

Val helps turn couples'

Need a helping hand or a fairy godmother for all of your wedding arrangements? Val Mattinson is your lady. LUCY BUDGE speaks to the Nottingham wedding planner

READY at hand to make sure it's plain sailing for couples on their wedding day is Val Mattinson, a Nottingham wedding planner who takes organisation to the next level.

After starting her business, Benessamy Weddings and Event Planning, three years ago, Val has racked up a proud portfolio of weddings and events.

The 45-year-old says that brides can call on her for help at any point in their planning: "I get clients contacting me at different stages. Some people have already organised the venue and the dress, but may need to just sort some smaller details.

"A lot of people start planning on their own but don't realise how stressful it can get. It can be hard for people working full-time.

"I have some clients who don't have a clue where to start, whereas some people have lots of ideas. I help them to dream big and make it a reality."

Val organises weddings across Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire, but has brides contacting her from as far away as the US.

"I get a really lovely mix of clients. Some of them are local, and others are returning to Nottingham



No task too small or big for wedding planner and event organiser Val Mattinson.

as the place that they met. Some even live overseas," she says.

All of her work is done from her office at home in Woodthorpe, where she lives with her husband and two children, 18-year-old Jessamy and 15-year-old

Ben.

From the dress to the venue to the transport, Val helps to arrange every little detail to ensure each wedding runs smoothly.

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big dreams into reality

Council House, Val can organise city or countryside weddings no matter what a couple's taste.

She says: "All of my clients are different. I do get some interesting requests. One couple wanted a helicopter arrival, and another changed the order of service because of tradition in their family."

"I always try and find out what the client likes, such as their favourite film and the place that they met. I also ask about their wedding experiences to see what they liked and didn't like at other weddings. You have to then work out how much they want to spend."

Val also has the title of Midlands Ambassador for the UK Alliance of Wedding Planners, which promotes professionalism and standards in the industry, as well as mentoring planners just starting out.

It's a role that she would never have believed when she first qualified as a solicitor in 1993.

She says: "The business is three years old. I came to Nottingham from London in 1986 to study for my law degree at Trent."

"I was a qualified solicitor and I worked at Nottingham City Council for three years. While I was working there, I was given a project in education. There was a lot of work organising events, and I loved it. It was all about corporate affairs."

"I then got a job at NCN doing similar jobs. There was a lot of communications work and marketing. I always had people contacting me and praising me for my work in events."

The real turn in events came when Val attended her brother's wedding in Barbados.

"On the morning of the wedding, I went to take a look at the room and they hadn't started to set up. I started to get a little bit nervous and that's when I got involved. I helped them to organise everything and get the room ready. I didn't want people hassling the bride and groom during the day, so I made sure everything was going OK."

"My family knew what had happened and they said to me, have you ever thought about doing this for a living? I came back from Barbados and went back to work but it was always in the back of my mind."

In 2010, Val started Benessamy Weddings and Event Planning, named after her two children.

She now plans weddings and corporate events all year round, but makes sure that each bride has the best experience possible.

She adds: "I launched the business and have never looked back. For me, it's all about how much time you can give each client and making sure they're happy. I like to be at the wedding during the day, so I don't try and plan lots in a year. It's really not about the numbers. I love my job, it's great meeting so many different people."

● For more information on Benessamy Weddings and Event Planning, go to www.benessamy.co.uk or www.facebook.com/BenessamyEvents



Val Mattinson helps Nadine Warwick get ready for her big day.



Val Mattinson was on hand to make sure everything went to plan at the wedding of Andrew and Nadine Warwick.

Planner helped wedding day run smoothly

ONE bride who took on Val's wedding planning to ensure her special day ran smoothly was 36-year-old Nadine Warwick.

The NHS worker, who lives in West Bridgford, married Andrew Warwick, 42, at Plumtree Church, and says that Val gave her peace of mind on her big day.

She says: "My wedding went really well without any hitches. I'm sure there were tiny problems in the background but Val sorted them all out. I knew I could just rely on her."

"It was great knowing that I had someone

there on the day that wasn't part of the wedding party and could sort everything. I wanted my guests to enjoy themselves. She made an effort to get to know everyone beforehand, too.

"Before the wedding, Val came along to look at the venue. My husband was working, so she sort of stepped into his shoes. She asked questions that I would never have thought of, and made sure that nothing was forgotten."

"I've recommended her to a lot of my friends since my wedding."