



DIOCESE OF BRISTOL
TRANSFORMING. TOGETHER.

Clergy Housing Guide

A helpful guide to your clergy home



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01.

WELCOME & OVERVIEW

[A Note From Your Archdeacons..](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Quick Reference](#)

02.

PROPERTY CARE & MAINTENANCE

[Repairs and Maintenance](#)

[Contractors, Small jobs & repairs](#)

[Emergency contacts](#)

[Approved contractors](#)

03.

COMPLIANCE, SAFETY & SUSTAINABILITY

[Compliance: Keeping you safe](#)

[Parochial Expenditure Guidance](#)

[Environment & Sustainability](#)

04.

LIVING IN YOUR PROPERTY & MOVING OUT

[Housing Matters - Your A-Z guide](#)

[Departing your Property - What do you need to know?](#)

[Departing your Property - Handover Day](#)

05.

TERMS OF SERVICE

[Terms of service](#)

[Lodgers or Tenants in Board owned property](#)

A note from your Archdeacons...

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to your Diocese of Bristol parsonage. We hope this will be a happy and comfortable home for you, and that you will enjoy a fruitful ministry while you are living here.

We know, from the inside, the difference that a good home and a caring diocese can make to clergy well-being and that of their families. When things aren't right, this can have a knock-on effect on all aspects of life including ministry.

Making the most of your parsonage house is an opportunity and responsibility that you share with the Property Team and the Archdeacons. This booklet sets out our mutual expectations, so that you and your household can flourish. Please take the time now to read it carefully, as there may be important matters of which you are unaware.

The Diocese aims to maintain a high level of investment in clergy properties and sustain the capability of the Property Team so that we can offer a personal, responsive and effective service.

Houses need maintenance and repair from time to time, so our colleagues in the property team will be keen to hear from you, and please don't hesitate to be in touch with them if there are any concerns.

As the Archdeacons team, we look forward to ministering alongside you, and assure you of our prayers as you begin your new ministry.

Best wishes



The Ven Christopher Bryan
Archdeacon of Malmesbury



The Ven Becky Waring
Archdeacon of Bristol



Revd Adam Beaumont
Associate Archdeacon

What do our Clergy have to say about living in our Diocese of Bristol Clergy homes...



I wanted to share how great your team have been in the lead up to the move into our new **home** – I use those words deliberately as it's something that was said when we went to visit it yesterday and it really struck me that 'our home' is language I've not heard from other places we've rented from related to the church in the past, here and in Surrey. I can really understand that it's easy for property teams to see houses as houses and not homes, whilst it's made a real difference that your team have been appreciative of that.



Introduction

We welcome you to Bristol Diocese, your new home and ministry with us. This guide has been carefully prepared to help you and your family to settle into and enjoy your new home and helpfully sets out the various responsibilities towards the house by the occupant and the Board.

The stewardship of your home is regarded as very much a partnership between you and the Board, and it is important that the house is seen as a resource for the mission of the church and to support you and your family as in some cases our homes have for generations before you.

This property is very much your home and ministry base, you are the custodian of the property, and we have a great team here who are keen to support and guide you where possible to ensure that you are happy there.

Prior to your move, your home has been inspected by our Property Team and where time has enabled us, any necessary works will have been undertaken in advance of your move with the aim of making your move as trouble-free as possible.

Please do contact us between acceptance and your move date to ask us any questions or to discuss any concerns you may have regarding your new home and, where possible, we will do our best to assist you.

As part of our property preparations for you, we also undertake an inventory at the property, which we will share with you along with any other important documentation you might need such as Local Authority contacts and bin and recycling days! The team reside across the Diocese area, so we have good team knowledge of most areas, therefore please do ask if you need more local information to support you. If we don't know ourselves, we will certainly know someone who does!

We are always mindful of the earth's precious resources and be assured that we procure works and products carefully to ensure the longevity of your home and its fittings in line with the National Church's environmental objectives.

This guide contains information and advice so that you and your family can enjoy your home. Please do take the time to read through the document and keep it handy for future reference.

Yours Sincerely,



Lindsey McCullam

MCIOB, MSc, AIHBC, Dip Surv

Director of Property & Estates

This guide applies to occupants of all properties held by the Board. Under the Repair of Benefice Measure 1972 "The occupant has a duty to take proper care of the property" being a duty "equivalent to that of a tenant". The Measure also gives certain responsibilities to the BDBF and the occupant as detailed in this guide and in Appendix 1. the use of the word Board and BDBF refer to the Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance The use of the word occupant includes all incumbents, clergy, curates and house for all duty occupants. The use of the word household includes the occupier, their spouse, children and parents and spouses' parents.

Quick Reference

The Team

The Diocese Property Team form part of the Diocesan Support Services and are based at: **Hillside House, 1500 Parkway North, Bristol BS34 8YU.**

Contact us

✉ Email: property@bristoldiocese.org

☎ Tel: 0117 906090

🕒 Mon–Fri 9am-5pm

Our people



Lindsey McCullam
Director of Property & Estates



Kate Tatchell
Head of Housing & Glebe



Adam Pinder
Property Surveyor



Matt Reader
Property Officer Compliance & Maintenance



Paul Mead
Property Officer Lease & Tenancy



Olivia Fox
Property Assistant

Visit our online directory for contact details: bristol.anglican.org/aboutus/staffdirectory

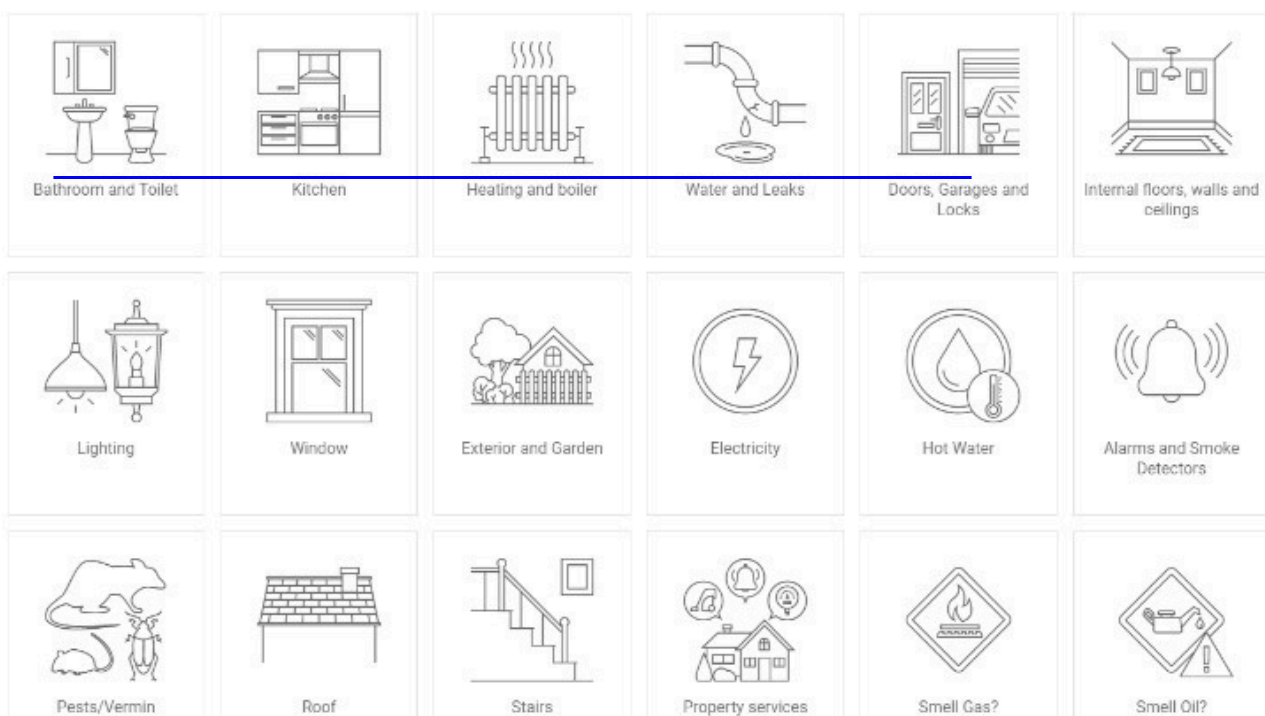


Repairs & maintenance

Please report any repair or maintenance items to the Property Team via our online reporting system dioceseofbristol.fixflo.com. A further link is also located on the Property page of the Diocese website.

An email with a link to set up a log-in will be sent to you upon allocation of your property to you, please contact us if this has not arrived prior to your move.

This reporting tool enables you to report maintenance issues and repairs to us via an app or website portal directly. When you submit the report to us, we will receive a notification immediately and can then allocate a tradesperson quickly and easily. It's much quicker and enables us to monitor the progress of work much more closely. The portal will be presented as shown in the image below and it is really very quick and easy to follow.



For a guide on how to use the portal visit:

bristol.anglican.org/diocesan-support-services/housing

Contractors

Only contractors that have been approved by the Property Team are authorised to work at your home as we undertake a number of checks prior to enabling them to work for us. We will not reimburse you for any non-emergency work that does not have pre- authorisation to go ahead as all works that involve expenditure by the Board need to be approved and commissioned by the Property Team in advance.

