



Organising a Wedding Blessing in the Parks

The parks are ideal places to hold your own event especially if you are looking for a unique venue for your ceremony.

This guide has been written for people who would like to hold an intimate wedding blessing in the parks in Milton Keynes.



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For more information visit:
theparkstrust.com



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1. Introduction

This guide has been written for people who want to hold a wedding/blessing ceremony in Milton Keynes parks with an expected guest attendance of up to a couple of hundred people.

Advice on holding other events large and small within the parks can be found in 'Organising events in the parks' available to download from theparkstrust.com.

If you would like to enquire about a filming, advertising or still photography licence please see theparkstrust.com or contact 01908 233600 for a copy of the current rate card.



Aerial view of the Tree Cathedral at Newlands

2. Locations

There are several parkland locations suitable for a wedding blessing ceremony and/or reception and only those venues listed in this pack will be considered for wedding blessing/reception use. Most parks have good transport links and gift a unique place to host your memorable day.

All our parks are public open spaces any licence we issue gives permission to use the park for your activity but **not exclusively**. A licence issued by The Parks Trust is a non-exclusive licence so other people are entitled to use the space at the same time as you, whether they are walkers, cyclists, dog walkers etc. We are not able to guarantee that other activities will not take place at the same time, however where possible, we do try and ensure that large events do not happen in the same place at the same time and the locations described below do afford benefit of having intimate areas within suitable for blessing services.

Please note that with the exception of Campbell Park Events Area none of our parks have on site electricity or water services.

Great Linford Manor Park

Great Linford Manor Park gives a flavour of the 18th century fashion for shaping the landscape whilst sitting comfortably beside the Grand Union Canal and 17th century manor house. The location of the canal and manor house beside the parkland makes it very attractive location for wedding receptions, filming and photography.

Please note – The building within Great Linford Manor Park is a private residence and not available for function use.



Great Linford Manor Park Venue Details

Size: 8 acres

Capacity: 300

Services available:

Car park
Art Centre MK café
Close proximity to St Andrews Church, Great Linford

Transport links:

Bus route.

Willen Lake North

Set in Willen Lake North the Medicine Wheel is a stone structure made up of 108 lime stones from Weston Underwood positioned to be in alignment with the earth's natural energy. The Medicine Wheel has four large gateways which represent the four compass points, the seasons, the races and the four elements. The two lesser gateways on the outer circle are aligned along the earth's natural energy line. The outer and inner circles symbolise our outer and inner worlds, the universe and humanity within. This harmony with the earth affords a perfectly tranquil place to hold a blessing ceremony.



Medicine Wheel Venue Details

Size: 658m²

Capacity: 100

Services available:

Pay and display car park

Transport links:

Local bus and road links off V10
Brickhill Street

Campbell Park Canalside

Set at the western end of Campbell Park, the canal side of Campbell Park provides a pretty and quieter setting than busier city centre end suitable for ceremony or marquee reception.



Campbell Park (Canal-end) Venue Details

Size: 2300m²

Capacity: 100

Services available:

Car park

Transport links:

Local bus and road links off
V10 Brickhill Street

Tree Cathedral

Located at Newlands near Willen Lake the Tree Cathedral is suitable for intimate events and filming, the Tree Cathedral's outline is based on Norwich Cathedral and was designed in 1986 by landscape architect Neil Higson. Different species of trees to represent the character of the Cathedral's sections: hornbeam and tall-growing lime for the Nave, evergreens to represent the central tower and spires, flowering cherry and apple as a focus in the chapels. It is the cloister area which is perfect for an intimate ceremony which easily accommodates 100 seated guests.

Please note - due to there not being a permanent structure at the Tree Cathedral only blessing services are allowed to take place there.



Tree Cathedral Venue Details

Size: 5 acres

Capacity: 200

Services available:

Pay and display car park

Transport links:

Local bus and road links off V10
Brickhill Street



Some occasions choose to use the cloister area

3a. Applying for a licence to use the park

All events need a licence: this is so we can help you ensure that the event is organised safely and that it doesn't clash with anything else, either another event or management work that may be going on in the park at the same time. A licence lists the conditions that the organisers need to abide by to protect the participants of the event, the parks themselves and other park users.

To hold an event in the park you have to apply for a licence from The Parks Trust. The licence sets out the terms and conditions on which The Parks Trust is willing to allow you use of the parkland. There is usually a fee applicable.

Notice Period

For wedding blessings and receptions, we request at least 12 weeks notice. For very large events we would advise you contact us in advance of that to secure your venue and leave enough time for all the relevant licence and health and safety information.

