

The Church Commissioners for England and the Diocese of Bath and Wells have today issued a joint statement following the publication of the decision of the committee of the Archbishops' Council.

"We thank the Archbishops' Council for their consideration of the objections made by the Diocese to the Church Commissioners decision to house the next Bishop of Bath and Wells outside of the Palace.

"We appreciate the thoroughness of the Council's consideration and the swiftness with which the decision has been reached.

"This outcome enables all concerned to look to the future, to celebrate the arrival of the new Bishop and to welcome Bishop Peter and his wife Jane when they arrive in June."

"We continue to work together to support the Bishop, and the Palace Trust in their ministries of welcome and hospitality for local residents and visitors from across the world."

Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells says,

"I feel called to serve the people of Somerset and whilst this process has been quite difficult for me and my wife Jane, I remain energised and wholly committed to my new ministry as Bishop of Bath and Wells."

"I'm pleased that the Archbishop's Council brought things to such a swift conclusion. It's now time to look to the future and I can't wait to get on with the job.

"The Palace will be at the heart of my ministry as the place where I live, study, pray and work, alongside the Bishop of Taunton. I'm very privileged and look forward to working with the Trustees and all those who work hard to make the Palace such a wonderful place to be."

ENDS