

THE WEDDING HANDBOOK

Introduction

We're very pleased that you've chosen to marry in one of these beautiful, ancient churches which nestle at the foot of the North Downs. Christian worship has been offered in these churches for nearly 1,000 years and many people speak of finding God's presence in these hallowed places.

You've made an active and very positive choice to be married in church. By this choice you're stating to each other, and to those who will gather with you on your wedding day, that this way of life, in God's presence and with his help, is the one you definitely wish to have not only as a strong beginning but as the entire foundation for your married life. A Christian marriage service has great meaning and depth: through the making of vows and the giving and receiving of rings; through the prayers that are offered for you as you begin this new part of your life together; through the Scripture readings and not least through the presence of your family and friends who will also pledge their full support for you during the years to come.

We hope that you'll find this handbook to be a useful addition in support of your preparations for your wedding day. With you we want your wedding day to be joyous, rich, memorable...and to go without a hitch!

At any stage of your preparations, if you're unsure about anything, or if there are any changes to the arrangements you've made please don't hesitate to get in touch with us. The contact information for everyone in the church who will have some involvement with your wedding will be found at the end of this handbook.

Susan Halliwell

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The Legal Bits

The Church of England wants to encourage people to get married in church and has made it much easier for people to do so. Marriage in church is both a legal and a religious ceremony, so we and you have to make sure that all the legal requirements are correct and put in place before your wedding day.

Since the Church of England Marriage Laws changed (2008) you no longer either have to live in your marrying parish or be Baptised before you can be married there.

The first route: living/residing in the church parish

If you and/or your partner live within the church (not the civil) parish then you have a legal entitlement to be married in the parish church. However by 'residing' we don't mean that you keep the address of the property as yours, but don't actually live there. You have to live at the address that you provide to us.

The second route: by a qualifying connection with the parish

This route makes it easier for people to get married in a parish church without actually living there, or having to be entered upon the Electoral Roll. Having a qualifying connection with a parish can be one of the following:

- That you and/or your partner were baptised in the parish church
- That you and/or your partner have been prepared for confirmation in the parish and that your name/s is entered in the Confirmation Register for the parish
- That a parent or Grandparent was married in the parish according to the rites of the Church of England (i.e. not a Civil Wedding or a wedding at a church of another denomination – e.g. a Methodist Church; a Roman Catholic Church etc.)
- That you or your partner has had your usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months
- That one of your parents has had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months during your lifetime
- That you or your partner or one of your parents has regularly and habitually attended worship at the parish church for at least 6 months.

If any of these qualifying connections applies to you, then you'd be required to provide documentary evidence in support of the connection.

If you've been divorced

Happily, the Church of England's response to people who've been divorced and who wish to remarry in Church is generally positive. A couple usually meet with the parish priest in strict confidence to discuss the circumstances relating to the divorce and in most cases there are no reasons why the marriage cannot then take place. Sometimes, when the circumstances relating to the divorce are more complex, the parish priest may have to consult with the Diocesan Bishop and the wedding will not take place until the Bishop and the priest are satisfied that everything is in order, both legally and pastorally.

Publication (Calling) of Banns

Marriage is a public and legal ceremony: theoretically anyone can come along to your wedding, whether it's held in a church or whether it's a civil wedding. The publication of Banns for both religious and civil weddings is a legal requirement and is an open means of checking out whether there are any legal reasons why the marriage may not take place. In this parish the Banns are called during the month before your wedding on 3 successive Sundays at the main service, usually beginning on the first Sunday of the month. For example, if you're planning to get married in August, then your Banns would be called on the first three Sundays in July.

If either of you live outside the parish then you must inform the parish priest of the parish where you live about your wedding arrangements and also arrange for the Banns to be published in that parish also.

Please make sure that you notify your local parish priest about your wedding here in good time - i.e. several months before your wedding - so that s/he can arrange for the Banns to be published in that parish.

It's usual for you to attend each church on the Sundays when the Banns are due to be called so that, if there are any mistakes, or if anyone has any objections, they can be addressed. After this you'll be given a Banns Certificate by your local parish church to prove that the Banns have been called: there's a small fee for this which you'll pay to that parish. Then please be sure to give the Banns Certificate to your marrying priest: the service can't proceed unless we have the Banns Certificate.

How much?

The fees for a wedding at Boxley or Detling in 2011 are as follows:

Boxley £713.00 (deposit of £300)

Detling £ 600.00 (deposit of £300)

A deposit is required when you return your Banns of Marriage application form. Please make your cheque payable either to Boxley PCC or to Detling PCC (obviously dependent upon where you're wedding is to take place). A cheque for the balance of the fees must be paid to the relevant PCC 6 weeks prior to your wedding and sent to the Church Administrator.

