



Inspiring *each* Generation



# Clergy Housing:

## General Guidance and Responsibilities

When moving house, please leave this book in a prominent position in the study for the sequestrators and your successor.

Thank you!



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**Hereford**  
Proclaiming Christ + Growing Disciples

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## **Welcome to your new home!**

This guide has been written to help occupants of Diocesan houses and their families with the management of their home. It aims to explain the system of maintaining our houses and clearly sets out responsibilities of all parties in order to avoid potential difficulties. It is hoped that the Guide will prove useful to all concerned and will enable us together to care for the property wisely yet prudently and to hand it on in a good state of repair for our successors. Caring for the property is a shared responsibility between the Diocese, you as occupant and The Parish.

Your house is both a home and a place of work. Caring for the property is not only important for the Diocese, but also for you and your family. Attending to maintenance should aid mission both now and in the future.

Funding for property maintenance is derived, in the main, from parish share across the Diocese. You will appreciate that funds are limited and that we will not always be able to accommodate your wishes. We have a responsibility to Parishioners to use funds prudently and to ensure that all occupants are treated equally.

We are committed to providing you with good quality accommodation and to providing an effective housing management service. We look forward to working with you to ensure that concerns about housing will not deflect you from your ministry in the Church.

## **Introduction:**

This Guide has been prepared to ensure a healthy working relationship between the Diocesan team, clergy and lay workers and their families regarding the management of their home. It seeks to explain how the system of maintaining our houses works, and to set out clearly who does what, and when. By describing the rights and duties of all involved, we seek to pre-empt any difficulties.

Repair and maintenance work is carried out by private contractors and all work is supervised and monitored by the Property Team in the Diocesan Office. The Property Team works in accordance with the Measure (2018). Funding for statutory testing, repair and maintenance and capital improvements is funded through a budget allocation made by the DBF. The cost of all agreed repair work is paid for indirectly by parishes through Parish Share.

The Diocesan Property Team is committed to serving clergy and parishes in the following underpinning principles:-

1. Good stewardship
2. Improving pastoral care of clergy families

## **The Property Team:**

As required by the Church Property Measure 2018 the property team is responsible to the Church Commissioners and to the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) for all matters relating to the parsonage houses of the Diocese. In this way the DBF has a direct interest in and responsibility for housing, although clergy occupy these properties as either freeholder, under common tenure or under license.

## **The Quinquennial Survey:**

The Board is required under statute to carry out an inspection and report for every parsonage house every five years – The Quinquennial Survey. This survey is completed by the Diocesan Surveyor and captures the condition of the major elements of the property and identifies and prioritises maintenance and capital works required to keep the property in a good state of repair. The decorative state of the property will also be assessed at this juncture. If deemed necessary the DBF will take responsibility to dealing with the common areas only (hall, stairs, landing, downstairs WC and study). Anything over and above will be assessed and considered by the Diocesan Surveyor on a case by case basis for an offer of a grant for materials on production of receipts.

An electrical inspection of the property will be undertaken by a qualified electrical contractor at the time of the quinquennial survey.



The report is subsequently forwarded to the Incumbent or occupier for his/her comments and observations. Specifications are prepared and the proposed work is procured.

## **Interim / Minor Repairs:**

As the "quinquennial" repairs are undertaken once in every five years there will inevitably be some occasions when an interim repair is required.

All required repairs should be reported to the Diocesan Property Office who will make arrangements with appropriate contractors on your behalf.

DIY alterations to electrical and gas installations are strictly forbidden – all electrical work must be undertaken by a qualified electrician and all gas work must be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Properties should be checked regularly by the Incumbent, or PCC if vacant, to ensure problems are addressed as soon as possible.

## **Vacancy Works:**

When a property becomes vacant, following an appointment being made, the Diocesan Surveyor will carry out separate inspections of the house with both the vacating and new Incumbent (where appropriate) and the Archdeacon or appropriate Rural Dean. These inspections are undertaken in order to establish the condition of the property at the end of an occupancy period and identify if improvements, repairs and decoration are necessary in preparation for the new occupant.

A photographic record of the condition of the property and grounds and inventory will be produced at the end of the Vacancy works. A digital record will then be presented to the new ingoing incumbent on arrival. The aim of which is to act as a reminder and give expectation of how the house should be returned at end of occupancy.

Every endeavour is made to ensure that the ingoing Works are completed before the occupier moves in but this does depend on the time scale involved and the scope of the works and may not always be possible.

The extent of decoration work undertaken by The Diocese at vacancy will be dependent upon condition and will typically be prioritised to include hall, stairs, landing, down stairs WC and study as a minimum. Anything the Diocesan Surveyor considered needing doing over and above will be assessed and an offer made on a case by case basis.

To aid the management of the Property budget all works requests from Clergy are considered based on need. For example, kitchens and bathrooms that are not serviceable are usually replaced whereas kitchens and bathrooms that are serviceable but may seem outdated, unfashionable or not to personal taste will not be considered as a priority for replacement.

