

12 December 2012

To: PCC Secretaries (2 copies, please pass one to your electoral roll officer)
Copy to: Incumbents / Priests in Charge / Churchwardens of parishes in a vacancy

Dear PCC Secretary

PREPARATION OF NEW ELECTORAL ROLL

The Church Representation Rules require a new church electoral roll to be prepared for each parish in every sixth year from 2007 onwards. This means that a new electoral roll needs to be prepared in 2013. The date which governs the timetable is that of the annual parochial church meeting ("The Annual Meeting").

Under the rules (the Church Representation Rules) the form of notice for the preparation of the new roll (Form SG3) must be completed and affixed by the minister, or under the minister's direction, on or near to the principal door of every church and every place licensed for public worship in the parish. This must be done at least two months before the date of the annual meeting, and the notice or notices must then remain in position for at least fourteen days. At every service on the two Sundays after the notice has been fixed, the person conducting the service must inform the congregation of the preparation of the new roll. If no services are held in a particular church on either of those Sundays, then the requirement to inform the congregation of the preparation of the new roll at each service applies on the first Sunday after the affixing of the notice on which one or more services are held in the church.

A person who wishes to have his or her name on the new roll must apply for entry by completing the form of application for enrolment (Form SG1). The PCC must take reasonable steps to inform all those on the existing roll (other than any which should have been removed) that the new roll is being prepared and that if they wish to be entered on it they must apply for enrolment. Such a person will not be disqualified from entry on the roll solely by reason of the fact that he or she has not habitually attended public worship in the parish during a six month period prior to enrolment, if he or she was prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause. It is, of course, also open to a person who does not have his or her name on the existing roll to apply for entry on the new roll. In that case the normal rules as to requirements which he or she must satisfy in order to qualify for the right to entry on the roll will apply.

The new roll should be prepared when Form SG3 is affixed on or near the principal door of the church. It must be completed not less than 15 or more than 28 days before the Annual Meeting. Upon completion, a copy must be exhibited on or near the principal door of the parish church, in the manner decided on by the PCC, for a continuous period of not less than 14 days before the annual meeting. The one exception to this rule is that a lay person who will reach the age of 16 after the new roll is completed may complete an enrolment form and, if otherwise qualified, will be added to the roll with effect from the date of his or her sixteenth birthday. As soon as the new roll is exhibited, the previous roll ceases to have effect.

As in every other year, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary or Electoral Roll Officer of the PCC should inform me of the number of names on the roll as at the date of the annual meeting (rule 4). In practice many parishes do not as the data is collected later in the year through the 'Statistics for Mission' returns. This is acceptable to me as long as the latter forms are completed. However a notice of the number of names on the roll should be affixed at or near to the principal door of each church and each building licensed for public worship in the parish and remain there for at least fourteen days.

To assist parishes, the following are available from Church bookshops:

1. The Annual Meeting pack of forms published jointly by CHP and SPCK.
2. The Church Representation Rules, new edition published in January 2011.

The Church Representation Rules are also available freely online on the Church of England website.

I enclose copies of forms SG3 and SG together with a second copy of this letter for your Electoral Roll Officer. Electronic versions of these forms will also be available on the diocesan website

Please do not hesitate to contact me if any of this needs clarification. I thank you and your fellow parish officers for undertaking this important exercise.

Yours sincerely, Andrew Roberts, Diocesan Secretary

FORM OF NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF NEW ROLL

Diocese of

Parish of

* Note – Notice is hereby given that under the Church Representation Rules a new Church Electoral Roll is being prepared. *All persons who wish to have their names entered on the new roll, whether their names are entered on the present roll or not, are requested to apply for enrolment not later than

The new roll must be completed not less than 15 days or more than 28 days before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The new roll will come into operation on

The new roll shall be published for not less than 14 days. Forms of application for enrolment can be obtained from the undersigned. In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, forms of application for enrolment must be returned by the earlier of the dates given above.

Under the Church Representation Rules any persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll, if they –

- (i) are baptised and aged 16 or over;
- (ii) have signed a form of application for enrolment;

and either

- (iii) are members of the Church of England or of any Church in communion with the Church of England being resident in the parish or (not being resident in the parish) having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment;

or

- (iv) are members in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity declaring themselves to be also members of the Church of England and having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

Any error discovered in the roll should at once be reported to the undersigned.

Dated this day of 2.....

.....
Church Electoral Roll Officer

Address

Note: In this notice ‘parish’ means an ecclesiastical parish

APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT ON THE CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL OF THE PARISH OF

.....
 Full name

Full address

..... Post Code

I declare that

1. I am baptised and am aged 16 or over
 (or, become 16 on.....) *

2. (a) I am a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion with the Church of England) and am resident in the parish.

†

Or (b) I am a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion with the Church of England) and, not being resident in the parish, I have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

†

Or (c) I am a member in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and also declare myself to be a member of the Church of England and I have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

†

I declare that the above answers are true and I apply for inclusion on the Church Electoral Roll of the parish.

Signed **Date**

* Those who become 16 during the next 12 months may complete the form, and become eligible to be entered on the Roll on their sixteenth birthday.

† Tick **one only** of boxes 2(a), (b) or (c).

Notes

1. The only churches at present in communion with the Church of England are other Anglican Churches and certain foreign churches.
2. Membership of the electoral roll is also open to members in good standing of a Church not in communion with the Church of England which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity where those members are also prepared to declare themselves to be members of the Church Of England.
3. Every six years a new roll is prepared and those on the previous roll are informed so that they can reapply. If you are not resident in the parish but were on the roll as an habitual worshipper and have been prevented by sickness or absence or other essential reason from worshipping for the past six months, you may write “would” before “have habitually attended” on the form and add “but was prevented from doing so because...” and then state the reason.
4. If you have any problems with the form please approach the clergy or lay people responsible for the parish, who will be pleased to help you.
5. In this form “parish” means ecclesiastical parish.