

Diocese of Monmouth

Guidance for Churchwardens



Dear Churchwarden,

This guidance document is welcome as it provides a comprehensive introduction to the role of the Churchwarden. All Churchwardens are Bishop's Officers and are asked to share in the wider ministry of the Diocese as well as support the local church.

In a time of great challenge, we are reminded of our urgent call to mission and engagement in the world. Churchwardens are the primary Lay Officers and have the responsibility of shared leadership with the clergy. All of us are called to serve others and work well together. Our leadership is rooted in the servanthood of Christ. As you explore your role with the Ministry Area Leader and other members of the Ministry Team, please be assured of my prayers and support.

Being a Churchwarden is a vocation and is an office that is pivotal to good ministry, good community engagement and mission. May God bless you in your work.

+ Bishop Richard

Bishop of Monmouth



Bishop Richard has been out and about across the Diocese thanking our churchwardens



Guidance for Church Wardens

It is important that Churchwardens nourish and maintain their own Christian faith, and not let it fade with the administrative and practical issues which may arise in the church.

In co-operation with the incumbent, churchwardens, as part of the ministry team, are generally responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the Parish and/or Ministry Area.

Churchwardens are not expected to do everything themselves, but to make sure that there are other people available to carry out the various tasks.

1. Mission

Churchwardens should work with the clergy to ensure that:

- the Ministry Area has a Mission Strategy Plan, and implements it;
- there is an encouraging welcome to all people attending church;
- the church building is open to the public as much as possible.

2. Oversight of the Spiritual and Pastoral Life of the Church

Pastoral Care

Churchwardens should ensure that the pastoral work of the Church is being undertaken in the Parish and/or Ministry Area and amongst the congregation. This includes caring for the congregation and encouraging people in their Christian faith.

Liturgy and Worship

Churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that:

- visitors or newcomers are welcomed and assisted;
- that there is adequate seating;
- that all other facilities are in place, including safety requirements.

Churchwardens should attend services regularly and arrive in good time to support the welcome group and be present for any refreshments. Practicalities for worship are likely to include:

- ensuring that the church is clean, unlocked, lit and heated;
- setting up for Holy Communion; lighting candles; ringing bells; displaying hymn numbers;
- handing out books and service sheets;
- welcoming worshippers into church;
- taking and dealing with the collection; completing the service register;
- tidying everything away after the service;
- being available to welcome visiting priests, the Archdeacon or Bishop, and offer any help as needed.

In the absence of the incumbent and during a vacancy they are responsible, with the Area Dean, for ensuring that there is someone to conduct services, and that liturgy and the life of the Parish and/or Ministry Area continues as far as possible.

If there is no one available they should conduct any service, as far as possible themselves, for example Morning and Evening Prayer or Services of the Word. See the Church of England website for resources for the Services of the Word: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/service-word>

3. Care of Clergy

Churchwardens should:

- care for, support and give advice to the incumbent;
- try to ensure that the incumbent is relieved of non-urgent administration and tasks;
- act as a 'critical friend', for the incumbent;
- help to resolve disputes or disagreements amongst the congregation or with the incumbent, or with the local community.

4. Legal, Financial and Practical Aspects of Church Life

Meetings / Trusteeships

They are ex officio members of the PCC (the trustees of the Parish and/or Ministry Area). Churchwardens become members of the PCC from the moment they are elected.

They may also be ex officio trustees of Parish and/or Ministry Area ecclesiastical and parochial charities. They should meet regularly with the incumbent.

Administration

With the Incumbent and the PCC, they should do their best endeavours to ensure that:

- there is adequate provision for and oversight of the administration of the Parish and/or Ministry Area, including financial administration;
- there are proper procedures in place for recruiting, and managing lay staff and volunteers;
- the PCC adopts a Safeguarding policy, and has a plan for ensuring that the policy is implemented;
- the PCC has a health and safety policy and ensures that it is implemented;
- there are adequate preparations for an Archdeacon's visitation.