The occupants are responsible for maintaining a safe environment for themselves, but also for contractors and third parties on the premises. When a contractor is on site undertaking works instructed by the Board, it is important that they are always treated with respect and courtesy, and we would expect them to provide this also.

When accommodating a contractor, the area they are working in should be provided as clean and free of clutter and in the event that a visit is cancelled because of safety concerns, then the Diocese reserves the right to recover costs for the cancelled visit and place any further work on hold until the area is made safe by the occupant.

Please do not undertake any work which would put yourself or others at risk, nor embark on repairs which are beyond your capabilities. It is a legal requirement that work on the electrical installation should only be carried out by a “competent contractor”. Work on the gas installation must only be carried out by Board approved Gas Safe Registered contractors.

Always try to keep to appointments made, avoiding abortive call-out costs for which the Board reserves the right to charge. Contractors will contact you directly for appointments, so please try to keep them and if you must cancel, please try to give as much notice as possible.

Small jobs and repairs

The Board expects occupants to carry out very basic jobs such as replacing missing screws, shelving, replacing toilet seats or hanging pictures, however care should be taken to ensure that you and your family remain safe, therefore please contact us before undertaking any activity that is beyond your capability or that requires working at height, poses any risk of harm or anything that requires structural, electrical or gas works.

Emergency contacts

Gas

In the event of a suspected gas leak do not operate any electrical equipment or switch on devices or light switches in case of sparks. Make sure there are no sources of flames anywhere. Open all windows and doors if you can safely do so. Turn the gas lever near the meter to off if possible and contact the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999** immediately.

Water

Please contact Wessex Water on **0345 600 4600** if you have an emergency water leak out of hours.

Electricity

You will need to contact your own service provider, their emergency contact details should be on your bill.

Emergency repairs

If you have an emergency repair:

- During office hours please call the Property Helpdesk on **0117 906 0060**.
- Out of hours please ring a locally available contractor who works out of hours (See table 1 below)

Notes:

- You will also need to report this to the **property@bristoldiocese.org** so that we are aware of the matter and can then follow up when next in the office).
- If you contact a contractor, ensure that it is only to deal with the emergency and to make safe and not any consequential works, as the cost of this may not be covered by the Board.
- If you have not reported the emergency immediately and we receive an invoice for work we were unaware of, payment might not be made or may be delayed.
- Only out of hours emergency works should be arranged directly with contractors as all other works need to be commissioned by the Property Team.

Table 1: Approved contractors providing emergency call out services

Bristol & South Gloucestershire	North Wiltshire & Swindon
General Builders Element Building Management Ltd 0330 223 2230	General Builders Element Building Management Ltd 0330 223 2230
Drains Maintain-a-Drain 0117 971 4447 Call may divert to the on-call engineer	Drains Maintain-a-Drain 0117 971 4447 Call may divert to the on-call engineer
Electrical (NICEIC) Element Building Management Ltd 0330 223 2230	Electrical (NICEIC) Element Building Management Ltd 0330 223 2230
Plumbing and Heating (gas and oil) Invictus Mechanical - 0117 322 6150/ 07880499457 UES 0117 951 9020 OR 01174528110 (out of hours number)	
Burglar alarms Cannon Security Ltd 0844 879 1703 OR 0117 974 8999 (24hr service) Select Security Solutions 0117 966 4881 (24hr service)	

Compliance matters: Keeping you safe

ASBESTOS: In 2023 The Board undertook portfolio wide Asbestos Management Surveys of all Board owned Clergy Homes. You will be supplied with a copy of the survey on occupation of your new home and copies of certificates evidencing any subsequent removal works as appropriate. If you propose to undertake minor repairs or put holes in walls to erect shelves/pictures, please review the Asbestos Management Survey to check for the presence of asbestos in that area of work.

If you have any questions or need help to interpret the survey, please contact the Property Team who will be happy to assist.

Important: Should you find any material that you suspect to be asbestos that has not already been referred to in the survey, or documented and appears to be damaged, please leave it alone and **contact the Property Team immediately, for investigation.**

ELECTRICAL SAFETY CHECKS: Electrical Installation Condition Inspections are carried out by NICEIC qualified contractors as part of Quinquennial and Interregnum works. No electrical work should be carried out unless commissioned by the Property Team. **Please report electrical concerns immediately to us.**

GAS/OIL BOILER & GAS FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS: Annual safety checks and servicing are arranged by the Property Team. Our appointed contractors and will contact you to agree a convenient time to visit. Please ensure you respond to their request for access. Any problems with your boiler or gas appliances between services **should be reported to the Property Team immediately.**

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS: A carbon monoxide (CO) detector should be present in any room containing a boiler, gas fire, open fire or log/coal burner. If this is not the case, please notify the Property Team who will reimburse you for the purchase of up to two, 10-year, long-life detectors. Please test the detectors weekly.



LEGIONELLA: A legionella and water hygiene risk assessment has been carried out on your home. A copy of the report is held by the Property Team but available upon request. Legionella bacteria are very common and can be found naturally in environmental water sources, hot and cold-water systems, and equipment which use or store water etc.

To prevent it becoming a risk to health, hot water should be stored at a maintained temperature greater than 60°C and should reach 50°C across all parts of the system and cold water should not exceed 20°C across all parts of the cold system. Little used outlets should be thoroughly flushed or run every week and **shower heads and hoses should be cleaned at least every 3 months**. Please inform the Property Team as soon as possible if you have any concerns.

RADON: Radon is a radioactive gas, we can't see, smell or taste it: and you need special equipment to detect it. It is present in the rocks and soil found in some parts of the UK. The radon level in the air we breathe is very low but where high readings are found, it can be higher inside some buildings due to the lack of specialist ventilation.

In 2023, we undertook the UK Health Security Agency, guidance and reviewed all Board properties to determine a level of exposure to radon. We then identified a small number of properties that appeared to be in areas of our Diocese that were more at risk and issued an update and monitoring kit to those occupants. These kits were to remain in place for 3 months to enable readings of any exposure and need for mitigation.

You will be made aware if there is a requirement for a fan to be installed to eliminate any potential risk. Where a property has a radon fan fitted, then it is important that you **keep this switched on at all times** and the fan will need to be serviced every two years.

If you would like to find out more, please review the Government website: www.ukradon.org or contact the Property Team.

Parochial expenditure guidance

It is anticipated that the use of your home in connection with your duties will most certainly incur costs and it is helpful to understand that some of these can be claimed benefit from tax concessions or can be claimed from your Parochial Church Council.

A useful guide is the **Parochial Expenses of the Clergy 2017**.

The document covers the following areas:

- Claims for reimbursement
- PCC accounts
- Expenses incurred in secondary appointments
- Capital items
- Non-stipendiary ministers and retired clergy
- Personal expenditure
- Taxation

For further information on grants and funding, please refer to the Housing Matters A-Z Guide Grants & Funds section or contact the HR Team or your Archdeacon.



Environment & sustainability

The following section describes how occupants can manage heating, hot water and other energy-consuming equipment to help reduce energy costs and maintain comfort levels.

Using TRVs (Thermostatic radiator valves)

If you live in a property with unused rooms, ensure the door to the room is closed and the radiator valve (TRV) is set to 1 or the frost setting (a picture of a snowflake) to ensure you are not heating an unused space.

Use the TRVs to set the temperature in different rooms. It is important to understand the TRV won't affect the rate of heat out of the radiator. This means turning it up to 5 does not make a room heat up faster or make the radiator hotter, instead the room will need to reach a higher temperature before the valve closes. The numbers on the TRV dictate when the radiator will turn off. At 3 the radiator will turn off when the room gets to about 18-20 degrees (each TRV might be set slightly differently). At 4 it will turn off at 20-22 and at MAX it will not turn off no matter how hot the room gets. You can set bedrooms to be cooler, living spaces to be at 4 and other underused spaces to 1 until you want to use them then turn the TRV up. Make sure to remember to turn it down again.

Large energy savings can be achieved by using smart TRVs such as Hive, Honeywell Evo home, Tado or Nest. However, these require a bit more effort to understand how to use them. If you think you would be interested in using these in your home, please contact environment@bristoldiocese.org.

More information: energysavingtrust.org.uk/

Boiler flow temperature

Your boiler will have a dial or similar on the front which allows you to choose how the temperature of the water going round the radiators. In the coldest parts of the year, it might need to be high, around 80 degrees, so that it meets the higher demand for heat. But in the autumn and spring, or at times when it's not so cold outside, the flow temperature can be reduced as far as 50 degrees (This is not the same as the stored water temperature in the legionella paragraph). The exact temperature will be different for each house, so try moving the temperature of the flow down bit by bit and get it as low as is comfortable. Boilers work best when the flow temperature is lower as they go into condensing mode, bringing additional energy savings.

Efficient lighting

Replace fluorescent or other bulbs with LED equivalents. The easiest way to do this is unscrew the bulb and take it to a shop to find the right size and shape LED.