How to apply for a licence and steps to holding an event:

1. Choose a location and event date contact The Parks Trust Events Team on 01908 233600 for availability advice and to ask for a licence application form to be sent by email.
2. Return your licence application form to the Events Team, Campbell Park Pavilion, 1300 Silbury Boulevard, Campbell Park, Milton Keynes, MK9 4AD or events@theparkstrust.com.
3. If your event is not feasible you will be advised of this straight away.
Filling in an application form does not guarantee you a licence. The Parks Trust reserves the right to refuse any application without explanation.
4. If your application is successful, we will then make sure the park is available at the requested date, and suitable for your proposed event.
5. You may be contacted at this point to discuss your event ideas. Likewise, please contact us if you have any queries.

6. We will then draw up the terms of your licence.

7. You will be sent two copies of the licence.

You will need to sign both copies and send one back to us, with your licence fee (if applicable), land bond (if applicable), certificate of public liability insurance and risk assessment.

An example risk assessment can be found on

www.theparkstrust.com/our-work/licensed-activities/health-safety-for-outdoor-activities/ and information regarding health and safety can be found in section 4.

8. Depending on your event you may be asked for further documentation, which will be clearly stated with your licence.

9. Depending on your event you may also need to apply for a Temporary Event Notice or Premises Licence from [Milton Keynes Council](#). We can advise you if you are unsure.

10. Organise your event e.g. book entertainment, refreshments, and logistics.

11. During your event ensure health and safety practices are being adhered to. Ensure you have all licences and documentation present as you may be asked to produce at any time.

12. After your event ensure there is a plan in place for clearing away and leaving the park in the good condition you found it in.

3b. Fees

Your licence fee will depend on the number of guests attending your event, please see different levels in table below.

You will also be required to pay a land bond. This is a returnable deposit to cover the costs of any damage that may be caused as a result of the event. The bond is usually returned in full after the event but, occasionally, it may be necessary to retain all or part of the bond to cover repairs. If this happens a full explanation of the costs which are being recovered will be supplied to you.

Wedding/blessing current fees schedule

Type of Event	Location	Number of Guests	Land Bond	Licence Fee
Personal wedding blessing	Any	0 - 50	£50	£260 + VAT
Personal wedding blessing	Any	51+	£100 - £500*	£310 + VAT + £105 /100 additional people

4. Health and safety

Each event organiser has a legal duty of care to all people involved in the event, be it a member of the public attending or an employee working and therefore event safety and welfare of all is paramount.

A risk assessment must be compiled and submitted as part of the licence application.

An example risk assessment can be found on www.theparkstrust.com/our-work/licensed-activities/health-safety-for-outdoor-activities/

Assistance in composing your risk assessment can be found on [HSE](http://www.hse.gov.uk/) website

5. Recommended Reading

To help plan a safe event we recommend the following publications as guidance:

The Event Safety Guide HSE Books (1999) ISBN 9780717624539

The Good Practice Safety Guide Home Office 2006

Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Open Air Events and Venues Department for Communities and Local Government Publications (2007) ISBN 978 1 85112 823 5

Milton Keynes Safety Advisory Group Guidance Document

6. Useful contacts

The Parks Trust	Events & Community Engagement Manager j.dawes@theparkstrust.com 01908 233600 General event enquiries events@theparkstrust.com
Entertainment /Alcohol Licensing Milton Keynes Council	www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/licensing licensing@milton-keynes.gov.uk 01908 252800
Environmental Health Milton Keynes Council	envservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk 01908 252398
Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service	info@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744400
Thames Valley Police	licensing@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
Local celebrant	Zadie Ward – Ceremonies by Zadie Email: zadie.ward@humanistceremonies.org.uk Website: www.ceremoniesbyzadie.com

A list of recommended event suppliers is available upon request

7. Frequently asked questions

Why can't I hold a full wedding ceremony in the parks?

Due to local authority rules venues in Milton Keynes must have a permanent structure for wedding services. We welcome requests for blessing, but we are unable to allow wedding services.

Can I have a marquee for my reception?

Depending on location and size of marquee you wish to use this may be possible. You would be responsible for the marquee company you engage, and any damage caused to the parkland would be recovered from your land bond.

Can I have a DJ/Band playing music at my reception?

Again, depending on location this may be possible. All our parks have neighbours which we have to be considerate of so depending on location we may ask that you finish by 11pm and to not play music over 65dba.

Is there a limit to the number of guests I can have?

Your event location will limit the size of wedding reception.

I see that there is pay and display parking at the Tree Cathedral is parking included in my licence or can I get passes for all my wedding guests?

Your licence to host your event does not include free parking and unfortunately, we are unable to provide passes for your guests. Please advise your guests of parking charges before the day.

I've decided not to go ahead can I get a refund?

Unfortunately, we are unable to issue licence refunds in the event of a cancellation, we may however be able to return your land bond.

Is the house at Great Linford Manor Park available for hire?

No – this is a private house and not available for function hire.

How will I power the PA we want to use?

Please note that none of our parks listed here have electricity or water services, therefore you may hire a generator to power any electrical items for your ceremony. Please note we only allow diesel generators on the parkland; petrol generators are strictly prohibited.