



Diocese of Peterborough

**APPOINTMENT
OF A
PARISH PRIEST**

January 2020

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PREAMBLE

Every benefice in the Church of England (whether it consists of a single parish or a group of parishes) has one or more **Patrons**, whose responsibility it is to nominate a new incumbent to the Bishop when the benefice is vacant. This is called the right of presentation to a vacant benefice.

The patron may be the Crown, the Lord Chancellor, the Diocesan Bishop or another individual, the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Patronage, a college, a society or (usually in the case of a united benefice or a team ministry) a group of individuals/bodies or a special board of patronage. If more than one person or body is involved, patronage is either exercised *jointly* or *by turns* depending on the provisions of the pastoral scheme which created the (united) benefice.

Under the provisions of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 the Bishop has the power to 'suspend presentation' to a vacant benefice in order to allow plans for pastoral reorganisation to be considered or implemented.

This paper describes the process of appointment used in the Diocese of Peterborough. It covers both the appointment of an incumbent, nominated by the patron(s), and of a 'priest-in-charge' when the bishop has exercised his power of suspension. As far as the PCC is concerned the processes are very similar, but different people may be involved at different stages.

Copies of all the forms referred to are to be found on the Peterborough Diocesan Registry website at www.peterboroughdiocesanregistry.co.uk. Patrons who do not have access to the internet should contact the Diocesan Registrar, 35 Thorpe Road, Peterborough PE3 6AG (Tel. 01733 882831 Fax. 01733 552748).

SUSPENSION OF PRESENTATION

If the Bishop suspends the patron's right of presentation, an 'incumbent' (usually called a Rector or a Vicar) will not be appointed. Instead the Bishop will normally appoint a priest in charge until the suspension is lifted.

Although a priest in charge is legally different from an incumbent, the responsibilities in the parish are identical. New appointments to either office are now exercised under common tenure and most parishioners are unlikely to know that there is any distinction between them.

If presentation is suspended, the usual provisions of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) (see appendix 1) will not apply but the Bishop will endeavour to follow the spirit of the Measure and consult the Patron, the Rural Dean, and the Lay Chair as well as the people of the parish in the process of making an appointment.

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. Archdeacon's Visit to PCC

When it is known that a benefice is about to become vacant, the Archdeacon will contact the PCC Secretary and/or the Churchwardens and arrange to visit the PCC to discuss the process of appointing a new Parish Priest, and the Archdeacon will normally be accompanied at this meeting by the Rural Dean. In the case of a multi-parish benefice this meeting may be with a representative group – the churchwardens and ministry team or the benefice council. The goodwill of the out-going parish priest is needed for the meeting to take place in advance of the actual vacancy but the Archdeacon would not expect that priest to be present at the meeting.

The Archdeacon will explain the process of making a new appointment, discuss the implications of 'suspension' if there is the possibility of pastoral re-organisation, and make sure that Churchwardens have copies of this booklet, and its companion *Responsibilities during a Vacancy*. The Archdeacon will also encourage the benefice to begin the process of drawing up its profile and will provide a template and notes for this purpose together with a generic statement from Bishop Donald concerning ministry in the diocese.

The meeting with the Archdeacon provides an opportunity for those present to clear up any queries they may have about the process.

2. Discussion at the Pastoral Committee

Every vacancy in the diocese is considered by the relevant Archdeaconry Pastoral Committee, which will advise the Bishop about the need for suspension of presentation if there is the likelihood of pastoral re-organisation involving the benefice.

If the Pastoral Committee does not recommend suspension of presentation, the Bishop sends a formal notice of the vacancy (**Form 30**) to the Registrar, who is the 'Designated Officer' under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended). The Registrar will then send the formal notice (**Form 31** or **Form 32** in a case where the Crown is the patron – see Appendix 1) to the patron and the PCC Secretary(ies).

If the Pastoral Committee recommends suspension, The Bishop will consult the patron(s), the PCC(s), the Rural Dean and Lay Chair and decide in the light of their comments whether to act on the Committee's recommendation. The Bishop must take any representations made by these 'interested parties' into account, but the decision is his and he is not required to obtain everybody's agreement or consent.

When the Bishop issues the Notice of Suspension, he will invite the PCC(s) to prepare a profile of the benefice in exactly the same way as if an incumbent was to be appointed.

