



Parochial Church Council *Handbook for PCC Members*

Version 3.0 May 2022





Parochial Church Council Handbook for PCC Members



CONTENTS

- 1. Church of England: Structure and Governance**
- 2. The Parish of Bridport**
- 3. Names we need to know**
 - The Clergy (Ordained)
 - Lay Ministers
- 4. PCC Introduction**
- 5. PCC Membership**
- 6. PCC Ways of Working**
- 7. PCC Member's Role**
- 8. Role of the Church Warden**
- 9. Appendices**
 - A. Key people in The Bridport Parish
 - B. Acronyms and special terms
 - C. Where to get more information

1. Church of England Structure



Parish

The Church of England is the established church of this country. It is divided geographically into 42 dioceses, each made up of parishes. Bridport is one of 442 parishes in the Diocese of Salisbury. Historically appointment of a clergyman to a parish was often the Lord of the Manor's patronage (or responsibility) but other institutions may have recommended someone. This pattern continues, regulated by Patronage (Benefices) Rules 1987. The patron can be an individual (or jointly or by rotation), the Crown, a bishop, a college, a charity or other religious body. After selecting a candidate, the patron asks the Bishop to license, collate or institute them. Appointment as a parish priest gives the incumbent the privilege of a benefice or living.

Benefice

A benefice is a single parish or group of parishes, normally under the care of a single incumbent, although a number of other arrangements are possible. We currently have 136 benefices in the Diocese of Salisbury, although this can change when benefices join together to form a team.

Deanery

A deanery is a group of neighbouring benefices forming an administrative area. Each deanery is overseen by a Rural Dean (an ordained minister) and a Lay Chair (not ordained). The Diocese of Salisbury has 21 deaneries, as since 1 January 2021 the Bishop of Salisbury has assumed pastoral responsibility for the Channel Islands, the deaneries of Jersey and Guernsey. Each deanery comes under one of four Archdeaconries (Sarum, Wilts, Sherborne and Dorset).

Diocese

The Diocese of Salisbury covers most of Wiltshire and Dorset, plus small areas of Hampshire and Devon. Click here to see a [map](#). The Bishop of Salisbury is diocesan leader with two suffragan bishops and four archdeacons who manage the diocese, each with their own responsibilities.

As a diocese, we are linked with many charities, church organisations, mission agencies, non-government organisations, retreat houses and trusts. We have international links with dioceses in other countries, particularly: Sudan, South Sudan, France (Évreux), and Latvia. The Salisbury-Sudan Link was initiated over 40 years ago through a medical connection but has grown to include educational elements, both school and theological, and friendships. Clergy and laity help to sustain this link by exchange visits with dioceses in Sudan and South Sudan.

1. Church of England Governance



Deanery Synod

Each deanery has a **Deanery Synod** made up of clergy and elected lay parish representatives. It is a forum for parishes to exchange views on issues affecting the Deanery. This gives the opportunity for initiating shared projects and greater collaboration. The ordained clergy of the deanery form the **Chapter** and, as colleagues, provide peer support for each other.

Diocesan Synod

The Deanery Synod elects representatives to the **Diocesan Synod**, the statutory governing body of the Diocese of Salisbury. Diocesan Synod is the wider forum for sharing ideas and resourcing parishes in their mission and witness to the people of Wilts and Dorset. Deanery representatives who sit on synod enable two-way exchange from parishes to General Synod and vice versa. It is where international links can be nurtured, where we can be challenged about our use of creation, how we maintain our historic buildings, how the Gospel message is reflected in the management of our church schools. It has to balance the diocesan budget and raise mutual understanding and standards.

General Synod

General Synod is the national assembly, legislative and deliberative body of the Church of England. Elected representatives from all dioceses gather to debate and decide the future direction of our Church. General Synod was set up in 1970 to give the laity more say in decisions of the Church, but roots of synodical governance actually date back to the medieval period.

Electoral Roll

In every parish, a roll of lay members of the church is created every 6 years. A lay person is entitled to have their name on the roll if: baptised, aged 16 or over, and declares membership of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. Residence in the parish is not a requirement but habitually attending worship in the parish can be an alternative qualification.

