



HOUSING GUIDE

This Guide has been prepared to help occupants of Diocesan houses and their families with the management of their home. It seeks to explain how the system of maintaining our houses works, and to set out clearly who is responsible for what, and when. By setting out the rights and duties of all involved, we seek to pre-empt difficulties.

Your house is both a home and a place of work, but it is for you to decide how to use it. However, it is not provided as a parish office, and you are under no obligation to follow previous practise. Caring for the property is therefore not only important for the minister and family, but also for the parish as well. Attending to maintenance should aid mission both now and in the future.

Responsibility for maintaining the property is shared between the Diocese, the occupant and the parish, and this Guide seeks to provide information for occupants and churchwardens about how these responsibilities are to be met. The Parsonages Committee hope that gathering this information in one document will prove useful to all involved, and enable us together to care for the property wisely yet prudently, and hand it on in a good state for our successors.

You will appreciate that our funds are limited and we will not always be able to accommodate your wishes. Funding, in the main, is derived from parish shares across the Diocese and my Committee has a responsibility to the parishioners to ensure that it is used prudently and that all occupants are treated equally.

The Committee does not differentiate between the status of the occupants and this guide applies to all Diocesan Board of Finance houses.

Ian Francis
Chairman
Parsonages Committee

ORGANISATION

Under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 the Coventry Board of Finance is designated as the Parsonages Board for the Diocese of Coventry. The functions of the Board under this Measure are delegated to the Parsonages Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee).

The Committee is responsible for the payment of Council Tax, Water and Sewage rates, and insurance of the structure.

The Senior Property Manager is Secretary to the Committee

The Committee comprises: The Archdeacons of the Diocese, two Ministers from each Archdeaconry, four laity and co-opted members as required. It is supported by the Senior Property Manager and the Property Department. A staff list with their addresses and telephone numbers is on the last page of this guide.

The Committee is responsible for:

- The maintenance of the structure and exterior of the building.
- The installation and maintenance of space heating, water heating and sanitation, and the supply of water, gas and electricity.
- Anything belonging with the house recognised as fixtures and fittings.

The Property Department, under the Senior Property Manager, exercises the day-to-day functions of the Committee, arranges for the Quinquennial Inspections and directs any subsequent maintenance action.

Under the terms of the Measure **The Occupant has a Duty** to take proper care of the property, being a duty **“equivalent to that of tenant”**.

POLICY

Maintenance and Repairs. The Committee will always attend to maintenance and repairs as its first priority.

Improvements. The Committee is aware of the need to maintain the standard of and modernise houses. Funds for this work are limited and the Committee will prioritise recommendations for improvement annually (normally at its last meeting of the year in December) and determine which improvements are to proceed in the following, or future years, dependent on budgetary constraints. The Committee will advise occupants of its decisions. Minor improvements costing less than £50 may, by exception, be agreed by the Committee outside the improvement prioritisation cycle.

The following pages define the **Diocesan Housing Policy**.

