



DIOCESE of  
**WINCHESTER**

# CLERGY HOUSING HANDBOOK

Sept 2022



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# INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

## a) Introduction

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024, Savills will manage our clergy housing portfolio on behalf of the WDBF.

The policies and guidelines set out below apply to all properties used to house clergy, whatever their legal status e.g. Benefice houses, Glebe team vicarages, houses owned by the Diocesan Board of Finance and some PCC owned houses used to house priests and curates.

Alterations to this policy are approved by the Parsonages Board from time to time (the date of this revision is shown at the bottom of each page).

Consistency in applying policy helps ensure good stewardship of resources and fairness in dealing with all clergy resident in Benefice or Diocesan owned houses.

## b) Governance

All housing policy and procedures are set by the **Property Working Group** under delegated authority from the **Diocesan Parsonages Board** (which is coterminous with Bishop's Council & Standing Committee and Directors of the WDBF) in line with the Church Property Measure 2018. The full terms of reference for the **Property Working Group** can be found in **appendix i**.

The **Property Working Group** reviews all housing related policy on an annual basis ensuring it is accurate and current, adjusting to changes in context, legislation or priorities. The Group also considers requests for works outside of policy from clergy.

## c) Savills contact details

During office hours (8:30 – 5:30 Monday to Friday) there are three ways to raise maintenance issues or anything property related with our main Savills points of contacts:

<b>Tom Rowarth</b> Rural Surveyor	01962 857403 <a href="mailto:Thomas.rowarth@savills.com">Thomas.rowarth@savills.com</a>
<b>Natasha Holden</b> Graduate Rural Surveyor	01962 857414 07812 686311 <a href="mailto:Natasha.holden@savills.com">Natasha.holden@savills.com</a>
<b>Frances Farrer</b> Office Manager	01962 857416 07870 403296 <a href="mailto:ffarrer@savills.com">ffarrer@savills.com</a>

- Phone (8:30 – 5:30 Monday to Friday): feel free to call **any member** of the team using the numbers listed above. You may wish to start with someone who has assisted you previously or has already visited your home.

- Email: please **send to all of Tom, Natasha and Frances** using their email addresses above, so that your email gets picked up at the earliest opportunity. Please put the first line of your address and the postcode in the subject line and outline the nature of your request in the body of the email.
- Savills repair portal: <https://savills-rep.fixflo.com/issuereport/CreteIssue>. It is very straightforward to use, allowing users to log maintenance issues (including photos if they wish). Where possible, it offers tips and tricks to help with the most common household issues as details are inputted. Once submitted, these are picked up during working hours by the Savills team.

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION

### a) Planned Maintenance

It is current diocesan policy to sustain a planned maintenance programme for clergy houses concentrating on the following priorities:-

- Replacement of single glazed window frames
- Refitting of kitchens
- Refitting of bathrooms
- Replacement boilers
- Installation of insulation

Every effort is made to address these needs according to priority and budgetary restrictions.



### b) Funding of Capital works

Capital improvements to clergy houses are dependent on funding from recycling capital receipts (i.e. profits made on sales of clergy houses being replaced or houses no longer required or other property sales).

To provide for this it is diocesan policy that:

- When a house ceases to be used by a stipendiary priest the expectation will be that the house will be sold. In some circumstances it may be deemed appropriate to retain the house as an investment property or if the property might be required for ministerial needs in the future. These decisions are made by the Diocesan Parsonages Board.
- The Diocese actively seek potential development opportunities across our portfolio to generate capital receipts. Where necessary we will ask all clergy and parishes to positively engage in these discussions, considering the benefits of such projects in supporting the wider mission and ministry of the diocese.

### c) Alteration/replacement of benefice houses

Where Benefice houses or team vicarages are assessed as being 'unsuitable' because of:

- inadequate accommodation,
- unsuitable location,
- a high carbon footprint,
- or high maintenance costs

the potential for replacement /or alterations will be considered. It should however be noted that even where a house is unsuitable, it may still need to be retained because of local pastoral needs, the lack of suitable alternatives within the parish, or due to lack of capital funds.

For major repairs or alterations to benefice houses the occupier must be consulted before improvements can be carried out. Incumbents have a legal right to refuse alterations (other clergy have no such right), which are not essential repairs. They do not however have the right to insist an alternative approach is taken.

### d) Obligations of Clergy

The Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 gives the Board of Finance a responsibility to ensure that essential work is carried out. It has the right to seek compensation from the incumbent if it considers repairs to be 'necessary by reason of damage caused or aggravated by any deliberate act of the incumbent... or any default in his duties under (the Measure)..'. (Sect 13(4)).

During a vacancy Savills will produce an inventory and a property statement, outlining any urgent and necessary planned work for the property. The property statement will be shared with candidates at interview to ensure clergy are aware of what works will and will not be undertaken.

If the inspection by Savills after vacation reveals the house to be in an unacceptable condition (i.e. well beyond reasonable wear and tear), the Archdeacon may authorise either:-

- A deduction of the cost of remedial works from the resettlement grant the Diocese offers for the next post, or
- If a move to another Diocese is involved, a bill for the cost to the outgoing occupants; in addition the Diocese of Winchester will notify the new employing diocese of what occurred.

### e) Financial Liabilities

The following table attempts to answer most specific queries regarding liability for installation, maintenance and running costs.