Church Representation Rules (CRR)

One hundred years ago legislation was passed to give a voice to the laity in the governance of church life. The most recent version is CRR2020, available online or to purchase. Click [here](#). It is these rules that we follow in how we set up the various groups in the parish, how meetings are conducted, and how business is carried out. The laity outnumber the clergy in the decision-making forum of the PCC and the number of lay members is dependent on the number of people on the parish Electoral Roll, who each have equal representation. As a PCC member you should familiarise yourself with the CRR as the basis of how we conduct the parish business.

2. The Parish of Bridport

Introduction



ST MARY'S
BRIDPORT-WALDITCH-BOTHENHAMPTON-BRADPOLE-ALLINGTON-WEST BAY
HOLY TRINITY
ST JOHN'S

The Mission & Pastoral Measure (Amended) 2018 legislates how parishes can be grouped together in different situations. Our parish was created in 1979 when the separate parishes of Allington, Bothenhampton, Walditch, Bridport and Bradpole were united to create the new, single parish and benefice of **Bridport**.

We have retained the five parish churches and a building licenced for worship (St John's at West Bay). Each parish church has two churchwardens, and all the churchwardens are churchwardens of the whole parish.

The Parish of Bridport is the area of the new benefice, and the team of clergy are the Bridport Team Ministry (BTM), led by the Team Rector with the Team Vicar and other ministerial colleagues. The Patrons for the presentation of the Rector in this benefice are the Lord Chancellor on behalf of her Majesty and a Patronage Board; with each taking turns to present.

We are members of the **Lyme Bay Deanery** which is led by the Rural Dean. Other members of the Deanery Synod represent the geographical area of West Dorset, which has the Benefices of Eggardon & Colmers and Bride Valley, and the Teams of Golden Cap and Beaminster, We have five lay representatives from Bridport on the Deanery Synod, who are elected by the annual meeting of the PCC and serve for a period of three years. The clergy elect their own representatives.

The Archdeacon of Sherborne covers the deaneries of Lyme Bay, Sherborne, Blackmore Vale, Dorchester and Weymouth & Portland.

The Electoral Roll for the Parish of Bridport listed 313 members in 2022.



2. The Parish of Bridport

Introduction



ST MARY'S
 BRIDPORT-WALDITCH-BOTHENHAMPTON-BRADPOLE-ALLINGTON-WEST BAY
 HOLY TRINITY
 ST JOHN'S
 ST SWITHUN'S

What you might know

Bridport is an attractive and lively market town, situated in rural Dorset, surrounded by breathtakingly beautiful coast and countryside. It has a lovely artists quarter, a lively Art Centre and West Bay, of Broadchurch fame, is nearby.

Some say Bridport is quite alternative, although the majority of the population are older, retired people.

Sounds rather cosy doesn't it?



The reality of the Parish of Bridport

- Population 14,000, living in 6,400 households.
- 27% are over 65, nearly twice the national average of older people.
- About 6,000 residents are in employment, nearly 20% in low-skilled work.
- Poverty levels are relatively low compared with the rest of the country but Bridport has its share of unemployment, broken lives and drug problems.
 - Two areas fall into the 20% most deprived in England.
 - 13% of children in the area live in low-income households.
 - 25% of households with dependent children are lone parent families.
 - There are around 2,500 families on benefits.

Figures from 2017



3. Names we need to know

The Clergy (Ordained)



The key clergy we need to know for The Parish of Bridport are:

Archbishop of Canterbury	Canterbury Province Leader of the Anglican Communion	The Most Revd.* Justin Welby
Diocesan Bishop	The Bishop	The Right Revd. Stephen Lake
Suffragan Bishop	The Bishop of Ramsbury The Bishop of Sherborne	The Right Revd. Dr Andrew Rumsey The Right Revd. Karen Gorham
Dean of the Cathedral	The Dean	The Very Revd. Nick Papadopoulos
4 Archdeacons	Sarum, Wilts, Dorset, Sherborne	The Venerable Penny Sayer, Archdeacon of Sherborne
21 Rural Deans	Lyme Bay Deanery	The Revd. Canon David Baldwin
Team Rector	Incumbent of The Parish of Bridport	The Revd. Canon Deborah Smith

When a clergyperson has completed the 7 years of training, they apply for a job, which is the first step after being 'fully qualified'. The position they take on can have a variety of titles, but all of these follow their training post and may have incumbent status: Priest in Charge, Associate Priest, Chaplain, Vicar, Rector.

