



A HANDBOOK FOR AREA DEANS

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FOREWORD

We are very grateful for your ministry as Area Deans. Previous Deans would say that on the whole they have enjoyed this ministry and we hope that you will do so as well. This handbook aims to support you in your role and draws on the reflections of a number of Area Deans in the London Diocese. The handbook is not designed to be an exhaustive guide to the role, but it is hoped that there are some useful things here.

We have tried to ensure that the full text of some of the legal material to which need to refer is immediately available and relevant pages from it may be freely copied and made available to Church Wardens and others.

If you have any comments on how we can improve the handbook please do pass them on.

With every blessing in your ministry.

+Sarah
Bishop of London

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for being willing to take on the role of Area Dean. The ministry of Area Deans has become more and more significant over the past few years. You share the *episcopate* of your bishop for the clergy and parishes within your deanery – as well as having a ministry in the wider community and Borough – and the role carries considerable responsibilities.

This handbook won't tell you everything you need to know, but it does aim to be a starting point and a reference document. The Bishop and Archdeacon, together with your colleagues in the Area Staff Team, will want to support you as you familiarise yourself with the shape of the job, and the Training and Development Team within the Diocese provides training opportunities specifically for Area Deans.

The shape of this booklet is as follows:

- Role
- Responsibilities
- Relationships
- Resources
- Other useful material

This gives you the chance to find out what you most need to know right now as you start, but also the chance to come back to this information later have another look!

ROLE

The legal aspects of the task start with Canon C23 (which is set out below). It is important to remember, however, that the Area Dean is both a bishop's officer and a parish priest, with a role as advocate on behalf of the clergy. This can sometimes be a demanding position to be placed in, and needs careful finessing!

CANON C23 "OF RURAL DEANS"

Every rural dean shall report to the bishop any matter in any parish within the deanery which it may be necessary or useful for the bishop to know, particularly any case of serious illness or other form of distress amongst the clergy, the vacancy of any cure of souls and the measures taken by the sequestrators to secure the ministration of the word and sacraments and other rites of the Church during the said vacancy, and any case of a minister from another diocese officiating in any place otherwise than as provided in Canon C 8.

In the case of any omission in any parish to prepare and maintain a church electoral roll or to form or maintain a parochial church council or to hold the annual parochial church meeting, the rural dean on such omission being brought to his notice shall ascertain and report to the bishop the cause thereof.

If at any time the rural dean has reason to believe that there is any serious defect in the fabric, ornaments, and furniture of any church or chapel, or that the buildings of any benefice are in a state of disrepair, he shall report the matter to the archdeacon.

The rural dean shall be a joint chairman (with a member of the House of Laity) of the deanery synod.

Your Area Director of Training will seek to support you and to offer suitable training for the role. You are not alone!

More details about the role are set out below.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Core Responsibilities

The work of an Area Dean is leadership. The Dean is a “first among equals” within the Deanery, an experienced priest who will undertake a role of influence, initiative and pastoral care. Prerequisites for the task are a continuing personal growth in spirituality and theological study. The Area Dean has a part in the Bishop’s oversight of the Church:

- by being one of the communication links between the Bishop and the parishes, and by being in a position to represent the needs and thinking of the clergy to the Bishop;
- by working closely with, and sometimes on behalf of, the Archdeacon, and by representing the local interests of the parishes in the deanery to Bishop, Archdeacon and Area Council.
- by acting as a pastor and facilitator to the clergy in their ministry
- by exercising a ministry of encouragement, friendship and support to parishes.

Below are listed the duties carried out by Area Deans as defined by Canon, custom and practice. The London Staff have agreed that these should form the core responsibilities expected of Area Deans in the Diocese of London.

1. Leadership

Area Deans share the oversight of the Bishop at a Deanery level and represent parishes to diocese and diocese to parishes.

2. Synodical duties

The Area Dean is Joint Chair of Deanery Synod (and Deanery Standing Committee) and should ensure that the Standing Committee adequately prepares for each meeting of the Synod and progresses work between meetings.

3. Deanery Chapter

The Chapter is a place for fellowship, study, sharing of information and discussion of pastoral, parochial and evangelistic concerns. The Area Dean chairs and leads the Chapter, seeking to facilitate clergy in mutual encouragement and support, theological reflection and spirituality.

The planning of the Chapter requires thought and creativity.

4. Area

The Area Dean is an *ex officio* member of the Area Council, and speaks on behalf of the deanery in that context. Area Deans are also members of the Area Staff Meeting, where much of the preliminary policy work of the Area is done.

5. Parishes

Technically, the Area Dean is still sequestrator during vacancies, and is in charge of the parish (with the churchwardens) during vacancies.

6. Licensed Lay Ministers

During a vacancy Licensed Lay Ministers should be relicensed to the Area Dean until the new Incumbent or Priest in Charge is licensed. It is important to ensure with the Area Bishop’s office that a new licence is

produced, and the LLM understands the lines of accountability to the Area Dean. The LLM will normally be licensed to the new Incumbent or PiC a few months into the new incumbency to give opportunity for review with the Area Warden of LLM.

7. Appointments

The Area Dean attends meetings in parishes within the deanery held under Section 11 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure.

8. Institution/collation/licensing

Except where these jobs are carried out by the Bishop's Chaplain, the Area Dean is responsible for preparing and checking service sheets, the rehearsal, the logistics of the service and the welcome to the new incumbent at the parish reception.

9. Parish Visitations

Area Deans may carry out triennial visitations on behalf of the Archdeacon.

10. Legal functions the Area Dean is responsible for:

reporting to the Bishop on omissions and defects of procedure in respect of the Electoral Roll, PCC, or APCM in a parish within the Deanery [Canon C23 (2)]

reporting to the archdeacon on defects in the fabric, ornaments, furniture, and buildings of any church or chapel in the Deanery [Canon C23 (3)]

reporting to the Bishop when ministers from another diocese officiate within the Deanery without permission, otherwise than provided for in Canon C8 [Canon C23 (1)]

11. Pastoral

The Area Dean's role is that of first point of contact for pastoral care to clergy within the deanery, exercised through:

visits to new clergy

offering hospitality to clergy and others

visits to sick clergy

reporting to the Bishop on any illness or distress amongst the clergy [Canon 23 (1)]

12. Cover

The Area Dean assists the churchwardens where cover is needed in a parish because the incumbent or priest in charge is ill, or during a vacancy.

13. Permissions to Officiate

The Area Dean may assist the Bishop in deployment of ministers who live in the deanery and hold PTO.

14. Ecumenical Relations

The Area Dean is responsible for local liaison with ministers and congregations of other denominations within the deanery and may be convenor of Borough Deans' meetings.

