

Bishop's Guidelines

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Diocese of *Rochester*
called together



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Diocese of Rochester

called together

****Diocesan Vision and Strategy is developing over this year****

[Called Together](#) is our shared vision across the Diocese to change, serve and grow the Church across our communities.

Much work has taken place to understand what these three themes mean for the life of the Diocese and our priorities, and to define what and where resources will need to be allocated to deliver them.

Through prayerful engagement and discernment, what has begun to emerge is an understanding that we are a community:

Seeking first the Kingdom of God, and called together by God to change, serve and grow with compassion, courage and creativity.

- **Change** is about the need for us to adapt in a changing world, so that our churches can play their full part in serving God and drawing people once more to faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Serve** is about the attitude we need to adopt if we are to earn and gain that cherished place in people's hearts and at the heart of our communities.
- **Grow** is about what God wants to bring about in us and through us, as people growing into the likeness of Christ, and as churches where people are being drawn to follow Jesus through our words and through our deeds

Our objectives

Within this overall vision, our emerging key objectives are to grow missional churches, with missional leaders and missional disciples, that are:

- Growing younger and more diverse
- Growing spiritually and numerically
- Impacting their communities
- Releasing financial resources for mission
- Planting and growing new missional churches
- Creating a safe and healthy culture for all

This is the [latest phase](#) in developing our strategic plans to grow the Kingdom of God across the areas of Medway, north and west Kent, and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

Central to these plans is sustaining and growing a flourishing and well-resourced parish structure, so as to enable our local churches to take their full and rightful place at the heart of their communities: serving God and serving the people, loving God and showing his love in and to our communities.

Explore more

- Read more about our story as a diocesan family in our latest Annual Report [Annual Report and Accounts](#)
- You can also learn more about how we are living out our vision in [Faith in Action](#)
- Discover more news and stories - [download Together magazine](#)

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A RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

This section gives comprehensive details of support resources for clergy and their spouses.

A1 Common Tenure

A1.1 Freehold

Under the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Regulations 2009](#), clergy with the Freehold (including incumbents, team rectors, deans, archdeacons and residentiary canons not on fixed term appointments) were asked if they wished to transfer onto Common Tenure. They remain on their existing terms, unless and until they agree to move onto Common Tenure (which they may do at any time) or leave their current post.

A1.2 Common Tenure

As from 31 January 2011 many clergy in the Church of England hold their Ecclesiastical Office under a new form of tenure. [Common Tenure](#) is part of a framework of terms of service that brings security, clarity and the opportunity for people to work together to encourage and support the clergy's ministry.

The law affecting patronage and the appointments procedure remains unchanged. The [Clergy Discipline Measure 2003](#) and the Canons continue to apply to all clergy whether on Common Tenure or not.

All clergy on Common Tenure have the right to a written Statement of Particulars which sets out the matters relating to the post they hold, such as stipend, location of house, leave provision, etc. They also have a right of appeal to an employment tribunal if removed from office on grounds of capability, access to a grievance procedure and the right to redundancy in certain circumstances. All posts are open ended until retirement age unless clearly defined as fixed term under the regulations (regulations 29 and 30).

A1.3 Qualified Common Tenure

There are two sets of regulations which enable the creation of temporary or fixed term appointments. Clergy - and other ministers/lay workers - whose appointment is of limited duration must have the fact recorded in their Statement of Particulars.

A1.3.1 Regulation 29 – posts held under Common Tenure may only be fixed term (or time limited) if designated as one of the following:

- Covering authorised absence (e.g. maternity/paternity leave; sabbatical)
- Posts held as Priest-in-Charge to cover vacancies ('interim ministries')
- Posts held by those aged over 70
- Training posts
- Subject to sponsorship or local funding
- Probationary posts
- Posts covered by Bishop's Mission Orders
- Posts designated as being held in conjunction with another office or employment
- Where the post holder has limited leave to remain in the UK.

Such appointments may be either

- for a fixed term (which may, however, be extended for a further period or periods indefinitely) or
- terminable on the occurrence of a specified event.

A1.3.1.1 [Interim Ministry](#)

Some posts in this Diocese are designated Interim under Regulation 29 (7C) of the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Regulations 2009](#). Interim posts are so designated under the following principals laid down by the Archbishops' Council:

- i. "An interim post should primarily be a response to a particular pastoral need or mission opportunity.
- ii. Before an interim appointment is made, there needs to be a clear understanding and articulation of the particular benefits that will be conferred by making the appointment interim rather than open-ended.

- iii. The parish should be consulted at an early stage. An interim appointment is only likely to work when the parish accepts that the purpose of the interim appointment is to help it make shifts in understanding, relationships and leadership that will enable it to move forward.
- iv. An interim post is not a substitute for a proper appointments process. Making an interim appointment 'just to see if it works' or in order to avoid the time required by a proper appointments process is not acceptable.
- v. An interim post should be a response to the particular circumstances and needs of the parish, not the minister: posts should not be fitted around the needs of an individual."

A1.3.2 Regulation 30 – Where the Mission and Pastoral Committee of the Diocese has invited the views of interested parties before submitting proposals to the Diocesan Bishop, the post may be designated under regulation 30 as an alternative to suspending presentation and appointing a priest in charge. The post would be held subject to pastoral reorganisation and a priest in charge may be appointed on a limited term basis – if the priest remains in post for over 5 years the post becomes permanent.

A1.4 Clergy who do not qualify for Common Tenure

The following office holders fall outside the scope of the legislation:

- Clergy with permission to officiate;
- Non-stipendiary readers, deaconesses and licensed lay workers;
- Those whose ministry is the subject of a contract of employment (for example, chaplains and diocesan employees) unless the Bishop's License authorises them to exercise a wider ministry in the Diocese (in which case Common Tenure may apply to that wider ministry).

A2 Statement of Particulars

A2.1 The Statement of Particulars (SOP) is a factual statement of the basic terms and conditions of service that apply to the office holder of a particular office.

A2.2 Under the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Regulations 2009](#), the bishop is required to nominate officer(s) to prepare the Statement of Particulars. The nominated officer for the Diocese is the Diocesan Secretary.

A2.3 All clergy on Common Tenure should be issued a Statement of Particulars within one month of the date from which the office holder took up office or moved onto Common Tenure.

A2.4 The information that must be provided in the Statement of Particulars is set out in the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Regulations 2009](#). Further info can be found on the Church of England's [clergy resources page](#).

A3 Role Descriptions

A role description is not mandatory under the Terms of Service legislation but it makes sense and is good practice in the context of making appointments, for the Ministerial Development Review process (see C9), and for grievance and capability procedures.

Most dioceses have introduced role descriptions in parallel with the Statements of Particulars and a revised MDR process. These role descriptions will be refined through the [MDR process](#), ideally during the archidiaconal review, and during the appointments process.

In addition to the to the role description there are a number of other sources which define the role of the priest:

- [The Ordinal](#), which describes the role of priests and deacons in a number of different ways at ordination.
- [Canon Law](#) sets out Church of England legislation which governs the way a priest should carry out their role.
- The licence from the bishop.
- The Church Representation Rules 2022 edition, which set out an incumbent's duties within the PCC.
- [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#) is a more recent document, which provides guidance on acceptable conduct.

A4 Stipend

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

A4.1 How payable

The stipend will be received by monthly instalments paid into your nominated bank account by the Church Commissioners. 'Payday' is always the last working day of each month and your stipend will be paid across to you then. Income tax and National Insurance contributions are deducted at source. The stipend level is determined by the Bishop's Council within the overall policy as set by the Diocesan Synod.

A4.2 Training curates

Curates' stipends are reviewed each year with effect from 1st April. The stipend is always at least the level of the National Minimum Stipend.

A4.3 Incumbents

Incumbents' stipends are reviewed each year with effect from 1st April. The stipend may not all be receivable through the Church Commissioners' monthly payment. For example, fees for undertaking chaplaincy duties all count toward the basic stipend. Clergy should not receive direct fees for weddings and funerals as these are income to the Diocesan Board of Finance. For further information contact the Diocesan Finance Team (01634 560000).

A4.4 Tax district

The tax district which deals with the Church Commissioners' payroll is NE3, Wadley House, 25 Little Horton Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 0TZ (tel: 01274 777444) and the PAYE reference is 929/C16. You may find it beneficial to employ a financial adviser. Some advisers specialise in clergy taxation so it might be helpful to make enquiries.

A4.5 Local income

If you are in receipt of any other local incomes (through chaplaincies et cetera) you should declare it to the Diocesan Finance Team. Shortly before the end of the tax year, each year thereafter, you should be contacted by the Diocesan Finance Team to ensure that information is up-to-date.

A4.6 Expenses

It is possible to claim certain expenses – not refunded by the parish – against tax (e.g. washing of surplices, maintenance of robes, clerical assistance and the purchasing of replacement prayer books). It is important that the payment made, for every item for which there is a claim, should be at a reasonable rate for the job.

For officeholders, this is done through the [Heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep \(HLC\) Scheme](#) for which expenses incurred and how they were reimbursed, the cost of heating, lighting and cleaning the official parts of the house must be declared. It is very important that this form is completed and returned to the Church Commissioners promptly. This will ensure you receive the appropriate tax relief and you may pay too much tax until the form is returned.

Clergy who are part-time are not eligible to receive the HLC allowance, but may still be able to claim tax relief on any work related heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep expenses through the Ministers of Religion tax return under other expenses.

A4.7 Council tax, water rates and utility costs

The PCC or benefice is responsible for meeting the Council Tax and Water Rates liability on houses occupied by parochial clergy. Accounts will normally be sent to the property to which it relates and you should pass them to the PCC or benefice treasurer for payment.

In respect of training curacies, the responsibility for payment rests with the ownership of the house. If it is a diocesan owned house, then the Diocese will meet the cost; if it is a PCC owned house, then the PCC should meet the cost. Please pass to the relevant body to make the payments.

Parishes who house their own curate receive a subsidy from the Diocese toward the overall costs of housing (currently £9,500 pa at the time of writing, payable quarterly in arrears).

With regard to utility bills (gas, electric and telephone), the responsibility rests with the occupants, but clergy can claim some tax relief for actual costs incurred on the PSA/PUN form.

A4.8 Self Assessment

Clergy should refer to their financial adviser or accountant – there are specialist firms that deal with clergy expenses. The Church Commissioners have issued advice for clergy regarding self-assessment and a copy of this can be obtained from them.

A5 Augmentation of Stipends

A5.1 It is the responsibility of the Diocesan Board of Finance to ensure that all incumbents' stipends are made up to the Diocesan Minimum Stipend for incumbents after taking into account their income from the following:

- Guaranteed annuities and personal grants
- Parochial giving direct for stipends (including contributions towards the costs of heating, lighting and cleaning the parsonage house)
- Easter Offering (an historic but largely defunct practice)
- Fees (both church fees and non-church fees)
- Income from chaplaincies and public and educational appointments (after expenses properly incurred in earning this income)
- Income from local trusts

A5.2 The computation of income for augmentation purposes does not include:

- Spare-time earning
- Spouse's earning
- Private income
- Approved working expenses

A6 Grants

The Diocese pays the following grants to clergy:

A6.1 First appointment grants

The Diocese will make a grant of 10% of the National Minimum Stipend to clergy taking up a first appointment to a living or to a post of similar status and to those taking up their first appointment after ordination. The current amount available can be obtained from the Diocesan Office.

The grant may be used to cover such things as the cost of:

- Domestic goods (eg carpets and curtains) intended to replace items used at the old residence which are not suitable for use in the new residence;
- Ecclesiastical robes;
- Books for use in the conduct of services.

The First Appointment Grant will normally be paid automatically following your Institution or the date of commencement of duties. An advance of up to £800 can be made for the purchase of robes, upon a request being made in writing to the Diocesan Office (email is acceptable).

In addition, the [Churches Mutual Credit Union](#) offer a [first post loan](#) which allows members, and those eligible for membership, who are about to finish ordination training to apply for a payroll deduction loan (usually for a car but we will consider applications for other items) up to four months before the first payment of salary or stipend is due.

A6.2 Removal costs and expenses

The Diocese is responsible for the cost of clergy removals (ie "the van") on taking up a full-time stipendiary post within the Diocese and the removal will be carried out in accordance with the corporate contract arranged by the DBF. The contract includes a full packing service. Under the terms of the Diocese's contract with the removal company, garden furniture and shed contents are not included within the cost of moves if they take the volume over the capacity of one van. Any unusual requests will be referred to the Diocese for agreement. The contractor will undertake the dismantling/reassembly of beds and desks, but other items would be chargeable to you directly. The removal contractor

will not ask you to pay any deposit for packing materials. Your goods need to be insured whilst in transit and your own contents policy may cover this. Please let us know if it does not, as the Diocese can arrange insurance through the EIG.

A6.3 Resettlement grants

The Diocese will make a grant of **up to** 10% of the National Minimum Stipend to a stipendiary person towards the cost of any necessary alterations to or purchases of furnishings and other expenses incidental to the removal, i.e. towards the cost of domestic goods intended to replace items used at the old residence which are not suitable for use in the new residence. This usually covers carpets and curtains, but could also cover, for example, kitchen equipment or furniture (eg a free-standing wardrobe which replaced a fitted one). The reimbursement of any of these costs is subject to receipts being provided to confirm the expenditure actually incurred.

Therefore Resettlement Grant payments are paid after invoices or estimates have been submitted to the Diocesan Office. This can be done in the weeks leading up to your move; scanned/emailed copies of receipts are acceptable.

A6.4 Continuing Ministerial Development grant

Grants for CMD can be applied for from the Formation and Ministry Team at the Diocesan Office. These are usually identified as part of the MDR process.

A6.5 Car loan schemes

The [Churches Mutual Credit Union](#) (CMCU) is now offering car loans, as does [Newgate Finance](#).

Many providers offer loans details of which can be found online. We are unable to offer investment advice or recommend a particular provider or product.

If you wish to consider CMCU, details of their products can be found at <https://churchesmutual.co.uk/>

If you have a question relating to an existing car loan please contact Payroll Services at clergy.payments@churchofengland.org or 020 7898 1618

A7 Parochial Fees - Ordained and Lay Ministers

Please see [Parochial Fees Guidance Notes](#) located on the diocesan website under [finance](#). However it is worth noting that

- The incumbent's fee is a thing of the past and no longer exists. All DBF fees should be passed to the relevant PCC, which will then make the appropriate apportionments to the DBF and retired ministers as necessary. Licensed clergy and LLMs do not normally receive fees.
- All relevant expenses incurred by the person carrying out the duty should be fully reimbursed.
- The duty fees are listed on the [diocesan website](#).

Other Publications about Parochial Fees

"[A Guide to Church of England Parochial Fees](#)" was issued by the Church Commissioners and "Supplementary Guidance Notes for Clergy". Copies of both these items, and the [Table of Parochial Fees](#), are available (free of charge) from the [Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council](#).

A8 Parochial Expenses

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#) and the [leaflet produced by the DBF](#).

All parochial ministers are entitled to have proper expenses of office reimbursed in full by the PCC. They are not perks, but a part of the cost of carrying out the work. Some PCCs suggest that a lump sum be paid to cover all expenses, but this is unsatisfactory because actual expenses still have to be justified to the Inspector of Taxes and you could be liable for tax on the sum received. You are advised to make a monthly claim to the PCC Treasurer and a pro forma for doing this can be obtained from the Diocesan Office. The main items of reimbursable parochial expenses include postage; stationery; telephone; secretarial assistance; office equipment; maintenance of robes; hospitality; travelling expenses (including mileage around the parish, travelling from the parsonage).

Agreement should be reached with the PCC as to the true costs of all expenses and how they are to be met. The booklet also deals with circumstances in which payments can properly be made to a spouse. Curates will not incur the same level of expenses as an incumbent, but it is important, at the start of an appointment for a curate to find out exactly how their expenses will be dealt with i.e. what do they cover, how are claims to be made. The level of such expenses is to be agreed with the incumbent, who will see that they are reimbursed.

Other publications about parochial expenses

A booklet entitled "The Parochial Expenses of the Clergy" is published by the Central Stipends Authority, Ministry Division, 14 Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ (0207 898 1792) and a guide to clergy expenses is published on the [Church of England website](#).

A9 Termination of Appointment

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

All clergy are required to give at least 3 months' notice before resigning their appointment. This period may be waived by agreement between you and the Diocesan Bishop.

Your term of office may be terminated only in accordance with the circumstances set out in Section 3 of the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Regulations 2009](#).

In order to ensure continuous payment of a cleric's stipend, convention has it that the date of resignation is the day before s/he is licensed to the subsequent post.

A 10 Housing

Check with the property department for all matters under A10 as it is not a recent update.

See also [statement of particulars](#) and the [Clergy Houses Strategy](#).

A10.1 The parsonage house

The incumbent is required, for the better performance of their duties, to occupy the parsonage house. Remember that the parsonage house is the incumbent's home and it is for them to decide how it is used now, even though it might have been used differently previously. Remember also that it is the family home and we all need space, time and privacy. The incumbent must not feel pressurised by how the house has been used in the past.

The Diocese is responsible for the provision, maintenance and insurance of the house. The initial point of contact on any matter relating to the parsonage is the [Diocesan Surveyor](#) at the Diocesan Office.

The care of the parsonage house is a joint venture between the Diocese and the occupant. Essential repairs will be undertaken by the Diocese, but funds may not be available for less urgent work and parish assistance, either financial or practical, is always welcome.

A10.2 Quinquennial surveys

Every house is subject to a detailed survey every 5 years by the [Diocesan Surveyor](#). A copy of the report is sent to the incumbent. The Diocesan Surveyor seeks tenders for the repairs detailed in the report and arranges for the work to be carried out. If the incumbent wishes any local contractors to be included in the tendering, please advise the Diocesan Surveyor.

The incumbent can make representations to the Clergy Houses Committee (which is accountable to the Finance Committee) if s/he feels the Diocesan Surveyor's report does not cover all the repairs considered necessary.

A10.3 Interim repairs

From time to time other repairs will be necessary, which should be arranged through the Diocesan Surveyor, who will either instruct a contractor to carry out the work, or will authorise the repairs to be dealt with locally.

A10.4 Minor Repairs

Minor repairs anticipated to cost less than £100 may be put in hand without reference to the Surveyor and reimbursement will be made if requested.

A10.5 Emergencies

In an emergency the incumbent should still contact the Diocesan Surveyor or, if out of normal working hours,

contact a contractor directly to deal with the immediate problem, and inform the Diocesan Surveyor at the first opportunity.

If a suitable local contractor is not known, or it is not possible to contact them, those on the list below are known to us, and offer 24-hour 7-days-a-week, emergency call-out at a reasonable cost.

The names and numbers of any other contractors that are known to be reliable, and the telephone numbers of relevant Local Authorities, etc, can be added as an immediate reference point if and when an emergency arises. Avoid using unknown contractors, especially from directories like Yellow Pages.

A 10.5.1 Emergency contact numbers

An up to date list can be found on the [Diocesan Website](#)

A10.6 Central heating

The contractors have instructions to carry out a service and gas safety check annually. If you believe your boiler service is due, or overdue, please contact the contractor direct to make an early appointment. The contractors also have instructions to respond direct to call-outs in case of breakdown or emergency.

A10.7 Trees

Trees listed on the quinquennial survey report or those subject to statutory approval such as TPO or in conservation areas may be lopped or felled only with the Diocesan Surveyor's approval.

A10.8 Improvements

Any work undertaken to improve or upgrade the parsonage house must have the approval of the Finance Committee and the Clergy Houses Group. The Finance Committee has only a very limited sum of money available for grants towards such work, so parishes are usually expected to fund the cost of the improvement, enabling the limited monies to be used where most needed. It is essential that a parish consult its Archdeacon as early as possible for guidance.

A10.9 [Diocesan Surveyor \(Property\)](#)

The surveying department will be pleased to advise if there is a problem with the parsonage house – if in doubt ask! The contact details can be found on the diocesan website or through the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.

A10.10 Sub-Letting

Incumbents should not sub-let any part of the parsonage house under any circumstances or grant any rights of way without first consulting the Diocesan Secretary. It can lead to serious difficulties.

In practice, many sub-tenancies in parsonage houses are established inadvertently by allowing friends or others to occupy part of the house in response to some urgent plea. In these circumstances, on no account should the incumbent receive money, either as a direct payment or towards the cost of heat and light, or it may be construed as the payment of rent and a legal tenancy will be created.

Furthermore, when letting wider family and friends stay medium to long-term in the property it is worth remembering that in this diocese all DBS checks for clergy are 'working from home.' This allows the police to consider information held not only on the applicant, but also others living at the address.

A10.11 Interior decorations

Ongoing interior redecoration is the responsibility of the incumbent but parishes are encouraged to assist wherever possible, particularly before a new priest arrives in post. Many incumbents find it convenient to have a programme of interior decorations, whereby at least one room is redecorated each year, and PCCs are encouraged to assist if possible. Some grants are available in exceptional circumstances.

A10.12 Burglar alarms

These are fitted to the majority of parsonage houses. An annual service and maintenance agreement is strongly

recommended and this is the responsibility of the PCC. If the parsonage does not have an alarm, a grant towards the cost of installation may be available.

A10.13 Smoke detectors

Two detectors, one on each floor, are recommended,

Although the Diocese has been upgrading to interlinked alarms with QI electrical works, battery operated units, as found in most DIY shops, are adequate.

A10.14 House insurance

All parsonage houses are covered by a policy effected by the Diocesan Office with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office.

Briefly, the policy makes the usual provisions for loss or damage to buildings by fire, explosion, lightning etc and for subsidence or landslip, but excluding damage to paths, drives, fences and gates, unless associated with such damage to the building.

Provision is made for third-party liability cover for which the incumbent may be legally liable as owner, but not as occupier.

Please inform the Diocesan Surveyor as soon as possible of any accidental damage to the parsonage house.

A10.15 House contents

Incumbents are responsible for making arrangements to insure the contents of the house which personally belong to them and should ensure that the policy makes provision for third party cover as occupier.

Any points arising under this heading or in connection with anything affecting the fabric of the house should be referred to the Diocesan Surveyor. The contact details can be found on the diocesan website or through the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.

A10.16 When an incumbent leaves

It is the incumbent's responsibility to leave the house and garden clean and empty and to see that all rubbish is cleared from the premises.

Fixtures are the property of the benefice and must be left in the house. Passing on curtains, carpets, etc to a successor is a private matter. In some parishes the PCC will have bought the hall and stair carpets for the vicarage or clergy house and so, of course, they remain.

Services should not be disconnected (gas, electricity, telephone) as it costs money and can cause inconvenience having them reconnected, and they will be required in the vacancy-

Meters should be read before the incumbent leaves so that the extent of liability for gas and electricity is known.

Please contact the Diocesan Surveyor for more detailed guidelines.

A10.17 The purchase of curate houses – notes for incumbents and PCCs

Please check with Property Department

Before purchasing a curate house, consultation must take place with the [Director of Mission and Ministry](#) who holds responsibility for the placement of curates, and with the [Finance Director](#) (it is, of course, essential that funding has been agreed and is in place).

If the parish is to be responsible for funding, under the [Parochial Church Council \(Powers\) Measure 1956](#), the DBF will be the Custodian Trustees of the property with the PCC being the Managing Trustee. The consent of the DBF to the purchase will be required and in line with the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure, the PCC is responsible for all fees (legal and surveying) to be incurred in a transaction and the PCC must indemnify the DBF in this respect.

Following the purchase the property will be registered in the name of the DBF at The Land Registry. Under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure, the PCC cannot hold property in its own right.

The PCC will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance, repairs, insurance and council tax of the property (see

also [G2 – the Diocesan Church Repair Fund](#)).

Whether the purchase is funded by the DBF, the parish or a mixture of both, a report and valuation of the property will be required and it should be carried out by a qualified surveyor. Where the property will be owned or partly owned by the DBF, the Board's property adviser is appointed as surveyor. It is recommended that the PCC appoints the DBF's solicitor to act on its behalf. S/he will already be advising the DBF and this can save on fees.

Once the PCC has found a suitable property, it should notify the DBF for its consent. However, no offer should be made as this will be done by the Board's solicitor. The offer will be made subject to contract following a favourable surveyor's report and valuation.

It is important to consider whether it will be necessary to spend any money on "ingoing works", for example, decorating and upgrading. The kitchen is often one area in need of this.

When the PCC has identified a property which is thought suitable it should contact the [Diocesan Office](#) when the Diocesan Secretary or Legal Adviser will give further advice and set in motion the purchase process (subject to survey).

The PCC should not become too enthusiastic about a property before the [Diocesan Surveyor](#)'s inspection.

If all goes well and the purchase is completed, the Deeds to the property will be held in the Diocesan Office. The DBF's solicitor will also draw up a Declaration of Trust setting out the various equities in the property and signed by all parties concerned, and this will be kept with the Deeds.

NB: All properties housing assistant clergy must be in the CRF in accordance with the Schedule of the Diocesan Synod (October 1973) - see [G2 – the Diocesan Church Repair Fund](#).

A10.18 Housing Allowance

Where the PCC owns or part owns a property for the occupation of a curate, then an allowance will be paid monthly to the PCC throughout the period of occupation. *Please contact the Property Department for updated information*

A10.19 The Clergy Housing Strategy

"Inspired by the Called Together vision, a new [Clergy Houses Strategy](#) has been developed.

<https://www.rochester.anglican.org/for-leaders/support-for-clergy/housing/#additional>

A11 Annual leave

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#) and the [Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing](#). See also [A19: Well-being](#).

The leave year begins on 1st April of the year in which you were appointed and annually thereafter. You are entitled to the equivalent of 6 weeks leave, pro-rata in part-time posts, in each leave year and bank holidays (or time off in lieu).

In any ministry team, it is important that the structures are clear for arranging and reporting annual leave and ensuring that services are covered or cancelled appropriately. It is the incumbent's responsibility to ensure the cover is arranged for Sundays and principal feasts when s/he is absent on annual leave.

It is good practice to inform the Area Dean if the incumbent is absent.

Your days of annual leave may not be taken on:

- More than 6 Sundays per year
- Any of the Principal Feasts of the Church of England and set out in [Canon B](#) 6, paragraph 2.
- Ash Wednesday
- Good Friday
- The Parish's Patronal Festival

A12 Rest periods

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#) and the [Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing](#). See also [A19: Well-being](#).

You are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours in each period of 7 days and should take sensible

amounts of rest during the rest of the week. The Bishop recommends that clergy consider taking at least 36 hours off, uninterrupted, in order to enable travel to family and friends who are further away.

Your weekly rest period may not be taken on:

- A Sunday
- Any of the Principal Feasts in the Church of England as set out in the Canons and Common Worship
- Ash Wednesday
- Good Friday
- The Parish's Patronal Festival

When your weekly rest period coincides with one of the above, you are entitled to take a day's rest at some other point during the week. Indeed, it may suit the natural pattern of some clergy, rather than taking one clear day off a week, to take their rest in accrued days. This should not be counted as leave.

A13 Special leave

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#) and the [Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing](#). See also [A19: Well-being](#).

The Diocesan Bishop may allow you an additional period of Special Leave in particular circumstances, including bereavement or other compassionate needs.

A14 Time off for public duties

You are entitled to spend time on public duties as specified in Regulations 24 and 26 of [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Measure 2009](#).

You shall not suffer any reduction in stipend for time spent on public duties unless specified.

A15 Jury duty

Clergy are now eligible for [jury service](#) on the same basis as other people and can only seek excusal or deferral for good reason. Jurors receive an allowance for their attendance at court and the employer is entitled to recover this amount from their pay. As a juror you are also entitled to receive the allowance for your attendance at court, and an equivalent adjustment can be made to your stipend.

In consultation with the Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department and the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee of the Archbishops' Council, the following guidance has been produced:

- Time off with pay will be granted
- On receipt of the jury service notice, you should inform the Bishop, the Archdeacon, the Diocesan Secretary and the Churchwardens of the period when you will be absent on jury service
- You should claim the attendance allowance (which is paid on a net pay basis)

The loss of earnings form (provided by the court) should be sent to the Church Commissioners' Clergy Payments Department for completion before the jury service starts. The form will be completed and returned to you to enable you to claim back the allowance. When the jury service has been completed you should inform the Finance Team at the Diocesan Office of the amount of attendance allowance received. The Diocesan Office will then instruct Clergy Payments to reduce the stipend by the amount of the net pay saved, adjusted for tax and National Insurance contributions.

A16 Entitlement to maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave

You are entitled, as appropriate, to maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave, as specified in the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 Regulation 23 and time off to receive ante-natal care as specified in Regulation 25.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/clergy-terms-and-conditions-service>

Family Friendly Policies

Those called to public ministry are also called to other vocations. These enrich ordained ministry. There are times when clergy are likely to need additional support if their family life and, as a consequence, their ministry is to

flourish. It is important that clergy know that they will be properly supported and feel able to ask about this'. (Church of England website)

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/family-friendly-policies>

For further details see the guidance issued by the Archbishops' Council, on the Church of England website under [Parental Leave](#).

For details of the Rochester policy, please contact your archdeacon.

(See also the [Statement of Particulars](#)) .

A17 Time off for dependents

'Those called to public ministry are also called to other vocations. These enrich ordained ministry. There are times when clergy are likely to need additional support if their family life and, as a consequence, their ministry is to flourish. It is important that clergy know that they will be properly supported and feel able to ask about this'. (Church of England website)

You are entitled to [request time off](#), or adjustments to the duties of office, to care for dependants in accordance with the Ecclesiastical Offices Terms of Service Measure 2009 Regulation 23.

To request time off or adjustments to the duties of office to care for a dependent, please contact your archdeacon, for details of the Rochester Policy.

(See also the [Statement of Particulars](#)).

A18 Clergy Spouses

See also the [Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing](#) and [A19: Well-being](#) and [A21](#) within the Guidelines

Being a clergy spouse can be an exciting opportunity but it can also be a strange and even bewildering transition. Everyone's situation is different but we are aware that many of you now find yourself in a role that you didn't anticipate a few years ago, and one that can bring its own pressures as well as its joys.

Currently a formal programme for clergy spouses is not run but we are here to support you in any way we can. Moving forward, and as we discern a need or a specific interest, we are open to running events either in person or online.

We are also planning to set up some peer support so that you have someone more local you can approach with any questions or issues you may have. In the meantime, please feel that you can contact Julia or Toni about anything at all. We have both been clergy spouses for many years and in many different settings and have probably encountered some of the challenges you may come across. And we have lived to tell the tale!

The particular nature of the work of the clergy (using the home as a work place, being in the public eye etc) means that the support that can be provided for clergy spouses is important.

Spouses are also entitled to the [counselling provision](#) offered to clergy.

The initial point of contact is with

Julie Flood

Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network Co-ordinator

phone: 07827 157328

e-mail: counselling@rochester.anglican.org

Other forms of support are available. For further details contact the Clergy Spouses Co-ordinators: Toni Gibbs and Julia Burton -Jones

Bishopscourt@Rochester.anglican.org

A19 Well-Being

See also: [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#); and [The Church of England Covenant for](#)

[the Care and Well Being of Clergy](#). See also sections A11-A13.