All the other bits and pieces

Music

At Boxley and Detling our amateur, but experienced, organists play village church organs of different size and quality. Their aim is to help you make suitable choices of both the music to be played before, during and after the marriage service, and of the hymns to be sung. If you have particular pieces of music that you would like to be played – that are special to you - then please discuss this with Francis Coomber at Boxley or with Tim Cathcart at Detling.

We suggest that you contact either Francis Coomber or Tim Cathcart several months before your wedding day to allow plenty of time for discussion, and for the preparation of the music any draft Orders of Service that you might wish.

Usually a Voluntary is played at the beginning of the service, as the Bride arrives. Another Voluntary is played as Bride and Groom walk together down the aisle. Another piece of music may be played during the Signing of the Registers. Alternatively you might know a relative or friend who enjoys and is good at singing who might be persuaded to sing something appropriate during the Signing of the Registers.

When choosing your hymns it's important to try to choose hymns which will be known to most of your guests, as well as choosing those which are suitable for weddings. We hope very much that all your guests will be in good voice on your wedding day.

Here are the first lines of some hymns which are often sung at weddings: which others do you know and like?

Jerusalem (And did those feet)	One more step along the world I go
Bind us together Lord	Praise my soul the King of heaven
Come down, O love Divine	Praise the Lord, ye heavens, adore him
Fill your hearts with joy and gladness	To God be the glory
Love Divine	Make me a channel of your peace
Morning has broken	Give me joy in my heart
Now thank we all our God	Great is thy faithfulness
O praise ye the Lord	Lead us, heavenly Father
O worship the King all glorious above	Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us

Your choice of music for the 'Entry of the Bride' and as you leave the Church does allow for some variation and we hope that you'll feel able to choose music that reflects your mood. Please let the organists know of any particular favourites that you have. Meanwhile here are some 'old favourites' that have been played at many weddings:

Bridal March by Wagner – used at the beginning of the service

Wedding March by Mendelssohn – good for the end of the service

Prince of Denmark's March by Jeremiah Clarke (also known as The Trumpet Voluntary by Purcell) – this is good for both arriving and leaving

Prelude by Marc Charpentier

Alleluia Chorus from 'The Messiah' by Handel

'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' by Handel

Minuet from 'The Royal Fireworks' by Handel

Flowers for your day

At Boxley church there's a small group of people who organise the flower arrangements in the church throughout the year. Usually the arrangements are placed near the altar and in the side chapel. At Christmas and Easter extra flower arrangements are put in place to decorate the church for everyone's enjoyment.

If you would like our church flower arrangers to include in the flower arrangement placed by the altar a particular colour to blend with the colours that you're planning for your wedding, then please contact Mrs Mary Moulard about this no less than 6 weeks prior to the wedding day. We're not able to make other flower arrangements for your wedding apart from this.

If you would prefer to appoint your own florist to decorate the church for your wedding then please let Mary Moulard know about this no less than 6 weeks before your wedding so we don't place flower arrangements in the various locations. Your florist will need to provide equipment for these arrangements.

If you choose to have pew ends then please don't use pins, nails, hooks or glue to fix them to the wood of the pews. Please use suitable ribbon or cord or containers which hook over the top of the pew end.

Boxley church is open each day from morning – dusk but please check that it will be open and not in use for a service if you or your florist want to visit to plan your flower arrangements.

Detling church is closed during the week so please contact Mrs Margaret Cooke to make arrangements to visit the church and to discuss the placing of flowers. You might need to use your own florist for the flower arrangements here.

Bells

At Boxley there's a team of Bell ringers who will be happy to ring for your wedding if you would like this. Please make sure to book them well in advance if you'd like them to ring for your wedding. Alternatively some people choose a Piper or a Trumpeter to play before and after the wedding.

There are no bells at Detling so perhaps a Piper or a Trumpeter could be handy?

The photos and the film

All those pictures...and the film too!

Photographers usually have a good idea of where and when they'll get the best shots of you. Obviously arrivals at and departures from the church are essential times for photographs, as

is the time during the Signing of the Registers, whether this takes place during or after the marriage service.

It's good practice for the photographer (and the film crew if you have one!) and the priest to agree in advance the suitable places for the photographs (and the filming) to take place: before, after, and possibly during the service. Most photographers and DVD makers will understand the need for discretion in relation to their location during the service and there shouldn't be a problem. Last minute embarrassment is to be avoided at all costs!

