

A photograph of Manchester Cathedral, a large Gothic-style stone building with a prominent clock tower and a flag on top. In the foreground, there is a large, full-bloomed pink cherry blossom tree. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "Marriage at Manchester Cathedral" is overlaid in white, bold font across the center of the image.

# Marriage at Manchester Cathedral

## Booking your Wedding

[www.manchestercathedral.org](http://www.manchestercathedral.org)

## Welcome to the Cathedral

It is believed that there has been a church on or near Manchester Cathedral for over a thousand years. King Henry V granted a Royal Charter to found it as a Collegiate Church dedicated to St Mary, St Denys and St George in 1421. This church became Manchester's Cathedral when the Diocese of Manchester was formed in 1847. We have inherited a rich tradition of prayer and worship which continues today.

As the Cathedral we serve the communities of Greater Manchester and beyond. Although we have our own parish remaining from the much larger Parish of Manchester, the congregation is a diverse Christian community drawn from the whole area. Congregation members might have grown up here or recently moved to Manchester. The Cathedral today reflects the rich diversity of modern Manchester.

## Who can marry at Manchester Cathedral?

The Cathedral follows national rules about who can be married here. It is much easier to marry in a parish church where 'qualifying connections' such as your parents or grandparents marrying there also allow you to get married in the same church. Those rules do not apply in the Cathedral.

Everyone who gets married in England has to be 'of age', which is 18 years old or above. They have to be not closely related and they must not be in an existing marriage or civil partnership. At present it is only possible for a man and a woman to have a wedding in a Church of England parish church or cathedral.

To marry in the Cathedral you will need to *either*:

- live in the Cathedral's residual parish, or
- be enrolled on the Cathedral's Electoral Roll, or
- obtain a 'Special Licence' to allow you to marry in the Cathedral.

## Do you live in the Residuary Parish?

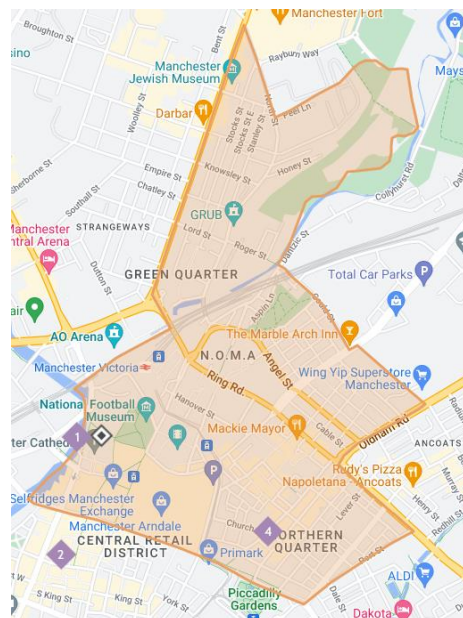
Almost everyone in England lives in a Church of England parish.

The ancient parish of Manchester was a large area which has become the city we know today. As new parishes were created the Cathedral's own parish became smaller. This is the Residuary Parish.

You can check which is your parish by using the postcode checker on the website [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com).

The website will also give you contact details for the church there.

If you can prove you reside in the Parish then, other requirements being met, you can marry in the Cathedral.



## Are you on the Cathedral's Electoral Roll?

If you are baptised and have regularly worshipped in Manchester Cathedral for six months or more then you are entitled to have your name entered on the Electoral Roll.

Roll members elect the Cathedral's Wardens each year. Membership of the Electoral Roll also gives you the same right to marry in the Cathedral as can be exercised by residents of the Residuary Parish.

If you decide to attend worship in order to join the Roll, then you need to know:

- The legally required period of regular attending is **six months**.
- By 'regular' we mean **fortnightly or more**.
- It would be helpful to tell us when you start attending in order to join the Roll.
- Attendance can be at any of the Cathedral services.
- At the end of six months (if we are within three months before the wedding) then the **legal preliminaries** – eg Banns of Marriage – can begin. This means that, in practice, it takes *at least* seven months from your initial joining in worship to the date of your wedding. It is vital that this is followed through - or it will not then be lawful for us to allow the wedding to take place.

### **Can you Marry by Special Licence?**

If you do not live in the Parish or cannot join the Electoral Roll then the only other route to marry in the Cathedral is by a Special Licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury. These are issued on his behalf by the Registrar of the Court of Faculties in London.

The Registrar will only issue a Special Licence if the couple has what is referred to in law as a "present and demonstrable connection" with the cathedral in question. In practical terms, this likely means that you will need to have a connection through working at the Cathedral or through service in the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

Because the Cathedral has a Chapel for the Regiment, those who have served could qualify as having a present and demonstrable connection.

In order to obtain a Special Licence you will need to full written support of the Cathedral. The full legal rules, regulations and requirements for getting married in cathedrals by Special Licence can be found on the Court of Faculties' website:

[www.facultyoffice.org.uk/special-marriage-licences](http://www.facultyoffice.org.uk/special-marriage-licences)

### **What if you are a divorcee?**

Divorcees with a former spouse still living do not have the legal *right* to marry in a parish church or cathedral. However, like most churches the Cathedral does allow marriage of divorcees where that is appropriate.

### **Are you from overseas?**

Every wedding in the UK must have legal preliminaries. If one or both of you is a citizen of a country outside the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland or if you live outside England and Wales it likely means we will not be able to use the usual 'Banns of Marriage' route towards the service but instead will need to follow either the 'Marriage Licence' route or the 'Superintendent Registrar's Certificate' route.

Cathedral clergy can give further advice on this area.

### **Arranging the date of your Wedding**

To book your wedding you will need to speak with the Cathedral clergy, usually in the first instance Canon Nigel Ashworth, Canon Pastor. The Cathedral is a busy church and dates and times to be planned with care. Once booked, it is often difficult to change a date or time for a wedding.

#### **Getting in touch with the Cathedral for further information**

**Canon Precentor**

**Telephone**

0161 833 2220 extension 222

**E-mail**

[Canon.Precentor@manchestercathedral.org](mailto:Canon.Precentor@manchestercathedral.org)