

## *Annual Letter to PCC Secretaries*

2 March 2016

Dear PCC Secretary

Welcome to those of you who are new to the role of PCC Secretary, and thank you all, newcomers and older hands, for shouldering what is a key role in the smooth running of the PCC, and for your parish.

This letter takes the form of the usual Annual Letter sent out at around this time of year. It has information on Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs), elections, PCCs, any changes in the rules governing these, and other information which may be useful.

As we continue in our commitment to ‘Capital Vision 2020’, our vision for how, together, we serve Jesus Christ in London, please continue to use the opportunity of the APCM to pray for, plan for and reflect on your own stories of engagement with ‘Capital Vision 2020’.

The APCMs taking place across the Diocese, present a great opportunity for congregations both to pray for and to engage with ‘Capital Vision 2020’. Attached, as an Appendix (3) to this letter, is an invitation for APCMs to set aside time to pray that as a Diocese we may be more ‘Confident’, ‘Creative’ and ‘Compassionate’. Please read Appendix 3, and draw it to the attention of your parish priest.

## **1 APCMs**

Parishes are required to hold their APCMs by no later than 30 April in each year.

Key items of business conducted at the APCM include, the Annual Report on the proceedings of the PCC and activities of the parish, and the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ending 31 December, which the meeting receives from the PCC and is free to discuss.

Elections of lay representatives to the PCC are held each year, and in every third year parochial representatives to the deanery synod are elected.

Appendix 1 lists documents that relate to the APCM, and which can be downloaded from the diocesan website.

## 2 Electoral Rolls

### (a) Prompt submission of parish electoral roll numbers

Elections to deanery synods take place at APCMs in 2017. However, it is the electoral roll numbers reported at this year's APCMs which are used in the calculations which determine the number of places on the deanery synods to be allocated to the parishes across the diocese.

These calculations form part of a statutory process to produce a set of 'Scales' for the representation of the laity from parishes on deanery synods. These 'Scales' are required to be approved by the Diocesan Synod in time for the allocation of places on the deanery synods to be forwarded to parishes before the end of the year.

Before the process of calculating the 'Scales of Representation' can begin, the electoral roll numbers of all of the parishes in the Diocese are required.

It would be greatly appreciated if PCC Secretaries and Electoral Officers could ensure that the parish's electoral roll number reported at this year's APCM is submitted by 31 May.

As part of the parish Annual Return process, the 2016 electoral roll portal will be open from April 2016.

### (b) What is the date for the preparation of new electoral rolls?

2013 was the last year for the preparation of new church electoral rolls, which meant that everyone had to come off the roll and re-apply. This takes place only once in every six years. The next preparation of new rolls will be in 2019.

In the intervening years, i.e. this year, 2017 and 2018 the usual annual revision of the electoral rolls takes place.

A sample schedule, based on a hypothetical APCM date of 22 April, showing the minimum periods in the revision timescale can be downloaded from the following link on the diocesan website: <http://www.london.anglican.org/kb/electoral-roll>.

## 3 Deanery Synods: election of lay members

### (a) Elections at APCMs in 2017

As mentioned under paragraph 2 (a) above, elections to deanery synods are due to take place at the 2017 APCMs. Further information will be sent about these elections in next year's annual letter.

The term of office of all lay elected deanery synod members commenced on 1 June 2014 and will end on 31 May 2017.

The term of office of the lay representatives to be elected at the 2017 APCMs, will run from 1 June 2017 until 31 May 2020.

## **(b) By-Elections to deanery synods**

It may be that a parish has one or more vacancies in its lay representation on the deanery synod, for which a by-election is due to be held at this year's APCM.

A schedule containing the number of parish representatives on the deanery synod can be found on the diocesan website at <http://www.london.anglican.org/support/annual-meetings/>. You can consult this at any time throughout the 3 year term if you should need to check the number of representatives for your parish on the deanery synod.

