

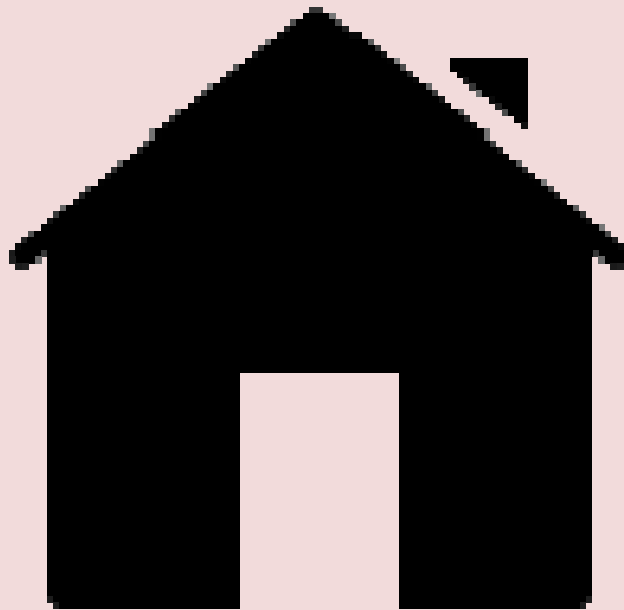
The Diocese of Carlisle  
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CUMBRIA



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# Your Home



**From moving in... to moving out**

# **Archdeaconry Parsonages** **Committees**

## *Your Home – Our Concern*

*This is 'The Pink Book' which we hope you will find informative and helpful.*

*The Diocesan Board of Finance consider it important that your clergy house provides a 'happy home' as well as a base for mission and if you have any queries, concerns or require clarification please do not hesitate to contact the Property Department for advice.*

*It would be of assistance to the Property Department if you could please inform them immediately of repairs and problems so that as little time as possible is wasted in finding solutions and small jobs do not become big ones.*

*Archdeacon of Carlisle  
Archdeacon of West Cumberland  
Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness*

*Revised October 2019*

## ***What can you expect from us?***

Subject to available finance, to keep the structure and services of the house in good and substantial repair.

A prompt acknowledgement and response to queries.

To keep you informed of matters concerning your home.

To require ALL contractors to agree appointments with you prior to carrying out any works.

## ***What do we expect from you?***

To direct all queries about your home and requests for repairs, to the Property Department at Church House, Penrith (☎ 01768 807762).

To continue to take care of your home whilst living there.

To arrange for small non-structural repairs to be carried out on a DIY basis if possible, otherwise please contact the Property Manager for advice.

To leave the house upon vacation in a clean and tidy condition – please remember the person who moves in after you.

To put back (and in proper working order) any items which form part of the house and which you may have temporarily removed and stored.

To remove all personal effects attached to the house, both inside and out, such as TV satellite dishes and wall brackets etc and to make good any resulting damage.

To remove all personal possessions from the house, both inside and out. Remembering to clear the garage and roof space.

To keep all equipment manuals, operating instructions, maintenance requirements and the like in a separate and clearly marked file or folder ready to pass to the next occupier.

# CARLISLE DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

## The Care of Clergy Houses

The Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) is the Parsonages Board of the Diocese with its functions delegated to Archdeaconry Parsonages Committees. These Committees, working through the Property Department, have responsibility for Property issues relating to the care of clergy houses. The DBF Finance Committee has responsibility for the financial issues relating to the care of clergy houses.

For those in paid or house for duty ministry whose accommodation is a Diocesan responsibility, the above Committees provide and maintain houses. For housing matters please contact:

## PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance  
Church House  
19-24 Friargate  
Penrith  
CA11 7XR

Direct dial: 01768 807762  
In emergency: 07584 684 298  
Email: [property@carlisediocese.org.uk](mailto:property@carlisediocese.org.uk)  
Web site: <https://www.carlisediocese.org.uk/property/report/>

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## **1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND COSTS**

In maintaining clergy houses, the DBF through the Property Department fulfils the obligations of the Diocesan Parsonages Board, under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, subsequent Diocesan Schemes under the Measure, the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 and Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009.

The Diocese is responsible for maintaining the building's fabric (including services and fixtures), its external decoration, insurance, Council Tax and water consumed, including standing charges. Greenhouses, garden sheds and the like are NOT considered to be part of the building's fabric and as such will not be maintained by the DBF.

The occupier has a responsibility for routine maintenance, such as the clearing of gutters (but see below), sweeping chimneys, garden upkeep, small household repairs, together with internal decoration (see 7), contents insurance (see 14), electricity and gas consumed, including standing charges (see 17), computer/telephone/television cabling and any specialist aerials/dishes/receivers/apparatus and costs for all unauthorised work (see 8).

The Diocese will arrange for gutters to be cleaned and rainwater gulleys to be cleared in conjunction with quinquennial works. Otherwise the periodic cleaning of gutters and clearing of gulleys is the responsibility of the occupant and arrangements should be made if necessary for their window cleaner, or other contractor, to undertake this. A grant for annual gutter cleaning may be made available on application to the Property Department, and with approval from the Archdeaconry Parsonages Committee, but only where gutters are both unusually inaccessible and the house is exceptionally affected by leaf fall.

The Committee members and Property Department staff wish to serve the clergy within the professional guidelines and budgets agreed for housing. Please make any initial enquiry via the Property Department.

## **2. WHO FUNDS REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS?**

The parsonage repair fund is designed to meet repair costs. This fund is made up from parsonage repair forecasts 'year on year' and funded from parish offer. From time to time there may be the opportunity to gain some assistance from other bodies, eg: Marshalls Charity, Church Commissioners, etc.

A limited portion of the housing budget is allocated to minor improvements and is used in conjunction, where possible, with grants from charitable sources. From time to time the DBF may make available additional funds for more significant capital improvements to housing.

PCCs are not usually asked for additional contributions BUT are always welcome to make such an offer.

Legal details apart, clergy are asked to occupy their houses in a manner which would be appropriate for a good tenant. This suggests something the Diocese is keen to foster – a sense of partnership between Priest, Parish and Diocese.