Clothes lines

A tumble dryer is very expensive to run. Install a garden clothes line to make use of free fresh air. Even on a sunny day in winter clothes can be part dried outside and finished off on a radiator . Some examples can be found here [argos.co.uk/washing-lines](https://www.argos.co.uk/washing-lines)

Efficient cooking

Microwaves are one of the most efficient and quickest way to cook. Use it to reheat food instead of your gas hob and not only will you save money but the air quality in your home will improve. Part cook baked potatoes in the microwave before finishing them in the oven to speed up and reduce costs of cooking.



When using the hob make sure to match the pan to the right sized ring to avoid wasting heat at the sides. Always cook with a lid to keep the heat in the pan and prevent your kitchen from getting too damp.

Have you tried a slow cooker, pressure cooker or air fryer? These are all ways to reduce your energy costs. Deciding which one is right for you depends on what you cook, how often and for how many people. There is a lot of information online to help you decide which is best. Start with this article.

Showers

To reduce hot water use, a shower timer can help keep showers to 4 minutes. Consider swapping your shower head for a low flow head. However, only do this if your shower is fed from the main system. If it is electric, then it is not recommended. More information at [savewatersavemoney.co.uk/products/showers](https://www.savewatersavemoney.co.uk/products/showers).

Housing Matters – Your A-Z guide

Adaptations

The Board will consider funding adaptations to the house for the occupant, spouse and children as required by an occupational therapist, where no other funding streams are available to the occupier. (Please refer to our Disability adaptations at home link on the Property page for more detailed information and contacts)

The Board will not adapt properties for occasional visitors nor anyone staying at the property other than the occupant, spouse and their children.

The property is a private dwelling and as such does not come under the Equalities Act. It is not therefore appropriate or possible for the Board to make adaptations to properties for visitors. It is recommended that for the purposes of meeting the requirements of the Equalities Act that clergy make “alternative provisions” such as meeting individuals at a different location.



Absences or sabbaticals

If you are planning a period where you will be staying away from your vicarage that would extend beyond the normal expectation for a holiday. Please consider what support should be put in place during the period to ensure your home remains safe, secure and well maintained. In many cases a Church Warden or PCC member will be pleased to assist you carrying out a weekly check on the property but if this is not possible, please ask the Property Team for support with this or notify us if you have a friend/other house sitting. It is important to always inform the property team of the intended vacancy as this will impact upon insurance cover and also poses risk of damage should storm damage/ or other go unnoticed and repaired.

Fire/ Smoke alarms

The Board is responsible for the installation and any replacement of alarms. The occupant is advised to test the alarms weekly and ensure that all the alarms in the property are working.

The occupant should keep a log of testing and advise the property team of any fault. The occupier is responsible for battery changes.

Security Alarms

We do not actively install new alarm systems in properties and therefore the installation and maintenance of security alarms is the responsibility of the occupant if installed by the occupant.

Intruder Alarms can be left in-situ when the house is vacated, but no guarantee is given to the incoming occupant of the functioning of the intruder alarm. It will not be serviced unless this has been agreed with the occupant, as many remain unused. Should it be identified that an alarm is necessary to meet personal circumstances, we will install and continue to maintain that alarm.



The Board does not routinely install CCTV in properties unless there has been an identified need confirmed by the safeguarding team. We do, however, offer to reimburse clergy purchases of a ring doorbell that enables viewing of the caller on a phone should they wish to take this offer up.

Where existing CCTV is in place, please let us know if you wish it to be decommissioned otherwise, we the Board will maintain this.

Carbon monoxide alarms

The Board is responsible for the installation and any necessary replacement of alarms. The occupant is advised to test the alarms weekly and ensure that all the alarms in the property are working. The occupant should keep a log of testing and advise the property team of any fault. The occupier is responsible for battery changes.

Alterations

The occupant cannot make any additions or alterations to the property without the Property Team's prior written consent. Such consent may be provided if all work is reinstated upon vacation. Alterations include structural and non- structural works, plumbing or electrical works. Occupants can erect shelves, mounted TVs and pictures, but you must remove the items and make good the holes and decorations when you vacate. If you install a stairgate for children or animals, during your occupancy please remove and make good any damage before vacating the property.

Bathrooms

The Board does not repair or replace lavatory seats, which are the occupier's responsibility. Shower curtains are also the responsibility of the occupant. Lavatory brushes, toothbrush holders will not be provided, however a lavatory roll holder and mirror will be provided. Shaver sockets are not provided as standard, but some properties may already contain them following installation by a previous occupant.



Bees and Wasps

If you discover you have a bee or wasp nest in your home, please contact the Property Team as soon as possible, and we will provide advice and support to manage this.

Bins & Waste

The occupant is responsible for Bins/ Waste management and should ensure that rubbish and unwanted possessions are removed from all parts of the house and garden as soon as possible.

Rubbish, soil or other material piled against the wall of the house may allow damp to bridge above the damp proof course, and this must be avoided.

The occupant is responsible for sorting all bins and recycling and putting them out for collected on the designated days. If a bin is damaged, missing or needs replacing the occupant should contact the local authority to arrange for a replacement.

If the occupants require a green bin for garden waste, they will need to make the necessary arrangements with the local authority at their own expense.



Boundaries

The Board are responsible for all boundaries where there is a legal liability, this includes walls and fences. The Board does not meet the cost of fencing which needs erection due to the occupant having children or animals, fencing is erected to delineate a boundary only. Should you plan to install additional fencing, please seek consent from the Property Team in advance.

Business from home

If a member of a clergy household wishes to carry on a trade or business of any type from within the property, he/she must first obtain the written consent of the Board. This is because some activities may be detrimental to the state of the house, relations with neighbours or the work of the church.

In some houses the options may be restricted by covenants which prohibit business activity, in which case the Board is not at liberty to grant permission. If any business activity increases the Board's expenditure on the house (e.g. business rates), the occupier will be expected to pay the difference.



The following guidelines apply to all clergy who live in benefice, glebe, DBF or parochial trust properties, and whose homes are used by any person (e.g. a spouse) to carry out business or other non-domestic activities.

Such activities may be as varied as professional counselling, manufacturing or retail trading.

The Board seeks neither to encourage nor discourage such use, but is concerned that clergy should be aware of the possible implications and that the wider interests of the Diocese and parishes should be protected.

No alterations may be made to any house without the agreement of the Board. Clergy should be mindful of the possible effect on the building insurance cover arranged by the Board. This is particularly true if the business activity involves retailing, manufacturing, or the storage of potentially harmful materials. (NB household contents insurance, which is not the concern of the Board, may also be affected.)

Council tax is paid by the Board for stipendiary clergy. If a business use results in the imposition of a standard business rate, the occupier will be liable.

The possible effects on neighbours (e.g. through increase in traffic volume) or on the normal functioning of the house in church/parish use (e.g. through the inappropriate storage of large quantities of material) must be considered.

The deeds for some houses contain restrictive covenants which prohibit business use or any use other than residential. This must be checked in each case with the Property Team. Some forms of non-domestic use may require planning consent for change of use.

The Board should be informed in writing of all business use and such use should not begin until the Board's written consent is received. In the case of parochial trust properties, the consent of the PCC will also be necessary. This should be done retrospectively for existing businesses.

It is important that no third party is able to acquire a protected interest in the property, e.g. a business tenancy of the property or part of it under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. If in doubt, it is important that clergy contact the Property Team.

The Board has legally defined responsibilities for clergy houses, covering such matters as maintenance, insurance, alteration and disposal. The Board cannot accept any additional cost or liability (including all taxes) arising from the use of a house as a place of business; these must be borne by the incumbent.

Carpets and Flooring

The Board is responsible for replacement floor coverings to kitchens, utility rooms, bathrooms and WC's upon vacancy and will ensure these are installed prior to your occupation. If an occupant damages or takes up any flooring in these areas it is their responsibility to ensure the flooring and any threshold strips are replaced on a like for like basis.

Due to the high costs of replacing carpets and the environmental impact of this in manufacture, transport and waste, we do not replace carpets upon vacancy however, where a serviceable carpet remains, we will aim to retain it for the next occupant. Should you wish to install or change an existing carpet, you are permitted to. The Clergy resettlement grant referred further in this document is provisioned for such items as carpet and blinds in particular.

Cooker hoods

You are requested to regularly (every 3 months) check and replace cooker hood filters and clean the cooker hoods to avoid a build-up of grease deposits which pose a serious risk in the event of a cooker fire.

Chimneys

The regular sweeping of existing chimneys used for open fires or any solid fuel stove is essential for your safety. Where chimneys are used, sweeping is the responsibility of the occupier and should be undertaken at least annually. If you are unable to arrange this, it is asked that you contact the Property Team regarding the blocking up of the fireplace. The Board may ask for a copy of the paid invoice for their records.