15. Borough Relations

The Area Dean should seek to maintain contact with the Mayor and local authority members and officers for the Boroughs within the Deanery. The Area Dean also has a role, along with other denominational leaders and representatives of faith groups in relation to the Major Incident Plan.

16. Church Schools

The Area Dean takes a lead in ensuring that the Deanery Synod fulfils its responsibilities in relation to the appointment of deanery representatives on Governing Bodies.

B. Area-specific responsibilities

The role of Area Dean varies between the Episcopal Areas. In most Areas, the Area Dean is responsible (with the Bishop and Archdeacon) for:

1. Strategic Planning

Involvement in planning clergy staffing strategy at deanery level.

2. Appointments

Section 12 meeting or other meeting with the PCC during a vacancy

Shortlisting

Showing candidates around the parish

Interviewing (where there is no patron or patron's representative)

3. Finance

Chairing Common Fund consultations

Membership of, or attendance at, Area Finance Group (where there is one)

C. Appointment

Area Deans are appointed by the Bishop after taking soundings from licensed clergy and the Deanery Lay Chair. Appointments are for five years (renewable). The role is not one to which the provisions of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure apply.

D. Training

Training for Area Deans is the responsibility of the Diocesan Director of Ministry. Area Deans will need a handover session with their predecessors and training in their visitational and other legal responsibilities exercised on behalf of the Archdeacon.

E. Stipend, expenses and support

Area Deans are paid a 10% uplift on the standard incumbent's stipend.

Expenses, including travel, reasonable administrative and secretarial costs, and hospitality, can be claimed from the diocese. There is a standard claim form for Area Dean's expenses and it is important that Area Deans use the correct process. Forms and receipts are signed off by the Archdeacon and then sent on to the Diocese. The Diocese then reimburses the Area Dean by paying the claim into their bank accounts.

At the time of appointment, the Area Dean will need to clarify with the Archdeacon and the General Secretary the level of available financial support which can be expected within the current Diocesan budget. Each Area has an allocated budget for Area Deans' expenses.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Canon makes it plain that an Area Dean's role relates particularly to people and organisations:

The Bishop

For most Area Deans in the diocese of London 'the Bishop', in practical terms, means the Area Bishop (for those in the Two Cities Area it is the Diocesan Bishop). The Area Dean has a responsibility to report to the bishop matters 'useful and necessary for him (sic) to know' which may have pastoral implications, but also could have disciplinary consequences. As such, the Area Dean's ministry is an extension of the bishop's ministry.

Area Deans will need to have access to their Area Bishop. Regular contact by telephone and email are the best way to ensure that there is a proper flow of information on issues that are coming up in parishes. Some Area Bishops ensure that the Area Dean is routinely copied into emails concerning their deanery. Knowing the mind of the Bishop on an issue ensures a "joined up" approach to problems.

The Area Dean is part of the Area Staff and Leadership Team. This meets regularly to provide leadership with the bishop for the local parishes. As a member of the Bishop's staff team the Area Dean has a prominent role in the strategic planning of the Episcopal Area, and a key role in the dissemination of information and policy.

The Archdeacon

Specifically, the Area Dean shares in the Archdeacon's ministry where that is concerned with the condition of church buildings and their contents, and other property.

The Area Dean is accountable to the Bishop but the relationship with the Archdeacon is a crucial one. Expectations may vary and so at the beginning of an Area Dean's ministry a meeting should take place between the Archdeacon and the new Area Dean to establish if there are functions the Archdeacon wishes to share or delegate, such as visitation.

The Area Dean is not an Archdeacon's assistant, and is not there to take work off the Archdeacon's hands, although cooperation is obviously essential.

The time requirements of the job will vary depending on the size of the deanery and local circumstances. A realistic assessment of hours should be made with the Archdeacon, and the issue of additional support should be on the agenda.

It is important that the Area Dean meets with the Archdeacon and Area Finance Adviser in order to understand the Area Dean's role in the Common Fund process specific to their Episcopal Area.

The Local Parish

While working to support all local parishes the Area Dean may have to act in a way that conflicts with a specific parish if they report a matter of concern to the bishop or archdeacon. The bias of the canons is towards the Bishop and Archdeacon, rather than the local parish. Similarly, the Area Dean is responsible for reporting any difficulties with church governance at parish level.

The Deanery Synod

The Area Dean is the co-chair of the deanery synod, and is therefore partly responsible for it performing smoothly at deanery level.

The Lay Chair

The other joint chair of the Deanery synod is the duly appointed joint (lay) chair. Developing a good working relationship with your joint chair can be a very enlivening thing. There is a draft role description in the appendices (page 30) which may help you to have a discussion as to the nature of your distinct roles and relationships.

The Chapter

Convening and chairing the Chapter is a common function of an Area Dean throughout the Church of England. The use made of the Chapter by the clergy will vary, as will its membership, but it provides some opportunity for mutual support. As such, the Area Dean's role is one of pastoral and leadership responsibility. Chapters are becoming more "human" and better places of support in the contemporary church. The element of competition that has sometimes marked clergy gatherings is reducing, and it is an opportunity for fellowship and prayer whose function is worth enhancing if at all possible.

There is considerable variation in practice across deaneries; the following is intended to highlight possibilities and issues rather than to be prescriptive.

Given the independent mindedness of many clergy, Chapters work best when there is a sense of common ownership for plans, meetings and process. Consultation with colleagues is therefore essential for successful Chapters.

Even if there is no discussion with Chapter as a whole, an incoming Area Dean needs to consider the following:

Establish whether the current pattern of chapter meetings is working effectively or whether a change in frequency, timing, or location would help.

Discuss with clergy colleagues the purpose of chapter to develop a shared understanding and commitment (see below)

Consider using the chapter meeting to update the chapter on one parish each meeting, with a short presentation from the incumbent.

Publish a calendar of meetings as a reminder to clergy.

Consider evening meetings on occasion in order to include Self Supporting Ministers.

Try to ensure that the clergy pray together in some form during the chapter meeting.

Consider an annual residential meeting or day trip.

Consider the opportunity of eating together.

It is worthwhile to review with the Chapter Clerk and a sample of other clergy (perhaps the clergy members of the Deanery Standing Committee) what the Chapter is for and what expectations the deanery clergy have of Chapter meetings. It is even worth a discussion at Chapter!

A. What is the purpose of the Chapter?

Mutual support?

Theological stimulus?

Sharing of good practice?
Consultation over policy?
Formulating local strategy?
Prayer?
Practical co-operation over cover for vacancies, etc.?
Enabling the clergy to look outwards and be focussed in mission?

B. To meet these purposes:

When should Chapter meet?
How often should Chapter meet?
How long should meetings be?
Should meetings include lunch?

