

The Pastoral Team of the Church Commissioners deals with parish reorganisation, clergy housing and glebe matters.

We aim:

- To **assist** the reorganisation and property work of dioceses by dealing swiftly, accurately and efficiently with proposals submitted in respect of parish reorganisation, clergy housing, glebe and related matters
- To **provide accurate and appropriate advice** to dioceses and others
- To **keep up to date** Codes of Practice, guidance notes, forms and draft legal documents. Any changes we make to these documents are emailed to Diocesan staff and anyone else who has asked for them. Please contact us if you like to be included on our circulation list.
- To deal with **objections** to reorganisation or property transactions by explaining when they are based on misunderstanding
- To present full, fair and accurate information to allow the **Mission, Pastoral & Church Property Committee** to decide on proposals where there are objections.

Pastoral reorganisation - How do you do it?

- By a *Pastoral Church Buildings Scheme*
 - for any reorganisation including closing a church
 - made by Church Commissioners
- By *Pastoral Scheme*
 - for any reorganisation except closing a church
 - made by Church Commissioners
- By *Pastoral Order*
 - for minor reorganisation usually not affecting legal rights of parishioners
 - made by the Bishop
- By *Pastoral Order (Short procedure)*
 - for minor reorganisation usually not affecting any legal rights
 - made by the Bishop (with consent of interested parties)
- By **Bishop's Mission Order**
 - For mission initiatives alongside parish system
 - Made by the Bishop.

What is the process?

- The diocese seeks the views of “interested parties”
- The diocese recommends proposals to the bishop (who can make a Bishop's Mission Order or a Pastoral Order if all interested parties have agreed).
- Draft Scheme or Order published (anyone may object to Church Commissioners)
- If there are objections the Church Commissioners decide whether the Scheme or Order should go ahead.
- The bishop makes a Pastoral Order unless the Church Commissioners decide it should not be made.
- Objectors may seek Leave to Appeal against the Commissioners decision on a Pastoral Scheme or Pastoral Church Buildings Scheme.
- The Church Commissioners make a Scheme unless they decide it should not be made or there is a successful appeal against their decision that it should be made.

Objections

The Mission, Pastoral & Church Property Committee considers objections to proposed pastoral (parish) reorganisation and some clergy housing and glebe transactions.

- Objections are legally called **representations**.
- Representations may also be made in support

Do I have a right of objection?

- **Anyone** has a right to object to a proposed Pastoral Scheme or Pastoral Order to carry out pastoral reorganisation
- Only named **interested parties** have a right to object to clergy housing proposals made under the Church Property Measure 2018

How will I know about a proposed reorganisation or transaction?

Pastoral reorganisation

- All current proposals are published on our website here.
- Named interested parties will be sent notices by **letter or email**.
- **Notices** will be put up at churches.
- Notices will appear in **local newspapers** for church closures or schemes affecting burials or churchyards.

Clergy housing

- Letters or emails will be sent to the interested parties.

How do I make a representation?

You must send a letter or email to the address on the website or in the notice, by the date given.

Will I be able to speak to the Committee?

Members of the Committee will decide in each case whether to hold a public hearing. If there is a hearing you may come and may be able to speak, though this depends on the number of people who wish to do so.

Clergy Housing and Glebe

We have four roles

1. Approving some parsonage and glebe transactions
2. Considering objections to some clergy housing matters
3. Managing Value Linked Loans (VLLs) for deserted clergy spouses, assistant clergy housing and theological colleges
4. Giving advice.

Approvals

We have to approve any parsonage transaction and sales or long leases of glebe where a diocese

- Has not sought advice from a professional agent; or
- Does not wish to follow the agent's advice, or
- the proposed transaction is to a connected party.

Objections

- Patrons and PCCs (only) may object to parsonage transactions
- Clergy on common tenure may object to the sale of the house which they occupy with their post
- Adjudicate on whether or not a transaction should proceed where there are objections.

Value Linked Loans (VLLs)

- We approve new VLLs for deserted clergy spouses
- We deal with the repayment or changes to shares in VLLs for assistant clergy housing and theological colleges.

Advice

We publish the following guidance

- Parsonages Design Guide (also called “The Green Guide”)
- Code of Practice to the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure (for the care and maintenance of parsonages)

We are also able to advise on other church property matters.

More details about our work relating to parsonage and glebe transactions, including the Parsonages and Glebe Diocesan Manual are [available here](#)

Value Linked Loans (VLLs)

What is a Value Linked Loan?

- A loan where the maker of the loan shares the value of the property for which the loan is made with the person or body receiving the loan. The shares are in proportion to the percentage of the value of the property at the time of making the loan which is represented by the loan.
- Example: a house is bought for £250,000. We provide a Value Linked Loan (VLL) of £125,000 (50%). It is sold for £350,000 net. Our 50% share has increased to £175,000, and that is the sum repaid.
- Interest is paid on the original amount of the loan until it is repaid.
- No capital is repaid until the loan ends
- The person or body receiving the loan may buy in to a greater share of the value during the lifetime of the loan and this will also change the amount of the loan outstanding and the interest paid.
- The loan continues until the property is sold or the person or body who received the loan has bought into the whole value of the property

What do the Church Commissioners give VLLs for?

- We now only make VLLs for housing deserted clergy spouses.
- We also used to make loans for housing assistant clergy and the staff or those attending theological colleges. We no longer make these loans but existing loans continue.

Further information

An Application Form and Notes may be downloaded below.

[VLL3 - Housing in connection with clergy marriage breakdown \(Application Form\)](#)

[VLL4 - Housing in connection with clergy marriage breakdown \(Notes\)](#)

(See also VLL5)

[VLL5 - Summary of scheme in connection with clergy marriage breakdown](#)

Source URL: [*https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/parish-reorganisation-and-closed-church-buildings/parish-reorganisation*](https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/parish-reorganisation-and-closed-church-buildings/parish-reorganisation)