3. Special PCC Meeting

When the PCC Secretary receives the Form 31/32 notice from the Registrar, arrangements should be made to call an extra-ordinary meeting of the PCC within six months of the "start date" specified in the notice. (If there is more than one parish in the benefice, this should be a joint meeting)

The meeting should:

- elect a vice-chairman,
- agree the benefice profile (including the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish,
- take note of previous PCC resolutions, if any regarding the House of Bishops' Declaration made on 19 May 2014 (for the recommended form of declaration see Appendix 3, and an example of a Statement of Needs and Theological Conviction under the House of Bishops' Declaration see Appendix 4.),
- elect lay parish representatives to act as the PCC's representatives in the process of the appointment, including meeting potential candidates. (These representatives should be empowered to speak for the PCC(s) in the process of consultation with the Bishop, as the Patronage (Benefices) Measure requires the representatives' agreement to the appointment of an incumbent, and the Mission and Pastoral Measure requires the Bishop to consult the PCC in appointing a priest-in-charge.),
- decide whether to request the Patron or the Bishop to advertise the vacancy, and
- **if an incumbent is to be appointed**, decide whether to request a joint meeting with the Patron and the Bishop (a 'Section 12' meeting), noting that the Bishop has already provided, through the Archdeacon, a generic statement in writing from the Bishop describing the needs of the Diocese and the wider interests of the Church.

Notes:

- At least 14 days notice of the meeting must be given to all members
- The outgoing priest or the spouse or civil partner of the outgoing priest should not attend, nor the registered patrons(s) or their representative(s)
- None of the following members of the PCC shall be qualified for appointment as parish representative:
 - a) the outgoing priest, their spouse or civil partner; and
 - b) any deaconess' or lay worker licensed to the parish.
- If a PCC holds a meeting but does not appoint any representatives at that meeting then two churchwardens who are members of the PCC shall act as representative. A patron who is also a churchwarden may not act as parish representative.
- The meeting should produce one statement for the entire benefice
- It is difficult to produce a statement in committee. It is suggested that the Churchwardens prepare a draft beforehand for discussion at the meeting. The Archdeacon welcomes receiving an electronic advance copy of this draft, so that he or she, the Rural Dean and Deanery Lay Chair can have the opportunity to comment upon the draft before the meeting.
- The Chairman should not allow powerful voices to dominate at the expense of other members. As the archangel Gabriel may not be a candidate, it is advisable to prioritise, rather than list all the virtues of an ideal parish priest.
- Each parish in the benefice should elect two representatives. In large multi-parish benefices the representatives may choose from amongst themselves a smaller panel for interviewing purposes, though all representatives have equal rights in the appointment process.

4. Action following the Meeting

If an incumbent is to be appointed the PCC Secretary should notify the Patron and the Bishop of the names of the Parish Representatives using **Form 34**, enclosing copies of the benefice profile, the latest audited accounts, and the most recent Quinquennial Inspection(s), and indicating the decision about the other matters considered. The profile and names and addresses (including email addresses and telephone numbers) of the parish representatives should also be sent to the Archdeacon.

If presentation is suspended the benefice profile, together with a copy of the latest audited accounts, the most recent Quinquennial Inspection of the church and any other relevant information (e.g. parish magazine, photographs, maps etc) are then sent to the Diocesan Bishop. The PCC should choose parish representatives as if the procedure in the previous paragraph were being followed and the Secretary should also send a covering letter giving the names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of the parish representatives, and the decisions relating to the other matters discussed. Copies of all these documents should also be sent to the Archdeacon.

5. Consultation

The Patron and the Bishop (and his staff) will study the information supplied by the parish(es) and decide whether the appointment will be advertised. The Archdeacon will discuss the process of interviewing etc. with the patrons and parish representatives, and agree with them the date for the interviews and the arrangements for the candidates (and their spouses) to visit the benefice.

In some cases, the Patron, or the Bishop, may wish the parish representatives to meet one candidate rather than interview a number; this is usually the case if the Crown is Patron of the living. In that case the representatives must arrange to meet the candidate, show him/her the benefice and decide whether they believe the candidate is suitable and the right person to fill the vacancy.

6. The Decision

Normally, when the parish representatives are involved in the interviewing process, the interviewing panel will agree with Bishop or Patron that the post should be offered to one of the candidates. If they have not been part of the formal interview, the parish representatives report back to the Patron or the Bishop, following their own meeting with the candidate. Legally, the right of presentation, or appointment, rests with the Patron or the Bishop, with the agreement of the parish representatives.

