in one of the city's parks. These, and other popular ingredients, blend with Oxford's lively mix of restaurants, pubs and theatres to give this historic city its alluring, vibrant and cosmopolitan buzz.

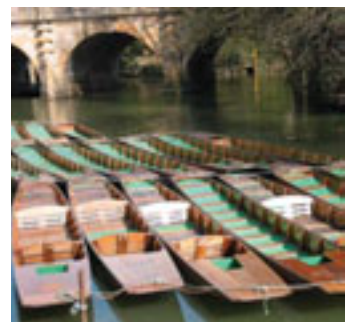
Well-known as it is, Oxford never fails to impress even its most regular visitors with something different or something new. In among the treasures and attractions that are renowned as the oldest, finest or even the only one of their kind, there are always more secrets to discover and more stories to be told.

Oxford's golden Cotswold-stone university buildings include some of England's most impressive architecture, notably the Bodleian Library, a masterpiece of English Gothic; Sir Christopher Wren's Sheldonian Theatre and the Radcliffe Camera. One of Oxford's oldest colleges, Christ Church, founded in 1525, is home to the city's cathedral and is the birthplace of Lewis Carroll's famous *Alice in Wonderland* books. Harry Potter fans will love the Great Hall, which provided the model for the hall at Hogwarts in the films.

When you are searching for inspiration, the Oxford Information Centre will be very pleased to hear from you. We are there to help you lift the lid on Oxford, to dip into its nine centuries of 'town and gown' and bring out the people and the places, interests and anecdotes that you will enjoy.

For more information visit www.visitoxford.org

Oxford Information Centre,
15-16 Broad Street,
Oxford. Tel: 01865 252200
E-mail: tic@oxford.gov.uk



Beyond the city, Oxfordshire's central location offers a gateway to a wealth of stunning countryside and attractions.



Experience the White Horse country, stretching from Oxford to the threshold of the Cotswolds, with its beautiful country homes, the ancient Ridgeway and the tranquil River Thames Path, peaceful villages and bustling market towns.

Visit www.visitvale.co.uk



North Oxfordshire offers a chance to relax and discover the historic market towns of Banbury and Bicester, some of England's most beautiful countryside and picturesque villages and walks alongside the Oxford Canal.

Visit www.visitnorthoxfordshire.co.uk



The Cotswolds, on the doorstep of Oxford, offer gentle, rolling countryside, quaint villages, glorious gardens and a rich and colourful history. Antique trails, garden tours and textile heritage are waiting to be explored, as is world heritage site and old home of Sir Winston Churchill, Blenheim Palace. Visit www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org



An area full of natural beauty, picturesque villages, shops to browse and places in which to stay and eat. South Oxfordshire offers a chance to explore Thames and Chilterns country, with stunning towns such as Henley-on-Thames.

Visit www.visitsouthoxfordshire.co.uk





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www.tallyhotel.com reception@tallyhotel.com



The Bridal Photographer



Grange Photographic



Peter Marshall

what is a civil wedding?

GONE ARE THE DAYS WHEN A CIVIL WEDDING MEANT A QUICK AND SIMPLE CEREMONY IN FRONT OF AN OFFICE DESK.

■ These days, you can have almost any kind of wedding, from a simple “I do” in a Registration Service Ceremony Room with a couple of friends as witnesses, to a more grand affair at an approved venue, with bridesmaids, readings and music: the works! Nearly anything goes but be aware that civil ceremonies must not include any religious content.

There will be two Registrars at your wedding; one to conduct the ceremony and the other to register your marriage. All ceremonies are held in English. If either partner is unable to speak or understand English, an interpreter must be present. You can discuss this with the Registrar who takes your Notice of Marriage so that you can make appropriate arrangements. The only other requirement on the day is that you have two adult witnesses present who also must be able to speak and understand English.

There is a huge variety of places in which to have a civil wedding in Oxfordshire. Summarised opposite are your options, with further information appearing later on in this publication.



“The Registrar helped us all to remember a day that was full of laughter and was a really relaxing environment. A truly lovely day. Thank you.”

Registration office weddings

There are several ceremony rooms across the county, in Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Henley-on-Thames, Oxford, Wheatley and Witney. They all vary in style, size and appearance, from the more traditional rooms, such as Oxford’s wood-panelled Dexter Room and Banbury’s Bodicote House to the purpose-built modern Broadway Room in Didcot. You can see a list of these, with photos, on pages 28 and 29.

The Register Office for Oxfordshire is situated in the heart of Oxford city centre and its helpdesk is pleased to answer questions on arranging a wedding in any of the rooms in the county.

Call **0845 129 5900** for further information on the rooms, their capacity for guests and to discuss any special requirements you or your guests may have, such as provision for people with disabilities.

Approved venues

Instead of having your wedding in a Registration Office, you could opt to hold it in one of the many diverse approved venues throughout Oxfordshire, from an old Cotswold hotel or a famous city centre museum to an Oxford College. The only difficulty will be making your decision!

Once you have settled on the venue for your marriage and made a provisional booking, you will need to get in touch with the helpdesk on **0845 129 5900** to ask if Registrars will be available on the day and at the time you want. **It is essential that you do this before making any other arrangements.**

Registrars are happy to attend marriages at approved venues on any day, including Sundays and Bank Holidays (excluding Christmas Day), between the hours of 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, as the law requires. For this reason, we recommend that you book your wedding no later than 5.00 pm to allow for any unforeseen delays. Provisional bookings can be made up to 24 months before your actual wedding day.

■ For a complete list of approved venues, see page 26.

Notice of Marriage

After booking your wedding at a registration office or an approved venue, both of you will need to give your Notices of Marriage. Details of how to do this are on pages 12 and 13.

Marriage in the Church of England

Churches are special places and there are some things about a church wedding that you don’t get anywhere else. If you haven’t been married before (and in some circumstances if you have) you have a legal right to be married in the Church of England parish church where you live. What’s more, the law has recently changed to make it easier to get married in other churches, if your family has historic links. Please ask the vicar for details. There are 282 historic churches in Oxfordshire, many of which are beautiful listed buildings. To find your local C of E church, see www.achurchnearyou.com For more information about getting married in church and help planning a service and choosing hymns, see www.yourchurchwedding.org

Marriage in any other church or religious building

Many religious buildings and churches can be used for marriages; please speak to the minister to discuss things further. Normally, you or your partner must live within their district, although some exceptions may apply. The minister will not be able to call banns and, therefore, you will need to give Notice of Marriage in the district in which you live. Some churches require the attendance of a Registrar at the wedding ceremony; please ask your minister if this is the case. If so, please contact our helpdesk as soon as possible on **0845 129 5900** to avoid disappointment.

Marriage abroad

Tying the knot abroad is becoming an increasingly popular option. If you are thinking of doing this, please contact the appropriate country’s embassy in England for advice on the formalities and documentation required.

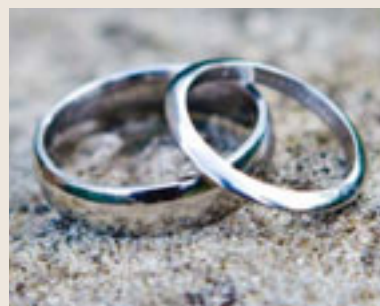
Insurance

If, for whatever reason, you need to change your plans, it could be extremely expensive. Therefore, it makes sense to take out insurance against this possibility.



Everything you need to know

HOLDING A CIVIL WEDDING CEREMONY IS NOT A COMPLICATED AFFAIR BUT THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU WILL NEED TO DO BEFORE THE DAY TO ENSURE YOUR WEDDING PREPARATIONS GO AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE.



The Bridal Photographer

Legal Preliminaries

Notice of Marriage

You will need to give notice of marriage in your local registration district. If you and your partner live in different areas you will both need to give notice in your own district. If you are subject to immigration control please see the section headed 'foreign nationals' for further information.

A minimum of seven **clear** days residency is required immediately before you give your notice. The day of arrival does not count and notice cannot be given until the ninth day; e.g. if arrival day is Tuesday, notice cannot be given until the following Wednesday.

Normally 15 clear days notice is required; e.g. if you give notice on 1st June the ceremony can take place on or after 17th June.

If you live in Oxfordshire then please ring **0845 129 5900** to make an appointment or book online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/communityandliving

A non-refundable statutory fee is payable for each notice given.

If you do not speak English you will need to provide an interpreter when you give notice of marriage and for the ceremony.

Documents

The Registrar will need to see certain documents to confirm the following:

Proof of identity and nationality

British Citizens:

Born before 1st January 1983

- Current passport or
- Birth certificate and photo ID or
- Naturalisation certificate and photo ID

Born after 1st January 1983

- Current passport or
- Naturalisation certificate and photo ID or
- Full birth certificate confirming you were born in the UK and showing your parents' details and photo ID together with evidence of your parents' nationality (passport or birth certificate)

EEA Nationals:

- Current passport or
- National ID card

Foreign Nationals:

- A current passport with a marriage/fiancé visa or
- A Home Office certificate of Approval or
- A current passport or UK travel document with settled status in the UK (e.g. indefinite leave to remain)

Evidence of Change of Name:

- Deed poll document or
- Statutory declaration

Consent Form

- if under 18 years of age

Recent proof of address

- Council tax bill or
- Utility Bill/Bank statement or
- A letter signed by someone able to confirm your residence.

Previous marriage/civil partnerships

- Decree Absolute/Annulment or
- A dissolution certificate or
- Death certificate.

Please note that original or certified copies of documents are needed. Photocopies are not acceptable.

Authorities for Marriages

Please note that for the marriage to proceed it is your responsibility to ensure that the legal preliminaries are completed and that the authorities for marriages are given to the Registrar.

Witnesses

You will need two witnesses who can be friends or family. They must be able to understand the ceremony and sign the register. As a guide they should be over 16 years of age.





Barker Evans

common questions

What fees do I need to pay and when?

Fees for all weddings are payable 12 weeks before the Big Day. If you are getting married in less than 12 weeks, you will be asked to pay in full straight away.

Payment can be made online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registrationceremonies or by card payment by telephoning 0845 129 5900. Visa, Switch/Maestro and Delta can be accepted and can be used for making payment at any of our registration offices. Cheques should be made payable to Oxfordshire County Council and need to be supported by a valid guarantee card.

