



**CELEBRATING MARRIAGE OR A
CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
AT ST MARY'S BATTERSEA
Including Fees Information for 2024**



A Warm Welcome to St Mary's

Welcome to St Mary's. In coming to Battersea's ancient Parish Church for your ceremony you will be celebrating on a spot which has been hallowed for 1,300 years or more. The dramatic position at the riverside and the attractiveness of the church itself will add to the special character of the occasion. We, for our part, will do all we can to make your day enjoyable and memorable.

Christianity and Marriage

A wedding ceremony marks only the beginning of a marriage and is a public witness before God to the love that two people have for each other. A Church wedding makes certain themes clearer: the vows and covenant made between two people reflect the promises that God has made to bless the world. A Christian marriage service celebrates God at work in and through our human relationships blessing us on our journey through life.

Christianity teaches that marriage is 'a gift of God in creation'. Marriage is thus for all people, not just those who are married, and not just for those who consider themselves Christians. The Church of England has a long and passionate commitment to serving every person living in the parish and, as such, no-one should feel that they cannot ask for a marriage at St Mary's. We will do our level best to ensure you can be married at St Mary's, saving the legal rules that apply, as set down in English Marriage Law. We are here to serve.

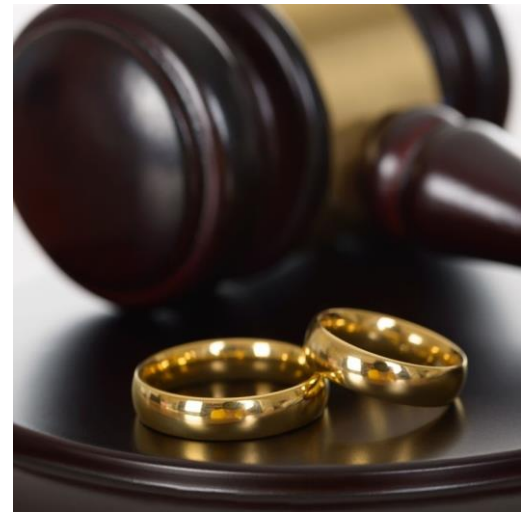
Marriages after a Divorce

At St Mary's we understand that some marriages do not last, and we try to help people rebuild their lives in new relationships. If you have been divorced and would like to discuss the possibility of being married a second time in church, please do not hesitate to speak to one of the clergy.

Civil Partnerships & Marriage for Same-Sex Couples

It is a matter of sadness and frustration for the clergy at St Mary's that we cannot yet lawfully marry same-sex couples in church. However, the clergy and people of St Mary's want to do all we can to help LGBT+ couples celebrate their relationship together after a Civil Partnership or Marriage ceremony at a Register Office. At St Mary's we are committed to being an inclusive church and are keen to support all permanent, faithful and stable relationships.

Marriage and the Law



The Church of England & English Marriage Law

Marriage in the Church of England can be authorised in several ways.

i) **Banns of Marriage** are the easiest and most commonly used method and are based on the residence of bride and/or groom in St Mary's Parish. Formal notice of your forthcoming wedding is read out in St Mary's on three Sundays in the period three months before the wedding. If you both live in St Mary's Parish that is all that you need to do but if one of you lives in another Parish Banns will have to be called there too. It is customary, but not legally required, for couples to attend the calling of their banns. These will take place during the 11am Sunday service. Attendance will help you feel more at home with the surroundings and this will have obvious benefits in terms of your nervousness on the big day.

