

Guidelines for Clergy in Occupation of Parsonage and Other Houses (and Lay Personnel in Diocesan Properties)

These Guidelines have been produced by the Houses Committee to assist in the maintenance and upkeep of parsonage and other houses. The purpose of the guidelines is to make clear the differing responsibilities of the Committee and of occupiers, and to reduce costly problems experienced on vacation and re-occupation of houses.

With effect from 1 July 2017 the management of the maintenance of the properties has been brought in house. Carter Jonas remain as diocesan surveyors dealing with the larger projects and carrying out the quinquennial surveys.

**For all maintenance issues please contact:
Patrick Berryman on 01733 887023 / Sandra Allen on 01733
887024.**

**Alternatively email [maintenance@peterborough-
diocese.org.uk](mailto:maintenance@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)**

***In an emergency, please
contact one of the following:***

Diocesan Office (Property Office)

*The appropriate Archdeacon (in case of an emergency outside
office hours)*

Archdeacon of Oakham: 01733887017

Archdeacon of Northampton: 01604887075

*R F Blount (for emergencies with central heating)
01536 514046*

General

G1. Occupiers are asked to make sure that nothing is done to involve the Diocese in expense without first obtaining written approval for expenditure.

G2. If occupiers notice any faults, defects or other matters that need attention, the property office should be notified at once.

G3. Occupiers must ensure that their houses are always kept secure.

G4. Occupiers are asked to ensure that their houses and gardens are well cared for.

G5. When work is being carried out on their property, the Houses Committee expects the occupier to keep a sensible eye on the works and, when complete, to provide feed-back.

G6. In an emergency, occupiers may authorise minor works but they should inform the property office that they have done so. Invoices for authorised work, raised in the name of the occupier (or the PCC), should be paid and a receipt submitted to the property office for reimbursement. This will avoid reminders from creditors. Occupiers must not order work on behalf of the Diocese unless they have been authorised to do so.

G7. Occupiers are responsible for the insurance of all their house contents, including furniture, personal effects and all valuables. The building insurance cover provided by the Houses Committee does not cover the use of the house for business activities, other than those associated with professional duties of the occupier. (See Clauses O7 and C9).

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE HOUSES COMMITTEE

C1. BOUNDARIES

Where there is not already a substantial wall, fence or hedge, fences will be provided along all boundaries belonging to the property. The Houses Committee is responsible for repairing fences but preservation treatment is the responsibility of the occupier (see Clause 03).



C2. CARPETS

Worn out or badly worn landing, stair, hall or study carpets and floor coverings in wet areas will be replaced.



C3. COOKER SPACE

Kitchens will have a 600mm wide cooker space. Where there is a built in cooker, this will be left in place until it needs to be replaced. At that time it will be removed and a 600mm wide space will be created for the occupiers own cooker.

C4. DOUBLE GLAZING

Double or secondary glazing will be

fitted when replacement windows are needed.

C5. FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

The maintenance of all fixtures and fittings listed on the Quinquennial Survey.

C6. HEATING SYSTEMS

The Diocese has a contract, obtained by competitive tender, for the maintenance and annual servicing of all the heating systems in its houses. Boilers will be replaced when the heating contractor reports that this is advisable or necessary (see Clause 05).



C7. IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to houses will be undertaken when considered appropriate and as funds permit. The need for most improvements will be identified by the quinquennial inspection, they will then be given appropriate priorities for implementation.

C8. INSULATION

An ongoing programme to provide loft and cavity wall insulation up to current Building Regulation standards in all houses has been completed.

C9. INSURANCE

The insurance of parsonage buildings, including the fixtures and fittings listed in the quinquennial survey, is for all standard risks. These include damage caused by storm, wind and subsidence. Third party claims, for example, trees falling onto neighbouring buildings, are also covered.

Before using a house for any business, other than diocesan business, the occupier should advise the Property Officer, who will check with the insurer that the cover will remain valid. **Do not operate a private business from a diocesan house unless clearance to do so has been obtained from the Diocesan Secretary.**

C10. LISTED BUILDINGS

Listed buildings will be maintained in the condition required by the Historic Buildings Act 1962.

