

# Ceremonies in Dundee





# The City of Dundee

The City of Dundee is Scotland's fourth largest city, where the traditions and culture of city, country and coastal life, sit easily alongside each other.

Find yourself in the midst of beautiful unspoilt scenery, where rugged coastlines brace themselves against the North Sea, and gentle rolling foothills run into the Cairngorms' eastern edge. Challenge yourself at one of the many nearby championship golf courses and discover an abundance of other opportunities to walk, cycle, fish, or simply experience the changing seasons in wide-open spaces.

The "City of Discovery" proudly remembers its sea faring and industrial heritage, whilst developing exciting cultural, artistic, and scientific dimensions for the 21st century.

See the premier textile heritage centre at Verdant Works - awarded the 2012 Winstan Bond Trophy for Best Entrepreneurial Museum at the Museums and Heritage Awards. Just across the city centre, on the bank of the River Tay, Captain Scott's famous Antarctic expedition ship R.R.S. Discovery is berthed - just by the award-winning Discovery Point Visitor Centre.

The city's burgeoning cultural quarter is home to Dundee Rep Theatre and Dundee Contemporary Arts. Fun is the order of the day at Dundee Science Centre, where interactive exhibits help children of

all ages understand the five human senses. Stop awhile to explore Dundee city centre, where shopping in the magnificent glass-fronted Overgate shopping centre must be close to shopping heaven, with a major department store and a wealth of well known outlets of adult and children's clothing, together with specialist shops.

The pedestrianised High Street leads neatly from the Overgate to the Murraygate and Wellgate shopping centres, which have more department stores and retailers to suit all interests. Look out for City Quay, on the Dundee waterfront, where factory outlets aim to guarantee designer labels at low prices.

A feast of events is on offer in Dundee, including the annual summer festival of street entertainment, and the city's Guitar, Blues and Mountain Film Festivals. Dundee's Food & Flower Festival, held in September, is now the largest in Scotland.

For further details about Dundee and the surrounding area, please contact Dundee and Angus Tourist Board on **01382 527527** or visit their web-site at: **[www.angusanddundee.co.uk](http://www.angusanddundee.co.uk)**

# Your Civil Marriage in Dundee

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have decided to get married. This brochure will help guide you through the process of arranging both religious and civil marriages in Dundee and will highlight the civil marriage facilities available in the City. All the registration staff will be happy to assist you in every way to ensure that your ceremony is tailored exactly to your wishes and you truly have a day to remember!



## BOOKING YOUR MARRIAGE DATE

You may choose to be married at any location in Scotland, providing an authorised person agrees to conduct the ceremony. There is no longer a legal requirement to seek approval for a venue for your civil marriage in Dundee. A registrar can now marry you at any location in his/her Registration District without the need for additional paperwork or a fee to approve the venue. When you have decided where and when you would like to be married, you must ensure that this is suitable for the person who is to marry you and confirm the place, date and time. In Dundee, you may book a marriage with a registrar as far ahead as you like. Civil weddings in Dundee may be arranged for any day of the week, at any time of day or night, in consultation with the Registrar. This includes Saturdays, Sundays and all Public Holidays. This includes Christmas day and New Year.

In effect this means that couples may now choose to hold their civil marriage in Dundee in almost any location of their choosing in the City, at any time of day or night. Many couples choose to be married at the venue where they are to hold their reception. This may be an hotel, restaurant, bar or club. You may also be married at home or in a

private garden. Many couples however, choose to hold their ceremony at one of the many unique locations in the Dundee area to add a romantic or personal touch to their civil wedding.

Try to imagine your ceremony at one of the locations below:

- On the golden sands of Broughty Ferry beach.
- On top of the Law (extinct volcano), overlooking the City.
- On a boat in the river Tay.
- Overlooking the reservoir at Clatto Country Park.
- Surrounded by the flowers and shrubs at Barnhill Rock Gardens
- In a hot air balloon floating over the City.
- In one of the many historic and atmospheric castles within Dundee.
- In the bandstand at Magdalen Green with views across the River Tay
- And for devoted football fans: Dens Park or Tannadice football stadia

# Same Sex Weddings in Civil Partnerships in Dundee

## SAME SEX MARRIAGE IN SCOTLAND

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 came into effect in December 2014.

This Act relates to same sex marriage; changing Civil Partnerships to marriage and the provisions on gender recognition. This means:

- Same sex couples are now able to give notice of intention to marry.
- Marriage ceremonies of same sex couples can take place, after the required notice period has expired and subject to the usual checks (eg on divorces of any previous marriages).
- Civil partnerships registered in Scotland can be converted to marriages through an administrative route, rather than by means of a ceremony.
- Same sex couples can now give notice of intention to enter a religious or belief civil partnership.
- People in a marriage solemnised in Scotland will be able to apply to the Gender Recognition Panel and obtain a full Gender Recognition Certificate without the need for divorce



# Documents Required

When you have booked your wedding or civil partnership date you must ensure that the necessary paperwork is completed within the correct time.

