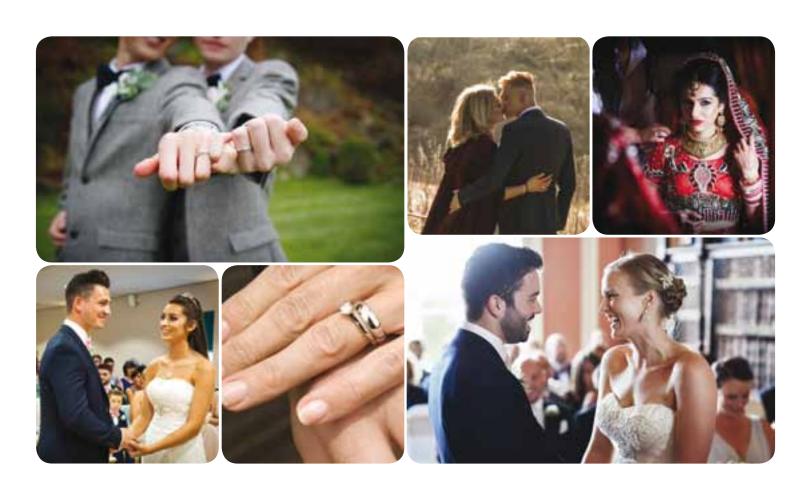
Celebrate in Leicestershire

A Guide to Marriage and Civil Partnership Ceremonies





Leicestershire Registration Service

- 0116 305 65 65
- registration@leics.gov.uk
- www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk



Acknowledgments

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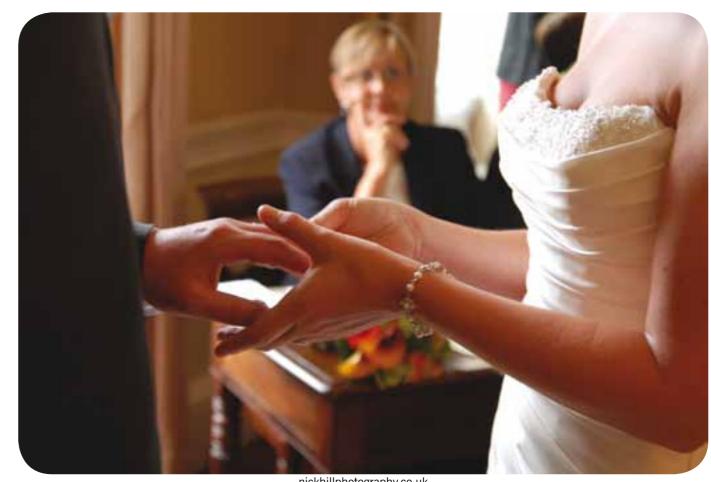




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Types of Ceremonies

Thank you for choosing to celebrate your wedding in Leicestershire...



About Leicestershire

Leicestershire, lying at the heart of the Midlands, is a vibrant and multi-cultural county, with a rich history that can be traced back to the Romans.

The landscape is vast and varied, with many idyllic, historic villages and market towns surrounded by picturesque country parks and national forest.

It is also easily accessible by all forms of transport. There are excellent motorway connections, rail links and even an international airport on the northern edge of the county.

About our service

Leicestershire Registration Service has a statutory duty to provide for the formalities of marriage (outside the Church of England and the Church in Wales) and civil partnerships, as well as the registration of births and deaths and the performance of citizenship ceremonies.

We offer civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies in 7 Registration Offices and over 70 high quality venues across the county - ranging from manor houses to contemporary hotels and even a castle.

We understand how stressful a wedding can be and we want your ceremony (whether small or large) to be a memorable experience for all the right reasons. To make things run smoother, our staff will discuss your needs and guide you every step of the way.

About this guide

Within these pages. you will find information on what to do if you are getting married or entering into a civil partnership, as well as suggestions of local wedding services and venues.

We look forward to being part of your big day.

Amanda Bettany (County Superintendent Registrar) Leicestershire Registration Service



Marriage and civil partnership ceremonies are the legal union of two people and a hugely important institution in this country.

Please take a moment to read the following information, which explains the differences between civil marriage, civil partnership and religious marriage ceremonies.

Civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies

Civil ceremonies take place in either a registration office or approved venue.

The introduction of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 legalised same-sex marriage in England and Wales.

Civil partnerships can still be preformed for same-sex couples, but carry different rights, obligations and legal provisions. More information can be found in this document on the UK Government website:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/ comparison-of-civil-partnership-and-marriage-forsame-sex-couples

Only local authority registrars can register civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.

For more information on civil marriage or civil partnerships, please read page 3 initially and then turn to page 4.

Religious marriage ceremonies

Religious ceremonies take place at a registered religious building.

For same-sex couples, even with the introduction of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, religious freedom means that you'll need to check that the relevant religious organisation allows for the marriage of same-sex couples and that the premises have been registered for the marriage of same-sex couples.

Usually, a religious official will register a religious marriage ceremony.