If all are agreed, the Patron or the Bishop will offer the post to the successful candidate, subject to the receipt of the necessary disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

In the case of **an incumbent** the legal process involves the Patron completing **Form 36** seeking the Bishop's approval of his nomination, and **Form 37** for the Parish Representatives. When these have been completed and signed, the Patron sends **Form 38** to the Bishop which gives formal notice of his presentation.

Under the provisions of the Measure as amended by the Legislative Reform (Patronage of Benefices) Order 2019, if the Patron fails to appoint an incumbent within eighteen months of the date of the vacancy then the right of presentation lapses to the Bishop (or at the request of the PCC to the Archbishop of Canterbury). If this occurs, the Registrar and the Bishop will inform the parish representatives of the action which has to be taken.

7. Announcements

News of the appointment should be made simultaneously in the new benefice and the candidate's previous benefice and will take the form of a notice provided by the Archdeacon; it

is important that news does not leak out prematurely. Once the appointment has been announced in the benefice, and the DBS disclosure received, the notice of appointment ('the yellow') is issued by the Bishop's Office.

COLLATION/INSTITUTION & INDUCTION or LICENSING & INSTALLATION

If the new priest is to be **the incumbent** of the benefice, the Bishop of Peterborough or the Bishop of Brixworth will agree a date for his/her institution (called a collation when the Bishop is the sole patron), and induction by the Archdeacon.

If the new priest is to be **priest in charge** of the benefice, he/she will not be instituted but licensed and installed.

In practice, in either case, the Archdeacon will arrange the date and time of the service, in consultation with the Bishop, the Rural Dean, the Patrons, the benefice and the candidate, and the Bishop's Chaplain will then be in touch with the Rural Dean with regard to the order of service. The choice of which church in a multi-parish benefice hosts the service needs to take account of parish "turns", as well as practical issues such as access in darkness. If necessary, the Bishop's Office will issue a supplementary notice ('yellow') of the appointment giving this date.

The two services are very similar and the template for the service will be provided by the Bishop's Chaplain. The hymns and readings are normally chosen by the candidate. The service template will be supplied electronically and the benefice should print its own copies, incorporating the chosen hymns and readings etc. The Bishop should be notified of these in good time (usually at least a fortnight before the service) and informed of any other relevant details.

The Rural Dean will arrange the rehearsal and advise the parish on practical details about the service.

Appendix 1 Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) came into effect on 1st January 1989. Any benefice becoming vacant will be dealt with under the provisions of this Measure.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

2. The Measure provides for the creation and maintenance in each diocese of a central register of Patrons of the livings of that diocese. The register will record the patrons, and in the case of there being more than one Patron, whose turn it is to appoint to the living next.
3. The second purpose of the Measure is to confine the exercise of Patronage to those who are actual communicant members of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it. This means that when a vacancy occurs, the registered Patron is required to make a declaration that he is a communicant member of the Church of England, and if he is unable or does not wish (for whatever reason) to make that declaration, he will be required by law to nominate someone of his own choosing to act for him in making the appointment.
4. The third purpose of the Measure is to create a partnership in the making of appointments. A Patron is required to obtain the agreement of representatives appointed by the PCC as well as that of the Bishop before proceeding to offer the living to the priest whom he has chosen. The law formerly gave the Bishop little power in the matter, and gave to the Churchwardens only (not to the PCC) the right to make representations against the Patron's nominee. The Measure carries this a stage further and puts on a statutory basis what previously happened in good practice.

GENERAL NOTE

5. The statutory provisions are complex and detailed, and deal with various situations. In any case of doubt, the PCC should seek advice from the "Designated Officer", who in the case of this Diocese is the Diocesan Registrar, Miss Anna Spriggs, of 35 Thorpe Road, Peterborough. PE3 6AG (Tel. 01733-882831)
6. PCC Secretaries should pay careful attention to the time limits which are mentioned in this document and ensure that they are strictly kept.
7. Samples of the forms which will be used during the procedure for filling the vacancy are included in Appendix 2. (Numbers of these forms are given in brackets at the appropriate places in the main document.) When a Patron or PCC needs to use one of the prescribed forms, the forms in the appendix may be copied, or copies may be obtained from the Designated Officer, or downloaded and/or printed from the Diocesan Registry web site at www.peterboroughdiocesanregistry.co.uk.
8. Where benefices are held in **plurality**, they are treated as a multi-parish benefice for the purpose of the Measure. Where there is a **Team Council** or a properly established **Joint PCC**, the Team Council or Joint PCC will carry out the PCCs' functions under the Measure.