Whether your ceremony is in a church, an approved building or on top of the Dundee Law, you must each complete a Notice Form. These should be lodged with the registrar for the district in which the ceremony is to take place. Ideally these forms should be returned about eight weeks before the date of marriage. The forms are only valid for 3 months however, so they cannot be completed too early and they must be lodged within 28 days of the ceremony at the very latest. Notice forms are available from any Registrars Office in Scotland. A link is also provided on our web-site so that you may download Notice forms. If there is a matter of urgency, the completed forms may also be returned by fax or e-mail, so long as we receive the original document before the ceremony. We must also receive full payment when the Notice Forms are received.

In addition to these forms, the registrar will require to see the following documents:

- **Birth Certificates**
- **Divorce Documents**, if applicable
- **Death Certificates**, if applicable
- **Proof of Nationality:** Passport or parent's birth certificate
- **Proof of place of residence**

If either party is a foreign national, they may also be required to submit a Certificate of No Impediment.



Image courtesy of Angus Forbes Professional Photography



Non British, Swiss or EEU nationals will also be required to complete a Home Office Immigration Status Declaration form.

Details of these documents and the legal preliminaries are available in the accompanying leaflets RM1 (marriage) and on the back of the Notice form. If you are not sure whether you require to produce any of these documents, please contact the registrar.

There is no residential qualifying period in Scotland. Nor will you require parental consent if you are under 18 years of age.

When the registrar is sure that your documents are in order, your schedule will be prepared. If your ceremony is to be a religious marriage you must ensure that either you or your fiancé collect the schedule in person from the registrar. You must collect this within the 6 days prior to the wedding and usually the Minister or Priest etc. will ask for this document for the rehearsal. Following the ceremony, the schedule should be returned to the local registrar within a period of 3 days.

In the case of a civil wedding or partnership, the registrar will be responsible for the schedule at the ceremony and thereafter.

Once the schedule has been returned to the registrar, your certificate will be prepared and posted to an address of your choosing. If it is more convenient, you may arrange to collect the certificate directly from the Registrar's Office.

# Marriages Abroad

If you live in Scotland but intend to be married outside Scotland, you will be asked to submit various documents to the local civil authorities for the district in which the marriage is to take place.



If the country concerned requires authentication of the registrar's signature on the Certificate of No Impediment, you should contact the Registrar General in Edinburgh for advice (0131 334 0380).

If the marriage is outside the UK and you experience any difficulty with your arrangements when you arrive, you should seek the help and advice of the British Consul in the country concerned.

## AFTER YOUR CEREMONY

You cannot register a marriage which has taken place outside Scotland with a registrar in Scotland. There is also no legal requirement for you to register the marriage with the authorities in the United Kingdom. If you have complied with all the local procedures in the country concerned, there should be no problem with the validity of your marriage when you return to Scotland.

## DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

The first thing that you should do is check with the local authorities what documents that they require and if there is a residential qualification prior to the ceremony taking place. If the country concerned has an embassy or consul in the UK, contact them for further advice.

One of the documents that you will almost certainly be asked to submit is called a Certificate of No Impediment (Form M1R) and this may be obtained from the registrar for the registration district in which you live. To obtain the Certificate of No Impediment you should give Notice of marriage, in the usual manner, using Notice form (M10), as explained in the previous section. Birth certificates and proof of termination of a previous marriage must be shown when Notice is submitted to the registrar. The Certificate of No Impediment may be collected 15 days after Notice has been submitted to the local registrar, so long as the registrar is satisfied that there is no legal impediment to your marriage.

Authenticated marriage certificates are only obtainable however from the civil authorities in the country where the marriage took place. It is therefore advisable to purchase duplicate certificates whilst you are still abroad.

If you have any doubt about the validity of your marriage or the marriage certificate when you return home, you should contact General Registration Branch, New Register House, Edinburgh (0131 314 4452).

# Renewal of Vows Ceremonies

A renewal of vows ceremony will allow couples to renew their commitment to each other or reaffirm their vows as part of a celebration or an intimate ceremony for close family.

It has been estimated that over 25% of couples in the UK now choose to be married abroad and many of these couples then choose to hold a party on their return home. A renewal of vows ceremony will allow couples to hold a ceremony for friends and family who were unable to be present at the original marriage ceremony abroad. This ceremony can be held at the start of the evening, as a prelude to the festivities, allowing everyone to participate fully in the celebrations. Alternately many couples may choose to renew their vows as part of an anniversary celebration or following the birth of a child.

