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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **FROM THE ARCHDEACONS**

The care of the Diocesan Residential Property is a partnership between the Clergy and their households on the one hand and the Diocese on the other.

The vast portfolio of property, spread across the Diocese, includes Parsonages, Area Bishops and Archdeacons houses, Team Vicarages, accommodation for Chaplains and Sector Ministers and some Assistant Staff housing as well as tenanted property.

The Diocese currently spends a significant sum on each of these properties. This is accounted for partly by the size and age of many of our houses and also by the programme of improvements and maintenance to which the Diocese is committed.

We are grateful to the Property Management Team for the production of this Handbook which should help us all to undertake our various responsibilities in an informed and capable manner.



## 1. MINOR WORKS

A large proportion of the Diocesan Residential Property Budget is spent each year on Minor Works. By their nature they are usually essential but, sometimes, it is difficult to control the cost of such repairs within that budget.

The Diocese does have an established policy which occupiers should try their very best to follow so that these costs can be kept as low as possible and, when in doubt, a member of the Team at should be consulted.

The procedure for the authorisation of works of a routine nature is as follows:

- a) All works, other than those that are urgent, are to be authorised by the Team prior to the contractor being instructed to proceed.
- b) All works costing **£100 or under** ( including VAT) should normally be met by the PCC or occupier , other than those to boiler/heating and plumbing systems.
- c) For works costing **over £100** , please refer to a member of the Team for approval to proceed.

- d) For works costing **over £500** two estimates may be required
- e) Preferably, estimates should be supplied in writing, by fax, email or post although approval can also be given over the telephone. A full description of the proposed works should be provided.

Further guidance is given in the yellow 'Minor Works Handbook' (including a list of authorised contractors). Unless these procedures are followed there is no guarantee that expenditure of this nature will be met centrally.

Generally there is a duty of care for all Incumbents/PCCs within the Diocese of London to ensure that their properties are kept in good repair. Properties should be checked regularly by the Incumbent/PCC to ensure problems are addressed as soon as possible.

Gardens to the front and rear of the properties should be maintained to a good standard and the grass cut regularly, and any refuse should be disposed of as quickly as possible to ensure against infestation from vermin /pests.

## **2. EMERGENCY WORK**

Emergency works are those which must be carried out within 48 hours such as blocked drains, gas leaks, re-glazing and securing a property after a break-in, leaking pipes or water penetration. **Where possible** the staff of the Team should be informed of the

problem and their instructions/advice sought before work is carried out and, in any case, as soon as the office is open!

[Also see sections in regard to Gas, Plumbing and Drainage]

### **3. QUINQUENNIAL WORKS**

Every residential property is due to be inspected at five-yearly intervals. These inspections are carried out by a contractor on instruction by the Maintenance Manager. The report covers the condition of the external fabric of the house and the internal fittings, it does not include internal decorations, although it may comment on the state of these. A specification for any necessary works will be drawn up and priced. Once approval is granted to the works proceeding, a copy of the schedule of works is sent to the occupier for information and a programme for the works is agreed.

The Team is always interested to hear any comments regarding Any complaints or comments on the standard of workmanship should be notified at the time the work is carried out, so that any problems can be resolved

Any major structural problems should be notified to the Team as soon as they occur, as it may be advisable to bring forward the Quinquennial inspection and works.

Similarly, in certain situations a Quinquennial may be deferred; for example, if an appointment is pending or further investigation of structural problems is required.

#### **4. MOVING IN AND INGOING WORKS**

When a property becomes vacant, a member of the Team will carry out an inspection of the house in order to establish if improvements or repairs are necessary. Once an appointment is made a meeting will take place at the property with the Archdeacon of the Area, a member of the Team, the new occupier and possibly the churchwardens or other church representative to discuss any works that may be required. At that meeting the amount of any decoration and shelving grant is also agreed [see section in regard to Grants] Every endeavour is made to ensure that the Ingoing Works are completed before the occupier moves in but this does depend on the time scale involved and the scope of the works

It is essential that a new occupier arranges to take over responsibility for the gas, electricity and telephone charges on the day of moving in with meter readings having been taken as appropriate. Details of these should be obtained from the Churchwardens or whoever has had care of the property while it has been vacant.