9. Where Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Cornwall or the Lord Chancellor ("the Crown") is the sole Patron of a benefice, or it is the turn of any of them to present to a benefice, the normal provisions of the Measure on filling a benefice do not apply, other than Section 7 (dealing with the notification of vacancies in benefices).
10. The PCC(s) have the right to send the presenting Patron a statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish (the benefice profile), and a copy of the profile must be sent to the Bishop and should be copied to the Archdeacon. A PCC is not entitled to appoint any representatives or to request a statement from the Bishop on the needs of the diocese and wider Church in relation to the benefice (though Bishop Donald has produced a generic statement which the Archdeacon will make available), and none of the parties has the right to call for a joint meeting (Section 12 Meeting).
11. The provisions with regard to lapse do not apply to the rights of presentation belonging to the Crown, and the right to present remains until a priest accepts an offer of the benefice.
12. The right of Her Majesty the Queen to present a priest to a benefice where the outgoing incumbent has been appointed to a diocesan bishopric, or where the presenting Patron is the diocesan bishop and the see is vacant, is preserved. In these cases, the benefice is treated as a Crown benefice and the provisions outlined in paragraph 9 above apply. Where the outgoing incumbent has been made a diocesan bishop and the Crown appoints his successor, the Patron whose turn it would have been to present on that occasion has the next turn.
13. Where a vacancy arises at a time when the Diocese has no Bishop (a vacancy in see) the Bishop's right of patronage passes to the Crown. This includes cases where:-
 - 13.1 The Bishop is joint patron, in which case, the Crown acts as paramount patron; and
 - 13.2 The Bishop has appointed but not inducted and instituted a candidate, in which case the Crown will present.

Appendix 2 - Forms

The following pages contain draft copies of the forms required under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended), when an incumbent is to be appointed. Their use is explained in the main document.

Form 15

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Complete either Part A (overleaf) or Part B (below) of this form

Diocese **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice _____

PART B: APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE

To the Designated Officer

I, _____ (Full Name)

- * being the registered Patron of the above Benefice
- OR * being the holder for the time being of an office which is registered as Patron of the Benefice
- OR * being the donee of a power of attorney made by the registered Patron
- AND
- * being unable to make the declaration required by the Measure
- OR * being unable to discharge the Patron's functions on this occasion

hereby appoint ** _____

of _____

to act as my representative on the occurrence of the vacancy or impending vacancy in the Benefice and authorise him/her to discharge my functions under the above Measure.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
Presenting Patron

DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

I, _____ hereby declare that

- * I am an actual communicant member of the Church of England
- OR * I am an actual communicant member of a Church in communion with the Church of England, namely, _____
- OR ** I am a clerk in Holy Orders

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
Patron's Representative

Note: In accordance with Section 9 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended), this form must be returned to the Designated Officer within two months of the occurrence of the vacancy. Failure to return the form within that period will mean that the vacancy will be filled without recourse to the Patron.

* Delete as appropriate.
** Inset name of Church. Advice will be given by the Registrar as to which churches are in communion with the Church of England.

Form 16

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Appointment by a Body of a Representative (not being an individual)

Diocese **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice _____

I, _____ (Full Name)

of _____

being the Chairman/Secretary/Clerk/† _____ of

the registered patron of the above Benefice declare that

_____ *

has been duly authorised to act as the representative of the registered Patron and to discharge the Patron's functions during the current vacancy.

Dated this _____ day of _____ .20

Signed _____
Chairman/Secretary/Clerk/†

DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

I, (full name) declare that

** I am an actual communicant member of the Church of England

OR ** I am an actual communicant member of a Church in communion with the Church of England, namely,

*** _____

OR ** I am a clerk in Holy Orders

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____
Patron's Representative

† Delete as appropriate or insert designation of responsible officer.

* Insert full name and address (in capitals) of the representative acting.

** Delete as appropriate.

*** Inset name of Church. Advice will be given by the Registrar as to which churches are in communion with the Church of England.

Appointment of Parish Representatives

Diocese : **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice :

To: The Bishop of the Diocese
The Presenting Patron

1. I hereby give you notice that, at [a] duly convened meeting[s] of the Parochial Church Council, which took place on _____ [and on _____] the following persons were appointed as the representative[s] of the Council in connection with the appointment of a new Incumbent:

Full Name¹ _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

Full Name¹ _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

2. I attach a copy of the statement prepared by the Council describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the Parish

3. The Council resolved:

(a) to request the presenting Patron to consider advertising the vacancy² ;

(b) to request a meeting under section 12 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended)²

(c) to request a statement in writing from the Bishop describing in relation to the Benefice the needs of the Diocese and the wider interests of the Church²

[(d) [to pass][not to pass] a resolution under the House of Bishops' Declaration, (a copy of which is annexed to this form.)³

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____

Secretary to the _____ Parochial Church Council

¹ Complete in BLOCK CAPITALS

² Delete or amend as appropriate

³ Delete or amend as appropriate.