C11. PAVING MAINTENANCE



The maintenance of any paving within 1m of the house and of a reasonably sized patio area. The making good of any serious deterioration of the access driveway and its drainage.

C12. PAYMENTS BY THE HOUSES COMMITTEE

The Houses Committee will be responsible for the following payments:

- Council Tax
- Water and Sewerage Charges
- General Maintenance
- External Decoration
- Quinquennial Surveys
- The servicing of boilers and security alarms

C13. QUINQUENNIAL REPORTS

There will normally be an inspection of the house every five years, in order to provide a detailed report on its condition. The occupier will be sent a copy of this report, on which comments are invited.

C14. RADON

There is an ongoing programme to test radon levels in houses. When the report of each test is received, it will be sent to the occupier. The Houses Committee will authorize any work needed if radon levels are found to be at or above the recognized action level (see Clause O19).

C15. SECURITY

Houses are equipped with secure locks and security lighting (see Clause O22).



C16. SECURITY ALARMS

See Clause O21.

C17. SEPTIC TANKS

The servicing of septic tanks and cesspits.

C18. SERVICES PROVISION

The provision and maintenance of the installations for the following services:

- Heating
- Water heating
- Internal and external drainage
- Sanitation
- Supply of water, gas (where applicable) and electricity
- Security alarms (where applicable).

C19. SHOWERS

All houses are provided with a shower. Power showers will not be provided.

C20. SMOKE ALARMS



All houses are provided with s m o k e alarms. Usually there will be an upstairs alarm and a downstairs alarm (see Clause O24).

C21. STRUCTURAL AND EXTERNAL MAINTENANCE

The maintenance of the structure and exterior of the property. Each

house will be decorated externally at no more than five yearly intervals.



C22. TELEPHONES

The provision of a telephone connection to the study. If the line has been disconnected, the Houses Committee will pay for the reconnection.



C23. WATER METERS

See Clause O29.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL OCCUPIERS



The Houses Committee hope that occupiers will use and enjoy using their house during the time of their occupancy as they would their own property. In order to avoid any uncertainty, the following section of the Guidelines lists the responsibilities which the Committee expects the occupier to accept during the time they occupy the house. By doing so they will help to keep our houses both in good condition and pleasant to live in.

If occupiers are uncertain about these responsibilities, or how to deal with any other situations that may

01. AIR BRICKS AND DAMP COURSES

Occupiers should make sure that air bricks are not blocked by earth or other obstruction. Earth or other materials should not be allowed to bridge the damp course and ground level should be maintained at a depth of about 150mm below the damp course.

02. ALTERATIONS

Under the repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, no additions or alterations may be made to a parsonage house without consent of the Houses Committee (and patrons). Occupiers must not make alterations to the house structure themselves. If alterations are thought to be necessary they will be sanctioned by the Committee and paid for by the Diocese. Major re-

pairs and alterations to listed buildings will need special planning consent before they can be authorized. Occupiers will be told if their house is listed before they take up residence (see Clause C10). Kitchens will be viewed at the quinquennial inspection and when the house is empty between appointments to see if improvements are needed (see Clause C7).

03. BOUNDARY WALLS AND FENCES

Any cracks or movement appearing in boundary walls should immediately be reported to the property office. The occupier should apply preservation treatment to timber fences when this treatment is needed.

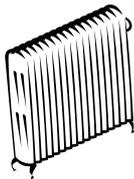


04. CAT AND DOG FLAPS

Occupiers fitting cat or dog flaps in doors will be responsible for replacing the door when the house is vacated.

05. CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEMS

The Diocese has a contractual agreement for the servicing and maintenance of heating systems. Occupiers should allow the contractor access to service, maintain or repair the system. The contractor will notify you when he wants to carry out any of this work (see Clause C6).



06. CHIMNEYS

It is the occupier's responsibility to arrange for the regular sweeping of chimneys used for open fires, wood burners or any solid fuel burning fires. Chimney fires can be the cause of damage to the house and unnecessary inconvenience to the family and to neighbours, particularly if there are thatched roofs near by.



