

# NEWS from the Church of England

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## **Royal School of Church Music and Church of England get together to answer brides' top questions about wedding music and money**

In a joint bid to welcome more weddings in church, the Church of England's Weddings Project and the Royal School of Church Music have teamed up to offer fresh advice for churches, including answers to brides' biggest questions about wedding music and money.

RSCM Director Lindsay Gray answers the most frequently asked question from brides, on a video featured on the For Vicars page at [www.yourchurchwedding.org/project](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/project): why pay double for an organist if a wedding is filmed?

The days are gone, he said, when recording a marriage service on camera was only something for the royal family: "I accept that times have changed since the early days when if someone appeared with a video camera in the church it was a rarity. Nowadays anyone can come along with a mobile phone and take a few pictures."

Some organists' contracts carry an uplift in the organist's fee of 100% if a wedding is filmed, originally thought to be to compensate the organist for the pressure of having a camera in church. (Organists in the UK usually charge between £50 and £150, depending on skill and experience.)

Lindsay adds: "We don't make hard and fast rules on this at the RSCM and there is no RSCM requirement that the organist's fee is automatically doubled when the ceremony is recorded on video. It comes down to the contract between the organist and the church. Nowadays there is an argument for having some sort of flat fee whether the service is videoed or not."

The second most frequently asked question is why the couple may need to pay the organist if a friend plays for their wedding. Lindsay Gray advises that such a clause may be in the organist's contract with the church, or it may not be: "Couples need to ask what the contract says from the outset."

The Rt Revd James Langstaff is the Bishop who leads the Church of England's current review of fees for weddings and funerals. In a training video for the Weddings Project he tells vicars: "We live in an age where people want to know exactly what it is they're paying for. And I think that's fair enough." He welcomes the intent of both organisations to be clear on money and music. "That's because when we are transparent on these things, we are fair to the couples we're so pleased to serve on their wedding day."

The RSCM launches a refreshed online weddings section next month at [www.rscm.com/wedding](http://www.rscm.com/wedding) stressing that music (and the people who play it) lifts the beauty and meaning of the marriage service. “When couples feel free to choose music that is meaningful to them, we know that it makes their day more special. For most organists and directors of music, making this happen is an enjoyable and satisfying part of their work,” says Lindsay Gray. “Good music and musicianship add a unique element to the marriage service.”

Meanwhile, the Weddings Project team starts a new season of training presentations next month with more than 700 vicars in seven further dioceses, bringing the latest research and a suite of practical resources to help churches welcome more weddings – see [www.yourchurchwedding.org/project](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/project).

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### **Notes to editors**

A clip of the interview with RSCM Director Lindsay Gray answering the most frequently asked question from brides can be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ty1p-icigo8>

The **Royal School of Church Music** supports a world-wide network of 8,500 churches, schools and individuals. It is committed to achieving the best use of good music in worship – whatever the resources, whatever the style. Through education, training, publications, advice and encouragement, it aims to support church music today and to invest in church music for the future. More information at

[http://www.rscm.com/about\\_us/index.php](http://www.rscm.com/about_us/index.php)

The **Archbishops' Council's Wedding Project** is tasked to develop and support the Church of England's wedding ministry.

### **Information**

Howard Dobson, 0207 898 1456