COVENTRY DIOCESE HOUSING POLICY

Absence	Insurance cover is automatically restricted under Diocesan block policy if the house is left inadequately furnished for occupation for more than 20 consecutive days. It is virtually impossible to maintain full cover during a vacancy and special instructions are given to Sequestrators to minimise the risk of uninsured loss. See also Insurance, Vacancy, ‘Care of Property during Vacancy’.
Alarm Systems	When a house is considered to be particularly vulnerable the Committee may install an alarm system, subject to the occupant’s agreement. It is the responsibility of the PCC to pay for repairs and maintenance of the system.
Small Alterations	Any alterations to the house require the prior consent of the Committee and details should be provided before undertaking the work. See also Improvements.
Animals	Pets may be kept in the house or garden but occupants are expected to exercise common sense in their choice of animals with particular regard for the maintenance of the property and relations with neighbours. The Committee is not responsible for providing additional fencing to prevent domestic animals escaping.
Bathrooms	Existing bathrooms will not be replaced unless they are considered unusable or may be more sensibly replaced than repaired. Replacement suites will normally be in white or cream to make matching easier and to leave future occupants a neutral colour scheme.
Boilers	Annual servicing and repairs are funded by the Committee. The appointed contractor will contact you to arrange a visit. When a boiler is beyond economic repair consideration will be given to a replacement. Factors such as installation and running costs will be taken into account before a decision is reached to change fuel source.
Boundaries	Care should be taken to ensure that no encroachment occurs onto or from the property. Please address all queries on boundaries to the Property Department. Legislation is now in place due to the Party Wall Act. See also Walls, Ivy.
Burglaries	In the event of a burglary the occupant should <u>notify the police without delay</u> and advise the Senior Property Manager about damage, etc, at the earliest opportunity. The occupant should also arrange for urgent repairs to be undertaken such as boarding up or reglazing to prevent further loss or damage. All accounts are to be forwarded to the Senior Property Manager who will submit an insurance claim for damage to the property in appropriate cases. The occupant should notify his/her own insurers regarding any loss of or damage to contents. See also Emergency Repairs, Insurance.
Carpets	The Committee does not provide floor covering other than vinyl

flooring to the kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, bathroom and WC. Where carpets are acquired with a newly purchased house they are to be left for the benefit of future occupants. The Committee will not involve itself in negotiations for carpets left behind by outgoing occupants. **See also Woodblock Flooring.**

Central Heating

Central heating fuelled by Gas or Oil is provided as standard. The occupant is responsible for ensuring that radiators are bled of air periodically. **See also Boilers.**

Chimneys

Sweeping solid fuel use chimneys and removing obstructions such as bird's nests is the responsibility of the occupant and should be undertaken annually, and before a house is vacated. Clearing of gas flues comes under regulations and will part of the Gas Safety inspections. Occupants are responsible for organising an annual inspection and the final account forwarded to the Property Department for settlement. **See also Gas Safety and Servicing**

Conservatories

If the Diocesan Surveyor does not list these as superfluous building under the measure, or a conservatory was provided as part of a new house when bought, they will be maintained as part of the structure. If they are deemed superfluous the Committee will pay for removal and making good only. **See also Garden Sheds, Greenhouses.**

Consultation

The occupiers of houses will be consulted before any work arising from a quinquennial inspection or improvements are carried out. Occupiers have a right to refuse alterations with which they do not agree, though they cannot impose their alternate preference on the Committee. **See also Quinquennial Inspection, Improvements.**

Cookers

The provision and repair of cookers is the responsibility of the occupant. Cookers should be fitted by a suitable qualified contractor, (CORGI registered for gas or NICEIC for electric). The Committee is responsible for built-in ovens and hobs which may involve the removal of same when they break-down and the creation of a cooker space for the occupant to fit new. The Senior Property Manager will decide on the appropriate circumstances in negotiation with the current occupant. The occupant may remove freestanding cookers on vacating a house without consultation with the Senior Property Manager.

Council Tax

The Committee is responsible for all charges. Any communication received is to be forwarded directly to the Diocesan Office for reply. Occupants are to notify the Diocesan Office of any changes in circumstance which may affect the level of Council Tax due. i.e. single occupancy, disability etc.

Cracks

Cracks in plaster are usually due to shrinkage and should be dealt with as part of the internal redecoration. Cracks which appear to be structural (e.g. in brick or stonework, or of a greater than normal width, usually appearing on both the inner and outer faces of the wall) may be due to subsidence and should be reported to the Senior Property Manager without delay. **See also Decorations (internal).**