If you are having a religious ceremony, there is more you need to know. Please turn to page 11 for more information.



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Legal Formalities



If you live in the UK, or within the EU European Economic Area

- In England or Wales, before you can marry or enter into a civil partnership, you must each give legal notice (in person and by appointment) in the district where you live (or have resided) for at least 7 clear days (prior to your appointment).
- You cannot ask a friend or relative to attend and give notice for you.
- You will need to provide evidence of your name, age, nationality, address and that you are free to marry or enter into a civil partnership.
- There is a statutory fee of £35 for each notice given.
- Your ceremony can take place after 28 clear days, and within 12 months of giving notice.
- You can give notice at the same time or on different days, but the ceremony cannot take place until 28 clear days have passed for each person.
- Once notice is given, certain information is publicly displayed at Leicestershire Register Office, Glenfield for 28 clear days. This is a legal requirement.

 After 28 days, providing all formalities have been completed, the Superintendent Registrar (for the district of the marriage or civil partnership) will be able to prepare a certificate or a schedule to enable the ceremony to take place.

If you live outside of the UK, European Economic Area or Switzerland, and/or subject to immigration control

- You cannot ask a friend or relative to attend and give notice for you.
- You must both attend a designated office to give your notices of marriage.
 More information can be found on the UK Government website: www.gov.uk/marriages-civilpartnerships/foreign-national

How to make an appointment to give legal notice.

If you live in (or have resided) for at least 7 clear days in Leicestershire, call us on 0116 305 65 65 to make an appointment.

Otherwise, a contact number for your local registration office can be found on the UK Government website: www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/

www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/giving-notice-at-your-local-register-office



Civil Ceremonies at a Registration Office

You may hold your civil marriage or civil partnership ceremony at any registration office in England and Wales.

Our ceremony rooms

Here in Leicestershire, you have a choice of 12 ceremony rooms in 7 registration offices across the county.

Our ceremony rooms are individually styled, ranging from traditional to contemporary and are open to all. The Cedar Room, a modern ceremony room in Anstey Frith House, Glenfield, even offers DVD and webcam broadcasting facilities. Our newest addition, the gazebo, is perfect for a fairy-tale outdoor wedding.





You can find details, including photographs, of each of our ceremony rooms on pages 7-8. Alternatively, visit:

www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk for 360° virtual tours of all our rooms.

How to book

To make a booking, call us on 0116 305 65 65. You may make a provisional booking with us up to three years in advance of your chosen date. You can also see any of the rooms prior to booking.

Pricing

We have a variety of packages available. Our higher priced packages include a longer, more customised ceremony, a prosecco toast for the couple, a personalised DVD and confetti bags.

For more information, call us on 0116 305 65 65, or visit: www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk





Top: Anstey Frith House (Leicestershire Register Office, Glenfield). Bottom left: The Gazebo (Leicestershire Register Office, Glenfield). Bottom right: Stenson House (Coalville Registration Office)

Civil Ceremonies at an Approved Venue

You may hold your civil marriage or civil partnership ceremony at any approved premise in England and Wales.

Our approved venues

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Here in Leicestershire, you have a choice of 70 venues varying in price and style, such as contemporary hotels, stately homes, converted barns and even a castle. We're proud to offer such a large range of venues and have a dedicated team always on the look out for new establishments.

You can find details of our approved venues on pages 9 -10. Alternatively, visit: www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk

How to book

If you decide to hold your ceremony in one of Leicestershire's approved venues, you should initially contact the venue of your choice and make a provisional booking for the date and time of your ceremony.

You should then immediately call us on 0116 305 65 65 to ensure that registrars are available to attend.

Pricing

Prices range from £310 - £450* depending on the ceremony day.

For more information, call us on 0116 305 65 65, or visit: www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk

*To book registrars to perform and register the legal ceremony only. The venue may have additional fees. Prices correct at time of print. Subject to change.



Converting a Civil Partnership into a Marriage

Following the introduction of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, in England and Wales, you can now legally convert your existing civil partnership into a marriage.

You'll get a marriage certificate dated when your original civil partnership was formed.

Converting without a ceremony

You'll both need to make an appointment at your local registration office. You do not need to live, or have lived in Leicestershire, to have your civil partnership converted here.

Call 0116 305 65 65 to make an appointment.

You'll need to bring your original civil partnership certificate, proof of address and payment.

Converting with a ceremony

Although it is not a legal requirement, you can hold a conversion ceremony. You can do this at:

- A local registration office.
- · An approved venue.
- A registered religious building, providing the religious organisation and the building allows for same-sex marriages.

 A premise where a ceremony according to the Jewish faith or the Society of Friends will follow immediately after the conversion.

If you would like a conversion with a ceremony, please contact your local registration office and staff will advise what to do. Here in Leicestershire, call 0116 305 65 65.