What if I need to cancel my wedding?

If you need to cancel your wedding for any reason, please contact us immediately on **0845 129 5900**.

Is smoking allowed?

Smoking is not permitted in any of the marriage rooms or registration buildings.

Can people take photographs of, or record, the wedding?

Your guests are more than welcome to take photos before and after the ceremony. If you would like pictures during the ceremony, you need to discuss this with the Registrar first. Video recordings are allowed but please let the Registrar know this before the ceremony so the person can be directed to the most appropriate position.

What are your rules on mobile phones?

It would be a shame if a ringing mobile phone ruined your day so please ask guests to ensure they have turned them, and any pagers, off before the ceremony. Please note that food, drink and chewing gum are not permitted.

Can guests throw confetti?

Some wedding venues have restrictions on confetti, so please discuss this with the Registrar conducting your ceremony and the staff at the venue.





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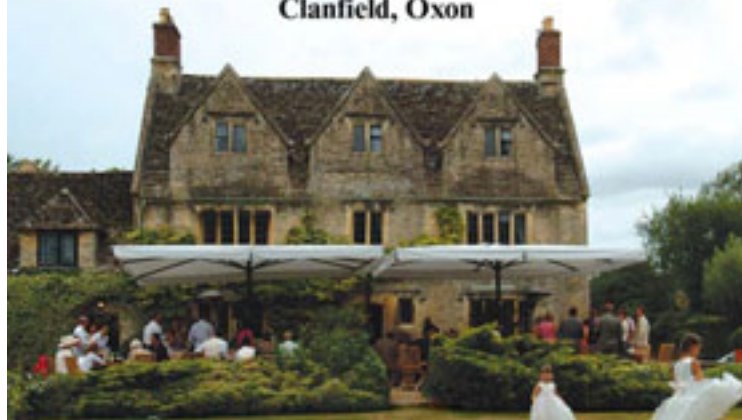
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www.theoxfordshire.com

The Cotswold Plough

Clanfield, Oxon



Dating back to the 17th Century, The Plough was originally a gentleman's house and is based in the village of Clanfield, bordering the Cotswolds, an ideal picturesque wedding venue, 18 miles from Oxford, 6 from Burford and 18 miles from Swindon.

The Plough holds a civil licence, catering for weddings from 8 to 120 and can offer you exclusive use. We have 12 en-suite rooms, four of which are four poster rooms.

We offer a totally flexible approach from formal to informal and themed, to meet your own specific requirements; no gold, silver or bronze packages. Easy payments available.

Winter weddings are very popular with the crackling log fires. We can offer special rates on Bank Holiday weddings and mid-week weddings.

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All hotels are also licensed for civil ceremonies.

For a copy of our wedding pack or to arrange an appointment with one of our Wedding Coordinators call the hotel of your choice.

Further details and copies of our wedding packs can also be downloaded from www.four-pillars.co.uk



With us, you're at home



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01235 553456



Oxford Spires
01865 324324



Oxford Thames
01865 334444



Witney
01993 779777

We want this to be a memorable day for everyone involved

your wedding ceremony

...what happens and when!



Before the ceremony

To make sure everything goes ahead on time and without any hitches, please ensure you and your guests arrive at least 15 minutes before the time of your wedding. Registrars are very busy and will normally be attending several weddings in one day, particularly at busy times. Remember to make allowances for traffic delays, parking and any pre-wedding photographs and inform your guests of this. **If you are late, we might not be able to proceed with the ceremony.**

Before the ceremony, the Registrar who will be registering the marriage will see both partners privately to check that the details to be entered into the marriage register are correct. You can be seen either individually or together, whichever you prefer. This is also an opportunity for you to ask any last minute questions. After these checks have been made we can proceed with the wedding ceremony itself.

The ceremony

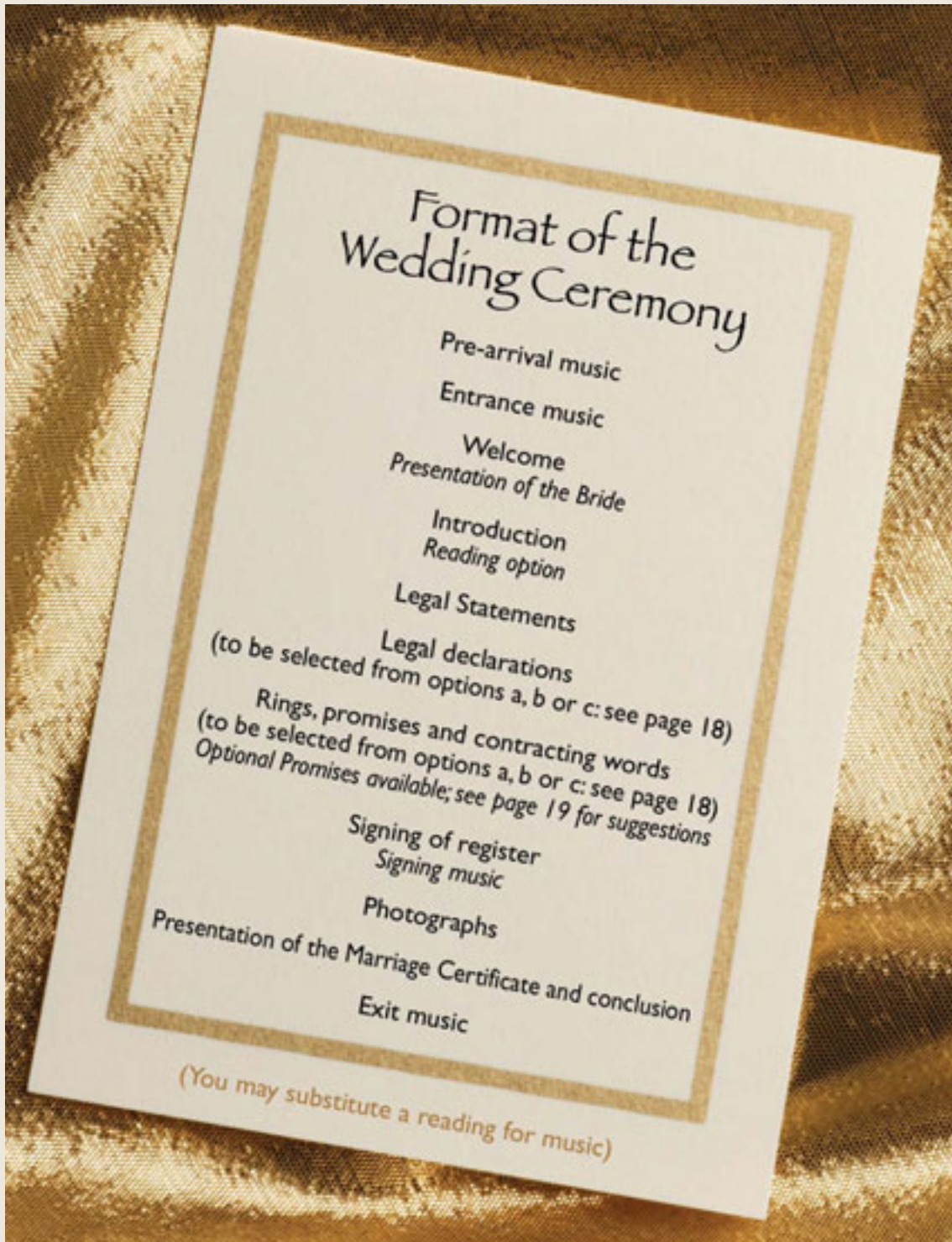
Saying “I do” in front of friends and family can be a nerve-racking event but the Registrars will be on hand to help you every step of the way. They will guide you through everything you need to do or say, so there is no need to worry about forgetting your lines or doing things in the wrong order!

Once you, your guests and your witnesses are seated, the ceremony will begin with a welcome by the Registrar. The bride and groom will be asked, in turn, to repeat a number of solemn declarations, which will be the choices you made for your legal declarations and contracting words (your vows) and your promises. See pages 18 and 19 for the options you can choose from.

After you have made your marriage contract, you and your witnesses will sign the marriage register. After this, the Registrars will sign the register and will present you with your marriage certificate.

“Our Registrar was professional, welcoming, friendly and very reassuring. After we had our photos developed we noticed in the background she was beaming. This in itself illustrates that the service we received from Oxfordshire Registration Service was excellent and much appreciated. Thank you from us both.”





Studio Blanco



Barker Evans





Traditional, modern or simple?
Choose the vows or promises that mean
the most to you when you say “I do”

CJ Photography

Choosing and **vows** and **promises**

While a civil wedding ceremony has a fairly standard format, there is plenty of scope within it to make it a personal statement of your love and commitment to each other. The minimum vows for a legal civil wedding are included below, under **legal declarations** and **contracting words**. You can choose which version suits you best from each one: a, b or c.

Legal declarations

(a) Traditional

I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I (your full name) may not be joined in matrimony to (your partner's full name).

(b) Modern

I declare that I know of no legal reason why I (your full name) may not be joined in marriage to (your partner's full name).

(c) Simplified

The Registrar asks: “Are you (your full name) free, lawfully, to marry (your partner's full name)?
You reply: “I am”.

Contracting words

(a) Traditional

I call upon these persons, here present, to witness that I (your full name) do take thee (your partner's full name) to be my lawful wedded wife/husband.

(b) Modern

I (your full name), take you (your partner's full name) to be my wedded wife/husband.

(c) Simplified

I (your full name) take thee (your partner's full name) to be my wedded wife/husband.



After the 'legal' part of the ceremony has taken place, you can become more personal and creative, if you so wish, by saying promises to each other. The following are suggestions that some people have used in the past.

Suggested promises

- 1** I promise that I will respect you as an individual, support you through difficult times, rejoice with you through happy times, be loyal to you always and, above all, love you as my wife/husband and friend.
- 2** I promise to care for you above all others, to give you my love and friendship, support and comfort, and to respect and cherish you throughout our lives together.
- 3** I give you this ring as a token of my love and friendship.
- 4** I give you this ring as a token of our love and marriage, as a symbol of all that we share and in recognition of our life together.