Service	Installation	Maintenance	Running Costs
Gas	Diocese	Diocese	Clergy
Electricity	Diocese	Diocese	Clergy

Oil	Diocese	Diocese	Clergy
Water	Diocese	Diocese	Diocese
Council Tax	n/a	n/a	Diocese
1 <sup>st</sup> Telephone line	Diocese	Diocese	Clergy
Additional Telephone lines	Clergy	Clergy	Clergy
TV aerials/cable/satellite	Clergy	Clergy	Clergy
Alarm Systems	Diocese <sup>1</sup>	PCC/Clergy	PCC/Clergy
Solar Panels	Diocese	Diocese/Clergy <sup>2</sup>	n/a

Please note that any bills received for Council Tax or water rates by clergy should be forwarded to Savills for payment. If in doubt, clergy should consult Savills.

#### f) Removal and Resettlement Grants

When clergy move into a Diocesan house, the cost of the move is met in full by the WDBF (including packing if required) up to a maximum of £5,000. The cost of moving non-general household items, such as grand pianos, will not be covered by the WDBF.

For clergy arriving from overseas, the Diocese will pay removal costs from the UK port of arrival to the clergy property within the diocese. The Diocese will not be responsible for any storage costs.

All stipendiary clergy, curates and House for Duty posts are entitled to a resettlement grant that is set nationally each year. The grant is to assist in the cost of carpeting, curtain tracks, curtains/blinds and the installation of appliances (all items works which are not undertaken by the WDBF).

For clergy taking on their first incumbent status role, a first appointment grant is also available. This amount is set nationally each year.

A Diocesan grant of up to £500 is available towards the cost of decorating materials such as gloss and emulsion paints during the vacancy (**for further information see painting & decorating policy in section 3 F**).

The cost of removal and the resettlement grant are not available if clergy choose to move whilst in post. In situations where clergy are required to move for better performance of their role, the Archdeacon will consider whether assistance to facilitate this is appropriate and seek

<sup>1</sup> Alarm systems are only installed in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear need.

<sup>2</sup> There are limited to no running costs for Solar Panels, but the clergy person will benefit from some free electricity. The Diocesan Team will remain responsible for repairs of the panels if there are any technical issues. It has been noticed that solar panels can lead to a greater build up of debris in gutters as birds attempt to nest under the panels – where this happens clergy remain responsible for the regular clearing out of the gutters and the underside of the panels.

approval for the necessary funding.

Where clergy are moving to a post outside the Diocese of Winchester they will need to discuss the costs of the move with their receiving diocese or new employer.

Clergy are responsible for all removal costs on retirement.

#### g) Tenancies and Other Lettings

Incumbents are entitled to let rooms to lodgers. Other clergy may do so only with the consent of the Parsonage Board. A standard form of agreement is available for this purpose, and this provides protection for clergy, lodgers and the WDBF. Finance should be consulted prior to any decision to accept rent as it will have implications for the clergy person's stipend and tax.

#### h) Multiple Occupation

Multiple occupation is not allowed because the implications can prove very expensive for the WDBF in areas of compliance i.e. fire safety etc.

#### i) Business Use

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 WDBF. This is because some activities may be detrimental to the state of the house, relations with neighbours, the work of the church, insurance, or may be contrary to planning consents. In some houses, options may be restricted by covenants which prohibit business activity. If any business activity increases the WDBF's expenditure on the house (e.g. Business Rates, maintenance) the occupier will be expected to pay the difference.

#### j) Glebe

Glebe is the responsibility of the WDBF under Endowments & Glebe Measure 1976.

The Measure requires glebe to provide income through lettings or sales for the benefit of the Diocesan Stipends Fund (DSF). Some clergy housing is owned as glebe and, as long as it is occupied by qualifying clergy, does not have to generate income for the DSF.

#### k) Parish use of Benefice Houses, Drives and Gardens

The circumstances of parish clergy vary greatly and so, for example, an incumbent with a young family will have different requirements from a single person. The Benefice house is primarily the home and study of the Incumbent. Clergy may sometimes choose to allow parish activities to take place within the Benefice house (e.g. PCC meetings), drives (e.g. parking for parish officers), and garden (e.g. summer fetes). However, such arrangements happen by grace and favour of the current clergy, and they cannot be imposed on their successors.



Locating the parish office in the Benefice house is not permitted by the Parsonages Board. This is for the reasons given above and to allow all houses to be let for a minimum term of 6 months during vacancies. This generates much needed income for the wider mission and ministry of the Diocese

The parish must understand that, at a vacancy, such activities will have to be removed elsewhere. Their continued presence in the property could constitute a serious deterrent to candidates for the vacant post/tenancy.

#### l) Planning Applications

Savills will investigate the implications of planning applications concerning neighbouring properties. If the proposed changes could be detrimental to the present or future occupants of the benefice house the WDBF will object. It is essential for clergy to advise Savills of any application that has been submitted, as statutory notices are not normally sent by the planning authority to the WDBF. The notice period is only 21 days so it is important that Savills are contacted as soon as the notice is received or a notice appears on an adjacent property.

#### m) Animals

Pets may be kept in the house or garden, but clergy are expected to show common sense in their choice of animals, particularly with regard to the maintenance of the house and garden, and relations with neighbours. The Parsonages Board is not responsible for providing additional fencing or other improvements to the boundaries of the garden required to prevent domestic animals escaping or predators entering.

Dog owners must ensure the garden is kept clear of faeces as many contractors refuse to undertake work at properties where gardens are not clear.

#### n) Listed Buildings

Some clergy houses are listed as being of architectural or historic interest or lie within a Conservation area. This restricts freedom to make alterations to either the interior or exterior of the property, including changing paint colours, altering boundary materials and changing windows/doors. Clergy in such properties should always consult Savills.