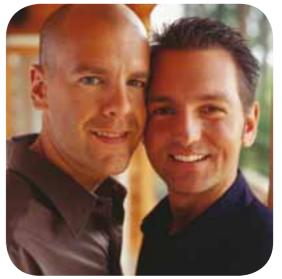
Pricing

• £49 to convert your civil partnership (includes a marriage certificate*)

The cost of a conversion ceremony depends on the venue chosen. Please see pages 4 and 5 for more information.

*Additional certificates can be requested at a cost. See FAQs for more information.





busin.com

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Our Registration Office Ceremony Rooms

Beaumont Room:

- Level access
- Maximum capacity 12*

Coalville Registration Office

Stenson House, London Road, LE67 3FN



Charnwood Room:

- Level access
- Maximum capacity 18*

Loughborough Registration Office Southfield Road, LE11 2TQ



Newbury Suite:

- Level access
- Maximum capacity 54*



Music Room:

- Level access
- Maximum capacity 44*

Hinckley Registration Office The Atkins Building, Lower Bond Street, **LE10 1QU**

Lliffe Room:

- Lift/second floor
- Maximum capacity 12*



Paget/Goddard Room:

• Lift/first floor • Maximum capacity 52*



Blaby

Hinckley and Bosworth

Wigston

Harborough

Melton Registration Office Parkside, Civil Offices, Station Approach, Burton Street,

LE13 1GH



Ferneley Room:

• Level access • Maximum capacity 44*

Coming soon...

Vigston Registration Office. An up-to-date

list of all venues can be found at:

Cedar Room:

- Level access
- Maximum capacity 80*



Gazebo ^:

Level access

 Maximum capacity 80***



Dove Room: Level access

Maximum capacity 18*

Perry Gold Room:

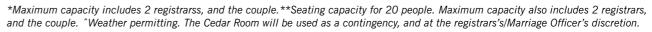
- · Lift/first floor
- Maximum capacity 50*