Curtains and Blinds	These are the responsibility of the occupant.
Curtains (shower)	The Committee will provide shower rails as standard. Shower curtains are the responsibility of the occupant and are to be provided to all shower installations and must be long enough to draw inside the bath or shower tray when in use.
Curtain Tracks	Provided as standard. The Committee will relace broken or defective track but will not undertake to replace such items for cosmetic reasons.
Day-to-Day Repairs and Maintenance	<p>Occupants are expected to carry out minor maintenance tasks costing less than £25 at their own expense provided that they feel competent to carry out the work.</p> <p>Other than emergency repairs, all simple day-to-day repairs must be reported to the property department in the first instance. If the cost is less than £50 the occupant may be authorised by the Senior Property Manager to arrange for the repairs to be carried out locally and the accounts forwarded to the Diocesan Office for payment. However, the Senior Property Manager may wish to inspect and assess the remedy required or instruct a contractor to assess and remedy the problem. This is intended to speed up rectification for the benefit of occupants whilst at the same time maintaining control over expenditure.</p>
Decorations (external)	The Committee is responsible and will arrange for tenders so as to undertake such works during the summer of the Quinquennial inspection. A copy of the specification will be provided to each occupant. See also Quinquennial Inspections.
Decorations (internal)	The occupant is responsible for internal decoration. However, PCCs should be encouraged to contribute to the cost, especially those parts of the house which could be considered ‘public’ (i.e. study, hall, stairs and landing).
Departure	<p><u>The Committee expects occupants to leave the house in the same condition that they themselves would expect if moving in.</u></p> <p>The house is to be in good order and not left dirty or in urgent need of redecoration. All personal possessions are to be removed from the house (including the loft), garden and all outbuildings. The Committee will not purchase carpets or reimburse an occupant for any works carried out at his/her own expense. Keys, clearly labelled, are to be left with Sequestrators and one key sent to the Diocesan Office to enable access if required due to the terms of insurance.</p> <p>Arrangements are to be made for the electricity and gas meters to be read and a final account requested for these. With regard to the telephone, the service should not be disconnected but restricted to incoming calls only. This way, not only can calls be diverted to a Churchwarden, or left on an answering machine, but the line number</p>

will not be lost, with all the inconvenience this would cause. **See also ‘Care of Property during Vacancy’.**

Dishwashers	Where required plumbing connections for dishwashers will be provided as standard.
Door Bells & Knockers	The Committee will provide either a door bell or a door knocker if neither is yet fitted. Security intercoms or musical chimes are not provided.
Drives and Paths	Although occupants are responsible for the maintenance of their gardens, the Committee checks the condition of drives and pathways as part of the Quinquennial inspection. Necessary repairs will be carried out, however occupants are requested to help control costs by keeping drives and paths free from weeds.
Dustbins	These are the responsibility of the occupant.
Electrical	Electrical tests and wiring are the responsibility of the Committee. DIY electrical work is strongly discouraged and only NICEIC registered contractors are to be invited to undertake work on the property. Checks will be carried out by the Diocese in the Quinquennial years.
Emergency Repairs	In the case of real emergencies (i.e. fire or flood), authority is given to take immediate action to reduce further damage. The Senior Property Manager should be contacted at the earliest opportunity, and the appropriate Archdeacon informed. Problems may involve an insurance claim and urgent remedial action preceded by a visit of the Surveyor. During holidays and when the office is closed, other day-to-day repairs can be carried out and claimed if they are interrupting the normal use of the house.
Extractor Fans	Extractor fans are sometimes provided in kitchens and bathrooms where condensation problems are considered to be sufficiently serious.
Fences (not boundary)	Fencing within the boundaries of the garden (e.g. to divide the front from the rear garden) may be erected at the discretion of the Committee if it is deemed necessary for the safety of young children or for the general security or privacy of the property. This will not be carried out for animal enclosure.
Fences	Maintenance and repair is the responsibility of the Committee unless the boundary belongs to a neighbouring property. The minimum standard to be achieved is a fence capable of keeping small children within the garden under normal supervision. Fences do not need to be designed to keep domestic animals within the garden. Boundary fences of houses bordering agricultural fields will need to be stock proof, and, under Common Law, the Committee will require the adjoining owner to provide the necessary fencing. Occupants are not to plant trees and shrubs in such a position that they are likely to damage fences or obstruct access for maintenance purposes, and are to remove self set

bushes and ivy before it becomes established.

