

Birmingham Diocesan Board
of Finance

Clergy Housing Handbook

September 2023

Document Issue Record

Version No	Description of Change	Author	Approved by	Date of issue
01	Final Draft	JT/DM		
01A	Draft Revised	JT/DM		
02A	Draft Revised	JT/DM/RH		
03A	Draft Revised	JT/DM/RH		
04A	Draft Revised	JT/DM/MH		
05A	Revised			
06	Revised	JT/DM/RH		
07	Final - reference to sequestrators	DM		28/08/2023

Contents

Document Issue Record	1
2 Preface	4
3 Executive Summary	6
3.1 Office Holders, including all Clergy Responsibilities.	6
3.2 Landlord Statutory Requirements for Clergy Housing.....	9
4 Preambles	12
5 Responsibilities & Costs	14
6 Who funds the repairs & improvements?	15
7 Quinquennial inspections	16
8 Repairs	17
9 Improvements	18
10 Incoming clergy	19
11 Outgoing clergy/vacant houses	21
12 Offices within a clergy house	25
13 Letting of rooms if the property is occupied by either a curate, associates, or a priest in charge.	26
14 Letting of the property	28
15 Insurance	29
16 Health & Safety	30
16.1 Smoke Alarms.....	30
16.2 Carbon Monoxide Detectors.....	30
16.3 Electrical Faults.....	30
16.4 Escape Routes	31
16.5 Asbestos.....	31
16.6 Radon	32
16.7 Lead Paint	32
16.8 Water Hygiene and Risk of Legionellosis	33
16.9 Covid-19, or other national pandemics	33
16.10 Gas Cookers, Gas Boiler, Gas Heaters and Gas Fires.....	33
17 Smoke-free law	35
18 Mains services	36
18.1 Electricity, Gas and Water Supplies.....	36
18.2 Heating Systems and Appliances	37
18.3 Drainage and Wastewater	38
18.4 Electrical Installation.....	38

19 Useful information relating to looking after the property and its grounds etc.	41
19.1 Air bricks and ventilation	41
19.2 Garden Maintenance (including trees)	41
19.3 Boundary Walls and Fences	42
19.4 Japanese Knotweed	42
19.5 Climbing shrubs and plants	42
19.6 Garden Sheds	42
19.7 Ponds and Water Features	42
19.8 Dustbins and Recycling Collections	43
19.9 Internal Decorations	43
19.10 Carpets	43
19.11 Roof Spaces	43
19.12 Pets, Domestic Animals and other Livestock	44
19.13 Unauthorized works	44
19.14 Alterations Carried Out by an Office Holder	44
19.15 Burglaries	45
19.16 Security	45
19.17 Pest Control	46
19.18 Beetle and Fungal Infestations	46
19.19 Cookers	47
19.20 Computer/Telephone/Television Cabling/Aerials/Dishes/Receivers/Apparatus	47
19.21 Energy Efficiency	47
19.22 Chimney Flues	49
19.23 Condensation	49
19.24 Post	50
19.25 Integral Appliances	50
20 Summary of responsibilities	51
21 Appendix A	53
22 Appendix B	54
23 Appendix C	60

2 Preface

Welcome to the Clergy Housing Handbook for the Church of England Birmingham.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with the majority of the information that you should need whilst either you, or your family/household are living in a Diocesan property.

Please take the time to read this booklet and keep a copy of it in a safe place.

The intention of this booklet is to provide you with advice and guidance and inform you of the back-up services which are available so that you and your family can enjoy living in your home and run the house efficiently. The booklet states the latest Diocesan policy, who is responsible for what, as well as giving hints on looking after your home, facilities, the garden and trees etc.

The house you do, or will occupy, is the parsonage house for the Benefice or is one that is owned by the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). In both cases we are responsible for its care and maintenance and for the formulation of policy matters relating to the house.

If you hold office on an 'old-style' freehold, your rights, and duties (and the rights and duties of the diocese) are set out in the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 which includes the following general statement:

“The incumbent shall have 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”.

If you hold office on common tenure, the respective rights and duties are set out in Regulations 12-14 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 and the license agreement in relation to the property which you sign prior to taking occupation of the property.

Please see the checklists that have been reproduced in the Executive Summary to assist you in meeting your responsibilities.

The Property Team may be contacted by telephone, email or in person, please see their contact details in Appendix A. They will deal with all the questions relating to the running of your home and garden. Office Hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

When you are moving into your house in the Diocese, please do not forget to apply for the connection of your telephone, electricity and/or gas services prior to your occupation. This office cannot make these account changes for you. The Diocese arranges building insurance cover, but you are responsible for any contents insurance.

Normally, your house will be prepared before occupation, and a “Ingoing Meeting” undertaken recording the condition of the various elements of the property generally ahead of you moving in. This includes photographs of each room and the garden. **When you vacate the house, the property needs to be returned in the same condition as the date of your occupation, subject only to fairwear and tear for the period of your occupation.**

There will be charges incurred if there is a substantial deterioration between occupation and vacation and for any work needed to return the house and garden to its original condition when you took occupation.

Please could you acknowledge receipt of this handbook, by emailing the Property Team at property@cofebirmingham.com within seven working days.

For clarification purposes, any occupier, benefice holder, or priest-in-charge is referred to as an office holder. The closest parallel with regard to Landlord and Tenant law is to consider that the office holder is a Tenant, with the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance, hereafter being referred to as DBF, being in the position of Landlord.

3 Executive Summary

This section highlights the areas of which as a 'minimum' the DBF and an office holder should hold responsibility. The following section should be used as a guideline and where necessary should be followed to ensure the safety and protection of the tenant and property.

3.1 Office Holders, including all Clergy Responsibilities.

For the purpose of this section, a benefice holder and all other clergy are referred to as an office holder. The checklist below provides a guide as to which obligations the office holder should carry out to ensure that the property remains a safe living environment. If any of the below areas are cause for concern, ensure contact with the Property Team/Property Director is made, to ensure such areas can be rectified. Any elements/items of concern should be reported within five working days to the Property Team/Property Director unless it is an emergency, when the concern should be reported on the same day. We have defined an 'emergency' as when a material defect, an asset, or piece of equipment suffers an unexpected breakdown, or change in condition that results in an immediate threat to health and safety to occupants, or the public (e.g. electrical fault, gas leak, overflowing drains), or will cause significant damage to the property if it is not resolved (e.g. burst or leaking pipes), or leaves the property no longer secure (e.g. broken windows or broken door locks)

Provisions for fire safety such as fire alarms and carbon monoxide detection fall under Common Law duty. The office holder must ensure a written paper or electronic logbook is kept up to date with an assessment of the fire detection / prevention devices, which should be carried out **Monthly**.

Each office holder will be provided with either a paper or electronic logbook with any associated guidance. The Office holder should also be issued with a copy of the Legionella Risk Assessment completed by the Landlord, which will identify the recommended functional checks and tests. In the absence of a Legionella Risk Assessment the advice in the table below should be followed.

Type of System	Action Required	Frequency	Inspection By	Type of Inspection	Relevant Legislation and/or Guidance
Fire detection & Carbon Monoxide alarm systems	Functional check Inspection Inspect and Test	Monthly	Office holder	Operational	The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 BS 5839--1:2017 Fire detection & alarm systems Code of practice Loss prevention Standard 1014 requirements for Fire detection & alarm systems installers. FIA, LPC, or similar BS EN 50291: detection of carbon monoxide in domestic premises.
Fixed electrical intake position and consumer unit.	Visual Checks for signs of burning overheating or damage	3 - 6 monthly	Office holder	Operational	Inspection is recommended. Inspection frequency varies according to the type of equipment and the environment used in. BS7671:2008+A3:2015 IET Wiring Regulations
Portable Electrical Appliances (PAT) A portable appliance in a low-risk area is an electrical appliance that can be plugged in or moved whilst connected to an electrical supply and includes some fixed appliances.	Pre-use check of equipment condition such as checks of burns/damage Ensure required testing is carried out periodically	12 months	Office holder Competent Person	Operational	The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW) The Management of the Health & Safety at Work Act Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) The Provision & use of work Equipment Regulations 1999 (PUWER) The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EAWR) HSE HSG107 Maintaining portable and transportable electrical equipment HSE INDG236 Maintaining portable equipment in offices
Asbestos	Report any damage or disturbance.	Contact the Property Team immediately.	Office holder	Visual check for signs of damage or	Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Riverside Environmental to undertake Risk Assessments as necessary.

Type of System	Action Required	Frequency	Inspection By	Type of Inspection	Relevant Legislation and/or Guidance
				exposure	
Water Hygiene Risk Assessment -- Management Control of legionellosis	Assessment of Coldwater storage & Tap Temperatures/ Laboratory samples Descale tap / shower heads Flushing of system outlets	Assessment subject to risk Shower heads cleaned twice annually Water outlets flushed weekly	Office holder	Operational / Visual	Prevention & Control of Legionellosis and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).

The Finance Investment and Property Sub-Committee consider it important that your clergy house provides a 'happy home' as well as a base for mission and if you have any queries, concerns or require clarification please do not hesitate to contact the Property Team.

3.2 Landlord Statutory Requirements for Clergy Housing

The checklist below, provides a guide of which obligations the DBF as Landlord must carry to ensure the conservation of the property and to maintain a safe living environment. If any of the below areas are cause for concern, ensure contact with the Property Director and/or Property Team is made, to ensure such areas can be rectified. As part of our proposed integration of Fixflo into our reporting and monitoring systems, office holders/occupier will be issued with copies of all statutory documents as necessary.

Type of System	Action Required	Frequency	Inspection By	Type of Inspection	Relevant Legislation and/or Guidance
Gas Safety Inspections	Annual Safety Check of all gas appliances	Annually, with a certificate held on site	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Annual	Gas Safety (Installations and use) Regulations 1998 as amended (2018)
Environmental	Production of an EPC	Upon Occupancy and Change of Office holder	Landlord to provide an "Energy Performance Certificate"	Operational	Energy Performance of Buildings (England & Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
Fixed Wiring Testing & Inspection	Thorough Inspection and test	5 Yearly	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Periodic	BS7671:2008+A3:2015 IET Wiring Regulations
Fire Extinguishers	Inspection Discharge (not CO ₂)	12 monthly 5 Yearly	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Annual/Periodic	BS EN 3:2006 Portable fire extinguishers BAFE, LPC or similar
Legionella Risk Assessment	Produce a Risk Assessment. Update when system changes implemented	Kept up to date and managed. Copy KEPT	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Operational	HSE ACoP L8 Prevention & Control of Legionellosis BS 8580 risk assessment for the control of

Type of System	Action Required	Frequency	Inspection By	Type of Inspection	Relevant Legislation and/or Guidance
		ON SITE			Legionella in water systems
Asbestos Register	Produce a Risk Assessment. Update when asbestos removal implemented	Kept up to date and managed. Copy KEPT ON SITE	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Operational	Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
Fire Risk Assessment	Produce a Fire Risk Assessment. Update when system changes implemented	Kept up to date and managed. Copy KEPT ON SITE	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Operational	The Housing Act 2004: part 1 – housing health and safety rating system The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
Health & Safety Rating	Carry out a Health & Safety Rating in accordance with Dept for Communities & Local Government guidance HHSRS	Kept up to date and managed. Copy KEPT ON SITE	Landlord to engage a Competent Person	Operational	The Housing Act 2004: part 1 – housing health and safety rating system

Upon the arrival of a new office holder to the property in question, the landlord is presented with statutory requirements which initially should be made clear to the office holders, together with their responsibility regarding key property maintenance.

Periodically, an office holder should be provided with statutory documents which will certify the condition and main features of a property which could be classed as 'High risk'. More specifically these areas of concern can be listed in terms of Gas, Electric and Fire safety.

