**WARDEN AT THE WEDDING**

Your first wedding as a warden? Here is a handy **Before During and After** checklist. Churches vary in their approach, but an overview will help make sure that you’ve got it covered.

**BEFORE**

The couple will have thought of most things, but arrange to meet them in advance to go through some practicalities:

**Visiting Vicar:** some couples request that an ordained family contact from outside the diocese conducts the service. Any such request should be referred to Bishop’s House as the incumbent would need permission from the Bishop.

**BANNS** to be read on three consecutive Sundays around three months before the wedding, at the principle service or both the principle service *and* another service. Banns should be published by the clergyperson officiating at the service.

**The Vicar should bring the MARRIAGE DOCUMENT,** which is signed by them and two witnesses straight after the service. If for any reason this essential document is missing or unavailable it must be accessed via the local Registrar in the registry office of Births Marriages and Deaths

The Vicar should also mention **Fees.**

**Some churches arrange** for **photo ID** of bride and groom to ascertain true identity. You may need a photo copy of passports and a utility bill or similar, in their name.

**Order of Service** needs plenty of time to plan and ample copies to be given to guests on the day

**Organist and Music choices**

**Flowers:** prior accessand where to put them-for example most couples choose to be photographed when signing their marriage document so flowers may also be needed in a vestry or church room

**Church bells-**if desired, and someone to ring them

**Confetti**-if desired and where it can be thrown

**Guests -** how many are we expecting and is there need for overspill space. Any disabilitiy?

**Media and sound system** checks

**Wedding cars** and where to pull up

**Car parking facilities** and will groomsmen assist with parking or is church help needed

**Altar frontals**: presume white but check

**Photographs**

**Wedding rehearsal**: if possible, try to allow a few days between this and the wedding in case of any oversights

**ON THE DAY AND DURING**

**Arrive early** do a general check: eg do we have the ramp in place in case of a wheel chair? Parking bollards? etc

**Reserve front benches** according to family wishes; usually Groom and family on Right facing Altar

**Groomsmen** usually first to arrive, up to an hour before ceremony. Check they will assist with seating?

 **Order of Service booklets** at the ready

**Warden dress code:** There isn’t one but don’t compete with Bride’s mother or best dressed male guests!

**Collection plate**: placed in view of retiring guests

**Almost there** so Wait, Smile and Enjoy

**Signing the Marriage Document after the service**: be on hand to show where. Recent changes have resulted in no certificate being issued after the service, and the couple must apply to the Registry Office to obtain the certificate.

**AFTER**

**Photographs**

**Friendly goodbyes**

**Marriage document**: keep safe, be ready to send to appropriate authority. Ensure that this is posted to the correct Registry Office and sent recorded delivery.

**Gather up Service sheets,** lost property, general tidy up

**Anniversary Cards:** some churches send these over time. Just make sure they’re still married first!

**And finally: This** website really is very helpful for Bride and Groom, Warden and any other interested party **yourchurchwedding.org**