Fire Safety	Occupants are encouraged to fit and maintain a smoke detector on each floor level for their own safety.
Garages/parking	A house will normally have a garage but this is not possible in all cases. The Committee is not obliged to provide parking for second cars, caravans or boats.
Garden Sheds	These are the responsibility of the occupant.
Gardens	Occupants are responsible for all routine garden maintenance and they are expected to keep their gardens in good order. This includes the maintenance of hedges, pruning of fruit trees and similar work. See also Drives and Paths, Hedges, Trees.
Gas Connection	A gas connection may be installed when the opportunity arises, but a gas boiler will not necessarily be installed as a matter of course. Gas fuel bills are the responsibility of the occupant. See also Boilers, Vacancy bills.
Gas Safety and Servicing	Annual gas safety checks and the servicing of gas appliances are funded by the Committee. The appointed contractor will contact you to arrange a visit from whom you should obtain and retain a Gas Safety Certificate.
Green Guide Standards	The Church Commissioner's 'Green Guide' is a design guide for newly built houses and, where possible, the Committee tries to bring all existing houses up to that standard. However financial pressures and the nature of some properties restrict the ability of the Committee to achieve this aim in all cases. Green Guide standards should therefore be regarded as <u>advisory</u> rather than mandatory or standard.
Greenhouses	These are not provided or maintained by the Committee.
Gutters	Physical repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of the Committee but occupants are asked to assist by having leaves and other debris cleared every Autumn.
Heating	An additional heating appliance will be provided in the Study, in addition to the central heating system. Houses without these will be considered during the Quinquennial inspection. The appliance is to be left in the house on departure.
Hedges	These are the responsibility of the occupant. The Committee may be prepared to undertake work on tall beech or coniferous hedges as part of the Quinquennial but occupants are expected to trim all hedges on a regular basis to avoid the need for costly work. If in doubt the Property Department should be consulted. See also Gardens, Trees.
Improvements	All requests for improvements should be submitted to the Committee for consideration. Such requests as the Committee considers appropriate will be listed with other improvements identified by a 'Vacancy

Working Party' or identified at a Quinquennial inspection and prioritised. The Diocesan Surveyor will obtain competitive estimates for the highest priority improvements for further consideration. **See also Alterations, Windows.**

Infestation Infestation by mice, rats, wasps, flies or other pests should be reported to the Property Department. The Property Department will arrange for appropriate action to be taken. **See also Emergency Works.**

Insulation Loft insulation and lagging are provided as standard. Where standards are increased by legislation the Diocesan Surveyor will consider the need to upgrade.

Insurance (Buildings) All properties are insured by the Committee for a wide variety of perils and for public liability. The possibility of a claim is considered whenever damage to a property is reported. However it is not considered worth submitting claims unless the loss is at least £25 more than the relevant excess of £250. **See also Vacancy (insurance).**

Insurance Contents The occupant is responsible for insuring their own contents against loss or damage.

Ivy The removal of long standing Ivy growth from boundary walls can often destabilise them leading to costly repair bills. Guidance should be sought from the Property Department or at the Quinquennial inspection before undertaking such work. **Occupants are requested not to plant or set ivy to grow up building or walls or to ensure proper husbanding to prevent damage to structures.**

Keys During a vacancy keys, clearly labelled, will normally be held by the Sequestrators and one key sent to the Diocesan Office to enable access if required due to the terms of insurance. **See also Departure and 'Care of Property during Vacancy'.**

Kitchens Kitchen units are normally replaced only when they are considered to be unusable and are beyond economic repair. Replacement schemes will be considered during occupancy, in the right circumstances.

Legal Obligations The Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 gives the Committee a responsibility to ensure that essential work is

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carried out and to seek compensation from the occupant if it considers repairs to be "necessary by reason of damage caused or aggravated by any deliberate act of the occupant". The Committee may, on completion of the repairs, by notice require the occupant concerned or his/her personal representative to pay to them the whole or part of the cost attributable to the said act or default and, if the notice is not complied with, the Committee may take proceedings for the enforcement thereof. (Sect.13(4) of the Measure).

Listed Buildings Where a building is listed no structural alteration may be carried out

without the prior consent of the Senior Property Manager.