In line with the National Church, the Diocese of Bristol's carbon net zero ambitions, and the government's targeting of pollution reduction from household burning we do not support the new installation of log burners and open fires will be blocked up prior to new occupation, where possible. If you wish to access further information on this a good starting point is: [Government takes action to cut pollution from household burning - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-action-to-cut-pollution-from-household-burning)



Clergy Welfare Fund

Licensed Clergy in the Diocese of Bristol can be supported by the Clergy Society, which is an amalgamation of various historic trusts. The Clergy Society may make discretionary grants including, but not limited to: provision of household goods, emergency household and transport expenses, support for holiday and retreat costs, counselling, some medical/support costs. School fees are not covered. Please contact your Archdeacon for more information, and for details of other charitable bodies which may be approached.

Compensation

There is a responsibility on the Board to seek compensation from the occupant if it considers repairs are “necessary by reason of damage caused or aggravated by any deliberate act of the occupant”. The Board may ask occupants to pay for the making good of any repairs needed as deemed appropriate and may take proceedings for their enforcement.

Council Tax

The Board pays your Council Tax directly to the local authority on your behalf therefore please let the Property Team know the number of adults living in your household and if there are any changes of circumstances during your occupation.

Council Tax is paid based on two adults (over 18 years old) living on the property although discounts are available for some adult occupiers i.e. full time students, student nurses, school or college leavers, those still in receipt of child benefits, apprentices, hospital patients, patients in nursing and care homes, those who are severely mentally impaired, carers and care workers and those in receipt of certain pension credits.

Where we are aware of a sole-occupant for which we are responsible, the Board will claim a Council Tax rebate for Single Occupancy. Please be aware that where occupants live alone, and their circumstances change, this must be communicated to the Property Team ASAP. To incorrectly claim a Single Occupancy rebate is a breach of the law by the occupier - NOT the Board, thus it is important you communicate with the Property Team to ensure your house has the correct number of people registered for Council Tax, this is your responsibility **not** the Board's.



The Property Team also needs to be informed if there is a single occupier where previously more than one adult has lived in the house as a discount can be applied, saving upon potential wastage of parish share funds.

The Board will not pay Council tax for anyone outside of the immediate household, (for example lodgers) therefore, any additional cost will need to be borne by the occupant and will be re-charged to them by the Board.

Please ensure you provide the Property Team with full details of the adults in the household to ensure the correct Council Tax is paid, this is a legal requirement for you as the occupant. If you are in any doubt as to what the Council Tax status is for the property, please contact the Property Team.

Curtains, blinds, tracks and poles

The fitting of curtains, blinds, tracks and poles are the responsibility of the occupant and upon vacation, these items may be left for the next occupant or taken onwards. If the property already has curtains, blinds and/or poles we will often leave these in situ for the new occupants who are welcome to utilise or replace to their own taste at their own cost.



Damage & compensation

The Board has adopted a pro-active approach to any damage caused by the occupant and reserves the right to recover the cost of damage caused during the occupancy of the property. The provisions of section 13(4) of the Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 will apply to the occupier paying for repairs resulting from a lack of reasonable care of the property.

Damp and Mould

Many homes suffer from condensation, simply a result of warm, moisture-laden air meeting a cold surface and turning from a warm vapour into condensing water droplets. Condensation is more prevalent in the winter when the air in your house is much warmer than the air outside. You will be creating a lot of moisture in your home just from day-to-day living.

For example, 2 people in 1 day could naturally create 3 pints of water, cooking and boiling a kettle may produce 6 further pints of water, shower could create 1 pint of water and drying clothes in the house could create a staggering 9 pints of water!

The ways to tackle condensation is by firstly stopping the moisture building up, this could be by wiping down surfaces where moisture settles, drying clothes outside, closing the kitchen and bathroom doors when in use, putting on kitchen and bathroom extractor fans when the rooms are in use, ensuring any tumble driers are vented to the outside. Ventilating your home can also assist with condensation. When cooking or washing open windows or using extractors, open windows in your house to ventilate the house. When using nighttime breathing apparatus, please ensure that a window is opened, If you must dry clothes in your house, do so in a small room and leave the windows open, ensure air vents are not blocked, keep air circulating in your home by not overfilling cupboards and under bed space, leaving a gap between furniture and walls.

Keep your home warm by maintaining a low heat when the weather is cold or wet. When the whole house is warmer, condensation is less likely to form.

Please use every attempt to follow this guidance: nea.org.uk/Dealing-with-damp-and-condensation

Death in service

Following the death of a serving clergy person, the members of the household should be re-assured that they will be able to remain in the house for a period of 3 months following the death of the clergy person. Please liaise with your Archdeacon regarding this and we will seek to be as accommodating as possible.



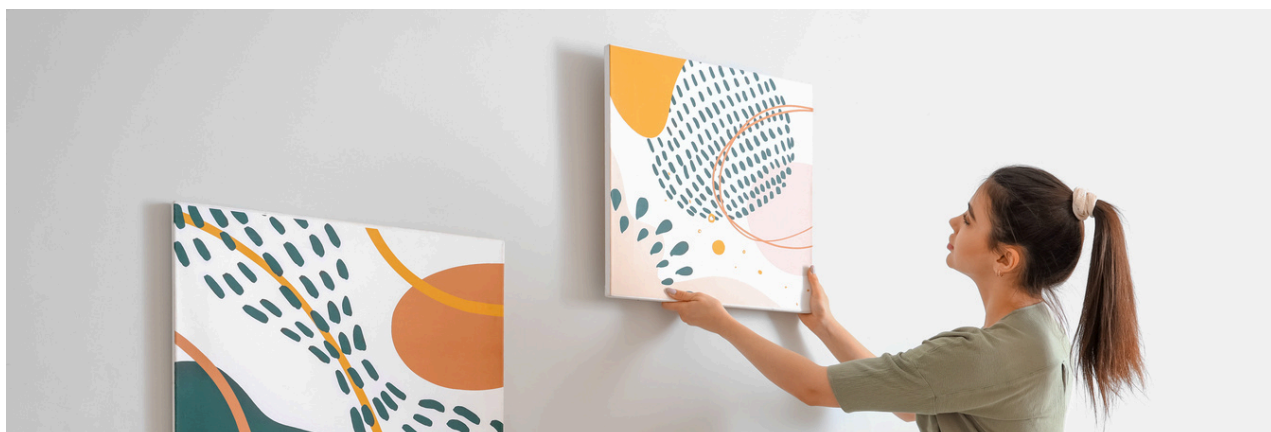
Decorations External

The Board are responsible for external decorations to the property and these are scheduled in as surveyed necessary, often opportunity is taken when carrying out other external work such as during a quinquennial.



Decorations Internal

The Property Team do not as standard redecorate the vicarage upon vacancy as there is a grant available to support you with this and to enable you to personalise your own home. The occupant can redecorate as they wish but will be responsible for their own internal decorations. The Board requests that no textured paints, motifs or stickers are applied to walls or doors and that the house is returned to us in good clean decorative order and a neutral colour scheme. Please therefore avoid strong colours if you are not prepared to redecorate prior to your departure.



Should the Board have cause to re-decorate upon your vacation due to the guidance not being followed, costs will be sought from the occupant.

There is a decorating grant that is made available to incumbents every 5 years to a value of £1500. If you wish to take this up, contact the Property Team directly and they can advise.

Drains

In order to keep the drains and sewage system working well, please avoid pouring fatty substances including cooking oil down the sink and drains. Do not put paint down the drains and wet wipes or other non-biodegradable items should not be flushed down the lavatory.

Blockages to internal drains (sinks, shower, toilets) due to misuse are not the Board's responsibility and where such blockages occur, the Board reserves the right to re-charge the cost of rectification to you.

In the first instance you should endeavour to unblock it yourself or to call a plumber. For any blockage due to a fabric defect, such as a collapsed drain, repairs are the responsibility of the Board.

Disability support (Please also see the section under Adaptions)

We recognise and appreciate that it is important to ensure that your home is appropriate for you and your immediate family's requirements regarding disability and accessibility. Please be aware that the Property Team are not informed of any individual needs for adaptation or adjustment and recognise that not everyone is comfortable with sharing such information. If this is the case, please do raise with either the HR Team, your Archdeacon, or the Diocese Disability Advisor who can ensure you are heard and supported and then navigate the matter with us confidentially.

We have also produced a short guide that you may find as a useful on grants, adaptations and network support, particularly if you are new to the area. The leaflet can be found here: [Housing - Diocese of Bristol](#)



Disputes

Should there be a dispute about the performance of the respective obligations of the Board or the office holder please do raise concerns first with the Housing and Glebe Team or the Head of Housing & Glebe to enable them to assist you.

The Board takes seriously any concerns and will follow the Board's 'Complaints Policy & Procedure' for all cases that require escalation to ensure matters are reviewed and intervention undertaken where required.

Doorbells

Should a doorbell be required, we can supply a 'Ring' doorbell which has the additional feature of a camera to assist with your safety when opening the door. If you wish to take up this offer, please contact the Property Team. Please note that this is limited to one per property unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Electric car charging points

The Board does not install electric car charging points as standard as not everyone has access to an electric vehicle currently. If the occupant wishes to install one, they should seek to undertake the government grant scheme following receipt of the certificates and a receipt for payment of installation (up to £600) the Board will reimburse the cost.

The occupant must leave the unit in good working order upon vacation of the property. Please note: We do not reimburse the cost of charging points for motorhomes or for non-Diocese 'business' vehicles (eg Vans). Any other EV charging points or additional chargers should be funded by the occupant.