Legally, landlords must cater for the inspection of the gas supply, such as the pipework and any flues with appliance connections. This should be carried out by a Gas safe registered engineer every **12 Months**, (Refer to *The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulation 2018*). Upon testing an office holder should be provided with certification within the period of 28 days from the testing.

By law the condition of the electrics within the property should be in a safe condition once an office holder enters the property and regular maintenance should be carried out by a qualified electrician **every 5 year** with relevant certification shared with an office holder. Regular visual checks are also required between this period, however as mentioned in Section 1.1 an office holder and landlord share this obligation.

A full Legionella risk assessment should be carried out periodically by the landlord, with an office holder notified of any specific functional checks and tests to be carried out.

A full HHSRS risk assessment, including fire risk assessments, should be carried out with a copy left with an office holder. This may include inspection of the furniture / furnishings ensuring they comply with *The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 2010*. Any significant Health & Safety concerns will be picked up during Quinquennial Inspections and subsequently addressed by the Property Team.

4 Preambles

BIRMINGHAM DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE (BDBF)

FINANCE INVESTMENT & PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE (FIPS)

Finance, Investment and Properties (**FIPS**) is a sub-committee of Bishop's Council (acting as directors of the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance) charged with responsibilities for financial and property issues.

For those in paid ministry whose accommodation is a diocesan responsibility, the Committee provides and maintains houses. A clergy house is an asset. It is the duty of the DBF to maintain the structure and fabric of the property and the services to it, in good order. An office holder has the duty and responsibility to take proper care of the clergy house, being a duty equivalent to that of an office holder, to use and keep the premises in a tenant-like manner, notifying the Property Team of any repairs appearing to them to be necessary, or other issues that affect the accommodation.

The clergy house often represents the heart of the parish, serving not only as a home but also as a base for the incumbent's ministry. Meeting our respective responsibilities, we can provide the all-important 'happy home' to support the work of the incumbent and the church's ministry.

.....

The Archdeacon of Birmingham
The Venerable Jenny Tomlinson

**Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance
(DBF) Chairman**

Mr. Steven Skakel
c/o Church of England
The Citadel
190 Corporation Street
Birmingham
B4 6QD
Tel: 0121 426 0400

DBF Secretary

Dr Jan Smart
c/o Church of England
The Citadel
190 Corporation Street
Birmingham
B4 6QD
Tel: 0121 426 0434
jans@cofebirmingham.com

DBF Property Director

Mr. Daniel Mayes
c/o Church of England
The Citadel
190 Corporation Street
Birmingham
B4 6QD
Tel: 0121 426 0408
DanielM@cofebirmingham.com

5 Responsibilities & Costs

In maintaining "official" clergy houses, the FIPS fulfils obligations of the Bishops Council, acting in its capacity as the Diocesan Parsonages Board, under the *Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, the Church Property Measure 2018* and Diocesan Schemes approved by the Church Commissioners in 1972, 1974, 1993, 2000 and 2005.

The FIPS is responsible for:

- maintaining the building's fabric (including services and fixtures*),
- its external decoration,
- buildings insurance
- Council Tax
- Arranging an annual gas safety inspection
- Arranging legionella inspections
- Arranging an electrical safety inspection, and
- Arranging asbestos sampling and removal/encapsulation.

Office holders/Incumbent/PCCs are responsible for:

- replacement of worn or broken fittings*,
- garden maintenance,
- the cost of internal decoration,
- contents insurance,
- annual maintenance of intruder alarm systems and CCTV,
- electricity, gas, and water consumed, and telephone/communication costs including standing charges,
- computer/telephone/television cabling/aerials/dishes/receivers/apparatus and costs for all unauthorized work.
- Routine checking of taps and showers to ensure that they are flushed through on a weekly basis.
- the annual sweeping of live flues and log burner maintenance. (FIPS will pay for the initial clean/sweeping of a flue for a new incumbent)

Examples of what are classed as fixtures and fittings are listed in Section 11.

The FIPS members and Property Team wish to serve the clergy within the professional guidelines and budgets agreed for housing. Please make any initial enquiry via the Property Team.

6 Who funds the repairs & improvements?

The Clergy Housing Fund is designed to meet repair costs for which the FIPS is responsible. This fund is made up from Quinquennial Inspection assessments on parsonage houses and paid by PCCs as part of their Common Fund contribution and from Church Commissioner's grants. This complies with the Church Property Measure 2018 and requires the production of a clear five-year plan with the Clergy Housing portfolio being inspected once during a five-year period. It also allows FIPS members to objectively understand the standard of housing across the portfolio and to provide useful data that can be used when decisions need to be made with regard to the improvement of individual properties.

A limited portion of the clergy housing budget is allocated to improvements and used in conjunction with, where possible, grants from charitable sources and by contributions from PCCs.

7 Quinquennial inspections

Clergy houses are inspected at intervals not exceeding 5 years. The inspection is made by either the appointed Property Director, Planned Maintenance Surveyor, or an external property consultant.

Following the inspection, either the Property Director, Planned Maintenance Surveyor, or external property consultant will produce a report giving answers to certain questions required by the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure, including:

- stating what repairs are required,
- recommending any improvements,
- stating whether the house should be replaced,
- commenting on the state of the interior decorations and fixtures and
- advising on the amount for which the building should be insured.

The report is sent to the incumbent, usually within 3 weeks of the inspection. The incumbent has a right to make representations and the date by which these must be made to the FIPS Secretary/Property Director /Property Team shall be **within one calendar month** from the date on which the notice/report is sent.

The report and any representations are taken to the next available FIPS meeting, and the Committee shall confirm the report without variation or with such variation as the Committee may, at its discretion, decide.

Any recommended improvements within the report will be added to the list of outstanding improvements. These are addressed as funds permit, generally in the order of those first that have been on the list longest, but the FIPS does have a responsibility to prioritize works that will contribute towards achieving its Net Zero Carbon target by 2030 as well as other improvements that can be more logically addressed during an interregnum. Therefore, it is possible that some jobs will be undertaken ahead of others that have been on the list for a longer period of time. Any items that are classed as Health & Safety issues will be dealt with as a priority as and when they arise.

The FIPS will instruct the Property Director/Property Team to obtain competitive tenders for the repairs and external redecoration and, provided that total tender costs are within the budget allocation, place orders so that work commences within the allocated financial year.

Orders will be placed by the Property Director/Property Team and where the works will take over seven working days a contract pre-commencement meeting will be arranged to which the incumbent will be invited. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce the 'parties to the contract', deal with any queries or concerns and agree mutually convenient contract commencement dates/ provisional completion dates.

The Property Team will administer the contract, dealing with all queries and Contract Instructions, including, following the satisfactory completion of the work, settlement of the contractor's Final Account.

8 Repairs

Since 2017, a budget is prepared following an analysis of the five-year plan, with this being prepared following the completion of the quinquennial inspections and any particular property may have works identified as being required to be undertaken in either multiple years, or in some cases, in just a single year, including external redecoration. These quinquennial inspections are undertaken once every five years and are used as a basis for preparing a five-year plan including either compliance or improvement works.

In interim years there may be insufficient monies to do any work other than those of an emergency, Compliance, or Health and Safety nature.

With limited resources it is important that the Property Director /Property Team controls commitment and expenditure of the Housing Budget. Requests for required work*, which FIPS are responsible for, must be reported using the Fixflo application to the Property Team at the Diocesan Office in Corporation Street and the designated surveyor will decide if work is necessary and, if so, organize the same, that will include placing an order with a contractor and settling the account upon satisfactory completion of the work. Further information regarding the Fixflo application as containing Appendix C at the end of this document.

Out of office hours, an office holder is only allowed to arrange work of an emergency or Health and Safety nature, informing the Property Team of this on the next working day. This work must still be reported via Fixflo, even if you contact a contractor direct. A Preferred List of Contractors offering an 'out of hours' service is enclosed and is also posted on the Diocesan website - [www.cofebirmingham.com](http://www.cofebirmingham.com/documents/housing) /documents/housing - this is featured at the end of this document. Further copies are available upon request from the Property Team. Only contractors on the list should be used.

The cost of unauthorized work arranged by an office holder/PCC will not be met or reimbursed by the FIPS unless exceptional circumstances prevailed which can be justified.

*In regard to repairs, it is reiterated that the DBF is responsible for maintaining the buildings structure and fabric, including services (electric/gas/water - but not for the consumption of these services), fixtures (items that are permanently attached to the building) and its external decoration. Office holders/PCCs are responsible for repair/replacement of fittings (items that are detachable) and internal decorations. If the structure/fabric/services or fixtures are damaged by an office holder, they will be required to meet the cost of repair/replacement.

If any repairs or inspections are required, your contact details will be forwarded to the relevant contractor and/or property professional. They will arrange a mutually convenient time for their visit with you direct. Although we expect all contractors and property professionals to keep your contact details confidential, if you do not want your contact details given out to a contractor or property professional, please inform the Property Team. For access, which is not considered as an emergency, reasonable notice of at least 24 hours will be given.

9 Improvements

Any improvements recommended by the Surveyor in the Quinquennial Inspection Report and approved by the FIPS, go on a list of outstanding improvements which are addressed as available funds permit and, generally, in the order of those on the list longest first.

The current policy of the FIPS is to prioritize improvements that help to achieve a Net Zero target by 2030 and in order to meet this target additional repairs or improvements may have to be undertaken.

Assisting funding for improvements is sought from charitable sources. PCCs are invited to make a contribution also.

10 Incoming clergy

Following the notification of the appointment of an office holder, an Ingoing Meeting is arranged at the clergy house involving the prospective office holder, the Archdeacon, or their representative and the Property Director/or another member of the Property Team. Churchwardens are invited to also attend. This meeting will be chaired and minuted by a member of the Property Team. This meeting provides an opportunity to inspect the house, assess its condition and deal with any queries or other matters. Observations and suggestions relating to the house will be welcomed from the new office holder but, whilst the interregnum is a logical time to carry out certain works, the extent of these works will always be controlled by the results of the five-year plan, including addressing any improvements that are deemed to be necessary.

By the end of the meeting the extent of any work will generally be agreed, including work cost contributions. Internal decorations are the responsibility of the office holder, though often with the help of the PCC, and are generally organized 'locally' although sometimes the Property Team is asked to arrange work or suggest appropriate contractors.

Once the scheme of FIPS related works has been agreed, the Property Team will advise whether the package of works needs to form part of a competitive tender exercise, or whether the cost of the works can be negotiated with a single contractor. Once this decision has been made, the Property Team will issue the prospective office holder, the Archdeacon, or their representative and the Churchwardens with an outline programme for the works, detailing the design period, proposed tender period and the likely programme dates for the works, although all parties must accept that these dates are subject to change until a contractor has been appointed. There may also be occasional delays in materials being obtained and delivered to site, unexpected periods of bad weather, or if something unexpected is found as and when repairs/replacement works are being undertaken; these factors can all lead to it being necessary to adjust the programme of works accordingly.

Once a contractor has been appointed by the Property Team the Health and Safety and responsibility for the property will return to the Property Team and their appointed contractor, rather than the Churchwardens, as the property will then be classed as a 'construction site'. The Churchwardens will be informed one week before works are due to commence on site. From then on, weekly update meetings will be held, either on site, or via Teams/Zoom between the Property Team and the Churchwardens.

Subject to the scope and type of works required, approximately one week before Practical Completion is due to take place the date for a snagging meeting will be agreed and this information circulated to the incoming office holder, the Archdeacon, or their representative and Churchwardens to give them the opportunity to attend, although only the Property Team can give instructions to the contractor on site. Once all snagging items have been attended to and Practical Completion has been reached, the property will be handed back to the Churchwardens, and they will subsequently be responsible for its security and any Health and Safety issues. At this point, the Churchwardens will be responsible for arranging all PCC related works.