It should be noted that, although a telephone line is normally available, the occupier is responsible for the line rental and any other charges in connection with the phone installation. The Diocese does not provide additional lines, points or equipment for fax machines, internet lines etc.

The Diocese pays for the buildings insurance on all its properties but please ensure that you advise your insurance company regarding your own contents insurance on your move.

## **REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL WORKS**

-(Quinquennials and Ingoing Scope of Works)

Where an occupier makes a request to the Maintenance Manager to undertake additional work or increase the specification in the agreed scope of works the cost of these works must be paid in advance to the London Diocesan Fund. Additional works will not be carried out without prior payment. Any additional works must be sanctioned by the Maintenance Manager,

## **5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR VACATING A PROPERTY**

The property should be left clean and tidy and free from any rubbish or unwanted furniture or possessions. If any fixtures and fittings are removed they should be replaced and the basic decorations should be made good in readiness for redecoration by your successor. If any light fittings are removed these should be replaced by a simple rose and pendant.

The meters at the property should be read and the reading agreed with either the Churchwardens or other person taking over responsibility for the building. Arrangements should be made for your final bills to be settled and for the name on accounts for the various utilities at the property to be changed as appropriate, usually to the PCC or London Diocesan Fund (if changed to the LDF the billing address should also be changed to Causton Street)

The property should be handed over with vacant possession and therefore all members of the family and anyone else living there should be fully prepared to move out on the same day. All sets of keys should be handed to the Churchwardens or other person responsible.

The existing telephone line should be maintained and not cut off so that it can be passed to the new occupier without incurring the cost of a reconnection, or having to amend church directories.

## **6. VACANT PROPERTY**

If the property is to be left empty, those who will be taking care of the property should ensure that either heating and water systems are turned off and the tanks drained down or, if more appropriate, kept running in order to maintain the house temperature at 10C during the winter months, with the heating controls set to operate twice per day.

While empty it is important to ensure that the property is safe from unwanted intruders by maintaining a 'lived in' appearance, by having lights on timer switches, curtains at the windows and keeping the grounds tidy. All locks, bolts and protective security devices should be put in to operation and it should be regularly visited to clear post and make sure all is in order. It is also wise to inform the local police that the property is empty.

During a long vacancy it is sometimes advisable to have the property occupied by caretakers or short term tenants – particularly when the property is located in a vulnerable area.

Any occupancy should only be allowed under proper terms of an agreement drawn up by the Residential Property Manager.

## 7. **CENTRAL HEATING AND BOILER SERVICING**

Properties should have full gas central heating to all living rooms and at least four bedrooms (in accordance with the 'Green Guide' recommendations). Thermostatic valves should be fitted to all bedroom radiators.

The annual servicing of central heating and hot water systems is carried out each year by various contractors as detailed below. They will also cover properties for emergency callouts and problems occurring during the year. In general the following companies cover this work but please check which contractor is responsible for your property as it can vary.

### TWO CITIES AND EDMONTON AREAS:

BEAVER COMPANY LTD 0208 450 7835  
Out of hours emergency number 07730 013690

### WILLESDEN /STEPNEY/KENSINGTON AREAS:

GARRY WJ HALL AND JOHN L RANDALL  
020 8953 2094 - their office opens at 5am  
(Hall & Randall also cover a number of designated properties in the other areas.)

If problems with the heating/ boiler are encountered between services please contact the Team to seek advice on who you

should call in. In an emergency you may call one of the contractors listed in the yellow Minor Works Handbook if one of the firms above are not available.

## **8. PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE**

Most properties have an insurance policy to provide cover for plumbing and drainage emergencies.

The Two Cities, Stepney, Edmonton and Willesden areas – are covered by Thames Water Home Service .

The Team will send you details of your policy and contact numbers if your property is within the scheme. Please contact Ann Murdoch if you require further clarification or cannot locate your policy number in an emergency

These policies enable properties to be covered 24 hours a day 365 days of the year and cut out the need to call out expensive emergency local tradesmen.

