MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

IN PORTSMOUTH
Portsmouth is one of the oldest naval ports in the country. It offers easy access from the M27, and the continental ferry port makes it ideal for those couples wishing to sail away for their honeymoon in Europe. The city is rich in history being the home to monuments such as Charles Dickens’ birthplace, Nelson’s ship HMS Victory and Henry VIII’s Mary Rose.

This publication has been written, edited and designed by Portsmouth City Council.
Portsmouth Register Office is situated in Milldam House, a Grade II listed Georgian building. Built in the early 1800s, it has won awards for the renovation work carried out in 1994, when it was restored as much as possible to its original features. The main entrance to the building is dominated by the original wrought iron staircase and is perfect for those who wish to make a grand entrance. Milldam House has a beautifully landscaped garden and offers a perfect setting for your photographs.

There are now two rooms available for ceremonies. Both rooms have been re-decorated in a style which is in keeping with the period of the building. Situated on the first floor, the Ceremonies Room, which holds a maximum of 45 guests, is fully air-conditioned and is spacious and elegant. This room is available on weekdays and Saturdays.

Downstairs there is an alternative room available for register office ceremonies only. This room holds 16 guests and a very simple ceremony is available in this room on weekdays. Please note: both rooms have been fully equipped with a hearing loop system for use by the hearing impaired. If you would like to use this facility please let the Registrar know prior to your ceremony.

If you are looking for somewhere different to hold your marriage ceremony we can offer you an extensive range of venues to choose from. We have something for everyone from a ship to a theatre! A full list of our venues can be obtained from the Register Office or via the Portsmouth City Council website.

We hope that this brochure will offer you a full and comprehensive insight into planning your day, covering everything from your preliminary arrangements to the legal requirements.
Approved premises

Once you have provisionally booked with the venue of your choice, you should contact the Superintendent Registrar of the district where it is located. You will need to confirm that registration staff will be able to attend on your chosen date and discuss a time for the ceremony. A locally set fee is payable for the registration staff to attend. This fee is in addition to any charged by the venue or those paid for the notices of marriage. Full details of these can be obtained from the Register Office or via the Portsmouth City Council website.

www.kimcollinsphoto.com
Booking your civil ceremony

You can have a marriage or civil partnership in any register office or approved premises of your choice in England or Wales.

At Portsmouth Register Office we are happy to take a provisional booking from you up to two years in advance. This allows you to be able to make your other arrangements in plenty of time.

A non-refundable booking fee is applicable when making a provisional booking and this can be done in person or over the telephone by either one of the couple.

We are unable to take bookings from friends or relatives unless the couple are overseas.

Our refund policy

In the unfortunate event that you may need to cancel your ceremony with us, Portsmouth Registration Service’s refund policy is as follows:

• Twelve weeks or more written notice of cancellation: Full refund
• Less than twelve weeks but more than four weeks notice: 50% refund
• Less than four weeks notice or failure to cancel: No refund
The legal preliminaries for marriage or civil partnership

Before you can marry or have a civil partnership, each of you must give notice of your intention to do so, in person, in the registration district in which you live.

You must both have had your residence in England or Wales for the eight days immediately before giving notice. It does not matter if you move to a different address after the notice is given.

Each of you must give notice in person. The notice is a legal statement signed by you. Your partner, a relative or friend cannot give notice on your behalf.

The notice must be given to the Superintendent Registrar of the district in which you reside, regardless of where the marriage is to take place.

If you live in different registration districts, you must each give notice in your own district.

If either of you are subject to immigration control you will be required to attend a designated register office together, after eight days residency in any district within England and Wales.

Each notice is valid for 12 months from the date it is given. The date and time of the ceremony may be altered within that year. However, a change to the place of marriage will mean that two new notices must be given.

Many register offices now operate an appointment system for taking notices of marriage, including Portsmouth. Please telephone the relevant office to check whether an appointment is needed and to confirm what documents the Superintendent Registrar will need to see.
Documents we will need to see

When you give your notices you will need to show some documents to the Superintendent Registrar. These documents will be used to verify your details such as name, marital status and nationality.