As part of any PCC arranged works, if the ingoing office holder has agreed to pay for any additional improvement works, these works will take place at this time, but all additional

improvement works should use standard materials that can be obtained through local suppliers and ideally use local contractors.

Unless major ingoing work is envisaged, completion dates will normally 'dovetail' with licensing dates. If major work is involved, the option of postponing the licensing, occupying another house as a temporary measure, or taking occupation of the clergy house with work unfinished, will be fully discussed and a way forward agreed.

Prior to the new office holder occupying the property, a separate inventory and photographic record of the condition of the property will be prepared and agreed with the office holder.

The new office holder must arrange to take over responsibility for the electricity, gas, water and telephone charges on the day of moving in.

Computer/telephone/television cabling, including line rental, additional lines and apparatus, is the responsibility of the office holder/PCC, as is an aerial/dish provision.

11 Outgoing clergy/vacant houses

Following notification that an office holder is to leave a parish, an Outgoing Meeting is arranged at the clergy house involving the office holder, the Archdeacon, or their representative and the Clergy Housing Surveyor. Churchwardens (the sequestrators in a vacancy) are invited to also attend. This is seen as an opportunity to inspect the house to assess its condition and likely required works before the arrival of the next office holder, as well as obtaining the views of the outgoing office holder on the suitability/deficiencies of the house. It is the responsibility of an office holder to ensure that before the keys are handed over that the property is left in a clean and tidy state, that all personal belongings, furniture and white goods, rubbish and debris have been removed not only from the main property, but also from any roof spaces, void areas, garage(s) and outbuildings. If any costs arise from the Property Team having to arrange for works to be undertaken in order to put the property in order, to remove any rubbish or personal items an/office holder will be invoiced for any repair, removal and/or disposal costs.

As part of this inspection, the Property Team will arrange for a photographic record of the house and the gardens so that there is a visual record of the condition of the internal decorations, whether the property has been left in a clean state, or whether additional cleaning and redecoration works are required. This photographic survey will also include the gardens and any outbuildings in order to ensure that they have been properly maintained and are free from rubbish etc.

Where pictures, or other wall or ceiling fixtures and fittings are removed, a discussion can take place during the Outgoing Meeting as to whether it is likely that somebody would want to reuse these hanging fittings/fixings. If it is unlikely that these fittings or fixings would be reused an office holder may be requested to remove all redundant fixings and/or rawl plugs, make good and fill the holes, bringing level with adjacent surfaces, and then touch in decorations to match adjacent surfaces. If there are larger areas of wall or ceiling that have been damaged, an office holder may be requested to arrange for the plaster/surface finish to be repaired and the whole of that part of the element redecorated. Any remedial works not undertaken will be recharged by the DBF.

If the property has been let to a private/commercial tenant, if the private tenant does not undertake remedial works these remedial works will be undertaken by the DBF and recharged to the tenant.

On a benefice becoming vacant the churchwardens and the rural dean automatically become the sequestrators of the benefice pursuant to s.1 of The Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992. Therefore Churchwardens (sequestrators), as officers of the Bishop, are responsible for the clergy house during an interregnum and are responsible for day to day requirements for security, maintenance and general management. The churchwardens must undertake twice weekly inspections in accordance with insurers requirements made from time to time. The churchwardens are to keep a log of the twice weekly inspection whilst the clergy house is empty, either in paper, or electronic format. A brief summary of any issues noted during the inspection should be reported back to the Property Team as soon as possible after the inspection has taken place. Other responsibilities of the sequestrators are as follows (more details are provided in procedures below):

- cutting of grass and maintenance of the garden/hedges/ driveways;
- to provide access for all contractors and agents;
- to inform the Property Team of the need for any repair work;
- to set and monitor the heating system;
- to pay for all utilities (Council Tax and insurance will be organized by the DBF Finance team).

When an office holder leaves the property, the following procedures are followed: -

- 1) Gas and electricity meters should be read for the appropriate Authority and bills for supplies, up to the departure date, forwarded to the new address for settlement. Supplies should then be transferred to the name of the churchwarden/treasurer of the PCC. The DBF will only pay utility bills relating to an unoccupied property if approval has already been obtained for the property to either be developed, sold or demolished.
- 2) The telephone company should also be informed, and arrangements made for the payment of outstanding charges. The telephone must not be disconnected, and the number must be kept unchanged, where possible. The telephone account should be changed so that it is in the name of the PCC Treasurer, or a named bill payer. Please speak to your provider to ascertain how this can be achieved. Whilst the property is vacant, all calls to the telephone number should be diverted to either the Parish Office, or a Churchwarden. A telephone number can only be frozen on the permission of the Archdeacon until a new incumbent has been appointed.
- 3) We have been advised that it is better to leave the water supply turned on during cold weather if the heating installation is left switched on and left on its frost protection setting, rather than draining down the whole system owing to boilers suffering more major faults and catastrophic failures when they are left dormant for long periods.
- 4) If the property has been provided with a Smart Meter, it is the responsibility of the office holder to ensure that this is left behind at the property when they leave, otherwise they will be invoiced for a replacement meter.
- 5) When an office holder vacates the property, one full set of keys is to be returned to the Property Director/The Clergy Housing Surveyor. Any remaining sets of keys are to be handed over to the Churchwarden(s). Any key safes fitted are for the sole use of the Property Team and their contractors. Private/commercial tenants are to return all keys to the letting agents.
- 6) Whilst empty it is important to maintain the house so that it appears 'lived in'. Our insurers require that all locks, bolts and protective security devices are put in operation and the house inspected, both externally and internally, at a minimum twice weekly. It is sometimes wise to inform the local police of the situation. Any damage noted or repairs required should be immediately reported to the Property Team who will arrange the necessary works.
- 7) During an interregnum garden maintenance becomes the responsibility of the churchwardens/PCC.

Subject to available finance, works considered necessary will be organized by the Property Team, with the potential for letting the house upon their completion.

With regard to fixtures and fittings, generally, fixtures are items in a property that are physically attached to the property, using mechanical or chemical means; fittings are items that are not physically attached to the property unless by a system whereby they can be removed without causing damage, for example by using a screw fixing.

Taking the bathroom as an example:

Bathroom fixtures include:

- Light/lamp shades
- Radiators
- Heated Towel Rails
- Basins
- Showers
- Baths
- Toilets and cisterns
- Toilet Seats
- Plug Sockets

Bathroom fittings include:

- Shower curtains
- Toilet roll holders
- Bathroom furniture
- Soap dispensers
- Shelves

An office holder will be responsible for replacing the following items, if they have been **damaged**, when they leave the property:

Toilet Seats

Radiators

Heated Towel Rails

Light Fittings

Door ironmongery,

Other non-standard fixtures and fittings.

Lawnmowers and other garden maintenance tools should be removed from the property at the end of the tenancy.

Any PCC archives, furniture, or other stored PCC related chattels etc. should be removed from a property prior to a vacancy occurring.

With regard to some empty properties, if the Archdeacon advises the Bishop that there is not

sufficient time for a 6-month let the preferred solution for the DBF is to use a guardian service. The DBF are now using the services of Ad Hoc who offer a professional vacant property and site protection service, including the introduction of live-in Guardians and CCTV remote alarm installations in some of their vacant properties.

If a property is occupied by a Guardian the minimal rental period is three calendar months, with the property being returned within 31 days' of terminating an individual contract. During the time that a property is let to a Guardian from the sequestrators, no twice weekly inspections are required to be undertaken by Churchwardens (sequestrators) and the payment of all utility bills and Council Tax will be the responsibility of Ad Hoc once a Guardian is in occupation. This will therefore reduce the liability of a sequestrator (and sequestrator account) for paying these outgoings once a Guardian is in residence, but the sequestrators will still be liable for these bills during an interregnum if the property is empty and either a Guardian is not in occupation, or works are being undertaken on the property by the Property Team. The DBF will also be responsible for ensuring that the property is maintained during the period of Guardian occupation by Ad Hoc. Ad Hoc are members of the Property Guardian Providers Association. Prior to Ad Hoc occupying a vacant property, the Property Team will consult the relevant Archdeacon (representing the Bishop), to ensure that this arrangement is suitable and agreeable with all parties. The Property Team will then liaise with the churchwarden so that they are aware of the ingoing and outgoing dates.

12 Offices within a clergy house

A clergy house should be welcoming to visitors and yet allow a family necessary privacy and thus public and private areas should be separated.

A clergy house should include a separate study to meet an office holder's need for a place of work and quieter activities, both pastoral and administrative, and to hold private interviews and small meetings without disturbance.

Whilst a study can accommodate computers, filing cabinets and storage for items not more suitably placed in a parish office or church vestry, it is **not** intended to accommodate parochial plant, nor should the clergy house be the administrative centre for all parish affairs.

The official status of a clergy house, as a private dwelling, is domestic. However, if the property accommodates a parish office, as opposed to a private study, then it becomes characterized as non-domestic and would then not only change the tax status of the premises but also impose requirements under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, potentially including need for risk assessments, setting up of emergency procedures, first aid requirements, employers liability insurance and compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations, Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations and the Smoke-free Law. **Such assignment would not only require the "duty holder" i.e., an office holder, to arrange surveys/assessments, but would also involve identification and compliance strategy and ongoing management of same.** From 1st July 2007, virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England became smoke-free under new laws.

A clergy house, as a private dwelling, **does not** have to be smoke-free, except any part that is used solely as a place of work by more than one person, who does not live at the dwelling. If parts of the dwelling are used both for work purposes and private residential purposes, e.g., a living room which doubles as a meeting room, the smoke-free law will still not apply.

For these reasons the DBF **discourages** "office" provision and "business use" within a clergy house and **such will not be allowed unless express permission has been given in writing by the DBF Secretary, or Property Director.** which would only follow the "duty holder" taking on full responsibility for complying with the law and the ongoing cost of managing same.

13 Letting of rooms if the property is occupied by either a curate, associates, or a priest in charge.

Letting has significant legal requirements which must be observed. **Therefore, no curate/associates/priests-in-charge should let any room, or part of a clergy house without first consulting the Property Director, who will then consult with the Archdeacon and Diocesan Secretary, if necessary, to gain written approval.**

Under changes to the Housing Act 2004, a house which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet, is classed as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). A household is defined as couples married or living together or relatives living together. A couple sharing with a third person would be considered two households. Three friends sharing would be considered three households.

A HMO must be licensed if it has 3 or more storeys (these include habitable basements and attics) and 5 or more tenants in 2 or more households.

As a HMO imposes responsibilities in protecting the additional households, including fire precautions (such as fire-fighting equipment, inter-linked heat detectors as well as smoke detectors, emergency lighting, fire doors), electrical safety of appliances (provided by 'the Landlord') and furniture and furnishings fire safety (provided by 'the Landlord'), **the DBF strongly discourage three or more tenants who form two or more households residing in a clergy house and such will not be allowed unless express permission has been given in writing by the Diocesan Secretary**, which would only follow the 'duty holder', i.e. an officeholder, taking on full responsibility for complying with the legislation, meeting all costs and the ongoing management of same.

If approval is given, this will likely only be for a Resident Landlord Let, i.e., allowing lodgers. If someone lives in your house and shares facilities, such as bathroom or kitchen, they have no right to stay on when you require them to go and are only entitled to receive the amount of notice that was agreed when they moved into the property.

A simple Lodging Agreement would need to be constructed and signed by yourself and the lodger(s). The lodger would be required to make good any damage caused at their own cost to the satisfaction of the Property Director. If they fail to do so, the incumbent in charge would be responsible.

