They asked the question and you said yes! You are getting married!

But what do you do before you say “I do”...

Here at South Causey Inn, we have compiled some frequently asked questions and handy hints - to help guide you through engagement too ever after!

The most important advice of all is to relax, enjoy it and have fun!

Second, to ask questions - at South Causey Inn we are available to answer any question - large or small! No question is silly or trivial to us! Our dedicated team helps create magical days for many couples - and their combined knowledge base is there to help guide you and your partner through your wedding journey!

**BOOKING YOUR WEDDING**

Normally from 24 months to 1 month before your intended date is the time to contact us and arrange to view our venues. South Causey has 3 venues – The Old Barn, The Durham Suite, and The Farmhouse.

Smaller, intimate weddings can also take place in our Beamish Barn or restaurant. Just an idea but all of our Hot Tub bedrooms are also licenced for Civil Ceremonies – you can even get married in the Tub)!!

All of our venues are completely stand-alone with separate entrances, gardens for photography, toilets, kitchens, and staff.

Have a look at our different packages and wedding types online (<https://www.southcausey.co.uk/weddings/packages/>). Arrange a phone meeting ( 01207 235555 ) to begin asking questions and looking at the type of wedding you are looking to create – themes, guest numbers, and ideas that will determine the best venue for you.

Contact us and we can arrange a convenient time for you to come and have a look around and talk to our wedding team.

At this point, it is the ideal time to get a wedding planning book – write down all those questions and ideas that wake you up in the middle of the night so you don’t forget anything at your meeting.

We really hope that one of our packages are ideal for you and now we can look at the diary and organise your ideal date!

Once a date has been decided upon, we shall make a provisional booking which we can hold for 48 working hours and this allows you time to break the exciting news to family and friends and also to contact Durham Registrars at Aykley Heads on 03000 263263.

**IF YOU WANT TO HOST A CIVIL CEREMONY AT SOUTH CAUSEY**

**DO I PAY EXTRA FOR A CIVIL CEREMONY?**

Yes, you have to pay for a licence to be married at the Inn. If you are using the Registrar's services you will also have to pay the Registry Office a fee for the Registrars to perform the ceremony.

**IS THIS THE ONLY OPTION?**

No, you could be married at a religious house i.e. Church, Mosque, Synagogue or you could use a Celebrant.

**CAN I HAVE A CANDLE OR A SAND CEREMONY?**

Yes, you can have anything as long as there are no religious elements to your Ceremony. Please confirm with the very helpful Durham Registrars and they will give you the correct guidance.

**BOOKING YOUR REGISTRAR**

You can get married in the UK if you are:

16 or over

Free to marry (single, divorced, or widowed)

Not closely related

You need permission from your parents or guardians if you are under 18.

Give notice - You can give notice at either Aykley Heads House register office.

After you have both given your notices of intention to marry you will be given a ceremony pack. The pack gives you information about making your wedding personal, with readings, music, and personal promises.

You must plan to have your wedding at least 28 days after you give notice.

You will need to pay a non-refundable booking fee.

This fee needs to be paid to the superintendent registrar at least six weeks before your wedding is due to take place.

**CONFIRMING YOUR WEDDING DATE**

After 48 working hours, it will be necessary to confirm your wedding date with South Causey and pay your deposit.

The price for Infinity Weddings is £1100

Platinum Weddings are £1000

Gold, Oak, Festival and Evening Weddings are £1000

Intimate and Elopement weddings are £350

Drive through weddings are to be paid in full at £500

**MY PACKAGE STATES IT INCLUDES 50 DAY GUESTS AND 70 EVENING GUESTS? HOW MANY GUESTS IS THIS IN TOTAL?**

If the package includes 50-day guests and 70 evening guests the breakdown would be as followed:

A total of 50 guests (including the happy couple) attending the wedding breakfast.

A total of 70 guests attending the evening reception. (Please note this is NOT an additional 70 on top of the 50-day guests, but a total number of 70 evening guests included in the package price).

