

## **Marriage Policy**

### **St John's Sharow and Holy Innocents' Copt Hewick**

#### **Can I be married at St John's or Copt Hewick Churches?**

There are certain things that must happen in a church wedding to ensure the marriage complies with both UK civil and church law. These are the main legal points to consider before you begin planning:-

You must be over 18 years old or 16 years old with parental consent.

Although same sex-marriage legislation is now in force, it remains the case that it is not legally possible for same-sex couples to marry in the Church of England.

The wedding must take place between 8am and 6pm on any day.

There are special guidelines on marriage in the church if you are divorced. Usually it is possible but you will need to talk to the parish priest before a definite decision can be reached.

You can marry in either of our churches if you can show that one of you:

- has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months, or
- was baptised (christened) in the parish concerned, or
- is confirmed and your confirmation was entered in the register of confirmations for a church or chapel in the parish (this will usually be the case if you were prepared for confirmation in the parish), or
- has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church 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 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

That one of your parents or grandparents:

- was married in the parish

If you cannot demonstrate any of the above connections, you could create one, simply by attending the church's usual services at least once a month for seven consecutive months. If you decide to do this, leave enough time after your attendance for the banns to be read before your wedding too – about another two months should be enough.

#### **If I wish to be married in the parish what should I do?**

Weddings can be booked in one of two ways, by attending the parish surgery which takes place after the 10am service on the first three Sundays of the month, or arrange a booking appointment with the parish priest at Parish House, by ringing Revd Ruth Newton on 07805265171. There will be at least one additional meeting and a rehearsal in the week before the wedding.

## **Legal Preliminaries**

### **Reading of Banns**

Most Church of England marriages will require banns to be published before the wedding can take place. You won't need to arrange banns until about four months before your wedding date. If you are not both resident in Sharow Parish, you will need to have your banns read in the parish where you live as well as in Sharow.

If there is not enough notice given for the banns to be read before the marriage is due to take place, or in the case of the marriage of people who are not nationals of a country within the European Economic Area, or if one or both of you does not live in England or Wales, it is recommended that the licence procedure be used rather than banns.

### **Licences**

There are some circumstances in which you may need a Special Licence, Common Licence or a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to marry in church. Your vicar will let you know if these apply to you.

### **Documents you'll need**

- All couples will need to show the parish priest their passport as proof of nationality. If you don't have a passport, there are other documents which would be acceptable, so please ask.
- If either or both of you are divorced, you will need to bring your decree absolute for the parish priest to see.