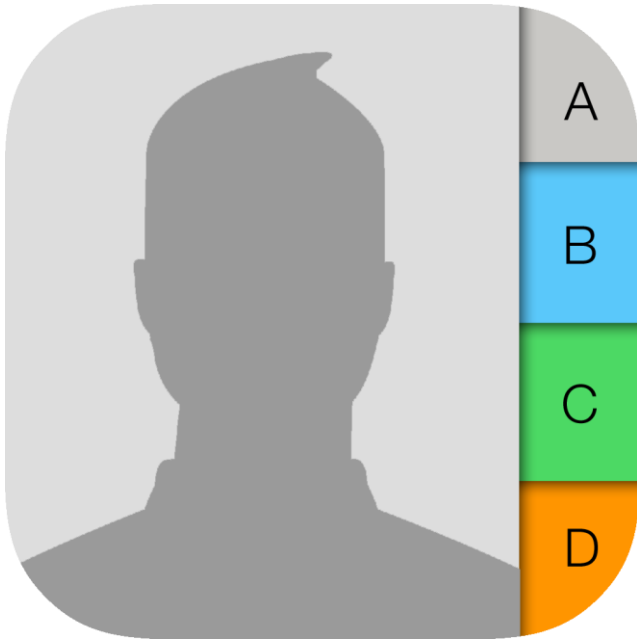
ii) **Licences** are a quicker method than Banns but more expensive. A **Common Licence** is recommended where one or both of you live abroad, where there isn't sufficient time to call banns, or if you're likely to move during the time between booking the wedding and the day itself; a **Special Licence** allows people to be married without the usual requirement of living in the parish, but only when there is a particular connection with the Church that satisfies the Archbishop of Canterbury's Legal Registrar.

iii) It is also possible to get married at St Mary's if you can show a **Qualifying Connection** with St Mary's. For example, this might be that you or one of your parents have ever worshipped here regularly for at least six months or that you have ever lived within the parish boundaries for at least six months or that one of your parents have ever lived within the parish boundaries for at least six months during your lifetime. It might be that you were christened here or that you were prepared for confirmed at St Mary's or that your parents or grandparents were once married here.

V) If you don't qualify by residence or a Qualifying Connection it is still possible to get married at St Mary's if you have joined St Mary's congregation and are entered on the church Electoral Roll. Doing this requires regular worship at St Mary's (twice a month) for six months. Please note: the Electoral Roll is not the same as the Local Government Electoral Roll: it is the official list of church members. To join the electoral roll **you must have been baptised**.

Nationality & Immigration

Under new rules after Brexit, EU citizens who have EU Settled Status (EUSS) in the UK are permitted to be married by banns, and will need to provide the information to demonstrate that they hold this status to us. EU citizens without EUSS and all others who are not British citizens are required to obtain a **Superintendent Registrar's Marriage Schedule** in order for the marriage to take place at St Mary's. Irish citizens are permitted to be married by banns without needing to obtain a Marriage Schedule. If you think this might apply to you, please do contact us in plenty of time – it can take a number of months to complete the processes associated with obtaining a Marriage Schedule.



Useful Contacts

stmarysbattersea.org.uk

The Vicar of St Mary's – Venerable Stephen Taylor

vicar@stmarysbattersea.org.uk
07874853251

St Mary's Parish Office (Felicity Brindle, Church Manager)

office@stmarysbattersea.org.uk
020 7228 9648

Marriage by Licence (the Area Dean will advise if this is the case)

If you need to be married by **Common Licence**, you will need to apply for the Licence through one of the Surrogates of the Diocese. The nearest one is

Revd. Geoffrey Owen, Christ Church & St Stephen's Vicarage, Candahar Road
London SW11 2PU
020 7228 1225

If you need to be married by **Special Licence**, you will need to apply via:

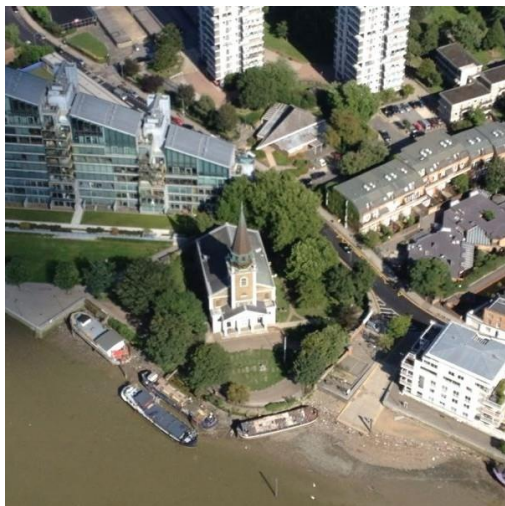
The Registrar, The Faculty Office, 1 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3JT
020 7222 5381 ext.262
www.facultyoffice.org.uk

Marriage by Superintendent Registrar's Marriage Schedule

Register Office, Wandsworth Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, SW18 2PU
020 8871 6120
registeroffice@wandsworth.gov.uk (general)
or ncs@wandsworth.gov.uk (nationality)

Music Matters: Katy Silverman, Director of Music
music@stmarysbattersea.org.uk

Flowers: St Mary's no longer provides flowers for weddings. Contact the Office for more details.