## **4 Ongoing reporting on newly elected deanery synod members**

**It is important that the records of the membership of the deanery synods throughout the diocese are kept up to date.**

A key reason for this is so that the deanery secretaries can have an accurate and up to date list for the deanery synod circulations for meetings and other events.

A further important reason concerns the occurrence of by-elections to various synodical bodies, for instance to fill vacancies that may arise at any time on the General Synod, Diocesan Synod or Area Councils. The lay membership of the deanery synods form the list of electors in these elections. It is therefore important that the deanery synod membership records which are held centrally on the diocesan database, are accurate and kept up to date.

Those responsible for passing on the information of newly elected representatives to the deanery synod after the APCM are asked to do so as quickly as possible. Please enter details of the name, postal and email addresses and (if available) telephone number onto the diocesan database either online (where possible), or by downloading or requesting a copy of the Annual Return form from the Area/archdeaconry office, and returning the completed form to that office (see Note 2 below for email addresses).

At other times during the year, details of any changes in deanery synod representation should be forwarded by email to the Area/archdeaconry office.

## **5 PCCs**

Below in (a) and (b) is a recap on two significant changes in the Church Representation Rules which took place in 2004 relating to PCCs:

### **(a) Number of lay representatives on the PCC, i.e. the formula now in force**

Number on Electoral Roll	Number of representatives to be elected
50 or less	6
51 – 100	9
101–200	12
over 200	15

Note that parishes are permitted to set a different (i.e. higher or lower) number of lay representatives to elect, (e.g. a parish with an electoral roll of 101-200 may consider 10 rather than 12 representatives to be more appropriate). This is done by passing a

resolution at the APCM. Any such resolution, however, will only take effect from *the following APCM*.

**(b) Term of office of elected lay members of the PCC**

The length of time that an elected member serves on the PCC changed in 2004 from one year to three years, with a third of the PCC to be elected each year – unless the APCM decides to retain the system of annual election of the whole PCC. Such a decision, when taken, is *effective in the year in which it is passed, and must be reviewed at least every six years*.

**(c) Declaration that a person is not disqualified from being a PCC Member**

In order to assist in meeting statutory requirements, a Form of Declaration that a person is not disqualified from being a charity trustee, and therefore a PCC member, was produced in 2011 for use in parishes from that point onwards. A copy of the form can be obtained from the diocesan website at <http://www.london.anglican.org/support/annual-meetings/>. Circumstances which disqualify a person from serving as a PCC member include, for example, being an undischarged bankrupt.

The form should be brought to the attention of

- Those standing for election to the PCC, deanery synod, and as churchwardens;
- Those elected verbally at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting to the PCC, or deanery synod; and
- Other persons appointed as members of the PCC (e.g. co-options), and who have not already signed a declaration confirming that they are not disqualified from being members of the PCC.

The form explains that

- Candidates standing for election to the PCC, deanery synod, or as churchwardens should read the declaration (in Section 4 of the Form), but need not sign it if they will be signing (or have signed) nomination forms which already contain the declaration (i.e. which include a reference to section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (formerly section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993)).
- The declaration should be signed by
  - (a) Those elected verbally at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting to the PCC or deanery synod; and
  - (b) Others appointed to serve as members of the PCC (e.g. co-options), who have not signed a declaration confirming that they are not disqualified from being members of the PCC.

### How should the Form of Declaration be used?

Sufficient copies of the form should be provided

- Alongside nomination forms for those standing for election to the PCC, deanery synod, or as churchwardens; and
- During or after the APCM, for anyone elected to the PCC or deanery synod verbally at the meeting to sign;

(Ideally, when a verbal request for nominations is made at the APCM, it should be announced at that point that those offering themselves should be satisfied that they are not disqualified from serving as a member of the PCC. (Note that deanery synod members are automatically members of the PCC)).

## **6 After the APCM**

### **(a) Parish Annual Returns - deadline: 31 May**

A Parish Annual Return is completed each year by every parish. It is the means of collecting information required by the bishops, archdeacons, diocesan officers, and the committees of the Archbishops' Council, to assist in their various responsibilities for planning and administering the affairs of the Church at its different levels.

