

5 – CLERGY – PERSONAL MATTERS

5.1 - CLERGY SUPPORT

5.1.1 PROFESSIONAL AND PASTORAL SUPPORT

The Bishop and his Senior Staff are always available to offer professional pastoral support to clergy. This is focused in Ministry Reviews (see 5.2), but telephone conversations and personal appointments are encouraged between clergy and their Rural Dean, Archdeacon and Bishop.

5.1.2 SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Available to all clergy is the Bishop's Adviser for Spirituality, whose name, address and telephone number are in the Diocesan Directory. All clergy are encouraged to make use of an annual retreat and the services of a Spiritual Director (or Soul Friend – whatever name one wishes). Some priests also find a Confessor helpful.

5.1.3 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT

This heading is intended to cover not only the traditional family

unit, but also (for example) single clergy and clergy with dependent relatives. Provision for this is to be found through a *confidential counselling service* available to all clergy households in the Diocese. The name, address and telephone number of the Adviser is to be found in the Diocesan Directory.

5.1.4 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

This may be found primarily through the provision of Continuing Ministerial Education (see 5.3). All clergy are encouraged to make use of funds budgeted every year within the Diocese for this purpose.

5.1.5 PEER GROUP SUPPORT

Peer group support can be found in such a variety of forms that everyone should be able to find some means of peer support; indeed all clergy have a responsibility for creating such support for themselves.

The *Chapter Meeting*, because it is outside the Synodical structure, can be an important resource for support. Its principal disadvantage for some is that the choice of other members of the Chapter is not in the hands of the individual, and who may be in a smallish group of people with whom there is little in common in terms of outlook, age and gender. On the other hand, many have been surprised by how much support clergy of different persuasions can give each other.

The possible tension between the Chapter as a fellowship and as a business meeting need not be exaggerated, since often it is out of a business matter that the most helpful discussions arise in

fellowship.

Alongside Chapters are also local *ecumenical ministers' meetings*. Much of what has been said about Chapters is true of these meetings also.

For newly-ordained clergy, *post-ordination training* will provide opportunities for sharing needs and concerns, out of which can often arise friendships which last many years. For other clergy, attendance at courses of *Continuing Ministerial Education* (see 5.3 - particularly residential courses) not only should provide intellectual and spiritual stimulus for the individual, but also fellowship and support from others at the course.

Many clergy also remain members of a *cell* of people who were at theological college together. These cells may meet only once a year, but give opportunity for sharing at a level not possible in a local group. Some clergy have close *confidants* (as distinct from a spiritual director) with whom they meet from time to time. Others join with neighbouring clergy for informal *study groups*, perhaps of a theological book or a member's paper. Yet others still have developed their own *support groups* of those with whom they may reflect about their ministry; these can be very valuable, but need careful ground rules to be established in order that they may function most effectively - for example, about confidentiality, membership, time allotted to each member, and above all, the purpose of the group.

The Society of Mary and Martha has produced a helpful document '*Affirmation and Accountability*' which is available from them (see 5.7.5).

5.2 – REVIEW OF MINISTRY

Review of ministry provides an opportunity for ministers to reflect on their ministry in order –

- to strengthen mission and ministry:
- to offer an expression of pastoral care:
- to identify areas for development.

It works on a two-year cycle; in one year the review is with the Bishop or a member of his Senior Staff; in the other year with a member of a specialist panel. In each case the review is on a one-to-one basis. The members of the specialist panel, who are appointed by the Bishop, bring to the review process particular skills – for example, counselling, personnel, academic or spiritual direction.

Stipendiary clergy and other licensed ministers, other than those clergy serving their Titles, take part in the review programme.

5.3 - CONTINUING MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

5.3.1 THE CONTEXT OF CME

Continuing Ministerial Education (CME) is a function of the pastoral oversight of the Bishop for his clergy. It is concerned with personal, collective and professional development and it is expected that all ministers will take responsibility for their own continued lifelong learning.