There are significant differences between being an office holder and being an employee, and this is one area where they come into play. The office holder has responsibility for the duties of the office until that office is vacated and must make reasonable efforts to see that those duties are carried out. During days off or periods of leave this may involve finding cover. However, the office holder also has considerable freedom to decide how those duties are to be carried out, and in the use of time. The office holder therefore needs to find a balance between the duties of the office and his or her own well-being, and the Bishop and his staff will want to be supportive to all clergy in finding this balance. Clergy are encouraged to develop and maintain a good work-life balance. Ordained ministry is demanding – physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. No priest can ever 'switch off' his or her vocation and calling to serve Christ. However, periods of rest, refreshment and time off are important and should be taken.

The Bishop believes that the well-being of the clergy, their families and our diocesan staff is vital for the health and fruitfulness of the Church's mission and ministry. That is why he has made the arrangements in [A21 \(Pastoral Care and Counselling\)](#), as care and support are of great importance. When circumstances arise in which some counselling support may be helpful, he would encourage you to err on the side of seeking that earlier rather than later. To do so is not the admission of some kind of failure but simply to recognise the vulnerability which goes with being human.

Further guidance and resources may be found on the Church of England website, including:

[A Document for Reflection and Action for the Clergy](#)

[A Document for Reflection and Action for Local Congregations](#)

[A Document for Reflection and Action for Bishops and the Wider Church](#)

A20 Lone Working – Personal Safety

Many clergy and other officers of the church undertake much of what they do whilst alone – either in the home or elsewhere. It is important, therefore, that you should not forget the risks associated with this, but be mindful of your safety and where possible avoid working alone.

Please also refer to [Diocesan Safeguarding guidance](#) (and see [C6 – Safeguarding](#)) regarding working alone with young people or adults with vulnerabilities. As a rule, no one should be working one-to-one with children or with adults legally deemed vulnerable. This section is principally concerned with the worker's safety – please consult the soon-to-be published guidance by the safeguarding team regarding maintaining safeguarding protocols when working alone.

Where you believe that you are in serious or imminent danger you should not hesitate to act to protect yourself, ideally by removing yourself to a place of safety. Report any incidents to your Churchwarden/Incumbent, Archdeacon and to the police if necessary.

A20.1 Risk Assessment

In places where you are consistently working alone, it is good practice to record a risk-assessment.

The following should be considered:

- Your ability to carry out your activities safely on your own in the environment in which you are working;
- The potential for you to be subject to violence;
- Your ability to request assistance or to withdraw safely from a dangerous situation;
- Whether the task would be better accomplished by more than one person;
- What would happen in the case of sudden illness or emergencies;
- Risks related to driving;
- Fire safety;
- The suitability of any existing precautionary measures and emergency arrangements.

A20.2 Minimise Risk

Examples of precautions which may be appropriate to minimise risk include:

- Whenever meeting people alone, especially when these people are unknown to you, consider carefully whether this is a meeting that would be better in a public place, or whether it is possible to have someone else with you (or in the building). Do not hesitate to rearrange the meeting so that this may be possible.
- *Always* check who is at the door before opening.
- When people call unexpectedly, do not invite them in without considering the risk to yourself (and your household). When people call late at night it is *not recommended* that you admit them to your home. If it is an emergency, call the emergency services.

- It is not recommended that you host (parish) visitors overnight when you are alone.
- If meeting someone in another location, keep clear records about where you are going, who you are meeting, the time of the meeting and a contact number.
- Where possible, try to let someone know when to expect you home, as well as your mobile no. and car registration.
- Where possible, park somewhere where people are about and, when after dark, in well-lit areas.
- Ensure you have a clear understanding of emergency procedures and locking up protocols.
- Ensure the availability of first aid facilities, which might include carrying one in the car.
- Ensure breakdown cover insurance is in place for travelling around the Diocese.
- Carry a mobile phone which is charged.
- Carry a panic alarm.
- Do not encourage strangers (eg homeless individuals) to stay in your house without first seeking advice.

A20.3 Living and Working in Areas of High Risk

In areas of high risk you may consider:

- Set up a 'buddy system' with set call times to ensure personal safety.
- Agree a distress code word.
- Consider training on dealing with violent/aggressive people.

A21 Pastoral Care and Counselling

A21.1 Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network

A diverse network of qualified, experienced counsellors working within or near to the Rochester Diocese have been recruited to provide well-being and counselling support. The network will offer free short-term therapy to clergy, spouses, partners and household family members, diocesan and cathedral office employees, Head teachers and youth and children's workers. Eight initial sessions will be offered to individuals with the possibility to increase to a maximum of twelve following discussion and review. Arrangements for families and groups can be made in negotiation with the network coordinator.

Following referral or self-referral, people will contact the network Co-ordinator who will undertake a telephone screening interview to ascertain their availability, locality and primary reason for wanting a service. Very often a person may approach the service with the knowledge (indeed encouragement) of an archdeacon or bishop. Our arrangement, however, ensures that you are free to approach the network lead yourself *without a bishop or archdeacon being aware*. In cases of self-referral, a maximum of eight sessions will be paid for without reference to The Bishops Office; thereafter, agreement will be needed between the service and the Bishop's office, but still maintaining the person's anonymity where necessary.

The initial point of contact is with: Julie Flood

Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network Co-ordinator

e-mail: counselling@rochester.anglican.org

phone: 07827 157328

For each referral, Julie will allocate a practitioner from our network for an initial assessment which will generally take place in their practice space. This will be an independent counsellor, therapist or mental health professional who is monitored and supported by the network. We ensure that the practitioner holds appropriate qualifications, has professional liability insurance and is a member of an accredited professional body. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained within professional, ethical guidance. This means that disclosure of information is only made to ensure or enhance the quality of work, to protect an individual or others, for safeguarding reasons and when a practitioner is legally required or authorised to do so. Be assured that all those working within the Diocese of Rochester Counselling and Well-being Network are passionate about providing a safe, effective, supportive service in line with diocesan values and commitments.

A21.2 St Luke's

[St Luke's](#) is a leading charity in clergy wellbeing and mental health. Its website provides information on the help it gives to individuals and their families. They help clergy to flourish in their ministry, through the three parts of their work: preventive, restorative and advocacy.

- **Wellbeing menu** with preventive training workshops
- **Restorative one-to-one help** with interventions that enable clergy to recover
- **Advocacy and collaboration** as an independent, authoritative voice for clergy wellbeing

Contact St Luke's medical secretary, in strict confidence, by email - medical@stlukesforclergy.org.uk - or by phone - 020 45 46 7000.

A21.3 Other counselling agencies

- [Relate](http://www.relate.org.uk) – to find your nearest Relate service: www.relate.org.uk
- The [Tavistock Centre](#), 120 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5BA (tel: 0207 435 7111)
- [Home - Institute of Family Therapy \(ift.org.uk\)](#), 24-32 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HX (tel: 020 7391 9150)
- [The Society of Martha and Mary](#), The Sheldon Centre, Dunsford, Exeter, Devon, EX6 7LE (tel: 01647 252752)
- [Tonbridge Counselling Service](#) Tonbridge Counselling Service, First Floor, Gilbert House, River Walk, Tonbridge, TN9 1DT (01732 605046)
- Medway Towns Counselling Service 01634 828484
- Orpington Christian Counselling Service 01689 852105
- Maidstone Counselling Service 0800 756 6236
- Sevenoaks Counselling Service 01732 450118
- Bromley Community Counselling Service 020 8460 7711
- Emmaus Counselling, Tunbridge Wells 01892 861160
- [Cruse Bereavement Care](#), Cruse House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1UR (help line 0808 808 1677)
- [At a Loss](#) bereavement support - For general enquiries email: office@ataloss.org (helpline 08004480800)

In some circumstances you may find it helpful to look beyond the Diocese and it may be possible to find you help in the Southwark, Chelmsford or Canterbury Dioceses.

A21.4 Counselling for parents

Parents often go through a period of difficulty as their children grow up. Most of these periods pass and are, with hindsight, written off as part of the growing process. Sometimes, however, a child's disruptive behaviour or unhappiness is a matter for deep concern for the parents. When it is the vicarage family that is in trouble, the pressure can become intense. It is easy for the child to be labelled as "the problem".

Before things become too entrenched and parents lose their confidence or patience it can be very worthwhile for them to review with a suitable counsellor their own approach to the problem. Sometimes it is necessary for a child to receive help in their own right. If your family has a problem you are urged to contact your Archdeacon for advice.

It is worth noting that [St Luke's](#) offers help with psychological support. Where there is concern for a child or when help is needed with child protection issues you should contact the [Diocesan Safeguarding Team](#) or the [local authority children's services](#).

A21.5 Domestic Abuse

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse and it would be foolish to assume that the families of clergy and Church officers are immune. The cross government definition of domestic abuse applies to individuals who are 16 years old and above and applies to family's members as well as partners and ex-partners, the definition also includes controlling and coercive behaviour. The [Government website](#) offers advice for recognising, reporting and addressing domestic abuse. There are also local support services available which vary from area to area. [Relate](#) is a national organisation able to support and help. The Church of England guidelines for responding to domestic abuse can be found here [3. Domestic Abuse | The Church of England](#).

If a member of clergy or their spouse/partner are affected by domestic abuse, the tied nature of the housing may affect their ability to respond safely. In these cases the Bishop's Visitor (see below) is available to ensure we can move you to a safe place.

[The diocesan safeguarding team](#) are available for support (scroll down for phone numbers). Greg Barry, Head of Safeguarding: 07585 952174

There is also a National 24hr helpline www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

A21.6 Separation and divorce

If you should suffer the personal tragedy of a bereavement, or of marriage breakdown, you will need practical and personal support. The Bishops will help all they can and the Archdeacons can also offer sympathetic and practical help.

One of the major problems arises from the fact that you and your spouse have been living in a "tied house". The Bishop and Archdeacon will be able to advise you about finding a new home and also about the legal position, pension rights and possible sources of financial help if needed.

You may wish to inform the Communications Department as they will help and support you and your family through this time which may attract the unwanted interest of local or national media. It is better to do this at an early stage rather than wait, to counter the risk of any media intruding on your private life.

In the case of divorce, "[Broken Rites](#)" is an independent, interdenominational organisation which exists to support

clergy spouses through times of crisis. Peer-to-peer support and practical advice are also offered. For counselling support see above.

[Relate](#) also provides sensitive support both to individuals and couples in times of marital difficulty or breakdown.

A helpful guide to the law relating to divorce/dissolution can be found here: gov.uk/divorce/file-for-divorce

A21.6.1 The Bishop's Visitor

Policy and Guidance for the Church of England in the care of the spouses and partners of divorced and separated clergy

The Bishop has a pastoral responsibility to the spouse/partner and dependants of clergy in his diocese. Not only is there the care offered through the clergy spouses network ([see A18](#)) but also the diocese continues its care in the unfortunate event of bereavement or marriage breakdown. This means, among other things, a responsibility to ensure that spouses and dependants have a home to live in, at least in the short and medium term

This responsibility is normally discharged by the [Bishop's Visitor](#), who acts as a point of contact between the spouse/partner and the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), and provides advice and pastoral support. The main form of assistance is advisory (see pages 8-9 of the Policy and Guidance document listed above) and in the following areas:

- helping the spouse to find affordable private rented accommodation
- providing the spouse with information on the level of government support
- if the spouse chooses to buy a property, arranging for the Diocesan Surveyor to inspect it and give advice on any significant repairs.

During this difficult time, the Bishop aims to provide the sufficient care and support to a clergy spouse whilst wherever possible promoting their independence.

The Bishop's Visitor can be contacted through the Bishop's Chaplain (01634 842721) or your Archdeacon.

A21.6.2 Organisations offering advice regarding separation and divorce

The following organisations may also be able to offer financial help for the separated or divorced:

- [Clergy Support Trust](#) (formerly *Sons of the Clergy*), For divorced and separated spouses and civil partners of eligible clergy they give:
 - Help with maintenance of children including grants for education
 - Removal grants in certain circumstances
 - Assistance with financial problems
 - Assistance for dependent children
- [The Foundation of Edward Storey](#), (01223 364405) info@edwardstorey.org.uk

A22 Sickness

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

Your obligation and rights if you are unable to perform your duties because of sickness are set out in Regulation 27 and 28 of [Ecclesiastical offices \(Terms of Service\) Measure 2009](#) and summarised usefully on the [Church of England website](#).

A22.1 Any Sick Leave

If you are unexpectedly unavailable for parish ministry (for any reason but, in this instance, sickness or injury) it would be helpful to let your Archdeacon know so you, your churchwardens and parish can be supported.

If you are unable to perform the duties of your office because of illness or injury for four or more days in a row, you should fill in an [employee's statement of sickness \(SC2\)](#) (this can be found from the gov.uk website or via the [Church of England website](#)) and send it to Bishops court. This is in order to comply with the rules of the Statutory Sick Pay Scheme. Bishops court will then inform Payroll, as well as the DBF and your Archdeacon.

You should also make all reasonable efforts to make arrangements for the duties of your office to be carried out by another person during any absences because of illness. This may, where appropriate, consist of notifying your

Churchwardens or Area Dean.

A22.2 Sick Leave for 7 calendar days or more

If you are unable to perform the duties of your office because of illness for a period of 7 calendar days or more, you must provide a Statement of Fitness from your doctor. This needs to be sent to Bishopscourt. It may also be advisable to let your Area Dean know. In case of significant injury or illness you would do well to contact your Archdeacon.

As of 1 July 2022, [The Social Security \(Medical Evidence\) and Statutory Sick Pay \(Medical Evidence\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2022](#) came into force.

This legislation means that 'alternative Healthcare Professionals (HCPs)' can issue Fit Notes as well as doctors. To support eligibility for both SSP and State sickness payments, an HCP is tightly defined as a person (who is not the patient) who is:

- A. A registered medical practitioner (a doctor)
- B. A registered nurse
- C. A registered occupational therapist or registered physiotherapist or
- D. A registered pharmacist

Further information regarding sickness absence for clergy is available on the Church of England website, [What happens if I am ill?](#)

A22.3 Pastoral Care

Your Area Dean and Archdeacon will be aware of available support for you during any illness (as well as the support offered by the NHS) and will do their best to support you – as long as you let them know!

A22.4 Long Term Sick

The rates of statutory sick pay can be found on the [government website](#). Payroll will contact you toward the end of the first 28 weeks of statutory sick pay, with further advice.

The Diocesan Occupational scheme varies according to length of service.

A22.5 Disability

The [Government website](#) states,

"It's against the law for employers to discriminate against you because of a disability. The Equality Act 2010 protects you and covers areas including:

- application forms
- interview arrangements
- aptitude or proficiency tests
- job offers
- terms of employment, including pay
- promotion, transfer and training opportunities
- dismissal or redundancy
- discipline and grievances"

Beyond this, the way that disability is articulated within the church is very important and has the potential to have a positive and affirming impact upon disabled people in our congregations. It is especially important that disability and illness are not conflated, neither should there be an assumption that a person needs to be healed of their disability (see B16)

Accordingly, disability should be affirmed as part of personhood and disabled people affirmed and encouraged in the widest possible sense within congregations

Fostering an environment within the church where disability can be discussed freely will ensure that support is sought and the inclusion of disabled people encouraged, without it being seen as a problem

Inclusion of disabled people in the widest sense within churches should be seen as normative, rather than exceptional and there are a variety of ways in which parishes and individuals can be supported in working towards greater inclusion.

A22.5.1 Resources and support - disability

The name of the Bishop's Adviser on Disability is The Reverend Rachel Wilson reverendrachelwilson@gmail.com. She can provide advice to individuals and parishes, either on individual issues or providing access advice to churches. She is also available to speak to congregations and PCCs on questions of disability and inclusion

The following courses may also be of use for parishes wishing to explore these issues and increase their accessibility:
Disability and Discipleship – helping disabled people to flourish in churches
Unconscious Bias and Disability – arranged through diocesan office

Further information on Barrier-free belonging within the Church of England is available on the Church of England website and can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/barrier-free-belonging>

A23 Pension

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

If you receive a stipend your service is pensionable within the terms of the [Clergy Pension Scheme](#).

There is no contracting out certificate in force stating that the office is contracted out employment for the purpose of Chapter 1 of Part III of the Pensions Schemes Act 1993.

A23.1 Additional Voluntary Contributions

If you wish to make Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) towards your pension, please contact the [Pensions Board](#) for further details.

A24 Retirement from Stipendiary Ministry

Stipendiary clergy may retire when they reach the age of [65?] (state pension details available via government website) and must retire when they reach the age of 70, (or with their PCC seek permission from the Bishop to hold their licence for a fixed term extension). Practical preparation for [retirement](#) should start in good time to allow all of the necessary arrangements to be made. It is essential that we face realistically and with faith the inevitable changes, including the gains and losses that retirement will bring.

A24.1 The Pre-Retirement Conference

This is a high quality event which is offered free of charge to clergy and their spouses during the five years before expected retirement date. This conference is staffed by experts who can advise on practical issues such as pensions, housing, finance and health. We also have people there to help with reflection on spirituality in retirement, opportunities for further ministry, occupation, leisure, etc. Clergy and their spouses are strongly encouraged to take up that invitation as early as possible in that five year period.

A24.2 Resource people

Currently:

- The role of the Diocesan Clergy Retirement Advisers is concerned with the pastoral care and support of retired clergy and their families, and with the encouragement of any ministry that clergy may wish to offer following their retirement. Each Archdeaconry has its own adviser. The contact details of the Officers can be found on the diocesan website or from the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.
- [The Church of England Pensions Board](#) and their Housing Department can assist you with information about retirement housing, finance and pensions.
- The Director of Mission and Ministry arranges the pre-retirement Conferences for clergy and their spouses. The contact details of the Director can be found in the on-line Directory or from the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.

A24.3 Housing in retirement

Information about the Church of England's housing assistance for retired ministers is available from [The Church of England website](#). Advice can be found in the leaflet '[Considering your Retirement Housing Options](#)' .

Within Rochester Diocese, retirement housing for clergy and their spouses and for clergy widows is available at [Bromley and Sheppards colleges](#) (close to the centre of Bromley). Enquiries to the Chaplain's Office, Bromley College, London Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 1PE (020 8460 4712).

A24.4 Retirement on grounds of ill health

In case of ill health it is possible to [retire early](#) on a disability pension. The first contact for clergy in this case should be with their Archdeacon, who will be pleased to ensure the help, advice and support needed.

All of the pension-related information required is available from the [Church of England Pensions Board](#).

A24.5 Financial planning for retirement

It is wise to take advice, but clergy should be sure that they understand the distinction between an independent financial adviser and an agent of a provider of financial service. Independent financial advisers are bound by law to give totally impartial advice (for which they may charge). Other advisers i.e. agents of providers, will, in general, be seeking to persuade the person about to retire to use their services for insurance/saving schemes/investment plans etc. through their company, and are usually working for commission fees.

A24.7 Further guidance

Further guidance supporting [the ministry of retired clergy](#) in general may be found on the Church of England website.

A25 On the Professional Conduct of the Clergy

"Serving in ordained ministry can be a difficult and challenging way of life, with many demands made upon themselves by conscientious clergy as well as by those to whom they minister." [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#).

All clergy in the Diocese of Rochester should have a copy of these guidelines given to them by the Diocese. The advice and boundaries described within them is sound and the Bishop commends them to his clergy. Among them, it is worth noting:

A25.1 Gifts and Hospitality

Clergy should consider the potential perceptions arising from their acceptance of a gift or hospitality and the possible consequences to their role and pastoral care.

If in doubt about whether to accept a gift or hospitality, clergy should consult their Archdeacon, or, in their absence, their Area Dean. Regard should be had to the frequency and amount of gifts or hospitality from the same source as well as to the value. It is to be recommended, that for the sake of transparency, all gifts received through the exercise of one's duties should be recorded, for example with the churchwardens.

Also, it is worth noting:

A25.2 Directorships

[Canon C28](#) prohibits officeholders from 'engaging in trade' without the permission of the Bishop. In particular this should be held to include the holding of directorships of companies.

A25.3 Further Resources

[Clergy in a Complex Age](#) edited by Jamie Harrison and Robert Innes, SPCK 2016

A26 Disciplinary Measures

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

For guidance about the process and timescales of the Clergy Discipline Measure, please see the [Church of England Website](#). In particular, clergy may wish to be aware of the Church Of England leaflet, entitled '[A Complaint has been made about me. What happens now?](#)'

The disciplinary rules and procedures applicable to your office are contained in the [Clergy Discipline Measure 2003](#) and the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963.

The latter concerns offences regarding doctrine, ritual and ceremony, while the former concerns disciplinary procedures and defines the acts or omissions (other than those relating to matters of doctrine, ritual or ceremony) which warrant disciplinary action.

The Bishop is responsible for providing for the care and support of a respondent (and their close family) of a CDM. This will be made freely available.

A26.1 Convictions for criminal offences

"Any member of the clergy who is arrested for an offence, however minor, and whether or not charges are brought, is required by the Clergy Discipline Measure to report this fact within 28 days to their bishop. However, clergy who are questioned by the police in relation to a possible arrest should also report that fact."

11.6 [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#)

A26.2 Matrimonial Orders

"Clergy whose marriages break down and who are divorced, or have an order of judicial separation made against them, on grounds of their adultery, unreasonable behaviour or desertion by them of their spouse can have a penalty under the Clergy Discipline Measure imposed on them as a result. Any member of the clergy who is a party to a divorce petition or an application for an order for judicial separation should therefore obtain legal advice in respect of their position under the Clergy Discipline Measure before any steps are taken in the matrimonial proceedings.

Clergy are under a duty to inform their bishop when they are divorced, or have an order of judicial separation made against them." 11.7 & 11.8 in [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#)

Failure to give a copy of the degree nisi to the Diocesan Bishop automatically triggers [CDM procedures](#).

A26.3 Safeguarding and Clergy Disciplinary Measures 2016

Under the Safeguarding and Clergy Disciplinary Measures 2016 it became a disciplinary offence not to comply with relevant safeguarding policies and instruction, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

A27 Capability Procedure

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

The Archbishops' Council has issued a [Code of Practice](#) under Regulation 31 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009. Diocesan bishops are required to have regard to this Code if they have grounds for concern about the performance of an office holder and institute an inquiry into his or her capability.

"The principal objective of a capability procedure is to help office holders whose performance falls below an acceptable minimum standard to improve in cases where the problems are not disciplinary in nature. It is expected that most performance-related matters will be identified and addressed informally without engaging this procedure. Nevertheless, there will be occasions where informal steps are not appropriate and in such cases it will be necessary to implement the procedure. If an improvement in performance cannot be achieved through the capability procedure, there is a real possibility that the office holder will be removed from his or her current office, but only as a last resort." Paragraph 2.1 of the Procedure

A copy of this Code, together with the supporting advice, can be obtained from the [Church of England website](#).

It should be noted that capability procedures are not the same as MDR or CDM. In the case of the former, it should be held with great sensitivity if capability procedures are in train, while if, *"in the course of the capability procedure, matters come to light which appear to amount to misconduct, the capability procedure may be suspended so that disciplinary proceedings can be begun."* 1.6 of the [Archbishops Council Capability Procedure Code of practice](#)

A28 Grievance Procedure

See also the [Statement of Particulars](#).

A28.1 Code of Practice

The Archbishops' Council has issued a Code of practice under Regulation 32 of the [Ecclesiastical Offices \(Terms of Service\) Measure 2009](#) containing a procedure for enabling an office holder to seek redress for grievances.

This aims to ensure that:

"A) Every grievance should be treated seriously because of its significance to the person concerned.

B) No-one should be disadvantaged, for example in relation to new appointments or access to training, by bringing a grievance or by acting as a companion to someone who has brought a grievance.

C) Where the grievance involves the alleged actions of a respondent, whether an individual or a body, it is necessary to ensure that the respondent has the opportunity to express a view and that that view is taken into account. If an informal approach proves incapable of resolving the grievance, the formal procedure may be invoked by the office holder.

D) Office holders and respondents have the right to be accompanied at all meetings concerning the grievance by a trade union official or a lay or ordained colleague.

E) It is important, and in the interests of all parties, to keep written records during the grievance process. Records should include:

- *the nature of the grievance raised*
- *a copy of the written statement of grievance*
- *the archdeacon's decisions and the actions*
- *whether the matter was taken to the further stage and if so the outcome;*
- *subsequent developments.*

F) Records should be treated as confidential and kept securely in a sealed envelope on the relevant file. Where the grievance is raised against a respondent who is also in holy orders, it will be necessary to keep a record of the grievance in a sealed envelope on the personal files of both the respondent and the person making the grievance." [Grievance Procedure Code of Practice – Supporting Advice](#)

If you have a grievance, you may seek redress by using the said procedure which, together with the supporting advice, can be obtained from the [Church of England website](#).

You are encouraged to take up any grievance informally in the first instance and, if appropriate, seek mediation. This will not affect your right to require formal consideration of your grievance under the procedure.

A28.2 Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Diocese of Rochester has adopted a policy as a framework for addressing [Bullying and Harassment](#) in the Diocese. This framework will operate according to the context i.e., clergy office holders, other role holders, PCC employees, DBF employees or other members of the church. All PCCs are encouraged to adopt the policy.

Statement of Commitment

In setting out a golden rule that we should love God and love our neighbours as ourselves, Jesus gave meaning to life and located it in the relationships we form. These are what make us truly human, and people flourish when they are surrounded by the qualities of love. Some of these are: patience and kindness (1 Corinthians 13:4); compassion and humility (Colossians 3:12); generosity, faithfulness, and self-control (Ephesians 5:22-23).

In the Diocese of Rochester, we want to develop these kinds of relationships and to provide a supportive and caring environment in which the wellbeing of each person is respected, and they are treated with dignity at all times. It is from this basis that we provide the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and a Code of Conduct as to how the policy should be lived out.

Our Diocese seeks to provide a supportive, caring environment in which the rights of individuals are respected, and each person is treated with dignity and courtesy at all times. Any suggestion of abuse, bullying and harassment, either within the Diocesan Office or in Parishes must be taken seriously and complaints thoroughly investigated. Within the Diocese our commitment is to value everyone involved within church life. While UK legislation covering the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, sex, religion and belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership status and pregnancy and maternity sets minimum standards, our determination in the Diocese is to respect diversity and going beyond legal compliance to seek to enhance the value of all involved with Christian ministry throughout the whole Diocese.

Bullying and harassment remain significant issues in our society despite increasing awareness of the problem. Sadly, there are some typical bullying and harassment behaviours which can and do manifest in church life, from unwanted physical contact, unwelcome remarks and offensive written communications to shouting and persistent unwarranted criticism of volunteers, Office Holders and salaried staff. It is appropriate to record here that research shows that people who are the recipients of these behaviours are more likely to be depressed and anxious, and generally begin to feel worthless and of little value.

Bullying and Harassment often arises in the context of an abuse or misuse of power. Where a colleague or office holder is in a position of power, such as a line manager, senior manager or member of clergy, their behaviour can feel more intimidating to the recipient, who may feel powerless to do anything about it and even doubt their own experience. Power imbalances can also occur where there is a difference in age, gender, socio-economic class, or race/ethnic origin. Our Diocese is committed to promoting a culture that minimizes the potential for unhealthy power dynamics by encouraging respect, equality, compassion, transparency and dialogue at all levels.

A copy of the Policy for the Diocese of Rochester can be found on the [diocesan website](#).

A29 Trade Union / Professional Association Representation

All clergy are entitled to be a member of a Trades Union or Professional Association and this is a matter for individual decision. Members of a Trades Union or Professional Association may be represented in matters affecting them as individuals by their Trades Union or Professional Association representative. (However it should be accepted that in certain situations, the representative must not be someone who could prejudice any hearing or who might have a conflict of interest.)

A29.1 Insurance Cover

Clergy are insured in relation to the pastoral care they offer as a normal part of their duties. In relation to Spiritual Direction, this falls in the category of 'pastoral care' rather than 'professional counselling' and it is therefore covered by the insurance for pastoral care. We retain a list of all those people who are official Spiritual Directors in the diocese and clergy who offer this service should contact Rev Canon Susanne Carlsson, Diocesan Advisor for Spirituality, to ensure they are listed.

B WORSHIP, MISSION and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTB1 Public Worship

B1 Public Worship

One of the joys of the Church of England is its liturgical worship, as worship lies at the heart of Christian life. It is in worship that we express our theology and define our identity. It is through encountering God within our worship that we are found and transformed as his people.

Public worship in the Church of England is governed by law. The most recent statute, regulating the form of service which may be used in the public worship of the Church of England, is the [Church of England \(Worship and Doctrine\) Measure 1974](#).

Under the Measure, the services of the *Book of Common Prayer* remain permanently available for use. A complete list of the services 'authorised, approved and commended by General Synod' may be found listed under the [supplementary material](#) of the Canons of the Church of England. All in all there is great scope for flexibility and adaptability within Church of England provision. Nevertheless the Bishop takes seriously the promise all licensed ministers make to '*use only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by canon*'. This way we hold to our common identity, while honouring the local needs of our congregations. New material and updated best practice is constantly being created, and it is worth keeping abreast of such developments.

It is important that decisions regarding the forms of service used in public worship are made jointly between the PCC and the incumbent, holding in mind -

- Is the overall pattern of services right?
- How often is a Service of the Word or a Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion used?
- Does the PCC want to make specific recommendations?
- When will the PCC next review the pattern of worship?

In cases of disagreement, the *Book of Common Prayer* or a form of service in use for two of the past four years is to be used. In a dispute the Bishop has the final word.

Also in this context, the following need to be considered:

B1.1 Versions of the Bible and the Psalms

The [supplementary material](#) of the Canons of the Church of England lists the versions of Scripture allowed by canon. The Bishop encourages the use of the NRSV, but the incumbent and PCC should carefully consider the accuracy and poetry of the translation, against the vocabulary of the listeners, as well as the tone aimed for at that particular service.

B1.2 Music in public worship

The incumbent has the legal responsibility for the choice and provision of 'appropriate and reverent' music for public worship, but the incumbent who does so in the teeth of the advice and preference of his/her musicians and PCC needs to tread very carefully.

Both the [Royal School of Church Music](#) and the [Incorporated Society of Musicians](#) publish recommended salaries and fees for directors of music and organists. They also publish the fees which should be paid for special services such as weddings, funerals and memorial services. Although some musicians will cheerfully give their time and talents freely, no musician should be expected to do so - many earn their living from their music. Care should be taken that no one feels obliged to forgo what is reasonably theirs. Care should also be taken also regarding safer recruitment of musicians and clear role descriptions in case of (employment) dispute.

B1.3 Orders of service

Common Worship is a [body of liturgy](#) in multiple volumes designed with the expectation (though not the necessity) that parishes will put together a local order of service. In doing so the PCC and incumbent need to consider

- Whether the booklets produced are of sufficient quality to honour the purpose for which they were put together;
- How often the booklets should be reproduced (the consideration above may be a factor here - it is better to produce one good flexible document, than a series of tatty leaflets that give a poor impression of the importance of what we are doing);
- The balance between guidance for the congregation and flexibility for the worship leaders.

A Liturgical Commission leaflet entitled [A Brief Guide to Liturgical Copyright](#) deals with the procedures for local reproduction. It provides guidance on preparing local texts and information about copyright requirements. [Christian Copyright Licensing International](#) also has a number of fact files about copyright and useful FAQs.

Please note: honouring copyright is a legal obligation to which all must adhere. See [B2](#).