The Annual Return should be completed online as soon as possible after your APCM, and in any event, must be completed by 31 May. (Note that when completing the Return online, it need not be filled out in one sitting, but the different parts can be filled out at different times).

The 'Statistics on Mission and Finance' provided through the Annual Returns are very useful in enabling changes in these areas to be identified over the years within parishes, deaneries, Areas and across the Diocese as a whole.

Parishes were asked to complete the 'Statistics for Mission' section of the Return by 31 January 2016. *(If your parish has not as yet submitted this section of the Return, please could this be done urgently)*. This section covers a range of subject areas including questions about the worshipping community; special services, such as weddings, and attendance data for Easter, October and Christmas.

*Please contact your Area/Archdeaconry Office if you experience any difficulty with the online process.*

### **(b) Parish Annual Report and Accounts**

PCCs are governed by the Church Representation Rules, Rule 9 (4) of which states that, after the APCM, the PCC

*shall cause copies of the annual report and financial statements to be sent within twenty-eight days of the annual meeting to the secretary of the [London Diocesan Fund] for retention by the [Diocese]*

Failure to submit accounts before 1 June means that all members of the PCC are in breach of their duty as trustees. Failure to file may also affect the validity of the parish's insurance policy.

### **Online submission of accounts and report**

Parishes should submit their annual accounts and report online. They will need to certify electronically that the copies being sent in electronic form are an accurate copy of the accounts which have been approved by the PCC and signed by the chair presiding at the meeting. (Please note that the electronic certification will also constitute a declaration that the accounts have been signed off with an unqualified report by either the Independent Examiner or the Auditor).

### **Registered Charities**

Parishes with income of over £100,000 must now be registered with the Charity Commission. Such PCCs must also submit their accounts and reports to the Charity Commission as well as to the Diocese. In addition to providing the Charity Commission with their annual report and accounts, they must also complete a 'Charity Commission Annual Return'. The Charity Commission will e-mail a reminder to the nominated contact about this.

### **Personal liability**

The PCC is a charity (whether registered or not) and all PCC members are classed as trustees. As trustees, the PCC's members are not normally personally liable for the activities of the parish. However, as the Charity Commission's website makes clear, if the trustees act imprudently, or are otherwise in breach of the law or the governing document, the position is different. Here, trustees may be personally responsible for liabilities incurred by the charity, or for making good any loss to the charity. Since trustees act collectively in running a charity, they will usually be collectively responsible to meet any such liability. Failing to keep proper records and accounts, to prepare annual statements or failing to submit accounts on time could well be considered to be an example of acting imprudently or in breach of law. A further impact of not filing accounts is that charity status could be withdrawn / suspended, and this would mean the PCC being unable to make Gift Aid claims, which would present a serious problem.

*Please draw this section of the letter to the attention of your PCC Treasurer.*

## **7 Churchwardens Measure 2001**

### **Disqualification after six periods of office (Section 3)**

The following note is based on one which was included in mailings of 'Ministry Matters' sent to clergy in the Diocese in 2008. They were asked to note that:

A person is disqualified from being appointed to the office of churchwarden when he or she has served as churchwarden of the same parish for six years in succession. A person must have a gap of at least two years before serving again.

However, the Annual Meeting of Parishioners can pass a resolution to the effect that this section of the Measure shall not apply, which would allow the person in question to be

appointed after the six years has expired. Such a resolution would take effect immediately. The end of the first six year period, since this rule came into effect, was the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held in 2008.

This therefore meant that any churchwarden who had served continuously since the Annual Meeting of Parishioners of 2002 could not be re-appointed in 2008 unless the Meeting had passed a resolution specifically overruling this provision in relation to the parish, which would enable him or her to be reappointed.

Any such resolution can be revoked by a subsequent Annual Meeting of Parishioners.

The intention of the legislation appears to be that six successive terms should normally be regarded as the maximum, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

If necessary, advice can be obtained from the Diocesan Registrar.