Occupants of properties without insurance cover should contact either Hall and Randall or Beaver if they have a plumbing emergency and Fullbore or Draintech for drainage emergencies. [see Yellow 'Minor Works Handbook' for contact details]

Gas leaks should be dealt with at once either by contacting Transco, British Gas or an appropriate contractor.

Water should be turned off at the mains during holiday periods at all times of the year, and, if you are in any doubt, please

contact the Team for advice. Any claims for water damage to the property or its contents may not be accepted by the insurance company if this procedure is not followed.

## **9. GAS FIRES AND CENTRAL HEATING**

It is Diocesan Policy for all properties to have full central heating and to phase out the use of gas fires. Since 1997 the Diocese has not supplied gas fires for its properties because most, if not all, now benefit from central heating. Existing fires are serviced annually, but, should they reach the end of their useful life, they are not replaced.

Where a living flame gas fire is installed, it must be installed by a registered CORGI installer and the correct ventilation provided. Our heating engineers and surveyors will check this, at the time of the annual service or Quinquennial inspection and if inadequate, the occupier will be asked to meet the cost of carrying out the necessary improvements.

## **10. IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

Improvements are not normally carried out between vacancies. If occupiers feel that they have a particular acute need, they are advised to contact their Archdeacon in the first instance.

Please note, in special cases the Archdeacon can sometimes suggest alternative sources of funding.

Structural alterations will normally only be considered if the house falls short of the recommendations in the 'Green Guide' on clergy housing. (see section 16)

The following works are **not** normally carried out or reimbursed

Toilet seats ,supply or repair  
Cleaning of extract fans  
Light bulbs replacement  
Cooker extract filter replacement  
Gardens (excluding trees adjacent to boundary)  
Extension in height to existing boundary fences  
(unless recommended by a local crime officers report )  
Paths, Patios and driveways  
Internal decorations  
Cooker, Fridges, White goods etc  
Television aerials, Sky dishes  
Floor coverings, ,sanding/sealing/ staining of floors  
Curtains and bilnds  
Supply and fit of additional internal lighting  
Supply and fit of additional sockets  
Movement of radiators to accomodate furniture  
Accidental damage caused by the occupier  
Repairs caused by negligence on the part of the occupier.  
Abortive call outs when an occupier fails to be at home for  
a prearranged appointment  
Pest/vermin control call outs to properties which maintain poor  
standards of hygiene  
(reasons for infestation to be highlighted on contractors report )  
The fitting of video entry unless recommended by a local crime officer  
Additional locks and slip bolts unless recommended by a local crime  
The supply and erection of garden sheds, greenhouses,  
conservatories and maintenance of same  
Additional heating sources (radiators, electric fires, gas fires)  
Damage to property from pets  
Damage to properties by sub tenants/ co habitants  
Provision of fire extinguishers/blankets  
Works undertaken for cosmetic reasons

## **11. ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS**

Electrical installations should be checked at the time of the Quinquennial survey or during Ingoing Works and any upgrading carried out as necessary. If occupiers have any particular concerns or problems please contact the Team. The use of adaptors should be avoided wherever possible and there should normally be two double power sockets in each living room.

## **12. GRANTS**

Decoration – this grant is normally considered at the time of the Ingoing Works inspection and the amount payable [up to a maximum of £1000] will be agreed with the Archdeacon at that meeting. All internal decorations are the responsibility of the occupier to whom the grant is paid directly, on written application to the Maintenance Manager, together with receipts for expenditure already incurred or an estimate for the work to be undertaken. It is hoped that, where applicable, the PCC will also assist the new occupier in the cost of decorating the house.

It is good practice for a room in the house to be decorated each year and for parochial property, the PCC should discuss how it can properly assist in doing this to a cost of approximately £500.

Study Shelving – where not already provided Diocesan policy is to fit 100 feet of shelving (of adjustable rack and spur type) or to make a grant of £300 for freestanding units - which then become a fixture at the property and then remain in situ at the time of your move for your successor.

### **13. SECURITY**

Throughout the Diocese, it has been emphasized that the care and security of the Clergy and that the safety of households is of paramount importance.

It is Diocesan policy that certain basic security items should be provided in our houses: For the front door, a spy hole, a security chain and mortice lock, a porch light outside and secure locks on other external doors. Please contact the Team if any of these are defective or not in place.