B1.4 Vesture of the minister

[Canon B8](#) sets out the vesture to be worn by the minister during public worship, while Amending Canon 36 allows vestments not to be worn, where they may hinder mission. While at fresh expressions, and other *emphatically* informal services, vestments may not be appropriate, proper consultation and should be established and recorded with your Archdeacon. Bishop Jonathan would still encourage the wearing either of an alb or a (cassock and) surplice, with scarf or stole for Sunday worship.

The choice of vestments to be worn, while in essence the minister's own choice, needs to bear in mind both the traditional practice of the local congregation and the nature of the service.

Where there is doubt, the Bishop's Office is available for consultation.

B1.5 Assistance in the conduct of divine worship by lay persons

An incumbent may invite lay persons to read the lessons or to lead the intercessions at Holy Communion, and to assist in the conduct of informal non-Eucharistic worship. Attention is drawn to the section on 'ministries' preceding the orders of service for Holy Communion in Common Worship.

Except in an emergency (when it is permissible for the Churchwardens to deputise for the incumbent) only Licensed Lay Ministers may conduct Morning or Evening Prayer, the Litany, the Service of Thanksgiving after Childbirth, while they and Licensed Lay Workers may publish the Banns of Marriage (subject to the conditions of the Marriage Act 1949).

The regular provision of preaching should be given by ministers licensed or authorised to do so. In extraordinary circumstances permission may be given to individuals to preach on a 'one-off' basis. Such permission should be sought from the Bishop, giving plenty of notice. Where the Bishop's Certificate has been issued that person may preach and conduct worship occasionally, within their parish.

For Administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion by lay persons, please see [B3.3](#)

B1.6 Visiting clergy and other preachers

Please see C6 Safeguarding.

B2 Copyright

The reproduction of copyright material can be a complex matter, since each copyright holder is entitled to place such conditions on the use of their work as they see fit.

Unless you know you have permission to reproduce written, published or recorded material, including material found online, or even a performance (however reverent) recorded in your own church, assume that you cannot.

Churches have no special exemptions and should respect the law and the legal rights of copyright holders. They must refrain from reproducing copyright texts or performances without permission. Any parish wishing to use texts from other sources must abide by the wishes of the copyright holder and, where required, seek their permission directly. For example, material from *Enriching the Christian Year* may be reproduced for use on a single occasion or annually, but more frequent use requires a written application.

A full statement of the position can be found in [A Brief Guide to Liturgical Copyright](#), by the Liturgical Committee.

- The copyright of the *Book of Common Prayer* is administered, on behalf of the Crown, by: *The Copyright Administrator, Cambridge University Press (CUP), The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU*. Applications to reproduce material from the Prayer Book, including service papers for use on a single occasion, should be made to CUP.
- Copyright for hymns and (except in the circumstances covered by the previous paragraph) for extracts from translations of the Bible and the Psalter must be obtained from the appropriate copyright owner, who can usually be contacted by writing first to the publisher of the hymn book, Bible or Psalter in question.
- *Not all hymns are covered under a CCLI licence. Where a hymn is not, permission must be sought separately.*

The law of copyright also includes video, audio tapes, CDs, records and films and is highly complex and far-reaching. Because of this and because of the possible serious consequences which may follow if the law is not adhered to, before recording worship or sharing recorded material, clergy are strongly advised to obtain and study the guidelines issued by the [Legal Advisory Commission](#) of the General Synod.

Useful information can also be obtained on our [diocesan website](#) and from <https://uk.ccli> who have a number of [fact files](#) about copyright as well as useful [FAQs](#).

B2.1 Common Worship

Common Worship and other authorised and commended material in the Church of England, have deliberately simplified copyright arrangements greatly. There is no need to apply for copyright permission or pay a fee, provided that the booklets are not sold, the name of the parish is clearly displayed, no more than 500 copies are made and copyright is acknowledged in the proper way.

Common Worship services from the main book should be acknowledged as follows:

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000.

Copyright of material from other authorised or commended sources is acknowledged in the same way, with suitable alteration to the wording.

B2.2 Bible passages

Most Bible translations include a "fair use" policy along the lines of the following taken from the [NRSV website](#):

" Up to 500 verses of the RSV or NRSV may be quoted in any form (written, visual, electronic or audio) without charge and without obtaining written permission provided all of the following conditions are met:

The total number of verses quoted is:

- less than an entire book of the Bible, and
- less than 500 verses (total), and
- less than 25% percent of the total number of words in the work in which they are quoted
- No changes are made to the text. All quotations must be accurate to the text, including all appropriate punctuation, capitalization, etc. unless specifically approved to the contrary prior to publication. All acceptable guidelines and alternative usages are available as a separate document, which is available upon request.
- The applicable notice of copyright must appear in an appropriate location in the publication in which they are quoted...*

Special permission is not required for quotations from the RSV or NRSV meeting the above criteria that are utilized in non-saleable media, such as church bulletins, orders of service, newsletters, class handouts, transparencies or other presentation media, whether electronic or mechanical."

*All quotations from the RSV or NRSV text must include the designation "RSV", "RSV-CE", "NRSV", or "NRSV-CE" after the biblical citation.

For example:

- "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth," Genesis 1:1 (NRSV) or (Genesis 1:1, NRSV)
- "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (RSV) or (John 3:16, RSV)

B3 Holy Communion

B3.1 Who are to be admitted to Holy Communion?

Canon B15A regulates who may receive Holy Communion. Please note that regular adult communicants ought to be received into the Church of England either by Confirmation, or by a rite of Reception if they are already Episcopally Confirmed. While it is understood that good pastoral reasons prevent interrogation at the altar rail, nevertheless incumbents should take reasonable care that Holy Communion is not given to the unprepared, the unbaptised, and to those who intend wilfully to misuse the sacred elements.

The Bishop is happy to receive baptised Christians into the Church of England at a Confirmation service, but it may be done - the Bishop's permission having been sought - by the incumbent, using the rite from [Christian Initiation](#).

Excluding someone from Holy Communion is an extremely grave step, only to be done in consultation with the Bishop.

B3.2 The admission of baptised children to Holy Communion

The Church of England now admits baptised children to Holy Communion under regulations listed in the Supplementary Material to the canons under Canon B15A.

Parishes wishing to admit baptised children to Holy Communion *must obtain the Bishop's permission*, via the [Children & Young People's Mission & Ministry Team](#) (and must have done so since 2006). The decision must be made by the incumbent and PCC together, with due consultation of the worshipping community. The Bishop's permission should be on public display.

A child's First Communion must be recorded in a register, and each child will receive from the Bishop (upon application by the parish) a signed certificate. Once a person has been admitted to Holy Communion they may not be deprived of it on the grounds of their age, although once a communicant child reaches maturity, they should be encouraged to come to Confirmation.

The [Children & Young People's Mission & Ministry Team](#) has a useful information pack for parishes seeking more information and this can be obtained from them (01634 560000) or the documents may be downloaded from the [diocesan website](#).

B3.3 The administration of the Holy Sacrament by lay persons

Following the amendment of Canon B12 in July 2015, the General Synod has now approved regulations whereby a Diocesan Bishop may give authority to incumbents and priests-in-charge to give this authorisation. These regulations came into force on 1st of October 2015.

The Bishop has taken full advantage of these regulations and, according to Regulation 3 of the incumbents and priests-in-charge in this Diocese may authorise communicants of good standing to distribute the Holy Sacrament in their parish. This authority extends to Area Deans where the parish is in vacancy, but it does not at present extended to chaplains (owing to synodical oversight) who must still apply either directly to the Bishop, or ask the parish incumbent/priest-in-charge to authorise lay assistants functioning in that parish.

The regulations specify that:

- Those chosen to share in Eucharistic ministry must be of good standing within the life of the Church and regular communicants within the Church of England - this includes children who are baptised and regular communicants;
- Each PCC (or, in the case of school, the headteacher) must consent in relation to each person authorised to administer Holy Communion;
- Authorisation must be given to each person in writing specifying the period for which authorisation is given, and whether this extends to taking the sacrament to the sick and housebound. A list of those authorised should also be included in the minutes of the PCC and made available, e.g. at a Visitation, on request.

Furthermore the Bishop expects the incumbent or priest-in-charge to prepare and train those who will exercise this ministry. This training should emphasise that it should be exercised in a reverent and prayerful manner. Attention should be given to the overall membership of the group of those chosen for this ministry, especially to ensure suitable diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender and age.

In this Diocese, the list of those authorised is to be reviewed at the last meeting of the PCC in each calendar year, with those authorised then being authorised for the following year. If a decision is made not to renew any person's authorisation, it is important that this should be for good reason and that there be pastoral sensitivity communicating that decision to the person concerned.

Please note

- It should be remembered that all Licensed Lay Ministers, Licensed Lay Workers (this does not include authorised or commissioned lay ministers) and clergy who are beneficed, licensed or hold permission to officiate, have permission to assist in the administration of the Sacrament without special leave being sought.
- Licensed Lay Ministers and other authorised lay persons may administer either the paten or the chalice and, for such an occasion, they need not be robed unless they wish.
- Authorisation to take the Sacrament to the sick and housebound does not constitute authorisation to celebrate Holy Communion by Extension. Permission for Holy Communion by Extension still must be sought from the Bishop.

B3.4 Hygiene and the chalice

From time to time there is public concern, usually arising from an epidemic such as the flu virus or the recent Covid 19 pandemic, that sharing of the common cup might be a means of infection. However, research on the chalice as a possible means of transmitting infection has shown that the risk is [extremely small](#). In the case of the Covid 19 virus the risks presented by congregational proximity – especially when masks were removed and singing was congregational – were far greater.

This can be reduced even further by the application of the normal rules of hygiene:

- A chalice of gold, silver or other suitable metal is to be preferred to pottery, particularly unglazed pottery.
- The rim of the chalice should be firmly wiped with a purificator after it has left the lips of each communicant. The same part of the purificator should not be used repeatedly, nor should it be allowed to become sodden.
- Anyone with cuts, sores or abrasions on their lips should receive communion in one kind.
- Simultaneous Communion (aka intinction), where practiced, should only be administered by the minister. ***Congregants should not be dipping their own bread into the chalice.***
- In addition to ritual ablutions, the chalice should be thoroughly cleaned after use.
- In times of a perceived threat to public health guidance may be offered either nationally or by the Archbishops or more locally by the Diocesan Bishop whose advice can be sought, if necessary.

B3.5 Gluten-free bread and non-alcoholic wine

Regarding the elements for Holy Communion, Canon law and good practice require that the bread of the Eucharist, which may be leavened or unleavened, must be “of the best and purest wheat flour that is convenient to obtain” (Canon B17). (In the spirit of this, when leavened bread is being used - ‘ordinary bread’ - the supply ought to be of fine quality bread, rather than cheap, mass-produced bread.)

Gluten-free bread, made of the best quality obtainable, does not contradict Canon B17, but ought to be made with wheat flour from which the gluten has been removed (as is the case in most church suppliers) rather than made from another substance together.

It should be noted that some people, intolerant of gluten, are sensitive even to the smallest trace of gluten, in which case care should be taken to keep the gluten-free wafers separate and to avoid touching said wafers after touching the regular wafers.

The use of non-alcoholic wine, where it is pastorally appropriate, is perfectly legal being still “fermented juice of the grape, good and wholesome” (Canon B17) - the alcohol having been removed. (Drinks of grape juice or other non-alcoholic beverages are not the same thing, and are neither Scriptural nor canonical.)

B3.6 Public Worship with Holy Communion by Extension

Holy Communion by Extension is not for routine use and may not be used except with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop. Permission must be sought by the incumbent (or by the Area Dean in the case of a vacancy) from the Bishop's office.

Holy Communion by Extension is clearly ascribed by the House of Bishops as an *in extremis* measure.

The Guidelines were revised in November 2023 and updated on the diocesan website. For further information and advice, with as much notice as possible, please contact Bishop Jonathan's chaplain through [Bishopscourt - \[bishopscourt@rochester.anglican.org\]\(mailto:bishopscourt@rochester.anglican.org\)](mailto:bishopscourt@rochester.anglican.org)

B3.7 Dispensation from weekly celebration of Holy Communion

[Canon B14A](#) provides that the reading of Morning and Evening Prayer as required by Canon B 11 or the celebration of the Holy Communion as required by Canon B 14 may be dispensed with, on an occasional basis, by the PCC and the Incumbent (or Area Dean, during vacancies) working together. Where this is intended to be a regular or longer term pattern of worship (ie more than a month), the Bishop must authorise it. Either way, the PCC must pass a resolution making clear the purpose and dates/duration of the change. Further guidance can be sought from the Bishops Chaplain.

B3.7 Aumbries (reservation of the Sacrament)

An aumbry is a locked cabinet fixed to or set into the wall of the church, installed in a side chapel or by the main altar.

It is exclusively for the reservation of the Sacrament (ideally both kinds) for the Communion of the sick and, in exceptional circumstances (see B3.6), for Holy Communion by Extension. These elements should be changed about

once a week.

It is desirable that the aumbry should be marked by a suitable light.

B4 Holy Baptism

[Canon B 21-25](#) govern the administration of Holy Baptism in the Church of England.

Key aspects of the canons to bear in mind are:

- Only ordained ministers may baptise;
- Generally, families approaching their parish church for baptism may not be refused (unless the individual is already baptised), save for the purpose of preparation or instruction. If there are circumstances in which an incumbent is considering refusing to baptise an infant, the Bishop must be consulted, and holds the final say in the matter;
- A minister, intending to baptise an infant whose parents live in another parish, should seek the goodwill of the incumbent that parish before proceeding;
- Adults coming to baptism ought to be confirmed as soon as practically possible - indeed, in this Diocese clergy are expected to bring adult candidates to be baptised in the same service as their Confirmation (see [B5 Adult Initiation](#));
- A child's right to baptism in no way is dependent on the marriage or baptism - nor indeed good standing or expressed gender - of the parents. However, if the parents or godparents also seek baptism for themselves, it is appropriate to baptise them first and then the child.
- Only a person with parental responsibility has the right to present a child for baptism.

The canons also state that baptisms, wherever possible, ought to take place in the main Sunday service. The Bishop understands that this can have its own set of difficulties and is not always possible or practical, but does expect each congregation to make a proper effort to receive baptism families into the worshipping life of the Church.

B4.1 Photography and video recordings

The same principles apply as at Weddings – see [B6](#). See also <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/blogs/understanding-how-use-photo-video-consent-forms-your-church>

B4.2 Requests for 're-baptism'

The Church of England does not re-baptise. However, any refusal should be accompanied by a sensitive explanation of the theology, tradition and practice of the Church in this matter.

Requests for re-baptism usually lie in a desire of adults to own for themselves a baptism they do not remember, and with which they have not previously engaged, or else in the sense of having fallen from their baptismal promises and a desire for a new start. [Christian Initiation](#) provides several rites which may be offered to address these desires.

Should the very rare case arise that a rite of renewal of baptismal vows in water is pastorally appropriate, every effort by word and deed should be undertaken to make it abundantly clear that the rite is not Baptism, and reference should be made to the lasting significance of the baptism already received.

B4.3 Baptism registers

Baptism registers may be used not only (as required) to record the baptisms that take place in the parish, but also, where the baptism has taken place in another parish, to make a log in brief terms for the sake of tracing the baptism in later years.

B4.4 Parental Consent

Only a person with parental responsibility may present a child for baptism: to baptise a child improperly presented for baptism may be construed as assault. Therefore it is advised that parishes devise a simple addition to their paperwork, viz. a questionnaire asking who the natural parents of the child are, and who holds parental responsibility.

Similarly, while it only requires one parent/person with parental responsibility to present a child for baptism, it is pastorally important to check – where possible – the views of any other such. In the event of any disagreement the minister should seek the direction of the Bishop.

See the [Legal Advisory Commission's advice](#) for further guidance.

B5 Adult Christian Initiation

In an episcopally ordered Church the Bishop is the Chief Minister of the whole process of Christian initiation and is integral to its practice. Therefore:

B5.1 Confirmation

Confirmation is the Bishop's service, which may be hosted in a parish church or other suitable place of worship. Therefore the structure of the service belongs to the Bishop, but every effort is made to see that the structure of the Eucharist reflects local practice. Accordingly, some 6-8 weeks before the Confirmation Service, Bishops Court will send an outline of the service to the parish priest for the addition of local material.

The Bishop's permission needs to be sought to present for Confirmation of a child under the age of 12 years.

At the time of writing, dates for Confirmations are received via Area Deans by the June of the previous year. Requests made outside the normal process may not be successful.

B5.2 Baptism, Affirmation of Baptismal Vows and Reception into the Church of England

A Confirmation service may also incorporate the baptism of those Confirmation candidates not yet baptised; the baptism of close younger kin of Confirmation candidates; the reaffirmation of baptismal vows by those who have returned to faith and to the Church's fellowship; and also the reception into the fellowship of the Church of England of those who have been baptised and episcopally confirmed within another Church tradition.

In this Diocese, adult catechumens ought to be baptised at the same service at which they are confirmed, and the bishop strongly discourages the baptism of an adult independently of Confirmation. Good pastoral reasons need to be given when this is otherwise, when the incumbent [notifies the Bishop](#).

If a candidate is baptised at a church not their parish church, it is worth making a note in the 'home' parish baptism register, for future reference ([see B4.3](#)).

B6 Marriage

In the matter of marriages, clergy have a very responsible role with regard to the law. Every care must be taken to ensure that the due requirements of the law are in all respects carried out. The local (civil) registrar is an invaluable resource and is generally more than happy to be consulted where there is any doubt.

All incumbents should possess a copy of:

"[Guidebook for the Clergy](#)", issued by HM Passport Office, General Register Office – 2011 (updated November 2013 and May 2021) AND

"[Anglican Marriage in England and Wales – A Guide to the Law for Clergy](#)" issued by the Faculty Office, No. 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3JT. Please always check via the Faculty office website for the latest supplements to the guidance.

B6.1 Who may be married in Church?

B6.1.1 Every parishioner is entitled to be married in his or her parish church after banns, whether the parties are members of the Church of England or not.

B6.1.2 (Divorce) On the other hand, no cleric is compelled to solemnise the marriage of any person whose former marriage has been dissolved and whose former spouse is still living, or to permit the marriage of such person to be solemnised in the church of which s/he is the minister (see also **B6.4**).

B6.1.3 (Foreign nationals) A marriage involving a foreign national who is not a British or Irish national, or who does not as an EU citizen have Settled or Pre-Settled Status, will need to have a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate (SRC) - through the civil system - as the preliminary to a Church marriage. EEA foreign nationals with Settled Status would normally be married under a Common Licence (obtained via a Surrogate for Marriages in the Diocese (listed in the CMS database) who will liaise with the Diocesan Registry), rather than by banns.

B6.1.4 (LGBT+) To be married in a Church of England church, by a Church of England minister, the engaged

couple must each be (according to law) a different sex to the other. An incumbent may not, in law, request to know the birth-sex of an applicant to be married, nor refuse the use of their church for marriage to a couple, one or either of whom has completed the transgender process. However no cleric is compelled to solemnise the marriage of a transgender person (providing they are legally entitled to hold that knowledge – hearsay is not sufficient).

B6.1.5 (Qualifying connection) [The Church of England Marriage Measure 2008](#) permits a person to have a 'qualifying connection' if one party to the marriage has an historic or occasional connection to the parish - see the [House of Bishops' guidance](#).

B6.1.6 (Annulment) The Church recognises a declaration of nullity made by the civil courts in the United Kingdom; that is, a declaration that there is no valid marriage in existence. A cleric has the same obligation to marry a parishioner whose marriage has been annulled in this way as would exist if the parishioner had never gone through a form of marriage.

If in doubt, seek advice from the local registrar or from the Bishop's Office.

B6.2 Who may conduct a wedding?

Transitional deacons are not encouraged to conduct weddings on the grounds that they are already learning so much in their first year. They should not do so without the consent of those responsible for their training (and, if a different person, the incumbent). If conducting a wedding, a deacon may bless the rings, and pronounce a blessing on the couple, but should not pronounce the blessing of the congregation at the end of the service (cf The Archbishops guidelines regarding the solemnization of marriage by deacons may be found in the [Supplementary Material](#) of [the canons of the Church of England](#).)

The decision as to who should solemnise a wedding belongs to the incumbent. If a visiting minister is invited to conduct the wedding from outside the Diocese, the incumbent is under a statutory duty to check the good standing of the visiting minister. Please contact the [Bishop's office](#) who will facilitate this (see C6 – Safeguarding).

B6.2.1 Ecumenical weddings

Because Anglican marriage has a special status in law in this country, Church of England clergy may only solemnise marriage in Anglican buildings, and Church of England buildings may only host Anglican wedding ceremonies conducted by a properly authorised Anglican cleric.

However, a(n) (ecumenical) minister can substantially assist at a Church of England wedding, providing the Anglican cleric conducts:

- The Declarations;
- The Vows
- The Proclamation
- The Blessing of the Marriage
- The Marriage Document

Similarly, an Anglican cleric may assist in weddings led by other denominations (according to [canon B43](#)), providing it is clear that they are not conducting the wedding itself.

B6.3 Permission to marry - banns or licence

To be married by banns is the simplest and cheapest method and, with a qualifying connection, most couples now have access to this. It is important to remember that if banns are being read in another church also, the officiating minister must see a banns certificate before solemnising the wedding. Not all parishes have a service every week, so it is important to give the 'away' parish enough notice to complete the reading of banns.

An incumbent is required to see that the banns are read, when requested to do so by a couple seeking to marry in another church.

For a good summary of the reasons for marrying by licence, see the [Church of England website](#). Again, the licence must be seen by the officiating minister.

Couples in which one or both parties is a foreign national should be married by licence (see **B6.1.3 (Foreign Nationals)**).

B6.4 Marriage, when one or both parties are divorced

The House of Bishops has issued [advice to clergy](#) regarding further marriage in church after divorce. This can also be found in the [Supplementary Material](#) of [the canons of the Church of England](#).

Key matters to note are:

- It is not a light matter to solemnise a marriage in which one partner has a previous partner still living.

- No minister is compelled to officiate at such further marriages, nor to make their church available for them, but if you are unwilling to officiate at further marriages or to make your church available for such services, you should make this clear to enquiring couples at the earliest stage.
- The PCC has no power to force the minister to conduct the marriage, or to make the church available for a wedding, when one or both parties are divorced.
- If considering conducting the marriage, careful and sensitive investigation should be made regarding the breakdown of the former marriage, and the timing of the forming of the new relationship.

Such marriages do not need the permission of the Diocesan Bishop, although he is willing both to give advice and, for the protection of his clergy, to be the avowed source of a decision not to conduct the marriage.

Clergy conducting such a marriage must see and check the relevant divorce documents before arranging the marriage preliminaries. Particular note should be taken that a decree absolute (rather than nisi) has been obtained.

Banns can only be published after the incumbent has had sight of the decree absolute.

If in doubt, contact your local registrar.

B6.5 Services of prayer and dedication

In 1985 the House of Bishops approved and commended for use Services of Prayer and Dedication after Civil Marriage. The vows taken in a civil marriage are just as binding as those taken in church but the Service gives the couple an opportunity to express their commitment before God.

You must of course be satisfied before conducting the service that a marriage recognised by English law has been contracted.

B6.6 Music and decorations

Although s/he will try as far as possible to meet the wishes of the bride and bridegroom and will seek the cooperation of the organist, it is the responsibility of the incumbent to decide what music is to be played and what hymns, psalms or anthems are to be sung at a wedding. The incumbent has the final decision about what furnishings or flowers are to be placed in or about the church for the occasion.

B6.7 Photography and video recordings

It is the incumbent's decision whether or not, and how, photographs or other recordings be allowed during the service.

The Bishop's advice is that photographs should be allowed only during the signing of the registers and after the service.

Flashlight photographs should never be allowed during the service in order to avoid attention being diverted from the solemnity of the occasion.

If a sound or video recording is requested the incumbent should insist that all necessary equipment is installed well before the congregation arrives for the service and be as unobtrusive as possible. In all such recordings the law of copyright applies - see [B2 - Copyright](#) - **i.e. the permission of the copyright owner is required e.g. for the recording of music and lyrics.** The musicians' rights are also protected under copyright law, and their permission should be sought before permission to record is given.

B6.8 Marriage registers

The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc.) Act 2019 significantly altered the process of registering a marriage. The "Guidebook for the Clergy", issued by HM Passport Office, General Register Office (online) offers good advice. There is some variation in the practice of the new scheme so if you have any uncertainty it is worth contacting your civil registrar for guidance.

This has not changed the guidance above, although where there have been civil preliminaries, the couple will now bring a schedule from the Local Register Office.

There are now two forms of registration of the marriage. The ecclesiastical record of marriages, which should be made in a document not the service register, and the civil registration, which is now held by the registrar, electronically. Therefore all Church wedding registers should be archived, with one retained by the church and the other closed register delivered to the Local Registration Office.

Rather than a registrar, the officiant should print off the Marriage Document and complete 1-7 in registrar's ink, checking with the couple that the details are correct, and complete the document (sections 8-11 also in registrar's ink) after the ceremony, when – as in olden times – the parties and the witness will need to sign it. After it has been signed, only superficial changes may be made – and then, only immediately after the ceremony and witnessed by the parties. Any significant, or later, alterations will need to be taken to the registrar's office.

It is the responsibility of the officiant to take the Marriage document to the registrar, although the family *may* agree for another party to take it. Once received at the register office – and not before – the marriage is registered in the electronic register (Registration Online, RON), and the parties can then be issued with a marriage certificate. It is this, and not the Marriage Document, that constitutes the legal proof of marriage.

We no longer

- register marriages
- send quarterly returns
- charge for a certificate

B7 Funerals

B7.1 Who may come to the church for funeral?

A parishioner is entitled to have their funeral service conducted in the parish church and to be buried in the churchyard, if it is open, or that of the parish where s/he is on the electoral roll, irrespective of the place of death.

A non-parishioner can be buried in the churchyard of the parish where s/he happened to die.

These rights apply also to the interment of ashes after cremation.

If the deceased person is not a parishioner, not on the electoral roll of the parish and has not died in the parish, the person's burial or the interment of his or her ashes in the churchyard can take place only with the consent of the incumbent. In deciding whether or not to give such consent the incumbent shall have regard to any general guidance given by the Parochial Church Council of the parish with respect to the matter. In order that bereaved families may receive pastoral care, the minister who conducts a funeral of someone from another parish, should, wherever possible, notify the deceased person's incumbent or welcome that parish incumbent to take the service.

These are not only legalities, these are part of the practical outworking of the pastoral implications of the 'cure of souls'.

B7.2 Who may officiate at a funeral?

Licensed Lay Ministers and other lay workers may only bury the dead or read the burial service if they have specific permission in their licence.

The incumbent has a duty to conduct the funerals of parishioners, even if this is in a crematorium outside the parish. Reasonable notice must be given.

Occasionally a family may request a specific minister due to family links. This request must be approved by the incumbent. The incumbent is under no obligation to fulfil this request - even if it is part of the dead person's will - although a refusal must be handled sensitively. If a visiting minister is invited to conduct the funeral from outside the Diocese or the Church of England, the incumbent is under a statutory duty to check the good standing of the visiting minister. Please contact the [Bishop's office](#) who will facilitate this.

Increasingly, funerals and memorials are being held in the chapels of funeral directors. It is legal for a Church of England minister to conduct such a service, though if the chapel is not in the minister's own parish, consent should be sought from the incumbent of that parish.

B7.3 Burial in a Churchyard

Parishioners may be buried in the churchyard with or without any religious service.

The selection of a particular grave is a matter which is within the discretion of the incumbent, but neither the incumbent nor the PCC can give anyone exclusive rights to any area of the churchyard. Only by faculty can a grave be 'reserved', and even then, there is no right of ownership (see also [G6 Churchyard Regulations](#)).

The responsibility for arranging the digging of a grave lies in the hands of the executors or other persons responsible for the funeral arrangements.

Before overseeing the interment of the body, the minister must be satisfied that a certificate for the disposal of the body has been issued by the registrar, or corresponding order made by the coroner.

B7.4 Care of Churchyards

The care of churchyards is a particularly fraught, so to speak, field. A study of [the 'Churchyards Handbook'](#) is recommended, although the Church of England's [brief guide](#) is useful.

The [Diocesan Churchyard Regulations](#) can be found on the Diocesan website, and section G.6-8 of these guidelines. The incumbent is responsible for maintaining these regulations. Most funeral directors and stonemasons will be aware, but great care needs to be taken in enforcing these regulations with grieving families. It is better to take advice sooner rather than later. It is good practice to alert the bereaved family to the existence of these regulations before the funeral service in church or at the crematorium takes place by having available a suitably pastoral procedural letter or pamphlet.

B7.4 Crematoria

Cremation takes place in large crematoria, often at a distance from the home of the deceased, which can create practical problems for the funeral, and pastoral problems for the family.

When the funeral takes place in the church, and the committal at the crematorium, imagination needs to be used to ensure that both services are connected without being overly repetitive. (For example, it is not necessary for the minister and family to accompany the body to the crematorium - the committal may take place at the church door, for example, or at the lych gate, and the body then sent on to the crematorium with the funeral directors.)

When the cremated remains are left at the crematorium, again, with imagination, provision may be made to hold the grief and memory of the bereaved in the parish church, for example using books of remembrance, annual memorial services, memorial corners and gardens.

B7.5 Burial of ashes in a churchyard

The Funeral Service in Common Worship provides a short Committal Service of prayer for the separate [burial of ashes](#) and this can be extended with readings if wished. Often relatives wish to attend even though there is no need for them to do so. It is usually done by a priest, with the undertaker bringing the ashes and pouring them into a prepared hole.

Wherever the Church has an existing churchyard or burial ground, relatives should be encouraged to inter ashes in existing family graves and this can be done without re-opening the grave or removing stones etc. It can take place in any open or closed churchyard, provided that, in the case of a closed churchyard, the Order in Council which closed the churchyard allows for the continuing interment of ashes.

Many parishes have a designated area in the churchyard or grounds of the church where ashes can be buried. Any area set aside within a churchyard for the specific burial of cremated remains must be authorised under a specific faculty (see also [G6 Churchyard Regulations](#)). Gardens of Remembrance should be clearly advertised as such, with relevant regulations clearly visible, and, as with burials, it is good practice to alert the bereaved family to the existence of these regulations before the funeral service in church or at the crematorium takes place. The diocesan guidelines can be found [here](#).

[The 'Churchyards Handbook'](#) published by Church House Publishing contains a section on gardens of remembrance.

B8 Ministry of Absolution after Private Confession

The ministry of reconciliation is covered by [Canon B29](#), and [Supplementary Canon](#), and by the [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\)](#). While these guidelines affirm in general terms the confidentiality often referred to as the 'seal of the confessional', this is currently under review.

It is customary that a priest shall not exercise the ministry of absolution after private confession until s/he has been three years in priest's orders. Nor is it a ministry generally undertaken by a priest not receiving the same.

B9 The ministry of Healing

The ministry to the sick is governed by [Canon B37](#).

The healing ministry is available to all in the following ways:

- PUBLICLY – as part of services
- AT HEALING SERVICES – including the Eucharist: in institutions such as hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, residential homes for the elderly and disabled people, prisons etc and at healing centres and related conferences
- PRIVATELY -- within the home, hospitals and hospices and discretely in church side chapels etc
- ECUMENICALLY – across the Church denominations, including local services, health care and prison chaplaincies
- In co-operation with the medical and caring professions

It should be noted that, in accordance with Mark 6.13 and James 5.14, the laying on of hands with the anointing of oil is a presbyteral function, but that the healing ministry of the Church is a Gospel imperative (Matthew 10. 5-15).

