**MARRIAGE/ CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONY RESTRICTIONS from the 16th September 2020**

Please be aware that your marriage/civil partnership ceremony must be conducted under the current NI Executive restrictions.  The information provided below includes additional restrictions for postcodes deemed by the NI Executive to be in a ‘protected area’. Information on the postcode areas currently included in the protected area can be obtained at:

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/Protected-Areas-Postcode-listing-160920.pdf>

**Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Outside Protected Area)**

* Indoor gatherings in a **private dwelling** are restricted to six people from two different households. If all other participants at a ceremony are not from the same household the ceremony cannot proceed as the registrar can be the only person from a separate household.
* Outdoor gatherings at a **private dwelling** (including the garden of the dwelling) can take place with up to 15 persons present.
* Can take place in a **private dwelling** if one of the parties is terminally ill with six people in attendance (this includes the couple, two witnesses and the officiant).
* Indoor gatherings in a **non-private location** e.g. hotel, religious location, registration office can proceed. The number attending must be discussed and agreed with the venue who will determine attendance based on the size of the venue and the ability to socially distance.
* Outdoor gatherings in **non-private dwelling locations** can proceed. The NI Executive have stated that certain events can have more than 15 people attending including marriage and civil partnership ceremonies as long as a risk assessment is carried out. The number attending must be discussed and agreed with the venue who will determine attendance based on the size of the venue and the ability to socially distance.

**Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Inside Protected Area)**

* No mixing of households is permitted at a private dwelling therefore it will not be possible for a ceremony to be held indoors as the registrar would not be permitted to enter the premises.
* Outdoor gatherings at a private dwelling (including the garden of the dwelling) is restricted to six people from two different households. If all other participants at the ceremony are not from the same household the ceremony cannot proceed as the registrar can be the only person from a separate household.
* Can take place in a person’s home if one of the parties is terminally ill with six people in attendance (this includes the couple, two witnesses and the officiant).
* Indoor gatherings in a **non-private location** e.g. hotel, religious location, registration office can proceed. The number attending must be discussed and agreed with the venue who will determine attendance based on the size of the venue and the ability to socially distance.
* Outdoor gatherings in **non-private dwelling locations** can proceed. The NI Executive have stated that certain events can have more than 15 people attending including marriage and civil partnership ceremonies as long as a risk assessment is carried out. The number attending must be discussed and agreed with the venue who will determine attendance based on the size of the venue and the ability to socially distance.

The new restrictions also include guidance in relation to travel outside the protected area which states that people should avoid unnecessary travel. You should make your guests aware of these guidelines.