CME policy, provision and practical matters are the responsibility of the Diocesan Director of Ministerial and Adult Learning.

CME events and opportunities are regularly discussed and advertised.

5.3.2 THE COMPONENTS OF CME

¶ *The First Three Years of Ordained Ministry*

Post Ordination Training provides a practical partnership between the diocese, training incumbents and curates, for the strengthening and support of mission and ministry. A three-year programme of diocesan events complements training offered locally, addressing the development of roles, skills, knowledge and personal gifts for the early years of ordained ministry. Attendance is seen as a very high priority.

¶ *Events and Courses*

The dioceses of the eastern region provide a regular programme of short residential courses on particular aspects of ministry (currently, a New Posts conference, a New Rural Deans' Conference, a pre-Retirement Conference, and Conflict Management workshops). There is also a regular New Ministers' Day for those who have recently taken up licensed ministry in the Diocese of Ely. Further events of this sort, both in the region and in the diocese, are to be developed as well as events generally available to ministers and lay people together.

¶ *Clergy/Ministers' Conferences*

The Bishop may periodically invite clergy and ministers to a day or residential conference. Attendance is seen as a very high priority.

¶ *CME Grants*

Personal Grants: All stipendiary clergy are entitled, on completion of an application form, to an annual grant (£120 in 2003) to pursue a course of study, attend a conference, retreat etc. Arrangements for reporting back on CME activities are among the requirements set out on the application form. Copies of the form are available from the Director of Ministerial and Adult Learning. Personal grants can be 'rolled over' for a maximum period of three years, but only with the prior agreement of the Director. Non-stipendiary clergy do not currently share the entitlement, but may nevertheless make applications for personal grants.

Project Grants: Ministers need different levels of training at different times. It is possible to apply for an additional Project Grant (up to £200 in 2003). Such grants are always at the discretion of the Director. Applicants need to establish in writing their need for further training, to give evidence of other recent training, and of seeking matching funds.

¶ *Extended Study Leave*

Extended Study Leave is a period of withdrawal (normally of three months) from parish and diocesan life for the purposes of study, reflection, spiritual refreshment and rest. All stipendiary workers who hold the Bishop's licence are eligible for ESL. They should normally have been in role for at least ten years. They should have been in post in Ely Diocese for at least five years (excluding a curacy). For pastoral and financial reasons, ESL is limited currently to six people each year.

Those considering ESL should contact the Director of Ministerial and Adult Learning in the first instance. Initial discussions may result in the Bishop's permission to begin planning. The person together with the Director prepares an ESL proposal, covering practical arrangements, cover and support, a plan for the elements of the period of leave, including the supervision of study, a financial plan, and arrangements for reporting back. The Bishop may then authorise the ESL.

In addition to the usual stipend, and ESL grant (£500 in 2003) can be made available (to which accumulated Personal Grants can be added). A number of grant-making trusts may also need to be approached. The Director has details of possible sources of funding, in addition to those shown in section 5.7 of this Handbook.

5.4 - STIPEND AND FEES

5.4.1 STIPENDS

¶ The Stipend Level

After consultation with the dioceses through the Inter-Diocesan Finance forum, the Finance Committee of the Archbishops' Council, recommends national stipend levels for incumbents and ministers of similar status effective from 1st April of the following year. Each diocese sets its own stipends; Ely sets a stipend weighted to take account of the cost of living in the eastern region. Assistant Clergy are paid according to a national scale set by the Archbishops' Council, again after consultation with dioceses.

