



DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER: INFORMATION FOR PARISHES IN A VACANCY

CONTENTS

SECTION A: BASIC INFORMATION

- 1. Before the Vacancy Begins**
- 2. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Sequestrators**
- 3. Arrangements for Worship**
- 4. Role of Different Ministers during a Vacancy**
- 5. Fees**
- 6. The Parsonage House (Vicarage/Rectory)**
- 7. Safeguarding**
- 8. Trusteeships**

SECTION B: PROCESS FOR FILLING A VACANCY

- 1. Filling the Vacancy**
- 2. The Section 11 Meeting**
- 3. Suspension of presentation**
- 4. Applications and Shortlisting**
- 5. Interview Process**
- 6. Announcement**
- 7. Arrangements for Institution and Induction**
- 8. The Parsonage House**

SECTION C: CONTACTS

SECTION A: BASIC INFORMATION

This booklet contains information and guidance for churchwardens, Parochial Church Councils, treasurers and others during a period of vacancy in a benefice or parish. It is intended as a guide rather than a legal document so, although we have tried to make it as accurate as possible, please do not rely on it as the letter of the law. For further information please contact your Rural Dean or Archdeacon.

It should be read in conjunction with the other diocesan documents, in particular the *Property Handbook*, *Financial Aspects of Ministry* and the *Chancellor's General Directions*. All of these are available on the diocesan website.¹

All that is said below is offered with prayers and best wishes for those taking up responsibility for vacancies in the diocese.

1. Before the Vacancy Begins

Some suggested subjects for discussion with the departing incumbent if these are not already clear:

- The date the vacancy officially begins (legally known as the 'start date') and the incumbent's last Sunday, which is usually two or three weeks earlier
- Contact details of clergy, organists and Readers who can be asked to help with services
- How various organisational matters have been dealt with, such as choosing hymns and readings for services, filling in registers and communications such as keeping the parish website up to date and the parish newssheet and magazine
- Suppliers of communion wine, wafers, candles, etc. and other domestic and church suppliers
- Procedures for administering baptisms, weddings, funerals (important to be clear about policy for baptism, and remarriage of those who have a spouse from a previous marriage still living)
- Pastoral work: home communions and visiting
- Procedures for burial in the churchyard (if there is one)
- Location of official papers, e.g. plans of the churchyard
- Forthcoming events booked in the Incumbent's diary and contact details, e.g. for weddings.
- Planning communication. Vacancies need a lot of communication. The congregation should be made aware that the churchwardens with the Rural Dean will be responsible for the parish during the vacancy. Phone calls and e-mails will increase for churchwardens. It will of course be best if up to date communication via parish website, notice sheet and magazine to regular churchgoers and other parishioners can continue during the vacancy.
- Confidential documents: a plan should be made for how these will be stored and kept confidential. If necessary, they should be given to the Rural Dean or Archdeacon for safekeeping.

¹ To find them, use the search tool in the top right hand corner of the home page and type in the relevant title.

2. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Sequestrators

The legal Chair of the PCC is usually the Incumbent. There are special provisions for team ministries, and it is also possible for the PCC to ask the Bishop to authorise a priest or deacon who is licensed to officiate in the parish or has permission to do so to act as chair of the PCC in the incumbent's absence. Unless that has been done, during a vacancy the chair is taken by the Vice-Chair. (The Church Representation Rules say that a lay member of the PCC shall be elected as a Vice-Chair whether or not there is a vacancy.) If the Vice-Chair is not one of the churchwardens, then his/her responsibilities relate solely to chairing the meetings of the PCC. PCC meetings and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting may be convened and chaired by the Vice-Chair of the PCC.

The **sequestrators** of the benefice during a vacancy are the churchwardens and the Rural Dean. Where a benefice consists of more than one parish, the churchwardens from every parish are appointed. The Bishop may also appoint an additional sequestrator. The sequestrators are responsible for administering the income of the benefice, i.e. paying expenses and passing over fees as appropriate during the vacancy. More informally, the sequestrators have oversight of the administrative aspects of parish life during the vacancy.

Sequestration begins when an incumbent ceases to hold the benefice. Usually this is the date of his or her institution or licensing in a new post or official retirement date, which is usually later than his or her last Sunday. Sequestrators remain in place if the Bishop appoints a priest in charge, although the Bishop may invite the priest in charge to become a sequestrator of the parish in which he or she serves.