B9.1 Healing services

There is plenty of material, as well as thoughtful notes and wise advice, to be found in the [Common Worship Pastoral Services](#) edition.

When holding a healing service, however, it is worth noting that publicity is normally best confined to the church congregation. They may also want to bring their friends and those for whom they have been praying.

Both the congregation and - most particularly - those sharing in the ministry of healing, should prepare individually and corporately, touching on the nature of healing in Christian tradition (as opposed to magic or 'faith healing').

B9.2 Ministry to the sick

See [B3.3](#) - General Synod has now approved regulations whereby a Diocesan Bishop may give - and in this Diocese has given - authority to incumbents and priests-in-charge to authorise lay assistants who may administer Holy Communion. These [regulations](#) came into force on 1st of October 2015.

- It should be remembered that all Licensed Lay Ministers (this does not include authorised or commissioned lay ministers) and clergy who are beneficed, licensed or hold permission to officiate, have permission to assist in the administration of the Sacrament - including taking Communion to the sick - without special leave being sought.
- The reserved Sacrament, in the interval between the Celebration of Holy Communion and distribution to the sick, should be kept in the church. An aumbry ([see B3.7](#)) or similar should be used if the reserved Sacrament being kept overnight.
- Authorisation to take the Sacrament to the sick and housebound **does not constitute** authorisation to celebrate Holy Communion by Extension. Permission for Holy Communion by Extension still must be sought from the Bishop.
- Permission to take Holy Communion to the housebound does not constitute grounds for a DBS check. For all lay persons authorised to take Communion to the sick, a role description should be drawn up, which will help discern whether a DBS check is necessary. Please contact the [Warden of Lay Ministry](#) for advice.
- When a priest is taking Communion to the sick it is preferable that s/he celebrate Holy Communion when practically possible.

B9.3 Resources

The post of Bishop's Advisor for Healing and Well-being is currently vacant.

There are, however, a number of Christian agencies, mostly ecumenical, which provide resources, literature, and general information. These include:

- The Guild of Health and St Raphael <http://www.gohealth.org.uk>
- Divine Healing Mission <http://www.crowhursthealing.co.uk>

B10 Holy Oils

The use of holy oil is innately scriptural and from an early date in the history of the Church it became customary to sign candidates for baptism with the cross in holy oil as an act of preparation and then to anoint them with the perfumed oil of chrism immediately after their baptism.

This signified the touch and power of the Holy Spirit to whom each Christian is incorporated into the prophetic, priestly and royal life of Jesus Christ. It is through intimacy, touch and human warmth that the incarnate God meets us, heals us and strengthens us. Much of modern life is estranged from the dimension of our senses as channels of God's divine love – instead we have exploited them often through base commercialism. The use of these holy oils in ministry reaffirms the holiness of the material world and reassures us of the power and energy of God's Holy Spirit.

At the [Chrism Eucharist](#) on Maundy Thursday the Bishop blesses the oils to be used in the sacramental life of each Christian community in the Diocese through the coming year. Anointing by the power of prayer and the Holy Spirit God touches us with his healing grace and love.

Each oil is prepared with a particular perfume evoking its use and nature.

B10.1 The Oil of the Sick

This is used, along with the laying-on of hands, in ministering to the sick and frail. Many medicines, ancient and modern, are oil-based and soothe and heal the body.

B10.2 The Oil of Baptism

This comes from the gladiatorial arena and relates to the modern day locker room. Combatants would oil their bodies to make them slippery, so preventing their opponent gripping and holding them. Similarly, those preparing for baptism (catechumens) need to recognise the power of the evil one and be prepared to prevent him catching hold of our lives. Oil is also today used as an embrocation by athletes to make the body supple and to lubricate muscles and joints ready for action; Christians, too, need to be fit and strong for the assaults of the world, the flesh and the devil. This oil should be used BEFORE Holy Baptism but NOT as an alternative or substitute for the Holy Chrism.

B10.3 The Oil of Chrism

This is a heady and aromatic oil, a sign of God's holy and anointing Spirit. As a person is baptised (christened) by water and the Spirit, so he or she is then anointed on the head with this holy oil as a sign of this incorporation into the life of Jesus Christ. Anointing in this way signifies the royal priesthood of all believers and emphasises the essence of Holy Baptism as the source and process of discipleship. The oil is also used at Confirmation (confirming the Spirit's action in an adult profession of faith), and can be used at marriages, ordination and the consecration of bishops, altars and churches, as well as at the commissioning of a new ministry.

B11 Welcoming disabled people

As part of the Body of Christ, the inclusion of disabled people within our churches and within community and missional activities is a Gospel imperative

In thinking through the steps involved in achieving inclusion and what that might look like, churches can usefully ask themselves three questions, which are applicable to both church services and community and missional activities:

- Can disabled people get in/join on the same terms as others
- Can disabled people participate?
- Can disabled people flourish and actively contribute?

It is worth remembering that "disability" should be interpreted in the widest sense, including those with a wide range of disabilities *which may or may not be visible*

Bishops Advisor for Disability: <https://rochester.anglican.org/for-leaders/support-for-clergy/support-for-clergy>

B11.1 Worship

The importance of ensuring that disabled people can fully participate in services is not to be underestimated. Getting into church is only the start; real care needs to be taken to ensure that disabled people can access the service alongside the rest of the congregation. This means ensuring that people can fully participate

B11.1.2 Enabling participation

Ensuring that deaf and disabled people can participate in worship is *not an optional extra*; churches must play their part in ensuring that people have what they need to participate. These might include:

- Use of subtitles
- Use of audio and text description to support visual material
- Provision of sign language interpreters; for example, for funerals
- Provision of large print material
- Seating which allows for good lines of sight for lip readers

Advice on the use of interpreters and other steps which support inclusion can be sought from The Reverend Rachel Wilson, [Bishop's Adviser](#) on Disability reverendrachelwilson@gmail.com

Whilst it is recognised that becoming more inclusive is a process and one in which we are keen to encourage churches, it is not a factor which can be ignored in worship planning.

B11.1.3 Participation in Holy Communion

It is a common practice to offer to take communion to people in their seats. Whilst there may be good pastoral reasons for doing this, people should always be given the opportunity to receive from the rail if that is what they wish to do

B11.1.4 Disability and Healing Prayer

Whilst disabled people may wish to participate in healing prayer, care should always be taken to ensure that the relationship between those leading prayer and those being prayed for does not become a coercive one. The potential for spiritual abuse is significant and these questions need to be sensitively handled

B11.2 Mission and Community Initiatives

In planning parish activity, churches should ensure that their activities are planned in ways which are open to disabled people. Disabled people should also be consulted in planning for mission and community work and where possible, should be encouraged to lead services and other programmes

B12 Ministry of Deliverance

'Deliverance ministry is a specialist ministry within the Church of England and constitutes one aspect of the Church of England's commitment to bringing wholeness, peace and healing to all who experience distress, whether in body, mind or spirit. As such, deliverance ministry is pastoral, missiological and embedded in wider healing ministry'. (Church of England website "Deliverance Ministry.")

Those seeking the ministry of deliverance will come with a wide range of concerns. They may be experiencing disturbance in a place they live in or have to use; they may have subjective experiences within their own mind or feelings; they may have a concern for a loved one or friend or a child; they may have been involved in occult activity of some sort or another which itself could cover a wide range of different possibilities. In extreme cases they may have been involved in Satanism. Not only will the concerns people bring come from a wide variety, but the people bringing them tend to be from a wide range of the general public often with little or no previous contact with the church, though of course sometimes cases are from church members. These factors, combined with the sensitive nature of the ministry, make it important that this ministry is handled with a special care.

Deliverance ministry is subject to the House of Bishops' pastoral guidance and to the Safeguarding Code of Practice set out in Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/mental-health-resources/deliverance-ministry>

B.12.1: Deliverance Ministry in Rochester diocese is under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop and a delegated advisor or group of advisors who are trained and experienced in this ministry. The Bishop has also appointed a convenor who leads the group. Contact with the group is initially through the Bishop's Chaplain. Referrals are only taken from the **incumbent** of the parish, or another priest with a well-established pastoral connection. In all cases the incumbent must be aware and content regarding the ministry of deliverance that is taking place.

The convenor and the group are always available to help in any matters to do with the ministry of deliverance however light the case may seem. Contact details of the convenor are available from the Bishop's office at Bishopscourt.

It is always good practice to consult with the convenor before exercising the ministry of deliverance and the Bishop insists that the convenor be consulted and involved in any serious cases of deliverance ministry. By *serious case* is meant cases where there is evidence of psychiatric illness, emotional instability or significant occult involvement, either personally or in the family background, of the person seeking ministry. The licence held by parish clergy does not include authority to conduct exorcisms. Exorcisms may only be conducted by clergy specifically licensed so to do by the Bishop.

B12.2: Safety and Safeguarding: All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the safety of any person or persons providing or receiving Deliverance ministry by following the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance/Safeguarding Code of Practice 2021 on matters relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults and in consultation and collaboration with the diocesan safeguarding adviser on matters of

safeguarding. *This guidance, and the safeguarding guidance is very clear on age limits, and areas in which Deliverance Ministry may not be used* <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/4-1>

B12.3: Collaboration with Resources of Healthcare, including Counselling and Psychotherapy: As set out in Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults (4.1.2), a multi-disciplinary approach will form part of the sensitive pastoral response to enquirers. <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/4-1>

B12.4: Continuing Pastoral Care: Good pastoral practice in Deliverance ministry depends on that specific ministry being followed up with continuing pastoral care, which would normally involve the incumbent minister.

B12.5: Those appointed by the Bishop for deliverance ministry are covered specifically for this ministry by Ecclesiastical Insurance. Clergy are to exercise caution in exercising this ministry without the advice and support of the deliverance ministry team. If in any doubt, please check with the Bishop's office.

B12.6: Matters of data protection, informed consent and safeguarding guidance/code need to be followed to ensure good practice. Deliverance ministry team members will have received appropriate training in these matters. To note, the privacy and dignity of all involved should be respected and protected, stressing the need for confidentiality. For good practice you are advised to keep a record of cases.

B12.7: Personal Conduct: Deliverance ministry witnesses to the love and healing brought by God in Christ Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the personal conduct of everyone involved in the pastoral care particular to deliverance should encourage confidence in this ministry and never undermine it.

B12.8: Deliverance and Sexual Orientation: No person may undergo Deliverance ministry aimed at changing or influencing a person's sexual orientation, even at their own request. This restriction on deliverance ministry also applies to matters of gender identity. See 4.1.5 <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/4-1>

B12.9: Complaints and procedures relating to inappropriate Deliverance Ministry practice: Most Deliverance ministry will support the pastoral care of local clergy and lay ministers and be situated within the larger ministry of healing and wholeness. However, more complex issues, mental health vulnerability and matters requiring more complex rites of deliverance must adhere to these guidelines and their safeguarding requirements. Complaints will be taken seriously. It is vital never to begin or to continue deliverance ministry when one feels out of one's depth. As noted above- advice must be taken from the convenor.

B12.10: In the unfortunate event that the media become interested, *under no circumstances* discuss this ministry with them - contact the Diocesan Communications Department for advice.

B12.11: Liturgy: There are good resources on the Church of England website related to this ministry: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/mental-health-resources/deliverance-ministry> linking to https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/liturgical-resources-for-the-ministry-of-deliverance_0.pdf and the section within [Pastoral Services](#) of Common Worship which offers liturgical rites under the [Prayers for Protection](#)

B12.12: Other Resources: A basic leaflet designed to help enquirers from the public on deliverance matters is available from [The Churches' Fellowship of Psychical and Spiritual Studies](#). Tel 01623812206 e-mail gensec@churchesfellowship.co.uk

B13 Ecumenical Relations

"Taken together the [Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018](#) and Canon B 43 - Of ecumenical relations are the Church of England's core legislation for ecumenism. Other legal provisions have a bearing upon the Church of England's ecumenical practice, such as the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969, which has had tremendous impact in enabling churches to work together, or Canon B 15A, which makes provision for the admission to Holy Communion of members of other churches." ([Code of Practice](#) on Co-operation by the Church of England with Other Churches February 2019 issued by the House of Bishops under section 5B of the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988)

[Amending Canon 38](#) condensed the current two Ecumenical Canons ([B43](#) and [B44](#)) into one Canon (currently found within the [Code of Practice](#)). Together with the Code of Practice, this gives churches much more flexibility to work with other denominations and creates provision to work with the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends.

B13.1 Informal arrangements

Currently, Rochester Diocese does not recommend the setting up of new LEs, but encourages more flexible local arrangements (using Canon B43).

Under these arrangements it is worth noting that:

B13.1.1 Non-Anglican clergy of churches ministering in Anglican buildings

(a) When a minister or member of another Church is to be invited to read the Holy Scripture or to lead intercessions and prayers, only the incumbent need approve.

(b) To assist at a Baptism or at a Marriage or conduct a Funeral a minister of another Church must have been requested by the person concerned. It is to be noted that there is **no provision** for the minister of another Church to baptise or to solemnise marriage in the Church of England. They can however 'assist' as per Canon B43.

(c) Where a minister or member of another Church is to assist in the distribution of the Holy Sacrament the incumbent and the PCC must approve (cf Bishop's Guidelines B3.3)

(d) Where a minister or member of another Church is to say or sing Morning or Evening Prayer, the Litany or to preach, the PCC must approve and, if this is to be done on a regular basis, the Bishop must also approve.

(e) Where a congregation of another denomination is invited to use a parish church for worship in accordance with the practice of that other Church, the approval of the incumbent, PCC and the Bishop is required. See [Code of Practice](#).

(Note - when lending buildings to external groups, PCCs are advised to require assurance of the safeguarding training of the key leadership members of that group, and to insist on receiving a copy of their safeguarding policy.)

In all cases above please see Safeguarding C6.4. Incumbents are responsible for ensuring that anyone who ministers in their church is authorised so to do. Regarding local ecumenical colleagues, the Bishop advises that incumbents bring such matters to Bishops court where there is any doubt. Ecumenical colleagues from other areas should be cleared through Bishops court.

B13.1.2 Anglican Clergy conducting services in non-Anglican buildings

Any deacon or priest who receives an invitation from a person authorised by another Church to take part in a service may, in the course of that service, perform any duty provided that the duty is similar to a duty which s/he is authorised to perform in the Church of England. Further s/he must obtain the approval of the incumbent of the parish in which the service is to take place. If the invitation is to take part in a service on a regular basis, the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese and the PCC of the parish where the service is to take place must be obtained in writing.

In the case of an invitation to preside at the Eucharist the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese must be obtained. The Bishop shall not give his approval unless he is satisfied that there are special circumstances which justify acceptance of the invitation. Further, the rite and the elements to be used are not to be contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter.

Where an application requires the approval of a PCC and this is refused there is no appeal. Where an incumbent's approval is withheld the applicant may send all the documents to the Bishop for decision.

B13.2 Local Covenant

When these flexible local arrangements are persistent and frequent it may be worth considering a local covenant. The essential character of this arrangement is that the local congregations of two or more denominations enter into a specific agreement. The content of the covenant is determined by the local congregations, but it can include commitment to joint worship and prayer, to training, study and mission. There are various types of local agreements to work together:

B13.2.1 local churches, exploring ways of working together, may commit themselves to the process of drawing up a programme; they may hold a service to declare their commitment to this task, seeing themselves as an area for ecumenical development. This is not an area for ecumenical development. This is not a [Local Ecumenical Co-operative Schemes](#) as understood by Canon B43.

B13.2.2 local churches may make an informal agreement to work together, but if they do not register that agreement with the Sponsoring Body and gain the support of their denominational authorities, it cannot be recognised as a local covenant as understood by Canon B43.

B13.2.3 local churches may make a formal agreement to work together; they do this with the agreement of their denominational authorities and register that agreement with the Sponsoring Body, thereby becoming partners in a Local Ecumenical Co-operative Scheme.

How the Canons apply in this case depends upon the extent of the sharing of ordained ministry agreed in the Covenant.

B13.3 Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Very occasionally it is more practical to enter into a Local Ecumenical Partnership (now called a Local Ecumenical Co-operative Scheme). This is defined as "a scheme under which Churches of more than one denomination agree, in relation to an area or institution specified in the scheme, to co-operate in accordance with the provisions of the scheme in matters affecting the ministry, congregational life or buildings of the Churches which are participating in the scheme" – [Church of England \(Ecumenical Relations\) Measure 1988](#).

Legislation regarding the establishing of new Local Ecumenical Schemes is covered under the Code of Practice on Co-operation by the Church of England with Other Churches February 2019 issued by the House of Bishops under section 5B of the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988, which states,

"Before entering into any agreement establishing, extending or amending a local ecumenical co-operative scheme, a bishop will naturally need to be satisfied that the form of the agreement serves the scheme's purpose, context and scope. The ecumenically agreed *A Framework for Local Unity in Mission* helps in this discernment. The *Framework* document proposes that agreements may take one of three forms: a working agreement, a partnership agreement, or a constitutional agreement. Any of these types of agreement could be recognised as a local ecumenical co-operative scheme under the Canon, making it possible for the bishop in all these contexts to give the permissions available to a local ecumenical co-operative scheme. They are not limited to single congregation local ecumenical partnerships." V.102

Such a scheme may take a variety of forms which demand different sorts of agreement. Please consult your Archdeacon for advice.

The Code of Practice also elucidates the legal position with regard to liturgical matters, particularly the administration of the Sacraments. It also deals with the question of joint Confirmations.

B13.4 Further Resources

The Church of England website has a number of resources on their [webpage](#), including:

[Welcoming Ethnic Minority Congregations: Church-Sharing and the Church of England - December 2020](#)

[Ecumenical Code of Practice on Cooperation by the Church of England with Other Churches - February 2019](#)

[A Formal Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment](#)

[A Service of Joint Baptism and Confirmation](#)

B14 Churches in Communion with the Church of England

Among the qualifications necessary for a person to be entitled to have his/her name entered on the Church Electoral Roll is that he or she

"is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England".

A full list of Churches in communion with the Church of England is included within the Supplementary Materials (pages 238-40) to the Canons. (CHP 8th edition 2022)

The Church of England has a special relationship with certain other Churches, such as those referred to in the [Porvoo Declaration](#), like the Church of Sweden and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estonia. This relationship is also now being recognised as one of the 'communion'.

The phrase "in communion with the Church of England" does not include members of the Free Churches or of the

Roman Catholic Church.

In addition it is now possible (under CRR1 as revised) for a baptised member of 16 years or over in good standing with a Church **not in communion with the Church of England** but which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and also having declared him/herself to be a member of the Church of England and who has habitually attended public worship in the parish for a period of six months prior to enrolment, to be qualified for inclusion on a parish electoral roll and thereby to be eligible for nomination for election to the PCC of that parish.

B15 Links with Other Dioceses

Our Diocese is linked with four Companion Dioceses - Estonia, Harare (Zimbabwe) and Kondoa and Mpwapwa in Tanzania. We also enjoy, through our Cathedral, a link with the Church of South India in Chennai.

In our overseas links we aim to:

- Support and encourage each other in God's mission
- Commit ourselves to learning about each other's history, tradition and partnership
- Share our spiritual resources and our material ones
- Build strong and lasting friendships in order to advance the Kingdom of God within our Dioceses

B15.1 The Companion Diocese Steering Group

To help ensure there that these partnerships thrive, the Steering Group meets four times a year. It's membership includes the chairs (listed below) of the Partnership Groups, the Bishop's Adviser for Overseas Links for the Diocese of Rochester and the Companion Diocese Link Coordinator and the Treasurer, Companion Diocese Links (see B14.4 below).

The Partnership Groups are made up of representatives from the many links with each diocese and they meet regularly to support our churches, schools and communities, by providing training/awareness days, sharing best practice, encouraging and generally assisting with any matters arising. Our income is currently the offerings made at our Licensing and Confirmation services. All donations to the respective dioceses go through the DBF.

B15.2 Our [Companion Dioceses](#):

B15.2.1 Estonia

We are linked under the Porvoo Agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estonia, whose practices are in many ways similar to ours. There is an annual clergy conference each January that Rochester clergy are invited to join and to which they are made very welcome. Winter temperatures can be adventurous, falling to -25C and freezing the sea. As with our other links, there is much mutual enrichment. Memories of half a century of Soviet occupation are only just under the surface. Now Estonia is looking westwards and they deeply value their links with us. Our parish links with this Diocese are increasing in number.

B15.2.2 Harare, Zimbabwe

This is our most long-standing link, starting with a friendship between a Bishop in this Diocese and the then Bishop of Harare. However, the relationship was interrupted for several years by a dispute in Harare which saw congregations locked out of their churches. They met under trees, in marquees, or hired buildings - in some cases the numbers of worshippers increased so much, they would not have fitted into their former buildings. After the matter was finally resolved in 2012, Chad Gandiya, the new Bishop and his people were granted the freedom to use the buildings that were rightfully theirs. Bishop Chad retired at the end of 2018, with The Revd Dr Farai Mutamiri consecrated and enthroned as his successor in January 2020.

B15.2.3 Kondoa, Tanzania

The Diocese of Kondoa was founded in 2001 with Yohana Mkavu as its first Bishop. A formal link was begun in 2005. Bishop Yohana resigned in 2009 and, after a period without a Bishop, Given Gaula was appointed in May 2012. This Diocese is one of the poorest in Tanzania and the Bishop faces a number of challenges to shepherd his people and grow his Church. He has visited the UK many times since his appointment, sometimes with his wife the Rev Lilian Gaula, and the reality of life in his Diocese, together with the way he and Lilian enthuse and encourage people to walk with him, has seen the number of churches linked with Kondoa grow substantially over the last few years.

This Diocese of Mpwapwa was founded in 1991, with Simon Chiwanga as the first Bishop. Rochester's first visit was in 1997, although a formal link was not agreed until 2005. By this time an impressive cathedral had been built and roofed. Rochester supported the building of Queen Esther's, a secondary school for girls with boarding facilities, and

there are several active parish links and school links. Bishop Simon's successor, Jacob Chimeledya, was appointed in 2008. Whilst continuing as Bishop of Mpwapwa, he was also elected Archbishop of Tanzania in May 2013. Bishop Jacob served additionally as Archbishop of Tanzania from 2013-2018. Bishop Jonathan attended the consecration and enthronement of their fourth Bishop, the Rt Rev Luzineth Kingamkono, on 27 August 2023.

B15.2.5 Links through Rochester Cathedral

Rochester Cathedral has a partnership with Chennai (South India) which continues to engage members of the Cathedral congregation. There is also a connection with St George's Cathedral Jerusalem – Hosam Naoum, the Bishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem, is an Honorary Canon of Rochester.

B15.3 Developing a parish link

All the parties to a link gain enormous benefit. And the more people that are involved, the more there is to be gained. If it's a church link - it is good to involve the wider church; perhaps the PCC, the Mission Committee, perhaps form a small group of 'interested' parishioners.

If it's led by the school - perhaps involve the Head, the Governors, the PTA, perhaps form a small group of 'interested' parents.

Where these links broaden to embrace the wider community, we see a range of connections - we know of some links that have begun scout groups in their link community; some are looking to share their experience on environmental issues; some have invited teachers and clergy to the UK; some work with partner charities on resource utilisation projects. Many links grow to establish mutual projects as friends begin to **share their spiritual and material resources** - some have provided stipend support and some supported a long term 'project manager' placement in the Diocese; some support a bible school ... the possibilities are endless.

B15.4 Visiting clergy from overseas

Please see C6 Safeguarding

B15.5 For more information

There is real joy to be had in forming a link with a church in one of our Companion Dioceses. If you want to know more, please get in contact with David who have built up a store of 'best practice'. They would be happy to answer any questions you may have and could arrange for someone to come and talk to your church.

The [Diocesan website](#) carries the most up to date information for our Companion Dioceses.

The Revd Canon David Kitley, Bishop's Adviser for Companion Dioceses (for the Diocese of Rochester)
(Offers advice and guidance on more strategic matters.)

Tel: 07437-152723

Email: kitley@clara.net

Mr Peter Kettle, Appeal Coordinator, [Poverty and Hope](#),

Tel: 01474 813632

Email: povertyandhope@gmail.com

The Revd Christine Allen (Companion Diocese Co-ordinator)

Tel: 01634 853172

Email: revchrisallen74@gmail.com

B16 Interfaith Relations

B16.1 Inter-faith Adviser

A useful resource for ideas about Inter-Faith engagement can be found on the Church of England's [Presence and Engagement](#) section of the website

B16.2 Interfaith Groups

The following Inter-faith groups are known to meet in the Diocese:-

B16.2.1 Medway Inter Faith Action (MIFA)

Aims:

- To promote, organise and support Inter-Faith and Multi-Faith activities in the Medway area
- To promote cohesion and dialogue between the Faiths and Faith Communities in the Medway area
- To promote mutual respect and understanding
- To support, and maintain membership of, the Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom
www.medwayinterfaith.org.uk

B16.2.2 North Kent Council for Interfaith Relations

The Council co-ordinates various interfaith initiatives across North Kent. <https://www.northkentinterfaith.org.uk/>

B16.2.3 Dialogue society

<http://www.dialoguesociety.org/> They work to foster relations between Christians and Muslims.
<https://www.dialoguesociety.org/publication/community/>

B16.2.4 Bexley interfaith Forum

Contact Rev Trevor Wyatt revtrevorwyatt@btinternet.com

B16.2.5 Bromley Three Faiths forum

Contact: Andrew McClellan, 020 8460 1844 or saintjohnsbromley@gmail.com

B16.3 Scriptural Reasoning

A fruitful area of Inter-faith dialogue is Scriptural Reasoning, which has been pioneered at Cambridge University <http://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/sr> This site includes many suggested texts which can be used by Christians, Muslims and Jews to explore a theme.

B16.4 Interfaith worship

[The Ecumenical Canons](#) (Canon B43) restrict the worship conducted within a Church of England building to that which is (Christian and) Trinitarian in nature.

However, it is sometimes appropriate to allow the use of church-owned buildings for the worship of other religions as an act of hospitality, for example when the usual building has been damaged or is being renovated.

See also the relevant pages https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/ecumenical-code-of-practice-2019-may-22_0.pdf

It is wise to contact your Archdeacon before offering any building for the use of another religion.

B16.5 Interfaith vigils

It is becoming increasingly common to hold vigils after an event that has had a serious impact in the community, and it is often appropriate for these vigils to express solidarity across the faith community. For advice please see the [Presence and Engagement website](#).

C MISSION AND MINISTRY

C1 Vocational Exploration

If a person senses that they may have a vocation to ordination or if they are encouraged to explore this by their incumbent, the first step of exploration is to sign up, via the Diocesan Website for an "It's Your Calling Day". The incumbent may also want to contact the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations (DDO & V). Following this day, everybody attending is invited to meet with a Vocation Adviser.

C1.1 Exploration

If the explorer still feels that the calling to ordination is to be explored further after working with the VA for 3-4 months on various tasks, the VA will write a report for the DDO&V.

At this point the candidate then

- meets with the DDO & Vocations
- A process of Safer Recruiting is started, including obtaining an Ordinand DBS. An Ordinand DBS is necessary even if other DBS Certificates are held at the time. The prospective Candidate will also need to complete the online Basic and Foundation Safeguarding training
- A full CV has to be obtained, and ordinand DBS has to be obtained
- The explorer then works, with the DDO or Assistant DO (ADO) in the first instance, towards Stage One of the Shared Discernment process

The Stage One set of discernment interviews, which will be organized by those of the national Ministry Team, consists of six 15 minute interviews and will take place on-line. After these interviews, a short report is sent to diocese which will help discern which areas, if any, might need further development before the explorer proceeds to Stage Two in discernment.

C1.2 National Discernment Process

Once the Sponsoring Bishop is confident that the explorer's vocation is ready to be attended at the Stage Two Discernment interviews. The DDO and Candidate will prepare the relevant paperwork.

It might be necessary, if the Candidate has been divorced, remarried and their previous spouse is still alive, or their spouse has previously been married, for a C4 Faculty to be obtained. This requires discernment to be put on hold. This process is carried out by one of the Bishop's Representatives, and the Faculty must be obtained before the Stage Two interviews.

Throughout the two-stage discernment process, which could normally take up to two years but be slightly less or more, depending on experience and other circumstances, there are a number of interviews and tasks which the vocational explorer is expected to engage with. Their faith, experience of mission (in its widest sense), involvement in church and relationships with others are explored, as well as their self-awareness, all being key aspects of a life of future ordained ministry. More general information can be found on the Church of England Website.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/vocations/preparing-ordained-ministry/understanding-discernment> .

Details of the Shared Discernment Process within the Diocese of Rochester and the C4 Faculty process can be obtained on request from vocations@rochester.anglican.org .

C1.3 The DDOs

The Diocese currently has one DDOV and **a team of six assistant DDOs.**

C1.4 Summary of the criteria for selection for ministry

A summary of the Criteria for Selection for Ministry in the Church of England – published by The Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council - can be found on the Church of England website or for young people considering ministry the Diocese has a Young Person's Champion, or it might be that the Ministry Experience Scheme is appropriate.

C1.5 Disability and vocation

The numbers of disabled people in licenced and ordained ministry are still very small. However, it is vital that parishes remain alert to the truth that God call disabled people too and that we should expect to see the outworking of God's purposes in disabled people as we do in others

The life experience of many disabled people may mean that they assume that God does not call them. Churches have a huge part to play in encouraging disabled people in their spiritual and formational growth.

Mentors, incumbents, and DDOs may need to be flexible, and creative in accompanying disabled people through the discernment process, The educational path of some disabled people may mean they cannot demonstrate the "usual" formational and educational "cues" in the discernment process. This makes it all the more important that disabled people seeking to discern God's call are able to establish trusting relationships with those who are accompanying them.

C2 Deacons

A deacon is an ordained minister who has a distinctive ministry within Christ's church. In the Church of England, the Diaconate remains predominantly a transitional stage to the priesthood, although every priest ordained in the Church of England remains a deacon.

C2.1 The distinctive diaconate

However, a Distinctive Diaconate has been recognised more recently as a significant contribution for ministry within the life of the Church.

At present in the Diocese of Rochester there are few who hold this particular office. It is possible for those in the Distinctive Diaconate to be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and be deployed in a number of settings within the life of the Diocese.

C2.2 Clerical dress

A deacon is subject to the same customs - and canons - of clerical dress as the priest, except that the stole is worn over the left shoulder and tied under the right.

C2.3 Functions of the deacon

"Deacons are called to work with the bishop and priests with whom they serve as heralds of Christ's Kingdom. They are to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, as agents of God's purposes of love. They are to serve the community in which they are set, bringing to the Church the needs and hopes of all the people." (Ordination of Deacons, Common Worship 2007).

Traditionally, the deacon's role is 'outward facing': care of the housebound and the destitute and, liturgically, in the proclamation of the Gospel, exhorting the worshipping people of God to word or action – eg the invitations to confess and to exchange the Peace, and the dismissal - and leading the people of God in their prayer for the world (the intercessions).

A deacon may not preside at Holy Communion nor pronounce the blessing nor absolution of God (except, distinctively, if officiating at a wedding see [B6 Marriage](#)).