¶ Funding Stipends

In funding the stipend of a benefice there are several sources, including:

- *Guaranteed Annuities (replacing the former endowment income of the benefice) payable by the Church Commissioners*
- *Local Trusts*
- *Parochial Fees*
- *Easter Offerings*
- *Part Time Chaplaincies*
- *Augmentation Grant (from Diocesan Stipends Fund, diocesan glebe income and Parish Share receipts)*

5.4.2 HEATING, LIGHTING AND CLEANING ETC. (TAX-FREE HOUSING EXPENSES)

Clergy who live, rent free, in an official house and receive a diocesan augmentation or similar grant are eligible to receive part of that grant tax-free. This is to reimburse expenditure on heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep at the official residence. It is not an additional payment, but is an adjustment to reduce the liability for income tax. This reduced tax liability is claimed by the appropriate expenditure being declared on the annual income and expenditure return. (Clergy new to the Diocese will be sent the relevant forms.) The Inland Revenue expects the dioceses to monitor these expenses and, when claims appear high, further enquiries may be necessary; clergy should therefore retain documentary proof of these expenses.

Changes in stipend levels and other benefits due in April each year, including assistant clergy increments, cannot be implemented until the annual return of income and expenditure (PSA/PUN) is completed and returned to the Diocesan Office. Any significant changes in total income during the year should be notified immediately. Further information is available from the Diocesan Secretary at the Diocesan Office.

5.4.3 ASSIGNMENT OF FEES FOR WEDDINGS, FUNERALS ETC.

¶ Incumbents

By virtue of the office, an incumbent is entitled to receive and retain certain fees arising from the performance of parochial duties. The incumbent may retain these fees, in which case their total value will be taken into account when augmentation of stipend is calculated. Alternatively, the incumbent may assign these fees to the diocese under cover of a Deed of Assignment.

¶ Team Vicars and Assistant Clergy

Although all parochial fees are legally the property of the incumbent, he or she may direct that such fees may be retained by the minister performing the service or duty. In these cases, it is possible, should the minister so wish, to assign the fees receivable to the diocese under a separate Agreement, thus providing the advantages indicated below.

¶ Advantages

First, the augmentation grant from the Diocesan Stipends Fund will form a greater part of the stipend, thereby guaranteeing a regular monthly income rather than one which fluctuates with the amount of fees received in any one month. Secondly, it simplifies the tax return, as assigned fees do not have to be declared separately to the Inland Revenue. A third consideration is that national insurance contributions are levied only on the stipend. If fees are retained therefore, the stipend paid may be insufficient to attract national insurance contributions, with subsequent loss of certain benefits to the individual.

¶ Procedure

In order to assign fees, a minister must complete a Deed of Assignment to the Board of Finance (DBF). The minister will then be required to pay all fees received in a month to the DBF under cover of an assigned fee slip.

¶ General

It should be noted that though Easter Offerings and Chaplaincy income are included in, rather than additional to, the diocesan stipend, they may not be assigned and must be declared to the Inland Revenue.

Deeds of Assignment, Agreements and fee slips are obtainable from the Diocesan Secretary at the Diocesan Office, from whom any other information should be sought.

5.5 - REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

The Church of England practice is for PCCs to meet in full all approved expenses incurred by their clergy in the performance of their parish duties. The stipends are calculated on this assumption. Proper payment can be achieved only if there is complete understanding and frankness between clergy and PCCs.

5.5.1 DEFINITION OF EXPENSES

PCCs should meet the full cost of the following items incurred by the clergy in the course of their parochial duties:

- *Postage*
- *Provision/Depreciation of Office equipment*
- *Stationery*
- *Maintenance of Robes*
- *Telephone (excluding personal calls)*
- *Provision of Locum Tenens (but see Section D9)*
- *Secretarial assistance*
- *Hospitality*
- *Travel, including car maintenance and depreciation*

In certain circumstances, the following items may also be included:

- *Books*
- *Continuing Ministerial Education*
- *Repair/ replacement of carpet, chairs etc in the 'official' part of the house*

5.5.2 CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Claims for expenses are much simplified if the clergy fully record all expenses occurred and submit a monthly claim. Where clergy serve more than one parish, it is essential that agreement be reached between the respective PCCs as to the proportion of expenses to be borne by each. Whilst, of course, clergy and PCC will wish to monitor expenses, the subject should ideally be reviewed and discussed openly on an annual basis, perhaps when the parish's budget is being prepared. (NB Experience suggests that clergy on fixed rate allowances, or those not using a local claim form, are those least likely to have their expenses properly reimbursed.)

