GETTING MARRIED AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, WICKHAM

We're delighted that you hope to be married at St Nicholas Church, Wickham. We hope that this leaflet will answer some of the questions that you may have as you prepare for your special day.

Additionally, you can find some helpful information about getting married in church on the Church of England website: https://www.yourchurchwedding.org

There are legal requirements to be met before you can be married in church, so it is very important that you get in touch with us before confirming a date with your guests and your reception venue.

ARE WE ELIGIBLE TO GET MARRIED AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, WICKHAM?

You may wish to get married at St Nicholas, Wickham because you live in the parish or because it has special significance for you through family or other connections. The good news is that you can marry in church regardless of your beliefs, whether or not you are christened and whether or not you have been a regular churchgoer.

If one of you lives in the parish of St Nicholas, Wickham you are eligible to get married at the church. You can also marry at St Nicholas Church, Wickham if you can show that one of you:

- has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months.
- has been baptised (christened) in the parish.
- has been prepared for confirmation at St Nicholas Church, Wickham.
- has at any time regularly gone to one of the usual church services at St Nicholas, Wickham for a period of at least 6 months.

or

That one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

- has lived in the parish for at least 6 months.
- has regularly gone to one of the usual church services at St Nicholas, Wickham for a period of at least 6 months.

or

That one of your parents or grandparents:

- was married at St Nicholas Church, Wickham.

If you cannot demonstrate any of these connections, you can create one by attending usual church services at St Nicholas, Wickham at least once a month for 6 consecutive months before your banns are read (for information about banns, see below).

If one or both of you have been divorced, it may still be possible to be married in church. Please contact the Benefice Administrator for more information.

Despite recent changes in same-sex marriage legislation, it is not legally possible for same-sex couples to marry in the Church of England.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

Banns of marriage ('marriage banns') are an ancient legal tradition. They are the public announcement in church of your intention to marry and the opportunity for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place.

Most Church of England weddings require banns to be read out in church before your wedding day. Banns must be read in the parish/es where you live as well as at the church in which you are to be married: St Nicholas Church, Wickham. Please remember that your parish church is not necessarily the church which is closest to your home. You can find out which is your local parish church by looking at www.achurchnearyou.com

It is your responsibility to make sure that banns are read at the parish church/es where you live and to collect the certificate/s proving that your banns have been read there. If you do not have a banns certificate from your home parish/es, your wedding will not be able to take place at St Nicholas Church, Wickham.

You must have your banns read out in church on three Sundays during the three months before the wedding. In the Benefice of Shedfield with Wickham, this will usually happen at the 10.00am service at St Nicholas on the first and third Sundays of the month and at St John the Baptist on the second Sunday two months prior to your wedding. Your minister will be able to confirm these dates for you.

As well as being a legal requirement, the reading of your banns is a special public occasion when people in church hear of your intention to marry. It is an exciting and happy time and you are welcome to invite friends and family to hear your banns being read.

Marriage law changed in 2021 in that mother's names are included in a Marriage Document signed during the ceremony. This document is then submitted to the local Registrar's office from whom you (or a member of your family) may obtain a Marriage Certificate (the fee is now payable to that office).

MARRIAGE LICENCES

Most weddings will take place after the calling of banns. However, in some circumstances it is necessary to obtain a licence to marry. Please note that the granting of licences is by no means guaranteed. It is very important that you talk to the Rector as early as possible if any of the following conditions apply so that you can be advised of the process by which a licence may be obtained.

You may need a Common Licence if:

- one or both of you is/are British but live abroad.
- one or both of you live in the UK but your home is not in England or Wales.
- your home address is likely to change during the time when banns would normally be read out.
- your wedding date is too soon to allow enough time for banns to be read.

You may need a Special Licence or a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to enable you to marry if:

- you have no legal connection with St Nicholas Church, Wickham, and you do not have time to create one before your wedding.

You will need to obtain a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate if:

- one or both of you is a national of a country outside the European Economic Area.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GET MARRIED AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, WICKHAM?

The basic fee (the 'statutory fee') for a wedding is set by the Church of England nationally and is the same for every church.

This statutory fee includes the cost of:

- the minister.
- the use of the church building.
- calling the banns.
- lighting.
- administration.

There is also a statutory fee for the reading of banns in St Nicholas if you are a resident of this parish but marrying elsewhere.

You will be charged a fee for the services of the church's verger at your wedding. The verger prepares the church, helps to look after your guests and assists the minister during the service.