- 5** I promise to love and respect you. Helping our love grow, always being there to listen, comfort and support you, whatever our future may bring.
- 6** I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage and as a symbol of our love. I promise to care for you, to respect and cherish you, throughout our lives together.
- 7** I give you this ring as a sign of our love, trust and marriage. I promise to care for you above all others, to give you my love, friendship and support, and to respect and cherish you throughout our life together.
- 8** I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and affection, wear it with happiness and pride – now and always.



Grange Photographic

DIY promises!

Alternatively, if none of these take your fancy, you may be able to write your own promises; it is best to discuss this with your Registrar first to gauge their views on this. If you get the go-ahead, you can start putting pen to paper to come up with vows that really do come from the heart – and yours, not someone else's. The following promises may give you some inspiration:

- To get through whatever life throws at you, both good and bad
- To love, cherish and respect one another
- To stay together for life
- To share happiness and laughter
- To be kind, trusting, tolerant and understanding
- To be good friends forever.

This way you can decide which aspects and elements of your relationship you wish to share with your family and friends.





Folly Hill, Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 8AA



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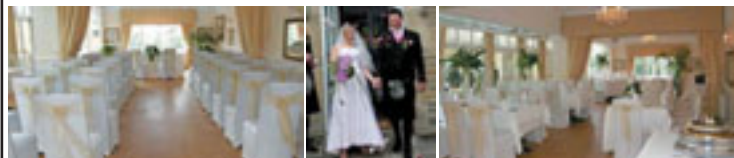


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Venues for marriage vows

Oxfordshire has so many wonderful wedding venues that the biggest problem you will face is choosing the right one! We hope the following tips can make your task less daunting.

First and foremost, your choice will be influenced by where you tie the knot. If you marry in a registration office (see pages 28-29) then you will need a venue in which to celebrate

afterwards. However, if you would prefer to marry in one of the county's approved venues (pages 26-27), you can have your ceremony and celebration in the same place, thereby removing any worry and cost associated with travel from one venue to another. Below is a list of all the different types of venues in which you can either do the whole thing or celebrate in after your registration office marriage.



City hotels and museums

If you want a more modern, urban wedding celebration, a hotel or museum in Oxford can be a wonderful choice. An added bonus is that guests will have a wider choice of easily accessible accommodation, either at your venue (if appropriate) or at a hotel or B&B that suits their budget. They can also enjoy good transport links to and from the venue or even walk if they fancy some exercise!



Oxford colleges

Oxford's biggest claim to fame is its ancient university, so why not wed in one of its colleges? The architecture and gardens will provide a dramatic backdrop to your photos and the unusual atmosphere within their walls is perfect for that special day. Your guests will appreciate some of the city's tradition at first hand and you will have wonderfully central, but interestingly peaceful, surroundings in which to celebrate.



Country hotels

From old Cotswold-stone buildings to riverside hotels, there is a wide choice of venues in the county. Country hotels provide a romantic setting and many have fantastic gardens for those important photographs. Depending on the size of both your party and the venue itself, you may have full rein on the day, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.



Stately homes

Imagine having access to a fantastic stately home for longer than a guided tour; your wedding could be your chance to do so. Prices might be higher than at other venues but, if you fancy being Lord and Lady of the Manor for a few hours (or more), what better day to choose than this, potentially the most important day of your life?

Top tips for choosing your dream venue



CJ Photography

- Each venue will have its own atmosphere, charm and 'feel' so make sure you visit several before making up your mind.
- Will you have unlimited access to the venue's facilities during your wedding day?
- If any of your guests has mobility problems will the venue still be suitable?
- Are there any facilities for children?
- Is there sufficient parking?
- What sort of accommodation can they offer (if appropriate) and do they offer guests a discount?
- Is the venue easy to find? Are there suitable or adequate signposts?

Barker Evans



Abingdon Four Pillars Hotel
Marcham Road, Abingdon, OX14 1TZ
Tel: (01235) 553456
www.four-pillars.co.uk/Abingdon

Abingdon Guildhall
Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE
Tel: 01235 524085
www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/leisure_and_arts/vale_halls_to_hire/abingdon_guildhall

Abingdon Registration Office
School House, Bridge Street,
Abingdon, OX14 3HU
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Ardington House
Ardington, Wantage, OX12 8QA
Tel: (01235) 821566
www.ardingtonhouse.com

Ashmolean Museum
Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2PH
Tel: (01865) 288299
www.ashmolean.org

Badgemore Park Golf Club
Badgemore, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 4NR
Tel: (01491) 637300
www.badgemorepark.com

Banbury Registration Office
Bodicote House, Banbury, OX15 4AA
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Barcelo Oxford Hotel
Godstow Road, Oxford, OX2 8AL
Tel: (01865) 489988
www.paramount-hotels.co.uk/oxford

Bay Tree Hotel
Sheep Street, Burford, OX18 4LW
Tel: (01993) 822791
www.cotswolds-inns-hotels.co.uk/bay_tree

Bicester Hotel, Golf & Spa
Chesterton, Bicester, OX26 1TE
Tel: (01869) 241204
www.bicestercountryclub.com

Bicester Registration Office
Garth Park, Launton Rd, Bicester, OX26 6PS
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Bignell Park Hotel
Chesterton, Bicester, OX26 1UE
Tel: (01869) 326550
www.bignellparkhotel.co.uk

Bix Manor
Bix, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 4RS
Tel: 01491 579929
www.bixmanor.co.uk

Blenheim Palace
Woodstock, OX20 1PS
Tel: (01993) 813874
www.blenheimpalace.com

Britwell House
Britwell Salome, OX49 5LJ
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www.britwellhouse.co.uk

The Cosener's House
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Tel: (01235) 523198

The Cotswold Plough
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Tel: (01367) 810222
www.theploughclanfield.co.uk

The Crazy Bear Hotel
Stadhampton, OX44 7UR
Tel: (01865) 890714
www.crazybeargroup.co.uk

The Crown Inn
Pishill, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 6HH
Tel: (01491) 638364
www.crownpishill.co.uk

Didcot Registration Office
197 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RU
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Drayton Park Golf Club
Steventon, Drayton, OX14 4LA
Tel: (01235) 528989 ext.23
www.draytonparkgolfclubabingdon.co.uk

Eynsham Hall
North Leigh, Eynsham, OX29 6PN
Tel: (01993) 885200
www.eynshamhall.com

Fallowfields Country House Hotel
Faringdon Road, Southmoor, OX13 5BH
Tel: (01865) 820416
www.fallowfields.com

Friars Court
Clanfield, OX18 2SU
Tel: (01367) 810206
www.friarscourt.com

The George Hotel
High Street, Wallingford, OX10 0BS
Tel: (01491) 836665
www.george-hotel-wallingford.com

Hawkwell House Hotel
Church Way, Iffley Village, Oxford, OX4 4DZ
Tel: (01865) 749988
www.hawkwellhouse.co.uk

Headington Hill Hall
Oxford Brookes University
Headington, Oxford, OX3 0BP
Tel: (01865) 484615
www.brookes.ac.uk/services/catering

Henley Registration Office
Regatta Court, Northfield End,
Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2JN
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Heythrop Park
Enstone, OX7 5UE
Tel: (01608) 673473
www.heythropark.co.uk

Holiday Inn Oxford
Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 8JD
Tel: 0870 400 9086
www.ichotelsgroup.com

The Holt Hotel
Oxford Road, Nr Steeple Aston, OX25 5QQ
Tel: (01869) 340259
www.holthotel-oxford.co.uk

Hotel du Vin
New Street, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2BP
Tel: (01491) 848400
www.hotelduvin.com

Kingston Bagpuize House
Kingston Bagpuize, Abingdon, OX13 5AX
Tel: (01865) 820259
www.kingstonbagpuizehouse.org.uk

Kirtlington Park
Kirtlington, OX5 3JN
Tel: (01869) 350236
www.kirtlingtonpark.co.uk

Lains Barn
c/o Vale & Downland Museum Centre
Church Street, Wantage, OX12 8BL
Tel: (01235) 760991
www.wantage.com/lainsbarn

The Lambert Arms
London Road, Aston Rowant, OX49 5SB
Tel: 01844 351496
www.lambertarms.com

Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons
Church Road, Great Milton, OX44 7PD
Tel: (01844) 278881
www.manoir.com

Linton Lodge Hotel
Linton Road, Oxford, OX2 6UJ
Tel: (01865) 553461
www.lintonlodge.com

Malmaison
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Tel: (01865) 268400
www.malmaison.com

Mansfield College
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Tel: (01865) 270999
www.mansfield.ox.ac.uk

The Meet
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Faringdon, SN7 8JE
Tel: 01367 718576
www.themeetoxford.co.uk

Mill House Hotel & Restaurant
Station Road, Kingham, OX7 6UH
Tel: (01608) 658188
www.millhousehotel.co.uk

The Mill and Old Swan
Minster Lovell, OX29 0RN
Tel: 0870 609 1152
www.devere.co.uk/venues/the-mill-old-swan

Milton Hill House
Milton, Abingdon, OX13 6AF
Tel: 01235 825720
www.devere.co.uk/venues/milton-hill-house

The Old Parsonage Hotel
1 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX1 6NN
Tel: (01865) 310210
www.oldparsonage-hotel.co.uk

The Otmoor Lodge
Horton-cum-Studley, OX33 1AY
Tel: (01865) 351235
www.otmoorlodge.co.uk

The Oxford Belfry
Milton Common, Nr Thame, OX9 2JW
Tel: (01844) 279381
www.gohotels.co.uk/hotels/the-oxford-belfry.aspx

The Oxford Centre
333 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7PL
Tel: (01865) 554719
www.the-oxford-centre.co.uk

Oxfordshire District Register Office
Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford, OX1 1NS
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Oxford Spire Four Pillars Hotel
Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS
Tel: (01865) 324324
www.four-pillars.co.uk/Spire

Oxford Thames Four Pillars Hotel
Henley Rd, Sandford-on-Thames, OX4 4GX
Tel: (01865) 334444
www.four-pillars.co.uk/Thames

Oxford Town Hall
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www.oxfordtownhall.co.uk