The historic origins of wedding anniversaries date back to the Medieval German empire, when husbands crowned their wives with silver and gold wreaths, marking 25 and 50 years of marriage respectively. Other anniversaries have evolved from more commercial origins during the 20th century. Nevertheless, the anniversaries listed below are a useful guide, and may help with the selection of appropriate gifts:

- 1 - paper
- 2 - cotton
- 3 - leather
- 4 - flowers, fruit
- 5 - wood
- 10 - tin
- 15 - crystal
- 20 - china
- 25 - silver
- 30 - pearl
- 35 - coral
- 40 - ruby
- 45 - sapphire
- 50 - gold
- 55 - emerald
- 60 - diamond
- 70 - platinum



Couples can choose to exchange their original marriage vows or they can update their vows to take account of the events which have occurred since their wedding. Couples may also make promises to each other prior to exchanging their vows and they can rededicate their wedding rings or exchange gifts as part of the ceremony. Family or friends can also contribute to the ceremony by offering an account of the marriage or reading passages or poems which have significance to the couple. Orders of Service for your renewal of vows ceremony are included in the fee and the registrar will design and print these to a design of your choice.

# Civil Naming Ceremonies

The naming ceremony for children is a non religious ceremony that will allow parents to formally give their baby or child its forenames, before family and friends and is also an opportunity to publicly pledge their commitment to raising the child in accordance with specific values.

Naming ceremonies provide an opportunity for a family to formally celebrate the birth and naming of a child. Such ceremonies are an important means of acknowledging an important life event and helping encourage a sense of community and respect. During a Naming Ceremony parents will commit themselves to the upbringing of their children in a loving and caring environment which will be defined by their own beliefs, morals and values.

The registrar will assist the parents in structuring their ceremony to match their hopes and aspirations for their child.

The registrar will help the couple select promises which they would be asked to make to their child as well as any promises they may wish to make to each other during the ceremony. Supporting adults would also make a pledge of commitment to the child. Parents may also choose to introduce musical recitals, songs or readings into the ceremony. The registrar will assist in all stages of planning the ceremony. Orders of Service for your Naming Ceremony are included in the fee and the Registrar will design and print these to a design of your choice.

Child Naming Ceremonies and Renewal of Vows Ceremonies may be held at any venue within Dundee Registration District. It is not necessary to seek Approval for a venue for these ceremonies.



Images courtesy of Dundee Courier

# Dundee City Council

## Civil Ceremony Venues



A Civil Marriage may be conducted by the registrar in many of the Council buildings within Dundee Registration District.

The elegance of the accommodation provided by the Council Marriage Suites off the City Square offers a bright yet formal backdrop for a varied number of guests. Broughty Castle offers a romantic and historic setting for your ceremony, whilst Mills Observatory and the surrounding grounds of Balgay Park will offer a unique backdrop to your photographs. The prestigious Pavilion set within the parkland of Baxter Park will lend a rural elegance to your ceremony.

Most City parks and open spaces in the City are also available for civil weddings, including Dundee Law, Broughty Beach, Barnhill Rock Gardens and Magdalen Green Bandstand.

Ring cushions and silk flower pedestal arrangements are provided in most of the Council's own marriage venues.

A current list of Council venues and other popular venues in the City is available from the City Registrar or on the Council web-site, at [www.dundee.gov.uk/supportservs/registrar](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/supportservs/registrar)

Civil Partnerships, Naming ceremonies and Renewal of Vows ceremonies may also be conducted at any venue in the City.

### Booking Times

In Dundee you may arrange your Civil Wedding, Civil Partnership, Naming Ceremony or Renewal of Vows 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, in consultation with the Registrar. This includes all Public Holidays, including Christmas Day, Hogmanay and New Year's Day.

## Ceremonies at the City Square Marriage Suite, Dundee Council Chambers

### City Square Marriage Suite Dundee Council Chambers

The Tay, Discovery and Law Rooms are all situated within the Council Chambers, in the heart of the City.

Entry to all the rooms is direct from the City Square and there is also disabled access direct from the underground car park at the foot of Crichton Street. The entrance from City Square contains many historic portraits depicting former Lord Provosts of the City. As you and your guests arrive for the ceremony, the City Square adds a continental flavour to your day and the fountains and pillars in the square offer numerous opportunities for photographs. The accommodation includes a separate, spacious waiting room for the bridal party, silk flowers and if your wedding takes place on a Saturday, the fee includes 2 parking spaces in the integral car park at the foot of Crichton Street which your guests may also make use of on the day.

## Ceremonies at The Tay Room

The Tay Room has recently been completely refurbished and provides bright and spacious accommodation for a large number of guests.