Where an occupier makes a request to the Diocesan Surveyor to undertake additional work or increase the specification in the agreed scope of works for quinquennial or vacancy works the cost of these works must be paid for by the occupier in advance to The Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance. Additional works will not be carried out without prior payment. Any additional works must be sanctioned by the Diocesan Surveyor.

## **Occupier's Responsibility:**

Incumbents are the legal owners of their parsonage house and all stipendiary clergy and licensed lay workers normally reside in Church-owned housing as part of their terms of service. The entitlement to housing is a general one and it is left to each Diocese to set out detailed arrangements in documents such as this Guide. Occasionally a house is left for the next residents in a poor state and this generally causes extra costs and inconvenience, so this section sets out your responsibilities very clearly to avoid confusion. In general, the legal situation is set out in the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972.

In the words of the Measure, your responsibility as occupier (or as a resident living in accommodation provided as part of your terms of service) is "equivalent to that of a tenant". The aim of the DBF is to make the best possible use of the limited funds at its disposal to ensure that properties are as well maintained, as comfortable and as economical to run as can reasonably be achieved within its budgetary limitations. This can only be achieved with your co-operation.

### **• Moving In**

It is essential that a new occupier arranges to take over responsibility for the gas, electricity and telephone charges on the day of moving in with meter readings having been taken as appropriate and passed on to the Diocesan Property Team so that any bills that cross over with your arrival can be dealt with. Details of the suppliers should be obtained from the Churchwardens or whoever has had care of the property while it has been vacant. It should be noted that, although a telephone line is normally available, the occupier is responsible for the line rental and any other charges in connection with the phone installation. The Diocese does not provide additional lines, points or equipment for fax machines, internet lines etc.

Council tax and water rates are paid for by the diocese therefore any bills received must be

forwarded on to the Diocesan Property Team at the diocese for payment as soon as received.

- ***Insurance***

Parsonage houses are insured under a block policy with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group (EIG) but it should be noted that this cover extends to the bricks and mortar only and does not include cover for contents which is the responsibility of the occupier. If the property is to be left unoccupied for more than thirty days reference must be made to the Property Secretary as the EIG may delete certain insured perils after this time.

- ***Internal Responsibilities***

- \* **Internal decoration** - The internal decorative state of the property will be reported upon when the Diocesan Surveyor carries out the Quinquennial inspection and any remedial action necessary will be discussed by the DBF when the report is tabled. Where necessary hall, stairs, landing, downstairs WC and study will be undertaken and paid for in full by the DBF subject to competitive tenders and available finances.

It is advised that the Incumbent undertakes a rolling programme of internal re-decoration to ensure that when leaving the property it is returned in a similar condition to that which it was when taking up occupation.

- \* **Fittings, floors and windows etc.** - should be kept clean and in good decorative order. The routine maintenance and oiling of wood block (parquet) flooring is the responsibility of the Incumbent.

- \* **Appliances** - The Diocese does not provide domestic appliances (refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, cookers etc). However, there may be occasions where previous occupants leave such items for the benefit of their successors. In such cases incoming occupants are free to use or dispose of the items as they wish but it is their responsibility to ensure that such items are safe and fit for use. Additionally, should such items become defective or beyond economical repair then repair or replacement is the responsibility of the occupant and will not be funded by the Diocese. Where built in appliances exist as an integral part of a fitted kitchen, responsibility for replacement will rest with the Diocese.

- ***External Responsibilities***

- \* **Drains (Foul) / Septic tanks** - Many of our rural Vicarages will be connected to a septic tank rather than mains drainage. These systems work by storing solid waste and allowing liquid waste to percolate into the ground via a system of soakaway pipework.

Routine emptying of the system will be required and the frequency will depend very much upon the size of the tank and the number of occupants in the household. As a guide the tank will require the solids removed on an annual basis as this will help with the maintenance of the system and prevent the soakaways from becoming blocked. Arrangements for emptying should be made by the occupier at the appropriate time although the charge will be paid by The Diocese.

Please be careful not to dispose of fats, grease, oil, disinfectants, paints or white spirit into the system, these products destroy the beneficial bacteria within the tank that help to break down solids.

Care should also be taken not to flush away nappies, sanitary products, paper towels or coffee grounds as these will block the system.

Please don't lift the cover to your tank as the gases can be hazardous to health. If you have concerns about the performance of your septic tank or need to arrange a maintenance visit please contact the Diocesan Surveyor for further advice.

\* **Storm drains, gutters and down pipes** - Occupiers are expected to make arrangements to ensure that all rainwater and gutter systems are cleaned annually to prevent water ingress into the building. Rainwater goods will be checked as part of Quinquennial and Ingoing Works and where necessary cleaned through and arranged by the Diocesan Property Team. The clearance of gutters will inevitably require safe working at height and occupiers are encouraged to engage appropriately qualified contractors to undertake this work on their behalf. Window cleaners will offer gutter clearance as a service and it would be appreciated if Clergy took advantage of this service and arranged an annual clearance where the service is offered. Where this is not the case the incumbent should arrange an appropriate contractor to deal with gutter clearance. Where repair or replacement guttering is required the DBF will take responsibility and this should be arranged through the Diocesan Property Team.