Getting Married at St Mary's

When?

You can marry on any day between 8am and 6pm. It is often much cheaper to find a reception venue for a Friday or a Sunday afternoon.

The wedding service normally lasts about 45 minutes with about 20 minutes of photographs outside afterwards.

Small Print

Only once the booking has been taken and the deposit has been paid can we guarantee the availability of the church. We cannot guarantee which priest will officiate at the service.

Who?

Because the parish is currently in vacancy we will secure the ministry of a local priest to officiate at your wedding.

Small Print

We will happily welcome Church of England clergy to officiate at weddings at St Mary's if you have a relative or family friend who is one. They must, however, be authorised by the Diocesan Bishop.

Preparation

A member of the clergy will meet you over the coming months before your wedding to discuss Christian marriage and the words of the service. We can direct you to more in depth **Marriage Preparation**, which some couples find valuable as they prepare.

Rehearsal

This will be in St Mary's during the week before the wedding. It is usually on the Thursday at 6pm or 7pm. It is important that Bride and Groom, Best Man and Bride's Father (or the one who will escort her into church) and any Bridesmaids and Page Boys are present, but anyone else is very welcome to come along. Please bring an Order of Service to the Wedding Rehearsal.

Parking & Access

Only wedding cars and those vehicles bringing those with limited mobility will be able to park in the church grounds on the wedding day as parked cars can often spoil good quality wedding photos. Please inform us if you need to make use of these spaces. We ask that your guests park on street. The church has a lift for wheelchair users.

Elements of the Wedding Service



Music

St Mary's has a professional Director of Music who will assist you in your choices of music for your wedding service. If you wish to sing at your service, you will need to choose up to three hymns and music to accompany the arrival of the bride and the departure of the bride and groom. There is also the possibility of having music during the signing of the registers which can be live or recorded, as you wish.

A choir comprising a quartet of professional singers can be engaged for your ceremony. They will lead the singing of hymns and sing one or two anthems during the ceremony (most commonly at the signing of the registry and/or between readings). A single soloist may also be engaged, or an instrumentalist. Fees and repertoire suggestions are available on request. Regular worshippers at St Mary's may request the Parish Choir instead, which has more limited availability.

You must contact the Director of Music, Katy Silverman, about three months before the wedding.

Small Print

By contract with the Royal School of Church Music the church organist has the right to the organist's fee at all St. Mary's weddings where the organ is used. This is standard across all churches and is regardless of whether she plays or not.

The Director of Music may not be free on the day of your ceremony and may find a substitute organist.

Musicians are entitled to performing rights. Any video recording (camera, phone, etc.) or live streaming of any of the musical portions of the service will double the fees you pay.

Please contact the Director of Music if you have requests.

Bells

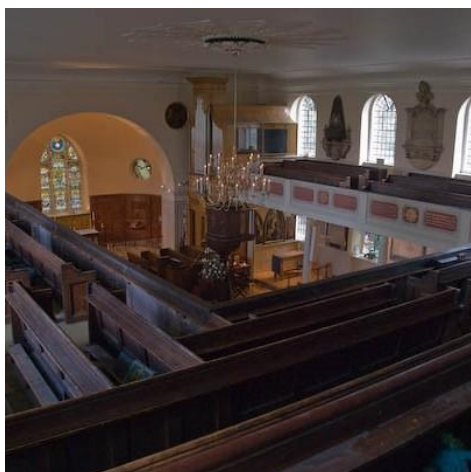
You may have the bells ringing after the service. It may also be possible to have the bells ringing before the service (see fees table).

Small Print

Although we will make every effort to provide bells if requested we cannot guarantee bells on any date, and especially in August or on any day other than Saturday.

Order of Service

We use the Common Worship Marriage Service. Other authorised Church of England services can be used by arrangement, although you are encouraged to read the text – especially of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer service before requesting its use!!



Elements of the Wedding Service

Photography

Guests will be allowed to take photographs only as the couple leave the church at the end of the service. They cannot take photographs during the rest of the service. The professional photographer (or designated family photographer) will be allowed to take photographs throughout the service, subject to the guidance of the priest officiating.

