



Bybrook Team Ministry

The Bybrook Office, The Bell Inn,
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09 July 2020

Dear Couple

Re: Coronavirus Covid-19 and your weddings plans

Following our letter to you of 8th April 2020, we wanted to share with you some further guidance and advice from the Church of England and Bristol Diocese.

Worship Services allowed to resume from 4th July 2020

The UK Government allowed worship services in England to resume from 4th July 2020 subject to being Covid secure and taking the proper precautions. Services across Bybrook Benefice are due to resume shortly, some from 12th July 2020. Restarting these services safely needs careful risk assessment and adaptations, often affected by particular building and architecture. Not every church will open, and some not as frequently as they did.

Please keep up to date with where and when services are happening on www.brybrook.org.uk

Banns

Now that services are no longer prohibited by law, banns have been allowed to resume. Banns must be called in the main (principal) Sunday service of the church. Though permission has been granted to resume, not all churches will, and if they do it may be less frequent.

All of this will impact the timing, location, and possibility of publishing your banns. We will keep you up to date with changing times and places.

If there is insufficient time to publish the banns you will need a common license (see below).

Remember, you will also need a banns certificate from the parish you each reside in. Please check with your local parish how Covid-19 and resuming are affecting their own plans and the timing of your banns with them.

We must have a valid banns certificate from your 'home' parish to be able to proceed with a wedding. If you cannot obtain a banns certificate from your home parish, you will need a common license (see below).

Qualifying Connections

In order for us to publish banns of marriage you must have a qualifying connection with the parish. For those of you who were establishing the qualifying connection through habitual worship, some things have changed.

If you began accruing your attendances with us *before* lockdown you have been credited with one attendance per month for each month. From 4th July 2020 *permission* to resume services (whether or not the church can *provide* them) means that the onus now returns to the wedding couple to establish the connection.

You will need your qualifying connection to be established (6 regular attendances, typically defined as at least once per month) *before* we can publish Banns. They in turn need publishing in three successive services in time for your wedding.

If you do not have time to establish a qualifying connection in time for your wedding please contact us urgently. Without a qualifying connection you will need an archbishop's special license to marry. Typically, these take up to 90 days, which in itself could be a problem given timing.

Should you manage to establish a qualifying connection but leave insufficient time for the publication of banns we will need to act quickly to establish a common license, see below.

Common License

Obtaining a common license requires meeting a Marriage Surrogate within the diocese of Bristol. The standard fee of £200 is now been reinstated (the fees though the Church of England are set by the state). If, however, you have already paid for your banns to be published and Covid-19 has prevented the timing of the banns, the fee will be deemed paid. You will need to speak with your marriage surrogate, who we will put you in touch with, to confirm the process and the fee.

A common license is only valid for 3 months and we cannot therefore begin the process until three months before your wedding date.

If you have been previously married, your minister marrying you will need to have spoken with you and confirmed with the Bishop that we can proceed with your wedding. This needs to happen before you pay to proceed with a common license.

So, what do we do now?

If your wedding is some time away and you need a qualifying connection to marry, please begin as soon as possible. No one can predict national or even local lockdowns that may prevent you coming to us or us being open for you.

Be aware that under [current government guidance](#) 'You should only invite close friends and family, up to a maximum of 30 people. The wedding exception is for wedding ceremonies only. Large wedding receptions or parties should of course not be taking place. Wedding celebrations can only happen when people follow the guidance of six people outdoors, support bubbles, or two households indoors or outdoors. It is critical for these guidelines to be observed to keep you and your family and friends as safe as possible.'

Please consider wedding insurance for your future plans and keep checking for service updates on www.bybrook.org.uk.

We will work with you to provide your wedding celebration as best we can.

Yours sincerely,

Revd Marc Terry

Priest in Charge (Rector Designate)

Mrs Claire Campbell

Office Manager