

Scottish Episcopal Church

Responsibilities of the Property Convener

The management of all Charge properties is the responsibility of the Vestry, but this duty is normally delegated to a Fabric sub-committee, whose Convener is responsible for overseeing the activities and reporting to the Vestry. The Property Convener should be aware of and adhere to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and any Scottish Episcopal Church Net Zero guidance in relation to church property.

Responsibilities of the Property Convener

- Executing the agreed policy for monitoring all of the Charge properties and refurbishing, where necessary.
- Being aware of Diocesan policy regarding the management, maintenance, acquisition, leasing and disposal of property.
- Ensuring that quinquennial (five-yearly) inspections of all Charge properties are kept up-to-date and liaising with the Diocesan Official or body appointed to monitor Quinquennial inspections on behalf of the Diocese. (This may be the Diocesan Buildings committee).
- Planning and budgeting for programmes of maintenance and submitting such forecasts to the Treasurer for inclusion in the Charge's budget for the following year.
- Ensuring that energy performance certificates for church property are maintained and renewed as necessary.
- Being aware of the provisions of Canon 35 and ensuring consent is obtained from the Diocesan Buildings Committee for any changes to the church and/or associated buildings.
- Obtaining any necessary planning and/or listed building consents and building warrants from the appropriate authorities as appropriate to any proposed works.
- Ensuring that all repairs and other work, apart from small emergency repairs up to a sum agreed with the Vestry Treasurer, are properly estimated and costed. This should include any professional and planning fees.
- Maintaining the Charge's property register and updating the inventory of furniture and fittings on a regular basis. Inventories should be updated as and when items are acquired or disposed of and a full inventory check should be undertaken every five years. The property register should similarly be kept up to date.

- Reporting annually to the Vestry on the condition of Charge properties, including the internal condition of clergy residences.
- Liaising with the Treasurer regarding sources of finance, preparation and submission of grant or loan applications to the Vestry, Diocesan Buildings Committee or other relevant body e.g. Historic Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund, relevant trusts.
- Liaising with the Diocesan architect, where appointed.
- If not personally qualified and appointed to carry out this task, liaising with any other surveyor or architect appointed by the Vestry for work involving Charge property.
- Overseeing such work in conjunction with the people so appointed, and approving all related invoices.
- Ensuring that adequate insurance protection is maintained in respect of all Church property and the liabilities of the Vestry, seeking appropriate advice as necessary.
- Liaising with the Treasurer regarding any insurance claims.
- Being aware of the statutory responsibilities placed upon Charges in relation to buildings and relevant Health and Safety matters.

Recommendations on Clergy Housing

The recommended guidelines adopted by the Provincial Administration Board for the Minimum Standards for Clergy Housing are shown in the Personnel Handbook for Stipendiary Clergy.

Reference should be made to Diocesan inserts, or to the Diocesan Office, for any specific Diocesan policy.

Maintenance, Fittings and Equipment

- A house should be modernised as far as wiring and plumbing is concerned, and there should be plumbing for a washing machine in the kitchen or utility room. There should be a form of central heating system. Adequate storage and cupboard space should also be provided.
- A Vestry should provide carpets for halls, stairs and landings. Carpets and floor coverings for other rooms, as well as curtain fittings and curtains, may also be provided to a reasonable level of cost if mutually agreed with the Vestry. Kitchen equipment is a matter for local negotiation, although it is normal practice for a cooker to be provided.

- At the beginning of an incumbency, a house should be fully decorated by the Charge and there should be a continuation of decoration of the rooms on a rotating basis. However, Charges should note that, except during a vacancy, actual outlays for redecoration are considered by the HM Revenue & Customs as a benefit which is taxed on the incumbent. If in doubt, please seek advice from the Diocesan Treasurer.
- It is the responsibility of the Charge through its Vestry, to ensure that any house is maintained in a good state of repair, and regularly inspected.
- No housing stock should be bought, sold or leased without consultation with the Diocesan Buildings Committee.

Other requirements relating to clergy housing are set out in the recommended guidelines adopted by the Provincial Administration Board for the Minimum Standards for Clergy Housing which are shown in the Personnel Handbook for Stipendiary Clergy.

Church Buildings Maintenance in Scotland

A website www.maintainyourchurch.org.uk has been developed with one specific audience in mind, the fabric and property committees of local congregations of all denominations. The website provides learning modules, toolkit modules and resource modules.

VAT Refund for Repair and Maintenance of Listed Church Buildings

Under the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme a proportion of the VAT on eligible work on repair and maintenance) can be reclaimed on certain works of repair and maintenance to listed buildings and to alterations to listed buildings. Information on the grant scheme is available from the following website: www.lpwscheme.org.uk

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