

# ST. MARY THE VIRGIN SHALFORD



For further details please contact  
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## ARRANGING A WEDDING

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### Where can I be married?

Normally, to be married in the Church of England one or both of you must be resident in the church parish in which you wish to be married. It is then a requirement of law that notice is given of your intention to marry; this is called **calling the banns**. These are read aloud in church for three weeks and, if your partner lives in another parish, they **have to be read there too**. Please therefore ensure that you contact the clergy in the other parish; we require from them a **banns certificate** certifying that this has been done and without it **we are not allowed by law** to marry you. Please contact both parishes (if necessary) as soon as possible to arrange this for which there is a small charge.

If neither of you currently live in the parish where you wish to marry but you or your parents have lived there in the past for at least six months (or your parent/s still do), it may still be possible for you to marry here. Please contact us as soon as possible to discuss this with us; some documentary proof is needed. Full guidelines about "Qualifying Connections" can be found on the Church of England website [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org)

### Who can be married in church?

If you are single\* or a widow or widower and satisfy the residential or other qualifications above, you can be married in church. For people who are divorced other conditions may apply, but it may still be possible. Your parish priest will be glad to discuss this with you. The Church of England is currently legally unable to conduct same-sex weddings.

(\*This currently means not previously married or in a civil partnership).

### What arrangements do I need to make?

You will need to arrange a date and time with your parish priest. Please do not book the reception first as it is not always possible to have a service on the same day without first consulting him or her and the parish diary. He or she will then tell you of other people to contact, for example the organist about the music and hymns, bellringers, flower arrangers and so on.

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## How much will it all cost?

Weddings can be expensive occasions but a service in church will cost somewhere between £400- £600; this is made up of fees set by central government (not the Church) and "local" fees such as those for the organ, choir, administration &c. Your parish priest should be able to give you further details.

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## Can we make up our own vows?

Unfortunately, no. The service has to contain a form of words set down by law for the marriage to be valid. But it may be possible to include other words, or special readings or poems, at the discretion of your parish priest.

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## How many people can we invite?

As many as you wish, but the church cannot comfortably seat more than 150.

## Can a family member or friend who is ordained marry us?

If s/he is a Church of England cleric with a current licence from his or her bishop, or a cleric from elsewhere in the Anglican Communion, this may be possible. Ministers/ clergy of other churches can take part in the service (for example, leading prayers, reading or the address) but are not legally allowed to perform the actual wedding ceremony (ie the vows &c). Again, please talk to your parish priest about this.

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## What about music, flowers, bells?

You will be sent details of who to contact about arranging these and the current fees when you book your wedding with us.