Team Vicar with incumbent status	The Parish of Bridport	The Revd. Pete Stone
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When clergy retire from active ministry they can continue to offer to assist locally in some aspects of ministry. They have the Bishop's permission to officiate (PtO) at services in the parish, at the invitation of the Rector. They provide additional experience and resource for parish clergy to access.

Permission to Officiate	Retired clergy in Bridport	The Revds. Ann Ayling, Janis Moore, Kay Watters, Philip Ringer, Dan Shackell
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Those who are mid-way through their training are given a legal licence when placed in a parish following their time at theological college. Full training, Initial Ministerial Education (IME 1-7), takes 7 years. During the time spent in a college they are known as an 'ordinand' but once ordained Deacon they are licensed to a parish, so they are Reverend and an Assistant Curate. At some point during the time spent in a parish they will usually be ordained to the Priesthood. Some people do not feel that God is calling them to the priesthood and so they will remain as a Perpetual Deacon with limited responsibilities.

Assistant Curate	Assistant Curate in Bridport	The Revd. Helen Croud
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* Revd. = Reverend

3. Names we need to know

Lay Ministers



Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs)

LLMs are licensed to work alongside ordained colleagues in the parishes where they serve, usually as part of a team under the guidance of their incumbent. Their theological education, on a degree of parity with their clergy colleagues, is regarded as essential.

They preach the gospel, teach and enable others to grow as disciples of Christ. They may lead and participate in worship, conduct funerals, and offer pastoral care.

Some Lay Ministers have a ministry with a specialist focus, they proclaim the gospel primarily through pastoral care, or in a chaplaincy environment such as a hospital or prison. They are often seen as a 'bridge' between the church and the world. They may be able to minister in contexts where clergy are not so readily accepted.

Licensed Lay Ministers

Coral Hatton, Graham Purse & Peter Wright

Lay Pastoral Assistants (LPAs)

LPAs engage in pastoral ministry, as part of a team of clergy and laity. Many parishes have teams of LPAs, some of whom specialise in a particular area. All LPAs focus on pastoral care, but an individual's ministry varies. In all cases it calls for a loving, compassionate heart, and a willingness to listen and support those in need. LPAs may be involved in:

- Welcoming newcomers to our churches and our communities
- Hospital visiting, visiting people in their homes, prayer and healing
- Supporting families: marriage preparation, baptism, children & young people, bereavement
- Training and nurture, including confirmation preparation & home groups
- Evangelism, including Alpha groups
- Hospitality

Lay Pastoral Assistants

Caroline Cooke & Diana Wright

Lay Worship Leaders (LWLs)

LWLs assist with planning and leading worship in the parishes where they live. They are chosen by the incumbent, PCC and minister alongside licensed colleagues both lay and ordained, under the direction of their incumbent. They can lead a wide variety of worship.

They are trained locally and then commissioned for this ministry. LWLs are:

- Baptised and confirmed
- A regular communicant in their home church
- Rooted in their local community
- Someone with an appropriate ministerial 'presence'
- Willing to engage in continuing ministerial development
- Able to handle the expectations of others

Lay Worship Leader

Martin Whiting

4. Parochial Church Council Introduction



Objectives

- To work in co-operation and partnership with the Team Rector in the shared leadership of the church.
- To promote in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
- To take responsibility for the care and maintenance of the church buildings and churchyards.
- To be responsible for the finances of the church, to ensure legal compliance with charity law and recognise its role as employer of the church's paid workers.
- To link the parish into the wider structures of the church.