If you do have a lodger, you need to inform the Accounts Teams straight away, as this may affect the Council Tax status for the property. It is also your responsibility to keep the Property Team updated with the name(s) and contact details for any lodger staying with you on a formal basis, then if there is an emergency with regard to the building fabric, grounds or services they can be contacted should you be temporarily away from the property.

In a Resident Landlord Let the office holder is regarded as the landlord under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. **As such, they, and not the DBF, are then responsible for the safety of any gas appliance in the sub-let accommodation. Such accommodation should have an**

annual safety check carried out by a Gas Safety Registered Gas Installer, a record kept of each safety check for a minimum of two years and a copy of the safety check issued to the lodger.

With specific reference to a property occupied by a Curate/Associate/Priest-in-Charge, any income from a Resident Landlord Let should be declared to the Diocesan Secretary and Property Director.

14 Letting of the property

On a benefice becoming vacant the churchwardens and the rural dean automatically become the sequestrators of the benefice pursuant to s.1 of The Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992. In addition to the payment of the cost of serving the cure, the sequestrators are required to make provision for the proper care, custody, security and upkeep of the parsonage house and land albeit the Property Team on behalf of the Parsonage Board (DBF) continue to manage and organize planned preventative maintenance of the buildings fabric, including services and fixtures.

The bishop of a diocese may, with the consent of the DBF, authorise the sequestrators of a benefice in the diocese, to grant a lease of parsonage land belonging to the benefice for such period as the bishop authorises. The Bishop of Birmingham recognises that this is unfamiliar territory for most sequestrators so the Bishop has appointed the Diocesan Clergy Housing Surveyor, to be one of the “sequestrators” to support you through the process. The DBF will administer the contract, including overseeing the letting agents and collect the rent on behalf of the sequestrators.

Currently the DBF use Vision property to assist with the letting process and Ad HOC Property to help place guardians in properties that are not going to be let for 6 months or more.

A tenant would meet the Council Tax charge and the cost of consumed gas, electricity and water and absolve the sequestrators from responsibility for garden maintenance and twice-weekly inspections. The other benefits to sequestrators are as follows:

- deters vandalism.
- keeps the house properly maintained.
- removes the risk of invalidating insurance.
- generates rental income for the sequestration account.
- avoids adverse comments on leaving houses empty.

A letting agreement is deemed to be between the sequestrators and the tenant and so, unless some other arrangement is put in place, it would require all parties to sign the tenancy agreement. In the largest multi-parish benefice in the diocese this would require the signature of multiple churchwardens plus the rural dean and the Diocesan Clergy Housing Surveyor which would be an administrative nightmare. It is in everyone’s interest to ensure any letting is managed swiftly and efficiently. In order to avoid an administrative logjam in getting a letting agreement signed, the Diocesan Clergy Housing Surveyor (sequestrator) will sign the letting agreement on behalf of all the sequestrators. Such an arrangement will save considerable time and would enable lettings to be managed effectively.

Once a tenancy comes to an end the responsibility for paying for gas, electricity, water and telephone services reverts back to the parish sequestrators.

15 Insurance

All clergy houses are insured for their replacement value on a block policy, currently held with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.

Office holders are responsible for their own contents insurance and for tenant's liability and are strongly advised to ensure that their cover is adequate. The FIPS are not responsible for repair or replacement costs as a result of any " loss" owing to policy cover not being arranged by an office holder. If additional security precautions are required by the insurer owing to the nature or value of contents, an office holder will be expected to fund these precautions.

Any claims relating to the Buildings Insurance Policy should be notified immediately by telephone and letter to the Property Team. Malicious damage and break-ins must be reported to the police and a Crime Identification Number obtained. The Property Team will arrange for any necessary temporary boarding up, repairs, etc., settlement of work cost and submission of claim to the insurer seeking reimbursement.

16 Health & Safety

16.1 Smoke Alarms

The FIPS's current policy is that as part of any major electrical installation upgrading work, mains circuit connected smoke alarms are provided.

In clergy houses with older electrical installations, the FIPS policy is to meet the cost of providing battery-operated alarms on the basis of one per floor. The maintenance of these is the responsibility of an office holder of the house. The recommendation is that the alarms be tested once a week, or monthly (as appropriate) by an office holder to ensure that they operate effectively.

Where battery-operated types exist, these are of a sealed unit type with an integral battery that should last five years before the whole unit needs changing. A continuous single beep from a smoke alarm is the signal for a low battery. On hearing this continuous single beep, please report the issue using Fixflo application to the Property Team and they will arrange for a replacement battery to be installed. Alarms should never be disconnected; if nuisance activation is occurring because it is too sensitive, then the problem should be reported using the Fixflo application to the Property Team as the alarm may need replacing.

16.2 Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Carbon monoxide detectors are provided by FIPS and are checked and maintained when gas appliance servicing is undertaken by one of the DBF contractors.

16.3 Electrical Faults

Over 20,000 fires in the home are reported each year as being caused by electrical faults. Risks can be significantly reduced by taking a number of simple preventative measures, such as unplugging electrical appliances when not in use, always fitting the correct fuse and not overloading a power point by using several adapters in one socket. Electric blankets should be properly maintained, correctly used and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Flexes should be checked from time to time and should not be joined or run under rugs or carpets. Look out for warning signals of dangerous wiring - hot plugs and sockets, fuses which blow for no apparent reason, lights flickering or brown scorch marks on sockets and plugs. If you see any of these danger signs, contact the Property Team who can arrange for these to be checked. Do not store old newspapers, polish, paint, spirit, cleaning solvents, etc. in a cupboard under the stairs, especially if electricity and gas meters are also located in the same area. A fire in this area can prevent escape from upstairs and the stairwell often acts as a chimney, causing smoke to rapidly spread vertically, cutting off escape.

16.4 Escape Routes

If a fire occurs in your home, you may have to get out in dark or difficult conditions. Escaping from a fire will be easier if you have already planned your route and know where to go. Such escape routes should remain free from obstructions, ensuring that there are no loose floor coverings that could trip you up. Everyone in the house should be made aware of the escape route, but you should also plan for an alternative means of escape in case the usual route of exit is blocked. If the main exit from your home is locked with a key, make sure that the key is always easily accessible and everyone in your household knows where it is kept.

If any member of your household has serious mobility difficulties, you may wish to consider having their bedroom on the ground floor and, if practical, as near as possible to an exit. If someone requires assistance to escape, it is vital that they have a means of summoning help by their bed, i.e., a whistle, buzzer, intercom or telephone.

You can find more detailed guidance on the Fire Service website and looking at their Fire Safety in the Home information: <https://www.fireservice.co.uk/>

16.5 Asbestos

Asbestos still kills around 5,000 workers each year. This is more than the number of people killing on the roads each year. Asbestos is not just a problem of the past as it can be present in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000. Crocidolite and amosite asbestos was banned in the UK in 1985. The manufacturer and supply of all asbestos was banned in the UK by the end of 1999.

Asbestos was widely used in buildings in this country until it was discovered that it could be harmful to peoples' health. It might be found in:

- Asbestos cement products (pipes, flues, roofs etc.)
- Lagging (on pipes and boilers etc.)
- Water tanks and toilet cisterns
- Asbestos insulating board (AIB – which closely resembles plasterboard)
- Loose asbestos in ceilings and wall cavities.
- Sprayed coating on ceilings, wall and beams
- Textured decorative coatings (these are sometimes referred to as Artex)
- Floor tiles
- Textiles and composites

Asbestos is potentially harmful. However, a risk only arises when asbestos is damaged, or if it is drilled, sawn, scrubbed or sanded. This can release tiny fibres into the air which can be breathed in and penetrate the lungs. People considered most at risk of exposure to asbestos fibres are tradesmen and maintenance workers who disturb the fabric of a building during the course of their work.

Slightly damaged asbestos materials can sometimes be repaired by sealing or encapsulating them. If the asbestos is badly damaged and is likely to become further damaged it should be removed if

it cannot be protected. Some materials, for example, sprayed asbestos coating, asbestos lagging, asbestos insulation, or AIB should only be removed by a HSE licensed contractor. Asbestos containing materials must be legally disposed of as hazardous waste and should not be mixed with household waste.

If you suspect there may be asbestos in your home - contact the Property Team who will arrange an assessment, if appropriate, tests and, if necessary, safe removal.

16.6 Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in soil and rocks which can enter a building from the ground. It has no colour, taste or smell. Levels vary from region to region but in general, in the Birmingham Diocese, levels are low.

Radon rises from soil into the air; outdoors radon is diluted and the risk it poses is negligible. However, when it enters enclosed spaces concentrations can build up, all of which cause exposure to radiation and can potentially cause lung cancer.

The government recommends that people in affected areas test their houses for radon and offers a test that measures radon in the home for a period of three months.

The Measurement/Screening is overseen by the Health Protection Agency www.hpa.org.uk - and more information can be found at <https://www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps>

16.7 Lead Paint

Lead based paint is only likely to be found in pre-1960 buildings containing original paint systems.

Young children are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead.

Lead based paint does not present a hazard unless it is ingested or inhaled. There is minimal risk where paint is in a sound condition and is not flaking or powdering.

To determine whether paint contains lead a testing kit is available from some decorating merchants and DIY stores. Alternatively, advice is available from the British Coatings Federation Ltd, Tel 01372 700848 or website www.coatings.org.uk

If deteriorating lead-based paint is present this can be dealt with either by removal or encapsulation. The former is the best option as, by encapsulation, the paint will always have the potential of becoming a problem in future years.

Lead is hazardous to anyone exposed to it and anyone carrying out painting and decorating must take all appropriate precautions to avoid exposure. However, where lead-based paint is present, it is recommended that a professional trades person should be called in who has the necessary training and equipment to fully protect the home from lead contamination.

If in the slightest doubt contact the Property Team for advice.

16.8 Water Hygiene and Risk of Legionellosis

Legionella bacteria which can develop within water systems is the root cause of Legionnaires' disease. Legionella can be contracted if some of the following conditions permit, such as the water temperature within some parts of the system is between 20 – 45 °C. If there are deposits of debris within the system which can support bacterial growth such as scale and rust. To ensure minimized risk, some of the following precautions can be considered such as ensuring hot water is above 60 °C and distributed so that it reaches a temperature of 50 °C within one minute at outlets. Cold water systems should be maintained at a temperature of below 20 °C.

Office holders will be responsible for ensuring that any taps not used within a seven-day period are flushed for two minutes on a weekly basis; any shower not used within a seven-day period should be run for two minutes on a weekly basis; any toilet not used within a seven-day period should be flushed with the lid closed each week.

The DBF appointed Legionella contractor will ensure that when they attend for servicing, or at the beginning of a tenancy, that the correct hot water temperatures can be delivered at all outlets within an acceptable period of time. Visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/what-you-must-do.htm#identify> for further information regarding the precautions of legionella. The property in question should in fact have a full risk assessment carried out, which will present an office holder with an understanding of the level of risk associated with the property. This will ensure that appropriate actions are carried out periodically.

16.9 Covid-19, or other national pandemics

We will put procedures in place with our existing contractors to ensure that they are adopting best practice and following government guidelines to minimize the risk of transmitting the infection. You can assist in avoiding the transmission of this infection by:

- Regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces, for example, door handles and light switches, and shared rooms like kitchens and bathrooms.
- Minimizing movement in circulation areas
- Opening internal doors before they arrive.
- Opening external windows before they arrive.
- Wearing a face covering if you are indoors with someone who you do not normally meet.

