



Information on what to do when a Clergy House is about to be vacated

1. Before vacating please ensure that you have taken responsibility for:

Cleaning & emptying:

The house must be left both clean and completely empty (including garages and outhouses).

In particular, PCC/parish related items such as photocopiers, files etc must be removed.

Setting the heating:

Over the winter months October - March please leave the heating set continuously at 15°C. During extremely cold spells where possible open the loft hatch to help protect water tanks in the roof space. If the house operates on oil please alert the Property Department if the supply is low.

Cookers:

Please contact the property department who will arrange for a suitably qualified contractor to disconnect your gas or electric cooker.

Telephone arrangements:

If the parish wish to retain the telephone line, i.e., if it appears on parish stationery, notice boards, etc., then you should advise the telephone provider of the date from which the service is no longer required, and arrange for the number to be retained and calls redirected to someone in the parish e.g. churchwarden or parish office.

Finalising utilities:

Notify gas and electricity providers of the final meter readings and let the Property Department have a copy of the readings and the providers' details. Please also ask the utilities companies to address future correspondence in relation to the vicarage to: The Property Dept., St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester LE1 5PZ.

Redirecting the post:

Occupants are responsible for arranging the re-direction of their mail with the Post Office, and ensuring the parish also set up re-directions for any parish mail that

they had sent to the vicarage on a regular basis. Should mail be delivered when the property is vacant it should be collected by a Church Warden or parish representative and, if appropriate, sent to the property department.

Keys:

Please can you ensure that all keys (including spares held in the church safe, or by churchwardens, other church members or neighbours) are gathered in and accounted for, then given to the churchwardens for them to hold in safekeeping while they are managing the property, or for subsequent return either to the Property Department or to their appointed letting agent.

Contents:

It probably goes without saying that contents including carpets, built in appliances, log burners etc should not be removed from the property.

Securing the house:

On the day of departure please ensure that all doors are locked and windows shut (please do not lock internal doors). Hand over external keys to the sequestrators together with the alarm code. Notify Police and Neighbourhood Watch that the house is empty.

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No part of the property may be used by the parish once it is vacant.

Once the house is vacant then care of the house becomes one of the primary responsibilities of the churchwardens as local sequestrators.

2. Once the house has been vacated:

Any house left empty is vulnerable to unwanted attention. Twice weekly internal and external visits to the house by members of the parish are essential in reducing the risks and in maintaining security. There are a number of measures that should be adopted to reduce the risk of incidents occurring:

Post: A build up of post is an obvious sign that the house is empty, and should be collected every few days.

Lights: Most houses will have external sensory security lighting around the perimeter of the property. In addition, it is advisable that the parish place a couple of lamps on timer switches in the house.

Alarm: The alarm should be set at all times.

Curtains: If there are any missing curtains we ask that the parish provide replacements so as to prevent the house looking empty.

Garden: Arrangements should be made to cut the lawn between March and October at three weekly intervals. Reasonable costs will be met but only following prior consultation with the Property Department.

Water Hygiene Safety: During periods of vacancy all hot and cold water outlets(taps/showers) should be flushed through at least once a week for at least two minutes. Further, all taps/shower heads should be cleaned, disinfected and de-scaled at least every three months and showers should be run at least once a week".

3. Interregnum Visit:

The Property Department will be in touch to arrange a visit to inspect the house to note its condition and any necessary repairs or improvements which will be carried out at diocesan expense, and in readiness for a new appointment.

4. Letting the Property:

If a longer than normal vacancy is envisaged then attempts will be made to let the property, and this would be arranged by the Property Department. There are a number of benefits in having the house let during the vacancy. It transfers many of the parish responsibilities and provides an income which is used to support the work of the diocese. Council tax, water rates and utility costs are borne by the tenant.

The Property Department is on hand to provide help & support. Please do not hesitate to contact us on:

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