Locks (Door)	The Committee will provide 5 lever external locks as standard. The Diocesan Surveyor to decide upon manufacturer.
Locks (Window)	The Committee will provide good quality locks to all accessible windows as standard.
Lofts	Items may be stored in the loft if the flooring is provided (up to the limit set in the Green Guide) but it is important that the loft is not overloaded and that the weight of stored items is spread as evenly as possible. A loft ladder and light will be provided as standard. If no boarding is provided this will be considered during the Quinquennial inspection as an improvement.
Parish Accommodation	It is not the function of the Committee to provide additional accommodation within the property for Parish use. An occupant should not make any arrangements for use of or access over any part of the house without prior permission of the Property Department. This is intended to avoid unintentionally binding a successor into an arrangement which may not be suitable for his or her style of Ministry.
Planning Applications	The Committee will investigate the implications of planning applications concerning neighbouring properties and object if the proposed changes could be detrimental to the occupants of the property. It is essential that occupants advise the Property Department if an application has been submitted.
Quinquennial Inspection	An inspection will be made very five years by the Diocesan Surveyor to ensure that the property is fully maintained and repairs and preventative maintenance carried out as necessary. Once the Parsonages Committee has approved the report a copy will be sent to the occupier who is asked to comment on the inspection before work is organised by the Diocesan Surveyor. The occupant may make representations to the Committee if he/she consider that the schedule does not cover all necessary work. Repairs will be carried out in line with the measure, but improvements will be subject to Committee procedures. See also Improvements.
Rights of Way	Occupants are asked to ensure that members of the public are not able to cross their gardens regularly other than using the appointed route to the front door. Long term use may establish rights of way by prescription.
Rubbish	It is the responsibility of the occupant to ensure that all rubbish and garden waste are removed from the house and garden on a regular basis. See also Departure.
Security	Occupants are expected to exercise care in order to minimise risk of burglary (e.g. by locking windows, joining Neighbourhood Watch schemes where they exist). The Committee will normally respond promptly to security recommendations made by the EIG's Surveyor.

See also Alarms, Locks (Door), Locks (Window).

Security Lighting	Appropriate security lighting is provided as standard. Replacement of bulbs is the responsibility of the occupant.
Sewerage Charges	The Diocesan Board of Finance is responsible for all charges. Any communication received should be forwarded directly to the Property Department for settlement.
Shaver Point	At least one is provided as standard. This will normally be installed in the bathroom.
Shaving Mirror	Provided as standard in bathrooms and in other rooms provided with a wash basin.
Septic Tanks	Problems with these should be reported to the Property Department Emptying payments are the responsibility of the Committee.
Shelving	The Committee will provide fitted shelves in the study to a maximum of 30 metres or to a shorter length by agreement, or according to the size and shape of the study. Occupants may otherwise add shelving at their own expense but should take care when fitting shelves not to damage features, electrical cables etc. If such additional shelving is added by the occupant, and is removed on departure, any consequential damage or decoration is to be made good by the occupant,.
Showers	The Committee will give consideration to the installation of showers. The initial preferred type of shower is the bath/mixer with shower attachment as this requires the least maintenance. However, where this is impracticable the installation of an electrically heated shower unit would be acceptable. Consideration would only be given to the provision of a separate shower cubicle if the installation of a shower over an existing bath was not possible. The Diocesan Surveyor will arrange for the work to be carried out. See also Tiling (Showers), Curtain (Showers).
Standard Items	Items listed in this guide as “provided as standard” are included in new properties or added during Quinquennial inspections or at a vacancy. In appropriate cases they may be provided as extra items on request.
Storm and Other Damage	See Emergency Repair. For damage to personal property see Insurance (contents).
Study Accommodation	The current Green Guide standard is 220 square feet or 200 square feet if alternative storage for equipment and vestments is provided elsewhere. The standard is applied to all new properties but existing studies are often too small or poorly designed. It is not always possible to rectify such deficiencies.
Sub-Letting	Sub-letting any part of the property is not permitted.
Telephone Points	A telephone point is provided as standard in the study with a second point for family use elsewhere on the ground floor. Other extensions

(e.g. in a bedroom) may be fitted at the expense of the occupant. The basic cost of telephone installation is paid for by the Committee but quarterly bills are the responsibility of the occupant.