3. Arrangements for Worship

a. Sunday and Weekday Services

During the vacancy the churchwardens are responsible for arranging the services, in consultation with the Rural Dean or, if necessary, with the Archdeacon. The Rural Dean can help with suggestions of neighbouring, visiting and retired clergy and readers who might help. The churchwardens should also consult members of any local ministry or music teams who are used to helping lead services.

In a vacancy the customary order of Sunday services should be maintained as far as possible. However, it may not be possible to maintain a full diary of services so there may have to be some adjustments to the pattern. It is an expectation in Canon Law that the Eucharist (Holy Communion) will be celebrated on all Sundays and feast days in each benefice.² Any changes to the pattern of worship may only be carried out with agreement of the PCC.

b. Occasional Offices (Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, etc.)

As stated above, it will be helpful for the churchwardens and PCC to consider in advance how they will allocate responsibility for these during the vacancy so that it is clear who will provide pastoral care and make the necessary arrangements.

It is advisable to set up a system to manage weddings, funerals and baptisms, to ensure adequate preparation is given, and to designate an appropriate person, for example the parish administrator,

² See Canon B14 and B14A.

to deal with all enquiries. Weddings involve legal constraints, so it is advisable to contact the Rural Dean for any advice, including advice where one of the couple is divorced.

With matters to do with **churchyards**, churchwardens can consult the Rural Dean or Archdeacon if in any doubt. Information about what is and is not permissible in churchyards may be found in the *Chancellor's General Directions* on the diocesan website.

4. Role of Different Ministers during a Vacancy

Clergy: priests and deacons who officiate at services, including funerals at crematoria, **must** be authorised by the Bishop of **this diocese** to do so, in other words they must either be **licensed** (generally as Incumbent or Curate in a parish) or have current **Permission To Officiate** (PTO: the status normally given to retired clergy). A minister's current status should be checked using the diocesan database.³

The person presiding at the Eucharist/Holy Communion service **must always** be a priest.

If parishes wish to invite a priest from *outside the diocese* to officiate at a service the churchwardens must seek advice from the Bishop's Chaplain.

Readers (formerly known as Lay Readers) are lay people, called to a voluntary preaching, teaching, liturgical and pastoral ministry alongside their ordinary occupation or employment. Readers who hold a licence or PTO may conduct and preach at Matins, Evensong, family services and services of the Word. They may also preach at Holy Communion, read the Gospel, lead the intercessions and Ministry of the Word, administer the paten and chalice and distribute the sacrament to sick or housebound people not present at a celebration.

A Reader may publish the Banns of Marriage and sign the entry in the Banns book, but may *not* sign the Banns Certificate or officiate at a Marriage.⁴ He or she may officiate at a Service of Prayer and Dedication after Civil Marriage with suitable preparation and the approval of the Archdeacon. A Reader may conduct a funeral service provided those responsible are agreeable to this. A Reader is *not* authorised to baptise except in emergency situations. A Reader may be asked to prepare people for baptism, confirmation and marriage, to visit and pray with the sick, or to undertake other pastoral and educational work as part of the ministry team of the benefice.

Readers give their ministry freely and receive no fees for their services. However, a Reader should be reimbursed travel expenses at the diocesan rate.

Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs) are authorised by the Bishop to exercise a particular ministry in their local parish. In a vacancy, the ministry of ALMs may continue as normal, under the authority of the Churchwardens and PCC, as part of the Ministry Team in the parish, and with the support of the Rural Dean.

Churchwardens may, in the unusual event of no one arriving to officiate at a service, conduct Morning or Evening Prayer, or a Service of the Word, but should not preach unless licensed to do so.

³ This can be accessed from the top right hand corner of the home page of the diocesan website. For assistance, contact databaseadministrator@chichester.anglican.org

⁴ '... a lay person may sometimes publish banns and sign the entry in the banns register but a member of the clergy must always have authorised the entry in the register before first publication, and a member of the clergy must always sign the certificate of publication (if required).' *Anglican Marriage in England and Wales: A Guide to the Law for Clergy*, Third edition, 2010, p. 33. If in doubt about who is the appropriate person, please contact the Rural Dean.

5. Fees

The churchwardens should keep a careful record of any expenses incurred in filling the responsibilities of the vacancy. These are normally met by the PCC, which will be saving on the incumbent's working expenses.