More guests are more than welcome but must be paid for – the price is indicated in your brochure.

**WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?**

South Causey Inn highly recommends booking wedding insurance …The Hotel recommends that couples obtain appropriate wedding insurance, including public liability cover, before booking their Event. This is to protect themselves against accidents, ill health, and other unforeseen circumstances including but not limited to the failure of suppliers, cancellations, accidental damage to the contents of The Hotel, or any property not belonging to the bridal party or guests which is proven to have been damaged by the wedding attendees, bodily injuries as a result of the bridal party's mismanagement and negligence of the event.

**NOW THE FUN STARTS…..**

Think about setting up a wedding website - Personal Wedding Websites are websites that engaged couples to use to aid in planning and communication for their wedding. The websites are used to communicate with guests about their wedding and inform them of location, date, time, and a gift registry.

**CREATE A GUESTLIST AND MAYBE SEND SAVE THE DATES**

This is the wedding event of the year so give people time to put in their diaries!

**APPOINT BRIDESMAIDS, A BEST MAN, AND USHERS**

Choose from close friends and family – you know, the thoroughly trustworthy ones!

**BOOK BEDROOMS**

South Causey Inn has a wide array of types and sizes of bedrooms. The only one that will be booked automatically is the Bridal Suite for you both on the night of your wedding (if applicable to your package). No bedrooms are held for the wedding party. We advise booking as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

**DO MY GUESTS RECEIVE ANY DISCOUNT ON BEDROOMS?**

Yes, your guests receive a rounded 10% discount on bedrooms on the night of the wedding. Please note this is for Bed and Breakfast rates only (excluding the Pamper Houses / House) and cannot be used with any other offers or any package rates.

**CAN MY GUESTS GET THIS DISCOUNT ON BEDROOMS BOOKED ONLINE?**

No, unfortunately, guests will only receive the discount by booking the rooms over the phone on 01207 235 555.

**DO MY GUESTS HAVE TO PAY A DEPOSIT?**

Yes, there is a 20% non-refundable deposit required on booking.

**CAN I STAY THE NIGHT BEFORE THE WEDDING?**

Yes, you can. However please keep in mind that no room will be held, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to book this.

**WHAT TIME IS CHECK-IN FOR ALL ROOMS?**

Check-in is from 2 pm for all Guests.

**WHAT HAPPENS TO ANY THINGS LEFT IN BEDROOMS?**

We will hold any belongings left in accordance with our Lost Property Policy.

**ENGAGE WITH SUPPLIERS**

Stationers, cake suppliers, florists, jewellers, entertainers, photo booths, magicians, bands and singers, dog sitters, children’s entertainers and baby sitters, doves, owls…… the list of possibilities goes on. For great opportunities to meet excellent suppliers, please come along to the regular Wedding Fayres that SCI hosts ( link to wedding fayre pages ). Your DJ is included in most of our packages so you don’t need this but bands, acoustic singers, ceilidhs are all more than welcome.

**ENGAGEMENT SHOOT**

Photographers will offer this service and of course you can use the extensive grounds and lake at South Causey. Give us a ring and we can arrange a time.

Tip – You may be nervous in front of the camera so this is a great way to forge a relationship with your photographer. Tips - don’t take it too seriously, do something you both love, and have fun! Use one of these pictures on your wedding day and guests can sign for great memories.

**MAYBE YOU WOULD LIKE A TASTER NIGHT**

These are included in Infinity Packages along with an overnight stay in a fabulous Hot Tub Room of your choice.

If you are on any other package and would like to organise a wedding taster please head to the link here. (<https://www.southcausey.co.uk/weddings/wedding-menus/>)

**WHAT IS THE PAYMENT SCHEDULE AFTER BOOKING?**

Twelve Months before the Big Day, we can organise a meeting with one of us at Causey to go through the day plan and answer any questions that you may have. This meeting is optional but to organise, please ring us on 01207 235555.