Scope

Our PCC meets regularly to discuss the life of the church. Apart from finance and buildings, it considers the church's involvement in the wider community, our outreach and mission, the spiritual development and pastoral care of the congregation, our patterns of worship, and the social activities of the church.

Sub-C'ttees

To ensure all these areas are covered the PCC delegates some of these tasks to sub-committees which report back to the PCC. The sub-committees can include people who are not on the PCC, and they work across the whole parish. There are sub-committees for core areas of the parish e.g. finance, fabric and a sub-committee for each church.

Policies

A range of policies are written, disseminated, monitored and reviewed by the PCC. For example: Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Financial Control, Environment, Privacy and Data Protection, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders, Conflict of Interests and Complaints Procedures. See Appendix giving links to useful material.

New Incumbent

The PCC has an important role in the appointment of a new incumbent. Beginning with drafting the Parish Profile and working with the Patron and the Diocese, lay parish representatives will be elected to act as the PCC's representatives. They will actively be involved through the process of appointment, including the shortlisting and interviewing of all potential candidates. These representatives are empowered to speak for the PCC in the process of consultation with the Bishop and there is a legal requirement for the PCC representatives' signed agreement to the final appointment of a new Team Rector.

Issues

The PCC may make representations to the Bishop on matters affecting the welfare of the parish.



5. PCC Membership

Who are the members?

The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church
Members of the PCC are drawn from two sources

1

Ex officio members and members co-opted by the PCC

- Ex officio members:
 - All priests and deacons licensed to the parish
 - Deaconesses and Licensed Lay Workers, licensed to the parish.
 - The churchwardens.
 - Anyone on the electoral roll, who is a member of Deanery, Diocesan or General Synod.
- Members co-opted by the PCC:
 - Typically people who take on a specific function for the PCC, e.g. treasurer or secretary. We have 15 lay members of the PCC, so we are allowed up to 3 co-opted members.

2

Lay Representatives elected at the Annual Parish meeting

- The number of elected representatives of the laity on the PCC is governed by the Church Representation Rules and is based on the number of people on our electoral roll. For a parish with an electoral roll of 300 or more, the maximum number of lay representatives is 15.
- Lay representatives are generally elected for three years, with one third elected each year. At the end of their three years, they are able to stand for re-election if they choose to do so.



5. PCC Membership

How are they elected?

Standing for Election as a Lay Representative

PCC members must be at least 16 years old, be communicants (they regularly receive Holy Communion) and have been on electoral roll for at least 6 months prior to being elected.

Lay representatives should also be people who are:

- Committed members of the congregation.
- Keen to promote the life of the church in the parish and the local community.
- Respectful of other people's views and position.
- Willing to listen, learn and to share ideas, experiences and skills.
- Willing to commit time to regularly attend PCC and other meetings/events and serve where needed.
- Able to debate proposals in an open, frank and courteous manner.
- Caring and good humoured.

Who cannot be a member of the PCC?

You must NOT permit yourself to be nominated or elected to the PCC if you are:

- Disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993.
- Included in a Safeguarding & Vulnerable Group Act 2006 barred list or if you have been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 of the Children & Young People Act 1933.
- Disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbent (Vacation of Benefice) Measure 1997.

6. PCC Ways of Working Overview



Meetings

The PCC holds sufficient meetings each year to transact its business (usually about 6, dates published in advance):

- All PCC meetings are closed events, the content and discussions are confidential to the group, but the agreed minutes are released into the public domain.
- All meetings require a notice period and are usually convened by the chair.
- A week prior to a meeting, the agenda and papers are circulated to members to give the opportunity of seeking clarification or information before the meeting itself.
- A quorum of members is required.
- Visitors may be included for specific items on the agenda and their time-limited attendance is welcomed and encouraged.
- The Standing Committee may transact some of the PCC's business between meetings. Thus, extraordinary meetings or business by correspondence may occur between the published meeting dates.

The Annual Meeting is held by 31 May every year and the annual report is then filed with the Charity Commission. The financial year is the calendar year.

