

Parsonage Handbook



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

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ARCHDEACONS' INTRODUCTION

This is the new version of the Parsonage Handbook, which we hope will be a useful source of information about housing provided for ministry in the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham.

The Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) seeks to provide a standard of accommodation for the clergy and their families which is generally in line with the guidelines set out in the 'Green Book Guide'.

The Diocesan Board of Finance, believes that housing matters. Our policy is to maintain a good standard for clergy, other occupants and their families. Feeling comfortable, secure and happy at home makes for better ministry and is part of the Church's proper pastoral care for its people.

This handbook is intended to establish a standard for the fair and equal treatment of everyone living in a house. If you have any concerns about a house, please get in touch with the Property Team, at Jubilee House. They will be glad to do what they can to help.

If you're finding it challenging to maintain your clergy property, please don't hesitate to get in touch. The Diocesan Board of Finance is here to support you, and there may be assistance available to help with property maintenance issues.

Depending on your circumstances and the type of property you occupy, support options can vary to best assist with specific maintenance needs. Additionally, organisations like the [Clergy Support Trust](#) may be able to offer grants for property repairs and general living expenses.

It's important to contact your local Diocesan Property Team first, as they can provide tailored advice and direct you to appropriate resources. Please remember, you're not alone - support is available to help you maintain a safe and comfortable living environment.



Victoria Ramsey
Archdeacon of Newark



Phil Williams
Archdeacon of Nottingham

PROPERTY TEAM

The Property Team are responsible for the day-to-day management of all Diocesan Board of Finance houses. Matters relating to the repair and maintenance of your house, should be brought to the attention of the staff:

The Team is based at Jubilee House, 8 Westgate, Southwell, NG25 0JH.



Aaron Grounsell
Property Coordinator

01636 817214 or 07712 835267
property.repairs@southwell.anglican.org



Jo Page
Property Administrator

01636 817213 or 07801 685969
property@southwell.anglican.org

Often, catching a fault early can prevent defects from escalating into larger issues which can be disruptive, damaging and costly to the property and occupant's belongings.

Note - Throughout this handbook the term “parsonage” is used to cover all benefice houses, regardless of whether they are locally termed vicarage, rectory, or other such name. This handbook does not cover glebe or other Diocesan houses or properties, which are subject to different management arrangements and funding.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPAIRS

The Diocesan Board of Finance responsibility, under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 is:

1. The structure and exterior of the building including boundary walls, fences, etc.
2. The installations for space heating, water heating and sanitation and the supply apparatus for water, gas, oil and electricity.
3. The payment of Council Tax, water rates and insurance of the structure.
4. Permanent fixtures and fittings in the property. These would normally include fitted kitchen cupboards but not white goods, bathroom fittings, etc.

CONTRACTORS & WORK ORDERS

Contractors used by the DBF are subject to due diligence checks, for their competence, accreditation, Public Liability Insurance, statutory compliance, safety record, and standard of work.

Work Orders are issued to contractors by the Property Team for each job of work, whether large or small, that is carried out. The purpose is to establish formal contractual relationships, enable effective monitoring of works, and control the financial commitments undertaken.

STANDARD OF WORKMANSHIP

Suggestions of new reliable contractors are always welcome, as are comments on the standard of workmanship and the general attitude of contractors. It is essential that any problems are notified to the Property Team as soon as they become apparent.

Your feedback is very important to us, as it is not always possible for our staff to inspect minor works personally.

CHIMNEYS AND FLUES

The chimney will be swept and inspected prior to occupation by a HETAS Approved Contractor appointed by the property team.

During occupancy, if your property has a chimney flue which is in use, it is your responsibility to make sure that it is swept and inspected annually by a HETAS Approved Contractor. The annual cost of this can be claimed back from the Finance Team by providing a copy of the receipt and [completion of an expenses form](#). You must also provide a copy of the “Certificate of Chimney Sweeping” to the Property Team.

If the flue is not in use, it must be properly closed off to prevent damp and debris collecting inside the building. You should contact the property team for assistance.

COUNCIL TAX AND WATER RATES

Council Tax and Water Rates are paid directly by the Finance Department. It is vital that accurate dates for occupation and for vacating properties are provided. If your circumstances change (e.g. marital status, children become adults, an adult other than a family member living with you etc) please notify the Finance Department by email (finance@southwell.anglican.org)

ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

All houses will have a full electrical inspection (EICR) every 5 years in line with the quinquennial inspection. The works will be undertaken by a NICEIC or NAPIT Approved Contractor appointed by the keys Board of Finance (DBF) during clergy occupation, vacancies and tenancies.

GAS AND OIL SERVICING

The DBF has a responsibility under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure to service and maintain the central heating and plumbing systems and has the statutory responsibility to comply with the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994. The appointed heating engineers for the DBF therefore carry out the annual servicing and safety checks on all gas installations every year and provide the Property Team with a Landlord’s Gas Safety Certificate. The occupant is required to grant access to the heating engineer, for statutory compliance purposes.

If the occupant does not automatically receive a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate, they should request one from the Property Team.

Engineers who are not Gas Safe registered must not be used on parsonage properties. If there is a need for additional work between annual services, the occupant should first contact The Property Team. If emergency out-of-hours work is required (see page 23) please contact the DBF's nominated heating engineers who carry out the regular servicing of the boiler. In extreme emergency, if neither of the above are available, [a 'Gas Safe' registered engineer may be used](#). See page 29 for guidance on initiating emergency works and reimbursement arrangements.

The servicing of oil-fired boilers and associated plant is arranged by the DBF. As with gas installations, the servicing cost will be paid for by the DBF. In the case of emergency work, the procedure is the same as for gas installations.

INSURANCE

All houses for which the DBF are responsible are insured under a comprehensive group building policy with Ecclesiastical Insurance Group (EIG). Occupants are responsible for obtaining their own Household Contents Insurance.

SMOKE, HEAT AND CO DETECTORS

All detectors will be inspected during electrical inspections. At this time, if detectors are faulty the Property Team will arrange replacement. Occupants should test detectors weekly to ensure they are operating correctly replacing batteries when applicable/annually. If found to be faulty the occupant can arrange replacement, and the cost can be claimed back by the occupant ([find the expenses form here](#)). The cost of replacing batteries is to be met by the occupant.

UTILITIES: WATER, GAS, ELECTRICITY, OIL

The DBF are responsible for paying the water bills. All utility bills e.g. gas, oil, electricity, telephone, broadband and TV licence are the responsibility of the occupant. Please ensure you provide meter readings and details to the suppliers on the day occupying and vacating the property. Any delay could result in an increased bill.

At the time a vicarage becomes vacant, the outgoing clergy should take meter readings. The DBF will then arrange to take over the utilities accounts and pay bills during the vacancy. The DBF should then arrange with the new occupier to take over responsibility for these services from the day of occupation.

