

Getting married away from where you live.

If one of you lives in the parish where you want to get married, then you have a right in English law to marry there, including if you're moving into the parish a few weeks before the wedding. In the same way, you can get married in the **Church which you usually attend on Sundays**.

So that's all very straightforward and simple.

If you're a couple (same-sex or straight) who had a register office ceremony and would like a blessing after your civil marriage, that's simple, too: if the Church you'd where you'd like to have your service offers wedding blessings (all our group does), there aren't any legal hurdles to jump.

For everybody else....

These days a lot of people move away from the place where they were brought up, but still want to be married there, or would like to be married in another place where they used to live. There might just be a 'family church' where parents, or grandparents married. You might even just have 'fallen in love' with a building. A change in English marriage law a few years ago makes all that a lot easier.

It's called '**Qualifying Connection**' - all that means is that one of you has some sort of meaningful link with the Church where you want to marry.

So you can usually marry in the Church of England parish church of your choice if either of you:

- has at any time lived in that parish for 6 months or more, or
- was baptised (christened) there, or
- is confirmed, and your confirmation is in the parish's confirmation register, or
- has at any time regularly gone to normal church services there for 6 months or more.

If none of that applies, then don't give up hope just yet.

If one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

- has lived in the parish for 6 months or more, or
- has regularly gone to normal church services at the parish church for 6 months or more,

or

- if one of your parents or grandparents was married in the parish

then that clears the way forward, too. (Do note that if it's a 'Churchy' connection rather than a 'lived there' one, then it does only apply to CofE services.)

With the combined parish church connections of parents, grandparents, the places you were brought up, or lived in before you left home, or with your first jobs, and where you live now, people can easily have meaningful connections with something between half-a-dozen and thirty-some parish churches.

Still struggling? Read on....

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

If in doubt, or if you've any questions, do get in touch with us. We may need evidence of Qualifying Connection (but if mum still lives just round the corner, for example, or you're name's in our baptism register we probably don't need to worry overmuch).