Clergy benefit from having well maintained comfortable houses, of course. Parishes also benefit from parsonage houses – much hospitality is shared, and they often provide comfortable meeting rooms. The Diocese will do what it ought to, within the confines of the budget, but everything which keeps costs of maintenance down will help Diocesan money to go further.

So, clergy should do what they can to keep down costs to the Diocese of repairing clergy houses; some clergy are happy to do quite extensive DIY, others less so. Where the priest is unable to do much DIY, it may be that there is a competent person in the parish who can help. If major work is

proposed, the priest should ask the Property Department first! It is important to stay safe and not to tackle anything beyond your competence. When such DIY measures are taken then the Diocese might well agree to pay the cost of materials which might enable works that otherwise could not be funded from the repairs budget.

Some improvements to a parsonage house may benefit not only the Priest, but also the Parish and the Diocese (for example installing a gas fire or wood burner instead of an open fire or polishing a wooden hall floor). In such cases, it may be that sharing the cost two or three ways can make an otherwise unaffordable project more affordable. The place to start would be a conversation with the Property Department and/or the Archdeacon. Such a conversation would focus on exactly who does benefit, and on affordability.

### **3. QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS**

Parsonages and other clergy houses are inspected at intervals not exceeding five years. The inspection is made by an Architect or Surveyor appointed by the Diocese and is generally carried out in the autumn.

Following the inspection, the Architect/Surveyor will produce a report giving answers to certain questions required by the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure, including:

- (1) stating what repairs are required,
- (2) recommending any improvements,
- (3) stating whether the house should be replaced,
- (4) commenting on the state of the interior decorations and fixtures,
- (5) advising on the amount for which the building should be insured.

A copy of the report is sent to the Incumbent or occupier who has a right to make representations and the date by which these must be made to the Property Department is indicated in a letter accompanying the report.

The report and any representations are taken to the next available Archdeaconry Parsonages Committee meeting or annual Joint Parsonages Committee Conference. The Committee will confirm the report without variation or with such variation as the Committee may, in its discretion, decide.

Any recommended minor improvements within the report will be considered, and if approved added to the list of works to be undertaken as part of the quinquennial repairs.

Major improvements are addressed as funds permit and where possible carried out at the same time as the other scheduled/quinquennial works. The funding of these major improvement works are authorised by the DBF Finance Committee.

The Diocese will instruct the Architect/Surveyor to obtain tenders for the confirmed repairs and external redecoration (and any properly authorised improvements). Provided that total tender costs are within the budget allocation, orders are placed with the expectation that the works are commenced and completed within the following calendar year after the initial report.

For major improvement works orders will be placed by any external Architect/Surveyor and along with the Property Manager there will usually be a contract pre-commencement meeting arranged to which the occupier will be invited. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce the 'parties to the contract', deal with any queries or concerns and agree mutually convenient contract commencement dates/provisional completion dates.

The Architect/Surveyor will administer the contract, deal with all queries, contract instructions, agree any interim payments due to the contractor and settlement of the contractor's final account following the satisfactory completion of the work. The occupier will be invited to attend any site meetings as necessary during the execution of the works. Here they will have the opportunity to comment on progress, or any other relevant matter.

The occupier will also be given the opportunity to comment on the works, once completed.

Parsonage houses, other clergy houses and DBF corporately owned properties are all dealt with in a similar manner and to all practical purposes the Diocese does not differentiate between them.

#### **4. REPAIRS**

Money from the parsonage repair budget is used in order to carry out repairs recommended by the Surveyor at the quinquennial inspection, including external decoration.

In interim years there are limited funds to pay for minor interim repairs, usually those of an emergency, essential or Health and Safety nature.

Where a minor repair could incur disproportionate cost to arrange centrally then the Property Department may direct an occupant to arrange for a local tradesman to undertake the repair and will either reimburse the cost or arrange for direct payment of the tradesman on receipt of an invoice.

The cost of unauthorised work will not be met or reimbursed by the Diocese unless exceptional circumstances prevailed which can be justified. Please see section 8.

Although there is a limited budget, the current policy of the Diocese is that it will prioritise work recommended in the Quinquennial Inspection Report to the house itself, including 'external works', ie driveways, hard standings, paving and boundaries.

Whilst the Diocese anticipates carrying out all repair work recommended by the Architect/Surveyor, the availability of sufficient funds should be borne in mind. However, efforts will be made to carry out all work of a Health and Safety nature.

#### **5. IMPROVEMENTS**

Any improvements recommended by the Architect/Surveyor in the Quinquennial Inspection Report, and subsequently approved, are addressed if available funds permit and, generally, alongside the quinquennial repairs.

The current policy of the Diocese is to prioritise improvements to window replacements which will improve sound insulation, reduce heat loss (and thus heating bills), and reduce the cost of quinquennial repair and external redecoration work (by the frame material of such being PVCu or in a self-finish or stained wood).

Assisting funding for improvements is sought from charitable sources. PCCs are welcome to contribute. Inevitably there are insufficient resources to address all suggested improvement work. It is therefore inevitable that some will not be able to progress. A note of these is kept by the Property Department so that they are considered again with future quinquennial works (or earlier if funds permit).

## 6. GARDEN MAINTENANCE (including trees and boundaries)

The general principle is that garden maintenance is the responsibility of the occupier.

- 6.1 **Landscaping:** The policy of the Diocese is that gardens to new or altered houses will be laid out to lawn with limited, simple patio/seating areas only. Occupiers may further develop gardens but should only do so after consulting with the Property Manager. Overly extensive or elaborate planting schemes will be discouraged.

The Diocese will endeavour to ensure that on moving into a property that garden boundary hedges are of a size to be reasonably manageable. Thereafter maintenance of hedges, and other garden maintenance, is the responsibility of the occupier. Should the Diocese need to intervene and carry out works to hedges or gardens that have not been appropriately maintained then it may seek to recover any costs incurred from the occupier.

It is appreciated that both the grounds of houses and the capability of occupiers will vary widely and consequently that garden maintenance presents a varying challenge. Where difficulties are encountered then it may be appropriate for a parish to provide physical or financial support to clergy. Garden maintenance does remain the responsibility of the occupier. If it is felt that there are particular circumstances to warrant assistance from the diocese then an approach should be made to the relevant archdeacon. However, such assistance, at their discretion, would only be given in the most exceptional of circumstances.

