

FRIARS COURT

LICENSED CEREMONY VENUE



Friars Court is a mid-17th-century Cotswold stone house located in West Oxfordshire and has been a popular venue for civil and partnership ceremonies since 2002.

Situated within three acres of moated grounds, Friars Court has been the home of the Willmer family for over a century and as a privately-owned property it offers prospective couples an enviable degree of privacy. Operating exclusively as a 'ceremony only' venue, Friars Court allows couples the opportunity to exchange their vows and solemnize their commitment in the peace and tranquillity within its grounds before proceeding to their chosen reception venue.

In addition to the Garden Room, which provides a light and airy indoor space for conducting ceremonies there are also a number of outdoor options available. Ceremonies can take place under the rose arbour, under a cherry tree, the gazebo by the moat, or at the front of the house.

For more information or to arrange a viewing, please contact:

Charles Willmer

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Frequently Asked Questions

Over the years, we have been asked a range of questions. To help you, here's a list of some of the ones which crop up most often.

Can you send me a brochure?

We don't print a brochure. If you require more information please don't hesitate to telephone or email.

Can I come and view Friars Court?

Viewing is certainly the best way to get a true feel as to whether Friars Court is the right venue for you and we enjoy showing people around. However, as Friars Court is also a home, all viewings and meetings are strictly by appointment.

We would really like an outdoor ceremony, how many guests can we have, and what if it rains?

Hopefully, it won't rain but this is England after all. In licensing the outdoor ceremony locations, the registrars require a suitably-sized indoor ceremony location to be available at the same time in the event of inclement weather. Our Garden Room is our largest indoor area, and the fire officer stipulates a maximum of 80 persons allowed inside, so our limit for any ceremony, whether outdoor or inside, is 80. Take note this number includes the bridal party as well as their guests.

Can we have our reception after the ceremony at Friars Court?

No, unfortunately not as we only host ceremonies. Friars Court offers a unique option as a ceremony only venue, allowing couples the opportunity to get married here and have their reception at the venue of their choice.

Are you open all year round?

Friars Court may be booked for a civil ceremony between April and October.



Do we have exclusive use?

Absolutely! As Friars Court is privately-owned, we can assure you that you will have exclusive use of all our gardens and grounds during your time with us.

Do you marry us?

The basic answer is 'No'. While Friars Court is an approved venue where ceremonies may be conducted, the bridal couple will need to contact Oxfordshire's registrars department to check their availability and then book, and pay for, a registrar to come out and conduct the ceremony.

Which areas are licensed for civil and partnership ceremonies?

A ceremony conducted by Oxfordshire's registrars must take place within the confines of a licensed space. We have one indoor area and four outdoor:

Indoor: Garden Room (maximum of 80 people)

Outdoor: Rose arbour, cherry tree, moat-side gazebo, front of house

How do we contact Oxfordshire's registrars department?

Oxfordshire's registrars department will only accept ceremony requests via a completed online form. Please visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contactus/contact-registration-service

Can we have drinks after the ceremony?

It is possible to have drinks and/or canapes after the ceremony, and if you would like to arrange this yourself, that is not a problem, or we have two local caterers we can recommend you contact. Alternatively, we can assist with serving any drinks you provide; this would be an addition to our hire rate, and a quote can be provided on request. *Please note:* the registrars are strict with their rule that no food or drink is permitted to be present or served for the hour before, and during, the ceremony.



Do you include chairs in the hire?

We include 60 banquet chairs in our hire for an indoor ceremony, and we can provide up to 80 garden chairs for an outdoor ceremony.

Do you charge corkage?

As a venue, we'll only charge corkage if we are asked to assist with pouring and serving drinks. We don't make a corkage charge if you do things yourself or bring in your own caterers.

Do you have a kitchen we can use?

We have a basic preparation area you may use if you are doing your own drinks; however, please note this does not have a fridge, oven, or hot-water washing facility. We may make an additional charge if you or your caterers require more space or time. Only our approved caterers are permitted to use our private kitchen within the house.

Are there any rooms where the bride or guests can change?

As Friars Court is a private residence, there are no rooms inside the house available for the bridal party or guests to use.

Do you have accommodation for guests?