16.10 Gas Cookers, Gas Boiler, Gas Heaters and Gas Fires

Only a Gas Safe registered engineer should be allowed to either install or disconnect a gas

appliance. You can find a Gas Safe registered engineer by going to <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>

17 Smoke-free law

From 1st July 2007 virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England became smoke-free. The new law was introduced to protect employees and the public from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. **Persons having control of those premises have a legal responsibility to prevent people from smoking.**

The clergy house, as a private dwelling, does not have to be smoke-free except for any part which is used solely as a place of work by more than one person who does not live at the dwelling, or a person who does not live in the dwelling and a person who does, or a person (whether he/she lives in the dwelling or not) who in the course of their work invites persons who do not live in the dwelling to attend that part of it, which is used solely as a place of work.

When determining whether a part of a dwelling is used solely as a place of work, the Regulations exclude work that is undertaken solely (1) to provide personal care for a person living at that dwelling, (2) to assist with the domestic work of that household, (3) to maintain the structure or the fabric of the dwelling or (4) to install, maintain, or remove any service provided to the dwelling for the benefit of the persons living in it.

Therefore, the Smoke-free Law only applies only to parts of the dwelling used solely as a place of work. In a clergy house, it is likely that the study will be the only area that may be affected. An office holder is unlikely to use their study solely as a place of work and this, therefore, exempts it from the Regulations, but if a room or area was used as a parish office, the Smoke-free law would apply. The Policy of the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance, covered in 'the Care of Clergy Houses' booklet, already states that offices within a clergy house will not be allowed unless express permission has been given in writing by the Diocesan Secretary.

If part of the dwelling is used for both work purposes and private residential purposes, for example a living room which doubles as a meeting room, the new Smoke-free Law will not apply.

With respect to the clergy house grounds, a public place includes both permanent structures and temporary ones, such as tents and marquees and these may, therefore, come under the Smoke-free Law if, for example, they are open to the public for a church fete to which any member of the public could attend. Private functions are exempt.

Nothing in the law takes away the tenant's right to not allow smoking in any part of the premises.

If there are any questions about the law, it is recommended the Environmental Health Officer at the Local Council is consulted. Local Councils are responsible for enforcing the law; their role is to help.

18 Mains services

18.1 Electricity, Gas and Water Supplies

The payment for consumed electricity, gas and water, including Standing Charges, is the responsibility of an office holder/PCC.

Electricity/Gas

Competition now allows, if desired, an office holder to choose between different supply companies. Companies compete on both price and service and may offer significant price reductions. Companies may offer 'dual fuel' packages for both electricity and gas supplies giving even greater savings.

If you are considering changing your supplier, the advice is to shop around for the best price; be aware of the fact that price is not everything. Some companies are much better than others when it comes to Customer Services.

Whilst an office holder/PCC is free to enter into contracts for electricity and gas supplies, they are not free to enter into any other agreements, e.g., new boilers/heating controls/servicing/energy saving measures, etc. which supply companies may attempt to 'sell'.

IF YOU SMELL GAS OR SUSPECT THERE IS A GAS ESCAPE, YOU SHOULD IMMEDIATELY SHUT OFF THE GAS SUPPLY AND CONTACT THE GAS EMERGENCY FREEPHONE TELEPHONE NO. 0800 111 999.

Water

It is essential that office holders/churchwardens familiarize themselves with regard to the position of the incoming water supply to the house. There are usually two stop taps (stopcocks), one at the boundary of the property, which is the water supply company's responsibility and one on the inside of the house where the main supply enters, which is the office holder's responsibility. The position of this stopcock should be known and its method of shutting off, in case of a water leak within the property. All stopcocks should be checked regularly (a minimum once a year) to ensure the stop tap is working properly, as sometimes they can seize. The recommended method is to fully open the stop tap by turning it anti-clockwise as far as it will go and then turn it back a half turn as a precaution against it seizing. Should the stop tap location not be evident, or if you have concerns over the stop tap operation please report this to the Property Team using the Fixflo application.

In new houses and households that are likely to use sprinklers for external watering, water meters have to be installed. A hosepipe without a sprinkler attachment is acceptable but a perforated hose is classed as a sprinkling device and would require metering. If you use a garden sprinkler or automatic garden watering device you must also have a meter fitted. The water supply company often encourages the installation of meters by offering such as free installation and giving examples of cost savings that could be achieved by having the supply metered as opposed to a set charge linked to the rateable value of the property. Provided meter installation cost is free, or any cost will be met by an office holder/ PCC, the Diocese are content for such to

be installed but require that the Property Director and/or Property Team are first informed in writing.

You are advised to carefully compare rateable value/meter water charges as the latter may be more expensive.

Ultimately, it is likely all properties will be required to have a water meter, but whilst the option remains the general rule is if the house has more bedrooms than occupants then having a water meter installed may offer a cost saving.

We have been advised that it is better to leave the water supply turned on during cold weather if the heating installation is left switched on and left in its frost protection settings, rather than draining down the whole system owing to boiler suffering more major faults and catastrophic failures when they are left dormant for long periods.

18.2 Heating Systems and Appliances

In addition to offering a central heating system to each official clergy house, the FIPS also offers to provide and maintain an independent heat source to the main reception room and the study.

The FIPS aim is to follow the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amended) Regulations 2018 in order to:

1. Ensure gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition.
2. Ensure an annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance/flue.
3. Have all installation, maintenance and safety checks carried out by a 'Gas Safe' registered engineer.
4. Keep a record of each safety check for a minimum of two years.

The FIPS arranges an annual safety check of gas fittings, flues and gas appliances/flues, including the servicing of any boiler (whatever its fuel medium) and FIPS owned gas fires.

In the case of a heating failure or appliance breakdown, during office hours the fault should be reported using the Fixflo application to the Property Team. Out of office hours, if such is an emergency, an office holder will be allowed to call out an engineer from the list of names offering an 'out of hours' service. (See Appendix B), but the fault should still be reported using the Fixflo application so that there is a record of the callout.

Heating systems are today often 'pressurized' and if the pressure reading on the boiler falls below 1 Bar the system may 'lock-out' as a safety precaution. Re-pressurize by turning the tap on the 'filling loop', which should be adjacent to the boiler and fill until the gauge shows between 1 and 1.5 Bar. Then re-start the boiler. If it does not re-start or the pressure drops again within a short period, report the fault using the Fixflo application to the Property Team.

On modern 'high efficiency condensing' boilers (which produce a plume of water vapour) an 'overflow' pipe takes excess condensate from the boiler and discharges to the outside. In sub-zero winter temperatures this pipe can freeze and as a safety feature the boiler will 'lock-out'. The problem can be overcome by pouring warm, not boiling water on external pipework and use of a

hairdryer on internal pipework. Then re-start the boiler. If it does not re-start report the fault using the Fixflo application to the Property Team.

A Preferred List of Contractors offering an 'out of hours' service is posted on the Diocesan website - www.cofebirmingham.com /documents/housing – and also in Appendix B at the end of this booklet. 'Hard' copies are available upon request from the Property Team. Only contractors on the list should be used.

If an appliance fails a safety check the record will contain details of any defect identified and remedial action taken or required to be taken. The equipment **must not be used until the defect is rectified** and you should confirm that a problem exists to the Property Team who will ensure rectification work, or appliance replacement.

Where existing FIPS-owned fires are unrepairable, the Committee will meet the cost of providing a fire, that is appropriate for the flue opening, up to a current purchase figure of no more than £1,000 plus VAT, plus the fitting cost. Should an office holder wish to purchase a more expensive fire, then they would need to meet the cost difference, but this appliance would then be considered a clergy house fixture and must not be removed/taken when the property is vacated.

18.3 Drainage and Wastewater

An office holder is responsible for keeping the external rainwater and wastewater gullies clear of all debris, leaves and silt. With regard to internal wastepipes and external drainage runs:

- Please avoid pouring fatty substances down the sinks or into the WC.
- Do not flush items down the lavatory that could cause a blockage.
- Do not pour forbidden substances into the drains that could enter the water course e.g., oil, or paint.
- In the event of a blockage during normal office hours, please contact the Property Team.

If your property is in a rural area and not connected to a public sewer it will most likely to be connected to either a cesspit or septic tank. The Property Team is responsible for the maintenance of septic tanks and cesspits, however, the office holder is responsible for arranging for the emptying of the tank.

Please report the issue using the Fixflo application to the Property Team if you consider you have a problem with the drains. For out of hours and in an emergency please see Appendix B for the details of our emergency call out drainage contractors.

18.4 Electrical Installation

Officially the Property Team should arrange all electrical work at the clergy house, but if an office holder organizes any work, for example, the installation of a new light fitting, then the work **must** be carried out by a competent and qualified person and preferably one on the Diocese's preferred list of contractors.

From 1st January 2005, Building Regulations require that most electrical work receives prior

application and approval, unless carried out by a competent person (having a full qualified knowledge of electrical installations) who will then issue a certificate confirming work is in compliance with the Regulations.

The Property Director /Property Team ensures electrical installations are regularly checked and any recommended upgrading work carried out.

It is the FIPS's policy to gradually replace all fuse boards with consumer units containing Miniature Circuit Breakers (trip switches). These are sensitive to the slightest power surge or earth leakage and, after an upgrade, 'nuisance tripping' can sometimes be experienced. This tripping generally does not indicate a problem with the installation itself but is sensing a fault with an appliance. An appliance, therefore, may require a repair or even replacement and this cost is an office holder's responsibility.

To identify an appliance with a potential fault:

- unplug all appliances
- reset all trip switches to ON including RCD switch if fitted
- individually plug in each appliance and switch it on.

The tripping of a circuit when an appliance is switched on indicates a fault with that appliance.

Some older types of electrical installations have an unearthed lighting circuit, which was once common. If this exists in a house, it is perfectly safe provided metal light fittings are **not** used. If in doubt seek advice from the Property Director.

If there is an electrical failure during office hours, please report the fault using the Fixflo application to the Property Team. Out of office hours, if an emergency exists an office holder will be allowed to call out an electrical engineer from the Contractors List.

A Preferred List of Contractors offering an 'out of hours' service is posted on the Diocesan website - www.cofebirmingham.com /documents/housing - this is featured in Appendix B of this handbook. Only contractors on the list should be used.

Extractor fans are provided in some kitchens, bathrooms, cloakrooms and shower rooms. These are maintained by the Property Department, but you are expected to regularly remove dust and grime from the cover and to provide any replacement filters/light bulbs.

Extract Fans work on the principle of extracting to the outside air-laden grease, steam or smell-laden fumes, some of which will condense on the internal surfaces of the extractor as they pass through the duct. In time a thick deposit builds up which will cause the motor and solenoid to burn out.

To clean an extractor fan, isolate the appliance from the electricity supply. Remove the louvre panel or inner grille (usually held in place by screws or push fit lugs). Scrape off any build-up of grease from all parts within the duct and then wash in a strong detergent solution, rinse and dry. Take care not to get water into the electrical parts. Make sure all parts can move freely.

The Property Team provides light fittings in each room either a pendant light fitting or fitted lighting units. These will be working on occupation. An office holder will provide lightshades and replacement light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters during their occupation and will leave the same in working order on vacation. In order to improve our green credentials, we request that consideration is given to replacing tungsten halogen and fluorescent lights with LED rated bulbs or fittings.

FIPS discourages the use of extension cables for multiple appliances, owing to the increased risk of fires, damage to individual appliances and the fact that these cables can act as trip hazards. An extension cable should only be used to serve one appliance at a time and the rating of the cable/extension lead should not be exceeded. Extension cables should never be 'daisy-chained' together and an office holder should follow the guidance provided with the extension cable when it was first purchased. If the number of fixed sockets is inadequate in a particular room, or area, please report this to the Property Team.