The Tay Room has been completely refurbished and provides bright and spacious accommodation for a large number of guests. A feature of the room is the ornate wall and ceiling frieze and panelled walls which add a formal touch of elegance to your ceremony. The bright westerly aspect from the large windows facing the foot of Crichton Street allow plenty



of light for your photographs. The Tay Room provides the most spacious accommodation within the Council marriage suite and will accommodate large wedding parties without compromising the available space for photography and videography.

**Guest Limits: 80 guests**

## Ceremonies at The Discovery Room

The Discovery Room is a bright spacious venue for your ceremony and the décor and size of the room lend an importance of occasion to any ceremony.



The Discovery Room is located in the heart of the City and like the Tay Room and Law Room, access is directly from the picturesque City Square which offers many photographic opportunities. A feature of the Discovery Room is the ornate frieze which covers the walls and ceiling of the room and the large Adams fireplace which dominates the main

wall of the room. Seating can be arranged to suit a large marriage party and up to 60 guests. The Room also provides an elegant yet intimate setting for ceremonies with a small number of guests.

Guest Limits: 60 guests

## Ceremonies at The Law Room

The Law Room is a large bright room which is used for the majority of civil ceremonies within the Council marriage suite.



Seating can be arranged to suit a large marriage party and up to 50 guests.

or for basic civil ceremonies. The furnishings and décor, combined with the traditional panelled walls and ceiling add a touch of elegance to your ceremony.

The Room also provides an elegant yet intimate setting for ceremonies with a small number of guests

Guest Limits: 50 guests

## Ceremonies at Broughty Castle

The Castle has a magnificent view over the river and is only minutes away from Broughty Ferry Beach and Esplanade. Built on a rocky promontory, it has faced many sieges and battles.



The Castle was completed around 1495, although the site was earlier fortified in 1454 when George Douglas, 4th Earl of Angus received permission to build on the site. The main tower house forming the centre of the Castle with four floors was built by Andrew, 2nd Lord Gray who was granted the castle in 1490. In 1846 the Castle was bought by the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company in order to build an adjacent harbour for their railway ferry. In 1855 the Castle was acquired by the War Office with the intention of using it to defend the harbour from the Russians. The Castle remained in military use until 1932, and again between 1939 and 1949. In 1969 the Castle opened as a museum and is now operated by Leisure and Culture Dundee.

Castle with an unrivalled view of Broughty Ferry Beach, the River Tay and harbour providing a backdrop for your photographs.

Guest Limits:  
Castle Grounds: 30 guests

Bookings for the Broughty Castle are available Monday to Saturday and the last marriage booking is 3pm. Ceremony bookings are however, only available at Broughty Castle from April until September.

Entrance to the Castle is via a drawbridge which leads to a main entry guarded by cannons. Your ceremony can be conducted in the grounds of the

## Ceremonies at Magdalen Green Bandstand

Magdalen Green has the distinction of being Dundee's oldest city park having been in use for some 400 years and has long been used for both meeting and recreational purposes.



Magdalen Green is situated in Dundee's west end and affords views over the river Tay.

The bandstand built in 1890 has become a Dundee icon and hosts concerts on Sunday afternoons during the summer. Built at the Saracen Foundry by Walter Macfarlane & Co of Glasgow it was restored in 1991. The octagonal plan bandstand has a concrete moulded base and is supported by cast-iron columns and with surrounding Arabesque cast-iron railings. The bandstand also has an ogee domed metal roof with wrought-iron crown finial.

The summer of 2009 saw the start of much needed repairs to make it safe for future public use. The bandstand provides a unique focus for your ceremony and lends an elegant backdrop for your photographs.

## Ceremonies at Barnhill Rock Garden



Barnhill Rock Garden is situated on part of a former nine-hole golf course, which was laid out after the Dundee to Aberdeen railway was built more than a century ago.

The garden was started in 1955 by clearing an area of volcanic rock which had at one time been the old shore line. Over the years, it was extended eastwards over areas which had been sand dunes, and rock from Carmyllie Quarry was used to form a large part of the garden. There were originally five natural springs and the lowest pond is the site of one of these, the others having dried up in 1976. The lower ponds were created in 1982 and the upper ponds in 1985. They have separate water circulating systems.

Plants have come from many sources including the Scottish Rock Garden Club and Dundee Botanic Gardens. Friends of the Barnhill Rock Garden regularly supply new plants including special donations from its members in memory of loved ones and help to propagate plants and shrubs from seeds and cuttings.

There are picnic tables and seats, and toilet facilities are nearby. There is easy car parking and the garden is only minutes walk from the nearest bus stop. Broughty beach is directly across the road from Barnhill Rock Garden and the golden sands provide a further opportunity for photographs.



## Ceremonies at Baxter Park Pavilion



Baxter Pavilion is situated in the midst of the 38 acres of mature parkland of Baxter Park.