Electrical works

The Board is responsible for undertaking a 5 yearly electrical installation condition survey on all residential Board property. Please ensure that you support any requests to carry this work out as it is important to keep your home safe for you.

For safety reasons, no works to the electrical installations are permitted by the occupant unless prior written consent is obtained by the Property Team.

Extractor Fans



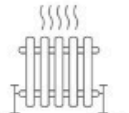


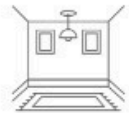
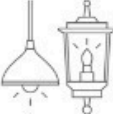











Where provided the Board is responsible for the repair or replacement of extractor fans, the occupant is responsible for keeping them clean and removing dust and grime from the cover and replacing the filters. If doing this, please ensure the fan is switched off / isolated beforehand. Please ensure they are switched on when cooking or showering/bathing as this will help to reduce condensation.

FixFlo

Our issue maintenance and repair reporting system enables you to report maintenance issues and repairs to us. - See Repairs and maintenance section at start of document. For a guide on how to use the portal:

bristol.anglican.org/diocesan-support-services/housing.

Please select the relevant picture

 Bathroom and Toilet	 Kitchen	 Heating and boiler	 Water and Leaks	 Doors, Garages and Locks	 Internal floors, walls and ceilings
 Lighting	 Window	 Exterior and Garden	 Electricity	 Hot Water	 Alarms and Smoke Detectors
 Pests/Vermin	 Roof	 Stairs	 Property services	 Smell Gas?	 Smell Oil?

Gardens

Gardens are the responsibility of the occupant, for keeping them clean and tidy, which entails mowing the lawns regularly, trimming hedges/bushes and weeding flower beds. Please ensure all drives and paths are cleaned to remove all moss and leaves that may cause them to become hazardous. Please ensure no ivy or other climbing plants can navigate the walls of the property as this can be very damaging to the building.

Invasive plants

Japanese Knotweed

Some properties may have Japanese Knotweed present. Where this has been identified, the Property Team will ensure that this is treated in line with Government guidance. If you suspect that you may have Japanese Knotweed, or a neighbour has some, please contact the Property Team immediately, so that we can arrange treatment or discussion with the neighbour. Please do not delay any treatment works required and be aware that you must permit access for treatment if there is a threat to a neighbour's property. For identification and more information, a useful guide is located here: [Japanese knotweed / RHS Gardening](#)



Bamboo

This is very commonly found in gardens across the Diocese and it is planted often because it is a fast growing and decorative plant for screening and in many cases can pose little concern. The problem often concerns where the more invasive species of Bamboo are planted or where the plants are left unmanaged and able to spread quickly and extensively with the fibrous roots rapidly producing new shoots and extending over many meters at pace. It is recommended to avoid planting Bamboo unless it is in tubs or containers that prevent spread. For identification and more information, a useful guide is: [Bamboo control / RHS Gardening](#)

Fencing and gates

Your vicarage will have received appropriate repairs to any fences or gates when in vacancy and the boundaries are as identified upon your visit at interview unless stated otherwise by the Property Team.

Where pets (See also Livestock) are being introduced to a property, it is the occupant's responsibility to make the necessary changes or adaptations to accommodate, following confirmation of approval in writing from the Property Team. We do not supply locks for garden gates and ask that upon departure any locks are removed unless keys are made available.

Garden sheds, greenhouses and structures

Occupants can erect sheds, greenhouses and other garden structures at their own expense if you remove them upon vacation unless consent is given in writing by the Property Team.

If the property already has a shed, greenhouse or other structure at the property when you moved in these become the occupant's responsibility and not the responsibility of the Board with regard to any repair or maintenance.

On occasions the Board may provide a wooden shed/structure. The Board is responsible for these assets and will repair and maintain them, however if the Board deems, they are beyond repair they will not be replaced.

General data protection regulations (GDPR)

It is essential we can pass on your contact details and name to contractors. If you do not wish us to pass on your email address, phone number or name you need to notify us otherwise we will deem it acceptable to pass your details to third parties undertaking works at the property so they can contact you for appointments direct.

Gutters, downpipes & water butts

The Property Team routinely clear gutters and flush through down pipes as part of the 5 yearly quinquennial process. This does however require doing much more often, particularly for homes with large trees close by. All gutters and downpipes should be cleared at least twice a year, but particularly during the autumn season, after most leaves have fallen from the trees.

It is the responsibility of the occupant to arrange this work, however we can supply a list of contractors for you to contact and in the later part of 2024, we will be carrying out a tender exercise for this work and aim to have some contracts in place to make it easier for you to arrange the work.

If you install a water butt please ensure the overflow is connected back into the downpipe to prevent damp. The Board is not liable for water butts, these remain your responsibility.

Please note that any connections to downpipes should be made good upon water butt removal and or vacating the property.

Grants and funds

Please see:

- Clergy Society
- Redecoration Grant
- Settlement & Resettlement Grants

Heating & hot water

The occupier is responsible for paying the gas and/ or electric bill directly to the service provider of their selection and/ or ordering and paying for the oil tank to be filled.

At move in, the Property Team representative will explain to you how the heating system works and there may also be instructions left with you if the system is new or presents new technologies.

The occupant can of course contact the property team if they have further queries, and we will do our best to assist, but please be advised that any contractor call outs for educational purposes will not be arranged.

Boilers

The Board is responsible for servicing the boiler. Gas servicing is undertaken annually, and we would appreciate your co-operation regarding access to undertake this safety check for you in a timely manner. Whilst servicing the boiler the contractor will also service any gas fires you may have in the house, please highlight these to the engineer on the day to ensure they are fully aware and should anything be missed, please let the Property Team know asap.

Running out of oil can cause damage to the boiler, as occupant you are responsible for checking the oil level. If you are unsure how to do this, we can show you on handover day or please call us. If you do run out of oil, then you will need to organise and pay for our contractor to rectify any damage caused. Do not solely rely on gauges or monitors, please do check the levels via a visual inspection and arrange regular top-ups. The Board will not be liable for any damage caused due to faulty readings on gauges or monitors.

Instruction booklets or manuals

All instruction booklets/manuals should be kept in a safe place and close to hand should any engineer/contractor be on site and want to undertake any servicing or repair of the appliances at the property.

Insulation

Cavity wall – TC.T Carbon Net Zero upgrades

The Board are currently upgrading cavity walls where appropriate with piped insulation (Type dependent on the property/ cavity size and shape)

Loft insulation/ pipe lagging – TC.T Carbon Net Zero upgrades

The Board are currently reviewing loft insulation depths and condition and where necessary, insulation levels are being topped up with mineral wool fibre to a 'minimum' of 300mm. Where practical we will also insulate loft hatches and lag pipes in the roof space.



Insurance

Buildings

Currently the insurer is Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, and the Board insure all our parsonage property within a combined policy. We annually negotiate the contract to ensure it provides appropriate cover for our homes' diverse needs, is cost effective and we benefit from long-term good relations with the insurers, who have a clear understanding of a Diocese environment.

The building's insurance covers the cost of repairing damage to the structure of the property. Garages, sheds (if the property of the Diocese) and fences are also covered, as well as the cost of replacing items such as pipes, cables and drains if the damage / loss is due to an insured peril.

Buildings insurance usually covers loss or damage caused by:

- fire, explosion, storms, floods, earthquakes
- theft, attempted theft and vandalism
- frozen and burst pipes
- fallen trees, lampposts, aerials or satellite dishes
- subsidence
- vehicle or aircraft collisions

When reporting a maintenance issue to the Property Team, they will review if the issue is a possible insurance claim matter or a maintenance defect for direct repair scheduling.

Contents

Contents cover is the responsibility of the occupier. It is important that occupiers make their own arrangements for the insurance of their personal possessions.

Accidental damage

Any accidental damage caused to the property or garden/fences/boundaries by the occupant, is to be immediately notified to the Property Team and any damage will be made good at the occupant's own expense. If the Board is able to make a successful claim against its buildings insurance the occupant will be responsible for paying any excesses.

Keys

The replacement of locks and keys as a result of loss or theft rests with the occupier and is often covered by their contents insurance policy. The responsibility does not lie with the Board.

All keys including out buildings, garages and gates should be left with the property team at the property handover meeting on departure.

Key Safe

If there is a Key safe at your home, the key safe number will be changed prior to your arrival and we will provide you with the access code for this on request. If you wish to change it, please do let the property team know what the new number is so that we can keep a record for emergencies and /or the next occupant.



Light Fittings - Internal

The Board is responsible for providing appropriate light fittings/pendant however, any shades or replacement bulbs are the occupier's responsibility. The Board does not provide additional lighting i.e. in cupboards, alcoves or under the counter. If these were in-situ prior to your arrival, we will ensure they are checked when the electrics are tested, but if they fail, they will not be replaced.

Light Fittings – External

We do not install exterior lighting as standard to Board properties, however many of the properties have it in some form. Where lighting is already installed, we will check the functionality and bulbs prior to your arrival. The Board will maintain any external security lighting above 2.5m including changing bulbs. Where lighting is safely accessible from the ground, the occupant will be responsible for the changing of bulbs.