C2.4 Preparing for priesting

Before a deacon is ordained into the priesthood, they must be recommended for ordination (again) by the Diocesan Bishop, which will be preceded by interviews and reports. However it is also important that the deacon is prepared for ordination to the priesthood in a practical sense. In particular it is beneficial to rehearse the words and actions for presiding at Holy Communion - in essence, practising the Eucharistic Prayer - so that, when they come to it, the new priest can preside gracefully, prayerfully and confidently.

C3 Assistant Clergy

C3.1 Nature of Appointment

An ordained assistant member of staff is an office-holder, licensed by the Bishop to assist a beneficed incumbent, Team Rector or Priest-in-Charge with the Cure of Souls in his/her parish. Such posts are held under Common Tenure; this may, however, be limited if the person is required to undertake initial ministerial education.

Stipendiary assistant clergy will be either an Assistant Curate in Training, whose selection, stipend and training will be organised by the Diocese; or an Assistant Curate (not in training) whose appointment and stipend are organised by the parish, and who is responsible for their own training. By the means of section 99, an assistant curate (not in training) may be licensed as an associate minister (please contact BishopsCourt for more information).

C3.2 Assistant Curate in Training

In Rochester Diocese the Bishop, in consultation with his Senior Staff, has the responsibility for the placement of curates, and may approach parishes concerning such placements.

Any parish wishing to be considered for a curate should notify the Bishop. If the Bishop, after consultation, finds it right to so place a curate he will approach the parish at the appropriate time. However, parishes should be aware that the number of requests for curates in future is likely to exceed those available for placement.

C3.2 Appointment Process

C3.2.1 An appointment is agreed through consultation between the Bishop, (if it is a training post, the Director of Formation and Ministry), the incumbent and the assistant member of staff.

C3.2.2 If the appointment is made before ordination, details concerning ordination and ordination retreat will be sent to the appointee from BishopsCourt.

C3.2.3 BishopsCourt notifies the Diocesan Office of the appointment and date of its commencement and the appointee is contacted in writing by the Office approximately two months before that date requesting various personal details, e.g. bank account number. At the same time the appointee will also be provided with information on First Appointment Grants, Resettlement Grants and Removal Grants (see below).

C3.3 Finance

C3.3.1 Stipend

The level of stipend will be included in the [Statement of Particulars](#).

Under the Rochester Diocesan stipends policy the financing of the stipend of a curate is in accordance with the Rochester scale of stipends for assistant staff pertaining at the time. *The scale is agreed by the Bishop's Council and revised each April, within the approved Diocesan stipends policy.*

Assistant staff can usually expect their stipend to increase through the scale on the anniversary of their ordination and that stipend may be further enhanced by an annual increase identified by the Finance Committee.

The stipend is paid monthly via the Church Commissioners who provide a central payroll service.

C3.3.2 National Insurance

The Employer's proportion of National Insurance is calculated by the Church Commissioners' Payroll Department and the cost is recovered from the Diocese.

C3.3.3 Removal Grants

The Diocese has a contractor, who organises all clergy moves. Please contact BishopsCourt for details.

C3.3.4 Resettlement Grants

The Diocese will make a grant of approximately 10% of the National Minimum Stipend pertaining at the time towards the cost of any necessary alterations to or purchases of furnishings and other expenses incidental to the removal (e.g. towards the cost of purchasing or adapting existing carpets, curtains etc) provided that:

- such a grant can be justified by reference to the expenditure actually incurred
- invoices or estimates are submitted to the Diocesan Office with the claim form provided.

C3.3.5 First Appointment Grants

The Diocese will make a grant of 10% of the National Minimum Stipend pertaining at the time to a stipendiary curate taking up a first appointment after ordination or to a post of similar status.

C3.3.6 Parochial Expenses

Reimbursement of all expenses, as approved by the incumbent, in carrying out parochial duties is the responsibility

of the PCC. Car expenses should be reimbursed according to the diocesan mileage scale.

C3.3.7 Fees

Fees for weddings, funerals, etc are part of the incumbent's stipend and must not be retained by the curate. Any teaching income or (net) chaplaincy pay received by assistant staff form part of stipend and must not be additional to it. There is no entitlement to a Whitsun offering.

C3.3.8 Sickness Benefit

Although an assistant member of staff is self-employed s/he is entitled to receive state benefit when ill (because they pay Class 1 National Insurance contributions).

Under the statutory sick pay scheme the Church Commissioners sick pay can be claimed provided the illness lasts for at least 4 consecutive days (including Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays).

It is important to make a formal claim and to do so the member of staff must complete and return the Church Commissioners' "self-certificated sick leave" form and subsequently a Doctor's Statement should be obtained and forwarded to the Diocesan Office. During the period of illness the Church Commissioners will continue to pay stipend in the usual way but if it should continue for longer than 28 weeks, or if for any reason the person concerned is not entitled to sick pay, the Church Commissioners will give advice.

C3.3.9 Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave

Currently, the most up to date details are available from Natasha Clement HR and Governance Manager at the Diocesan Office 01634 560000

C3.3.10 Pension Contribution

An assistant member of staff is entitled to a non-contributory pension from the Church of England Pensions Board. An explanatory leaflet is available from the Pensions Board. Since 1998, parishes, through the Diocese, have been required to contribute towards the cost of the pension for service thereafter.

C3.4 Housing

([See also A10.19](#))

Accommodation is provided free of rent, Council Tax, water rates, buildings insurance, repairs and exterior redecoration. This does not include heating, lighting cleaning and garden expenses. An annual return of these expenses is required to enable the appropriate part of the stipend to be paid tax free provided that the house is supplied by the PCC or other charity (e.g. DBF).

The assistant member of staff must complete a return of expenditure each year. If no return is received in the Diocesan Office by 1st August, any existing tax free payments have to cease. If no return is received by the following 1st August, any relief for that year is lost entirely.

Responsibility for payment of Council Tax rests with the PCC. The assistant member of staff is responsible for contents insurance and interior decoration as and when necessary, although sometimes PCCs are able to help with such redecoration.

C3.4.1 Licence to Occupy

You will be required to enter into a Licence to Occupy by the owner of the clergy house. Further advice is available from the Diocesan Office. Where the property is owned by the DBF a Licence to Occupy is mandatory.

When the curate's Licence to the parish is terminated either by the Bishop, the incumbent or the person concerned, the assistant member of staff will be required to vacate the premises.

C3.5 House for Duty

House for Duty ministry is increasingly used to maintain the presence of Church of England in parishes where the Church could not otherwise do so. This includes clergy who are under retirement age with other employment or other means of income, and also clergy who are on retirement pension.

This ministry should be properly recognised as an important means of ministering to parishioners and a way for the Bishop to ensure that there is someone looking after the parish, and so it is necessary that proper attention is paid to the terms and conditions under which these clergy minister.

A minister operating under House for Duty terms will have their housing and licence under the same terms as other assistant clergy. Their [Statement of Particulars](#) will set out expected terms as with other clergy, but a clear working agreement is an advisable document.

See <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/house-for-duty-guidance.pdf>

C3.6 Time Off and Holidays

The annual holiday allocation will be shown in your [Statement of Particulars](#). See also chapters [A11-A17](#)

C3.7 Useful Publications

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/1687943693_parochial-expenses-guide-2017.pdf

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/life-events-parochial-fees-and-guidance/guide-church-england-parochial-fees>

C4 PTO Clergy

The House of Bishops has committed itself to applying this policy when granting clergy permission to officiate (PTO). Clergy with PTO play a vital and sometimes unsung part in the Church's mission. Their ministry is largely unstructured, and varies enormously. But, in order to preserve the flexibility that is its hallmark, there does need to be an agreed structure and framework within which permission to officiate operates. In particular, it is necessary to ensure that: -

- the process for agreeing and reviewing PTO is carried out in accordance with the House of Bishop's Safer Recruitment: Practice Guidance;
- PTO clergy receive appropriate pastoral support, and are not asked to do more than they are willing or able to provide;
- appropriate use is made of their talents;
- their ministry is properly acknowledged and affirmed and supported.

C4.1 Ministry with Permission to Officiate (PTO)

Most clergy who seek PTO are those who have retired from stipendiary ministry or, having been in self-supporting ministry, have reached the age of 70. Some of these will previously have ministered within the Diocese of Rochester, others will have moved from elsewhere. For those who are retiring, the Bishop will not normally give PTO until 6 months after retirement, so as to ensure a good period for refreshment and, in the case of stipendiary clergy, settling into a new home and community. For those who have been licensed to self-supporting ministry and will continue to minister with PTO in the same setting, the timescale may vary.

PTO is also appropriate for some clergy in other circumstances. This may include those who are licensed in a different Diocese but also wish to minister within the Diocese of Rochester, and also some who are not in a specific ministerial post or office but wish to offer some ministry.

PTO is given and held entirely at the discretion of the Bishop. The shape and extent of ministry offered by those with PTO varies hugely according to personal and local circumstances. Some minister mainly in one parish or group of parishes, others offer ministry more widely in a deanery or beyond. Some choose to offer ministry in chaplaincy and other such settings. Some of our PTO clergy offer their skills and experience within the work of our Mission and Ministry Team (perhaps as a tutor or mentor) and in other aspects of diocesan life. Clergy with PTO are listed in a special section of the Diocesan Directory, and also under the deanery in which they are resident or to which they are attached.

C4.2 Seeking PTO for the first time

The process for seeking PTO is handled through the Bishop's Office at Bishopscourt in Rochester. Initial contact is best made by email to bishopscourt@rochester.anglican.org or by post to Bishopscourt, 24 St Margaret's Street, Rochester ME1 1TS. Providing a simple CV at this stage is helpful, especially if new to the Diocese. The Bishop's Office will then do five things:

C4.2.1 Set in train the process for seeking a fresh disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We now operate a simple on-line system for this, with the Bishop's and Archdeacons' offices able to undertake the necessary identity check. The Confidential Declaration must be completed and sent to Bishopscourt for the DBS application.

C4.2.2 In the case of those who have moved from a different Diocese, seek a reference and commendation from the person's last bishop.

C4.2.3 Arrange for the person seeking PTO to meet one of the Archdeacons (usually the one in whose archdeaconry the person lives) - this applies to all those seeking PTO, including those who have ministered previously in the Diocese.

This meeting gives an opportunity for a conversation about the nature, location and extent of ministry which may be offered. For those new to the Diocese, it is also a time when the Archdeacon may be able to offer helpful information about the life of the Diocese, including safeguarding policies and procedures. For those who have been SSM in a particular place, the discussion may include consideration of whether a change of focus for ministry would be appropriate.

C4.2.4 Ask the person seeking PTO to complete a Register of Minister's Form.

C4.2.5 Arrange for the person seeking PTO to meet with a Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. Part of the meeting will be an induction, including an introduction to diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures. It will also be necessary to review the person's safeguarding training needs in line with current requirements, and to establish whether any transferable training is up to date.

Once all five of these elements are in place the Bishop will give Permission to Officiate. In the first instance this PTO is up to the most convenient year-end or the date of Leadership Safeguarding Training renewal date. In the case of those seeking PTO upon retirement, these processes may begin before the 6-month period mentioned above in order that ministry with PTO may begin around 6 months after retirement.

If a person has moved to our Diocese from outside the United Kingdom and/or was ordained in an overseas Diocese, there will be additional steps to be taken before PTO may be given. The Bishop's Office will guide a person through this.

C4.3 Renewal of PTO

Once a person has completed an initial limited period of ministry with PTO, permission is then renewed for three calendar years at a time (in line with Leadership Training renewals). Before permission is renewed, there will be a meeting with the relevant Archdeacon which will be an opportunity for a light-touch review of the person's ministry. Before a person's PTO expires, the Bishop's Office will alert the person and the Archdeacon concerned; they will then arrange to meet. Archdeacons may on occasions delegate this to an Area Dean. Renewal will be upon recommendation of the Archdeacon, and also dependent on up-to-date DBS disclosure and safeguarding training (see C4.4 below).

PTO is granted subject to DBS clearance and attendance of relevant Safeguarding training. DBS checks and safeguarding training are to be renewed at least every three years.

- PTO will only be granted or renewed after a satisfactory DBS certificate has been received and examined.
- Clergy will be asked to complete the ministerial review form in time for their renewal meeting with the Archdeacon. The designated responsible person (usually the Area Dean) should countersign the form.
- Following a review, it will not always be appropriate to renew PTO, if, for example, the cleric is no longer physically capable of presiding at the Eucharist. The designated responsible person will need to raise this sensitively with the cleric with PTO and make the appropriate recommendation to the Archdeacon and Bishop.
- The Bishop will consult the Archdeacons before renewing PTO.

Once clergy with PTO reach the age of 80, it is suggested that they should be informed that they can apply for renewal on a twelve-month basis, and that the Bishop will be particularly concerned to ensure that PTO extends only to clergy whom the Bishop feels are still capable of exercising ministry effectively.

C4.4 Safeguarding matters

Following decisions by the House of Bishops and General Synod, all clergy who offer public ministry within the Church of England (and this includes those with PTO) must not only have a clear DBS disclosure, but must also undertake regular training in relation to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This training will be according to the pattern now to be applied nationally, which includes refresher training every three years. More detailed information about safeguarding training for clergy is available from the Bishop's Office and the diocesan website.

<https://www.rochester.anglican.org/events-and-training/safeguarding-training/>

Renewal of PTO will depend on the person having, by then, completed the necessary safeguarding training. For those who already have PTO, renewal on each occasion will depend on that person being up-to-date with the necessary training.

C4.5 Other Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD)

In addition to the mandatory safeguarding training, clergy ministering with PTO are encouraged to take other opportunities for continuing development. Details of the diocesan CMD programme are available on the diocesan website. Depending on the nature of the ministry exercised, some elements of the CMD programme may be particularly appropriate to those with PTO. This might include, for example, training in relation to pastoral/occasional offices.

C4.6 Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy (2015 version)

The [Guidelines](#) have been produced by the clergy for the clergy, and a completely revised version was issued in 2015 with the endorsement of the General Synod. The Guidelines are relevant to all clergy, including those who minister with PTO, and offer a great deal of wise advice. The guidelines are available from the Church of England website:

C4.7 Remuneration for ministry

Financial probity is one of the matters referred to in the Guidelines; it is, therefore, important that those ministering with PTO are scrupulous in such things.

Those who minister with PTO are entitled to receive remuneration for occasional duty when they offer ministry in a parish. The levels of such remuneration relate to particular acts of worship and are notified annually by the Diocesan Board of Finance. These payments are claimed (together with any associated expenses of travel) from the PCC concerned. Many clergy with PTO choose not to claim these payments (not least from parishes where they have a strong personal involvement), but it is important to be clear that they are entitled to claim.

Clergy with PTO are also entitled to receive remuneration for ministry at pastoral/occasional offices; these amounts are also notified annually by the DBF. Such payments (together with any associated travel expenses) should usually be claimed from the PCC for the parish concerned.

C4.8 Parish, Deanery and Diocesan life

Clergy with PTO are not formally part of the church's synodical structures, except that there is provision for one or more retired clergy to be part of the House of Clergy of a Deanery Synod. Clergy with PTO may be made welcome at the Deanery Chapter, but that is for each Chapter to decide. The same principle applies in parishes, where clergy with PTO are not ex-officio members of a PCC but may be invited to attend meetings in a non-voting capacity. For SSM clergy who have previously been licensed in a benefice, moving to PTO does, therefore, mean no longer being ex officio on the PCC. At the invitation of the Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge, clergy with PTO may often be invited to be honorary members of a staff or ministry team within a parish or benefice. It should, however, be understood that there is no requirement for clergy with PTO to take part in any of these ways.

C4.9 Specific Ministries

There may be occasions when a person with PTO accepts an invitation to take on a specific ministerial responsibility, perhaps for a period of time. This may (as indicated above) be in such roles as chaplaincy or mentoring, and often the PTO is sufficient authorisation. Occasionally, however, a person may agree to take on formal responsibility for a parish on an interim basis, perhaps during a vacancy or period of clergy illness or other absence. It may sometimes be appropriate for a Licence to be given for such ministry, and the terms of any such Licence would be agreed with the person concerned.

C4.10 Retired clergy networks

For those clergy with PTO who are also retired, there are various networks of support and fellowship. There is a branch of the Retired Clergy Association within the Diocese, with a programme of activities. Suzanne Rogers at Bishops court has details of the Association; for those who have served in this Diocese, the Bishop pays for life membership upon retirement.

While the general expectation is that pastoral care will be found within the normal patterns of parish and deanery life, the Bishop has appointed a number of Advisers for retired clergy, their spouses and the widows/widowers of clergy – one in each Archdeaconry (cf [A24.2](#)).

There is also an annual summer event in the Bishop's garden at Bishops court, with invitations sent around Easter; this is often linked with a service at St Margaret's church, Rochester or the cathedral.

C4.11 Engaging clergy with PTO

Canon C8 now requires that an incumbent must be confident that all clergy ministering in their parish are authorised and in good standing (see C6 Safeguarding). This means checking that clergy seeking to minister in the parish under PTO have all the relevant permissions and also permission to work in this country. If using a minister under PTO for the first time, even if they are resident within the diocese, it is worth checking with your Area Dean that everything they need is in place.

C4.12 Non-serving clergy

There are also clergy living in the Diocese who are not authorised to minister; these include those who may have

held a Licence or PTO but, for health or other reasons, are no longer available for ministry. A number of these like to maintain some contact with diocesan and wider church life. Where details are known, therefore, these clergy are included on a list held in the Bishop's Office, so that they can be included in appropriate invitations or other communication.

It should be noted that clergy with neither licence nor PTO may not function as a priest in the Church of England, nor may they wear vestments (see [amendments to Canon C8](#)).

C5 Licensing, Institution, Collation, Induction

When a new incumbent receives an appointment letter from the Bishop, the parish will need to contact Bishops court to arrange the next steps.

C5.1 Forms of Service

The generic term 'Commissioning' is used at some points in these notes and in the service itself. In legal terms, a Commissioning Service takes one of four main forms:

C5.1.1 Collation, Induction and Installation where an Incumbent (Rector or Vicar) is being commissioned, and where the Bishop is the sole Patron;

C5.1.2 Institution, Induction and Installation where an Incumbent (Rector or Vicar) is being commissioned, and where the Patron is other than the Bishop;

C5.1.3 Licensing and Installation where a Priest-in-Charge is being commissioned, and where the living has been suspended under the [Pastoral Measure 1983](#); or, in some cases, for a Team Vicar.

C5.1.4 Licensing and Commissioning where an Associate minister or chaplain is being commissioned or, in some cases, for a Team Vicar.

The service is usually Non-Eucharistic, but a Eucharist may be requested taking into account the usual traditions of the parish. It is imperative that the template sent out is used.

C5.2 The Process

The process for arranging a Commissioning Service is relatively simple. The following are the main steps:

- Once the date and time of the service have been agreed with the Bishop, the Area Dean/Incumbent liaises with those concerned to draw together the various elements;
- The invitation list is agreed between the parish and the incoming priest; invitations are sent out by the parish;
- The incoming priest and the parish between them make choices about readings, music and participants;
- The Area Dean/Incumbent returns the details to Bishops court on the form provided, ideally *at least* 4 weeks before the service date; any queries are negotiated with the Bishop's Chaplain;
- The final service booklet needs to be agreed by the bishop's office/chaplain at least 10 days before the rehearsal (see also [B2 Copyright](#)). The parish must arrange their own printing. Contact Bishops court to discuss if a problem exists concerning this.
- The Area Dean/Incumbent arranges a rehearsal;
- It is helpful if someone arranges to pick up the Gift Aid envelopes from Bishops court in time for the service. Bishops can bring by arrangement only.

C5.3 Invitations

If a formal invitation is sent, the following wording is appropriate:

The Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council of St. ABC's, XYZ

invite you to

The Collation / Institution / Licensing
by The Bishop of Rochester / Tonbridge

(and the [Induction and] Installation
by The Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley / Rochester / Tonbridge)

of The Reverend NN
as Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge/ Associate Minister.

[Insert Date, Time and Venue]

Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers are invited to robe: choir dress or according to denominational tradition

[If a Eucharist, this should read: alb/surplice and white stole or according to denominational tradition]

RSVP to *[Insert reply details]*

It may be appropriate to add a parish logo or crest and/or the diocesan logo.

Who is invited may to some extent be dictated by the size of the building, but the following list should provide a starting point:

- Family and friends of the incoming priest;
- Those from the incoming priest's former place(s) of ministry;
- The Mayor and county/borough/district/parish councillors in whose area the parish falls;
- The Member of Parliament;
- Cathedral Chapter (who will send a lay or ordained representative wherever possible);
- Lay Chair of Deanery Synod;
- Deanery clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers);
- Any other clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers who have connections with the parish, especially those who have led services during the vacancy;
- Clergy/leaders from other Christian communities in the area;
- Leaders/representatives from other faith communities in the area (this may need to be done with sensitivity, as the invitation is to an act of Christian worship);
- Funeral Directors with whom the incumbent might be expected to work;
- Headteachers and/or Chairs of Governors of local schools;
- Principal/Director of any higher or further education colleges;
- Leaders/representatives of local institutions, community organisations, uniformed groups etc.

In deciding who to invite, it will of course be important to ensure adequate space for members of the congregation.

C5.4 Rehearsal and on the Day

It is helpful to the new minister and other participants if a rehearsal is arranged a few days before the service. This is usually led by the Area Dean (or incumbent for a team or associate minister). Particular attention needs to be paid to making sure each stage of the service moves forward with elegant alacrity.

In the church register of services, remember to start a new page for the new 'era' in the life of the parish.

C6 Safeguarding

C6.1 Safeguarding Policies

Always check with the diocesan website for the most recent guidance.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable plays a vital part within the church community and it is imperative that all Clergy are aware of and have due regard for (i.e. implement and not breach without cogent reason) the various House of Bishops and Diocesan policies, practice guidance and advice notices located on the [Diocesan web site](#). Failure to implement these policies will – and have – lead to incumbents, in particular (but not exclusively), being subject to disciplinary measures. The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group has made it clear that their insurance cover is only valid where national safeguarding policy and practice guidance is being followed.

Increasingly, domestic abuse is included with our safeguarding awareness and the Guidance on responding well is also on the Church of England website [3. Domestic Abuse | The Church of England](#). It encourages churches to address the issue of domestic abuse and raise awareness of its impact on adults and children.

C6.2 Safeguarding Training

Following the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure, failing to attend proper safeguarding training, as required by the Diocese, is potentially a disciplinary offence (see canon [C30](#)).

All information about current training requirements can be found on the [Diocesan web site](#).

C6.3 Victim and Survivor Care

The well-being of those with lived experience of abuse from within the Diocese of Rochester and beyond must be the primary consideration when responding to and engaging with victims and survivors. The Diocese has developed policies to outline what responding well to victims and survivors should consist of and what care a victim and/or a survivor should expect from the Diocese of Rochester. This is on the diocesan website under [support for victims and survivors](#).

C6.4 Visiting Clergy and Other Preachers

The [Ecumenical Code of Practice 2019](#) on co-operation by the Church of England with Other Churches, has clarified some of the questions raised since amending Canon 34 (2015) on the responsibility of incumbents regarding the good standing and proper authorisation of visiting ministers and preachers¹.

The importance of this responsibility is two-fold: firstly, regarding safeguarding, that all those to whom we give authority in our community are not only fit and proper people but that they are adequately trained should a member of our congregation choose to disclose abuse at the hands of a figure of authority; secondly, regarding orthodoxy, that the minister is both properly trained and doctrinally sound.

This document is designed to signpost the relevant chapters of the House of Bishops' guidelines and to suggest questions incumbents should be asking when they invite someone. This document is principally concerned with occasional invitations; regarding invitations of a more substantial or enduring nature you are advised to contact your archdeacon.

C6.4.1 Visiting Anglican clergy

This is, by and large the simplest matter. In this diocese all Anglican ministers, lay or ordained, must be authorised by a bishop and be in good standing in their own diocese. Church of England ministers must also have a current DBS certificate and the relevant safeguarding training. Contact Bishops court so that we can confirm that this is the case and they are listed on the [National Register of Clergy](#). (There have been cases in which clergy have been mistaken, or indeed actually disingenuous, regarding the degree of authorisation that they hold.) Please note, visiting clergy who do not hold Leadership safeguarding training will not be permitted, under the Diocesan safeguarding protocols, to lead worship unattended but must have present another minister with Leadership training.

Clergy visiting from another Anglican Church, or from a Church whose orders are recognised, must have the Archbishop's Permission to Officiate before they can be authorised to minister in this diocese. This requires a letter from their bishop and copies of their letters of orders. Contact Bishops court in good time to enable this. It can take a couple of months. For visits of less than 14 days, the OPTO light process can be followed by the Bishop's office.

C6.4.2 Visiting representatives of charitable organisations

These may only *preach* if they are licensed so to do, but when inviting them to *speak* certain questions can usefully be asked.

Have we applied our own safeguarding protocols?

Is this charity/organisation registered with the Charity Commission? If not, how is it accountable?

What safeguarding policies does the organisation/charity hold?

Have we checked that the representative(s) is (are) in good standing with the organisation they represent?

C6.4.3 Visiting ministers from other denominations

The mechanism for this depends on the denomination in question, whether they are included in wider canonical arrangements, or not:

C6.4.3.1 Churches designated pursuant to the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988.

This is almost as simple as visiting Anglican ministers. Canon B43 permits an incumbent to invite a "A minister or lay person who is a member of a Church to which this Canon applies" to

- "(a) to say or sing Morning or Evening Prayer or the Litany;
- (b) to read the Holy Scriptures at any service;
- (c) to preach at any service;
- (d) to lead the Intercessions at the Holy Communion and to lead prayers at other services;
- (e) to assist at Baptism or the Solemnization of Matrimony, or to conduct a Funeral Service;
- (f) to assist in the distribution of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the people at the Holy Communion;

if the minister or lay person is authorized to perform a similar duty in his or her own Church."

You are advised to contact Bishops court to establish their authorisation and good standing, unless the minister is local and well known.

¹ "Ministry" consists of anything normally requiring a licence or commission. "Preaching" may be distinguished from "speaking". When "speaking" in the context of public worship, steps should be taken to ensure that it is clear that this is not the sermon. For example vestments ought not to be worn, nor the pulpit used. If the "sermon slot" is used for the talk, a short address on the readings should still be made (even if only a couple of minutes long) by an authorised minister.

C6.4.3.2 Churches for which temporary designation must be sought.

This is now possible under the new measure but requires much thought beforehand.

It requires both the Bishop's written consent and a formal request from "the appropriate authority of that church". The [Ecumenical Code of Practice](#) requires that the following [questions](#) are posed relating to the Church's doctrine, the ordering of its life, and its relations with the wider Church:

"With regard to a church's doctrine:

- the church subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity;
- it celebrates the dominical sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion;
- its Baptism is administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit²;
- it does not promote doctrines that are contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter.
- Furthermore, many churches have statements of faith, and it is advisable to consider them. Membership of the Evangelical Alliance or Affinity or a Churches Together group requires a church to be Trinitarian in confession. If a church is a member of one of these bodies, there is some assurance of not only its doctrinal orthodoxy but also of its recognition by other the member churches of those bodies.

With regard to the ordering of a church's life:

- the church demonstrates that it orders its life with financial probity and good governance;
- those in positions of leadership are accountable regarding pastoral ministry, finances and the exercise of authority;
- the church has a policy for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults consonant with that of the diocese, and it can demonstrate that it implements that policy, with appropriate disciplinary measures in place if they are breached.
- Furthermore, indications that can be considered as to whether a church is responsibly ordered include its registration as a charity or the equivalent in a European context, having legal personality, using the services of a national safeguarding agency, being part of an association of churches that offers training and accreditation for ministers and pastors, and membership of the Evangelical Alliance. In practice it will be necessary to have conversations between incumbents and safeguarding advisers of all churches involved in any ecumenical arrangements.

With regard to a church's relations with the wider Church:

- it engages with other churches, and they regard it and its leadership as having integrity;
- its relations with other churches in its locality are constructive;
- there would not be a negative impact upon the Church of England's relations with an existing ecumenical partner as a result of developing a relationship with this church.
- Furthermore, indications of a church's good relations with other churches that should be borne in mind include its membership of a local Churches Together group, its involvement in one of the new unity movements, and belonging in its own right or as a member of an association of churches to an 'intermediate' ecumenical body, Churches Together in England, the Evangelical Alliance, or Affinity or, in a European context, the Conference of European Churches."

While this may seem overly onerous for an occasional preacher (or other ministry), it must be born in mind the reputational damage – and subsequent damage to the life and mission of the Church – if credence is given to a Church that later turns out to be divisive, heterodox or negligent in its care of the vulnerable.

Therefore please contact the [Bishop's Office](#) in good time before you have a visiting minister from another church or Diocese, so that their credentials and standing may be checked and, where necessary, the relevant permissions sought.

C6.5 When Incumbents move on

It is very important when incumbents move on, that they ensure that all safeguarding paperwork/information is

² Local note - other three-fold descriptors, eg "Creator, Redeemer and Sustained" are not adequately Trinitarian.

safely and confidentially handed over to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and that the Parish Safeguarding Officer is fully briefed about any matters in their remit.

C6.6 Additional Resources

<https://rochester.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

C6.6.1 Church of England website

The Church of England website has a number of resources which are being constantly updated. See

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding>

Contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be obtained on the Diocesan web site: <https://rochester.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

C7 Initial Ministerial Education (IME phase 2)

C7.1 Who is it for?

The IME2 programme is for Curates in the Diocese of Rochester. It is run in partnership with the Diocese of Canterbury. Full participation in the IME2 programme is required for all Stipendiary and Self-Supporting Curates.

C7.2 Further Information

The diocesan expectations for training of stipendiary and self-supporting curates are set out fully in the Handbook for Training Incumbents and Assistant Curates. The current handbook is available on the diocesan website and provides a valuable source of further information.

The Coordinator of IME2 for Rochester Diocese can be contacted at the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.

C8 Ministerial Development Review

C8.1 Ministerial Review Under Common Tenure

As part of the continuing support for all clergy and stipendiary lay ministers, all ministers under Common Tenure are required to take part in the programme of Ministerial Review. It is not a requirement for clergy who hold the freehold, but the Bishop still recommends all his clergy to undertake regular peer review by way of best practice.

C8.2 Ministerial Development Review Procedure

Our diocesan scheme for Ministerial Development Review (MDR) follows guidance from the House of Bishops and is, therefore, similar to schemes in other dioceses. MDR is an expression of the Bishop's oversight of ministers within the Diocese; it is part of a pattern of pastoral and developmental support, which is intended to foster both the ministries of individual priests and deacons, and the pastoral and missionary calling of the whole church.

The aim of the Scheme is to help clergy take time to reflect upon their ministry, not least in relation to the Ordinal. It is an opportunity for them to think about what has gone well and to consider the reasons for this. It is also a chance to think about what has not gone so well, and to respond accordingly. There is a particular focus around opportunities for further development and formation.

Every calendar year you should be called for a review either with a Diocesan trained reviewer, with your Archdeacon or with a Bishop.

The requirements for MDR, which is formally part of the pattern for all clergy on Common Tenure, are set out in Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 part IV. The documents for the scheme in this Diocese will be found on the Diocesan website under the ministry section.

[Ministerial Development Review - Diocese of Rochester](#)

C9 Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD)

The Bishop encourages all in the ministry of the Church to pursue their Continuing Ministerial Development,

Education and Training. For this purpose, the Diocese arranges courses and events for clergy and lay ministers. Some courses are related directly to major transition points of ministry. Others are subject or special interest focused. Clergy and lay ministers are encouraged to be proactive about in-service training and to make use of the training grants available.

