

**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA
DIOCESE OF TASMANIA**

POLICY

DOCUMENT NO: DPO 002

SUBJECT	CLERGY HOUSING
AUTHORISED BY	DIOCESAN COUNCIL
LAST REVISED	NOVEMBER 2007
RESPONSIBILITY	PARISH COUNCILS

Preamble

The stipend and related rates determined by the Diocesan Remuneration Commission are predicated on the assumption that suitable, fully-maintained accommodation is provided for the clergy person and family.

'Fully-maintained' means that rates and charges, insurance and the costs of repairs and maintenance are met by the parish. The occupant is responsible for cleaning and for maintaining the grounds to an agreed standard. Energy and telecommunications costs are shared between the parish and the occupant as prescribed elsewhere.

This policy recognises that, unlike some dioceses, not all parishes in the Diocese of Tasmania own suitable clergy housing.

Principles

1. Parishes provide suitable, fully-maintained housing, as described in the attached Schedule, for Incumbents (Rectors and Priests-In-Charge) and their families. Provision of housing for other individuals/families in ministry positions is governed by the agreement between the parish and the appointee, such agreement to follow the principles reflected in these guidelines, and specifically guidelines 3 and 4 in situations where the parish does not have housing other than that provided for the Incumbent.
2. If the Incumbent requests that he or she be paid a sum of money in lieu of the provision of housing, the Parish Council and Registrar concur, and the parish-owned housing is then let with the permission of Diocesan Council, the amount payable will be the greater of the minimum rate set from time to time by the Diocesan Remuneration Commission and 75% of any rent received for the parish-owned housing net of rates, insurance, management fees and land tax, provided this payment does not exceed 75% of the mean rental for comparable housing in the area which meets the Diocesan standard. This provision is considered non-taxable. However, clergy should be aware that it may affect entitlement to Centrelink benefits.
3. Where a parish does not own housing, the parish acting through Diocesan Council and the Trustees rents suitable housing in the name of the Trustees and makes it available to the priest on the same basis as 1. above. Such rented premises should comply with the minimum specification for parish-owned clergy housing unless special conditions apply and the Registrar approves the variation.

4. Where a parish does not own housing and the Incumbent requests that he or she be paid a sum of money in lieu of being provided with rented housing, the parish will pay a sum which is the greater of the minimum rate set from time to time by the Diocesan Remuneration Commission and 75% of the mean rental cost for the area for premises which meet the minimum specification for parish-owned clergy housing. This provision is considered non-taxable. However, clergy should be aware that it may affect entitlement to Centrelink benefits.

Related Matters

5. Where a parish, with the approval of Diocesan Council and the Trustees of the Diocese, sells unsuitable housing, the funds generated by the sale are invested with the Trustees and quarantined for the future purchase of suitable housing. A quantum, determined by Diocesan Council from time to time, of interest earned by these funds is capitalised to preserve the value of the capital, and the remainder may be used to offset the costs of providing alternative housing arrangements for the Incumbent. If a parish seeks and gains permission of Diocesan Council to expend any portion of these funds on an unrelated purpose, then the portion so expended will be subject to the New Ministries Endowment Fund levy, unless exempted by Diocesan Council.
6. A Parish Council wishing to purchase a clergy residence makes application to Diocesan Council in the usual way.

Once approval in principle has been obtained from Diocesan Council, the decision on a specific property rests with the Wardens and the Registrar.

7. Maintenance of parish-owned housing

The parish is required to develop a plan, and make budgetary provision, for regular and ongoing maintenance of such property, including but not confined to interior and exterior painting and replacement of floor coverings in accordance with a timely schedule.

The Wardens are required to inspect the property annually in April, and to note and bring to Parish Council recommendations for expenditure on the property in the budget of the following financial year.

Smoke alarms must be provided/installed and the Wardens are required to test smoke alarms and to replace smoke alarm batteries in October of each year. If and when substantive electrical work is carried out on the property, opportunity should be taken to install wired-in smoke alarms.

When the property is vacated on the departure of the Incumbent, the Registrar or his nominee and the Wardens will jointly inspect the property and agree on work to be undertaken before the property is re-occupied. Normally, carpets would be steam cleaned at this time, at the expense of the parish.

It is a firm expectation that a clergy family vacating parish-owned housing will ensure that the property, both inside and outside including the garden, is left in an acceptable state of cleanliness and tidiness, and at least in the condition in which it was first occupied, allowing for fair wear and tear.

8. Housing arrangements for Clergy taking Long Service Leave are unaltered from those which they enjoy as part of their regular ministry, although those in parish-supplied housing may choose if convenient to make that housing available for the use of a *locum tenens*.

Schedule

The minimum configuration for clergy housing, unless negotiated otherwise and with the permission of Diocesan Council, is:

- a. site within ten minutes' drive of the principal parish church and office and in a position which in the opinion of the Wardens and Registrar offers good amenity for family living
- b. low maintenance construction, typically brick and tile with aluminium window frames
- c. low maintenance, reasonably level grounds
- d. minimum of four bedrooms and a study/office, no bedroom to be less than 9m²
- e. minimum of two bathrooms including two toilets, one of which is easily accessed by those visiting in connection with pastoral matters
- f. a configuration which provides for meeting with visitors without impacting adversely on the living space for the family
- g. undercover parking for at least one car
- h. adequate heating of principal living spaces
- i. adequate kitchen range or oven, cooktop and dishwasher *
- j. disabled access it to be provided to the office, living spaces, bathrooms and at least one bedroom available for guests

* NB: Whilst the Parish provides a stove or oven/cooktop combination and dishwasher, all other whitegoods, including refrigerator, washing machine, clothes dryer and microwave oven, if required, are the responsibility of the Incumbent, unless otherwise negotiated.

The repair, maintenance, replacement and insurance of whitegoods owned by the Incumbent are the Incumbent's responsibility.