Form 37

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Approval by Parish Representatives of Offer of Benefice

Diocese of PETERBOROUGH

Benefice of _____

To the Parish Representatives

I, _____

of _____

being the [presenting Patron] [Patron's representative]¹, hereby request your approval as Parish Representatives to my making an offer to:

Full Name² _____

Address _____

Office _____

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____
[Presenting Patron][Patron's Representative]

ENDORSEMENT (to be completed by the Parish Representatives)

We hereby approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present him to the above benefice¹

or

We do not approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present him to the above benefice for the following reasons:¹

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____
Parish Representatives

NOTE: Unless the notice of refusal to approve the making of an offer is received within five weeks beginning with the date on which this notice is sent, the Parish Representatives will be deemed to have given their approval.

¹Delete as appropriate

²Insert full name and address in block capitals and details of present office (if any).

Form 38

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Notice of Presentation

Diocese of PETERBOROUGH

Benefice of

To the Bishop of the Diocese

1. I, _____, being [the representative of]¹ the registered Patron with respect to the vacancy of the above benefice hereby present to you for admission to the benefice:

The Reverend _____ at present² _____

2. I confirm that the requirements of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) have been complied with and the approvals of the parish representatives obtained.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____ Presenting Patron

¹ Delete if inappropriate

² Insert present preferment (e.g. assistant curate, team vicar, incumbent, chaplain of _____, or as appropriate).

Appendix 3

House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests made on 19th May 2014

The recommended form of the resolution passed by the PCC is as follows:

'[For the sake of the unity of our Parish,] This PCC requests, on the grounds of theological conviction set out in the statement appended to this Resolution, that arrangements be made for it in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests.'

[DRAFT TEXT]
**Statement of Needs and Theological Conviction
under the House of Bishops' Declaration
by the Parochial Church Council of
The Parish of [NAME OF PARISH]**

We reaffirm our desire to flourish within the life and structures of the Church of England, in accordance with the Five Guiding Principles set out in the House of Bishops' Declaration, and our commitment to Christ's mission in the Diocese of [NAME]. We recognize the diocesan bishop and other bishops of this Diocese as the true and lawful holders of their offices, and wish to maintain the highest degree of communion with them that is consistent with the theological convictions that underlie our Resolution.

The theological convictions set out below are held by a significant number of worshippers in our parish. The Resolution will ensure that the episcopal and priestly ministry exercised in our parish is such that can be received with integrity by all who worship here. Our Resolution contributes to the Church of England's 'wider commitment to sustaining diversity'.

Women have always exercised various ministries in the Church. However, those who are unable to receive the sacramental ministry of women as bishops and priests hold that neither Scripture, nor apostolic Tradition, nor the great majority of the Church throughout the world today endorse the ordination of women as bishops and priests. There is therefore doubt as to whether the roles of bishop or priest are, sacramentally speaking, roles that women can exercise. We ask that episcopal and priestly sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish should be exercised by those whose sacramental ministry is not subject to such doubt.

The unique sacramental ministry of a bishop is to ordain bishops, priests and deacons. In receiving their ministry, we receive the ministry of the bishops who ordained them. If there is doubt about the sacramental ministry of women as bishops, there will be doubt about the sacramental ministry of those whom they ordain. **We therefore ask that episcopal and priestly sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish be exercised**

- ❖ **by male bishops at whose consecration a male bishop presided and who stand in the historic, apostolic succession of bishops so ordained, and**
- ❖ **by male priests ordained by such bishops.**

We are pledged to maintain the highest possible degree of communion with the Bishop of [NAME OF DIOCESAN SEE] and the other bishops of this Diocese, and we reject any suggestion that ordaining women to the episcopate and priesthood renders a bishop's episcopal ministry invalid. However, our flourishing requires the flourishing of our priest. We understand that our priest can only flourish if he is in *full* communion with a bishop and with all those whom that bishop ordains to the priesthood – a full communion made visible when he stands together with them at the altar. Therefore **we request that episcopal sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish be entrusted to a bishop who ordains only men to the priesthood.**

Approved by the PCC on [DATE]