Baxter Park was laid out in 1863, a gift to the people of Dundee from linen manufacturer Sir David Baxter and his sisters Eleanor and Mary Ann. The park was designed by Victorian landscape architect Sir Joseph Paxton, one time gardener to the Dukes of Devonshire and designer of London's Crystal Palace (1851). It is recognised as the best preserved example of his work in Scotland. The Italianate Baxter Park Pavilion at the centre of the park was designed by Paxton's son-in-law, George Stokes. The opening of this "people's park" in 1863, in the presence of the then Prime Minister, Earl Russell and other notable people, was marked by a public holiday, when some 70,000 townspeople turned out to cheer a two-mile long procession which wound its way to the park beneath a series of triumphal arches.

Dundee City Council has restored the historic Baxter Pavilion to its former glory and this building provides unrivalled and unique accommodation and surroundings for your ceremony.

The restoration of this magnificent building includes a large ceremony suite with a separate ante room. The approach to the Pavilion is through the tree lined drive of Baxter Park and the glazed

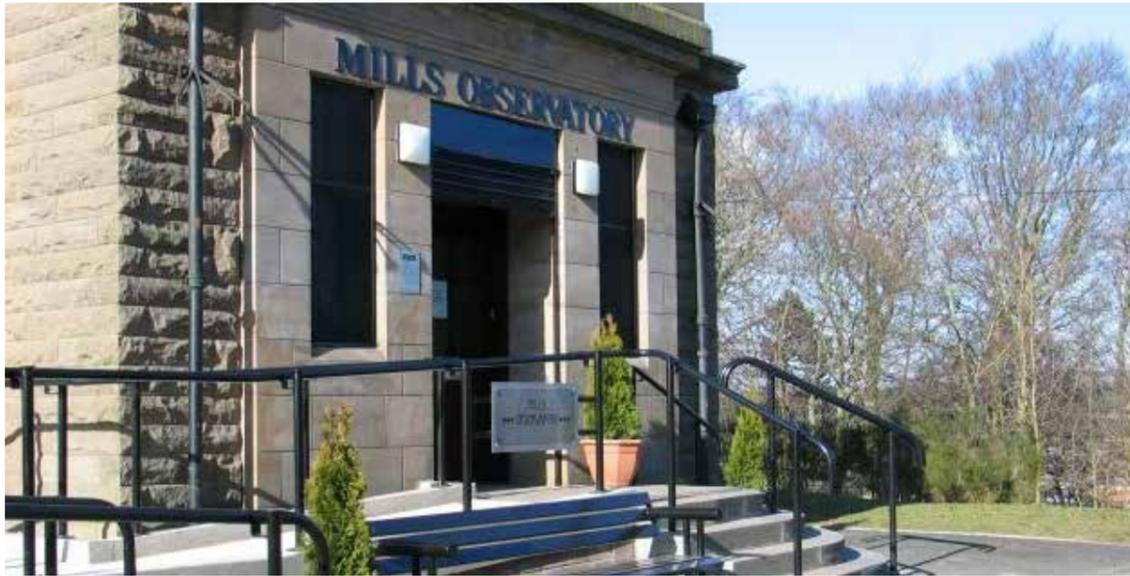
frontage of the Pavilion leads to a large terrace that looks southwards over the park, towards the River Tay. Due to its location, Baxter Park Pavilion also affords a unique opportunity for photographs before and after the ceremony.

Ceremonies may also be conducted within the surrounding grounds of Baxter Park.

**Guest Limits: 80 guests seated, or 100 guests standing**



## Ceremonies at Mills Observatory



The Mills Observatory is the only British Observatory to have been built with the sole aim of encouraging public understanding of science.



John Mills (1806 – 1889), a line and twine manufacturer and keen astronomer in Dundee, bequeathed funds for its construction. The Observatory, designed by the City Architect, Mr McLellan Brown in collaboration with Professor Ralph Samson the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, was completed in 1935 and opened on 28 October in the same year.