The agreed **parish share** should still be paid during the vacancy. It is calculated so as to take account of savings through the typical number of vacancies across the diocese.

Occasional Duty Fees (for Sunday and weekday services)

Travelling expenses are payable to a priest, deacon or Reader for taking a service in church when it is in vacancy, or when the incumbent or priest-in-charge is ill. Visiting clergy who are retired from stipendiary ministry are also entitled to a fee. The diocese is responsible for paying occasional duty fees for public worship during vacancies or sickness. The parish is responsible in other cases, for example public worship during the period between the incumbent's last Sunday and the formal start of the vacancy and other parish work. For information about how to claim these fees, please see the 'Financial Aspects of Ministry' document on the diocesan website. The claim forms can be found at <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/information-for-parishes-in-vacancy/>

If visiting clergy or Readers incur necessary expenses in excess of those payable by the diocese (meals or travelling in excess of the diocesan maximum travelling allowance, etc.) the sequestrators should ensure that these are met by the PCC or from other parish funds.

Statutory Fees (for weddings, funerals, banns, certificates, memorials, etc.)

The Table of Fees prepared by the Archbishops' Council states the portion of the fee attributable to the PCC and the portion attributable to the DBF. A copy of the current table of fees can be found on the diocesan website, together with a quick reference table setting out the portions due to each party, including the portions due to retired ministers. It is the duty of the sequestrators to pass over the DBF portion to the diocese.

Fees that are normally payable to the PCC, should continue to be paid to the PCC. The fees payable to the DBF should continue to be paid to the DBF. An exception is made when a clergyperson who is over state retirement age and has fully retired from stipendiary ministry takes a wedding or funeral; in that case 80% of the DBF's fee is payable to the retired clergyperson with the remaining 20% being paid to the DBF. Note that where a minister with PTO officiates at a funeral in a crematorium or cemetery, no fee is payable to the PCC. In this case, the fee should be paid in full to the DBF, which will pass over the relevant portion to the retired minister where applicable.

For further information on these matters, please see the *Information on Parochial Fees* page on the diocesan website.

6. The Parsonage House (Vicarage/Rectory)

The churchwardens' responsibilities include taking care of the parsonage house and any other property belonging to the benefice, in conjunction with the Property Department. The Diocese makes every effort to rent out vacant parsonages where appropriate, which not only reduces the responsibilities of the sequestrators but also improves security, ensures the house is properly heated, and generates income to reduce the parish share needed across the diocese. This will however only be done where the house is suitable for letting, and it is not likely to increase the length of the vacancy.

*Churchwardens are politely requested **not** to transfer utilities or council tax bills to the diocese until the Property Department has confirmed that the house will in fact be let.*

In the event that a parsonage house is *not* able to be let during a vacancy:

1. **Utility bills** are likely to be insignificant.
2. **Council Tax:** in most local authority areas, clergy housing which is vacant pending the appointment of a new priest benefits from an exemption from Council Tax during the vacancy under Class H. Please contact the local authority to inform them that the parish is in vacancy and you wish to claim the exemption.

For matters relating to the Parsonage House, please see the *Property Handbook* on the Diocese of Chichester website which has information on arrangements in vacancies in appendix 2.

In the event of the death in office of a licensed minister, please see the policy on widows, widowers and surviving civil partners.

7. Safeguarding

The PCC's policy on safeguarding remains in place.

Any questions about safeguarding should be referred to the Parish Safeguarding Officer or to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor as soon as possible.

Serious concerns should of course be reported to the police.

For further information, please go to safeguarding section of the diocesan website: a tab may be found at the top left hand corner of the home page.

Your archdeacon will always be happy to give guidance in case of doubt.

8. Trusteeships

Where an incumbent is trustee ex officio of a local charity, the sequestrators cannot act as trustee in place of the incumbent, nor do they assume ex officio school governorships. However, under section 90 of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, a priest in charge does take the place of the incumbent for trusts or charities established for ecclesiastical purposes of the Church of England. This does not apply to educational charities or trusts.

SECTION B: PROCESS FOR FILLING A VACANCY

The appointment of a priest is not the same as a secular recruitment process. The period immediately after an incumbent has resigned or retired leaves the benefice in vacancy (also known as an interregnum); it is a time for reflection and enables parishioners to evaluate the situation in the parish(es), clarify their aspirations for the future, and consider what qualities and attributes they would expect of a new priest. It would be inappropriate for this to be done whilst the retiring incumbent was still in post, and whilst parishioners were saying "farewell" to him/ her. The vacancy period gives time for the parish to prepare for change. On a more mundane level the vacancy period provides a convenient opportunity to carry out significant works to the parsonage house without causing disruption to the occupants. It is rare for vacancies to be shorter than nine months.

