



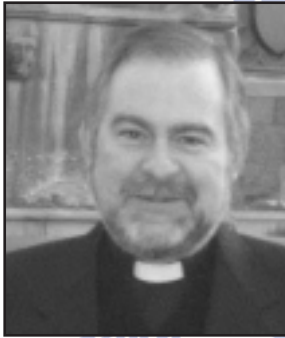
HOUSING MANUAL

For all who dwell in
Benefice or Board
owned houses

**PLEASE LEAVE IN A PROMINENT
POSITION IN THE HOUSE
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ARE
AWAY - AND ON VACATING
THE PROPERTY**



*The Diocese of
Canterbury*



FOREWORD

FROM THE ARCHDEACONS

We hope that the new edition of the Housing Handbook will be a source of useful information for you. If you feel that there are matters which this booklet does not address then please contact the staff of Property Services at 9, The Precincts, Canterbury, CT1 2EE. (Tel. 01277 478390)

Your home is also your place of work and its care and maintenance is a shared responsibility between the Diocese and you.

This guide seeks to explain the implications of this shared responsibility and to bring the policy of this Diocese in line with others.

You will appreciate that the housing budget is under considerable pressure as we seek to be good stewards and direct our limited resources to the improvement of our ageing housing stock. The budget derives almost entirely from Parish Share; there is no assistance from the Commissioners and only limited, but nevertheless welcome assistance from charitable sources.

We hope you enjoy your home as a place for family, work, rest and hospitality.

Patrick Evans

Philip Owen

NOTES FROM THE DIOCESAN SURVEYOR

The shared responsibility referred to by the Archdeacons derives from the Repair of **Benefice Buildings Measure 1972**.

Clause 2(1) defines the responsibility of the Diocese as follows:-

- (a) to keep in repair the structure and exterior of the buildings of the parsonage house, including doors, windows, drains, gutters and external pipes; and
- (b) to keep in repair all walls, fences, gates, drives and drains of the parsonage house, other than those which some person other than the incumbent is wholly liable to repair.
- (c) To keep in repair and proper working order -
 - (i) the installations in the parsonage house for the supply of water, gas and electricity, and for sanitation, including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences, and
 - (ii) the installations in the parsonage house for space heating or heating water, and
 - (iii) any fixtures fittings and appliances in the parsonage house (other than those previously mentioned), if they belong to the benefice but not otherwise; and includes works of interior decoration necessitated in consequence of such works...."

Cont...

Section 13 (1) defines the obligation of the Incumbent (occupier) as follows, "...a duty to take proper care of a parsonage house, being a duty equivalent to that of a tenant to use premises in a tenant-like manner."

The Notes on Section 13 issued by the Church Commissioners in January 1972 expresses the desirability that occupants should "...carry out by their own initiative and at their own expense such minor tenants' duties as re-washing of taps, replacement of blown fuses, repair of the odd broken window and so on."

As a further guide, the Committee would interpret the definition of such minor works to encompass such works as the replacement of lavatory seats, repairs to wall tiling and joinery, minor electrical repairs or replacement of light-fittings etc., but otherwise at the discretion of the Diocesan Surveyor.

It would be helpful if requests for reimbursement could be limited to sums over £50.00.



QUINQUENNIAL SURVEYS

The inspection is carried out 12 months before the works are due - this is to aid budget planning. Allowance is made for problems that may arise between inspection and start of work. Consideration will be given to including the internal redecoration of circulation areas every second Quinquennial, subject to funds being available.

Other works of essential improvement may also be considered but funds for this purpose are limited.

If you know of good local contractors please let me know.

It is not possible for me to visit all the smaller contracts and so I would appreciate your keeping an eye on things and letting me know if you are unhappy with any aspect of the work.

INTERIM REPAIRS

Maintenance of houses is a yearlong activity and your contribution is vital in keeping the house in good repair and ensuring that deterioration in the structure and services does not go unchecked.