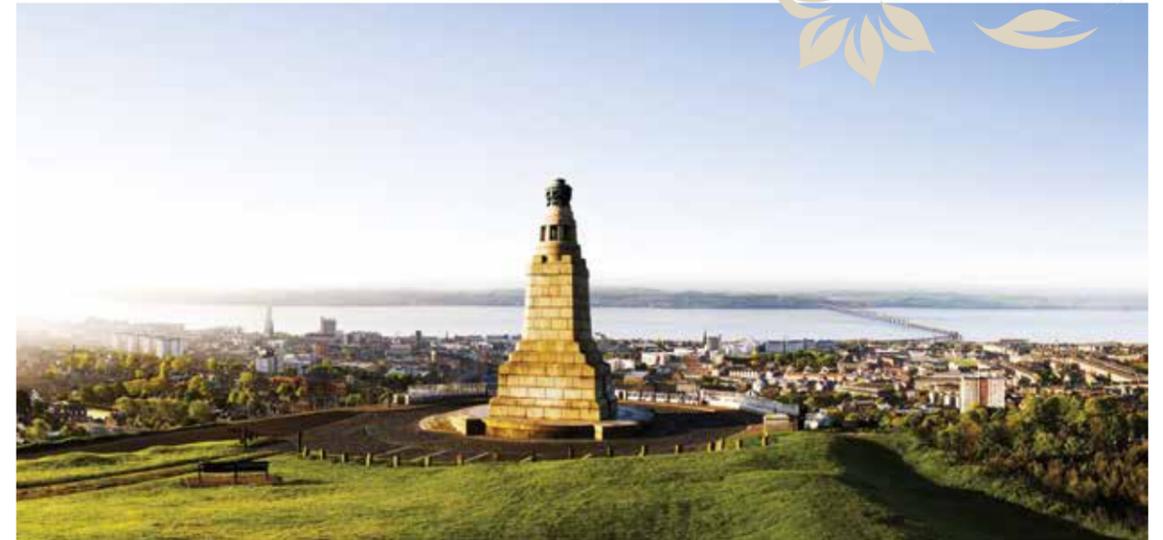
The Observatory is located in Balgay Park, on the wooded summit of Balgay Hill, one mile west of

Dundee City Centre. The southerly facing Sun Terrace on the first floor provides a large open terrace area with stunning vistas of the river Tay and Fife and accommodates up to 30 guests. Vehicle access is via the gate at Glamis Road, near the junction of Ancrum Road. The approach to the Observatory is a narrow, winding, tree-lined road which ambles through the grounds of the park and provides a romantic start to your day. There is free parking available for up to 8 vehicles.

**Guest Limits:**  
**Sun Terrace: 30 guests**

Booking for Mills Observatory are available Monday to Saturday, and the last marriage booking is 3pm. Ceremony bookings are however, only available at Mills Observatory from April until September.

## Ceremonies on Dundee Law



Dundee Law is an extinct volcano formed around 400 million years ago. The 572-foot peak is the city's most distinctive landmark and an enduring attraction for visitors and locals.

The vista provided by this Dundee landmark provides a breath-taking backdrop for your civil ceremony and affords unparalleled photographic opportunities.

Central to Dundee's defences for thousands of years, the Law was used as Iron Age hillfort and prehistoric graves dating to about 1500 BC have been uncovered on its slopes. Roman pottery dating from the 1st century AD has also been discovered.

The most notable find, a cup-shaped steatite lamp found during the construction of the war memorial, can be seen in the city's McManus Galleries.

In the 1820s, the Law had a 300 metre long, 3 meter diameter tunnel driven through its eastern flank to carry the Dundee to Newtyle railway. Originally drawn by horse, the first locomotive was introduced in 1833 and operated until the 1860s when a new railway line was built to skirt the hill.

Investment and landscape improvements mean the summit now sports a stylishly constructed observation point offering spectacular views



extending on a clear day almost 45 miles over the city to Fife, Perthshire and the Sidlaw Hills to the north.

Public art blends sympathetically with natural habitats, "Fact Panels" guide visitors through the panorama and provide a wealth of fascinating historical, archaeological and environmental information.

The city's Nature Conservation Strategy has ensured the Law remains largely unspoilt and home to a wide selection of trees, plants, mosses, fungi, insects, birds and mammals.

The peak is easily reached by foot, bus or car.



## Ceremonies within Public Parks or Open Spaces in Dundee



Dundee City Council has approved all public parks and open spaces in Dundee for civil ceremonies.

This progressive initiative has simplified the process for couples to arrange their ceremony within the many acres of parkland of Dundee City. This also allows couples the opportunity to hold their civil marriage or partnership at many of the unique locations within Dundee, such as Broughty Ferry beach, Dundee Howff, Grassy Beach or one of several parks located in Dundee. Due to this initiative there is no requirement for couples to seek Temporary Approval for a civil wedding ceremony at any of these locations.



## The Ceremony



The most important consideration to the staff when organising a civil marriage or civil partnership ceremony is the wishes of the couple.

Couples are encouraged to create their own, unique ceremony, in conjunction with the registrar. The registrar will be happy to tailor the ceremony to the exact wishes of the couple and in Dundee we allow plenty of time for your bespoke ceremony. The registrar can also personalise your ceremony by saying a bit about how you met, your proposal/engagement etc. The registrar will be happy to accommodate any requests that you may have but the various options below may assist you in arranging your ceremony.

