

## Shared Buildings and Marriage

A Shared Building can be certified for marriages. If the building is a Church of England parish church, parish centre of worship or licensed chapel, then for services conducted under the rites of the Church of England, everything is dealt with as if it were simply a Church of England building. Although where the Church of England is not involved, only one set of marriage registers will be issued, it is normal for two sets of marriage registers to be supplied to a Shared Building if one participant in the Sharing Agreement is the Church of England - one for non-conformist marriages and the other for those according to Church of England rites. It is important that these are kept separate, and it is very important that the Church of England registers are not used for non-conformist weddings and vice versa.

Registers are supplied to an 'authorised person' in respect of Shared Buildings. The Diocesan Registry will not be aware of who that person is from time to time, but the incumbent or minister in charge (and if there is no incumbent, the non-conformist participant minister) should make sure that they are clear as to who has the responsibility of custody of the registers. It is not clear in the rules, but the Diocesan Registry think that the position is that if there is no Church of England minister from time to time, then the Registrar General would authorise a person who was already an authorised person for the building (i.e. one of the other participant church ministers) to hold the registers.

We think that Church of England registers are always supplied for parish churches within Sharing Agreements. There are presumably supplied to the Church of England minister as an authorised person. Another set would be supplied to an authorised person for the non-conformist participants.

The authorised person conducting the marriage completes the registration process. In the absence of a Church of England minister, marriages could not be conducted under Church of England rites. (A visiting licensed Church of England minister would be able to conduct marriages of course).

Certificates of entries made are supplied by the authorised person. So a Methodist minister could only supply copies of a Church of England registered marriage if he had been made the authorised person for those registers. If s/he has not been given that role then the couple should seek a copy from the Register Office. (Questions as to this should be addressed to the Superintendent Registrar because the Diocesan Registrar is not involved with these registers)

The correction of an error in the register books, discovered after the completion of the entry is always governed by the correction rules (regulation 26 of the 1952 Rules). The procedure involves liaison with and consent from the Registrar General *before* any alteration is made. No alteration should be made by any person without that consent.

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