Limescale

Limescale is prevalent in many parts of this Diocese. The Board does not supply water softeners as standard but if one exists in your property, we will maintain it. Occupants wishing to install a water softener must get the Property Team's prior written consent.

Limescale causes a large number of call outs that could be avoided; therefore, we would be grateful if you could regularly descale shower heads, taps and the WC to prevent build-up. Please contact the Property Team if you need any advice on this.

Listed buildings

We are fortunate to be the custodians of a small number of heritage and listed buildings for which we have a responsibility to care, maintain, and sympathetically repair and improve. We are also aware that with they often come with compromise in comfort or complications when improving or adapting them. If you are unsure if your home is listed, please contact us and we can inform you. Alternatively, a handy search is available here: [Heritage List for England](#) where you can find the designation and also the listing detail.

Please do not make any changes to the property without checking with the Property Team if you are aware or unsure it is listed.

Livestock

Whilst we do not encourage the holding of livestock on the vicarage plots, we are very aware that there have been some occupants who have managed this very well historically.

We therefore request that if you are seeking to introduce animals other than domestic ones to your garden site, please do seek written consent from the Board prior to introduction as there may be planning or covenants affecting your rights to do so in place. Additionally, should you have neighbours in close proximity, it is wise to discuss the plan with them to avoid potential conflict.

Should you utilise the land for livestock, we request that the land is returned to the Property Team with vacant possession and in the condition of which it was originally provisioned to you.

Please note that the Board do not provide additional fencing or sheds and stabling for this purpose and any requirements must be funded by the occupant.



Lodgers or tenants

The Diocesan Clergy Handbook includes a brief section at 5.4 regarding lodgers and tenants. A copy of the revised diocesan guidelines is contained in Appendix 2. Please note that, apart from clergy with a Freehold ownership, permission is required before taking a lodger.

In all cases the guidance within the Appendix 2 must be followed.

If you have an existing lodger who was in occupation prior to this guide being issued (April 2025) please contact the Property Team so that we can register this and please note that the guidance will still apply. You are of course permitted to allow members of your household to reside in the property with you however please do let us know if any are over the age of 18 or approaching this age as we will need to provide them with a license for occupation. This does not affect their rights to live with you at the property, it means that upon your own departure, we are able to regain the property for the next member of clergy without potential challenges.

Multiple Occupations

If a house is classified by the local authority as being a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) because of subsequent arrangements made by the occupant, they will be responsible for any fee charged by the authority. HMOs are identified by the separate use of facilities (e.g., separate bathrooms, kitchens, mealtimes) and by the number of unrelated persons in occupation. Classification of a house as a HMO can prove very expensive for the Board and clergy are asked to consult the Property Team before making any arrangements which might lead to this. Fire safety matters are a priority and there are very specific requirements for HMOs.

A definition of a HMO can be found in the Housing Act 2004, however there are small differences in how they are managed and licensed in Local Authorities, therefore please see below for the links to your own LA.

- Bristol City Council: [Check if you need a property licence and apply. \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#)
- South Gloucestershire Council: [Houses in multiple occupation | BETA - South Gloucestershire Council \(southglos.gov.uk\)](#)
- Wiltshire Council: [Houses in multiple occupation - Wiltshire Council](#)

Ovens & white goods (fitted Appliances)

The Board in many properties now provides an electric oven and hob (inductor) and in some properties a fridge freezer or occasionally a dishwasher also be present as part of a fitted kitchen.

The Board does not as standard provide white goods such as washing machines, dishwashers, tumble driers or fridge freezers, however they may be already in situ within the property or from a previous occupation.

Where Board installed integrated appliances and ovens are installed at the property, these become your responsibility upon occupation of the property for any necessary repairs and for ensuring cleaning upon departure. The Board is not liable should they need repair or maintenance and provides no guarantees as to the condition of these goods upon your occupation of the house. The Board is responsible for replacing any integrated appliances or cookers that are confirmed beyond economic repair.

The occupant is liable for the installation of your own white goods, and you must therefore employ a suitably qualified electrician, plumber, or gas engineer. Work on a gas installation must only be carried out by Board approved Gas Safe Registered contractors.

Alterations to fitted kitchens to adapt them for new appliances are not permitted unless written permission from the Property Team has been obtained.

Parish use

It is acknowledged that the property will on occasions be used for parish meetings etc. However, any permanent use of the property as a parish office is not permitted unless consent in writing is obtained by the Property Team and a license agreement is put in place between yourself and the PCC. Please contact the Property Team for a pro-forma.

Any such parish use will cease upon your vacation, and you must ensure the parish had made arrangements to relocate, as this occupation may not be the incoming occupant's preference.

You are reminded that the function of the property is to be very much your home and a base for ministry; it is not provided to be a parish office. If there is a parish use of your home already you will need to contact the Property Department in order to regularise this occupation.

The Property Team keeps a log of all parish use, and it is essential to report any parish use as there may be insurance and health and safety requirements to consider or costs relating to their occupation in your home.

Party Walls

Where a boundary is owned by our property, then the boundary walls and fences will be maintained by the Property Team. Some boundaries are shared a 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.

As occupier, you are our local eyes and ears, should you become aware of any encroachment onto our property please advise the Property Team immediately, likewise, should you become aware of any planning application on neighbouring property or land please advise the Property Team so that we can judge if such application will have any detrimental effect on our property.

Please do not allow neighbours or third parties to have access over our property as such actions can give rise to permanent rights. Should you receive a Party Wall notice from a neighbour, please pass this onto the Property Team for review and action as soon as possible, as these notices have a two month notice period. Failure to do this can impinge upon your peaceful occupation of the property.

Pest Control

The Board is not responsible for pest/vermin control unless this has been identified as an ongoing concern upon occupation of the property. In exceptional circumstances the Board will undertake preventative work to ensure further infestations can be prevented. Should you have any queries please contact the Property Team for advice.



Pets

Domestic pets are permitted in Board houses, any damage caused by pets is to be made good at the occupant's own cost and the Board reserves the right to recover costs for damages caused by pets if not remedied.

Written permission is required from the Property Team for the fitting of a cat/dog flap and, upon vacation, the opening is to be fully reinstated to the original condition.

The Board is not responsible for new fencing requirements for accommodating pets, for which any self funded fencing should seek written permission should be sought from the Property Team first and is the responsibility of the occupant to maintain thereafter.

Photovoltaic solar panels (PV)

If the property has a PV installation. Please inform your chosen provider that the property has them installed. During normal use generation data is sent automatically via SIM card, however, you may be contacted by an independent meter reader who will require access to provide a verified reading. You can benefit from cheaper electricity by using appliances when the panels are generating during the day. Please contact the Property Team for more information if you are unsure about their operation.

Ponds

You are discouraged from creating ornamental ponds in gardens. If a pond already exists, the Property Team will arrange to have it filled in upon request. Should you choose to retain a pond then you will be responsible for its maintenance and for the safety of anyone around it.



Quinquennial inspections

The quinquennial survey is a requirement under the 'Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972: Section 4' and will be conducted on your home every 5 years and where possible, this survey is carried out prior to your occupation.

The Property Officer will contact you to book an appointment for a surveyor to visit your property at a mutually agreeable time. Where possible we appreciate your co-operation with this as scheduling around twenty quinquennials each year in a short period can be quite a challenge.

The quinquennial survey itself undertakes an inspection of the condition of the house and grounds. Access should be provided to all areas including roof spaces where possible in order to facilitate this inspection.

The inspection covers the condition of the external fabric of the house and the internal fittings; it does not include internal decorations. A copy of the Quinquennial will be sent to you upon completion and you will have the opportunity to make comment or to highlight any concerns for a period of up to one month from receipt of the report. The works are subject to funding being available, therefore should there be an additional request in your commentary, we will consider this against the appropriateness for the property, the need and funding available.

We will then finalise the schedule of works for all properties in co-ordination with your Archdeacon and put the works to tender. During this period, we are required to tender to a minimum of three contractors where possible and as such there will be a short period of visitation by the contractors to enable them to price the works. We recognise that this can be inconvenient and will endeavor to co-ordinate these visits on one day or closely where we can, but please do try and support us where this may not be possible as we are seeking to get the best job done for you in doing this.

Finally, once tenders are in and programming of works has been completed, we will be in touch to explain the next steps, time scales and to understand if there are any dates to avoid or special requirements we need to take into account.

Redecoration Grant

A redecoration grant of up to £1500 is available to incumbents every 5 years and in most cases we can offer this at the start of your occupancy to enable you to decorate your home to suit. Should you wish to take this grant offer up, please contact the Property Team directly.

Resettlement grants/ one-off settlement grant

Resettlement Grants are paid by the Board and can be used for a variety of homemaking and has traditionally provisioned clergy with carpets and curtains etc. Currently a grant is made available for a first appointment of £2867.00. On this first appointment, you will additionally qualify for the resettlement grant of £2867.00.

The resettlement grant is then available for each house move thereafter. Please contact the HR Department for details if you have any queries on this.