Harborough Registration Office

The Symington Building,

Adam and Eve Street, LE16 7LT





Our Approved Venues

Coalville

Appleby Park Hotel - www.applebyparkhotel.com - 01530 279500

Breedon Hall - www.breedonhall.co.uk - 01332 864935

Charnwood Arms - www.hungryhorse.co.uk - 01530 813644

Donington Park Farmhouse Hotel - www.parkfarmhouse.co.uk - 01332 862409

Langley Priory - www.langleypriory.com - 01332 853197

The Royal Hotel - www.royalhotelashby.com -1530 412833

Sir John Moore Foundation - www.sirjohnmoore.org.uk - 01530 273629

Staunton Harold Hall - www.stauntonharoldestate.co.uk - 01332 86443

Hinckley

Badgers Mount - www.badgersmount.com - 01455 848161

Bosworth Hall Hotel - www.britanniahotels.com - 01455 291919

Hinckley Golf Club - www.hinckleygolfclub.com - 01455 615124

The Jury's Inn (Hinckley Island) - www.jurysinns.com - 01455 631122

The Meeting Centre - www.themeetingcentre.com - 01455 250555

Millers Hotel - www.oldenglishinns.co.uk - 01827 880223

Mythe Barn - www.mythebarn-weddings.co.uk - 01827 722200

Royal Arms - www.royalarms.co.uk - 01455 290263

San Giovanni - www.sangiovanni.co.uk - 01827 881000

Sketchley Grange - www.sketchleygrangehotel.co.uk -

01455 251133

Stanton Lakes - www.stantonlakes.co.uk - 01455 283043

Thurlaston Country Park - www.thurlastoncountrypark.co.uk -

0344 8481419

Twycross Zoo - www.twycrosszoo.org - 0844 4741777

Ullesthorpe Court Country Hotel & Golf Club -

www.bw-ullesthorpecourt.co.uk - 01455 209023

The New Plough Inn - www.thenewploughinn.co.uk - 01455 615037

Loughborough

Charnwood

Blaby

Oadby &

Wigston

Harborough

Beaumanor Hall - www.beaumanorhall.co.uk - 01509 890119

Burleigh Court - www.burleigh-court.co.uk - 01509 633001

Donington Manor Hotel - www.doningtonmanorhotel.co.uk - 01332 810253

Donington Hall - www.doningtonhall.com

Hilton East Midlands Airport - www3.hilton.com - 01509 674000

Kegworth Hotel - www.kegworthhotel.co.uk - 01509 672427

The Link Hotel - www.linkhotelloughborough.co.uk - 01509 211800

Loughborough Town Hall - www.loughboroughtownhall.co.uk - 01509 634775

Nanpantan Hall - www.nanpantanhall.com - 01509 239230

Prestwold Hall - www.prestwold-hall.com - 01509 880236

The Priest House - www.thepriesthouse.co.uk - 01332 810649

Quorn Grange Hotel - www.quorngrangehotel.co.uk - 01509 412167

Quorn Country Hotel - 01509 415050

Radisson Blu Hotel - www.radissonblu.com - 01509 670575

Ramada Loughborough Hotel - www.ramadaloughborough.com -

01509 233222

The Jury's Inn - www.jurysinns.com - 0161 7742985

Yew Lodge Hotel - www.yewlodgehotel.co.uk - 01509 672518

Melton

Belvoir Castle - www.belvoircastle.com - 01476 871001

Brooksby Hall - www.brooksbyhall.co.uk - 01664 855262

Glebe House - www.glebehousemuston.co.uk - 01949 842993

Ladywood Estate - www.ladywoodestate.com - 01664 454122

Keythorpe Manor - www.keythorpemanor.com - 0116 2598100

The Manners Arms - www.mannersarms.com - 01476 879222

Quorn Lodge Hotel - www.quornlodge.co.uk - 01664 566660

Scalford Hall - www.scalfordhall.co.uk - 01664 444654

Stapleford Park - www.staplefordpark.com - 01572 787522

The Angel Hotel - www.theangel.co.uk - 01858 462702

Catthorpe Manor - www.catthorpemanor.co.uk - 01788 860599

Kilworth House Hotel - www.kilworthhouse.co.uk - 01858 880058

Leicester Race Course - www.leicester-racecourse.co.uk - 0116 2710637

Lutterworth Town Hall - www.lutterworthtownhall.org.uk - 01455 552737

The Lakeside Suite - 07770 601713

Retro Suite - www.retrosuite.co.uk - 0116 2779067

Stage Hotel - www.stagehotel.co.uk - 0116 288 6161

Stanford Hall - www.stanfordhall.co.uk - 01788 860250

The Oathill - www.theoathill.co.uk - 01858 462324

Shearsby Bath - www.shearsbybath.co.uk - 0116 2478202

The Three Swans Hotel - www.threeswans.co.uk - 01858 466644

Horborough

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Glenfield

North West

Leicestershire

Hinckley

Leicester Marriott Hotel - www.marriott.co.uk - 0116 2820100

The Castle Hotel - www.chefandbrewer.com - 0116 239 5337

Hilton Leicester - www3.hilton.com - 0116 2630066

Rothley Court Hotel - www.rothleycourthotel-leicester.co.uk - 0116 237 4141

The Field Head Hotel - www.oldenglishinns.co.uk - 01530 245454







Religious Ceremonies

Anglican (Church of England or Church in Wales) marriage

The church or chapel you can get married in varies depending on your circumstances (although it is usually somewhere local). You can find more information on the official Church of England website:

www.yourchurchwedding.org/article/finding-a-church

Or Church in Wales website:

www.churchinwales.org.uk/structure/places/churches

Once chosen, you need to contact the resident religious official (such as a vicar or bishop), who will arrange the ceremony and advise you of the legal formalities.

Usually the vicar or bishop will perform and register the ceremony. But in some cases, a registrar may need to attend - the religious official will advise what to do if this is the case.

Marriages in all other religions

You are able to marry in a religious building (that is approved for worship and marriage) if it is situated in the registration district where one or both of you reside. You may, however, be married in a religious building in a district where neither of you reside if it is the usual place of worship of one or both of you.

As well as contacting the religious official of your chosen religious building, you both need to give notice at your local registration office at least 28 days before the ceremony.

To give notice, if you live in (or have resided) for at least 7 clear days in Leicestershire, call 0116 305 65 65 to make an appointment.

Otherwise, a contact number for your local registration office can be found on the UK Government website:

www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/gi

www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/giving-notice-at-your-local-register-office

More information on giving notice can be found on page 3.

If you live outside the European Economic Area or Switzerland, and/or are subject to immigration control.

More information can be found on the UK Government website:

www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/foreignnational

Your local Registration Office can also advise. Here in Leicestershire, call 0116 305 65 65. Otherwise, a contact number for your local Registration Office can be found on the UK Government website:

www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/givingnotice-at-your-local-register-office



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Frequently Asked Questions

These FAQs relate to civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies only. Please contact your local religious official for questions relating to religious ceremonies.

Before the ceremony date

When do I pay for my ceremony?

You will be asked to pay a deposit for your ceremony when you book. For a registration office ceremony, the remaining balance is to be paid in advance of your ceremony. If the ceremony is at an approved venue, you will need to have paid the full balance at least 6 - 8 weeks before the ceremony.

I need to cancel or rearrange my ceremony - what do I need to do?

If you need to rearrange your ceremony, contact us as soon as possible to check alternative dates/ times. Please note, you will be charged for this. If you want to cancel your ceremony, a detailed policy is given to you at the time of booking. Please read this to determine whether you are entitled to a refund. Either way, you will need to inform us.

Can I change my name on my passport before the ceremony?

You can apply to change your name on your passport up to three months prior to your ceremony. You will need to complete a PD2 form which you can get from a post office. The name on your passport and the name on your travel booking documents must be the same, otherwise you may be refused entry onto the plane/into another country.

Can we have a ceremony outside?

We have licensed outdoor structures at several of our approved venues. We also have a gazebo at the registration office in Glenfield. If the weather is not suitable, the ceremony will be held inside instead. The registrar performing the ceremony will determine whether or not it can take place outside.