The Oxfordshire Golf Club
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Nr Thame, OX9 2PU
Tel: (01844) 278300
www.theoxfordshiregolfclub.com

Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PW
Tel: 01865 272950
www.oum.ox.ac.uk

Phyllis Court Club
Marlow Road, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2HT
Tel: (01491) 570500
www.phylliscourt.co.uk

The Randolph Hotel
Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2LN
Tel: 0870 400 8200
www.randolph-hotel.com

The Red Lion
Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames RG9 2AR
Tel: 01491 572161
www.redlionhenley.co.uk

River and Rowing Museum
Mill Meadows, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1BF
Tel: 01491 415600
www.rrm.co.uk

Rye Hill Golf Club
Milcombe, Banbury, OX15 4RU
Tel: 01295 721818
www.ryehill.co.uk

St Edmund Hall
Queen's Lane, Oxford, OX1 4AR
Tel: (01865) 279222
www.seh.ox.ac.uk

Shillingford Bridge Hotel
Shillingford Hill, Nr Wallingford, OX10 8LZ
Tel: (01865) 858567
www.shillingfordbridgehotel.com

Shiplake College
Henley-on-Thames, RG9 4BW
Tel: (0118) 940 2455
www.shiplake.org.uk

Spread Eagle Hotel
High Street, Thame, OX9 2BW
Tel: (01844) 213661
www.spreadeaglethame.co.uk

The Springs Hotel & Golf Club
1 Wallingford Road, North Stoke,
Wallingford, OX10 6BE
Tel: (01491) 836687
www.thespringshotel.com

Studley Wood Golf Club
The Straight Mile, Horton-Cum-Studley, OX33 1BF
Tel: 01865 351144
www.studleywoodgolfclub.co.uk

Sudbury House Hotel
Folly Hill, Faringdon, SN7 8AA
Tel: (01367) 241272
www.bw-sudburyhouse.co.uk

The Tally Ho Hotel
Ploughley Rd, Arncott, Bicester, OX25 1NY
Tel: (01869) 247170
www.tallyhotel.com

The Tythe Barn
Manor Farm, Launton, Bicester, OX26 5DP
Tel: (01869) 321442
www.thetythebarn.co.uk

Wallingford Town Hall
Wallingford Town Council
9 St Martins Street, Wallingford, OX10 0AL
Tel: (01491) 835373
www.wallingfordtown.co.uk

Wantage Civic Hall
Civic Centre, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY
Tel: 01235 763456
www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/leisure_and_arts/vale_halls_to_hire/wantage_civic_hall

Weston Manor Hotel
Weston-on-the-Green, OX25 3QL
Tel: (01869) 350621
www.westonmanor.co.uk

Westwood Country Hotel
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Tel: (01865) 735408
www.westwoodhotel.co.uk

Whately Hall Hotel
Banbury Cross, Banbury, OX16 0AN
Tel: (01295) 253261
www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/whatelyhall

Wheatley Registration Office
Littleworth Road, Wheatley, OX33 1NR
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Witney Four Pillars Hotel
Ducklington Lane, Witney, OX28 4EX
Tel: (01993) 779777
www.four-pillars.co.uk/Witney

Witney Lakes Resort
Downs Road, Witney, OX29 0SY
Tel: (01993) 893003
www.witney-lakes.co.uk

Witney Registration Office
Woodgreen, Witney, OX28 1NB
Tel: 0845 129 5900
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Woodstock Town Hall
Market Place, Woodstock, OX20 1SL
Tel: (01993) 811216
www.wakeuptowoodstock.com/town-hall

Wroxton Abbey
Wroxton, Nr Banbury, OX15 6PX
Tel: (01295) 730551
www.wroxtonabbey.org

Wroxton House Hotel
Wroxton St Mary, Nr Banbury, OX15 6QB
Tel: (01295) 730777
www.bw-wroxtonhousehotel.co.uk

Wychwood Golf Club
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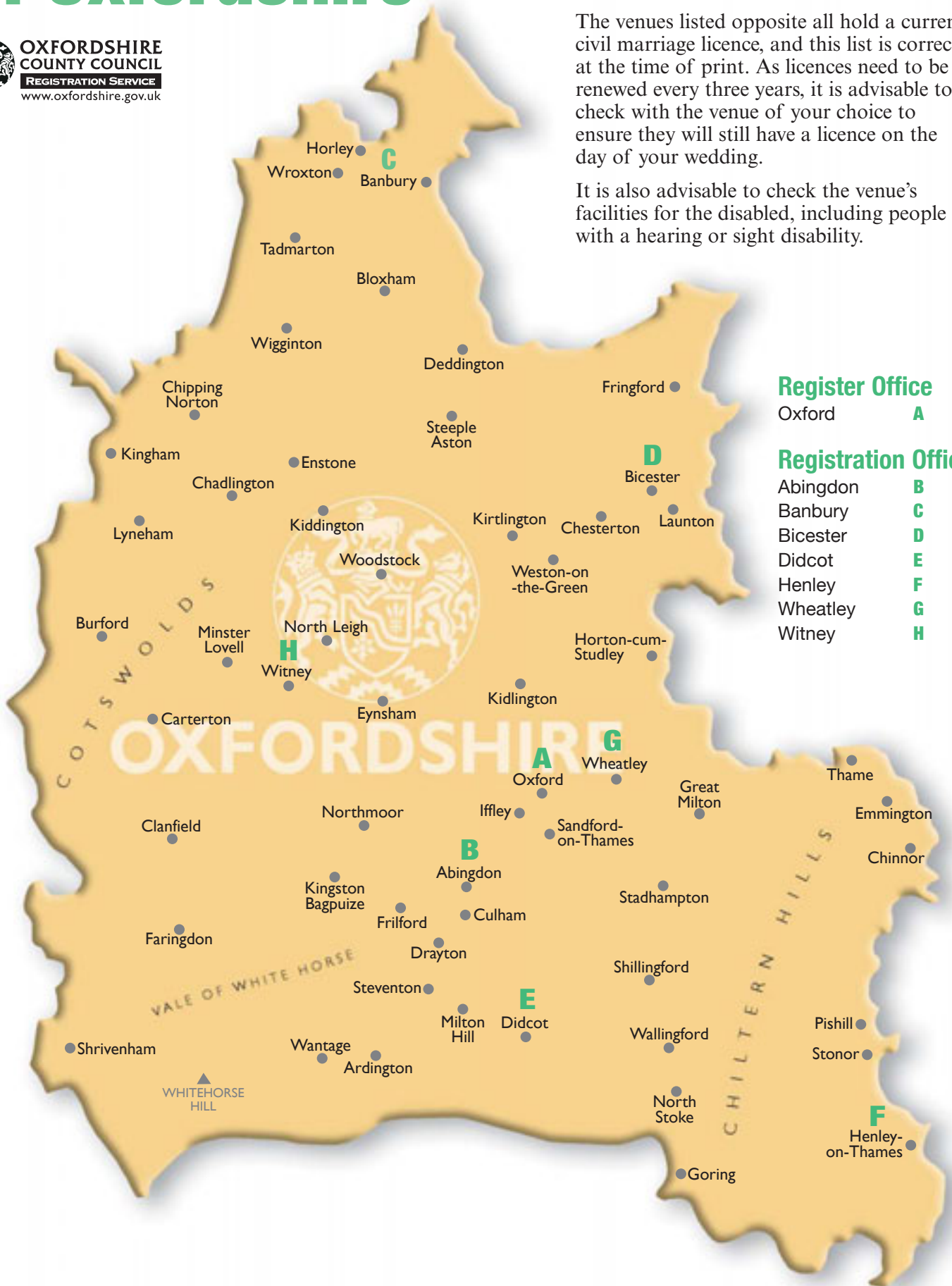
Approved Venues in Oxfordshire



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
REGISTRATION SERVICE
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

The venues listed opposite all hold a current civil marriage licence, and this list is correct at the time of print. As licences need to be renewed every three years, it is advisable to check with the venue of your choice to ensure they will still have a licence on the day of your wedding.

It is also advisable to check the venue's facilities for the disabled, including people with a hearing or sight disability.



Register Office

Oxford **A**

Registration Offices

- Abingdon **B**
- Banbury **C**
- Bicester **D**
- Didcot **E**
- Henley **F**
- Wheatley **G**
- Witney **H**



Oxfordshire Registration Service Ceremony Rooms

Photographs on this page and of Witney ceremony room by Keith Turner at 2-2-1 Photography. Tel: 01993 883388 Mobile: 07899 968057 www.2-2-1photography.com Email: keithturner_photography@hotmail.com Photographs of Oxford and Wheatley ceremony rooms by Phil Bowles of Bridge Brook Photography. Tel: 01869 247470 www.bridgebrook.co.uk Email: bridgebrook@googlemail.com

Abingdon ceremony room

School House, Bridge Street, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 3HU

The School House is a lovely room decorated in green/cream. This room is limited to 20 people, and offers an intimate setting for the smaller wedding. Disabled access is available and parking is in the town centre.



Banbury ceremony room

Bodicote House, Banbury, Oxon, OX15 4AA

The ceremony room at Bodicote House, Banbury was the former dining room in the old manor house. The room has recently been refurbished to enhance its traditional features and contains a stone fireplace and oak panels with a burgundy colour scheme. The room holds up to 60 people (seating for 39) and leads out on to a lovely garden, which is available for pictures. Parking and disabled access is very good.



Bicester ceremony room

Garth Park, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 6PS

This ceremony room is located in the award-winning Garth Park. The room is traditionally decorated and is light and airy with a long aisle and holds 50 guests. Disabled access is good. The bandstand within the grounds of Garth Park also has a licence for ceremonies and can accommodate up to 50 guests. Use of the bandstand for ceremonies is limited as it is used for other functions and availability must be checked. Parking is available within Garth Park.



Didcot ceremony room

197 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8RU

The Broadway Room is in the library building in Didcot. It is a purpose-built, modern ceremony room. It has been refurbished in a rich aubergine and cream, creating a very serene and tranquil atmosphere. This room is airy and is able to accommodate 45 people. Parking is good and disabled access is via a lift to the 1st floor.