\* **Air bricks / damp course** - It is essential to ensure that no earth is blocking any airbricks and that no earth is above the damp course. Walls should be kept free of earth to a depth of about 9" (225 mm) below ground floor level or 6" (150 mm) below the damp course.

\* **Gates** - Occupiers are requested to ensure that entrance gates are kept free from undergrowth and clear of the ground. This helps to prevent rot developing within the lower timber members of the gate.



- \* **Drives, parking areas, and hard paved areas** - Weeds should be removed and drains kept clear of earth, leaves and other obstructions. Undertaking this work helps to prevent the deterioration of the surrounding surfacing.

- \* **Gardens / Trees** - The immediate garden and all land associated with the property should be well maintained throughout the year with grass cut and paths and drives kept free of weeds and moss.

Large specimen trees are inspected and maintained by The Diocese at the Quinquennial survey. Smaller trees, shrubs and hedges are deemed to form part of the garden for which the Occupier is responsible. If the garden has suffered from neglect it is your responsibility, before leaving, to engage a contractor at your expense to ensure that it is returned in a well maintained condition.

Vegetation such as ivy should be kept off the face of the building and if clematis and the like are to be grown they should always be kept clear of gutters and soffits and certainly NOT allowed to encroach under the eaves of the roof.

- \* **Livestock** - Permission should be sought from the Property Department before keeping livestock, for example chickens. Upon vacation, any damage caused by keeping livestock should be made good and the house and garden left in a similar condition as when it was occupied. The keeping of livestock shall be strictly in accordance with the relevant guidelines set out by DEFRA.

- \* **Rights of way** - If an occupier permits parishioners to use a short cut across the parsonage garden between the village and the church it is imperative that this informal short cut does not become an established right of way. There is no objection in principle to allowing certain specified persons across parsonage property, providing one or both of the following steps are implemented in order to prevent a legal right of way being established:

- \* A gate or simple lockable barrier must be erected at each end of the footpath in question and these gates or barriers should be closed and locked for at least one day in every year. Where access on to a footpath is by means of a stile then some means should be devised to prevent access over the stile for that one day.
- \* In addition to a barrier it would be wise to erect a clear notice at both ends of the footpath simply stating "THIS IS NOT A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY".

Where an incumbent/occupier wishes to permit specified persons to cross parsonage property, then these precautions must be taken and the Board of Finance cannot undertake to

bear any of the costs incurred. The same precautions must be undertaken for all existing informal accesses and short cuts and it should not be necessary to incur any significant expense in erecting simple barriers as described above.

A public right of way becomes established if it is used by the public without hindrance over a period of 20 years. Forcible or secret access by the public does not establish a public right of way.

### **Occupier's responsibilities at the end of occupation:**

Clergy are required to vacate the house within one month of vacating office. In exceptional circumstance this can be extended by a further month by request to the Archdeacon providing it does not compromise plans for the property. Extensions beyond the second month will be on a commercial let basis provided that doing so does not compromise plans for the property. The third month will be charged at 80% the commercial rate plus council tax and water rates increasing to 100% the commercial rate plus Council tax and water rates thereafter. Any stay beyond the initial one month grace must be supported by a Licence to Occupy setting out the terms agreed.

The DBF has adopted a policy to let all empty properties during a vacancy where time permits (AST for 6 months minimum). This is in order to generate income to assist with the maintenance of the property and to reduce any impact on the parish offer.

Please be reassured that this process is no way intended to slow or act as counter to the wish to fill the vacancy in the future. This is the usual practice in a vacancy, which we only rarely depart from (for example, if for some reason the vacancy is expected to be much shorter than usual).

There will naturally be a short period where the property is left empty whilst we look for suitable tenants or time does not permit to let for 6 months. It is therefore imperative that the properties are visited once a week inside and out from a safety and security point of view. The Diocesan Property Team would therefore be grateful for your assistance with the following to ensure that properties are ready for immediate letting upon your departure: -

- ***Internal***

The property should be left clean and tidy and free from any rubbish or unwanted furniture or possessions. Occupants should take with them or arrange removal / disposal of all owned movable fittings. Wood burners to remain. If any occupant owned fixtures and fittings are removed they should be replaced. Any non-standard light fittings installed by the occupier

should be replaced by a simple rose and pendant.

Basic decorations should be made good in readiness for the next occupant. Any personalised colour scheme should be returned to a neutral colour. Windows should be cleaned inside and out.

- ***Utilities***

The meters at the property should be read on the day of your departure and given to the utility supplier servicing the property for a final bill to be issued. You should also notify the supplier that future bills beyond your departure should be forwarded to the Hereford Diocese during the vacant period.

- ***Central heating***

The central heating system and hot water cylinder should only be drained down where a property is to be disposed of. In all other cases it is preferable to leave the heating on a low setting (10 degrees) or intermittently on a timer to reduce the risk of damage from extreme frost. Where systems are oil fired, the oil tank should be checked to ensure levels are maintained.

Where levels are low contact should be made with the Diocesan Property Team for a minimum delivery (500 litres) to be arranged. Tanks should not be allowed to run dry.