The **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** is a public meeting, giving the opportunity for wider questions. It is the forum for openness and transparency on the work of the church. The annual report is shared, and the background agenda of the parish discussed.

Policies and sub-committees

The parish has policies concerning e.g. Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Employment of Ex-offenders and standard procedures and templates defining how we carry out our secular business e.g. how to recruit new volunteers, how to gain approval for major expenditure. Policies, procedures and templates are available on the [parish website](#)

The PCC has a number of sub-committees, each focusing on a particular area e.g. specialist areas such as Finance, or activities only relevant to individual churches. The sub-committees submit proposals to the PCC, for decisions and allocation of responsibility. Sub-committees may include others from outside the PCC but who have an interest or expertise in a particular area.

Working with the Clergy

The clergy have been called by God through the recruitment process. They each have a Statement of Particulars (legal contract) outlining their role and terms: housing, pensions, holiday, days off, learning etc. The PCC must respect this and be aware of the need for privacy for the clergy and their families. Theirs is a very public role, they come into our community to serve us; we must enable them to work to the best of their calling by supporting them with ours.

Some clergy are still in training posts but all need time for training, retreat and theological learning, consulting others for advice or reflection and time for God in their lives. Retired clergy are not in full-time ministry, they assist in a variety of ways and have Permission to Officiate (PtO) at the invitation of the incumbent.

7. PCC Member's Role

What you need to do



The PCC is a team, we share our talents and work closely together for the benefit of the whole parish

Time commitment

You will need time to do this role properly

This role takes time, it's not just about attending PCC meetings.

Remember you represent everybody on the Electoral Roll of the parish, not just your local church. Get to know the different buildings and styles of worship, meet the people and consider their needs.

The PCC must be seen to do its job thoroughly and well, to gain the trust and confidence of the parish.

PCC meetings

Preparation before PCC meetings

- Six PCC meetings annually, with the APCM in May.
- Agenda and accompanying papers are circulated electronically a week before each meeting, allowing time to seek clarification or further information.
- Read the documents before the meeting, prepare thoughts/questions.
- You will be involved in developing strategy and taking decisions you must be fully informed and prepared for this.

Involvement during PCC meetings

- Lively debate and challenge reflect good governance, each member must discuss and defend their position without causing ill-feeling; whilst accepting criticism graciously.

Actions after each PCC meeting

- There will be follow-up actions for everyone, and perhaps tasks that need collaboration with people beyond the PCC. You must complete these and prepare to give feedback to the PCC as requested.

Sub-C'ttees

Each PCC member will actively contribute to at least one **PCC sub-committee** in which they can demonstrate an interest, make use of previous experience or a transferable skill. This will ensure that, across the PCC, we have an in-depth understanding of the workings of the parish.

7. PCC Member's Role

Being a Charity Trustee



*PCCs are charities and their members are **Charity Trustees***

The legal definition of a trustee is someone who has the “control & management” of a charity, ensuring it is solvent, well-run and delivering its charitable outcomes

Key Responsibilities

Ensure compliance with charity law and with church (ecclesiastical) law.

- This includes preparing an annual report of key achievements and annual accounts. Submitting copies of the accounts to the Charity Commission and diocese.

Duty of prudence to ensure the parish will remain solvent.

- This includes keeping yourself informed of the PCC's activities and financial position. Using funds and assets wisely, to further the purposes of the parish and avoiding activities that might place property, funds, assets or reputation at risk.

Duty of care to use reasonable care and skill, to ensure the PCC is well-run.

- This includes taking special care when investing or borrowing funds, and seeking professional advice where appropriate.

Personal Liability

Many people ask: “What are the potential liabilities of PCC Members?”

The answer is:

- PCC members meet the PCC's liabilities out of its own resources.
- Personal liability would only arise in the event of a failure to act in accordance with legal responsibilities as trustees, including the duty to show a reasonable degree of care in the administration of PCC affairs.