Oxfordshire Registration Service is able to offer ceremony rooms across the county, these are in Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Henley, Oxford, Wheatley and Witney. Availability and prices for weddings vary so you will need to call 0845 129 5900 to talk to our Helpdesk to ensure we are able to meet your needs. All our offices have attractive marriage rooms, with quite different styles, to suit everyone's requirements. Please call the above telephone number for further details or view the website on the link at the foot of the page.

Henley ceremony room

Regatta Court, Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 2JN

Regatta Court is a purpose-built ceremony room. It is very light and airy and decorated in light colours. This room is able to accommodate larger weddings of up to 60 people, and works well as it has an exit directly to an outside terrace where photographs can be taken. Parking is available and disabled access is very good.



Oxford ceremony rooms

Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford, OX1 1NS

The ceremony rooms at Oxford Register Office are located in a Victorian building close to the city centre. The larger Dexter Room has oak panelling and stained glass windows. The room is attractively decorated in cream and aubergine with decorative cornices and is licensed for 50 people for ceremonies at weekends and bank holidays. The maximum number is 25 on busy weekdays. There are also three offices available for a small ceremony with just two witnesses. Disabled access is good and public car parks are close by.

Wheatley ceremony room

Littleworth Road, Wheatley, Oxon, OX33 1NR

Following major refurbishment, the Shotover Room is now available for ceremonies, with much improved facilities. The spacious ceremony room will seat 56 guests and is attractively decorated in light colours with a contrasting navy carpet. This venue is popular with couples wishing to avoid Oxford's busy city centre. Car parking is available close by and disabled access can be arranged.



Witney ceremony room

Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon, OX28 1NB

Two rooms are available in the district council offices at Woodgreen. The Council Chamber is used for weddings on Fridays and holds 20 people, while the Windrush Room is available for weekend weddings and holds 50 people. Both rooms are attractive and the Windrush Room uses lilac and cream to create a warm atmosphere. Woodgreen itself provides photographic opportunities. Parking and disabled access is very good.



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Bignell Park Hotel

Chesterton, Nr Bicester, Oxford. OX26 1UE

"Nestling in over two acres of manicured country grounds, a stone's throw from the pretty Cotswold-stone village of Chesterton and just a mile from the bustling market town of Bicester, Oaks restaurant at Bignell Park Hotel.

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Call 01235 763456



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Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JE
email: abingdon.guildhall@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Call 01235 524085

Wedding Breakfast Menu A

soup of your choice served with crusty roll & butter

roast meat served with roast potatoes
and choice of 2 seasonal vegetables

profiteroles with hot chocolate sauce

coffee & mints

Drinks Package A

glass of bucks fizz on arrival

glass of red/white
house wine with meal

glass of sparkling wine for the toast



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Beautiful bride

EVERY BRIDE WANTS TO LOOK HER BEST ON HER WEDDING DAY, SO WE DECIDED TO TAKE A LOOK AT HOW TO GET THAT FAMOUS INNER AND OUTER GLOW.

Before you read any further, remember this key tip: it is usually best to work with what you have already got rather than trying to create a new image for yourself. Enhance your best features and you are already on the way to beauty on the day.

The most important thing you can do is to look after your skin properly. Forget going to bed without taking your make-up off and get into the habit of regularly cleansing, toning and moisturising your skin twice a day, morning and night.

It is important to use products that suit your skin type, so why not book yourself a skin consultation at a local department store? These are often free or inexpensive and are a great way to learn about what skin type you are (e.g. normal, combination or dry) and the sort of products that will best suit you.

Armed with this information, you can then either buy the products used in your consultation or buy cheaper versions. Do not feel pressurised into buying on the day as, sometimes, products might not agree with your skin.

Make-up is more tricky, especially if you normally do not wear it much. Hiring a beautician is the safest way of getting it right as they will know what colours suit you and how to apply the trickier things like mascara and eyeliner.

However, beauticians can be expensive, especially if your budget is rather tight. You can still do a great job yourself by deciding on the products you want to use and practising as much as possible. To learn the basics, why not book a make-over in a department store, where you can learn some handy tips for the Big Day?

Your skin:
DIY or
SOS?
CJ Photography



The Bridal Photographer

Hair-raising question

Most brides choose to have their hair done by a professional and with good reason; no one wants a bad hair day on their wedding day!

Most hair salons offer wedding packages, when your hairdresser will come out to your house or hotel to do your hair. Hairdressers are normally extremely busy, especially during peak wedding season, so book in with one as soon as possible. This not only ensures their availability but also gives you both a chance to try out different styles to see what suits you, and your wedding dress, best.

If you want to keep your wedding and your hair a low-key affair, you could either style it yourself or pop into the hairdresser's on the day for a simpler style. Whichever you choose, you can help keep your locks in tip-top shape by having regular trims at your salon and by using a good shampoo and conditioner at home, with frequent conditioning treatments to make your mane super-glossy.



Grange Photographic

Relax, relax

Beautiful hair and skin can be achieved more easily if your body is not under constant stress. Easier said than done, we realise, when you are trying to co-ordinate the biggest day of your life! However, there are simple steps to take to try to keep you calm, both in mind and body:

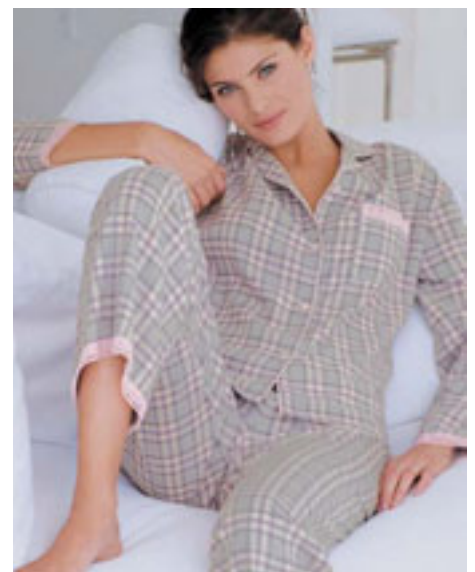
■ **Aromatherapy:** no matter what is going on around you, aromatherapy can help reduce tension and induce relaxation. Lavender is the oil of choice for combating stress, insomnia, digestive problems, nervous headaches and depression, while Ylang Ylang, best known for its aphrodisiac qualities, also uplifts and brings a sense of well-being.



Relax with the Everyday Wellbeing Relaxing Lavender range from the Body Shop

■ **Diet:** If you find yourself running around like a mad thing and unable to calm down, you might be getting too much caffeine. Replace tea, coffee and cola with herbal teas, fruit juices and mineral water. Incorporating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables into your diet will not only boost your metabolism but will also feed your skin, giving it that wonderful glow. Finally, whenever you feel a slump coming on, reach for a glass of water. Fatigue is often caused by mild dehydration so always keep a glass of water nearby to keep your energy levels high and your skin beautifully moisturised.

■ **Sleep:** In the old days, sleep deprivation was a form of torture (it still is, if you ask any exhausted mother). Try to get your eight hours a night to rest your body and mind in between hectic days. If you find dropping off to sleep difficult, a warm bath with lavender oil often helps, or rent or buy a meditation or relaxation CD, which will help your stress levels overall.



Get a good night's sleep in these long-sleeved pyjamas from Next

Fit as a fiddle

As soon as their wedding date is finalised, many brides-to-be swear they will lose loads of weight to fit into their dream dress. They then embark on an unrealistic exercise regime that leaves them dispirited and often injured in a matter of days or weeks.

It's great to want to get fit for your wedding but try to keep a sense of perspective about this. Set yourself realistic goals and fit exercise in whenever possible, e.g. getting off the bus a few stops early and walking the rest of the way or taking the stairs instead of the lift. Local gyms often offer special packages, so keep an eye out for membership deals.

Finally, if you have a friend who wants to get trimmer, why not join forces and exercise together? It is much more fun and inspiring than setting off to a multigym on your own for a workout.



Studio Blanco





Wedding on a Budget

CJ Photography

With the average wedding costing at least £11,000, it's nearly enough to make you say "I don't". However, you don't need to spend a fortune to have a fantastic day.

We look at ways to cut the costs...

■ **Work out your budget...**

... and stick to it. Sit down together and decide what you can realistically afford for your wedding and which aspects of the process are the most important to you. For example, you may not care how you get from the ceremony to the reception venue but you would like to spend a bit extra on flowers.

■ **Be ruthless with your guest list**

This is the first place you need to consider to prevent costs from spiralling. Sometimes it is tempting to invite every distant relation or friend of a friend but

with each invitation, your costs are rocketing. If money is tight, make a list of your closest family and friends, the ones you really do not want to miss the day.

■ **Invitations**

It is nice to do something terribly original with wedding invitations but, while this is nice, it can cost up to £90 for a set. If you want to make your invites personal, pop into a stationers and pick up some decent card, gold and silver pens or a calligraphy pen and set to work writing them yourself. Stationers also often sell glitter and other decorative items that you could glue to your invitation.

■ **Flowers**

Simple arrangements can be just as effective as larger ones, so do not feel you need to go overboard. A small posy for the bride is often enough, with one main arrangement in the ceremony room.

If you want flowers on the tables at your reception, you could do what Alison did at her wedding:

"We bought gerberas from a local garden centre and put them in pretty plant pots on the tables as a centrepiece, then told the guests they were welcome to take them home afterwards as a way to remember the day."



■ **Photography**

Wedding photography can take up a considerable chunk of your budget. If you cannot afford the prices of a professional photographer, why not ask someone you know who is good with a camera? Jenny did this at her wedding.

“One of my friends was a keen amateur photographer and I always admired his pictures at get-togethers. We asked him to take our pictures and paid for the camera film for him. It was wonderful having someone we knew taking our pictures on the day as we felt more relaxed than if a relative stranger was bossing us around! The pictures were fantastic; more informal than a wedding photographer would take but since we wanted a more relaxed wedding, we were more than happy with the results.”

For the reception itself, you could buy disposable cameras and put them on the table, asking guests to take pictures and leave the cameras afterwards.

■ **Bridal dresses**

Every bride wants to look beautiful on her wedding day but you don't need to bankrupt yourself in the process.

