

St. Michael, Smarden, and All Saints Biddenden

Notes for couples completing an application to get married

May 2011.

Congratulations.

We are delighted you are considering getting married. We look forward to helping you prepare for your wedding day.

Legalities: Banns of marriage.

To be married couples either need the reading of their Banns, or a Common License, or Special License. It is now rare that couples need to be married in church with a License, you will be advised if this is necessary at your marriage interview. Most couples are married through the reading of Banns. Banns of marriage are the public declaration of your intention to be married. They must be called three times both in the parish where you are to be married and, if different, where you live. We automatically arrange for the calling of the your Banns in the church where you will be married, the dates are agreed at your initial marriage interview and found on your marriage application. However if you live outside the parish, **you** will need to arrange for Banns to be called at your local church. Banns are valid for up to 3 months before your wedding.

Many couples plan their weddings well in advance their wedding, and often move before their wedding. It is therefore very important for you let me know in writing any change of address. It is also likely you will need to arrange to have your Banns called local to your new address. If you fail to inform of a change of address, this can invalidate your marriage.

To find out which parish you live in, use the following website: www.acny.org.uk/parishmap.php

Have you been married before?

Re-marriage of divorcees will be considered **but** each case has to discussed with the Rector in the first instance. It's helpful to your Decree Absolute for the interview.

You have a legal right to get married in one of our local churches:

- you live in the parish concerned, or
- you are a member of that church, ie on the official membership list called its Electoral Roll (you qualify to join the roll if you are baptised and have worshipped at the church regularly – that is once a month – in that church for six months).

In addition, a recent change in the law allow couples to get married in church which is not local to them, but with which they do have special connections. So we can consider a wedding at St. Michael Smarden, All Saints Biddenden, St Margaret Bethersden or St Mary High Halden if qualify for one of the following seven connections with the relevant parish.

One of you must:

- have been baptised in the parish concerned, or...
- have been prepared for confirmation in the parish, or...
- have at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months, or...

one of you, at any time after you were born:

- has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months, or...
- has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months, or...

one of your parents or grandparents:

- was married in the parish.

Music, Organist and Hymns

Please see the separate sheet for hymn and song suggestions.

Our resident organist is Bob Barnes. Tel 01233 770355. You are permitted to invite your own organist to play at your wedding, however you will still be obliged to pay the 'Organist' fee which is put towards our organ fund.

The organist is able to play a large variety of the popular music often used at weddings. However if you think you will choose music which is less familiar the organist needs plenty of warning.

The Church can provide a choir which if available will be a minimum of 6 singers. They offer support with hymns and if requested a sing a blessing at the end of the service. They are generally only available on Saturdays. One of our choir members is a semi professional singer and can offer a solo during the signing of the registers. Please speak to the Rector about this.

Many of the words and tunes for hymns out of copyright can be obtained at:

www.hymnal.oremus.org or look at the [Kent County Council website](http://www.kentcountycouncil.gov.uk)

<http://www.akentishceremony.com/uk/a-kentish-wedding>

Photographs

Photographs may only be taken without flash. Photographers need to be sensitive, and aware of the intrusion excessive number of photos during the ceremony can cause. Photographs can be made during the registration. The congregation are requested not to take photographs.

Videos

To video your wedding you will need :

- A License from the church. The fee is £100, with £60, paid to the PCC, £40 to the organist.
- A general Video license. This is necessary if the music you have chosen is in copyright, and applies both for your service and at your reception. A license can be obtained from www.wvrl.co.uk, The cost is likely to be not more than £30.

Flowers.

St. Michael Smeden: Contact: Pat Palmer 01233 770557

All Saints Biddenden: Contact: Vera Jones 01580 291620.

Even if couples are using 'outside' florists the couple should discuss their plans and wishes with the respective flower coordinators.

There are times of the year when there are restrictions as to what can be arranged in the way of flowers. Particularly for weddings in the seasons of Lent (6 weeks before Easter) and Advent (4 weeks before Christmas), where normally we don't have flowers in church.

Also for weddings where weddings place shortly before or after flower festivals couples will need to accept restrictions about what can be arranged, and accept the decorations in church.

Hire of Halls.

Each Village has halls which you can hire for a reception:

Smeden Charter Hall: Tom & Maggie Potts, 01233 770258, foxes@email.com

Biddenden Village Hall: Flick Brookman 01580 291320

Service leaflet:

We encourage you to create a special service booklet/leaflet for your wedding. But you should always show us a draft before printing.

Readings:

Please see the separate sheet for sample readings. Texts can also be seen on line at: www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/marriage/marriagefront.html Go to 'Readings and Psalms'. Other poems or readings can also be included.

Mid-week weddings:

Mid week weddings are possible to arrange, but please beware that availability of bell ringers and choir is more difficult to arrange.

Additionally parking in Biddenden at co-inciding with school pick up time can be difficult.

Parking (Biddenden only)

Parking around All Saints Church can be limited, additional parking can be organised by arrangement with our local village school. Please ask Alex for further information. A donation to school funds will be appreciated.

Cars should always be kept clear of exits and driveways of neighbouring houses

Clergy and Parish contact details:

Parish Administrator:

Ann Cole

(Available Thursday and Friday mornings 9 – 1pm)

The Rectory,

36 High Street,

Biddenden, Kent,

TN27 8AH. T: 01580 291454 E: office.smdbid@gmail.com

Rev'd Alex Bienfait

Priest in Charge St. Michael Smarden, All Saints Biddenden.

The Rectory,

36 High Street,

Biddenden, Kent,

TN27 8AH. T: 01580 291454 E: alex.bienfait@gmail.com

Alex has a day off on Mondays. You can leave messages on the answer phone

Rev'd Judy Darkins,

Assistant Curate St. Michael Smarden, All Saints Biddenden

T: 01580 765475 E: judy.darkings@btinternet.com