- ***Telephones***

The domestic line should be disconnected. Diocesan policy is that the line should be cancelled unless a) you wish to take the entire service to your new address or b) the parish feel strongly about retaining the number at their own cost. It is advised that you discuss this with the parish and make the necessary arrangements. To retain the number seek advice from your telephone provider as how best to do this. It may be advised that a call redirection / forwarding can be applied but the line deactivated and the number retained, but please seek advice as this may not work in all cases. Your telephone line may already be owned by the PCC therefore no action is required. If a Business line exists this should remain connected during the interregnum with a message to forward calls. The parish to remain responsible for this line/costs.

- ***Security of the building / Insurance***

Please ensure that the property is secure to protect against unwanted intruders—all doors and windows should be locked and, if possible, curtains should be fitted to the front windows. We recommend the installation of a time-switch so that lights come on and off at night.

All Diocesan housing is covered by EIG Insurance and in order to comply with this policy the following must apply:

- \* Buildings unoccupied or unfurnished houses – cover in respect of vandalism or malicious acts; water or oil; water freezing; theft or attempted theft and breakage of glass or sanitary fixtures will continue after a building has been continuously unoccupied or unfurnished for more than 60 days subject to:
  - \* All locks, bolts and other protective devices being put into operation
  - \* Weekly internal and external inspections of the building are made
  - \* Water is turned off at the mains and the heating system drained down during the months of October to March, unless there is an automatic central heating system in constant operation involving the water supply and set at a minimum temperature of 10 degrees

Incumbents to make arrangements for the weekly inspection of properties during extended periods of absence in order to satisfy the requirements of EIG.

Any items of repair or maintenance reported to the Diocesan Property Team. It is also a good idea to open and close curtains regularly to make the house look occupied.

- ***Burglar Alarms***

We suggest you advise the PCC to continue to pay the lower premium of any service agreement during an interregnum. As with other costs during this period where appropriate this can be reimbursed from the central Sequestration account. If the alarm contract is not continued it may be more expensive to re-set up. It is important that the alarm is activated and left on during this time.

- ***Garden***

The garden should be left in a tidy condition with lawns mown, shrubs, hedges and beds cut back; paths, drives and all hard standing areas maintained and freed from weeds and moss. Where appropriate we would encourage you to work you're your parish to form a working party to assist where gardens are quite large. We appreciate that this is not always possible therefore reasonable costs for a gardener to be instructed can be reimbursed from the central Sequestration Account, with the Archdeacon's prior authorisation.

- ***Keys***

The property should be handed over with vacant possession and therefore all members of

the family and anyone else living there should be fully prepared to move out on the same day. All keys to the property (including out buildings where appropriate) should be deposited with the letting agent or with a nominated churchwarden for collection by the letting agent. On occasions where the house is to remain empty keys should be handed into the Diocesan Office with one key being left with a nominated churchwarden / member of the PCC to enable access to the property whilst it is empty for checking post and the security of the building etc. Please ensure that all window keys are left on the sills of those windows they relate to. Any missing keys must be replaced at the cost of the outgoing incumbent.

- ***Parish Office***

Where the parish office is based within the property we would ask that you inform the parish / parishes you work with that they will be required to find an alternative permanent base. The new incumbent may not be happy with this arrangement and properties that are required to be let in the short term cannot be marketed until completely empty. Unauthorised access to the house during a tenancy is forbidden as the occupant has the right to enjoy total privacy during their stay. All keys therefore held within the parish should be deposited with either the Letting Agent or the Diocesan Property Team.

## **Health and Safety in the Home:**

- ***Boiler Servicing***

The Property Team is responsible for ensuring that central heating boilers (gas and oil) and any gas appliances are serviced annually by a Gas Safe / OFTEC registered contractor. This will not only improve their efficiency and ensure they are safe to use but will also, in all probability, extend the useful life of the system.

It is possible for the heating circulating pump to seize if left off throughout the summer months. Please ensure therefore that the pump is switched on for five minutes at least every month during this time.

For safety reasons it is important that prompt access is arranged with the servicing contractor to undertake the annual service.

If you have an oil fired system ensure that when the oil is running low the tank is filled and never allowed to run out - if it does the system will need re priming and you will be responsible for any charges incurred.

- ***Electrical Installations***



An electrical inspection of the property will be undertaken by an NICEIC qualified electrical contractor at the time of the quinquennial survey and any remedial works identified will be carried out under the instruction of the Diocesan Surveyor.

- ***Smoke Detectors***

These are provided for your safety and should be checked on a monthly basis – under no circumstances must they in any way be disabled by removing batteries for example. Batteries must be replaced immediately when required. At the quinquennial inspection an electrical test will be undertaken by an NICEIC registered contractor and part of the work subsequently undertaken will be the provision/replacement to mains operated smoke detectors.

- ***Carbon Monoxide***

These are provided for your safety – Non-replaceable battery type carbon monoxide alarms are being provided where there are open fires or solid fueled appliances and in rooms containing a boiler and older gas fires. If you have not been provided with a Carbon Monoxide detector please notify the Diocesan Property Team who will arrange for one to be supplied.

