

Bournemouth council applies for licence to allow weddings on the beach

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By **Stephen Bailey**

IT may not be Jamaica or Hawaii, but you will soon be able to get married in a Bournemouth beach hut.

The council plans to put a temporary hut on the sand by the West Cliff Lift so it can be used for civil weddings.

The hut would be available between April 25 and October 10.

The beach is a popular spot for post wedding photos, but you currently cannot get married on it.

A planning application is awaiting approval – comments must be received by April 1.

The wedding hut would be a cream-coloured ‘Superhut’ of the same design as those at Alum Chine – just over 11m square in size.

The East and West Cliff lifts are opening from tomorrow for the first time in 100 years and that also will give guests an unusual route down from hotels on the cliff top.

The council’s planning statement says that Bournemouth Registrar gets around 60 enquiries a year for beachfront weddings.

“Recent market testing of this proposal has demonstrated a clear demand,” it adds.

“A beach wedding package will be offered by local hotel partners who will be able to supply a wet weather licensed room at their hotels as back up.”

The plans say the hut would be 1.5m out on to the sand. Part of the beach might be roped off during services.

Andy Price, owner of nearby restaurants West Beach and Aruba, said: “We wholeheartedly support it.

“We have met with the council’s beachfront services team to see how our restaurants can support it.

“If it’s done right it will be very popular because it’s a great spot. You have got the Marriott and the other hotels just above it on the cliff.”

Melanie Kiani, owner of Throop-based wedding planners Bellissimo, said: “How lovely. It would be very popular.

“People are always asking for venues that are by the sea but the area is actually really short of venues.

“It’s a lovely idea because of the restrictions in the UK – you cannot get married in the open air but need a three sided structure.”

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