

GUIDANCE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO MARRY OR FORM A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT APPROVED PREMISES

- 1 Couples who have made provisional arrangements for their marriage or civil partnership formation at approved premises must be advised to contact the Superintendent Registrar at South Gloucestershire Register Office, Civic Centre, Kingswood (Tel 01454 863140). Postal address: South Gloucestershire Register Office, R&BC Dept, PO Box 1953, Bristol BS37 0DE. Please note from 4 January 2023 we are able to book ceremonies up to 31 December 2024. All ceremonies are booked to start on the hour e.g. 12noon, 1pm, 2pm etc.
- 2 Without the presence of an appropriate Registrar there can be no legal marriage or civil partnership and any arrangements for the use of the premises depend entirely on their availability. It is, therefore, essential that the couple make an advance booking with the Superintendent Registrar for his/her attendance at their proposed marriage as soon as a booking can be accepted. A fee for this attendance will be payable 8 weeks before the ceremony; a non-refundable, non-transferable booking fee is taken when couples phone to make their booking. Non-payment of fees would render the ceremony cancelled.
- 3 The couple will also have to give a notice of marriage or civil partnership to the superintendent registrar(s) of the district(s) in which they live. This notice must be given in person by each party and is valid for one year. Both parties should, therefore, arrange to attend the register office where they live between 4 -8 months before the wedding date. There is a mandatory waiting period of 28 clear days after the notices before a wedding or partnership formation can take place (up to 70 days for couples subject to immigration control). South Gloucestershire operate an appointment only system, office hours are Monday to Friday; 9am until 4pm.
- 4 The couple should be warned that any arrangements made for a marriage or civil partnership to take place on the approved premises are dependent on:
 - (a) the availability of the superintendent registrar and a registrar (in the case of a marriage) for the district in which the premises are situated, and in the case of a civil partnership, the availability of a civil partnership registrar.
 - (b) the issue of the schedule for marriage or civil partnership by the superintendent registrar after the end of the mandatory waiting period.
- 5 The couple should be advised that only a civil, non-religious ceremony can be permitted by the Superintendent Registrar. Any music, reading, words or performance which form any part of the ceremony must be secular. The content of the ceremony must be agreed in advance with the Superintendent Registrar who will be attending the ceremony.
- 6 Any rights of copyright for music, readings etc permitted at the ceremony are a matter for the couple and the holder of the approval.