Other properties may lie in areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Parks. Special conditions may apply to properties in such areas and clergy in these properties should also seek advice from Savills.

#### o) Health needs

Some clergy will have or may develop health needs that require specific alterations to their house. In these instances, clergy should contact the HR Team in the first instance for a confidential occupation conversation around their medical needs and potential adjustments. The Director of HR will then advise the Property Working Group on necessary changes.

#### p) Carbon Net Zero

The Diocese of Winchester is committed to the General Synod's target for the Church of England to be Carbon neutral by 2030. We will continue to explore options for making our houses more energy efficient and carbon neutral as and when opportunities arise.

### 3. MAINTENANCE

#### a) Quinquennial Inspections

The property will be surveyed every five years to assess its state and identify required maintenance and preventative maintenance. A report will be supplied to the occupier as soon as possible.

The occupier is asked to comment on the survey report before proposed works are put out to tender. Any concerns or omissions should be discussed with the Houses Coordinator in the first instance. Clergy may make representations to the Property Working Group if they consider that the approved report does not cover all necessary work.

#### b) Major Repairs

Fine cracks in plaster are usually due to shrinkage and should be dealt with as part of internal decorations.

Cracks which appear to be structural (e.g. in brick or stonework, or of a greater than normal width, usually appearing on both the inner and outer faces of the wall) may be due to structural movement or subsidence and should be reported to Savills as soon as observed.

#### c) Minor Works and Repairs

Clergy are expected to arrange to carry out and pay for minor maintenance tasks to help protect their houses and keep the WDBF's costs to a minimum, e.g.

- Washing down of external gloss paintwork, UPVC windows
- Descaling shower heads and hoses often in order to ensure continuing proper function
- Lubricating doors and window mechanisms
- Checking radiator valves for any signs of leakage
- Installation of all kitchen appliances
- Replacement/maintenance of doorbells
- Maintenance of built in wardrobes (where applicable)
- Cleaning and replacement of extractor fan filters
- Maintenance/replacement of TV aerials/satellite installations
- Regular trimming and maintenance of hedges
- Replacement or installation of toilet roll holders, seats and bathroom mirrors

- Replacement curtain tracks
- Easing of internal doors

Clergy are asked not to undertake DIY work in the following areas:

- Electrical (including light fittings)
- Gas
- Central Heating
- Plumbing (other than changing washers on taps)
- Internal layout

If in any doubt clergy are asked to consult Savills.

If clergy wish to undertake minor repair works themselves it may be possible to reimburse the costs of materials. Reimbursements can only be agreed however if the works/costs are agreed in advance, in writing, with Savills or a suitable WDBF representative.

Although general repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of the WDBF, keeping the **gutters** clear of leaf and other seasonal debris is the responsibility of the occupant. When gutters are not kept clear it significantly increases the risk of damp, water ingress and damage to brick work and internal decoration of the house. Occupants must ensure the gutters are cleared once a year and can make use of an annual grant of up to £120.

#### d) Windows

Diocesan houses have a wide variety of windows and there is no single type or standard. Windows may from time to time be replaced on grounds of security, disrepair, or heat loss under the planned maintenance programme.

Windows are normally only considered for replacement at the time external decorations are due, except in exceptional circumstances.

Locks are provided as standard to ground floor windows and windows overlooking flat roofs.

#### e) Pest Infestation and Rot

Infestation by rats, lice, wasps or other pests should be reported to the local authority and Savills as quickly as possible. Treatment of pests and infestation **is the responsibility of the occupant** unless it will affect the structure of the property or any work being undertaken on it.

Should pest infestation/rot be notified to Savills within 3 months of occupation, responsibility for addressing such issues will fall to the WDBF.

Fungal growth or other signs of suspected rot should be reported without delay to Savills. Bad

smells within the house can sometimes be due to rot.

#### f) Condensation & Ventilation

Most condensation issues are caused by lifestyle, so only the occupant can ensure that they are minimised. Condensation forms when water vapour in the air meets a colder surface and turns back into water. Too much condensation can make a house damp. This can encourage mites and the growth of mould and can increase the risk of respiratory illness. To avoid condensation at home, clergy need to try and keep their home warm but well ventilated, so that condensation cannot form.

Windows should be opened for short periods to ventilate rooms. Draughts are not always a bad thing because they allow a flow of air through the home. Ensure trickle vents at the tops of windows are working and free from obstruction, and that grilles are not blocked or closed. This ensures moisture can escape.

To help reduce condensation all occupants are asked to:

- Use extractor fans when cooking and consider opening a window.
- Use extractor fans or open a window when using the bath or shower and keep the bathroom door closed so the moisture does not go into other colder rooms.

#### g) Decorating/Painting

External Decoration is the responsibility of the WDBF and is normally carried out on a cyclical basis. White or light-coloured paint will normally be used unless, at the discretion of the WDBF, darker colours are deemed more appropriate to the appearance of the property. Where houses are listed as being of architectural or historical importance, or are situated within a Conservation area, planning consent may be required to change colours.

Internal decoration is the responsibility of the clergy. A grant of up to £500 is available towards the cost of gloss and emulsion paints during a vacancy. Subsequently, after 3 years, the cost of consumable materials, i.e. paint (but not wallpaper), white spirit, masking tape, will be met on receipt of appropriate receipts/invoices to a maximum of £150 per annum. These grants should only be used for materials and not to cover the cost of contractors or other related expenses.