Can we have a ceremony in our back garden?

The law requires that a civil marriage and civil partnership ceremony must be held at a registration office, or an approved venue, so this prevents the option to hold a ceremony at your home. However, as part of our packages, we offer the option of a bespoke ceremony at your home following a lawful ceremony.

I want an independent celebrant to perform my ceremony, will it be legal?

Only local authority registrars are able to perform legal civil marriages or civil partnerships. We offer a variety of wedding packages - including the option of a bespoke ceremony. Call us on 0116 305 65 65 and we can discuss your needs. If you still choose to go ahead with a celebrant, you must ensure that your lawful marriage takes place first.

How many witnesses will I need – can you provide them?

You will need one witness each. They can be relatives or friends, but must be able to understand the ceremony without the aid of an interpreter. If requested, an additional two witnesses can be included in the register. The registration office cannot provide witnesses for you.

Is there a minimum age for my witnesses?

There is no minimum age but any witnesses should be mature enough to understand the ceremony, understand written and spoken English and be able to potentially testify in court in extreme cases.

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Before the ceremony date

I want to have a religious ceremony before my civil ceremony

A religious ceremony should be held after your civil ceremony, otherwise it could cast doubt on the legality of the marriage. A change in the law means that a couple cannot contract more than one legal ceremony with each other.

Can I have a hymn, or religious reading at my ceremony?

As this is a civil ceremony, no religious connotation is permitted by law. This includes imagery such as trinity candles, crosses on the walls or religious text. Religious practices such as hand fasting and blessings or prayers are also not permitted. Your registrar will advise you on content of music and readings.

I'm 18 but my fiancée is 16. Can we still get married?

Anyone under the age of 18 who wishes to marry must have the consent of whoever is responsible for them (parent or guardian). Speak to your local registration office about obtaining the appropriate forms.

Can I have live music at my ceremony?

For a registration office ceremony, live singers or bands are not permitted on logistical grounds. For an approved premise ceremony, please speak to the venue who will advise.

Can I bring decorative flowers to my ceremony?

For a registration office ceremony, our rooms already have flower arrangements so it isn't necessary to bring your own. For an approved premise ceremony, please speak to the venue who will advise.

Can I bring my own music?

For a registration office ceremony* please give the CD to a registrar in advance of your ceremony, so we can make sure the player will accept it. A registrar will then play the CD on the day. For an approved premise ceremony, please speak to the venue who will advise.

Can the 28 day waiting period be reduced in any way?

It can be done in exceptional circumstances. For example, if the bride/groom or a close relative is terminally ill and not expected to recover, then it is possible for the 28 days to be reduced on authority of the Registrar General. There are other possible circumstances but these must be exceptional. Ring your local registration office and ask to speak to the Superintendent Registrar who will determine if this is the case.

Where can I get more information?

The UK Government website has lots of information, you can find it at: www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/overview Alternatively, if you live in Leicestershire, you can

www.celebrateinleicestershire.co.uk or call 0116 305 65 65 to speak to a member of staff.

visit our website:

On the day, before the ceremony starts

What time should I arrive for my ceremony?

For a registration office ceremony, you and your guests should arrive 10 minutes before the time of the ceremony. You will both need to be interviewed before the ceremony and if applicable, any remaining fees paid. If one or both of you wish to make an entrance into the ceremony without having seen each other before, please make arrangements to arrive separately, but a few minutes apart. For an approved venue ceremony, the registrars will arrive at the venue 30 minutes before, and will need to see each of you separately before the ceremony can begin.

What is the purpose of the interview before our ceremony?

Registrars will need to check that all the information on the paperwork is up to date as this information will go into the marriage register. The registrar can update changes to occupations, addresses and ages. The details of your father or step-father will also be checked. For a step-father to be included on the marriage entry, he must have been married to your mother at some point. We ask these details for genealogy purposes - the best way to trace a family tree is through birth and marriage certificates.

Do we have to see each other before the ceremony?

If you don't want to see each other, decide who will be interviewed first and arrive separately. You will still be interviewed separately whether you see each other before or not.

Can I make my entrance at my registration office ceremony with my father, friend or other relative?

Yes of course.









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^{*}Applies to certain packages only.







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On the day, during the ceremony

What if I make a mistake in my vows, or start to laugh or cry?

The registrar will ask you to repeat all vows after them. If you make a mistake, they will simply repeat what you need to say. Please don't be embarrassed, your guests are there to celebrate your big day and will understand if you make a mistake - you're only human!

How long will the ceremony take?

At a registration office, the actual ceremony performed by the registrar can take up to 20 minutes. At an approved venue, the actual ceremony can take up to 30 minutes. The duration is usually determined by the number of readings, songs played and photographs taken. For both, the interviews beforehand take approximately 5 minutes each.

Can I bring a professional photographer / videographer?

Photographs and film are wonderful reminders of your day. However, registrars will explain to your photographer and guests who wish to take photos/ video when this should take place.

Can I use an aerial drone to record at any point?