1. Filling the Vacancy

The Archdeacon will coordinate the appointment process, together with the Patron(s) (the person or body which has the right to present or nominate a candidate for the post to the Bishop, if the Bishop is not the patron himself). If you have any questions, please talk to the Archdeacon in the first instance. Legal documentation will be sent by the Diocesan Registrar to the PCC Secretary, so if the parish has recently elected a new PCC Secretary please check that the diocesan office has been advised of the change. It is important that the paperwork is dealt with promptly and accurately. If you have any queries, please contact the Registry Clerk, Ms Anne-Marie Organ: 020 7593 5015.

The process is governed by The Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, as amended by the Legislative Reform (Patronage) Order 2019. This legislation lays out the guidelines to the process which involves a number of different people, time deadlines and forms.

The process starts when the Diocesan Bishop serves a formal notice to the Designated Officer – the Diocesan Registrar – this is ‘Form 30’ or ‘Notice of Impending Vacancy’. Unless presentation is being suspended or restricted (see below), this is done no later than the date the vacancy arises (i.e. the legal departure date of the previous Incumbent; note that this is usually a few weeks after the Incumbent’s last Sunday). The Diocesan Registry will send a notice, referred to as a ‘Form 31’ (Notification of Vacancy), to the secretary of the PCC(s) and to the registered patron(s). This will specify a ‘start date’, which will be no later than three months after the date the vacancy arises.

As soon as practicable after the start date for the vacancy specified in Form 31, and in any event before the end of the period of six months beginning with that date, the PCC should hold its ‘Section 11’ meeting.

2. The Section 11 Meeting

This meeting is referred to as a ‘Section 11’ meeting because it is described in Section 11 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. The outgoing incumbent and spouse/partner and the Patron or the patron’s representative *may not* attend this meeting. In multi-parish benefices which do not have joint PCCs, then this should be a meeting of all of the PCCs in the benefice together.

The Section 11 meeting is asked to:

- **Appoint two lay members of the PCC to act as the parish’s representatives⁵** in connection with the selection of the new incumbent. They need not be the churchwardens and *must not* be clergy, deacons or licensed lay workers or the spouse of the outgoing Incumbent. (The PCC Secretary will have received ‘Form 34’ on which s/he records the names of the PCC representatives and then sends the form back to the Registry.)
- **Prepare a statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish.** This is normally described as the ‘Parish Profile’. It is intended for the Bishop and the Patron(s) and for candidates considering whether to apply for the post. It allows the PCC to say what it is looking for in a new incumbent and also acts as a sort of brochure describing the parish. Advice about how to write it may be found on the diocesan website⁶. This is the PCC’s document, but a draft should be sent to the Archdeacon in advance of the meeting so that s/he can comment upon it and suggest any improvements. Multi-parish benefices can

⁵ In multi-parish benefices, at least four lay representatives, with at least one but no more than two from each individual PCC in the benefice.

⁶ <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/documents/guide-writing-successful-parish-profile/>

choose whether to prepare a joint statement to be approved by all the PCCs or separate statements for each parish.

- **Decide whether to request the patron to advertise the vacancy.** All vacancies are automatically notified on the diocesan website. The PCC may request that the post also be advertised in the *Church Times* and sometimes in other publications. Although this will be a matter for discussion and negotiation, the Bishop/Patrons are not legally bound by the PCC's request to advertise and may decide, at least in the first instance, to 'headhunt' a suitable candidate. The PCC will be asked to pay for the advertisement, but the Archdeacons' PAs are able to negotiate the placement of the advertisement in the *Church Times* if requested to do so. The advertisement will be written in the light of the Parish Profile and in consultation with the Archdeacon.
- **Decide whether to request a joint meeting, known as a Section 12 meeting,** with the Bishop/his or her deputy and the Patron/his or her deputy. This meeting is not normally necessary.
- **Decide whether to ask the Bishop for a statement** describing in relation to the parish or benefice the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the church.