All Clergy and Stipendiary Lay Ministers are strongly encouraged to take part in CMD programmes and in courses and conferences related to the development of their ministry (cf Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy (2015)) although CMD Grants may not be available to those with Permission to Officiate – please check with the Director of Mission and Ministry Development.

CMD events provided by Rochester Diocese are advertised directly to the clergy and other ministers through special mailings, the diocesan website www.rochester.anglican.org, and in The Digest.

Further information can be found about CMD on the Diocesan website, including:

- Extended Ministerial Development Leave (EMDL)
- CMD Grants
- Coaching

It is important that clergy and lay ministers should take regular opportunities for a retreat. A good rule of thumb is that about three or four working days per year should be spent on retreat, either as a block of time or as separate days. This should be regarded as part of normal work, and a legitimate charge on the working expenses to be reimbursed by the parish. Clergy and lay ministers needing help with setting up or resourcing retreats should discuss the matter with their Archdeacon or the Director of Mission and Ministry Development.

Director of Formation and Ministry

The Rev Dr Andrew Dunlop

Contact: Diocesan Office (01634 560000)

email: andrew.dunlop@rochester.anglican.org

C9.1 Main Elements of CMD

C9.1.1 Training Grants

Each Minister is entitled to a CMD Grant to help defray the costs of conferences or courses which are directly related to the development of their ministry. Applications for CMD grants must be made on the forms provided by the Formation and Ministry Team in advance of the event and are available on our diocesan website.

Claims made after a training event has already taken place will not be met.

C9.1.2 Higher Education Grants

Ministers may also seek help from the Mission and Ministry Team with the cost of fees in relation to higher education or further professional training programmes. Application should initially be made in writing to the Director of Mission and Ministry Development, detailing the proposed course of study and its likely costs. Preference will be given to applicants wishing to develop their expertise in Biblical Studies, Doctrine, Mission, Liturgy, Ecclesiology and Practical Theology. When considering which programme of higher education or professional study to apply for, it is wise to consult in good time with the Director of Mission and Ministry Development.

C9.1.3 Extended Ministerial Development Leave (EMDL)

Stipendiary clergy are encouraged to take EMDL at various points in their ministry. EMDL is defined as three calendar months away from the parish in addition to the annual holiday allocation. Clergy and stipendiary lay ministers become eligible for consideration for study leave in the tenth year of holy orders/post commissioning.

Those considering taking an EMDL should reflect this in their Ministerial Development Review. An outcome of an MDR might be to consider taking an EMDL. A conversation with the relevant Archdeacon seeking their insight should be sought and also with the Director of Mission and Ministry Development who is responsible for ensuring the correct process. The Diocese offers study leave grants and practical help and support in preparation for and follow up of the study leave.

It is also possible for clergy and stipendiary lay ministers to take shorter periods of study leave. Those considering this possibility should first discuss it with their Archdeacon.

The EMDL Guidelines are available from the Mission and Ministry Team at the Diocesan Office and on the Diocesan Website.

C9.1.4 Retreats

It is important that clergy and lay ministers should take regular opportunities for a retreat. A good rule of thumb is that about three or four working days per year should be spent on retreat, either as a block of time or as separate days. This should be regarded as part of normal work, and a legitimate charge on the working expenses to be reimbursed by the parish.

Clergy and lay ministers needing help with setting up or resourcing retreats should discuss the matter with their Archdeacon or the Director of Mission and Ministry Development.

C9.1.5 Ministerial Review Under Common Tenure

As part of the continuing support for all clergy and stipendiary lay ministers, all are required to take part in the programme of Ministerial Review under Regulation 18.

C9.2 Director of Mission and Ministry Development

Currently held by Director of Mission and Ministry Development, Rev Dr Andrew Dunlop

Contact: [Diocesan Office](#) (01634 560000) or email: andrew.dunlop@rochester.anglican.org

Enquiries should be made to the Diocesan Office (01634) 560000.

C10 Spiritual Direction and Retreat

"All the clergy should... be encouraged to have a spiritual director, soul friend or confessor to support their spiritual life and help to develop the growth in self-understanding." [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy \(2015\) 14.6](#)

You are encouraged to seek the help of a Spiritual Director/Soul Friend. [The Mission and Ministry Team](#) may be helpful in you obtaining an appropriate person if you do not have anyone already. Contact the Mission and Ministry Team at the Diocesan office on 01634 360000.

Clergy are encouraged to take an annual retreat as well as quiet days through the year. This should not count as rest days or holiday.

C10.1 Retreat Houses

C10.1.1 Malling Abbey

The Diocese is fortunate to have Malling Abbey, home to a community of Anglican Benedictine nuns within its bounds. The community provides rooms for residential self-catering retreats and guests are welcome to attend the community's corporate prayer at intervals throughout the day.

The Retreat Association: <https://www.retreats.org.uk/retreat-directory>

C10.1.2 The St. Benedict's Centre

The [St Benedict's Centre](#), situated in the grounds of Malling Abbey, offers a place for individuals and groups to come for the day to retreat, to study, to meet and to pray.

C11 Non-Stipendiary Ministry (Self-Supporting Ministry)

C11.1 Categories of Self Supporting Ministers (SSM):

C11.1.1 Those in secular employment whose chief area of ministry is in the context of their employment, commonly called "Ministers in Secular Employment".

C11.1.2 Those in secular employment and those retired from, or not engaged in, secular employment whose chief area of ministry is in the context of a parish or a chaplaincy.

C11.2 Who are classed as SSM?

C11.2.1 SSMs are those whose financial income comes from sources other than their work as ministers and who

receive no direct salary or stipend for their ministerial work. Although SSMs, and former SSMs with permission to officiate, do not receive fees they should be fully reimbursed for expenses incurred in their own parish or when taking services in parishes other than their own.

C11.2.2 Self Supporting Ministry covers men and women, including priests, deacons, accredited lay workers and those in the deaconess order, who hold a Licence from their Diocesan Bishop for their ministry.

C11.2.3 SSMs include both those who have been directly ordained or accredited to such a ministry, and those who were originally ordained to the Stipendiary Ministry, but who have moved to other employment and hold a Licence from the Bishop at the particular time.

C11.2.4 Self Supporting Ministry does not generally include those in the following categories:

- those who are receiving a stipend from the Church Commissioners;
- those who are paid by the Central or Diocesan Boards of Finance;
- those who hold stipendiary chaplaincies in recognised institutions; the Armed Forces, Prisons, Hospitals, Universities, Colleges, Schools;
- those who teach in Theological Colleges and Courses;
- those who are members of religious communities;
- those who are receiving a pension from the Church of England Pensions Board;
- those who have "Permission to Officiate";
- those who have held Licences as Self Supporting Ministers and have retired from this ministry.

Details of the officer for Self Supporting Ministry in this Diocese can be found from the Diocesan Office 01634 560000.

C12 [Lay Ministry in Rochester Diocese](#)

In some dioceses Readers are known as Licensed Lay Ministers, but, since 2015 in Rochester, the designation (LLM) covers a range of roles, including those previously designated as Readers, Pastoral Assistants and Evangelists as well as those whose primary calling is, for example, to community engagement, youth ministry, work in schools or some form of chaplaincy. Their responsibilities and duties vary according to the gifts and abilities of the individual, the needs of their parish or ministry setting, and the context of their ministry. The selection process for licensed ministry is rigorous, especially in the area of leadership, so new candidates for LLM gain experience in and knowledge about different expressions of ministry, with an emphasis on development of ministerial leadership.

A Licensed Lay Minister will be:

- Theologically articulate
- A reflective practitioner
- A leader alongside others in mission and ministry

In all cases part of the understanding is that Rochester's Licensed Lay Ministers will have some leadership role in the setting of their ministry.

C12.1 Ministry

The duties which Licensed Lay Ministers can lawfully undertake are covered in [Canon E4](#) as all Licensed Lay Ministers are admitted as Readers within the Church of England.

It is lawful for a Reader to:

- Conduct Morning and Evening Prayer;
- Take part in the Eucharist and to assist at the administration of the Holy Communion.
- Take the Sacrament to the sick immediately after the service, or from an aumbry ([see B3.7](#)) on a weekday following, provided that if a person is permanently housebound, a priest shall take it from time to time;
- Publish banns of marriage, subject to the conditions laid down in the Marriage Act 1949;
- Preach the Word of God and teach the children;
- Conduct informal services and family services;
- Visit the sick and to pray with them;
- Conduct funerals, *but only*, in each case, with the goodwill of the bereaved and at the invitation of the incumbent (or Area Dean during an interregnum). The minister in question must have special training for this ministry and

have the permission of the Bishop to exercise it, specified in his/her licence.

[Canon E4](#) adds that it shall be lawful for a Reader "generally to undertake such pastoral and educational work and to give such assistance to any minister as the Bishop may direct".

A LLM or Reader may not preside at the Eucharist, baptise, conduct marriages, or give the absolution or the blessing.

The first cohort of Rochester LLMs were licensed at Pentecost 2015, and as well as fulfilling a significant leadership role in a local church or ministry setting, LLMs contribute to ministry in a wider setting (e.g. deanery), or new context, as need arises. After Admission LLMs are licensed for a year, and following a 12 month review their licence will be extended to fit in with the pattern of other Lay Ministers in their Archdeaconry and will be licensed for 5 years at a time until the age of 70. LLMs and Readers are normally licensed and accountable to their Incumbent.

When Lay Ministers reach the age of 70 they have the option, in consultation with their incumbent, to extend the Licence for 5 years, receive Permission to Officiate (PTO) or step down from Licensed ministry. This will be done in the context of a Lay Ministry Development Review.

C12.2 Selection and Training

The first stage of enquiry about Licensed Lay Ministry is to attend an "It's Your Calling" day. For details of the training and how selection works, please contact the Mission and Ministry Team Administrator, via the Diocesan Office. The first stage of the training programme - Certificate in Christian Ministry - is open to anyone who has attended "It's Your Calling" and who has an active involvement in their local church, or offers a distinctive Christian perspective in another setting, and who wishes to gain knowledge and skills to give a firm foundation to their Christian life and service. It also gives the student an opportunity to explore other areas of ministry under the guidance of his/her parish priest.

The second stage of the programme – Licensed Lay Ministry – is open to those who are recommended and selected for training as Licensed Lay Ministers. Selection is usually in the Summer term following the September start of the Certificate course.

C12.3 Robes

The blue scarf is the liturgical sign of the LLM's and Reader's office. It is to be worn with a black cassock and surplice, with or without a hood of degree, or with a cassock-alb. No other decorations or badges should be worn. It is becoming normal practice to wear the readers scarf over a cassock-alb when assisting at Eucharistic services.

Not all Licensed Lay Ministers robe at all, but care should be taken to attend to the traditional custom of the parish and setting in which ministry is taking place. In particular, when leading - with the bishops specific permission - funerals or Extended Communion, vestments should be worn.

C12.4 Expenses

If Readers or LLMs are invited to preach or lead a service in another parish travelling expenses should be paid. The principals in [A8 – Parochial expenses](#) – generally apply also to lay ministers. Contact the [Warden of Lay Ministry](#) for more advice.

C12.5 Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers with PTO

Permission to Officiate is a diocesan-wide authorisation and not specific to any parish or benefice. LLMs and Readers with PTO are listed in the Online Directory under the Deanery in which they worship and minister, and whilst they are still likely to a part of their parish ministry team, their PTO is renewable (every 3 years) on the nomination of their Area Dean. (This is exactly the same as for clergy with PTO.)

LLMs and Readers with PTO have a shorter working agreement and are therefore free to do as much or as little as they wish.

In this Diocese an Emeritus Reader (or Emeritus LLM) is one who has completely retired from licensed ministry and is no longer active. An Emeritus minister is no longer listed among the ministers available for service, because the usual safeguarding checks are no longer pursued.

C12.6 Authorised Ministers

Alongside our Licensed Lay Ministers, are a number of authorised and commissioned ministries including pastoral assistants, evangelists, funeral ministers and others with a Bishop's Certificate in Christian Ministry. Some Evangelists have done extra training and are permitted to preach.

[Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends](#) Anna Chaplaincy is an ecumenical, community-based chaplaincy to older people.

Authorised (or commissioned) Ministers are not automatically given permission to assist with the chalice at Holy

Communion. If they are required to do so their names should be agreed annually by the PCC with other chalice assistants.

Authorised and Commissioned Ministers are authorised by the Bishop for a period of 5 years, renewable and it is expected that they will undergo Lay Ministry Development Reviews biennially. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that they are reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out their pastoral duties.

Authorised and Commissioned Ministers over 70 are also offered the option to extend until 75, or receive Permission to Minister for 3 years at a time, renewable subject to the usual safeguarding and DBS requirements, or to step down.

C12.7 Lay Workers and Church Army

Occasionally a parish may appoint a lay worker to undertake a specific task or ministry. Licensed Lay Workers (listed under the CMS database as Accredited Lay Workers) are appointed under [Canon E7](#) and are usually stipendiary or paid positions which fall under [Common Tenure](#). In this diocese the additional duties (principally conducting funerals and preaching) made possible under Canon E7 are only permitted in consultation with the Mission & Ministry Development lay training team, in order that it may be established that proper training has been undertaken for these ministries.

Church Army ministers are generally licensed under Canon E7 as Lay Workers.

If a parish wishes to appoint a Lay Worker, the incumbent should contact their Archdeacon. The process is broadly parallel to appointing an associate priest.

C12.8 Working Agreements

All licensed ministers must have a working agreement, and this good practice is also applied to authorised ministers. A Working Agreement will set out the arrangements the incumbent and the Lay Minister have both come to by mutual agreement as to the lay minister's responsibilities and role in the parish, the way in which they will both be accountable and supported, and other relevant information. A Working Agreement [template](#) is available on the diocesan website, under Lay Ministry.

Most Lay Ministers are volunteers, and it is important that they are not expected to be "on duty" every week, and should be worshipping in the congregation when they are not required to be up front. They must have opportunities to be ministered to as well as to minister.

It is good practice for Lay Ministers to meet regularly with their incumbents, and parishes with ministry teams often meet regularly as teams. Whilst the incumbent has the responsibility of leading the ministry team, the best ministry teams are the ones where collaboration has developed into mutually supportive and trusting relationships.

C12.9 CMD

All Lay Ministers are offered a variety of opportunities for CMD by the Mission and Ministry Team, as well as being encouraged to book for opportunities offered beyond the Diocesan structures.

C12.10 Parochial Church Council Representation

A PCC may decide – or not – to include Readers (and therefore LLMs), or a representative number of Readers licensed to the parish, as ex-officio members of the Council. Authorised ministers are not so recognised and need to be elected as individuals.

C12.11 Further information

... can be obtained from the Warden of Lay Ministry who works from the Diocesan Office 3 days p/w - normally Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

ALL LAY MINISTERS (LICENSED, AUTHORISED, COMMISSIONED OR WITH PERMISSION) MUST HAVE DBS CLEARANCE, AND ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE REGULAR SAFEGUARDING TRAINING (cf [C6 – Safeguarding](#)).

C13 Recruiting, Commissioning & Licensing of Children, Youth & Family (CYPF) Ministers

As a Diocese we are committed to raising the profile of Children Youth & Family Mission & Ministry as part of our Called Together Strategy. As part of the National 30K project to employ people to work with children, young people and families the Bishop chooses formally to recognise the contribution to the ministry of the church made by children and youth ministers.

The Diocesan CYPF Mission & Ministry Team Lead Adviser is available to support and advice in the

implementation of the Bishops Guidelines surrounding recruiting a specialist in this ministry alongside the process of licensing & commissioning.

Please do contact the Children & Young people Mission & Ministry Team via Sarah.Cabella@rochester.anglican.org 01634 560024.

Further information can be found on the diocesan website pages <https://rochester.anglican.org/for-parishes/children-young-people-and-families/>

C14 The Fellowship of Diocesan Pray-ers

The Fellowship of Pray-ers is committed to regularly praying for the parishes in their own deaneries, as well as the wider Diocese, and they meet several times a year as a deanery of praying people. Most deaneries have a co-ordinator who keeps the deanery churches informed of needs and thanksgiving, and most regularly issue a printed leaflet of prayer topics for the parishes they represent, some monthly and others quarterly.

The intercessions and prayer requests may be found on the [Diocesan website](#).

The Pray-ers also offer emergency intercession by way of 'prayer chain'. Contact any of the Archdeaconry coordinators below:

C14.1 Archdeaconry Co-ordinators

The Diocese has a co-ordinator for each Archdeaconry. As well as visiting and encouraging the deaneries in their Archdeaconry, each archdeaconry co-ordinator collects and collates prayer topics each month and submits them to the diocesan website for [Praying the Way](#), so that all can share in this ministry.

Anyone who would like to become more involved with praying for their deanery and the Diocese, please get in touch with one of the archdeaconry co-ordinators, who will be delighted to put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Bromley and Bexley Archdeaconry

Jenny Smith

Email: jenny_marry@outlook.com

Rochester Archdeaconry

Lorna Kahan

Email: lorna.kahan@hotmail.co.uk

Tonbridge Archdeaconry

Judith Howard

Email: judithhoward@weald.plus.com

C15 Churchwardens

C15.1 Canon Law

The duties of churchwardens are set out in paragraphs 4 and 5 of [Canon E1](#) and in the [Church Representation Rules 2025 edition](#) online. Available also as a book from [Church House Publishing](#). The provisions of those paragraphs are as follows:

In essence, they are the Bishop's officers, appointed to represent the laity, and liaise and cooperate with the incumbent in the work and ministry of the parish church. In particular they have responsibility for the order, fabric and property of the church.

C15.2 Functions

Their functions are many and varied. The following list is not a complete statement of them but it includes the chief duties assigned by law and those usually assigned by custom.

C15.2.1. Save in the exceptional case of a non-communicant churchwarden approved by the Bishop, the churchwardens – designate will become members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) from the date when they are

chosen, although they become the Bishop's officers only after their admission to office. The outgoing wardens retain office and continue to serve as ex-officio members of the PCC until their successors are admitted. The churchwardens should help the PCC in carrying out all its duties, including co-operating with the incumbent in promoting to the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

C15.2.2. As lay officers of the Bishop, the churchwardens ought, when necessary, to report to him or to the Archdeacon as to the state of the parish, and if there be neglect or default, as to the incumbent's discharge of his/her duties.

C15.2.3. The churchwardens should see that the PCC carries out its responsibilities for the care, maintenance and insurance of the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church and for the fencing of the churchyard. In particular it is the duty of the churchwardens to ensure that the necessary faculty is obtained before any works are carried out. The churchwardens should keep a log book of repairs done to the church.

C15.2.4. The churchwardens are the 'owners' as trustees of the plate, ornaments, furniture and furnishings of the church. It is their responsibility to ensure that nothing is disposed of without a faculty. They must keep the inventory up to date. They should inspect the items at least once a year to check that none have been lost. A certificate to this effect in the inventory should be signed at every annual parochial church meeting, when a report should be made on the furnishings and fabric of the church. The churchwardens should ensure that the valuable furnishings, alms boxes, etc., are secure against theft.

C15.2.5. The churchwardens are responsible for the seating of the congregation in the church, and for maintenance of good behaviour especially during services. They are assisted in these duties by the sidespeople. The churchwardens should arrange the sidespeople's roster, and ensure that they know what their duties are.

C15.2.6. The churchwardens are responsible for the taking of any offerings or collections in church (helped by the sidespeople), for recording of the sums received in the service register and for the proper disposal of the money. The disposal of any offerings or collections in church is at the discretion of the incumbent and PCC jointly. Notwithstanding any rubric in the Book of Common Prayer, monies given and collected at the Eucharist shall form part of the general funds of the PCC.

C15.2.7. The churchwardens are responsible for providing the bread and the wine for the Eucharist, on the advice and at the direction of the incumbent and at the expense of the PCC.

C15.2.8. When visiting clergypersons, LLMs or Readers take services during the temporary absence of the incumbent due to sickness or holiday or during a vacancy the churchwardens will no doubt wish to welcome them and, if necessary, see that they are offered hospitality. They must be satisfied that they are authorised to officiate and should make sure that they are paid the appropriate fee and their travelling expenses. In the absence of the incumbent the duty of ensuring that the church services are maintained falls in the first instance on the churchwardens who should always consult the Area Dean if any difficulties arise.

C15.2.9. The churchwardens should try to ensure that the incumbent is relieved of administrative work particularly in connection with such matters as the insurance, heating, lighting, cleaning and maintenance of the church and other parish buildings, and the repair or replacement of such things as hassocks, hymn and prayer books, notice boards and the like.

C15.2.10 The churchwardens should try to ensure that the PCC meets its financial obligations, including contributions to diocesan funds and the payment in full of the working expenses of the clergy in the parish.

C15.2.11. A churchwarden may hold the office of treasurer and, if no other member of the PCC is willing to act in that capacity, the churchwardens, or one of them, must do so.

C15.2.12. If, during a vacancy in the benefice, the churchwardens are appointed as sequestrators, the duties required of them by the Bishop, will be explained to them.

C15.2.13. The churchwardens also have duties in connection with visitations by the Bishop, the Chancellor or the Archdeacon, which are explained at that time.

C15.3 Churchwardens Measure 2001

[The Churchwardens Measure](#) came into force on 1 January 2002. The principle changes made by the Measure are as follows:

C15.3.1. Churchwardens may not serve more than *six consecutive terms of office* unless the annual meeting of the parishioners specifically agrees to allow this. The period of six years commences from the 2002 elections and is not retrospective. See [Church Representation Rules 2025](#) for guidance.

C15.3.2. The procedure for the election of churchwardens is substantially unchanged, but there is a requirement that candidates must be *nominated and seconded in writing*. The nomination paper must confirm that the candidate is willing to serve and is not disqualified. Each nomination paper must be given to the minister *before* the beginning of the meeting.

C15.3.3. Candidates must be on the *electoral roll* of the parish. Residence in the parish is no longer a qualification on its own.

C15.3.4. Persons who are *disqualified from being charity trustees* – for example, people convicted of certain offences, disqualified as company directors or declared bankrupt – are disqualified from being churchwardens. Persons convicted of certain offences against children or young people are also disqualified.

C15.3.5. The Measure restates the existing rule that churchwardens must be admitted to office after having made the necessary declaration that they will faithfully and diligently perform their duties. This declaration must be made and churchwardens must be admitted before *31 July* in every year, even when churchwardens are re-elected. Under the new Measure any churchwarden who is not admitted to office following election or re-election will not hold office.

C15.3.6. Outgoing churchwardens who are *not* re-elected, *automatically cease to hold office on 31 July* or on the date of admission to office of their successors, whichever is earlier.

C15.3.7. It will be possible for churchwardens to *resign* by giving *not less than 2 months written notice to the bishop*. It will no longer be necessary to obtain the consent of the minister and the other churchwarden. The bishop may permit resignation on less than 2 months' notice, but in that event the Bishop will first need to consult with the minister and any other churchwarden of the Parish.

C15.3.8. If it appears to the minister of the parish that the election of any particular person nominated might give rise to serious difficulties between the minister and that person in carrying out their respective functions the minister may before the election make a statement to the effect that only one churchwarden is to be elected by the meeting. In that event one churchwarden shall be appointed by the minister from amongst the persons nominated, the name of that person being announced before the election is conducted, and the other should then be elected by the meeting.

1. C15.4 Further Resources

2. [The Church Representation Rules](#) (2025 edition) can be found on the Church of England website or bought from [Church House Publishing](#).

[The Churchwarden's Yearbook](#), published annually, is a useful resource. The reference section contains a brief outline of the Churchwarden's duties; recommended reading matter; details of helpful organisations; tables of fees and festival of other faiths. The order form is available on the diocesan website.

[Practical Church Management](#) by James Behrens, 3rd Edition.

[The PCC Member's Essential Guide](#), by Mark Tanner (Church House Publishing 2015)

[Your Church and the Law](#) by David Parrott

C16 Employing Workers and Ministers

When the PCC employs anyone to fulfil any role within the parish it is essential that PCC follows both employment law and [safer recruiting](#).

The Diocese employs a [People \(HR\) team](#) to advise parishes, but the PCC bears the legal responsibility for ensuring that correct procedures are followed. See [Guide to Recruitment](#) on the diocesan website.

In particular parishes should check that:

- Any post filled has a contract of employment and a role description;
- references are always taken up;
- Where DBS checks are appropriate that they have been completed before the post begins;
- That the PCC has checked that any foreign national is legally entitled to work in this country;

That all payments are made by cheque or BACS transfer, so that proper scrutiny is possible. It is recommended

that, even when remuneration is little, parishes register with the HMRC as an employer and pay people using PAYE. D
EDUCATION

D1 [Diocesan Board of Education \(click the title to go directly to the separate website\)](#)

D1.1 The purpose of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)

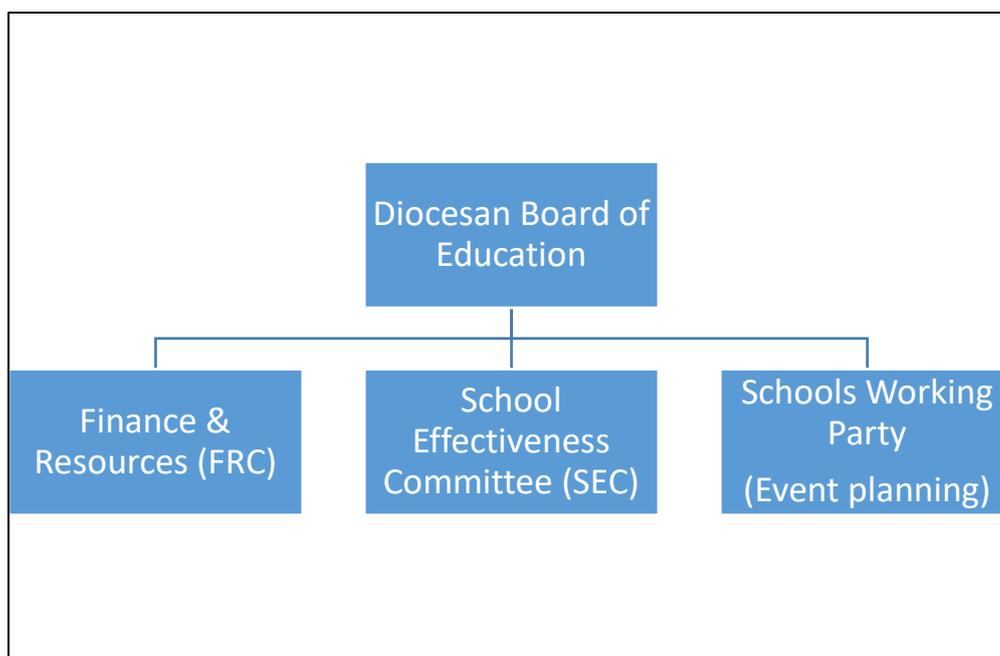
The DBE exists as an independent company with its own constitution, to promote and support the development of Christian and Religious Education in line with the tenets of the Church of England in all schools across the Diocese of Rochester. The Bishop is the President of the Board and approves the appointment of the Chair (should he or she decide not to act as Chair).

The DBE is currently comprised of 18 members, six appointed by the Diocesan Synod, two appointed by the Bishop of Rochester, four representatives of the Local Authorities within the diocese (Bexley, Bromley, Kent and Medway) and up to six co-opted members appointed by the DBE itself for their specific skills and expertise.

The DBE works with 89 Church of England schools and academies, five secondary schools and 84 within the primary age group. We encourage warm links and relationships with all schools across the diocese.

D1.2 DBE Committees

The DBE works through a series of sub-committees which manage the operation and specific areas of responsibility of the Board. Each sub-committee is Chaired by a member of the DBE and supported by a lead officer and/or adviser. The Committees are able to co-opt non-members of the DBE for their specific expertise or skills set as required. The Committees report to the Board three times a year.



The Officers of the [Diocesan Board of Education](#), the Diocesan Director of Education (known as the DDE) and the Education Team, are always available to advise incumbents on matters relating to education and Church schools.

They can be contacted during office hours 9am – 5pm at The Diocesan Office, St Nicholas Church, Boley Hill, Rochester ME1 1SL. Telephone number: 01634 560025

D1.3 DBE Associate Advisers

The Education Team work closely with a number of Associate Advisers and Consultants, who provide specialist skills and support for our Church schools and academies.

Information, guidance and policy documents are available on the RDBE's website (currently separate to the Diocesan website) at: www.rdbe.org.uk

D1.4 Aims of the DBE

"To support and encourage the work of schools, churches and parishes across the diocese of Rochester in promoting *Christian distinctiveness through excellent education of children and young people.*" In line with the Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good (2016), our RDBE Vision Statement is captured by John 10:10, I came to give life - life in all its fullness.

1. To actively promote and support Christian Distinctiveness through developing high quality teaching and learning, leadership and effective governance of our Church schools.
(Lead Officer – Deputy Director of Education)
 - a) Deliver training and support for the introduction of the new CE vision for education to schools
 - b) Deliver training and support to governors in relation to their roles and responsibilities in church schools
 - c) Deliver training and support to clergy in partnership with those responsible for Ministry and Formation

2. To provide targeted challenge and focussed support for school effectiveness in order that 90% of our Church schools are judged "Good" or better in both the OFSTED and SIAMS inspection frameworks by 2021.
(Lead Officers – Deputy Director of Education and Lead Associate for School Improvement)
 - a) Continue to analyse all data from schools using ASP, FFT Aspire, data from schools and local authorities
 - b) Continue to monitor schools in relation to leadership, governance and teaching and learning
 - c) Using all available information, identify schools that are vulnerable and visit each identified school to assess current support and future support needs
 - d) Manage the team of associates and allocate consultants to schools to provide appropriate support and liaise with other members of the team in relation to support provided
 - e) Offer a series of governor training modules across the year
 - f) Run a leadership group for newly appointed head teachers
 - g) Provide induction for new head teachers
 - h) Review support available to schools and academies to ensure that what is being offered is effective and appropriate for our schools
 - i) To provide appropriate training and support to schools in relation to school improvement
 - j) Provide briefings for SEC and the Board on standards and SIAMS outcomes in schools across the Diocese and update on activities undertaken
 - k) Expand the team of associates to include associates with more recent 'hands on' experience
 - l) To provide appropriate training and updates for all associates
 - m) Deliver training and support to schools for the new SIAMS framework
 - n) Deliver training for the Rochester and Canterbury SIAMS inspectors for the new SIAMS framework
 - o) Schedule and manage all SIAMS inspections in the Rochester Diocese

3. To improve the quality of teaching and learning of Religious Education in Church primary schools through the implementation of a revised Diocesan syllabus, sharing best practice and offering professional development opportunities for all teaching staff in Church primary schools.
(Lead Officer – Deputy Director of Education)
 - a) Fully implement the new syllabus for RE across all primary schools, Understanding Christianity in secondary schools
 - b) Continue to provide support for the new syllabus through regular meetings for the RE subject leaders in schools and through bespoke to schools and Trusts as appropriate
 - c) Ensure that the seconded RE subject leader is able to fulfil her roles and responsibilities in relation to the new RE syllabus
 - d) Continue to support the SACRES for Bexley, Bromley, Kent and Medway

4. To develop effective strategic partnerships with Local Authorities, Teaching Schools Alliances, Multi Academy Trusts and other key stakeholders ensuring that every Church school is part of an informal, formal or structural collaboration which supports their Christian Distinctiveness, school effectiveness and sustainable future.
(Lead Officers – Director of Education, Deputy Director of Education and Lead Associate for School Improvement)
 - a) Review and approval of individual Church school admission policies

- b) Joint visits with RDBE Chair and director of education to MATs and schools
 - c) Liaise with CEOs of Trusts about performance in the Trust schools
 - d) Work in collaboration with Trusts to deliver training and offer support for Christian distinctiveness, RE and collective worship
5. To ensure the good stewardship and effective deployment of the Board of Education's resources, to ensure its sustainable future and ability to deliver its triennial aims and key priorities.
- a) Continue to press for completion of outstanding statutory land transfers at Church schools
 - b) Successful management of the RDBE education team
 - c) To maintain an effective, professional working relationship between the Chair of the RDBE and the Diocesan Director of Education
6. To take opportunities for growth through the establishment of new Church schools and maintaining existing Church schools.
- (Lead Officer – Director of Education)
- a. Delivery of SCA projects at Voluntary Aided Church schools
 - b. Support and liaison over additional Church schools
 - c. Act as DBE lead and project manage Church academy conversions
 - d. Develop and progress strategies for the future of existing schools identified as needing to make a significant change in the longer term.

