

Diocese of Rochester Property Department

Summary of function for 2017

The repair and maintenance of parsonages (and other clergy) properties is governed by legislation set out in 'The Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972', a measure passed by the General Synod of the Church of England to provide for the repair of parsonage houses by Parsonages Boards and for the repair of other buildings belonging to a benefice.....', and the 'Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure, 1972, 'Diocese of Rochester Scheme under the measure as amended 18th October 2014'.

We aim to provide houses to the best standard possible, within the budget available, to help the Incumbents and other clergy with all property matters to ease the living and hopefully enable them to focus on their demanding role. We are often the main contact clergy will have with the Diocesan office.

We also aim to maintain the Diocesan Property assets to the best standard, the Dioceses most valuable (financial) asset.

Duties and responsibilities

1. To arrange and oversee the dilapidations survey reports on a quinquennial basis to 192 parsonage and 56 other clergy houses (including DBF), following a significant number of property sales, and some purchases, in 2017.
2. To arrange and oversee the preparation of specifications, obtaining tenders and seeing the work through to completion and final account (full contract administration)
3. To advise the Diocesan Secretary and the Clergy Houses Committee on new houses, improvements and extensions to parsonage houses which will include initial reports and recommendations; the preparation of detailed drawings, obtaining tenders and Planning and Building Regulations approvals, and seeing the work through to completion.
4. At the direction of the Diocesan Secretary to arrange for the inspections of properties prior to purchase.
5. To be responsible for the general supervision and coordination of the work of the Surveyors' department.
6. To be responsible for the arrangement of all maintenance work under diocesan legal liability on all clergy houses (see below)
7. To be responsible for the maintenance of appropriate records and work progress sheets.

8. On behalf of the Diocesan Secretary to be responsible for visiting parsonage houses during vacancies and to advise on and organise works of repair and improvement before re-occupation.
9. On behalf of the Diocesan Secretary, to assist and advise with the preparation and development of the brief to Architects for the design of new parsonage houses, and to manage that process through to completion.
10. To receive, review and advise the Diocesan Secretary and the Clergy Houses Committee on all plans, drawings and specifications received and submitted for approval by commissioned Architects etc. for new parsonages, major improvements etc. To oversee Architects and other professionals employed for specific housing projects.
11. To be aware of Ecclesiastical Law so far as the maintenance and provision of parsonage houses is concerned, in particular the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, the Parsonages Measures 1938 and 1947 and the duties and responsibilities therein.
12. To maintain membership of the RICS and to attend such meetings as are necessary to maintain a link with other Diocesan Surveyors, their work and sharing experiences.
13. To attend such other similar conferences, meetings and exhibitions as may be directed by the Diocesan Secretary (and to maintain CPD records as required by the RICS)
14. To attend such other in-service training for Diocesan Office staff as may be required.

Service of Synod, Boards, Councils and Committees

Clergy Houses Committee

To attend meetings of the Clergy Houses Committee and to advise as appropriate.

The Bishop's Council and the Finance Committee

To maintain a general knowledge of the Bishop's Council and its Finance Committee and their current business in order to occasionally assist in the transaction of such business at the direction of the Diocesan Secretary.

To attend such other Council meetings as may be required by the Diocesan Secretary and to give advice and guidance as necessary.

Financial Management

1. To be responsible, with the Diocesan Secretary, for the preparation of the annual Budget of the Clergy Houses Committee and to work within the constraints of such agreed Budgets.

2. To oversee the production on a monthly basis of a financial statement for replacement and repair of parsonage and other property schemes. To oversee the production on a monthly basis of a summary of vacant property
3. To be aware of the sources of funding of improvements schemes for benefice properties in consultation with the Assistant Diocesan Secretary – Finance, and the Diocesan Secretary.

Diocesan Office

1. To receive and review the Quinquennial Inspection report of St. Nicholas Church (Diocesan Office) and to advise the Diocesan Secretary on the condition of the building and the appropriate method of executing the necessary repairs.
2. To be responsible for the general maintenance of the Diocesan Office.
3. To be a member of the Senior Management Team.

Support to Parishes and Clergy

To establish and maintain sound working relationships with parish clergy in the Diocese, particularly in relation to clergy housing. To be available to them for consultation at any reasonable time.

2017

Total number of property work orders 1569

Parsonage expenditure, within set budget, as at end of December 2017 at £530k

Note

2017 was the second year of a significantly reduced budget. The assessed total budget requirement, including works cancelled from 2016, was £1.3m. The budget for 2017 was £530k for parsonage expenditure. The remainder of planned/QQ works have again been carried forward in the programme.

Vacancies - levels are still high, with 34 vacant parsonages and 6 other properties over 2017.

Summary of function

- QQ inspections and reports
- Vacancy inspections and reports
- Specifications, tenders and full contract administration
- Gas safety checks and boiler services
- Electrical reports and subsequent work

- Asbestos removal
- Day to day repairs – large variety of works, some ordered direct others following site visit, report and investigation; huge variety from Japanese knotweed, wasps and bees, boiler breakdown, leaks, roof failure, wall failures, boundary disputes, locksmiths, all general building and service works etc
- Damp investigation and remedial work
- Tree reports and works
- Drainage, blocked drains and where necessary further investigation and remedial work
- Plumbing
- External decorations and repairs (following QQ)
- Roof works including repairs and recovering of both pitched and flat roofs
- Window replacements
- Drive resurfacing
- Fencing
- Boundary and retaining walls – maintenance and remedial works (2 large projects brought forward into 2017)
- Party wall matters (party wall act)
- Kitchen refurbishments – (minor due to budget restriction)
- Bathroom refurbishments – (as for kitchens)

Although the restricted budget of the past two years has led to a significant back log of repair and maintenance works, there are some excellent ‘self-financing’ developments that have been completed, or are currently under way (the photographs in Appendix A also give a flavour).

