

# Diocese of Worcester

## Clergy Housing Handbook

The Diocesan Property Team



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## Preface

We are delighted to introduce this new edition of our clergy housing handbook, which we hope will be helpful.

Living in clergy housing is not always straightforward, and we are aware that you might not be the living in a house that you would have chosen for yourself. The diocesan property team are committed to working with you to make sure it's a really good home for you, as well as being a good base for your ministry.

Caring for your home is a partnership between you and the diocesan team. Our team are committed to providing a regular maintenance programme, and in turn we expect you to look after general upkeep, treating your home well so it can be passed on to your successors. This is especially important whenever you prepare to move on.

Living in clergy housing has many benefits and we hope you will enjoy your house and being part of the community around it. Please be assured of our thanks and prayers for you and those you share life with; we are grateful for all that you give as you minister amongst God's Kingdom People.

+ Hugh + Martin



## Welcome, Stewardship, and Shared Care

Welcome to your new home! We hope that you and your family will be happy here, and that this house will be a place of rest, hospitality, and fruitful ministry. This guidance is provided to set out clearly how your home is cared for and the shared responsibilities between you, the diocesan property team, and the parish. Clergy housing is both a home and a resource for the mission of the Church. It is entrusted to us all, and its care depends on a spirit of partnership.

As the diocesan property team, we are committed to providing homes that are comfortable, well maintained, and sustainable. As these homes are funded largely through Ministry Share, it is important that resources are used wisely, fairly, and with care for the environment and for future generations.

Each benefice has a parsonage house and, where there is a team ministry, may also have one or more vicarages. The benefice is the legal owner of the parsonage house, while the Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance (WDBF) owns all other clergy housing. In practice, however, all properties are managed in a consistent way. During a vacancy, responsibility for the parsonage house passes formally to the Diocesan Bishop, with day-to-day oversight undertaken locally by the sequestrators (churchwardens and the area dean).

The care of clergy housing is governed by the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, which sets out the shared responsibilities of both the WDBF and you as occupier, including the expectation that the property is cared for in a “tenant-like manner.” You therefore need to be committed to looking after it, attending to the routine upkeep such as clearing gutters, cleaning windows, refreshing internal decoration, tending the garden, and dealing with small household repairs, either personally or by arranging and funding them. Alongside this, the diocesan property team is here to support you through regular maintenance programmes and, where possible, through additional improvements. We encourage you to fully enjoy your home, while also treating it with care and respect so that it can be handed on in good condition to those who follow. Where damage arises through neglect or deliberate action, we will seek to recover the cost of repairs, but our hope is that such situations are rare and can be avoided through shared understanding.

This partnership of care, rooted in trust and good stewardship, helps to ensure that our clergy homes continue to serve the life and mission of the Church, both now and for future generations.

This guide has been produced with the support of our bishops and archdeacons and contains information and advice so that you and your family can enjoy your home.

It is an evolving document, subject to review and change when needed. Please do keep it in a handy place and for the most up to date version please refer to [cofe-worcester.org.uk/parish-support/support-for-clergy-and-readers/clergy-housing/](https://cofe-worcester.org.uk/parish-support/support-for-clergy-and-readers/clergy-housing/)



**Ruth Beard**

**Diocesan Director of Property &  
Secretary to the Parsonages Board**

## The Diocesan Property Team

The property team oversees the management of the Diocese of Worcester's property assets, including approximately 134 clergy houses, the diocesan office building and approximately 2,500 acres of glebe land. We are:

**Ruth Beard** – Diocesan Director of Property

**Mark Rosten** – Diocesan Maintenance Surveyor

**Jaine Simm** – Clergy Housing Officer (working days Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)

**Anna Phillips** – Property Administrator (working days Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday)

**Paul Coombes** – Property Maintenance Technician (working days Monday, Tuesday)

**Carl Woollaston** – Facilities Administrator (Diocesan Office Building) (working days Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)

## Contacting the Property Team

Telephone: 01905 732806

Email: [PropertyTeam@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:PropertyTeam@cofe-worcester.org.uk)

NB: Appendix 1 provides contact telephone numbers for use in an emergency outside office hours.