If the parsonage is due to be let out during a vacancy, the utilities bills will be transferred to the interim tenant.

Smart meters or water meters are welcomed, and if installation is proposed by the occupier or parish the Property Team will support this.

Please note, houses with Solar Panels installed (also known as photovoltaics PV) will benefit from free electricity generated but, will not benefit from the tariff of surplus electricity which is part of the DBF Green Policy. PV Panel readings will be requested quarterly from you, by the Property Team. Please ensure you respond with readings so that the account is up to date. This also helps determine if the panels and equipment are functioning correctly.



DAY-TO-DAY REPAIRS

These are repairs which arise from time to time and are necessary to keep the house and outbuildings in good order between quinquennial inspections. When you require assistance with a repair, please contact the Property Team either by email or telephone who will be able to arrange for repairs to be carried out as quickly as possible.

When repairs are ordered via the property team you will receive a copy of the repair order which will indicate the contractor who will carry out the work and your contact details.

Small repairs (with the exception of electrical or plumbing), up to the value of £150, can be dealt with locally by the occupant ([complete this expenses form](#)). You should then send the invoice along with a completed expenses form to the property team for payment. Work which is likely to be in excess of this amount should not be arranged without first seeking the approval of the Property Team.

It is recognised that it may not be possible to follow this procedure when genuine emergencies arise, i.e., at weekends and outside normal office hours. In these situations, you should refer to the section on [“Property Team Out of Hours Notification” \(page 23\)](#). Any defects which may cause deterioration to the fabric of the building should be reported to the Property Team without delay.

REACTIVE WORKS

In the event of any maintenance issue for which the DBF are responsible, the occupant should contact the Property Team:

property.repairs@southwell.anglican.org / 01636 817214 / 07712 835267

Please do make direct contact with the Property Team, rather than via a Churchwarden/Area Dean/Archdeacon/Bishop.

Please include the following in your message:

- Who you are and your contact details,
- Where your property is (address/post code) and where the problem is,
- What the problem is to do with (e.g., boiler, windows, taps, etc.),
- When you first noticed the problem (and if it has previously been reported, and to whom).
- Describe the problem and how long it has been happening. If possible, how did it happen?

Reactive works will be prioritised for a response within hours/days/weeks according to the specific issue. [See Appendix 2 – Property Team Out of Hours Notification](#).

Substantial improvement works are normally only carried out following quinquennial inspection. If occupiers feel, however, that they have a particularly acute need, they are advised to contact the Property Team in the first instance. When considering these requests, comparison will be made with the Church Commissioners' Green Guide as to whether the accommodation meets the recommended standard.

The type of improvement work for which requests are most received are:

WINDOWS - REPLACEMENT

Diocesan Board of Finance properties have a very diverse range of window design and construction, and some properties have restrictions on what can be done because of listing or conservation issues. There is a programme for window replacement (under Quinquennials) and all requests will be considered within the limits of what can be achieved both financially and practically.

KITCHEN UNITS

Kitchen units should last about 15 years and normally be repaired/renewed when this becomes essential, preferably at a quinquennial or during a vacancy. The DBF does not provide for under cupboard lighting or cornices at the top of the units. The DBF does not accommodate integrated units. The DBF does not fund additional items, such as corner pull-outs.

BATHROOMS

Bathrooms should last between 10 and 15 years, normally being replaced when this becomes essential, preferably during a quinquennial or at a vacancy.

SHOWERS

It is DBF policy to provide at least one shower in each vicarage, if the layout of the building permits. If the internal layout of rooms is restricted, a shower over a bath will be provided instead of a standalone shower cubicle. Exceptions to be discussed with the occupant.

GROUND FLOOR WC

The WC on the ground floor will be made as accessible as possible for visitors, to avoid any need for them to intrude into the private area of the house.

STUDY SHELVING

Where not already provided and where requested. The DBF will reimburse the installation and purchase of shelving (up to 30 m (100 ft) length to the amount of £1,000.

LOFT INSULATION

When existing insulation is less than 100 mm (4") in thickness, this will be upgraded to 270 mm (10.5/8") at the time of quinquennial works.

FITTED UNITS OF FURNITURE

If occupants wish to have fitted wardrobes (or other similar items of furnishings) installed at their own expense as an improvement, this is permissible, with agreement from the Property Team. If these items are removed on vacating the property, then all making good to walls etc. must be carried out by the occupant prior to vacation. Where fitted units are already installed, they are not to be removed without permission from the Property Team.

CONSERVATORIES

The property team does not normally install or maintain conservatories and is phasing out their use in parsonage houses. Where there is one in existence, the property team will advise on its condition and maintenance.

OCCUPANT'S OWN IMPROVEMENTS

Occasionally, occupants will wish to carry out improvements at their own expense or funded by the parish. Permission must be obtained from the DBF before work commences. The Property Team must approve the specification, the works must be inspected by the Property Coordinator during and after construction, and there must be no claim for reimbursement upon vacation or sale of the property.

Occupants must not erect new permanent structures e.g. conservatories, extensions, outbuildings etc. or undertake any improvement works to the structure e.g. installing cavity wall insulation, replacing windows, forming new openings, removing walls etc. or remove any existing bathrooms or kitchens without written permission from the Director of Finance. Any improvement work installed without written permission from the Director of Finance will not be funded by the DBF and you may be requested to be remove/restore at your own expense.

EXTERNAL DECORATION

The DBF will arrange for the external decorations of the property to be undertaken during a quinquennial year including garages, outbuilding, fences and gates. This includes paint, timber stain and timber preservative as appropriate. The DBF will not be responsible for sheds or occupants garden furniture.

INTERNAL DECORATION

Internal decoration is the responsibility of the occupant. The DBF encourage occupants to keep their houses reasonably decorated and to support this provides a decoration grant.

A grant of £100 per annum is available on production of receipts for either the purchase of decorating materials, or towards the cost of the occupant paying a tradesman to carry out the work. Any allowance remaining will not be carried over to the next financial year period.

The decoration grant can be used to employ a professional contractor/tradesperson or when undertaking the works on a DIY basis. If undertaken as a DIY project the grant will reimburse the costs of the materials used on the decorated surfaces e.g. paint and wallpaper. It does not cover the costs of dust sheets, brushes, rollers, white spirit, masking tape etc. to undertake the works. It is not permitted to apply textured paint finishes to ceilings or walls.

PROFESSIONAL OPTION EXPLAINED

If a professional is employed, the grant will contribute £100 towards the total cost of the work completed (not exceeding the £100 grant). For example: If a living room cost £400 to decorate. The occupant can reclaim £100 towards the costs of the works, up to the value of the total grant remaining. The remaining balance will need to be paid for by the occupant.

DIY OPTION EXPLAINED

If the works were undertaken on a DIY basis, the occupant can reclaim 100% of the cost of materials up to the value of the grant remaining.

All DIY decoration grant submissions will require a reclaim form to be completed with which are available on the [Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham website](#).

The submission should include an invoice from the contractor if undertaken professionally or a copy of the material receipts from the shop. Please ensure the receipt adequately describes the items purchased as any incomplete or ambiguous submissions can be rejected.

Please note: once the grant has been spent any decoration works undertaken will be the responsibility of the occupant to pay.

The DBF will not dictate colour schemes, nor has the power to do so, but it does request that strong colours and wall murals are avoided. Strong colours are expensive to cover over and the cost to do so will remain the responsibility of the occupier.

If surfaces are painted with strong bold colours, they must be returned to neutral shades prior to vacating the property.

The Decoration Grant is for decoration works to the property and must not be used for decorating sheds, fences, playhouses etc.

IMPORTANT:

Occupants must not paint external masonry internally and externally including brick work, stonework and concrete as this can cause material failure or additional planned maintenance.

Occupants must not paint natural timber finishes to doors, balustrading, architraves, skirting, kitchen units, parquet flooring or standard floorboards. These finishes are to be left as natural timber finish unless written permission has been granted by the Director of Finance.

If PCCs or occupants undertake the works, care must be taken to ensure that everyone works safely, within their competence and to a good standard of work including preparation and tidying / cleaning any surfaces not intended to be painted (e.g. parquet floors, floorboards, light fittings and switches, plastic window frames etc.)

Whatever method you adopt the DBF trusts that you will return the house in good order. Failure to keep the house in good decorative order may be considered to be neglect as previously explained (refer to page 22).

The care and maintenance of the garden is the responsibility of the occupant (including garden waste bin collection costs). During a vacancy it becomes the responsibility of the DBF.

Composts should be managed and not stockpiled so that a mountain of grass and garden waste takes over a large area of garden. Large composts can become a nuisance and attract vermin. Advice on how to compost can be found [on the RHS website](#).

The garden must not be sub-divided or shared with a neighbour without a formal legal agreement. Any garden accessed or used by a neighbour could result in legal dispute when the property is vacated.

Grass should be regularly maintained, cut and strimmed throughout the whole garden. If you have large amounts of lawn cuttings and leaves, try using them around the garden to help plants and trees.

Ivy and creepers can damage the property by blocking gutters and ventilation. Please keep them trimmed and do not plant them near the property. At no time should you put yourself or other occupants at risk by climbing ladders, using power saws or otherwise doing work which requires specialist knowledge.

Ensure all ground levels are maintained around the building approx. 150mm or 6" below the damp proof course. Maintain and clean airbricks to ensure they remain clear of any garden debris. High ground levels and blocked air bricks can result in damp ingress and timber rot (wet and dry rot).

Hedges are considered as part of the garden and as such are the responsibility of the occupant, or, in a vacancy, the DBF. Expenditure on maintenance will not be reimbursed. In exceptional circumstances the Archdeacon may consider a grant towards costs.

Occupants should not plant new hedges. Existing hedges should be kept at a height that is easy to maintain. (Max 6ft or 1.8m).

BOUNDARIES

It is very important that the boundaries to the property are properly marked and maintained both for legal reasons and to promote good relations with neighbours. If you know that the boundary is being altered, either increasing, encroaching on or increasing the size of the plot, you should let the property team know.

Walls around the property are maintained by the property team and you should report any damage or deterioration to them and inform the team if you think there is a risk to you, your family, or the public.

If the building shares an internal wall with a neighbouring property, “a party wall” then you should inform the property team immediately of any concern you may have about it, for example, its condition and any works on it undertaken by your neighbours.

DECKING

It is not permitted to install decking in the garden of the property for safety reasons. Unless it is carefully maintained and cleaned, decking can become slippery and unstable and is costly to remove.

DRIVEWAYS

Drives (tarmac, brick paving, gravel etc.), patios, path surfaces and flower beds should be kept clear of vegetation, weeds, moss etc. with regular maintenance. The perimeter edgings to these areas should be visible and maintained at all times.

DUSTBINS

The arrangements for dustbins and collections vary between local authorities. You are responsible for ensuring the necessary bins are at the property and that they are collected regularly so there is no accumulation of rubbish.

The DBF does not pay for the collection of garden waste or new bins.

FENCES

When work is required to boundary fences, walls etc, the Property Team must first be consulted. Responsibility may be with the owner on either side, or it may be shared with them. If responsibility is with the property or partly with the property, then the DBF will meet the cost or its share of the cost.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Japanese Knotweed is currently the most invasive alien species in Britain. It can cause damage to hard standings, foundations, drains, services, walls, and other built structures by growing through cracks and openings between them.

Soil can be contaminated with reproductive knotweed up to a depth of 3m and a radius of over 7m. Infected soils will require specialist treatment. To identify this weed, look for reddish/purple shoots (Spring) appearing from the ground and

fat, asparagus-like 'spears' rapidly lengthening from bright pink 'crown' buds. These can grow up to 2cms a day, forming dense stands of bamboo-like stems that develop green heart shaped leaves.

Further identification may be verified from [this video link](#).

Should this vegetation be identified either within or immediately adjacent to the garden boundaries; then it is a requirement for the DBF to be informed immediately. Upon discovery, the area of habitation should be marked out and avoided, where reasonably possible, pending further guidance from a DBF appointed horticultural specialist.

OUTBUILDINGS: Garages, Sheds, Greenhouses & Water Butts

There is no obligation upon the DBF (under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972) to keep in repair any outbuilding, although it may agree to do so in some cases.

If there is no suitable storage space for mower or essential garden equipment, the occupant may request that the DBF provide a wooden shed for this purpose. The decision on provision will be made by the Director of Finance. Maintenance of the shed is the responsibility of the occupant.

The purchase and maintenance of any additional outbuildings (sheds, greenhouses, conservatories, detached garages) is the choice and responsibility of the occupant.

You may install a garden shed, greenhouse or water butt at your own expense provided that you remove it when leaving the property unless agreed otherwise with the property team.

The provision of garages and parking is dependent on the locality of the property. In urban areas, it may not be possible to provide off-street parking, although every effort is made to do so.

PONDS

If you have an existing pond, it is your responsibility to maintain, or leave it drained.

RIGHTS OF WAY

The law relating to rights of way is complicated and it is important to prevent the unintentional creation of a right of way by allowing the public to cross the property regularly over a period of years, other than in using the appointed route to the front door. If you are concerned that long-term use of a route across the property by the public may be creating a right of way, please contact the property team immediately.