C. What general clergy needs are not met by Chapter meetings?

Sense of belonging?
People to share problems with?
Communication of news and policy?
People to pray with?
Theological stimulation?

D. What problems are encountered by the Chapter?

Absenteeism caused by parochial individualism?
Absenteeism because of conscience over women priests and collegiality?
Non-involvement of non-parochial clergy?
Non-involvement of SSMs and MSEs?
Competitive spirit being fostered by “encouragements in the parish” being heard by others as unhelpful ‘success’ stories.

Borough and Deanery

The Area Dean should seek to build relationships with the local Council. Where two or more Deaneries relate to the same London Borough, the respective Area Deans should agree respective areas of responsibility.

In particular, Area Deans should:

seek to make themselves known to the Mayor (and the Mayor’s Chaplain, where applicable) on election;

make contact, where possible with the leaders of the various political groups on the council;

build relationships with the Chief Executive and other Council officers;

liaise closely with the Church of England’s appointees on the Council’s Education bodies and the SACRE;

liaise with the Borough Commander for the Metropolitan Police and any appointed police chaplains.

seek to ensure that provision is made when requested for Church of England input into Civic Services, services of Remembrance, and other major borough occasions.

In many Boroughs, there is an ecumenical Borough Deans' meeting, and many opportunities for informal contact with leaders of other denominations (though it is important to be realistic about the value of these!)

Interfaith relationships will also need addressing, and the Area Dean needs to be aware of, and be represented at, interfaith forums and similar representative bodies. The Bishop and his interfaith adviser (where one has been appointed) will be useful sources of advice here.

Area Deans may well wish to consider delegating some of these functions to other clergy and laity in the Deanery.

Resilience (Major Incident Planning)

The Archdeacon is the co-ordinator Resilience (Major Incident Planning) in each Episcopal Area. Each deanery will have a named member of the clergy who co-ordinates action within the Deanery on the Major Incident Plan and emergency planning in general. The Area Dean should expect to be kept informed as to developments in the plan.

Structural Relationships

In the Diocese of London additional responsibilities go with the role of Area Dean. These vary between the Areas, though most are common to each.

Area Council – the Area Dean is an *ex-officio* member of the Area Council.

Area Finance Group – the Area Dean is often an *ex officio* member of this group.

Caring for Clergy and Parishes

Most Area Deans find it helpful to keep in regular one-to-one contact with the clergy of the Deanery, by phone, email and the occasional lunch or visit to them at home. You will need to cultivate your own style for this. It's important not just to focus on the problem clergy, but to give time to being with those who are getting on with the job without fuss – not least for the sake of your own sanity!

Resources

HR

The diocesan HR department is there to help us all. Be in touch with them if you are unsure about something. <https://www.london.anglican.org/support/human-resources/>

Finance

Each Area has a finance adviser. Make sure you know who it is and be in touch. <https://www.london.anglican.org/support/finance/parish-finance-support/>

Media

If an issue arises where there are wider and media implications it is OK for you to be in touch with the diocesan media support team. You can reach the media team seven days a week by t: 020 7618 9106 or by e: dioceseoflondon@luther.co.uk.

Safeguarding

All clergy should be safeguarding trained, but if something comes up that concerns you contact the safeguarding team. safeguarding@london.anglican.org

Vacancies

AREA DEAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Because Area Deans are technically in charge of a parish during a vacancy, along with the churchwardens, this can be quite a demanding part of the job. As you get to know the parishes, you'll become aware of which parishes and churchwardens need the most hand-holding during a vacancy and how much you need to "walk alongside" them.

Before Vacancy begins:

(Note: The outgoing incumbent completes Form 2, which is shared with the Archdeacon. This may contain valuable information that can be passed to the Area Dean)

See the outgoing incumbent as soon as possible to ascertain:

How responsible are the Churchwardens?

What is the clergy help situation?

How many services, and what are the numbers?

Any practical knowledge, such as where keys are kept.

Unofficial lettings in Vicarage - notice to quit to be given by present incumbent and the vicarage to be wholly vacant by the time the incumbent leaves.

See the Churchwardens to ascertain:

The number of services needed during the vacancy. Parishes differ but, generally speaking, one Eucharist per Sunday and one during the week should suffice. Other services can be taken by LLMs.

Care of empty vicarage: against squatters (curtains, lights, etc.), against frost (water off, etc.).

Ensure that arrangements have been made for other work for which the incumbent has been responsible, e.g. letting of halls.

During vacancy

See Wardens from time to time to make sure that the above is all being done and to smooth out any problems.

If there is a Curate, SSM or LLM, consult with them to see how things are going or, better still, get them to contact you from time to time.

If there is any question of pastoral reorganisation, consult with the Bishop about steps to be taken.

When an Appointment is made:

Write to welcome new incumbent

Archdeacon will arrange ingoing works with new incumbent and Residential Property Department.

Work with the Wardens in preparation for new incumbent. Proof check the Institution Service. Check invitation list.

Arrange and take rehearsal of Institution Service.

Let new incumbent know any information which they ought to have from you, e.g. date of next Chapter Meeting, Deanery Synod, etc.

If there is a Licensed Lay Minister(s) agree a process for review of work agreement (in conjunction with the Area Warden) and relicensing (see page 5, point 6)

Pages 20-21 contain a sheet that can be copied and given to Churchwardens to remind them of their responsibilities – though you'll want to talk these through with them first.

Pages 22-23 (*What Happens when the Vicar leaves?*) set out the formal legal position in relation to the filling of parish vacancies. These, too, can be copied to Churchwardens. Both you and the Wardens may have to deal with queries from parishioners, including the parish's own barrack room lawyers!

There is also a more detailed note about Installation (etc.) which you may find helpful.

Parish visitations

Parish Visitations carried out on behalf of the Archdeacon

The Archdeacon carries out a visitation to every parish (and usually to all the church buildings within the parish) on a three-yearly cycle. (This is not the same as the Archdeacon's Annual Visitation at which Churchwardens are admitted). Area Deans are often asked to help in this process by making a visitation on behalf of the Archdeacon. The purpose of the visitation is to check that the parish is complying with the requirements of various measures; in particular, the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955, the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 and the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991.

Each Archdeacon will have a slightly different approach to visitations, and the Area Dean should consult with the Archdeacon to discover what is specifically required to be covered at a visitation. Normally, visitations will entail inspection of parochial registers and records, inventory and log book; examination of faculties granted and compliance with their requirements; examination of minute and account books; review of progress on quinquennial works; and inspection of specific matters of concern in the buildings and curtilage. There may also be an opportunity for discussion with incumbent and key lay officers or the

whole PCC. A report to the Archdeacon on compliance should be made after each visitation has been completed.