At this 12 month point, there is also a payment due to 25% of the pack price. Please note that this a non-refundable or transferable payment.

Six months before the Big Day, you will be invited to a meeting, which is mandatory. We will gather some more information as to how you would like your day to go, timings, menu choices, etc, music, table plans. and at this point a non-refundable or transferable 25% of the pack price is due.

Six weeks before the wedding you will again join us for a meeting where we will discuss your final arrangements for the day and this is when the non-refundable or transferable final balance is paid. Your final balance will be calculated, this will include your civil ceremony price plus any extra day or night guests minus the original deposit and 25% 12 and 6-month payment.

**HOW CAN I PAY?**

Payments can be made free of charge via BACS (33-93-55 74972868), cash, or cheque within 7 days of your invoice being issued or you can make a card payment but these may incur a service charge.

**THE PRICE OF THE PACKAGE HAS CHANGED SINCE I BOOKED, WHICH PRICE DO I PAY?**

The package price you are required to pay is the price shown in the corresponding brochure to your signed contract.

**BOOK YOUR HONEYMOON**

Many couples will organise a mini-moon straight after the wedding – don’t forget that South Causey has a range of bedrooms with Hot Tubs, including our Log Cabin – please visit our website for ideas or give us a ring for advice.

If you’re planning a honeymoon abroad, book it in your maiden name and use your existing passport, then change all your documents to your married name when you return.

**DECIDE WHAT KIND OF WEDDING DRESS YOU WANT**

If you’re having a couture wedding dress made for you then you’ll need to start this process now. If you’re ordering a designer dress then allow 4-6 months and if you’re buying off-the-peg or second-hand, 4-6 weeks before should be fine for alterations if needed.

**WHAT ARE YOUR PARTNER AND ATTENDANTS GOING TO WEAR?**

Get suits organised – or even come in fancy dress – this is your wedding day!!

**TIME TO ORGANISE WEDDING STATIONERY**(<https://www.southcausey.co.uk/weddings/packages/infinity-package/>)

Invitations should include your menu cards if you are giving you’re guests a choice of menu and do make sure you have one menu card per guest listing their menu options and with their name at the top.

This is the last time you’ll officially announce yourself by your maiden name before you reach the aisle. So, let your names take pride of place on your wedding invitations.

You should include:

Guests names

Don’t make it ambiguous as to who is invited. Name each person specifically, making sure you specify whether it is just them, the kids, and/or a plus one as well.

Your wedding date AND time

Adding the date is obvious, but don’t forget to include the ceremony start time on your wedding invitations, too. South Causey recommends asking guests to arrive one hour before the ceremony is due to start.

Your venue

Do name which venue your wedding will take place in to avoid any confusion.

RSVP requirements

When is the latest date for guests to let you know if they’ll be attending? How would you like them to do it – by phone, email, RSVP card, or by responding on your wedding website? Make it easy and clear for guests to get back to you. The sooner you know, the sooner you can get your seating plan sorted (and that’ll be a BIG relief!).

Gifts

It’s a given for most weddings that gifts will be involved. It might feel strange or presumptive to include your gift list but it’ll actually be less awkward for your guests. They’ll know their options and be able to get your gift sorted.

Inserts

You may also include how to book bedrooms – don’t forget your guests are entitled to a discounted rate if they contact South Causey directly – 01207 235555. You may have a dress code or specific theme details that guests need to be aware of.

**SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE BIG DAY**

Book your 6-month appointment at South Causey.

At this meeting, you will discuss the run-through of the full day and we will give you all the required information, although nothing final is handed in until 6 weeks before. (menu totals etc)

Finalize your outfit!

Get your shoes in good time for your first dress fitting, and your tiara and veil in time for your makeup and hair trial. Choose what jewellery and any other bridal accessories you will wear.

Book your make up artist and hairdresser

Speak to several to find the one that’s right for you, then book a hair and makeup trial complete with your tiara and veil if possible.