The Property Working Group encourages the PCC, through volunteer labour if they are able, to assist clergy with decorations on taking up a new appointment and, where clergy have exceptional difficulty carrying out decorations, at other times. Clergy are urged to adopt a programme for internal decorations e.g. decorating one room per annum and to use white gloss on woodwork and neutral/pastel colours to walls.

If colours other than neutral shades or light pastels are used for internal decoration, it is likely

that the occupant will be asked to repaint these walls before their departure.

Where internal décor is significantly damaged due to structural issues (cracking) or water ingress then the WDBF will contribute to the costs of redecorating.

#### h) Emergency Repairs

From time to time problems arise which require immediate attention because there is a danger to occupants (e.g. leaking gas fire); because the security of the building is affected; because there is a loss of a basic service (e.g. broken water main) or because failure to attend to the problem immediately might cause consequent additional damage to the house and expense to the Diocese.

***When emergency repairs are necessary please contact Savills in the first instance*** and a suitable contractor will normally be despatched promptly.

In an emergency and if any further guidance is needed out of hours, and the issue cannot wait, the occupant(s) should put in hand the necessary emergency repair work as quickly as possible using a contractor from the list of emergency contractors (see appendix ii). Savills should then be advised of the emergency at the start of the next working day in order that a permanent repair can be effected. This is particularly important if an insurance claim could arise. An official order number for the emergency repair should be obtained when the incident is reported.

#### i) Interim Repairs

Repair work may arise between quinquennial inspections which is desirable but not of an emergency nature. All requests for such repairs should be directed to Savills. Budgetary constraints may, regrettably, necessitate deferring some non-urgent repair works until the next quinquennial inspection.

#### j) Improvements

Requests for improvements should be referred to Savills in the first instance. They will consider the requests and, if appropriate, report to the Property Working Group and other relevant interested parties.

Financial resources for improvements, which go beyond the provision of basic house standards, may be limited or not available and are applied according to assessed priority of need.

Occupants and/or parishes are welcome to make proposals to Savills at any time. Such a proposal should include suggestions as to how the proposed work will be financed.

Any contribution will be treated as a gift and not refunded by the WDBF at a later time.

#### k) Unauthorised Works

Clergy should not arrange improvements and alterations to their homes without prior written authorisation from Savills and the WDBF. If unauthorised work is undertaken, the WDBF reserves the right to decline to meet the costs incurred. **Clergy may be asked to remove unauthorised works and restore to the original condition at their own expense.**

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## 4. SAFETY AND SECURITY

### a) Security

**Security alarms** will only be installed in exceptional circumstances and require approval from the Property Working Group. Maintenance costs for any alarms that are installed shall be the responsibility of the occupant. Where an existing system fails, Savills will decommission it unless the occupant/parish wish to arrange and pay for the repair.

External **security lighting** is installed and maintained by the WDBF, usually one bulkhead fitting to the front and one to the back of the property, but additional lights may be provided at the discretion of the Houses Coordinator or Property Working Group. Replacement bulbs are the responsibility of the occupant.

If a burglary occurs it is the responsibility of the clergy to notify the police without delay and advise Savills at the earliest opportunity. If a burglary is discovered during a period when Savills is closed, it might also be necessary for the clergy to arrange urgent repairs such as boarding up or re-glazing.

A list of suitable contractors is provided for use in emergencies (See appendix ii).

Clergy who are concerned about their safety or the safety of other members of the household should consult Savills about basic security measures such as spyholes and/or safety chains. In some cases, this may be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Five lever mortice locks will be provided as standard to all external doors in new benefice houses, to comply with British Standard BS3621.

Clergy are expected to exercise care in order to minimise risk of burglary (e.g. by locking doors and windows.)

### b) Fire Safety

The WDBF provide smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Where battery operated smoke detectors are supplied, clergy are responsible for replacing the batteries and are advised

to test the smoke detectors weekly. Clergy are asked to alert Savills if these items are not provided or are missing. Equipment provided by the WDBF remains the property of the WDBF and should not be removed without replacement. Provision of fire extinguishers is the responsibility of the occupants.

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## 5. ACCOMMODATION

### a) Study

The study is a space set aside for the clergy's private work and reflection. There should be a reasonable provision of space for books and private office equipment and, ideally, some storage space for robes. A study is also a room where clergy can interview individuals or couples and can, if they choose, hold small meetings. It is not designed, however, to be a parish office or the venue for PCC meetings.

Bookshelves are provided in the study. Clergy may otherwise add shelving at their own expense, but should take care when fitting shelves, not to damage features, electrical cables etc. If clergy wish to take fixed shelving with them when they depart, they must ensure the walls are made good.

Not all curate's houses have designated studies as office space is sometimes provided at the Church.

### b) Kitchen/Utility Room

The need for replacement of kitchens is identified by Savills through the process of quinquennial or vacancy inspections. In broad terms kitchens are expected to last at least 20 years before being replaced.

Adequate provision of wall and base units will be provided within the constraints of the room layout and space available. There is no standard number of units and cupboards identified. The WDBF will not normally reorganise the kitchen layout to suit the wishes of an occupant.

#### Sinks

A sink is provided within the kitchen, usually single bowl, and the utility room (if applicable) where space permits.

#### Equipment Connections

Connections are usually provided for a washing machine, dishwasher, tumble drier, electric cooker and gas cooker (if gas is supplied to the property). The responsibility for installing appliances rests with the occupants.