The Visitation also presents an opportunity for an audit of where the parish has got to in relation to its Mission Action Plan; Finance and Common Fund issues; the Deanery Mission Plan (where applicable) and the strategy of the parish for its mission and outreach going forward.

Health and care of clergy

You can be a key contact in terms of clergy health and care. If you find out about a person who is ill please let the bishop and archdeacon know as soon as possible, so that they too can offer appropriate support. All clergy have the occasional health meltdown. You can be a key player in supporting them, their spouse, partner, churchwardens and people.

Registry

The diocesan registry can seem remote and scary, but be assured they are just a bunch of Christians giving their time to fulfil their own vocation before God as lawyers. The diocesan registry contact details are: <https://www.london.anglican.org/directory/legal-officers/>

Data protection

The new GDPR rules come into force in 2018. Training is available. Be aware and get help if you need it. <https://www.london.anglican.org/kb/data-protection/>

Unconscious Bias Training

As the Church of England has reflected in recent years on issues of gender and ethnicity, it has come to recognise the value of understanding the nature of the unconscious biases we all carry, some of which can have unintended but very real consequences on the nature of the communities we form. Unconscious Bias training gives an overview of the nature of bias and how implicit associations can and do impact on individual and group attitudes, behaviours and decision-making processes within an organisational context. Training is available. <https://www.london.anglican.org/event/2018/02/06/unconscious-bias/>

Support for Area Deans

Accountability and appraisal.

It sometimes happens that following an initial conversation with the bishop, and the handover of the accompanying pile of paper, there is no further opportunity for appraisal until the appointment ends. This can lead to demotivation, and presents a missed opportunity for enhancing ministry.

In so far as an Area Dean has a line manager, the Bishop is most likely to be the appropriate person. This will probably be more by way of consultation than close monitoring but on appointment the Area Dean should agree an appraisal procedure with the Bishop. This could be an annual appraisal explicitly focusing on enabling the Area Dean to perform the job better, rather than to judge or 'mark' past performance.

The agenda might be:

Review of goals set in the previous year. If it is a first meeting then it may be hopes.

Positive achievements during the year.
Difficulties that have arisen.
Areas where support may be needed.
Goals for the coming year.
Parish / deanery balance.

A written record of the appraisal should be kept by both parties.

It may be helpful to meet with one or more clergy colleagues from the deanery prior to meeting the Archdeacon. Colleagues could be asked to contribute on:
Positive developments in the deanery over the year.
Areas that might have gone better.
Current needs in the deanery.
Suggested goals for the coming year.

Area Deans' Network

There is a network of Area Deans, both in your Area and across the Diocese. Although it is 'another meeting' there is no place more useful to you than meeting your colleagues who are also Area Deans and having the chance to chat, support, (moan, oh yes, we know that) and encourage!

Legal

Canon Law referring to Rural (Area) Deans

C 23 Of rural deans

1. Every rural dean shall report to the bishop any matter in any parish within the deanery which it may be necessary or useful for the bishop to know, particularly any case of serious illness or other form of distress amongst the clergy, the vacancy of any cure of souls and the measures taken by the sequestrators to secure the ministrations of the word and sacraments and other rites of the Church during the said vacancy, and any case of a minister from another diocese officiating in any place otherwise than as provided in Canon C 8.
2. In the case of any omission in any parish to prepare and maintain a church electoral roll or to form or maintain a parochial church council or to hold the annual parochial church meeting, the rural dean on such omission being brought to his notice shall ascertain and report to the bishop the cause thereof.
3. If at any time the rural dean has reason to believe that there is any serious defect in the fabric, ornaments, and furniture of any church or chapel, or that the buildings of any benefice are in a state of disrepair, he shall report the matter to the archdeacon.
4. The rural dean shall be a joint chairman (with a member of the House of Laity) of the deanery synod.

Other Canons

Canon B2.3

In this Canon the expression 'form of service' has the same meaning as in Canon B 1 and the reference in paragraph 2A(5)(b) above to the minister shall, where there is no minister, be construed as a reference to the rural dean.

Canon B42.5b

the reference to the minister shall, where there is no minister, be construed as a reference to the rural dean.

Canon B43.12(2)

In this Canon 'incumbent', in relation to a parish, includes – (a) in a case where the benefice concerned is vacant (and paragraph (b) below does not apply), the rural dean and (b) in a case where a suspension period (within the meaning of the Pastoral Measure 1983) applies to the benefice concerned, the priest-in-charge, and (c) in a case where a special cure of souls in respect of the parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry by a scheme under the Pastoral Measure 1983 or by his licence from the bishop, that vicar, and 'place of worship' means a building or part of a building licensed for public worship.

Canon B44.9(a)

In this Canon – 'incumbent', in relation to a parish, includes – (a) in a case where the benefice concerned is vacant (and paragraph (b) below does not apply), the rural dean,

Canon D1.4

When a cure is vacant the first reference in this paragraph to the minister of a parish shall be construed as a reference to the rural dean.

Canon E2A

When a cure is vacant the reference in this paragraph to the minister of a parish shall be construed as a reference to the rural dean.

Canon E5.1

A candidate for the office of reader (LLM) in a parish or district shall be nominated to the bishop by the minister of that parish or district; and a candidate for the said office in a wider area by one of the rural deans or archdeacons after consultation with the minister of his parish or district.

Canon E7.5

When a cure is vacant the first reference in this paragraph to the minister of a parish shall be construed as a reference to the rural dean.

Canon F17.2

Every archdeacon shall at least once in three years, either in person or by the rural dean, satisfy himself that the directions of the preceding paragraph of this Canon have been carried out in all the parishes within his jurisdiction.

Canon F18

Every archdeacon shall survey the churches, chancels, and churchyards within his jurisdiction at least once in three years, either in person or by the rural dean, and shall give direction for the amendment of all defects in the fabric, ornaments, and furniture of the same. In particular he shall exercise the powers conferred upon him by the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955.

Canon B12.3

No person shall distribute the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the people unless he shall have been ordained in accordance with the provisions of Canon C 1, or is otherwise authorized by Canon or unless he has been specially authorized to do so by the bishop acting under such regulations as the General Synod may make from time to time.

Notes in supplementary material

Where the cure is vacant and no priest-in-charge is appointed, an application under the preceding paragraph may be made by the rural dean and supported by the churchwardens.

Misc. Provisions Measure

Church of England Miscellaneous Provisions Measure 2000, s12

Provisions relating to rural deans.

12. - (1) Where a rural deanery is vacant or a rural dean is unable by reason of illness or absence to carry out any or all of his functions, the bishop of the diocese in which the rural deanery is may appoint by an instrument under his hand another person to perform any or all of the rural dean's functions for a period specified in the instrument.