We also request a donation towards the upkeep of the church and its outreach. Other fees, depending on your requirements, include:

- additional heating in the church. At St Nicholas Church, Wickham this is mandatory during the winter months and optional at other times.
- having an organist.
- having the church choir.
- having the church bells ring before and/or after the service.
- if you choose to hire a professional florist to provide flowers in church there will be a £50 supervision fee
- fees for using the church sound system to play recorded music or for the videoing of the service.

See page 6 for a list of fees payable at St Nicholas Church, Wickham.

ADMINISTRATION

Booking deposit: A non-returnable deposit of **£100** is payable when you submit your banns application and booking form. Please check first with the Benefice Administrator that your preferred date is available.

Fees: Fees are normally payable not later than one calendar month before the wedding. An invoice will be sent to you detailing costs and giving the dates on which your banns are to be read. *Please see the table of marriage fees on page 6.*

Passports: If you require a new passport in your married name immediately after your wedding, your minister needs to complete and sign the special form available from post offices.

MUSIC FOR YOUR SERVICE

Organist and choir: Both are arranged through the Benefice Administrator. Please let us know in good time so that we can help with the arrangements for music at your service. *If you wish to bring your own musician/s or recorded music you must let us know.*

Copyright: Copyright law applies to all music 'within copyright' and must have the author and copyright owner noted after the hymn/song. Music covered by a CCLI licence may be printed in an order of service without further payment or permission: St Nicholas, Wickham's CCLI number is 610286. Please see the Christian Music Publishers' Association website for more information: http://www.cmpa-europe.org/weddings.htm

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Orders of service (service booklets): Your minister will discuss the order of service with you: please do not have copies of your order of service printed before your minister has seen the final draft.

Readings: One or two readings may be used, at least one of which must come from the Bible. Your minister will discuss readings with you. A helpful guide to readings can be found at https://www.yourchurchwedding.org

Timing: The service usually lasts about 45 minutes. So that the service can start promptly, please make sure to arrive in good time for any photographs you would like to have taken before the wedding service.

Rehearsal: Your minister will arrange to meet with you for a rehearsal. The best man, a representative of the ushers, the bridesmaids and your parents are all very welcome to come to the rehearsal. However, the only essential people are yourselves!

Video: It is essential to consult your minister before entering into any agreements about video filming. A video licence fee is payable *(see page 6).* In addition, a Performing Rights Society licence (PRS) is required. This may be obtained from www.wvrl.co.uk.

Photography: No flash photography is allowed during the service. Guests will be requested not to take photographs during the service – only the official photographer may do so (without flash). The parish protocol for the use of drone photography must be complied with *(available from the Benefice Administrator)*.

Flowers: If you wish to provide your own flowers or to use a professional florist, you are most welcome to do so: please let the Benefice Administrator know your florist's contact details so that we can arrange for the church to be open and water etc to be available, there is a £50 supervision fee for this.

And finally… If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your minister or the Benefice Administrator. Please be assured of our prayers and best wishes as you prepare for your wedding day.

MARRIAGE FEES AND COSTS
ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, WICKHAM
FROM 1ST JANUARY 2026

Statutory marriage fees	
Marriage Service (CofE fee)	£566
Calling of Banns (CofE fee)	£39

Verger fee and donation towards the fabric of the church	
Verger*	£50
Requested fabric donation (maintenance of the church building)**	£100
Sub-total	**£755**

Other fees, depending on your requirements	
Winter heating – 1st Oct to 30th April***	£70
Organist	£90
Choir	£110
Video permission	£80
Bells	£200
Flower supervision fee if using your own florist	£50

Other fees that may be payable	
Calling of Banns at other parishes	£39
Banns Certificate	£20
Total	**£59**

BLESSING / RENEWAL OF VOWS

Service – basic fee (before verger, organist, choir etc.)	£250
Requested fabric donation (maintenance of the church building)*	£100
Sub-total	**£350**

*Payment of the verger fee is a requirement of St Nicholas Church, Wickham.
**We have a beautiful church and extensive ministry to the people of the local community and further afield. This donation is requested to help us to keep the church open and active in the years ahead. If you are a UK taxpayer, please complete a Gift Aid Declaration for these amounts.
***The heating fee is mandatory in winter; optional at other times.

NB Fees are normally revised with effect from 1st January each year.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Benefice Administrator	**Ms Sarah Weston**	**01329 832162**	**lifeevents@shedfield-wickham.org.uk**
Rector	Revd Fiona Grove		rector@shedfield-wickham.org.uk
Curate	Revd Lindsey Crowhurst		curate@shedfield-wickham.org.uk
CofE website	http://www.yourchurchwedding.org		