## Cookers

The cooker is the responsibility of the occupant. A cooker loan facility is available up to a maximum of £500 repayable interest free over a maximum of three years. Details can be obtained from the WDBF.

Where a built-in oven and hob unit has been provided as part of a fitted kitchen in a property purchased by the WDBF, the cooker will be retained until it is beyond economic repair. At this point, it may be appropriate for the kitchen to be altered to accommodate a free-standing cooker, the provision of which is the responsibility of the occupant. It should be noted that the Diocese will not install fitted hobs or ovens during kitchen replacements.

## Agas

Where an Aga or Rayburn is fitted maintenance is the responsibility of the occupant. It is not the policy of the Parsonages Board to install any new Agas or Rayburns. An occupant wishing to install one **must** consult with Savills **before** taking any action.

Installation will only be agreed if Savills and the WDBF are satisfied that the installation is appropriate and on the basis of a written understanding by the occupant to meet all costs of installation, subsequent removal and making good.

## Extractor Fans

An extractor fan or externally vented cooker hood is provided to kitchens where condensation or ventilation is a proven problem or when refitted. Cleaning and replacement of filters are the responsibility of the occupants.

## c) Reception Rooms

A benefice house will normally have three reception rooms – lounge, dining room and study.

## d) Bedrooms

A benefice house will ideally have four bedrooms, two of which will be doubles.

A number of houses have built-in wardrobes provided as a result of their being already fitted when the house was built. The WDBF does not provide new built-in wardrobes or maintain existing ones during occupation (See section 3c).

## e) Bathrooms/WCs

In addition to a bathroom, benefice houses should also have a ground floor WC with washbasin.

Existing bathroom suites will not be replaced unless they are considered unusable or may be more sensibly replaced than reinstated after repairs or other works. Replacement suites will be



white to make future matching easier and leave future clergy a neutral colour scheme.

Extractor fans are sometimes provided in shower rooms and bathrooms, and may be supplied as additional items if condensation problems are considered to be sufficiently serious. Cleaning of filters and internal vents is the responsibility of the occupant.

Shower heads and hoses should be descaled on a monthly basis by the occupant.

Replacement of tiles will normally only be undertaken during refurbishment or when existing ones are significantly defective. Clergy will be offered a choice within a limited range of neutral colours, to avoid problems caused by widely differing tastes.

#### f) Floor Coverings/Carpets/Curtain Tracks

A durable floor covering (usually sheet vinyl) is provided to kitchens, utility rooms, bathrooms, cloakrooms and WCs. This will be replaced only when it has reached the end of its useful life.

Woodblock floors are no longer provided to the ground floor of new houses. Existing ones will only be maintained where they are in good order and they have not been covered by linoleum, vinyl sheeting or carpeting, in which case they will be treated as a hard surface e.g. a concrete screed. Where a woodblock floor is in poor condition and requires extensive work, it may be removed.

Clergy are responsible for providing carpets. Clergy are asked not to stick carpet to the floor or to allow foam backed carpet to become stuck over a period of years. This may result in the carpet being irreparably damaged in the course of routine repairs, and the WDBF will not accept liability. Fibrous membrane or other barrier material must be used as underlay.

We do not cover the cost of fitting or replacing carpet during occupation.

In houses which are carpeted either because the carpets have been left by a previous occupant, provided by the PCC or acquired at purchase, such carpets become part of the fittings. These “inherited” carpets should not therefore be removed, especially when the occupant moves, except with the agreement of the WDBF. Such carpets will not be replaced when they become worn.

The WDBF may consider providing carpets for training curates or clergy on Interim Common Tenure posts i.e. those who are unlikely to occupy the house for more than 3 years. Each request will be reviewed on a case by case basis with appeals to the Property Working Group.

The WDBF **does not** provide curtain tracks/poles, curtains or blinds.

## 6. SERVICES PROVISION

### a) Heating

Gas, electric or oil fired central heating is provided to all habitable rooms. Technical upgrading of existing heating systems (e.g. thermostatic radiator valves) will only be considered in conjunction with major repair works to the heating system unless funding is available from an alternative source (e.g. PCC)

Conversion of central heating systems from oil to gas (or vice versa) will only be considered when the conversion constitutes a repair because the boiler requires replacement. A substantial local contribution may be required (each case will be reviewed on its own merits).

Savills will arrange for an annual maintenance service of the central heating boiler and gas safety check for all mains gas boilers, fires and cookers.

New forms of heating should not be introduced without the prior agreement of the Houses Coordinator.

Where gas fires are provided as an alternative source of heating, the annual Gas Safety Certificate and maintenance is the responsibility of Savills.

Sweeping chimneys and removing obstructions such as birds' nests or birds is the responsibility of the occupant. This should be done at least annually but ideally twice a year with a copy of the certificate being sent to [property@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:property@winchester.anglican.org) Persistent problems which require capping of chimney pots should be reported to Savills.

Open fires in living rooms will be repaired and kept functioning. Fireplaces and surrounds will not be replaced for purely aesthetic reasons. Tiled or other surrounds will be considered for replacement when beyond economic repair but otherwise will be retained.

### b) Fuel Sources

The occupant is responsible for paying all electric, gas, oil or solid fuel bills.

#### Solar Panels

Some houses have been fitted with Solar Panels by the WDBF. In these cases the occupant will benefit from any of the electricity produced. Savills will maintain and manage the Solar Panels with relevant contractors, but the occupants are responsible for ensuring they remain clean

and free from debris.