If not already been done as part of Ingoing Works you may wish to invite the local Crime Prevention Officer to visit your home and give advice. Besides their recommendations, other concerns should be taken into account – particularly , that the house is a place of work as well as a home and clergy should explain this to the Officer when the inspection is undertaken.

Alarm systems are to all properties as a norm, usually when the property is inspected for Ingoing Works The capital costs for installing a sound only alarm system with panic buttons will be met centrally but the annual servicing and maintenance is the ongoing responsibility of the PCC or occupier.

If you consider further security measures such as lights, grilles or CCTV are needed you should contact the Team so that there can be an agreement about installing these and their being funded appropriately.

All who live in Church housing need to be vigilant in using the security measures provided (eg door chains) and ensuring that the household and visitors are also aware of such precautions.

#### **14. SMOKE ALARMS**

Smoke alarms should be installed in all our houses. The Diocese will meet the cost of providing alarms on the basis of one per floor and one for the kitchen. The maintenance of the alarms (merely changing the batteries) lies with the occupier of the house and they should also be tested once a month. Most new houses will have electrically powered alarms installed, with battery back-up, as part of the design specification.

#### **15. TREE WORKS AND GARDEN WORKS**

The Team is not responsible for garden works and occupiers are expected to keep their gardens in good order.

Where trees threaten the structure of buildings, overhang public highways, or are in a dangerous condition following storm damage, the cost of necessary works will be met centrally.

Tree root trespass, causing damage to neighbouring properties, is a common problem and occupiers should note that roots are deemed by insurance companies to be in their control – any claims for damages will be directed, in the first instance, to their insurers under the occupiers liability of a contents policy. [This ruling applies to all properties and it may be worthwhile checking individual policies!]

The Diocese is not responsible for hedges, pruning of fruit trees or routine garden maintenance. Any trees which are planted by the occupier should not be placed in a position which is likely to threaten the structure of any building, wall or path and should be of a species recommended for the size garden and urban environment.

Vines and creepers such as ivy should not be planted against buildings and all gutters, drains and down pipes should be kept clear of foliage in order to prevent structural damage to the property.

In some areas, prior approval for works to trees from the local authority is required and no work should be undertaken without obtaining this or checking whether there is a tree preservation order (TPO) on the tree. Occupiers should ensure that all regulations are followed and are, therefore, advised to consult the local tree officer in most instances.

## **16. REPLACEMENT AND SUBDIVISION OF PROPERTIES.**

Following the implementation of the Department Housing Policy by Diocesan Synod in April 2002, the Property Team reviews all houses, as a matter of routine, to ensure they meet the established criteria.

Generally, the policy sets out the Diocese's aim to provide a 4-bedroomed house with 2 bathrooms, a kitchen/diner, a dining room, one reception room and a study and where possible, a garage ( in line with the Church Commissioners Green Guide)

If the existing house does not provide accommodation that is closely in line with the Guide, the Diocese will endeavour to alter the existing house or find a more suitable alternative. Any such proposals are, of course, explored jointly with the Archdeacon, the Occupier and the Parish. And may be implemented whilst the existing occupier is still at the property or when the next vacancy occurs.

## **17. INSURANCE**

All properties are insured for the replacement value on block policies held with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. Occupiers are responsible for their own contents insurance and for occupiers liability and are strongly advised to ensure that their cover is adequate. Advice can be obtained from the EIG, who run a special contents insurance scheme for the clergy. Please note that, should additional security precautions be required because of the nature or value of contents, the occupiers will be expected to fund them .