5.5.3 VOLUNTARY GIVING

Some clergy wish to claim less than the full cost of their expenses, treating the balance as a form of voluntary giving. Whilst this is effective in parish finances in the short-term, it has long-term ramifications. For example it can lead to embarrassment when a successor quite reasonably claims his full costs. Similarly, it hides from the PCC the true cost of ministry. Full declaration also avoids misunderstandings when different figures are shown on tax returns and returns to the Church. There are therefore both administrative advantages and financial benefit to a parish if clergy claim their full expenses and return whatever proportion they wish under a covenant, permitting tax to be reclaimed by the parish.

Please note: If there is difficulty in observing the precepts of this Section, advice should be sought from the Archdeacon or from the Diocesan Office.

5.6 - REMOVALS AND GRANTS

5.6.1 GRANTS

¶ First Appointment

A First Appointment grant is payable by the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance on initial appointment as an assistant minister. This is intended to help towards the cost of robes, theological books, office furniture and equipment (e.g. desk, chairs, filing cabinet, typewriter). Details of expenditure are required when claiming this grant.

¶ First Incumbency

A further grant is made by the Board on first appointment with incumbency status to help with the cost of additional robes, equipment or items of office furniture which may be required. Again, full details of expenditure are required when applying for the grant.

¶ Removal

All clergy are entitled to removal charges on appointment. At least three quotations should be obtained from firms with whom the claimant would be satisfied; the Board will meet the cost of the most cost-effective tender, in agreement with the clergy person. In the case of a self-drive hired van, the cost of hire and petrol used will be reimbursed on submission of receipts. Removal costs may also be met for certain lay staff.

¶ Resettlement

A resettlement grant, in line with that recommended annually by the Church Commissioners, is paid to all stipendiary clergy moving to a parochial charge. This is to help towards the cost of curtains, carpets and other fittings in the new parsonage house.

5.6.2 CAR LOAN SCHEME

Car loans are provided for stipendiary clergy. The maximum loan is one half of the national minimum stipend for incumbents. Repayments are spread over a four year period and are deducted from the monthly stipend. Application forms are available from the Diocesan Office.

5.7 - GRANT-MAKING TRUSTS FOR CLERGY

There are literally hundreds of Trusts, many of which make grants to individuals. The only way to ensure that you have reviewed all of them is to go to the local Reference Library, and scour through *The Directory of Grant-making Trusts*.

Below are listed a number of Trusts which provide grants for clergy. Some are general in their purpose; some are restricted, either to the sort of clergy to which grants may be given, or to specific purposes (education, holidays, etc).

All Trusts, before parting with their Trust money to an applicant, will want to know some detail of that applicant's financial circumstances. Clergy without dependent children and whose spouse brings in a full salary are less likely to qualify for grants than those with several dependent children and a non-earning spouse. Some of the smaller charities may want to know whether or not an applicant has already tried to access income from the larger ones. Many charities may well ask for an endorsement of an application from the bishop or archdeacon.

5.7.1 CHARITIES FOR GENERAL PURPOSES

¶ **The Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy** – The Registrar, 1 Dean Trench Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3HB (020-7799-3696). Email: robert.welsford@sonsoftheclergy.org.uk

The Charity gives grants to clergy and their dependants for the following: Secondary school fees and clothing, school travel and trips of an educational nature, musical instruments and lessons, maintenance of children at college

and university, book grants for ordinands. Also for nursing home fees, marital counselling, child maintenance for divorced and separated clergy and spouses, bereavement expenses, and removals from abroad. Grants are not available for objects covered by the Friends of the Clergy Corporation.