Finance

They should do their best endeavours to ensure that:

- there are systems in place for two people counting collections, recording amounts and their secure; holding until they can be banked;
- adequate processes are in place for managing the finances of the PCC;
- expenses of office are paid to the clergy; the church is adequately insured;
- all bills are paid;
- the Parish and/or Ministry Area pays its quarterly ministry share by standing order to the Diocesan Board of Finance;
- the Parish and/or Ministry Area's end of year accounts, and other returns are submitted promptly.
- In the absence of a PCC Treasurer, the churchwardens must fulfil the role of Treasurer together.

Buildings and Contents and Property

Churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that the PCC cares for and maintains the church and its contents and other buildings in the Parish and/or Ministry Area, and the churchyard or grounds.



They are responsible for ensuring that:

- there is a terrier, (the list and description of any land or buildings belonging to the church)
- proper records are kept of any property transactions, including tenancy agreements and leases;
- a list of all ecclesiastical trusts and charities associated with the Parish and/or Ministry Area is maintained;
- an annually updated inventory and photographic record of all the items belonging to the church is retained;
- quinquennial repairs are carried out;

- a log book of all alterations and repairs to the church and its lands and contents exists;
- appropriate building and contents insurances are in place;
- an annual report is made on the fabric of the church and any other buildings to the Annual Vestry Meeting;
- all valuable items are kept securely;
- the Archdeacon and the DAC are consulted about any repairs or alteration to the church, or any acquisitions or disposals of contents, and that a Faculty is obtained before any work is begun.

At the end of their time in office churchwardens should handover their keys to their successors, and the inventory, which should then be checked and signed.

5. Vacancies

- During a vacancy in the Parish and/or Ministry Area, church wardens, with the Area Dean, are responsible for the good ordering of the Parish and/or Ministry Area. They are responsible for ensuring that worship, pastoral care and mission continues in the Parish and/or Ministry Area, and for supporting any assistant clergy, lay ministers, staff and volunteers in the Parish and/or Ministry Area with their responsibilities.
- When any concerns arise, they should consult the Area Dean and/or Archdeacon.

6. Person specification

Churchwardens:

- Should be over 18.
- Should consent to being appointed.
- Should be resident in the Parish and/or Ministry Area or on the Electoral Roll. They need not be members of the congregation of the parish church in a parish with more than one church.
- Should have been confirmed and should be regular communicants. A person who is ready to be confirmed and wants to be confirmed also qualifies.
- Churchwardens hold office for one year at a time, up to a maximum of six years. However, dispensation can be given by the Archdeacon to enable a churchwarden to serve longer, which will be reviewed annually.
- The Church in Wales constitution specifies that Churchwardens may hold office up to the age of those serving on the Governing Body (currently age 75). Wardens wishing to continue their service beyond age 75 should discuss their position with their incumbent and Archdeacon.

A churchwarden's duties call for the highest financial integrity, as along with all PCC members they are a charity trustee. People who have been convicted of certain offences of dishonesty, and those who have been disqualified as company directors, are not allowed to be charity trustees. Therefore, they should not be considered for the role of churchwarden.

A churchwarden should be someone who the congregation respects and who can lead when needed. They need to guide the Parish and/or Ministry Area Council to make the right decisions. A churchwarden may have to take a service at ten minutes notice, or deal with the press. They should be wise, and if needed, firm. They should not be intimidated when dealing with senior clergy and Diocesan staff.

A churchwarden wishing to step down from their role should inform the Incumbent and write to the Bishop by giving two months' notice.

7. Training

A programme of churchwarden training will be available across the Diocese of Monmouth from September 2018.

Useful Contacts

www.pariahresources.org.uk

Visit Parish Resources for a wide range resources and information.

Diocese of Monmouth Website

Visit www.monmouthchurchinwales.org.uk for other useful information, including the contact details of the Diocesan Officers who can answer any queries you may have.

Or contact the Diocesan Office at:

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Tel 01633 267490

Email monrec@churchinwales.org.uk