A current passport is the preferred document for proving your identity and nationality. If you have never held a passport we will need to see a copy of your full birth certificate, and possibly your mother’s full birth certificate, depending on your date of birth.

If either of you has been married or in a civil partnership before we will need to see proof that the marriage or partnership has ended. This will be either a decree absolute, conditional order or a death certificate for your late partner. In some cases the previous marriage or civil partnership certificate may also be required.

If either of you has changed your name by deed poll, change of name deed or statutory declaration, we will need to see the document.

If either of you is under eighteen, we will need to see proof that your parents or guardian agree to the marriage. They will need to complete a consent form, which you must collect from the Register Office before giving your notices of marriage.

Please remember that all documents must be the originals and any translations should be carried out by a third person.
Your marriage ceremony

When you arrive on the day of your ceremony the Registrar will need to see both of you prior to the ceremony in order to complete your marriage certificate.

On Saturdays there will be someone to greet you and your guests at Milldam House, and they will show you the way to the marriage waiting room. The Registrar will collect you from the waiting room and will then take you through to a private interview room, where they will check your details and complete your certificate.

If you are having a ceremony in the downstairs Ceremonies Room at 9.30am, you will be taken into the room together, before your guests enter, to complete your paperwork with the Registrar.

If you are having a ceremony in the upstairs Ceremonies Room, you may be seen separately if you prefer. The Registrar will take your guests through to the Ceremonies Room, but if you require specific seating arrangements please nominate one of your party to act as an usher. Please note that for health and safety reasons the downstairs Ceremonies Room holds a maximum of 16 guests and the upstairs Ceremonies Room holds a maximum of 45 guests. This includes children aged two and over.

If you are having a ceremony in the upstairs Ceremonies Room you can choose how you wish to make your entrance. Some couples like to enter the room together, whilst others prefer to be escorted by friends or relatives.
The ceremony

The ceremony is a simple one during which you will each make two statements. In the first you will each declare that you are free to marry the other person, this is called a declaratory statement. In the second you will each say that you take the other person as your husband/wife, this is called a contracting statement.

There is a choice of three statements for each of these and you will need to decide which two you would like to use. Please note, these words will be prompted to you to repeat after the Superintendent Registrar.

These statements are:

Declaratory words

“I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I .......... may not be joined in matrimony to ..........”

or

“I declare that I know of no legal reason why I .......... may not be joined in marriage to ..........”

or

By replying " I am " to the question “Are you .......... free lawfully to marry ..........?”

Contracting words

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I .......... do take thee .......... to be my lawful wedded wife/husband”

or

“I .......... take you .......... to be my wedded wife/husband“

or

“I ..........take thee .......... to be my wedded wife/husband“
Personalising your ceremony

If you are having a ceremony in the upstairs Ceremonies Room you can choose to personalise your ceremony. There are many ways in which the ceremony can be tailored to be more personal to you. The Superintendent Registrar is able to offer a choice of vows, readings and music, and as it is your special day you own suggestions will be welcome.

However, any additions to the ceremony must be seemly and dignified, and must not have any religious or spiritual connotations. Any additions must be approved by the Superintendent Registrar at least two weeks prior to the ceremony taking place.

Due to time constraints you can choose either one reading or your own vows. If you would like any help planning your ceremony our staff will be happy to offer advice or suggestions.

Please note that these options are not available for ceremonies held in the downstairs Ceremonies Room.

Exchanging rings

The giving and receiving of rings can also form part of the ceremony. The choice of one or two rings is left to the wishes of the couple.
Signing the register

At the end of the ceremony you will be asked to read through the details recorded in the marriage register. You are asked to check the information carefully as corrections are very difficult to make once the register has been signed.

After you have both signed, the Registrar will ask the witnesses to come forward to sign the register.

You are required by law to have two witnesses present at the ceremony who can sign for you. We recommend that your witnesses are eighteen years or over and they must be able to speak and understand English.
Photographs and videos

Photography is permitted throughout the ceremony and there will also be an opportunity for your guests to take photographs afterwards.

A video recording can also be made throughout the ceremony.