Diocesan Disability Advisor

**Jo Hyrons** – [jhyrons@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:jhyrons@cofe-worcester.org.uk)

Jo can be contacted for issues or concerns relating to the diocesan disability policy and further information can be found at: [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/disability-policy.php](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/disability-policy.php)

Occupiers should raise any specific issues or concerns with the Archdeacon's Office.

**We look forward to collaborating with you to support  
you in your ministry and to care for your home  
together.**

## Occupier Responsibilities

Your role is essential in the day-to-day care of the property and in ensuring it is maintained to a good standard for both present and future occupants.

### Moving In

On taking up occupation, you are responsible for:

- Arranging transfer of gas, electricity, and telephone services into your name from the date of entry
- Taking and recording meter readings and sharing these where required

The WDBF pays **council tax and water rates**, and any such bills received should be forwarded promptly to the property team.

### Keys and Locks

It is not diocesan policy to change the locks when clergy move into our properties unless there are particular circumstances which necessitate this.

### Insurance

- The WDBF insures the building only. You are responsible for arranging contents insurance.
- If the property is to be left unoccupied for an extended period, you must inform the property team.

### Internal Decoration

- You are responsible for maintaining the internal decorative condition in line with its condition at occupation, and a rolling programme of redecoration is encouraged to maintain standards.

### Fixtures, Fittings and Finishes

- You are responsible for maintaining floors, fittings, and windows in good and clean condition.

### Appliances

The WDBF does not provide freestanding domestic appliances. You are responsible for:

- Their maintenance, repair, or replacement
- Ensuring any inherited appliances are safe to use.

Integrated appliances may be maintained by the diocesan team on a case-by-case basis.

## Garden and Grounds

- Maintain lawns, beds, hedges, and general tidiness.
- Keep paths, drives, and hard surfaces clear of weeds and moss.
- Ensure the property is left in a well-maintained condition at the end of occupancy.

## Trees and Vegetation

- Routine care of smaller trees, shrubs, and hedges.
- Prevent climbing plants (e.g. ivy) from damaging the building.

## Gutters and Drainage

- Arrange annual clearance of gutters and rainwater systems.
- Keep drains clear of debris.

## Septic Tanks (where applicable)

- Outside of regular emptying, notify the property team of any concerns.
- Use systems responsibly to avoid blockages or damage.

## General External Care

- Keep air bricks and damp courses clear.
- Maintain gates, boundaries, and access areas.
- Avoid creating informal public rights of way across the property.

## Health and Safety Responsibilities

You are responsible for:

- Testing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms regularly
- Arranging annual chimney sweeping where required
- Ensuring safe use of heating and water systems
- Reporting any concerns about asbestos or other hazards before undertaking any work

## Utilities and Running Costs

- You are responsible for utility bills (except council tax and water charges)
- Please ensure heating systems are used appropriately (e.g. avoid running oil tanks empty)

## Reporting Repairs

- Report all repairs promptly to the property team.
- Do not undertake works without prior approval (except emergencies)
- Provide access for inspections and contractors.

## End of Occupation

When leaving the property, you are expected to:

- Leave the property clean, tidy, and free of possessions.
- Restore decoration to a reasonable and neutral standard.
- Ensure the garden is maintained.
- Return all keys and fittings.
- Provide final meter readings and close accounts.

Failure to maintain the property appropriately may result in costs being recovered.

## Responsibilities of the Diocesan Team

The WDBF, through the property team on behalf of the Parsonages Board, is responsible for the overall management, maintenance, and long-term stewardship of clergy housing.

## Repair and Maintenance

- Maintain the structure, exterior, and core systems of the property.
- Arrange and fund repairs identified through:
  - Quinquennial inspections.
  - Vacancy inspections.
  - Reported issues.
- Appoint and manage contractors for all approved works.

## Planned Inspections and Compliance

- Undertake quinquennial inspections every five years.
- Carry out:
  - Electrical testing
  - Gas and heating servicing
  - Other statutory compliance checks

## Internal and External Works

- Undertake repairs and replacements of:
  - Fixed installations (heating, wiring, plumbing)
  - Structural elements and external fabric
  - Undertake decoration of key internal areas at vacancy.

## Vacancy Management

- Inspect properties at the start and end of each occupancy.
- Arrange necessary repairs and improvements.
- Maintain security and compliance during vacancy.
- Manage short-term letting where appropriate.

