

**To all Parochial Clergy and PCC  
Secretaries** (or Churchwarden or  
Administrator in parishes without a PCC  
Secretary)

Church House  
5500 Daresbury Park  
Daresbury  
Warrington  
WA4 4GE

T: 01928 718834  
E: [ds@chester.anglican.org](mailto:ds@chester.anglican.org)  
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## **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS IN 2025**

We are writing to all Parochial clergy, PCC Secretaries (and in parishes without a PCC Secretary to a Churchwarden or Administrator) as we have reached the time of the year when you will be making arrangements for the annual meeting of parishioners and for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) which should take place before the end of May.

Before addressing the formalities of this matter, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers and support during this time of interim arrangements at Church House, following the departure of George Colville as Diocesan Secretary earlier this year. Arrangements for the appointment of George's successor are very much underway. Please be assured of our ongoing commitment during the vacancy to ensure that Church House remains a hub of support for parishes, clergy and church officers. Please don't hesitate to ask us for help, to come and visit us at Church House, or to invite us to see you in context. We are here to support you and would love to engage with you in any way which better enables you to bless the 1.5 million in the diocese who do not yet know Jesus.

To return to the purpose of this letter, full details of the procedures for your APCM including deadlines, timings and notice periods are set out in the Church Representation Rules 2022. Every Parish should have a copy of the Rules, so please ensure that you obtain them and are working from the most recent version. If you do not wish to buy a copy, the rules are available for free online at:

[Church Representation Rules online - contents | The Church of England](#)

Alternatively, copies of the latest (2022) edition, are available from Church House Publishing [CH Publishing CRR 2022](#) (postal address Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ) or [Amazon CRR 2022](#)

At the Summer 2023 General Synod, changes were approved to the Church Representation rules, which can be found here: [The Church Representation Rules \(Amendment\) Resolution 2023](#)

The Parish Resources website is a useful tool: all of the relevant forms for the APCM can be downloaded in MS Word and Adobe .pdf formats at:

[APCMs - Parish Resources](#)

If you are a new PCC Secretary and haven't organised an APCM before the procedure can seem a little daunting but we are here to help: if, having looked through the Rules and visited the Parish Resources website you would like any clarification or advice please contact [ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org) and we will be happy to assist you.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about matters that must be dealt with at these meetings: the establishing of a new Electoral Roll; the election of PCC members; the appointment of Officers.

## 1. The Electoral Roll

It is necessary for each parish to prepare a new Electoral Roll, before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2025. In accordance with Church Representation Rules 6 to 8, the notice (Form 3) must be displayed at least **two months** before the APCM and must remain on display for at least 14 days. During those 14 days each person conducting a service must inform the congregation of the preparation of the new roll. For more information see Rule 6(4)-(6), if you are for example in a vacancy.

The preparation of a new roll must not begin before the date on which the notice is displayed, and must be completed at least 15 days, but no more than 28 days, before the APCM. The PCC must take reasonable steps to inform every person whose name is on the roll that a new roll is prepared and if they wish to enter their name, they must (re-)apply for enrolment with Form 1. Please refer to Rule 7 for more details.

The new roll must then be published for at least fourteen days. Only error corrections are to be made and very importantly, **ONLY names** are to be published on any publicly available lists: Church Representation Rule 8(3) states, "The roll as published, and the copy made available for inspection, must include every name entered on the roll but no other personal data." Please refer to Rule 8 for more details.

The chair, vice-chair, secretary or electoral roll officer of a PCC must, no later than 1 July in each year, give the Secretary of the Diocesan Synod written notification. This is done by emailing the number of names on the roll at the date of the APCM to [er@chester.anglican.org](mailto:er@chester.anglican.org) [Please see attached document "How to submit ER".]

This could also be done by sending a suitable written notification to Church House.

Please be aware that a certificate of the Electoral Roll is no longer needed, and an email suffices.

## 2. Election of PCC Members

Procedures for electing PCC Members are set out in Part 9 of the Church Representation Rules 2022, and The Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2023.

### I. Qualification for election to a PCC

Rule M8 (1) sets out the requirements. This means that a lay person must be an actual communicant, aged over 16, and unless they are under 18 have been entered on the electoral roll for at least six months before they may be elected to the PCC.

### II. Number of members of the PCC

- a. Rules M15 (8) and (9) concern the number of elected lay members of the PCC (ie not counting priests, churchwardens and other ex officio members nor co-opted members).
- b. Unless your APCM resolved otherwise last year or before, the PCC should have:
  - i. **Six** lay representatives if there are no more than 50 names on the electoral roll;
  - ii. **Nine** lay representatives if there are more than 50 but no more than 100 names on the electoral roll;
  - iii. A further **three** lay representatives for every hundred (or part thereof) names on the electoral roll up to a maximum of **fifteen** members.