Roof spaces / Lofts/ Attics - See also Insulation

A roof space is not recommended to be utilised for storage of items and furniture. There are significant access and loading risks presented in this and many of our roof spaces are not boarded for access with those that do have boarding, not inspected for integrity and therefore cannot be relied upon to support persons or storage items. It is also likely that items stored in the roof space may perish given the climate and risk of water ingress and strongly discouraged.

Satellite dishes & TV aerials

The Board is not liable for any satellite dishes or TV aerials. You will need written consent from the Property Team to erect one as there may be covenants or planning issues to consider. You may be required to remove any satellite dishes or TV aerials and make good any damage.



Second Homes

Should you have a home that you own and rent out to others, please be aware that if you are residing in a Parsonage it is recognised as your 'Primary Residence' and may therefore present increased Council Tax charges on your rental property following the introduction of the new Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 that is positioned to come into force in April 2025. It is also possible there could be some impact in relation to Capital Gains Tax for some.

The Property Team are unable to advise you further on these matters but would advise sourcing independent financial advice if you have concerns.

Septic tanks & other private sewerage systems

The Board is responsible for all repairs and maintenance to septic tanks and the costs of emptying them. You will need to notify the Property Helpdesk in advance of when they require emptying, so the Department can arrange appropriate contractors.

If you are unsure if you have a septic tank and would like to confirm, please contact the Property Team.

Shelving – Vicarages only

The Board will provide shelving for up to a maximum of 20 linear metres in the study. If you wish to put up your own shelves in addition to this in the property you may be required to remove them upon vacation and make good the wall – This should be discussed at the survey one month prior to departure.



Smoke detectors

Your property should be fitted with two alarms one on each floor of the house. These are either battery operated or hard-wired in. The Property Team is responsible for any necessary replacement or repair, but regular checking/testing and battery replacement is an occupant responsibility. Please ensure that you test your detectors weekly by pushing the test button on the face of the unit. The Board will recharge for contractor call outs where a battery required replacing.

Statutory notices

If you receive any statutory notices, please try to forward them to the Property Team immediately. This will include any planning, highways or local authority notices.

Telephone and internet

The installation of a telephone or broadband line from your network provider is your responsibility along with the subsequent costs. Where a PCC has done this on your behalf, they are responsible for the termination of the line and return of any equipment upon vacancy. Should you have additional costs that are causing hardship, please discuss this with your Archdeacon directly.

Third party rights

It is important that you do not make arrangements for the use of, or access across any part of the property without prior written consent of the Property Team. This is intended to avoid unintentionally binding a successor into an arrangement which may not be suitable for them. This includes third party lettings.

If the occupant notices any change in boundary by an adjoining neighbour or posed encroachment, please report the matter to the Property Team.

Trees

The Board is responsible for any large trees on the property; however we are not always able to be aware of matters and therefore we appreciate your support in notifying the Property Team where you have any concerns.



Note: Some trees could be subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) which means they cannot be pruned or cut down without permission. There may also be restrictions in place due to the area being a conservation area. If you wish to check the status of a tree, please contact the Property Team.

Occupants are requested not to plant any trees within 12 meters of the property and actively discouraged from planting Leylandiis. If an occupant plants a Leylandiis and it is unmanaged, the Board will hold the occupant responsible for any necessary reduction and or removal works needed.

The Board will meet the cost of the pruning or taking down any large tree which:

- threatens the structure of buildings or overhands the public highway;
- has become (or likely to become) dangerous;
- has grown too large for the site.

Trees will not be removed by the Board for cosmetic reasons. If you wish to remove a tree yourself, please seek prior written permission of the Property Team.

Warranties

If there are any warranties that are applicable to the property, the Property Team will make you aware of these. Once you are aware of these any breaches in the warranty will be held as your responsibility and any remediations/work needed that need to be paid for as a result of a your breach of warranty will be your financial responsibility and the Board will seek full reimbursement from you.

Washing lines

Due to heavy wear and tear on equipment and personal preferences, washing lines are not provided as standard by the Property Team and are the occupier's responsibility.

Water

The Board pays water rates/meters directly to the provider. The incumbent is requested to be mindful of the environment and budgets and not to use excessive amounts of water where avoidable.

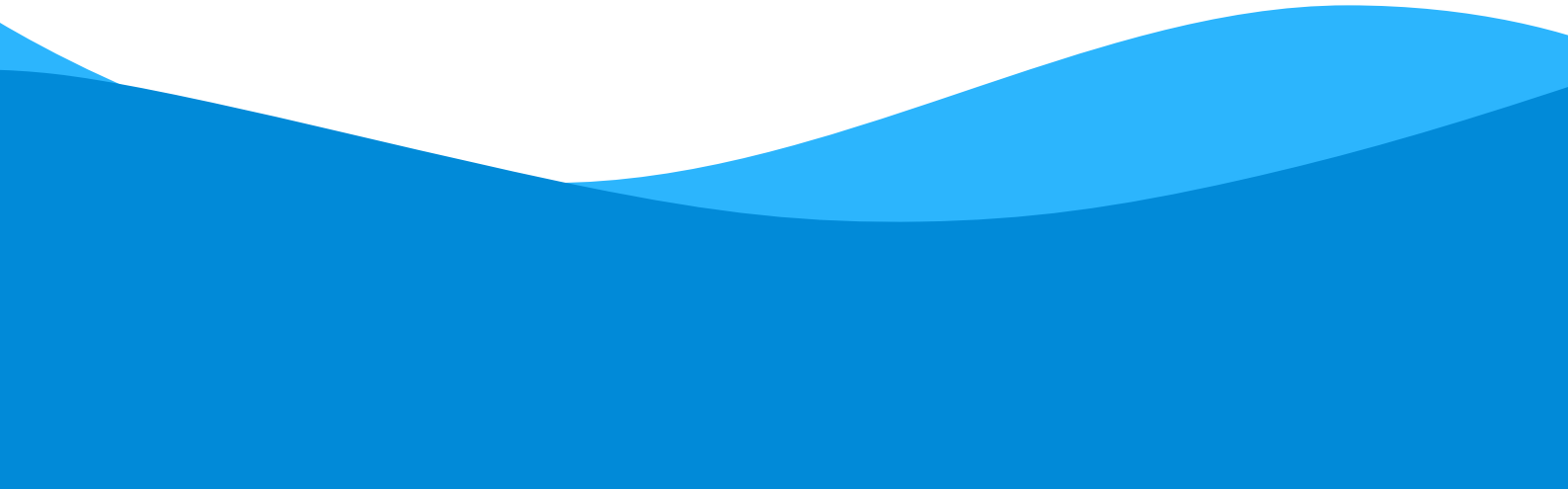
Respectfully we ask you not to fill large-scale paddling pools, self-build swimming pools unless you reimburse the Board the additional cost of water.

Using less water is good for the environment and we should all strive to preserve the Earth's resources.

As a useful guide the average daily use for water is:

1. **person – 181 litres**
2. **people – 301 litres**
3. **people – 373 litres**
4. **people – 452 litres**
5. **people – 499 litres**
6. **people – 548 litres**

If your average use is above average, we will contact you to see how we can help you reduce your water consumption which can often highlight matters such as underground leaks or faulty valves.



There are some simple actions however that you could take to reduce your water consumption: do not leave the tap on whilst brushing teeth or shaving, take showers instead of baths, have shorter duration showers plus many more. There are various free water saving devices available from the water suppliers in your area (see their respective websites and if unclear who your supplier is, please contact us and we can inform you).

Wayleaves

A handful of homes across our Diocese have a an established wayleave agreement in place which in most cases is in the form of right to access a telegraph pole sited in the garden, however a wayleave can be defined as a contract between the owner of a piece of land, and a third party, giving the third party a right of access across the owners land to install or maintain poles, cables, ducts, pylons, and other equipment or infrastructure.



In return for the right of access, the grantor receives compensation, the level of which is set out in the wayleave agreement.

Wayleaves are only used by electrical supply companies and telecommunications businesses for cabling. They are governed by the Electricity Act 1989 for electricity suppliers and the Electronic Communications Code 2017 for telecoms companies. In most cases the wayleave agreements are not exercised but in some cases, we may receive notification of a need to access in which case we would be in contact with you to advise that this is planned.

Due to the nature of the agreements, we may only receive notice (Especially in case of an urgent matter) in some cases, we can arrange a more convenient time. The compensation for the wayleave trigger is usually between £10 and £38 per event and is in most cases very infrequent, with years elapsing. For each payment, we reinvest these funds back into the repair of clergy property via the Stipend Fund.

Departing your property - What do you need to know?

Vacating the property process

The office holder is expected to vacate the property on the date on which the office holder ceases to hold office, however a licence can be put in place to extend for up to one month in agreement with the Archdeacon. Any requests to stay longer than one month will be subject to availability of the property and the creation of a tenancy agreement at a market rent and would be subject to agreement by the Property team and Archdeacon.

Please provide us with as much notice of your intended departure date as possible, to allow us time to prepare for the next occupant.