### Health and Safety Provision

- Maintain and service heating systems and gas appliances.
- Provide and maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Monitor risks including electrical safety, asbestos and structural integrity.

### Insurance and Costs

- Provide buildings insurance.
- Fund agreed repair and maintenance works.
- Manage budgets to ensure fair and consistent provision.

### Improvement and Adaptation

- Consider requests for improvements or adaptations. Prioritised on need, safety, and available resources.
- Approve and oversee any occupier-funded alterations.

### Advisory and Support Role

- Offer guidance on property care and maintenance.
- Provide a point of contact for repairs, concerns, and queries.
- Work collaboratively with occupiers and parishes.



## **The Quinquennial Survey & Report**

In line with the RMMB 1972 an inspection is carried out by a qualified surveyor every five years to assess the condition of the structure, external fabric, and key internal elements.

Following the survey visit a report and schedule of required works are prepared for consultation with you as occupier. Agreed works are tendered and approved within budget and contractors are appointed, who will then liaise directly with you. The quinquennial process will also include electrical inspections and tree surveys where required. Occupiers are expected to facilitate access and are encouraged to report any concerns about work promptly.

## **Interim Repairs (Minor Works)**

As issues may arise between quinquennial inspections, interim repairs are managed as needed. All repair requests should be reported to the property team and approved contractors will be arranged on your behalf.

Regular checks of the property by you as occupier, or the PCC in a vacancy, are essential to ensure problems are reported and addressed without delay.

## **Vacancy Work**

When a property becomes vacant, the Diocesan Director of Property and Maintenance Surveyor will carry out separate inspections of the house with both the vacating and new occupiers where possible. Often a visit with the Archdeacon will also be arranged. These inspections are undertaken in order to establish the condition of the property at the end of an occupancy period and identify if improvements, repairs, and decoration are necessary in preparation for the new occupant.

A photographic record of the condition of the property and grounds will be produced at the end of the vacancy works. A digital record will then be presented to the incoming occupant, the aim of which is to act as a reminder and provide expectation of how the house should be returned at end of occupancy.

Every endeavour is made to ensure that the ingoing works are completed before the occupier moves in, but this does depend on the time scale involved and the scope of the works and may not always be possible

The extent of decoration work undertaken by the diocesan team at vacancy will be dependent upon condition and will typically be prioritised to include hall, stairs, landing, downstairs WC and study as a minimum. Decoration over and above what is deemed necessary will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

To aid the management of the budget, all works requests from clergy are considered based on need. For example, kitchens and bathrooms that are not serviceable are usually replaced whereas kitchens and bathrooms that are serviceable but may seem outdated, unfashionable, or not to personal taste will not be considered as a priority for replacement.

Where an occupier makes a request to the property team to undertake additional work, or to increase the specification in the agreed scope of works, this must be approved by the property team and must be paid for by the occupier in advance.

## Improvement Work

Improvement works are normally carried out during vacancies to minimise disruption. However, requests from occupiers may be considered where there is a clear need. Priority will be given to essential works and proposals should align with the Church Commissioners guidelines; *Parsonages: a design guide* (Church Commissioners, 1998). This guide, informally referred to as the 'green book' is under review but copies of the 1998 version can be borrowed from the property team on request.

## Environmental Improvements and Upgrades

The Diocese of Worcester is committed to improving the environmental performance of its housing, with a positive focus on the transition to efficient, low-carbon electric heating. This is supported by a fabric-first approach, ensuring that insulation (loft and wall) and glazing are upgraded where possible to maximise energy efficiency and comfort.

Alongside these improvements, the property team will increasingly consider the installation of modern electric heating solutions, such as air source heat pumps, and renewable technologies such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. These measures aim to reduce carbon emissions while providing reliable, cost-effective heating for the future.

All improvements are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the type, age, and location of each property, with the overall aim of creating homes that are warmer, more sustainable, and more economical to run.

## Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs are issues that need immediate action to keep you safe or to prevent serious damage to the property. This includes situations such as gas leaks, major water leaks, power failures, or structural damage.

### What to Do

- **During office hours:** Contact the property team on **01905 732806**
- **Out of hours:** Use an approved contractor (see Appendix 1)
- If no contractor is available, seek trusted local help (e.g. churchwardens), **but only arrange work to make the situation safe.**

You must inform the property team as soon as possible after any emergency work is carried out.