Some occupants have reported that when birds attempt to nest under the panels additional debris can end up in the gutters causing blockages. Clearing gutters remains the responsibility of the occupants and should be checked regularly during the year.

A **gas** connection may be installed to properties without an existing supply where an opportunity arises, but a gas boiler will not necessarily be installed until the existing boiler needs replacing.

### Smart Meters

Where occupants wish to install a **Smart Meter** they may do so. These are often funded by the utility provider but if not, the cost must be borne by the occupant. Clergy moving into a house may find an existing Smart Meter has already been installed. Some Smart Meters are specific to the utility company and may not work with alternative providers. Where new Smart Meters are installed, the WDBF is not able to make good any resulting damage to interior decorations and this must be done by the occupant.

### Gas Leaks

If a gas leak is suspected, clergy should turn off the gas at the mains, open a window and telephone **National Grid emergency line 0800 111 999**. Do not turn electric switches on or off. Please report the problem to Savills as soon as possible.

### Electrical

Electrical tests and rewiring are the responsibility of the WDBF. Tests are usually undertaken as and when recommended by an electrical contractor. Clergy should not undertake DIY electrical work under any circumstances, as they may place themselves and their families in danger and render themselves legally liable for the condition of the electrical system. Savills should always be notified of any faults.

Occupants are permitted to install electrical vehicle charging points on application to the WDBF. Installation costs fall to the Occupant. Where a Diocesan approved contractor is used to undertake the installation no further checks are required. Where the occupant chooses to use a different contractor, they will also need to pay for a subsequent electrical check by a diocesan contractor and, if any remedial works are found to be required, to fund the full costs of those works.

### c) Drainage

Most houses have mains drainage, but a few drain to septic tanks. In all cases the WDBF is responsible for maintenance and emptying.

If a sewage pump is in use, its maintenance is the responsibility of the WDBF.

## d) Asbestos

The WDBF is committed to ensuring that all materials containing asbestos in your property are safe. If clergy find materials containing asbestos, or they are discovered during works, Savills will inspect and, if warranted, the material will be removed. If clergy suspect asbestos containing materials have been damaged, please contact Savills.

Things to remember about asbestos:

- Materials containing asbestos which are in good condition and left undisturbed are safe and do not pose a risk to health,
- Ensure anything that may contain asbestos remains in good condition,
- Not to drill, sand or scrape anything which may contain asbestos and to seek advice first,
- To always soak wallpaper before removing, if possible by using a steam stripper and then gently peeling away wallpaper before redecorating,
- Not to attempt to remove textured coatings from ceilings or walls. To wash any areas of flaking paint before repainting,
- Not to remove old floor tiles or linoleum but to leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them,
- **If you suspect that asbestos containing materials have been damaged, to contact Savills.**

The most common possible locations of asbestos in a property are:

- Fascia and soffit boards,
- Panels beneath window frames,
- Roof sheets or tiles,
- Loft cement cold water tank,
- Old ventilation pipes and soil pipes,
- Textured coatings and ceiling panels,
- Hot pipe insulation,
- Bath panelling,
- Garage roofs,
- Garage fascia boards,
- Garage window lining,
- Panels behind fires or heaters,
- Fire door panels,
- Partition walls,
- Rainwater downpipes and guttering,
- Service ducting,
- Roof felt or lining panels,
- Floor tiles and linoleum products.

### e) Telephones

A telephone point is provided as standard in the study, with a second point for family use elsewhere on the ground floor. The location of these points should not be changed. Other extensions (e.g. in a bedroom) may be fitted at the expense of the clergy. The cost of phone lines and broadband are the responsibility of the clergy and/or PCC.

Where trees grow near overhead telephone or electrical lines, utility companies tend to contact the occupant first – please forward any such correspondence to Savills.

### f) Televisions

Television aerials, satellite dishes and cable connections are not provided or maintained by the WDBF.

Clergy wishing to install a satellite dish or connect to a cable network may do so without consulting Savills, provided any planning consents are obtained and any cables do not cross other properties after leaving the public highway, or require drives, paths etc to be dug up. Requests by cable companies or others for permission to connect across a benefice house, glebe or Diocesan property should be referred to Savills.



## 7. GARDEN AND CAR PARKING

### a) Garden

This is the responsibility of the clergy. If the occupant wishes to consider letting part of the garden, this should be discussed Savills before any contract is entered into. If such a proposal is agreed, the arrangement must be on a proper legal basis which will automatically lapse when the occupant leaves the house.

### b) Trees

Clergy are expected to prune small trees, shrubs and hedges to prevent excessive growth, and to consult Savills before planting any kind of new tree (some may cause subsidence or other problems because of their type or proximity to buildings). Ivy and other creepers should also be strictly controlled because of the potential damage they can cause.

The WDBF will pollard or fell dead, dying or dangerous trees during quinquennial works, but will do so at other times only if they are considered to present an immediate danger to people. Clergy are asked not to undertake work which may be dangerous or require specialist knowledge, and to avoid major work to any tree which might be the subject of a preservation order, or in a Conservation Area (and should consult Savills if in doubt).

***Please note there is currently a £20,000 maximum fine for unauthorised tree work requiring local authority consent.*** Self-sown seedlings should normally be uprooted as weeds in the course of general gardening, particularly if they are close to the house.

Clergy should notify Savills if they receive notice from their local authority that trees within their garden are to be covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

### c) Patios

New patios are not provided by the WDBF. An occupant wishing to install one should consult Savills first. Subsequent maintenance is the responsibility of the occupant. The WDBF does provide a path from the front of the house to the rear and, where appropriate, to a washing line.