### Option 1: Promises

Nowadays many couples wish to make personal promises to each other before exchanging their vows. These may be romantic, serious or humorous. Many couples also wish to use the words "I DO" or "I WILL" during the ceremony and the inclusion of promises will allow this during the ceremony.

### Option 2: Vows

You must each make a declaration during the ceremony but these may be amended to include any

vows that you feel are appropriate. A couple may also choose to use different wording for each of their vows, so that their own choice of vow reflects their personal sentiments and feelings.

### Option 3: Readings

You may also wish to consider including readings by family or guests during the ceremony and advice is available from the registrar to help you select suitable passages or poems. It is popular for couples to have 2 readings during the ceremony, one before the couple exchange their vows and one afterwards.

### Option 4: Exchange of Rings

The exchanging of rings is a pivotal point in the ceremony and many couples feel that it is appropriate to offer each ring as a symbol or token of their love. This can be highlighted by a simple declaration as the ring is placed upon the finger.

A selection of popular readings, promises and vows are available on our web-site at:

[www.dundee.gov.uk/registrars](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/registrars)



### Option 8: Handfasting

The ancient Scots ceremony of handfasting has proved popular with many couples following the 1995 movie, Braveheart in which Mel Gibson, in the role of William Wallace, was handfasted with his girlfriend Murron.

“Handfasting” was the word used by the ancient Celts to describe their traditional trial-marriage ceremony, during which couples were literally bound together. The handfasting was a temporary agreement, that expired after a year and a day. However, it could be made permanent after at that time, if both spouses agreed.. This ritual is the source of the expression “to tie the knot.” In 1820, Sir Walter Scott referred to this ritual in his book “The Monastery:” The registrar will be happy to discuss how this ancient tradition can be incorporated into your ceremony.

### Option 5: Music

In the case of a civil wedding, further consideration should also be given to the entrance of the bride. Many couples record a piece of music on CD or iPod or choose to have a piper lead the bride. Some couples have also arranged for a singer or band to perform as part of the ceremony. If you wish to make arrangements for live music or want to incorporate a selection of music you should discuss this beforehand with the registrar. Please note however, that no religious content is allowed in a civil ceremony.

### Option 6: Candles

Couples may choose to light a Unity Candle during their ceremony to represent their union. Candles can also be used to remember absent family or friends or to symbolise children or the joining together of two families.

### Option 7: Sand Ceremony

You can symbolise your union by incorporating a “sand ceremony” into your civil ceremony. During this part of the ceremony the couple pour two vessels of sand together into a third vessel, to represent the coming together of their lives. It is impossible to separate these grains of sand once they have joined together which symbolises the unity and eternity of your marriage. Sand can be used from different locations which may hold a particular significance for the bride and groom. Alternately, coloured sands may be used to provide a reminder of the ceremony.

### Option 9: Orders of Service

Once couples have selected suitable promises vows etc. it is quite popular to create an Order of Service which lets guests follow the ceremony and is a very personal souvenir of the day. Orders of service would contain an outline of the ceremony and would normally include vows, promises, wording for the exchange of rings and any readings that the couple have chosen. Couples may choose to create their own Orders of Service but the registrar in Dundee will be happy to design and print Orders of Service as required, for a modest fee.

The registrar will be happy to show examples of all the above elements and will assist you to draw up an Order of Service. All your video recording and photographic arrangements will also be accommodated, in consultation with the registrar.

If you have arranged a religious ceremony you should ask the minister if you have any special requests.

### Option 10: Broadcast Ceremony Over the Internet

All your video recording and photographic arrangements will be accommodated, in consultation with the registrar. The registrar can also arrange for your ceremony to be broadcast

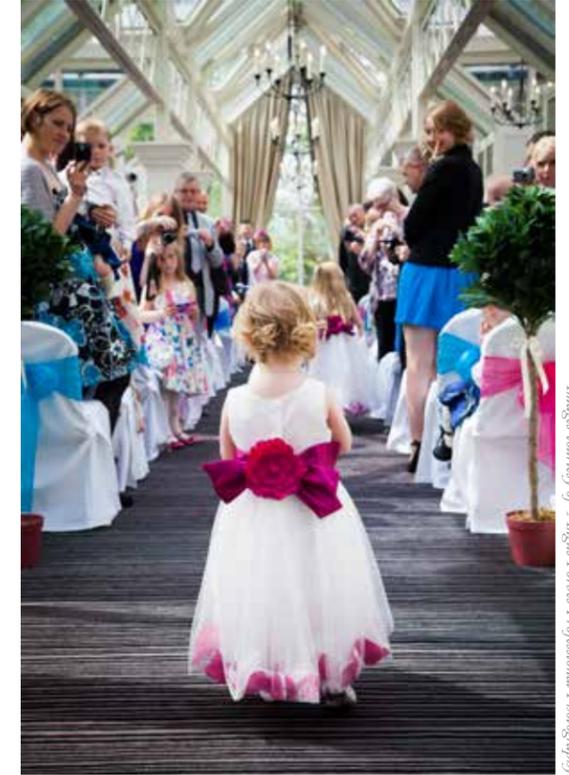


over the internet for a nominal fee, so that absent friends and family can still participate in your big day. The registrar will make all the arrangements for the web-cast and start the broadcast as your guests begin to enter. The ceremony can also be recorded on the internet so that you and your guests can watch the entire ceremony over again, at a later date.