### Break-ins

Inform the police and obtain a crime number. The police usually have contractors who will board up, as necessary. Report the incident to the property team as soon as possible.

### Gas Emergencies

For gas leaks, contact **National Grid Gas immediately: 0800 111 999.**

If you smell gas:

- Do not use switches or electrical appliances.
- Do not smoke or use naked flames.
- Open windows and doors to ventilate.
- Leave the gas supply as it is.

### Electrical Issues – Power Tripping

Electrical systems are checked regularly, but if you have any concerns, contact the Property team promptly.

Occasional tripping at the consumer unit is often caused by a faulty appliance rather than a problem with the wiring. If this happens:

- Unplug all appliances.
- Reset all switches (including the RCD)
- Plug appliances back in one at a time to identify the fault.

If the circuit trips when an appliance is switched on, that appliance is likely faulty and should be repaired or replaced at the occupier's cost.

If the cause cannot be identified or the issue persists, arrange for a qualified electrician.

- If the fault is within the property's wiring or fixtures, costs will be covered by the WDBF.
- If caused by an appliance, costs remain the occupier's responsibility.

For urgent issues, refer to emergency contact details (Appendix 1).

### **Costs and Payments**

- Only arrange the minimum work needed to make things safe.
- If you pay a contractor directly, reasonable costs will be reimbursed.
- Always obtain a receipt.

## **Health and Safety in the Home**

### **Boiler Servicing**

The property team is responsible for ensuring that central heating boilers (gas and oil) and any gas appliances are serviced annually by a Gas Safe / OFTEC registered contractor.

For safety reasons, occupiers are expected to respond promptly to contact from their designated heating engineer to keep the annual servicing up to date. A lapse in the servicing can invalidate appliance warranties and lead to avoidable efficiency problems with the heating system.

It is possible for the circulating pump to seize if left off throughout the summer months. Please ensure therefore that the pump is switched on for five minutes at least once a month during this time.

If you have an oil-fired system, ensure that when the oil is running low the tank is filled and it is never allowed to run out - if it does the system will need re priming and you will be responsible for any charges incurred.

### **Carbon Monoxide Alarm**

Our heating contractors will make sure that a carbon monoxide alarm is at the property and will test these when they carry out their annual servicing of the heating system. They will also be checked during the quinquennial survey process. However, householders should also test carbon monoxide alarms on a regular basis.

## Electrical Installations

An electrical inspection of the property will be undertaken by an NICEIC qualified electrical contractor at the time of the quinquennial survey and any remedial works identified will be carried out under the instruction of the property team.

## Smoke Detectors

Smoke alarms, at least one on each floor, are installed in all clergy houses and diocesan managed properties. These are provided for your safety and should be checked on a monthly basis. Under no circumstances must they be disabled in any way. Standalone battery powered units, will be replaced with mains operated smoke detectors when security systems are upgraded at vacancy or quinquennial.

## Water Hygiene - Legionnaires Disease

Legionnaires disease is a pneumonia like illness caused by breathing in small droplets of water contaminated by the Legionella bacteria. The disease cannot be passed from one person to another. Legionella bacteria are found in the natural environment and may contaminate and grow in water systems, including domestic hot and cold-water systems. They survive low temperatures and thrive at temperatures between 20 - 45°C if the conditions are right. They do not appear to multiply below 20°C are killed by high temperatures at 60°C or above.

Most residential premises will be very low risk but the information below summarises the recommended precautions you can take within your home.

- How to prevent bacteria breeding in stagnant water
- If taps in the property are not used for one week or more, each tap should be run to flush them through.
- If your property is empty for long periods of time, i.e. over two weeks, then the hot and cold taps and shower should be flushed and cleaned, flushing for at least two minutes.
- Shower heads should be flushed out on a regular basis.
- Ensure any taps which are not normally used are flushed regularly i.e. outside toilets and taps.
- How to prevent bacteria breeding in limescale

Keep tap and shower heads free from limescale where possible; if not, flush or use the outlets regularly. Flushing is defined as running the tap or shower at maximum temperature for approximately three minutes. For cold water taps this cannot be done and so it is recommended that they are cleaned with lime scale remover and washed through with cold water.

The property team will carry out a Legionella test every five years as part of the quinquennial process.

## Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material which was regularly used in the construction industry from the 1950s to the mid-1980s. Although all uses of asbestos were banned in the UK from 1999, it is possible that asbestos containing materials are still present within your property. Typical locations for asbestos containing materials are:

- Cement water tanks and pipe lagging loose fill insulation.
- Textured decorative coatings e.g. Artex.
- Asbestos Insulating Board (AIB) ceiling tiles, window panels, and partition walls, AIB bath panels
- Toilet seat and cistern, AIB behind fuse box, AIB around boiler, vinyl floor tiles
- AIB panel behind fire
- Roof soffits, gutters, and asbestos cement down pipes. Soffits – AIB or asbestos cement, AIB exterior window panel, asbestos cement roofing sheets.
- Roofing felt

Undisturbed asbestos usually causes no problems. However, loose asbestos fibres can seriously damage your health. The most common diseases associated with asbestos exposure are lung cancer and mesothelioma.

Asbestos fibres can only affect your health if they become damaged, either accidentally or while they are being worked on during building work or DIY.

How can you reduce the risk?

- Discuss any works you propose to carry out on your property with the diocesan property team before starting.
- Don't repair or remove any material that you think may contain asbestos.
- Don't cut, break, saw, drill, sand or disturb anything you think may contain asbestos. If you don't know what a material is made from, assume that it contains asbestos.
- If you think you may have damaged or disturbed asbestos contact the property team.

## Net Zero Carbon Principles

The Diocese of Worcester must remain synchronized with wider societal aims to reduce carbon emissions, and is now undertaking to embed NZC principles in all aspects of diocesan activity. This is underpinned theologically by the Fifth Mark of Mission within the Anglican tradition.

Careful routine maintenance is a key driver for minimising emissions, and fabric improvements are made in line with this strategy. We also encourage you to participate in any government grant schemes to improve energy efficiency; these tend to require the occupant to apply directly. If you have ideas for efficiency that you would like to propose for your parsonage, please speak with the property team.

If your property has solar PV panels, you will personally benefit from running your main appliances during daylight hours. You are encouraged to proactively seek a green tariff and install a smart meter as part of living out your care for creation. We encourage you to consider managing your garden for nature. This can also make it easier to maintain. For instance, using low care shrubs, some wild areas cut only a few times a year, and reducing the area of lawn needing regular care.

PV Panels (solar electricity panels) will be considered for houses which are deemed to be suitable for this purpose. Solar electricity is a low carbon, renewable energy source and has many benefits including reduced electricity costs.



### Smart Energy Guarantee (SEG) and Feed-in Tariffs (FIT)

Where solar photovoltaic (PV) panels were installed under the former Feed-in Tariff (FiT) scheme, payments for electricity generated (and in some cases exported) are still received under that original arrangement. For newer installations, or where a FiT does not apply, exported electricity is covered by the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG), under which energy suppliers pay for electricity exported back to the grid.

In all cases, the arrangements for payments and any associated meters or registrations will be managed in line with diocesan policy, which is that the associated income should be received by the occupier of the property, rather than the WDBF as installer of the panels. PV systems are intended to support energy efficiency and reduce running costs for the household, while contributing to the Diocese's wider environmental commitments.

### Battery Storage

The current diocesan policy is not to provide battery storage alongside PV solar panel systems. This reflects the significant upfront cost and ongoing maintenance requirements, together with environmental concerns relating to the extraction of raw materials, energy-intensive manufacturing, and the recycling and disposal of batteries at the end of their operational life. Furthermore, the financial benefits are not considered sufficiently compelling across the housing portfolio, as savings from stored electricity may not be significantly greater than the income available through a Feed in Tariff or Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) tariff (see above).

Instead, we seek to prioritise cost-effective and sustainable measures that deliver consistent benefit across the housing stock. Occupiers are encouraged to make the best use of electricity generated during the day, helping to reduce energy costs while supporting responsible and practical stewardship of resources.

This policy will be reviewed periodically in light of developments in battery technology, whole-life costs, recycling capability, and changes to energy tariffs and market arrangements.

## EV Charging Points

The WDBF will meet the cost of EV Charging Points if required. This can be arranged by the occupier or via the property team. A qualified electrician will need to install the charger and will need to check that the electricity supply is adequate to support it. Please contact the property team for further information.