### d) Conservatories, Greenhouses, Garden Sheds

Conservatories, greenhouses and garden sheds are not provided or maintained by the WDBF. The WDBF may however agree to provide a garden shed where there is no other storage facility (e.g. garage) for outside items. Conservatories and greenhouses to be erected and maintained at the occupant's or PCC's expense must have the written prior consent of the WDBF (because of planning restrictions in some areas) and erected in accordance with their directions. The WDBF may require any such structure erected without prior consent, or contrary to the

directions of Savills or the Diocese, to be removed at the occupant's or PCC's expense.

#### e) Boundaries, Fences and Hedges

Fences and walls are provided to delineate boundaries. Structural maintenance and repairs are the responsibility of the WDBF unless the boundary belongs to a neighbouring property or is a party structure. The minimum standard to be achieved is a fence capable of keeping small children within the garden under normal supervision. Fences do not need to be designed to keep domestic animals in or out of the garden.

Boundary fences of houses bordering agricultural fields will need to be stock proof and, under Common Law, the WDBF will require the adjoining owner to provide the necessary fencing. Clergy are requested not to plant trees and shrubs in such a position that they are likely to damage fences or drains, or obstruct access for maintenance purposes e.g. around the base of soil pipes or down pipes.

Fencing within the boundaries of the garden, e.g. to divide the front from the rear garden, may be erected at the discretion and expense of the WDBF if it is deemed necessary for the security of the property. Fences solely to provide privacy for the clergy family are not provided.

Hedges are the responsibility of the clergy. The WDBF may deal with some tall beech or coniferous hedges as trees during a quinquennial or vacancy, but clergy are expected to trim them sufficiently to make this unnecessary. Hedges should not be allowed to grow above a height of six feet (some types of conifer hedging are now subject to specific regulations) and the WDBF reserves the right to charge clergy for neglect leading to additional costs for hedge cutting. Any issues with trees should be referred to Savills at the earliest opportunity.

#### f) Drives/Paths

Although clergy are responsible for the maintenance of their gardens, the condition of drives and paths are checked as part of the quinquennial survey and works carried out as necessary subject to the availability of funding. Clergy are expected to help control costs by keeping drives and paths free from weeds. Existing gates are maintained and replaced when necessary. New gates will only be provided in cases of exceptional need, e.g. child safety.

Clergy are asked to ensure that members of the public are not able to cross their gardens regularly over a period of years, other than in using the appointed route to the front door. Long term use may establish rights of way by prescription.

#### g) Garages/Parking

A benefice house will normally have a garage, but this is not possible in all cases. The WDBF will not provide parking for second cars, caravans or boats.

## 8. INSURANCE

### a) Buildings Insurance

The WDBF insures its properties against various perils and for public liability.

Contents insurance is the responsibility of the clergy and it is strongly recommended that adequate cover is arranged and reviewed periodically.

### b) Insurance Claims

The possibility of a claim should be considered whenever there is damage to a property (e.g. arising from frost, storm, vandalism, leak). Savills should be informed of all circumstances immediately and will make any claim on the diocesan policy.

If a house is left insufficiently furnished for habitation for more than 30 consecutive days, much of the insurance cover will lapse. Diocesan policies have a variety of excesses and it is not considered worth submitting a claim unless the amount claimed is significantly more than the relevant excess.

If occupants leave a house unoccupied for more than 30 days Savills must be informed to ensure insurance cover is not affected.

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## 9. VACANCIES

### a) Clergy Leaving

Clergy should vacate the property within the period of 4 weeks before the date on which they cease to hold the office.

When resigning their office a clergy person should do so with their last Sunday being not more than one month from the date he or she ceases to hold the office or retires. Please refer to guidance from the HR department for further information.

It is expected that clergy would begin their preparations for leaving (connected with the house) within the month before they take up their new office (this may well mean before their last Sunday).

Holiday due must be taken within the three months of a clergy person's notice period.

For clergy moving into retirement section 14 (1) (h) of The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 applies, permitting the cleric to remain in the property for a period of up to one month from the date on which the office holder ceases to hold the office.

Within the first month after writing to the bishop, the clergy person should agree the date they



will be leaving their diocesan property with their suffragan bishop. The clergy person should then complete the Notification of Departure form sent to them by the Clergy Appointments Assistant (CAA) with the agreed exit date, last service date and resignation date. The HR department will advise the CAA when the dates have been agreed.

Clergy are expected to ensure that their homes are handed over in good order. All personal possessions must be removed on vacating the property and keys should be left with Savills unless otherwise directed by Savills during the pre-vacancy discussions. Prior to departure Savills will request information relating to the property, meter readings, forwarding address etc. Electricity and other meters should be read and arrangements made for final gas, electricity and telephone bills to the date of leaving.

The telephone should not normally be disconnected, but transferred instead to the PCC unless a different arrangement is agreed with Savills.

It is the responsibility of departing clergy to ensure that rubbish and unwanted possessions are removed from all parts of the house and garden. Rubbish, soil and other material piled against the wall of the house may allow damp to bridge above the damp proof course and this must be avoided. Where rubbish or items are left at the property, Savills will arrange for their disposal and then send an invoice to the clergy person for reimbursement.

After a final reading, responsibility for gas and electricity bills should be transferred to The Diocese of Winchester for Savills to administer, unless a different arrangement is agreed with the PCC.

If the volume of oil in an oil tank is significant, reimbursement for the value may be negotiated with the WDBF if the house is to be let, or in other circumstances with the PCC, which may then wish to pass it over the new occupant as a gift.