(2) A power of appointment under this section may be exercised by the appointment of two or more persons and by the division among them, whether territorially or otherwise, of the function or functions to be performed.

(3) A statement in a document issued in the performance of any such function that the person by whom the document is signed or executed has been duly appointed under this section to perform that function shall be conclusive evidence of that fact.

(4) The bishop of a diocese may by order declare that the office of rural dean shall, in any deanery in that diocese, be called the office of area dean; and, accordingly, in any enactment (including this section), Canon or other instrument references to a rural dean shall be construed as including references to an area dean.

Vacancies

There follows 3 papers relating to vacancies, which can be copied and sent out:

A note for Churchwardens

A more general note about vacancy processes

A note about s12 meetings, which remind people that the appointment is not only about the parish, but also about the wider church.

WHAT TO DO DURING A VACANCY

Notes for Churchwardens

Vacancy - the time (also known as an interregnum) between the departure of the outgoing incumbent (through a move; retirement; resignation; or death in office) and the Institution/Collation and Induction or Licensing of the incoming incumbent.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Churchwardens and the Area Dean to maintain the life, worship and mission of the parish during the vacancy. This responsibility begins from the date of resignation/retirement.

Services

As far as possible these should continue as before. If there is a curate or associate vicar in post, the Bishop, in consultation with the Area Dean, may make them responsible for the day-to-day organisation of services. Otherwise, the Area Dean will advise on clergy to cover normal services and occasional Offices. The Churchwardens will need to check that the following have been covered: Sunday Services, Festivals, Weekday Services, Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, Home Communion and calling of Banns

Registers

Registers must be maintained. The quarterly Wedding Return (including nil returns) signed by a member of the clergy, must be sent to the local Registrar of Marriages.

Parsonage House

Any lodgers in the parsonage must be given notice and the latest date for leaving must coincide with the resignation/retirement date of the incumbent. The Churchwardens are responsible for the security of the vicarage. They should retain the keys and check the vicarage regularly for possible break-ins and for post. If possible, curtains should be kept at the windows to deter squatters, and lights switched on sporadically at night to maintain the illusion of occupancy. If the parsonage is to be empty over the winter months, central heating should be switched on at a low temperature to avoid freeze-up and burst pipes. The Archdeacon and the Secretary of the Diocesan Residential Property Department may well inspect the vicarage during the vacancy. If it is thought necessary for the sake of security to have a caretaker living in the parsonage, this must be arranged in consultation with the Residential Property Department of the Diocese (telephone number 020 7932 1208 or 1209).

Income and Expenditure during the Vacancy

The Churchwardens should liaise with the Parish Treasurer to ensure that a separate vacancy account (often known as a Sequestration Account) is kept to record income and expenditure explicitly related to the interregnum. This does not have to be a separate bank account. A leaflet for the treasurer is available from the Area Finance Adviser.

Income relates to:

- fees as indicated in the leaflet for treasurers
- Garage and other rents normally payable to the incumbent of the benefice.
- Any trust funds paid directly to the incumbent

Expenditure relates to:

- fees and travelling expenses paid to retired clergy officiating during the vacancy. The current Diocesan rate for expenses and the scale for fees paid to retired clergy can be found on the Diocesan website;

- travelling expenses for other visiting clergy (stipendiary or non-stipendiary clergy with a Licence, or clergy with Permission to Officiate). The scale for expenses can again be found on the Diocesan website and is included in the leaflet for treasurers. The telephone bill for the vicarage, unless this is normally paid by the PCC;
- standing charges for gas and electricity in the parsonage during the vacancy;
- central heating costs during the winter months (the minimum heating necessary to prevent damp and freezing-up).

At the end of the vacancy the income and expenditure (sequestration) account is totalled up, and if it is in surplus, send the money to the Diocese, but if it is in deficit, claim the balance off the Diocese.

Meetings during the Vacancy

PCC Meetings and the APCM and Meeting of Parishioners must take place as normal, and should be chaired by the elected lay chair of the PCC, unless the Bishop appoints a priest to be in charge for the duration of the vacancy. The Area Dean should be kept informed of important matters relating to parish meetings, and can be invited to the Annual Meeting if this would be helpful, though the presence of the Area Dean is not necessary for the Annual Meeting to take place.

When an Appointment is made

When a priest accepts the Living, they will visit the parsonage and inspect the house with the Archdeacon and the Secretary of the Diocesan Residential Property Department. The incumbent-to-be receives a grant from the Diocese towards redecoration, but the PCC may wish to consider contributing towards the costs of redecoration, or even helping out with redecoration before the new priest moves in.

When the Incumbent Moves In

Please ensure that the gas, electricity and any other meters are read, and that the telephone bill and other bills are put in the name of the incumbent as appropriate. The incumbent should be responsible for any bills from the day of his or her occupation of the parsonage.

Collation/Institution and Induction Service or Licensing Service

Arrangements for this Service will be co-ordinated by the Area Dean. The Churchwardens should consult with them regarding the arrangements. The Area Dean will have a check list of items which need to be dealt with before the Service, including suggestions for those to be invited to the Service.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE VICAR LEAVES?

Filling the Vacancy

INTRODUCTION

1. The provisions of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 ("the Measure") set out the procedures for filling benefices which become vacant on or after that date. For most purposes the provisions do not apply where the Patron is the Crown, the Duchy of Lancaster or Cornwall or the Lord Chancellor; in addition, they do not apply when filling an office of Team Vicar (as opposed to a Team Rector) in a Team Ministry.

2. This document is intended as a brief outline of the procedures to assist Patrons and Parochial Church Councils ("PCC"). The statutory provisions are complex and detailed, and deal separately with various special situations. In case of doubt, the Patron or PCC should seek advice from the "Designated Officer" ("DO") for the Diocese who is the Diocesan Registrar, Stuart Jones (Birketts LLP, 106 Leadenhall Street EC3A 4AA stuart-jones@birketts.co.uk 01603 756 501)

FILLING A VACANCY

3. Preliminary (Form 30)

The Diocesan Bishop ("the Bishop") must give notice (Form 30) of the vacancy or impending vacancy to the DO, who must serve notice (Form 31) of it on:-

- (a) all Patrons of the benefice who are registered in the Diocesan Register of Patrons. The notice will inform them which of them ("the Patron") is entitled to act on this occasion; and
- (b) the PCC Secretary.