Claims on the building insurance policy are dealt with by the Team . If an incident occurs such as a break in, malicious damage, storm damage, flood or water penetration, that may be part of a claim, the following should be done:

- a. Please keep a note of the time and day the incident occurred and who discovered the problem. In the event of a break-in or malicious damage, please report the incident to the police and obtain from them a

crime reference number. Forward the information to the Property Team

- b. Arrange for any emergency works to be carried out such as boarding up and lock replacement, which will secure the property and prevent further damage in the short term.
- c. Advise the Team of the situation as soon as possible. You may be asked to obtain two estimates for repair work to be carried out and when received forward these to the diocese office. Alternatively, if there is extensive damage the Maintenance Manager may attend to see the damage and organize estimates for repair. A loss adjuster may also be involved in this process.
- d. Only claims for the replacement of existing fittings are acceptable. For example, damaged locks must be replaced as existing and any improvements clearly itemized on the invoice.
- e. Our insurance policy excess is now £750, and very often repairs that are a possible insurance claim come below this amount or very near to it, making a claim not worthwhile. The cost of repairs will then normally be met by the Diocese.

## **18. COUNCIL TAX**

The payment of Council Tax for all its stipendiary Ministers of Religion and Layworkers under Licence in the Diocese is the responsibility of the Diocese. Non stipendiary and House for Duty Clergy will be personally responsible for this outgoing unless their Archdeacon advises otherwise.

Occupiers should forward bills and payment books as soon as they are received from their Councils to the Diocesan Office for the attention of Elaine Saunders and payment will then be made directly. New occupiers should inform her of their moving in date when known (0207 932 1218)

It is important that the Diocese knows whether properties are in single or multiple occupancy to ensure the correct tax is charged or it could face being fined by Councils if found to be giving false information concerning this.

Every effort is made when occupiers move from and into property to inform the Councils of changes - but occasionally it takes time to obtain this information . Please assist us by forwarding any paperwork you receive in regard to Council Tax to the office and keeping the Team informed of your moving in and out dates.

## **19. SUBLETTING OF PROPERTY**

Occupiers should not sublet parts of their houses to tenants or lodgers without first seeking the advice of the Team and ensuring that proper legal agreements have been drawn up.

Failure to do this can lead to many problems such as tenants refusing to vacate the premises when asked to do so and this is particularly relevant when Clergy leave their appointment. Not only can this cause considerable inconvenience and sometimes unpleasantness for the occupier but it can also result in the Diocese having to meet heavy legal costs to regain possession of properties. If vacant possession is not available, it can delay the appointment of a successor, as they will be unable to move into the property.

Accordingly, occupiers are required to hand over their houses with vacant possession when they leave and tenants or lodgers should enter into legally binding agreements, which state that their occupation terminates on vacation of the post.

Taking in a lodger/ tenant can also have implications for Council Tax – if you are listed as a single occupant, you must let the Diocese know that the property is now under multiple occupancy and you or your tenant must pay to the Fund the resulting difference in tax.

If you sublet any rooms you may be regarded as Landlord under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994 and become responsible for the safety of gas appliances in the sublet accommodation.

Arrangements on how the surplus income from sub-lettings should be declared or forwarded onto the Diocese should be made with the Team prior to the occupancy commencing. In some cases, this may mean an appropriate adjustment being made to your stipend.

## **20. WATER RATES**

Since 2000, the payment of this utility bill for Parsonages has been the responsibility of the PCC. For occupiers of properties who hold a non-Parochial post this cost is still met centrally. If you need further clarification regarding this policy please contact the Team.

## **21. ASBESTOS**

Regulations concerning the treatment and removal of asbestos come into force in 2004. As of June 2006 nearly all Diocese properties (houses, churches and halls) have been surveyed by Cook Denning and reports sent both to the Team and to a named person at the Parish or property. These reports should be made available to any contractors carrying out work at the property

If a property has not been surveyed to determine if asbestos is present contractors coming to carry out work at the property should proceed with caution. Should you have any concerns regarding asbestos please contact Kenny Cathro or another member of the Team immediately.

The company now carrying out these surveys and follow-ups is Advanced Project Solutions Ltd 01527 544586

## **22. GUTTERS**

A gutter maintenance programme is in place for Churches, Hall and Parsonages. For more details please contact Mattanah Sackey on 0207 932 1250. See [www.london.anglican.org/gutters](http://www.london.anglican.org/gutters) DSP parishes will have their Parsonages included as part of the scheme As an incentive Non DSP parishes who sign up for the programme will have the cost of the parsonage gutters covered by the Diocese.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

The staff of the Property Management Team are always happy to answer any queries you may have and please do feel free to contact them.