#### b) During the Vacancy

It is the Diocesan policy that all properties will be let for six months during a vacancy, subject to the expected length of the vacancy and works needing to be done to the house.

In all cases, the WDBF acts as the landlord and makes all the necessary arrangements. When a house is let, the church wardens are relieved of their responsibilities. However, if they have any concerns about the tenant/s occupation of the house, these should be referred to Savills as soon as possible.

Savills carries out inspections of vacant houses and assesses the extent of necessary repairs and any improvements needed to comply with policy before a new appointment is made. Priority is given to checking gas equipment, electrical fittings, the structure of the building, the condition

of the roof, and signs of rot or other problems affecting timber.

Incoming clergy will be notified of the schedule of works (See appendix iv for example of Property Statement). Requests for additional works will be considered against the policy regarding minimum provisions but this increases costs and often results in subjective decisions which subsequent clergy may wish to reverse.

Where a house is left unoccupied during a vacancy the church wardens are responsible for looking after a benefice house, including the maintenance of the garden except during a period of tenancy. Should the property remain in vacancy for more than eight weeks during the growing season (1 March – 30 Sep), the Diocese will provide support by way of simple garden maintenance mowing and hedge trimming if applicable, up to the value of £80 per month on submission of receipts to Savills. It is also very helpful if church wardens can keep an eye on any other clergy houses.

Savills will normally drain down vacant properties during winter months

Keys to the benefice house are normally held by the church wardens, who are responsible for the security of the building. It is a condition of the WDBF's insurance policy that empty property is checked at least once a week – in the case of a benefice house, it is the responsibility of the church wardens to ensure that these checks are all carried out. A house unoccupied for more than 30 days is not insured for all perils normally covered by the policy.

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## 10. CONTRACTORS

All contractors are approved by Savills and are required to have the necessary liability insurance in place.

Savills is always willing to hear from clergy regarding contractors who do a good job, are well organised and prompt in their attention to work to be done.

Savills would also like to be informed of any contractor who has **not** done a good job and with whom there may have been difficulties. Any concerns over quality of work should be reported.

Contractors are expected to work carefully within each property, be cleanly presented and professionally equipped. In turn clergy are expected to be as helpful as possible to facilitate them in their work.

Any complaints or concerns should be directed to Savills or to the Parish Support Team.

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## PROPERTY WORKING GROUP

### Terms of reference

#### Purpose

The purposes of the Property Working Group are to:

- a) To review and update operational policies relating to the care, maintenance and usage of clergy housing;
- b) To consider any appeals or requests outside of standard policies from clergy relating to the maintenance and development of their house;
- c) To monitor the usage and occupation of all Diocesan properties, ensuring they are available for ministerial purposes, whilst giving due regard to the importance of income raised from lettings to support the wider diocesan budget;
- d) To support the Operations and Governance Manager in their management of the housing budget, recommending areas for prioritising expenditure;
- e) To help develop a strategic property plan, working in conjunction with the Investment Advisory group and the BCSC in its capacity as Parsonages Board.

#### Membership

The membership will be as follows:

- 1.1. The Archdeacon of Winchester (Chair);
- 1.2. The Assistant Archdeacon;
- 1.3. Two lay people appointed by the BCSC;
- 1.4. Two beneficed clergy from the Diocese appointed by the BCSC;
- 1.5. The Operations and Governance Manager;
- 1.6. The Houses Manager (in attendance);
- 1.7. The Houses Administrator – Finance (Secretary).

The Working Group shall meet at least 4 times a year.

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June 2022

## Appendix ii

Should a **serious** problem occur with your property (e.g. flooding, structural damage, loss of power or heating) during out of Office hours or during the Easter or Christmas break, please contact an appropriate contractor from the list below. If you are still unable to resolve the problem, then please contact your Archdeacon or Area Dean who will be able to provide contact for members of the Property Team who will be able to give advice.

### OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY CONTRACTOR LIST

#### Gas

Emergency call out – 0800 111 999 **TURN OFF GAS AT METER, OPEN WINDOWS AND DO NOT USE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES**

Service	WDBF Emergency Contractors	Tel No	Detail	What is covered
Heating	M J Property Maintenance	07765 880890	24 hour call out	GAS - All areas
Heating	R H Hammond & Sons Ltd	02380 772442 / 07769 690968		GAS/OIL - All areas
Heating	S R Hall Ltd	01256 765535		GAS/OIL - North
Plumbing	M J Property Maintenance	07765 880890	24 hour call out	All Areas
Plumbing	R H Hammond & Sons Ltd	02380 772442 / 07769 690968		All areas
Blocked Drains	R H Hammond & Sons Ltd	02380 772442 / 07769 690968		All areas
Electrics	M J Property Maintenance	07765 880890	24 hour call out	Winchester & South
Electrics	A W Electrical	01264 356111 / 07850 366442	24 hour call out	Winchester & North
Trees	N P Tree Management	01256 768954/ 07880 575958	24 hour call out	All Areas
General	R H Hammond & Sons Ltd	02380 772442 / 07769 690968		All areas
General	M J Property Maintenance	07765 880890	24 hour call out	All Areas
Glazing	R H Hammond & Sons Ltd	02380 772442 / 07769 690968		All areas

#### PLEASE KEEP IN A SAFE AND PROMINENT PLACE, IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

This list is updated regularly and is also available on the diocesan website:

<https://www.winchester.anglican.org/documents/emergency-property-contractors/>