- ***Chimneys***

The regular sweeping of chimneys for open fires, woodburners or any other solid fuel burning fires is essential. It is the occupant's responsibility to arrange sweeping of all flues and chimneys at appropriate intervals and at least once a year. This work should be carried out by HETAS registered sweep or a member of the Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps and the certificate forwarded on to the Diocesan Surveyor.

If chimney flues are disused within your property please ensure that they are swept and inspected for safety before bringing them back into use.

- ***Asbestos***

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material which was regularly used in the construction industry from the 1950's to the mid-1980's; all uses of asbestos were banned in the UK from 1999. It is therefore possible that asbestos containing materials are present within your property. Typical locations for asbestos containing materials are:

- \* Cement water tanks and pipe lagging Loose fill insulation
- \* Textured decorative coatings e.g. Artex
- \* Asbestos insulating board (AIB) Ceiling tiles, window panels and partition walls AIB Bath panels
- \* Toilet seat and cistern AIB behind fuse box AIB around boiler Vinyl floor tiles
- \* AIB panel behind fire

- \* Roof soffits, gutters and asbestos cement down pipes Soffits – AIB or asbestos cement AIB exterior window panel Asbestos cement roofing sheets
- \* Roofing felt

Undisturbed asbestos usually causes no problems. However, loose asbestos fibres can seriously damage your health. The most common diseases associated with asbestos exposure are lung cancer and mesothelioma.

Asbestos fibres can only affect your health if they become damaged, either accidentally or while they are being worked on during building work or DIY.

- ***How can you reduce the risk?***

- \* Discuss any works you propose to carry out on your property with the Property Office before starting.
- \* Don't repair or remove any material that you think may contain asbestos.
- \* Don't cut, break, saw, drill, sand or disturb anything you think may contain asbestos. If you don't know what a material is made from, assume that it contains asbestos.
- \* If you think you may have damaged or disturbed asbestos contact us.

- ***Legionella***

Legionella are bacteria common in natural and artificial water systems, e.g. hot and cold water systems. Legionella can survive in low temperatures but thrive at temperatures between 20°C - 45°C. High temperatures of 60°C and over will kill them.

Legionella bacteria can multiply in hot or cold water systems and storage tanks in residential properties and then be spread e.g. in spray from showers and taps.

The risks from hot and cold water systems in most residential settings are generally considered to be low owing to regular water usage and turnover. A typical 'low risk' example may be found in a small building (e.g. housing unit) with small domestic-type water systems, where daily water usage is inevitable and sufficient to turn over the entire system; where cold water is directly from a wholesome mains supply (no stored water tanks); where hot water is fed from instantaneous heaters or low volume water heaters (supplying outlets at 50 °C); and where the only outlets are toilets and wash hand basins.

Implementing simple, proportionate and appropriate control measures will ensure the risk remains low. For most domestic hot and cold water systems, temperature is the most reliable way of ensuring the risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria is minimised i.e. keep the hot water hot, cold water cold and keep it moving. Other simple control measures to help control the risk

of exposure to Legionella include:

- \* Flushing out the system prior to letting the property and after a holiday period
- \* Avoiding debris getting into the system (e.g. ensure the cold water tanks, where fitted, have a tight fitting lid)
- \* Setting control parameters (e.g. setting the temperature of the hot water cylinder (calorifier) to ensure water is stored at 60°C)
- \* Make sure any redundant pipework identified is removed.
- \* Flushing through little used outlets e.g. sinks in bedrooms

The risk is further lowered where instantaneous water heaters (for example combi boilers and electric showers) are installed because there is no water storage. Any maintenance works to plumbing installations will be arranged by the Diocesan Surveyor.

## **Neglect of houses:**

The outgoing occupant will have received a digital record of the condition of the property and grounds and inventory at the beginning of their occupation. The aim of which is to act as a reminder and give expectation of how the house should be returned at end of occupancy.

### **Repair of Benefice Measure 1972 extract:**

*When the report of a Diocesan Surveyor, whether under section 4 or 7 of this measure, specifies any repair to a parsonage house as necessary by reason of damage caused or aggravated by any deliberate act of the incumbent or a previous incumbent or any default in his duties under this section, the Board may, on completion of the repairs, by notice require the incumbent concerned or his personal representative to pay them the whole or part of the cost certified by the Diocesan Surveyor to be attributable to the said act or default and, if the notice is not complied with, the Board may take proceedings for the enforcement thereof.*

Should the Diocesan Property Team feel that those responsible have not taken reasonable care of the house they may decide to charge them for the cost of works, consequent upon this failing to avoid any impact on the Parish Offer. The Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure covers such action if it is felt necessary.

## **Letting of Parsonages:**

No person or persons are to take up residence in a parsonage house during a vacancy without written approval of the Diocesan Property Team. The DBF has adopted a policy to let all empty properties during a vacancy on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy of six months which may run on if circumstances permit. This is in order to generate income to assist with the maintenance of the property and to reduce any impact on the parish offer.