Filming/photographing any part of a registration office ceremony using an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, otherwise known as a drone, is forbidden - this is on health and safety grounds. For an approved premises ceremony, please speak to the venue who will advise.

Are we allowed to throw confetti?

For a registration office ceremony you may throw confetti as long as it's biodegradable, and outside only. For an approved premises ceremony, please speak to the venue who will advise.

Are animals allowed?

On animal welfare and health and safety grounds, no animals (this includes butterflies and doves), are allowed during the ceremony. Certified assistance dogs are the exception to this.

Can I have more than one marriage certificate?

You get one marriage certificate initially. Additional certificates can be requested but at a cost. You can do this online:

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/registrars/copycertificates/request-a-copy-certificate





THE PERFECT PLACE FOR YOUR SPECIAL DAY

The most important day of your life deserves a special setting - a location that's not just out of the ordinary, but extraordinary, That location is Kilworth House Hotel. Situated in extensive grounds with a variety of rooms and a Victorian Orangery, Kilworth House Hotel is a place of timeless warmth, elegance and gracious living set amid 38 acres of beautiful rolling parkland.

Whether it is small and intimate or you invite over a hundred friends and family, Kilworth House has the facilities and choice to help tailor for your individual needs. We pride ourselves in providing a bespoke service to every bride and groom and offer a variety of food and drink packages.

Our civil wedding licence means you can choose from a variety of rooms at Kilworth House Hotel to hold your marriage ceremony as well as your wedding celebrations.

Why not make Kilworth House exclusively yours and have the sumptuous surroundings and attentive staff set aside just for you. your family and guests on this special day. Exclusive use is available from 3pm on the day of arrival to 9am the following morning.

If you would like further information on any one of Kilworth House Hotel's stunning venues or services, would like to arrange a visit, or have a bespoke request please contact us by telephone, email or online.













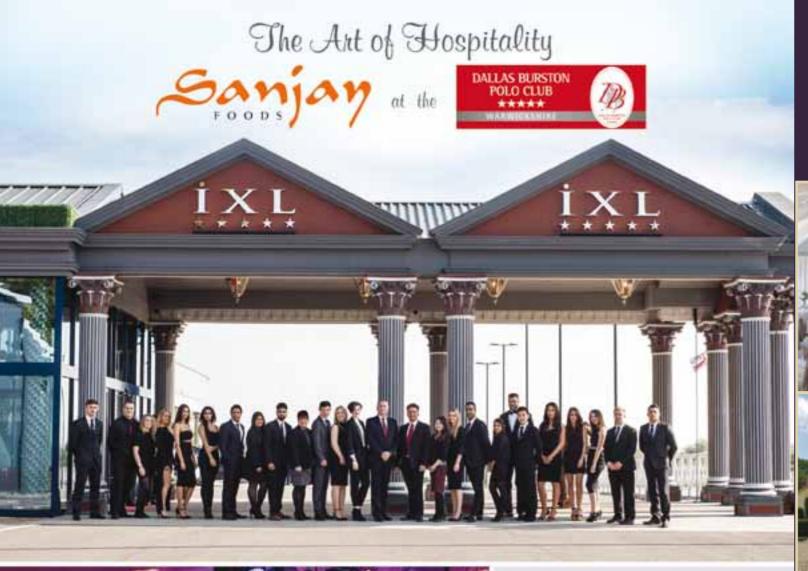


To discuss your wedding requirements, please call 01858 880058 www.kilworthhouse.co.uk/weddings LUTTERWORTH ROAD NORTH KILWORTH LEICESTERSHIRE LEI7 6/E TEL 01858 880058 FAX 01858 880349 EMAIL info@kilworthhouse.co.uk











- . Boasting 6 polo pitches and a 2.4 acre all-weather DBPC SuperArena
- · 2 lakes and landscape gardens
- · Wrsp around terraces for live cooking and alfresco dining
- · Multi-functional state of the art wedding venue
- · A fully fitted professional banqueting kitchen
- · Avant-garde sound and lighting systems
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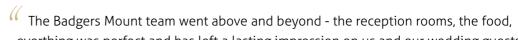


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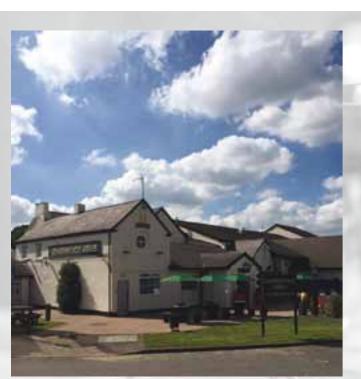






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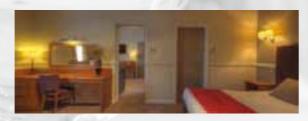
Charnwood Arms Licensed for civil ceremonies

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The Charnwood Arms Hotel is a former country house providing the perfect location for your wedding ceremony or reception.

