

Carly & Ben, Bristowe Hill – August 2018

Why did you decide on finding a planner?

We had a definite vision of what we wanted our wedding to be and planned it ourselves but it became clear as we ironed out the details that we would need someone there on the day so that everything would run smoothly and we could enjoy every minute of it.

What made you pick Weddings by Annabel?

Once we agreed on our venue, which was not an established wedding venue, I started to research who could offer wedding coordinator services in Cumbria. There was no contest, every review and every indication pointed to Annabel being the best choice. Following a call with Annabel it was clear she really knew her stuff and would be an asset to our wedding, both before and on the day.

Was a consultation a helpful part of the process?

Yes definitely, we met with Annabel for 2 hours a few months before the wedding. Not only was it extremely helpful to talk through our plans with someone who knew what work and what might not, Annabel also offered advice and pointed to things we should consider. It was clear from early on in our dealings with Annabel that she has a vast array of experience to draw from. Most important for us though, it was clear that we would enjoy working with Annabel, laugh and chat with her, and that she would add something to our day.

The day before and day of the wedding, what stood out as most helpful from Annabel?

Annabel came the day before to help us to set up, decorate the tipi and to walk through the schedule for the day. Her direction and support helped immensely during what could have been a stressful day of set up, but she helped prioritise what needed to be done to get everything in order before the next morning. I could not have relaxed as much as I did on the day without Annabel, she made sure everyone was in the right place, chairs were moved when they needed to be, the caterers knew where to go and at what time, and that was all before midday! Throughout the day she was wherever she was needed, making sure the day went as planned and always smiling.

What was your favourite part of the day?

So many memories, every part of the day was full of love and laughter and happiness. As there was so much rain leading up to the day and also in the morning, when the sun came out it was a great feeling. Seeing everyone relax outside the tipi enjoying a gin cocktail in the sun was a definite highlight.

Would you change / miss out / add in anything?

Our Photo Booth was set up in the gazebo out side of the tipi. The only thing I would change is I would make sure everyone knew it was there, it was open and what time it was open until. I would also have given a set hour that everyone could come and get in a photo with the bride and/or groom so we could try and get photos with everyone.

Which other suppliers stood out for you and why?

Anyone looking for a mobile bar needs to use Helen, her Topsy Filly with wonderful gin and prosecco combinations plus her amazing personality were a highlight for the guests. Stonehouse Smokery for their mouthwatering hog roast which was the food hit of the day and I would recommend anyone to consider this over a run of the mill 3 course dinner, the guests talked about the food for weeks. We used Wilde and Romantic for props and glassware, Janet had an impressive selection for us to choose from, the biggest difficulty was deciding what to hire! Also a special mention to our tipi company Special Event Tipis, the tipi was beautiful, clean and the staff were lovely to deal with. Quite last minute we also decided to get a caricaturist to come, instead of wedding favours we would have a picture for each guest. Chris Murphy is very talented, very personable and was exactly what we had wanted.

Any advice for others creating a DIY wedding?

Start with the big things. Get the venue, caterer and bar organised and take as much advice on those as possible. Don't get too hung up on Pinterest yet, it's good to help guide a theme or ideas for things but the big things need the most attention. Without proper planning, a DIY wedding could be stressful and it could take away from your enjoyment of the day. I would urge anyone to use a professional like Annabel, it is the best money you will spend!

Would you recommend Annabel for those couples?

Absolutely. A DIY wedding is great but only if you can enjoy it. A wedding is probably the biggest event you will ever plan and it is a huge thing to orchestrate, not something I could ever have imagined going smoothly without Annabel there to run the show.