Television and other Aerials

These are the responsibility of the occupant. The installation of such must ensure that no damage is caused to the property.

Tiling

The Committee specifies tiles in neutral colours which will be used in kitchens and bathrooms when replacement is required. Occupants may be offered a limited choice within a chosen range but not outside it. Neutral colours have been chosen to avoid problems caused by widely differing tastes which might otherwise lead to expensive retiling and difficulties in matching other fixtures and fittings.

Tiling (Showers)

The seal between the bath and tiling is to be properly made and maintained to prevent water leaking under the bath. The tiling should at least be provided on the tap wall and the long wall of the bath. If the bath is enclosed on three sides by walls, all three walls should be tiled. The tiling should be at least 1.5 metres high above the rim of the bath and preferably to full height where ceilings are low. The Diocesan Surveyor will arrange this when a shower is installed.

Toilet Roll Holder

Provided as standard.

Towel Rail

Provided as standard.

Trees

The Diocese will meet the cost of pruning or taking down a tree which:

- threatens the structure or drainage of the property, or overhangs the public highway.
- has become or is likely to become dangerous.
- has grown too large for the site

Such work is to be referred to the Property Department.

Any trees which are planted by the occupant should not be placed in a position which is likely to threaten the structure, drainage, wall or paths of the property and should be of a species recommended for the size of the garden and the environment. Vine and creepers should not be planted against any property. Fast growing evergreen trees and conifers must not be planted under any circumstances.

See also Drives and Paths, Gardens, Hedges, Ivy.

Utility Rooms

These are provided in houses built to **Green Guide standard** but are not necessarily provided in all properties. If provision is considered essential it will be the subject of an improvement. **See also Improvements.**

Vacancy Inspections

As soon as practicable after a vacancy arises a Vacancy Working Party will inspect the property to note the condition in which the property has been left, to determine what maintenance/repair work is required and to assess if improvements are necessary. **See also Vacancy**

Working Party, Improvements.

Vacancy (Insurance)	If a house is vacant for more than 30 consecutive days cover reduces, with conditions in the following areas: escape of water/oil, malicious damage or vandalism, theft or attempted theft and glass breakage. It is therefore essential that Sequestrators follow the instructions given to them in the notes entitled “Care of Property during a Vacancy” attached to this guide, and which will be issued to them when a vacancy is announced.
Vacancy (Lettings)	The Property Department is likely to consider the possibility of a short term let at each vacancy and may arrange a tenancy. The Senior Property Manager will liaise with the Sequestrators in each case should this be proposed. Any rent collected is received by the Diocesan Board of Finance to help offset the burden of parish share across the Diocese.
Vacancy Working Party	Following departure a Vacancy Working Party will inspect the property to determine what work, if any, needs to be completed prior to re- occupation and consider for recommendation to the Committee any improvements that should be made. The working party will comprise the Senior Property Manager, the Diocesan Surveyor, the relevant Archdeacon, and the Chairman of Parsonages Committee. See also Improvements.
Walls	Any enquiries regarding ownership or repairs to boundary walls should be referred to the Property Department for guidance. See also Ivy.
Washing Machines	Plumbing for washing machines is provided as standard.
Washing Line (incl Rotary)	These are not provided.
Water Charges	The Diocesan Board of Finance is responsible for all charges. Any communication received should be forwarded directly to the Property Department for reply.
Windows (Replacement)	Once identified these houses will be prioritised by the Committee and dealt with as improvements. Diocesan houses have a wide variety of windows and there is no single type or standard to which the Committee is working. Windows may from time to time be replaced on grounds of security, disrepair or heat loss. See also Improvements
Woodblock Flooring	Sanding, polishing and staining the floor is deemed the responsibility of the occupant. Repairs to the woodblock when required is the responsibility of the Committee.