4. The Patron

Where the Patron is an individual, they must (using Form 15 or 16) either:-

- (a) make a formal declaration that they are a Communicant member of the Church of England or a church in communion with it, or that they are a clerk in Holy Orders of the Church of England ("the declaration"); or
- (b) appoint as a representative either an individual who can and does make the declaration or a body chosen from a statutory list (e.g.: the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of the Diocese, Universities and University Colleges, any Diocesan Board of Patronage).

The Patron may also appoint a representative if, for any reason, he considers he will be unable to discharge his functions as Patron in filling the vacancy.

A Patron which is a corporate or unincorporated body must appoint an individual as its representative who can and does make the declaration; the same applies to a body chosen as a representative from the statutory list.

6. The declaration by the Patron or any representative, and the name and address of any representative, must be sent to the DO within two months of the date when the benefice becomes vacant. If this is not done, the Bishop acts in place of the Patron and fills the vacancy, subject to the rights of the PCC representatives (see paragraph 7(b) and 11). The DO must inform the PCC Secretary (Form 33) of the name and address of any representative.

THE PCC MEETING (often called the Section 11 Meeting)

7. Within four weeks of the notice of vacancy under paragraph 3, the PCC must hold one or more meetings (from which the outgoing Incumbent and spouse, and the Patron and their representative if any, are excluded) for the purpose of:-

(a) preparing a statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish. This must be sent as soon as practicable to the Patron and the Bishop, failing which the PCC representatives lose their right to approve any choice of Incumbent (see paragraphs 7(b) and 11);

(b) appointing two lay members of the PCC to act as the PCC's representative in connection with the selection of an Incumbent. The persons mentioned above as excluded from the meeting and all clerks in Holy Orders together with any Deaconess or lay worker licensed to the parish, are not eligible for appointment. If no representatives are appointed the two Churchwardens have to act. The names and addresses of the representatives should again be sent (Form 34) as soon as practicable to the Patron and the Bishop;

(c) deciding whether to request the Patron to consider advertising the vacancy. The final decision on advertising rests with the Patron;

(d) deciding whether to request a joint meeting with the Patron and the Bishop (see paragraphs 9 and 10); and

(e) deciding whether to request a statement in writing from the Bishop describing, in relation to the benefice, the needs of the Diocese and the wider interests of the Church;

8. In the case of a multi-parish benefice which does not have a Team Council or joint PCC, the meeting must be a joint meeting of all the PCCs. The PCCs may make a joint statement under paragraph 7(a) or may each make a separate statement dealing with the parish concerned, but the other decisions of the meeting must be joint decisions. Four or more representatives must be appointed under paragraph 7(b) so that each PCC has at least one representative; if no representatives are appointed, the Churchwardens are to appoint not more than five of their number to act. The same principles apply to benefices held in plurality, which are treated as a single multi-parish benefice for this purpose. Where there is a Team Council or joint PCC it will carry out the PCCs' functions under the Measure.

JOINT MEETING (often called a Section 12 Meeting)

9. The PCC, the Patron or the Bishop may request (Form 34 for PCC, Form 35 for Bishop or Patron) a joint meeting, which the PCC Secretary must then convene, giving at least fourteen days' notice, within six weeks of the request. In the case of the Bishop or Patron, the request must be made within ten days of receiving the PCC statement (see paragraph 7(a)). Once the meeting has been requested, the Patron may not make an offer of the benefice to a priest until the meeting has been held, or all concerned have agreed not to hold it, or until the six-week period has expired. If the Patron or the Bishop requests the meeting and the PCC Secretary fails to convene it, the PCC representatives lose their right to approve any choice of Incumbent (see paragraph 11).

10. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange views on:-

(a) the PCC statement under paragraph 7(a); and

(b) the Bishop's statement under paragraph 7(e) or, if no written statement has been requested, an oral statement on the same matters.

The Bishop and/or the Patron (or their representative) may send a representative to the meeting if unable to attend personally. At least one third of the members of the PCC must attend, and the outgoing Incumbent and spouse are again excluded. The Area Dean and the Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod must also be invited to attend.

11. When the Patron has chosen a priest to whom he wishes to offer the benefice, he must give notice of this to the Bishop (Form 36) and the PCC representatives (Form 37), who must approve the offer before it is made. They will be deemed to have approved it unless, in the case of the Bishop, he gives notice of refusal within four weeks or, in the case of the PCC representatives, any of them give notice of refusal within two weeks. In the event of a refusal, the Patron may refer the matter to the Archbishop, who may decide to override the refusal.

12. Once the Patron has offered the benefice to a priest who has accepted, the Patron (if he is not the Bishop) must give formal notice of presentation (Form 38) to the Bishop within the nine-month period mentioned in paragraph 13.

LAPSE

13. If no priest has accepted the appointment to the benefice within nine months of the date when the benefice became vacant the right to select the new Incumbent lapses to the Archbishop. The DO will inform the Archbishop when this occurs (Form 39) and the PCC Secretary (Form 40). He must consult the Bishop and the PCC representatives as well as anyone else he thinks fit, but he does not normally need their approval before offering the benefice to a priest.

INSTITUTION OR COLLATION

14. The Bishop must give the PCC Secretary at least three weeks' written notice (Form 17) of his intention to institute or collate the priest, and the PCC Secretary must see that it is displayed for two weeks at, or near, the principal door of every church and licensed place of worship in the parish. The institution or collation can then take place.

GENERAL

15. Forms referred to in this document have been prescribed by the Patronage (Benefices) Rules 1987. When the DO initially writes to the Patron and PCC Secretary he will enclose the forms required by the Measure.

MEETINGS UNDER SECTION 12 of the PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE

On receipt of the official notification of a vacancy or an impending vacancy in a benefice, the PCC, Patron or the Bishop may request a Joint Meeting of all parties, which the PCC Secretary must then convene, giving at least fourteen days' notice, within six weeks of the request.

In the case of the Bishop or Patron giving notice, then that request must be made within ten days of receiving the PCC statement.

Once the meeting has been requested, the Patron may not make an offer of the benefice to a priest until the meeting has been held, or all concerned have agreed not to hold it, or until the six-week period has expired. If the Patron or the Bishop request the meeting, and the PCC Secretary fails to convene it, the PCC representatives lose their right to veto any choice of an Incumbent.

The purpose of Section 12 Meeting according to the Code of Practice and the Measure is to exchange views on:

- (a) the PCC statement;
- (b) the Bishop's statement.

The Bishop and/or Patron may send a representative to the meeting if they are unable to attend personally, and at least one third of the members of the PCC must attend. The outgoing Incumbent and their spouse are excluded. However, the Area Dean and Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod should also be invited.

Section 12(7) provides that the Chairman of any meeting shall be such person as the persons who are entitled to attend and are at present at the meeting may determine. It is not therefore automatically the Bishop, Patron or Lay Chair of the PCC who chairs the meeting.

