



The Box River Benefice

*Boxford, Edwardstone, Groton,
Little Waldingfield and Newton*

A Church Wedding



Some Guidelines



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich

A Church Wedding

Marriage is a significant step in a relationship and your wedding day should be one of the most important and memorable of your life. Marriage is a sacrament of the Church -a visible sign of God's love for us in which he bestows upon us his life giving grace. Through Marriage, God spiritually joins two individuals by means of their solemn vows, their shared love and His blessing, so that each may help the other to fulfil themselves and offer mutual support in good times and bad. Within the security they find in this union, their love may expound into their family, the surrounding community and wider society, enriching it through their generosity, sharing and Christian service. This is why marriage is so often referred to as the foundation of family life and the bedrock of society.



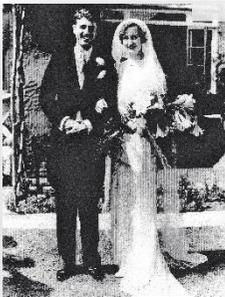
Marriage in the Box River Benefice

The Box River Benefice has many weddings every year. We are fortunate enough to be able to combine the most stunning holy and ancient venues with a deep and engaging ceremony and spiritual experience (and even a little light hearted humour too). A church wedding is always so much more than any alternative. A church wedding combines worship, ceremony, prayer and God's blessing with civil and legal aspects of marital union. In so doing, it implants all present into the long-standing Christian tradition of marriage, the traditions that have been the bedrock to British society for almost as long.



At the Box River Benefice, we do all we can to make the occasion as enjoyable and meaningful as possible. We warmly welcome anyone who wishes to get married at our churches and we will work with you to ensure that your wedding is a happy occasion and a day to be treasured.

In a Long Line of Tradition



When you get married in the Box River Benefice, you join a long history of couples who have tied the knot within these sacred walls. Just to stand in our churches is to feel the centuries of prayer and ceremony that today fills them with that sense of spiritual grace

and sanctuary. Just think, on the same day more than 1000 years ago someone may well have been declaring their marriage vows and receiving God's blessing upon their union in exactly the same way as you.

A living history

There are many reasons to be proud of our churches: with active memberships and expanding congregations, we hope that these churches can remain at the centre of their communities for another 1000 years, providing them with prayerfulness, service and blessing during good times and bad. The importance of the church in these communities is something to celebrate and cannot be underestimated. With your help and commitment, it can continue for a long time to come. The centuries of prayer and worship within these walls is something to cherish and it tells a story of a Christian community right at the heart of these villages; a community that continues in its prayerfulness, devotion and Christian service today. However, it is also a part of English history too and of people and events that belong to the world.



Planning Your Wedding

The Parish Priest (Rector), the churches' Wedding Administrator and our Organist will help you to plan your wedding service, and we will offer advice drawn from our experience to help ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible on the day. A wealth of information can be found at: <http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/> this can provide some helpful material when we look to tailor your wedding to your needs and to fit our beautiful churches.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU BOOK THE CHURCH BEFORE MAKING ANY OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR WEDDING TO ENSURE THAT THE DATE IS AVAILABLE. Due to popularity and conflicting demands, we regret that availability of the church and the priest cannot be guaranteed until you have secured your booking.

Next Steps and Fees

If you are interested in getting married in the Box River Benefice, please contact rparkermcgee@gmail.com, who will respond to your email as quickly as possible.

As a Church of England Church, we are required by law to charge statutory fees. There are also additional optional charges for a verger (who sets up the church), an organist, bell ringers, the choir and heating (if required). Due to copyright law, there will also be an additional charge if you wish to make a professional video recording of the ceremony. For the latest fees please request a copy of our parish fees table or see one on our website.

In order to secure your wedding booking both partners will need to provide two forms of identification in person (either a Birth Certificate, Passport, Full Driving License, Utility Bill; one of which should include a photo and one should confirm your address and be dated within the last three months. To secure the date and time of your wedding, you will also need to pay a £100 deposit (which will be fully refundable up to a month before your wedding date and subtracted from your overall wedding fee).

In order to ensure the spiritual aspect of a church wedding is best served, all couples should attend church most weeks in the six months leading up to their wedding.

Couples should also be present for the reading of their banns.



Eligibility

By law, you can marry at one of the churches in the Box River Benefice if you can show that you or your partner:

1. has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months
2. was baptised in the parish;
3. was prepared for confirmation in the parish;
4. Are on the electoral role of the parish; or
5. has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months.

Alternatively you can also marry in our church if:

1. 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
2. if one of your parents or grandparents was married in the parish.

Legal Requirements

1. If you are both UK citizens and are eligible for marriage at St Mary Magdalene or St Mary the Virgin, it is a legal requirement for your marriage banns to be called in the parish church. If one or both of you are resident in a separate parish, your banns will need to be called in that parish as well.
2. If you are under 18 years old you will need your parents' written consent to be married and by law you cannot be married until you are 16.
3. A wedding can take place on any day of the week (subject to availability and agreement with the Vicar), but must take place between 8.00am and 6.00pm.
4. If one or both of the people marrying is a foreign national or if your marriage is to take place too soon for Banns to be read, then you will need to apply for a licence. The Vicar will advise you which licence is necessary. You will normally need to contact the Church to arrange your wedding at least 6 months before the date you hope to secure for your wedding. PLEASE

ENSURE THAT YOU BOOK THE CHURCH BEFORE MAKING ANY OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR WEDDING.

5. The following relatives are not allowed to marry by law. If they do, the marriage will be automatically void even if they do not know they are related: a child (including an adopted child); a parent (including an adopted parent); a brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister; a grandparent; a grandchild; a brother's, sister's, half-brother's or half-sister's child.
6. If you are previously divorced then you will need to be prepared to speak honestly to the Vicar regarding the breakdown of your previous marriage. In order to book a wedding, you will also need to provide evidence of the legal dissolution of your previous marriage, in the form of a Decree Absolute (the law does not allow any other documentation to be used).



If you are to be married at St Mary Magdalene or St Mary the Virgin, or if you are to be married at another Church of England church and one or both of you are resident in our parishes, it is a legal requirement for your Banns of Marriage to be called. Banns will be called over three Sundays within three months of your wedding (these do not have to be consecutive, although they usually are). This will take place during the main Sunday morning service.

For your banns to be read, please follow the following steps:

7. To check if you live in the parish go to: <http://www.achurchnearyou.com> and type your postcode into the search engine.

3. If you live within the parish contact rparkermcgee@gmail.com to complete the form no later than three months before your marriage date.
4. The parishes' Wedding Administrator will contact you with dates for the three Sundays on which your banns will be called. We ask you to attend the service to hear them read.
5. After the third reading of the banns, you will be contacted to arrange a time to collect and pay for a banns certificate. For the latest fees, please see the latest Parish fees table.
6. The certificate should be given to the clergyperson conducting your wedding before your wedding date.

*May God's blessing be upon you both as you
begin planning your special day.*



We hope to see you very soon!