## Gas Fires

The property team no longer supply gas fires as part of our Net Zero Carbon policy. Where there is an existing gas fire in the property, these will be capped off by our heating engineers and will be replaced by an electric fire where necessary.

## Wood Burning Stoves and Open Fires

The WDBF will not provide or install wood burning stoves. Where there is an existing stove, this will be removed at vacancy, or at the request of the occupier. If the occupier chooses to retain the stove, then they are responsible for the ongoing maintenance, chimney sweeping and cleaning of the appliance. Similarly, where an open fire is present the occupier is responsible for regular chimney sweeping.

## External Areas

### Garden

Occupiers are responsible for all routine garden maintenance, and they are expected to keep their garden in good order. This includes the maintenance of hedges, pruning of fruit trees and similar work. Occupiers may decide to employ a local gardener in this regard.

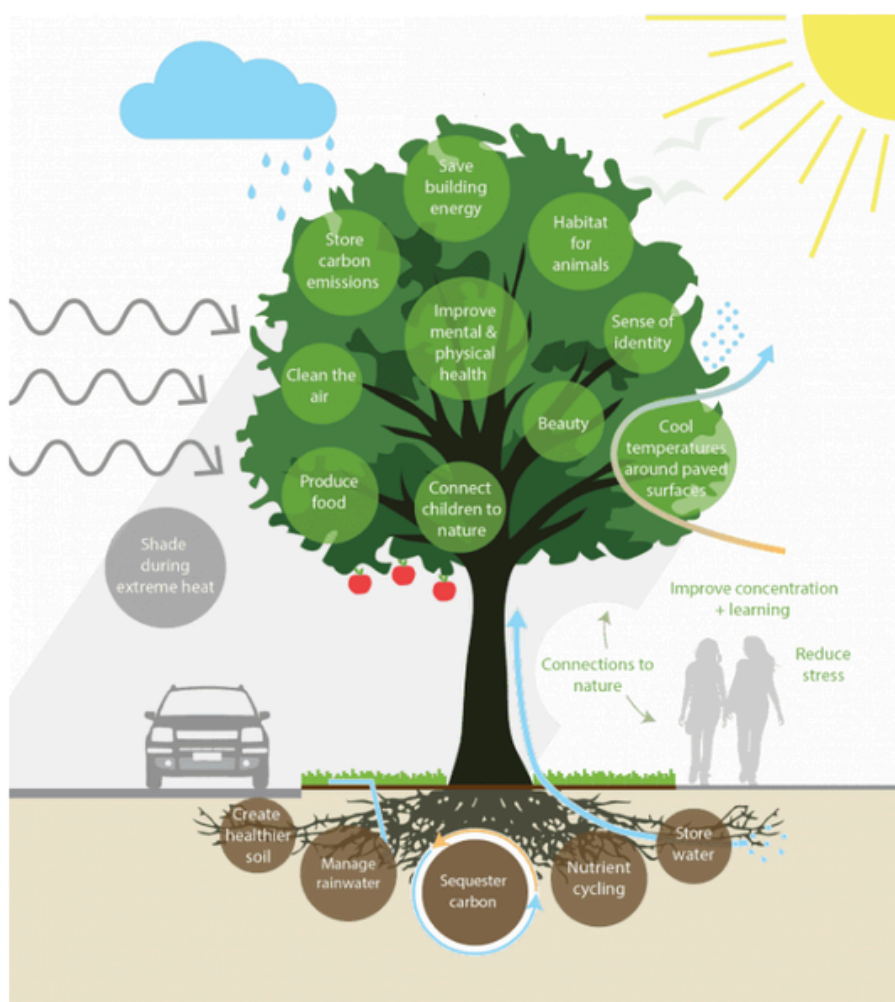
## Hedges

The property team will ensure that hedges are in a well maintained and manageable state when the occupier moves in.

A contribution towards the cost of maintenance of large boundary hedges may be available by way of a grant, but only where hedges are exceptionally large.

## Trees

We recognise the important contribution that trees make to the environment, biodiversity, climate resilience, landscape character and human wellbeing. Trees provide shade, improve air quality, support wildlife and contribute positively to the setting and enjoyment of diocesan homes. The diocesan team is therefore committed to the retention and appropriate management of trees wherever practicable.