Lead Officers have been identified for the operational implementation but the responsibility for the monitoring, review and delivery of these aims is a corporate responsibility shared by both RDBE officers and Trustees.

D2 Church of England Schools and Academies

D2.1 Background

Church of England schools are established primarily for the communities in which they are located. They are inclusive and serve equally those who are of the Christian faith, those of other faiths and those with no faith.

Church schools are recognised for their distinctive Christian ethos and the impact this has on standards and all-round education. The proportions of Church schools regarded as 'outstanding' (by Ofsted) is much higher than the national norm and yet the Church schools are fully inclusive.

D2.2 Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools

A voluntary aided school is a State-funded school in England or Wales in which a foundation or trust (the Church of England) owns the school buildings, contributes a proportion to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school. Such schools have more autonomy than voluntary controlled schools, which are entirely funded by the State. VA schools always have a majority of Foundation (Church appointed) Governors on the Board of Governors.

D2.3 Voluntary Controlled (VC) Schools

A voluntary controlled school is a State-funded school in England, Wales or Northern Ireland in which a foundation or trust (the Church of England) has some formal influence in the running of the school. Such schools have less autonomy than voluntary aided schools and normally Foundation (Church appointed) Governors are in a minority on the Board of Governors.

D2.4 Academies

The Church of England, through its dioceses, is the biggest provider of academies in the country.

In the Diocese of Rochester, the DBE made a strategic decision to allow its Church schools to become academies if this was the wish of the governing body of the Church school and providing that the governing body of the school agrees to meet the DBE's Academy Conversion criteria which is published on its website.

The DBE has decided not to sponsor its Church of England schools directly and instead works closely in partnership with a growing number school-led Church of England Multi-Academy Trusts (MATS) operating within our diocese.

For more information on academy policy please visit the Board of Education website.

D3 Religious Education (RE) and Church School Inspections

D3.1 What is Religious Education?

RE in our Church schools is an academic subject and it is expected that the RE curriculum will reflect a good balance between theology, philosophy and human science. Pupils will develop the knowledge and understanding to be able to engage with religious text and theological ideas. They will develop age appropriate skills of enquiry, critical analysis and interpretation. In this way, well-constructed and coherent RE provision will result in pupils who give an age appropriate thoughtful account of Christianity as a living and diverse faith with some reference to theological concepts. They will also be able to demonstrate an informed and respectful understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. RE lessons in our Church schools are expected to provide a safe space for pupils to discuss religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ideas.

D3.2 Church school inspections (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools - SIAMS)

The Church of England and the Methodist Church use the Church Of England Education Office's (formerly The National Society) framework for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The framework sets out the expectations for the conduct of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican, Methodist and Ecumenical Schools under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The framework provides a process for judging the effectiveness of a Church school by asking, 'How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?'

It is expected that this will be a vision which is 'grounded in a clear theology firmly rooted in a Christian narrative'.

D3.3 The focus of a SIAMS Inspection

The question about the school's vision is explored by looking at seven strands in the life of each school.

- Vision and Leadership
- Wisdom Knowledge and Skills
- Character Education: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy
- Community and Living Well Together
- Dignity and Respect
- The impact of collective worship
- The effectiveness of religious education

For more information see the [Rochester Diocesan Board of Education](#), in particular the Church of England [vision document](#) which sets out the principles for setting a Christian vision and associated values which we recommend to our Rochester Diocesan schools.

E COMMUNICATIONS and DATA

E1 The Communications Team

The Communications Team, based in the Diocesan Office, is responsible for both internal and external communications in the Diocese. It aims to support parishes, the Diocesan Office and the Bishop, to share and promote the work and mission of the Church locally, as expressed through its shared Called Together vision.

It also works with parishes to encourage high standards of press and media relations and to promote good communications within parishes themselves. The department can offer help and advice on a wide range of communications issues, as well as provide media and communication training sessions.

As well as managing the Diocese's various social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Youtube](#), [Flickr](#)), they also produce the weekly [Digest](#) and the quarterly magazine – [Together](#). The Diocesan website can be found at: www.rochester.anglican.org/

If you have an interesting story that could be shared, relating to a person or initiative in your church, please email: communications@rochester.anglican.org

You are also encouraged to keep your churches [A Church Near You](#) (ACNY) page up to date with contact details, services, events and facilities. Every church has a free page and it is now a key way that those who do not regularly attend church are accessing information about their local church.

The Communications Team are available to support parishes with communication at times of crisis. It is always best to seek advice sooner rather than later regarding any issue that you think might have difficult or negative consequences. The department can also help with media relations where a church service (such as a funeral) is likely to attract a high level of media attention.

Some simple guidelines on how to respond to calls from the media are:

- If you speak to a member of the media, you must assume that everything you say will be on the record. If you don't want to be quoted, don't say it!
- If the call is in response to a news release that you have distributed and you are confident about the subject then please carry on. Out of courtesy, could you let the Communications Team know you have a story running it might be something they can share with the wider diocese too!
- If the call is unexpected and/or unwanted, take the name and contact details of the journalist. Then please call the communications team and discuss the way forward with us.
- If the call concerns a national or controversial issue, please take the name and contact details of the journalist. Then please call the communications team and discuss the way forward with us.
- In the event of a media crisis out of office hours, please call: 07585 952174

Diocese of Rochester [Communications Team](#): 01634 560000

Head of Communications: Jennifer Ross: jennifer.ross@rochester.anglican.org

E2 Social Media Guidelines

Social media is a very public way of enabling us as Christians to live out our calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ. One of its many joys is that it is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This opportunity comes with a number of downsides if users do not apply the same common sense, kindness and sound judgement that we would use in a face-to-face encounter.

The Church of England has a set of [social media guidelines](#). These community guidelines have been created to encourage conversations that reflect Christian values. They apply to all content posted on the national social media accounts run by the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York. Individuals, churches and organisations are invited to sign up to the Digital Charter to show support for its principles. They include:

- **Be safe.** The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be maintained. If you have any concerns, contact [Rochester Diocese safeguarding team](#).

- **Be respectful.** Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.
- **Be kind.** Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just *whether* you would say it in person, but the tone you would use.
- **Be honest.** Don't mislead people about who you are.
- **Take responsibility.** You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.
- **Be a good ambassador.** Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.
- **Disagree well.** Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.
- **Credit others.** Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.
- **Follow the rules.** Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

If you are in any doubt, for further help and advice, please contact the Communications Team.

E3 Digital services

With many Churches going online recently, the Diocese has produced the following resources:

Digital Church Hub, which has lots of information and signposts to resources to help churches in this ministry: <https://www.rochester.anglican.org/communications/digitalchurch/> including:

- The Basics: Equipment
- Grants
- Safeguarding and accessibility
- Copyright and GDPR

A Diocese of Rochester Digital Support Group on Facebook, where no question is too silly, and where people from across the diocese, with varying experience can gather and share ideas, resources and support each other. People can request to join here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/399052624405337>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/blogs/understanding-how-use-photo-video-consent-forms-your-church>

E4 Confidentiality and Safeguarding

It is essential that clergy in particular have confidential channels of communication to them. It is therefore advised that clergy and other key officers of the church do not share email addresses with other members of their household (or at least have an email address which is accessed only by themselves), and that, where answering machine messages are not confidential, this is made clear in the greeting message.

E4.1 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has taken effect in the UK as of 25 May 2018 and replaces existing data protection legislation (the Data Protection Act 1998). The DPA 2018 sets out the data protection framework in the UK, alongside the UK GDPR. This affects all charities and organisations, including parishes and clergy. The Church of England website, <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/> provides [guidance, templates and a checklist](#) to help you.

There is now a comprehensive [Rochester Diocese Parish Toolkit](#) as well as advice and many resources available from the [Diocesan webpage](#).

The Privacy Notice regarding clergy data may be sought from the Bishop's Office, while the [Diocesan Privacy Notice](#) is on the diocesan website.

F CATHEDRAL

F1 Cathedral

[The Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary](#) is the seat of the Bishop and a centre of worship and mission. Since its foundation by St Augustine in AD604 it has been served by a community of clergy and laity charged with ensuring that the daily worship of God is at the heart of Cathedral life.

The services of the Church are celebrated throughout the year with at least two services a day (Morning Prayer with Holy Eucharist and Evensong or Evening Prayer). Intercession is made for parishes, their clergy and people. The major church festivals are marked by additional services and every effort is made to ensure they do not clash with parish timetables.

The choral tradition is alive and well in Rochester and the Cathedral has a boy and girl choristers as well as a voluntary choir with a large number of deputy lay clerks who sing on a session basis. Evensong is sung on weekday evenings except for Wednesdays and choir holidays.

The Cathedral hosts a range of Diocesan services as well as Ordinations and other major Episcopal occasions. Throughout each year there are a number of special services which complement the daily round of prayer and the liturgies of the Church. A range of secular bodies also use the Cathedral to mark particular events including university graduations and civic services. A wide range of local schools make use of the Cathedral for their end of school year services and carol services. There is a strong link with King's School, who use the Cathedral for daily worship, and is where the boy choristers go to school.

The mission outreach of the Cathedral is reflected by the involvement of the Dean and Residentiary Canons in civic and secular bodies. They also hold diocesan appointments. The Cathedral's engagement with the local regeneration agenda is particularly important.

The Cathedral attracts many visitors and is always seeking ways to help them engage with the Cathedral as a sacred and safe space as well as an historic building. Various activities, exhibitions and events for visitors are run throughout the year and the Cathedral often works in partnership with the local Council on these.

The Cathedral relies heavily on a large number of volunteers, who welcome visitors, act as tour-guides, help in the tea rooms, work with school groups and assist with a wide range of other activities. Clergy, LLMs and Pastoral Assistants from parishes across the Diocese act as Chaplains to visitors.

The Education Department provides structured visits for school groups that link clearly to the national curriculum and also offers activities for children with special needs and other groups that don't usually interact with the Cathedral or even church.

The Cathedral website provides a great deal of information including service times at www.rochestercathedral.org and the Cathedral Office can be contacted at Garth House, The Precinct, Rochester ME1 1SX. Telephone: 01634 843366.

Please check on the printed Music List or on the website (www.rochestercathedral.org/services-music) for details of services and changes to the usual pattern

G CHURCH BUILDINGS AND CHURCHYARDS

G1 Repairs to Churches

G1.1 The Quinquennial Inspection

G1.1.1 The Diocese appoints an architect or chartered building surveyor (a Quinquennial Inspector) to undertake an inspection of the church building every five years (the quinquennial inspection). The inspection is a legal requirement.

G1.1.2 A Quinquennial Inspector produces a report on the condition of the building and this will comment on any aspects of the building which show cause for concern. The PCC and its own architect or professional adviser should investigate such concerns. Some may have a simple remedy while some may have arisen as a result of serious defects.

The PCC is advised to ask the quinquennial inspector to attend a PCC meeting to discuss the report, and a charge may be made for this meeting.

The Quinquennial Inspection report is **not** a specification for repairs: it is a report outlining repairs that need to take place and does not include enough detail to inform contractors how to do the work.

G1.1.3 The report should be presented to the PCC and the discussed; and future action discussed and minuted. It is suggested that the procedure below is followed:

- (a) The recommended repair items should be split into three groups:
 - (i) Those which can be undertaken by the parish, e.g. removing rubbish; clearing low level gulleys;
 - (ii) Those requiring outside help, e.g. cleaning out high gutters and tile replacements, for which quotations should be obtained from skilled contractors
 - (iii) Those requiring professional supervision, e.g. structural repairs, stonework and roof repairs: the PCC should appoint an architect or conservation surveyor to draw up specifications and give independent professional advice/
- (b) The PCC should refer to the [Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015](#) (or [DAC Secretary](#)) to see if works can be undertaken without any approval (for works detailed in List A of the Rules); with the approval of the Archdeacon (for works detailed in List B of the Rules; or whether a faculty is required.

NOTE: Interior redecoration to walls using emulsion should never be undertaken without first seeking the advice of the DAC. This applies to all churches built before 1900 and will include some built in the earlier part of the 20th century.

- (c) PCCs are encouraged to invite two or three contractors to submit estimates, having been supplied with the same written specification. Proper comparisons can then be made as to costs. Specifications should be submitted to the DAC for a recommendation before being sent out to contractors. Specifications, as the name implies, specify in detail the extent and method of repair and the materials to be used. Builders' estimates are often very brief on adequate information. Be sure you engage a builder who knows the requirements of your type of building. Many do not, despite what they may say. If you have any doubts, check with your professional advisers or the [DAC Secretary](#). Details of all proposed work, including DIY and builders' specifications must be sent to the Diocesan Office for the attention of the DAC Secretary.
- (d) The DAC will check the details of the proposed work to ensure it is appropriate to the building, and may raise queries before making a recommendation in connection with the issuing of a Faculty, or for more routine works, approval by the Archdeacon.
- (e) The DAC has, among its members, experts in architecture, repairs to ancient fabric, heating, lighting, sound enforcement, bells, stained glass, organs (pipe and digital), monuments, brass, clocks and archaeology. All are willing to guide parishes if asked to do so. (Enquiries to the [DAC Secretary](#).)

- (f) The PCC should consider taking out an annual maintenance contract for the church if it does not already have one. The contract could cover such items as cleaning gutters, downpipes and drains, replacing slipped, broken or missing tiles, servicing heating systems and management of the churchyard.

G1.1.4 When instructing an architect to prepare a specification, the PCC is not restricted to the person who produced the quinquennial report. The chosen professional adviser should have experience in dealing with buildings of similar age and construction as the church in question. The DAC Secretary can provide a list of Architects and surveyors who are known to the Diocese. Naturally, where an architect or other professional is engaged, fees are payable, and these fees are subject to negotiation between the PCC and the person concerned. Architects can be employed on a percentage of cost basis or at an hourly rate.

G1.1.5 Remember that a few hours spent looking at the report may save the parish money, e.g. it is not necessary to engage an architect to remove rubbish from an oil store or sweep out the tower. The report (in part) is a list of work to be done not a specification.

G1.1.6 For those parishes whose churches are in the Church Repair Fund, an estimate of the cost of work falling within the Scheme and suggested amounts to save for the next quinquennium are contained in the covering letter sent out with the report.

G1.2 Training

Parishes are encouraged to attend training days such as those provided by [SPAB Faith in Maintenance](#). A calendar of suggested annual maintenance can be provided by the [DAC Secretary](#), which can help to reduce the risk of expensive repairs in the future.

G1.3 Closing a Church for Repairs or re-ordering

When it may prove necessary to close a church temporarily for public worship because of re-decoration or re-ordering or repair work, it is important to plan ahead for this, to think through what arrangements may need to be made and to ensure that the Bishop is satisfied with the arrangements and that he can authorise the necessary provisions arising out of the closure of the church.

If the church is closed for public worship, then regular Sunday worship will need to take place elsewhere, eg, perhaps at another church in a multi-church benefice, or in another building within the parish. Those responsible for that other building or church will need to be in agreement with the proposals. It may also be relevant to alert the PCC's insurers.

Are baptisms to take place in this other setting? If so, the Bishop needs to authorise it.

Are marriages to take place elsewhere? If so, under the Marriage Act, it is possible for these to take place in the church of an adjoining parish, but the Marriage Registers of the temporarily closed church are used when recording the marriage. The Diocesan Registrar can advise further on this, if necessary.

Banns for marriages can only be called in a parish church, or in a place licensed for that purpose — and it is possible for the Bishop to issue a licence for the publication of banns to take place in, for example, a village hall, if Sunday Worship is to take place there during the period of the temporary closure of the church building itself.

It may be possible for burials to continue in the churchyard of the church which is temporarily closed for public worship, but the funeral service itself may need to take place elsewhere, eg, in a nearby church.

Agreement may need to be obtained over the allocation of fees, where another church in a different parish is involved in such above services.

The parish architect or/and contractors should be able to advise as to the period of time during which the church may need to be closed for the necessary work. Save in a case of emergency, it should, therefore, be possible to plan for the temporary closure to take place in a way which avoids, perhaps, key events in the Christian calendar, eg, Christmas and Easter and events such as weddings. (If it is known that the church may need to be temporarily closed at some stage in the foreseeable future, this should be communicated to prospective wedding couples as early as possible, in case it affects the plans which they wish to make for their Marriage Service.)

Once it is clear where public worship and other such services, as above, are to take place, this should be communicated to the community and congregation, but the approval of the Bishop to the arrangements should be sought first of all.

The Archdeacon may also be able to advise on matters which might arise out of the temporary closure of the church.

Any work requiring the temporary closure of the church, of course, cannot be undertaken without proper authorisation under the Faculty Jurisdiction procedures.

G2 Diocesan Church Repair Fund

The Church Repair Fund, usually referred to as the CRF, was set up over 40 years ago to help parishes set aside regular and adequate savings towards the cost of repairs to their churches and other PCC property.

This is a fairly unusual arrangement within the Church of England but it enables parishes to set aside regular sums each year into an account so that, when repairs are required every five years, the parish is not faced with having to find large sums to carry out those repairs.

G2.1 How the Scheme Works

The scheme is essentially a savings scheme. Each year, for five years, the parish pays an agreed amount called the Repair Rate into an account held within the Fund for each property they have within the scheme. At the end of the five year period, the building is inspected and a report is produced outlining the repairs necessary. If the parish's agreed savings are insufficient to cover the repairs and the parish has paid contributions in accordance with the agreed amount, the Fund can offer an interest-free loan to the parish, subject to being able to meet the repayments, usually repayable over five years. Following the inspection, a new Repair Rate is agreed for the following five years.

Repair Rates and other contributions into the Fund earn interest at a rate set by the [Finance Committee](#).

Formalities and paperwork are kept to a minimum but payments into the CRF are usually made by Direct Debit collection or Banker's Order, and payment terms are discussed with parishes to suit individual circumstances. It is expected that parishes should make at least two payments a year into the CRF although more frequent payments are perfectly acceptable with many parishes setting aside a set amount each month.

G2.2 Membership

Membership is related to individual buildings. A PCC can, therefore, enter one or more buildings, but not necessarily all buildings that they own. However, it is requirement by Diocesan Synod that all curates' and Licensed Lay Ministers' houses or flats must be in the Repair Scheme. The CRF is only open to buildings in the ownership of either the PCC or Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and is not available to other church or charitable organisations.

The Scheme is designed to cover quinquennial repairs of the building, i.e. repairs and restoration work to the fabric internally and externally, electrical wiring and also external painting, although other repair work could be considered.

Any church coming into the Scheme has to be adequately insured by the Parochial Church Council or the DBF to the satisfaction of the DBF.

Any parish may withdraw a building or buildings from the Scheme at any time provided there is no loan outstanding. However, housing for assistant staff must remain within the system. The Diocese reserves the right to charge to parishes the costs of quinquennial surveys if a building is not in the CRF.

G2.3 Building Inspections and Repairs

Churches and clergy housing are inspected every 5 years and a report listing the repairs necessary is sent to the PCC.

PCCs are responsible for arranging and paying for inspections of Church halls.

Parishes should liaise with the [Diocesan Surveyor \(Property\)](#)'s department regarding the inspection of clergy housing, whether owned by the parish or the Diocesan Board of Finance.

In respect of churches, in most cases the Diocese meets the full cost of the inspection and the preparation of the report. The DAC will write to parishes and the quinquennial inspecting architects to remind them when the church inspection is due, and PCCs will liaise with their architect to arrange an appointment for the inspection. The issued report is not a specification for a builder. Once a report has been prepared, it is for the PCC to arrange for repairs to be carried out. Where professional help is required (such as for structural or specialist work, etc) the report can be handed

to the PCC's architect. Otherwise, some other person (a surveyor or builder, for example) will need to draw up a specification for the approval of the PCC.

The specification or quotation for works must be submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) for a recommendation to apply for a Faculty, or for the Archdeacon's written approval.

If there are sufficient funds available in the CRF to cover the cost of the repairs, amounts can be paid direct to the contractor PCC bank account by the Diocesan Office subject to receipt of written authorisation from the PCC Treasurer or other authorised PCC official (either by email or letter). Repairs in this context can include the cost of professional fees (for example, fees from surveyors, architects or structural engineers etc) and VAT.

Should urgent repairs occur between quinquennials the Scheme Administrator or [Finance Director](#) would be willing to advise on the best way forward.

G2.4 Payments Into and Out of the Scheme

At the time that inspection reports are received, the parish is given an estimate of the amount considered necessary by the inspecting architect to cover the anticipated cost of repairs which will need to be carried out following the next quinquennial inspection (based on the assumption that the work recommended as 'essential' in the previous report will have been completed within the 5 year period). This amount is usually paid into the Fund by the parish in regular instalments (either by Bankers Order or by Direct Debit collections on at least 6 monthly intervals). This is called the REPAIR RATE.

Money saved during the preceding years is used to finance quinquennial repairs. Repair Rate contributions at the new rate, dating from the quinquennial inspection, are usually reserved for the next quinquennial repairs (in 5 years time).

Interest on credit balances held in the Fund in the name of the parish is added at a rate determined by the [Finance Committee](#), currently being annually on 31 December.

Any excess in the Fund standing to the credit of the parish after the quinquennial repairs are completed can be carried forward towards the next quinquennial estimate, transferred to another Fund or repaid, as the parish desires.

A PCC may decide it wishes to save more in the CRF, possibly as a means of saving towards additional building/repair work. These can be made either as a further Direct Debit collection (which needs to be requested to the Finance Team first) or by cheque (made payable to 'Rochester DBF'). These additional amounts can be paid back to parishes at any time. It is important however, that you specify the CRF account that needs to be credited.

G2.5 Loans (Please check with the Finance team regarding this section).

The parish is expected to use its own available resources before requesting a loan. If there are insufficient funds available in the CRF, an application will need to be made to the Finance Committee through the [Finance Director](#). Loans are usually repayable by regular instalments paid by either Direct Debit or Bankers Order over the ensuing 5 years and are payable in addition to the new Repair Rate for that period. The PCC must be able to justify repayments of the loan within the specified period.

Loans from the CRF are (usually) interest-free, although the DBF reserves the right to charge interest on loans for certain projects, if it so determines. In addition, if a PCC has been unable to save in accordance with the recommended repair rates, or has utilised funds for non-repair purposes, it may not be entitled to an interest-free loan, or even a loan at all. To ascertain a PCC's ability to meet loan repayments the current position of payments in respect of contributions towards the diocesan 'offer' will be considered before a loan can be made. The Finance Committee will be the final arbiter in any decision.

There is no maximum limit to the size of loan that can be given, subject to the satisfaction that the parish can afford to meet the repayments without affecting other parish costs, including the payment of contributions towards the diocesan 'offer'. However, as a guide, it is unlikely that a loan would be given for sums greater than the annual income of a parish.

For parishes wishing to undertake restoration work, interest-free loans can be made available but, again, subject to the affordability and ability to repay by the parish, and the satisfaction of the [Finance Director](#) and Finance Committee that the parish will be able to meet these commitments for the period of the loan.

Loans can be given from the CRF to help with bridging finance if significant grants are likely to be received from organisations such as English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund. Assurances may be required that the grant is going to be received, and on what timescale, before the loan is given.

G2.6 Applying for a Loan

In the first instance talk to the [Finance Director](#) who will be able to discuss the matter with you. There are two sources available: the Church Repair Fund or the Diocesan Loans Fund.

If a loan is required the PCC will have to write in to the [Finance Director](#) outlining the following:

- What the project is
- What the loan is required for
- How much and when funds will be required
- What funds are currently available (or why certain funds may not be available)
- Estimates of the whole project
- How the loan will be repaid and over what timescale
- Any other details in support of the application

The more information that the PCC can provide on how the parish is managing the project, the easier it is for the Finance Director to make an agreement to the loan. See [Appendix IV](#) for the current policy.

In addition, no loan can be arranged without a written undertaking from the PCC that it agrees to the terms of any loan, and agrees to meet the repayments without affecting existing expenditure commitments, including contributions towards the diocesan 'offer'.

Loans up to £25,000 can be agreed by the Finance Director assuming everything appears in order, and all payments to the Diocese are up to date, but any loan in excess of this amount or if there are additional terms requested will need to go to the Finance Committee for approval.

In some circumstances the Chancellor will not grant a faculty until payment for the work has been arranged, which could include the agreement of a loan. It is therefore important for a PCC to agree in principle its funding arrangements before going ahead with commitments for work.

If a parish is behind with 'offer' payments a loan will still be made available if the PCC is able to agree to meet the loan repayments and if deposits have been made in accordance with the recommended rates. However, a loan will NOT be made available if there are other PCC funds available or the property concerned is being used as an investment generating asset.

The decision of the Finance Committee in any loan application is final.

G2.7 Making Withdrawals and Paying Contractors

When repair work is carried out the PCC will pay the contractor direct and then claim back the cost of repairs from the CRF via the Diocesan Office. The PCC should send through a copy of the invoice or a request for payment and quote the relevant CRF account that funds are being drawn from. A fax, letter or email instruction is sufficient, providing the signatories on the instruction match the signature requirements held on the account.

PCCs should remember that the payment of repair bills is the responsibility of the PCC and not the Diocesan Office and to note any timescales from the contractor for payment – don't hold onto a bill for a month before sending it in as it could be a further 10 days before payment is made!

All payments are made by BACS/bank transfer and not by cheque. To avoid possible delays in payment you may need to ensure the [Finance Team](#) in the Diocesan Office has the correct bank details for the PCC.

Should a parish wish to withdraw any funds from the CRF for other purposes (which, of course, is possible as the funds are only designated and the PCC can re-designate as required), the parish's wishes must be followed, but PCCs should remember that if they make such a withdrawal from the CRF and they have insufficient funds available to meet the costs of repairs, they may not be entitled to CRF loan facilities.

G2.8 Interest

Interest is calculated on all balances in credit from the date that deposits are received and accrues on a daily basis but the interest is only added to the account at the end of the year (31 December). Likewise, if a payment is made, the interest is calculated from the date of the payment. Should a payment be requested that will take the account overdrawn without previously agreed loan facilities, the Finance Team can calculate the amount of interest that has accrued on the account to the date of this payment. This interest will be applied to the account if that enables the payment to be made.

There is (normally) no interest on any loan accounts.

G2.9 Accounting Treatment

The CRF is a parish designated fund and NOT a restricted fund. The PCC can choose to take money out of the CRF if it so wishes and use it for purposes other than for building repairs. It is NOT a restricted fund.

The CRF should be included within the PCC financial statements at year end, including any interest accrued. Some PCCs like to show their CRF as a separate designated fund within the financial statements. This is perfectly acceptable.

Money paid into the CRF is NOT expenditure but is the transfer of money from one account to another. Any movements of funds into the CRF should be shown in the section 'transfers between funds' in the Statement of Financial Activity (SOFA) for the year end annual accounts. Likewise the same applies if a PCC has a refund from the CRF.

Expenditure made from the CRF, either for repair work or professional fees needs to be shown in the SOFA in an appropriate line under 'Resources Expended'.

Any balances in the CRF belong to the parish, not the Diocese, and can only be utilised with the authority of the parish. The only exception is the payment of the quinquennial survey fee which is automatically charged to the relevant parish CRF account.

G3 The Care of Churches & Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, and Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015

G3.1 [Diocesan Advisory Committee](#) (for the Care of Churches): The Legal Framework

The care, maintenance and contents of every Church of England church (with a very few exceptions) is subject to the [Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991](#), and the [Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015](#). (On 1st April 2020, the [Faculty Jurisdiction \(Amendment\) Rules 2019](#) come into force.)

The Measure (which has the effect of an Act of Parliament) lays down the procedures for obtaining permission under the law for any changes to church buildings, their contents and anything within the curtilage of the church (ie the churchyard). See also the [Making Changes to Your Building](#) pages issued by the [Church Care](#).

Faculty jurisdiction is a system for ensuring all repairs and alterations to churches and churchyards are planned and carried out with proper consideration given to the historic fabric and architectural significance of the building, and to the archaeological impact on the churchyard.

It is administered by the Consistory Court of the Diocese. The faculty is a licence issued by the Diocesan Chancellor, permitting work to be carried out.

A faculty gives permission to carry out development to:

- a building used for public worship or its contents
- the churchyard or other consecrated buildings and land

Church of England churches enjoy "ecclesiastical exemption" – in other words, the faculty process replaces the need for listed building procedures which apply to secular buildings and, importantly, allows for due regard to be given to the *"role of a church as a local centre of worship and mission"*. It is most important that the faculty procedure is strictly observed, otherwise the Church of England risks losing this exemption.

However, Faculty jurisdiction does not replace the general planning laws: Building Regulations apply and planning permission will be required when alterations affect the exterior of a church, the churchyard or the change of use of part of the church. The Chancellor will not grant a faculty until he is satisfied that the relevant secular permissions have been granted.

Faculty jurisdiction applies to listed and unlisted churches. All repairs and alterations to churches and churchyards, including furnishings, fittings, additions and removals, are subject to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015.

The decision to grant a faculty is made by the Chancellor of the Diocese having considered the advice given by the DAC. All applications should come to the DAC first except for exhumations or the reservation of grave spaces.

G3.2 What is the DAC?

The DAC ([Diocesan Advisory Committee](#) for the Care of Churches) is a statutory committee which provides advice at Diocesan level, especially to parishes, the Diocesan Chancellor and the Archdeacons in respect of church buildings

and other places of worship, their contents and churchyards.

The duties of the committee and its constitution are governed by the current Faculty Jurisdiction Measure and Rules. Faculty jurisdiction has been in place for more than two centuries, but became more regulated during the 20th century. The current [Rules](#) are comprehensive, and the faculty procedure and role of the DAC are well defined.

Members of the DAC are appointed by Bishop's Council for their knowledge and expertise in the care and use of places of worship.

The Committee must consist of a Chair, the Archdeacons of the Diocese, and not fewer than twelve other members who between them have the necessary knowledge of the history, development and use of church buildings; knowledge of Church of England liturgy and worship; knowledge of architecture, archaeology, art and history; and experience of the care of historic buildings and their contents.

The DAC membership is supported in its role by a number of consultants, who can advise on specialist matters such as lightning protection, organs, bells, stained glass, clocks, ecclesiastical embroidery, trees and archaeology.