Buy wedding rings

Arrange the Stag and Hen parties – it’s the last fling – make it a good one! South Causey has on-site, the very popular Pamper Houses with indoor Hot Tubs, movie room, and many beds and bathrooms. There are Beauty Rooms in there too and we can arrange for beauticians to give mini massages, nail treatments, pedicures, and facials. You are more than welcome to hire experts for Cocktail Classes, Butlers, Drawing teachers, or anything else that will make your party swing!

As part of the Infinity Pack, Cocktail Afternoon Tea Parties or Clay Pigeon Luncheons are arranged any time in the run-up to the wedding but these are lovely to add to any package for guests that maybe are unable to travel to Ibiza!!!!!!

**YOUR DRESSING MEETING**

Room dressing is included in the Platinum Package or it can be added to Gold Package. You will contact us to arrange a time to come along to Causey to discuss your room dressing. (Please note that at peak season – June, July, August, and December the function suite is often in use.) This is normally

between the six month and the six weeks meetings. You can book your dressing meeting as soon as you know your colour scheme/ theme. Please feel free to bring any guests that you may want to have input.

Please note that for Winter Weddings, our Christmas Decorations are put up in all venues and outside by the last Friday of the month and are taken down after New Years Day.

**IF I AM USING AN EXTERNAL COMPANY FOR DRESSING –WHAT TIMES CAN THEY COME?**

External companies must sign an external supplier's form before delivering anything to the Inn. It is the wedding party’s responsibility that companies are informed of this and that the form is signed. Companies can access the function suite from 9 am on the day of the wedding ( please check the venue times ) and all belongings of the company must be picked up by 7.30 am the day after the wedding. South Causey Inn cannot accept any responsibility for external supplies or the bride's own wedding items. When collecting your things the following day, we ask that a list of ALL items that you bring to decorate your room, etc is given and you must check that these things are there before you leave the next day. South Causey Inn cannot accept any responsibility for loss or breakages.

**SIX WEEK MEETING**

**WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING AT MY 6 WEEK MEETING?**

This is an important meeting and does make sure you have all the relevant paperwork organised and filled in to avoid any stress for you.

You can find a full form of the information required (to be completed in full) for your 6-week meeting here <https://www.southcausey.co.uk/weddings/weiddng-planning-downloads/>

**WEDDING ETIQUETTE**

**WHAT IS THE TRADITIONAL SEATING ARRANGEMENT FOR THE TOP TABLE?**

Traditionally the seating arrangements for the top table are Chief Bridesmaid, Groom's Father, Bride's Mother, Groom, Bride, Bride's Father, Grooms Mother, and Best Man. However, we understand that this is not always the most practical arrangement and if you would prefer no top table or a top table of only the bride and groom that is your choice.

Our round tables are 6 feet wide and can normally seat between 6 and 10 guests ( please note in the Durham Suite you can seat up to 12 guests).

**FOOD**

- Most dietary requirements can be catered for and must be arranged in advance, but please note that South Causey Inn does not operate a nut-free kitchen and cannot guarantee that traces may be found in dishes.

- Only one flavour of soup can be chosen.

- Don’t worry if you have a fussy eater – if your guest would like a meal made without gravy, sauce, etc, this can be arranged at your 6-week meeting.

- For Muslim and Jewish guests, some of our meals can be made Halal / Kosher.

- If a guest is bringing a baby and does not require a meal, we can of course heat up milk or baby food, and children in high chairs that do not require a meal are free of charge.

- There are several options for your evening wedding buffet and don’t forget you do not have to pay for any children under 10 years but all other adults must be catered for.

**DRINK**

- This is a gentle reminder that only alcohol purchased on the premises can be consumed on the premises. Any guests in breach of this will have any items confiscated, be removed from the venue and the event organiser will be fined.

- If you have a favourite beer or drink, please let us know and we will of course try and source this for you.