If your budget is very tight, you can easily hire a dress from a local shop (look in the *Yellow Pages* for information on this). There will be a wide variety of choices, from the more traditional styles to dresses with a modern or funky twist, with a pleasant price tag attached! If you are only going to wear the dress one day in your life, why spend a fortune on it?

Alternatively, hit the high street in search of a bargain. Shops like Monsoon, British Home Stores and Debenhams have beautiful gowns to buy from as little as £100, with matching accessories to boot. If you opt for a 'ballgown' design, you can always wear it on other smart occasions, thereby getting even more use out of it.

Finally, for those of you with a conscience, check out Oxfam's bridal departments. Some of the bigger charity shops have a dedicated bridal section where you might find the dress of your dreams at a fraction of the first price. Not only will you look amazing on your wedding day but you can feel good that your choice has benefited someone in need.

■ **Ceremony**

If you want a small wedding (yourselves plus two witnesses) and a short ceremony, you are able to marry in a register office for the statutory fee.

This is only available on certain days and times of the week.

■ **Reception**

There are various ways of holding a good reception. You could hire out a room (or several) in a hotel, and ask them to cater the event for you. Church and village halls can be hired fairly cheaply, though you will need to check in advance if a special licence will be needed for serving alcohol. Additionally, local pubs and restaurants often hire out rooms for celebrations, so look around and see what suits you best

■ **Food**



The cheapest catering option is to provide your own food (if you are hiring a hall: restaurants, hotels and pubs might insist that you use their catering facilities if you hire a room with them). A finger buffet can be the cheapest and easiest option. If you can stretch your budget more, you can order sandwich platters from supermarkets or from local

delicatessens. Some supermarkets do wedding cakes at vastly lower costs than those charged by a cake maker. Alternatively, see if you have a relative who is good at baking to come up with something!

■ **Drink**

Buying in bulk is the most cost-effective option. Wine merchants and supermarkets often offer good discounts on bulk buys, while some places also offer a glass-hire service, the cost of which is sometimes refunded if you return the glasses clean and undamaged at the end. Cava is a great alternative to champagne, at a fraction of the price.



■ **Transport**

If you want to ride in something unusual on your big day but your budget is too tight, why not ask family and friends to see if they can provide a car (or at least drive you in theirs)? It is highly likely that someone has a smart sports car or vintage vehicle that you can borrow. If not, have some fun decorating your own car, as Pete did. *“We didn't want to spend a fortune on a horse-drawn carriage or limo so we bought some ribbon and balloons and decorated the car with those. Our friends 'helped' us a little when we drove away from the ceremony to the reception by adding pots and pans and shaving foam that said 'Just married' on the back windscreen. I don't think a hire car would have allowed that! It was nice having our car as part of our wedding day; it made it more personal.”*





green wedding?

BILLY IDOL MAY HAVE HAD A TOP-TEN HIT IN THE EIGHTIES WITH WHITE WEDDING, BUT WE CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO HAVE A NUMBER-ONE GREEN EVENT TODAY!

While white weddings have been the rage for a while, international charity Oxfam estimates that 15 per cent of couples feel that having an ethical approach to their wedding is important. The current concern about the state of the environment means that many couples want to make their special day as eco-friendly as possible, and this can be done more easily than you think!

■ **Invitations and photos**
Obviously you'll need to invite friends and family to the wedding but there are ways in which you can do this without felling more trees in the process. If you send out 'hard copies' of invites, choose recycled, instead of brand-new, paper or card. Better still, why not set up a wedding website? You can include all the relevant details

you need – date, time, venue, and wedding lists – as well as add those all important photos afterwards! The big advantage of a website is that you can update it regularly in case any changes need to be made. Encourage all your friends and family to reply by e-mail too, as far as possible, to save on RSVP cards and letters.

■ **Recycled rings**
There is often controversy over wedding rings: has the gold or silver used to make them been ethically sourced? At what cost to the planet's resources? To minimise any negative impact, look for rings in antique shops or at student art shows or choose ones made from other materials such as wood. Alternatively, look for recycled gold or fair trade silver on the internet, or for conflict-free diamonds, check out the Kimberley Process website.

■ **Something borrowed**
Everyone wants to look their best on their wedding day but you don't necessarily need a new outfit to do this. Why not check out some of the charity shops that specialise in bridal gowns? Oxford-based charity Sobell House has a special bridal section in their Botley Road charity shop: appointments are necessary.

Oxfam has nine dedicated bridal shops throughout the UK, and the charity's bridal co-ordinator Barbara Warmsley says that there is a growing trend for women to source their dresses second-hand. *"I started selling wedding dresses for Oxfam in 1960; now we've got a business that is booming. It's great that so many brides are coming to Oxfam for their dresses."*



■ **Top nosh**

Many of Oxfordshire’s hotels and restaurants place a big emphasis on sourcing locally produced and seasonal ingredients, so do enquire when you’re looking at reception venues. A large number of local caterers also incorporate this ethos into all their catering by using ingredients from suppliers that are local, organic and fair trade, and can cater for dietary requirements such as vegetarian and vegan.

If you are hosting your own event, buy organic wine, spirits, beer and soft drinks from such providers as Vinceremos, Vintage Roots or Festival Wines. Try, wherever possible, to support local, seasonal and organic food production by buying from local farmers or from shops that do so. Although washing-up can be a pain, do try to avoid using disposable cutlery, plates and glasses and ensure that empty bottles and containers are placed in recycling bins.

■ **Trusty transport**

If you want to cut down on transport, choose a venue that’s close to home. Why not arrive at the wedding in a horse-drawn carriage for a more traditional feel or, alternatively, why not use an electric car and make a real statement? Walking and cycling are also possibilities... if you’re brave enough to try them! If the wedding ceremony and reception aren’t at the same place, try to encourage guests to share cars or look into providing a coach.



Studio Blanco

■ **Gifts that go on giving**

Many couples nowadays either have been living together for years or have already set up home and don’t need toasters, kettles and vases. Why not use this opportunity to create a wish list on a charity website, where friends and families can donate gifts to charities instead? Alternatively, you could choose a charity, or charities, and simply ask guests to make a small donation; wildlife and conservation charities seem the obvious choice here. If guests still insist on giving you something, ask for plants, trees or wildlife products for the garden, where you can make a small, but important, impact on your local environment.

■ **Caring confetti**

Confetti has become unpopular in recent years because of the mess it makes on pavements and outside of buildings. If guests are keen on throwing something, why not use dried rose petals? They look pretty, smell divine and are biodegradable!



■ **Honeymoon at home**

A honeymoon is often the one chance couples think they’ll have to travel somewhere exotic; however, jetting off to Thailand clocks up air miles and CO² emissions. Think about all the romantic destinations you can visit here in the UK by train, without spending 12 hours on a plane. Equally, there are stunning places right on your doorstep in Oxfordshire just waiting to be explored: call in at a local tourist information office for ideas. After all, you’re starting a new life together: what better opportunity to find out more about where you live while you get to know one another?

We would like to thank Oxfordshire County Council’s Future First team for their help with this article.



Key contacts

- Future First:** www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/futurefirst
- Kimberley Process:** www.kimberleyprocess.com
- Sobell House Bridal Department:** (01865) 251204
- Vinceremos:** www.vinceremos.co.uk tel: 0800 107 3086
- Vintage Roots:** www.vintageroots.co.uk tel: 0800 980 4992
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Witney Lakes Resort, Downs Road, Witney, Oxon, OX29 6SY
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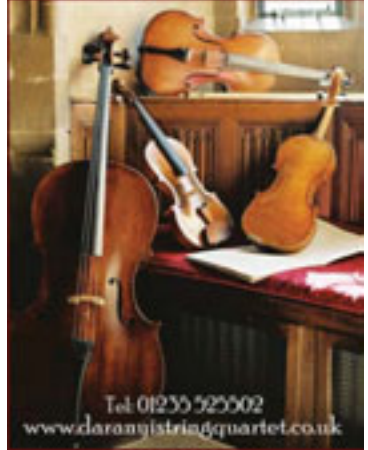
Contact **07885 932691**
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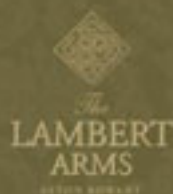
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■ Music is another wonderful way to personalise your wedding. Traditional musical pieces are often chosen above modern alternatives because many of them were written with the marriage ceremony in mind. And just because you are having a civil wedding, it does not mean you cannot have something traditional in your music choices! However, modern songs, from pop to folk to jazz, can offer a refreshing change and might express your feelings even more appropriately. The choice really is yours, but just remember that songs must not contain any religious content.



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Music for your wedding

The following are listed as suggestions. Please note that if you wish to include any of these tracks, you will need to provide your own CD.

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Something traditional: top ten

- “Bridal March” (Here comes the Bride) - Lohengrin/Wagner
- “Canon in D” - Pachelbel
- “Wedding March” (from A Midsummer Night’s Dream) - Mendelssohn
- “The Arrival of The Queen of Sheba” - Handel
- “Spring from The Four Seasons” - Vivaldi
- “Air on a G string” - Bach
- “Wedding March” (from The Marriage of Figaro) - Mozart
- “Trumpet Tune and Air” - Purcell
- “Ode to Joy” - Beethoven
- “Nimrod from Enigma Variations” - Elgar



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Something modern: top ten

- “Everything I do (I do it for you)” - Bryan Adams
- “Here Come the Girls” - The Sugarbabes
- “I Do, I Do, I Do” - Abba
- “Can’t take my eyes off you” - Andy Williams
- “Wonderful Tonight” - Eric Clapton
- “I can’t help falling in love with you” - Elvis Presley
- “What a Wonderful World” - Louis Armstrong
- “Unforgettable” - Nat King Cole
- “Wind Beneath My Wings” - Bette Midler
- “We’ve Only Just Begun” - The Carpenters



