

STATUTORY FUNCTIONS OF AN ARCHDEACON
(A Church of England Document)

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An Archdeacon exercises his/her jurisdiction within his/her Archdeaconry in his/her own right and not as delegate of the Diocesan Bishop.

His/her work is responding to a theology of order. Rules and regulations are useful in resolving differences of opinion of interpretation, becoming accessible “measuring rods”. They save every generation from having to “reinvent the wheel” every time a problem arises or a decision has to be made. Since the following of rules avoids disputes and conflict, it facilitates the work of the gospel.

1. Inspection of Churches Measure 1955. He/she is required to enforce compliance by each parish with the provisions of the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955 which requires each parish to have its Church inspection at least once every five years. Canon C22(5) requires that he/she shall also survey in person or by deputy all Churches, Churchyards etc and give direction for the amendment of all defects in the walls, fabric, ornament and furniture.
2. Visitations. He/she is required by Canon to hold yearly visitations (Canon 22(5)).
3. Inductions. He/she is required on receiving the directions of the Bishop to induct any Priest who has been instituted to a Benefice (Canon C22(5)).
4. Pastoral Measure 1983. An Archdeacon is ex-officio a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee and is an “interested party” in relation to proposals for any pastoral re-organisation. He/she is in practice responsible for identifying the need for pastoral re-organisation and negotiating with all other interested parties any proposals for it.
5. Incumbents. (Vacation of Benefices) Measure 1977. On a request to the Bishop for an enquiry into the pastoral situation in a Parish on the basis that there has been a serious breakdown in pastoral relationships the Bishop is required to direct the Archdeacon to take such steps as the Archdeacon considers appropriate to promote better relations between the parties and to advise whether in his/her opinion a formal enquiry into the pastoral situation in the Parish should be instituted.
6. Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972. An Archdeacon is an ex-officio member of the Parsonages Board and has special interest in the clergy house in his/her Archdeaconry. Where the Board’s functions are exercised by a committee of the DBF, there is no absolute requirement that archdeacons are members although in practice they usually are.
7. Church Representation Rules. An Archdeacon has the responsibility of convening and conducting an extraordinary meeting of a Parochial Church Council under Rule 23(1).

8. Care of Churches, and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measures 1991. In his/her own Archdeaconry the Archdeacon is the most important person concerned with the enforcement of the faculty jurisdiction. An Archdeacon is an ex-officio member of the DAC, and is thus able to explain to the Incumbent and the Churchwardens who consult him/her the likely attitude of the DAC to what they want to do.

An Archdeacon has statutory authority to intervene in faculty proceedings, ie. For the removal of an object that has been placed without the authority in any Church or Churchyard. Faculties may be issued subject to a condition requiring the work authorised to be carried out under the direction of the Archdeacon. The Archdeacon may also issue faculties under the Chancellor in certain matters that do not entail a material change of appearance to the church building or churchyard.

He/she may also grant a licence for a period of fifteen months relating to experimental reordering, or minor changes which are reversible and which do not entail alteration to the fabric of the building. At the end of the licensed period the Archdeacon must ensure that the parish either cease the experience or apply for a faculty to confirm the change. A license may not be extended by the Archdeacon.

Under the “de minimis” rule, in matters of minor importance the Archdeacon may permit work to be done without recourse to the faculty legislation. The Chancellor periodically updates a list indicating the range of “de minimis” matters.

An Archdeacon has the power to order that an article of architectural, artistic, historic or archaeological value, which he/she considers to be at risk, be removed to a place of safety.

9. An Archdeacon will be in priest's orders and have been at least 6 years in holy orders (Canon C 22.1)
10. The Archdeacon is an ex-officio member of Diocesan Synod (Rule 30(3) of the Church Representation Rules.

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To this must now be added the Ecclesiastical (Terms of Service) Measure which came into effect on 31st January 2011. Here the Archdeacon leads the work enshrined within the measure and in particular, other than already included above:

- 1 issuing clergy Statements of Particulars and handling all queries;
- 2 developing role descriptions for Self Supporting Ministers and signing them off;
- 3 conducting investigations and hearing within the Clergy Capability and Grievance procedures;
- 4 overseeing clergy forecasts within deanery plans;
- 5 providing advice on terms of appointments, stipends, fees, pensions, sickness, leave and related issues.