¶ **The Friends of the Clergy Corporation** – The Secretary, 27 Medway Street, Westminster, London SW1P 2BD (020-7222-2288). Email: focc@btinternet.com Web: www.friendsoftheclergy.org

The Charity gives grants to clergy and their dependants for the following: Primary school clothing, holidays, retirement, infant, adult and clerical clothing, hospital visiting and convalescence. Grants are not available for objects covered by the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy.

¶ **Mrs Frances Ashton's Charity** – The Receiver, Mrs Barbara Davis, Charities Aid Foundation, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA (01732-520081). Email: bdavis@caf.charitynet.org

Provides grants of variable amounts for needy clergymen of the Church of England, serving or retired, and the widows or widowers of such clergy. Grants are not available towards the cost of independent school fees.

¶ **Henry Smith's Charity** – The Treasurer, Smith's Charity, 5 Chancery Lane, Clifford's Inn, London EC4A 1BU (020-7242-1212).

Grants are made to clergy at Christmas time, and application forms are available during September. Applications are particularly welcomed from clergy who are married and for whom the stipend is the only source of income. A means-test is used by the Trustees to decide the level of grant offered.

5.7.2 SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL CHARITIES

¶ **The Oley Trust** – The Bursar, Clare College, Cambridge CB2 1TL (01223-333200).

Most grants are made to clergy in the Diocese of Ely, to help them meet the costs of putting their children through independent schools.

¶ **The Rustat Trust** – The Dean, Jesus College, Cambridge CB5 8BL (01223-339421).

Assistance is given to needy clergy whose children are being educated in maintained schools. The Trustees particularly like to help clergy below the status of incumbent. The Rustat Fund also provides bursaries for children of Anglican clergy who gain a place to study at the College.

¶ In addition, a number of independent schools may offer bursaries for children of clergy to help with costs of tuition and boarding. The following may be worth trying:

¶ **The Church Schools Company** (01832-735105)
Email: admin@church-schools.com Web: www.church-schools.com

¶ **Christ's Hospital**

¶ **King Edward's School Witley**

¶ **St John's School Leatherhead**

5.7.3 HOLIDAY GRANT CHARITIES

¶ **The Clergy Holidays Society** - 11 Crabgate Lane, Skellow, Doncaster DN6 8LE (01302-337101).

Founded to assist clergy who wish to arrange holiday locums or exchanges; and also to assist clergy and Licensed Church Workers who wish to arrange inexpensive holidays in Britain.

¶ **The English Clergy Association** – the Revd J W Masding, The Old School House, Norton Hawkfield, Pensford, Bristol BS39 4HB (01275-830017). Email: masding@breathe.co.uk

Offers small grants towards the costs of clergy holidays.

5.7.4 CHARITIES FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS OR PURPOSES

¶ **Dr George Richards Charity** – Mr David Newman, 51 Pole Barn Lane, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9NQ (01255-676509).

Email: djnewm@netscapeonline.co.uk

Founded to assist financially clergy of the Church of England forced to retire early due to ill-health.

¶ **The Foundation of Edward Storey** – Storey's House, Mount Pleasant, Cambridge CB3 0BZ (01223-364405).

The Charity can help women over 40 years of age who are 'widows of clergymen, dependants of clergymen, women deacons and deaconesses, missionaries, and other women closely involved in the Church of England.' Some pensions are given, and grants are made towards items such as fuel bills, electric appliances, furniture and clothing, food for special diets, medical aids, and holidays.

¶ **The Mylne Trust** – The Secretary, Messrs Bells, Potter & Kempson, 11 South Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QX (01252-733733).

Annual and one-off grants are available to 'Protestants who have been involved in evangelistic work..., married ordinands with dependent children (who are given priority) and other Christian workers at the trustees' discretion.'

¶ **The Society for the Relief of Necessitous Protestant Ministers**
– Mr A Lathey, 8 Marston Avenue, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2HF
(01372-379441).