19 Useful information relating to looking after the property and its grounds etc.

19.1 Air bricks and ventilation

It is important to ensure all airbricks and vents are clear of any garden debris, leaves etc. as they serve an essential purpose. Ground levels and vegetation should not be allowed to build up above the damp proof course of the property.

19.2 Garden Maintenance (including trees)

Garden maintenance is the responsibility of an office holder.

Trees are seen as part of garden maintenance and an office holder's responsibility. It is essential that trees are 'managed' because if not the consequences often result in Health and Safety issues, trees affecting buildings and encroachment on the house and garden as a result of self-seeding. Tree work should only be carried out by competent and qualified people holding necessary insurance and preferably using names on the Dioceses Preferred List of Contractors. Prior to tree work, it must be ascertained from the Local Authority (LA) Tree Officer if Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) exist. If so, prior approval for the work must be obtained from the LA. In Conservation Areas all trees are deemed to have TPOs.

To encourage 'management' FIPS adopt a pro-active and joint approach to tree maintenance with an office holder/PCC, carrying out any work recommended by an arboriculturist and sharing costs, subject only to (a) available finance and (b) prior approval. In situations involving large gardens and a high number of trees, the FIPS look to the PCC to financially support an office holder in the maintenance of the clergy house "grounds".

An office holder is only allowed to plant trees after notifying the Property Director/Property Team of their proposal, including location and tree type, and receiving written approval. Any tree must be appropriate for its location, taking account of its mature height and spread and positions of drains and buildings.

With a limited budget, the current policy of the FIPS is that it will prioritize work recommended by the Property Director/Property Team in the Quinquennial Inspection Report to the house itself, rather than 'external works', i.e., driveways, hard standing, paving and boundaries (fences, hedgerows, walls, etc.).

Whilst the FIPS will attempt to carry out all repair work recommended by the Property Team, their current policy should be borne in mind. However, all efforts will be made to carry out work of a Health and Safety nature.

If the property has had a commercial tenant for more than 12 months and bushes/trees have not been adequately maintained prior to a new tenant moving in, the Property Team will arrange for the gardens to be put back to the state that they were in at the start of the commercial tenancy and the previous tenant contra-charged for these works.

19.3 Boundary Walls and Fences

Where a boundary is owned as part of your hereditament, the boundary walls and fences will be maintained by the DBF. Some boundaries may have a shared responsibility with a neighbour and if you become aware of the boundary being altered please advise the Property Team. Please also report any damage or deterioration to walls and fences. If the building shares an internal wall with a neighbouring property, 'a party wall', then you should inform the Property Team immediately of any concerns you may have about its condition, or if any works on it are undertaken by your neighbours. Care should be taken to ensure that no encroachment occurs onto or from the property.

Office holders should note that there is no requirement for the FIPS to provide 'pet-proof' boundaries. It will be the office holder's responsibility to, if necessary, provide additional fencing/screening and to meet the cost in order to prevent the escape/loss of a pet.

19.4 Japanese Knotweed

Japanese Knotweed is an extremely invasive shrub and can cause serious damage to buildings. If you see Japanese Knotweed growing in your garden or that of an immediate Neighbour, please leave it alone and notify the Property Team. Other invasive plants to be aware of are Himalayan Balsam, Giant hogweed, and certain bamboo types.

19.5 Climbing shrubs and plants

If you have any creeping or climbing shrubs, for example Ivy etc. growing against the walls of your house, please do not allow them to grow above the gutters and eaves. Damage can be caused to gutters and roof tiles and vermin can climb up and gain entry to the property. To prevent damp problems or damage to the external house walls, please ensure that if you plant new shrubs the plants are not positioned too close to the brickwork. As these plants grow, the stems will expand, and the roots may start undermining the brickwork.

19.6 Garden Sheds

You may install a garden shed and/or greenhouse, but this will be at your own expense and on the understanding that it is removed and making good undertaken when you leave the property unless an alternative agreement has been reached with a member of the Property Team. The maintenance of items provided by an office holder are the responsibility of the office holder in all cases. Garden sheds or storage structures provided by the DBF will be the responsibility of the DBF.

19.7 Ponds and Water Features

Office holders are requested not to create an ornamental pond in the garden as they can be a safety hazard.

If a pond or water feature already exists, the Property Team will liaise with an office holder prior to occupation regarding safety implications but will not take responsibility for maintenance/safety if an office holder requests the pond is not removed.

19.8 Dustbins and Recycling Collections

The arrangements for dustbins and recycling collections vary between local authorities. You are responsible for ensuring the necessary bins are at the property and that they are collected regularly so there is no accumulation of rubbish.

19.9 Internal Decorations

Internal decoration relates to paint/wall coverings to wall and ceilings.

Office holders are responsible for internal decoration, though often with help from the PCC. Where an incumbent does not serve a parish, then the diocese may assist, in line with agreed expenses.

The FIPS encourages office holders/PCCs **to decorate at least one room a year on a rolling programme** of improvement, rather than decorating in total when taking occupation of the house and carrying out none in interim years, resulting in major internal decorations being required when the house is vacated.

19.10 Carpets

An office holder and/or the PCC is responsible for looking after and replacing any fitted carpets and floor coverings. The exception to this is where fitted carpets and floor coverings are replaced as part of a DBF improvement project. If there is a trip hazard, particularly on the stairs then the DBF may meet the cost of repair or replacement, but this will not extend to the landing and hall and is at the discretion of the Property Director/Property Team. Vinyl or similar floor covering is provided in the kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, bathroom and WC.

If improvement/repair/maintenance works have taken place at the property on behalf of the DBF the carpets will be cleaned in the areas where works have taken place if required and at the discretion of the Property Director/Property Team. If no works have taken place between one tenancy finishing and another tenancy commencing, the PCC will arrange for the carpets to be professionally cleaned.

19.11 Roof Spaces

Items may be stored in roof spaces where flooring has been provided but it is important the ceiling joists are not overloaded, and the weight is spread as evenly as possible. You should avoid contact with any loft insulation if you enter the roof space. Flammable items must not be stored in the roof space. Items that might leak, spontaneously combust, or attract vermin must not be stored in a roof space, together with all items, belongings or objects that might invalidate the BDBF Building Insurance policy.

19.12 Pets, Domestic Animals and other Livestock

Pets and domestic animals may be kept in the house or garden, but occupants are expected to exercise common sense in their choice of animals with particular regard to the maintenance, size, and location of the property and especially with regard to maintaining good relations with any adjoining neighbours. The Property Team is **not** responsible for maintaining animal/stock proof fencing, or pet enclosures, nor does it provide cat/dog flaps.

Any damage that is caused by pets, animals or livestock that is not repaired at, or by, the end of the tenancy will be recharged.

19.13 Unauthorized works

Quinquennial repairs and external redecoration will be arranged by the Property Team in liaison with an office holder. Formally, the only work allowed between quinquennials is that of an emergency, compliance or of a Health and Safety nature. Requests for interim work should be made by contacting the Property Team at the Diocesan Office who will, if appropriate, arrange work including placing of an order, check work on completion (if considered necessary) and settle the contractor's account. Out of office hours, an office holder should only arrange work if considered of an emergency or Health and Safety nature and then only using contractors on the Preferred List offering an out-of-hours service, after first reporting this using the Fixflo application to the Property Team. The Property Team must be informed on the next working day. A Preferred List of Contractors offering an 'out of hours' service is enclosed and is also posted on the Diocesan website - [www.cofebirmingham.com](http://www.cofebirmingham.com/documents/housing) /documents/housing - this is also featured in Appendix B at the end of this booklet. Further copies are available upon request from the Property Team. Only contractors on the list should be used.

The FIPS will not meet the cost, or reimburse the cost, of work arranged by an office holder/PCC unless out of office hours and of an emergency or Health and Safety nature (and then only if such can be justified).

19.14 Alterations Carried Out by an Office Holder

Office holders of clergy houses are reminded that FIPS approval is required before alterations are carried out.

The proposal should be explained in writing to the FIPS Secretary/Property Director /Property Team including, if appropriate, a drawing. The appointed surveyor may wish to visit the house to assess the work.

The decision regarding the FIPS will be in writing and no work must commence until permission to do so is received. If the alteration proposal has not been instigated by the FIPS it is unlikely that any work costs will be met from the Housing Budget.

On the basis of being a clergy house, if the alteration is anything other than minor, it is likely that

Church Commissioner's approval will be required, possibly necessitating plans and specifications which may need to be provided at an office holder's cost.

Benefice fixtures within an official clergy house must not be removed, added to, or altered, without consulting the Property Director and/or Property Team and gaining written permission.

Where an office holder proposes carrying out alterations, consent will normally depend on reversion, if required, by the FIPS when vacating.

19.15 Burglaries

Should you be unfortunate enough to experience a burglary, these are the steps to follow:

- Notify the police immediately and get a crime number.
- Contact the Property Department either by telephone or email.
- Notify the Archdeacon.
- Contact your contents insurance provider.
- If the burglary takes place outside of our normal office hours you should contact one of the contractors on the Emergency Contractors List for assistance with boarding-up/securing the property etc.

19.16 Security

Intruder alarms and where appropriate, external security lighting are provided at all clergy houses where an office holder requires them, with the cost being met by the diocese. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems will be installed where 'risk' situations are seen to exist; the FIPS Committee having the ultimate decision in regard to this. The payment of the annual maintenance agreements for CCTV and the burglar alarm are a 'local' responsibility, and the office holder is responsible for paying these costs, although often with assistance from the PCC. For lower risk areas, the DBF may consider fitting a doorbell fitted with a camera, if the Property Team think that this is appropriate, however the office holder will be responsible for paying any annual subscription costs. The DBF will ensure that the security systems are in working order prior to handover to an office holder. Where security lighting is provided, maintenance of the unit(s) and replacement bulbs are a 'local' responsibility.

It is the FIPS policy to provide certain basic security items at clergy houses, being:

- 1) At the front entrance an external quality outer door being solid or fitted with toughened or laminated glass (with any windows/panels to the side fitted with same) a five-lever security mortice deadlock to current British Standard, door chain or limiter and door viewer (if appropriate).
- 2) Remaining external doors to be of substantial construction and provided with a five-lever security mortice deadlock to current British Standard.
- 3) French windows are to be provided with one pair of key-operated mortice security bolts or key-operated surface-mounted bolts to each door.
- 4) Sliding patio doors are to be glazed in toughened or laminated glass, include an anti-lift device and a minimum of three-point locking or equivalent security device.

- 5) Ground floor and accessible first floor windows are to have key-operated locks conforming to current British Standard.
- 6) Where key-operated window locks are fitted, it must be ensured that keys are readily available and held within the particular room in a place known to all occupants of the house. In a fire or panic situation there is unlikely to be sufficient time for a person to rummage for hidden keys and if not held within the room, there is a real danger that a person may become trapped without a means of escape.
- 7) Spare keys are no longer held by the Property Team when a property is occupied.

If any of these items are lacking or defective, please contact the Property Team.

Normally a key safe will have been fitted near the front door to either allow emergency access during your occupation, or whilst the property has been vacant. The key safe is for the sole use of the Property Team, so that representatives of the Property Team and their appointed contractors can gain access when the property is not occupied.

The Property Team can prepare a security assessment report on your property if you have any specific concerns with regard to security. Crime statistics for individual areas can be provided by the Property Team.

19.17 Pest Control

The FIPS will generally meet the cost of eradicating rodents (mice, rats, squirrels, etc.) infestation. The FIPS will not usually meet the cost of eradicating ants, bees (generally a protected species) and wasps (they generally die in the first frost of winter and do not re-use a nest). Killing and controlling foxes is restricted under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Pest control companies generally provide a fox removal service on a fee-paying basis, but the FIPS will not meet costs. The RSPCA's national helpline 0300 1234 999 can give advice or visit their website - www.rspca.org.uk.