- 6.2 **Fencing & Boundaries:** The policy of the Diocese is generally to provide delineation of boundaries with a minimum of a timber post and three rail fence but considering site location and any planning requirements. Further internal fencing necessary to create a secure area of garden may be considered where requested by an occupant, agreed by the Property Manager and supported by the area Archdeacon.
- 6.3 **Trees** are considered to be part of grounds maintenance and therefore the occupier's legal responsibility. However, tree management work can be expensive and is rarely addressed by the occupier, with the consequences often impacting on the Diocese in having to meet the cost of dealing with Health and Safety issues, trees affecting buildings and encroachment on the house, neighbouring properties and highways.

The Archdeaconry Committees wish to adopt a pro-active and joint approach to tree maintenance with the occupier. In situations with significant trees the Diocese will usually arrange for a specialist tree survey in conjunction with the quinquennial inspection. The Diocese will usually undertake recommended work to trees where it is considered to be beyond the capability of an average householder to undertake themselves. This results in the parsonage repair funds financially supporting the occupier in the maintenance of the clergy house "grounds". Any assistance (financial or otherwise) from the PCC or others will be most welcome.

The occupier should plant trees only **after** consulting the Property Manager of their proposal. They will need to advise on the proposed location and tree type and receive written approval. Any tree must be appropriate for its location, taking account of its mature height and spread and the positions of drains and buildings.

- 6.4 **Sheds and Greenhouses** are not provided by the Diocese. Where they currently exist the Diocese will only carry out very minimal repair and maintenance in conjunction with quinquennial works. If the Property Manager judges that the shed or greenhouse is beyond minimal repair the Diocese will remove same at Diocesan cost. There will be no replacement and any ground works left will only be minimally attended to.

Should you require the use of a shed or greenhouse you may provide your own on the basis that the Diocese is indemnified from any costs associated with its provision and/or repair and maintenance.



## **7. INTERNAL DECORATION**

The occupier is responsible for internal decoration. Any help from the PCC will be appreciated.

The Diocese encourages occupiers to decorate on a rolling programme, rather than decorating in total when taking occupation of the house and carrying out none in interim years, to avoid an accumulation of outstanding decorative work.

The Diocese makes an ingoing decorations grant, which is paid in conjunction with resettlement grants, to assist clergy in ensuring a house is in good decorative order on their arrival. The Property Department will advise on the level of grant available (£500 at the time of writing). The Property Department can assist in arranging decorations in conjunction with other ingoing work if requested.

In conjunction with ingoing and quinquennial works the Diocese will also arrange to decorate the entrance hall, staircase and landings of a house to a basic emulsion finish on ceilings and walls and with woodwork to the existing finish. If arranged at ingoing they will be omitted from the next quinquennial works.

## **8. UNAUTHORISED WORK**

All properly authorised work of repair, improvement and external redecoration will usually be arranged by the Architect/Surveyor or Property Department in liaison with the occupier.

Due to limited resources it is important that the Property Department controls commitment and expenditure of the available budget. Requests for required work must be made through the Property Department. The Property Department will decide if the work is necessary and, if so, will arrange for the work or, in the case of minor works, may authorise the occupier to arrange for a local tradesman to carry it out.

Out of office hours, the occupier should only arrange work of an emergency nature, informing the Property Department of this on the next working day. If in doubt consult either the Property Department emergency number, Rural Dean or the relevant Archdeacon.

The cost of unauthorised work will not be met or reimbursed by the Diocese unless exceptional circumstances prevailed to justify it.

## **9. ALTERATIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE OCCUPIER**

Occupiers of clergy houses are reminded that Diocesan approval is required before alterations are carried out. If an occupier wishes to carry out some alteration the proposal should be explained in writing to the Property Department including, if appropriate, a drawing. The Property Manager may wish to visit the house to assess the work or send an Architect/Surveyor.

The decision of the Property Manager will be in writing and no work must commence until permission to do so is received. If the alteration proposed has not been instigated by the Diocese it is unlikely that any costs will be met from the repairs budget.

Occupiers may be authorised to carry out minor alterations but at their own cost and with an undertaking to reinstate if necessary on departure. If the alteration is major then the occupier may be required to deposit with the DBF a sum sufficient to cover the cost of reinstatement.

If alterations to a Parsonage house are anything other than minor then they may be subject to requirements for formal notices, consultation and approvals under the Church Property Measure

2018. Alterations may also require planning, listed building or building regulation approvals. Occupiers will be responsible for any necessary plans, specifications, application and associated costs for any alterations that they wish to carry out.

Benefice fittings within an official clergy house must not be removed, added to or altered without consulting the Property Manager and gaining written permission.

## 10. LETTING OF ROOMS

Occupiers should be aware that letting has significant legal requirements which must be observed. Therefore, no occupier should let any room or part of a clergy house without first consulting the Archdeacon and the Property Manager. Many occupiers can only use a clergy house for occupation by their household without the agreement of the DBF.

If approval is given this will likely be for a 'Resident Landlord Let', ie allowing lodgers. If someone lives in your house and shares facilities, such as bathroom or kitchen, they have no right to stay on when you require them to go and are only entitled to receive the amount of notice that was agreed when they moved into the Property.

A simple Lodging Agreement would need to be signed by the occupier and the lodger(s). The lodger would be required to make good any damage caused. Should they fail to do so then the occupier of the house would be held responsible. The DBF may require to be reimbursed for any other additional costs incurred due to a letting (insurance, loss of Council Tax reduction, etc).

In a 'Resident Landlord Let' the occupier of the house is regarded as the landlord under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. As such, they, and not the Diocese, are then responsible to the lodger for ensuring the safety of any gas appliance in the sub-let and shared accommodation. As such they should ensure that an annual safety check is carried out by a Gas Safe Registered contractor, keep a record of each safety check for a minimum of two years and provide a copy of the safety check to the lodger.

## 11. OUTGOING CLERGY/VACANT HOUSES

When notified that a occupier is to leave a house vacation form is forwarded to them requesting certain information including meter readings, utility suppliers and reference numbers, confirmation that all window lock keys are available, the alarm code and the name of the key holder(s) for when the house is vacated.