Confetti

In order to keep Milldam House looking attractive and tidy for all its users, we would ask that confetti is only used when you are outside the building. Confetti and bubbles are on sale at Milldam House should your guests wish to purchase them.
On the day of your civil partnership, the Registrar will need to see both of you prior to the ceremony in order to check your details on the schedule. To do this we ask you to arrive fifteen minutes early, however if you would like to be seen separately we can arrange to do so, but we do ask you to let us know before the day.

On Saturdays there will be someone to greet you and your guests at Milldam House, and they will show you the way to the waiting room. The Registrar will collect you from the waiting room and will then take you through to a private interview room, where they will check your details on the schedules.

The Registrar will take your guests through to the ceremonies room, but if you require specific seating arrangements please nominate one of your party to act as an usher. Please note that for health and safety reasons the upstairs Ceremonies Room holds a **maximum number of 45 guests**, and the downstairs Ceremonies Room holds a **maximum of 16 guests**. This includes children aged two and over.

You can choose how you enter the Ceremonies Room. Some couples like to enter the room together, whilst others prefer to be escorted by friends or relatives.
The ceremony

The ceremony is a simple one during which you will each make two statements. In the first you will each declare that you are free to enter into a civil partnership, this is called a declaratory statement.

In the second you will each say that you take the other person as your civil partner, this is called a contracting statement. Please note, these words will be prompted to you to repeat after the Superintendent Registrar.

The statements used are:

**Declaratory words**

“I declare that I know of no legal reason why I .........may not register as the civil partner of ...........”

**Contracting words**

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I ...........do take ........... to be my lawful civil partner”.

Alternatively you can choose to write your own declarations and vows to each other. Please see the section headed “Personalising your ceremony”.
Personalising your ceremony

There are many ways in which the ceremony can be tailored to be more personal to you. The Superintendent Registrar is able to offer a choice of vows or readings and music, and as it is your special day your own suggestions will be welcome.

However, any additions to the ceremony must be seemly and dignified, and must not have any religious or spiritual connotations.

Any additions must be approved by the Superintendent Registrar at least two weeks prior to the ceremony taking place.

Please note that, due to time constraints, for a Milldam House ceremony you can choose either one reading or your own vows. If you would like any help planning your ceremony our staff will be happy to offer you advice or suggestions.

Exchanging rings

The giving and receiving of rings can also form part of the ceremony. The choice of one or two rings is left to the wishes of the couple.
Signing the schedule

At the end of the ceremony you will be asked to read through the details recorded on the schedule. You are asked to check the information carefully as corrections are very difficult to make once the schedule has been signed.

After you have both signed, the Registrar will ask the witnesses to come forward to sign the schedule.

You are required by law to have two witnesses present at the ceremony who can sign for you. We recommend that your witnesses are eighteen years or over and they must be able to speak and understand English.

Registration Only

If you do not wish to hold a ceremony, then you can opt to have a simple signing of the schedule in front of two witnesses, held in the Superintendent Registrar's office.
Confetti

In order to keep Milldam House looking attractive and tidy for all its users, we would ask that confetti is only used when you are outside the building. Confetti and bubbles are on sale at Milldam House should your guests wish to purchase them.

Photographs and videos

Photography is permitted throughout the ceremony and there will also be an opportunity for your guests to take photographs afterwards. A video recording can also be made throughout the ceremony.
Our facilities

Milldam House has its own car park at the rear of the building. The car park can become busy, and should this happen parking is available in the surrounding streets.

The main entrance has access for disabled guests and there is a lift to the first floor. Our Ceremonies Room is fully equipped with a hearing loop system for use by the hearing impaired. A parent and baby room and nappy changing facilities are also available. If you have questions about the facilities we have, please contact us for further information.
Naming ceremonies

These ceremonies have been designed for people who wish to celebrate a special event in their lives, but who may not feel that a religious ceremony is right for them. The ceremony has no legal status and is simply an opportunity to bring family and friends together to share in a special or significant occasion. Naming ceremonies give parents the opportunity to pledge themselves to the upbringing of their child and to ask supporting adults to promise their support and commitment to the whole family.