A five-yearly arboriculture survey will be undertaken as part of the quinquennial inspection process, and a copy of the report will be shared with the occupier. The property team will arrange and fund any significant tree works recommended by the survey, while occupiers remain responsible for routine maintenance and minor works that would normally be undertaken by a gardener.

The diocesan team will not normally agree to the removal of a healthy tree unless it poses a risk to people or property, threatens the structure of a building, or has become unsuitable for its location due to its size or growth. Where a tree is removed for these reasons, we will normally seek to ensure that it is replaced with an appropriate drought-tolerant species suitable for the location, in support of its commitment to environmental stewardship, biodiversity and climate resilience.

Occupiers should contact the property team for advice before any such work is considered, so that appropriate arboricultural advice can be obtained.

Any trees planted by the occupier must be suitable for the size of the garden and should not be positioned where they may, when mature, affect buildings, walls, paths, drains or other structures. Vines and creepers should not be planted against buildings. Fast-growing evergreen trees and hedges should be avoided and require prior approval from the property team before planting.

Where trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or are located within a Conservation Area, the necessary consent must be obtained from the local authority before any work is undertaken. Copies of all notices and approvals should be provided to the property team. Occupiers are responsible for ensuring that all relevant statutory requirements are met.

### **Fencing**

Existing fences to those boundaries that are the responsibility of the parsonage house to maintain, will be maintained by the diocesan team.

New fencing provisions will be considered for safety and security of clergy families at the discretion of the property team, but not for consideration in relation to domestic animals.

### **Sheds & Greenhouses**

Greenhouses, garden sheds etc are not considered to be part of the building's fabric and as such will not be provided or maintained by the diocesan team.

### **External Paving**

Existing paving will be maintained by the diocesan team and additional paving will be considered at the team's discretion.

## Decking

Where there is decking at the property, this should be maintained on an annual basis and stained regularly. However, where there is no decking, we would actively discourage the installation of this due to the ongoing safety and high cost of maintenance. Please contact the property team with further queries about decking.

## Further Miscellaneous Information

### Ring Doorbells

The WDBF will fund the cost of a Ring doorbell providing you arrange for this to be purchased and fitted yourself. If you require a Ring doorbell, or have recently fitted one yourself, please let us know and we can reimburse you for this cost.

### Study Shelving

The property team will provide fixed shelving in the room designated as the study. Where there are existing shelving systems in the study, their suitability will be ascertained before a decision is made regarding their renewal.

### Kitchen Appliances

Kitchen appliances including cookers and white goods are not provided by the WDBF. In cases where a house has built in appliances there may be some discretion regarding repair work, but if an appliance fails it will not automatically be replaced by the property team.



## Curtains and Curtain Poles

Battens will be provided above each window but the supply and fitting of curtain poles, blinds and/or curtains are the responsibility of the occupier.

## Flooring

Flooring will be provided to kitchens, utility rooms, and bathrooms by the WDBF. Carpet replacements will be considered by the diocesan team at vacancy on the basis of condition only.

## Security

The Parsonages Board supports the 1998 report of the Advisory Board of Ministry and the Church Commissioners regarding clergy security.

Security of the house is only part of the answer. An awareness of “good practice” with regard to answering the door and remembering to lock all windows and doors when leaving the house - and setting the alarm if you have one - is just as important.

The property team will generally fund the cost of installing a suitable security system (including PIR detectors internally and external lighting). Any additional security measures may be considered following consultation with occupant, the property team, and the police.

Please remember that the contents of the house are the responsibility of the occupier. The diocesan building insurance policy does not cover contents.

## Security Systems

All security systems will be serviced annually, at which time any faulty components will be renewed.

The batteries in these systems are designed to provide a back-up electrical supply for up to eight hours in the event of a power cut. All systems are provided with a tamper system that activates the alarm if the power is cut. This will happen when the battery becomes flat. The sounder will make a noise for 20 minutes and the system will then be dormant. The alarm company should only be called if, when the mains electricity supply has been reinstated, the system will not reset. The engineer will then check and possibly renew the battery before resetting the system.

If you do not use your alarm, please do let us know so that we can discuss removing it. You should check your insurance policy as it might invalidate any future claim if you do not use the house alarm provided.

## CCTV

It is not the responsibility of the WDBF to install CCTV unless in exceptional circumstances. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Pest Control

Householders will be required to implement their own pest control measures by way of self-sourced treatments or employing a local contractor if required.