TREES

If there are mature trees (over 6ft or 1.8m in height) and they are overhanging public highways, presenting a risk to the building, or have become storm-damaged and dangerous, please consult the Property Team who will appoint a contractor and secure the necessary local authority permissions.

Trees should not be planted as they can affect the condition of properties, and their roots reach out underground as far as the branches do. These can pose a risk to building foundations.

Trees under 6ft/1.8m in height are the responsibility of the occupant to maintain.

Trees will be inspected by the DBF as part of the Quinquennial (Planned Maintenance) Works.

It should be noted - trees may be listed for preservation, in which case Local Authority consent will be required before undertaking any work including lopping and felling. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in prosecution of the occupant and a fine up to £20,000. Serious cases may be liable on conviction to an unlimited fine. Please contact the DBF prior to undertaking works to trees.

BREAK-IN, THEFT & MALICIOUS DAMAGE

If you are unfortunate enough to have a burglary, these are the steps to follow:

- Notify the police immediately and get a crime reference number.
- Contact the property team as soon as possible.
- Contact your own insurance provider in relation to your content's insurance.
- You can take steps to commission urgent repairs such as boarding up the property to make it safe and secure until proper repairs can be carried out.
- Inform the churchwardens.

The Diocesan Board of Finance do not cover the cost of lock changes or replacement keys as a result of a lost or stolen keys. Security incidents of this nature should be reported to your insurer and claimed via your content's insurance.

SECURITY & SECURITY ALARMS

The security of your house is important and there are simple, low-cost measures that can be taken to make your house more secure. If your property is not already fitted with external security lights, or they are not working please contact the team so that we can look at rectifying this. If you have specific security issues at your home, please contact the team to discuss what measures we might take in mitigation.

Repairs to security alarms and CCTV systems are undertaken by the DBF. Any repairs due to fault and not misuse will not be covered by the DBF and may be re-charged back to the occupant.

If your property does not already benefit from an installed CCTV system. It is permitted to install "Ring" (or equivalent) doorbells for security, if needed. The ongoing cost of these will be paid for by the DBF and [you should submit all receipts and claims using this link.](#)

NOTE: If you have told your insurance company that you have a security alarm you must ensure you use the alarm and service the system as stipulated in your insurance terms and conditions otherwise you could invalidate an insurance claim.

When you know the date on which you will be leaving the property, please contact the property team to arrange a visit to carry out a pre-vacation inspection.

If costs arise from having to carry out works to put the property in order or to remove rubbish and items remaining, the Property Team reserves the right to pass on the costs for this to you. You may make an agreement with the Property Team to leave serviceable items for the new occupant. In which case, you should provide the Team with a list clearly setting out what is items are being left and gain agreement prior to leaving the items.

You should arrange for the utility readings to be made and the final account to be issued to you for payment. It is particularly important that gas, water and electricity meters are read, and services are turned off (but not terminated) when the house is vacated. The meter readings together with the names of the utility providers should be forwarded to the Property team by email on the day the house is vacated.

If a vacant parsonage house is protected by a security alarm, please do not switch off the electricity supply. Please ensure the property team are provided with the alarm code.

Before you vacate a house, an email / telephone call setting out any known problems, repairs required etc., would be welcomed by the Property Team.

CLEARING THE HOUSE

When vacating a property, occupants must ensure all belongings from the house, attic, cellar, outbuildings, garages, sheds and the garden are removed before or on the day you vacate the property. The belongings are defined as all the occupants and parish possessions including appliances, furniture, parish files, office furniture, greenhouses, garden plant pots and garden furniture, children's garden equipment, fish from ponds etc.

No belongings should remain in the property after the removal date. If you wish to donate items to friends, charities etc. please arrange this to be undertaken weeks in advance of moving. Any items remaining on site after the removal date will be removed and disposed of by the Property Team and the costs forwarded to the outgoing occupant.

IMPORTANT:

All hot and cold-water supplies to appliances removed e.g. washing machines and dishwashers, should be turned off and end caps fitted to the taps to prevent leaks and damage to the property.

CLEANING

Please ensure the house is cleaned throughout as you would expect to receive the property when moving in. Regrettably, there are occasions when the departing families leave the house in a less than satisfactory state. If this occurs, the Property Team will arrange a clean of the property and the Finance Team will pursue the outgoing occupant for re-imburement.

CENTRAL HEATING

Please ensure that central heating remains on as your normal timed programme. Please set the temperature to 55 °F/16°C, during winter. The DBF will arrange a drain down, so the house will need to be protected until the heating contractor undertakes the drain down.

CURTAINS, BLINDS, CURTAIN TRACKS & FIXINGS

The fitting of curtains, blinds and their tracks and fixings are the responsibility of the occupant. On departure, these items may be left for the next occupant at the agreement of the property team.

GARDENS

Please ensure the garden is tidy with lawns mown and in good order before vacating. Hedges and small trees should be left at a maximum height of 6ft/1.8m. During Vacancy, the DBF will take responsibility of the garden so please be mindful of the state of garden handed over. Refer to page 16 'Garden' for more detail.

KEYS

Please liaise with the Property with regards to returning all sets of keys, including sets with the PCC. The Property Team should receive at least two full sets of keys to the property.

NEGLECT OF HOUSES

Should the DBF feel that the occupier has not taken reasonable care of the house they may decide to charge them for the cost of the works to rectify the issues.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

GAS LEAKS	Tel: 0800 111 999
POWER CUT	National Grid Phone 105 - www.powercut105.com
WATER SUPPLY	Your own local water company

PREFERRED CONTRACTORS

PLUMBING: BOILER / HEATING

Company Name: Profile Design & Construction Ltd

Tel: 07970 149880 | Email: david@plumbheatbuild.co.uk

Company Name: J Daws Plumbers

Tel: 07971 164970 | Email: j.daws@sky.com

ELECTRICAL REPAIRS

Company Name: NG Charged

Tel: 07543 006858 | Email: enquiries@ngcharged.co.uk

Company Name: Mellor Electrical

Tel: 07805 035306 | Email: contact@mellorelectrical.co.uk

FALLEN TREE

Company Name: Groveside Tree Specialists

Tel: 07747 654 917 or 07792 511 137 | Email: groveside@talk21.com

LOCKS

Company Name: A1 Locksmiths

Tel: 07977 432089 (24 hours) | Email: a1locksmithsltd@yahoo.co.uk

GENERAL REPAIRS

Company Name: Winslow Property Services Ltd

Tel: 07852 431186 | Email: Darren.mangold@ntlworld.com

Company Name: Julian Hogg

Tel: 07854 501161 | Email: julianhogg@hotmail.co.uk

ROOF REPAIRS

Company Name: On Top Roofing Solutions

Tel: 07549 017558 / 07989 530174 | Email: info@ontoproofingsolutions.co.uk

BLOCKED DRAINS

Company Name: Turbo Drain

Tel: 07831 616197 | Email: turbodrain@gmail.com

BURGLAR ALARMS

Company Name: WEC Alarms Ltd

Tel: 0115 9312656 | Email: info@wecalarms.com

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCIES

Emergency maintenance is when a material defect, an asset or piece of equipment suffers an unexpected breakdown or change in condition that results in an immediate threat to health and safety to occupants or the public (e.g. electrical fault, gas leak, overflowing foul drains) or will cause significant damage to the property if not resolved (e.g. burst or leaking pipes), or finally leaves the property no longer secure (e.g. broken window or lock).