Personalising your wedding ceremony is easy with well chosen poetry and readings

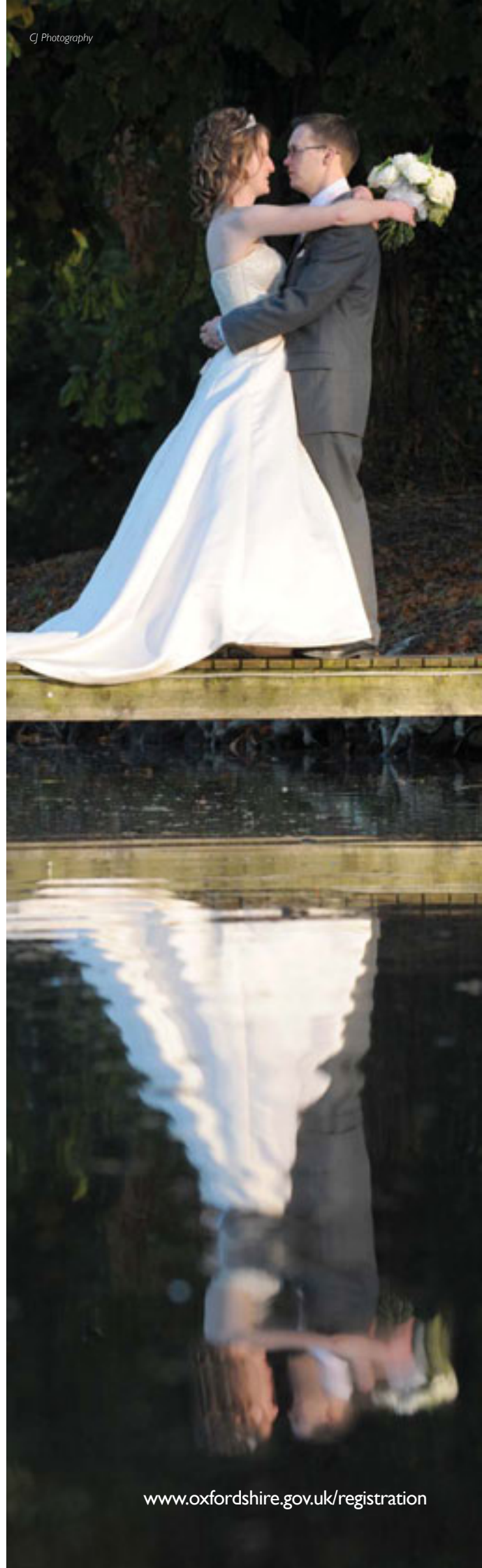
Poetry and Readings

You can make your wedding an even more personal affair by including a reading, which can either be read by you or a friend or family member. Readings are a fantastic way of summing up what you feel about each other or expressing what marriage means to you. There is a vast choice of suitable passages or poems from which to select; your only restriction is that it must not contain any religious references, nor, of course, be offensive to anyone attending.

If you are finding it difficult choosing a reading, sit down together and think about any poems, authors or pieces of writing that you have enjoyed or that have moved you most. If you are still stumped, try looking at a book of quotations for inspiration or a book specifically for wedding readings, such as *The Big Book of Wedding Readings* by Confetti.co.uk and *The Nation's Favourite Love Poems* by Daisy Goodwin.

■ Opposite, we have included a small selection of possible readings to get you started. The Sonnet by William Shakespeare is a traditional love poem that is always popular at weddings. The lyrical language suits the high emotions you are bound to feel on the day.

However, if you would prefer something more modern, or your readers are too daunted at the prospect of attempting a sonnet modern poetry offers many options too! The anonymous poem is a simple but powerful statement about the journey you are about to embark on, while Pam Ayres' comedic verse warmly and amusingly conveys the reality of married life in a way that is bound to bring a smile of recognition to everyone who hears it.



Sonnet 116 William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
 Admit impediments. Love is not love
 Which alters when it alteration finds
 Or bends with the remover to remove;
 O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken:
 It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom;
 If this be error and upon me prov'd,
 I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd..

On Your Wedding Day Author unknown

Today is a day you will 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 you know that the answers lie hidden inside
 where the bond of true love lives 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 your dreams can be real
 may success find its way to your hearts,
 tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys
 but today is the day it all starts.

From a Native American Indian Ceremony

May the sun bring you new energy by day;
 May the moon softly restore you by night.
 May the rain wash away your worries
 And the breeze blow new strength into your being,
 And all the days of your life may you walk
 Gently through the world and know its beauty.

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for
 the other.
 Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to
 the other.
 Now there will be no more loneliness,
 Now you are two persons, but there is one life before you.
 Go now to your dwelling to enter into the days of your life together,
 And may your days be good and long upon the earth

Yes, I'll Marry You, My Dear

Yes, I'll marry you, my dear,
 And here's the reason why;
 So I can push you out of bed
 When the baby starts to cry,
 And if we hear a knocking
 And it's creepy and it's late,
 I hand you the torch you see,
 And you investigate.

Yes, I'll marry you, my dear,
 You may not apprehend it,
 But when the tumble-drier goes
 It's you that has to mend it,
 You have to face the neighbour
 Should our Labrador attack him,
 And if a drunkard fondles me
 It's you that has to whack him.

Yes, I'll marry you,
 You're virile and you're lean,
 My house is like a pigsty
 You can help to keep it clean.
 That sexy little dinner
 Which you served by candlelight,
 As I do chipolatas,
 You can cook it every night!

It's you who has to work the drill
 and put up curtain track,
 And when I've got PMT it's you who gets the flak,
 I do see great advantages,
 But none of them for you,
 And so before you see the light,
 I do, I do, I do!

*Copyright: Pam Ayres, 1997. Reproduced by permission,
 from WITH THESE HANDS, pub. Orion Paperbacks*

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,
 but is being the right partner.



Countdown to your wedding

Once the initial excitement about getting married has calmed down, the amount of work organising a wedding entails will hit you. We know how time-consuming arranging a wedding can be so we have compiled a checklist of basic tips and suggestions to make the process easier.

Once the date is set

- ❑ Draw up a rough budget for your wedding plus the guest list
- ❑ Book the registration office or approved venue and arrange a Notice of Marriage for you both
- ❑ Book the reception venue, caterers and entertainment
- ❑ Choose your bridesmaids, best man and ushers, if applicable!
- ❑ Book the photographer and/or videographer
- ❑ Order your invitations, if you are having them made
- ❑ Decide on what sort of transport you will be using and book cars for the ceremony and going away
- ❑ Plan the honeymoon and make the travel arrangements
- ❑ Start shopping for the bridal dress, bridesmaids' dresses and groom's suit
- ❑ Decide on and speak to a hairdresser and/or your beauty salon for your Big Day

Three months before

- ❑ Order the wedding cake
- ❑ Pay your wedding ceremony fees
- ❑ Choose the rings
- ❑ Send out the invitations, order menu cards and place cards

- ❑ Book a florist and choose flowers for the bridal party and reception, including buttonholes and corsages
- ❑ Decide on your wedding gift list
- ❑ Have a first fitting of your bridal dress (if it is being made to measure)
- ❑ If you are honeymooning abroad, arrange any necessary visas and vaccinations
- ❑ If you are changing your name, allow at least six weeks (preferably more in the peak holiday season) for a new passport and remember to change your driver's licence and bank details
- ❑ Book a hotel for the wedding night

Six weeks before

- ❑ Finalise your guest list
- ❑ Choose gifts for the bridesmaids, best man and mothers
- ❑ Order gift boxes if you plan to send out wedding cake to guests who cannot attend
- ❑ Attend a second dress-fitting (if appropriate)

Four weeks before

- ❑ Have the final fittings for the wedding outfits
- ❑ Take your headdress and veil to the hairdresser's for a practice run

- ❑ Confirm numbers with the caterers and arrange the seating plan
- ❑ Speak to your Registrar about the ceremony, discussing your readings, vows and music choices
- ❑ Prepare thank you letters for the presents you will receive

Two weeks before

- ❑ Work out a rough timetable for the reception and run through it with the best man and bridesmaids
- ❑ Write out any place cards for the reception
- ❑ Order travellers' cheques and currency if honeymooning abroad
- ❑ Wear-in your wedding shoes at home

On the day

This is your day, remember, so ask friends and family to see that the following arrangements are made for you on the day.

- ❑ The cases for your honeymoon are sent on to your overnight hotel
- ❑ The wedding dress and groom's suit are packed and taken home and any hired items are returned as soon as possible
- ❑ The wedding presents are carefully packed up and taken home
- ❑ Wedding cake is sent to anyone unable to attend



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Aweddingimage.co.uk



Aweddingimage.co.uk





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Peter Marshall



Peter Marshall

Changes to your Passport

There are so many things to organise when you are getting married that you may forget to notify the passport authorities if you are changing your name. Some countries might not accept a passport that has not been amended even if you take your marriage certificate with you. Check with your travel agent or the country's consulate, if in doubt.

You can change your passport details at any time up to three months before the wedding, although you will not be able to use your passport until the actual day of your wedding. To do this, you will need to apply to the Passport Office for a new standard UK passport. Alternatively, the Passport Office will amend your existing passport to show your future married name.

Application forms are available at post offices and you will need to complete a PD2 form as well. Once you have given your Notice of Marriage, the forms can be filled in. The Registrar conducting your ceremony will need to complete the PD2 form for you. This should then be sent to the Passport Office, together with the application for a passport or amendment to your passport.

If you are going abroad on honeymoon, remember to book any travel tickets in the name you will have in your passport at the time of travelling.

For further information, contact www.passport.gov.uk.



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Naming ceremonies

This is a special occasion to gather close family and friends together to witness your commitment to your child, whether it is to celebrate your newborn baby's birth or to welcome adoptive and stepchildren into your family. You can make promises of commitment to support and nurture the child and other adults can be appointed as mentors until your child reaches adulthood.



Renewal of vows

What better way to reaffirm your love and commitment towards your partner than to renew your vows? Although these are often associated with special wedding anniversaries, they are equally appropriate for couples at any stage of their marriage. These ceremonies are becoming increasingly popular amongst couples who marry abroad but want to celebrate their commitment in the UK, with all their family and friends present.



Civil partnership ceremonies

The legal formation of a civil partnership can be very simple or it can be included within a more ceremonious celebration. Civil partnership ceremonies give same-sex couples the opportunity to celebrate their love and commitment to each other and to have this acknowledged by their friends and family. You can choose from a wide range of venues and tailor your ceremony to suit you.