The Property Department will usually arrange a meeting with the outgoing clergy and churchwardens or parish representatives.

Churchwardens have legal responsibilities for a parsonage and are requested to take a general responsibility for all clergy houses during an interregnum. They are asked to arrange the inspection of the house at least weekly, both internally and externally.

When an occupier leaves the Property, they are asked to:

11.1 **Gas and electricity meters** should be read for the appropriate authority and bills for supplies, up to the departure date, forwarded to the new address. Supplies should then be transferred to the Diocese. Please inform the Property Department of the name of the supplier together with the final readings.

11.2 The **telephone company** should also be informed and arrangements made for the payment of outstanding charges. If a PCC wish to retain the telephone number then the billing responsibility should be transferred to the PCC, or to a churchwarden or PCC member. Failure to arrange for the transfer will result in disconnection of the line and likely loss of the

number. The Diocese will not meet the costs of maintaining telephone lines to vacant houses (however see section 12 below).

- 11.3 **Water** must not be turned off at the mains. During the winter months (October to March), the house should be heated with the thermostat set to 8 degrees Celsius with the heating controls set on 'constant'. If this is done then the cost of heating in this manner will usually be borne by the Diocese. The Diocese may decide to completely drain down the water services in a vacant house, in which case the churchwardens will be advised and the heating need not be run.
- 11.4 **Contents** should be completely removed from the property, including from all lofts, garages and outbuildings. Arrangements should be made for any parish record documents and equipment to be transferred to the church or other location for safe keeping. Arrangements should be made with the Rural Dean or Archdeacon regarding storage of any confidential documents.
- 11.5 **Keys** should be passed to a trusted 'key holder' and the Property Department notified of their name and contact details.
- 11.6 **Whilst empty** it is important to maintain the house so that it appears 'lived in'. Our insurers require that all locks, bolts and protective security devices should be put in operation and the house should be inspected, both externally and internally, a minimum of weekly. It is also sometimes wise to inform the local police of the situation. Any damage noted or repairs required should be immediately reported to the Property Department who will arrange the necessary work.
- 11.7 **During an interregnum** the PCC are requested to keep the garden tidy and grass cut. If there is likely to be a problem with this then the Property Department should be consulted for advice. To ensure a minimum standard of grounds maintenance, avoid unduly burdening certain churches or parishes and to ensure fairness the diocese offers to meet the cost of lawn mowing during vacancies.
- 11.8 Use as a **Parish Office** or similar parish use of studies or other parts of clergy houses is sometimes permitted by the occupant. The Diocese does not approve of such arrangements and any such use is a private arrangement between the individual occupant and the parish. Such arrangements must be brought to an end when the occupant vacates.

Continued parish use during a vacancy would prejudice the Council Tax exemption on the empty clergy house, cause complications with responsibility for utility costs and prejudice any possible letting of the house. When considering a new appointment it is inappropriate for candidates to face an established office in what is meant as a private clergy house.

Occupants allowing such parish use of part of a clergy house are advised to note that this will bring parts of the property within the scope of Health & Safety at Work Act, Equalities Act and other legislation not otherwise applicable to the clergy house, with significant regulations consequently to be followed. The Diocese does not accept any responsibility in these matters. There are associated insurance liabilities that are not covered by the Diocesan policies. Furthermore, the use could well prejudice the building insurance cover. The occupant should ensure that provision is made for these matters.

Occupants of houses may sometimes permit parish use of house grounds for parking, access to the church, storage of parish equipment, etc. Such arrangements are again personal between the occupant and the parish must be brought to an end when the occupant vacates. Where there is an expectation that there will be an ongoing arrangement then the diocese will require matters to be formalised in a written licence agreement.

## **12. LETTING OF THE PROPERTY**

During an interregnum, it is sometimes advisable to let the clergy house. The benefits include 1) it deters vandalism, 2) it helps to keep the house properly maintained, 3) it generates rental income, and 4) it avoids adverse comments on leaving houses empty.

A letting will only be pursued with the approval of the DBF Finance Committee and, in respect of official parsonages, in consultation with the sequestrators and with the authority of the Bishop. The letting will be arranged by the Property Department. If a tenant is found, they will meet the cost of consumed gas, electricity and water and absolve the churchwardens from the responsibility for weekly visits and the PCC from garden maintenance.

Where there is a telephone number associated with the property which the parish wishes to retain then, when a property is to be let, the Property Department can arrange for the number to be retained during the tenancy and diverted to a recorded message. The number will be transferred back to the property after the tenancy. The Diocese will bear the cost of the diverting the line and maintaining the number during a letting.

## **13. INCOMING CLERGY**

Once an appointment has been announced it is usual for an inspection of the clergy house to be arranged with the prospective occupier and the Property Department in order to establish if repairs or improvements are necessary to enable re-occupation. Representatives of the churchwardens will be invited when appropriate.

Whilst it is the established principle in the Diocese that repair and improvement works should be carried out on the quinquennial cycle consideration will be given to miscellaneous repairs and works that are identified during an interregnum and which might be undertaken before a new occupation. The extent to which these can be accommodated will be subject to the funds available in the housing repairs budget.

By the end of the meeting the extent of work will generally be known. The Property Department will circulate a record of the proposed work, seek further authority if necessary and arrange for agreed works to be implemented. If significant works are required then a further inspection may be required with the Rural Dean or Archdeacon, and possible consideration required at an Archdeaconry Committee meeting in order to establish exactly what can be done as ingoing work and what may need to be deferred, possibly to the next quinquennial works.

Internal decorations are the responsibility of the occupier, though any assistance from the PCC is usually gratefully received. The Diocese makes limited internal decoration grants available at 'ingoing' (see section 7 above). The Diocese may assist in arranging decorations work for the occupier if requested.

Unless major ingoing work is envisaged, works will normally 'dovetail' with removal and licensing dates and be completed prior to arrival of new occupiers. If major work is involved it may be necessary to discuss the options available which may include delaying the move and licensing, temporary alternative accommodation or taking occupation of the house with work unfinished.

The new occupier must arrange to take over responsibility for the electricity, gas and telephone charges on the day of moving in.

Computer/telephone/television cabling (usually internal), including line rental, additional lines and apparatus, is the responsibility of the occupier/PCC, as is any specialist aerial/dish provision (but see item 21 below).

The Diocese will provide at first installation three telephone points in the house (one in the study, one elsewhere on ground floor and one on the first floor) plus two television aerial points (usually one to each floor). A basic aerial will be provided and of a standard that can receive a digital

signal. After the first installation on acquisition of a house the diocese is not responsible for maintenance of telephone wiring.

## 14. INSURANCE

All clergy houses are insured for their replacement value on block policies, currently held with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.

Occupiers are responsible for insurance of their own contents (including any cover necessary whilst their possessions are in transit when moving house) and for occupier's liability and are strongly advised to ensure that their cover is adequate. The Diocese is not responsible for repair or replacement costs as a result of any "loss" due to policy cover not being arranged by the occupier. It needs to be particularly noted that the block policy covers only those aspects that are subject to the DBF's repairing liability.

If additional security precautions are required by the insurer because of the nature or value of contents, the occupier will be expected to fund these.

Any claims relating to the Buildings Insurance Policy should be notified immediately by telephone and in writing to the Property Department. Malicious damage and break-ins must be reported to the police and a Crime Identification Number obtained. The Property Department will arrange for any necessary temporary boarding up, repairs, etc, settlement of work costs and submission of claims for property damage to the insurer.

## 15. SECURITY

It is the policy to provide certain basic security items at clergy houses. If not already in place then these matters are generally addressed as ingoing works or with the quinquennial repairs, if available funds permit. If any of these items are lacking or defective, please contact the Property Department.

15.1 **Door Locks:** Security for external doors and windows is expected to be to the following standards:

- External quality doors with a minimum of 5 lever dead lock or a multi-point locking system and a chain or stay.
- Door viewers or other means of viewing visitors to front doors without opening the door.
- Key locks on all ground floor windows and accessible windows (locks are not generally fitted to upper floors for fire safety reasons).

Additional or improved locks will usually be provided, when considered necessary, as a minor improvement at the next quinquennial or with ingoing works. Occupiers, or the parish during a vacancy, are responsible for care of keys. The diocese will not replace locks on account of lost or unaccounted for keys."

15.2 **Intruder Alarms:** Where an intruder alarm is not fitted then the Diocese will arrange for one to be provided, usually as a minor improvement at the next quinquennial or with ingoing works.

New alarms when installed will be expected to be to only a "grade 1" standard, covering main points of entry. Where the vulnerability of a property is considered to warrant it then, at the discretion of the relevant archdeacon, a "grade 2" standard may be considered, to cover all ground floor and other accessible points of entry. Additionally the system will, where practical, include panic buttons at the main entrance and in the study and master bedroom. Where practical new systems will also include an auto dialler for users to programme to dial chosen contact numbers in case of alarm activation.

The Diocese does not pay for annual maintenance and if the occupier feels this is necessary they must arrange it themselves. It is recommended that the occupier 'tests' the alarm at least once a year and normal 'day to day' accidental tripping of the alarm should alert an occupier to any malfunction. The Property Department will arrange for replacement of exhausted alarm batteries.

Existing alarm installations will generally not be upgraded until disrepair or obsolescence requires the system to be replaced. Systems will not be upgraded to meet current British Standards or to meet any requirements of contents insurers. Where particular concerns arise then the Property Department may, with the approval of the relevant Archdeacon, agree to adapt an existing installation that does not meet the current diocesan standards.

The diocese will not:

- Provide equipment for, or meet costs in connection with, automated remote monitoring of alarms.
- Provide alarm systems to meet specific insurer's specifications.
- Provide systems required to allow police response to uncorroborated alarm activations.

Where external security lighting is provided, maintenance of the unit(s) and replacement lamps is a 'local' responsibility.

15.3 **Security Lighting:** The Diocese will provide as far as reasonably practical external lighting necessary to provide safe access to a property, to illuminate entrances and where reasonably required to provide security. Additional or improved lighting will usually be provided, when considered necessary, as a minor improvement at the next quinquennial or with ingoing works. Occupiers are responsible for any replacement of light bulbs in external lighting"

15.4 **CCTV:** The Diocese does not generally provide CCTV installations. Where due to exceptional circumstances, either of very vulnerable properties or cases of particular need, an occupier considers that a CCTV installation is required then an application should be made to the Property Department who will consider with the relevant Archdeacon whether the request can be agreed to.

## 16. HEALTH AND SAFETY

16.1 **Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms:** The Diocese will provide smoke alarms (either mains wired or battery powered units) and battery carbon monoxide alarms in all clergy housing in accordance with statutory requirements for rented housing, generally:

- A smoke alarm in the hall/landing of every storey which is used as living accommodation.
- A carbon monoxide alarm in any room used as living accommodation where solid fuel is used (open fires and stoves).

Heating servicing contractors have been asked to ensure alarms are present where required but occupiers should report any missing or defective alarms to the Property Department.

Where alarms are fitted these should be regularly tested, it is suggested on a monthly basis, by the occupier to ensure that they operate effectively. Alarms should never be disconnected; if nuisance activation is occurring because it is too sensitive, then the alarm may need to be replaced. Any replacement batteries required are the occupier's responsibility.

The diocese does not provide carbon monoxide alarms in rooms containing gas or oil fired appliances, which are serviced on an annual basis. Should an occupier wish to install battery carbon monoxide alarms then if they buy and install the fittings then the Property Department will reimburse a reasonable purchase cost.

- 16.2 **Chimney Sweeping:** The Diocese will arrange to have flues serving any working open fire or stove swept once as ingoing work. Thereafter if occupiers use these fittings then they must arrange for flues to be swept, at their own cost, at least annually or more frequently if necessary, depending on the fuel type being used.

Failure to sweep flues will reduce the efficiency of fires and stoves and, more significantly, lead to serious risk of flue fires.

- 16.3 **Electrical Faults:** There are many fires in the home reported each year as being caused by electrical faults. Risks can be significantly reduced by taking a number of simple preventative measures, such as unplugging electrical appliances when not in use, always fitting the correct fuse and not overloading a power point by using several adapters in one socket. Electric blankets should be properly maintained, correctly used and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Flexes should be checked from time to time and should not be joined or run under rugs or carpets.

Look out for warning signals of dangerous wiring – hot plugs and sockets, fuses which blow for no apparent reason, lights flickering or brown scorch marks on sockets and plugs. If you see any of these danger signs, contact the Property Department who can arrange for such to be checked. Do not store old newspapers, polish, paint, spirit, cleaning solvents, etc in a cupboard under the stairs, especially if electricity and gas meters are located there. A fire in this area can prevent escape from upstairs and the stairwell often acts as a chimney causing smoke to rapidly spread vertically, cutting off escape.

- 16.4 **Escape Routes:** If a fire occurs in your home you may have to get out in dark or difficult conditions. Escaping from a fire will be easier if you have already planned your route and know where to go. Such should remain free from obstructions, ensuring there are no loose floor coverings that could trip you up. Everyone in the house should be made aware of the escape route, but also plan for an alternative means of escape in case the usual route of exit is blocked.

If any member of your household has serious mobility difficulties, you may wish to consider having their bedroom on the ground floor and, if practical, as near as possible to the exit. If someone will require assistance to escape, it is vital that they have a means of summoning help by their bed, i.e. a whistle, buzzer, intercom or telephone. The Diocese does not provide these facilities.

- 16.5 **Asbestos:** Asbestos containing materials were widely used in buildings in this country until it was discovered that it could be harmful to peoples' health. For example, it might be found in:

- lagging on pipework and boilers
- insulating boards such as ceiling tiles, partition walls and heater cupboards
- roof, wall and door cladding and fascia and soffit boards.
- boiler and incinerator flues, gutters, rainwater pipes, water tanks, etc
- floor tiles, roofing felt and corrugated sheets.

Asbestos is potentially harmful. However, a risk generally only arises when asbestos containing material is damaged or if it is drilled, sawn, scrubbed or sanded. This can release tiny fibres into the air which can be breathed in and penetrate the lungs.

If you suspect there may be asbestos in your home contact the Property Department who will if necessary arrange an inspection and agree a course of action if appropriate.

- 16.6 **Radon:** Radon is a natural gas found in soil and rocks. It has no colour, taste or smell. Levels vary from region to region but in general levels are low. Radon rises from soil into the air; outdoors Radon is diluted and the risk it poses is negligible. However, when it enters enclosed spaces concentrations can build up. The majority of the area occupied by Carlisle Diocese is not considered a high risk although there are some pockets of high risk.

The government recommends that people in affected areas test their houses for Radon. Risk reports and test kits are available from UKradon: <http://ukradon.org> , tel 01235 822622. The Diocese may agree to reimburse the cost of testing a house should the occupier wish to arrange this if the property is in a high risk area. No house tested in the Diocese has yet produced results suggesting any remedial work was required.

- 16.7 **Lead Paint:** Lead based paint is only likely to be found in pre 1960 buildings containing original paint systems. Young children and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to the adverse affects of lead. Lead based paint does not present a hazard unless it is ingested or inhaled. There is minimal risk where paint is in a sound condition and is not flaking or powdering.

Lead is hazardous to anyone exposed to it and anyone carrying out painting and decorating must take all appropriate precautions to avoid exposure. Where lead-based paint is present, it is recommended that a professional trades person should be used who has the necessary training and equipment to fully protect the home from lead contamination. If in doubt contact the Property Department for advice.

## 17. ELECTRICITY/GAS/WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE

Payment for consumed electricity and gas, including standing charges, is the responsibility of the occupier/PCC.

- 17.1 **Electricity/Gas:** Occupiers are free to choose between the many different supply companies that are available. Companies compete on both price and service and may offer price reductions for 'dual fuel' packages, extended contracts, direct debit accounts. Occupiers may wish to consider opting for "green" energy suppliers.

If you are considering changing your supplier, the advice is to shop around for the best price. Whatever you choose to do be aware of the fact that price is not everything. Some companies are much better than others when it comes to Customer Service.

The Diocese encourages the fitting of "smart" gas and electric meters.

Whilst the occupier is free to enter into contracts for electricity and gas supplies, they are not free to enter into any other agreements, eg new boilers/heating controls/ servicing/energy saving measures, etc which supply companies may attempt to 'sell'. If they do so any associated costs will be the occupier's responsibility.

- 17.2 **Water:** Water supply and drainage charges are usually paid by the Diocese.

It is essential that occupiers and churchwardens familiarise themselves with regard to the position of the incoming water supply to the house, the stopcock and its method of shutting-off in case of a water leak within the property. Should the location not be evident, contact the Property Department who will confirm or arrange investigation.

In new houses and households using garden sprinklers\*, water meters have to be installed. For others, the water supply company often encourages the installation of meters by offering free installation and giving indications of cost savings that could be achieved by having the supply metered as opposed to a set charge linked to the rateable value of the property. The Diocese does not encourage the fitting of water meters to clergy houses that do not currently have them. Occupants must not make arrangements for a meter to be installed without approval from the Property Department.

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\* A hosepipe without a sprinkler attachment is acceptable but such as a perforated hose is classed as a sprinkling device and would need metering.



17.3 **Drainage:** The majority of clergy houses are simply connected to mains foul and surface water drainage.

A limited number of houses have septic tanks or small treatment plant foul drainage or pumped drainage arrangements. Specific guidance is issued to occupiers of these properties on how to manage the systems to prevent blockages and other problems occurring. If you believe your property may have a septic tank, treatment plant or pumped arrangement and you have not received this guidance then please contact the Property Department.

The Diocese does not routinely arrange for servicing or emptying of septic tanks and treatment plants. Experience shows that if properly used then they can operate undisturbed for many years without issues arising. The Property Department will arrange for emptying should this become necessary.

With any drainage problems then please contact the Property Department. Occupiers will be asked to attempt the simple clearing of gullies blocked by leaves or other matter before a specialist drain clearance firm will be called in. Where blockage of drains is found to be due to the action of occupiers then they may be asked to reimburse to cost of drain clearing. In particular the flushing of wet wipes (whether supposedly biodegradable or not) down drains is frequently the cause of blockages and occupiers should avoid doing so.

## 18. HEATING SYSTEM AND APPLIANCES

18.1 **Gas Safety:** The Diocese aims to follow the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 in order to:

- ensure gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition,
- ensure an annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance/flue,
- have all installation, maintenance and safety checks carried out by a Gas Safe Registered engineer,
- keep a record of each safety check for a minimum two years.

18.2 **Servicing:** The Diocese has agreements with heating engineers to carry out annual safety checks/servicing of oil and gas fired boilers and gas fires/heaters at houses for which it is responsible

If any occupier wishes to use the services of an alternative engineer, in the first instance they should write to the Property Manager. It may be possible for them to use another engineer provided they can agree in writing to ensure that (a) work will be carried out annually by a Gas Safe or OFTEC Registered Installer as appropriate, (b) that a copy of the safety check record will be sent to the Property Department and (c) that if the work unit cost is in excess of that of the contractor proposed by the Diocese, the occupier/PCC will meet the difference.

18.3 **Breakdowns:** In the case of a heating failure or appliance breakdown, during offices hours the Property Department should be contacted and they will arrange for the appropriate engineer to attend. Out of office hours, if such is an emergency, the occupier will be allowed to call out the appropriate engineer directly, or in case of difficulties, an engineer offering an "out of hours" service – if possible first consult the Property Department emergency number, your Rural Dean or Archdeacon (see Section 4).

If an appliance fails a safety check the record will contain details of any defect identified and remedial action taken or required to be taken. The equipment must not be used until the defect is rectified and you should confirm that a problem exists to the Property Department who will arrange the rectification work or appliance replacement.

Where existing Diocesan owned fires are uneconomic to repair, the Property Department will meet the cost of providing a replacement fire that is appropriate for the flue opening. Should

the occupier wish to purchase a more expensive fire, then they would need to meet the cost difference, such a fire would be considered a clergy house fixture and must not be removed or taken when the property is vacated.

18.4 **Gas Emergency:** If you smell gas or suspect there is a gas escape, you should immediately shut off the gas supply and contact the gas emergency FREEPHONE TELEPHONE NO. 0800 111 999.

18.5 **Multi Fuel Stoves:** Multi fuel stoves have become increasingly popular to replace open fires or, in some cases, gas fires. The diocese does not provide multi fuel stoves but has a policy to assist clergy who wish to have a one:

Where an occupier pays for the supply and installation of a multi fuel stove (which is to be left as a gift to the benefice/property), including any adaptation to the fireplace and hearth, then the diocese will meet the cost of any necessary flue lining. The work is to be approved in advance by the Property Manager and the relevant Archdeacon. In cases where a flue liner is found not to be required then the diocese may instead share the cost of supplying and installing the stove.

The Property Department can assist in obtaining costs and arranging for a stove installation, which must be undertaken by a suitably HETAS qualified installer. The diocese does not arrange for any routine maintenance of stoves (see section 16.2, chimney sweeping). Any fault with a stove should be reported to the Property Department. The diocese may look to recover from an occupier any costs arising from mis-use of a stove, notably damage caused by running at excessive temperatures.

## 19. ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

19.1 **Testing:** Electrical installations will periodically be inspected and tested, usually in conjunction with alternate quinquennial survey. Any necessary upgrading work will usually be included in the subsequent works.

19.2 **Consumer Units:** The great majority of consumer units ("fuse boards") have been replaced to at least contain Miniature Circuit Breakers (known as MCBs or trip switches). Many have circuits additionally protected, in whole or in part, with Residual Current Devices (RCDs). With changes in regulations consumer units will increasingly be replaced so that all circuits are RCD protected.

MCBs, and in particular RCDs, can be very sensitive to the slightest power surge or earth leakage. 'Nuisance tripping' can be experienced, with even a blowing light bulb sometimes enough to trip an RCD. Such tripping frequently does not indicate a problem with the installation itself and more commonly indicates a problem with an appliance.

To try and identify an appliance with a fault, without unnecessarily having to call out an electrician, occupiers should:

- 1) unplug and switch off all appliances and switch of lights.
- 2) reset all MCBs to ON and re-set any RCD if it has tripped.
- 3) individually plug in and switch on each appliance circuit to try and identify a fitting that causes repeated tripping.

The cause of repeated tripping due to an intermittent fault can be difficult to identify. It can occur in particular with appliances such as fridge freezers, fridges or washing machines when motors intermittently operate. If an electrician is instructed due to circuit tripping where the cause is found to be a defective occupier's appliance then the diocese may look to recover the cost from the occupier.

- 19.3 **Electrical Faults:** See also section 16.3. If there is an electrical failure then occupiers should first check that there is not a power cut (are neighbouring properties affected) and check the consumer unit for any tripped switches (see above). If there is still a problem then during office hours the Property Department should be contacted who will if necessary arrange for an appropriately qualified electrician to attend.

Out of office hours, if it is an emergency, the occupier will be allowed to call out an electrician offering an "out of hours" service – if possible first consult the Property Department emergency number, your Rural Dean or Archdeacon (see Section 4).

## 20. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- 20.1 **Current Measures:** In the Diocese measures currently undertaken to improve energy efficiency of clergy housing comprise:

- Upgrading of insulation to accessible loft spaces to current standards, usually in conjunction with quinquennial works or where grant aid or other additional funding is available.
- Replacement of windows and doors to current double glazed standards, again usually in conjunction with quinquennial works.
- Replacement of central heating boilers with new, high efficiency boilers. However, boilers are only usually only replaced when they reach the end of their serviceable life. Boilers will not be renewed solely for energy efficiency grounds unless additional funding is made available.

- 20.2 **Cavity Wall Insulation:** Some clergy houses have already had cavity wall insulation installed. The diocese will support the installation of cavity wall insulation where an assessment identifies the property as suitable and where the work can be wholly or substantially paid for by grant funding.

The availability of grant funding is often dependent on the location of the property and also the circumstances of occupiers, which makes it difficult for the Diocese to centrally coordinate further cavity wall insulation.