The aim of 'Emergency Works' is to remove or isolate the risk. The contractor may not always be able to rectify the fault but will make safe. The works may require further investigation or parts which will be undertaken during normal working hours.

When an emergency occurs, please use the emergency contractors list which can be [found on the website](#). Before contacting a contractor out of office hours, please bear in mind that they will charge higher rates for this service. Please consider whether the matter is an emergency and in need of urgent attention or a matter which could wait until the normal office hours.

Any works undertaken out of hours which are deemed not to be urgent, or an emergency may be charged to the occupant.

Note: All works instructed out of hours should be reported to the Property Team on the next working day so a purchase order may be placed, and a cost allocated. The following lists emergency issues you may encounter out of office hours and the necessary action required to resolve the issue.

GAS LEAKS

If you think you have a gas leak or are worried that fumes containing carbon monoxide are escaping from a gas appliance, please call the free Gas Emergency Services emergency line immediately on 0800 111 999. This is a 24-hour emergency line.

Also:

- Turn off your gas supply – the meter tap should be located beside your gas meter. Move the handle a quarter turn until it is 90 degrees from the pipe.
- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the property and vacate the property until emergency services attend site.
- Do not turn any electrical switches on or off.
- Extinguish all naked flames, do not smoke, strike matches, or do anything which could cause ignition.
- Let your neighbours know especially if adjoined to the property.

ELECTRICAL DEFECTS IN THE PROPERTY

If you can smell burning, or you notice smoke coming from your fuse box, lights or sockets call 999 immediately, then contact your electrical supplier and our 'out of hours' electrical contractors.

ELECTRICAL FAILURE

If the circuit breaker (RCD) trips on the consumer unit and fails to re-set on the power circuits to the household plug sockets the following action should be taken:

- Unplug all domestic appliances / items. The plugs must be removed and not simply turned off on the socket switch. Re-set the switches in the consumer unit.
- If it fails to re-set, it is considered an emergency, contact one of the electrical contractors listed on the emergency list.
- If it re-sets, plug in each appliance / item one by one checking the circuit breaker as this is undertaken.
- Continue this process until the circuit fails noting the appliance / item was last to be plugged in, this will indicate the faulty appliance.

Note: It is worth noting which appliance(s) was running when the electrics failed. Appliances can fail and trip the electrics when turned on or during a cycle and not just when plugged in e.g. kettles coming to boil, toasters toasting, washing machines changing to spin cycles etc. If any electrical call outs are found to be a result of failed appliances the cost will be charged to the occupant.

POWER CUTS

Contact UK Power Networks on 105 to report or to obtain information about power cuts in your area and speak to your local electricity network operator.

ELECTRICAL EMERGENCIES TO MAINS CABLES

Contact UK Power Networks 24 hours a day on 0800 31 63 105 or 105. Always treat damaged electricity cables as live and therefore stay away. If you think that the cables are down and cause significant risk to the public call 999.

BOILERS / CENTRAL HEATING NOT WORKING

Please contact the relevant contractor from the emergency list of contractors. Before calling a contractor, please check the following:

- Check you have oil in the tank (oil boilers only). If the tank is empty the boiler will not work and may be faulty even when the oil is replenished due to air being dragged into the system. The boiler will require an engineer to attend. If this occurs, the cost of the engineer will be the responsibility of the occupant as it is not a fault of the appliance but user error. Regular checks of oil levels are required in particular during winter months when greater volumes are consumed.

- Check your room thermostats are the correct temperature setting and if battery operated check the battery.
- Check time clock is correctly programmed e.g. time, date, settings etc.

LEAKS / BURST PIPES / PLUMBING

If you have a leaking pipe inside the property, isolate the water by turning off the internal or external stop tap or isolate the leak using the appropriate isolating valve to limit damage.

Contact a plumbing contractor from the emergency list immediately.

If you have a burst water main outside the property, contact your Water Provider. Non-emergency works listed below should wait until the office is open:

- Dripping tap into bath, sink or basin or external tap.
- Cold radiator(s) if this is limited to a few radiators only. If the majority are not functioning, then call a contractor out from the list.
- Toilet not flushing - if another toilet is available on site this is not an emergency.
- Shower not working and can be isolated, so water is not pouring out of appliance. This is an inconvenience and not an emergency.

IMPORTANT:

To reduce the risk of frozen pipes during the colder months please do not turn off your heating especially when going away. Keep the heating on as normal as the damage caused to personal possessions and the property is not worth the pennies saved. Isolate outside taps internally during October – May and leave the outside tap slightly open to drain any residual water.

BUILDING / GARDEN EMERGENCIES

Most building repairs will wait until the office is open. If, however, you have one of the following issues 'out of hours' please contact a contractor from the emergency list.

- Serious damage to a roof
- Leaking oil tank or oil line
- Blocked / overflowing foul drainage and septic tanks
- Storm damaged tree(s) which endangers the occupier, visitors, passing traffic, pedestrians or neighbours. Notify the police if damaged tree(s) are lying on or overhanging public highways, footpaths or public areas e.g. school or park. Contact the Property Team on next available day to have obstacle removed.
- Collapsed boundary wall onto public footpath or highway. Notify the police if risk to the public. Contact the Property Team on next available day to arrange wall to be rectified and obstacle removed.

PROPERTY TEAM OUT OF HOURS NOTIFICATION

Our Office hours are Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm and Friday 9.00am to 3.00pm.

CLERGY AND TENANTS EVENING AND WEEKEND FOR REQUESTS FOR MAINTENANCE

We prioritise requests according to the following guidelines:

Priority Level	Example
URGENT: risk to life & property within 24-48hrs	Gas leak, break-in, locksmith needed, other security issue, lack of water, significant water leaks, live wires, etc.
HIGH PRIORITY: extreme inconvenience within 3-5 days	Loss of services: no hot water, minor water leaks, broken shower, structural cracks, boiler/heating not working, etc.
MEDIUM: mildly inconvenient within 1-4 weeks	Broken fencing, no shower but bath available, tree damage, gutter failing dampness, 1-2 radiators not working, etc.
LOW: can afford to wait within 1-3 months	Tree / gardening work, interior decoration, draughty windows, broken garage door, etc.