3. Suspension of presentation

This is the temporary removal of a patron's rights to present an incumbent for appointment to a benefice. Suspension of presentation is recommended by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee (DMPC) in appropriate cases. The most common reason for recommending suspension is as a step towards possible pastoral re-organisation. The DMPC may also recommend suspension of presentation for legal reasons, for example where it has been agreed that the parsonage house is to be relocated.

Once presentation to a benefice is suspended, when a priest is appointed s/he will be known as a priest-in-charge, although his/her role in the parish will be similar to that of an Incumbent (i.e. Vicar or Rector). A benefice will always be consulted if it is proposed to suspend presentation. When the suspension is lifted (e.g. because pastoral reorganisation has taken place) there is a 'shortened procedure' to enable the priest-in-charge to become the Incumbent, with the agreement of the PCC.

Diocesan good practice ensures that the appointment process for a Priest in Charge will be broadly the same as that for an Incumbent, and the patrons and representatives of the PCC will be invited to take part in the selection process, strictly speaking in an advisory capacity. When presentation is suspended, there is not a formal section 11 meeting, as per the previous section. However, there will almost always be an informal (in the legal sense) meeting to agree the parish profile and decide on their representatives.

4. Applications and Shortlisting

Archdeacons' PAs will send out application forms and parish profiles to those who request them. A standard Church of England application form is used. All completed application forms are returned to the Palace (the Bishop of Chichester's office).

The Patron, in consultation with the Bishop and drawing upon the parish profile and other expressed needs of the parish, will draw up a short list of candidates who are to be invited for interview.

Parish representatives should be aware that there is information on the application form that is confidential to the Bishop and may preclude a candidate being shortlisted.

The Archdeacon will liaise with the relevant parties to set dates for shortlisting and interviews well in advance of advertising the post. The Archdeacon will also communicate with candidates to inform them about whether or not they have been invited for interview.

The Diocesan Bishop's PA will obtain references for short listed candidates and these will be shared confidentially with members of the interview panel.

5. Interview Process

The interview panel consists of

- ❖ The Patron(s)
- ❖ The Bishop (either Diocesan or Suffragan) and/or the Archdeacon
- ❖ The PCC representatives

There will normally be a preparatory meeting of the panel, an hour or so before candidates are scheduled to arrive. This will give the panel the opportunity for prayer and discussion of the task they have been given, and for questions to be decided and allocated to different members of the panel.

It is hoped that the panel, after prayer, discussion and discernment, will come to a common mind about whether and whom to appoint. However, it is helpful to bear in mind the legal nature of the different parties' respective roles:

- ❖ The **Patron's** role is to essentially to nominate a preferred candidate.
- ❖ The **PCC representatives** must each assent to the appointment – so in other words they each have a power of veto.
- ❖ The **Diocesan Bishop** must be willing to license the priest so the Bishop, even when he is not himself the patron, also effectively has the power of veto.

The veto is exercised by completing 'Form 37' (in the case of the PCC representatives) or 'Form 36' (in the case of the Bishop) giving reasons for the refusal to approve the nomination.

In normal circumstances, the Bishop or Archdeacon who has conducted the interview will phone the preferred candidates to make a verbal offer, and also notify the other candidates as soon as possible. Feedback to candidates will be given as requested.

Once the verbal offer has been accepted, a formal offer letter will follow from the Bishop's office. This cannot happen until either the Form 37 has been received from the PCC representatives approving the nomination, or two weeks have passed without Form 37 being returned. It is therefore helpful for the PCC representatives to complete the form immediately after the interview, to avoid delay.

If no candidate has been chosen, the Archdeacon will liaise with the PCC representatives about the next steps. Normally, a new timetable will be set for the recruitment process and the vacancy will be re-advertised. If the diocesan bishop has not received the patron's notice of presentation within eighteen months of the 'start date', the right of patronage will lapse to the Diocesan Bishop.

6. Announcement

Churchwardens and PCC representatives should remember the need for discretion and confidentiality at all times during the process, particularly over the names of candidates for the post. Before the appointment is announced, the identity of the new priest should be carefully safeguarded, for a variety of reasons. The Bishop's and patron's communications with the churchwardens and PCC representatives need to be private and confidential, not even to be shared with the PCC (which has elected its representatives to act on its behalf in the process). It will be wise for PCC representatives to resist giving a blow-by-blow account of how the search for a new incumbent is going.