One off and recurrent grants are available to ‘Protestant ministers who are of good repute and who hold and proclaim the doctrines of free and sovereign grace.’

¶ **The Society for the Relief of Poor Clergymen** – c/o CPAS,
Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park, Warwick CV34 6NG (01926-334242). Email: srpc@caps.org.uk

Grants are available to ‘Evangelical ordained ministers and accredited lay workers and their dependants in the Church of England’ and are mainly for bereavement and illness, and not for educational purposes.

5.7.5 CHARITIES PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION

¶ **Cautley House** – 95 Seabrook Road, Seabrook, Hythe, Kent CT21 5QY (01303-230762). Email: cautleyhouse@compuserve.com Web: www.cautleyhouse.org.uk

An Anglican foundation which offers an atmosphere of love and healing for any who are weighed down with burdens. Staff members are available for a listening or prayer ministry. Special rates are available for those in the full-time ministry of the church.

¶ **The Society of Mary and Martha** – Sheldon, Dunsford, Exeter, Devon EX6 7LE (01647-252752). Email: smm@sheldon.uk.com
Web: www.sheldon.uk.com

Residential resources for people in ministry and/or their spouses. Help for people going through difficult times, as well as routine space apart. Independent, ecumenical, completely confidential.

5.8 - HOUSING

The Houses sub-Committee is responsible for ‘maintaining the Diocesan stock of clergy houses in such a way as to:

- preserve their long-term fitness for use and asset value and
- provide a service to the satisfaction of those who live in them.’

It will undertake this work within very tight financial constraints.

Its work will be most effective if those who live in the houses:

- are kept informed of policies and programmes of work, and
- see themselves as partners.

The purpose of these notes is to outline the nature of that partnership and describe the responsibilities of each party.

5.8.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOUSES SUB-COMMITTEE

The Houses sub-Committee wishes to provide an effective service, to establish a good relationship with clergy and to consult them when any works are envisaged which would have an impact on them or their family and to carry out work promptly and considerately.

The Houses sub-Committee is committed to achieving value for money and efficiency in all it does.

¶ Maintenance Policy

In order to preserve the long-term value of clergy houses and ensure they are always fit to be used as family homes and centres of ministry, the sub-Committee has adopted a minimum standard

for all houses. It is working towards a situation in which all clergy houses conform to this minimum standard. There are three types of maintenance programme:

- **Response -**
dealing with immediate repairs arising from breakages, and wear and tear as reported by clergy.
- **Cyclical -**
regular servicing and renewal of components such as heating boilers and external painting.
- **Planned -**
programmes of work to bring a house up to the minimum standard. Progress in implementing this policy may be constrained by the size of the Sub-Committee's budget in any year.

The sub-Committee will:

- carry out its obligations to provide clergy with a responsive, cyclical and planned maintenance service as described;
- keep clergy informed by letter, telephone or copy works order, of what action has been taken following a request for repairs;
- aim to achieve the following response times following a request for repairs:
 - Emergency Repairs*, defined as those which if not attended to could cause personal injury or serious structural damage – 24 hours
 - Urgent Repairs*, defined as those which, if not attended to, would lead to significant discomfort to those in the house – 5 working days
 - Routine Repairs*, defined as all other approved response repairs - 20 working days

5.8.2 CLERGY RESPONSIBILITY

The *Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1992* and amendments states in Clause 13(1) that ‘The Incumbent shall have a duty to take proper care of a parsonage house, being a duty equivalent to that of a tenant to use premises in a tenant-like manner.’ Clergy are expected to co-operate with the sub-Committee in the performance of its work and to be responsible and diligent in the way they use and care for their home.

The budget each year is used to maintain and improve the stock of nearly 200 houses; this is inclusive of buildings insurance, water charges, and Council Tax. Most of this money comes from parish shares.