## **8 The Role of PCC Secretary**

A presentation which may help you in your role as PCC Secretary can be found at:  
<http://www.london.anglican.org/kb/pcc-secretaries>.

A list of publications which may also provide some help is provided in Appendix 2.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the above matters, on  
[monica.bolley@london.anglican.org](mailto:monica.bolley@london.anglican.org); tel. 020 7932 1228.

I am sending copies of this letter to those noted below. Please share the contents of this letter with your parish priest, and other church officers. Where appropriate please also pass on a copy to the secretaries of any district church council associated within your parish.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

*Monica*

Monica Bolley  
Synodical Secretary

### Copies emailed to:

Archdeacons, the General Secretary, Diocesan Registrar, Incumbents and Priests-in-Charge, Churchwardens, Treasurers, Parish Administrators, Electoral Roll Officers, Area Deans, Deanery Lay Chairs, Deanery Synod Secretaries, Area Directors of Training and Development, Area Finance Advisers and Area Office Staff.

Notes:

- 1 Note to PCC Secretaries:  
In view of the increased use of email, and its benefits including the reduction in diocesan postage costs, this letter is now being sent by email to those PCC Secretaries for whom we have an email address. Those not on email are being sent copies by post.
- 2 Area /Archdeaconry offices
  - London Archdeaconry: Pam Nicholls, [pam.nicholls@london.anglican.org](mailto:pam.nicholls@london.anglican.org)
  - Stepney Area: Jenny Harding, [jenny.harding@london.anglican.org](mailto:jenny.harding@london.anglican.org)
  - Kensington Area: Fiona Holmer, [kao@london.anglican.org](mailto:kao@london.anglican.org)
  - Edmonton Area: Maura Roni, [maura.roni@london.anglican.org](mailto:maura.roni@london.anglican.org)
  - Willesden Area: Anne Davies, [wao@london.anglican.org](mailto:wao@london.anglican.org)

## Appendix 1

### Forms for Parish Annual Meetings

The following documents can be located on the diocesan website at  
<http://www.london.anglican.org/support/annual-meetings/>

- (a) **Electoral Roll**
  - Electoral Roll application form
  - Electoral Roll certificate for display in church
  - Notice of Revision of Electoral Roll
  - Sample of timetable for Revision of Electoral Roll
- (b) **Other Forms relating to Parish Annual Meetings**
  - Notice of Annual Parochial Church Meeting
  - Notice of Meeting of Parishioners - for Election of Churchwarden
  - Nomination Form for Election to the PCC
  - Nomination Form for Election to the Deanery Synod
  - Nomination Form for Election of Churchwardens
  - Results of Elections – Notice for display
- (c) **Parish Representation on Deanery Synods – Schedule of Numbers**
- (d) **The Role of PCC Secretaries – copy of a presentation on the legalities and practicalities**  
can be located at: <http://www.london.anglican.org/kb/pcc-secretaries>.

## Appendix 2



## **Publications for PCC secretaries**

### **(a) Church Representation Rules 2011**

PCCs are governed by the Church Representation Rules. All parishes should have a copy. The Church Representation Rules 2011 (ISBN 978 0 7151 1041 6) (the latest edition) are available electronically on the diocesan website at <http://www.london.anglican.org/support/annual-meetings/>.

These Rules comprise Schedule 3 of the Synodical Government Measure 1969, together with subsequent amendments. They contain information including details on the governance of APCMs, PCCs, deanery synods, and other synodical bodies, and on the formation, maintenance, revision and renewal of Electoral Rolls.

### **(b) Other useful publications**

- A Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors (Kenneth MacMorran and Timothy Briden) ISBN 0-819-28111-5
- Practical Church Management – A Guide for every Parish (James Behrens) ISBN 0-85244-602-0 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)
- An ABC for the PCC – A Handbook for Church Council Members (John Pitchford) ISBN 0-8264-6599-4
- A Basic Church Dictionary and Compendium (Compiled by Tony Meakin) ISBN 1-85311-087-6
- Your Church and the Law (A simple explanation and guide) – David Parrott ISBN 978-1-85311-927-9

All of these publications are available from Church House Bookshop, 31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN (tel: 020 7898 1300 / [www.chbookshop.co.uk](http://www.chbookshop.co.uk)).



