

Notices / Heads-up for Wardens at Admission Services

Chancel repair liability

Some churches have lay rectors, who are currently liable for a proportion of the costs of repair of chancels: under the 2002 Land Registration Act, these now need to be registered. The situation is complicated but the archdeacons are tackling the matter in several ways

- a) we have had a comprehensive briefing and have done a note explaining the situation, which we can share with those who want it; but
- b) **if you are aware that your church has a Lay Rector or is subject to a Chancel Repair Liability**, you need to ensure that it is registered by October 2013. **Contact your Archdeacon in the first instance.**
- c) if you want to do some of your own research, you could look at:
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/chancel-repairs.htm
- d) we are considering, with the Diocesan Secretary, what further action the Diocese should take to support churches, and will be in touch with you once a plan of action is agreed

Churchwardens Training Day: Sat 22nd September: Penrith Methodist Church

We mentioned this on the Articles of Enquiry; there is a flyer available now and which we shall send round again at the end of the summer; do please consider coming on this day, which many have found very useful; and do please tell us if there are subjects which you would particularly like covered on the day.

Fees

A new fees order comes into place at the beginning of 2013; it does three things:

- it changes the way in which fees are paid: nearly all clergy currently assign their fees to the Diocese and these are used to pay for local ministry – so that all clergy receive the same stipend regardless of how many weddings and funerals they do: under the new arrangements clergy will continue to handle fees and pay the money to the Diocese, but the procedure of assigning fees will end;
- it tightens up the charging of extras; it is immoral and illegal to charge as extras items which are necessities: we encourage churches to be transparent about fees so that there is a clear difference between the legal fees, which have to be paid, and the extras, which do not! and to consider carefully what you do ask people to pay for: we need to be seeing weddings and funerals (and baptisms) as opportunities to show how the people of God can celebrate with and give support to people at significant times in their lives, and for contact and outreach, not as ways of making money
- it increases the fees fairly substantially to compensate churches which had formerly relied on these extras. More from us on this later in the year.

Diocesan Finances

As you might expect, the next couple of years are going to be very very tight. Please continue to make generous and realistic offers. We realise that your offers are dependent on your income – which is why we hope and expect every church to make the most of the really good resource : Giving for Life. (It will be hard to argue that you are doing your best if you have not used it!) Please talk to your Archdeacon or to Geoff Hine at Church House.

Mission Action Plan dates

By now all churches should be somewhere on the MAP cycle having at least held a review with the PCC if not the wider church to establish a few priorities for their Mission Action Plan. All churches will be asked to provide an update on their progress by the end of this year with the hope that the majority will have an outline plan for the next three years.

Tim Montgomery (01539 730683 07584 684305 tim.montgomery@carlisle-diocese.org.uk) is available to church leaders and their teams to give help and advice and we are currently developing a 'MAPing support team' for each Archdeaconry to offer specific help and encouragement to those who feel that they could do with a bit of extra help!

Safeguarding

Diocesan Synod has now approved a new Safeguarding Policy: <http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/people-and-structures/committees/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy.html>

All churches **must** have a Safeguarding representative and **must** adopt the Diocesan policy (for three reasons: to what is right, because it is Diocesan policy, and because if you do not, your insurance will be invalidated). There is a timetable: for those churches without a current policy the deadline is 30th June 2012; for those churches with a policy which now needs updating, the deadline is 30th November 2012; in both cases, sooner than this would be better!

The main change in the policy is that safeguarding vulnerable adults is now included. Training is being arranged for Safeguarding reps through the Deanery Training Advisers; in addition Emma Saner-Haigh is prepared to visit Deanery Synods

Online finance & mission returns

A new user-friendly online system for gathering annual finance and mission stats has been introduced in the Diocese for 2011 figures and onwards. Information about this has been sent to every parish. If your parish has not yet let us know who the contact/administrator will be, please get in touch with Carolyn Dykes as soon as possible. carolyn.dykes@carlisle-diocese.org.uk 07584684304

EIG and metal theft - please see Archdeacons' News

Buildings Survey and Strategy

The Churches Trust for Cumbria is an independent, non-denominational body whom we see as one of our close and important partners; roughly, it works for church buildings, as opposed to working for the Christian faith. It is, with our co-operation and support, doing a Buildings Survey : every church building in Cumbria is being asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire holds up a mirror to churches, so that you can think about your sustainability.

There were pilots of the survey in Windermere and Penrith; at present the three deaneries in the west are working on it; the remaining six deaneries (Carlisle, Brampton, Appleby, Barrow, Furness, Kendal) will begin thinking about the survey before the summer – with the hope that the whole survey is completed by March 2013.

There are two reasons for doing the survey:

- from the point of view of Churches Trust for Cumbria, it will help them to target their work, especially as they have a very limited budget;
- the Diocese is using the thinking which has come out of the process of doing the survey, and its results, to produce a Buildings Strategy: this faces all of us with some hard decisions – but doing nothing is no longer an option. The Buildings Strategy will be go to Bishop's Council in June 2012.

VAT on church alterations

You may know that the Government, in its recent budget introduced changes to VAT: up to now, alterations to listed buildings have been zero rated for VAT – but the proposal is to include them in the VAT regime: the issue is that we are encouraging churches to make alterations (eg toilets, kitchens) to make their buildings more useable, and this would make such alterations 20% more expensive. The Government has suggested that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (which refunds VAT on works done to listed buildings) could be extended to cover this – but

- it is not clear that there will be more money in the pot to cover this increased demand
- it will not cover things like architect's fees
- it will not cover alterations done to non-listed buildings to comply with Disability Discrimination legislation

There is an e-petition:

<http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/news/969/124/Budget-2012-20-percent-VAT-on-alterations-to-listed-churches.html>