Should you have any pest control concerns please report these using the Fixflo application and the Property Team will arrange attendance by a specialist company if appropriate.

19.18 Beetle and Fungal Infestations

Beetle or fungal infestation can spread rapidly causing damage and disruption.

If an infestation is noticed or suspected, it should be immediately reported using the Fixflo application to a member of the Property Team who will arrange for an initial inspection and, if appropriate, an invasive survey in order to identify the extent and cost of eradication work.

With beetle infestation, check for: -

- 1) Newly created flight holes in timber. Holes can vary in size dependent upon the type of beetle.
- 2) Timber dust generally below flight holes indicating new infestation.

For fungal infestation, check for: -

- 1) A musty/mushroom-type smell within a room - especially on the ground floor.
- 2) 'Springing' within timber floors, potentially indicating a problem with the supporting floor joist(s).
- 3) Damp walls, etc. Check to ensure: -
 - a) Adequate natural ventilation to roof and floor voids - beware of insulation blocking the eaves area of roof.
 - b) Air bricks are not blocked, thus preventing cross-ventilation of sub-floor area.
 - c) Gutters/outlets/rainwater pipes are not blocked causing overflow and saturation of walls.
 - d) Ball valves are not defective, etc. causing overflow pipes to run allowing water to soak into the building structure.

For genuine emergencies, the name of a pest control company is included on the Contractors List.

19.19 Cookers

The provision of a cooker/hob/oven is the responsibility of an office holder, as is the servicing, repair and maintenance of same.

At clergy houses the usual is to provide a 615mm space for a slot-in cooker and separate ranges, ovens and hobs are not encouraged. However, if such is requested and feasible, sanction by FIPS would only be on the basis of the total cost of any alteration work/services provision being met by an office holder.

Gas cookers can only be installed and subsequently removed by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer. You can find a Gas Safe registered engineer by going to <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>

19.20 Computer/Telephone/Television Cabling/Aerials/Dishes/Receivers/Apparatus

Responsibility for provision, rental and maintenance of such equipment is a 'local' responsibility.

19.21 Energy Efficiency

The current means of improving energy efficiency at clergy houses is limited by the available budget to the extent of ensuring loft insulation meets current standards and the programme of window replacement to provide double glazing is continued.

We all have a duty to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, energy consumption and pollution. The DBF are willing to share costs with the PCC/Incumbent on energy conservation measures subject only to a) available finance and b) prior consultation with and the written approval of the Property Director on FIPS behalf. These may include one of the following: -

- a) Cavity wall insulation. Costs vary from around £475 - £750 using the DBF's preferred material of polystyrene bead. On average energy use, there may be a 'payback' within 5 years. Energy providers may offer a subsidized installation cost to the bill payer, albeit this is usually using a fibre material (mineral or rockwool), which has some 'history' of failure and also has a higher (worse) thermal conductivity than bead.
- b) Solar power systems. These are now being promoted on the basis of cutting reliance on fossil fuels and reducing atmospheric pollution. Systems include a) solar energy, thermal hot water heating and c) photovoltaic (PV) panels. Such are reputed to be 90% efficient, even on cloudy days and will provide 25 - 90% of annual hot water requirements. With relatively high installation costs of around £3,000 - £5,000, giving a saving of approximately £140 per annum. Other systems include solar thermal energy (solar panels that act as collectors and heat water) with an approximate £3,000 cost, saving £250 per annum. Ground source heat pumps (uses the earth [ground] as a heat source) with an approximate £14,000 - £19,000 cost, saving £540 per annum, source heat pumps (absorb heat from the outside air), with an approximate £7,000 - £13,000 cost, saving £450 per annum.
- c) Wind energy. A well sited 5kW turbine can generate around 7,500kWh a year, which could save approximately £340 a year on electricity bills and also save around 1.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. A 5kW pole mounted system costs between £23,000 - £34,000 with maintenance costs per year of between £100 - £200.
- d) Condensing boilers. These save around £165 - £365 a year. The complexity of modern-day boilers, however, means that the unit likely only has a life expectancy of around 10 years.
- e) Combined heat and power (micro-CHP). This is a dual action system that produces energy and heat at the same time. Such "boilers" are being assessed for reliability and potential use. Current figures indicate that the installation of this type of "boiler" is approximately £5,000. For electricity that you generate you will receive the feed-in tariff that is currently set at 12.89p/kWh and is index linked over a ten-year period.

Eleven tips for energy efficiency and reducing bills.

- i. Effective insulation. Properly installed insulation to current standards can give the following annual savings on average household bills: -
 - i.1. Roof- £165 - 380
 - i.2. Walls - £185 - £310
 - i.3. Windows - £95 - 120
 - i.4. Doors/Floors - £50 - £85
- ii. Avoid leaving appliances on stand-by - turn them off completely. Potential annual saving - approx. £60.
- iii. Close curtains at dusk to reduce heat escaping through the windows.

- iv. Changing bulbs to LED bulbs. Potential annual saving - approx. £6 – 9 per bulb per year.
- v. Do not fill kettles to the brim - only boil what you need. Potential annual saving approx. £21.70.
- vi. Ensure any hot water cylinder thermostat is never above 60°C and that the tank itself is properly insulated.
- vii. By turning down the central heating thermostat by 1°C - savings in an average household will be £80 per annum.
- viii. On your dishwasher, the eco setting heats water more slowly, using less energy.
- ix. Use your microwave oven more as it is quicker than using the oven or stove.
- x. Unplug all of your chargers could save approximately £60 per year when they are not being used.
- xi. By using effective washing machine detergents, a washing machine can be run at 30 °C and still clean clothes.

For energy saving guidance and advice visit the Energy Saving Trust (EST) website www.energysavingtrust.org.uk. All of the indicative costs used above are based on estimates in the first quarter of 2023 and are therefore subject to change/rebasing as necessary.

19.22 Chimney Flues

In-going office holders will not be charged for the sweeping of any existing open chimney flues, previously used for burning solid fuel when they first occupy a property. Following the initial sweep, it will be the responsibility of an office holder to arrange for inspections and sweeping to be undertaken annually to all flues that continue to be used for burning solid fuel, in order to ensure that they are in good condition, have no structural faults to either the flue, lining, or chimney terminals and are free from any obstructions.

19.23 Condensation

Condensation is a problem which has become more prevalent and problematic following the standards for modern construction changing and properties becoming more airtight and with less natural ventilation. Condensation occurs when warm moist air, produced naturally through daily living comes into contact with cold surfaces, water droplets within the air will condense on the cold surfaces such as windows and cold areas of wall. In time the prolonged build-up of moisture up may result in damage to decorations, mould growth and/or timber rot. Additional signs of condensation occurring could be peeling wallpaper or white streaks appearing on emulsion painted walls. Mould growth, or condensation is also likely to occur either in exposed corner, where there are gaps in the insulation, or where air is unable to circulate freely owing to either fitted or moveable furniture that is close to an external wall.

The installation of replacement double-glazing, fitting of draft excluders, the closing of chimneys, and replacing external doors are all factors which are likely to reduce natural ventilation within a property. The consequence of this is that warm moist air is unable to escape to the open air. The Property Team aims to reduce issues of condensation through providing extractor fans to kitchens and bathrooms.

Office holders can play their part in reducing condensation by:

- reducing the amount of moisture produced in the first place by keeping lids on pans when cooking, drying clothes outside when possible, and if you use a tumble dryer, making sure it is vented to the outside
- increasing ventilation so the moist air leaves the house – always use the extractor fan when you are cooking, showering, or bathing, leave any window vents open, and don't block off any other vents
- making sure that air can circulate by leaving gaps between furniture and the wall
- trying to avoid cold spots – if there is a gap between your wall insulation and your loft insulation, for example, try to get this fixed as it will attract condensation and possibly mould
- considering adding more ventilation – this could be a new external vent in a problem corner, a new extractor fan, or even a whole house ventilation system if you need it
- not fit any new draught-proofing in a room that already has a condensation problem.

19.24 Post

Before you vacate a property, it is your responsibility to arrange for all post to be diverted to your new address, or to a PO Box. The DBF cannot be held responsible for redirecting your post once you leave a property. Any post that is not redirected by the postal service will be returned to the sender and not forwarded to your new address.

19.25 Integral Appliances

The DBF are responsible for maintaining, servicing, repairing, and replacing any built-in appliance. If you consider that there is a problem with a built-in appliance, please report using to the Fixflo Application to the Property Team, during office hours, or to one of the relevant emergency contractors listed in Appendix B

20 Summary of responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES – Examples of what are classed as fixtures/ fittings

FIXTURES (FIPS)

FITTINGS (Occupier/Office Holder/PCC)

Central Heating/Hot Water

Boiler
Radiator/radiator valves/heater unit Heated towel rail
Immersion heater
Hot water tank/cylinder Water storage tank
Fixed gas heater (with any surround) up to 2 provided
Fixed electric heater (with any surround) by the Diocese

Free standing heaters

Electrical Power points Switches

Light pendant/fitting

Dimmer switches, Ceiling lights, Wall lights
Lamp shades
Table/free-standing lights

Television/Telephone

Aerial, Telephone lines
Telephone receivers, Satellite dish/receivers Computing lines
Cabling
Apparatus

Carpets

Carpets

Other floor coverings

Tile or fixed sheet floor to Bathroom/WC/Shower Room
/Kitchen/ Utility/Laundry areas/Circulation areas

Sanding/sealing of wood floors
Wood laminate floors
Floor finishes to other areas

Bathroom

Bath
Shower Toilet
Hand basin Taps
Fitted cupboards
Shaver socket
Mechanical extract
Toilet seat,

Showerhead/hose, Waste plugs and Plug chains, Mirror
Cabinet Shelf, Towel rail
Soap/toothbrush holder, Toilet roll holder
Wall heater

RESPONSIBILITIES – Examples of what are classed as fixtures/ fittings**FIXTURES (FIPS)****FITTINGS (Occupier/Office Holder/PCC)****Bedroom**

Fitted wardrobe
 Fitted cupboard
 Hand basin Taps

Wall mirror
 Free-standing wardrobe/
 cupboard/drawers/units Furniture

Kitchen/Laundry/Utility

Fitted cupboards Sink
 Extractor hood for cooker

Cooker, Oven, Grill, Hob
 Microwave oven, Refrigerator,
 Freezer, Dishwasher, Washing
 machine, Tumble dryer, Bins

Windows

Frames and glazing Ironmongery Curtain rail/track

Shutters/grilles

Curtain, Curtain pole, Pelmet,
 Blind

Doors

External/internal doors
 Ironmongery
 Locks

Doorbell/chimes

External Areas

Paving to driveways/paths and paving immediately
 around the house servicing external doors (but not to
 additional areas, including patios, etc.)

Trees/plants/shrubs Shed
 Greenhouse, Garden furniture,
 Ornaments, Barbeque, Outdoor
 heaters Oil/solid fuel/gas, Water
 butts,
 Clothesline/rotary line Bins

21 Appendix A

CONTACTING THE PROPERTY TEAM

The office at Corporation Street is open Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.

The Clergy Housing Property Team comprises:

Property Director – Daniel Mayes

Tel: 0121 426 0408

Mob: 07973 315 684

Email: DanielM@cofebirmingham.com

Clergy Housing Surveyor – Richard Hall

(Property repairs during office hours)

Tel: 0121 426 0409

Mob: 07392 196921

Email: richardh@cofebirmingham.com

Planned Maintenance Surveyor – John Templeman

(Planned Maintenance and Project Management)

Tel: 0121 262 1858

Mob: 07908 407678

Email: john.templeman@cofebirmingham.com

22 Appendix B

EMERGENCY PREFERRED LIST OF CONTRACTORS 2023

With limited resources it is important that the Property Director controls commitment and expenditure of the Housing Budget. Requests for required work must be made through the Property Department at the Diocesan Office and the Director or Property/Clergy Housing Surveyor will decide if work is necessary and, if so, organize the work which will include placing an order with a contractor and settling the account upon satisfactory completion of the work.