Video Cameras, whether professional, or simply belonging to the guests, may not be used in church except with prior agreement.

Flowers

Everyone's wedding is different and floral decorations vary enormously in colour, size and expense. For this reason St Mary's flower arrangers no longer make any special arrangements of flowers, although there are usually flowers arranged most Sundays.

Small Print

Two major arrangements are permitted, one under the pulpit and the other in the sanctuary. This is to preserve sight lines. No displays are permitted close to the chancel step from where the marriage is conducted. You can tie displays to pew ends, but no arrangement can ever be pinned, glued or attached to pieces of church furniture. Candles are not permitted in floral displays.

Professional florists must work within guidelines laid down by St Mary's Church Council.

You are welcome to leave your flower arrangements in church for the following Sunday. If you would like to do this, please let us know so that we can avoid arranging for other arrangements to be made.

At certain times of year (Easter, Christmas) wedding flower displays may have to conform to the usual seasonal decoration in church. In Advent and Lent you will need to take your flowers away at the end of the service as the church is undecorated in those seasons of the Christian Year.

If more than one wedding takes place on one day it is very much hoped that the different wedding parties can agree on a shared floral display and share the cost.

You may prefer simply to make a small donation to our regular flower fund, in which case you will have the normal seasonal flowers for the following Sunday. Please note that in Advent (before Christmas) and Lent (usually mid-February to early April) this may mean no flowers.

Bits and Pieces



Churchyard

Confetti must not be thrown inside the church or within the church doorway. Natural confetti (rose petals etc.) may be thrown in the church grounds and lavender or similar may be strewn across the portico steps. Please do not throw paper shaped confetti within the church grounds. If you **might be interested in having a drink in the Churchyard** after the ceremony with your guests, please enquire with the Church Manager.

Timekeeping

It is very important that your ceremony happens at the time arranged. There may be another service later the same day, and clergy, musicians and other church staff may have other duties or commitments after your service.

Therefore, it is with regret that we must make it clear that:

- If you are more than 14 minutes late, we may cut one or all of your hymns.
- If you are more than 29 minutes late the choir and the bellringers will go home and will not sing or ring for your wedding. You will not be refunded the choir or ringers' fee.
- If you are more than 44 minutes late the organist will go home and will not play for your wedding. You will not be refunded the organist's fee.
- If you are more than 59 minutes late the wedding will be deemed to have been cancelled. You will not be refunded any of the fees you have paid.

Non-Biblical Readings & Special Music Requests

The service must include one reading from the Bible, but can include other non-biblical reading, subject to the consent of the officiating minister. Please run the reading past the minister officiating during the preparation period.

Special Musical Requests can be considered, including a wide variety of popular music. Again, this is at the officiating ministers' discretion.

One Hymn We Cannot Sing

The hymn *I vow to thee my country* is not sung at St Mary's, owing to its deficient moral theology (Christians owe a duty to God above that of country which means we cannot vow "the love that asks no questions")!



Next Steps

Booking Your Wedding

Please speak to one of the clergy about your wedding and they will go through the necessary checks to ensure you can be lawfully married at St Mary's. The clergy particularly value the chance to get to know wedding couples as they prepare so do invite them to meet you at a mutually-convenient time.

To book your wedding please bring the completed application form with you then, or after you have spoken with one of the parish clergy you may send the form to the Parish Office with a non-returnable deposit of £100. You must also provide proof of address and copies of the photo pages of your passport with the form. Divorcees will need to provide a copy of their Decree(s) **Absolute** from their previous marriage. Your wedding will not be considered booked until we are possession of the complete set of these documents.

Paying for Your Wedding Service

Payment is preferred by electronic bank transfer

Account Name: Battersea Parish Church PCC No. 1

Account Number: 82127468

Sort Code: 50-21-01

You should use your surnames (e.g. Smith Jones) as a payment reference

A complete table of wedding fees is included as an insert with this booklet.

Full payment for your wedding must be made no later than eleven days before the wedding service (cash elements between the hours of 9am and 12pm on weekdays).

Your Church Wedding

The Church of England has worked hard to provide an online resource to assist you in planning your wedding. It provides a wide range of information about what you might include in the service, plus a whole lot more. Please check out:

www.yourchurchwedding.org

A Page for your Notes & Questions