### III. Term of office of PCC members

Rule M16 means that (unless the APCM decided last year or before to retain annual terms of office) elected members will hold office for three years, with one third retiring each year.

## 3. Appointment of Officers

### Churchwardens

Churchwardens are chosen at the meeting of the parishioners (which is usually held immediately prior to the APCM and, unlike that meeting, may be attended by all parishioners not just those on the Electoral Roll). The procedure is set out in the Churchwardens Measure 2001 (found in the Supplementary Material at the end of the Church Representation Rules). It is a requirement of that Measure that candidates for office as churchwardens must be nominated and seconded in writing in advance of the meeting. Each nomination paper must also include a statement, signed by the person nominated, that (s)he is willing to serve as a churchwarden and is not disqualified from doing so.

The Measure includes a provision defining the maximum period someone may serve as churchwarden. Elections continue to be for a year at a time, but under the current rules someone who has served six consecutive years as churchwarden may not be elected again as warden for the same parish until after a two-year gap. The Measure allows for a meeting of parishioners to decide that the six-year rule should not apply in their parish.

**It is important that elected Churchwardens attend a visitation service to be sworn into their role. If a Churchwarden fails to attend a visitation service, it may be difficult to make arrangements to do this at an alternative time. A Churchwarden that is not sworn into post will lose the ability to act as Churchwarden. Please ensure your Churchwardens are aware of this requirement. Dates of the 2025 visitations will be uploaded to the website early Spring 2025.**

**All other details on the 2025 visitation services will be available via our website in due course.**

#### Sidespeople

**Sidespeople are no longer to be appointed by the APCM**, (Rule M6 (6)). Instead, they should be appointed by the PCC at its next meeting.

#### Other Officers

The Lay Chair, PCC Secretary, PCC Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer are appointed by the PCC at its first meeting after the APCM in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. It is possible to hold a very short PCC meeting immediately following the APCM at which the only item on the agenda is the appointment of officers.

### **4. CMS Database update**

At the beginning of February, the person updating the details for your parish – the Parish Updater, will receive an email from “Diocese of Chester – [mailings@cofeportal.org](mailto:mailings@cofeportal.org)”, which will contain a link to review and update the postholders after the APCM. The email will be preceded by an email from Ruth Laemmel containing a guide on how to do this. After a time of moderation of all submitted changes at Church House, the changes will appear on CMS (Contact Management System).

Please ensure that your parish has a Parish Updater who can be reached by email.

Further details relating to our Privacy Notice can be found on our website.

[Privacy Notice - Diocese of Chester \(anglican.org\)](#)

If you have any further questions regarding the Contact Management System (CMS) or can't identify a Parish Updater, please contact Ruth Laemmel at [ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org) or by calling Church House.

#### **After the APCM Meeting**

Send the Electoral Roll number preferably by email to: [er@chester.anglican.org](mailto:er@chester.anglican.org) as laid out in the attached document.

### **Safeguarding Training and DBS**

Please be aware that it is a requirement for some posts such as PCC members and Churchwardens to do Safeguarding training and/or DBS Checks.

Details of what training is required and who should be DBS checked, as well as where to get further information, can be found on the safeguarding pages of the website.

[Chester Diocese - Safeguarding Training](#)

[DBS Disclosures - Diocese of Chester \(anglican.org\)](#)

Thank you in advance for your help with this. If anything in this letter is not clear or if you require any further help, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With many thanks for your work as a PCC Secretary.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'CP' or 'Chris Penn'.

Chris Penn  
Interim Diocesan Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, clearly legible as 'Jenny Bridgman'.

Jenny Bridgman  
Interim Executive Officer

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## Checklist

Before the annual meeting of parishioners and the APCM:

- ☐ Give notice of the new Electoral Roll
- ☐ Publish the notices of the meetings
- ☐ Complete the Electoral Roll
- ☐ Display the names on the new Electoral Roll for 14 days
- ☐ Obtain nominations for Church Wardens and PCC members (although PCC members can be nominated at the meeting)

After the meetings:

- ☐ Email to [er@chester.anglican.org](mailto:er@chester.anglican.org) or send by post the number of people on the electoral roll as soon as possible and by 1 July 2024
- ☐ Display the results of the elections for 14 days
- ☐ Elect Officers and sidespeople at the first PCC meeting following the APCM
- ☐ Parish Updater to update CMS