For any emergencies with your property, during evenings or weekends and when the office is closed, please call one of the numbers from Appendix 1.

For your guidance, the following is considered an emergency:

Repairs which maintain safety/security/major utility services and heating, or which prevent further damage to the building, and which are likely to cost less than £350 in total, excluding the call out fee.

Should you call any of the emergency numbers during evenings or weekends, then please send a courtesy email to the Property Team email address:

property.repairs@southwell.anglican.org

OCCUPANT'S DUTIES

As 'custodians' of the house you have responsibilities to yourselves and future occupants to take reasonable care of the property, keeping them clean and in good decorative order throughout its life returning the property to the DBF in satisfactory condition. Under the Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972, occupants have a responsibility to 'take proper care' of the house and garden to use them in 'tenant-like manner'.

The following information details checks and actions expected to be completed by occupants to keep your home in good order, and to reduce preventable issues. Garden responsibilities are covered on pages 16 and 22.

- Check electrical sockets are not overloaded. Avoid overloading electrical circuits with extension leads, heaters, seasonal light decorations, or appliance.
- Inspect roof tiles visually from the ground after extreme weather e.g. high winds, snow etc. Report any faults to the Property Team.
- Clean and lubricate window and doors openers with silicone spray or 3 in 1 oil.
- Wash windows and external frames to maintain in good order as necessary.
- Examine all grout and sealant to bathrooms, kitchen, utility and cloakroom wall and floor tiles including junctions with worktops and suites. Report any issues to the Property Team.
- Check all external vents and flues are clear from debris or vegetation.
- Check external walls are free of soil, compost, rubbish or snow being raised above the damp proof course of your home. This can lead to damp penetration into the property.
- Clean out internal vents to extractor fans etc. Do not take apart or push anything into the vent to clean. If you have any concerns with the fan report to Property Team.
- Cut back/remove plants and bushes where necessary to ensure they do not grow up against the outside of the house or near rainwater gullies. Roots and damp from plants can cause damage to your home and drains.
- Check air bricks located close to ground level are kept clear in order to ventilate the floor void.
- Inspect paved areas and asphalt drives. Keep areas clean of vegetation and moss.

- Inspect gutters and down pipes and rainwater gullies removing leaves and debris in particular between autumn and winter. If working at height is required, we would recommend employing a competent contractor to undertake these works.

LEGIONELLA

Legionella is a type of bacteria found naturally in freshwater environments, like lakes and streams. It can become a health concern when it grows and spreads in systems like showerheads, taps, hot water tanks and heaters. People can contract Legionnaires disease, which is a form of pneumonia, when they breathe in small droplets of water in the air that contain the Legionella bacteria. It can make you ill.

Catching Legionnaires disease in your home is rare. Most incidents of the disease are caught from faulty air conditioning systems or cooling towers. It is also not infectious so it can't be passed from person to person. However, there is a possibility that when certain conditions exist in the home it increases your risk.

Water that is between 20 - 45°C (lukewarm to hot) is a suitable breeding ground for bacteria to grow. This can happen in large water tanks in lofts that are not used much, or pipes that go to a tap that is hardly ever turned on

What you can do to minimise risk:

If you move into a new home or your home has been lying empty for at least a week, for example, if you've been on holiday, then you should flush out your water.

- If you aren't using showers or taps regularly, make sure you flush them through at least once a week.
- To flush out your water you need to run the water in all showers, baths, wash basins, sinks and taps continuously for at least two minutes, beginning with the sink taps. You must do both hot and cold taps.
- When turning taps on, turn them on slowly so that you don't splash water, as this might release water droplets into the air.
- When flushing showers, remove the shower head and lower the hose into the bath. If you're unable to remove the head, wrap it in a towel or facecloth to make sure there is no spray that you could inhale

Legionella can grow and multiply on grime, scale, algae and rust. Make sure you clean and descale all your taps and showerhead every three months or when there is an obvious build up by using a nylon brush or diluted bleach. Set your hot water tank temperature to 60°C (this does not apply to combi boiler systems that provide instant hot water) as this is too hot for bacteria to survive.

QUINQUENNIAL (PLANNED MAINTENANCE) WORKS

The Repair of Benefice Buildings Measure 1972 requires that every parsonage house be inspected at intervals not exceeding five years. These inspections are carried out by the Diocesan Board of Finance appointed Surveyor, against a standard checklist. The inspection covers the condition of the fabric of the house, ensuring that it is weathertight, checking external decorations and windows and external doors, along with the internal fittings. It does not include internal decorations, although comment may be made on the condition of these, and the occupant may be asked to respond.

The Surveyor will identify any essential works for which the DBF holds responsibility and discuss these with the occupant. A specification for any necessary works will be drawn up, a copy will be sent to the occupant for comment, and competitive tenders obtained. Please note that the DBF are standardising specifications for installations and works, in the interests of every occupant and every parsonage receiving fair and equal treatment and investment.

Following the receipt of acceptable tenders, the Director of Finance will authorise the works. Upon instruction of the contractor, the occupant will receive a copy of the Works Order, and the contractor is then required to contact the occupant direct to arrange timing for the work.

Usually, the quinquennial works are required to be completed within six months from date of order or by the end of the calendar year, whichever comes first, so there is a window within which the occupant can agree a mutually convenient timetable with the contractor.

Although the Surveyor usually makes inspections during major work being carried out, and upon completion, please do not wait for that inspection if there is any matter which causes concern. Constructive comment regarding contractors' work is always helpful. Any complaints or comments on compliance with the specification or the standard of workmanship should be notified to the Property Team at the time the work is carried out, so that any problems can be resolved quickly.

Any major structural problems should be notified to the Property Team as soon as they occur, as it may in some circumstances be advisable to bring forward a quinquennial inspection. Similarly, in certain situations, a quinquennial inspection may exceptionally be deferred, for example, if a vacancy is pending or further investigations of structural problems are required.

The aim of the Quinquennial Survey is to ascertain the necessary maintenance works to each individual property and its surroundings to reduce the likelihood of material failure or the performance degradation of an item or material.

This inspection is undertaken every five years in accordance with The Repair of Benefice Measure 1972 (Chapter 3). The inspection is carried out by the appointed surveyor along with the occupier. Following the inspection all repairs, found necessary, will be carried out at the Diocesan Board of Finance expense.

Inspections and Tendering Process

The inspection and tendering process will commence the Quinquennial year and the works undertaken the following year e.g. if your quinquennial is scheduled for year 2030 then the inspection and tender process will be undertaken in year 2030 and the works 2031.