Please be reassured that this process is no way intended to slow or act as counter to the wish to fill the vacancy in the future. This is the Diocese's usual practice in a vacancy, which we only

rarely depart from (for example, if for some reason the vacancy is expected to be much shorter than usual).

The Diocesan Property Team will instruct an appropriate agent to manage the property and its tenancy. We will attempt to let the house for an initial six months, extendable from month to

*If an interregnum is less than 6 months the Diocesan Surveyor will produce a report, detailing 'incoming' works to be carried out once an appointment has been confirmed. If an interregnum of more than 6 months is anticipated, the house will be put out to let with vacant possession secured in time to carry out incoming works.*

month by agreement with the tenants where appropriate. The churchwardens / sequestrators will be consulted when appropriate before the process commences. The Managing Agent appointed must be left to manage the tenancy in its entirety and at no point should the parish or in / out going incumbent intervene with this process.



## **Emergencies:**

If an emergency occurs during normal working hours it should be reported to the Diocesan Property Team who will organise the appropriate response.

In circumstances that require urgent attention out of office hours the Diocese provides

*Inappropriate use of emergency call-out services may be charged to the occupant.*

emergency call-out services (details below or visit [www.hereford.anglican.org/property/](http://www.hereford.anglican.org/property/) (address to be confirmed when populated) but the Diocese will be charged 'out of hours' rates which can be expensive. Therefore please consider whether the matter could wait until instructions can be given during office hours by the Diocesan Property Team.

- **Break-ins**

Inform the police and obtain a crime number. The police usually have contractors who will board up properties as necessary. Report the incident to the Diocesan Property Team as soon as possible.

- **Gas leaks**

If you smell gas take immediate action:-

- \* Put out any naked flames and cigarettes  
Open windows
- \* Turn off all gas appliances

- \* Turn off the gas supply at your gas meter
  - \* Contact National Gas Emergencies – 0800 111 999 (24-hour free service)
  - \* DO NOT use any electrical appliances including lights, or operate electrical switches.
  - \* Inform the Diocesan Property Team immediately.
- ***What to do in case of fire***
    - \* Get everyone out of the building
    - \* Call the Fire Service immediately on 999
    - \* If possible, as you leave the building close all doors and windows (to prevent fire spreading). Do not allow people to re-enter the building.
    - \* If possible switch off gas and electricity supplies

Do not use water to douse a fire where it involves an electrical supply, fat, oil or spirit. You must inform the Diocesan Property Team as soon as possible after any fire has occurred in your home.

- ***Boilers and central heating***

Contact the engineer responsible for the annual gas safety checks. If they are unavailable contact the Diocesan Surveyor.

- ***Water Stop valves***

Please check stop valves regularly. If you are uncertain as to the location of the stop valve to your property please refer to your Quinquennial survey or contact the Diocesan Property Team for further advice.

- ***Burst pipes and plumbing***

You should either turn off the water supply to an appliance or to the whole house. If you have central heating, turn off the gas and any electrical controls as well. In all cases report the problem immediately to the Diocesan Property Team.

- ***Electrical failure***

If the circuit breaker (RCD) trips and fails to re-set on the power circuits to the household plug sockets the following action should be taken:

- \* Unplug all domestic items and re-set the switch.
  - \* If it re-sets, plug in individual items until the circuit fails, this would indicate a faulty appliance.
  - \* If it fails to re-set and it is considered an emergency contact the diocesan emergency call out number
- ***Intruder alarm malfunction***



Call out the relevant alarm maintenance company.

- **Broken windows**

Contact the Diocesan emergency contact.

- **Storm damage to property or trees**

Call the Diocesan emergency contact. If other properties are damaged or passing traffic or pedestrians are in danger, inform the police.

## Emergency contacts:

- **Central Heating:-** Contact your boiler servicing engineer:-
  - **Shropshire area –**
    - \* Mr Nigel Cubbin – 07802 438361
    - \* GASCO – 01746 762000 / 766931
  - **Herefordshire area –**
    - \* Hereford Heating - 01432 264477
    - \* CJ Bayliss - 01432 265130
    - \* Stephen Weaver (Presteigne and Pembridge) – 07971261518
- **Water leak:** Welsh Water – 08000520140 / Severn Trent - 08007834444
- **Gas leak:** National Gas Emergencies – 0800 111999

*For all other emergencies our Diocesan Surveyor, Mr Mike Williams, will accept an out of hours call on 07563 382162.*

- **Electricity (power cut):** Contact National Grid 105
- **Alarm:** Contact your existing maintenance company
- **Police:** Contact your local station
- **All police:** (non-emergencies) – 101

## Useful Information:

Hopefully this guidance will prove useful to you during the occupation of your home.

If you have any questions relating to your Parsonage House you are invited to discuss these with the Diocesan Property Team.