Paragraph 86 of the Code of Practice proposes that as the Bishop and the presenting Patron, or his representatives (or their respective deputies), and the PCC representatives should be taking a leading part in the discussion, it is thought that it would probably not be appropriate for any of them to act as Chairman. It is suggested that the most suitable person might be the Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, who could be taken as an independent figure not being associated with the Bishop, PCC or Patron, or failing the Lay Chair, the Area Dean.

INSTITUTIONS/COLLATIONS/LICENSINGS

Area Deans have a particular responsibility to assist in the inauguration and celebration of new ministries in the Deanery. The Area Dean can be of vital assistance to those arriving in the Deanery, particularly if they have moved into London from another diocese.

Note:

An Institution is when there is a Patron presenting a new incumbent

A Collation is when the Bishop is the Patron

A Licensing is when the presentation is suspended

Preparation of the Service

One of the particular responsibilities of the Area Dean is to prepare for these services in the parishes of the deanery. The Bishop will arrange the date with the prospective parish priest, consulting with the Archdeacon, Area Dean and churchwardens.

1. ADVANCE PLANNING (Start once new incumbent is known)

The Bishop's Office will send copies of the standard service to the Churchwardens and the Incumbent Designate. Copies are available at (*web link?*).

- (a) Make personal contact with the new minister. Agree with them some general ideas about who the service is primarily for (the preface to the service helps with this process): Local church welcoming new vicar? Local civic leaders? New vicar's previous church members? Deanery Leaders? Answers to these questions will guide thinking about the service, its style and the arrangements to be made.
- (b) The Area Dean agrees the content of the service with the new Incumbent, and the Parish is responsible for the printing and duplication of service sheets. Any readings and special items will need to be communicated to the Bishop and Archdeacon.

2. Check List for Printing and Preparations

- (a) Invitations need to be printed and sent to those whom it has been agreed to invite. The Parish will want to consider who should be invited. Possible invitees will include: MP, Mayor, Ward Councillors, Deanery Clergy, Deanery LLMs, Deanery Churchwardens and Lay Leaders, Lay Chair of Deanery, local ecumenical links, other Faith Leaders, friends of new Incumbent, police, other key local people. Consideration also needs to be given as to whether invitations include spouses.
- (b) New Incumbent indicates numbers expected from former parish.
- (c) Have police been warned about parking and possible traffic generation, especially if MP and Mayor are expected, and coach is coming from former parish?
- (d) Order of Service needs to be sent in proof form to Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, Incumbent, Churchwardens.
- (e) Rehearsal date needs to be fixed. Rehearsal needs to include at least Area Dean, new Incumbent, the Churchwardens, others taking part in the service.
- (f) Arrange Bishop's Chaplain for the service, if required.

3. Rehearsal (during week before Institution)

- (a) Check list above to see that all has been carried out.
- (b) Arrangements will vary according to the traditions and style of the Parish. Area Dean may need to have briefing with new Incumbent, Churchwardens, and MC/Head Server before launching into rehearsal. Keep number at rehearsal to the minimum necessary to ensure that all those involved know what is going on. Some parishes will have a further rehearsal for servers and others. Help the parish to discover best style within its capabilities. The Area Dean is in charge of all this.
- (c) After the rehearsal it should be possible to make sure that the Bishop, Archdeacon, and Area Dean are provided with an annotated Order of Service, including a note of which portions of service are to be said or sung.
- (d) Check parking for civic guests, Bishop, Archdeacon, and Area Dean. Someone reliable from the Parish needs to be in charge of this.
- (e) Check robing facilities for:-
Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, Chaplain, New Incumbent, Patron;
Parish Staff, Servers;
Choir;
Visiting clergy, LLMs (Readers), ecumenical leaders: (appoint someone to co-ordinate visiting clergy - e.g. Chapter Clerk);
- (f) Organise Order of Procession
- (g) Someone in charge of each major group to get them into Church, in right order, at right time, and to pray before and after service. Check outdoor routes if windy/wet.
- (h) Check seating:

Bishop's chair (and removal later on, if necessary) and chaplain;
New Incumbent (usually starts with family if applicable);
Patron (if applicable), Archdeacon, Area Dean;
Parish Staff;
Incumbent's family (including parents, and brothers and sisters and other relations);
Servers, Crucifer;
stall of incumbent and position of bell;
Mayor, MP, etc.;
visiting clergy;
People from previous parish, including time of arrival if long journey.
- (i) Brief new Incumbent to pray during service. Check logistics of movement round church during service.
- (j) Check arrangements for celebration of Holy Communion (if Eucharistic).
- (k) Check someone responsible for:-

providing New Testament (for oaths) and a pen for the signing of the papers. NB Check that this is in position before service begins!

Service Register;

adequate supplies of Order of Service and distribution thereof by Sidespersons.

(m) Administration of Holy Communion:

estimate numbers beforehand, including known totals of visitors;

will extra Communion vessels be needed, and where can they be borrowed from?

brief Churchwardens on ways of getting people communicated more quickly than usual and brief

Sidespersons on helping people to get to the Communion rail.

(n) After Communion:

arrangements for ablutions;

arrangements for locking away vessels and cash.

4. AT THE INSTITUTION ITSELF

Area Dean is in charge.

(a) Get there thirty minutes beforehand and ensure the Churchwardens and Bishop's Chaplain will be there too. Use above aide memoire to make final check, especially noting seating, cars, New Testament, those in charge of Processions and Service Register.

(b) Be prepared to greet congregation, announce logistics, and announce opening hymn where applicable.

(c) Reception after service: get Incumbent and spouse to Hall without delay; Be ready to make short speech to welcome Incumbent to Deanery. Then brief one of the Churchwardens to welcome the Incumbent, and the Incumbent to reply. Ensure that members of the family, including children, get mentioned by name. Brief greetings to ecumenical and civic guests and thanks to hosts for refreshments.

USEFUL BOOKS

Anglican Marriage in England and Wales: A Guide to the Law for Clergy. This is available from the Faculty Office, 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3JJ. Tel: 020 7222 5381. It is sometimes referred to as 'the Yellow Book'. (recently revised version).

Suggestions for the Guidance of the Clergy with regard to the Marriage and Registration Acts. This may well be available from your local Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages. If not, it is available from the Registrar-General, Smedley Hydro, Trafalgar Road, Southport PR8 2HH. Tel: 0151 471 4803. It is sometimes known as 'the Green Book'.