Once an appointment has been made, the Archdeacon will liaise with individual parishes about the date for an announcement of the new Incumbent/priest-in-charge. Candidates who come from outside the diocese will need a new DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service). This is arranged between the person who has been appointed and the safeguarding department. Normally speaking, no announcement can be made until a clear DBS check has been received: this can take varying amounts of time, depending on local police forces.

Once the DBS has been obtained a date can be set for licensing, and the appointment can be announced in the parish. Care should be taken to make sure that this is coordinated with the announcement in the parish that the new Incumbent is leaving.

The diocesan Bishop's PA will send round a licensing notice to relevant parties.

7. Arrangements for Institution and Induction

Institution (done by the Bishop) means to be put in possession of the cure of souls of the parish (i.e. the spiritual side of being a parish priest). *Induction* (done by the Archdeacon) puts the new Incumbent into possession of the temporalities (i.e. the buildings) of the benefice. Institution and Induction take place at the same service. If a priest-in-charge has been appointed, s/he is simply licensed rather than instituted or inducted.

It is normally the case that, when Incumbents are coming from outside the Diocese of Chichester, they are instituted by the Bishop of Chichester, but if they come from another parish within the diocese, a suffragan bishop will preside. The Archdeacon will give guidance.

Institutions and Inductions normally take place within the context of a Eucharist, at which the Bishop presides. Further guidance about all aspects of the service, including the rehearsal, may be sought from the relevant bishop's office.

The Bishop's Liturgical Chaplain will be in touch with the churchwardens after the appointment has been made public about arranging the licensing service for the new incumbent/priest-in-charge. The name of the service will depend on the circumstances of the particular parish or benefice. There is much to be arranged and the Bishop's Liturgical Chaplain will be happy to advise. Such matters will include:

- Producing the service booklet
- Sending out invitations, e.g. to the patron, clergy of the deanery, deanery lay chair, clergy who have assisted during the vacancy, Headteacher and Chair of Governors of local schools, the MP, Mayor, Chair of Parish Council and other civic leaders, ministers of other churches in the parish, etc.
- Music (the new priest chooses the hymns)
- Sidespeople and arrangements for Holy Communion

- Refreshments after the service

There will be a rehearsal a few days beforehand organised by the Bishop's Liturgical Chaplain.

8. The Parsonage House

Once an appointment has been made, one of the diocesan surveyors will arrange a visit to the Vicarage for the incumbent before s/he comes into post, normally with their spouse or partner and the Archdeacon.

Please note that when a new Incumbent/priest-in-charge comes into post, the normal responsibilities for work on the parsonage house are:

- The Diocese: for structural and safety matters, including new kitchens, bathrooms etc.
- The PCC: for decoration (a modest grant towards the cost is available from the Property Department)
- The Incumbent: him/herself for carpeting (often making use of the resettlement grant that is provided by the diocese)

SECTION C: CONTACTS

Sequestrators should always remember that they are officers of the Bishop. They can ask for help and clarification when it is needed. In any case of doubt or difficulty or if there is a question about particular responsibilities they should contact:

For legal matters, the Diocesan Registry Clerk:

Winckworth Sherwood

Minerva House

5 Montague Close

London SE1 9BB

020 7593 5015

ChichesterRegistry@wslaw.co.uk

For financial and general matters, the Diocesan Secretary:

Diocesan Church House

211 New Church Road

Hove

BN3 4ED

01273 421 021

diocesan.secretary@chichester.anglican.org

For problems concerning the parsonage house, the Property Department:

Diocesan Church House

211 New Church Road

Hove

BN3 4ED

01273 425 683

property@chichester.anglican.org

For advice concerning clergy from other dioceses taking services, the Bishop's Chaplain:

The Palace

Canon Lane

Chichester

PO19 1PY

01243 782 161

stephen.ferns@chichester.anglican.org

Your Archdeacon is available to discuss any questions or concerns. His/her contact details, along with those of the Rural Dean can be found on the diocesan database.

If there are concerns or questions regarding the suspension of presentation, please contact the **Secretary to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee:**

Diocesan Church House

211 New Church Road

Hove

BN3 4ED

01273 421 021

dmpc@chichester.anglican.org

Please pray for the parish, the patron and the bishop during the vacancy in order to discern God's will for the future. Here is a prayer that could be used:

God our Father,

you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be his body in this place.

Send us your Holy Spirit at this time of transition, to fill us with vision, energy and faithfulness in prayer,

And guide with your heavenly wisdom those who are to choose a new priest for this parish.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen