

## Vacancy Process

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the vacancy process for parishes and will be particularly helpful as a reference point for PCCs and Churchwardens. The specific process used during a vacancy may vary based on the Patron involved, your Archdeacon will advise further on the specifics of your vacancy.

Colour Code			
Priest	Archdeacon	Area Dean & Lay Dean	PCC (s)/ Churchwarden / PCC representatives
Patron	Bishop	Diocesan Officers	

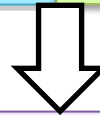
### Pre-Vacancy

#### Priest decides to leave

Priest notifies the Bishop in writing of the date they will leave following an informal discussion with the Archdeacon. Churchwardens and Parish(es) informed. Deed of resignation completed and date of formal announcement decided.

#### Resource 1 – [Section 7 of the Diocesan Guidelines for Clergy](#)

An informal conversation will normally occur with the Archdeacon about process and timing.



#### Bishop declares vacancy and notifies Designated Officer

Vacancy forms and pack sent to parish(es) and patron/s by **Designated Officer (Assistant Diocesan Secretary)**

N.B: some patrons may have their own vacancy process.

**Property Dept.** contacts the Priest and Churchwardens to arrange a vacancy meeting to discuss whether the property may be rented during the vacancy and if works are to be scheduled.

Archdeacon contacts Churchwardens for a meeting to outline the process (including sequestration) and sets the date for the first meeting with the PCC(s), to include the Area Dean and Lay Dean.

Archdeacon to contact Ministry for Mission for representation at the PCC(s) meeting



#### Parish(es) organise farewell to Priest

Archdeacon carries out exit interview with outgoing Priest and provides a brief to Parish Consultants as necessary.

- **Resource 2 – Exit Interview Template**

Priest (and family) moves out of the house. Date of move notified to the **Property Department**. Churchwardens to ensure that the incumbent has handed over to them all files, records and keys, and that the parsonage house meters have been read and bills paid. The utilities (gas, electricity and telephone) should be put in the name of the churchwardens during the vacancy.

## During the Vacancy

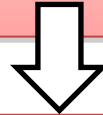
### Preparation for Vacancy

Archdeacon meets with PCC(s) and Area Dean and/or Lay Dean (with representative from Ministry for Mission) to explain the procedure and offer support through Ministry for Mission and diocesan resources. Timetable for the process is set.

Information given about dealing with arrangements for cover during the vacancy.

PCC(s) hold a formal section 11 meeting (only if not suspended or equivalent) to consider:

- Appointing two lay members as parish representatives in selection process
- Preparation of Parish Profile – may appoint a small group to work on the profile
- Decide whether to advertise or use a nomination process (this may depend on the Patron) – budget to be allocated for advertising and interview process. Right to request an advertisement of the Patron.
- Begin to clarify the interview process
- Reference: [Declaration on the ministry of bishops and priests](#), [Patronage \(Benefices\) Measure](#)



### Parish Profile Prepared

Parish Profile prepared which should include:

- Vision statement,
- Information about the local community and life of the congregation,
- [Role description](#) and personal attributes being sought,
- Details of the accommodation,
- The big picture in relation to the finances of the parish(es).

Support offered by **Ministry for Mission**, which could include:

- a vision day;
- offering assistance with examples;
- prayer support;
- assistance with ideas for finding out what the wider parish wants, e.g. a survey;
- pointing to websites and resources and/or proof reading

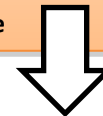
**Resource 3 – The Parish Profile**

Information about the house for the parish profile will be requested from the **Property Department**

Parish Profile sent to Archdeacon to sign off or for Archdeacon to send to Patron(s).

Writing of the advert – PCC(s) to produce the first draft.

Discussion with Archdeacon regarding the process of placing the adverts.



### Selection Process Commences

- Advertisement in Church Press and diocesan website (if advertising). May also be advertised on the parish and patron's website.
- Further information and application pack obtained via the Archdeacon's Office (or occasionally from the Patron).
- Private patrons may place the advert.

After the closing date the Archdeacon (or Patron) sends applications to the shortlisting panel

Archdeacon (or Patron) to send candidates invitation to interview

Shortlisting with representatives (or by the Patron)

**Resource 4 – Interview Guidance**

Finalise interview process, which could include:

- Panel Interview(s)
  - Presentation
  - Exposition of a biblical text
- Time should be allowed for visiting the house and tour of the parish, meeting members of the team or the PCC(s).



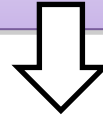
## Interviews take place

- Preferred candidate is nominated (confidences must be held)

Archdeacons will be available to give feedback to candidates

- Offer letter sent by the Bishop to the nominated candidate and DBS check is carried out
- Bishop may request to meet the candidate prior to the offer being sent

Where an appointment is not made a review is carried out and a further timetable identified. The Archdeacon will notify all interested parties after an appropriate time of review with the PCC(s). Changes may be made to the advert and profile prior to re-advertising.



## Announcements are made

Archdeacon's office to send advance notification to diocesan officers of appointment to include:

- Name of person appointed
- New role title
- Contact Details
- Date of licensing if known
- Proposed date of house move
- Time and stipend commitment
- Details of family in relation to housing

Permission to give announcement to parishes about the date of announcement.

Announcement of appointment locally in current and future parishes - there will be an embargo on the announcement until the agreed date (likely to be 2-3 weeks).

Clergy Change – Bishop's Notification form sent to Diocesan Officers once DBS check is received (likely to be 6 weeks) confirming date of licensing.

**Accounts Department** to send out information regarding removal grants.

**Property Department** to make contact to advise on decoration, future work and arrange site meeting with surveyor if required.

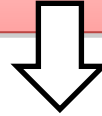
## Post Vacancy

### Incoming Priest (and family) moves into the house

Licensing or institution included in service of welcome. Bishop or archdeacon and new parishes welcome new Priest.  
The Area Dean is responsible for the organisation of the service (Archdeacons Offices have a template and guidelines).

Churchwardens to transfer the utilities back to the Priest.  
Priest commences ministry after licensing.

Statement of Particulars and role description sent by **Human Resources**.  
**Training Team Leader** visits new Priest after three months.



### Review

**Adviser in Counselling and Wellbeing** or Assistant Adviser in Counselling and Wellbeing to make contact with the new Priest and their partner normally within six months.

Archdeacon to make contact with the Priest after six months  
First Ministerial Development Review after one year  
Archdeacons' Day for clergy new to the diocese and new incumbents

For Incumbents – residential consultation after first year