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**THE NATURE AND DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF A CHURCHWARDEN**

*Thank you for being willing to serve as a Churchwarden for your parish. It is an ancient and noble office that carries with it the duties set out below.*

Churchwardens have important legal responsibilities, but the office also has a vital spiritual, pastoral and mission dimension – the duty is to be foremost among the laity in the life and mission of the Church in the parish.

The ***churchwardens’ main duties*** are summarised in Canon E1 paragraphs 4 and 5. Under those paragraphs, once churchwardens take up their office, they:

* are the officers of the bishop (not the incumbent or PCC) (E1.4);
* must be the foremost in representing the laity and co-operating with the incumbent (E1.4);
* must use their best endeavours by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace among them (E1.4);
* must discharge the duties assigned to them by law and custom (E1.4). (Examples of this are their duties in relation to the offerings or collections in the church, and the duties imposed on them by section 5 of the Care of Church and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 in relation to the church building and the land and articles belonging to it );
* must maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service (E1.4); and
* hold the title to the movable goods of the church, must keep an inventory of those goods and keep it up to date, and must hand over the goods to their successors, who must check the inventory (E1.5).

**In addition:**

* if a person chosen as churchwarden is an actual communicant and has his or her name on the church electoral roll of the parish, that person will automatically become a member of the PCC until he or she either ceases to satisfy those qualifications or ceases to be a churchwarden (CRR r.14(1)(d) and (2));
* if the PCC fails to appoint a treasurer, the churchwarden or churchwardens who are members of the PCC will be responsible for discharging the office of treasurer (CRR App II para 1(e)(i));
* churchwardens may also be trustees of other parochial charities by virtue of their office; and
* during a vacancy in the benefice, the churchwardens will be the sequestrators together with the rural or area dean and anyone else whom the bishop appoints (Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992 s.1(1)). (In the case of a team ministry, the team vicars and certain other members of the team take the place of the rural or area dean as automatic sequestrators except so far as the bishop directs that any of them are not to be included.)

**The Venerable Matthew Parker, Archdeacon of Stoke upon Trent**

 [archdeacon.stoke@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.stoke@lichfield.anglican.org)

**Miss Lucinda Wray-Wear, PA**

 [Lucinda.Wray-Wear@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:Lucinda.Wray-Wear@lichfield.anglican.org)

 **01782 663066**

The Archdeacon’s House, 39 The Brackens, Clayton,

Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 4JL.

<http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/ourpeople/bishops-and-archdeacons/the-archdeacon-of-stoke/> sjw2016

**Notes**:

* You will find further information about the duties of a churchwarden at <http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/default/assets/File/Duties%20of%20Churchwardens.pdf>  
  alternatively you can request a copy from the Archdeacons’ office [archdeacon.stoke@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.stoke@lichfield.anglican.org)

* The disqualifications are (a) disqualification as a charity trustee under s.72 of the Charities Act 1993; (b) convictions within Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933; and (c) disqualification under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure 1977. If you are in any doubt as to whether you are disqualified, please consult the diocesan registrar before signing this form.
* This form, when completed, will be handed to the Archdeacon or other person acting for the Bishop on your admission to office, and will be retained by the archdeacon.
* As a churchwarden you are a publicly elected office holder and we will hold your contact details in our internal database for diocesan communication and provide it to people we believe have a genuine reason to contact you in connection with your duties as a churchwarden.