- **Diocesan Property Team contacts: -**
  - \* **Mr Mike Williams, Diocesan Surveyor – 01432 373307**  
mike.williams@hereford.anglican.org
  - \* **Miss Sophie Mead, Housing Officer – 01432 373302**  
s.mead@hereford.anglican.org

- **Web links:-**

- \* [www.hereford.anglican.org](http://www.hereford.anglican.org)
- \* [www.hereford.anglican.org/clergyhandbook](http://www.hereford.anglican.org/clergyhandbook)
- \* [www.ecclesiastical.com](http://www.ecclesiastical.com)

## **Appendices:**

- **Appendix 1** – Maintenance responsibilities and guidance

## **Maintenance Responsibilities and Guidance:**

### **Repair Procedure**

When you need a repair that is not something you or the PCC are responsible for please contact the Diocesan Property Team on 01432 373307 (Mike Williams) or 01432 373302 (Sophie Mead). It is helpful if you give as many details as possible including:-

1. Your name, address and telephone number (where you can be contacted during the day).
2. What the problem is and where it is.
3. Access details or times during the week when a contractor or a member of staff can inspect or carry out the repair.
4. Any other information you think will be useful

*This Guide is not exhaustive and is regularly reviewed. Your feedback on the contents / usefulness of this document is welcomed. Please write to Mr Mike Williams, Diocesan Surveyor, The Hereford Diocese, Palace Yard, Hereford, HR4 9BL.*

*We look forward to working closely with you so that your home may feel secure and comfortable for you and your family, and be an asset / aid to the ministry exercised in your Parish.*

The Surveyor at the Diocesan Office will confirm your repair request and proposed course of action via e-mail.

## Schedule of Maintenance Responsibilities:

Item	Responsible	Comments
<b>Address Signage</b>	DBF	A suitable sign will be fitted and maintained by DBF.
<b>Access for all Adaptors</b>	Occupier	Although house classified for residential use, DBF at its discretion, will consider reasonable modifications.
<b>Accidental Damage</b>	Occupier	Where accidental damage occurs to the building fabric, fittings owned by DBF occasioned by a family member or guest, the damage will be repaired.
<b>Appliances</b>	Occupier/DBF	All integrated appliances gifted (where possible appliance to be freestanding). DBF responsible for integrated appliances only. Occupier to be responsible for maintenance of all appliances). DBF responsible for annual H&S checks of gas appliances. Kitchen alterations to accommodate specific requirements to be funded and reinstated by occupant, if considered appropriate by the DBF.
<b>Asbestos</b>	DBF/Occupier	The occupier to notify the DS prior to undertaking any works to the property in order to manage the risk associated with the potential presence of asbestos. Elements with the potential to contain asbestos will, where possible, be identified in the Quinquennial survey.
<b>Boundary Walls/Fencing</b>	DBF	New fencing provision to be considered for safety and security of clergy family at DS discretion, but not for consideration in relation to domestic animals.
<b>Brown Bins</b>	Occupier	This is the occupier's option and cost if council make separate charge to Council Tax.
<b>Burglar Alarm</b>	DBF/ Occupier	Refer any requests to the DS.
<b>Carbon Monoxide</b>	DBF	Carbon monoxide alarms fitted and maintained by DBF as standard. Please notify the Property Team if you do not have a CO detector.
<b>Carpets</b>	Occupier	Also see "Floor Covering"
<b>Central Heating</b>	DBF	Central heating system maintained by specialist contractor. All secondary heat sources to be serviced and maintained. See "Gas & Oil Testing & Servicing".
<b>Chimney Sweep</b>	Occupier	Occupier to arrange annual sweep of chimney (HETAS or Guild of Master Sweeps accredited contractor) and forward certificate to the Diocesan Property Office. DBF will instruct a sweep at the Ingoing works.

<b>Church Files</b>	Parish	At outgoing stage it is the Parish who is responsible to move all Church files being stored within the Vicarage. See "Parish Office/Equipment".
<b>Cleaning after Ingoing works</b>	Parish / DBF	Arrangements will be made for the property to be cleaned before your arrival and following ingoing works either by the parish or DBF.
<b>Cluster Flies</b>	DBF	See "Pest Control"
<b>Cookers</b>	-	See "Appliances"
<b>Curtain Tracks / Poles</b>	DBF	DBF to fit standard track and runners at Ingoing stage (if not in place). It is the Occupier's responsibility to maintain and leave in working order upon vacation.
<b>Day to Day Maintenance</b>	DBF	DBF responsible for all maintenance and building work. Incumbent to report day to day repair issues to the Diocesan Property Office.
<b>Disabled adaptation</b>	-	See "Access for all Adaptions".
<b>Electrical Installation</b>	DBF	A 5-yearly Periodic Electrical Inspection Certificate and remedial work/s as per Quinquennial or Ingoing.
<b>Exterior re-decoration</b>		See "Quinquennial".
<b>Fences</b>	-	See "Boundary Walls/Fencing".
<b>Floor Coverings; (kitchen, utility, bathroom, ground floor WC, en-suites)</b>	DBF	DBF responsible for replacement of slip resistant coverings at the end of their serviceable life. <u>Wood Block:</u> Routine maintenance and re-sealing not responsibility of DBF, however, should defect arise, repairs will be carried out by DBF.
<b>Other areas - Gardens (including hedges and trees)</b>	Occupier Occupier  Parish	During tenancy – lawns cut, beds and shrubs tidied and freed of weeds, paths / drives and hard standing areas freed from weeds and moss. During Interregnum it is the PCC / DBF responsibility to maintain. See "Trees".
<b>Garden furniture</b>	Occupier	Occupier to provide and maintain