## Capital Vision 2020

*Please raise with your Parish Priest the following*

**At your APCM, to consider setting aside a brief time to pray and reflect on our city and our vision of a church in 2020, that is Christ centred and outward looking. To pray that as a Diocese we will be**

- More confident in speaking and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- More compassionate in serving communities with the love of God the Father
- More creative in reaching new people and places with the Good News in the power of the Spirit

**At your APCM, as you review the life of your parish in 2015, and look forward to the rest of 2016 and beyond, to consider setting aside time to include one or more of the following in your meeting:**

- As we seek to double the number of young people involved in local Christian community take soundings from those present on what it would take to double the number of young people involved in your church – from 4 to 8 or 50 to 100, by 2020? Could you reflect this commitment by ensuring that young people are part of or lead this conversation?
- 13,000 people have already been commissioned as ambassadors representing Jesus Christ in daily life. This [short film](#) tells some of their stories, and the stories of churches involved in equipping and commissioning ambassadors. Could your parish share its plans for equipping ambassadors at your APCM? [www.ambassadors2020.org](http://www.ambassadors2020.org) has more resources and information.
- We are seeking to increase the number of vocations, increasing the number of ordinands by 50% between now and 2020. Could you pray for more vocations in your own parish, and pray for or hear from those currently in training? Find resources and films at [London Callings](#)

This year Bishop Richard has encouraged each parish to participate in a wave of prayer across our Diocese leading up to Pentecost Sunday on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Consider how your parish will participate in this week of prayer. Go to <http://www.london.anglican.org/articles/week-of-prayer-2016-ascension-pentecost/> for some ideas. Could you also gather people to come to St Paul's Cathedral on 14<sup>th</sup> May for an evening of informal prayer and worship? Booking details will be available shortly.

## RESOURCES

If you would like any Capital Vision resources to share at your APCM please email [capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org](mailto:capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org). Capital Vision foldout leaflets are readily available. A3 Posters can also be ordered for a notice board or wall display. [A short film](#) reviewing a year since the launch of Capital Vision is also available.

There are resources which are available to help you with your ongoing plans. Here are just a few resources to consider:

1. [Ambassadors website](#) is a hub of resources for individuals and for churches considering how to equip and commission people to live out their faith in daily life. Also available is a printed publication called Voice of Hope for ambassadors which includes an introduction from the Bishop of London, ambassador profiles, messages and stories and 40 days of devotionals. If your church would like free copies of Voice of Hope or to join a workshop on ambassadors, email [capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org](mailto:capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org).
2. Whatever we do in church, at some point or other we find ourselves thinking about communications. With so many opportunities, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed and not know what to do, or what to tackle first or next. This is where our parish communications toolkit comes in handy. The toolkit is a collection of 'how to' articles about many aspects of parish communications. If you need help with your parish website, or to get your good news recognised in the local media, or to navigate the thorny issue of copyright, how to market your building as a film location then it's a great place to start. Visit [www.london.anglican.org/communications](http://www.london.anglican.org/communications) to find out what the toolkit offers or to contact the communications teams.
3. Would your parish like to focus on each member of the congregation praying for seven people? Pray for seven bookmarks are available by emailing [capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org](mailto:capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org) or the [PrayerMate](#) app is available to download.

### **Finally, please hold in prayer**

Each of the 10 [Capital Vision 2020 priorities](#). Each priority is sponsored by one of the Bishops or Archdeacons who would love to hear how you are taking it forward and connect you with others with similar stories or ideas. Email [capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org](mailto:capitalvision2020@london.anglican.org).

Debbie Clinton, Capital Vision Manager

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