

Marriage Ceremony *Superior*

Welcome and Introduction

Good Morning / Afternoon to everyone present today. On behalf of _____ and _____, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you the warmest welcome to the *Chelsea Old Town Hall* here in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for this very special occasion: their marriage ceremony.

I know _____ and _____ are delighted that you could all be here to witness their marriage vows and join in the celebrations on this very happy and special day. Through your vows today you will be making a public declaration of your love for each other and through their presence here, your friends and family are all expressing their love and support for you both.

My name is _____, and as a Deputy Superintendent Registrar for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, it is my privilege and pleasure to be leading you through this ceremony today. With me is my colleague, _____, the (deputy) registrar of marriages, who will record the details of this marriage in the register and assist the couple and witnesses with the signing.

This place in which we are met has been duly sanctioned according to law for the celebration of marriages and civil partnerships. We are gathered here today to witness the joining in matrimony of _____ and _____, in *(registrar confirms name of venue on authorities)*, and if any person here present knows of any lawful impediment to this marriage, they should declare this now.

(Partner 1) – Would you please confirm your full names?

(Partner 2) – Would you please confirm your full names?

Thank you. Through their vows, _____ and _____ are making a commitment to each other for the rest of their lives. They are offering to each other the security that comes from legally binding vows, sincerely made and faithfully kept, and in so doing, their bond of love will grow ever stronger. Through your presence here today, as their family and friends, you are expressing your love and support for them at this very special occasions.

Now, as there have been no objections to your marriage we may now proceed with the ceremony and registration.

The civil ceremony is split into three parts. The first is when _____ and _____ declare that there is no legal reason why they cannot be married today. They will then

say the contracting words to each other, joining them in union as husband/wife and husband/wife, and finally they will exchange rings.

Marriage is a desire by two people to share themselves and their experiences with each other, and a willingness to accept each other for who they are.

Marriage means making a commitment to developing co-operation, friendship and mutual respect. It calls for understanding, honesty, patience and of course for humour! And marriage is where each partner cares for the other and supports them in all that they do.

It demands courage – the courage to be open, the courage to grow and to change, and the courage to sort out together the tasks of everyday living.

Marriage requires closeness and distance – closeness for a couple growing together yet enough distance to allow each partner to be an individual. A good partner in such a marriage will be loving and caring and above all a best friend.

It is in this spirit that _____ and _____ are now before us. In each other's company they have found happiness, fulfilment and love. They now wish to affirm their relationship with this marriage.

_____ and _____, we celebrate with you today. We are glad to join with you in the solemnisation of your marriage, to witness your vows and to support you in your intentions for your future life together.

The symbolic vows that you are about to make acknowledge that you are crossing a new threshold in your lives together. For, from today, you shall say to the world: "We are married – this is my husband, this is my wife".

(Optional Reading)

(Ask the couple to stand)

Vows

..... and before you are joined in matrimony I have to remind you of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. Marriage in this country means the union of two people, voluntarily entered into, for life, to the exclusion of all others.

I am now going to ask each of you in turn to declare that there is no reason why you may not marry each other.

Please repeat after me:

TRADITIONAL VOWS (A)

I do solemnly declare / that I know not / of any lawful impediment /
why I _____ / may not be joined in matrimony / to _____.

MODERN VOWS (B)

I declare / that I know / of no legal reason / why I _____ / may not be joined in marriage / to _____.

SIMPLIFIED VOWS (C)

Registrar asks:

“Are you _____ free lawfully to marry _____?”

Bride/Groom replies “I am”.

We have now reached the solemn moment when _____ and _____ will contract their marriage before you, their witnesses gathered here today. Would you all please stand.

And so I ask you now:

_____, do you take _____ to be your lawful husband/wife; do you promise to love, cherish and respect him/her, and to be loyal, faithful and kind to him/her for the rest of your lives together? [Response: I do]

And _____, do you take _____ to be your lawful husband/wife; do you promise to love, cherish and respect him/her, and to be loyal, faithful and kind to him/her for the rest of your lives together? [Response: I do]

Thank you. Please now turn to face each other and repeat after me:

TRADITIONAL VOWS (A)

I call upon / these persons here present / to witness that I _____ / do take thee _____ / to be my lawfully wedded wife / husband.

MODERN VOWS (B)

I _____ take thee _____ to be my wedded wife / husband.

SIMPLIFIED VOWS (C)

I _____ take you _____ to be my wedded wife / husband.

You may be seated.

(Optional Reading)

Exchange of Rings

The wedding ring is the ancient and traditional way of sealing the marriage contract that you have both just made. It is an unbroken circle which symbolises unending and everlasting love and is an outward sign of the vows and the life-long promises that you have made to one another today.

_____ would you please bring forward the rings.

Please repeat after me:

I give you this ring / as a symbol of our marriage / and as a token of my love, now and always.

Ceremony Conclusion

_____ and _____ you have both made the solemn and binding vows and declarations prescribed by the law of this country and have made promises of love, loyalty and commitment. You have sealed your vows by the joining together of hands and the giving and receiving of rings in the presence of your family and friends gathered here today.

Today will be a milestone in your lives that you will look back upon with love and happiness. May all those gathered here today in your honour uphold, support and celebrate your marriage, and may your love continue to deepen and strengthen for the rest of your lives together.

And so, it now gives me great pleasure to say congratulations to you both and to declare that under the law of this country you are now legally united in marriage. (Optional: You may kiss.)

Optional Reading

Thank you.

_____ and _____, your first duty as a married couple is to sign the register, and so I invite you both to take a seat at the registration desk.

[NOTE TO REGISTRAR: Part 1 takes a seat then signs. Party 2 then takes the seat and signs. Witness 1 takes the seat and signs. Witness 2 takes the seat and signs]

I would now like to invite the two witnesses to take a seat and also sign the register.

(Registrars then sign).

Presentation of Certificate

Guests gathered here today, would you all please stand.

On behalf of my colleague _____ and myself, I would like to wish you all the best for a long and happy life together. Contained here within is your certificate – I hand this to both of you together for future safe-keeping.

Please give a round of applause to the newlyweds, _____ and _____.

Please now gather on the stone steps outside to congratulate the newlyweds.