Renewal of vows

These ceremonies are an opportunity for couples to rededicate themselves to their partner. These are particularly popular with couples who are celebrating a special anniversary or who have recently married abroad. Very often family and friends are unable to travel abroad for a ceremony and many couples want a family celebration when they return as well. A renewal of vows ceremony is ideal for this and offers couples a chance to rededicate their vows to each other in front of their friends and family.
Order of Ceremony Examples

**Venue Ceremony**
- Entrance of couple or one party with an escort
- Welcome and introduction by the Superintendent Registrar
- Possible reading by family member or friend
- Declaratory Words & Contracting words
- Possible reading by family member or friend
- Exchange of wedding rings with personal vows (if required)
- Conclusion of ceremony
- Signing of the Register or Schedule & Photographs
- Exit of Couple

**Milldam House Ceremony**
- Entrance of couple or one party with an escort
- Welcome and introduction by the Superintendent Registrar
- Declaratory Words & Contracting words
- Exchange of wedding rings
- Possible reading or personal vows
- Conclusion of ceremony
- Signing of the Register or Schedule & Photographs
- Exit of Couple
TRULY HISTORIC VENUES

Whether you’re looking for a grand castle or intimate stylish location, we have a historical venue to suit every taste. Portsmouth is very fortunate to be able to offer a wide range of truly unique buildings steeped in history. From bold castles and towers to romantic themed museums and locations such as the majestic Lord Mayor’s Banqueting Suite.

Our historical buildings range from smaller intimate venues, such as the Charles Dickens’ Birthplace Museum, or something with a larger capacity, such as Southsea Castle, where you can follow in the footsteps of Henry VIII, who liked a wedding, or six.

All our venues are licensed for ceremonies and whatever your theme or budget, we guarantee a professional and comprehensive service. For more information or to view any of our unique buildings please contact us on Portsmouth 023 9283 4307 or email weddings@portsmouthcc.go.uk or go to weddingsinportsmouth.co.uk
Civil Ceremony Venues

The Royal Maritime Club

Phone: 023 9283 5842
Email: info@royalmaritimeclub.co.uk
Website: www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk

Portsmouth’s best kept secret — out at last!

A fabulous wedding or civil partnership reception venue situated within minutes of Portsmouth’s Register Office and Historic Dockyard.

The Royal Maritime Club is also fully licensed for the wedding ceremony (including same sex couples), with areas seating up to 200 guests.

The two main suites can cater for receptions of all sizes with an enviable reputation for providing great food and ambience. You really are made to feel very special.

Our experienced event management team is on hand to offer personal quotations specifically designed to suit your special plans at very competitive prices.

Your guests can stay over in one of our 100 comfortable bedrooms and enjoy reduced rates, a hearty breakfast, our leisure facilities and maybe explore Gunwharf Quays shopping area, only a short walk away.

For details of our packages and a show round, please contact the Events and Banqueting Department.

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We will not accept any responsibility for claims made by advertisers and their inclusion in this brochure and this should not be taken as an endorsement by Portsmouth City Council.
Weddings at Brasserie Blanc are always special & our stunning venues provide the perfect backdrop to your wedding celebration. With menus inspired by Raymond Blanc & a personal planner, we will ensure your day exceeds all expectations.

1 Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth, PO1 3FR. t: 02392 891 320 e: portsmouth@brasserieblanc.com
www.brasserieblanc.com

Fort Purbrook

Phone: 023 9232 1223
Email: info@peterashleyactivitycentres.co.uk
Website: www.peterashleyactivitycentres.co.uk

Enjoy this 19th century fort on your magical day with memorable views of Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

Hold your reception under a marquee* on our spacious parade ground or in one of our function rooms.

Outdoor prices: Hire of the parade ground for one day (*marquee not included): £800

Indoor Prices: Hire of either reception room 1 or reception room 2 for one day: £300.
The Spinnaker Tower

Phone: 023 9285 7524
Email: hospitality@spinnakertower.co.uk
Website: www.spinnakertower.co.uk

The Spinnaker Tower makes a unique and truly inspirational venue for weddings and civil partnerships. The stunning views create an idyllic backdrop to set a beautifully romantic scene for your special day.

Our dedicated wedding coordinator is on hand at every step to ensure every detail is taken care of and you have exclusive use of the tower for the evening.

