



St John's Church

W e n t b r i d g e

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Emergency Weddings.

It is very difficult to get married in a hurry. During the Second World War when members of the armed forces had leave they would return home, see the vicar, get a licence and get married, then return back to their base, often all within 48 hours. The Church does have special provision for emergency weddings, for example where one partner is gravely ill. An emergency wedding will be in the parish where one of the couple live. If neither of the couple live in the parish it will prove very difficult to marry them here. If however one of the couple live in the parish of Darrington with Wentbridge, then it may be possible to apply for an Archbishop's Licence, or a Common Licence.

How long does it normally take to get married in Church?

To be married by Superintendent Registrars Certificates you need to live in the parish for a week, then notice is posted for two weeks. The Certificates are then issued. This process can not take less than 21 days and can not be hurried.

To be married by Common Licence you must fulfil all the conditions, and if it is not your parish of residence, then you must live there for two weeks before the licence is issued. This is very unlikely to take less than another week, making a total of three weeks.

To be married by Banns you must give a weeks notice and fulfil the conditions to be married by Banns. You must also have Banns read in the parish where you live. This process takes a minimum of 4 weeks, and can not be hurried.

You can see it normally takes 3 to 4 weeks to be married in Church. If you live in this parish then a Common Licence may be issued immediately, but this is very unusual and not available to my knowledge for those with only a qualifying connection to the parish.

Emergency Weddings

An Archbishop's Licence or Special Licence may be issued in an emergency. The Licence application form is obtained from the Clerk to the Faculty Office, 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1 0207 222 5381 This licence is issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury in accordance with the Ecclesiastical Licences Act 1533. It is only issued in exceptional circumstances.

Eloping to get married is unlikely to be accepted by the Archbishop as an emergency.

You must normally have some connection with the parish of your choice. These links may be, but are not restricted to the following: i) you used to go to the Church school; ii) you used to come to Church here; iii) you help with Church socials, fundraising or activities; iv) you have family buried in the Churchyard; v) your family were married here; i) you or your family are benefactors of the Church, and have given money or goods to the Church (eg new church lights or carpet); vii) you or your parents used to live in the village, and you had to move away. A Special Licence is not guaranteed, and is unlikely to be issued to speed up an application to be married, except for reasons of extreme ill health or emergency leave from the Armed Forces.