The Property team's advice in relation to wasps and bees' nest is to leave them alone as much as possible. They will leave at the end of the season when an empty nest can be removed safely and easily if desired. A beekeeper, as opposed to a pest control firm, may need to be consulted in certain situations if they are causing concern.

With rodent activity, householders should try to identify the source of the problem. Externally this may be low hanging bird feeders, compost areas etc.

## Retirement - Leaving Ministry

In addition to the information provided in Section F14 of the Bishops' Papers, the following must also be taken into consideration when retiring or leaving ministry.

The right of a member of the clergy to live in a house administered by the property team ends on the final day of the licence and the house must be vacated on that date. Exceptionally, when time and all other factors permit, a tenancy agreement may be set up with the property team, on the payment of a commercial rent, to enable a priest to stay in the house after the licence has ended. This also requires the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, which the Director of Property will seek.

## Loft Access

Lofts should not be used for the storage of any items. This can compromise the insulation of the property and any existing pipework and cabling. Please arrange to store any items that are not required at the house in an alternative storage facility.



## Council Tax and Water Rates

The payment of council tax and water rates is met by the WDBF. The property team has arranged for demands to be sent to the diocesan office for payment. If a demand is received directly, it should be forwarded to the property team.

The property team should be kept informed of moving in and moving out dates at properties and the number of adult occupants, to ensure that the correct council tax is charged.

## Glebe Land

People often ask about the glebe; what is it, who owns it and what happens to the income from it.

Until 1978 glebe land was owned by the incumbent of a benefice. They could use the land, or rent it out, to provide their income, or living. Differences in the amount of glebe owned by benefices resulted in some clergy enjoying a high income while others, with little or no glebe land, struggled with low incomes.

Over time additional land and investment stocks were purchased, and it increasingly became necessary to supplement the annual income of poorly endowed benefices, to ensure a reasonable income for all clergy.

In 1978, when the Endowment and Glebe Measure 1976 came into effect, the ownership of all glebe land passed to the Diocesan Boards of Finance (DBFs).

From that point all clergy were paid a uniform “stipend.” DBFs now manage the glebe property and any income from it is used towards payment of clergy stipends and pensions across the diocese.

Over the years much of the old glebe land has been sold. At the present time, the remaining agricultural glebe land owned by the Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance comprises approximately 2,500 acres.

## Appendix 1

### Nominated contractors – Emergency numbers.

Please note that the following information can change. For the latest details please see the latest Clergy Housing Bulletin or the diocesan website.

#### Emergency Numbers

|                                |                                                                                            |               |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Security Alarm</b>          | Salamander Fire & Security Limited                                                         | 0330 0889 153 |
| <b>Plumbing &amp; Drainage</b> | Drain Doctor (All Areas)                                                                   | 01527 501700  |
| <b>All Other Issues</b>        | The diocesan property team<br>(This will not be picked up until the following working day) | 01905 732806  |

There is currently no 24/7 heating engineer or electrician and so it is acknowledged that in an out of hours emergency another contractor may need to be called to make a fault safe. Such a company must be Gas Safe or NICEIC registered and preferably known to the occupier or members of their congregation. In the event of any other emergency, a storm for example, please familiarise yourself with local contractors that you can contact for help when the office is closed. Any other repair which is not an emergency should be reported to the property team when the office is open.

|                                         |                                       |               |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Heating Engineers<br>(South of Diocese) | Heating Maintenance<br>Services (HMS) | 01684 892877  |
| Heating Engineers (North<br>of Diocese) | TBM Heating (Andrew<br>Slater)        | 07977 452 355 |

## Appendix 2

### Committee structure

Authority delegated to the  
Finance & Resources  
Committee

**Parsonages Board**  
**The Worcester Diocesan Board of  
Finance**

Responsible for the  
governance of the work  
carried out by the property  
team.

**FINANCE & RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**  
**(Chair, Archdeacons, Diocesan  
Secretary, Director of Finance,  
Trustees)**

All the day to day  
work.

**PROPERTY TEAM**  
**(Director of Property, Maintenance  
Surveyor, Clergy Housing Officer,  
Team Administrators)**

Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd

(Registered charity 247778, company limited by guarantee 271752)



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WORCESTER