- If your package includes drinks, please ask if you require non-alcoholic alternatives.

Music

We will ask you for two playlists:

1 - The first is played as the venue opens an hour before the ceremony, through photographs and wedding breakfast.

2 - If you are having a Civil Ceremony here at South Causey, you can have live musicians and singers, or you may prefer to give us 5 songs:

1 – is your walking down the aisle song – normally bridesmaids and pageboys will go in front of you.

2/3/4 – These songs are played when you are signing the register – everyone can take photos at this time and it sometimes needs 3 songs to be prepared.

5 – This song is played as you both leave the Ceremony Room and as you greet your guests and welcome drinks are served.

These songs should be downloaded onto an iPod or phone device and can be given to your Master of Ceremonies at any time. The device will be put back into your Bridal Suite in the evening unless asked for earlier.

**DJ**

In most of our packages, the DJ is included. PLEASE USE THIS DISCO FORM TO EMAIL THE DJ DIRECTLY: (<https://www.southcausey.co.uk/weddings/wedding-planning-downloads/>)

**5 WEEKS AND COUNTING**

Have your wedding dress altered and then don’t lose any more weight!

Start having regular facials to ensure your skin is healthy and glowing on your wedding day. Think of all those wedding photos!

**GIFTS**

Buy gifts for the best man, ushers, and bridesmaids.

And bouquets for the mothers of the bride and groom. Personalised gifts with your message engraved make incredibly special keepsakes.

**VACCINATIONS**

Arrange to have any vaccinations done If required for your honeymoon.

**SPEECHES**

Write the wedding speeches.

Either has it written by a professional speechwriter or write from the heart, and then practice, practice, practice…. If you require projectors and screens, please ask at your meeting. All or venues have wireless microphones.

Traditionally speeches take place after the wedding breakfast, but nowadays it is more common to have the speeches before the wedding breakfast so everyone can enjoy the meal free of nerves. The traditional order is Father of the Bride, Groom, and then Best Man.

**1 WEEK BEFORE**

Have your hair trimmed and/or coloured but only do as planned in your hair trials – I got married over 30 years ago and had a perm the day before – DON’T DO IT!!!

**PACK FOR YOUR WEDDING**

- If you are staying at South Causey the night before your wedding, pack all your necessities. If you are getting married in the Old Barn, don’t forget you have a private dressing room so please bring your tongs, gel, and mascara (and maybe even your evening trainers)!

- You will not be the first couple to have forgotten to clothes for the day after – don’t forget!!

- Wear-in your wedding shoes - Don’t wear bridal shoes outside but do wear them around the house to make sure they’re comfy on the day.

- Have your beauty treatments

- Go for pre-wedding and honeymoon waxing or fake tanning in good time before the big day. Get eyebrows shaped and anything else that needs attention done the week before, not the day before.

- Find your ‘something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue’.ask your mother or grandmother for something old, the rest is easy and a silver sixpence is meant to bring good luck.

- Hand over the supplier list of contacts to a designated person. Give the list of all the wedding suppliers involved in your wedding day with their contact details and times they are meant to arrive, in case they need to be contacted, to your best man and/or chief bridesmaid, and then do not give it all another thought!

**THE NIGHT BEFORE THE BIG DAY!**

Check in to the Hotel is normally from 2 pm.

You are more than welcome to drop off your personal things for tables etc that you wish us to layout in your wedding venue. This may include - table plans, name cards, children’s goodie bags, favours, gifts anything at all. They should be divided into individual boxes per table. Please make sure they are marked with your names and your venue. You will be asked to fill in a form listing all that you are bringing and we will use this form to assemble all your belongings the day after the wedding. Please note that South Causey cannot guarantee the safety or responsibility of any items and do recommend that you have someone responsible to look after all valuables.

Don’t forget if you are staying with other guests in your room, the Hotel will give you little luggage tags that your guests should put onto ALL of their belongings the next day. Our cleaning team will then take to the appropriate room where the guest is staying on the night of the wedding.