A Chartered Building Surveyor e.g. RICS or MCIOB will undertake the survey identifying the condition of all elements accessible. The surveyor will prepare a Condition Summary Report detailing the quinquennial items identified, potential improvements, occupiers' comments and requests and repair works which require urgent action prior to the quinquennial.

The summary is agreed, and a schedule and tender document prepared. The summary and authorised schedule will be issued to the occupants one month prior to going out to tender. The summary will include an explanation for the works agreed and for the works not authorised. Occupants must direct all comments and representations to the Director of Finance. If the occupant is unhappy with the decision representations can be taken to the Chief Executive. Representations must be submitted within 4 weeks. Any submitted after may not be considered.

The tender documents will be sent out to a minimum of three approved contractors for large works, minor works can be managed through a single tender process. An email will be sent to you from the Surveyor detailing the contractors tendering. The contractors will then make contact with you direct. Access must be provided under S11 of the measure, to the contractor to all areas to enable them to prepare a tender return. It is important that contractors are granted access at the earliest date to ensure they have sufficient time to submit a tender return. Any late tenders will not be accepted. Please do not add work items to the list when the contractors are pricing the works as this will confuse the process.

Monitoring of Quinquennial Works

The appointed contractor will be monitored throughout the works by the Property Team. The works should be undertaken in one continuous process where possible. If you are unhappy or have concerns during the works, please contact the Property Team. Once works are completed the Property Co-Ordinator may revisit to inspect and sign off the works. Any works not completed or substandard will be rectified before payment is issued.

A-Z HOUSING GUIDE

ACCESS AND CONSULTATION

You will be consulted about any works that are to be undertaken on the property. Some of these may be for health and safety reasons or for essential maintenance. You will be expected to allow access to the property team or contractors for this purpose. For other works, timing and extent will be by agreement. not be accepted. Please do not add work items to the list when the contractors are pricing the works as this will confuse the process.

ADDITIONAL HEATING, OPEN FIRES, CHIMNEYS

Gas fires may still be in situ in some vicarages, where these were once deemed necessary to supplement the central heating. Where this additional heating is still required, the DBF will replace gas fires that are declared unsafe or have reached the end of their useful life with a suitable modern electric fire.

If an occupant requires new additional heating, they can install a new electric fire at their own expense. The provision of supplementary heating in the workspace (study) may be considered by the DBF, where it is jointly agreed that this is essential, if the central heating cannot be extended there. All removal and capping-off works must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer (for removing gas appliances) An electrician, approved by the Property Team, must be used for the permanent installation of any new electrical heating appliances.

ADDITIONAL RESIDENTS

The parsonage house may, of course, be home to a close clergy family relative, for example, an aged parent. However, it is important to remember that no residents other than the office holder have occupancy rights. No arrangements for any form of sub-letting or lodging agreement should be entered into without written consent from the relevant Archdeacon.

ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The layout and facilities of the dwelling reflect the necessity for safety, ease of maintenance and the longevity of the property. The DBF recognises that occupants may want to undertake improvements, and you may apply to the property department with proposals for these and they will be considered carefully. However, no alterations (other than routine domestic redecoration – see decorations) may be made without the written permission of the Director of Finance, because of possible risks to the safety of the occupants, the soundness of the property and the effect on the property insurance.

If any alteration is agreed, the contractor must be approved by the Director of Finance. You may be required to reinstate unauthorised works at your own expense.

The DBF is working to improve the overall standard of the properties in the portfolio and so will be undertaking improvements as part of a planned programme of works over three to five years. You may therefore be approached about improvements to the property and your co-operation in enabling these to happen would be valued. Examples of alterations that are not permitted include altering any wiring, making openings or doorways in walls and altering or adding to the plumbing and heating systems.

BATHROOMS

The standard colour for all bathroom suites is white and they are replaced when they are worn out. If your house has a shower over the bath, the provision for a shower curtain of sufficient length to avoid water draining onto the floor is your responsibility.

BOILERS AND CENTRAL HEATING

Central heating is provided in the property as standard and the DBF are responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the boiler. The property team organises this service in consultation with you, as to access. If you have problems with your boiler between services, please contact the property team. You are responsible for the costs of the energy that you use.

BUSINESSES

The permission of the Chief Executive is required before any business activity can be carried out from a clergy house.

In considering any approach, the property team will require written confirmation that:

- You have arranged appropriate insurance. (Please note that you risk being financially exposed as a result of any event leading to a claim against the property insurance being rejected by an insurance company.)
- The proposal does not constitute a change of use of any part of the property (as defined in the Planning Act 2008 and other associated legislation).
- Any alterations required by any regulatory authorities have the prior consent of the property team.

COOKERS

The provision of a cooker, whether free-standing or built-in, is the responsibility of the occupant including its maintenance and repair.

When you install your own appliance, it is your responsibility to send the details of the fitting contractor to the Property Team to confirm their fitness to undertake the works and to record what is being done for safety purposes. In the event of the installation being regarded as unsafe when a property inspection takes place, repairs or replacement will be at your expense.

CRACKS

It is most likely that you, as the regular occupier of the property, will notice cracks internally and externally and be aware of whether they are getting worse. Most hairline cracks, especially if they run in parallel with the walls and ceiling, are due to plaster shrinkage and can be dealt with during the course of redecoration.

However, if you see one wider than a hairline that is changing or worsening, it is important you contact the property team for advice without delay. A photograph is particularly helpful. The property team can then decide on any necessary action.

DISABILITY

Where alterations are required for the purposes of complying with legislation and accommodating the disability needs of the occupant and family, the arrangements should be discussed with the Archdeacon and the Property Team.

DRAINS, SEPTIC TANKS AND SEWERAGE

Drains and sewer systems that work properly are an essential part of maintaining a property as a safe and healthy environment for living.

In order to keep them working well, you can help by:

- Making sure you avoid pouring fatty substances down the sink
- Making sure that those who use the bathrooms and cloakrooms do not flush items down the lavatory that can block the drains
- Making sure that no forbidden substances are put into the drains that could enter water courses and be subject to action by the Environment Agency, for example oil or paint.

Foul and surface water / rainwater drains, and septic tanks all need to be maintained and used in a sensible fashion. The DBF are responsible for any repairs to the drains but are not responsible for blockages resulting from misuse and poor daily maintenance.

Foul sewers are only designed to take away water, toilet paper and human waste from toilets, sinks baths etc. Please avoid flushing, wipes, nappies, cotton buds, sanitary products, food, animal / pet waste etc. down toilets or emptying fats, oils, food waste or paint down plug wastes as these are often the cause of blockages.

The property team is responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the septic tank. Emptying the tank is the responsibility of the occupant. The DBF are responsible for any sewerage charges that arise in respect of clergy occupants.