### Meetings with the Registrar

When you submit the paperwork with your ceremony you will have the opportunity to meet the registrar who will perform the ceremony. The registrar will guide you through the process and offer suggestions and advice for your ceremony. You will be able to make further appointments with the registrar to discuss the final arrangements for your ceremony and the registrar will be happy to assist you with the choice of readings, vows, music etc. and suggest an order of service. The Registrar will also be happy to make arrangements for you to view any of the Council’s approved buildings at a suitable time during the day.

The Registrar will be happy to run through your ceremony a final time prior to the actual day at The Registrars Office, at any time during normal



Images courtesy of Angus Forbes Professional Photography

working hours. During the meeting, the Registrar will guide you through the ceremony and agree the final order of events.

### Witnesses

You will require 2 witnesses on the day of your civil marriage or partnership. In the case of a civil marriage, normally your best man and chief bridesmaid would be given this responsibility. The only requirements for your witnesses are that they are aged 16 or over and that they are capable of fully understanding the proceedings. If you have arranged a civil marriage and you have more than one bridesmaid or a pageboy etc. you should inform the registrar beforehand. We will then ensure that all the bridal party is seated together.

### Floral Arrangements

Within all the Council marriage suites, silk flower pedestal arrangements will be provided for you on the day of your ceremony. You may provide fresh flowers, decorations etc. for your ceremony at any Council venue and you should discuss this with the registrar.

# Speeches, Toasts & other Duties



Images courtesy of Angus Forbes Professional Photography

## Best Man

The best man should supervise the ushers at the wedding and ensure that the groom arrives at the ceremony on time. The best man should take custody of the rings and pass these to the celebrant when requested during the ceremony.

After the ceremony he arranges transport for the guests to the reception.

The best man should announce the cutting of the wedding cake and give a speech which follows that of the groom. The speech includes a reply to the groom on behalf of the bridesmaids but it is also usually expected to contain amusing anecdotes about the groom. At the end of the speech he should read any cards or telegrams.

After the meal he should dance with the chief bridesmaid in the bridal waltz and arrange the transport for the bride and groom from the reception.

Finally the best man will normally return the groom's outfit and ensure that any presents are delivered to the couple's home. If it is a religious marriage the groom should ensure that the marriage schedule is returned safely to the registrar.

## Bride's Father

The bride's father will normally travel to the ceremony with the bride, walk her up the aisle and give her away. He will deliver the first speech at the reception, proposing a toast to the bride and groom and generally act as an host.

## Mother of the Bride

The mother of the bride usually travels with the bridesmaids to the wedding and acts as an hostess at the reception.

## Ushers

Ushers should ensure that guests are seated correctly at the wedding, hand out any service sheets and assist guests with transport to the reception.

## Groom

The groom has the responsibility for making a speech at the reception, in reply to the bride's father.

This should include thanks to the bride's parents and a toast to the bridesmaids.

Traditionally the groom pays for the following items:

- Engagement and wedding rings
- All fees for the wedding
- Bouquets for bride and bridesmaids
- Flower sprays for both mothers
- Buttonholes for the groom, best man and ushers
- Transport to church for groom and best man
- Gifts for bridesmaid, best man and bride

## Bride

The bride normally pays for the groom's engagement and wedding rings as well as a wedding gift for the groom.

At the reception the bride, groom and parents should greet the guests and the bride also leads the dancing (with the groom of course!). She should distribute favours amongst the guests.

## Chief Bridesmaid

The main job of the chief bridesmaid is to support the bride on her big day and help calm any nerves.

She should also organise any other bridesmaids, look after the bride's bouquet during the service and dance with the best man in the bridal waltz. The chief bridesmaid normally travels to the wedding along with any other the bridesmaids and the bride's mother.

*Wedding notes*



A series of horizontal dotted lines on a white background, intended for writing notes.





## Contact Details

Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages

Telephone 01382 435222

Fax 01382 435224

E-mail us at: [registrars@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:registrars@dundeecity.gov.uk)

Visit our website at: <http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/supportservs/registrar>

*Front cover: Main image courtesy of Angus Forbes Professional Photography  
Lower image courtesy of The Courier*