07. CONTENTS INSURANCE

The insurance of household contents is the responsibility of the occupier. The contents are not covered by the Diocese's buildings policy. Any claims for loss, damage or theft

of household contents or personal possessions can only be made on the occupiers' Household Contents Policy.

Occupiers who intend to use their house for business purposes should advise the Property Officer. Do not run a private business from a diocesan house unless clearance to do so has been received from the building insurers (see Clause C9).

08. COOKERS

It is not the policy of the Diocese to provide cookers. A 600mm wide cooker space is created in kitchens with fitted units. The maintenance and replacement of any built-in cooker, dishwasher, refrigerator or freezer is the responsibility of the occupier (see Clause C3).



09. DOUBLE GLAZING

The Houses Committee is installing double or secondary glazing as the need arises and the budget permits (see Clause C4). Window cleaning is the responsibility of the occupier .

010. DRAUGHT PROOFING

Effective draught proofing can give significant savings on heating costs. The property office can make recommendations where draughts create problems.



011. DRIVEWAYS

Occupiers should keep driveways clear of weeds and accessible drains freely flowing. Any deterioration of the driveway surface or any drainage problems should be reported to the property office. Early attention can save more costly repairs later (see Clause C11).



012. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Occupiers are expected to conserve energy and water and to recycle waste wherever possible. There have been programmes to bring loft and cavity insulation up to recommended standards and to fit water meters in all houses. The use of energy saving light bulbs is recommended, as is the switching off of television sets, computers and other electrical equipment when they are not in use (see Clauses O15 and C8).



013. GARDENS (including PATIOS AND PATHS)

There is no money available for the maintenance and improvement of gardens. With new houses there is a once-for-all provision for garden works. Occupiers are expected to keep their gardens in good order.



There are tax concessions for expenditure on garden maintenance. The appropriate form is sent, to clergy only, each year.

Where boundaries belong to the property, a reasonable standard of fencing is the responsibility of the Committee (see Clauses O3 and C1).

See also **TREES AND HEDGES** (Clause O27).

014. GUTTERS AND DRAINS

The occupier should arrange for all external gutters, downpipes, gullies, drains and hoppers to be cleaned at least once a year, usually during the autumn. Obtain advice from the property office if there is a problem with accessibility.



015. INSULATION

The Houses Committee has completed a programme of work to bring loft and cavity insulation up to current Building Regulation recommended standards. Personal possessions must not be supported on the insulation.



016. INTERNAL DECORATION

The occupier is responsible for internal decorations. When re-decorating, remember that your successor may have to inherit your colour scheme, so please avoid strong colours. All furniture should be moved away from the wall and not just painted around. Difficult areas, such as high ceilings or stairways, may require professional help. In such cases occupiers should consult the appropriate Archdeacon or the Property Officer for advice. If it is decided at the in-going inspection that the study, or the hall, stairs and landing need redecorating, this will be done as part of the in-going works.

The help of the PCC, in the shape of labour or finance, will greatly facilitate the redecoration of houses requiring more than normal expenditure on internal decoration.

017. KITCHENS

The need for kitchen improvements is reviewed at the time of the quinquennial survey and when a house is empty between appointments (see Clauses O2 and C7).

018. METER READINGS

Meter readings should be taken when a house is being occupied and when being vacated.



019. RADON

In some parts of the Diocese radon levels in houses may be at or above the recognised action level. There is an on-going programme to test radon levels in diocesan houses. After the quinquennial inspection you may be sent radon test cells. These cells should be positioned as instructed and returned to the Radon Test Centre after they have been exposed for the appropriate time (see Clause C14).

020. REPAIRS

Whenever possible, occupiers are expected to do simple jobs, for example to change tapwashers. Do not attempt to embark upon repairs which are beyond your capabilities. Do not do any work on electrical services.

Get advice and written approval from the property office before any work is undertaken (see page 1, paragraph G1).

021. SECURITY ALARMS AND LIGHTING

Security alarms and lighting are normally fitted in houses in urban areas and where they are thought to provide significant additional protection.



Occupiers should make sure that they are instructed how to use them.

The property office must be given the chosen code number. Requests for alarms should be made in writing to the Property Officer, for consideration by the Houses Committee.