- Clergy are expected to be responsible for:
- all minor repairs, undertaking them if it is within their capacity;
- all repairs which do not arise as a result of fair wear and tear, any accidental damage shall be reported to the Diocesan Surveyor’s office and repaired at the expense of the clergy. The office will arrange for all repairs to be carried out and the resultant invoice will be passed on to the clergy for due payment;
- clearing blocked drains and waste pipes;
- replacing all broken glass (normally covered by the householders’ insurance policy);
- the eradication of all pests including rats, mice and wasps (a service is normally provided free or at a nominal charge by local environmental health authorities);
- keeping the grounds in a clean and tidy condition including the proper management of hedges, shrubs (and trees where possible) so as to avoid inconvenience to other people or danger to the structure of the house. Where trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order, or are within a Conservation Area, clergy must first obtain all necessary permissions from the local planning authority prior to carrying out any work on such identified trees;

- keeping all drives and paths free of weeds;
- not undertaking any alterations or improvements to the house (including electrical and plumbing works) without the written approval of the Diocesan surveyor -

Please note that any alterations or improvements made will be regarded as part of the house and should not be removed when clergy move on without the specific approval of the Houses sub-Committee;

- maintaining the internal decorations of the house to the standard which existed when they moved in;
- insurance - the structure of all properties is insured. This does not include contents for which occupiers should make their own arrangements.

5.8.3 SATISFACTION

If the response to a request, or the method or manner of the sub-Committee's work is not to the satisfaction of the clergy, please will they write to their Archdeacon, who will discuss the matter further.

Clergy may also ask that their complaint be brought before the Houses sub-Committee or refer to the members elected by their archdeaconry, whose names are in the Diocesan Directory.

5.8.4 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Inevitably a number of issues of detail arise frequently for clergy in connection with their housing. The Diocesan Surveyor's office has a document entitled 'Frequently asked Questions' which should already be in the possession of all clergy. A further copy may always be obtained from the Surveyor's office on request.

5.9 - LEAVE AND SICKNESS

5.9.1 ANNUAL LEAVE

The Bishops recommend that all clergy and lay ministers should have four full weeks off every year, together with time off after Easter and Christmas. They ask incumbents to ensure that this time off is taken by their assistants and to have a similar amount of leave themselves. Churchwardens are asked to seek to ensure that this period off-duty is taken and to do all in their powers to make the holiday breaks possible.

Whilst it is legally the responsibility of an incumbent to ensure that during his holidays his duties are covered and officiants are paid when eligible, it is the Bishops' recommendation that PCCs will take full responsibility for any such payments and will also cover all expenses of visiting clergy.

5.9.2 MATERNITY LEAVE

Although clergy are office-holders, they are given the same rights to maternity leave as employees, and are eligible for Statutory maternity pay (SMP), payable for 26 weeks.

Care should be taken not to risk losing entitlement to SMP, and clergy should avoid taking an active role in the parish and should not attend PCC meetings or take services on a regular basis whilst on maternity leave.

For full details, please contact the Stipends Department at the Diocesan Office. In particular, those living in a diocesan house, but not intending to return to work, should contact the Diocesan Office as soon as possible.

5.9.3 PATERNITY LEAVE

Legal entitlement – fathers are entitled to *five days* paternity leave to be taken at the time of birth, or in the following weeks, whichever is more helpful to the family.

Discretionary leave – at the discretion of the Archdeacon (and with the incumbent, if a curate), a *further five days* of paid special leave may be given to cope with a short-term crisis. Any further special leave (paid or unpaid) for similar reason is at the discretion of the Archdeacon.

5.9.4 TIME OFF

All clergy and ministers should take a whole day off each week, or its equivalent.

These periods off-duty should be adhered to because the spiritual well being of the people committed to their care requires spiritually alert and physically healthy clergy.

5.9.5 BETWEEN POSTS

Whilst it is recognised that clergy need time for moving and settling in, a period of three weeks should normally be considered the maximum period from the date of the farewell in one parish to the Institution or Licensing in the next.