Civil funerals

Civil funerals are an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the life of the deceased. We work very closely with the bereaved family to compose a personal memoir and loving tribute. The ceremony can be held in a wide variety of locations and is equally suitable for cremations or non-religious burials.

For further information about any of these ceremonies, please contact us on 0845 129 5900 or visit our website at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration
Alternatively, pop in to one of our offices for a free leaflet.

civil weddings - civil partnerships - renewal of vows
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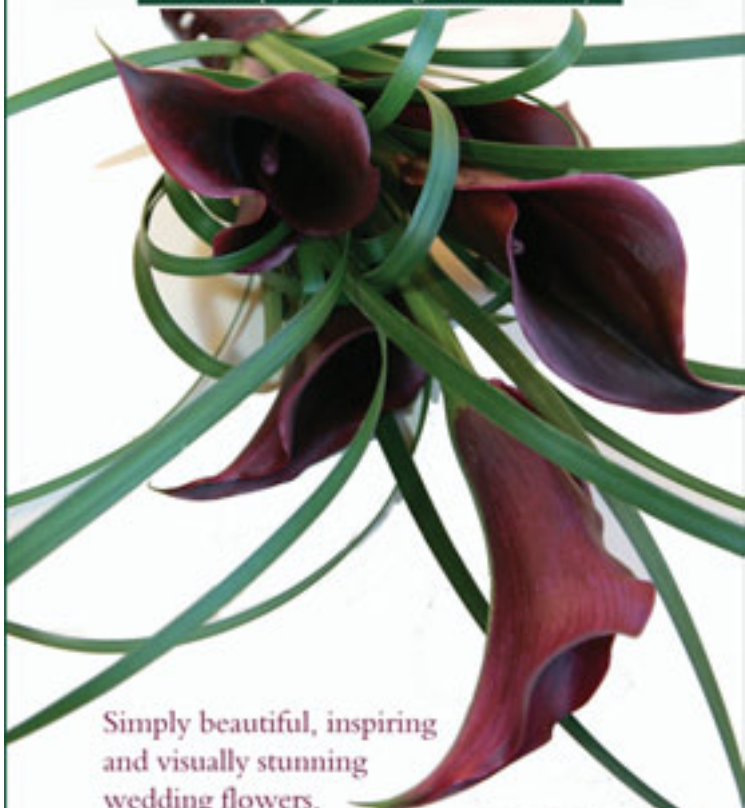
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Tel: 01235 553456

www.four-pillars.co.uk/Abingdon

Abingdon Guildhall (page 31)

Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

Tel: 01235 524085

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/leisure_and_arts/venue_halls_to_hire/abingdon_guildhall

Ardington House (page 22)

Ardington, Wantage, OX12 8QA

Tel: 01235 821566

www.ardingtonhouse.com

Ashmolean Museum (page 2)

Beaumont Street, Oxford, OX1 2PH

Tel: 01865 288299

www.ashmolean.org

Barcelo Oxford Hotel (page 33)

Godstow Road, Oxford, OX2 8AL

Tel: 01865 489988

www.paramount-oxford.co.uk

Bay Tree Hotel (page 14)

Sheep Street, Burford, OX18 4LW

Tel: 01993 822791

www.cotswolds-inns-hotels.co.uk/bay_tree

Bicester Hotel, Golf & Spa (page 41)

Chesterton, Bicester, OX26 1TE

Tel: 01869 241204

www.bicestercountryclub.com

Bignell Park Hotel (page 30)

Chesterton, Bicester, OX26 1UE

Tel: 01869 326550

www.bignellparkhotel.co.uk

Britwell House (page 42)

Britwell Salome, OX49 5LJ

Tel: 07885 932691

www.britwellhouse.co.uk

The Cosener's House (page 20)

Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JD

Tel: 01235 523198

The Cotswold Plough (page 14)

Bourton Road, Clanfield, OX18 2RB

Tel: 01367 810222

www.theploughclanfield.co.uk

The Crown Inn (page 30)

Pishill, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 6HH

Tel: 01491 638364

www.crownpishill.co.uk

Eynsham Hall (page 41)

North Leigh, Eynsham, OX29 6PN

Tel: 01993 885200

www.eynshamhall.com

Fallowfields Country House Hotel (page 23)

Faringdon Road, Southmoor, OX13 5BH

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www.fallowfields.com

Friars Court (page 8)

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Tel: 01367 810206

www.friarscourt.com

The George Hotel (page 40)

High Street, Wallingford, OX10 0BS

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www.george-hotel-wallingford.com

Headington Hill Hall (page 8)

Oxford Brookes University,

Headington, Oxford, OX3 0BP

Tel: 01865 484615

www.brookes.ac.uk/services/catering

Kingston Bagpuize House (page 22)

Kingston Bagpuize, Abingdon, OX13 5AX

Tel: 01865 820259

www.kingstonbagpuizehouse.org.uk

Lains Barn (page 33)

c/o Vale & Downland Museum Centre

Church Street, Wantage, OX12 8BL

Tel: 01235 760991

www.wantage.com/lainsbarn

The Lambert Arms (page 42)

London Road, Aston Rowant, OX49 5SB

Tel: 01844 351496

www.lambertarms.com

The Meet (page 23)

Coldharbour Farm, Hatford,

Faringdon, SN7 8JE

Tel: 01367 718576

www.themeetoxford.co.uk

Mill House Hotel & Restaurant (page 2)

Station Road, Kingham, OX7 6UH

Tel: 01608 658188

www.millhousehotel.co.uk

The Old Parsonage (page 32)

1 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX1 6NN

Tel: 01865 310210

www.oldparsonage-hotel.co.uk

The Otmoor Lodge (page 9)

Horton-cum-Studley, OX33 1AY

Tel: 01865 351235

www.otmoorlodge.co.uk

The Oxford Belfry (page 33)

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Tel: 01844 279381

www.qhotels.co.uk/hotels/the-oxford-belfry.aspx

The Oxford Centre (page 21)

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Tel: 01865 324324

www.four-pillars.co.uk/Spires

Oxford Thames Four Pillars Hotel (page 15)

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OX4 4GX

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Oxford Town Hall

Oxford City Council (page 32)

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www.oxford.gov.uk/community/town-hall-contact-us.cfm

The Oxfordshire Golf Club (page 14)

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Nr. Thame, OX9 2PU

Tel: 01844 278300

www.theoxfordshiregolfclub.com

Phyllis Court Club (page 23)

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Tel: 01491 570500

www.phylliscourt.co.uk

River and Rowing Museum (page 49)

Mill Meadows, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1BF

Tel: 01491 415600

www.rrm.co.uk

Shillingford Bridge Hotel (page 22)

Shillingford Hill, Nr Wallingford, OX10 8LZ

Tel: 01865 858567

www.shillingfordbridgehotel.com

Spread Eagle Hotel (page 8)

High Street, Thame, OX9 2BW

Tel: 01844 213661

www.spreadeaglethame.co.uk

St Edmund Hall

Queen's Lane, Oxford, OX1 4AR

Tel: 01865 279006

www.seh.ox.ac.uk

Sudbury House Hotel (page 20)

Folly Hill, Faringdon, SN7 8AA

Tel: 01367 241272

www.bw-sudburyhouse.co.uk

The Tally Ho Hotel (page 9)

Ploughley Road, Arncott, Bicester, OX25 1NY

Tel: 01869 247170

www.tallyhotel.com

The Tythe Barn (page 40)

Manor Farm, Launton, Bicester, OX26 5DP

Tel: 01869 250750/321442

www.thetythebarn.co.uk



Wantage Civic Hall (page 31)

Civic Centre, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY
Tel: 01235 763456

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/leisure_and_arts/venue_halls_to_hire/wantage_civic_hall

Wallingford Town Hall (page 40)

Wallingford Town Council
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Weston Manor Hotel (page 21)

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www.westonmanor.co.uk

Witney Four Pillars Hotel (page 15)

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Witney Lakes Resort (page 41)

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www.witney-lakes.co.uk

Woodstock Town Hall (page 41)

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www.wakeuptowoodstock.com/town_hall

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Brides Travel (page 49)

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D'Aranyi String Quartet (page 42)

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www.daranyistringquartet.co.uk

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www.serenataweddingmusic.com

Tori Handsley (page 42)

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www.torishands.com

Photography

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by Stephen Wright (page 20)

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Tel: 01491 200168

www.thebridalphotographer.co.uk

CJ Photography (page 24)

Tel: 01491 826440

www.cjphotography.co.uk

Grange Photographic (page 24)

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Tel: 01367 810452

www.grangephotographic.com

Mark Dowsett Photography (page 14)

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www.markdowsettphotography.co.uk

Paul Viney Photography (page 30)

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www.paulvineyphotography.co.uk

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www.hbs-e.com

Studio Blanco (page 41)

33 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1HP
Tel: 0778 996 3783

www.studioblancoco.uk

Reception Venues

(See Approved Venues also)

Conference Centre Oxford (page 49)

Cantay House, Park End Street,
Oxford OX1 1JP

Tel: 01865 797979

www.conferencecentreoxford.co.uk

Gees Restaurant (page 32)

61 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6PE
Tel: 01865 553540

www.gees-restaurant.co.uk

The Vines (page 49)

Burford Road, Black Bourton,
Bampton OX18 2PF

Tel: 01993 843559

www.vinesblackbourton.co.uk

Room Decoration

Isis Chair Covers (page 24)

Tel: 07875 656934

www.isischaircovers.co.uk

Video

Artistunlimited (page 49)

Tel: 01865 861928

www.artistunlimited.net/wedding_documentaries

Medialane Weddings (page 40)

Tel: 01844 278534

www.medialaneweddings.co.uk





Further advice and help



If you require any advice or help, or would like to make an appointment to see the Registrar who will be conducting your ceremony, please call us on 0845 129 5900, Monday to Thursday 9.00am-4.30pm, Friday 9.00am-4.00pm and we will be very pleased to help you.

We aim to offer you a personal and professional service and to share in the happiness of your wedding day. If you feel we have not given you this service then we would like to know. Please write to:

**The Superintendent Registrar, Oxfordshire Registration Service,
1 Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford OX1 1NS.**

If you need this information in another language, large print, Braille, on audiocassette, computer disk or by email, please telephone 0845 129 5900

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