Out of office hours, the occupier is only allowed to arrange work of an emergency or Health and Safety nature. An edited edition of the Preferred List of Contractors, offering an 'out of hours' service to the Diocese, is listed within this document. Only contractors on the list should be used.

If a contractor is called out, you should notify the Property Department of this, and the circumstances, on the next working day (for the Property Team). Please contact the Property Department on: 07973 315 684, or email – property@cofebirmingham.com

We have defined an 'emergency' as when a material defect, an asset, or piece of equipment suffers an unexpected breakdown, or change in condition that results in an immediate threat to health and safety to occupants, or the public (e.g. electrical fault, gas leak, overflowing drains), or will cause significant damage to the property if it is not resolved (e.g. burst or leaking pipes), or leaves the property no longer secure (e.g. broken windows or broken door locks)

Before contacting a contractor out of hours, please bear in mind that their costs/rates are likely to be significantly higher for this service than during normal office hours.

The aim of 'Emergency Works' is to remove or isolate the risk. The contractor may not always be able to rectify the fault during their visit but will make it safe to the best of their ability and materials available at the time. Some works may require further investigation, or parts that will need to be ordered and then fitted during normal working hours.

The cost of unauthorized non-emergency work arranged by the occupier/PCC will not be met or reimbursed by the Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance unless exceptional circumstances prevail and can be justified.

Birmingham Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), 14th December 2022

Gas

If you smell gas inside a property, there are several steps that you should take. Calling the National Gas Emergency Service number on **0800 111 999*** will notify them of the problem, and they can give you some advice on what to do next. Before that, taking the following action will help keep you and the property safe:

- *DO* open doors and windows to ventilate the property.
- *DO* turn off the gas at the mains tap. This can usually be located near the gas meter and has a handle that can be turned 90 degrees. If the gas leak is in a cellar or basement, do not enter and instead evacuate the building.

If you suspect you have a gas leak or you smell gas, it is important that you don't do any of the following as these could place you in further danger:

- *DON'T* turn any power or light switches on or off.
- *DON'T* light any sort of flame within the property.
- *DON'T* use any appliances that could cause a spark.

Further information can be found on the Gas Safe website:

<https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/gas-emergency/what-to-do-in-a-gas-emergency/>

Electrical Failure

If the circuit breaker (RCD) trips and fails to reset on the power circuits to the household plug sockets, the following actions should be undertaken:

- Unplug all domestic appliances/items. The plugs must be removed and not simply turned off on the socket switch. Re-set the trip switches by holding the switch in place on the RCD.
- If it fails to reset, this is considered an emergency. Please contact the electrical contractor listed on the emergency list attached.
- If it resets, plug in each appliance/item one-by-one, checking the circuit breaker each time as this is undertaken. Continue this process until the circuit fails, noting the appliance/ item that was last to be plugged in, as this will indicate a faulty appliance.

It is worth noting which appliances were running when the electrics failed. Appliances can fail and trip the electrics when turned on, or during a cycle and not just when plugged in. If any electrical call outs are found to be as a result of a failed appliance owned and supplied by the occupant, the cost will be charged to the occupant.

Power Cuts

Contact UK Power Networks at <https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/> to report, or to obtain information about power cuts in your area and speak to your local electricity network operator.

Electrical emergencies to mains cables: Contact UK Power Networks 24 hours a day on 0800 31 0800 31 63 105 or 105 0800 31 63 105. Always treat damaged electricity cables as live and therefore stay away. If you think that the cables are down and cause significant risk to the public call 999.

General Issues

Boiler, Central Heating and Plumbing Emergencies.

Boilers / central heating not working

Please contact the relevant contractor from the attached emergency list of contractors. Before calling a contractor, please check the following:

- Check that the gas supply has not been interrupted or switched off (gas boilers only)
- Check you have oil in the tank (oil fired boilers only). If the tank is empty the boiler will not work when the oil is replenished. The boiler will require an engineer to attend. If this occurs the cost of the engineer will be the responsibility of the occupant as it is not a fault of the appliance but a user error. Regular checks of oil levels is required in particular during winter months.
- Check your room thermostats are at the correct temperature setting and if battery operated check that the battery is not dead.
- Check time clock is correctly programmed e.g. time, date, settings etc.

Leak / burst pipes / plumbing Leak / burst pipes / plumbing

If you have a leaking pipe inside the property, isolate the water by turning off the internal, or external, stop tap, or isolate the leak using the appropriate isolating valve to limit damage. Contact a plumbing contractor from the emergency list attached immediately.

If you have a burst water main outside the property contact your Water Provider.

Non-emergency works listed below should wait until the office is open:

- Dripping tap into bath, sink or basin or external tap.
- Cold radiator(s) if this is limited to a few radiators only. If the majority are not functioning then call a contractor out from the list attached.
- Toilet not flushing - if another toilet is available on site this is not an emergency.
- Shower not working and can be isolated so water is not pouring out of appliance. This is an inconvenience and not an emergency.

IMPORTANT:

- To reduce the risk of frozen pipes during the colder months please do not turn off the heating especially when going away. Keep the heating on as normal as the damage caused to personal possessions and the property is not worth the cost saved.
- If possible, isolate outside taps internally during October – May and leave the outside tap slightly open to drain any residual water.

Security Emergencies

Intruder Alarm Malfunction

If the security alarm develops a fault and you are unable to disable the system / siren, contact the existing alarm maintenance company on the emergency list.

Broken locks to windows or doors.

If you are unable to open an external door to the house, or the garage to access the car, contact one of the general contractors on the emergency list.

Locks replaced due to keys being misplaced will be charged to the occupiers. If you break a window trying to gain access to the property if you lock yourself out, contact a contractor on the emergency list to secure the property.

Break-in, theft, malicious damage

If you are unlucky enough to be broken into take the following steps:

- Contact the police immediately on 911 and follow their instructions and obtain crime number.
- Don't touch anything until police attend, as this may affect the investigation.
- The police may be able to advise on securing windows and doors. If not, use one of the contractors from the emergency list.
- Contact your insurance company and provide them with the police crime number / reference.
- Once allowed into your property take an inventory of any missing or damaged items and notify your insurance company.
- Contact the Property Team as soon as the Office is open.

Building and Garden Emergencies

Most building and garden repairs will wait until the office is open. If, however, you have one of the following issues 'out of hours' please contact a contractor from the emergency list.

- Roof leak
- Leaking oil tank, or oil line.
- Blocked / overflowing foul drainage and septic tanks.
- Storm damaged tree(s) which endangers the occupier, visitors, passing traffic, pedestrians, or neighbours. Notify the police if damaged tree(s) are lying on, or overhanging, public highways, footpaths, or public areas e.g. school, or park. Contact the Property Team on the next available day to arrange for the obstacle to be removed.
- Collapsed boundary wall onto public footpath or highway - notify the police if there is a risk to the public. Contact the Property Team on the next available day to arrange for the wall/fencing to be rectified and obstacle removed.

Note: Blocked rainwater gullies and gutters are not emergency 'out of hours' works but, must be reported to the Property Team the next available day as these issues need attention.

EMERGENCY/ OUT OF HOURS CONTRACTORS

BUILDING/PLUMBING

P. Light Building and Maintenance
Contractor
64 Kingfisher Drive
Smiths Wood
North Solihull
B36 ORP

Emergency: 07515 631273

BUILDING/PLUMBING/GLAZING

Neil Taylor - NC Contracts
Unit 1, 41 Woodfield Road
Birmingham
B12 8TD

Emergency: 07967 570821

ELECTRICAL

N A Fair Electrical Services
14 Tudor Close
Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0PD

Emergency: 07976 829214

ALARM SYSTEM/CCTV

ARC Alarms
24 Alvechurch Road
West Heath
Birmingham
B31 3QW

Emergency: 0121 475 1596

BUILDING

Dean Bick - Bick Construction Limited

The Library
43 Rashwood Close
Hockley Heath
Solihull
Birmingham
B94 6DS

Emergency: 0781 621 6686

HEATING/PLUMBING

Lord Combustion Services Limited
131 Dudley Road East
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 3DU

Emergency: 07711 053382

DRAINAGE

Drain Doctor Plumbing
Unit C2
Umex Business Centre
Oxleasow Road
Redditch
B98 0RE

Emergency: 01527 501700

TREES

Westside Forestry Limited
The Stables
Harbours Hill
Belbroughton
West Midlands
DY9 9XE

**Emergency: 07796 145 902 /
07880380 260**

23 Appendix C

FIXFLO APPLICATION INSTRUCTION

Need something fixed?

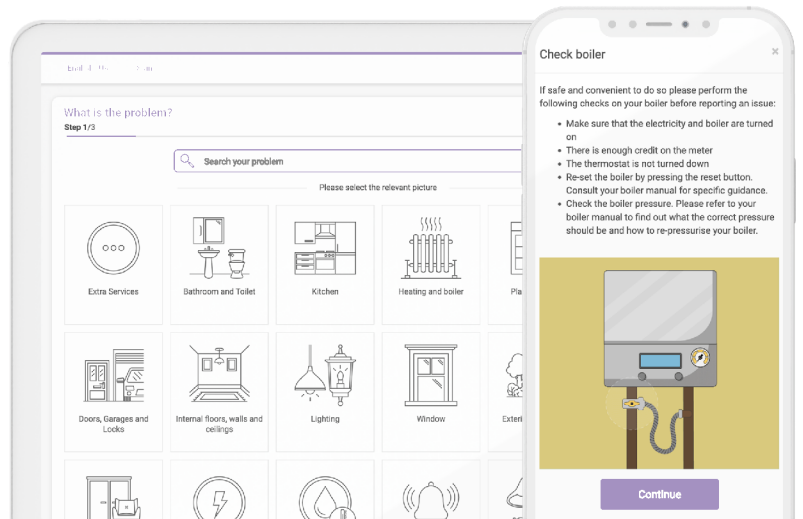
How to report your repair requests anytime, anywhere in **3 steps**

To report a repair, visit
<https://cofebirmingham.fixflo.com>

1

No download or install required.
You can report issues 24/7 using
any device.

For simpler maintenance issues,
you'll be shown helpful advice on
how to deal with the issue at hand.

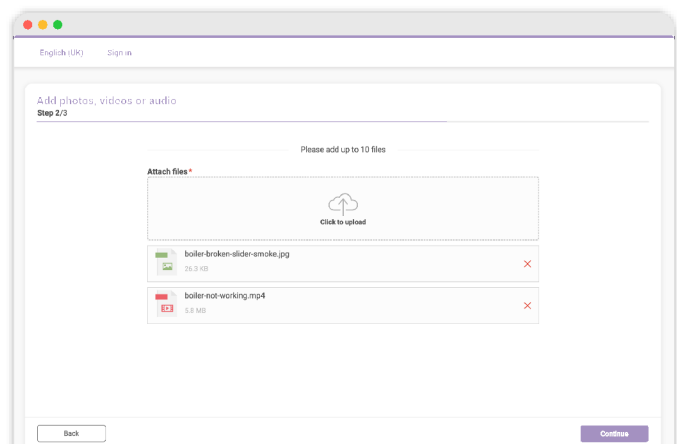


2

Provide as much detail as possible.

This helps your Property Manager
to take the right action quicker.

Photos and videos are always helpful!



3

Hit 'Confirm' and the full details of your request will be sent to your Property Manager straight away.