View Deck 2, located at 105 metres offers breathtaking views stretching up to 23 miles. This truly unique space can accommodate up to 70 guests for an intimate ceremony with a difference.

After the ceremony, you and your guests have the opportunity to take in the stunning scenery with champagne and canapés before your evening celebrations.

View Deck 1, located at 100 metres, will be transformed into the perfect setting for your reception, with stylish floral arrangements decorating this unique space.

The Waterfront Café at ground level makes the ideal place to dance the night away with space for a DJ or live music.

Cams Hall Estate, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 8UP
Phone: 01329 827222
Email: camshall-sales@crown-golf.co.uk
Website: www.camshallgolf.co.uk

Set amidst 200 picturesque acres lies Cams Hall Estate Golf Club, with its enviable reputation as being one of the most beautiful yet affordable venues on the South Coast. Its stunning landscaped patio and beautiful lake provide the perfect backdrop for those romantic fairy tale shots.

Extensive menu choices are available for wedding parties of between 20 and 120 day guests and up to 150 for the evening celebration, although the catering team will strive to tailor packages to suit your specific requirements and budget.

Superb midweek package offered Sunday to Thursday inclusive and discounted late availability options available upon request.
The Jolly Sailor
54 Clarence Parade, Southsea, PO5 2EU
Phone: 02392 295195
Email: enquiries@thejollysailorsouthsea.co.uk
Website: www.thejollysailorsouthsea.co.uk

The Jolly Sailor has two function rooms available offering a wedding breakfast for up to 80 and evening entertainment for up to 160. With affordable food freshly prepared by our own chefs. Or move away from the traditional and go for the TJS Hog Roast, sure to impress all your guests!

Our special events planner will be on hand from start to finish to ensure your special day is one to remember for years to come.

Please call to arrange a personal viewing.

Your perfect Wedding Reception

PYRAMIDS
A BH Live Experience

A perfect seafront location, with wonderful views over the Solent, Pyramids has so much to offer:

• Choice of wedding packages or create a personalised celebration for you and your guests

• Three function suites accommodating from 50 to 500 + guests

Our events team aim to ensure your special day is one you both cherish forever...

For further details and to arrange a viewing, call:
023 9279 9977
Ext 110 or email: functions.pyramids@bhlive.co.uk
Pyramids Centre, Clarence Esplanade, Portsmouth PO5 3ST
The beautiful Edwardian architecture and Baroque style lends itself perfectly to the sense of occasion. Set on the edge of Southsea Common with an extensive private garden and views across the Solent, the Queens Hotel is the perfect wedding venue and we are licensed to hold civil ceremonies for up to 150 guests.

We have a dedicated Events Team who would be delighted to advise and assist you with every detail to make your day truly memorable.

Tel: 02392 822466
Email: events@queenshotelportsmouth.com
Website: www.queenshotelportsmouth.com
Because your day should be perfect......

At The Portsmouth Marriott Hotel you can be confident your wedding will be just the way you imagined it. Picture perfect. Licenced for civil ceremonies and with inclusive packages from just £66 per person, the Portsmouth Marriott could be just what you are looking for to host a truly magical wedding day.

Email: claire.smith@marriotthotels.com for more information

PORTSMOUTH MARRIOTT HOTEL
Southampton Road
Portsmouth, PO6 4SH
Tel: 02392 383151 Web: PortsmouthMarriott.co.uk

Subject to availability and minimum numbers. Terms and conditions apply.

BEST WESTERN Royal Beach Hotel

St. Helens Parade, Portsmouth, PO4 0RN
Phone: 023 9273 1281
Email: events@royalbeachhotel.co.uk
Website: www.royalbeachhotel.co.uk

Situated on the seafront in Southsea with seven function rooms available, we offer a superb location for your wedding ceremony and/or reception. Our experienced, professional team will assist you in every way to ensure you enjoy a happy and successful day.

We have a variety of formal and informal packages to offer but whichever you select, value for money is guaranteed and we extend to you an invitation to view our facilities and discuss your requirements.

A charming venue in the heart of historic Old Portsmouth - tradition, contemporary style and unique cuisine.