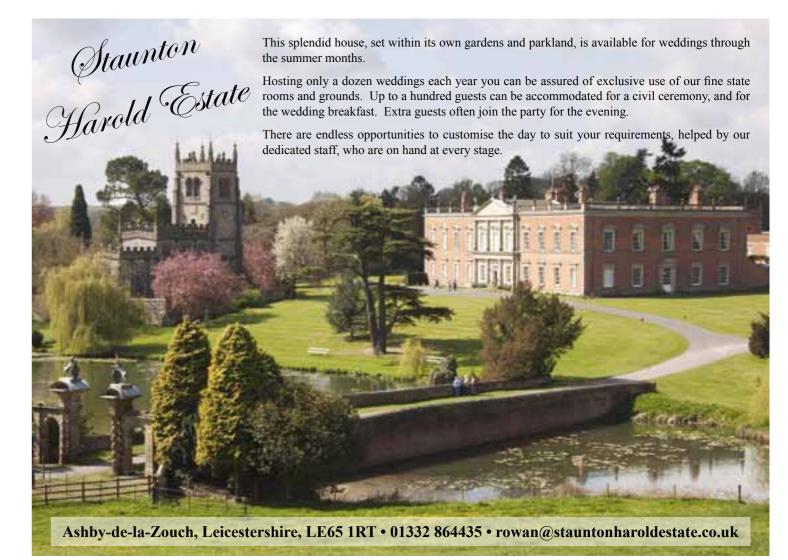


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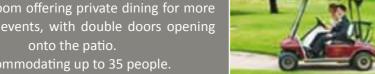
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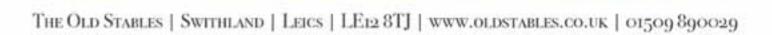
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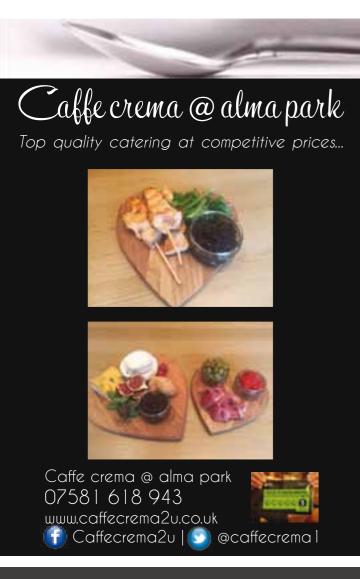
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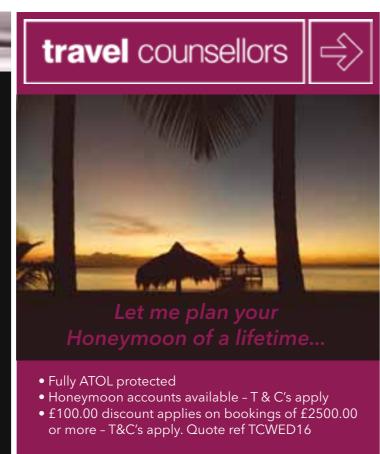
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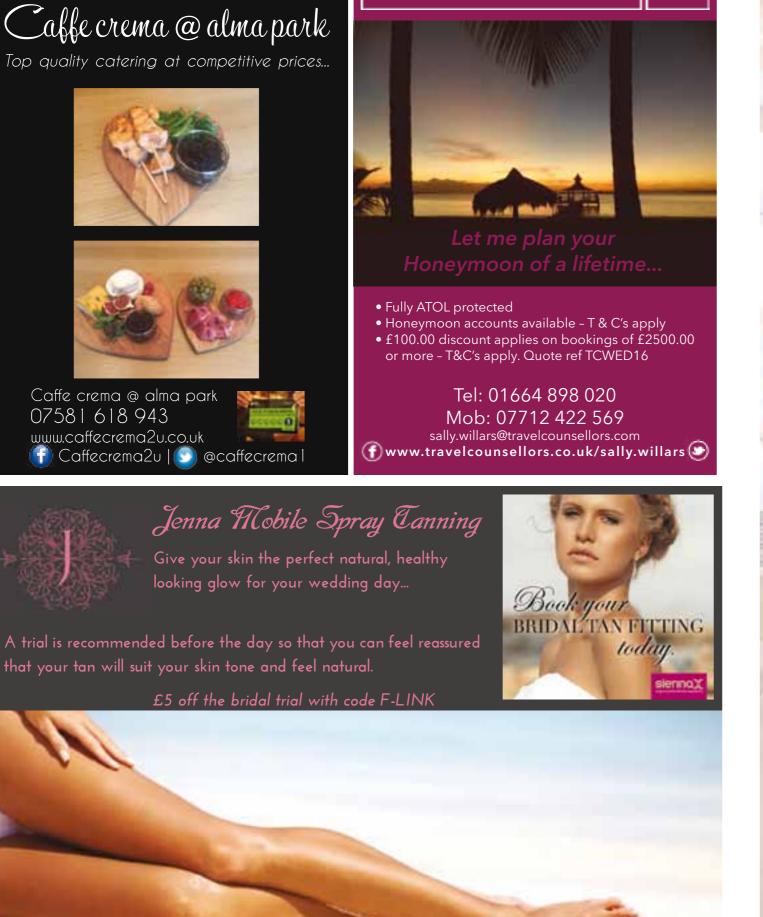
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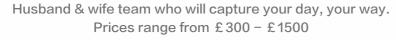