CARE OF THE HOUSE DURING VACANCY

This remains as one of the primary responsibilities of the churchwardens as local sequestrators. The duties in regard to the house are as follows:

1. Before the Occupant Departs

- (a) Contact the Property Department to agree procedures for the house during vacancy. A meeting will normally be arranged after vacation to outline ingoing and vacancy works.
- (b) Discuss with the occupant their removal arrangements, and in particular the disposal of any unwanted possessions and the final cleaning of the house, to ensure that it is both clean and completely empty (including garages and outhouses) for the next occupant. It may be possible for the PCC to arrange for a final cleaning after the removal has been completed.

2. The Day of Departure

On the day of departure, ensure that all doors are locked and bolted, and windows shut and secure. The outgoing occupant should hand over all the external keys to the sequestrators at the time of departure. Internal keys should be left in place. Please do not lock internal doors and remove keys. Please arrange for a front door key to be sent to the Diocesan Office for insurance purposes. Notify the Police and Neighbourhood Watch that the house is empty.

All PCC items including photocopiers and files should be removed to allow for letting, and for safe keeping.

3. During the Vacancy

If a longer than normal vacancy is envisaged (this will be considered by the Bishop's Staff) it may be prudent to let the property on a six months shorthold tenancy. If this is the case, this will be arranged by the Diocesan Office, in conjunction with Messrs Godfrey Payton, working through the Committee. Any rents received will be automatically paid to the Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd.

The telephone - in the case of a house being let, we would ask the PCC to arrange for the Rectory/Vicarage telephone number to be transferred for the period of the vacancy into their name and it might be worth considering that even on the appointment of a new Minister, this remains so.

It is still possible to have the telephone directory entry shown in the name of the Minister.

The tenant would therefore arrange for their own telephone number thereby ensuring that all calls relating to the Benefice both during the vacancy and afterwards reach the correct destination.

The outgoing occupant must make arrangements for a final telephone account to be submitted and paid by them or by the PCC, if this is normal practice.

A Vacancy Working Party will be arranged by the Senior Property Manager in order that a small group, including the churchwarden/s, inspect the house to highlight what work, if any, needs carrying out.

If it is not possible for the house to be let, please note the following:

- Has the outgoing Minister made arrangements for the reading of the electricity/gas meters prior to departure.
- Is the house empty and properly locked and arrangements made for frequent inspections in order to deter any potential vandalism.
- Keys should not be left in glass panelled outside doors where the glass can be easily broken and access gained.
- If possible, old curtains should be hung at the windows in order to create the impression that the house is still occupied.
- It may be necessary to arrange for a time switch to be fitted in order for the light/s to be turned on and off.
- It may be necessary to determine the level of protection required in consultation with the Senior Property Manager.
- Arrangements should be made to care for the garden. The Committee will meet the reasonable costs of cutting lawns etc but only following prior consultation with the Senior Property Manager.
- A spare set of keys is to be deposited at Church House.

Gas, Electricity and Oil supplies

When the meter is read on the departure of the Minister, it is important to ensure that the Gas and Electricity Boards do not disconnect the supply.

For those houses which are currently operating on oil fired central heating please do ensure that there is sufficient fuel to run the heating during the winter months (see below).

Winter Precautions

At present it is not the policy of the Parsonages Committee to drain down central heating systems during the winter months. It is necessary therefore to keep the heating switched on in order to ensure that there are no frozen pipes, and that regular inspections are carried out to ensure that all is well and that there are no unforeseen problems at the property.

Once the house is re-occupied the Sequestrators are asked to make arrangements for the gas/electricity meters to be read and for the supply to be transferred into the name of the incoming occupant.

General

Any damage to the property or any emergency repairs should be referred to the Senior Property Manager in order that the appropriate arrangements are made. **Any storm damage must be reported immediately in order to satisfy the terms of the diocesan insurance policy.**

Should there be any queries relating to this document or the duties of the Sequestrators, do please make contact with the Senior Property Manager, who is always available to assist.

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