Any items not labelled will be put into the Happy Couples room (and you don’t want everyone knocking on your door at 12.30 am looking for toothbrushes)!!

Please ask our team if you need a table booking for guests arriving early or room service can be arranged.

**THE DAY OF THE WEDDING**

Please note that Reception opens from 7 am and are there to assist with anything you may need.

Breakfast is served from 7.30 am to 9.30 am but of course, we can organise Room Service for you. Please contact us when you need your room clearing, extra beds removed, if you require extra chairs for your makeup and hair stylists, etc. You may even need a cheeky bottle of bubbles bringing to your room – just shout!

**SUPPLIERS**

Flowers, cakes, photographers, etc, etc can all arrive from 9 am. Please ask your suppliers to go to reception and we shall be delighted to direct them appropriately.

**YOUR WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR**

They will arrive one hour before your wedding ceremony is due to begin and will come to your room to see you. They will deliver any flowers, help to put buttonholes onto suits, help find bridesmaids, mothers, bring safety pins – in fact anything you need!

If you are leaving from a Causey bedroom then we will bring our Golf Buggy to take you and your wedding party to your venue. The Buggy will also be available to take you to the Causey Lake for photos and also help your guests to find their way!

If you arriving by car, we will be outside waiting for you but please stay in the car until your Wedding Co-Ordinator comes for you to avoid seeing guests that may have arrived a little late!

South Causey will provide a cake stand and a knife for you to use.

We will cut up your cake as instructed and put it out onto the buffet table to act as a dessert for your guests. Any tiers etc that you do not want cutting up will be popped into your bedroom. Please note any remaining cake will be put into yellow plastic boxes for you to take away unless an alternative is provided by yourselves. Please let us know if anyone else would like to be responsible for the cake.

**CARD BOXES**

All of our venues have their own card boxes. We will give the designated responsible member of your party the keys at the beginning of the day and then normally ask them to empty the card box at approximately 9 pm. Please note that unfortunately, South Causey Inn cannot be responsible for these cards.

**LOVE LOCKS**

Please bring your engraved padlock and this can be fastened at South Causey – it makes a great picture!

**ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO AN END - WHAT TIME IS LAST ORDERS?**

Last orders are called at 11.45 pm and all bars close at midnight for residents and non - residents.

Our staff will be on hand to assist you with your room. Try and ensure that all valuables are taken with you.

If you have a 1st Anniversary Stay with your package, your voucher will have been emailed to you approximately 1 week before, allowing you to keep it safe. This can be booked at any time.

We really hope you have an amazing day – this has been planned and thought about for a long time and we are here to help you every step of the day. Enjoy every moment and don’t forget to say hello to your new partner!!

**THE MORNING AFTER**

- BREAKFAST – we can organise a table in the breakfast room for up to 10 guests at 8.45 am. Please organise this at your 6-week meeting.

- If you want to stay curled up – not a problem, we can organise breakfast in bed for you.

- Our cleaning team will collect any belongings left in the venue together and they can be checked and picked up from the venue itself before 9.30 am – simply drive straight there and we will be delighted to give you a hand. Please note that we do not have the facilities to keep any belongings left at the venue for more than 24 hours and it will be your own responsibility to check and remove all goods. Unfortunately, South Causey cannot be responsible for any items left at all.

- Check out is normally 10.30 am. If we are lucky enough to have you stay another night with us, we will let you know as soon as your next room is ready and we will assist you in moving over. You do not need to vacate your Bridal Suite until your new room is ready.

**THESE ARE SOME OF OUR MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BUT OUR SMALL TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU AT ANY TIME. GIVE US A CALL ABOUT ANYTHING AT ALL ON 01207 235555 AND WE REALLY WILL BE GENUINELY DELIGHTED TO HELP. IT IS AN HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE TO DO OUR JOB AND BE WITH YOU ON THIS WONDERFUL JOURNEY – THANKYOU XX**