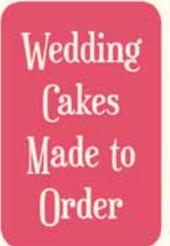




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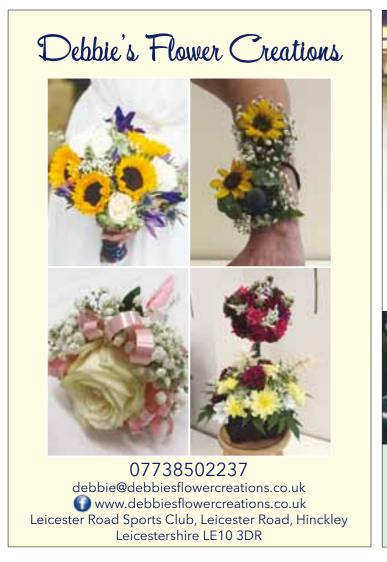




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Wedding traditions

What began around 5,000 years ago has blossomed into a ceremony infused with many ancient customs. Having stood the test of time the most popular traditions remain in diluted, disguised or upgraded forms reflecting our modern culture.

Throwing confetti

Originally, it was Pagan tradition for guests to scatter grain, nuts or rice over the bride and groom to encourage fertility. However, rice in particular has since been recognised as harmful to birds (and humans, should they slip!) The Victorians were the first to use shredded paper as an alternative.

Carrying the bride over the threshold

Marriages in the Middle Ages frequently involved kidnapped women, and so the groom would often be the first to leave as he literally stole his bride away.

Many centuries ago, young women were considered the prime targets of evil spirits, particularly those lurking in the threshold of a new marital home. Likewise, superstition in ancient Rome dictated that bad luck would fall upon the couple if the bride tripped over the threshold, so the groom would carry her through to avoid any misfortune. For Medieval Europeans, this method of entering the marital home also prevented the bride from appearing too enthusiastic about losing her virginity.

Avoiding the bride before the day

When arranged marriages were commonplace they were treated more as business transactions than declarations of love, so it was often customary for the wedding day to be the first time the couple saw one another. This way, the groom had little or no time to change his mind. Today many women choose not to be seen in their wedding attire until the moment they walk down the aisle, as they wish to make the moment more exciting and memorable.

Bride on left, groom on right

In less civilised times, it was crucial for the groom to keep his sword-wielding arm free in anticipation of any jealous suitors or worried parents chasing a kidnapped bride. There's (hopefully) no need for such positioning in today's ceremonies, but the tradition remains.

Tiered cakes

Bread or cakes have been staple celebration foods since the Medieval period. Typically at weddings, all baked goods were stacked high until they formed a mound for the bride and groom to reach over and kiss each other. Doing so without knocking it down would supposedly guarantee them a life of prosperity. By the 1600s, a visiting French chef encouraged the use of sawn-off wooden broom handles to better stack the food, but this idea didn't immediately catch on. The tiered wedding cake is thought to have made its first official appearance in 1882 at the wedding of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany.

Written by: Raychel Lean



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The following English rhyme originated in the Victorian period when it was believed that if a bride included each of the following items in her wedding attire, her marriage would be blessed with good luck.

Something old...

represents continuity with the past and serves as reassurance that old bonds with friends and family will remain.

It could be... a family heirloom, a locket with family photos, fabric from a relative's wedding gown or even an old childhood doll or piece of clothing.

Something new...

is a token of optimism for the newly-weds future together.

It could be... the wedding gown, lingerie, jewellery or shoes.

Something borrowed...

is traditionally handed down from a happily married woman in the hope that her good fortune will rub off on the bride.

It could be... jewellery, a brooch, purse, lace handkerchief, veil or headpiece.

Something blue...

has connotations of faithfulness and loyalty, and thus symbolises the pair's trust and devotion to one another.

It could be... blue flowers, a garter, lingerie, nail polish or shoes. Some brides have blue thread sewn into their wedding dress.

And a silver sixpence in her shoe... was originally included to wish the bride wealth.

This is disregarded in weddings today, but it was once customary for the father of the bride to place the coin in her shoe.

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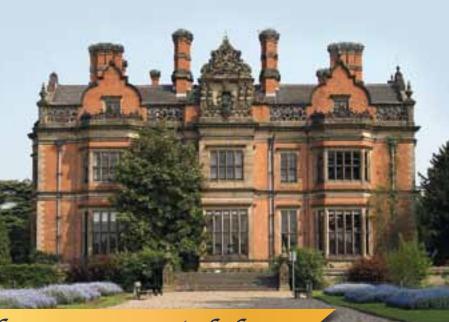
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