

Not your average I do...

Charlotte Harding talks to a wedding stylist who wants to do things different.



The average wedding in the UK costs £27,000 so if you are spending that amount you may as well 'do what you want' is the advice from Kelly Kearley wedding stylist and director of Not Your Average I Do.

"It is your wedding and you are spending a lot of money so do what you want," she says.

"You don't have to have a long head table with the mother of the groom next to the father of the bride.

"It is nice to have traditional elements but you can do it in a way which represents you."

Kelly launched the Patridge Green business in March 2015 but has worked in events for 15 years.

"I was working in London planning and hosting mainly corporate events," she recalls.

"When I had my children I decided to come out of London and when my second son was one I decided I needed to do something for me so launched Not Your Average Do."

The business initially did all events including birthdays and christenings but weddings formed the bulk of the bookings so Kelly added the 'I'.

Having got married 10 years ago Kelly says the wedding industry has changed a lot during that time and what was once all chair covers and candelabras has

changed to include horseboxes, flower walls and photo booths.

"I think because of social media there is an expectation of what you can do," she explains.

"I do get a lot of people saying 'we want something unique' and then show me something on Pinterest the thing is nothing is truly unique now.

"Although I did have one couple and their table numbers were pictures of the front doors of places they had lived which was a brilliant idea.

"I had a couple who had house rabbits so there were rabbits dotted about."

As the business launched in the March of 2015 Kelly and her team worked on 35 weddings that year as they joined the tail end of the season, but last year did 147.

Kelly and her team refer to themselves as wedding stylists rather than planners.

"We did a wedding a few weekends back and we styled it and ran the event," enthuses Kelly.

"It was amazing though as the couple came over at the end and were gushing about how great it was. It is meant to be the best day of your life and to be a part of that and help to create those memories is an honour.

"We have people who know exactly the look they want so may just hire the lighting and draping from us and some props or others who have no idea and want



WedFest date...

On Saturday, September 15 Not Your Average I Do will be hosting WedFest - 'think Glasto meets Alice in Wonderland'.

The wedding festival will have live music, street food vans, interesting bar areas and marquees filled with the very best wedding suppliers in the area.

Explore the idyllic, tree enclosed Lucerne Field a perfect wedding setting, with seven acres to do as you please. A secluded woodland area makes for a perfect setting for the ceremony whilst the beautiful field is large enough to host your wedding breakfast.

"The festival is to showcase what we can do and our suppliers," explains Kelly.

"Also any money raised will go to charity PTEN which raises money for the condition PTEN (PTEN Hamartoma Tumour Syndrome) where there are proteins on the 10th chromosome. It is a rare disease that my son has."

Tickets are £5, for more information visit notyouraverageido.com/wedfest



us to do everything."

Trends Kelly is seeing at the moment include festooned lighting and copper replacing rose gold for things like cake stands.

"People like the mix of something quite industrial like copper piping and then romantic looking draping," explains Kelly.

"Flower walls are also really popular but we are launching a foliage wall that will have palms, succulents and ferns on so a bit of a different take on it."

Although she admits that she likes to be at each event Kelly has a great team around her who she says knows the standard of finish she likes.

"I am quite picky," she laughs.

"A few weekends back we did six weddings and I was away for my mum's birthday and my team did it all."

Not Your Average I Do has a range of suppliers that they use to create the look that Kelly wants to maintain.

"People will come with their Pinterest board and I will look and know exactly who we will use," she adds.

The team work across Sussex, Surrey, Kent and

Hampshire and has done some weddings in South London.

Working in events can mean unsociable hours but Kelly says that running her own business does give her flexibility.

"My son has a condition called PTEN which means he has to go to loads of appointments," she explains. "As it is my own business I can plan my time ahead to fit around my kids rather than having to ask a boss for time off."

"My week just looks a bit different to other peoples my weekends will be a Tuesday and Wednesday."

The business has been named best venue stylists in the UK at the Wedding Industry Awards and The Wedding Awards UK, and at the Lux Life Global Wedding Awards.

With a huge wedding warehouse it showcases all they have to offer from the bar to lighting.

"We have a free consultation with the couple get their ideas and take it from there," she says.

"I love what I do. I don't want to do average weddings, I want to be different."

"It is nice to have traditional elements but you can do it in a way which represents you."