5.9.6 SICKNESS

¶ Payment of Stipend

During periods of sickness, the employer (for this purpose, the Church Commissioners) is responsible for the payment of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to male clergy of 65 and under, and women of 60 and under. If a period of illness lasts three days or less, there is no need to take any action other than to consult with neighbouring clergy or the Rural Dean if it becomes necessary to arrange for duties to be covered. For any period of illness that lasts four days or more, it is essential that the Church Commissioners be notified in writing as soon as possible. SSP will be payable from the fourth day onwards, but for all practical purposes no difference will be seen in the monthly stipend. The Commissioners will continue to pay the normal stipend in full and PAYE and National Insurance contributions will be deducted as usual, including that part of the pay which represents SSP. The Commissioners will reclaim the SSP they have paid so far from the DSS and any amount so reclaimed will be credited to the Diocesan Stipends Fund and thus be available for stipend purposes generally. It is essential that the Commissioners be notified of period of illness because, although the individual will not directly benefit, the Stipends Fund will be sustained to the relief of the Parish Share in due course.

¶ After 28 weeks

SSP ceases to be payable by the Commissioners after 28 weeks as the responsibility is then transferred to the individual's local DSS office. The DSS will pay state sickness benefit direct to the claimant, although it should be noted that they will almost certainly wish to see evidence of sickness by way of doctor's certificates.

During this period of illness (i.e. after 28 weeks), the Commissioners will continue to pay the stipend in full so the person concerned will be in receipt of both a stipend and state

sickness benefit. The state sickness benefit should, therefore, be sent periodically to the DBF, less any properly incurred additional personal expenses as detailed below. It is assumed that anyone ill for such a prolonged time will be in touch with the Bishop and Archdeacon who would always be pleased to advise.

¶ **Additional Personal Expenses**

The Bishops have directed that clergy should not be financially worse off as a result of illness, so any additional expense incurred and attributed to the illness may be deducted from the state sickness benefit before the balance is paid to the Diocesan Board of Finance. This could include a variety of items such as additional costs to keep a bedroom heated, travelling expenses for visits to clinics or hospital visits for immediate members of the family. After prior consultation with the Bishop or Archdeacon, in some cases the cost of staying at a convalescent home may be deductible. There are no convalescent homes specifically for the clergy, but Bishops and Archdeacons can often advise on suitable places for short times of tranquillity and recuperation.

¶ **St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy**

Clergy are reminded of the medical and surgical facilities which are available to them and their dependent relatives from the St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy. The hospital has recently been fully refurbished, including a new operating theatre and patient rooms. Full information can be obtained from the hospital at 14, Fitzroy Square, London SW1P 6AH. Tel 020 7388 4954.

5.10 - CLERGY APPOINTMENTS ADVISER

The Clergy Appointments Adviser acts as a central clearing house within the Church of England for clergy seeking new appointments, and those seeking clergy to fill vacant posts.

Priests seeking to move from their present posts are at liberty to approach the Clergy Appointments Adviser to ask if he will put their details on to his monthly list circulated to all bishops and archdeacons. Bishops and archdeacons, in conjunction with patrons, frequently refer to this list as they seek to fill vacant benefices and other posts. Before approaching the CAA, it is wise for priests to speak to their bishop, since in addition to any other referees priests may suggest, a reference will always be sought from their bishop before their name is published on the list.

Some posts are now advertised in the Church press; others are filled by patrons or bishops without advertising. But increasingly the Clergy Appointments Adviser's services are being used in the filling of vacant posts. In addition to the lists of clergy seeking a new area of ministry, the CAA also publishes frequent lists of vacant posts; these lists are available to anyone on his circulation list.

Contact:

The Clergy Appointments Adviser
Fielden House
Little College Street
Westminster
LONDON SW1P 3SH

Tel: 020-7898-1897/8

Fax: 020-7898-1899

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This list of literature is clearly not exhaustive. Suggestions for further books and booklets for inclusion in future editions of this guide will be welcome.