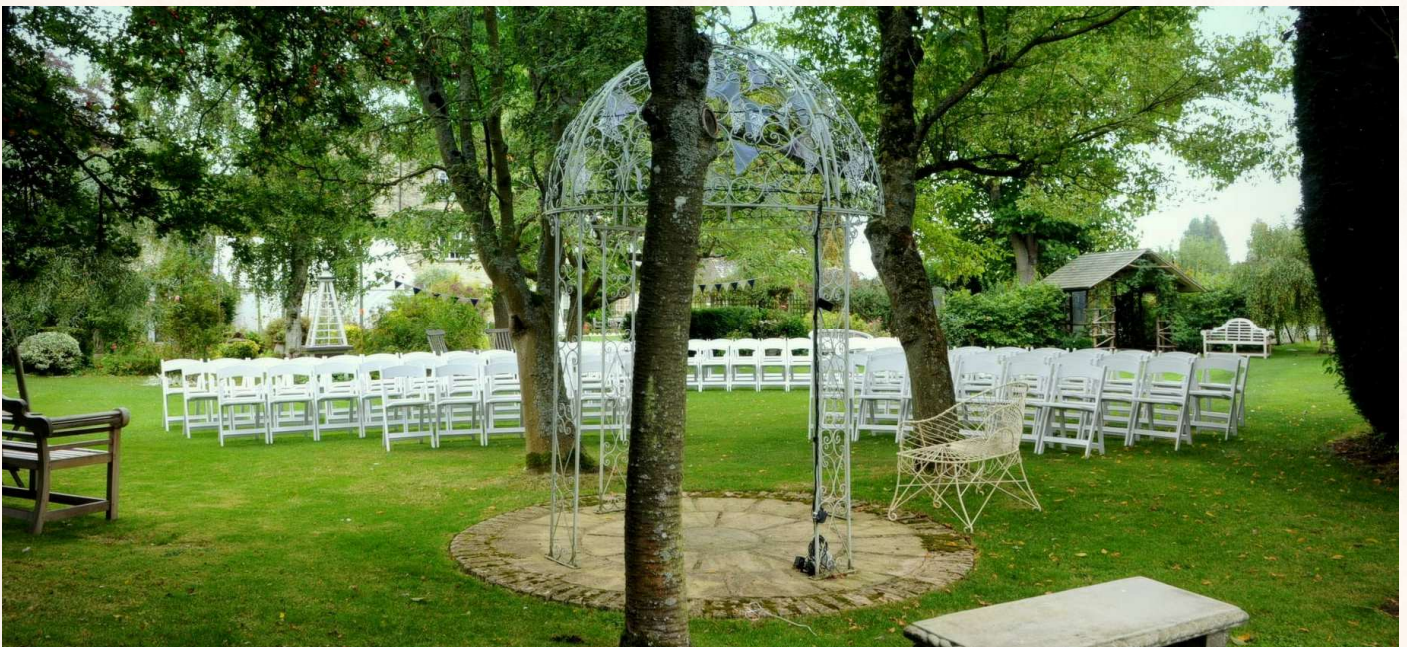
Friars Court doesn't offer accommodation, however, we can send you a list which includes nearby boutique hotels and self-catering cottages.

Do you have toilets?

We have both ladies' and gentlemen's toilets and also a wheelchair-accessible toilet, which includes a baby changing table.

Can we have fireworks or sky lanterns?

Owing to the inherent fire hazard, we do not allow fireworks or sky lanterns (including ones which are advertised as being "bio-degradable").



Can we have confetti?

We allow confetti as long as it is biodegradable: dried or fresh petals, lavender, or made from rice paper. What we don't like is 'silly-string', streamers, or plastic "table-confetti"... you won't like it either as we will make a clean-up charge for picking it out of the gravel or lawn afterwards.

When can we set up?

Normally, access the day before a ceremony to drop things off or set-up is fine; however, as we may be hosting an event, exact times will need to be confirmed in advance.

How much does it cost to hire Friars Court for a civil ceremony?

We like to keep things simple with no hidden costs. Our 2024/25 grounds hire for a civil ceremony are:

Monday to Thursday £600

Friday to Sunday (and Bank Holidays) £750

How long is the ceremony hire time?

Our hire time for a ceremony is three hours. *Please note:* the hire time starts one hour before the ceremony. This is to comply with the registrars' regulations and also to allow time for guests to arrive.

We would like to have our ceremony at Friars Court, what is the booking process?

We won't accept a booking until after you have visited Friars Court and had a chat with us. After this, if you want to book a date, we'll just require a non-refundable deposit. The remaining balance would be due eight weeks before the date of the ceremony.

If you should have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