The trustees are ultimately responsible for overseeing how best the church should advance the Christian gospel. The trustees' role is a strategic one, not a purely practical one

Note that, as a trustee and a senior representative of the parish, you will have an **enhanced DBS check** before you take on the role. DBS refers to the Disclosure and Barring Service, which helps organisations make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

8. Role of the Churchwarden



They shall be foremost in representing the laity and in cooperating with the incumbent; by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace among them. They shall also maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during divine service. The property, in the plate, ornaments and other moveable goods of the church, is vested in them, and they should keep an up-to-date inventory of these items, and deliver them to their successors.

Summarised from: The Canons of the Church of England [E1.4 and E1.5]

The Churchwardens represent all laity in the Parish, not just the congregation or those on the electoral roll. They are the Bishop's officers, appointed annually by the Archdeacon, on behalf of the Bishop. They, with the parish priest, are responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the parish. They are:

- Elected annually by the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, as the senior lay people of the parish.
- Elected for a term of office of one year and may serve up to six consecutive terms.
- Ex officio members of the PCC and PCC Standing Committee.

Bridport is one parish with five parish churches. St John's West Bay is a licensed building. We can have a team of up to ten churchwardens. The wardens can come from any of the church congregations and, as a team, they will divide up responsibilities to cover the parish.

Churchwardens will use their best endeavours to ensure that:

Administration & Finance

- Adequate provision is made for administration of the parish, including:
 - Financial administration (if no PCC Treasurer, churchwardens fulfil the role).
 - Recruiting and managing lay staff and volunteers.
 - Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies are in place and implemented.
 - Preparation is made for Archdeacon's triennial parochial visitation.

Mission

- The PCC implements a Mission Action Plan.
- People attending church are welcomed.
- The church is open to the public as much as possible.

Pastoral Care

- The pastoral work of the Church is being undertaken.

Buildings, Contents and Property

- The PCC cares for and maintains the churches and their contents, as well as other church buildings in the parish and the churchyards or grounds.

Liturgy and Worship

- In the absence of the parish priest they are responsible, with the Rural Dean, for ensuring someone conducts services, the liturgy and life of the parish continues as far as possible.
- If no one is available they should conduct any service, as far as possible, themselves.
- Check that all visiting clergy hold the Bishop's licence or Permission to Officiate.
- During a vacancy in the parish, they, with the Rural Dean, are responsible for the good ordering of the parish.

Parochial Church Council Handbook for PCC Members



APPENDICES

- A. Key people in The Bridport Parish**
- B. Acronyms and special terms**
- C. Useful reference materials and links**



A. Key people in The Bridport Parish



Role	Name	Contact Details
Safeguarding Officer	Coral Hatton	07900 984031
Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) Officer	Vacant	
Data Protection (GDPR) Officer	Di Sinclair	di@bridport-team-ministry.org
Health & Safety Officer	Vacant	
Electoral Roll Officer	Bridget Trump	pcc@bridport-team-ministry.org di@bridport-team-ministry.org
Parish Administrator	Di Sinclair	di@bridport-team-ministry.org

B. Acronyms and special terms



Term	Definition
BTM	Bridport Team Ministry
CRR	Church Representative Rules
PCC	Parochial Church Council
PtO	Permission to Officiate
Revd.	Reverend
Benefice	The term "benefice" originally denoted a grant of land for life in return for services. Now it's no longer "for life" but employment security is in line with modern employment law.
Incumbent	The holder of a Church of England benefice.
Institute and Collate	<p>Institute: this is when a patron presents a cleric for institution. The Bishop may examine them and either agree or refuse on good grounds to proceed.</p> <p>Collate: If the bishop has chosen the cleric, this is unnecessary, and the legal formalities are different.</p> <p>In Bridport the Bishop is asked to institute the candidate identified through the selection process.</p>

C. Where to get more information



Find out more about the Church of England on their [website](#)

Find out more about Salisbury Diocese on their [website](#)

To refer to the Church of England Parish Resources for PCCs [here](#)

Find out more about being a trustee:

- The Parish Resources website on [Trusteeship](#)
- Charity Commission's [Governance Code](#)