<b>Gas &amp; Oil Testing &amp; Servicing</b>	DBF	An annual gas service, test and certification undertaken by a Gas Safe/OFTEC registered engineer. Test to include boiler (gas or oil) and all gas fires.
<b>Glass (internal doors/screens)</b>	DBF	Assessment of condition (safety) carried out at QI or Ingoing stage.
<b>Greenhouses</b>	Occupier	Occupier to maintain
<b>Gutters &amp; downpipes</b>	Occupier	Annual clearance required after tree leaves have fallen. Suggest occupier engages appropriate contractor to undertake works safely on their behalf.
<b>Insurance</b> • <b>Contents</b> • <b>Building</b>	Occupier DBF	Please note the house is classified as residential.
<b>Interior Decoration (Hall, stairs landing, study and down-stairs WC)</b>	DBF	DBF responsible – * to be reported at Quinquennial Inspection and where necessary undertaken by professional contractor subject to competitive tender and authorisation by the DBF.
<b>All other areas</b>	Occupier	
<b>Improvement Work</b>	Occupier	Strictly by prior consent of DBF/DBF.
<b>I.T equipment</b>	Occupier	
<b>Lighting</b>	DBF Occupier	The maintenance of all lighting units is the responsibility of DBF. All bulbs are the responsibility of the occupant.
<b>Locks</b>	DBF	DBF to maintain and provide secure locks to windows and doors.
<b>Loft Ladders</b>	DBF	Where safe access is identified as required by DS, in order to maintain water storage tanks and associated pipe work.
<b>Mechanical Extract Ventilation</b>	DBF	Assessment of condition carried out at QI or change of occupancy.
<b>Oil Test &amp; servicing</b>	DBF	See "Gas & Oil Testing & Servicing".
<b>Oil Tanks</b>	DBF	DBF to maintain.
<b>Parish Office</b>	DBF/	It is at the Occupier's and DBF's discretion where to allow the Parish to use the study/house. See "Church Files".
<b>Office Equipment</b>	Occupier	



<b>Pest Control</b>	Occupier	Local Authority Pest control in the first instance / further advice from Diocesan Property Team if unresolved.
<b>Pets</b>	Occupier	Any fencing required as a result of keeping pets shall be the responsibility of the occupier and shall be removed at the end of occupancy.
<b>Phone Points</b>	DBF	To provide one socket in the study and one in family location for private use.
<b>Ponds, pergolas, decking</b>	Occupier	Assessment of condition carried out at Quinquennial Inspection or change of occupancy. Ponds may be filled in as part of the Ingoing work/s.
<b>Quinquennial Inspections &amp; Repairs</b>	DBF	Assessment of condition carried out by the DS at Quinquennial Inspection. (Every 5 years).
<b>Rotary clothes dryers / washing lines</b>	Occupier	Occupier to supply and maintain
<b>Septic Tanks &amp; Sewage Treatment</b>	DBF	DBF responsible for the maintenance and contract of sludge removal. Incumbent to instruct and present invoice to Diocesan Property Office.
<b>Sheds</b>	DBF/Occupier	DBF responsible only if the property does <b>NOT</b> have a garage, then a 8'x6' shed is to be provided and maintained by DBF.
<b>Showers</b>	DBF	DBF responsible to supply and maintain electric/mains feed showers.
<b>Smoke Alarms</b>	DBF  Occupier	DBF recommend occupier contact local Fire Service to assist in carrying out home fire risk assessment. Mains operated smoke and heat detectors provided and maintained by DBF. Occupier to test smoke detectors weekly and to notify Property Team of any defective units.
<b>Study Shelving</b>	DBF	Maximum 24-30 linear metre adjustable bookshelves. Please note DBF does not supply shelving for curate housing.
<b>Toilet seats</b>	Occupier	Occupier to provide replacements
<b>Trees</b>	DBF/ Occupier/ Parish	Occupiers are responsible for regular maintenance of all smaller trees, shrubs and hedges. DBF to carry out 5-yearly inspections and maintenance of large trees. See "Gardens, hedges & trees".

<b>TV aerials</b>	DBF	
<b>Satellite dishes</b>	Occupier	Occupants wishing to supply and fit satellite dishes on the property should consult DBF, especially when the property is listed.
<b>Outgoing Responsibility</b>	Occupier/ Parish	Refer to "Empty Clergy Housing Policy"
<b>Water filter</b>	Occupier	DBF do not maintain or provide Water filters.
<b>Windows (Double-Glazing)</b>	DBF	DBF responsibility
<b>Window Cleaning</b>	Occupier	Occupier to instruct an appropriate contractor. Often gutters can be dealt with at the same time. Windows should be cleaned prior to vacating the property and on regular intervals during occupation inside and out.