

The law states that:

Role of churchwardens, PCCs and archdeacons

49 Role of churchwardens in recording information

(1)The churchwardens in each parish must continue to maintain the terrier and inventory which they were maintaining under section 4(1)(a) of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 (“the 1991 Measure”) immediately before the commencement of this section, being respectively—

- (a)a full terrier of all land appertaining to the church, and
- (b)a full inventory of all articles appertaining to the church.

(2)The churchwardens in each parish must continue to maintain the log-book which they were maintaining under section 4(1)(b) of the 1991 Measure immediately before the commencement of this section, being a log-book which has inserted in it a full note of—

- (a)all alterations, additions and repairs to, and other events affecting, the church and the land and articles appertaining to it, and
- (b)the location of any other documents not kept with the log-book and which relate to those alterations, additions, repairs or events.

(3)In carrying out the duty under subsection (1) or (2), the churchwardens must act in consultation with the minister.

(4)The form of the terrier, inventory and log-book must accord with such recommendations as the Church Buildings Council may make.

(5)The churchwardens must send a copy of the inventory to such person as the bishop of the diocese may from time to time designate.

(6)The churchwardens must notify the person designated under subsection (5) of any alterations to the inventory at such intervals as the bishop may direct.

(7)In the case of a parish which has more than one church, this section applies in relation to each church.

In addition, the Registrar’s Office provided the following information:

All documents are now available as word documents for storage on computer, but there is also a requirement that they are printed off for archive storage in perpetuity. Please note:

- You can add more information if you so wish
- Information is required re the contents of the vestry, etc (but the level of detail is not given).
- It is not expected that anyone would count the teaspoons and forks in a kitchen, but it would be expected that expect someone lists ‘cutlery and crockery to cater for 50’.
- However, if you had a teapot (for instance) of high value (ie Clarice Cliff) then it would be expected that this was specifically listed!

The INVENTORY relates to the church (with church being defined as any parish church or other church or chapel used for worship). Therefore it is not expected to reference the contents of the

church hall on the inventory unless the two were combined in one building perhaps. The Church Hall itself is to be detailed on the TERRIER on which all land and buildings are listed (including copies of Registered Titles for examples).

If an item was on a previous inventory but is no longer found then that should be noted. Depending on the item and the circumstances further investigations by the churchwardens may be necessary (as they are responsible for the contents and for maintaining an accurate record). If it was valuable then does it need to be reported as stolen and claimed on insurance; if items of furniture, contents or pictures etc were removed then a faculty should have been obtained which would be noted on the Log Book (and the Inventory can simply mention 'items removed under faculty reference.....' and then need not be mentioned again in subsequent years); if the items were removed but no faculty obtained then it may be that a retrospective permission is now required (seek advice from the Archdeacon in the first instance) or if the items were insignificant (teaspoons, flower vases etc) then there is no need to be concerned.

The expectations for a modern church building are exactly the same as for any other – but the inventory may contain a lot less as there is less of note to detail. It is acceptable to leave boxes blank if there is nothing to put in them. There is a specific box for sound equipment to be listed, underneath the information required for musical instruments.

The documents should be stored electronically and printed in hard copy in order to archive. The hard copies are the ones that are eventually lodged with the County Records Office for posterity. The Guidance in relation to storage of data is exactly what you would expect for any organisation – it is important to ensure data is password protected and that it is backed up regularly. Cloud storage is a good idea. There is some information from the Church of England Records Centre on data and record management and storage of date [here](#) including some fact sheets on electronic records etc.