ELECTRICAL

No electrical works should be carried out unless they are commissioned and monitored by the property team.

EXTRACTORS

Extractor fans are provided in some kitchens and bathrooms and are maintained by the Property Team, but you are expected to make sure dust and grime are removed from the cover and to provide replacement filters.

FURNISHINGS, CURTAINS, BLINDS, CARPETS, FLOORING

The DBF provides vinyl flooring for kitchens, utility rooms, bathrooms and cloakrooms but **does not** provide carpets to other rooms. In some cases, carpets are already in place because they were included in the property on purchase and in those cases, they will not be replaced when they are no longer fit for purpose. Please see Woodblock flooring if you have parquet floor or similar.

The DBF will provide curtain battens over all windows but does not provide furniture or curtains or blinds.

GUTTERS

Occupants should ensure all surface water / rainwater gullies, rainwater goods are kept clear of leaves and vegetation throughout the year.

All gutters, down pipes and gullies, should be cleaned at your own expense. We would recommend this takes place during the autumn, once leaves have fallen from the trees. A further clean in areas surrounded by trees may be beneficial earlier in the year.

Under no circumstances should clergy or members of their family undertake gutter clearances themselves, particularly above single storey height, in the light of the risks to health and safety. If you choose to undertake gutter clearances yourselves, it is at your own risk and liability for damages rests with you.

Note: Blocked rainwater gullies and gutters are not classed as an emergency. Nevertheless, please report to the Property Team on the next available day as these works need attention to prevent damage to the building in the long term.

INSPECTIONS - MOVING IN

Inspections are undertaken to identify works necessary in order to present the house in an acceptable condition for the incumbent and family to live and work. The house will be inspected by the Property Coordinator prior to the ingoing meeting to identify any improvement works. Major items identified will be discussed with the Director of Finance. If improvement works are deemed necessary, they will be highlighted to the new appointee at the meeting. Where the vacancy period allows, these works will be completed before the incoming meeting.

Prior to moving in, grass will be cut, and small trees and hedges will be cut to a height of 6ft. Large trees will be inspected by a tree surgeon.

LIGHT FITTINGS

A standard light fitting will be provided in each room, which means a pendent light fitting or fitted lighting unit. You provide light shades and light bulbs. If you choose to fit a “non-standard” light fitting, then will become your responsibility to maintain. When leaving, if you have fitted a “non-standard” light then it is your responsibility for re-instating this to the original ceiling light pendant. If a non-standard light fails to work, the DBF will only replace with a standard light fitting.

LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

If the building that you live in is listed, there are additional restrictions on what can be done with the property in terms of maintenance and improvements. Some of the things that you would like to have done may not be permitted and some things have to be done to a required standard.

A building may be in a conservation area which similarly means that some things are not permitted in relation to the outside of the premises.

The property team can advise you as to whether the property is affected by these two pieces of legislation and how they affect any proposals you may want to make to improve the property.

LOFTS

Great care should be taken in accessing and using the loft for storage. It should only contain a small number of items, and they should not be of a nature to cause risk to people or property, such as flammable items like camping gas cartridges or items likely to leak and cause damage to ceilings or attract vermin.

Things should be arranged to spread the weight. You should avoid contact or inhalation of any insulating material in the loft and you should take care to use stable ladders and secure them when accessing the loft space.

The Occupier is welcome to install a loft ladder and board out the loft space at their own expense and with permission of the Property Team.

PEST CONTROL

The DBF is not responsible for the cost of Pest Control, e.g., for wasps, mice and rats. In the first instance, occupants should contact their local authority for advice. If the local authority no longer provides a service or recommends a contractor, occupants must source a local pest control company and be responsible for payment. The DBF will act in cases where structural work will need to be carried out to prevent access to the building by pests.

DOMESTIC PETS / ANIMALS

Domestic pets may be kept in the house and garden and occupants are expected to exercise common sense about the effects of their choice of animals on the maintenance of the property and relationships with neighbours.

You are responsible for providing any additional fencing that is required to keep the pets within the garden and any damage caused by them to the fabric of the property or the garden will be repaired at your expense. You will need the permission of the property team to fit a cat/dog flap, and this will normally be granted provided that you agree to reinstate doors to their original condition prior to leaving the property.

Many occupants like to keep animals in the garden e.g. chickens, rabbits etc. All associated housing, fencing, hard landscaping etc. erected for animals is the occupier's expense and must be removed and the garden reinstated before the property is vacated. Please note that a planning application in certain circumstances can be required. Please obtain permission from the DBF before proceeding.

Gardens should be kept clear of animal/pet waste at all times. Please ensure regular maintenance is undertaken and disposed of in correct manner. Animal and pet waste should not be flushed down drains, stored or placed on compost heaps and must be disposed of offsite.

SHELVING / FIXTURES TO WALLS

You may, in other rooms other than the study, add shelving at your own expense. If you remove these, you must make good the damage from the fixings.

STOVES - WOODBURNING AND MULTI-FUEL

The DBF does not approve installation of wood burning or multi-fuel stoves.

TV AERIALS, CABLE TV, SATELLITE DISHES OR EQUIVALENT

These are the responsibility of the occupant, to provide and to maintain, as well as the TV Licence.

WHITE GOODS AND COOKERS

The provision of white goods - regarded as being cookers, fridge, freezer, washing machine, dishwasher, tumble dryer, microwave, etc, whether free-standing or built-in, is the responsibility of the occupant including its maintenance and repair. If there is a built-in appliance already in place it will become your property to use, repair and maintain during the occupancy.

If you need appliances removed in order to put your own in place, the property team will help arrange to make the standard 600mm space available (where possible). When you install your own appliance, it is your responsibility to send the details of the fitting contractor to the property team to confirm their fitness to undertake the works and to record what is being done for safety purposes.

In the event of the installation being regarded as unsafe when the property inspection takes place, repairs or replacement will be at your expense.

If the occupant chooses to purchase and install an AGA or larger range cooker, they must firstly request approval from the Property Team. If permission is granted, the occupant will be responsible for all costs associated with installation, repairs and removal.

Electric cookers are preferred over gas, for reasons of safety and the cost of annual Gas Safe compliance. If the occupant's choice of AGA or range is gas-powered, they are responsible for the cost of installing the required flue, obtaining Gas Safe certification, and for the necessary making good when they move out.

Plumbing for a washing machine is supplied as standard. Upon request, a hole in wall/cupboard will be installed for tumble dryer.

The installation of second-hand gas appliances is not permitted, for safety reasons.

WOODBLOCK / PARQUET FLOORING

The Property Team will arrange for the sanding, polishing and staining of any woodblock flooring that is damaged or excessively worn. A decision may be made to cover/replace with carpet, if this is more cost efficient.

Revised May 2025