### Potential Concerns with Cavity Wall Insulation

Cavity walls were originally introduced in construction as a barrier to prevent damp penetration into buildings. There are some concerns as to whether completely filling a cavity with insulation may be detrimental and allow damp penetration.

There have been some cases, with a minority of properties, where penetrating dampness has been caused by cavity wall insulation. There are some properties where it is considered that cavity wall insulation should not be added, notably to houses which:

- Are in particularly exposed locations and subject to high levels of wind driven rain.
- Have external surfaces which are particularly porous, are in poor condition or which have pointed joints in poor condition.
- Have a previous history of damp penetration through the wall cavities.

### The Case for Insulation

Introducing insulation into the wall cavity, and reducing air circulation, can make a significant improvement to the insulation values of the wall and help reduce heating bills at a time of rising fuel costs.

Technology has advanced to reduce the risk of problems arising with cavity insulation:

- Works are carried out only by contractors registered under the Cavity Insulation Guarantee Agency (CIGA), which was established in conjunction with the DETR and provides 25 year protection and redress in the unlikely event that problems should arise.

- Contractors are registered under the Cavity Wall Insulation Self Certification (CWISC) scheme, which is operated by the CIGA in conjunction with the British Board of Agrément to ensure that the work complies with Building Regulation requirements.
- The work is carried out where an independent assessor and the installation company consider the property to be suitable.

Where an occupier finds that they and their property qualify for funding towards cavity wall insulation and wish to have the work carried out then the Diocese will usually support this.

If considering the above potential concerns an occupier thinks that their property may be particularly vulnerable to problems, or that it should fall within the category of house where cavity wall insulation should not be undertaken, the Diocese will not proceed with the cavity wall insulation against their wishes.

**20.3 Green Deal:** Under the “Green Deal” enacted by the government funding is available to property owners and tenants for a wide range of measures to improve the energy efficiency of buildings.

After inspection by an approved assessor a range of possible improvements and a level of funds will be made available. The funds for the works will be borrowed from approved funders and the works carried out by approved contractors. Repayments are made through the electricity bill for the property, with ongoing responsibility for these remaining with the property and not the individual owner or tenant commissioning the work. The “Golden Rule” for the scheme promises that the additional repayment costs on electricity bills will not exceed the calculated saving in energy costs that will result from the proposals.

The Diocese is not currently proposing to commission assessments and improvements under the Green Deal. Where an occupier wishes to implement works to a clergy house under the Green Deal then these will be considered as alterations and improvements requiring the consent of the Parsonages Board.

However, the Diocese will consider applications from clergy to implement energy efficiency measures under the Green Deal. After any assessment the report should be forwarded to the Property Department for consideration. Applications will be considered on an individual basis. Consent may be declined, particularly for proposals with prolonged repayment plans, with longer term maintenance implications or otherwise considered unsuitable for the clergy house.

## **21. COOKERS AND WHITE GOODS**

In clergy houses it is usual for the Diocese to provide space for a freestanding cooker and white goods (fridge/freezer, dishwasher, washing machine and tumble dryer). Separate ovens and hobs are not encouraged.

The provision of a cooker and white goods is the responsibility of the occupier, as is their servicing, repair and maintenance. Where there are built-in appliances the Diocese will accept some repairing liability. However, the policy is to adapt kitchens and remove built in appliances to create a space for occupiers to provide their own appliance unless, at the discretion of the Property Department, repair or replacement of a built in appliance is considered more economic. When space is created for a free standing fitting then the occupier will have to provide their own appliance.

If an appointee does not have a cooker, or does not have a cooker suitable for the fuel supply available at the property, then the Diocese will make available a partial grant to assist in the purchase of a cooker. The cooker will then belong to the occupier. This grant can only be offered once to any occupier and details are available from the Property Department.

## **22. BEETLE/FUNGAL INFESTATION**

Beetle or fungal infestation has the potential ability to spread rapidly causing damage and disruption. However, many older properties will have had some beetle infestation which may be of longstanding, extinct, or of no immediate concern.

To avoid encouraging problems occupiers can assist by:

- Ensuring air bricks are not blocked, thus preventing cross-ventilation of sub-floor area.
- Avoiding obstruction of ventilation to roof voids - beware of blocking the eaves vents to roofs.
- Ensuring gutters/outlets/rainwater pipes are not blocked and causing overflow and saturation of walls.
- Promptly reporting overflowing pipes and defective water tank valves.
- Ensuring earth or other material is not allowed to accumulate against buildings to above damp course levels.

With suspected beetle infestation in particular pay attention for dust or powder from new flight holes which would be an indication of an active rather than extinct infestation.

Indications of a fungal outbreak can include:

- A musty/mushroom-type smell within a room.
- Excessive springing or dipping of timber floors, particularly at the edges of rooms.
- Visible fungal growth, which may be fine tendrils, cotton wool like growth or mushroom like bodies.
- Deterioration of timber – shrinking, discoloration, warping or cracking

If an infestation is noticed or suspected, it should be reported to the Property Department, who will, if necessary, arrange for an initial inspection and, if appropriate, an invasive survey in order to identify the extent of the problem and cost of remedial work.

## **23. PEST CONTROL**

The Diocese will meet the cost of eradicating rodent and vermin infestations unless they are found to have arisen from the actions of the occupier. The diocese will not generally meet the cost of eradicating ants, flies, bees or wasps (they generally die in the autumn and do not re-use a nest). It may arrange for bee or wasp nests to be removed if the emergence point is giving rise to particular concern. Should you have any pest control concerns then please contact the Property Department for advice. They will arrange attendance by a specialist company if appropriate. Occupiers may wish to check whether their local authority offer free or low cost pest control services.

## **24. ACCESSIBILITY & EQUALITY ACT 2010**

Clergy houses are private residences and not subject to requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Diocese will consider accessibility a part of its assessment of suitability when acquiring a new house. Minor adaptations to improve accessibility to a house will be considered when requested as part of the quinquennial works process, or in-between at the discretion and the Archdeacon and Property Department, where the works are reasonably practical and can be carried out at reasonable cost.

Where an occupier has particular needs due to disability then the Diocese will consider making or accommodating reasonable adaptations to a house, with the support of grant aid where it is available.

*Property Manager  
October 2019*