The use of flash photography during the service is not permitted as it's very distracting. We also suggest that you discourage your guests from using their own cameras or their mobile phones to take unofficial photos during the service, for exactly the same reasons. However they may take photos of you when the Registers are being signed.

Boxley is a very popular church for weddings and it may be that another wedding is arranged to take place after yours. We would like to encourage you to agree with your photographer (and the film-maker too) to be very firm with the amount of time that is spent taking photos both before and after your marriage service. This is so that there's no overrun into the arrival of the next wedding party. Our experience tells us that **30 minutes** provides plenty of time for these all-important outside shots of bride and groom, and guests. We would hate to have to ask you to hurry up!

We allocate 2 hours for each wedding. This provides plenty of time for everything – photography and filming included - without undue haste

Copyright

The fee for your wedding includes the copying of the words of hymns into an Order of Service and the filming of the service for reproduction on DVD where it includes the singing of hymns and the playing of other music by means of CD, Organ or Piano.

Confetti

We hope that your guests will shower you liberally with **organic and preferably paper or rice confetti, or rose petals** after the service, and **outside the churchyard**.

Car Parking

Now that you've visited our churches you'll have seen for yourselves how limited the space for car (and stretch limousine!) parking really is. This is particularly difficult at Boxley and we're indebted to the generosity of the European School of Osteopathy for their willingness to allow wedding guests to park their cars along the driveway to the School, and also to use a part of their car park, for a relatively small fee which you pay direct to the School. We're also committed to being good neighbours to the people who live around the village green and near the church: the farmer and other private residents use the approach to church and farm very frequently as well as clients of our local Pub, the King's Head. In our ecologically

conscious times might we encourage you to avoid very long or tall vehicles which risk either getting stuck or simply blocking the roads (e.g. stretch limousines; red London buses) and encourage you to think of alternative – and possibly cheaper – modes of transport? We hope that you'll bear these very real limitations in mind when you consider the transport arrangements to the church for yourselves and for your guests on your wedding day.

Once your wedding is over your guests will have to return to their cars, and remove them from ESO premises. No cars may be left behind to be collected either later that day, or the next day. Once the wedding is over the gate to the ESO driveway will be closed and locked.

Please contact the Administrator at the European School of Osteopathy well in advance of your wedding day to book this car parking facility and pay the small fee direct to them.

At Detling there's limited car parking on the road running by the Church, and in the side-roads. The road by the church is a main bus route. Here too, we're committed to being good neighbours and making sure that wedding vehicles don't create jams and embarrassments.

Who's going to marry us? The detail

Lots of people come to Boxley and to Detling to be married and speak highly of the quality of service we offer, and of the friendliness of our congregations. Couples who attend worship regularly find that they settle into the pattern of worship and enjoy it too; they make new friends and begin to feel 'at home' here. This means that when they've finally come to their wedding day, they've not come to a strange church but to one that has become familiar to them and in which they feel at ease. This has made a rich, qualitative difference to their wedding day and many speak very warmly about the journey they've made from their first enquiry to their wedding day in terms of the increase in their spiritual awareness and understanding as well as their enjoyment and appreciation of the rich, ancient yet living Christian worship that is offered here still.

Our prayer for you is that you also will come to enjoy the enriching experience of worship in our churches, make new friends and feel that either Boxley or Detling is a place where you feel at home so that your wedding day may be a deeply memorable and joyous occasion

Your marrying priest will invite you to meet with her long before the wedding day. This will be an opportunity to talk over together the content of the marriage service so that you will each have a full understanding of its meaning and importance. You'll also be able to discuss any practical or other matters when you meet together.

Once you've met with your marrying priest then it's a good idea to meet with the Organist very soon afterwards so that you can consider the music you'd like at your wedding.

The summer time is the busiest season for weddings, which are usually held on Saturdays, although weekday weddings are increasingly popular. We can accommodate 2 weddings at each church on Saturdays, and one wedding on a weekday. Where the wedding is held on a Saturday, and allocating 2 hours for each one, the time for the other weddings to take place is often set by the first couple to book a particular day. For example, if Couple A choose to

be married at 11 am then Couple B's wedding will begin at 1pm. Unless you're able to be up especially early on your wedding day, 10 am weddings are usually best avoided!

When drawing up your Guest List please bear in mind that Boxley Church can seat 250 people and Detling Church can seat 100 people.

How does it all fit together? The Rehearsal

Weddings bring people together from all points of the compass. So if your Best Man or your chief Bridesmaid is flying in from Oz or the US a few days before the wedding, then the wedding rehearsal will be very helpful so that everyone who's being or doing anything special will find out what this special thing is and where it takes place during the service.