The Committee plays an important role in advising on faculty matters, both informally when giving advice to parishes on applications; and formally when advising the Chancellor on petitions for faculty. It is important to remember that the DAC only acts in an advisory capacity; the final decision about a faculty petition is made by the Diocesan Chancellor.

The Committee or individual members may also advise the Archdeacons or Diocesan Chancellor about other matters which do not require a faculty.

G3.3 When is a faculty needed?

A faculty is required for works which do not fall within [List A or List B](#) in Schedule 1 of the [Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015](#) and the [Faculty Jurisdiction \(Amendment\) Rules 2019](#).

These lists include a number of conditions, and a number of items specifically require a faculty:

- a. any works which involve alteration to or the extension of a listed building
- b. any works which are likely to affect the archaeological importance of a building or any archaeological remains within a building or its curtilage;
- c. any works in respect of all or part of which scheduled monument consent is required;
- d. any works which involve extension, demolition or partial demolition of a building, or the erection of a new building;
- e. any matter which gives rise to a question of law or of doctrine, ritual or ceremonial or which would, if undertaken, affect the legal rights of any person;
- f. the exhumation or other disturbance of human remains;
- g. the reservation of a grave space;
- h. the sale or other disposal of any article of architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest;
- i. the sale of any book remaining in or belonging to a library to which the Parochial Libraries Act 1708 applies;
- j. the introduction of an aumbry ([see B3.7](#)) or any other receptacle used for the reservation of the sacrament of Holy Communion;
- k. the introduction of, or the carrying out of any work to, a monument of the kind referred to in section 3 of the [Faculty Jurisdiction Measure 1964\(b\)](#).

Items detailed in List A can proceed without a faculty, and without any consultation with DAC members or officers, subject to conditions specified in that List.

Items detailed in List B can proceed without a faculty, but the Archdeacon must be consulted and give his approval to the works in writing. The Archdeacon has to consult with a DAC member or officer, and may impose additional conditions to the standard conditions which are included in List B.

Proposals for change need to come before the [Diocesan Advisory Committee](#) (DAC) – see G3.2 What is the DAC?

Parishes may also need to consult with statutory consultees, such as Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Georgian Group, Victorian Society, 20th Century Society, and the Church Buildings Council.

G3.4 How to apply for a faculty

i. Consultation before submitting an application

- You can contact your professional advisers with a request to prepare a specification and early consultation with the [Diocesan Advisory Committee](#) may be advisable in some cases.
- You should check what other permissions may be needed for your proposal – e.g. planning permission

may be required if you are making changes to the exterior of the church; further consents may be required if your church is in a Conservation Area.

- Discuss and minute all proposals fully within your PCC meeting. A PCC resolution will be needed, and the date entered on the Petition for Faculty form in due course.
- For larger proposals, it may be wise to request a site visit by the DAC before finalising your application. Consultation may be needed with Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Church Buildings Council and other amenity societies.

ii. Consideration of proposal by the DAC

When the PCC has agreed that the project will proceed, the detailed proposals should be referred to the DAC for formal consideration.

All faculty applications should come to the DAC first, (except for applications for memorials in churchyards, exhumations or the reservation of grave spaces when you should contact the Registry direct).

The Diocese of Rochester now uses the [Online Faculty System \(OFS\)](#) (including for the recording of works in List A, and for approvals by the Archdeacons under List B).

From 1 September 2017, all applications for List B and Faculties will need to be made through the [Online Faculty System](#).

Before submitting your application, you will need to register on the [Online Faculty System](#) (OFS), by clicking on the "Register" button at the top right of the home page.

There are helpful [user manuals](#) for each step of the registration and application process, which can be found via the "Help" button on the home page of the Online Faculty website.

You can upload to the Online Faculty website all relevant documents, including any reports or advice you have received from specialists you have consulted, and the comments of any consultees eg Historic England.

Proposals and supporting papers need to be received by the DAC at least three weeks before the meeting in which they are to be discussed. Please contact the [DAC Secretary](#) for a list of dates of meetings and deadlines. Members need to have time to view your proposal, arrange a visit if necessary and consider their response.

After considering the proposal, the DAC will make a recommendation and this will be incorporated in the DAC's Notification of Advice, which will be sent to you via the [Online Faculty System](#). Please note that this Notification does not give authority for the parish to proceed with the work. The DAC Secretary will send you the Notification of Advice with stamped copies of all papers listed on it along with the Petition for Faculty form, to be sent to the Diocesan Registry, and a form of Public Notice.

iii. Complete the forms online and send to the Registry

Once the Notification of Advice has been submitted to the parish, the parish will need to print off the public notices and display for 28 complete days.

The Petition Form will need to be completed online, and be submitted to the Diocesan Registry via the Online Faculty System.

The Registrar will arrange for the Petition for Faculty to be considered by the Chancellor via the [Online Faculty System](#), who will decide whether to grant the faculty. The Registry will notify the parish via the Online Faculty System when the faculty is granted, or if not, will send you further details of what you can do next.

G3.5 Closing a Church for Repairs or re-ordering

If the work needing to be done is sufficiently comprehensive or disruptive to require the temporary closure of the church, please see advice under [G1 Repairs to churches](#).

G4 Insurance of Churches

Many parishes are finding that insurance premiums are taking a substantial part of their income. In addition to insuring the building it is essential that adequate liability cover is arranged against the risk of injury to both members of the public and employees. [Employers' Liability Insurance](#) is a legal requirement under the terms of the [Employers' Liability \(Compulsory Insurance\) Act 1969](#).

In addition, there is a legal requirement for the PCC to insure the building, as detailed in the guidance from the Charity Commission. As the PCC are trustees, if there is not sufficient under the insurance policy to rebuild the church to the required standard, the PCC may be personally liable for any losses.

It is very important that the sum insured is adequate. If a claim is made and the sum insured is not enough, the insurance company will only pay a proportionate amount of any claim, even if the value of the claim is below the sum insured. An example might be where a property is insured for £10m but is really worth £15m, a claim for damage to half the property would only pay out up to £5m.

If the trustees ought to have bought more extensive cover, they may be liable to make good the shortfall out of their own pockets.

Insurance against other risks is also available.

G5 Value Added Tax (VAT)

As VAT is a complex matter, for specific enquiries it is best to contact HMRC direct or a VAT adviser.

HMRC advises that construction reliefs are complex and recommends that charities **phone their helpline 0300 123 1073** to check entitlement to zero-rating before commencing a project.

Parishes should be aware of the following:

G5.1 Refund of VAT paid on eligible repairs to listed churches

Listed churches can claim VAT back on any eligible repairs under the [Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme](#). This gives grants that cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. The scheme covers repairs to the fabric of the building, along with associated professional fees, plus repairs to turret clocks, pews, bells and pipe organs. You can find more information on the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, including details of what works are covered, and how to claim.

G5.2 Construction of an annex to a church building

Construction work to create an annex connected by a door or corridor to an existing church building is zero rated, provided that the annex is intended to be used for a non-business purpose (or as a church hall or similar), is capable of functioning independently from the existing building, has its own main entrance, does not provide the main entrance to the existing building, and is covered by the appropriate certification. You should establish with HMRC before commencing work that the work is eligible to be zero rated.

G5.3 Aids for disabled persons on church premises

The supply of goods or services for the following works will be zero-rated when carried out on existing church premises:

- (i) The construction of ramps, or widening existing doorways or passages, or widening pathways from the gate to the porch, for the purpose of facilitating a disabled person's entry to or movement within the building, including any preparatory work or making good;
- (ii) The installation of a chair lift or stair lift designed for use in connection with invalid wheelchairs, and the repair or maintenance of any such lift, including work done on it to improve safety, where the lifts have been installed to meet the needs of specified disabled individuals;
- (iii) The installation of a lift in a newly built annex to a church building with independent main access, where there is also internal access from the church. Subsequent repairs and maintenance to such a lift are standard rated.
- (iv) The installation of an induction loop system for the use of hearing-impaired persons. Repair and maintenance are also zero-rated. But the provision of a general public address system is standard rated, except where it is a first time installation in a listed church building.
- (v) The provision, extension or adaptation of a lavatory for use by a disabled person in a church building, provided that the building is used principally for church or other charitable purposes and the provision, extension, etc., is necessary to facilitate the use of the lavatory by a disabled person.

See [VAT Notice 701/7](#) for further information.

G6 Churchyard Regulations 1981

(Issued on the direction of the Chancellor of the Diocese. Note, since 1981, the Church of England has ordained women, so the reader should infer 'she' where appropriate in the guidance below.)

G6.1 Burial in the churchyard

(a) The parishioners (including all those on the Church Electoral Roll) and others who die in the parish have a right of burial in the churchyard if there is one and if there is room.

(b) The Incumbent may also grant permission for the burial therein of other persons at his discretion.

(c) A grave space may be reserved by faculty but not otherwise.

(d) Neither the reservation of a grave space, nor the exercise of the right of burial, nor the erection of a monument confers any right of ownership upon the relatives of the deceased or upon any other person in respect of any part of the churchyard. The whole churchyard is vested in the Incumbent alone, and the erection of any monument is a privilege.

G6.2 The Chancellor's jurisdiction and the Incumbent's delegated powers

(a) Nothing shall be erected or placed in a churchyard or be removed therefrom and no work shall be carried out therein without a faculty granted by the Chancellor of the Diocese or, in cases where the Chancellor's authority is specifically delegated to him as set out in paragraph 3 below, the written consent of the Incumbent of the parish. (Where the benefice is vacant, such delegated authority is vested in the Priest-in-Charge, or, if none, the Area Dean).

(b) Every application shall be made in the first instance in writing, in duplicate, to the Incumbent using the form CR1 approved by the Chancellor and obtainable from the Diocesan Office. If the application comes within the limits set out in paragraph 3 and if the Incumbent approves, the Incumbent may give his consent to the application. If however, the application is not within his power to grant or if he does not think fit, in his discretion, to approve it, he will so inform the applicant, signifying his decision in either case on form CR1 Where indicated. In the event of the Incumbent being unable or unwilling to give his consent, the applicant may, if he wishes, petition the Chancellor for a faculty. A form of petition may be obtained from the Registrar of the Diocese, Mr Owen Carew-Jones, The Diocesan Registry, Minerva House, 5 Montague Close, London SE1 9BB (020 7593 5110).

(c) In the event of any monument, tombstone or other memorial being erected or being placed in the churchyard without the written consent of the Incumbent or a faculty granted by the Chancellor (as the case may be), those responsible may be required to remove the same and pay the costs of the legal proceedings compelling them to do so.

G6.3 The extent of the incumbent's delegated authority

The Chancellor of the Diocese has delegated to the Incumbent authority to permit the introduction of the following monuments which comply with the following requirements:-

(a) Design

(i) Simple headstones not more than 4 ft. (1200mm) high, 3 ft. (900mm) wide and 6 ins. (150mm) thick, nor less than 2 ft. 6 ins. (750mm) high, 1 ft. 8 ins. (500mm) wide and 3 ins. (75mm) thick.

NOTE: A base forming an integral part of the design of the headstone is permitted and may, if thought appropriate, incorporate a vase for flowers, such vase being so arranged that the top of it is level with or below the surface of the base. A base shall not project more than 2 ins. (50mm) beyond the headstone in any direction, except where a vase is incorporated when the base may extend a maximum of 8 ins. (200mm) in front of the headstone. The base itself shall be securely fixed on a foundation slab (preferably of concrete) which shall be fixed flush with or just below the surface of the turf so that a mower may pass freely over it. The foundation slab shall extend beyond the base by between 3 and 5 ins. (75 to 125mm) all round.

(ii) Crosses shall not be more than 4 ft. 6 ins. (1350mm) high, 2 ft. (600mm) wide and 4 ins. (100mm) thick. No cross shall stand on more than two steps; the step, or the lower of the two steps shall measure no more than 2 ft. (600mm) from side to side and 1 ft. (300mm) from front to back. A cross shall stand on a suitable foundation flush with or below the surface of the turf.

NOTE: An Incumbent should not readily exercise his discretion to consent to a cross, the supreme Christian symbol, for crosses have been too freely used in burial grounds in the past. He should, in any event, require a high standard of design for a monument in this form.

(iii) Horizontal ledgers either flush with the turf or raised should not be more than 9 ins. (225mm) above a base,

which should be flush with the turf and extend not less than 3 ins. (75mm) all round the ledger. Inclusive measurements shall not be more than 7 ft. (2100mm) by 3 ft. (900mm).

(iv) As an alternative to a headstone, natural stone vases or urns measuring no more than 12 ins. x 8 ins. x 8 ins. (300 x 200 x 200mm).

(v) No monument shall include any kerbs, railings, plain or coloured chippings, figured statuary, pictorial etchings or photographic representations, or be in the form of an open book or a heart.

(b) Materials

(i) Monuments must be in weathering natural stone or slate, or hard wood. Care should be taken to see that stones blend with the setting of the church, churchyard and locality. Stones shall not be mirror polished nor polished beyond a good smooth finish.

(ii) No monument shall be of red, black or dark grey granite, marble, synthetic stone or plastic.

(c) Inscriptions

(i) The Christian and surname of the deceased should be given, with age and date (or year) of death or, of birth and death. The terms of any epitaph should be approved by the Incumbent and valuable advice is contained in chapter 8 of [The Churchyards Handbook \(4th ed.\)](#) - ISBN 0 7151 7583 1), published by Church House Publishing, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ. Lettering, preferably incised, should not be gilded or silvered. If the Incumbent cannot accept the proposed wording of an inscription, he must so advise the applicant, who may, if he wishes, petition for a faculty.

G6.4 Management and maintenance of the churchyard

(a) The Parochial Church Council which is, under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956, responsible for the care and maintenance of the churchyard, is encouraged to make its own rules to meet the needs of the local situation. These must be submitted to the Chancellor of the Diocese for approval and must be kept within the limits laid down in these Regulations. All existing rules will be superseded by these Regulations and should be resubmitted for approval, suitably amended if necessary. Any power exercised by the Parochial Church Council under these Regulations may be delegated by that Council to a person or persons deputed to care for the day to day upkeep and maintenance of the churchyard.

(b) No scheme for the removal of gravestones or monuments or other alterations of the churchyard may be undertaken neither may individual stones be removed without the authority of the faculty from the Chancellor. Subject thereto, the churchyard should be kept so far as possible level and free from grave mounds so that the grass can be mown by machine. The Parochial Church Council may, at their discretion, level any mound 12 months after the latest interment in the grave.

(c) Bulbs and small plants may be planted in the soil of a grave and plants and flowers may be placed in a removable sunken container, but unless they are kept tidy, the Parochial Church Council may treat the grave as part of the turf and mow over it.

(d) Wreaths or cut flowers may be laid directly on any grave or placed in any vase authorised by these Regulations but the Parochial Church Council may remove them when they appear to be withered. If a built-in vase container ceases to be used for a period of 12 months or more, the Parochial Church Council may insert a stone stopper in the vase hole.

(e) No artificial flowers may in any circumstances be placed in the churchyard, and, if they are so placed, and not removed upon request, may be removed upon instructions from the Parochial Church Council.

(f) An area of the churchyard may be set aside for the interment of cremated remains but only by faculty which will itself contain relevant provisions regarding interment and memorials.

G6.5 General

(a) A copy of these Regulations and of the Memorandum from the Chancellor dated 1st May 1981 shall be kept in the vestry of every church where burial rights exist and be available for inspection. A notice issued by the Archdeacon drawing attention to these Regulations shall at all times be exhibited in the church porch or on the noticeboard.

(b) General advice regarding the operation of these Regulations may be obtained from the Archdeacon and advice regarding any particular proposed memorial is readily available from the [Diocesan Advisory Committee](#) (The DAC Secretary, Diocesan Office, St. Nicholas Church, Boley Hill, Rochester, Kent ME1 1SL – 01634 560000).

(c) Any query regarding the interpretation of the Churchyard Regulations should be referred to the Registrar for a determination by the Chancellor.

G7 Trees in Churchyards

Trees are a traditional feature of churchyards. Within this Diocese there are many notable examples of fine churchyard trees. Some trees are of historic interest, for example, the ancient yews that go back many centuries. Some are of considerable rarity, for example mature elms that have somehow managed to survive the ravages of disease within the last thirty years.

Every Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility for properly looking after the trees within its churchyard or churchyards. It does not matter whether a churchyard is open or closed to the public. The responsibility covers all aspects, including planting, routine maintenance, lopping, topping and felling. Even if a churchyard is maintained by the local authority, the PCC is not absolved from its primary legal responsibility.

Some modern uses of churchyards can inadvertently cause damage to established trees; for instance, spillage from a heating fuel tank or pipeline can damage roots; a parking area close to trees can damage roots near the ground surface. Conversely, ill-advised tree planting can give rise to damage from roots spreading under a nearby path, tombstone or even the wall of the church itself. Valuable archaeological remains can be affected. Leaves from mature trees planted, in retrospect, too close to a building, can block gutter and drainpipes, thereby causing flooding and consequential damage, leading to expensive repairs.

PCCs are advised to appoint one of its members as its Tree Warden - this position can be filled by one of the churchwardens.

PCCs are advised to commission an arboricultural survey every five years. This is obligatory in the case of a tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) (schedule 3, paragraph 3 of the Care of Churches [Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991](#)). If the quinquennial tree report is undertaken by the architect or surveyor inspecting the church, any concern which he or she expresses with regard to the safety of any particular tree or trees should be referred to an expert.

If work is needed, an arboricultural contractor, i.e. a tree surgeon, may have the experience to give adequate recommendations as to tree safety as well as the appropriate skills to carry out the work, but if major work is needed, the engagement of an arboricultural consultant is strongly indicated and the work should never be entrusted to volunteers, however willing. Such work is not normally covered by church insurance policies. It is vital, therefore, to ensure that any contractor you do employ is adequately insured against public liability, including third party injury, loss or damage.

The Church Buildings Council has produced guidance regarding works to trees, and it is requirement of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules that PCCs have regard to this guidance. The guidance note can be found on the [diocesan website](#).

G7.1 Approvals for works to trees

Under the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015, PCCs can undertake some work without any approval. The felling of a tree if dead or dying can be approved by the Archdeacon, otherwise a faculty is required, see [G3 – Care of Churches](#) (NB: see also paragraph below re Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas).

List A – no approval needed

PCCs can arrange for the following without any approval

- felling, lopping or topping of a tree as long as the stem does not exceed 75mm (measured over the bark at a height of 1.5m from ground level).
- lopping or topping of any tree that is dying or has become dangerous,
- removal of dead branches from a living tree.

Works under List A are subject to the following conditions:

- the works do not relate to any tree in respect of which a tree preservation order is in force.
- that regard be taken to the guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council as to the planting, felling, lopping and topping of trees.

List B – approval by Archdeacon

The Archdeacon can approve the following:

- Felling of a tree that is dying or dead, or which has become dangerous
- Planting of trees
- All other work to trees except felling.

All works are subject to the following conditions:

- that regard be taken to the guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council as to the planting, felling, lopping and topping of trees.
- If applicable the law relating to the preservation of trees in respect of which a tree preservation order is in force or which are in a conservation area is complied with.
- In the case of any tree subject to a tree preservation order (TPO) or which is in a conservation area, the requirement for the planting of replacement trees is complied with.

G7.2 Tree Preservation Orders and conservation areas

Where any tree is subject to a TPO or is in a conservation area, the consent of the local planning authority must, in general, be obtained before any lopping, topping or felling.

The local planning authority consent is in addition to the Archdeacon's consent or Faculty.

Where a tree in a churchyard is felled, topped or lopped, the PCC may sell the timber or dispose of it in some other way. The PCC should apply the proceeds to the maintenance of any church or churchyard which it is liable to maintain, Section 6(2) of the [1991 Measure](#).

G8 Closed Churchyards: Procedure and Liability for Maintenance

G8.1 Procedure for closing a churchyard

If a churchyard is full, a PCC may decide to close the churchyard by Order in Council. It is wise to seek advice from the Archdeacon, the [DAC secretary](#) and the Diocesan Registrar before considering this possible course of action.

An application for an Order should be made by letter to Coroner's Division, Department for Constitutional Affairs, Ground Floor, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London SW1P 2HT (coroners@dca.qsi.gov.uk) and is usually made by the Incumbent or by the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council. The letter should set out in full the grounds on which an Order is sought. The Department is not normally prepared to consider applications relating to parts only of churchyards.

The Department will wish to be satisfied that an Order can be sought on at least one of the following grounds:-

- a) Further burials would constitute a public health risk;
- b) Further burials would be contrary to decency;
- c) Discontinuance of burials would prevent or mitigate nuisance;
- d) There is no proper room for new graves.

A wish to transfer responsibility for maintenance to the local authority is not a ground for seeking an Order.

Once a churchyard is closed by Order in Council, the PCC can transfer liability for maintenance to the local civil authority by serving notice under s. 215 of the Local Government Act 1972.

You should bear in mind that individual memorials belong to, and are the responsibility of, the 'heirs at law' of the persons commemorated by them. These rights and liabilities remain unaffected by any transfer of maintenance to the local authority, and care must be taken to trace and respect their entitlement if any works are proposed which affect the memorials themselves.

Work in churchyards, whether open or closed, fall under faculty jurisdiction, and the process for approvals remains unchanged.

G8.2 Maintenance Of Old Burial Grounds (From the Department of the Environment)

1. The notes in Part A (below) are applicable to Closed churchyards only and sets out the circumstances in which the responsibility for maintenance can be automatically transferred to local authorities.

2. Part B below summarise the statutory powers available to local authorities under which they may assist or take responsibility for the maintenance of old burial grounds. The exercise of the powers is at the discretion of local authorities and entirely a matter for agreement between individual authorities and the owners of burial grounds. Authorities with definite proposals under consideration will, of course, need to consult the actual text of the Acts.

PART A

Churchyards of the Church of England - Local Government Act 1972 Section 215*

3. Section 215(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that, where an Order in Council has been issued for the discontinuance of burials in a churchyard, the parochial church council shall maintain such churchyard in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair.

4. Section 215(2) provides that a parochial church council which is liable to maintain a churchyard closed by an Order in Council, may:

a. if the churchyard is in a parish having a separate parish council, serve a written request on that council to take over the maintenance of the churchyard;

b. if the churchyard is in a parish not having a separate parish council, serve such a request on the chairman of the parish meeting, or

c. if the churchyard is in England elsewhere than the City and the Temples and is not in any parish, serve such a request on the council of the district or London borough in which the churchyard is situated;

and subject to what is said in paragraph 11 below, the maintenance of the churchyard shall be taken over by the authority on whom the request is served or the parish meeting as the case may be, three months after service of the request.

5. If a request is served on a parish council or the chairman of a parish meeting and, if that council or meeting so resolve and, before the expiration of the said three months, give written notice of the resolution to the council of the district and to the parochial church council maintaining the churchyard, the council of the district and not the parish or parish meeting, are required to take over the maintenance of the churchyard at the expiration of the said three months.

6. A parochial church council therefore continues to be responsible for the maintenance of a churchyard after it has been closed by an Order in Council but where they serve a written request on the local authority or parish meeting their obligations in the matter are automatically transferred to the authority or meeting three months after service of the request. A parish council or a parish meeting have the option, however, of transferring the responsibility for maintenance to the district council provided that they resolve to do so and given written notice of their resolution to the district council and to the parochial church council before the three months have expired.

*This section does not apply to the City of London.

PART B

7. Local Government Act 1972 - financial contributions Under section 214(6) of the Local Government Act 1972 a burial authority may contribute towards any expenses incurred by any other person in providing or maintaining a cemetery in which the inhabitants of the authority's area may be buried.

8. Open Spaces Act 1906 - care, management and control Under section 9 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 all local authorities (i.e. county councils, London boroughs, district and parish councils) may

a. acquire by agreement, with or without payment, the freehold of or more limited interest in, and

b. undertake the entire or partial care, management or control (whether or not any interest in the soil is transferred to them) of any burial ground whether in use or partly or wholly disused. By section 10 the ground would be for use in trust by the public as open space and the local authority would have power to lay it out and improve it (but see below as to the removal of tombstones and monuments).

9. The powers of the 1906 Act are not given to a local authority as a burial authority. In the Department's view, if a local authority undertake

a. only partial care, management and control, this may be compatible with the continuance of burials by the owners of the burial ground.

b. the entire care, management and control of a burial ground, burials should cease unless in the exercise of acquired rights. Section 13 protects rights of a profitable or beneficial nature which, the Department are advised, include acquired rights of burial. If any burial rights are affected as a result of the exercise of powers under section 10, compensation would be payable under section 13.

10. A local authority cannot exercise any powers of management under the 1906 Act in relation to consecrated ground without the Bishop's prior authorisation (section 11(1)).

11. Section 11(3) permits the removal of tombstones and monuments in a disused burial ground only (i.e. one no longer used for interments whether or not the ground has been partially or wholly closed for burials under the provisions of a statute or an order in council). If the ground is consecrated, a licence or faculty must first be obtained from the Bishop (section 11(4)). The local authority, at least three months before moving any tombstones or monuments, must

prepare and deposit for public inspection a statement of the names and dates on the tombstones to be moved; give notice of the proposals at least three times in a local newspaper and to any person known or believed to be a near relative of a person commemorated on the tombstone; and place a notice of the proposals on the door of any church attached to the burial ground.

12. The playing of any games or sports must have the prior authorisation of the Bishop if the ground is consecrated or of the owner or former owner if the ground is not consecrated (section 11(2)).

G9 Parish Registers and Records

G9.1 Care of historic records

G9.1.1 The 1978 Parochial Registers and Records Measure, as amended by the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1993, lays down that, except where provision is made to the contrary, all parish registers and other documents in parochial custody in which no entry has been made for one hundred years, must be deposited in the Diocesan Record Office.

G9.1.2 Parishes will only be exempted from the compulsory deposit provisions of the Measure where it can be seen that parishes are capable of providing storage for records comparable to those in a Diocesan Record Office. These are summarised in Schedule 2 of the Measure.

G9.1.3 Records deposited in the Diocesan Record Office will be catalogued and, where necessary, repaired at no cost to the Parish. Most costs of the Measure are met directly by the Diocesan Record Office, which is normally the County Record Office, although in the Diocese of Rochester a small annual grant is made by the Diocese towards operating the Measure.

The Diocesan Record Office for most parishes in the Archdeaonries of Rochester and Tonbridge is the [Kent History and Library Centre](#), James Whatman Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LQ (telephone: 03000 413131).

Parishes within the Area deaneries of Gillingham, Rochester and Strood are served by the [Medway Borough Archives Office](#) in Strood.

In the Archdeaconry of Bromley and Bexley the Diocesan Record Offices are the archives departments of the library services provided by the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

G9.1.4 The Diocesan Record Office will make appropriate arrangements for the consultation of deposited parish records by members of the public. The issuing of certificates for baptisms, marriages and burials can also be undertaken by the Diocesan Records Office. Where records are deposited the parish loses the right to charge fees for access and the provision of certificates or copies, and the right to charge is transferred to the Diocesan Records Office.

Most Diocesan Records Offices do not charge for access to records but many now require certain documents, especially the older registers, to be consulted on microfilm or microfiche.

G9.1.5 It is always possible, given due notice, for parishes to temporarily reclaim deposited records for legal purposes, or to display in an exhibition, or for other legitimate reasons, though the display of records is controlled by the Measure and the Diocesan Record Office has a duty to advise parishes on what documents can safely be displayed and under what conditions.

G9.2 Care of records under one hundred years old (including parochial registers)

G9.2.1 When not in use by any Minister of the parish concerned or by any other person authorised in that behalf by the parochial church council of that parish, the registers and records shall be kept in a wood-lined, rust-proofed vented steel cabinet, fitted with a multi-lever lock, and unless the Ordinary otherwise directs, the container shall be kept in the appropriate parish church or other place of public worship.

G9.2.2 The place in which the container is kept shall be:

- (a) Well ventilated and likely to remain dry and unlikely to be subject to any significant variation of humidity and temperature. The temperature should not be allowed to exceed 18°C, and any variation between maximum and minimum temperatures during any week should not exceed 10°C. The relative humidity of the cabinet should not fall below 50° or rise above 65°.
- (b) The place where there is least risk to the registers and records in the event of flood or an outbreak of fire, which place shall be made secure in all other respects against flood, fire and theft.

G9.2.3 The container shall be opened at least once a week and left open for not less than fifteen minutes.

G9.2.4 No candles, wafers, wine, ink, oil, grease or articles made of cloth shall be kept in the container.

G9.2.5 No person having the custody of any register or record shall allow any other person to remove it from the church or other place in which it is kept unless s/he is empowered or requested to do so by a provision of the Parochial Registers and Record Measure 1978 or any order made thereunder.

G9.2.6 Where the person having the custody of any register or record allows another person to make a search in it, the custodian shall supervise the search with a view to ensuring that the register or record is not damaged, stolen or lost.

Matters coming under the provisions of the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, as amended, may from time to time be referred to a Joint Diocesan Books and Documents Committee of the Canterbury and Rochester Dioceses, the joint chairmen of which are identified in the Diocesan Directory.

G9.3 Inspection of registers and records in parochial custody

A requirement of the Measure (as amended) is that a periodic inspection of all registers and records in parochial custody must be arranged by the Archdeacon. This is mandatory. The person to carry out the inspection will be appointed by the Archdeacon after consulting the Chief Officer of the DRO. Future inspections are to take place within five years after the preceding inspection has been completed.

The detailed procedure to be followed at each inspection is left to each Diocese but the following are essential elements:

- (i) A full list of current and completed registers as at the first inspection;
- (ii) A full list describing the records of whatever date;
- (iii) A certificate of the continuing accuracy of any of the previous lists as at each subsequent inspection apart from any amendments specified in the certificate (e.g. designation of items deposited in the DRO);
- (iv) A report on the contents of (i)-(iii) above, to be made to the Archdeacon or any other person designated by him/her;
- (v) The sending of copies of each new certificate to the Archdeacon, the DRO, the incumbent or priest in charge and the parochial church council (but no longer to the Bishop); copies of original lists and earlier certificates should already have been sent or passed on to the same recipients.

G9.4 Further resources

See also Records and Information Management guidance from the [Church of England](#) regarding retention of documents.

G10 Friends' Schemes

Many churches find that a "Friends of St. Elsewhere Church" scheme is a very useful way of maintaining positive links with many in the community who are not regular worshippers. It can encourage local community life as well as providing additional funds for building maintenance and development. The core purpose of a Friends scheme is to harness the time, enthusiasm, energy and resources of people who are not usually part of the church community.

However there are pitfalls in an ill-conceived project, and it is worth making sure that the project is clearly thought through at the outset, and the nature of the Friends' group established according to the needs of the church.

G10.1 Charitable Status

You may be tempted to consider an informal independent scheme without charitable status. This is not advisable for the following reasons:

- The objects and terms of reference are likely to create a charity whether stated or not, and if the income exceeds £5000 the charity must be registered with the Charity Commission.
- If there is no formal constitution the funds are open to fraud and misuse.
- There would be no clear boundaries as to where the responsibilities of the PCC began and the activities of the

Friends Scheme ended.

- There would be no mechanism to ensure that the PCC was represented on the committee.
- If the objects are not charitable the scheme could be classified as a club existing for the benefit of its members who gave donations to the church. It would be liable to tax on the income from its activities and to have tax deducted at source on any bank interest.