Parsonage development projects

A number of schemes in 2017

Bishop of Tonbridge House - following the sale of Bishops Lodge in Sevenoaks for circa £2.5m a new house was purchased in Shoesmith Lane, Kings Hill for £1m. Ingoing works including minor alterations have now completed.

Archdeacon of Tonbridge House – the sale of the old house 3 the Ridings concluded towards the end of 2017 and a new build house has been purchased in Leigh. Completion due by April 2018.

Beckenham St James Parsonage – building of a new parsonage on land adjacent the current house in planning pre-application

Beckenham St Michael – sale of part of garden

Belvedere St Augustine – agreement to progress to feasibility for development of the site to include a new parsonage

Borough Green – significant in going works to house; sale of part of garden and construction of new double garage progressing

Green Street Green – construction of new parsonage in part of rear garden, architect briefed and progressing to planning in 2017

Swanley w Hextable – construction of new parsonage on land retained from sale of old parsonage. Completed in December 2017 and new Incumbent has moved in

Kemsing w Woodlands – planning appeal for construction of new parsonage, due by April 2018

Keston – the old house was sold in 2017 and a new house purchased. Ingoing works instructed early 2018 to be ready for new incumbent

Lamberhurst – the old house was sold in 2017 following purchase of new house in 2016. A new study extension is now proposed early 2018.

Paddock Wood – sale of existing house and site, and purchase of new parsonage agreed to proceed

Tunbridge Wells king Charles the Martyr – following the sale of the old parsonage and purchase of new (2016), study extension to the new house completed in 2017 (photograph below).

Wall schemes – works to retaining walls

Dartford holy trinity (parsonage) – works with Dartford Borough Council (50.50 liability), phase 1 completed 2017, phase 2, 2018.

Sevenoaks St Nicholas (parsonage) – to rebuild part retaining wall and upgrade drainage, completed 2017.

Magpie Centre Chatham (Non parsonage) – rebuilding of collapsed retaining wall, approvals and prices agreed end of 2017, works to start February 2018.

Synopsis

The focus for the next few years must be to resource property sufficiently to enable both a short-term catch up of essential work, but also to resource ongoing works on a yearly basis.

In one sense this area of work impacts all areas of the Rochester Diocesan Strategy by its inherent support of the clergy in their housing, with the intention of making that area of life easier to facilitate Incumbents to focus on their role, and with the specific area of 'Resourcing and Mission Growth' perhaps being key to a sustainable solution.

Mark Trevett (Diocesan Surveyor, Assistant Diocesan Secretary (Property))

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Appendix A - Examples - photographs / plans



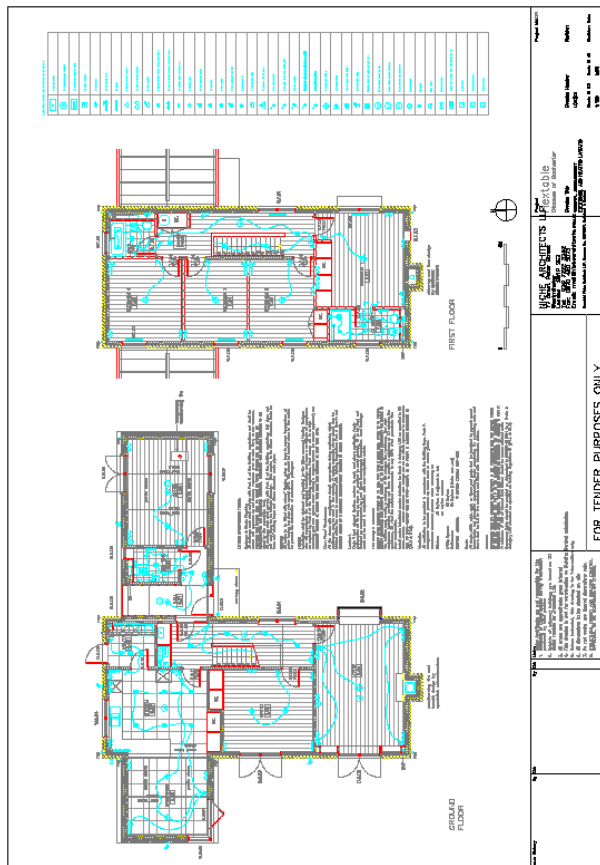
Tunbridge Wells King Charles – study extension 2017



Lamberhurst and Matfield - new parsonage



Old house Lamberhurst (sold 2017)



New Parsonage plan at Swanley St Mary w Hextable (completed December 2017)



New house for the Bishop of Tonbridge

Just a few maintenance issues



Roof soon in need of recovering (being monitored) - complex detailing



Older large house with high potential maintenance requirements



Older house with high maintenance – side roof requires recovering (monitored)



Older Kitchen (one of many, together with bathrooms) in need of modernisation (on hold due to restricted budget)