022. SECURITY LOCKS

There are security locks and security lights in all houses. If you do not have 5-lever mortice locks on all external doors and locks on all ground floor windows, please tell the Property Officer.

023. SHOWERS

Occupiers are responsible for routine shower maintenance, including the regular cleaning of shower heads. Curtains and shower doors must be properly positioned to prevent water damage to floors. Defective seals should be reported to the property office. The Houses Committee will not install power showers.



024. SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms are fitted in all houses. Make sure that you know where they are. Occupiers are responsible for checking that the alarms are active and for replacing exhausted batteries (see Clause C20).

025. TELEPHONES AND ANCILLIARY EQUIPMENT

Basic telephone equipment is provided (see Clause C22). The maintenance and repair of telephone equipment is the responsibility of the occupier. Occupiers are also responsible for providing any equipment such as extra jack



points, answering machines, broadband connections, computers or other office electrical equipment that they might need.

026. TIMBER SHEDS

Occupiers are responsible for the maintenance of any timber sheds they provide and for removing them when the house is vacated.



027. TREES AND HEDGES

Permission should always be obtained before any tree or hedge is planted, replaced or felled.



Permission will not be given to plant *Cupressus leylandii*, or other quick growing conifers. Maintenance of hedges to an acceptable height of no more than 1.5m or as defined by current legislation is the responsibility of the occupier. The Diocese may contribute towards the cost of removing conifer hedges but will not pay to reduce them to an acceptable height.

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas

There are regulations in force concerning trees covered by *Preservation Orders* and trees in *Conservation Areas*. These regulations are strictly enforced by the local authorities, whose written consent is required before any work is carried out, even if the tree is diseased or dead. Unauthorised lopping or felling can result in a fine and can cause much ill feeling within the parish. If work is required, please advise the Property Office, who will apply for the necessary consents on your behalf.

028. TV AERIALS AND SATELLITE RECEIVERS

TV aerials and satellite receivers are the responsibility of the occupier. The television aerial is not covered by the Diocese's insurance policy. Any damage to the building caused by the aerial is covered.

Consult the Property office before purchasing a satellite dish, as planning permission may be required. Planning permission will not normally be given for dishes on listed buildings.



No permission is required for fitting an aerial, provided a registered fitter is used. On leaving a property the aerial can be removed as the Diocese is not able to reimburse its cost.

029. WATER METERS

A Program to fit water meters in as many houses as possible has been completed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OCCUPANT WHEN MOVING HOUSE



When moving in:

- (a) Arrange for the gas and electricity service accounts to be transferred into your name. It is recommended that the telephone service be in the name of the PCC and arrangements made for private use.
- (b) Ensure that the correct amount of council tax, water rates and gas and electricity charges are levied by informing the Property Officer of:-
 - (i) the moving in date
 - (ii) the number of adults living in the house
 - (iii) water, gas and electricity meter readings

When moving out:

- (a) Give at least two weeks notice of the moving date to the Property Officer, so that an out-going survey can be arranged.

(b) Give a full set of keys of the property to the property office and a churchwarden. Only the property office and churchwardens are to have the keys.

(c) Read all the meters, including the water meter, and arrange for the payment of the final gas, electricity and telephone bills. Inform the Property Officer of the utility providers.

(d) Arrange with the Post Office for post to be re-directed as necessary.

(e) Turn off the water at the main stopcock unless otherwise directed.

(f) Remove all personal possessions. **Leave the house and out-buildings in a clean condition ready for the new occupant and as you would expect to find them. You will be counter charged with the cost of any cleaning needed after your departure and with the cost of disposing of any of your personal possessions left behind when you leave.**



Useful telephone numbers and email addresses

Diocesan Office	01733 887000
♦ Sandra Allen	01733 887024 sandra.allen@peterborough- diocese.org.uk
♦ Patrick Berryman	01733 887023 patrick.berryman@peterborough- diocese.org.uk
♦ Archdeacon of Oakham	01733 887017
♦ Archdeacon of Northampton	01604 887075
Carter Jonas	
♦ Michael Appleton	01604 608214 michael.appleton @carterjonas.co.uk
Blounts (for emergencies with central heating)	01536 514046