One month before departure

- A surveyor from the Property Team will visit you to undertake a survey of any works required prior to reoccupation and book in the handover date. Please be aware that they will need to take some photographs to include in the survey.
- The BDBF are not responsible for the moving arrangements on departure and therefore it is advised that you make your arrangements in good time to ensure that you are able to achieve your desired exit date. Please do contact HR if you need any support with this.
- Please touch up any paintwork, drill or picture hook holes, or return any strong paint colours back to a neutral palette prior to your departure.
- Upon vacating the Property, all reasonable steps must be taken to leave the property in a clean and tidy condition, removing all rubbish and unwanted furniture, white goods and personal effects. The Board expects that any carpets remaining at the property are in good clean condition only. The Board reserves the right to impose a charge for the cost of cleaning a property and for the cost of removal of any items left behind if not undertaken.
- Ensure grass/lawns/shrubs have been cut/maintained and the garden left in a tidy condition.
- Please ensure any bills are settled and accounts closed for utilities and telecoms
- Please ensure that you have set up an address forward for mail should you require this as the Property Team cannot be responsible for your post after your departure from the property. The link for the Royal mail service can be found here: [Moving home: Redirection | Royal Mail Group Ltd.](#)

Handover day

The Property Team will arrange for a team member to meet with you at the property and they will undertake a walk around the property with you during which they will record the meter readings. Should the property be on an oil fueled system, please ensure there is a minimum of 1000 litres in the tank as per when you arrived.

Please provide all sets of keys to the Property team member who will take them back to the office for safekeeping.

If you have changed any key safe or alarm codes please provide this information to us on the day or by email prior to the visit at property@bristoldiocese.org.



Appendix 1

The duties of the Bristol Diocese Board of Finance in relation to the property are set out in Regulation 12 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 (“the Regulations”).

Those obligations are:

- a) To keep the property in repair.
- b) To arrange to inspect the property at least every five years and, in the case of a new building, as soon as possible after the building is provided, and for a report to be submitted to the Board describing the state and condition of the property, including the state and condition of the interior, and the grounds and of any contents of the property provided by the Board.
- c) To send a copy of the Surveyor’s report (Quinquennial) to the office holder and, after consulting the office holder, to carry out within a reasonable time any repairs recommended in the report which appear to the Board to be appropriate.
- d) To pay the Council Tax.
- e) To insure the property against all such risks as are included in the usual form household owner’s policy relating to buildings.
- f) To undertake such works of repair and replacement as are needed:
 - 1) to keep in repair the structure and exterior of the buildings of the property, including doors, windows, drains, gutters and external pipes.
 - 2) to keep in repair all walls, fences, gates, drives and drains of the property other than those which some person other than the office holder is wholly liable to repair; and
 - 3) to keep in repair and proper working order:
 - i) the installations in the property for the supply of water, gas and electricity, and for sanitation, inc. basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences.
 - ii) the installations in the property for space heating or water heating; and
 - iii) any fixtures, fittings and appliances in the property (other than those mentioned above) provided by the Board, including works of interior decoration necessitated in consequence of the works mentioned above.

The duties of the office holder are set out in Regulation 14 and are as follows:

- a) To permit the Board, its officers or agents to enter the property in exercise of the Board's rights referred to above.
- b) To use all reasonable endeavors to keep the property and any contents of the property provided by the Board, clean and free from deterioration, with the exception of fair wear and tear, and to keep any garden or other grounds belonging to the property in a reasonable state of upkeep.
- c) To notify the Board of any works of repair that may from time to time be needed to the property as soon as reasonably practicable after the office holder becomes aware of them.
- d) If required to do so by the Board, to the extent that it is not recoverable under any insurance policy, to pay the whole or part of the reasonable cost of any repairs to the property which a report of the Diocesan Surveyor as mentioned in Regulation 12(1)(b) of the Measure authorised by the Board specified to be necessary as a result of damage caused or aggravated by the deliberate act of the office holder or a member of the office holders household residing with him or her or by a breach of the office holders obligations in relation to the property.
- e) Not to use the property except as a private residence for the office holder and his or her household and for such other purposes as may be agreed by the Board which agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- f) Not to make any repairs, alterations or additions to the property without the consent of the Board.
- g) Where the property is held on a lease, to observe any term, condition or covenant binding the tenant under the lease and, in any case, to indemnify the Board in respect of any breach by the office holder or by any member of the office holder's household living in the property of any term, condition or covenant binding on the occupier and to vacate the property within the period of one month from the date on which the office holder ceases to hold the office or on which he or she takes up a new office, whichever is the sooner or within such longer period as the Board may allow and to leave the property clean and tidy and clear of all personal possessions belonging to the office holder or any member of his or her household residing in the property.

Appendix 2

1. Lodgers or Tenants in Board owned property

1.1 Incumbents with Freeholds

There are a few remaining incumbents who hold the Freehold, these incumbents are entitled to have lodgers or tenants however they will need to let the Property Team know as there may be additional costs that need paying to the Board i.e. additional Council tax payments, additional insurance payments etc.

1.2 Incumbents occupying under the Ecclesiastical Offices Regulations 2009

For all incumbents who occupy the accommodation under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 there is no legal right to take in lodgers/ tenants or sublet any part of the parsonage house. The property is provisioned as a private residence for the office holder and their household and for any other purposes as may be agreed by the relevant housing provider. If an incumbent wishes to take in lodgers, the prior written consent of the Property Team is required. Additional guidance/requirements are contained in below. The Board does not permit lettings to tenants.

1.3 Guidance/requirements for all occupiers allowing lodgers

- a) You will need to draw up at your expense an appropriate legal agreement which requires prior approval by the Property Team before being documented.
A copy once documented is to be supplied to the Property Team.
- b) You need to check the immigration status of the lodger before renting the room.
This is particularly important if you have an overseas language student. A fine of up to £500 may apply for taking in a lodger without doing an immigration check (for tenants up to £3,000). If an incumbent takes in someone they know or suspect doesn't have the right to rent, an unlimited fine, or a 5-year prison sentence may be imposed.
- c) You need to seek the advice from the diocesan safeguarding adviser as to whether your use of the house would warrant any lodger having to undertake a DBS check and act on that advice (at your cost).
- d) You will need to ensure that you do not create a "House of multiple Occupation".
It is therefore your responsibility to ensure that you comply with the licencing arrangements and contact your Local Authority in order to avoid a costly fine, this is not the Boards responsibility.

- e) the clergy or other occupant will be regarded as a landlord under Gas Safety (Installation and Use Regulations) 1994 and as such they, and not the Board, are then responsible for the safety of any gas appliances in the sublet accommodation. Additionally, safety regulations regarding the flammability and fillings of furniture apply to items supplied with the sublet part; almost all foam-filled furniture over five years old does not conform. The clergy or other occupant must ensure that the electrical system and any electrical appliances you supply, such as kettles and toasters, are all safe to use.
- f) It is important to ensure upon vacation of the house that is handed back to the Property Team with vacant possession with all lodgers and tenants vacated. If there are any legal costs incurred by the Property Team in removing lodgers or tenants these are required to be reimbursed by the incumbent.

1.4 Lodger/Tenant Definition

For this purpose, a lodger is considered to be anyone who is not part of the occupiers household. The household is defined by the Board as the clergy spouse, civil partner, children of the clergy and /or clergy spouse/civil partner or parents of the clergy or clergy spouse.

This policy does not apply where a friend or relative is staying with clergy when their main or sole residence is elsewhere, the period of occupation should not exceed 3 months.

There is a significant distinction in law between a lodger and a tenant, the below definitions set out the main distinctions:

Lodger

- Will not have exclusive possession in that he will share possession on most of the property with the clergy or other occupant and the clergy or other occupant will have access to rooms such as a bedroom for cleaning purposes.
- They will not be able to put a lock on the door and keep the clergy or other occupant out.
- Often (although not essential) the clergy or other occupant will supply services such as cleaning and sometimes provision of bedding or towels or meals.
- The lodger could be moved to a different room in the property.
- The covenants for repair imposed on a landlord in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 do not apply.
- Does not have security of tenure.
- Will pay rent which will include payment for the provision of utilities and other services and council tax.

Tenant

- Will have exclusive possession for a term, has the legal right to refuse entry to their room.
- No services will be provided.
- Has exclusive use of rooms.
- Landlord responsible for keeping in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling as well as various installations in the premises.
- Security of tenure for a fixed period.
- Will pay rent which will not include the payment for the provision of utilities/other. services/council tax.

1.5 Costs

- a) any new or increased costs due to Lodgers/tenants are the responsibility of clergy. The Board requires full reimbursement of all additional costs i.e., higher charge in Council Tax, insurance or Water Charges these will be invoiced by the Property Team;
- b) the clergy will indemnify the Board against any other costs which may be incurred due to this arrangement, including wear and tear and legal costs to evict anyone remaining in the property after the clergy leaves.
- c) The clergy must include any income on their personal tax return. It is recommended that the clergy or other occupant takes independent advice on any potential tax liability.

1.5 Tenants and commercial letting of rooms (e.g. bed and breakfast, Airbnb)

The Board does not permit clergy to have tenants or to commercially let the property i.e. bed and breakfast, Airbnb.