



Upkeep of Diocesan clergy housing including hand-back procedures

last reviewed May 2020

Diocesan Responsibilities

1. Each property is surveyed under the Quinquennial programme of inspections. Repairs and maintenance, including tree works, are carried out as recommended by the Diocesan Surveyor, and under the supervision of the Surveyor, within the approved housing budget which is managed by the Head of Governance and Property.
2. Interim Repairs and Maintenance – the Property Team will organise repairs and maintenance, particularly plumbing, heating and electrical works, where these are reported by the occupants of diocesan properties. Contractors will work under direction of the Property Team, who also arrange annual gas safety checks and boiler services.
3. Each property is inspected prior to new occupancy (Vacancy visit) and the approved repairs and improvement works will be carried out under the supervision of the Diocesan Surveyor.
4. The Head of Governance and Property will visit or write to clergy occupants prior to vacation of a property, to discuss and agree any work that may be needed before a property is handed back to the Diocesan Board of Finance, including arrangements for keys, meter readings and disposal of unwanted items.

Clergy Occupants' Responsibilities

1. Within 3 months of moving into a property, clergy are asked to notify the Property Team of any works that they think are required, which may not have been apparent at the time of the vacancy visit.
2. Clergy are asked to notify the Property Team of any need for emergency repairs. In an emergency outside office hours, an approved contractor may be called, but please then notify the Property Team as soon as possible. Names and details of approved contractors are available from the Property Team on request and updated lists are sent out periodically, primarily with the intention of providing emergency cover during the Christmas/New Year period.
3. For some repairs, particularly electrical and plumbing repairs, there may be a need for additional remedial work to make good damage, eg when decorations have been damaged by a water leak, or where plastering is needed following electrical alterations. Plumbers and Electricians are not 'general builders' and will only attend to the area of work within their specialism! Therefore, clergy are asked to alert the Property Team whenever further remedial work of this nature is needed, so as to ensure that the right tradespeople can be instructed.
4. At the start of occupancy, a grant of up to £250 may be made available to clergy for internal re-decoration materials. In addition, starting from the beginning of occupancy, up to £1,000 is made available for the materials needed for internal re-decoration over any 5-year period. Clergy will be reimbursed for materials on production of receipts to the Property Team. The Board is prepared to consider requests for an increased sum to cover labour costs for re-decoration where health and safety issues are involved, eg rooms with high ceilings and hall/stairs/landing.
5. Minor repairs, gardening (including hedges), cleaning, telephone/broadband, TV aerials and satellite dishes are all the responsibility of clergy occupants. Two exceptions to this are: **(i)** any work that involves gas or electricity and **(ii)** trees. These are the responsibility of the Board and must **ONLY** be dealt with by approved Electricians, "Gas Safe" registered Plumbers and Heating Engineers, or qualified Tree Surgeons. Please contact the Property Team if such work is required.

6. Infestation - if a house becomes infested with fleas, or another pest brought in by a domestic pet, it is the responsibility of the occupant to deal with the problem. Arrangements for removal of wasps' nests, bees' nests, rats, mice, squirrels or woodworm will continue to be dealt with by the Property Team upon request.
7. Trees - every effort will be made to carry out necessary tree work at the time of the Quinquennial. Clergy are asked to inform the Property Team on receipt of any notice from the Local Authority that it intends to place a tree preservation order (TPO) on a tree within the property's curtilage. Local Authorities are not always good at telling the Diocesan Office.
8. Mould – in order to avoid mould forming, please ensure that the bathroom, en suite, toilet and kitchen are properly ventilated by opening windows. Trickle vents in double glazing (where available) should be left in the 'open' position at all times.

Moving on - Vacant possession

1. When vacating the property, it is expected that the outgoing clergy will leave the property in a tidy condition, in good decorative order, with all minor repairs completed and the property carefully cleaned.
2. There is also an expectation that all belongings will have been removed in order that the Board does not have to incur any expense in their removal after the occupants' departure.
3. Please be aware that the Board reserves the right to make a charge for the cost of cleaning a property and/or the cost of removal of any items left behind. In the event of this being necessary, following your departure you will receive a letter from the Board, with a copy of the quote(s), and details of the payment you are required to arrange.
4. Please contact the Property Team for advice if you have any difficulty in disposing of an unwanted item, or if you are unsure about whether an item is to be regarded as a Fixture and Fitting.
5. As a guide, the following items are regarded as Fixtures and Fittings: gas/electric fires; light fittings, including outside lights; hot water cylinder jacket; fitted cupboards and units; shelves; shower fittings; dustbins and re-cycling boxes/bags; curtain tracks; TV aerial; built-in oven and hob; extractors; any other integral items in a kitchen such as an integral refrigerator or a dishwasher.
6. Nowadays, most people do not need to take their satellite dish with them when moving house.
7. Curtains are not normally regarded as fixtures and fittings, but if you do not need to take them with you it is helpful to leave them in place as an aid to the security of the property until it is occupied again.
8. **Pets** – Anyone who has a pet, particularly a dog or cat, will know that they can sometimes cause damage to a property. It is expected that clergy will arrange for any such damage to be made good before vacating a diocesan property, with particular attention to carpets, which should be professionally cleaned in order to thoroughly remove pet odour.
9. **Sheds** – If you have a shed, either inherited or purchased during your own occupancy, and you wish to leave it behind when you move, please contact the Property Team for advice on the available options. The Board is not able to pay for the ongoing maintenance of a shed, but in certain circumstances it may be possible to offer it to the next occupant.

Gardens and Internal Decoration

The Board appreciates that in the areas of gardening and decoration, everyone's inclination and ability is different. Therefore, clergy are urged to consider carefully their choices of internal decoration and style of garden, not only bearing in mind that ministry is demanding and time-consuming, but also

remembering that one's successors are very likely to appreciate neutral decorations and low maintenance gardens.

Diocesan Property Team

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Please will you:

- * Report any issue promptly to the Property Team. The Head of Governance and Property is very willing to visit you if you feel this will assist.
- * Use your Decoration Allowance.
- * When preparing to leave, imagine that it is YOU entering the property next and ask yourself what you would hope and expect to see.