A Guide to Liturgical Copyright (download from the Church of England web site)

Diocesan Churchyards Regulations and other documents (on the website)

The Charities Act and the PCC, (third edition) (can be downloaded from Church of England web site)

Church Representation Rules (currently 2020 edition – available on line [here](#))

Canons of the Church of England (can be downloaded from Church of England web site)

Your Church and the Law: A Simple Explanation and Guide, David Parrott, SCM Canterbury Press, Autumn 2011 (second edition)

Practical Church Management (3rd edition), James Behrens, Gracewing

A DRAFT ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR A LAY CHAIR

(To be edited to make it local)

ROLE DESCRIPTION:

LAY CHAIR OF THE XXX DEANERY

The Lay Chair is elected for a triennium (i.e. a three year term co-terminus with the Deanery Synod). In general the Lay Chair provides a measure of leadership in the Deanery by being the senior elected local representative of the Church. The Lay Chair is a servant of the Deanery as a whole and so is answerable to the laity who are the electorate.

The Lay Chair can only work effectively if s/he has a good working relationship with the Area Dean. S/he should communicate regularly with the Area Dean to ensure that Deanery matters are addressed carefully and efficiently. The Lay Chair should regularly pray for the parishes of the Deanery.

CO-CHAIR OF DEANERY SYNOD

The Lay Chair is to act as Co-Chair of the Deanery Synod with the Area Dean, and they "shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the Deanery Synod or particular items of business on the agenda of the Synod" (Deanery Model Rules 9).

The Lay Chair is an ex-officio member of the Deanery Standing Committee which has responsibility for:

- initiating and advising on proposals
- ensuring that members of the Synod are adequately informed on matters of importance to the Deanery
- preparing the agenda for the Synod meeting
- transacting the business of the Synod between meetings
- doing such other things as the Synod may delegate to it
- dealing with the appointment of Deanery School Governors

A LINK BETWEEN THE DEANERY AND THE DIOCESE

The Lay Chair should be a channel of communication, representing Deanery concerns from a lay perspective and advising accordingly. S/he acts as a conduit between the Deanery and the Diocese and other appropriate bodies. As such s/he should have or be ready to gain a knowledge of the working of Diocesan governance and executive structures.

The Lay Chair may be asked to suggest, where possible, the names of appropriate people to represent the parishes and Deanery as the need arises. The Lay Chair may be asked to advise the Bishop as and when required, and to attend such meetings as the Bishop calls.

The Lay Chair is a member of the Two Cities Area Council. The Council meets 3 times a year at the London Diocesan Offices at Causton Street to discuss matters in the Two Cities Area, the meetings start at 5:30pm and are chaired by the Bishop (usually lasting 2 hours).

The Lay Chair of Paddington Deanery also attends meetings of the Two Cities Area Finance Committee where applications for grants and loans to churches within the Two Cities Area are discussed, and to make recommendations for Common Fund requests. The Lay Chair may be asked to support the Area Dean in

engaging with parishes about Common Fund. The members receive regular reports on the status of Common Fund payments. This Committee meets a couple of times per year. The Committee is a sub-Committee of the Area Council, and its recommendations on grants and loans to parishes are forwarded to the Council for consideration and approval.

What is Common Fund?

This video gives the answer: <https://vimeo.com/28613874>

CONDUCTING DIOCESAN SYNOD BY-ELECTIONS

The Lay Chair may be asked from time-to-time to carry out the election process required in the filling of vacancies that occur on the Diocesan Synod for the Deanery. A full explanation of the duties involved is sent to Lay Chairs and to the other officers of the Deanery. A training session for all deanery officers, held at Diocesan House, is normally arranged after the main three-yearly election (which is ran centrally by the Synodical Department) has taken place.

SEQUESTRATION NOTES FOR TREASURERS DURING A VACANCY

These notes are provided by the Area Finance Adviser to the Parish Treasurer during a vacancy. They are added here for information.

When a parish becomes vacant it is said to be in an “interregnum”, a period “between reigns”. Until a new priest is in place a process known as “Sequestration” is put into effect. Sequestrators are appointed with the duty to ensure that services are maintained, and that property is cared for during the vacancy. The Churchwardens and the Area Dean are the usual Sequestrators appointed.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS DURING A VACANCY

During a vacancy the costs of providing clerical cover for essential parish services falls to the Diocese, as do some other costs. The non-PCC element of the fee for statutory services continues to belong to the Diocese, as does some other income.

The following will be paid for by the Diocese

- Reasonable travel expenses to clergy (and others) taking services (currently up to £5 or 45p per car-mile)
- Service fees to retired, previously stipendiary clergy (currently £45 for one Sunday service, £51 for two Sunday services and £34 for a weekday service)
- Standing charges for the vicarage for telephone, electricity and gas
- Minor repairs to the vicarage and low level heating of the vicarage in winter (these must be agreed in advance by the Diocesan Property Department)
- Routine upkeep of the vicarage garden is a PCC expense during a vacancy.
- Water rates are always a PCC expense
- Advertising and interview expenses are a PCC expense.

The following monies belong to the Diocese

- Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) fees for weddings and funerals in the church
- Retired clergy taking weddings and funerals should be paid 2/3 of the normal Diocesan fee with the remaining 1/3 belonging to the Diocese
- Any rents from property belonging to the benefice which normally goes to the incumbent (e.g. rent received for the vicarage garage)
- Any trust fund receipts which may go directly to the Incumbent

NB: Self Supporting clergy (SSM) are not entitled to fees for services, except when retired. Stipendiary clergy are not entitled to fees whilst in a paid post in another parish or institution. If there is any doubt about which clergy can be reimbursed and which cannot claim a fee please contact the Area Finance Adviser.

THE SEQUESTRATION ACCOUNT

Keeping track of the receipts and payments is carried out by setting up a sequestration account. It is not necessary to have a separate bank account in order to keep track of the money received and spent on sequestration items. However a separate category will be needed in the accounts so that the funds in and out can be easily identified. An Excel template is available that may help in recording sequestration details if the parish does not use accounting software.

AT THE END OF THE INTERREGNUM

An account should be drawn up of all of the funds owing to the Diocese and all of the funds due from the diocese. A copy, together with supporting invoices and details of income and expenses, should be sent to the Stipends Administrator at the end of the interregnum. (During a long interregnum parish may send in an interim report and claim.)

If more money has been received in fees etc than has been spent on covering services and repairs then the parish should send the difference to the Diocese.

It is more common for the expenses of covering services and repairs to exceed the income from fees etc, in which case a claim should be sent to the diocese for the difference. Any claim should be signed by two PCC officers, and include details of the PCC's bank account.

COMMON FUND DURING THE INTERREGNUM

Common Fund and the diocesan budget are based on figures that include an allowance, a reduction, for about twenty clergy vacancies across the diocese throughout the year. Without this allowance the costs per parish would be higher. This means that there is no reduction to a parish's Common Fund promise during a vacancy.