Please note the following: -

Gutters/Downspouts

Gutters must be cleared at least once between Quinquennials (more often in some areas) - **DO NOT** risk doing this yourself. Please contact a local tradesman and send the bill to Property Services. It would be helpful if you could occasionally check for leaks or blocked gullies or down-pipes- standing outside in heavy rain is the best method!

Roof

Please report all slipped or missing roof or ridge tiles.

Heating

The annual service and landlords safety certificate is organised by Property Services Department. Please ensure that a notice is fixed on or near to the boiler giving contact details for the service engineer. Please ring the engineer direct if any failure of the system occurs.

You should aim to keep the house evenly heated and resist the temptation to heat only those rooms you occupy.

In any room containing a gas fired appliance there must be permanent ventilation - usually 2 no 225 x 225 airbricks which **MUST NOT** be sealed or closed.

Damp/Condensation

Damp penetration is caused either by the failure of the damp proof course, roof coverings or leakage from guttering and downspouts.

Remember however that in many cases 'damp' is often the result of condensation, particularly noticeable in bathrooms or built-in cupboards. In most cases improving ventilation and keeping the room warm will reduce the problem.

Plumbing

In the autumn, please check the stopcocks are in working order and that no overflows are dripping. It would be as well to check that tank and pipe insulation is correctly positioned and any that is missing should be replaced.

Drainage

In the event of any blockage in the foul drains, the Diocese has an arrangement with Drain Doctor who may be contacted on 0800 00 33 28

For those who have septic tanks please note that detergents, disinfectants, bleach and some soap powders have a harmful effect on the action of a septic tank.

Please only use a powder, biological or otherwise which states that it is "septic tank - friendly."

Please do not flush sanitary products, including baby wipes into a septic tank system

The sludge should be removed from your tank once a year by the Local Authority or specialist contractor. Cesspools require more frequent emptying.

Electrical Installation

A suitably qualified Contractor will test the installation as part of the Quinquennial Works. For your own safety please do not carry out any alterations to the installation. New electrical installation regulations are now in place which prohibit alterations or additions to electrical installations which are not carried out by an appropriately qualified contractor.

If any interim repairs are likely to cost in excess of £100 please contact Property Services first before instructing contractors.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ENERGY SUPPLIERS

You are free to change to any suppliers but please do not enter into any agreement that may be binding on your successors. Please record full details of suppliers in your house file.

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

The cost of materials for redecorating rooms will be refunded on request, subject to a minimum sum of £50.00. It is of great assistance to those who follow you if the house is kept in a good decorative state and the Property Committee suggests as a guide that one room should be re-decorated each year. Some PCC's undertake to re-decorate one or two rooms a year and this is the requirement in several Dioceses.

Eccentric decorative schemes are not encouraged, in fairness to your successor!

If it is essential to drill and fix shelving etc. please remember it is your responsibility to make good the walls when you leave.

INSURANCE

The Board of Finance maintains comprehensive building insurance cover for all of the houses. It does not extend to fixtures that are not benefice or Board property (e.g. TV aerials and greenhouses).

You are responsible for maintaining your own cover for contents, which should incorporate third party cover for you and your family as occupants of the premises.

SECURITY

Generally, you are responsible for the security of your own house but current policy is for assistance to be given in the following areas:-

the cost of upgrading front/back door locks to insurance company standards (5 lever mortice).

the cost of window locks (not fitting).

the cost of installing an intruder alarm is the responsibility of the PCC, but the Property Committee will make a grant of up to half the cost, provided the Contractor is a member of NACOSS and complies with B.S.4737 - please apply for further details. Please note that maintenance charges must be met from 'local' sources and provision made to cover them during any vacancy.

TELEVISION AERIALS

These are not Benefice property and the Diocese has no responsibility for repair or replacement. See also under Insurance.

TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT

The Diocese is responsible for the provision of a service to the house but not for cabling within the house or for the provision of instruments

GARDEN

Trees

Your co-operation in keeping the grounds of the house under control would be much appreciated. Under normal circumstances the housing budget is unable to meet the cost of garden maintenance. Several parishes generally help their Priest in the maintenance of large gardens, either by direct labour or by paying a local contractor and this is to be encouraged and commended.

The Diocese will usually only pay for tree surgery in urgent cases where trees present a serious risk either to people or property. The maintenance of trees, hedges and parsonage house land is the responsibility of the occupant, not the Diocese, and your co-operation in leaving the grounds in good order for your successor is requested. Parishes may be willing to assist with labour or the cost of maintenance in some circumstances.

Fencing

Boundary fences are checked during the Quinquennial survey, your assistance in keeping them in good repair is appreciated. Upgrading of boundary fences to provide security for animals, etc., is the occupant's responsibility.

General

Please ensure soil levels do not bridge the damp course and that all wall-climbing plants are kept in check. Ivy, in particular must not be allowed unrestricted growth as it can cause structural failure.

MOVEMENTS

Please advise us of the date you intend to leave the house.

The churchwardens are responsible for the house during any interregnum and I would wish to meet you and the wardens at the house before you leave to discuss the handover of responsibility. It would be appreciated if you could ensure that, before you leave, all keys are accounted for and are clearly labelled in readiness to be handed to the Wardens.

If you were moving within the Diocese I would welcome an early meeting with you at the new house.

And finally...

HOUSE FILE

Please maintain a file of all information relating to the house, e.g. Instruction booklets, energy suppliers, and anything that will assist your successors.

Philip G Bell

Diocesan Surveyor and
Director of Property Services

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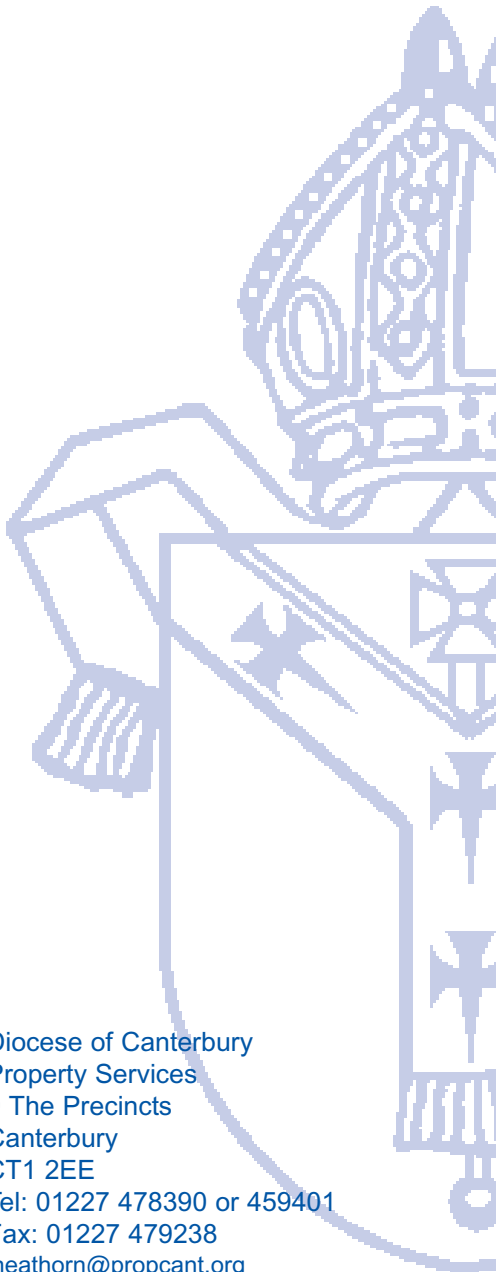
Jo Heathorn

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Property Committee

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**PLEASE USE THIS PAGE TO NOTE
ANY OF YOUR OWN USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS /
GENERAL INFORMATION ETC.**





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