The rehearsal will usually take place in the early evening usually 3 days before your wedding. Your marrying priest will arrange this with you.

These are the people who must be at the rehearsal:

- The Bride and Groom
- The person who's 'giving' the Bride away: this is often the Bride's Father, but can also be a close relative or friend. Women may take on this role too.
- The Best Man/Woman: this person has particular responsibilities before and during the service such as keeping the Groom calm, and producing the wedding rings at just the right moment.
- The Chief Bridesmaid: this person's role is to look after the Bride not only from the start of the wedding day at home, but also to attend to the Bride's dress and her bouquet (and to keep the tissues handy!) as well as to lead in the rest of the Bridesmaids.
- All other Bridesmaids (but not infants or babies): this is so that they'll see the layout of the church and find out where to stand, walk, etc.
- Couples sometimes find it helpful if Ushers also attend the rehearsal so that they too can find out where they'll need to be on the day itself.
- Mothers of both Bride and Groom are rarely dissuaded from attending the rehearsal!

At the rehearsal you'll run through everything that will happen during the actual marriage service. You'll practice saying the marriage vows to each other; you'll practice giving and receiving rings; you'll walk in and out of church, and sit and stand in church exactly as you'll do on your wedding day. There'll be chance to ask questions, to giggle hysterically with nerves if you need to, and to make sure that you're comfortable with everything that you'll be saying and doing in the service on the day.

Contact details for everyone you need to know here

1. Priest in Charge of Boxley and Detling - Rev'd Susan Hollins. 01622 600440/
s.hollins540@btinternet.com
2. Associate Priests
 - Rev'd Elizabeth Attaway 01622 762656
 - Rev'd Sue Austin 01622 745276
3. Organists
 - Mr Francis Coomber 01622 758638
 - Mr Tim Cathcart 07967 221505/ tim.cathcart@btinternet.com
4. Church Administrator
 - Mrs Zana Dixon 01634 842508
zana.dixon@btinternet.com
5. Parish Registrar
 - Mrs Barbara Rubie 01622 880404
6. Church Flower Co-ordinators
 - Boxley Mrs Mary Moulard 01622 758762
 - Detling Mrs Margaret Cooke 01622 737987
7. Church Car Parking
 - The Administrator The European School of Osteopathy, Boxley House, Styles Lane, Boxley ME14 3DZ. 01622 761558
8. Church of England Diocesan Offices for this area (if you need extra help in identifying the name of the parish in which you live or if you need a Special Licence for your wedding etc)
 - Canterbury Diocesan Office 01227 762862
 - Rochester Diocesan Office 01634 830333

“Help! I need a”

Useful resources to get you started

There are lots of websites providing a wealth of ideas and material to help you plan and organise your wedding day.

Yourchurchwedding.org	This is an excellent resource provided by the Church of England containing loads of excellent resources and information
Confetti.co.uk	Very comprehensive website providing detail about religious and civil weddings; wedding clothes; planning your wedding
Wedding-Service.co.uk	Extremely comprehensive – encyclopaedic perhaps – and well worth time spent browsing.
Prudentminds.com	This provides some ideas about organising a great wedding without breaking the bank
WeddingGuideuk.com	Has ideas for non-religious readings
Hitched.co.uk	Further ideas for non-religious readings
Speeches.com	Provides you with useful tools to write your own speech
Bookshops	Waterstones Bookshops have helpful book sections on weddings and books with religious and non-religious readings

Have we done everything? The checklist

1. Complete the application form and send it with the cheque for the deposit (payable to the relevant PCC) to the Parish Secretary
2. Help us get to know you when you come to church by introducing yourselves to the priest, the organist and everyone else!
3. Book your reception venue if you haven't done this. Could you do this for less?
4. Select the photographer and the film 'crew' and agree on photos and filming styles
5. Arrange/book the wedding cars/carriages. Don't forget – small is beautiful!
6. Arrange for your Banns of Marriage to be called in your home parish if you live outside the parishes of Boxley and Detling
7. Send out your wedding invitations
8. Contact the European School of Osteopathy (ESO) and book the car parking
9. Attend meetings with your marrying priest to discuss the service in detail
10. Arrange a meeting with the organist
11. Arrange the printing of the Orders of Service
12. Agree with the flower team your requirements for the wedding
13. Check that the church will be open for when your florist wishes to deliver and/or arrange the flowers/corsages etc
14. Pay the balance of the fees to the relevant PCC no less than 6 weeks before your wedding