For a day to remember: visit www.elnico.co.uk or call us on 023 9281 2040
Innlodge Hotel

Phone: 023 9265 0510
Email: candb@greeneking.co.uk

The Innlodge Hotel is an approved venue for civil wedding and partnership ceremonies.

The hotel offers two large function suites with capacities of up to 200, along with dedicated and experienced wedding co-ordinators to assist you with every little detail along the way.

Our wedding brochure consists of varieties of food and beverage packages to enable us to suit each individual need and budget.

The hotel itself boasts 74 bedrooms including two honeymoon suites both with jacuzzi baths, which are complimentary with our full day wedding package.
Mountbatten Leisure Centre

Alexandra Park, Portsmouth, PO2 9QA
Phone: 023 9262 6505
Website: www.leisurecentre.com
Email: sue.page@parkwood-communityleisure.co.uk

The Mountbatten Leisure Centre with its newly refurbished function suites can accommodate up to 300 guests. With both suites having an adjacent balcony, which overlooks the surrounding parkland and the Sails of the South, guests can enjoy a drink in the sunshine, making this an ideal venue for all wedding breakfasts and receptions.

You will also have the opportunity of consulting with the dedicated events team, who pride themselves on offering a personal, efficient and friendly service.

They have also created a variety of sumptuous and elegant menus for your special day, and these are complimented by a range of exciting and flexible beverage packages to suit your style and budget.

From 2014 we offer all this in conjunction with our Celebrant, Blessing Ceremonies for 100 guests.

For more information contact Susan and Hayley from the Bookings and Events team on the number above.
Stylish, creative and relaxed photography, combining a FUN approach with affordable pricing. Qualified with the MPA, experienced and popular local wedding photography specialist, Martin Lewis is very familiar with many Portsmouth venues.

Stylish coffee table or traditional albums, or high res images on DVD – flexible options and discounts for mid week weddings, starting from as little as £295.

Please contact me to get full details and to check my availability for your special day.
Make Light Work Photography & Video

Phone: 023 9234 8444 / 07941 871258
Email: info@makelightwork.com
Website: www.makelightwork.com

We are a husband and wife team who simply love weddings!

Tell us what’s important and unique to you - so we can understand your vision and translate this into creating fabulous natural images or cinematic videos.

You can visit our website to see our latest work, and if you like what we do and feel like we suit your budget, then drop us an email to arrange a friendly meeting over coffee.

All your images are delivered on DVD/USB, albums optional. Videos come with individual chapters and personalised presentation case.

- Mike and Vanessa
Central Square Lakeside, Western Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO6 3FE  
Phone: 023 9288 3556  
Website: www.co-opflorists.co.uk

The Co-operative Florist team will help make your day the beautiful dream you’ll always remember.

We are experienced at creating the highest quality Bridal bouquets whether in a traditional, modern or contemporary style. Our team of Wedding florists will discuss with you your ideas for the big day, and will suggest a variety of options and choices in a range of styles.

From the bridal bouquet through to thank you flowers, our skilled florists are full of ideas for the bride and groom to create the perfect wedding and reception designs.

You can also complete your wedding package and choose one of our luxurious limousines, finished with ribbons and flowers of your choosing.

Come and visit our shop at 1000 Lakeside, Western Road, Portsmouth and see our wide range of beautiful fresh flowers, vases, chocolates, ribbons, balloons and much, much more.
Commemorative Certificates

Capture the excitement of a celebration in a unique and lasting way with a Commemorative Certificate.

These certificates are available for any past or present event, within England or Wales, and make a unique keepsake, the perfect gift to celebrate an anniversary or preserve family history.

To order your commemorative certificate, please contact the Portsmouth Register Office on 023 9282 9041.

Available for:
- Marriages & Civil Partnership
- Births & Naming Ceremonies
- Renewal of Vows Ceremony
- Citizenship Ceremony

The commemorative certificate cannot to be used for any legal or statutory purposes.

£5 each
The Register Office
Milldam House
Burnaby Road
Portsmouth
PO1 3AF

Tel: 023 9282 9041
Email: registrars@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 9282 9041.